

**Theatre for Social Capital: A Case Study at Mangaliso¹ Child and Youth Care Centre,
Durban, KwaZulu-Natal**

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¹ Mangaliso is a pseudonym

Declaration

I, **Lerisa Ansuya Naguran**, declare that:

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Miranda Young-Jahangeer

I dedicate this dissertation to my parents, Ray and Janey Naguran, who afford me every opportunity to live my dream.

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Firstly, I would like to thank the children at Mangaliso Child and Youth Care Centre for allowing me into their lives and for leading me through a journey of self-exploration.

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I finally give thanks to the universal forces, far greater and more mysterious than I can comprehend, that continually conspire towards getting me to exactly where I want to be.

List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

CSA – Child Sexual Assault

CYCC – Child and Youth Care Centre

CYCW – Child and Youth Care Worker

DESC – Drama for Empowerment and Social Change

DQA – Deductive Qualitative Analysis

DRACON – Drama for Conflict Management

DSD – Department of Social Development

DVD – Digital Video Disc

FGD – Focus Group Discussion

HIV/AIDS – Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome

NCA – Negative Case Analysis

NRF – National Research Foundation

OBPP- Olweus Bullying Prevention Program

PAR – Participatory Action Research

TV – Television

UK – United Kingdom

UKZN – University of Kwa-Zulu Natal

UNICEF – United Nations Children's Fund

US – United States

USA – United States of America

Abstract

This study was conducted at Mangaliso² Child and Youth Care (CYCC) in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa, in response to concerns expressed by child residents of the high prevalence of aggressive behaviour in the CYCC. This study, through an applied theatre programme that adopts a combination of sociodrama and psychodrama techniques, attempts to address the prevalence of aggression at Mangaliso CYCC by generating social capital (Putnam, 1995).

Weakened family social capital has been shown to give rise to aggressive behaviour (Imtiaz *et al.*, 2010:103). Given that the participants of this study have been removed from their families due to physical and/or sexual abuse, the central premise of this study is that the high prevalence of aggression displayed by the residents of Mangaliso is resultant of weakened family social capital. Through weakened family social capital and the exposure to abuse in the home, the “culture of violence” (Galtung, 1990:291) that was deeply entrenched by the apartheid regime is transmitted intergenerationally. This study, however, recognises that strong peer social capital has the potential to compensate for weakened family social capital, thereby minimising the negative effects of it (Gatti & Tremblay, 2007). The applied theatre programme that forms the basis of this research therefore attempts to reduce the prevalence of aggression at Mangaliso CYCC by increasing peer social capital.

This applied theatre programme is specifically designed for the generation of social capital. The programme makes use of theatre of the oppressed (Boal, 1979), theatre of the oppressor (O’Toole 1998; Weinblatt & Harrison, 2011 and Chinyowa, 2014) and Geese Theatre Company (Baim, Brookes & Mountford, 2002; Watson, 2009) techniques with the intention of increasing peer social capital at Mangaliso by specifically engaging the four essential elements of social capital as defined by Robert Putnam (1993): trust, reciprocity, social norms and social networks.

The findings of this study show that, although the programme was certainly effective in the generation of peer social capital, the effectiveness of the programme was greatly influenced by the challenges that the institutional environment posed. These challenges include

² Mangaliso is pseudonym. Mangaliso CYCC is a children’s home that provides short-term care for children who have been removed from their families due to physical and/or sexual abuse, abandonment, neglect or because they have been orphaned by HIV/AIDS.

insufficient adult supervision due to short staffing, and the negotiation of hierarchical peer structures created to give some child residents power over others. This study finds that the institutional environment was often at odds with the participants' personal choices to employ less aggressive strategies for conflict resolution.

Even so, the findings of this study show that the increase in peer social capital that was generated through participation in the theatre programme resulted in less frequent incidents of aggression. An increase in peer social capital at Mangaliso CYCC created an environment that offered more safety, social support and fewer circumstantial reasons to behave aggressively.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

We owe our children – the most vulnerable citizens in any society – a life free from violence and fear – Nelson Mandela

The process of really being with other people in a safe, supportive situation can actually change who we think we are. And as we grow closer to the essence of who we are, we tend to take more responsibility for our neighbours and our planet – Bill Kauth

Survivors of abuse show us the strength of their personal spirit every time they smile –Jeanne McElvaney

... Only the Beginning

It was the work of Drama for Empowerment and Social Change (DESC), a non-profit organisation I registered at the Department of Social Development (DSD) in 2010 that led me to Mangaliso³ Child and Youth Care Centre (CYCC). DESC was a passion project of mine that was born out of my desperate need to *do something* in response to what I experienced week after week during my time as a volunteer at Ilanga⁴ CYCC in Durban. While I assisted high school seniors with their homework, I became more and more aware that the young people I interacted with, who had fallen victim to abuse at the hands of adults in their lives whom they ought to have been able to trust completely, believed that they were the sum total of the circumstances that had led them to being placed in the CYCC. What was worse was that they believed there was not much that they could do to change that.

This became evident to me through their lack of interest in completing their homework. They were frustrated by the fact that, academically, they were among the poorest-

³ Mangaliso is a pseudonym. The real name of the Child and Youth Care Centre at which this project was conducted cannot be disclosed. This is in the interest of protecting the anonymity of the participants of this research.

⁴ Ilanga is a pseudonym.

performing learners in their classes. They knew all too well that children housed at CYCCs generally did not perform well at school (Goddard, 2000), and that they fitted that mould. They perceived themselves to be “stupid”. Consequently, the children took no responsibility for their education, and education did not play a big role in the futures they imagined for themselves. A few of the boys I interacted with aspired to become members of gangs, and the majority of the girls dreamt of marrying rich men who would take care of them. Some dreamt of becoming social workers or teachers but were doubtful that they would get into university because of their poor grades. The others ... well ... they just did not know.

Week after week I encountered the children’s same stubborn sense that their futures had already been determined by their pasts. The children felt this way (as will be discussed at length throughout this study) because, as suggested in the opening quotation from Bill Kauth above, they were not part of safe and supportive social groups, for example, stable family units or peer groups, that validated them as valuable members of society and that opened ways for them to see themselves in a positive light. These children were denied such a supportive social network, and I knew this had to change.

I volunteered at Ilanga for a year, during which I also studied towards my Honours degree in Drama and Performance Studies at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. As part of my Honours programme, I was involved in a prison theatre project with a group of women at the Westville Correctional Centre. It was through my involvement in this prison theatre project that I began to recognise, and was completely convinced by, the transformative potential of theatre of the oppressed (Boal, 1979) and, specifically, its potential for casting participants in a light in which they may recognise themselves as agents for changing their social reality (Boal, 1979:155). Like pieces of a puzzle, the identification of the need for the young people I worked with at Ilanga to see themselves as more than the sum total of their circumstances, my will to *do something* about it, and the identification of theatre as a means through which to do it, began to fit together. Subsequently, I created DESC – an organisation that offered theatre of the oppressed as a medium through which young people in residential care could acquire tools to affect positive change in their own lives and in their communities.

Weekly applied theatre workshops were conducted in four CYCCs (Mangaliso and Ilanga CYCCs were two of them) in the greater Durban area over a period of two-and-a-half years. During the workshops, participatory performances were created around themes that emerged during group discussions about what the participants felt affected them most negatively. Among the themes were low self-esteem, stigma surrounding HIV/AIDS, abuse, teen promiscuity, peer pressure and the cycle of abuse.

In June of 2012, it was with great sadness that a decision was taken to cease DESC activities due to lack of funding. Members of DESC could no longer afford to devote endless hours to DESC activities on what was turning out to be a voluntary basis. We planned to stop running the workshops at all four CYCCs at the end of the second school term that year. However, the commitment, energy and obvious development of the theatre group at Mangaliso did not allow me to stop running workshops there.

One cold afternoon in June 2012, the day after what I thought was our last performance at Mangaliso, the Mangaliso theatre group and I reflected on the term's theatre work over cake and creme soda. This had become a post-performance tradition. It was on that occasion that I planned to tell the group that the theatre workshops would not be continuing. But with a simple statement, the eldest member of the group, Nomsa⁵, did not allow my mouth to form those words. "If there was one thing I could change about this place [Mangaliso CYCC]," she said, "I would make people stop hitting and swearing at each other. Especially Gordon, he's gonna hit his wife one day ... wait and see." Those powerful words had barely had the chance to sting when out of the mouth of the youngest member of the group, Lauren, came, "We should make a play about that! About violence⁶ at Mangaliso!"

The group had identified a social issue affecting their immediate context and had identified theatre as a means of addressing it ... on their own. This made it impossible

⁵ In order to protect the participants' anonymity, the real names of the participants are not used in this study.

⁶ The participant used the term "violence" here, but it was later agreed by the group that all aggressive behaviour (not limited to violence) at Mangaliso CYCC needed to be addressed.

for me to leave, and so I continued to work with the theatre group there on a voluntary basis. What I thought was the end of my journey at Mangaliso was only the beginning.

Over the subsequent months, I designed the applied theatre programme that forms the basis of this research. This programme builds on my Master's research. In 2010, my former academic supervisor Dr Christopher John and I conducted an applied theatre project at the Youth Centre at Westville Correctional Facility in Durban as part of my Master's research (Naguran, 2011). The project, which followed the Geese Theatre company approach (Baim *et al.*, 2002), aimed to address issues of self-esteem, drug abuse and sexual assault among a group of young offenders. The findings showed that the theatre project increased levels of social capital at the Youth Centre. This increase in social capital resulted in the reduction of aggressive behaviour such as gang violence and sexual assault. It also increased communication between members of different gangs and between offenders and correctional staff. This was particularly remarkable when considering the institutionalised power imbalance (Foucault, 1977) that exists between staff and offenders within correctional centres. Given that the findings of the research showed that an increase in social capital enabled a reduction in aggressive interactions between offenders, and between staff and offenders (Naguran, 2011), I decided I would conduct an applied theatre programme at the CYCC specifically aimed at increasing social capital as a means of addressing aggression.

This research responds to Lauren's and Nomsa's comments quoted above, and aims to use applied theatre as a tool to address aggressive peer interactions at Mangaliso CYCC. Like Nomsa, it has been my observation⁷, and the observations of the child and youth care workers (CYCWs), that the young people at Mangaliso interact aggressively with one another on a daily basis. The most prevalent form of aggression displayed by the children is bullying.

⁷ For example, one participant was slapped on the back of the head by another participant for accidentally stepping on her notebook. What was alarming to me was that I was the only person in the room who found this behaviour surprising. For the other children and the CYCW in the room, this behaviour was nothing out of the ordinary.

Cultures of Violence

Aggressive peer interactions at Mangaliso CYCC form part of a broader, intergenerational “culture of violence” (Galtung, 1990:291), which can be largely attributed to the apartheid regime, that is prevalent in South Africa today. According to Paulo Freire’s (1972) argument, the apartheid regime, which was rooted in white supremacy, was inherently and structurally violent. Freire (1972) argues that any act that interferes with a person’s vocation to become more fully human is both an act of oppression and of violence. Further, political violence and oppression during the apartheid regime contributed to violence becoming a first-line strategy for conflict resolution (Norman, 2010:1). This value followed South Africans into democracy. In addition to the value that violence was given during the apartheid regime, the construction of the aggressive male identity, under-valuation of women and children and the disintegration of the family structure under apartheid,⁸ have cultivated environments that are conducive to the longevity of the “culture of violence” on both domestic and societal levels in post-apartheid South Africa⁹ (Moffet, 2006; Emmet, 2002; Walker, 2005 and Bozalek, 2010).

Many of the children housed at Mangaliso embody this violent legacy of apartheid. As Nomsa commented, we run the risk of this culture being kept alive well into the adulthoods of the residents of Mangaliso, and by extension, passed down to the next generation of young South Africans.

Aggression and Social Capital

While I recognise that there are many historical, social and cultural factors that influence aggressive peer interactions at Mangaliso CYCC, this research focuses specifically on aggressive peer interaction resulting from low family social capital. The most useful definition of social capital (Putnam, 1995), in terms of the objectives of this research, is that social capital has features of social organisation such as reciprocity,

⁸ This is further discussed on page 17

⁹ Other factors conducive to the longevity of the “culture of violence” in post-apartheid South Africa are discussed in Chapter 2.

social networks, trust and social norms that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit.

Families¹⁰ are the most fundamental form of social capital (Putnam, 1995:73). Central to this study is the idea that weakened family social capital has been shown to give rise to increased aggressive behaviour (Imtiaz *et al.*, 2010:103). This is the case with many of the young people housed at Mangaliso CYCC who had been removed from their families, by court order, because they were either physically or sexually abused. Aggressive interactions between peers at Mangaliso CYCC have become a social norm, and it is the central premise of this study that this is largely due to the low family social capital to which these children have been subjected. As such, aggression cannot be addressed in isolation from the concept of social capital.

Although low levels of family social capital increase the likelihood of aggressive interactions, research has shown that an increase in other forms of social capital, such as positive peer social capital (quality and depth of relations shared among peers) in well-socialised peer groups, may be able to minimise the negative effects of low family social capital, such as aggressive behaviour. As a child grows up, the peer group becomes increasingly important, while the impact of the family environment declines (Gatti & Tremblay, 2007:241). It has been found that “peer acceptance and friendship” was able to moderate “the degree of family adversity on a child’s externalized behaviour problems” (Gatti & Tremblay, 2007:242). Embarking on this study, it was my hope that increasing peer social capital in Mangaliso CYCC would minimise aggressive peer interactions¹¹ as a negative effect of low family social capital.

Applied theatre is a useful tool for achieving this end. As will be discussed in Chapter 3, the term “applied theatre” is not easily defined and can encompass a wide range of

¹⁰ There are many types of families within the South African context (this is further discussed in Chapter 2), but for purposes of this research, a group of two or more people are considered a family when they are related by blood and/or when legal parent/guardianship has been obtained over minors, members of the group feel and emotional and psychological attachment to one another, and when there is a permanence or intended permanence of relationship with members of the group (Okon, 2012:386).

¹¹ It is important to note that this study did not aim to eliminate aggressive behaviour from Mangaliso entirely because, as will be discussed, aggression is sometimes necessary. Instead, this project aimed to provide the participants with an arsenal of strategies for dealing with conflict, so that aggression was no longer their “go-to” response as a result of a perceived lack of alternatives.

theatre practices. Different applied theatre practitioners have differing opinions about what falls under the applied theatre umbrella. However, it is generally agreed that applied theatre refers to theatre work, typically conducted outside designated theatre spaces “with particular outcomes in mind” (Baim *et al.*, 2002:xiv). For this research, applied theatre is particularly useful for its potential to, as Philip Taylor asserts, raise awareness about particular issues, interrogate human action and prevent life-threatening behaviours such as domestic violence and youth suicide (Taylor, 2003:1). Applied theatre also creates an environment of social cohesion (an indicator of social capital) that enables participants to come together for social action (Young-Jahangeer, 2004; Matarasso, 1997).

Theatre of the Oppressed/Oppressor

In following, this research explores the use of applied theatre techniques in increasing peer social capital at Mangaliso CYCC, with the aim of minimising aggression as a negative effect of poor family social capital. This project aims to increase peer social capital at Mangaliso by increasing the four established elements of social capital – trust, reciprocity, social norms and social networks (Putnam, 1993). To do this, I decided to incorporate applied theatre techniques from Augusto Boal’s theatre of the oppressed (1979), its adaptation theatre of the oppressor (O’Toole, 1998; Weinblatt & Harrison, 2011; Chinyowa, 2014) as well as selected Geese Theatre (Baim *et al.*, 2002) exercises.¹²

Theatre of the oppressed (Boal, 1979) is practised around the world with the intention of transforming oppression by shedding light on critical issues, generating dialogue and bridging the gap between actor and spectator by turning the audience into actors (Burstow, 2008:274). The primary aim of theatre of the oppressed is not directly to incite personal behaviour change, but rather to engage the consciousness of participants in ways that encourage the transformation of oppressive structures. However, the transformation of oppressive structures through human action obligates behaviour change. As such, theatre of the oppressed approaches behaviour change on a social and political level (with the intention of the transformation of oppression) rather than on a

¹² Reasons for combining the different applied theatre approaches are discussed below.

personal level. Theatre of the oppressed also acts as a rehearsal for social change for disempowered audiences. It demonstrates, to even the most disempowered groups, the audiences' ability to regain agency through individual choices, even in the face of oppression.

Theatre of the oppressor is an adaptation of theatre of the oppressed. It allows often unconscious oppressors to recognise and analyse their active roles in oppressive structures, so that they may begin to transform their oppressive actions (Weinblatt & Harrison, 2011; Chinyowa, 2014). This study makes use of both theatre of the oppressed and theatre of the oppressor.

The Geese Theatre Company

The Geese Theatre Company is a group of professional actors and group facilitators who work in youth-related settings in the United Kingdom. The company offers performances of issue-based plays, workshops, training and conferences (Baim *et al.*, 2002:xv). Geese Theatre work is rooted in cognitive behaviour theory (Beck, 1976) whereby participants are provided with a framework for understanding the ways in which our fundamental beliefs and attitudes affect our thinking, our feelings, and ultimately our behaviour (Baim *et al.*, 2002:19). The Geese Theatre Company approaches behaviour change on the level of the individual.

The combination of sociodrama techniques such as those used by theatre of the oppressed, and psychodrama techniques such as the work of the Geese Theatre Company are uncommon. Psychodrama focuses on responses of individuals to various situations, while sociodrama focuses on understanding the behaviour of groups and societies (Kellerman, 2007). I decided to bring together these two branches in this study because violence at Mangaliso is as much a social and political problem (stemming from the "culture of violence" left behind by the apartheid regime and low family social capital) as it is a problem involving individual and personal behaviour choices. While the participants of this study have been hugely affected by the South African social and political climate, each one of them should also be held accountable for their individual

choices to aggress¹³ against their peers within their social and political contexts. While the participants may not be able to control their environment, they can learn to control their behavioural responses, or at least come to understand their responses with a view to shifting them. This study combines sociodrama and psychodrama to address the issue of aggression as both a social and political problem, and a problem that exists on the personal and individual level. It combines theatre of the oppressed and the work of the Geese Theatre Company to offer an applied theatre programme that centres on the generation of the four elements of social capital.

What is particular to this study is that, while applied theatre has been shown to increase social capital (page 52), the generation of social capital occurred as a “side effect” of using applied theatre to address other issues. It is my argument that it was the generation of social capital in each of these instances that enabled other social actions to occur and, with a focused intervention, social capital and its elements could be even further entrenched, enabling stronger social action. The present study aims primarily, through a focused and intensive applied theatre programme, to increase social capital at Mangaliso CYCC in order to enable other social action, specifically, the transformation of oppression in the form of aggressive peer interactions.

This study also introduces applied theatre to the South African residential child-care system. To my knowledge, no other applied theatre programmes have been conducted within the context of South African child residential care. Also, while there are several applied theatre programmes that address the issue of bullying, all of them address bullying within the school setting. This study is the first to address bullying in a residential child-care setting.

My hypothesis is that applied theatre is an effective means of building positive peer social capital and that this increase in positive peer social capital will minimise aggression as a negative effect of low family social capital.

¹³ Aggression and violence are the forms of oppression that are most central to this study.

Key Questions

This study sets out to answer three key questions:

1. How does social capital affect aggressive behaviour at Mangaliso CYCC?
2. Was the designed theatre programme beneficial in increasing peer social capital in the CYCC?
3. Was the theatre programme able to bring about any other changes at Mangaliso CYCC through the generation of peer social capital?

Participants in the Programme

The theatre group that participated in the applied theatre programme that forms the basis of this research comprised nine children (all housed at Mangaliso) between the ages of 10 and 15 – three boys and six girls.¹⁴ I got to know most of these children prior to the start of the programme through previous theatre work I had done at Mangaliso CYCC, and therefore this programme built on relationships I had already established with the children.

While I was not granted access to information about the participants' histories and the circumstances that led to the children being placed at Mangaliso, I was informed that the participants of the theatre programme were victims of either physical or sexual abuse. This project does not focus on the participants' pasts but rather on how the participants can cope with their present situations and forge their own futures.

Duration of the Programme

For this applied theatre programme, I worked with the theatre group on a weekly basis for an hour-and-a-half at a time, over a period of six months. During this time we engaged in exercises that brought focus to the four elements of social capital, and created and performed two participatory performances.

¹⁴ A short description of each of the participants, as well as the nature of my relationship with the children, is given in Chapter 5

While this particular programme lasted for only six months, it built on two-and-a-half years of previous applied theatre work conducted at Mangaliso through DESC, and on the long-standing relationship I had established with the CYCC.

Mangaliso CYCC

This study was conducted at Mangaliso CYCC in Durban, KwaZulu-Natal. Established in 1907, Mangaliso¹⁵ currently houses 65 children. Mangaliso is not an orphanage. The majority of the children have parents/guardians and Mangaliso strives to rehabilitate both the children and the families in the shortest possible time and to reunite them with each other. Mangaliso works in conjunction with the Department of Social Welfare and all cases are cleared by the court to ensure that the children are safely united with their families if/when this becomes possible.¹⁶

Mangaliso's main priority is breaking the cycle of abuse by providing children with a safe and stable environment, counselling and therapeutic support to help them overcome the trauma they have suffered in the past and to help them become confident and responsible members of South African society. To achieve this end, Mangaliso offers child-oriented programmes¹⁷ (such as Girl Guides and Boy Scouts) and resident social workers and CYCWs to facilitate the development of positive life skills. While the children are in the care of Mangaliso, social workers also work with the families to provide support in the form of therapy and counselling to ensure that the families are also able to overcome the circumstances that led to the removal of the child/children from their care.

Mangaliso has been striving to break the cycle of abuse and to create safe living environments for the most vulnerable members of South African society for over 100 years. This study, with its aim of interrupting intergenerational cycles of abuse and

¹⁵ This information about the CYCC was sourced from the website of this particular CYCC. I cannot acknowledge the source without revealing the real name of the CYCC.

¹⁶ The length of time that children spend at Mangaliso CYCC differs greatly. Some of the participants had been there for up to seven years, whilst one participant left the CYCC two weeks into the theatre programme after only three months. The varying lengths of stay at Mangaliso add to the unpredictability that themed these children's lives.

¹⁷ The theatre programme that forms the basis of this research was listed as one of these child-oriented programmes in Mangaliso's annual report to the Department of Social Development.

creating a living environment in the CYCC that is safe, supportive and non-threatening, attempts to contribute to the realisation of Mangaliso's vision for a safer South Africa for its children.

Outline of the Dissertation

Below is a brief overview of each of the chapters that follow in this dissertation.

Section 1

Chapter 2: *From Apartheid to Applied Theatre: Addressing the Culture of Violence*

This chapter delineates the historical, political, social and cultural contexts in which this study is situated. It investigates the “culture of violence” (Galtung, 1990:291) in South Africa and argues this culture to have emanated from the legacy of apartheid. In this chapter, I argue that violence on the political stage has translated into violence in the domestic arena in the form of child abuse, and I argue that this culture has further embodied itself in the child and youth care system in South Africa. This chapter also looks at the challenges that the South African child-care system is currently faced with, particularly regarding human resources (Loffell, 2002:11). The effect of both child abuse and child residential care is also investigated.

This chapter also reviews previous theatre work that harnesses applied theatre as an effective tool for dealing with the issue of bullying (Beale & Scott, 2001; Gourd & Gourd, 2011; Burton, 2010; Burton & O'Toole, 2009; Theatre-in-Action, 2010).

Chapter 3: *Social Capital, Aggression and Applied Theatre: The Seamless Links*

This chapter explores the relationships between social capital, aggression and applied theatre. I begin the chapter by engaging the term “social capital”, its seemingly oxymoronic nature, its connotations and its origins. I then move on to engage the three main conceptualisations of social capital theory (Bourdieu, 1986; Coleman, 1988; Putnam, 1995) and their applications in this study.

In this chapter, I make the central argument that aggression at Mangaliso is a result of weakened family social capital (Imtiaz *et al.*, 2010:103). I argue too that the generation

of peer social capital can offset the negative effects that weakened family social capital has had on the participants of this research (Gatti & Tremblay, 2007:242). I also establish applied theatre as an effective means of generating social capital (Matarasso, 1997; Harden *et al.*, 2015; Somers, 2008; Sliep & Meyer-Weitz, 2003).

Lastly, I engage the three applied theatre approaches practised in this study: theatre of the oppressed (Boal, 1979), theatre of the oppressor (O'Toole 1998; Weinblatt & Harrison, 2011; Chinyowa, 2014) and the Geese Theatre Company (Baim *et al.*, 2002, Watson, 2009). I am careful to delineate the ways in which each of these three approaches have been appropriated and adapted to suit the needs and context of this study. I also argue for the need to bridge the divide between psychodrama and sociodrama to simultaneously address social issues within both personal and political frameworks.

Chapter 4: *Methodology*

In this chapter I situate this study within the interpretative and emancipatory paradigms and delineate the ways in which this study involves both ethnography and participatory action research.

Included in this chapter are short descriptions of each of the participants of this study. I also discuss my subject position as facilitator and researcher.

Mainly, this chapter takes the reader through the three key stages of this study: facilitation of the theatre programme (particularly how directive facilitation techniques were employed), data collection (ethnographic journal notes, interviews and focus group discussions) and the data analysis technique of deductive qualitative analysis. This chapter establishes the six categories (developed during the coding process) under which the results of this study are presented.

Chapter 5: *The Project: a Detailed Account*

In this chapter I provide an in-depth account of how the theatre programme played out. The reader is taken through the structure of the weekly theatre sessions I conducted with

the group, theatre games and exercises that the group engaged in, the process of the creation of two participatory performances as well as the experience of the performances themselves. This detailed account also provides the reader with insight into the interpersonal dynamics of the theatre group.

Section 2

Coming Together: The Results

In this Section I analyse the collected data and present the findings of this study. The results of this study are divided into three chapters:

Chapter 6: The Evolution of Social Norms at Mangaliso CYCC

Chapter 7: Creating a Non-threatening Environment

Chapter 8: Imagining the Future

‘That’s a Wrap’

This chapter provides conclusions for this research exemplifying the significance of this study for the field of applied theatre for Mangaliso CYCC and for the South African child-care system. It also offers recommendations for further work aimed at generating social capital.

SECTION 1

CHAPTER 2

From Apartheid to Applied Theatre: Addressing the Culture of Violence

Introduction

In this chapter I take the reader through the key literature that has informed this study. I start by presenting current debates around what constitutes aggression, as well as the historical and social factors that contribute to the high prevalence of aggression in South Africa today. While I am aware that the prevalence of violence and aggression is not unique to South African society, South Africa has been described as having the highest prevalence of violence in the world (Norman *et al.*, 2010). In considering why South African society is the most violent in the world, the historical, social and cultural influences that are unique to South Africa must be investigated. In the light of this, it is impossible for me not to contextualise the prevalence of aggression and violence in South Africa as a legacy of the apartheid regime. In this chapter, I argue that the apartheid regime has left behind a deeply entrenched “culture of violence” (Galtung, 1990:291) in South Africa that, while it may have its roots in the political and public arena, has manifested itself in the domestic setting too – for example, in the form of child abuse. This idea is central to this study. I argue that it is this domestic manifestation that has largely shaped the circumstances that led to the participants in this study being placed at Mangaliso CYCC. The historical, social and cultural factors that influence child abuse in South Africa, as well as the effects of it, are also discussed in this chapter.

I also argue that through the intergenerational transmission of aggression, the “culture of violence” has also found its way into Mangaliso CYCC, particularly in the form of bullying. The peer dynamics and ways in which the children at Mangaliso CYCC interact with each other reflect the broader social and political climate in South Africa.

The efficacy with which CYCCs in South Africa are able to meet the needs of the children in their care is also questioned in this chapter. Issues related to human resources are of particular concern in this regard.

As discussed in the previous chapter, this study has identified applied theatre as a medium through which to mediate excessive displays of aggression at Mangaliso CYCC. As such, applied theatre projects that are most aligned to this study with regard to the issue of bullying are highlighted in this chapter. However, these interventions are practised primarily in the school setting and not within the setting of residential child care, which possesses a unique set of issues and circumstances that must be navigated.

Aggression

Social psychologist Leonard Berkowitz, best known for his research on human aggression, recognises that the term “aggression” has many meanings in the scientific and academic spheres, as well as in everyday speech (Berkowitz, 1993:3). Just as a violent physical attack on a person is considered aggressive, so too can the strong assertion of one’s opinions or one’s determined striving towards a career goal be described as aggressive (Berkowitz, 1993:4), with the latter indicating that aggression is not always bad. For the purpose of this study, the most useful definition of aggression is that it “refers to any behaviour that is intended to harm another person who does not want to be harmed” (Bushman & Huesmann, 2010:833). The intended harm can be either physical or psychological (Berkowitz, 1993:3).

Aggression is external behaviour that can be seen – hitting, kicking, shooting, beating and stabbing are all forms of aggression. However, aggressive behaviour is not limited to the infliction of physical harm. Swearing and using harsh language towards someone is also considered aggressive. What is important is that aggression is the outward infliction of harm – it is not, for example, an internal, angry thought or feeling. The act of aggression also requires at least two people, one inflicting the harm and the other having harm inflicted on them. Self-mutilation is therefore not considered aggressive. Harm that is inflicted accidentally, for example a mother who accidentally jams her child’s finger in a car door, is not considered an act of aggression. Someone might also inflict pain onto another person intentionally, without the intention of harming them – for example, a dentist might administer a painful injection intended to numb a patient to a more intense pain that would otherwise follow. This act is not considered aggressive

(Bushman & Huesmann, 2010:833). For the purpose of this study, behaviour is considered aggressive when it possesses three characteristics: the behaviour is external, it is directed towards at least one other person and it is intended to be physically and/or psychologically harmful (Bushman & Huesmann, 2010:833).

A subset of aggression that will be largely engaged in this study is violence. For the purpose of this study, violence is defined as “aggression that has extreme physical harm as its goal, such as injury or death” (Bushman & Huesmann, 2010:833). For example, a brother who pushes his sister while playing in a sandpit is aggressive but not violent. However, if that same brother were to push his sister off the highest point of a jungle-gym onto the hard ground, with the intention of breaking one of her bones, he would be considered aggressive and violent. All acts of violence are aggressive, but not all acts of aggression are violent (Bushman & Huesmann, 2010:834).

Aggression can take many forms – physical, verbal, relational/social, direct, indirect and displaced (Bushman & Huesmann, 2010:834). Physical aggression involves harming another person physically. Verbal aggression involves using harsh language with the intention of hurting another person. Relational (also known as social) aggression is defined as intentionally damaging a person’s social relations, for example, cutting a person off from their peers so as to make them feel excluded. Direct aggression refers to harm that is inflicted with the victim being physically present, as opposed to indirect aggression such as destroying the victim’s property in his or her absence. Displaced anger refers to aggression that is triggered by one person/event and then redirected to another person – for example, a husband who is frustrated by the way his boss treats him comes home and yells at his wife (Bushman & Huesmann, 2010:834).

Aggression may take an active or passive form. Active aggressors respond to a situation in a harmful manner, such as swearing or hitting. Passive aggression is characterised by a lack of action, with the knowledge that not acting can bring harm – for example, not delivering an important message that could save someone from harm (Bushman & Huesmann, 2010:834).

People act aggressively to serve different purposes. Berkowitz (1993:8-9) identifies three main goals of aggressors: power and dominance, coercion and impression management. Aggressors may want to assert their dominant positions in their relationship with their victims, influence their victims to change their behaviour in a way that suits them, or, in an attempt not to have their personal challenges cast them in a light in which they may appear weak, aggressors may strike to appear strong and courageous. Impression management as a goal for aggressors, particularly in young South African men, is further discussed below.

Aggression in South Africa

South Africa has among the highest levels of interpersonal violence in the world (Norman *et al.*, 2010:1). This study attributes the high levels of violence and aggression in South Africa today largely to the two major oppressive systems to which South Africa was subjected: colonialism and the apartheid regime. Both colonisation and apartheid were inherently violent and oppressive structures. As mentioned earlier, Freire (1972) argues that any act that interferes with a person's vocation to become more fully human is both an act of oppression and of violence. Therefore both colonisation and the apartheid regime, which actively dehumanised native people and people of colour, were fundamentally and structurally violent.

Martinique-born psychiatrist, philosopher and revolutionary Frantz Fanon was largely concerned with the violent processes of colonisation and decolonisation. Fanon (1963), in his seminal text, *Wretched of the Earth*, argues that because colonisation is structurally and inherently violent, revolutionary violence is vital to the decolonisation process. He argues that decolonisation is inherently violent because it "is quite simply the replacing of a certain 'species' of men by another 'species of men'" (Fanon, 1963:35). Fanon goes so far as to argue that violence is a therapeutic process for the oppressed. He says, "at the level of individuals, violence is a cleansing force. It frees the native from his inferiority complex and from his despair and inaction; it makes him fearless and restores his self-respect" (1963:64).

Building on Fanon's argument, Stefan Sonderling (2014:26) asserts that "colonisation and decolonisation are based on reciprocity: colonisation was made possible by violence, and decolonisation must be violent. History begins with the violent colonial conquest and induces violent resistance." Further, everyone within a culture of domination (such as within a colony) is socialised into seeing violence as an acceptable means of control (hooks, 2000). Such socialisation ensures the longevity of violence in post-colonial societies such as South Africa.

Just as the process of decolonisation is inherently violent, the fight for freedom against the structurally violent system of apartheid was violent too, and this has left South Africa with a severely entrenched "culture of violence" (Galtung, 1990:291). Individuals and communities that were systematically oppressed by the apartheid government through institutionalised racism, used violence as a tool to retaliate against the constitutional violence to which they were subjected (Masango, 2004:2). Violence (an extreme form of aggression) was an effective tool that helped oppressed communities to regain their freedom. Professor of Practical Theology, Maake Masango (2004:2), argues that as a result, South African freedom fighters came to value violence. A culture of violence developed in South Africa until it finally became a norm.

Violence, as a legacy of apartheid, cannot be attributed to political violence alone. The regime was also responsible for a number of social factors that saw an increase in violence during the apartheid era and has carried over into the "new" South Africa. The apartheid regime attached different value to different groups of people. It was one not only of racial domination by a white minority, but also one of gendered domination (Morrell, Jewkes & Lindegger, 2012). Women were also devalued under apartheid and were given the status of second-class citizens (Andrews, 2001:698). Domination was frequently enforced through violent means such as harassment, torture, detention without trial and arbitrary arrests (Hamber, 1999:116). In addition, constructions of masculinity during apartheid were violent and authoritarian (Morrell *et al.*, 2012:17). This identity construction and the devaluation of certain groups of people under apartheid gave rise to increased violence being inflicted upon those marginalised by the apartheid government.

Liz Walker (2005:228) argues that with the improved legal status of women post-apartheid, constructions of masculinity have become even more violent. Feeling threatened by women's improved legal status, many men resort to violence against women to assert their dominance. "Constitutional, legislative and ideological efforts to reconstruct and reward less violent and less patriarchal masculinities in the period of transition have had the unintended consequence of lifting the lid on sexual violence and destabilizing old masculinities" (Walker, 2005:228).

Further, Helen Moffet (2006:132) argues that intimate partner violence in post-apartheid South Africa is "fuelled by justificatory narratives rooted in apartheid discourses". Moffet goes on to explain that the apartheid government used violent means of reminding marginalised groups of their subordinate position both publicly and within the domestic setting (Moffet, 2006:132). Moffet argues that in post-apartheid South Africa, a similar model to regulate gender imbalance is being employed in the domestic setting. This is largely done through sexual violence, and "many men are buying into the notion that in enacting intimate violence on women, they are performing a necessary work of social stabilisation" (Moffet, 2006:132). This shows that the "culture of violence" left by the apartheid regime plays out not only in the public and political arenas, but in the private and domestic arenas too.

Violence resulting from the disintegration of the family structure can also be attributed to the apartheid regime. Before I engage violence as a consequence of weakened family structure, I must first discuss what family means in the South African context.

The task of defining the family in is not an easy one. A universal definition of family would need to include families from different cultures and historical periods, which is practically impossible (Okon, 2012:377). For the purposes of this study, a group of two or more people are considered a family when they are related by blood and/or when legal parenthood/guardianship has been obtained over minors; members of the group feel an emotional and psychological attachment to one another; and when there is a permanence or intended permanence of relationship with members of the group (Okon,

2012:386). Important for the South African context, this definition not only encompasses the nuclear family but the extended family as well. “Grandparents, aunts, uncles and older siblings now often assume parental responsibilities over parentless children. All persons with such rights and responsibilities should be included in the definition of a family” (Okon, 2012:386).

Tony Emmet, best known for his research into youth risk behaviour and social and development issues, argues that “high crime and violence rates in South Africa are associated with the progressive disintegration of families and communities that occurred under apartheid” (Emmet, 2002:1). The migrant labour system, hostile job markets and forced removals that occurred during apartheid saw family members displaced, and the structure and social fabric that tied family members together destroyed (Bozalek, 2010; Okon, 2012). Youth’s involvement in violent protests against the apartheid government also played a role in the alienation of youth from their families due to the brutal consequences of political involvement involving isolation from family, such as imprisonment (Emmet, 2002:5). Such disintegration was deeply entrenched and is still present in South Africa today (Jacobs and Jacobs, 2013:2).

Families are the most fundamental form of social capital (Putnam, 1995:73). The physical presence of parents is essential for the formation of family social capital (Coleman, 1988:111). Weakened family social capital increases the likelihood of children’s behaviour problems like aggressive behaviour (Imtiaz *et al.*, 2010:103). This alludes to the ways in which the political climate of a country affects the most personal and intimate relationships of the citizens within it. In addition, through weakened family social capital that increases the likelihood of aggressive behaviour in children and through children’s exposure to violence in the home, the culture of aggression entrenched by the apartheid regime is passed from one generation to the next.¹⁸

I would now like to move onto the issue of impression management as a motive for aggression in South Africa. Impression management theory in sociology “suggests that

¹⁸ While apartheid did play a major role in the disintegration of the family structure, I recognise that the disintegration of family is not a uniquely South African issue. This study, however, focuses specifically on the current South African context that is undeniably hugely shaped by the legacy of apartheid.

much of human behaviour is designed to obtain favourable reactions from an audience. Persons are aware that they are being categorized or typified by others in a situation and they seek to make these categorizations favourable” (Felson, 1978:205).

Erving Goffman, in his classic text *The Presentation of the Self in Everyday Life* (1959), frames impression management dramaturgically. Goffman likens the giving off of an impression to others to a performance. According to Goffman (1959:25) “A ‘performance’ may be defined as all the activity of a given [individual] on a given occasion which serves to influence in any way any of the other [individuals]”. Essentially, one manages their impressions in an effort to control how they are perceived and responded to by others” (Goffman, 1959). Goffman (1959:3) says this control is achieved by

influencing the definition of the situation which the others come to formulate, and [one] can influence this definition by expressing [oneself] in such a way as to give [others] the kind of impression that will lead them to act voluntarily in accordance with his own plan. Thus, when an individual appears in the presence of others, there will usually be some reason for him to mobilize his activity so that it will convey an impression to others which it is in his interests to convey.

Goffman explains that there are two regions in which the impression management performance extends: the front region and the back region (Goffman, 1959). Performance that occurs in the front region refers to “that part of the individual’s performance which regularly functions in a general and fixed fashion to define the situation for those who observe the performance” (1959: 22). In this region, an individual conceals the parts of him or herself that will cause his/her audience to act in contrast to the way he wants them to. The back region is “where the impression fostered by the performance is knowingly contradicted ... [and] where the performer can reliably expect that no member of the audience will intrude” (Goffman, 1959:112-113). As such, there is no need to conceal any part of him/herself.

South African men “tend to be highly competitive about power, respect, and status”, and this status can be earned through violence (Seedat, Van Niekerk, Jewkes, Suffla & Ratele, 2009:1015). Men “only learn violence as part of their masculine identity if their environments encourage and reward such an identity” (Ward, 2007:18). Because boys

replicate the aggressive actions of adult males (Corey, 2005) the violent construction of masculinity rooted in apartheid (mentioned above) that serves as a means of earning respect and power, is passed on intergenerationally. As such, young South African men “live in an environment where they learn violent behaviour, where they learn that it is rewarded, and where they learn that violence is likely to solve their problems and make them feel powerful and worthy” (Ward, 2007:28).

When considering that young South African men can earn respect by creating an aggressive impression, it must be recognised that impression management offers rewards and that these rewards reinforce the need for an aggressive impression. Social learning theory also recognises that aggression is controlled by external stimuli and by reinforcement contingencies such as rewards (Huesmann, 1994:5).

As mentioned earlier, violence that originates in the political arena soon manifests itself within the domestic and familial contexts, for example in the form of child abuse. Because the participants of this study are all victims of either physical or sexual abuse, child abuse in South Africa is central to this study.

Child Abuse in South Africa

The South African Children’s Act 38 of 2005 (Republic of South Africa, 2005:10-11) defines child abuse as “any form of harm or ill-treatment deliberately inflicted on a child”. There are many types of child abuse in South Africa including “physical and mental abuse, sexual abuse, exploitative work [and] trafficking” (Richter & Dawes, 2008:81). Because the participants of this study were either victims of sexual and/or physical abuse, this study will focus specifically on these two types of abuse.

In South Africa, physical abuse is defined as “assaulting a child or inflicting any other form of deliberate injury to a child” (Republic of South Africa, 2005:10). Child sexual abuse is defined as,

- (a) sexually molesting or assaulting a child or allowing a child to be sexually molested or assaulted;
- (b) encouraging, inducing or forcing a child to be used for sexual gratification of another person;
- (c) using a child in or deliberately exposing a child to sexual activities

or pornography; or (d) procuring or allowing a child to be procured for commercial sexual exploitation or in any way participating or assisting in the commercial sexual exploitation of a child. (Republic of South Africa, 2005:17)

Child abuse does not occur in isolation from the social and political context in which it exists. It forms part of the broader social inequalities and “culture of violence” that was deeply entrenched by the apartheid regime (Loffell, 2004; Richter & Dawes, 2008).

There are a variety of social, political and cultural factors that increase the vulnerability of children to abuse in the South African context. As discussed earlier, the disintegration of the family structure and the construction of masculinity entrenched by the apartheid regime are two of the major social factors that are conducive to the escalation of violence, aggression and abuse in South Africa. These factors translate into increased physical and sexual abuse of South Africa’s most innocent and defenceless – its children (Mathews, Loots & Jewkes, 2012:84). South Africa remains largely patriarchal, which accords men “power over women and children, which some assume includes the power to beat women and children, and take sexual advantage of them” (Richter & Dawes, 2008:85). In addition, as mentioned earlier, violence is perceived as a means by which men can earn respect and power (Seedat *et al.*, 2009:1015). This perception also increases the risk of child abuse.

A cultural factor that increases the opportunity for child abuse in more traditional African families is the unwavering respect for adults that is demanded of children (Mathews *et al.*, 2012:87). Many elders believe that they can ensure a child’s respect for them through harsh and abusive methods of punishment. This is also a means of exerting power over a child. This allows abuse to occur without much resistance from the children because resistance is easily interpreted as disrespect or insolence (Mathews *et al.*, 2012:87). Teachers hold a similar position of authority and power over children, and this power imbalance has given rise to numerous incidents of child abuse in South African schools (Mathews *et al.*, 2012). Children are often afraid to speak out against abuse because any resistance may be interpreted as disrespect for an adult, which is even further punishable.

The culture of silence around physical and sexual abuse in South Africa is another risk factor that makes children more vulnerable to abuse. Freire (1972) says that in a culture of silence, the masses are made mute by the dominant and oppressive. The oppressed are deprived of the opportunity to speak out in order to change their social realities. Silencing the oppressed ensures that the oppressors are able to maintain the power imbalances that they have actively created. Patriarchy, which is largely embedded in African culture, forbids women and children from conversing on sexual matters. This tradition of enforced silence around sexual relations has created an environment that is conducive to child sexual abuse (Masehela & Pillay, 2014:23). In addition to cultural practices, victims of abuse may choose not to report abuse due to fear of the abuser, unequal power relations, confusion and uncertainty (Masehela & Pillay, 2014:28).

Below, Mathews *et al.* (2012:92) argue that child abuse cannot be addressed in isolation from the contexts in which it occurs. Here, the author speaks particularly about sexual abuse, but his argument holds true for physical abuse too.

In order to prevent the sexual abuse of children it is imperative that we address the broader social context; such as improving the status of children as well as the position of women in South African society. The patriarchal nature of our society legitimises men's position of power and their control over women and children, thus changing gender relations are key to shifting patterns of CSA [Child Sexual Assault]. Furthermore, the composition of families and parent-child relationships also increases the vulnerabilities of children. Strengthening families and parenting practices is important in preventing not only CSA but also in assisting with recovery to reduce the long-term consequences.

This study seeks to examine and address the social contexts in which violence, aggression and peer abuse occur in Mangaliso CYCC in an effort to transform it.

Effects of Child Abuse

It is not surprising that child abuse has many negative effects and consequences that often extend well into the adult lives of victims of child abuse. Included in these effects are the psychological, emotional, social and behavioural effects discussed below.

Psychological and emotional consequences of childhood maltreatments (which include all kinds of abuse) include “anxiety/depression, dissociation, delinquent behaviour,

PTSD [Post Traumatic Stress Disorder], thought problems and social withdrawal” and are experienced up to twice as frequently as children who have not experienced maltreatment (Landsford *et al.*, 2002:826).

One of the most significant long-term effects of child abuse is the diminished ability to trust others (Denov, 2004; Breire & Elliot, 1994; Messman-Moore, Long & Siegfried 2000). Clinical psychologist, Terri Messman-Moore (Messmann-Moore *et al.*, 2000:25) argues that

early experiences of abuse will likely alter a child’s expectation that the world is safe and friendly and instead invoke a view of the world as a place where one may often encounter physical and emotional pain as well as betrayal of trust. Because CSA destroys these assumptions of safety, such abuse no doubt has a long-lasting effect on the manner in which survivors view relationships and the world.

As a result of this distrust, children who have experienced abuse and/or neglect tend to have a reduced capacity for forming and maintaining meaningful and intimate attachments with others, and may deliberately engage in behaviours that threaten or disrupt bonds formed with others in fear that close bonds will render hurt or disappointment (Breire, 2002:3).

The experience of child abuse can profoundly diminish one’s sense of personal agency (Kim & Cicchetti, 2006). Agency has been conceptualised in many different ways in theoretical, social and cultural contexts. For the purpose of this study, agency refers to the capacity of human beings to shape the circumstances in which they live (Emirbayer & Mische, 1998:946). In relation to human agency, Albert Bandura (2006:164) declares that human beings are able to “transcend the dictates of their immediate environment and [...possess] the power to shape their life circumstances and the course of their lives”. Agency is a process of social engagement that is influenced by past experiences and habits. It is also, however, geared towards the future as the ability to imagine future possibilities, and towards the present as the capacity to contextualise past habits and future possibilities within the contingencies of the present moment (Emirbayer & Mische, 1998:963).

Those who have experienced child abuse are often left with a sense of powerlessness, and the impression that they have very little control over their circumstances (Dube *et al.*, 2005:435), and they therefore experience a diminished sense of agency. As such, traumatised victims of abuse are often not hopeful about future prospects, and prematurely foreclose potentially positive future opportunities (Breire & Elliot, 1994:56 and Tishelman, Haney, O'Brien & Blaustein, 2010:294).

One of the behavioural consequences of childhood abuse or the witnessing of domestic violence is aggression. A study by Tina Hotton found that “children who witness violence in the home have more than double the odds of acting out aggressively than [...] children who never witness violence” (Hotton, 2003:14). Children who are exposed to domestic violence and abuse are far more likely to display aggressive behaviour, and come to approve of violence and aggression as means for resolving conflict (Hotton, 2003:5). Further, the adoption by children of violent and aggressive conflict resolution strategies modelled by parents increases the likelihood of intergenerational transmission of violence and aggression (Black, Sussman & Unger, 2010).

In addition, aggressive behavioural problems are more likely to occur among children whose parents employ more hostile parenting techniques such as spanking or focusing on negative behaviour rather than positive behaviour displayed by a child, as compared to parents who adopt less aggressive parenting techniques (Reebye, 2005:1).

Interestingly, Hotton’s study found that exposure to violence in the home indiscriminately increased aggressive behaviour across the gender of children. No differential effect was found for aggressive behaviour by boys over girls (Hotton, 2003:14). However, girls are more likely to engage in relational aggression while boys are more likely to engage in physical aggression – each form being equally hostile (Reebye, 2005:1). This can be attributed to hegemonic constructions of masculinity and femininity. As discussed above, hegemonic constructions of masculinity in South Africa strongly characterise physical violence. On the contrary, Hotton (2003:16) argues that hegemonic constructions of femininity exert pressure on girls to refrain from aggression, as female physical aggression is strongly disapproved of, and females

become aware of this disapproval at a young age. As such “girls learn to suppress their anger, making them more susceptible to internalising symptoms such as indirect [or less physically overt] forms of aggression”, for example relational aggression (Hotton, 2003:16).

Because the participants of this study have been both exposed to violence in the home and either physically or sexually abused, aggression as a consequence of abuse and exposure to violence in the home becomes important for this study. It is the hope of this study that creating social support in the form of peer social networks will reduce aggressive behaviour among the participants of this study. Interestingly though, Hotton’s study (2003:16) did not find a “significant relationship between low parental and community social support and child aggression, nor did it find that social support mediated the relationship between exposure to violence and aggressive behaviour”. However, this finding was based on the social support available to the parents and not to the child. The study did not examine the relationship between social support available to the child outside of the family and aggressive behaviour. The study did however recognise that it may be that:

[...] the social resources directly available to children are more important than what they gain indirectly through their parents [... because] children exposed to marital conflict are better able to cope if they have close peer relationships and positive and distracting activities outside the home that enable them to distance and disengage themselves from the conflict (Hotton, 2003:16).

This study seeks to confirm Hotton’s findings by creating, through the theatre programme, social support outside of the family in the form of strong peer social networks at Mangaliso that will mediate aggressive peer interactions at the CYCC.

As seen above, there are many factors that contribute to the prevalence of the aggression in South Africa that is being passed on from generation to generation. The “culture of violence” in South Africa has, having been intergenerationally transmitted, found its way into the Mangaliso CYCC. The type of aggressive behaviour that is most prevalent at Mangaliso, and therefore most relevant to this study, is bullying.

Bullying

Norwegian professor of psychology Dan Olweus, most recognised for the widely-adopted Olweus Bullying Prevention Programme, states that bullying has three defining characteristics. Bullying is (1) intentional behaviour, that (2) typically occurs with some repetitiveness, against (3) a person who has difficulty depending on him/herself (Olweus, 2011:151). Olweus goes on to say that bullying is a “special form of aggressive behaviour that violates the rights of another person” (Olweus, 2011:151). Olweus also notes that bullying includes both overt (observable behaviour that is usually expressed verbally or physically) and covert (spreading rumours about someone, in their absence, with the intent of socially excluding that person) behaviours (Olweus, 2003:12).

Supporting Olweus’ definition, Anne Connell and David Farrington (1996:75) also argue that bullying comprises three key elements: a physical, verbal or psychological attack, threat or intimidation that is intended harm to the victim; an imbalance of physical or psychological power, with a more powerful person or group oppressing a less powerful one; a continuous series of incidents between the same people over a prolonged time period (Connell & Farrington 1996:75). For the purpose of this study, the difference between aggression (and violence, which is a subset of aggression) and bullying is that while bullying is aggressive, bullying involves repeated harmful acts over a prolonged period of time as opposed to a once-off attack. What is also important is that bullies have a specific intent to acquire power over another (this is discussed further later in this chapter).

Bullying in CYCCs

While bullying occurs in many contexts, this study focuses particularly on bullying in the child residential care system. While extensive research has been conducted in the area of bullying in schools, bullying within institutional environments (in residential child care, for example) is under-researched (Connell & Farrington, 1996:78). A study conducted in Scotland by Christine Barter (2003) is one of the few studies dealing with violence and bullying between peers in residential child care. Barter argues that children in residential care are far more likely to be abused by their peers than by adult

caregivers (Barter, 2003:39). Barter (2003:39) found that in residential CYCCs in Scotland, CYCWs lacked confidence and information on how to deal with abusive peer relations. This is largely true of the South African context too (see page 36).

Barter recognises that the issue of peer violence and bullying in residential child-care facilities is being addressed mostly by adults on managerial and policy level, rather than focusing on the interactions between peers in residential care facilities. This is not useful, as the source of bullying in residential care most often comes from fellow residents. Intervention needs to be placed at a level that addresses peer interactions. This study attempts to fill this gap in the literature by producing literature based on a study aimed at addressing relationships of aggression and bullying between peers at Mangaliso CYCC.

Research suggests that bullies often come from families that are troubled and unstable (Smokowski & Koasz, 2005:103). Parents of bullies are generally “hostile, rejecting, [or] indifferent to their children” (Smokowski & Koasz, 2005:103). Therefore children in residential care, who come from unstable families, often turn to bullying as a “means of regaining power that has been taken from them elsewhere” (Barter, 2003:45).

Children in residential care also bully to gain acceptance into peer groups and to protect themselves from being further victimised (Barter, 2003:45). Some of the aggressive bullies are also the most extreme victims (Ma, 2001:354). Bullying is thus valued by the children in child and youth care facilities as a means of acquiring power and acceptance. A sure way to maintain power and control in a residential care facility once it has been acquired is to create and maintain a hierarchy.

In the Scottish study mentioned above, Barter (2003:44) found that “peer group hierarchies or ‘pecking orders’ were a central context in which violence was experienced by young people”. She found that a few residents exercised power and control over others either through physical confrontation or emotional manipulation. Barter referred to the residents that held the power and control over others as the “top dogs”. The physical confrontation or emotional manipulation of those lower down on

the hierarchy offered the “top dogs” the opportunity to “bolster their reputations” (Barter 2003:44). However, Barter recognised that not all “top dog” positions were earned through violence. The duration of time spent in the facility, intelligence, knowledge of the residential care system and age, all play a part (Barter, 2003:44). Another study also suggests that a culture exists in child residential care facilities whereby older children establish a hierarchy and bully younger children who have less operational knowledge of the social dynamics of residential care facility (Gibbs & Sinclair, 2000).

Barter (2003:45) also interestingly found that:

Peer group dynamics were seen as being most problematic when they were in flux, when a new resident had to find their position or when a resident from the top of the hierarchy left and their position became vacant. [...] Workers stated they sometimes left young people to sort it out themselves as long as it didn't ‘get out of hand’. Unfortunately, we found that a lot of the violence that took place at these times was hidden from staff and strong disincentives were present in many homes to stop young people telling [members of staff] [...] The creation of peer hierarchies ensures that those who have positioned themselves within the residential care facility in a way that allows them to exert power over others remain in that position. Hierarchies serve the agenda of the ‘top dog’.

Barter's findings support Paulo Freire's (1972:27) claim that “the oppressed, instead of striving for liberation, tend themselves to become oppressors” if an alternative is not modelled to them through a critical understanding of the nature of oppression. This notion is further discussed in Chapter 3 (page 64).

Bullying Prevention Programmes and Interventions

The most widely used anti-bullying intervention is the Olweus Bullying Prevention Programme (OBPP). The goal of the OBPP is to reduce bullying and cultivate better peer relations at school (Olweus & Limber, 2010:126). The goals are pursued through the restricting of the school environment, which is “intended to reduce opportunities and rewards for engaging in bullying and to build a sense of community among students and adults within the school environment” (Olweus & Limber, 2010:126). The OBPP programme operates on four levels: the school, the classroom, the individual, and, in some contexts, the community (Olweus & Limber, 2010:126).

There are a number of applied theatre programmes and interventions aimed at the prevention of bullying. The Bully Busters drama intervention was born from the initiative of a US school's counselling and drama departments (Beale & Scott, 2001). The departments came together to create a play, entitled *Bully Busters*, which saw students sending an anti-bullying message through enacting believable and familiar situations of bullying to which middle-school students could relate. Drama was chosen as the medium through which to address the issue of bullying because of its social learning theoretical underpinning (Beale & Scott, 2001:302). Through social learning, students "can acquire new knowledge and skills by observing other students and events without directly engaging in the behaviour themselves and without any direct consequences to themselves" (Beale & Scott, 2001:302). Now performed throughout the United States, the 20-minute performance sees "student performers interject suggestions for combating bullying, including making authority figures aware, building relationships with peers, avoiding unsafe areas, and refusing to be a bully". The play serves as a catalyst for post-performance discussions and student interactions. The Bully Busters programme encourages the participation of teachers and principals in the deterrence of bullying by providing information packets that assist school staff in reiterating points addressed in the play (Beale & Scott, 2001:303).

In the north-west United States, Tina and Karen Gourd (Gourd & Gourd, 2011) created a forum theatre-based social studies curriculum unit that aimed to confront the issue of bullying with eighth graders. The unit is referred to as the "bullying unit" (Gourd & Gourd, 2011:406). The unit aimed to use "forum theatre as a means to practice and develop democratic dispositions and skills and to connect issues of inequities with the students' immediate social community" (Gourd & Gourd, 2011:403). The unit also focused on helping students to "develop strategies that they can use to respond effectively to bullying" and "to commit to stopping bullying in their school community" (Gourd & Gourd, 2011:404).

Evaluation of the bullying unit shows that, while students successfully analysed and understood the complexity of their personal and social interactions related to bullying, the unit neglected to connect the personal interactions that the students analysed to

broader political inequities such as race and class that were present in the classroom (Gourd & Gourd, 2011:416). The creators of the unit recognise the need for deeper questioning in future projects that give students “opportunities to practice and develop democratic knowledge and skills that include confronting inequities and injustices” (Gourd & Gourd, 2011:417). The present study aims to avoid such shortcomings by placing equal emphasis on the personal and political components of bullying and aggression.

The Cooling Conflict programme was developed by Australian researchers John O’Toole, Bruce Burton and Anna Plunkett. The Cooling Conflict programme is a “whole school approach that uses creative techniques and peer group teaching to systematically address conflict issues; helping significantly to build positive relationships across seeming boundaries and barriers” (Oddy, 2005:1). The programme aims to cultivate a genuine understanding of conflict and bullying across all the stakeholders of a school. The Cooling Conflict programme aims to provide participants with “strategies and skills to engage effectively and sensitively with diverse forms of conflict and bullying—i.e. verbal, psychological, social or sexual” (Oddy, 2005:1). The Cooling Conflict programme was found to build positive relationships across culture, race, age and status and develop a more harmonious environment for improved teaching and learning (Oddy, 2005:1).

Another theatre-based programme aimed at bullying prevention is the Theatre-in-Action Bullying Prevention Program in Vermont. The programme is an “arts-integrated, anti-bullying education program” that teaches “key concepts in anti-bullying awareness alongside drama activities for social-emotional learning that boost students’ confidence, encourage healthy risk-taking, build empathy skills for all ages and abilities” (Theatre-in-Action, 2014:1). Similar to the present study, Theatre-in-Action seeks to facilitate the examination of why bullying occurs, generate strategies for dealing with bullying and demonstrate friendship and empathy (Theatre-in-Action, 2014:1).

The Acting Against Bullying applied theatre programme was the result of a 10-year, ongoing applied theatre research project that investigated conflict and bullying in schools

(Burton, 2010:256). The project took its starting point from the DRACON (Drama + Conflict) project – an innovative theatre-based bullying prevention programme that made use of forum theatre and process drama and saw a collaboration between researchers in Australia, Sweden and Malaysia.

Bruce Burton (2010:256) identifies the key drama strategy used in the Acting Against Bullying programme as enhanced forum theatre. Enhanced forum theatre “involves the creation of a realistic play in three scenes, rather than the single scene structure of Boal’s version” (Burton, 2010:256). The three parties to bullying – the bully, the bullied and the bystander – and the three identifiable stages of escalation in bullying – latent, emerging and manifest – are taught to the students both conceptually and through the drama work (Burton, 2010:256). Students are encouraged to improvise each of the three scenes of their enhanced forum theatre plays to represent a specific stage in the escalation of the bullying they are exploring, and to incorporate the three parties involved in bullying. They are also encouraged to make sure there is a time lapse of days or weeks between each scene, so there is a genuine development of the plot, the characters and the issue being explored, and a genuine understanding of how bullying develops (Burton, 2010:256-257).

The benefit to having three scenes is that the audience can intervene in the build-up to the critical point, as well as during the performance. Enhanced forum theatre also includes participatory techniques such as “thought-tracking” whereby audience members can stop the action to ask what a character is thinking at any given point during the scenes. This inclusion “increases the contextual understanding of the audience, and allow their interventions to be better informed and more authentic” (Burton, 2010:257).

The outcomes of the Acting Against Bullying programme include a significant increase in awareness about the nature and consequences of bullying among both students and teachers, declines in bullying behaviour in the schools involved and increased self-confidence and self-esteem among those who have fallen victim to bullying (Burton & O’Toole, 2009:4).

While the abovementioned applied theatre projects have proved to be effective in bullying prevention in schools, no existing applied theatre projects aim to address the issue of bullying in the residential child-care context. The present project aims to fill this gap in the field of applied theatre.

Child and Youth Care Centres in South Africa

In South Africa, children who have been found by a court of law to be victims of abuse and whose families have been deemed unfit to care for them are placed in residential care facilities known as CYCCs. Merle Allsopp and Zeni Thumbadoo (2002:1) note that South Africa's first democratic government, which came into power in 1994, was faced with the challenge of "finding ways to nurture, develop and protect children whose growth environments had been distorted by the political, social and economic policies of apartheid and colonisation". In 1995 it was found that the child-care system in South Africa was fragmented between ministries, departments and disciplines and that community involvement in the child care system was limited. Child-care services were underdeveloped in rural areas. It was also found that the focus of the child-care system was on intervention rather than prevention, and that human resources for prevention and early intervention, as well as for appropriate residential child and youth care services, was inadequate (Allsopp & Thumbadoo, 2002:1).

Allsopp and Thumbadoo (2002:1) note that the first five years of democracy in South Africa saw the provision of "an appropriate policy and legislative framework for children and youth at risk which articulates the notions of children's rights". The provision of CYCCs with stipulated minimum standards and governance structures (a provision of the Children's Act of 1995) was a step towards the much needed, post-apartheid transformation of the child-care system in South Africa. This policy clearly indicates that CYCCs "should be short-term and specialized" (Allsop & Thumbadoo, 2002:1). The policy also focused on the need to create community-based services for youth at risk, especially in the poorest of communities (Allsop & Thumbadoo, 2002:1).

However, there is evidence that children placed into CYCCs by court order as a result of being abused or neglected are still not receiving sufficient care. Issues of short staffing and inexperienced CYCWs are key contributing factors. According to Jackie Loffell (2004), human resources issues are of particular concern in the child-care system. She says that “remuneration and service conditions for personnel in this system are extremely poor; stress and burnout are pervasive; training is often inadequate or non-existent; and turnover is at debilitating levels. There has been an inexplicable paralysis at national level in addressing these matters” (Loffell, 2004:253).

Loffell (2004) goes on to say that although there is a chance that a child may be placed in the care of a capable and experienced CYCW who works from a carefully planned out approach, there is equal possibility that the child will be placed in the care of someone who is new to the job and who, although well-intentioned, may do more harm than good and be completely unaware of the possible impact of their actions, and who receives insufficient guidance and support from the management of their employer bodies.

What is also concerning is that different CYCWs between and within CYCCs may be “working according to different frames of reference, imposing on the child a set of processes that are incoherent and unresponsive to his or her needs” (Loffell, 2004:253). This is particularly concerning as these different frames of reference within the child-care system are imposed upon the child in addition to the different social norms that are modelled by the child’s family and by the child-care system (this will be further discussed in Chapter 6).

In an article entitled “South Africa’s Unwanted Children” (Taylor, 2013) that appeared in The Star newspaper, frustrated CYCWs and other members of the child-care system who were interviewed expressed what they believed to be the biggest problems in the child-care system. Speaking particularly about CYCCs, respondents identified low staff-to-child ratios as a major problem. Respondents said that lack of funds led to low staff-to-child ratios and that this left CYCWs exhausted, allowing standards of care to slip. Respondents also said that low staff-to-child ratios means that sometimes CYCWs often

need to choose the good of an individual who requires a lot of care and attention over the good of the group. This means that children without behavioural problems (or “good” children) often get less attention than they deserve. Because of this, some children are of the impression that other children get “special treatment” as a result of favouritism (Taylor, 2013).

In the light of the challenges discussed above, it is important to note that child residential care is regarded as a last resort in South Africa. The Children’s Act of 2005 prioritises family and kinship care wherever possible over child residential care (Rochat *et al.*, 2015:2).

Theatre in Residential Care

Much applied theatre work and research with “youth at risk” has been conducted globally. The term “youth at risk” generally refers to youth who “show signs of emotional or behavioural problems, and who lack supports to navigate developmental tasks successfully (Keating, Tomishima, Foster & Alessandri , 2002:717).

While a substantial amount of work and research has been conducted in the areas of applied theatre with youth at risk in incarceration (the Geese Theatre Company; the Clean Break Theatre Company; Theatre in Prisons and Probation Centre; Conrad, 2006; John, 2011 and Naguran, 2011) and on the street (The Ubom: Art of the Street Project; Salami and van Beers, 2003 and McCreery, 2001), the area of applied theatre with youth at risk in CYCCs (the area in which this research study is situated) is under-researched. Also, while there are effective applied theatre projects that specifically engage bullying (these have been discussed earlier) these projects are practised within the school setting and not in the context of CYCCs. My literature search produced only one example of applied theatre with youth at risk in CYCCs.

In a paper entitled “Imaging the Future: Theatre and Change Within the Child Protection System”, (Spratt, Houston & Magill, 2000:1) argued that “the use of social pedagogy as a paradigm for critically appraising developments within children and family social work has been largely neglected”. The authors conducted a study on the

use of “Boalian” techniques in the child protection system in which they found that, “Boal’s [theatre of the oppressed] approach can be adapted by using action research techniques to analyse and effect change in situations where child-care professionals face daily contradictions in their attempts to both protect children and support families”. The results of this study suggested that theatre of the oppressed offers “a new theoretical framework for practice which aims to establish communicative consensus around the needs of children and mutual appreciation of roles and responsibilities [of both children and CYCWs]” (Spratt *et al.*, 2000:1).

This research study aims to add to the limited body of research in the area of applied theatre in CYCCs.

Conclusion

In this chapter I argued that the “culture of violence” as a legacy of the apartheid regime in South Africa has been intergenerationally transferred onto the participants of this study, and this has manifested itself in the form of aggressive behavioural problems, most especially a bullying problem, at Mangaliso CYCC. Coupled with the human resources challenges that plague the residential child-care system in South Africa, children being placed in residential care are not completely protected from harm, nor are they receiving sufficient support and care despite the best intentions of the CYCWs. This means the residential child-care system in South Africa is, for the most part, failing to protect South Africa’s most vulnerable population.

I have also outlined a number of applied theatre projects aimed at the deterrence of bullying. I did, however, point out that (to my knowledge) there are no existing applied theatre projects that specifically target bullying in CYCCs. This study attempts to fill that gap.

In the next chapter I take the reader through the theoretical framework upon which this study is built.

CHAPTER 3

Social Capital, Aggression and Applied Theatre: The Seamless Links

Introduction

In this chapter, I orient the reader to the theoretical lens through which the applied theatre programme that forms the basis of this study was both designed and analysed. I start by engaging debates around social capital, its terminology, its connotations, the theory of social capital (Bourdieu, 1986; Coleman, 1988; Putnam, 1995) and its application in this study. I then move on to engage with the field of applied theatre, (Prentki & Preston, 2009; Prendergast & Saxton, 2009; Baim *et al.*, 2002 and Taylor, 2003), the debates around what it encompasses, and the three applied theatre branches used in this study: theatre of the oppressed (Boal, 1979), theatre of the oppressor (O'Toole, 1998; Weinblatt & Harrison, 2011; Chinyowa, 2014) and the Geese Theatre Company approach (Watson, 2009 and Baim *et al.*, 2002). I am careful to delineate the ways in which these three modes were adapted to serve the purpose of the generation of peer social capital at Mangaliso, as well as the reasons behind combining sociodrama and psychodrama in this study. Lastly, I engage experiential learning theory (Kolb, 1984) and its application in this study.

Social Capital: Oxymoron or Metaphor?

Before I begin to unpack the theory of social capital in terms of this research, the term “social capital” itself and its connotations must be discussed. The marrying of the terms “social” and “capital” has been criticised as being oxymoronic and dehumanising. Let me first address the perception of the term “social capital” as an oxymoron. As is argued in a paper entitled “Social Capital as Dehumanising Terminology” (Taormina, Kuok & Wei, 2012:145), the term “social” refers to interactions between people for the purpose of enjoyment and pleasure. Purely social interactions are sincere and do not actively seek to gain anything beyond the pleasure of company and the inherent benefits of sincere friendship. This is, however, not to say that “sincere” relationships are not beneficial to those within them. In contrast to the term “social”, the term “capital” denotes a competitiveness and “involves rivalries, taking advantage of weaknesses, and

being threatened by one's fellows in the business, it is the antithesis of social cohesion" (Thompson, 2009:148). As such, the term 'social capital' appears to be oxymoronic.

Further, the oxymoronic nature of the term is perceived to be dehumanising. As will be discussed below (page 49), increased social capital can undoubtedly bring about financial gain. If one sets out to build relationships purely to "get ahead" and to increase one's economic status, one would reduce human relationships to mere tools, thereby dehumanising them (Taormina *et al.*, 2012:145). I strongly condemn such exploitative practices. As Robert Taormina (Taormina *et al.*, 2012:143) argue, under no circumstances should one's friends or other people be referred to as "capital" or be reduced to "tools" to get ahead.

What is ironic, however, is that when the term "social capital" was first used by Lyda Hanifan in 1916, Hanifan was very explicit that he used the word "capital" not in its usual acceptance, but only figuratively (Hanifan, 1916). Hanifan said:

I do not refer to real estate, or to personal property, or to cold cash, but to that in life which tends to make these tangible substances count for most in the daily lives of people, namely goodwill, fellowships, mutual sympathy and social intercourse among a group of individuals and families who make up a social unit. (Hanifan, 1916:130)

Hanifan conceptualised social capital in response to a need he identified for people to share social relationships with those outside the family in the greater community. After all, being affiliated and connected to other human beings is a basic human need (Maslow, 1943). This is particularly important in this study because this study attempts to create peer relationships in the absence of secure family relationships. Hanifan saw that group life has *value* of a social nature – hence the use of the metaphor. Hanifan attempted to guard against any misconception that could lead to the economising of social relationships. His attempt, however, was very obviously unsuccessful.

Social capital in this study certainly does not refer to quantifiable assets that are rendered from personal connections made, but rather (unlike financial or human capital that can be defined as "specifiable quantities") is used as a "metaphorical construct" consisting of "processes of social interactions that lead to constructive outcomes"

(Bankston, 2002:1). The constructive outcomes that this study aims to achieve are certainly not financial or even material in nature. In the absence of a stable family environment, this study seeks to create stable bonds between the participants of this study in which they feel included and cared for. It is my hope that the formation of such a peer network in the CYCC can begin to transform excessive aggression (and possible future criminality).

While, as James Farr (2004:26) points out, this metaphor does rely on the power of capitalism (and while I recognise the oxymoronic nature of this), the metaphor and even the capitalist language of social capital that came about only some 70 years after Hanifan originally used the term, does serve as a useful means of understanding and improving social relations as is the case with this study. I am not uncomfortable using overtly capitalist language in this study, simply because I am using the language of capitalism against capitalism itself. As mentioned above, capital (and therefore capitalism), denotes a “competitiveness” where people are put up against each other and use each other to get ahead. This study seeks to build sincere social relationships between the participants in this study (which undoubtedly yield *social* benefits), discouraging the manipulation and exploitation of personal relationships for *material* gain. Mutual social benefits inherent in friendships can certainly be enjoyed without exploitation or manipulation, and without expense to the progression of others. This study makes use of the term “social capital” as it was originally used by Hanifan – as a metaphor and in response for the need for personal connections to exist outside the family, particularly as this study attempts to compensate for a lack of family relations in the form of peer relations.

Social Capital Theory

While the term social capital was first used by Hanifan in 1916, it was only really defined and theorised from the 1970s to 1990s. The term “social capital” has been conceptualised in different ways by different people. However, it is generally recognised that the three most widely accepted conceptualisations of social capital are those offered by Pierre Bourdieu, James Coleman and Robert Putnam.

Renowned French sociologist and anthropologist Pierre Bourdieu was the first of the three theorists mentioned above to conceptualise social capital in the 1980s. Bourdieu's work was largely concerned with how individuals interface with larger societal structures. The concepts most associated with Bourdieu are the three constituents of his theory of practice: field, habitus and capital (Bourdieu, 1972). Of these three concepts, the concept of capital is most pertinent to this study. Bourdieu (1986) distinguishes four types of capital: economic, cultural, symbolic and social.

Bourdieu defines social capital as:

The aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalised relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition – or in other words, to membership in a group – which provides each of its members with the backing of the collectively-owned capital, a 'credential' which entitles them to credit, in the various senses of the word. (Bourdieu, 1986:249)

Bourdieu's conceptualisation of social capital focuses on the acquisition of resources or opportunity (what Bourdieu refers to as "profits") through affiliation to a social network. Bourdieu asserts that one's access to resources or potential resources (including credentials) is dependent on how well one is socially connected, as well as on the degree of access to resources that one's social connections possess. As such, central to Bourdieu's conceptualisation of social capital is that certain advantages and benefits can only be obtained through social association with others who may grant access to them (Bourdieu, 1986).

Bourdieu's conceptualisation of social capital regards the benefits (mostly economic or benefits that can be reduced to economic gain) derived from social relationships as the solidifier of these relationships (Bourdieu, 1986). The application of this conceptualisation is problematic for this study, as it reduces social relationships to tools for economic advancement. As mentioned earlier, this study stands in opposition to the exploitation of human relationships for the acquisition of financial capital.

Fellow sociologist James Coleman conceptualises social capital as defined by its function. He argues that social capital is

not a single entity but a variety of different entities having two characteristics in common: they all consist of some aspect of social structures and they facilitate certain actions of actors – whether persons or corporate actors – within the structure. Like other forms of capital, social capital is productive, making possible the achievements of certain ends that would not be attainable in its absence. (Coleman, 1988:98)

Coleman's conceptualisation of social capital incorporates both sociological and economic streams. But while Bourdieu recognised the value of social capital in what can be reduced to tangible gain, Coleman saw the value of social capital as being located within the structure of social relationships that render other benefits. Coleman not only focused on the potential benefits of social capital for individuals, but also on the scale of larger social networks and societies. Important for this study, Coleman also recognised family social capital as being central to the social and cognitive development of children (Coleman, 1990).

Putnam's (1995) conceptualisation of social capital is directly taken from Coleman's conceptualisation. However, while Bourdieu is concerned with social capital on an individual scale and Coleman is concerned with social capital on a small group and societal scale, Putnam is concerned with social capital on a national scale. Putnam (1995:67) defines social capital as "features of social organisation such as networks, trust, and norms that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit".

Putnam was particularly concerned with the relationship between social capital and political and economic functioning on a national scale. He argues that high levels of social capital are vital for a prosperous and highly functional community. Putnam (1993) argues that a thriving economy is dependent on civic participation and strong social networks. This is not to say social capital can only be generated in a capitalist democracy, but he rather argues that there is no economic prosperity or functional democracy without social capital.

This study is not largely concerned with social capital on a national scale that engages the role of social capital in a prosperous economy and functional democracy, neither is it concerned with the generation of social relationships for personal and material gain or

to increase one's social or financial status. As such then, this study makes use primarily of Coleman's conceptualisation of social capital – as a component of children's social development, operating on the scale of small groups, institutions and societies. While Coleman's conceptualisation is the most apt for this study, it is Putnam's language of social capital (that is directly influenced by Coleman's conceptualisation) that is most useful. I refer particularly to Putnam's four elements of social capital (discussed below) and to his definition of social capital. This study therefore makes use of Putnam's language and definition of social capital on the scale which Coleman was most concerned with.

Elements of Social Capital

This study is based on the four basic elements of social capital as determined by Putnam (1993): trust, reciprocity, social norms and social networks. Below I expand on each of these four elements, exploring their significance within the context of this research.

Trust

Social trust refers to having confidence in other people (Ferlander, 2007:116). In Putnam's social capital theory, this involves trust among and between groups of people in order to facilitate cooperation and coordination for mutual benefit (Putnam, 1995:67).

Trust is an important component of social functioning because it allows people to form positive relationships with each other (Ross, 2011:288). Those who harbour low levels of trust believe that it is safer to avoid connections with other individuals, with suspicion of others forming a central cognitive component (Ross, 2011:288)

Trust is important to this study, not only because it is an element of social capital but because the participants of this study – having been either physically or sexually abused at the hands of adults they had been socialised into trusting – have had their trust fundamentally betrayed on various levels. This betrayal, which will be discussed in Chapter 6, serves as a huge barrier to social cohesion between peers at Mangaliso CYCC.

Reciprocity

Reciprocity refers to a variety of forms of exchange of social support (Ferlander, 2007:116). It is the “giving of benefits to another in return for benefits received” (Molm, Schaefer & Collett, 2007:1). An example of reciprocity can be as simple as returning a favour.

The value of reciprocity in social relationships is not limited to the value of goods and services, in and of themselves, that are reciprocated. Social psychologists, Linda Molm, David Schaefer and Jessica Collett (2007:199-200) argue that acts of reciprocity also have symbolic or communicative value. They argue that reciprocity demonstrates “trustworthiness, and [...] the partner’s regard and respect for the actor and the relationship” (Molm *et al.*, 2007:200). One’s willingness to reciprocate is also a keen indicator of one’s trustworthiness. Trust is strongest when norms of reciprocity are most active (Castillo & Carter, 2002:1).

Creating generalised norms of reciprocity at Mangaliso CYCC can give the participants the chance to demonstrate to each other their trustworthiness, as well as demonstrate the much-needed respect and regard for each other.

It is important to note that while reciprocal behaviour means that in response to friendly actions, people are nicer, more cooperative and less likely to act in ways that serve purely their own interests, it also means that in response to hostile actions, people are nastier and even brutal (Fehr & Gächter, 2000:159). In this study, cooperative reciprocation is referred to as “positive reciprocity”, while retaliatory reciprocity is referred to as “negative reciprocity” (Fehr & Gächter, 2000:159).

Vengeance is a form of negative reciprocity that is often entered into by those who have experienced child abuse. Sandra Bloom (2001:61) argues that in the course of development of a child who shares empathic bonds with caretakers, peers and family, the child learns to manage their desire to “get even” with those who have hurt them. On the other hand, physical, sexual or emotional abuse “provokes retaliatory behaviour unless a sufficient number of mitigating factors impact on the desire and action of

seeking revenge” (Bloom, 2001:61). Further, those who have experienced child abuse retaliate for perceived justice if they continue to be treated poorly and if there is no apology for misconduct – and they feel morally justified in their outrage (Bloom, 2001:61).

Bloom (2001:62) goes onto to explain that when a child’s attachment relationships are disrupted through the experience of child abuse, their ability to inhibit retaliatory behaviour becomes diminished. Also, abuse models that violence is an effective means of solving problems. As such, displaced revenge (a form of negative reciprocity) is an important lens through which to view the intergenerational cycle of abuse (Bloom, 2001:61).

Social Norms

In sociology, and for the purpose of this research, social norms refer to “socially shared and enforced attitudes specifying what to do and what not to do in a given situation” (Prentice, 2012:2). This applies to any behaviour that is accepted and expected in any society or culture. Social norms are enforced informally by members of society who subscribe to them. Penalties for acting against a social norm are issued by means of social sanctions within groups and communities (Prentice, 2012:2). For example, on a bus a young person might be expected to give up their seat for an older person. Although there is no formal or lawful obligation to do so, there is the risk of being deemed disrespectful or impolite by the other people on the bus.

The power of social norms must not be underestimated due to its informal enforcement. Psychologist Deborah Prentice (2012:2) argues that social norms may be even more powerful than formal law. She asserts that, unlike law, the resources required to enforce social norms are unlimited, and as such they are much more pervasive. Also, while non-adherence to social norms may not cost the rebel financially, he or she stands to lose social status, which, Prentice asserts, due to the highly social nature of human beings, people often value more than material possessions. This study endeavours to harness the power of social norms in an attempt to reduce aggressive behaviour at Mangaliso CYCC by establishing new social norms that are alternatives to aggression.

Social Networks

For the purposes of this study, social networks refer to the social relationships between individuals and groups that serve as a resource for mutual benefit (Lin, 2001:6). The most fundamental example of a social network is a family.

In the absence of a social network in the form of a family structure (the negative effects of which are discussed above), this study aims to create strong, positive peer social networks at Mangaliso CYCC. It is my hope that the participants in this study may find in each other what they have been deprived of by their families – a reliable social support structure, feelings of acceptance, belonging and safety, and most of all, deep and meaningful human connections that help to navigate the unjust challenges that these children face.

Levels of Social Capital

Social capital exists and is generated on three levels: bonding, bridging and linking (Szreter & Woolcock, 2004). Bonding social capital refers to “trusting and co-operative relations between members of a network who see themselves as being similar in terms of their shared social identity” (Szreter & Woolcock, 2004:654-655). This study focuses particularly on generating bonding social capital between the participants in this study in the hope of creating strong and reliable peer networks. Bridging “comprises relations of respect and mutuality between people who know that they are not alike in some socio-demographic (or social identity) sense (differing by age, ethnic group, class, etc.)” (Szreter & Woolcock, 2004:655). Although the people who create bonds with each other on the level of bridging may be different from each other, no significant power differential exists between them. Finally, linking social capital can be defined as “norms of respect and networks of trusting relationships between people who are interacting across explicit, formal or institutionalised power or authority gradients in society” (Szreter & Woolcock, 2004:655).

This study focuses mainly on bonding social capital. The participants in this study, for the most part in my opinion, are not in a position to generate social capital at the level of

linking. These children are and have been disempowered on numerous levels. They are at the mercy of the adults in their lives – both in their families and within child-care systems. The children have a very limited ability to connect to those in power to mobilise and initiate either changes within their families or systemic changes, especially when considering the diminished sense of agency that victims of abuse tend to suffer (page 27). Interestingly though, as will be discussed in Chapter 8 (page 192), participation in applied theatre activities can bring about an increased sense of agency, sufficient enough to effect social change in the participants' immediate environment without intervention from those who hold more power. As Freire (1972:21) asserts, it is not up to the oppressor to liberate the oppressed, but for the oppressed to liberate themselves. applied theatre is a useful tool for such liberation.

Benefits of Social Capital

Social capital has been found to have benefits on both an individual and societal level. However, a large amount of research on the benefits of social capital has been conducted as part of the World Bank's Social Capital Initiative. I debated at length whether or not to include the World Bank's research in this study because the practices of the World Bank stand in complete contrast to the practices of this study. I share the opinion of Zambian economist, Dambisa Moyo (2009:1) that the World Bank perpetuates the cycle of poverty by lending poverty-stricken countries money on which they must pay interest, knowing that those countries are in no position to pay. While indebted to the World Bank, these countries must also operate according to the conditions of the World Bank. As such, a loan by the World Bank to a country in debt is a means to access power over that country and to make a profit while doing so. However, research conducted as part of the World Bank's Social Capital Initiative is so extensive that its conceptualisation is being considered as a fourth conceptualisation in contemporary social capital theory. While I stated that this study does not support such practices as those of the World Bank, the World Bank has produced research that is useful for this study. Since it is one of the leading social capital research bodies, I include its research here.

Perhaps the most significant benefit of social capital in relation to this study is that it is a resource for building durable social cohesion (Mulunga & Yazdanifard, 2014:19). While there is no universally agreed-upon definition of social cohesion, Kenneth Bollen and Rick Hoyle offer a definition of social cohesion that is useful for this study. Focusing on an individual's perception of connectedness to a group, Bollen and Hoyle (1990:482) define social cohesion as "an individual's sense of belonging to a particular group and his or her own feelings of morale associated with membership in the group". Social cohesion is a characteristic of relations among people that is dependent upon the accumulation of social capital (Dayton-Johnson, 2003:625), and is therefore an indicator of it. A child's sense of cohesion to a group can significantly affect his/her social development. Children from socially cohesive communities are less likely to experience symptoms of stress and anxiety, are less likely to display aggression, and are more likely to display prosocial behaviour such as interacting with peers and adults in their communities (Kingsbury *et al.*, 2015).

Social capital has been found to be useful in the alleviation of poverty through access to informal credit and resources offered by association to mutual credit groups that would not have been accessible in isolation (Grootaert, 1998:4). For example, a farmers' cooperative may agree to share resources in the case of a harvest failure (Grootaert, 1998:4). Also, as discussed above, Putnam (1993) argues that high levels of social capital are responsible for thriving economies, and encourage higher levels of civil engagement that are essential for a functioning democracy.

Social capital has also been shown to improve levels of education and curb school dropout (Grootaert, 1998:12, Coleman, 1998). Notably for this research, social capital and the strengthening of social cohesion in communities have been found to play an important role in the prevention of violent conflict (Colletta & Cullen, 2000). High levels of social capital have also been shown to reduce vulnerability to personal victimisation (Gottfredson & Dipietro, 2011). This study also seeks to create social networks that will leave individuals belonging to them less vulnerable to being victims of aggression, and that will enforce non-violent means of interaction.

Family Social Capital

As mentioned earlier, the families are the most fundamental source of social capital (Putnam, 1995:73). The way members of a family relate to each other internally affects the ways in which the members of that family, particularly children, relate to the broader community (World Bank, 2011).

The World Bank (2011) explains that:

Relations within the family foster the development of trust, essential for the formation of all outside relationships. The family's ability to meet children's physical and emotional needs strongly influences their perceptions of the trustworthiness of others outside the family. Family dynamics also encourage reciprocity and exchange, two other important factors in social capital generation. The material and emotional support shared freely between family members generates an implicit willingness to return such support.

Activities that can foster strong bonds between parents and children (thereby generating high levels of family social capital) include assisting with homework, discussing important developments in the child's life and holding high aspirations for the child's future (and helping them to achieve them) (Israel, Beaulieu & Hartless, 2001:45). It also involves the restriction of activities that could be harmful to the child in excess, such as the number of hours a child is allowed to watch television (Israel *et al.*, 2001:45).

The structural characteristics of a family may determine the extent to which these activities can be carried out. For example, the physical presence of one or both parents may limit the time that the parent and child have to foster strong bonds. Similarly, the number of children within a family may also hinder the frequency with which a parent is able to connect with each of their children individually (Israel *et al.*, 2001:45).

As the title of this chapter suggests, there is a seamless link between social capital and aggression. In instances where children grow up in families with low levels of social capital (i.e. the bonds between the parents/guardians and the child are weak or non-existent), children are likely to experience psychological and behavioural problems such as aggression (Imtiaz *et al.*, 2010:103). Imtiaz (*et al.*, 2010:103) explain that:

[the] dysfunctional family environment in predisrupted families is characterized by interpersonal conflicts among family members, financial difficulties, substance abuse, physical and emotional abuse of spouse, children, or both, and a decline in parental commitment. The deteriorating interpersonal relationships may increase the chances of children's psychological and behaviour problems because children in such conflict-ridden families are often found to exhibit fear and anger and because they model parents' aggressive behaviours. Thus, such an unfavourable family environment causes the children to be aggressive.

The participants in this research study were removed from the care of their families who harboured low levels of family social capital. The participants in this study have been either physically or sexually abused at the hands of adults, and the participants' families were not able to come together to adequately protect the wellbeing of the children. The premise of this research is that the aggressive peer interactions that take place at Mangaliso CYCC are primarily a direct result of the residents having grown up in families that harbour low levels of family social capital, and being exposed to social norms of aggression. The applied theatre programme that forms the basis of this research attempts to address the issue of aggression stemming from poor family social capital, by generating compensation for this in the form of strong peer social capital.

Peer Social Capital

In the face of the damage that the participants' family environments have caused, and in light of the overwhelming trauma and betrayal these children have experienced at the hands of adults in their lives, peer social capital is a ray of hope for the children at Mangaliso CYCC. Although low family social capital may give rise to a range of externalised behavioural problems such as aggression, positive peer social capital – the quality and depth of relations shared among peers (Gatti & Tremblay, 2007:242) – may be able to minimise the negative effects of low family social capital. This study takes the opportunity to do just that by creating a positive peer environment that can offset the negative effects of low family social capital.

When children grow older, the child's peers have more of an impact on the child's social development than the family does (Gatti & Tremblay, 2007:241). If the child belongs to a well-socialised peer network that perpetuates productive and healthy social

norms, the peer group may be able to moderate “the degree of family adversity on a child’s externalized behaviour problems” (Gatti & Tremblay, 2007:242).

Peer social capital is increasingly used to understand the resources into which children tap in order to negotiate difficult life circumstances (Skovdal & Ogutu, 2012:242). A peer network can not only provide emotional, informational and instrumental support in times of stress, but also mediate behaviour (Unlu, Yildiz & Sahin, 2010:51). Further, the network that a child feels most connected to will have the most influence over the child’s behaviour. In adolescence, the peer group emerges as a significant source of support, taking its place alongside or even ahead of the family group (Unlu *et al.*, 2010:52).

As such, the negative impact of an unstable family environment does not need to have an everlasting impact on a child’s life if they are able to rely on solid peer networks. The social norms of the peer network may override the norms established in a dysfunctional family environment. The aim of the applied theatre programme that forms the basis of this research is to moderate the effects of low family social capital on the participants by generating positive peer social capital, rich in trust and reciprocity, that perpetuate social norms that are productive and healthy for the holistic social development of the participants, particularly in relation to aggression and violence as a means of conflict resolution.

Theatre for Building Social Capital

At this point, I would like to draw attention to the link between social capital and applied theatre. This research is based on the hypothesis that the arts have a major role to play in the generation of social capital. As previously discussed (page 49), social cohesion is an indicator of social capital. Francois Matarasso (1997) has written extensively on the potential for participatory arts projects to build social cohesion in several ways. Matarasso (1997) acknowledges that interactive arts projects bring people together and provide neutral spaces that are conducive to the development of friendships, partnership and cooperation. He goes on to assert that participatory arts projects build social cohesion by reducing isolation, developing community networks

and sociability, promoting tolerance and contributing to conflict resolution (Matarasso, 1997:26). Below are examples of how applied theatre has been particularly useful for the generation of social capital.

The “Truth N’ Trauma Project” (Harden *et al.*, 2015) in Chicago, USA provides an example of addressing community violence through a youth-led multidisciplinary intervention by increasing social cohesion and trust. The intervention made use of trauma-informed practice, video production, action research and theatre (Harden *et al.*, 2015:67), and was conducted in response to the high violence-related death rate of young people in Chicago.

Participants in the theatre component of the programme learnt the theatre techniques of theatre of the oppressed, and techniques of activist Anne Bogart (Harden *et al.*, 2015:68). Through a combination of these techniques, “participants were challenged to embody complex ideas, emotions, and concepts into the physical storytelling of theatre through the creation of evocative tableaux and short scenes” (Harden *et al.*, 2015:68). This culminated in a movement-based theatre piece entitled *The Only Way Out is Through*, through which participants “voiced their own social concerns around such topics as family, friendship, gossip, trust, sexuality, and identity in looking at their past, their present, and their future” (Harden *et al.*, 2015:68).

In evaluation of this intervention, it was found that, through the collaborative creation of theatre, “participants learned to take risks and to be vulnerable to each other; working as an ensemble, they learned to trust themselves and their co-creators; they found a voice through the communal sharing of stories; and they sharpened their artistic acumen by critiquing, reworking, and heightening these stories” (Harden *et al.*, 2015:69).

The Theatre for Social Change research at UKZN provides an example of applied theatre’s role in building social cohesion in Durban, South Africa. Since 2001 the Drama and Performance Studies Department at UKZN has run Theatre for Social Change courses/programmes that have involved the students in working with offenders at Westville Correctional Facility. The intervention involves the creation of a short play

that forms the catalyst for discussion on a selected social issue. An evaluation of the Prison Theatre work at Westville Correctional Centre (Hurst, Young & Nkala, 2002) found that the work has impacted on social cohesion among students and offenders alike, which in turn enabled the groups to mobilise with a common political agenda (Young-Jahangeer, 2005:149).

“The Living at Hurford” is an interactive theatre programme that dealt with stress and clinical depression in the farming community in Devon, England, as the farmers struggled to keep their business open after the outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease in 2001 (Somers, 2008). The play that showed the challenges of a family during the foot-and-mouth outbreak was acted by members of the Devon farming community. Community engagement with participatory theatre techniques was found to increase social capital among the farming community in a context where intergenerational community events were disappearing (Somers, 2008:71). “Good friendships were made and developed, and people who lacked confidence came out of the experience enhanced” (Somers, 2008:71).

Yvonne Sliep and Anna Meyer-Weitz (2003) demonstrate applied theatre’s ability to strengthen social fabric (that they conceptualise as a combination of social capital, social innovation and social responsibility) in the case of a project conducted in a Ugandan refugee camp. Sliep and Meyer-Weitz (2003:47-48) argue that the narrative theatre approach used in the project, that centred on a physical fight that occurred between two women in the refugee camp, enabled the development of social fabric (which is necessary for social action and wellbeing) through its non-judgemental and inclusive nature. The expressive theatre activities employed in this project, such as storytelling, physical movement and song, resulted a positive energy that assisted in the “dissipation of tension” and brought forward “feelings of ‘togetherness’ and social cohesion” (Sliep & Meyer-Weitz, 2003:54).

As mentioned in Chapter 1, while applied theatre has been shown to increase social capital, no other applied theatre programme exists that specifically and primarily focuses on the generation of social capital. It is my hope that an intervention focused on

the four elements of social capital will create stronger bonds between participants, opening the way for other social action such as the reduction of aggression and violence at Mangaliso

Applied Theatre

Applied theatre is not an easily definable area of practice, and there are few collective agreements among applied theatre practitioners on what the term encompasses. Very broadly, there is a collective understanding that applied theatre is theatre that is performed to specific audiences within specific settings “with particular outcomes in mind” (Baim *et al.*, 2002:xiv). There is also collective understanding among applied theatre practitioners that it involves “theatre outside conventional mainstream theatre houses that is applied in various (site-specific) arenas in different communities and everyday life settings worldwide” (Gjaerum, 2013:352). That is to say that it is not theatre that is performed simply for entertainment purposes.

Beyond this, there is much debate around what applied theatre entails. Tim Prentki and Sheila Preston (2009:9), for example, attempt to delineate the nebulous field of applied theatre by saying that it encompasses

community theatre, community performance, theatre for social change, popular theatre, interventionist theatre, drama in education, theatre for integrated rural development, participatory performance practices, process drama/ theatre, prison theatre, theatre in health/education, theatre for development, theatre for conflict resolution/reconciliation, reminiscence theatre and so on.

While this delineation is useful, and while I agree that all these forms of theatre do fall under the applied theatre umbrella, it excludes theatre practices such as those used in this study, that involve cross-overs between different forms of theatre. Almost in contrast to Prentki’s very specific delineation, Monica Prendergast and Juliana Saxton (2009:6) offer a much more inclusive view without “limiting fixed agendas”. They view applied theatre as theatre that is

played in spaces that are not usually defined as theatre buildings, with participants who may or may not be skilled in theatre arts and to audiences who have a vested interest in the issue taken up by the performance or are members of the community addressed by the

performance. [...] Applied theatre is an umbrella term that refers to all the alternative theatre forms that have emerged since the 1960's including grassroots, community, social, political, and radical theatre. (Prendergast & Saxton, 2009:6)

I favour Prendergast's and Saxton's inclusive view over Prentki's and Preston's delineation. By Prendergast's and Saxton's broad definition, however, applied theatre can include anything from theatre with the intent of political propaganda to theatre for empowerment and social change. While I agree that anything within this spectrum can be considered applied theatre practice, this study aligns with the latter. For this reason, I find Philip Taylor's view of applied theatre most useful for this study. In his view, applied theatre raises awareness on particular issues, interrogates human action and prevents life-threatening behaviours such as domestic violence and youth suicide (Taylor, 2003:1).

Applied theatre approaches are known to create environments that are conducive to self-reflection. For example, Boal's theatre of the oppressed encourages reflection on action and, more importantly, reflection for future transformative action through metaxis – a process through which participants are able to recognise that the action in the theatre realm is a mirror of action in the “real” world (Vettraino & Linds, 2015:9-11). Importantly for this study, as will be engaged in Chapter 6, participatory applied theatre approaches actively create environments that encourage and increase the participants' sense of personal agency. Michael Balfour (Balfour, Bundy, Burton, Dunn & Woodrow, 2015:202) found that participatory theatre practices create playful spaces that privilege the role of agency and the individual's potential for taking greater control.

This study makes use of three approaches to applied theatre: Theatre of the oppressed, theatre of the oppressor and the approach of the Geese Theatre Company. These three approaches are described below.

Theatre of the Oppressed

Theatre of the oppressed is widely practised around the world with the intention of the transformation of oppression. Before I go on to discuss what theatre of the oppressed is, and how it is used in this study, I would like to provide some context as to its relevance

today. Because theatre of the oppressed was born out of a very specific political context in Brazil in the 1970s (when Brazil came under the control of right-wing military group), its relevance for being practised today in changing times and in various different contexts has been questioned, most notably by Julian Boal, the son of Augusto Boal (the founder of theatre of the oppressed). At the Twentieth Annual Theatre and Pedagogy of the Oppressed Conference in 2014, Julian Boal expressed concern at having seen much of the same work presented year after year at the annual conference. He expressed concern that the social and political climates in which theatre of the oppressed is being practised are evolving (and are vastly different to the original context out of which it was born in Brazil), but that the games, exercises and ways they are being facilitated are staying the same. He asserted that the practice of theatre of the oppressed was not evolving with social and political change (Sonia-Wallace, 2014:1).

This is not to say that theatre of the oppressed has no relevance today. As is obvious in the example of this study, oppression¹⁹ is still very much alive and well, socially and systemically, and the need to transform this oppression is as strong as ever. However, as Leigh-Ann Howard (2004) cautions, practitioners must mould the techniques of theatre of the oppressed to suit the participants with whom, and the context in which, it is practised, and the activities should not be used merely as a template. This study, along with other projects, such as the work John O'Toole's Enhanced Forum Theatre developed in Australia, discussed in Chapter 2, heed Howard's caution and respond to Julian Boal's concern to adapt theatre of the oppressed to suit contemporary contexts. Theatre of the oppressed, as it was originally practised, as well as how it has been appropriated and adapted to suit the context of this study, is discussed below.

Inspired by fellow Brazilian revolutionary and educator, Paulo Freire's "Pedagogy of the Oppressed" (1972) as well as the theatre techniques of German theatre practitioner, Bertolt Brecht, the "Theatre of the Oppressed" (1979) was developed by the late Brazilian visionary Augusto Boal. Theatre of the oppressed is practised around the world with the intention of transforming oppression by shedding light on critical issues,

¹⁹ What defines the participants of this study as "oppressed" is discussed later in the chapter.

generating dialogue and bridging the gap between actor and spectator by turning the audience into actors (Burstow, 2008:274).

Theatre of the oppressed seeks to lead oppressed²⁰ people to reflect critically upon oppressive social structures and upon their actions in relation to those structures, and in doing so, to transform them. Boal argues that what sets human beings apart from animals is our ability to observe ourselves in action (Boal, 1992:xxvi). He argues too that “this is theatre – the art of looking at ourselves” (Boal, 1992:xxx). Boal says:

Theatre is born when the human being discovers that it can observe itself; when it discovers that in this act of seeing, it can see itself [...]. Observing itself, the human being perceives what it is, discovers what it is not and imagines what it could become. It perceives where it is and where it is not, and imagines where it could go. Theatre – or theatricality – is this capacity, this human property which allows man to observe himself in action, in activity. It allows him to imagine variations of his action, to study alternatives. Man can see himself in the act of seeing, in the act of acting, in the act of feeling, the act of thinking. Feel himself feeling, think himself thinking. (Boal, 1995:13)

Theatre of the oppressed techniques harness the human property of reflection on action as a tool for the transformation of oppressive social structures.

Boal’s aim was to use theatre as a tool for the transformation of oppression and as a rehearsal for revolution. He writes:

The Theatre of the Oppressed tries to develop [...the capacity first,] to discover what oppressions we are suffering; second, to create a space in which to rehearse ways and means of fighting against those oppressions; third, to extrapolate that into real life, so that we can become free. [...]. The aesthetic [theatre] space allows democratic interchange, and allows us to say ‘Okay, that’s the way things are, but not the way things should be, and now I’m going to create an image of how I want the world to be ... We are in rehearsal for the real world when the aesthetic space disappears and people go home.’ (Boal, 1996:47-49)

Theatre of the oppressed creates a space in which people can generate and rehearse different tactics for liberating themselves from whatever oppressions they suffer, so that they may implement those tactics in the “real” world and in their real lives, thereby altering the status quo.

²⁰ This term is further unpacked later.

Theatre of the oppressed adamantly operates on Freire's principle that it is not up to the oppressor to liberate the oppressed, but it is up to the oppressed to liberate themselves as well as their oppressors (Freire, 1972:21). Boal's practice of theatre of the oppressed "goes beyond the ordinary boundaries of theatre because it asserts the oppressed as subjects rather than objects" (Boal & Epstein, 1988:35). Because the oppressed are subjects, not objects, of oppression, the oppressed have the power to transform oppression through action.

In order to achieve his goal of transformation of oppression, Boal developed a series of theatre games and exercises (Young-Jahangeer, 2009:101). The two major theatre of the oppressed techniques that were used in the applied theatre project that forms the basis of this research are forum theatre and image theatre. I also used games and exercises from Boal's *Games for Actors and Non-actors* (1992) that were designed for community building (social networking) and the generation of trust. Being central to all the abovementioned theatre of the oppressed techniques, the concept of the "spect-actor" must first be discussed.

Spect-Actor

Audience participation is central to theatre of the oppressed. This is in direct response and contrast to what Boal refers to as the Aristotelian "coercive system of tragedy" (Boal, 2000:ix). Boal argues that theatre is a very efficient weapon that ruling classes strive to use as a tool for domination. He writes:

'Theatre' was the people singing freely in the open air; the theatrical performance was created by and for the people. It was a celebration in which all could participate freely. Then came the aristocracy and established divisions: some persons will go to the stage and only they will be able to act; the rest will remain seated, receptive, passive – these will be the spectators, the masses, the people. And in order that the spectacle may efficiently reflect the dominant ideology, the aristocracy established another division: some actors will be protagonists (aristocrats) and the rest will be the chorus – symbolizing, in one way or another, the mass. Aristotle's coercive system of tragedy shows us the workings of this type of theatre. (Boal, 1979/2000: ix)

In response to this model of theatre, theatre of the oppressed provides opportunities for the audience (typically people suffering a form of oppression) to reclaim their space in

performance and to be involved in a democratic theatre process that serves the interests of the oppressed. Boal therefore sought to transform his audience from passive spectators to “spect-actors”.

In short, a spect-actor is a “member of the audience who takes part in the action in any way”, whether in the group warm-up activities, in the performance itself or both. In the practice of theatre of the oppressed, the audience is encouraged to change the actions portrayed on stage in ways that transform the oppressions represented in performance. Boal (1979/2000:122) writes:

By taking possession of the stage, the spect-actor is consciously performing a responsible act. The stage is a representation of reality, a fiction. But the spect-actor is not fictional. He exists in the scene and outside of it, in a dual reality. By taking possession of the stage in the fiction of the theatre he acts: not just in the fiction, but also in his social reality. By transforming fiction he is transformed into himself.

In recognition that there are few other platforms on which to do so, the creation of the spect-actor responds to the need for oppressed people to discuss their grievances and to actively work on transforming the status quo (Young-Jahangeer, 2009:104).

Forum Theatre

Forum theatre is a “theatrical game in which a problem is shown in an unsolved form, to which [...] spect-actors are invited to suggest and enact solutions” (Jackson in Boal, 1992:xxi). Typically, a scene (or full-length play) is played to an audience that represents a “symptom of oppression” and involves an oppressor (the antagonist) and an oppressed character (the protagonist) (Jackson in Boal, 1992:xxi). Once the scene is played to completion, it is played again. This time the spect-actors may at any point shout “stop”, come up and take the place of the protagonist, and offer a tactic the protagonist might employ to liberate themselves from the oppressive situation they are in.

When forum theatre is practised in its purest form, “both actors and spect-actors will be people who are victims of the oppression under consideration; that is why they are able to offer alternative solutions, because they themselves are personally acquainted with

the oppression” (Jackson in Boal, 1992:xxi). Because it is not up to the oppressor to liberate the oppressed, only the oppressed character may be replaced to behave in ways that are liberating. The oppressor character cannot be replaced to have his or her actions changed to serve the interest of the oppressed. This is what Boal refers to as a “magic” solution²¹ (Boal, 1992:233).

Many different solutions/tactics can be enacted during the course of one forum theatre performance. Spect-actors will try to bring the play to an end in which the cycle of oppression is broken, while the actor playing the antagonist will try everything possible to bring the play to its original ending where the oppressor is triumphant (Jackson in Boal, 1995:xxi). The result is a “pooling of knowledge, tactics and experience” and also a rehearsal for revolution that can be extrapolated into the real lives of the spect-actors (Jackson in Boal, 1992:xxi).

Forum theatre is presided over by a joker who is the bridge between the audience and the actors. Just as the joker in a pack of cards has no affiliation to any one suit, the “joker” in theatre of the oppressed has no affiliation to the audience or actors (Jackson in Boal, 1992:xxiv). It is the joker’s job to ensure the smooth running of the proceedings, and to establish the rules for participation. The rules may be changed if the audience wants them to be changed. The joker may also be replaced if the audience feels that he or she is not doing an adequate job (Jackson in Boal, 1992:xxi).

It is important to note that while forum theatre is useful for illuminating injustice, the form is not without its limitations. Bruce Burton (2006) points out that in the practice of forum theatre, there is a tendency to prioritise the generation of neat solutions to oppression, as opposed to a deep investigation or analysis of it. Michael Balfour *et al.* (2015:55) also notes that spect-actors are often not given the opportunity or guidance to deepen discussions with supported investigations and moral reflections. These limitations, as they arise in this study, will be discussed in Chapter 4. As a result of the limited depth of discussion that forum theatre offers, theatre practitioners are now adapting the form (as in the case of enhanced forum theatre, discussed in Chapter 2), or

²¹ This is true of all theatre of the oppressed techniques, not only of forum theatre.

practising forum theatre in conjunction with other interactive theatre forms (Chinyowa, 2012:6).

Image Theatre

Image theatre is “a series of exercises and games designed to uncover essential truths about societies and cultures without resort, in the first instance, to spoken language” (Jackson in Boal, 1992:xxi). Meaning is derived from the creation and analysis of static images formed from the participants’ bodies (Perry, 2012:106). Although the images are initially static, they are used only as a catalyst for action. Participants are invited to change the images from what they actually are (typically images of oppression) into what they want them to be. In this process, participants are invited to investigate how, in reality, the transition from the “actual” to the “desired” is possible (Young-Jahangeer, 2009:105). Images may also be brought to life for the “discovery of whatever direction of intention is innate in them” (Jackson in Boal, 1992:xix).

Theatre of the Oppressed at Mangaliso CYCC: The Practice of Appropriation and Transformation

The applied theatre programme that forms the basis of this research made use mainly of the theatre of the oppressed techniques of forum theatre and image theatre. These techniques were used to identify and rehearse tactics that could prevent the participants from becoming/remaining victims of aggression/violence in the CYCC. Forum theatre and image theatre, however, were also overtly used for the establishment of new social norms of participants liberating themselves from being victims of aggression and violence in the CYCC, in ways that do not involve further aggression and violence, thereby perpetuating the cycle. The ways in which theatre of the oppressed techniques were used during the theatre sessions is further discussed in Chapter 5.

Here, the theatre of the oppressed techniques were not used in their purest forms. Theatre of the oppressed is primarily used to encourage participants to critically reflect upon their actions in relation to oppressive social structures. While the theatre of the oppressed approach was used in the programme to encourage participants to find and rehearse new ways of liberating themselves from being victims of violence/aggression,

it was also used overtly to alter behavioural patterns that had developed in the CYCC around aggressive responses to conflict and to being victims of aggression. It was made clear to the participants that, as far as possible, the tactics they employed for liberation should not include violence or aggression.

This prescription would not typically be given to participants when practising theatre of the oppressed. Also, the games and exercises taken from *Games for Actors and Non-actors* (Boal, 1992) were mostly used as they were intended to be used (in these instances, for community building and the generation of trust) but were sometimes also used to bring focus to reciprocity. These agendas – altering behavioural patterns to limit violence and generating reciprocity – do not overtly serve a political agenda that theatre of the oppressed typically concerns itself with. I adapted the ways in which theatre of the oppressed activities are typically facilitated to ways that altered behavioural patterns (through the creation of new social norms) and served to generate peer social capital.

The Duality of the Oppressed and the Oppressor

For the purpose of this study, oppression refers to situations in which people limit the potential of other people to be “fully human” (Freire, 1972). Iris Young (1990:40) asserts that for a person to be considered truly oppressed, one of five conditions is needed: exploitation, marginalisation, powerlessness, cultural imperialism and violence. Children within the welfare system meet all five of these criteria (Bruskas, 2008:73).

The participants in this research, who are in the child welfare system, are indeed oppressed and do indeed meet all five of Young’s criteria. This study, however, focuses mainly on violence as a form of oppression. The participants in this study are victims of physical or sexual abuse, and through acts of violence have been betrayed by the adults in their lives whom they should have been able to trust completely. However, the applied theatre programme that forms the basis of this research does not focus on the violence committed against the participants at the hands of an adult prior to being placed at Mangaliso, but rather on the violence (further oppression) that occurs between the children housed at Mangaliso CYCC.

Freire (1972:27) says that:

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 very structure of their thoughts has been conditioned by the contradictions of the concrete, existential situation by which they were shaped.

This is true of the participants in this study. Although the participants in this research have all been victims of oppression in the form of violence, both inside and outside the CYCC, all the participants have also acted violently towards others in the CYCC. During image and forum theatre exercises, the participants found themselves identifying with both the protagonists and the antagonists. This is further discussed in Chapter 4 (page 105). The participants were admittedly in a dual role of oppressed and oppressor. For this reason, I employed the techniques of both theatre of the oppressed and theatre of the oppressor.

Theatre of the Oppressor

It has been argued that theatre of the oppressed as an apparatus has “for a long time privileged the transformation of the oppressed people by inciting their conscience and consciousness” as a means of developing social and political agency (Joseph, 2011:53). This, as discussed earlier, serves to deconstruct the positions of power imposed by the Aristotelian system of coercive tragedy in which only the dominant class is allowed to “act”. Christopher Joseph (2011:53), however, argues that the oppressor equally needs to be changed. He says that “theatre/drama as a tool of intervention should be framed in such a way that it provides possibilities for the oppressor to change instead of acting as an imaginary that only privileges the vanquishing of the oppressor”. Here, the concept of theatre of the oppressor comes to the fore.

The concept of theatre of the oppressor was first documented by John O’Toole (1998) after an incident he experienced while practising educational drama in South Africa. He recounts:

[T] he most memorable dramatic moment of my own life happened fifteen years ago [...] I was teaching in South Africa with an adolescent class in a role play drama about drugs,

observed by eighty teachers. The students were role playing doctors, cops and social workers, and we needed somebody to play drug addicts. I persuaded the students to bring the teachers to play the criminal junkies. Afterwards both groups expressed elation at the experience. How often in schools do young people have the opportunity to exercise power and status over adults especially their teachers? [...] The drama permitted this taboo to be broken, and made it innocent". (O'Toole, 1998:53-54)

This experience urged him to begin thinking of a "theatre of the oppressor". O'Toole argues that "if Theatre of the Oppressed can help those oppressed to learn ways of breaking out of their oppression, maybe the oppressors too can be helped to learn to stop oppressing" (O'Toole, 1998:54). In practice, theatre of the oppressor

subverts the techniques of the Theatre of the Oppressed to provide opportunity for the oppressor to learn how to stop acting oppressively, instead of the received notion that it is the oppressed who always needs to learn through possibilities offered by the processes of Theatre of the Oppressed how to overcome oppression. (Joseph, 2011:58)

The practice of theatre of the oppressor brings a number of issues into question. For one, it could be argued that the practice of theatre of the oppressor puts the power for change in the hands of the oppressor, further robbing the oppressed of power. As mentioned earlier, Freire (1972:21) says that it is not up to the oppressor to liberate the oppressed, but that it is for the oppressed to liberate themselves as well as the oppressor. Placing the power for change back in the hands of the oppressor, in the theatrical space, risks deeming the oppressed subjects and not objects of power. The fate of the oppressed is in the hands of the oppressor. Any liberation achieved through the practice of the theatre of the oppressor will have been handed to the oppressed on the terms of the oppressor, rather than having liberation claimed on the terms of the oppressed.

On the other hand, the practice of theatre of the oppressed places full responsibility for liberation on the oppressed, which, in my opinion, allows the oppressor the opportunity to abdicate responsibility and accountability for change. By extension, the oppressors then do not need to act towards the transformation of oppression. However, Marc Weinblatt, co-director of the Mandala Centre for Change, argues – and I agree – that "all of us are culpable and responsible for uprooting social injustice, not just the oppressed" (Weinblatt & Harrison, 2011:22). Also, the practice of theatre of the oppressed that completely favours the oppressed, in what I perceive to be a kind of

compensation for power not held outside the theatre space, also runs the risk of inverting and perpetuating power imbalances. As Freire (1972) points out, the oppressed themselves tend to become the oppressor. Granting power only to the oppressed only achieves the subversion of oppression, not the transformation of it.

Another question that needs to be asked in the practice of theatre of the oppressor relates to the need (or lack thereof) for the oppressor to be granted the power to change within the theatrical space. Do oppressors not already have the power and ability to change in real life? Why do they need it here? My response to this is that oppressors who have the power to transform oppression are the oppressors who are aware of the active roles they play in oppression. However, Weinblatt argues that people in positions of privilege are not always aware of their subtle yet active roles in oppression. He says that systematic oppression is often “unintentional and/or unconscious. Its manifestations can be deceptively subtle – almost invisible, except to the targets of the oppression. It carries assumptions based on the values of dominant culture” (Weinblatt & Harrison, 2011:23). I know that through participation in theatre of the oppressed workshops facilitated by Weinblatt, I am, as a self-proclaimed ally in the fight for the transformation of oppression, constantly made aware of and confronted by the unconscious ways in which I perpetuate inequality and oppression. It is only once I am made aware of it that I am able to transform my own role in oppression. This realisation of unconscious oppression was also true for many of the participants of this research. While some were proud bullies, completely aware of their oppressive actions, others did not realise that using aggression as a defence mechanism and in a strategy of “get them before they get you”, was further perpetuating the cycle of the very abuse they were protecting themselves from.

For me then, and as Kennedy Chinyowa (2014:7) asserts, the value of theatre of the oppressor is in bringing to light the subtle and often unconscious roles we all play in perpetuating oppression first, and then in looking for ways in which previously unconscious oppressors can transform oppression with this new enlightenment and become allies. It is also useful, as was often the case in this study, for those who behaved aggressively only for the reason of perceived lack of other options, as they

perceived non-aggressive behaviour as making them vulnerable. For these participants, aggression was not so much a means of acquiring power and control as it was about protecting themselves from harm. Theatre of the oppressor was useful for the participants who were aware of their oppressive actions in that it helped them to find non-violent and non-oppressive means of remaining safe. Because the children had not been socialised into non-aggressive conflict resolution, they lacked the skill to explore alternative and non-oppressive behaviours on their own, but were willing to employ non-oppressive tactics once they had identified them. This is further discussed in Chapter 6. In these cases, actions towards liberation on the part of the oppressor then, as Chinyowa argues, are not a magic solution. Chinyowa (2014:7) asserts that:

Far from being “magic”, the term used by Boal to describe the act where a spect-actor’s intervention may be challenged by other audience members if they believe that it’s improbable and unrealistic, those who are part of the problem are better placed to be part of the solution.

The danger, however, of perpetuating a power imbalance through the practice of theatre of the oppressor still exists. The structure still sets up the oppressed and the oppressor as binary oppositions. As Chinyowa (2014) points out, this binary tends to highlight the differences between oppressed and oppressor, and masks the similarities between them. The binary tends to “gloss over more complex relations of power in which these binary categories are fluid rather than fixed” (Chinyowa, 2014:4). What is more is that in both the practices of theatre of the oppressed and theatre of the oppressor, power for change is assigned solely to one or the other – oppressed or oppressor. For as long as this is true, only subversion, not transformation, of oppression is possible.

Weinblatt argues that it is a balance of theatre of the oppressed and theatre of the oppressor that we must strive for. He writes:

Theatre of the Oppressed demands revolution – justifiably calling for the marginalised to rise up and reclaim their power in the face of oppression. I worry that, alone, this revolution will flip, a role reversal, still leaving us with a world in which one group is on top and the other’s below. Theatre of the Oppressor, in conjunction with Theatre of the Oppressed, invites everyone to be the protagonist with full responsibility for his/her part in an oppressive system. I believe that working for change from both/all roles is the most sustainable and perhaps the least bloody path to the equilibrium Augusto Boal regularly

spoke of: a world where no one is oppressed, creating a true liberation for all. (Weinblatt & Harrison, 2011:30)

The applied theatre programme that forms the basis of this research responds to Weinblatt's call to invite everyone, both oppressed and oppressor (recognising that individuals simultaneously embody both roles as is the case with the participants of this research), to become protagonists and engage their roles in the oppressive system. At Mangaliso CYCC, both theatre of the oppressed and theatre of the oppressor were combined, in recognition that we are all both oppressed and oppressor and in an effort to go beyond binaries, to allow participants to identify with and replace either character – oppressed or oppressor – to transform oppression in the form of aggression and violence.

Geese Theatre Company: Theatre for Behaviour Change

The Geese Theatre Company is a UK-based group of professional actors and facilitators who work in prisons, young offender institutions, probation centres, youth centres and related settings (Baim *et al.*, 2002:xv). The company offers performances of issue-based plays, workshops, training and conferences (Baim *et al.*, 2002:xv). The company operates on the premise that theatre is an effective vehicle for exploring behaviour and contemplating the possibility of behaviour change (Watson, 2009:78). While Geese recognises that there are many variables that influence decision-making, the Geese Theatre approaches change on the level of the individual, inviting participants to take responsibility for their behaviour choices. Geese's work with challenges to attitudes and beliefs that inform behaviour choices, mainly by stimulating debate and asking participants to evaluate themselves (Watson, 2009:78).

The work of the Geese Theatre Company is located in the fields of psychodrama and therapy. Aligned to psychotherapy, The Geese Theatre approach is informed by three key theories: social learning theory (Bandura, 1977); cognitive behavioural theory (Beck, 1976) and role theory (Moreno, 1993). Participants are provided with a framework for understanding the ways in which our fundamental beliefs and attitudes affect our thinking, our feelings, and ultimately our behaviour (Baim *et al.*, 2002:19).

The Geese Theatre Company makes use of a range of participatory strategies to engage reflection on action. The technique that distinguishes the work of the Geese Theatre Company, however, is the use of the mask as a metaphor for the “front” (social mask) we present to the world (Baim *et al.*, 2002:iv). Throughout the performances, the audience is encouraged to ask the characters in the performance to lift their masks. Upon this request, the actors literally lift their masks from their face, and speak their innermost thoughts and feelings – free of façade. When their masks are lifted, the characters often reveal the fears and vulnerabilities that inform the behaviour choices they are making in the performance. This becomes a useful tool for analysing underlying thoughts and beliefs that contribute to offending behaviour (Watson, 2009:53).

The Geese Theatre Company offers several innovative projects including *Journey Woman* and *Lifting the Weight*. *Journey Woman* is a week-long theatre programme for offending women. The programme begins with a performance featuring the character of Ellie. Ellie is a woman who has overcome the vicious cycle of social circumstance, offending, re-offending and being imprisoned on several occasions. The performance focuses on defining moments of Ellie’s life, such as becoming a mother and being imprisoned for the first time. In these crucial moments, the audience observes the different “masks” that Ellie wears throughout her life. During the performance members of the audience are “enrolled as experts in Ellie’s life, analysing the crucial moments, exploring her inner feelings and emotions and contemplating how moments from her past have impacted on her present and future” (Prendergast & Saxton, 2009:5).

Lifting the Weight is an interactive performance designed for offenders who are close to being released from prison and reintegrated back into their communities. Through two central characters, the performance explores the challenges offenders often face within the first year of being released from prison. The “deathbird” mask, that represents the potential to re-offend, tries everything in its power to entice the two characters into re-offending. Whether or not the characters re-offend largely depends upon suggestions from the audience on how to negotiate the challenges that the characters are faced with. Many of the struggles that the characters are faced with are internal struggles such as

dealing with the stigma of being an “ex-con”, their own sense of failure and their impulse reactions to high-risk situations (Baim *et al.*, 2002:186).

The work of the Geese Theatre Company, which began in the late 1980s, has shifted from a radical political movement of working with marginalised populations such as offenders, towards focusing on the individual’s responsibility for their behaviour (Balfour, 2009). For this reason, the work of the Geese Theatre Company was useful in achieving the aims of this research. While the participants of this study were not young offenders (the target group of the Geese Theatre Company), Geese Theatre techniques allowed the necessary exploration of the participants’ individual responsibility for aggression and oppressive behaviour at Mangaliso CYCC. Theatre of the oppressed and theatre of the oppressor techniques allow for ample exploration of the social and political structures that influence aggression, but not sufficiently for personal accountability. The reflection on a personal level (as opposed to a political level) that the Geese Theatre techniques provide, oblige the recognition that personal actions sculpt the social and political contexts (which theatre of the oppressed and theatre of the oppressor explore) in which issues like aggression exist. As will be discussed below, combining Geese Theatre techniques with theatre of the oppressed and theatre of the oppressor techniques marry together both the personal and political in the interrogation of social issues.

The applied theatre programme that forms the basis of this research makes use of games and exercises taken from *The Geese Theatre Handbook: Drama with Offenders and People at Risk* (Baim *et al.*, 2002)²². In addition to the benefit of facilitating the claiming of personal responsibility that the work of the Geese Theatre Company offers, the Geese Theatre exercises I selected were designed specifically for the generation of trust and group-building (the creation of social networks) as well as for the purpose of facilitating a change in behaviour. I used the exercises to bring focus to the responsibility that each individual has for their own aggressive behaviour. I also facilitated the exercises in ways that brought focus to issues of trust and reciprocity

²² The ways in which I used specific exercises during the theatre sessions is discussed in Chapter 4.

between peers, the establishment of new social norms around aggression and the building of social networks with the agenda of generating peer social capital.

Marrying the Personal and Political

This study makes use of a combination of both psychodrama and sociodrama. The difference between the two is that psychodrama focuses on responses of individuals to various situations while sociodrama focuses on understanding behaviour of groups and societies. Sociodrama is also action oriented (Kellermann, 2007:18). Peter Kellermann, (2007:18) provides a useful metaphor for differentiating the two forms. He explains that psychodrama focuses on each tree while sociodrama focuses on the entire forest. This study seeks to examine the individual trees, as well as how they relate to and are affected by the forest.

This study combines the use of sociodrama and psychodrama by combining theatre of the oppressed and theatre of the oppressor techniques with Geese Theatre techniques. Theatre of the oppressed/oppressor is concerned with social and political transformation and less concerned with individual stories. In fact, individual stories are pluralised so that the oppression of one becomes the oppression of all, and the individual case is negligible in relation to its similarity with the other spect-actors (Boal, 1995:45). Geese Theatre, on the other hand, is concerned with individual transformation. While theatre of the oppressed and theatre of the oppressor offer a social and political framework for the transformation of oppression (in the case of Mangaliso CYCC, aggression and violence), Geese Theatre offers a framework within which participants can grapple with their responsibility for their own aggressive behaviour and ultimately change that behaviour.

Much of this dissertation so far has attributed the prevalence of aggression in South Africa and at Mangaliso CYCC to the legacy of apartheid. As discussed, the legacy of apartheid has undeniably shaped the circumstances that have led the participants of this study to Mangaliso CYCC, and has shaped the aggressive ways in which the residents interact with each other. However, I argue that within the challenging social and political contexts in which the children find themselves, the children – and South

Africans in general – must recognise and be accountable for personal behaviour choices that perpetuate the intergenerational transfer of the culture of violence in South Africa. Twenty years into democracy, aggression on a socio-political level and as a legacy of apartheid cannot be addressed alone. South Africans must be accountable – on an individual as well on a societal level – for the actions taken that serve to perpetuate violence as a legacy of apartheid. Personal transformation is essential to social transformation (Edwards and Sen, 2000:611). There must be a shift in balance towards personal accountability for aggressive and violent acts, and away from placing blame for such actions on socio-political circumstances.

For this reason, this applied theatre programme combines Geese Theatre and theatre of the oppressed/oppressor techniques to examine the social and political factors that influence personal behaviour choices to behave aggressively. The programme investigates how one can navigate the transformation of one's own aggressive behaviour within the constraints and challenges presented by one's social and political contexts.

Experiential Learning

This study also adopts an experiential learning approach to exploring new ways of responding to conflict and aggression. Experiential learning is the “process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience” (Kolb, Boyatzis & Mainemelis, 1999:2). Experiential learning theory asserts that knowledge is created when an experience is grasped and then transformed. According to Kolb (*et al.*, 1999:2), there are four stages of experiential learning. The first two stages are concerned with the grasping of the experience, and the other two with the transformation of the experience. The four stages are: concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualisation and active testing (Kolb *et al.*, 1999:2-3).

According to experiential learning theory:

Concrete experiences are the basis for observations and *reflections*. These reflections are assimilated and distilled into *abstract concepts* from which new implications for action

can be drawn. These implications can be *actively tested* and serve as guides in creating new experiences. (Kolb *et al.*, 1999:3)

Theatre techniques such as forum theatre, employed in the applied theatre programme that forms the basis of this study, provide opportunities for all four stages of the experiential learning process to be engaged. For example, in a forum theatre scene, the spect-actor is presented with a concrete experience in performance, typically one involving a symptom of oppression, which he or she observes and reflects upon. His or her observations lead the spect-actor to conceptualise tactics, strategies or behaviours that he or she may employ in the particular experience. This conceptualisation occurs in the realm of the mind. The spect-actor is then given the opportunity to actively test his/her conceptualised tactics in performance with intent to transform the experience. The spect-actor learns by first grasping and experiencing, and then transforming it.

The most common critique of Kolb's experiential learning cycle, such as that offered by Russ Vince (1998) is that it lacks interrogation of political contexts of individual experience as well as social power relations. Vince (1998:313) calls for the extension of Kolb's cycle from one that captures the evolution of individual experience to one that acknowledges the political construction of that experience through complex power relations as well as subjectivity that plays a role in creating new relations of power and powerlessness. This project heeds Vince's call and, as discussed above, considers individual behaviour choices in relation to their social and political contexts.

Conclusion

In this chapter I discussed the theoretical framework upon which this study was built. I have delineated the ways in which I appropriated and brought together three different applied theatre approaches for the purpose of generating peer social capital, and ultimately addressing the issue of aggressive behaviour at Mangaliso CYCC, on both a personal and political level. This framework will be engaged throughout the rest of this dissertation and in the methodology chapter, in the description of the project and in the analysis of the data.

In the next chapter I provide a detailed description of the research methods employed in this study.

CHAPTER 4

Methodology

Introduction

In this chapter I locate this qualitative study both within the emancipatory and the interpretive paradigms and discuss in detail the ethnographic and participatory action research approaches involved in this study.

I also discuss the three key stages of this study: facilitation of the programme, data collection and data analysis. My subject position and relationship to the participants and to Mangaliso CYCC are also discussed.

Finally, this chapter addresses the limitations of this study.

Qualitative research

This study involves qualitative research. Qualitative research “aims to address questions concerned with developing an understanding of the meaning and experience dimensions of humans’ lives and social worlds” (Fossey, Harvey & Davidson, 2002:717). General characteristics of qualitative research include that data is collected in the form of words rather than numbers; the researcher’s personal experiences and insights are an important part of the inquiry; it is concerned with process (how things occur); and that findings are placed within a specific social, historical and temporal context (Chenail, 1995:1). As such, this study is indeed qualitative.

The Emancipatory Paradigm

The emancipatory paradigm is “a family of research designs influenced by various philosophies and theories with a common theme of emancipating and transforming communities through group action” (Chilisa & Preece, 2005:33). To add to that “the emancipatory paradigm, as the name implies, is about the facilitating of politics of the possible by confronting social oppression at whatever levels it occurs” (Oliver, 1992:110).

The theatre programme that forms the basis of this research offered its participants – who have been oppressed and robbed of power – an opportunity to reclaim their agency for change through reflection on, and transformation of their actions. In this regard, this study falls within the emancipatory paradigm. However, as previously noted, the participants of this research were admittedly in the dual role of oppressed and oppressor. The theatre programme offered participants the opportunity to explore ways in which they could emancipate themselves from being oppressed by others, and also to emancipate themselves from being oppressive.

While I argue that this research falls within the emancipatory paradigm, I recognise that it is not a neat fit. The emancipatory paradigm is typically defined by transformation through “group action”. This study, in its combination of psychodrama and sociodrama, places a large emphasis on personal accountability and personal action, as well as on having that action supported by a group, which is not typical of research conducted within this paradigm.

Situated within the emancipatory paradigm is participatory action research (PAR) – a participatory and democratic process that is concerned with a world view that participants believe is emerging during a specific moment in history (Reason & Bradbury, 2001:2). PAR

seeks to bring together action and reflection, theory and practice in participation with others, in the pursuit of solutions to issues of pressing concern to people and more generally the flourishing of individual persons and their communities (Reason & Bradbury, 2001:2).

Participants of PAR are those most directly affected by the issues being addressed (Green *et al.*, 2003:419). The process of PAR is embedded in social relationships and is directly linked to transformative action (Baum, MacDougall & Smith, 2006:854). Participating in PAR should be an empowering experience, and give people increased control over their lives (Baum *et al.*, 2006:854).

The role of the researcher in PAR is to initiate a process of analysis and reflection that can eventually be taken over by the participants themselves when the facilitator leaves.

In order for the participants to take ownership of the process, the researcher must have cultivated within the participants a thorough understanding of the methods at work. The participatory action researcher's role is primarily "to take the time to facilitate dialogue and foster reflective analysis among the participants" (O'Brien, 1998:7).

PAR is relevant for this research because the theatre programme that forms the basis of this study invites participants – who are most affected by the aggression at Mangaliso CYCC – to devise new strategies for dealing with situations of conflict, so that they themselves can implement these strategies and make the best use of them. In doing so, the programme calls its participants to social reflection and action.

The Interpretive Paradigm

This study makes use of both the emancipatory and interpretive paradigms. John Hassard (1991:277) says that

in the interpretive paradigm, the social world possesses a 'precarious ontological status'. From this perspective, social reality, although possessing order and regulation, does not possess an external concrete form. Instead it is the product of inter-subjective experience. For the interpretive analyst, the social world is best understood from the viewpoint of the participant-in-action. The interpretive researcher seeks to deconstruct the phenomenological processes through which shared realities are created, sustained and changed. Researchers in this paradigm consider attempts to develop a purely 'objective' social science as specious.

This study falls within the interpretive paradigm because it operates from the perspective that reality is constructed inter-subjectively and experientially.

Rory O'Brien (1998:4) adds that containing such qualitative methodological approaches as ethnography, the interpretive paradigm is characterised by a belief in a socially constructed, subjectively-based reality, one that is influenced by culture and history. Situating this study in the interpretive paradigm as well as the emancipatory paradigm allows me to give informed meaning to the observations I made while immersed in the participatory theatre process.

Situated within the interpretive paradigm, ethnography can be described as the “study of social interactions, behaviours, and perceptions that occur within groups, teams, organisations, and communities” (Reeves & Kuper, 2008:337). Ethnographic researchers immerse themselves in a certain community over long periods of time, documenting the communities’ social arrangements, belief systems, perspectives and practices, thereby generating a rich understanding of social interactions (Reeves & Kuper, 2008). The central aim of ethnography is to “provide rich, holistic insights into people’s views and actions [...], through the collection of detailed observations” (Reeves & Kuper, 2008:337).

By this definition, this research involves ethnography. I tried to understand behaviour and culture by entering the “world” of Mangaliso CYCC and talking with the children who are housed there and with the people who care for them. I listened and watched their daily actions and interactions in the context of a child and youth care facility. I observed the participants’ behaviour both inside and outside of the theatre sessions, taking field notes which later formed my journal (see below).

However, I was not only an observer. I intervened directly in the daily activities of the CYCC by way of an applied theatre programme. This research is therefore not purely ethnographic, but the ethnographic element allowed me to create fuller descriptions of people’s experiences and allowed me to examine the contexts in which certain actions and responses to questions were given. The ethnographic element of this research also allowed me to offer explanations as to why the same environment and interactions within that environment are sometimes perceived so differently by different people within it.

Performance Ethnography

I mentioned earlier that this study makes use of PAR. In the light of this, performance ethnography is useful because it transforms the entertainment space into a site for PAR (Oberg, 2008:1). The performances usually reflect the day-to-day goings on of the community as interpreted by the research participants, who shed new light on cultural attitudes and phenomena. However, audience engagement and participation is also vital

to the performance process. Information gathered ethnographically about a culture or sub-culture is portrayed through a performance, creating an environment conducive to critical reflection from the audience.

Carol Oberg (2008:1) says that

performance ethnography is concerned with the 'here and now' of enhancing a vision for dignity and democracy in the world through the exploration of social practice [...]. The power of performance ethnography lies in its potential for illumination and engagement of all involved – researchers, participants and audience. For minority and marginalized populations of race, gender, age, class, etc., the emancipatory possibilities are significant. Through re-enacted performance the oppression of socially imposed roles is unveiled on stage and examined by both audience and actors simultaneously, thereby enabling a transformative critique of values, attitudes and practices.

Performance ethnography is relevant to this study. The culture under study is the culture of aggression at Mangaliso CYCC. The plays reflected the day-to-day goings on in the CYCC. Through the sharing and critiquing of their personal, everyday stories, participants gathered information about the culture of aggression at Mangaliso CYCC and shared their interpretations of aggression with an audience by means of performance. The performances allowed both audience and actors to examine their socially imposed roles of oppressed and oppressor. The performance space was transformed from an entertainment space to a site for PAR, where performances served as catalysts for critical reflection on the culture of aggression at Mangaliso CYCC. This is discussed further in Section 2.

Three Stages of the Study

As mentioned earlier, this study involved three key stages: 1. Facilitation of the programme; 2. Data collection; 3. Data analysis.

1. Facilitation of the programme

In this section, I discuss my use of the directive facilitation technique. Detailed descriptions of the programme, participant selection process (page 94), theatre sessions and performances are given in the next chapter.

Directive Facilitation

As discussed in Chapter 1, the theatre programme that forms the basis of this research was developed in response to a request that was made by the participants during an earlier theatre project I conducted at Mangaliso, for a theatre project that addressed the issue of aggression at Mangaliso CYCC. I did not impose onto the group the issue that was to be addressed by the theatre project. However, I also did not develop the project in partnership with the participants. I had decided on my own to create a theatre project that aimed to build peer social capital in the CYCC as a means of counteracting aggression as a result of poor family social capital.

I had decided upon the structure of the programme on my own and made use of directive forms of facilitation (McLaren, 2000) throughout the project. My facilitation of the theatre project was directive in that I always ensured the group did not stray from the issue that they themselves had chosen to address – aggression.

With this research being situated in the emancipatory paradigm and adopting PAR, the use of directive facilitation may seem contradictory. While the process of developing the structure of the programme was not democratic or participatory (and while I held the group to that structure) the nature of every workshop was. Every activity within the structured programme was participatory and led the group to develop their own strategies for dealing with aggression in the CYCC. This is further discussed in Chapter 6 (page 138). Every exercise, and my facilitation of them, true to PAR, initiated a process of analysis and critical reflection that the group was eventually able to take ownership of.

I was asked by the participants to conduct a theatre project that addressed the issue of aggression. The project I was tasked with by the children came with time constraints

(see page 86). Directive facilitation was useful for keeping the group focused on the issue of aggression and for ensuring that the elements of the programme I designed were engaged within the six-month period.

2. Data collection

Data for this research was collected in the form of interviews/FGDs with the nine participants of this study, with three residential CYCWs and with two senior CYWCs, as well as through observation.

FGDs

Semi-structured FGDs were conducted prior to the commencement of the theatre programme with the participants in this study and three residential CYCWs. The purpose of these FGDs was to determine the ways in which the participants approached situations of conflict in the CYCC prior to the commencement of the theatre programme. Further FGDs were conducted twice during the programme with the same sample group. These interviews allowed me to identify not only which elements of social capital increased and which elements remained consistent, but also which elements increased and then slipped back into old, familiar habits a few weeks later. Finally, I conducted FGDs at the end of the six-month period with the same sample group in order to gauge what the overall experience and impact of the theatre programme was for the entire six-month duration.

I chose to conduct FGDs as they may be less intimidating for the respondents than a one-on-one interview. The feeling of “safety in numbers” allowed respondents to express views that they may not otherwise have expressed. FGDs are also suited to obtaining several perspectives about the same topic as they allow respondents to comment on what other respondents are saying, thereby creating a richer discussion (Gibbs, 1997). FGDs are also useful for gaining insight into the ways in which individuals are influenced by others in a group situation (Gibbs, 1997).

I chose to conduct FGDs with three residential CYCWs – Trudy, Mary and Sally – as they lived with the participants and had a very good understanding of the dynamic that

existed between them. They would easily be able to detect any changes in behaviour or social dynamics that arose as a result of the theatre programme. I chose to conduct FGDs with the participants because they were most directly involved and affected by the programme.

All FGDs and interviews were conducted in English and were recorded using a dictaphone. Eight of the 11 participants were English first-language speakers. The other three participants, whose first language was isiZulu, were fluent in English. A total of 11 FGDs/interviews were transcribed by a professional transcriber. These transcriptions form the primary source of data for this study.

Interviews

I chose to interview the senior CYCW, Jackie, as she was instrumental in setting up the project and had a good understanding and knowledge of each of the participants, their behaviour and their backgrounds. However, two months into the programme Jackie resigned from her position at Mangaliso CYCC to take up another job offer. She suggested that I interview Sipho, a CYCW with whom I had also been liaising since I began the DESC programme at Mangaliso, for the remainder of the programme. Sipho stood in for Jackie until her position was filled, and he also knew each of the participants and their backgrounds well.

My interviews with Jackie and Sipho were conducted on a one-on-one basis and not in an FGD with the residential CYCWs because I did not want Jackie's or Sipho's presence to influence the responses of the residential CYCWs.

I interviewed Jackie two months into the programme in March 2013. Sipho was interviewed four months into the programme at the beginning of May 2013 and again on completion of the programme in June 2013.

Voice Recording

Section 18.1 of the practice guidelines of the Blue Print, Minimum Norms and Standards for Secure Care Facilities in South Africa (DSD, 2010:131) states that in a

Child and Youth Care Centre, no “photographs, videotape/films may be recorded/taken which can positively identify children”. I was therefore not permitted to take photographs or make video recordings during the workshops, but I used a dictaphone to capture some of the group discussions that took place during the workshops.

Ethnographic Journal Notes

During the six-month period I kept a comprehensive journal that documented the details of each theatre workshop and performance. I also recorded my observations about aggression and changes in group dynamics. The journal allowed me to reflect on each workshop, and helped me to write the “Description of the Project” chapter in this dissertation, as well as to analyse other sources of data collected for this study.

Confidentiality

The identities of the participants are completely protected in this study. The real names of the CYCC and names of the participants and CYCWs are not used in this study.

Even during the performances, and although the participants chose to use their real names in performances, the personal stories of the participants were not revealed as such, and the participants and I portrayed the stories in ways that made it difficult for the stories to be traced back to the original storyteller.

3. Data analysis

I analysed my data using the deductive qualitative analysis approach.

Deductive Qualitative Analysis (DQA)

When conducting DQA, researchers begin with a preliminary conceptual framework derived from theories and research that they have reviewed and deemed appropriate for their study, and determine categories for data analysis from the said framework (Gilgun, 2005). However, Jane Gilgun (2005:42–43) cautions that this approach alone may cause researchers to fit their findings into the pre-established categories, thereby imposing

theory onto their findings. Also, while this approach is useful for testing theory, it leaves no room for the development of new theory (Gilgun, 2005).

DQA recognises these limitations and responds by allowing for the modification of predetermined categories, through the process of a “negative case analysis” (NCA) (Gilgun, 2005:52). NCA is process whereby data is revisited to actively search for cases that did not fit into predetermined data analysis categories that may modify, amplify or undermine the developing theory (Gilgun, 2005:42; Shenton, 2004:67). This process may reveal new phenomena and, in DQA, predetermined categories can be modified or added to in order to accommodate the inclusion of all cases present in the data.

NCA is a means of increasing the trustworthiness and rigour of a research study. Conducting an NCA shows that the researcher “has engaged perspectives that challenge [his/] her theory of the situation under study, and therefore has not settled on only using those that support [his/] her view of the situation” (Boling & Smith, 2009:6).

DQA differs from the grounded theory approach as data analysis in DQA begins with a predetermined set of categories for analysis. DQA is relevant for this research because this study made use of predetermined categories (also referred to as codes) that were derived from social capital theory. The four pre-established codes for the data analysis for this study are also the four elements of social capital: trust, reciprocity, social norms and social networks. However, not all the social phenomena that emerged from the data could be included in those for predetermined codes. I therefore developed new codes in response to the data. These codes are discussed below.

Coding

I coded all the interview transcripts manually. I read through all the transcripts, first highlighting and noting all examples in the data relating to trust. I then read through the data three more times, each time searching for examples of reciprocity, social norms and social networking respectively. I also noted subthemes that emerged within each code. I then read through the transcripts a few more times, searching for extracts from data that could not be coded under the four predetermined codes. I created new codes by

which these extracts from the data could be explained. The two new codes were: sense of agency and self-confidence.²³

Once all the interview transcripts were sufficiently coded, I created coding memos. I cut and pasted each coded extract from the transcript onto its own index card. I numbered and labelled each memo with the codes and subthemes to which the extract on the memo pertained. In cases where one extract pertained to more than one code or theme, I cross-referenced that extract on a separate index card. I then grouped index cards with the same codes and themes together. Creating coding memos allowed me to create a systematic “filing system” for my data.

I analysed/interpreted the coded data in light of the literature and theories that were discussed in Chapters 2 and 3, and in the light of my own observations during my time at Mangaliso CYCC. Analysing the coded data against the literature and theories presented in Chapters 2 and 3 allowed me to determine how participation in activities based in sociodrama and psychodrama were able to bring about the social and behavior changes that were evident in the data.

Limitations

Access to Information

As the facilitator of this theatre programme, I had no access to information about the participants’ history and background. While the project certainly did not directly engage the participants’ backgrounds, their life experiences before coming to Mangaliso no doubt shaped their experiences of the programme. However, not having access to the participants’ files did not allow me to engage some of the influences that may have been present during the facilitation of the programme. Nevertheless, not knowing the participants’ backgrounds helped me not to make assumptions about the participants based on their pasts.

²³ For the purpose of this study, self-confidence refers to having a positive and realistic view of oneself, while agency refers to the ability to affect change in one’s environment.

Time Constraints

The staff at Mangaliso CYCC do all they can to ensure that the children in their care spend as little time as possible in their facility. Mangaliso CYCC's main focus is to reunite the children with their families or to find the children other permanent homes. Most children stay at the CYCC for a period of six to 12 months.

For this reason, I chose to conduct the programme over the relatively short period of six months. While the progress of that period is recorded in this study, I was not in a position to conduct follow-up interviews that extended beyond the six-month period, as many of the participants were no longer housed at the CYCC. The impact of the programme beyond the six-month period cannot be determined.

Interview Timing

Residential CYCWs are assigned to each cottage. Only one CYCW is on duty in that cottage at a time. The swapping of work shifts happens at 12.00 pm on Fridays. When conducting interviews with the CYCWs, the senior CYCW advised me to set up interviews for Friday at 12.00 pm as both "shifts" were present and could be interviewed together. This was the only time made available to me for interviews. Although this made sense logistically, the CYCWs who were scheduled to leave the CYCC at that time were reluctant to participate in the interviews because it was time for them to go home. For this reason I often felt that the CYCWs provided brief and rushed responses to the interview questions.

Also, I was not able to conduct interviews with the staff in the month of March because their schedules were interrupted by training that was provided by the DSD.

Self-Censorship?

The CYCWs seemed reluctant to share examples of when the participants behaved aggressively towards each other. From my own observations and from the explicit

responses of the participants, it was very clear to me that aggression and violence was rife at Mangaliso CYCC.

From my observations, it seemed that the CYCWs did not want to expose the ugly details of the interactions that the participants sometimes had with each other for fear that further exposure of these details might reflect badly on their abilities to carry out their duties as CYCWs. The interviews were, after all, clearly conducted for research purposes. Asking the staff to participate in interviews not only enabled them to have a voice in this study but also gave them a chance to reflect on their own actions and the actions of the children. It made them and the children visible, which must have been daunting.

Conclusion

In this chapter I situated this study in the emancipatory and interpretive paradigms and discussed both the ethnographic and PAR approaches. I also discussed the three key stages of this research and addressed the limitations of this study.

The next chapter offers a detailed account of the theatre programme and the facilitation of the intervention.

CHAPTER 5

The Programme: A Detailed Account

Introduction

In this chapter I will describe the theatre programme that forms the case study for this research. This chapter gives the reader insight into what the six-month-long experience of the weekly theatre workshops, as well as the performances of the two plays at Mangaliso, were like. In giving this detailed description of how the theatre programme was conducted, I also provide insight into the first of the three key stages of this research: facilitation of the programme.

The Group and I

Before I begin to describe the theatre project that forms the basis of this research, I would like to take this opportunity to introduce the reader to the participants of this study, and also provide insight into my role as the facilitator of this programme. Let me begin with Mandy: Mandy is a 13-year-old coloured girl. She holds the affections of many of the boys at Mangaliso and at school. She is considerate and actively seeks to please others.

Mandy's best friend, Sindi, is a well-mannered yet outspoken 11-year-old African girl. She is committed to self-improvement and showed initiative and leadership throughout the theatre programme.

Amy is a shy and reserved nine-year-old white girl. She tries to stay out of the way and out of trouble. She is surprised when someone notices and compliments her in any way.

Heather is a 10-year-old coloured girl of few words and harsh actions. Heather is always on the defensive and communicates most effectively through aggressive action. It does not take a lot to provoke Heather.

Kate was only with us for two weeks but provided useful insight into the social dynamics within the CYCC. She has an incredible ability to think conceptually, and as

such, she understands how her actions and behaviour can be used to influence the actions and behaviour of those around her. Kate is a 12-year-old white girl.

Ten-year-old Shanthi was the only Indian participant. At the time the programme was conducted, she was coming to grips with her appearance and to how she feels about boys. Many times she wanted to ask me questions about boys but shied away. Always with a smile, her laughter and liveliness were infectious.

A typical “tomboy”, Lauren is a 10-year-old coloured girl who has been at Mangaliso since she was a toddler. Although sometimes shy in front of boys and older girls, she does not shy away from causing trouble with those younger than herself. Lauren has been known to say terribly hurtful things. She never backs down from a physical confrontation.

The two African boys in the group, Gordon (11) and Jack (13), are best friends and very similar in nature. Both boys are very mischievous and seem to be obsessed with the impression they give others. They seem to want this impression to be excessively masculine and aggressive. Both boys are very intelligent.

Mark is an endearing and level-headed 12-year-old white boy. He is incredibly insightful and seems to be protective of the younger members in the group.

I feel that it is appropriate for me at this point to discuss what I (and the children) perceived my role to be at Mangaliso CYCC. My involvement in theatre work with institutionalised youth began in 2010 in the Youth Centre of the Westville Correctional Facility in Durban. I conducted research in the Youth Centre that formed the basis for my Master’s research (Naguran, 2011). Negotiating the personal dynamics of this environment was particularly challenging, and it forced me to interrogate what exactly my role in that environment was.

The Youth Centre at Westville Correctional Facility houses male offenders between the ages of 18 and 25. At the time when I conducted my research in the Youth Centre I was

21 years old. The offenders and I were more or less the same age. I was an Indian female working in a predominantly African male environment. I was one of very few (perhaps the only) young women who visited the Youth Centre as often as I did. For these reasons, I attracted a lot of attention during my visits.

The offenders would often express romantic interest in me. They also often asked me to carry out favours for them outside of the correctional facility, and would ask me for money (assuming that as a young Indian woman at university I had lots of it). In the face of these requests and comments I had to set very firm boundaries if I were to complete my research task, and I had to be clear about what exactly my role was and how much of myself I was willing to share with the offenders.

Unlike my experience at Mangaliso, where I was first a volunteer and then became a researcher, I entered the correctional environment with a research agenda. My involvement in the correctional environment was, from the outset, “professional”. I used that to my advantage. In the beginning I did not engage in any conversation that did not relate directly to the research work that brought me to the Youth Centre. This worked very well and soon favours were requested less and less. It became clearer and clearer to the offenders that I was not, in fact, going to give them my cellphone number and that they would not eventually win my heart and negotiate marital arrangements with my father, as many of them had hoped. With boundaries firmly in place and well respected, the research task became the focus of our engagements.

To my surprise, it was when the offenders began to respect the boundaries that I had firmly laid down that I felt as though I was in a position to extend my boundaries. Having worked with a group of offenders on a weekly basis for 10 months, I developed bonds with the offenders that made my research task a lot easier to accomplish – a good relationship with research participants made for good research. I would not go so far as to describe the bonds as personal friendships; I would rather describe the bonds I shared with the offenders as close working relationships – as collegial. The establishment of these bonds made me want to do more for the group I had worked so closely with because they clearly were in need of assistance and I was clearly in a position to offer

them assistance. I often assisted colleagues at my university with things that were not required of me, and I felt as though I should do the same for my colleagues in the Youth Centre who were assisting me in completing my research task with ease.

So, for example, when offenders from my group expressed interest in joining school and drug rehabilitation programmes, I contacted the Head of School and the Head of Social Services at the correctional centre to make sure that the offenders got the support they needed and requested. These “favours” did not relate directly to the research project that brought me to the Youth Centre, but the favours were still confined to within the walls of the correctional centre. I had found my new boundary – the physical boundary of the correctional centre. I was willing to give of myself and to assist the offenders beyond the scope of my research project, as long as my assistance was confined to assistance within the Youth Centre. I was not prepared to extend my assistance or my relationship with the offenders to life outside the Youth Centre – particularly once they had been released from the Youth Centre. I was clear and open about this. I was careful to maintain that my relationships with the offenders were collegial, not deeply personal. I was also careful to maintain a professional distance.

It was after my work at the Youth Centre had ended that I began to volunteer at Mangaliso as a theatre facilitator. From the outset I was firm about setting the same boundaries that I found worked for me in the correctional centre – I was willing to give of myself beyond the scope of the theatre project that brought me to Mangaliso, as long as that assistance was confined to the physical space of the CYCC. I did not take the children outside the CYCC nor carry out activities on their behalf outside the CYCC. I often bought the children treats and birthday gifts, but those, too, were enjoyed at the CYCC.

Much as at the youth centre, my first encounter with the children at Mangaliso was closely followed by requests for personal favours – requests to spend weekends at my home, requests for visits to the zoo, aquarium or movies, and even requests for cellphones and other technological devices. My experiences at the youth centre had prepared me for this. I knew where my boundaries were, and I laid them down firmly.

Like the offenders in the youth centre, the children quickly recognised and respected my boundaries.

However, the children were not my colleagues. They were children and I am an adult. I was a facilitator and they were participants in a project. I always felt as though they saw me as one would see a teacher – as a person who fulfils a professional function, someone whom you ought to be able to trust and share concerns with, someone who is invested in your wellbeing, but also someone who is not a primary care-giver. A teacher might form close bonds with his or her learners but those bonds are professional and rarely extend beyond the classroom. Spending the weekend with a teacher might even be deemed inappropriate for a learner. Throughout the theatre project that formed the basis of this research, the children saw me as an adult fulfilling a professional role in the CYCC. Although I certainly formed close bonds with participants, I was careful to ensure that the children saw me as a professional working for the wellbeing of the children housed in the CYCC, and not as a friend or as a family member. That was a role I was not prepared to fill in their lives.

From the outset, both the children and I knew that our relationship was temporary. The children are only housed at Mangaliso for a short period of time and we knew that our relationship would not continue once the children left the CYCC. For this reason, I never battled with issues of attachment, and to my knowledge neither did they. I worked with the children in the role of facilitator for the time that they were housed at Mangaliso, I did all I could to ensure that their time in the CYCC was as comfortable as possible, I offered them support in the CYCC wherever I could, and was prepared to let them go when their time, and mine, came to leave the CYCC.

The senior CYCW, Jackie, commented that my ability to maintain a professional distance and to set boundaries with the children – while still maintaining trusting relationships with them – made me the right kind of person to do the work that I do (informal communication, 2012). She commented that many volunteers completely immerse themselves in their relationships with the children in an effort to try to compensate, in a very short space of time, for the lack of parental support the children

have suffered from. Jackie commented that the volunteers often tried to fill the role of parent or friend for all the children, and not only became overly attached but completely emotionally exhausted and therefore unable to accomplish much of significance during their time in the CYCC. Also, when the children leave the CYCC, the volunteers are often visibly distraught when saying goodbye to the children and this makes the transition for the children from CYCC back to their homes more difficult.

The nature of working with abuse victims is emotionally difficult at times. This was particularly true for me when the participants would speak about the bullying they were subjected to or inflicted in the CYCC, because recognising these problems also requires the recognition that the children being placed in residential care – the most vulnerable of society's children – are not safe from harm within institutions that are specifically created to keep them from harm. This leads me to believe that the measures in child-care put in place by the state to protect our most vulnerable children are failing colossally. However, I very rarely saw a child in tears or visibly distraught. I chose to feed off their resilience rather than off the potentially depressing content of comments they made. I had to do this in order to have the strength to continue the work. I could not be reduced to sadness and tears (and worst of all, a sense of helplessness) in the face of their adversity – they certainly were not.

The children I worked with are strong and resilient and they inspired me to display the same characteristics, both when I worked with them and when I thought of them when I was not with them. Positioning myself as a professional with a specific role to play in the CYCC helped me to do this.

The Theatre Programme

The theatre programme took the form of weekly theatre session over a six-month period that engaged the four elements of social capital, and two participatory performances. Below is a detailed description of both the weekly sessions and performances.

Getting Started

As I mentioned in Chapter 1, I had been a part of the Mangaliso CYCC community for two-and-a-half years prior to the start of the theatre programme that forms the basis of this research. It was in fact through the previous theatre work conducted at the CYCC that the participants identified the need for the present theatre programme. When the present study commenced, my face was very familiar to the staff and children at Mangaliso. I had spent a lot of time at the CYCC, not only conducting theatre workshops but also attending birthday parties, awards functions, talent shows and annual general meetings that I had been invited to by both staff and children. Over the years, the staff and children became familiar, not only with my theatre work, but also came to know me on a personal level. Most importantly, the Mangaliso community came to trust me and my commitment to the development of the children. Therefore, while this particular programme geared towards the generation of social capital only lasted six months, it built upon previous relationships and theatre work that I had already established with the Mangaliso community. The entry-level dialogue and identifying the needs of the community (White and Nair, 1999) were already established before the commencement of this intervention.

When I arrived at Mangaliso after the holiday season in January 2013 to begin the programme, I learnt that six of the 10 members of the group who had originally requested this theatre programme had left Mangaliso CYCC and had been reunited with their families over Christmas. While I was happy that the children were able to return to their families, I felt that it was a pity they did not get to benefit from the programme they inspired. The other four children, however, were as enthusiastic as ever to realise the vision of the previous year. These four – Mandy, Sindi, Lauren and Kate – were tasked (by the CYCWs) with recruiting new members to the group. With a sense of serious purpose, the four members walked from cottage to cottage with a pen and a piece of paper, writing down the names of the children who expressed interest in joining the group. A list of seven names was generated (including the original four). Two weeks into the programme, one of the girls left Mangaliso CYCC and three boys joined the theatre group that same week. The group then consisted of three boys and six girls between the ages of 10 and 15.

The participants and I gathered in the hall, which was our venue for both the workshops and the performances. The hall was large, with a stage and ample chairs for seating. It was a comfortable space in which to work, particularly because we had the space to ourselves during the theatre sessions. There was a very clear divide between the four I had worked with previously and those who Mandy referred to as “the newbies”.²⁴

We played two warm-up games of their choice (these were not theatre games) and then sat down to discuss what the six months we had together would entail. I started by explaining that the aim of the programme was to address aggressive behaviour at Mangaliso CYCC²⁵ and then went on to explain how we would do so using theatre. All nine of the participants were already familiar with participatory performance methods because they had either been part of the DESC programme before or had participated as spect-actors during previous DESC performances.

I then explained that the programme would form part of my PhD research. I took the opportunity to read and explain the information on the informed consent form. I was afraid that talk of recording interviews might frighten away some participants. On the contrary, the thought of being part of a study was very exciting for them.

Once the aim, the means and the research aspect was explained and understood, we drew up an agreement of how we would work together for a six-month period. Anyone could suggest an item to be included in the agreement. The suggestions were discussed and then written down only if the whole group agreed that the suggestion was appropriate. The agreement (Naguran, 2013:3) read as follows:

1. We will meet on Tuesdays from 3.00 – 4.30 pm. All participants and the facilitator must attend every session (unless a legitimate reason is provided).
2. No interrupting while someone else is talking.

²⁴ A newbie is a person new to a game, concept or forum (Urban Dictionary, 2013:1).

²⁵ It was at this moment that I realized the process of selecting the issue to be addressed by this theatre programme – aggressive behaviour – was only partly democratic. The topic was chosen by participants of the previous programme and not by the new members of this group. However, the issue of aggressive behaviour at Mangaliso was one that visibly and obviously resonated with all the participants.

3. No fighting (physical).
4. Remember your manners.
5. Be on time.
6. Respect each other.
7. No teasing.
8. Don't be too forward (meaning do not ask too many personal questions).
9. No laughing at each other.
10. No one does anything they do not feel comfortable with.

Some of the items on the agreement were drawn up with regard to issues that the drama group had experienced in the past as well as earlier that same session, and represented some of the behavioural challenges that the participants face on a daily basis. Here are explanations of why each item was suggested and agreed upon:

In the past, attendance was sometimes poor and participants would often arrive late, claiming that they were confused about which days and at what time the DESC group would meet. Attendance at school and other extra-mural activities was often poor. Points 1 and 5 (the agreed-upon meeting time and the agreement to be punctual) took care of this issue.

Points 2, 7 and 9 (agreements not to interrupt, tease or laugh at each other) were suggested and agreed upon because of an argument that took place only a few minutes before the agreement was created. Lauren interrupted Shanthi while she was speaking, by laughing. When Shanthi asked Lauren why she was laughing at her, Lauren said she was laughing at her hairstyle, teasing that Shanthi had done her hair that way to impress a boy at school. Shanthi also said that Lauren always wanted the attention to be on her and did not give others a chance to speak. Therefore, in an attempt to avoid future disturbances of a similar nature, it was agreed that no one would laugh at, tease or interrupt another person.²⁶

²⁶ I had witnessed instances like this one almost every time I visited the CYCC until this point. Instances like these were so common they it became part of daily life in the CYCC. Points 2, 7 and 9 represent some of the behavioural challenges that the participants face every day.

It seemed to me that point 3 (pertaining to the restriction of physical fighting) was agreed upon because aggressive behaviour was the focus of the programme. The participants all agreed that physical fights occurred too frequently at Mangaliso and that they would like to see less fighting in the CYCC.

Points 4 and 6 (pertaining to manners and respect for each other) were suggested by Sindi. Sindi prides herself on having very good manners. She is constantly complimented by teachers and CYCWs on her manners and how respectful she is of her elders. She recognised these two qualities as being useful to working in a group. The group agreed.

Point 8 (that addressed “forward” behaviour) was suggested with reference to Lauren asking me if I had a boyfriend and whether or not I planned to have a baby with him. I explained that it was inappropriate to ask me such personal questions. Shanthi suggested this item for, what I think was, my defence.

I suggested the final point of retaining the right not to participate in any activity that felt uncomfortable because I wanted to reaffirm with the participants that they could withdraw from any activity or from the entire programme at any time.

At the end of the first session we were all clear about the aims and processes of the project, as well as what we all expected of one another. We were ready to begin the project.

Weekly workshops

I met the group every Tuesday afternoon at 3.00 pm. during the first two school terms²⁷ of 2013. We did not meet over school holidays as many of the participants would visit family members or be taken out of the CYCC by a host²⁸.

²⁷ The first term begins in January and ends in March. The second school term begins in April and ends in June.

²⁸ Members of the public can apply to be hosts to one or more of the children housed at the CYCC. Children housed at the CYCC who do not have families to go to over the holidays can be assigned a host

I would arrive at Mangaliso at 2.45 pm., allowing myself enough time to collect the participants from their cottages before heading to the hall. Upon arrival at the cottage I would be met with the voice of a child screaming “Aunt Su’s²⁹ here!!!” This was usually a signal to the others that they had better polish their school shoes, wash their school socks and hang the socks out to dry. The CYCWs would not allow the children to attend extra-mural activities before they had washed their socks and polished their shoes. These kinds of routines, including the meal-time, bed-time and bath-time routines in CYCCs serve to simplify everyday life and provide a sense of normality and predictability, particularly because of the instability and unpredictability that the children have experienced in their own homes. Such chores and routines also teach responsibility and consequences for actions.

After the socks and shoes rush they would race through the kitchen to meet me, often grabbing a piece of fruit or making a quick peanut-butter sandwich to eat on the way to the hall.

On the way from the cottage to the hall I would offer any treats I had brought to share and remind them to “speak one at a time” as they excitedly and all at once tried to fill me in on the week’s events. I could tell that they were used to competing for attention.

Because everyone had a story (or two) of the week to report, the beginning of every workshop would see the participants and I sitting in a circle, with each of us being afforded an opportunity to share whatever we wished to share – related or unrelated to the theatre work. Many versions of the same story were often told, sometimes argumentatively. Those “opening circles” were great indicators of what the group dynamics were on that day and how the rest of the workshop was going to proceed.

The opening circle would be followed by an explanation of what I had planned for that workshop. A typical plan would be:

if they wish. The job of a host is to take the child out for the day, or even host them at their home for a set period of time.

²⁹ The participants called me Aunt Su.

1. Theatre games – an exercise taken either from *The Geese Theatre Handbook* (Baim *et al.*, 2002) or *Games for Actors and Non-Actors* (Boal, 1992) (themed on building social networks, trust or reciprocity).
2. Image Theatre exercises (Boal, 1992), with the focus on creating new social norms.
3. Becoming familiar with participatory performance techniques or³⁰ making/rehearsing a participatory performance.
4. Closing circle discussion, (opportunities to reflect on the workshop and to voice any concerns).
5. Closing game (either chosen by the participants or from *Games for Actors and Non-Actors* [Boal, 1992]).

I am now going to provide examples of some of Geese Theatre and theatre of the oppressed exercises that were carefully selected and modified to engage the four elements of social capital. I will provide the examples under the headings of trust, reciprocity, social norms and social networks. Each exercise was only done once unless the participants specifically requested that the exercise be repeated, either during that same workshop or in a later workshop. Every exercise was followed by a group discussion based on the element of social capital the exercise addressed.

Social Networking (Group-Building³¹)

Example 1: Make the Shape (Baim *et al.*, 2002:21)

To begin this exercise, I held up pictures of shapes – some simple like a square, some more complicated like a question mark or musical note. Without using their voices, the group had to work together to make the shape collectively, using only their bodies. Everyone had to be a part of the shape.

³⁰ For the first month we did not begin to make the plays. The reason for this was twofold. Firstly, the group needed to develop some skills in participatory performance techniques before they could make a participatory performance. The second reason was that we first needed to generate some material for the plays through Image Theatre exercises that we could draw from during the play-making process. This is further explained below.

³¹ I used the term “group building” as opposed to “social networking” as this term was more accessible and understandable to the participants.

At first the group would not use words but still make sounds. When I reminded them that this was not allowed, many of the participants began to use large gestures to try to draw attention to themselves. There were many leaders and not enough followers. Much time passed during this exercise (with no intervention from me) before participants realised that some of them would have to give up trying to lead and decide to follow. This decision did not come easily or quickly. By the sixth shape, the group had non-verbally decided on two leaders— Sindi and Mandy. Sindi and Mandy are best friends and worked well together. The group realised that they were doing a good job at orchestrating the shape-making process, and allowed them to do so. This decision, however, put Sindi and Mandy in positions of power that were difficult to relinquish during other tasks.

Example 2: Make Together (adapted) (Baim *et al.*, 2002:71)

This exercise is usually done in pairs but I adapted the exercise to make it a group exercise. I did this because I wanted this exercise to bond the group as a whole, instead of forming pairs within the group.

The group was given one large piece of paper. The group was required to work together to make a paper aeroplane out of that piece of paper. The only rule was that all the participants had to be touching that piece of paper all the time.

Deciding on a leader was easier than in make the shape. Unlike make the shape, participants were allowed to talk, and only two people in the group knew how to make a paper aeroplane. These two worked together to make the plane and the others simply tried to keep at least one finger on the paper without getting in the way of the two leaders. It is interesting to note that those who did not know how to make a plane very easily agreed to be followers. A lack of skill and know-how here resulted in the almost immediate relinquishment of the power they had in the space.

Trust

Example 1: Trust Circle (Boal, 1992:67)

The trust circle involved the whole group in making a tight circle, standing shoulder to shoulder. Each member would have the opportunity to come into the middle of the circle. The person in the middle was required to relax their body (to the extent that they are no longer holding up their own body weight) and allow the group to gently pass their weight around the circle. This exercise requires the person to largely give up control of their own body and put their trust in those around them. However, because the circle is so tight, there is not much room to fall and the person in the middle always has the option of simply stepping one foot forward and catching their own weight. When done correctly, the risk of injury is very low. However, there was the risk that participants would deliberately let each other fall – particularly given that trust is not easy to come by at Mangaliso. The issue of trust between peers is discussed further in Chapter 7.

I went first, to demonstrate. Although the group did not let me fall, they did not do all that they could have to make me *feel* supported and safe. They were supporting my weight but they were also having unrelated conversations among themselves while doing so. When they asked me how I felt while I was in the middle I told them that although they did not let me get hurt, their having conversations while I was in the middle did not make me feel completely comfortable. This led to a rich discussion of how often it is not what we do that matters, but how we do it.

We continued the exercise with this in mind. The group supported most group members in silence. Two group members were nervous about taking their turn. Amy opted not to have a turn, while Shanthi clearly wanted to challenge herself (perhaps also not to appear weak). The group did not support her weight in silence, but instead made encouraging remarks like “We’ve got you” or “Just relax, you’re fine”. After sharing my experience of being in the middle, the group was much more sensitive to the needs of the person in the middle. This shift seemed to happen faster than it had in my previous theatre experience. I believe that the group progressed at a faster pace because

most of them were already familiar with me and with the structure of the theatre session from my previous work with them.

Example 2: Trust walking (Baim *et al.*, 2002:65)

Like the trust circle, this exercise encourages participants to relinquish control and put their trust in someone else's hands. This exercise was done in pairs. I asked the participants to choose someone they knew, in order to make the exercise less daunting. Each in the pair had a turn to be a leader and a follower. The followers would close their eyes and allow the leader to lead them around the room, trusting that they would not lead them into harm. We did not use blindfolds so that the participants could simply open their eyes if they became nervous.

Much as in the previous exercise, the participants kept their partner out of harm's way, but did so with little sensitivity with regard to how their partner might feel, not knowing where they were going. Most leaders would rush their partner around the room, and would have the same done to them when they were in the role of follower, as a means of revenge.

When we spoke about how it felt to be leader and follower, another discussion ensued of how *what* we do is not as important as *how* we do it. Everyone enjoyed being the leader and no one enjoyed being the follower because the participants found it difficult to put their trust completely in someone else. Distrust as an effect of child abuse was discussed on page 26.

We also spoke about whether the leaders who rushed their partners around the room deserved to be rushed around when they became the followers. The general consensus was that they did deserve it, because they needed to know how it felt so as not to do it again. This will be further discussed in Chapter 7 (page 181).

The group requested that we repeat the exercise. The exercise was repeated with much more sensitivity from most of the participants. Gordon and Jack enjoyed rushing each

other around far too much to try any other approach. However, from my observation, this was not a means of spiting each other, but rather a means of playfully bonding.

Reciprocity

Example 1: Knee Tag (Baim et al., 2002:79)

In this exercise participants are required to protect both their knee-caps from being “tagged” (touched). They do so by placing their hands on their knees. If a hand is not on a knee, the knee is vulnerable to being tagged. If you extend your hand to tag someone’s knee, you leave your knee vulnerable. If a participant gets tagged on the knee, they are required to go down on one knee and extend their hand for a peer to tag. If a peer chooses to tag the hand, that person is free to continue playing. The more people are in play, the higher the chance of being tagged. It may be in the participants’ best interests not to free those who are “out” because they cannot knee tag him/her. However if a participant chooses not to release their peer, there is a good chance that the peer will not release them either, when they need it.

As the exercise began, Gordon was determined to not release anyone. He made it very clear that he wanted to be the only one left who was not tagged. He would run past the others who were stuck, laughing and pointing, not releasing them. The members of the group then all tried to tag him. They were now ganging up on him. Eventually the group tagged him, and no one wanted to release him. They told him “what you give is what you get”. The game ended with everyone else free and only Gordon stuck. The discussion that followed this exercise was short. The participants felt that people should be treated in the same way as they treat others. This concept is further discussed in Chapter 7 (page 181).

Example 2: Colombian Hypnosis (Boal, 1992:63)

This exercise is done in pairs. Each in the pair has the chance to be leader and follower. The leader holds his or her palm about five centimetres away from the follower’s face. The leader then moves his or her palm and the follower needs to follow the movement of the palm, maintaining the five-centimetre distance at all times.

Some members of the group treated their leadership with sensitivity. They were sure to move their hands slowly so that the follower felt comfortable. Other leaders enjoyed moving their palms fast and leading their followers into positions that were difficult and uncomfortable. Some members of the group also made their partner go upside down.

When it was time to swap over, the case was the same in every pair. Those who were treated with sensitivity and respect while following treated their follower with the same sensitivity and respect. Those who were not treated with sensitivity and respect did not treat their follower with sensitivity and respect.

During the subsequent discussion, the group spoke about whether it was acceptable to treat someone badly because they treated you badly. The unanimous agreement was that bad treatment is deserved if it is handed out. The person must know how it feels so that they will not do it again. The person behaving badly must “get a taste of their own medicine” [their words] (Group discussion, March 2013). The group also made it clear that if someone treated them well, they would be sure to treat them well in return, because no lessons needed to be taught.

During these discussions on reciprocity, all the participants agreed that one should treat a person in the same way as they treat you (as opposed to how you would like to be treated). The reason for this was that people who are unkind need to be taught a lesson. This concept is further addressed in Chapter 7 (page 181).

After this unanimous agreement was reached, I asked the group if they always treat people the way people treat them. As we went around the circle, all the participants admitted reluctantly that they sometimes lash out at people for no reason. Gordon then bravely admitted that he sometimes picks on people because they are nice, because nice people will not fight back. When I asked him why he enjoyed picking on people, he said that it made him look tough (Naguran, 2013). Bullying, as a means for participants to access power, is further discussed in Chapter 6.

Social norms

As discussed in Chapter 3 (page 62), Augusto Boal's image theatre can be defined as a series of physical exercises designed to uncover essential truths about society and self. Participants create still images that usually depict situations of oppression that participants are victim to or have witnessed. Subsequent discussions about the image would usually centre on the broader societal factors that influence the oppression depicted. Participants are then invited to change the image in a way that alters the dynamics between the oppressed and the oppressor. Participants will typically change the position of the oppressed to one that affords the oppressed more power, leaving the oppressor as they were. The logic behind this move is that participants may not be able to change the actions of the oppressor, but they can change the way in which they respond to oppression.

As discussed in Chapter 3 (page 64) however, the participants of this study were admittedly in the dual role of oppressed and oppressor. In the CYCC, the participants were both aggressive towards others and victims of others' aggression. Image theatre, therefore, was used to model new social norms both in the role of the oppressed and oppressor. Participants were told that they could create images that depict real life examples of when participants were victims of peer aggression as well as when they were unnecessarily aggressive towards their peers. Below is an example of an image that later formed part of the forum theatre play.

Gordon made an image using three participants. He chose not to be in the image but shared with us that he was the person in the image who was behaving aggressively. The still image showed a girl bending over to pick up a bottle and a boy coming up from behind her to push her over. The third person was the teacher at her desk who did not see the incident.

The other participants were given the opportunity to interpret the image. Most of the participants interpreted the image to be the boy playing a trick on the girl when the teacher was not looking. Another participant interpreted the image as the teacher turning

a blind eye to what was going on in the classroom because she is too busy to intervene (a theme that also formed part of the second theatre performance).

Gordon told us that this image was based on something he had done at school. Gordon told us that a girl from his class accidentally knocked over his juice bottle, spilling over the juice that he was saving for after-school sport. She apologised and bent over to pick up the bottle. He was so angry that he pushed her onto the ground. The teacher on duty did not see the incident, and Gordon threatened the girl not to tell the teacher or he would hit her.

Participants were then invited to change the image. Gordon wanted to change his own image first. He moved the person representing himself. He repositioned himself to helping the girl pick up the bottle. When I asked why he made that move, he said that everyone makes mistakes and that he should not have pushed her. Gordon seemed to regret the aggression that he showed towards the girl at school. This is an example of how theatre of the oppressor served to invite those inflicting aggression to reflect on their actions. The ways in which theatre project encouraged participants to reflect on their actions are further discussed in Chapter 6.

I then asked the three participants who were in the image to recreate the original image. I offered the opportunity for participants to make different moves. Mark chose to change the position of the girl. He placed her next to the teacher. When I asked him to explain his move he said that the girl should have gone to the teacher despite Gordon's threat because if she did nothing Gordon would continue to treat her badly over and over again. Mandy did not change the image but she disagreed with Mark. She said that the girl should keep quiet because the teacher could only protect her on school grounds. She said that when the girl left school Gordon would hit her outside the school and the teacher would not be there to protect her. Also, when the teacher did not see an incident him/herself, the teacher usually did not take action, saying that he or she could not know for sure what happened because he or she did not see it. Mark then asked Gordon if there were any witnesses. When Gordon said yes, Mark suggested that the girl take one

of the witnesses to the teacher. That way, it was not just Gordon's word against the girl's. Most of the group agreed with Mark.

True-life Experiences?

At this point I would like to clarify how much of the theatre work was drawn from the personal life experiences of the participants as well as what those experiences were of. As discussed in Chapter 1, I had very little knowledge of what circumstances led the participants to the care of Mangaliso CYCC. What I had been told was that all the participants were victims of either physical or sexual abuse. I was also told how long they had been at Mangaliso. I was not in a position to ask the participants about their life experiences before they arrived at Mangaliso, neither did the participants share any of their previous experiences with me. This study focused on the use of aggressive behaviour at Mangaliso CYCC. Only experiences that occurred during the participants' time at Mangaliso were shared. This included experiences that took place at school while they were living at Mangaliso. The experiences they shared directly or indirectly related either to when the participants felt that they used aggressive behaviour unnecessarily, or when they were victims of aggression during their time in the CYCC.

Even when participants shared these experiences, they could decide on the degree of their anonymity. Although I asked that participants share experiences that were based on truth (something that they had experienced or witnessed), they did not have to name names. They could choose to tell the story using names of characters that they created. They did not have to say which of the characters represented themselves or other children at the CYCC. Although this option was extended, participants almost never used it and very comfortably and confidently shared their stories. I believe that this was because the theatre work offered one of only a few opportunities for the participants to tell their stories.

Play-making Process

Over the period of six months the participants and I created two participatory performances that were performed for staff members and the other children housed at Mangaliso. The first play focused on the individuals' role and responsibility towards

minimising their own aggressive responses to certain situations. The second play explored the broader issues and contexts surrounding aggression, why aggression exists, and if aggressive behaviour is ever necessary or appropriate.

Although the audience never knew it, the plays were based on true-life experiences of the participants. Using their own stories gave the participants a sense of ownership of the work. The participants chose to keep their own names in the play rather than choose character names. However, no one played a character that represented themselves in a scene that was based on their true story. Most of the scenes of the plays were developed from the stories and discussions that unfolded during the image theatre sessions discussed above.

Play 1

We had decided before the programme began that the plays would be built on the theme of aggressive behaviour. We did not decide what aspects of aggression the plays would address. When the time came to create our first play, I asked the group what exactly they would like the play to address. The image theatre exercises we had done during the preceding weeks had already generated some material for us to draw from in the form of true-life stories and debates and discussion that the images catalysed. Drawing from this material, the group told me that they wanted to show their audience that responding to a situation with aggression is unnecessary and only makes the problem worse.

The group suggested that we use the stories that were portrayed in the still images that the group created. By vote, four of those stories were selected to be part of the first play. With a bit of creative scripting and embellishment, the four stories were woven together and resulted in a four-scene play.

Scene 1: At school

Four girls (played by Amy, Shanthi, Heather and Lauren), who had just arrived at school are singing a song from their favourite movie to pass the time before the school bell rings. While they are singing, two boys (played by Gordon and Jack) approach. The girls know that this means trouble. Jack demands Lauren's pocket money. When Lauren

refuses, Jack shakes her and threatens to kiss her if she does not give it to him. The other three girls tell Lauren to give the money to him. Lauren begins to cry and gives Jack the money. Jack tells the girls not to tell the teacher. The school bell rings and the learners all go to line up.

Scene 2: Line up

Two teachers, who clearly favour the boys over the girls, appear. The boys behave badly and instead of reprimanding them, the teachers conduct a uniform inspection on the girls only. When the girls accuse the teachers of being biased, the teachers in turn accuse the girls of being disrespectful. The learners are sent to the classroom.

Scene 3: The juice bottle incident

In the classroom, the learners and teachers are all working at their desks. Heather gets up to throw away her waste paper and accidentally knocks over Jack's juice bottle. As she apologetically bends over to pick it up, Jack pushes her over. She begins to cry and tells the teacher what happened. The teacher calls Jack to her desk and asks for his side of the story. Jack says that Heather knocked over his juice bottle on purpose and so he pushed her. Always favouring the boys, the teacher punishes Heather for spilling the juice and makes her clean it up. She does not punish Jack for pushing Heather.

Scene 4: After school netball

After school, the same two teachers do a bad job of supervising the girls' netball practice. While playing netball, Amy accidentally hits Lauren with the ball. Lauren pushes Amy to the ground in anger. Lauren begins to cry and tells the teachers. The teachers tell her that they did not see what happened and that the girls should sort the problem out on their own.

This scene was based on something Mandy and Sindi had witnessed. They had witnessed one girl pushing another girl to the ground for hitting her with the ball. When the teachers told them to sort out the problem on their own, Mandy and Sindi

intervened. They told the girls that they had learnt in drama class that aggression makes matters worse than they already are and asked the girls to apologise to each other.

This play focused on incidents where aggression could easily have been avoided by the individuals in the play. In all four scenarios, the characters reacted to the situations they found themselves in in ways that were unnecessarily aggressive. The participatory element of this play in performance focused on the individual choices that the characters could have made that are alternate to aggression. The performance is discussed later on page 114.

Before I offer a description of the second play, I would like to share an anecdote that informed the play. In May 2013 I arrived at Mangaliso as usual for our weekly workshop. It was the day in the month when I would conduct FGDs with the participants. The participants loved being recorded. However, on that day I was not met with the same enthusiasm as usual. The children were not fighting with each other to have their stories heard. In fact, I felt that they were keeping something from me. The participants were clearly embarrassed that, after aiding in modelling new social norms that were alternates to aggression during the performance a week earlier, the following incident occurred. The workshop began with the opening circle as usual. “Aunt Su,” Mandy started, “A lot happened since we last saw you.” The group began to tell me the story, no doubt with embellishments.

Mandy is an attractive 13-year-old girl. At school and at the CYCC she has the attention of all the young boys. Mandy always made it clear that she was not interested in boys and carried herself in a manner that supported that claim. However, that week she had asked Jack, from the drama group, to accompany her to her school dance. Jack agreed. Another boy from Mangaliso, Paul, who was not in the drama group, wanted to escort Mandy to the dance instead. Mandy was a good friend of Paul’s and she had clearly hurt his feelings. Mandy asked Jack if it was okay if she took Paul instead of him. Jack said that he wanted to escort her to the dance and that she could not go with Paul. Paul then confronted Jack demanding that he let Mandy go to the dance with him. Paul punched

Jack. The CYCWs saw what happened and took Paul away. Paul had his pocket money taken away from him as a consequence and was not allowed to go on his school outing.

Later that evening, Paul told Jack that he was lucky the CYCW stepped in to save him because he would have beaten him up further. He also boasted about how the CYCW could not do anything to him if he hits Jack again. He remarked that he would get more pocket money from his host over the weekend and therefore his punishment meant nothing to him. Paul also told Jack that he ran to the CYCW too often and accused him of not being able to fight his own battles. Jack then punched Paul and injured his nose and jaw. Jack was punished by not being allowed to go to the dance with Mandy. Mandy felt responsible for the injuries of both the boys and decided not to go to the dance either.

When Jack told us why he decided to punch Paul, he made a statement that silenced the group. He explained that although he knew what the “right” thing to do was, he was not in a position to do it. He felt that firstly, the CYCWs could not offer him the protection that he needed because they could not remove Paul from the CYCC, and secondly, if he did not prove to Paul that he could defend himself, Paul would continue to pick on him. It was my feeling that he also wanted to impress Mandy because she had witnessed him being punched by Paul earlier.

What made matters worse was that after the incident some of the girls from the drama group had accused Mandy of being a trouble maker and a flirt. This caused a few arguments in the girls’ cottage too. While these arguments did not escalate to physical fights, the arguments certainly caused some rifts in the group.

This opening circle discussion gave us almost enough material for our second play. Our second play explored the broader issues and contexts that sometimes leave the participants feeling that there is no alternative to aggression.

Play 2

The second play was slightly shorter than the first. Although this play was inspired by the incident discussed above, it was adapted significantly so that the audience would not recognise the incident. In fact, the incident was almost completely unrecognisable, maintaining only two key themes:

1. The perception that the adults in the participants' lives cannot/do not offer them the support they need.
2. If you do not stand up for yourself, you leave yourself vulnerable to further victimisation.

The play was set at school and at Mangaliso. The group decided to set the play at a school because the participants are often picked on at school because they live in a CYCC.³² The group also wanted to incorporate the theme of neglectful teachers that was identified earlier.

Scene 1

The play begins with a life skills class at the CYCC. The life skills coach is asking the class to suggest what they should do if they are confronted by a bully. Some suggestions included, "Walk away and don't engage them", "Run to find an adult", "Do not fight back but rather blow off some steam by exercising". The life skills coach was impressed with all the suggestions.

Scene 2

This scene saw learners writing a test at school. Two girls in the back row hit Amy (seated in front of them) on the head and giggled. Amy puts up her hand and tells the teacher. The teacher asks the girls if this is true and they deny it. The teacher does nothing.

³² While some of the participants attended the same school, Jackie (the Senior CYCW) explained (see page 146) that if all the children went to the same school, they would form a gang so as not to be picked on by the other children for living in a CYCC. The children were placed in different schools in the area to avoid a gang situation. However, not having the support of a gang leaves them vulnerable to being picked on at school.

With the knowledge that their actions had no consequences, the girls hit Amy again. Receiving no support from the teacher, Amy decides to stand up for herself so that the girls stop picking on her. Amy pushes one of the girls off her chair. The teacher reprimands Amy. Amy explains that the teacher did nothing so she had to do something. The teacher accuses her of being insolent and gives her detention.

Scene 3

This scene finds the children back in the life skills class at Mangaliso. The life skills coach had heard that Amy was given detention and wanted to know why. Amy explains what happened. The scene ends with the life skills coach asking the class who thinks that Amy did the right thing.

Performances

Both the performances were given on Tuesday evenings at 6.00 pm. We would rehearse during our usual Tuesday slot from 3.00 pm–4.30 pm and then perform for staff and to the rest of the children at Mangaliso at 6.00 pm. The senior CYCW suggested a starting time of 6.00 pm to allow enough time for the audience to return home from school, do their chores, have a snack and bath. Performances needed to be over by 7.00 pm. On performance days I would not walk down to the cottages to collect the participants. Instead, the participants would be waiting at the main entrance gate for me to arrive. Their excitement was infectious.

Upon arriving at the hall on both occasions, participants chose to skip the opening circle and theatre games/exercises to leave more time for rehearsing the play so that it would be “perfect”. As a facilitator, I had very little to do during the rehearsals on performance days because the group was self-managing.

When the participants felt that they had rehearsed sufficiently and that they were ready to perform (at around 4.30 pm), we would pass the time and sustain the energy level by playing games of their choice. At 5.45 pm one of the group members would be tasked

with visiting each cottage to remind the CYCWs that it was time to send the children to the hall for the performance.

The participants wanted to be seated at the front of the stage when the audience arrived. From the hall, participants could hear the audience making their way from the cottages to the hall. Upon entering the hall, the audience would find nine proud participants, dressed in black clothes, sitting authoritatively on the edge of the stage.

Once the audience of 30 children and five CYCWs were all present and settled, my role as facilitator would begin. I would start by welcoming everyone and thanking the audience for being there. I would then explain that the performance was participatory and what the audience participation would entail. I would then hand over to participants to perform their play.

Performance 1

The first play was performed as a forum theatre (page 60) piece. As discussed earlier, the forum theatre process encompasses all four stages of the experiential learning cycle – concrete experiences, reflections, abstract concepts and active testing (Kolb, 1984).

The audience was encouraged to participate in the action by coming up onto the stage and changing the action at any point during the second run of the play. The audience was very keen to participate in the forum and needed very little encouragement or persuasion to come up on stage. During the forum, every act of aggression in the play described above was identified. In every case, aggression was either replaced with kindness or politeness, or saw the aggressive character walking away from the situation. For example, when the young boy pushed the girl for accidentally knocking over his juice bottle, the audience immediately stopped the action. A volunteer from the audience came up on stage and politely accepted the apology that was offered by the girl who knocked the bottle over. The audience was able to identify aggressive behaviour as inappropriate and to model new behaviours that were alternatives to aggression.

As during the image theatre exercises, the audience was allowed to replace both the oppressor and the oppressed because many of the children in the CYCC played dual roles of oppressed and oppressor. This forum theatre performance took place both in the realms of theatre of the oppressed and theatre of the oppressor.

Although the audience was told that they could replace anyone on stage – people who were treated badly as well as those who were treating others badly – the audience chose to replace the oppressor in every instance. Not once did any member of the audience replace the victim of aggression and suggest ways in which the characters could liberate themselves from victimisation. Based on my observations and knowledge of the context, the reasons for this were threefold: First, was because the CYCWs had told the audience that they were going to watch a play in order to learn about how they can be less aggressive (not how they could protect themselves against aggression). The audience therefore went into the performance in that frame of mind. Essentially, they were being told they were “bad” and asked to demonstrate “good behaviour”, not to think critically, consciously or empathically. Second, there was the risk of identifying with the oppressor. Inhabitants of the CYCC are understandably reluctant to appear weak in public, which would make themselves vulnerable to more aggression. In the safe space of the drama group, participants had learnt to trust one another, but this was not the case in the general population. Third was the fact that the audience identified with the oppressor, partly because they were being asked to (as stated in the first point) but also because being aggressive towards others was an established culture in the CYCC that most participated in.

In light of the above, when actors were replaced, the action that substituted aggression was simplistic and lacked complexity and depth. Every action that replaced aggression was accepted by the audience as valid, leaving no room for debate about how realistic the suggested behaviour was. In my opinion, the spect-actors accepted simple solutions because they recognised themselves in the play and were reluctant to further analyse their own behaviour, particularly as victims, so as not to appear weak, but also as aggressors. Perhaps it was difficult to confront “themselves” in the play and to admit publicly that aggression was the only means many of the spect-actors had at their

disposal to appear powerful. Perhaps the spect-actors feared that admitting that behaving non-aggressively would require the relinquishing of the power they had acquired through aggression, and that their strategy for "survival" in the CYCC would be revealed – again exposing insecurity. Another possible reason, as alluded to above, is that the audience was prepared by the CYCWs not to think critically about their behaviour, but rather to "learn good behaviour". The CYCWs were present in the room, so the children could simply have been showing the CYCWs what they wanted to see.

This experience correlates to Burton's and Balfour's criticisms of the practice of forum theatre discussed earlier (page 61). As is evident in this forum experience, the practice tends to prioritise neat solutions over genuine interrogation. This forum experience was useful for the identification of inappropriate use of aggression- and even rudimentary behavioural alternatives, but was not useful for the interrogation of behavioural choices and in-depth analysis of the proposed solutions.

It became obvious to me that the true value of this project was not the performances of the plays to the larger Mangaliso community, but in the creation of them with the theatre group (for example, during the image theatre exercises discussed above). During the theatre sessions in which the plays were created, the participants were able to truly reflect on their behaviour choices in relation to their realities. Their behaviour choices, particularly their aggressive behaviour choices, came under scrutiny, and the practicality of any proposed alternative behaviour choices was debated at length. The actual forum performance, however, offered little of the same value.

I recognised that the structure of the next performance needed to be more conducive to generating deeper discussions, and that my facilitation as joker needed to challenge the spect-actors to analyse their own behaviour further. This is discussed below.

Once every instance of aggression was replaced with behaviour that the audience deemed appropriate, I concluded the session and thanked the audience for their participation. The audience was abuzz with energy as the staff prepared to escort them back to their cottages, warning the children not to dirty their pyjamas in the mud on the

way. The cast received chocolates from me and talked about how happy they were with the way their performance went. I congratulated them on their focused performance and they returned to their cottages.

Performance 2

The group and I decided together that the second performance would not be a forum theatre performance. The audience would not be invited on stage to replace actors. Instead, the audience would be given a chance to respond to questions based on the play, which would be posed by the facilitator. I took this decision for two reasons: the first reason was that the group felt “thrown” when members of the audience replaced them. The group expressed that they did not always know how to react to the new behaviour being modelled by the spect-actor. The second reason was that, by opening up the play for discussion alone, a richer, deeper discussion (which the first performance lacked) was more likely.

The cast performed the play once. After the performance, the following questions (which I formulated) were posed by me, the facilitator:

1. What was the play about?
2. What was Amy taught to do in life skills class if she was ever bullied?
3. Did Amy do what she was taught when she was bullied at school?
4. What did she do?
5. Did Amy do the right thing?
6. Why do you think so?

One member of the audience suggested that the play was about bullying. Although there were many repetitions of this suggestion, no other suggestions were made, nor did anyone disagree with that suggestion.

In response to question 2, the audience repeated the suggestions that they heard during the play. These suggestions were “walk away”, “tell an adult”, “don’t fight back” and “exercise to get rid of your frustration”.

When asked if Amy did as she was taught in life skills, the audience collectively responded “No”. A girl in the audience raised her hand and pointed out that Amy’s character did tell an adult, but the adult did nothing about it. No one disagreed with that statement.

A member of the audience, in response to question 4, said that Amy pushed Heather off her chair. When asked why Amy did that, another audience member said that Amy pushed Heather off her chair to make Heather stop picking on her. No one disagreed or had anything to add to that statement.

The response to question 5 was mixed. Roughly half the audience responded “yes” saying that Amy did the right thing, while the other half responded “no” saying that she didn’t.

When the audience was asked why they responded the way they did, a debate ensued. One member of the audience raised his hand and said that Amy was right to defend herself because the teacher did nothing. If Amy had not pushed Heather, Heather would have continued to bully her. Another audience member, Samantha, disagreed, saying that Amy stooped to Heather’s level by fighting back and that she should have ignored her.

Another member of the audience, Carl, then posed a question to Samantha. He asked, “Was Amy just supposed to sit there and be hit every day?” Samantha responded by saying that she could perhaps have stood up for herself without being violent. When I asked Samantha if she could make a suggestion as to how Amy could have handled the situation, she said that Amy could have first tried to ask the girls nicely if they would stop hitting her. Mike responded to Samantha by asking, “And if they carried on?” Samantha responded by saying that “Amy could have told the principal.”

A show of hands showed that roughly a quarter of the audience agreed that Amy, realistically speaking, had the options of first asking the girls to stop, and then telling

the principal. I asked the rest of the audience why they felt that telling the principal was not a valid option. An audience member responded by saying that if a child tells the principal instead of fighting back, the child is labelled a “tattletale” and is picked on even more. No one disagreed with that statement.

I then asked the members of the audience who felt that Amy had no other option but to react the way she did in the play. Four members of the audience raised their hands. Two of those members opted not to speak. The other two made similar statements. They argued that when someone is bullied, the only way to make the bully stop is to show them that you are not afraid of them. Most of the time that means hurting them.

When I asked the audience who agreed/disagreed with that statement, a girl responded that Amy was not wrong in doing what she did in this case. However, she added that some people did not fight because they have to fight back, they fight because they think it is fun. She went on to say that most of the fights that happen at the CYCC happen because some boys think it is fun to hurt others. When I asked why some people think it is fun to fight, Samantha responded that it makes them feel “main” (slang for feeling important or powerful).

This led to a discussion about when aggressive behaviour might be appropriate. The general consensus was that if you were being picked on, the bully needed to be stopped. The audience agreed that the child being bullied should explore every available option they had for adult support. If the child got no support from the adults, or was accused of being a tattletale, and was picked on even more for telling an adult, then that person should stand up for themselves by hurting the other person.

Only two audience members did not agree with this general consensus. They raised the point that adult support may take too long come. One audience member said, “When you are being hit on the head, there is no time to explore all your options. Your anger is going to make you hit that person.” He added that being polite and kind all the time is easier said than done. This statement concluded the discussion and the performance

event. The cast was awarded certificates of participation and all the children returned to their cottages.

Conclusion

This chapter provided insight into what the theatre workshops, rehearsals and performances were like at Mangaliso CYCC over a six-month period. It detailed the use of exercises from *The Geese Theatre Handbook* (Baim *et al.*, 2002) and *Games for Actors and Non-Actors* (Boal, 1992) that were carefully selected and adapted for the purpose of addressing the four elements of social capital.

This chapter also provided insight into how I facilitated the workshops and performances. In the next section, I present the findings of this research.

SECTION 2:

COMING TOGETHER

Introduction

In this section, I present the results of this study. This section sets out to determine if the theatre programme was successful in generating peer social capital among the participants in this study, thereby reducing aggressive peer interactions at Mangaliso CYCC. It also determines if the theatre programme brought about any other changes in the CYCC. It explains why – in terms of social capital – the theatre programme was able or not able to effect change in the CYCC.

In order to present the results of this study in a way that is manageable, I have divided this section into three chapters:

- In Chapter 6 I determine the social norms that were established prior to the theatre programme, as well as the ways in which the theatre project affected these social norms and/or established new ones. The findings in this chapter show that the theatre programme established new social norms in the form of less aggressive responses to conflict; reporting of incidents of aggression to adults in authority; using aggression only when necessary for preventing further victimisation; increased attendance at school and extra-mural activities and improved behaviour at school.
- In Chapter 7 I delineate how the theatre programme influenced the strength of peer social networks, trust and reciprocity at Mangaliso. The theatre programme created an environment that was conducive to the cultivation of trust between the participants, and this trust laid the foundation for the formation of reciprocal bonds and for the building and strengthening of peer social networks. Most importantly, the generation of these three elements of social capital created an environment that was conducive to the adoption and implementation of new social norms in the CYCC.

- In Chapter 8 I engage the effect that the theatre programme had on the participants' self-confidence and sense of agency. Through participation in the theatre programme, the participants became more aware of the ways in which they could actively shape their futures, and subsequently began to imagine futures different from their current realities.

In each of the three chapters, the results of this study are presented chronologically, taking its starting point from the interviews and FGDs that were conducted prior to the start of the theatre programme and ending with interviews and FGDs that were conducted after the theatre programme. Through this chronology, the reader is taken through the complex interactions that the group experienced during the time we had together. My own observations and perceptions that were recorded in my research journal are also offered in this section.

This section ends with a summary of the results of this study.

CHAPTER 6

The Evolution of Social Norms at Mangaliso CYCC

Introduction

The central aim of this study was to reduce aggressive and violent behaviour as a “go-to” response in situations of conflict at Mangaliso CYCC through the generation of peer social capital. In light of this, the element of social capital referred to as “social norms” is the most significant of the four elements for this study. As mentioned earlier, social norms refer to “socially shared and enforced attitudes specifying what to do and what not to do in a given situation” (Prentice, 2012:2).

While the focus of this study was on altering norms of aggression, the theatre programme also engaged other social norms at Mangaliso. This chapter delineates the social norms that were established at Mangaliso prior to the theatre programme that the participants engaged in during the programme, and determines the ways in which the theatre programme altered these norms.

Aggression: A Normalised Route to Protection and Power

From my observations during the years that I spent at Mangaliso prior to beginning this theatre programme, and from informal discussions with the children and staff at Mangaliso CYCC, it became increasingly clear that in most cases aggression was the preferred response when the children at Mangaliso CYCC were faced with situations of conflict. For verification, I asked the participants, residential CYCWs and senior CYCWs how the participants were most likely to deal with a situation of conflict.

During an FGD with participants that was conducted prior to the theatre programme, all the participants, except Mandy and Sindi, who said that they dealt with conflict by ignoring it (January 2013), stated that they responded to conflict with aggression. The participants were very forthcoming in their descriptions of their aggressive approaches to conflict. Here are some examples:

- I: Okay. Lauren when you get angry with somebody how do you deal with it?
- Lauren: I fight them.
- I: And by fighting... [you mean...]?
- Lauren: If I was fighting with Mandy I would bust her. (January 2013)
- I: Shanthi, when you get angry with somebody how do you deal with it?
- Shanthi: [...] fight and push against the wall and punch and bite [each other's] lips and all. (January 2013)
- Kate: I will be honest with you. [...] [The way] they treat me, [is the way] I will treat them back. [If] they start fighting with me, like even if they are way older than me, I will fight them back. Except for Dora. She is really big, so...
- I: You mean fight as in hit them back?
- Kate: Yeah I mean like as in hit. [...] I fought with some people, most of them in the cottage before. They hit me, I hit them back. (January 2013)

None of the participants disputed that aggression at Mangaliso CYCC was rife or that reacting to conflict with aggression was a social norm in the CYCC.

When I asked the participants to provide specific examples of when they or others behaved aggressively in response to conflict, the examples the participants provided involved aggression in its physical form and in the form of bullying. Each participant could provide me with a story of when they were physically hurt or bullied by another child at Mangaliso. In fact, if time allowed, I am sure each child could have provided me with several stories. It made me realise that the children in CYCCs such as Mangaliso were not safe from harm even though they had been placed in CYCCs to be protected from harm (see more below on page 126). A comment that Shanthi made confirmed this. She said:

- Shanthi: We came here for people to look after us. It does not feel like that. It feels like we are being abused. (January 2013)

While speaking about incidents of aggression in the CYCC, the participants also alluded to factors that made certain children more or less vulnerable to being victims of aggression at Mangaliso. One of these factors is being a “junior”,³³ When the girls from the junior (primary school) cottage were speaking about the ways in which Lucy,³⁴ the resident Mangaliso bully, bullies them, Kate commented that Lucy does not bully anyone in her cottage (January 2013). Kate lives in the senior cottage that houses high school girls. Kate’s allusion to the fact that she would not fight anyone that is bigger than her in size led me to believe that Lucy intentionally bullied those who were younger than her because they could defend themselves less effectively in a physical confrontation. (January 2013).

These comments revealed that those who are younger and smaller are more vulnerable to being victims of bullying at Mangaliso. This finding correlates to the literature presented in Chapter 2 (page 31), in which it was found that older children in CYCCs establish a hierarchy and bully residents who have less knowledge of the social dynamics of the CYCC (Gibbs & Sinclair, 1998).

Children who do not fight back are also more vulnerable to being victims of aggression. For example, Kate shared that one of the girls from her cottage who usually hit other girls would not hit Kate because Kate would fight back:

Kate: [If the other children] hit me, I hit them back. [...] Say for instance [name of child], she will not hit me because she knows I will hit her right back. (January 2013)

From this comment, and many other comments that were made during the theatre sessions, it became evident that those who did not fight back were at a significantly greater risk of becoming victims of bullying and aggression. As is discussed later, (page 148) aggression provides the children in the CYCC with protection.

³³ The children at Mangaliso are classed as “junior” or “senior”, depending on whether they are in primary school or high school.

³⁴ Lucy is older than the other participants of this programme. She has bullied and physically hurt every one of the participants more than once.

It also became clear that children who did not belong to strong social networks were also more vulnerable to becoming victims of aggression. Lauren provided an example of this, saying that if her sister lived in the same cottage as her, Lucy would not pick on her:

Lauren: About Lucy, the same thing, you see if my sister was with me in the same cottage [Lucy] would not be bullying me. My sister, [...] Elisa is big now. She can fight, and now like Lucy is scared of my sister. (January 2013)

In another comment, Lauren herself recognised that the other girls in the cottage do not include her in activities because she is shy and keeps to herself (January 2013). Lauren, therefore, did not belong to a social network and share close bonds with the other girls in her cottage. Lucy was aware of this isolation and used it to her advantage. An incident where the girls in the junior cottage came together to defend Shanthi against Lucy, the resident Mangaliso bully, is also a clear indicator that the rest of the participants also saw that not belonging to a social network (a form of social capital) makes one more vulnerable to being bullied. The other participants aligned themselves with a social network that offered them protection against Lucy. Prior to the theatre intervention, Lauren was isolated from this network, leaving her more vulnerable to being victimised by Lucy. This also demonstrates the value of social networks in the CYCC environment, although, as will be discussed later, social networks in the CYCC were very unstable prior to the theatre project.

The children housed at Mangaliso CYCC were not safe from physical harm. As discussed above, some factors made some children even more vulnerable than others. These findings correlate with what has been addressed in Chapter 2 (page 36) about children not receiving sufficient care, support and safety in CYCCs. As discussed in Chapter 2 (page 36), low staff-to-child ratios enabled the child residents in CYCCs to abuse one another without this behaviour being noticed by the caregivers and, as will be discussed on page 134, children did not report incidents because the culture of Mangaliso did not support “tattletaling”. This meant that children are often further abused by other children in CYCCs without intervention from adults or caregivers. As discussed in Chapter 2 (page 29), children in CYCCs are far more likely to be abused by

their peers than by CYCWs in CYCCs. The children at Mangaliso CYCC were hardly protected from harm and therefore felt the need to use aggression as a means of protecting themselves. This is discussed further on page 148.

I was taken aback by how nonchalantly the children were able to provide me with details of when they were hit and punched by other participants. For example, Mandy said:

Mandy: One day me and Shanthi were playing, like we were on our way to the hall. Lucy just came behind both of us. She was like “bah!” she gave us a hit on our back. Then we ran around the hall I think and she slapped us [again]. (January 2013)

The casual nature of their responses, to me, reaffirmed how normal aggression was in the lives of these children, and at Mangaliso prior to the theatre programme.

In contrast to the forthcoming nature of the participants’ responses presented above, the responses of some of the residential CYCWs to questions regarding conflict at Mangaliso were reserved and reflected that some of the CYCWs were serving an institutional agenda in their responses. When I asked the residential CYCWs about the social norms for dealing with conflict at Mangaliso, only Trudy responded to this question. She was very selective, and sometimes evasive, in her responses. She avoided having to give details of the aggressive means that the children employed in dealing with conflict. Here are her comments:

Trudy: Yeah they deal with [conflict in] different way[s]. Some, they [do] get aggressive, but some they can go to the aunties and report that they are dealing with this [conflict], then the aunty must intervene with whatever situation they are dealing with.

Trudy: Some of them they just cry, sometimes not coming to [CYCWs]. You just see the child crying.

I: Lauren, how does she deal with conflict?

Trudy: [...] Sometimes she is not coming to [the CYCWs]. You can find her in the corner just crying, crying, crying and then you go to her and

then; she cannot talk when she is angry. You must wait until she calms down and then she will tell you that happened.

I: Okay, and Sindi? How does she deal with conflict?

Trudy: Sindi she just comes straight to you.

I: Okay [...]. And Shanthi?

Trudy: Shanthi she is crying. She is very emotional. [...]

I: Yeah, and do [the participants] get aggressive with each other?

Trudy: No [...]

Trudy: Mandy can tell you straight.

I: Yeah

Trudy: If she is angry she will tell you what happened and she is going to tell you where did this thing start. Sometimes when the child [...] fight[s] with her today she is going to tell you “Aunty [...] she’s just holding the grudge because I did not give her money that day”. [...]

I: And Amy?

Trudy: Amy is crying as well.

I: Yeah.

Trudy: Yeah. She is a quiet child.

I: Yeah, and Kate?

Trudy: Kate she takes it on herself. She does not express her feelings. I think with her she is always scared of being judged.

I: Okay.

Trudy: So with her you just observe the body language.

I: Okay. When she gets angry, how does she deal with it?

Trudy: She is very matured when it comes to things like that. I think it is almost a year working with her. I have never seen her swearing [...]. And then she will not talk about it unless you go to her and ask what happened. She is like “you know aunty this and this and this and that”. And if [the person she is in conflict with] comes and is more talkative than her, she will not say anything. [...] She will just like, she will give you that option, it is either you believe her or you do not. With her she is finished talking about it. (January 2013)

When responding to this question, Trudy chose only to focus on the non-aggressive ways that the participants dealt with conflict. In the beginning, Trudy did allude to the fact that the participants were sometimes aggressive. However, later during that same interview, I blatantly asked if the participants were aggressive in their responses to conflict and she said “no” (January 2013).

While it is true, and Trudy acknowledges it, that not all incidents of aggression are reported to the CYCWs (see below page 134), Trudy is well aware that the participants are aggressive with each other. She knew that I was aware of it too. I had witnessed explicit displays of aggression in her presence, and she had complained to me about the children’s aggression on more than one occasion. Trudy made a definite choice not to reveal that the participants were aggressive with each other during this FGD.

I can only speculate on the reasons for this choice. I suspect that Trudy was afraid of the consequences of admitting that the children were violent with each other under her watch. She was aware that she was being recorded, and in her responses she served the agenda of protecting the image of Mangaliso CYCC and its staff from being called into question. Perhaps she was afraid that she would be accused of not doing her job properly if management were to hear this recording. Perhaps she was afraid that I would not respect her anonymity, despite my assurance that I would. Whatever her reason, she severely downplayed the role that aggression played when the participants dealt with conflict, and contradicted information gained through ethnographic means. Also, the responses that Trudy gave here do not, for the most part, correspond with the participants’ responses above. The only responses that corresponded with Trudy’s are those of Sindi and Amy, in that both the participants and Trudy stated that their responses to conflict are non-aggressive. Trudy concealed the use of aggression by Lauren, Shanthi and Kate in their efforts to resolve conflict.

It was not only I who recognised that Trudy’s statements were inaccurate. Sally added to Trudy’s response. Immediately after Trudy’s comment about Kate’s approach to

dealing with conflict, Sally interjected with an account of a time when Kate hit Lucy because Lucy was bossing her around:

Sally: I remember when [Kate] was with me [...]. Lucy used to pushing her, pushing her and she said the other day, “you know Aunty, one day I will hit Lucy. You will not believe. Really it is what happened. I was hanging the washing. She hit Lucy. [...]. And [...] she said [...] “remember aunty I told you that I am going to hit her one day”. Really from that day Lucy never interfered with her. (January 2013)

Sally clearly did not have the same reservations as Trudy. Sally clearly describes how Kate was known to respond to conflict with aggression. This response corresponded with Kate’s own response and also with my own observations.

While no further responses to that particular question on dealing with conflict were given, examples of physical aggression were given later during that same FGD. Trudy conceded that the participants were sometimes physically aggressive with each other. Here are her comments.

Trudy: Shanthi and Mandy. [...]. There was a fight the other day. [...]. They fight, they really hit each other. [...]. I came to separate them. (January 2013)

Perhaps it was because Sally spoke about the aggression that she experienced with the children in her cottage that made it more comfortable for Trudy to declare that the children in her cottage were aggressive too. Still, Trudy chose to focus on the non-aggressive means of conflict resolution that the children employed, and merely alluded to the fact that participants were sometimes aggressive.

Sally also provided one more example of physical aggression:

Sally: [Mandy] reported after a month [...] that “[name of child] came to my cottage and strangled me Aunty”. (January 2013)

These comments corresponded with my observations and to accounts of aggression that were shared during group discussions during our sessions.

Although Trudy may not have been explicit, the comments above offer some evidence that the aggression was rife prior to the theatre intervention. The magnitude of the issue of aggression in the CYCC may have been portrayed differently from one respondent to the next, but all respondents acknowledged that the participants interacted aggressively with each other prior to the start of the theatre intervention.

As discussed earlier (page 50), the participants came from families who harbour very low stocks of social capital. Weakened family social capital increases the likelihood of behaviour problems like aggression (Imtiaz *et al.*, 2010:103). Although I recognise that low family social capital was not the only contributing factor in displays of aggression in the CYCC, the explicit examples of aggression provided above supported the argument that weakened family social capital was a contributing factor to aggression. The weak and ill-formed family structures to which the participants belong cannot be discounted when examining why the participants behaved aggressively. The abuse, betrayal of trust and separation from the family unit (which is supposed to be the strongest example of a social network, in which healthy social norms are modelled) to which the participants were subjected during their periods of abuse, coupled with the removal from their families, have undoubtedly had an influence on the way that the participants treated each other and dealt with conflict in the CYCC.

Another contributing factor to the display of aggression by participants was their exposure to aggression and violence as norms in their homes, prior to being placed at Mangaliso CYCC. Jackie, the senior CYCW, argued that reacting to conflict with aggression was learnt behaviour. She said:

Jackie: Oh my children they've learned a lot of things, but mostly it, it has been not positive stuff. [...] they fight, they scream, they retaliate. That's the most learned thing [behaviour] they do around here and, and it's retaliating. [...] Whatever one does [...to] win [a fight] the other one will take [on that behaviour]. So it's mostly learned behaviours. (March 2013)

Jackie's comments correlated with what was discussed in Chapter 2: violence resulting from apartheid has manifested itself in the domestic setting, and is being passed down intergenerationally. The participants of this programme had all been raised in homes

where aggression was normal. They were then subjected to the distressing process of being removed from their homes and placed in institutional care, with peers who also perceived aggression as normal, and in an environment that required participants to physically defend themselves against acts of physical violence inflicted on them by their peers.

As I discussed in Chapter 2 (page 30), aggression was a means for children in the CYCCs to protect themselves and to prevent further abuse from being inflicted on them. This literature correlates to the findings of this study. Kate earlier alluded to the fact that she only fought with those whom she knew she would be able to hurt without being hurt in return. Gordon made a similar comment during an image theatre exercise, saying that he would only pick on people who were “nice” enough not to retaliate (see page 104). Dora was the biggest girl in the CYCC; therefore Kate would not hit Dora. Dora’s size was something that offers her protection in the CYCC. If a child in the CYCC was aggressive and/or able to fight, inflict pain and defend themselves, they became less vulnerable to being physically attacked. Aggression was therefore a means through which power could be accessed.

Dora embodies a threat of violence that was respected and carries power in the CYCC, as well as in the wider South African and international contexts. This was evident in the case of Dora and Kate above. Kate and Dora felt the need to project an aggressive impression because they lived in an environment in which they could be severely victimised if they were perceived to be weak or vulnerable. The environment in which they lived made an aggressive impression obligatory. This corresponded to the literature presented in Chapter 2 (page 21) that addressed the rewards that an aggressive impression offered such as respect and power. While this literature refers only to the desire of young South African men to act aggressively as a means of impression management, this study shows that the girls in the CYCC also behaved aggressively for the purpose of impression management.

Inconsistency as the only constant

Establishing new social norms at Mangaliso was admittedly difficult for the CYCWs because of conflicting ideas between the CYCC and what the participants learnt in their homes about what behaviour was acceptable and what was not. Although the children were physically housed at Mangaliso for the majority of the time, they were not completely removed from their home environments. Depending on the nature of their cases, some children were allowed to return to their homes over weekends and/or holidays. Trudy explained that this exposure to different settings and different behaviours creates confusion about the type of behaviour the children should adopt:

Trudy: What happens is parents and hosts... they are role models [with] different [values/ideas] compared to what we preach here. Here swearing words are not allowed. So now Monday to Friday they do not swear. Then they go home... [...] At home they swear. So now they come back and they are confused. (January 2013)

In the children's home environments, swearing was a social norm. At Mangaliso, swearing was discouraged and the staff try to model new social norms around the use of language. These social norms conflicted with the social norms modelled outside the CYCC.

Language was only one example of how the social norms modelled in the different environments to which the children were exposed conflicted with each other. Another example was one that came up in an informal discussion I had with Jackie in 2012. She explained that the children who attended the neighbouring high school travelled to and from school on foot. They were told to walk straight back to Mangaliso after school. If they arrived late, they were punished. Returning straight home was not expected in the children's home environment, and if they broke the rules of the CYCC the children often responded with remarks such as, "but my parents allow me to" when questioned and punished by the CYCWs. Inconsistency (in the setting of boundaries, living environments, expected behaviour and consequences for behaviour) has been a constant theme in the lives of these participants. This corresponds with the discussion on page 36 that addressed the difficulty of having different frames of reference for social norms.

No one likes a tattletale

A well-established social norm prior to the theatre programme that enabled children to abuse each other without adult intervention, was the norm of not reporting incidents of aggression to the CYCWs. Kate said:

Kate: We fight with words and [...] with the hands and we never report things out. (January 2013)

In discussions that emerged during the workshops, the participants shared that they did not report incidents of aggression to the CYCWs because there is a stigma attached to being a “tattletale”. There were also consequences to being a tattletale, such as being further victimised or being physically hurt by those who had been spoken out against. This finding correlates to the literature presented on page 31, as well as to comments made by CYCWs during the FGD that was conducted prior to the theatre programme. The CYCWs said that children often did not report incidents of aggression immediately for fear of the consequences:

Sally: I wish the children they can tell you at the same time if anything happens. I can make an example of a child, I think it is about three, two weeks, the children they do not tell me that [one] child was calling [another] child that she is HIV [positive].

I: [...]

Sally: Until it was a meeting. [At] a meeting we [usually] sit down and then we talk [about] [the children] feel. [At the meeting] that child stood up [and said] “Aunty, so and so was telling me two weeks back that I am HIV positive”. [CYCW to child] “Why did you keep quiet for all that time?”

Mary: She was waiting for the meeting.

Sally: [I asked,] “You were waiting for the meeting? You should have reported to aunties on duty that that is how you feel, you see”. I said to them I wish [when] anything that happens, even if anyone takes your money, report at the same time. [...] Children they have [...] something that is going to hurt them but they are going to wait and tell you later.

Sally: I remember one of the children [...] she came from the [other] cottage and strangled my child in my cottage. That time I was hanging the washing and the child reported after a month [...] that [name of child] came to my cottage and strangled me aunty. [child to CYCW] “You

were there and you were hanging the washing”. [CYCW to child] “But you never report, because I was on that side [hanging the washing]”. So I wish the children they can [tell the CYCWs if] anything happened (January 2013).

Mary: But sometimes the younger ones, sometimes the bigger ones would say “if you tell aunty I will find you when you go to school”. Then the child would be scared to tell.³⁵ (January 2013)

The CYCWs mentioned that the children did eventually tell them about incidents of aggression, they just did not report them immediately. There is no way of knowing if all the incidents of aggression were eventually reported, or only selected incidents.

This social norm was particularly alarming to me because this culture of silence (Freire, 1972) – the voiceless compliance exerted by the oppressor upon the oppressed – is one that gives power to abuse in the larger societal context (page 25). The participants in this programme had all been victims of abuse and had spoken about their abuse. They had even testified in court to the abuse that they had been subjected to. To me, the fact that the children were able to give testimony of their abuse at such a young age was admirable. Their social worker and CYCWs continually encouraged the participants to speak out against the abuse they had suffered. In the light of the bravery and courage that each of the participants showed in this regard, the disjuncture between their ability to speak out, inside and outside of the CYCC, was surprising to me.

One of the reasons that the children did not report incidents of aggression is that the CYCWs did not have the trust of all the children in their care (this is discussed in detail on page 157). Given the culture that existed around reporting incidents of aggression and victimisation in the CYCC, reporting was already a risk to take, as it might bring further victimisation. It was an even bigger risk to take when a child did not trust the CYCW to handle the matter appropriately, as no help might come of it. Mandy indicated that she did not report because she did not feel that the CYCWs would give her the support she needed for the matter to be resolved. She said:

³⁵ This threat made by senior to juniors corresponds with the literature presented in Chapter 2 (page 36).

Mandy: You cannot explain to the aunties. They will take the bigger [older] girl's side. (January 2013)

Trudy's comment on the issue of favouritism supported Mandy's comment. Trudy explained that the children did not know about each other's cases – why each of them was brought to live in the CYCC. Because of that, the children could not understand why CYCWs – who know what each child was dealing with – treated certain children differently to other children. The CYCWs treat each child on a case-to-case basis:

Trudy: Individually they know why they are here. [...] As a Child and Youth Care Worker you know this [child] is going through this... so [if] the behaviour [...] is like this, I will understand because of that. But with [the children], because they do not understand [each other's situations], they want you to kind of deal with the problem in the way [that favours them]. So if it is not suitable for them, then they feel like "oh you are taking [the other child's] side", because as a child-care worker you understand [what] this child going through. But with them, they do not understand. [The children expect the treatment] to be the same. "We [the children] are all the same, why [are you favouring] her?" Maybe one will be very attached to [...me] because now she is longing for this attention. (January 2013)

Here, Trudy admitted that the CYCWs did treat some children differently to others, depending on the child's individual case. The children, however, did not understand the rationale behind the CYCWs decisions to treat children differently, and this behaviour displayed by the CYCWs was perceived by the children as favouritism.

These statements correspond to the discussion in Chapter 2 in which it was suggested that children without behavioural problems often got less attention, and it left them feeling as though they did not get the same "special treatment" as others did (Taylor, 2013). The comments also corresponded to the manner in which authority figures were portrayed in the plays (see page 112).

It is clear that prior to the start of the theatre intervention, aggression as a means of dealing with conflict was a social norm at Mangaliso, and that the children were threatened not to report incidents of aggression to adults in authority.

“There is less fighting in the home lately”

The comments that the participants made during the FGD in March (two months into the theatre programme) reflected that the interactions between the participants were less aggressive than they were prior to the theatre programme. The participants attributed this directly to the theatre intervention. Through the experiential theatre process that allowed participants to explore and actively test new ways of dealing with conflict, the theatre work modelled new social norms for dealing with conflict that were alternatives to aggression. The participants were able to adopt and practise these new norms in their day-to-day interactions with each other. The participants said:

Shanthi: I stopped shouting a lot except for [at] Lauren. [...] When I [...came into] the [CYCC], I used to [...] take everything roughly. I thought that children here are like so rough, are so rough. And like now [...] I just calmed down and it is because of drama. (March 2013)

Mandy: There used to be a lot of fighting when we used to work in a group. Now you have taught us not to fight. You taught us things that we did not know before. We were always fighting before. [...] Now we learnt that it is not good to fight in groups. We are meant to work together. That is why it is called groups. [...] There is less fighting in the home [CYCC] lately. [...] And less stealing. (March 2013)

Sindi: Like when you're fighting with somebody and [...] it is just a little thing [...] that you make a big fight [out of], you can just walk away from it.

I: Good, thank you.

Sindi: And not like stay and shout at each other and hit each other. (March 2013)

Heather: Instead of fighting, you can just walk away and leave them. (March 2013)

I find it interesting that Mandy, and other participants in later comments, said things such as “you taught us...”. It is true that I had a specific agenda for the intervention. It is true that I brought focus to the issue of the aggressive behaviour in the CYCC – I did so at the request of the previous year’s participants of the DESC programme. It is true that

I ensured that the focus remained on this issue, and explicitly encouraged the participants to explore new ways of dealing with conflict. However, not one of the suggested alternatives to aggression ever came from me. The group generated their own suggestions and alternatives under my facilitation. I did very little “teaching”. I merely equipped the participants with the tools they needed to make their own discoveries.

Jackie’s comment, two months into the theatre programme, corresponded with those made by the participants. She recognised that the theatre intervention modelled new social norms and behaviour. Her comment below was given in direct regard to the participants’ aggressive responses to conflict:

Jackie: I think they [participants] really liked the drama [...] and they are able to identify with [drama] and they able to say “no this is not how you should be doing it”. (March 2013)

With the implementation of new social norms that were modelled during the theatre workshops, it was clear that the participants and Jackie noticed a decrease in aggression (in themselves and in others) in the CYCC since the start of the theatre intervention. During the theatre sessions, the participants agreed that walking away and not engaging in conflict to start with could be a viable strategy for avoiding conflict, depending on the situation, because giving a bully a reaction was to give the bully exactly what the bully wanted. They of course knew this because they themselves were bullies too. In the comment above, Heather suggests this strategy as something she had learnt as a result of the theatre programme.

Reflection on Action

The theatre programme also encouraged the participants to reflect upon their actions. Mandy and Jack both shared instances when they had behaved aggressively and unkindly, and later reflected on that behaviour and decided that their behaviour was not appropriate. When discussing possible impacts of the programme on their behaviour, they said:

Mandy: When [we] went [to] Scouts the last time, we all were fighting saying “No, I do not want to be in this person’s group, they stink”. And then

afterwards when I went back home [...] I thought and I said that was not nice what we said to that person. (March 2013)

Jack: So my friends they were playing [soccer]. [...] The other team they were playing rough, and then my friend said “Ok if you want to play rough, we will be as rough as well”. So each time they tried to score, my friends would kick them in the stomach and then they said it was a penalty. So each time they wanted to take the penalty, they [Jack’s team mates] would come and kick them on their legs, and then they said that we must just carry on with the game. So we carried on, carried on [...] and then it got to this point where those guys were pushing. [...]. [Someone from the opposing team] pushed and my head hit the ball. So I was very angry. I kicked him. I swore him and then my friends came and said “stop, stop, stop, stop, stop, stop”, and then I said ok. I stopped. And the game carried on. [...]. So we were playing [...] then my team [mate] got kicked in his head and then [the opposing team] said it was a penalty. So the other team was arguing with us, saying “No, no, no it is not a penalty. You guys also did that to us. You guys also did that to us”. And then I remembered [...] my short temperedness. [...] So I told [my team] to stop it and then the monitor came, sent us to the teachers. We all got detention. And then [...] after detention I told them “Guys come let us speak about it”. So we spoke about it and then by the next week we were all friends.

During the theatre sessions, the participants had got into a habit of acting out a scene [a concrete experience (Kolb, 1984)] and then reflecting on that action – the third stage of the experiential learning cycle (Kolb, 1984). It was something that we had practised in every single workshop. It was through the group reflections on the actions that the participants began to reflect on their own lives and asked themselves how they could do things differently. As we have seen in an earlier comment, Gordon reflected on the way he responded to the girl accidentally knocking over his juice bottle, and subsequently expressed regret. It is only possible to change inappropriate behaviour once inappropriate behaviour has been recognised as such by the person rendering it.

The habit of reflecting on action had carried through into the everyday lives of two participants. The theatre work had equipped the participants with the ability to be self-reflective. This ability was applied to situations outside the theatre workshops, and will presumably prevent similar situations to the two described above from occurring in the future.

Two Steps Forward, One Step Back

The day I convened the theatre group for a FGD in May (four months into the theatre programme) was two days after the incident described on page 110, involving a fight between Jack and Paul over Mandy's school dance. When I arrived that day, I immediately noticed very obvious rifts in the group, but did not yet know what had caused it. It was during the opening circle that I heard the details of what had happened two days earlier. The incident left most of the participants feeling as though the theatre programme had had little impact on social norms of aggression.

All the participants except Lauren and Sindi blatantly stated that the theatre programme had effected no change in the CYCC (May 2014). These responses were very different to the responses the participants provided in the previous FGD in March (page 137). The participants would not explain why they felt as though the theatre work had brought no impact to the CYCC, but it was obvious to me that they felt this way because the theatre intervention had focused on alternatives to aggression, yet over the weekend some of the participants had behaved very aggressively. The participants were visibly disappointed that some of them were not able to maintain the new social norms that they had set for themselves. In their "all or nothing" world, they therefore dismissed the entire project as ineffective.

In their disappointment at not being able to adhere to the social norms modelled in the theatre programme, Gordon, Amy and Shanthi offered explanations as to why the participants found it so difficult to adhere to these new social norms. Amy explained that although the participants encourage each other not to fight, fights still occurred. She said:

Amy: Like you tell [the other participants] not to fight, and when we go down [to] the cottages ... Like say last week Friday, Jack hit Paul. (May 2013)

Here Amy stated that, although the participants encouraged each other not to fight, fights still occurred. What Amy failed to recognise was that, prior to the theatre intervention, the participants were not encouraging each other not to fight. From Amy's

comments, it is clear that the participants had formed a network in which they watched each other's behaviour and enforced the new social norms modelled during the theatre intervention. Gordon explained why he found change so difficult:

Gordon: 'Cause the same people [repeatedly] continue [to irritate] you. Even though you want to stop [being aggressive], [...] you know you can't run to the [... CYCWs]. (May 2013)

Gordon's challenge was that his personal willingness to become less aggressive was being challenged by his environment. He continued to be provoked by other boys in the CYCC and it was therefore difficult to avoid confrontations. The environment of the CYCC, in which violence and aggression were useful tools for accessing power and in which Gordon (and others) felt he could not run to the CYCWs for protection, strongly influenced the participants' personal choices about how they would like to address conflict. Gordon's comment indicated that he was considering his personal behaviour choices in relation to the context in which he found himself.

Despite the environmental challenges that the CYCC presented, and despite the fight that had occurred two days before, Sindi and Lauren felt that the theatre programme did affect the ways in which each of them responded to conflict. Sindi explained that the theatre programme helped her to deal with her anger (May 2014). Lauren explained that she still got angry but had stopped hitting people:

Lauren: No I can't calm myself down when I am angry. I just ... I am short tempered. So if I look at a person and they are very irritating, they give me all this attitude, I will just look at them straight in the eye and I would say "You are irritating me and you're getting on the last nerve". And I would tell them off and then after they go tell the aunty and then I will start getting angrier and then I will go and hit that person.

I: Okay.

Lauren: But I don't do it anymore [...] I just get short tempered and shout at the person. (May 2013)

Lauren and Sindi had noticed that they were able to control their aggression better as a result of the theatre programme. The experiential theatre process allowed the

participants to explore and test new, less aggressive or non-aggressive ways in which to deal with conflict. These two participants had been able to implement these new ways of dealing with conflict in their own lives. I argue that the reflection on action that the theatre programme cultivated (page 138) and the exploration of new behaviour, enabled Sindi and Lauren to begin to change their behaviour, particularly when faced with situations of conflict.

Lauren's and Sindi's comments regarding their less aggressive strategies to conflict resolution were supported by comments made by the CYCWs four months into the programme. Sally, who was open about the displays of aggression in the FGD prior to the theatre programme, stated that she had noticed that all the participants with the exception of Heather were considerably less aggressive than they had been prior to the theatre programme (May 2014). This was interesting to me in light of the fight that had occurred between Jack and Paul. Even taking this incident into account, Jack was still noticeably less aggressive. This was also supported by Sipho's statement:

Sipho: Yes, oh those two [Jack and Gordon] surprise me all the time; surprise me big time. I think Gordon is growing in a way, yes. There is improvement [in terms of his behaviour] although there are regressions ... because it does regress and progress and regress. However there is a change when it comes to him. [...] Sometimes he deals with anger and attitude in a positive way other than before. Before it was swearing, fighting, swearing fighting, mumbling and grumbling but now he can express himself. [...] Jack too. When it comes to Jack he is also on that similar phase. I think... can say they are the same, but not on the same occasions. It depends what triggered him then sometimes he will address the issue in a correct way sometimes he will just turn off. (May 2013)

Mary, supported by Sipho (May 2013), recognised that the programme that had modelled new social norms for dealing with conflict.

Mary: I think it was a wakeup call for the young.

I: Okay.

Mary: Yeah.

I: In what way?

Mary: [...] the other one must correct that thing. Yeah I think it was about showing that you must, you must always try to do things right. (May 2013)

As mentioned earlier (page 135), the CYCWs admittedly found it difficult to establish new social norms in the CYCC because the social norms that the children were exposed to outside the CYCC were contradictory to the norms that the CYCWs “preach” (Trudy, January 2013). The theatre programme was successfully able to model and establish new social norms because the participants explored and identified new social norms themselves as opposed to having them “preached” to them by the CYCWs. Most young people are far more likely to adhere to expectations if they were involved in creating them, instead of having them imposed (Cara & MacRae, 2012:445). The participatory theatre process involved the participants in modelling valuable social norms themselves, and they were therefore more willing to comply with them. It also gave the pre-teens and teens the space to practise how (and who) they wanted to be as adults.

Tattletales: The Stigma Loses Power

One of the non-aggressive strategies the participants employed for conflict resolution went against a social norm that was already well established at Mangaliso prior to the theatre intervention, and is one of the most significant findings of this study. Four months into the programme, the participants were willing to report incidents of aggression to the CYCWs and call on them to intervene in their situations of conflict. This is reflected in the following exchange:

Trudy: I think that they are open [to different ways of resolving conflict] because sometimes if there is conflict they will come to you and report to you that “aunty, [...] I do not like somebody when she is doing this to me”. (May 2013)

Mary: Some of the child[ren] when she is angry she will just shout and shout and shout. But sometimes she will come and say “aunty please call somebody, I want to tell you in front of her that she has done this and this and this to me.”

I: Was that happening before, at the beginning of the year?

Mary: No, I think the, the way, when you were busy teaching them. Yeah, it helped them a lot. (May 2013)

Sipho echoed the CYCWs above comments (June 2013). In the preceding interviews and FGDs presented above, participants and CYCWs alike shared that incidents of conflict and aggression are not immediately reported to the CYCWs, if at all. Here, the CYCWs stated that, afterwards, the participants did, in fact, report incidents of conflict to them. During the theatre sessions, one of the alternatives to engaging conflict that was explored several times was involving the CYCW.

During one of the theatre sessions in April (Naguran, 2013), Mandy said that the CYCWs did not intervene in the situations of conflict. Mark rightly pointed out that this was because the CYCWs were not always aware of what is going on in the cottages. Lauren then said that she did not want to involve the CYCWs because they might not take her side. The other girls responded that when fights occurred and the CYCWs were called to intervene, the other people who had witnessed the fights should be honest about what had happened when they told the CYCW. That way, the person at fault would be punished because there was no room for doubt. It is evident from these comments that the participants adopted this strategy, which was devised during the theatre workshop.

The increase in reports to CYCWs also reflected increased levels of trust between the participants and, by extension, the CYCWs. The participants trusted that, with the support of other participants, the CYCWs would deal with the situation appropriately.

The New Normal

At the end of the theatre programme, it was clear that the programme modelled new social norms in dealing with conflict that the participants were able to adopt and practise in their everyday lives. The participants provided examples of this:

Sindi: I think drama helped me to like stay away from fights, be a peace maker and be kind to each other.

I: Okay ...

Lauren: I think drama taught us a lot about not to fight and to be kind to others and not to like, bully and not to be like be ugly to others and I made new friends.

I: [...]

Heather: The drama taught me about; that to be kind and play together and not to be ugly to each other. (June 2013)

Lauren: The thing that changed my life that was in drama was the time when we had fun and now I have changed my life ... I am no more fighting with people. I am just talking up for myself. And I do not like fight with people, [...]. Sometimes I do, but then I do not like, you know like, punch them. I just like, talk to them nicely, say what you did to me because I remember [...] I must not, we must be friends with each and other and we must not try to fight. (June 2013)

The participant's comments were also supported by comments made by members of staff. As mentioned earlier, Sally stated four months into the programme that all the participants except Heather were less aggressive than they were before the start of the theatre intervention (May, 2014). At the end of the programme, she stated that she had now noticed that Heather, too, was less aggressive than she had been before (June 2013).

The participants expressed that although the theatre programme allowed them to explore new ways of dealing with conflict that were alternate to aggression, implementing these new means of conflict resolution was not always easy. The participants were able to provide reasons for this. For example, Lauren explained that the theatre group was sometimes teased because they were trying to establish new social norms that were contrary to the norms that were already established within the CYCC:

Lauren: The thing I did not like was when, like people used to tease us and make fun of people and the thing I liked was when we got to know new things.

I: Okay. Tell me about the people who were laughing and teasing you.

Lauren: Not most of them but some.

- I: Okay. Tell me about that. What happened?
- Lauren: Like people outside like the people who come and watch us like normally Lucy sometimes. She says that we are ugly and all those things and then people laugh through our thing. And say we are *phapharing*³⁶ and all those ugly things. Yeah, and the thing I liked was when we got to learn new things.
- I: Okay, and why do you think that those people said horrible things?
- Lauren: Because they cannot do even better. (June 2013)

Within minutes of the final bow after the first performance, three of the girls from the group came to me complaining that Lucy had already begun teasing them. The girls said that she called the play “stupid” and asked if the participants thought they were better than the other children.

One of the possible reasons why Lucy and others, who have reaped the benefits of bullying for some time, reacted to the play in this way, is a fear of a loss of power and position. Resistance to organisational change can come about when members of that organisation are focused on maintaining the stability of the status quo (Stonehouse, 2013:150). As discussed in Chapter 2 (page 31) the creation of peer hierarchies ensured that those who had positioned themselves within the residential care facility in a way that allowed them to exert power over others, remained in that position. This was true for children like Lucy, who used aggression for the purpose of dominance in the CYCC (see Chapter 2, page 18). The social norms of aggressive interaction that children like Lucy helped to establish, and that served to maintain a peer hierarchy in the CYCC, worked well in their favour. If those who were at the bottom of the hierarchy and who had been bullied were exploring ways to challenge their authority, people like Lucy would lose power in the CYCC. A no-tolerance stance against aggression, and suggestions that included soliciting intervention from CYCWs, meant that people like Lucy would have to find new ways to attain power in the CYCC. It is therefore not surprising that Lucy did not support the sentiment expressed in the play.

³⁶ This phrase was used by Lucy to indicate to the theatre group that they thought they were better than the other children in the home. This was especially because the theatre group received praise from the CYCWs, who commended them for trying to set new examples for conflict resolution.

As discussed throughout this chapter, the participants were able to adopt, and put into practice more frequently, non-aggressive means of dealing with conflict that were modelled during the theatre sessions. It is particularly remarkable that the participants were able to do so despite the discouragement the participants received from their peers, as mentioned above by Lauren. The participants were able to look past this discouragement because they found encouragement in the social networks they had created between them. Although their new strategies for conflict resolution were not supported by everyone in the CYCC, they were supported by one another, and evidently that was all the support they needed.

“And drama taught us that it is good to fight back sometimes ...”

While it was true that the participants found protection in the social network they created, it also remains true that children who do not fight back when confronted physically are more vulnerable to becoming victims of aggression. Even though the participants were mostly able to handle situations of conflict with the new, non-aggressive strategies that were modelled during the theatre process, the participants still found it necessary to react violently to some situations of conflict such as bullying, so as not to seem like a “pushover” and make themselves vulnerable. Mandy explained that if they did not fight back, the abusive behaviour inflicted upon them would persist:

Mandy: [...] sometimes they push your buttons ... like, you tell them “I don’t want to fight with you, so just leave me alone” and then they go on and on and on and then you end up just hitting them.

I: And why do you think it is difficult [not to hit them]?

Mandy: Because they, like, if you leave them they go on and on and on and on and on about it and it can get really annoying. (June 2013)

During the theatre sessions, it was generally agreed that if non-aggressive means of dealing with conflict failed, it was necessary to resort to aggressive and even violent strategies to avoid future confrontations (Naguran, 2013). In the comment above, Mandy indicated that she did try to reason with the person who was annoying her before becoming physical with them. She also recognised aggression as a tool for protection from further victimisation.

While Sindi had not adopted aggression as a means of conflict resolution (perhaps it had not yet been necessary for her to do so), she also recognised aggression as a tool for protection. Also, because she and Mandy are best friends, it is likely that she had noticed in Mandy's situation, how aggression could be useful in deterring future victimisation, and chose to speak of it here. Sindi said:

Sindi: And drama taught us that it is good to fight back sometimes, because [if you don't bullies] will think you are soft [...] and they will take advantage of you [...]. (June 2013)

Sipho also noticed that Mandy employed aggressive tactics to deter future victimisation. He said:

Sipho: Yeah I think [Mandy] gained confidence but it was more because she started this thing of sorting [out] the boys... hitting the boys. [...] It's good, I'm glad that she developed this thing of standing up for herself. However, the hitting... I spoke to her about it. I said "please can you make sure that you don't fight them". [...] I don't know if I can relate it with the play... or [if] it's something new. [...] But she is on a mission of sorting [out] the boys. (June 2013)

It became increasingly clearer to me and to the participants that aggression, especially in the CYCC environment, was sometimes extremely necessary to avoid future victimisation, as was discussed in Chapter 2. It is my argument that the reason for aggression here was impression management (Chapter 2, page 21).

In accordance with Goffman's dramaturgical framework of impression management (presented on page 22), the participants' management of their impression was indeed performative. However, during this theatre programme, the functions of the frontstage and backstage regions seemed to be reversed. During theatre session, the participants were literally performing in short scenes and portraying characters in images. However, I argue that the theatre session took place in the backstage region and that the participants were frontstage outside the theatre space in their everyday lives. Based on my observations, this was because the theatre space offered one of only a few (if not the only) non-threatening spaces in which participants could let their guard down. During

the theatre sessions, the participants could be who they really were, without the need to give the impression that they were someone else. As Sindi said, the participants got to know the “real side” of each other for the first time during the theatre process (June 2013) (see more on page 177). During the theatre sessions, the participants tested and rehearsed new ways of behaving, and adopted and performed these new behaviours in their everyday lives (in the front region). Children like Mandy constantly need to be “switched on” and aware of the performance that they were giving at all times in their everyday lives in an effort to control how people responded to them, because too many people in the children’s lives could potentially harm them if they did not perform their aggressive impression with conviction.

During the theatre session and the forum theatre performance, when the participants were asked to change either an image or an action in a scene, the participants almost always chose to change the behaviour of the aggressor, not of the victim of aggression. On occasion, however, I would draw their attention to the victim of the aggression portrayed and ask if the participants felt as though the victim was in a position to change the situation they found themselves in; was the victim to passively wait for the aggressor to self-reflect and change his or her ways, thereby liberating the victim?

While each participant admittedly played the dual role of oppressed and oppressor in their everyday lives, the participants almost always chose to replace the oppressor, and chose to reflect on how they could be less aggressive. It is my contention that this was because it was more empowering and less embarrassing to recognise themselves as the oppressor and not the oppressed, because playing the oppressed might have led the participants to appear weak in front of their peers, which past experience has taught them was not wise. It could also be because the participants felt as though there really was nothing the oppressed could do to change their situation. However, this did not seem to be the case on the occasion when the participants did replace the oppressed in a scene or image.

When the victim of aggression was replaced, the group only saw two options for the victim. The first was to call an adult to intervene – this adult would be a CYCW if the

incident took place in the CYCC. As mentioned earlier, the group decided that they would support each other by being credible witnesses to the CYCWs should one of them decide to report an incident to a CYCW. Having credible witnesses would go a long way in ensuring that the CYCW dealt with the situation appropriately.

The second option was for the victim to retaliate with aggression, to show the aggressor that the victim was not weak. The group felt as though this would be a good deterrent for future victimisation. During the group discussion we had after this consensus had been reached, the group explained to me that although this theatre intervention focused on alternatives to aggression, one can put oneself in danger by not being willing to defend oneself. The group agreed that aggression was not always appropriate, but that it was sometimes necessary.

Mandy applied this strategy for liberating herself from victimisation in her everyday life. As mentioned earlier, Mandy held the affections of many of the boys in the CYCC. As a display of teenage affection, the boys would sometimes pick on her and call her names and sometimes hit her. Mandy was determined to let the boys know that she would no longer be picked on. Aggression was her way of showing them that. It was her way of demonstrating power. As discussed throughout this chapter, aggression was one of the most effective ways of obtaining power and respect in the CYCC. For Mandy, the theatre programme brought this realisation to the fore.

When I asked Sipho why people like Mandy felt as though aggression was their only option for deterring future victimisation, he responded by saying that the children's aggression came from a place of fear. He said,

Sipho	When it comes to aggression I think the anger comes with fear so they want to respond so that they can stop you [a person trying to do harm] from doing any more harm. They try to protect themselves. (May 2013)
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This comment correlates with the literature presented in Chapter 2 (page 26) and with the participants' distrust for each other that is discussed in the next chapter. The benefits of behaving aggressively, coupled with the constant distrust and fear of being hurt by

others (and the perceived need therefore to protect themselves) often resulted in the participants' perception that aggression is sometimes their only option.

In light of the evidence I have presented throughout this chapter, I argue that the theatre intervention did model new social norms for conflict resolution that the participants adopted and practised in their everyday lives. As a result of the theatre intervention, the participants now had a range of options to choose from when they faced situations of conflict, which they had explored during the theatre sessions. Because of this, the participants were clearly more conscious of making non-aggressive choices for resolution of conflicts with which they were faced.

Beyond the Theatre Space

The theatre programme not only had positive effects at Mangaliso but also carried through to the participants' school lives. The CYCWs noticed changes in the way participants behaved at school, and attributed these changes to the theatre programme. Trudy said that, while Heather was previously notorious for her aggressive behaviour at school, Heather's teacher had reported a change in her behaviour. Trudy said,

Trudy: As I was telling you before that Heather, even at school, we used to have so many reports about not behaving at school. Then we have gone to school I think twice, but now the teacher said she can see the change. (June 2013)

Heather adopted the new, non-aggressive social norms that were modelled during the theatre intervention and put them into practice, not only in the CYCC but also at school. The social norms modelled during the theatre workshop carried through to the ways that participants behaved at school.

The theatre intervention also established new social norms around committed attendance. Sipho noted that the children's attendance at other programmes at Mangaliso was not as committed as it was to the theatre programme.

Sipho: The commitment ... we have a tendency of children committing themselves into some life skills or project then they fall apart along

the way they lose interest. But when it comes to the [drama] group [they] were committed. (June 2013)

These new norms were not only upheld by the participants during extra-mural activities in the CYCC, but also translated into regular attendance at school for Jack.

Sally: [The theatre programme] will help at school because Jack used to bunk class but he is no more, we no more getting any complaints now. (June 2013)

Before I began the theatre project at Mangaliso, I was warned by Jackie that attendance of extra-mural activities was often very poor. She also told me that volunteers often stop visiting Mangaliso because of it. In the first theatre session we had together, I told the participants that I would attend the theatre sessions and expected the same from them. It was through the issue of attendance that I first introduced to the participants the concept of reciprocity – if I could make the time for them each week, they could make the time for me. Attending every session was one of the items on the agreement drawn up during the first session.

The only time attendance was poor was, understandably, during exams. I still came to Mangaliso every week during the exam period in May despite poor attendance. We did not conduct a theatre session that week. Instead, I helped some of the participants with their studying.

I argue that securing strong attendance could be attributed to three things. First, it was decided by the group, not me, that full attendance (unless of course there was a legitimate reason for absence) was one of the criteria that made the participants eligible to be part of the group. As mentioned earlier, young people are far more likely to adhere to behavioural expectations if they are involved in the process of developing them (Cara & MacRae, 2012). Because the suggestion came from the group, the group was more inclined to stick by it than if it came from me or the CYCWs. Secondly (as discussed earlier), I pledged that I would attend every week and requested the same from them. My consistent attendance obligated them to attend consistently too. I modelled the behaviour of committed attendance, and the participants adopted this. The third reason

was that the theatre sessions were one of only a few occasions that boys and girls had the opportunity to interact with each other at Mangaliso (this is further discussed on page 176). If they did not attend the theatre sessions, they would miss out on the opportunity to interact with those of the opposite sex. The theatre programme changed social norms of the participants' truancy, both in the CYCC and at school.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have presented the evolution of social norms that were well established prior to the theatre programme, as well as the creation of new social norms resultant from participation in the theatre programme.

The four stages of the experiential learning cycle (Kolb, 1984) – concrete experiences, reflections, abstract concepts and active testing – offered by the theatre process, allowed for the modelling and adoption of new social norms by the participants in this study. The participants were able to enact concrete experiences, reflect on the actions present in those experiences (both their own actions and the actions of others in relation to broader contextual factors), discuss/debate alternative action in the abstract form and finally actively test those new actions, both during the theatre activities and in their everyday lives. The new social norms that were modelled and adopted by the participants as a result of the theatre intervention were:

- Less aggressive responses to conflict;
- Reporting of incidents of aggression to adults in authority;
- The use of aggression only when necessary, in the interest of preventing further victimisation;
- Committed attendance at school and extra-mural activities; and
- Improved behaviour at school.

In the next chapter I discuss how the cultivation of the other three elements of social capital – trust, reciprocity and social networks – created an environment at Mangaliso that was conducive to the implementation of the social norms that were modelled during the theatre sessions.

CHAPTER 7

Creating a Non-Threatening Environment

Introduction

In this chapter I demonstrate how the theatre programme created opportunities for the cultivation of trusting relationships between the participants. I go on to demonstrate how this increase in trust laid the foundations for the formation of stronger peer social networks, as well as for the implementation of norms of reciprocity.

1. Trust

Fear as a Constant Companion

A week before the start of the theatre programme, I spoke to the participants about the trust that they have in each other and in the staff of Mangaliso. During our discussion, it became abundantly clear that the participants harboured very low levels of trust towards others. Given the discussion of a diminished sense of trust as a result of child abuse presented on page 26, this was not surprising.

All the participants very candidly stated in front of each other that they did not trust each other. Kate went so far as to point out that it was Lauren that she did not trust the most (January 2013). Lauren did not seem the least bit offended by this. For me, this was indicative of just how normal distrust was at Mangaliso. No one completely trusted anyone, nor was it expected of them to trust anyone.

The participants went on to provide examples of why they felt justified in their distrust for each other. Shanthi explained that she could not trust some people in the group because they had shared secrets of hers in the past. She said:

Shanthi:	See, if I have a letter and I am reading it for myself in one corner, one person will come [up to me]. They will say “let me read” [...] then they pull it from my hand and they will go tell the whole entire world about [what was written in the letter]. [...] And then I will get embarrassed. (January 2013)
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Shanthi (January 2013) also added that she did not trust the other participants in the group with whom she shares a cottage because one of them stole her phone. Sindi concurred that theft in the cottages was one of the reasons that she could not trust everyone in the group. She stated:

Sindi: They steal and they go and dig in other people's cupboards. (January 2013)

The CYCWs expressed a different (although not completely opposing) view on relations of trust between the participants prior to the theatre programme. The CYCWs interpreted the borrowing and lending of goods and the sharing of personal feelings as reflections of the trust that exists between the participants. They lent each other their possessions with faith that their possessions would be returned (January 2013). The examples provided by the CYCWs (borrowing/lending and sharing of personal feelings) were also examples of trust that the participants provided, only much later in the programme (June 2013).

While the CYCWs did recognise that this trust is sometimes betrayed (January 2013), it was interesting to note that while giving similar examples of how the participants had put their trust in each other, the emphasis of the participants' accounts was not on the act of trusting another person but rather on that person's betrayal of trust. Both the participants and the CYCWs had shared that the participants borrowed/lent as well as shared their feelings with each other. Both the participants and CYCC had also shared that trust of this nature has been betrayed. However, in giving their accounts, the CYCWs chose to emphasise the trust rather than the betrayal, while the participants chose to emphasise the betrayal rather than the trust.

From what I observed (Naguran, 2013), this was again because Trudy did not want to divulge too much of the participant's anti-social behaviour on record for fear of possible repercussions. The participants, however, had much fewer inhibitions and had nothing to lose by telling me about the distrust they harboured towards each other. The participants were perhaps less inhibited because they did not, in fact, recognise mistrust

as anti-social behaviour. For the participants, mistrust was normal, prior to the theatre programme.

The participants not only made it clear that they did not trust each other, but all the participants, except Kate, candidly stated that they did not trust the staff at Mangaliso either. They especially did not trust the residential CYCWs, who they referred to as the “aunties”, who lived with them in their cottages. These women were their primary caregivers. From my discussion with the children and CYCWs, I was led to understand that the CYCWs and the children perceived the role of the CYCW to be a professional role as opposed to a social or familial role such as a mother. This was because I had heard children say such things during informal discussions as “they are not our parents”, in justification of not obeying every instruction of the CYCWs; or as in the comment “they must be getting paid to say that” (Sally, January 2013). To the children, the CYCWs were doing their job and nothing more.

Mandy and Shanthi said they did not trust the CYCWs because they did not respect confidentiality. They said:

Mandy: I cannot trust them because say now I tell the aunty something that happened to me and I do not feel comfortable [...] and then I tell her please do not go out and tell them [the other CYCWs]. She will have like a gossip friend and she always tells everything. It is aunty [name of CYCW] and aunty [name of CYCW] and aunty [name of CYCW]. They always tell each other what happens in the cottage. (January 2013)

Shanthi: If I do something wrong then they will go sit with this other person and they will chat and chat and then they will pass on to one child-care worker and the other child-care worker and then it will go on and on and on. (January 2013)

Mandy and Shanthi perceived the CYCWs’ lack of respect for their confidentiality as a betrayal of their trust. A few weeks later I asked Mandy and Shanthi if the CYCWs sharing of personal stories could really be considered gossip. I asked them if it was not their job to make sure the other CYCWs knew what was going on with all the children in the CYCC so that they could fix any problems any of the children might have. Their

response was that, if that was the case, they should not assure the children that they would not tell anyone, and then not keep their word (Naguran, 2013).

Supporting the participants' expression of distrust for the CYCWs prior to the theatre programme, Trudy explained that the CYCWs did not have the trust of all the children in their care. For example, the children did not always trust that what the CYCWs say was true.

Trudy: Because even now when I tell [told] them I passed my driving [driver's licence test] they do not believe it. Yesterday they wanted to go with me so I can prove it to them that I can drive. So to them they do not really trust us in other [some] things. They are like "they must be getting paid to say that. They must be getting paid to do that". So sometimes when it is someone outside [the CYCC] emphasise about these things [aggression], they [participants] kind of take it seriously. (January 2013)

The participants had been lied to and manipulated by those whose duty it was to protect them. It is therefore not surprising that the participants did not completely trust those who were now responsible for their protection and care, and did not believe everything that their current caregivers – the CYCWs – had to say.

In contrast with what was said by the participants and residential CYCWs above, however, Jackie was of the impression that the children did trust the CYCWs prior to theatre programme.

Jackie: I think they [participants] do [...] put their trust in them [CYCWs], yeah because with them having child-care workers they should be trusting them and they should be the people they first report to... and... and we also rely on them to be our, our eyes and stuff so yeah. (March 2013)

Jackie feels as though the participants did trust the CYCWs prior to the theatre programme, but was unable to provide examples of the participants' behaviour that reflected this trust. She said that they should trust the CYCW because they were the participants' primary caregivers. However, from the comments of the children and CYCWs above, it was clear that what "should" happen with regard to trust between

participants and CYCWs was not the same as what did happen. This was also true of the fact that Jackie relied on the participants to be the “eyes and ears” of the CYCWs. It was clear from previous comments that the participants could not be relied upon in this regard because the children did not always report incidents of aggression in the CYCC. What should happen was not always the same as what did happen in the CYCC. Perhaps Jackie did not want to admit the mistrust harboured by the participants towards the CYCWs because this would involve admitting that the children did not receive sufficient adult support in the CYCC. This would cast her, the senior CYCW at Mangaliso, in a questionable light. It was evident that the participants did not trust each other or their primary caregivers prior to the start of the theatre programme.

The experience of child abuse can severely diminish the levels of trust for others (page 26), and the participants of this study were no exception. This had manifested itself in unstable, mistrustful peer relations between the participants. It was clear that, prior to the start of the theatre programme, fear was a constant companion of the participants, which made the participants extremely distrustful of their peers and of the caregivers, and made the formation of companionships with other people difficult.

Trust is Delicate

Four months had passed before the group and I talked about issues of trust again in an FGD. This discussion took place two days after the fight between Paul and Jack. This incident definitely influenced the levels of trust that the participants had built during the workshops up until this point. When asked about trust, Gordon and Jack categorically stated that they no longer trusted anyone in the group (which indicates that they could at some point) (May 2013). While the girls were less emphatic, they also indicated that trust had, for the most part, been damaged (May 2013). The comments of the CYCWs also supported the participants’ expressions (May 2013).

These responses were given in stark contrast to what I had observed throughout the month of April and also only a week before, on the day of the performance (Naguran, 2013). During the trust exercises that were engaged in during the theatre workshops, I saw the participants’ resistance to trusting slowly fade away as their peers proved

themselves to be trustworthy during the theatre sessions. For example, during the trust walk exercise, Amy was initially very resistant to allowing Heather to walk her around the room with her eyes closed. However, on their way up from their cottage to the hall for the subsequent drama session, I saw Amy and Heather walking hand-in-hand. Upon closer observation, I saw that Amy had her eyes closed and Heather was leading her up the stairs. I was astonished. Amy said that she liked it when she and Heather did this exercise now. She said that it was fun not knowing where she was and having Heather to help her reach her destination. She said that she did the same for Heather and “I did not let her walk into walls” (Naguran, 2013). This was an undeniable display of trust, for Heather that Amy did not have prior to the start of the theatre intervention.

From this incident and from others that I had witnessed during the theatre workshops and performances, it was clear to me that the theatre work had created relationships of trust between the participants. However, as Jackie (Senior Child Care Worker at Mangaliso) mentioned in her interview (March 2013), relations of trust were dependent on the nature of the friendships that existed between the participants. This became evident through the ways in which the fight that occurred days earlier had affected relations of trust in the theatre group. This shows that, although trust can be built up through cohesive activities such as participatory theatre programmes, this trust was fragile due to the volatility of the environment in which the children lived. As discussed earlier, the institutional environment did not support cohesion and trust, but was one that provided valid reasons for children to behave aggressively towards each other. As seen in the incident between Jack and Paul, aggressive interactions between peers went a long way towards damaging trust. It was difficult, therefore, for the participants to maintain the relationships of trust that they built up with each other during cohesive activities such as theatre.

What is interesting is that, in the midst of the advancing and retreating in relations of trust, there was a significant drop in incidents of theft in the cottages. Siphso recognised this as a signifier of increased trust between the participants. He said:

Siphso: There are no incidents that has been shared with me when it comes to the drama which shows that there is mistrust. And [...] some of the

children that are a part of the drama, back in the cottages they take things without permission. But there are no... [Incidents]... Even yourself, you never reported your cell phone is missing, your bag is missing and all that stuff. And they always look upon your coming in, when you are coming... they expect you to be there so they trust you as well that you will come. (June 2013)

One of the reasons that the participants gave for not being able to trust each other prior to the theatre intervention was theft by children in the CYCC (page 156). Siphso had noticed that no incidents of theft were reported since the start of the theatre intervention. This provided the participants with one less reason not to trust each other.

Siphso also mentioned that the participants trusted me – they trusted that I would do what I said I would. Not many adults in the participants' lives were true to their word. I felt an added pressure not to disappoint the participants to whom I had grown so close. By not going against my word, I gained the trust of the participants and Siphso acknowledged that. It was my hope that having at least one trustworthy adult in the participants' lives would help them to believe that there are other adults who were worthy of their trust too.

Even with the volatility of the institutional environment, the aggression it sometimes necessitates and the negative effects it has on personal relationships between participants, the participants remained resilient and did not allow the fight between Jack and Paul to completely destroy what they had built as a group. This is evident in the next section.

“I am going to put my trust in them. But ...”

While relationships of trust are certainly difficult to maintain within the institutional environment, the cultivation of those relationships is certainly possible through cohesive activities. I saw for myself over the six-month period of the theatre programme how the participants' resistance to trust began to fade away. I could see that they were more willing to trust each other. I saw the participants seeing each other in a new light, one that was less threatening than the way they had seen each other before. I watched the girls lend each other clothes for the theatre performances with faith that the borrower would return the clothes safely. I watched the boys worry less and less about what the

other boys might say or do to embarrass them in front of the girls. Most movingly, I felt the children trusting me more. First, they came to trust that I would show up when I said I would and that I would see this theatre programme to completion (which was not always their experience with volunteers). They also came to trust that I was there simply because I wanted to be there, and not to solicit information about them on behalf of the CYCWs. This allowed them to share more of their thoughts and feelings during the workshops. Most importantly, they trusted that I truly had their best interests at heart. I did not take the children's trust in me for granted.

As discussed in Chapter 2, the experience of abuse teaches children that placing their trust in someone else is not necessarily a wise choice. During the theatre workshops, we spent a lot of time talking about whether it was wise to trust people, given that the participants have had their trust broken many times by adults and their peers alike. Over the course of the theatre programme, the group came to agree that one should take the time to really get to know someone before trusting them. During a forum theatre scene we enacted during a workshop, we explored ways in which one could determine if someone was trustworthy or not. Heather suggested that you could "test" if they were trustworthy with something seemingly insignificant, before trusting them with something important. She gave an example of asking someone to keep a small amount of money for you while you play sport at school, and waiting to see if that person would return it, lose it or steal it. The group came to agree that they should not blindly trust people, nor deem everyone untrustworthy without reason. They agreed that they needed to be selective about who they trusted, and why (Naguran, 2013).

The comments that the participants made in relation to trust at the end of the theatre programme showed that the participants had internalised their discussions on trust during the workshops and were practising them in their everyday lives. Their comments showed that the participants were willing to get to know people before deeming them untrustworthy or not. For example, Shanthi (June 2013) shared that she was willing to trust the people in the drama group because she got to know them over the course of the programme. The group unanimously concurred that the theatre work had strengthened relations of trust between them (June 2013).

Three of the participants shared that after the theatre intervention they were more likely to take the risk of trusting other participants in the group, even with the knowledge that that trust might be broken. For example, Mark said:

Mark: I have finally [learnt] like, value, like real value of friendship because a lot of people have, like, expressed it [friendship...] this month. Yeah and some people I have learnt how to trust now, so I am going to put my trust in them. But if they break it there will be, like, a problem. (June 2013)

Supporting these expressions of increased trust, the CYCWs saw the fact that the girls in the theatre group gossiped less frequently about each other as being a reflection of increased trust between the participants. Trudy said:

Trudy: *Ja* they do [trust each other] sometimes, [...] because even when somebody is talking about someone, she [a child] will come and say aunty you know you even told us that it is not ok to talk to other person back. Even at the drama we used to say that you must tell a person straight, don't just talk behind her back. (June 2013)

One of the reasons the participants provided for mistrusting each other prior to the theatre intervention was gossip. Speaking behind someone's back is a betrayal of trust. The CYCWs noticed that the participants gossiped less frequently about each other, and attributed this to the theatre project.

During the theatre sessions, the participants enacted scenes of when they had had their trust betrayed. The scene that Shanthi created dealt with the issue of gossip. Through the scene, the participants explored what it felt like to be gossiped about. The action in the scene was changed so that the girls in the scene no longer gossiped about each other and respected each other's confidentiality. As the comment above reflects, new social norms about gossiping were modelled during this process. The girls no longer gossiping about each other gave the girls one less reason to mistrust each other. The decrease in gossip reflected increased trust between the participants as a result of the theatre intervention.

The main reason why the theatre programme was effective in strengthening relations of trust between participants was that it created, for the first time, an environment in which the participants felt safe enough to take small risks with each other and “test” each other’s trustworthiness. While the trust exercises required the participants to make themselves vulnerable by putting their trust in each other, they were not required to risk bringing very much harm to themselves. For example, in the trust circle exercise, the participants could easily regain control of their own body by stepping forward if they felt themselves falling. They did not have much to lose. Although the participants had the opportunity to “hurt” each other during the trust exercises (more emotionally than physically), not once did any of the participants cause harm to each other during the trust exercises. This was perhaps initially because they feared that the others in the group would reciprocate – the participants constantly held each other accountable and behaved in ways that were negatively reciprocal (this is discussed further on page 181). The participants proved to each other that they could trust each other – at the very least within the theatre space that was controlled and moderated by the rules that were agreed upon at the beginning of the programme.

The participants got to see different sides of each other during the trust exercises because, perhaps for the first time, it was evident from the ways the participants carried themselves during the trust exercises that no one had the intention to hurt anyone else. This trust therefore created an environment that was conducive to the implementation of new social norms that were alternatives to aggression, and that were modelled during the theatre programme. The participants came to trust that no one in the group had the intention of harming the other members, and therefore did not feel the need to defend themselves with aggression or give an aggressive impression to their peers.

At the start of this programme, the participants stated clearly that they did not trust each other and throughout the theatre intervention it became evident that relationships of trust in the CYCC were unstable. The participants recognised that, despite the work we had done to build trust in the group, there was no guarantee that the participants would not break each other’s trust. This insecurity would always exist, and justifiably so. What is interesting, however, is that even with this knowledge, the participants were still

willing to put their trust in each other's hands at the end of the intervention. At the end of the intervention the participants had faith that there was a chance that their peers would not betray their trust and that they were willing to give their peers the benefit of the doubt, having got to know them through the theatre project. This was reflected, for example, in Mark's comment above. This was much more than they were willing to do before the start of the theatre intervention. This was not only beneficial for increasing stocks of social capital at Mangaliso, but being willing to selectively trust others was beneficial for the holistic social development of the participants as individuals. It would assist the participants in forming healthy relationships with others outside the CYCC and in their adult lives.

2. Social Networks

As discussed in Chapter 3 (page 47), social networks refer to the social relationships between individuals and groups that serve as a resource for mutual benefit (Lin, 2001:6). Sociologists David Lee and Howard Newby (1983) argue that it cannot be assumed that because people live close to each other, they have much to do with each other. For example, neighbours do not always necessarily share close relationships. It can therefore not be assumed that because the participants shared a cottage, or because they lived on the same premises, the participants formed part of strong social networks in the CYCC.

More accurate signifiers of the strength of social networks that exist between people who live in close proximity to each other are their interconnectedness and the nature of the relationships between them (Lee & Newby, 1983:57). Therefore, the sense of belonging that the children felt towards their peers and the nature of the interactions between the participants were useful signifiers of the strength of the social networks that existed in the CYCC, or if social networks in the CYCC existed at all.

Feelings of trust and distrust (presented earlier) are largely relevant to a sense of belonging – feeling included or excluded (Morgan & Swann, 2004:11). Putnam (2000:274) argues that our deepest sense of belonging often comes from our most intimate social networks. With this in mind, I asked the participants if they felt included

in the CYCC and among the people who formed the theatre group. I asked this because the responses would be a good indication of the strength of the ties that existed between them.

The Certainty of Instability

Prior to the theatre programme, it was clear that instability was the only certainty within peer social networks at Mangaliso. Only Amy and Kate shared that they felt included in the CYCC and among the people in the theatre group (January 2013). This was because these two girls had been in the CYCC the longest of all the participants. As was discussed in Chapter 2, the amount of time the children had been in the CYCC carried with it a certain ranking. Amy and Kate were most familiar with the ways in which social dynamics unfolded at Mangaliso, which helped them to feel more comfortable than the other participants.

Mandy, Sindi and Lauren felt excluded in the CYCC and from the people in the theatre group (January 2013). Before the start of the theatre programme, these three girls also stated that they did not trust the other people in the theatre group (page 155). This supports the argument above (Morgan & Swann, 2004 and Putnam 2000) that the ability to trust is largely related to ones sense of belonging.

The participants gave reasons why they did not feel as though they belonged among the other participants. Lauren shared that she did not feel included in her cottage or in the group, but recognised that it was her own shyness that excluded her (January 2013). Mandy shared an incident where she was deliberately made to feel excluded by two girls. She said:

Mandy: The last time I remember like [name of child] and Sindi the two [of them] would leave me [alone in a bedroom]. I used to sleep on my own bed and then they used to leave me alone. And then one day [name of child] and Sindi they made a choice where they want to move me. They put me in one corner all by myself. (January 2013)

Sindi (January 2013) shared an account of a time when she felt excluded by the other girls in the group. Only Sindi was punished for getting into a fight that all the girls were

involved in because the CYCWs only saw Sindi fighting. The rest of the girls did not acknowledge their part in the fight and let Sindi take the punishment alone. The CYCWs made Sindi do all the chores by herself as her punishment. The other girls in the group knew that this was unfair, but still they did nothing.

This incident portrays a form of passive aggression (see page 17) – a lack of action with the knowledge that this might bring about harm. By not owning up to their part in the fight, the girls’ lack of action hurt Sindi’s feelings. The girls did this deliberately to make Sindi feel excluded. This is therefore also an example of relational aggression (page 17) – cutting people off from a group to make them feel socially excluded.

I had witnessed many instances similar to this, and had had many stories of a similar nature related to me during my time at Mangaliso. There was very little sense of cohesion among the children, and very little sense of loyalty between them. The children were intentionally malicious towards each other, and interacted with each other in ways that were oppressive. The children purposely stifled the development and happiness of others. It was clear from the participants’ responses during the FGDs and from stories of exclusion that they told me during informal conversations that the majority of the participants did not feel included among their peers at the CYCC prior to the theatre intervention. The participants felt it was less of a risk to exist in isolation from a social network (and ensuring that everyone else was isolated from a social network too) to prevent being hurt by a betrayal of trust.

However, even given the harmful and oppressive ways in which the participants treated each other to access power over each other, there was one person who was able to temporarily unite the group for a mutually beneficial outcome. That person was Lucy. The participants recognised that when it came to standing up to Lucy, they were stronger as a group than they were as individuals.³⁷ Lucy had less power over each of them when they stood up for each other.

³⁷ We saw a similar pattern emerge during the knee tag exercise, when the entire group ganged up on Gordon, who was out to tag everyone and assist no one.

Shanthi related an incident when Lucy pushed her and she did not retaliate. Mandy then commented that in instances such as those, the girls would defend each other and confront Lucy together. Because selfless acts of assistance were rare prior to the start of the theatre programme (as seen in the comments above), I am lead to understand they did this, not necessarily because they were concerned for Shanthi's (or anyone else's) injury, but for their own potential injuries in the future. Mandy said:

Mandy: Shanthi is that person that does not fight back for herself so if we find out we go [...] as a gang and ask why did you do it and then if Lucy wants to hit us then we hit³⁸ her back. (January 2013)

By forming bonds with each other to fight against Lucy, the girls created a social network (even before the start of theatre intervention) that offered the mutual benefit of protection. The power that the girls had as a network destabilised some of the power that Lucy had over them as individuals. As seen from the comments above, however, these bonds were brittle prior to the start of the theatre programme. Despite coming together to provide each other with protection against Lucy, the participants still showed little loyalty towards each other and often turned on each other. Even so, the girls' sticking together to defend themselves and each other against Lucy is an example of how positive peer social capital (however unstable) helps to mediate some of the power imbalances inherent in an institutional setting. This also correlated with literature in Chapter 3 in which it was presented that social capital reduces individual vulnerability.

Jackie spoke of how (even though the participants were not loyal to each other in the CYCC) a similar, though not positive, phenomenon would occur if the participants were to be placed in the same school. She said,

Jackie: [...] Here they [...] sometimes cannot rely on... on the other for loyalty and stuff but then at school [...] outside this place, they stick [together]. [...] They fight for each other [...]. That's why we've always made sure that we put them in different schools [so as] not to have a gang. (March 2013)

³⁸ This alludes to the social norm of aggression as a means of dealing with conflict that exists in the CYCC.

Jackie stated that if the children were placed in the same school, they would form a gang. I agree with Jackie. First, the fact that the participants live in a CYCC made them vulnerable to being teased and bullied by the other children at school. As discussed earlier in this chapter (page 126), one of the factors that could make the participants even more vulnerable to victimisation is social isolation. Creating a strong social network with other Mangaliso children at school, in the form of a gang, would make the children less vulnerable to being bullied. The fact that they were all bullied and teased because they lived at Mangaliso would be a factor that united them as a gang.

What is interesting, however, is that the children would only form a gang if they were at school together; they did not form gangs in the CYCC. As was shown earlier that the participants do work together to protect each other from harm in the CYCC but that these social networks that the participants shared with each other prior to the theatre intervention were unstable. This was due to the disloyalty the participants showed towards each other. When considering the discussion of distrust as an effect of child abuse (page 26), it is likely that the participants did not act in ways that were trustworthy or loyal as an act of sabotaging healthy relationships out of fear of the disappointment and hurt that those relationships might cause.

My finding on the ability for the participants to work together, but later betray relationships that has been built, corresponded with both Jackie's (March 2013) and Sally's observations. Sally shared that the participants sometimes took very good care of each other, but that those caring relationships did not exist constantly or unconditionally. Here are her comments:

Sally: They are really caring. I have noticed when one child is sick in the cottage, you can see the other children they are going to her. "Are you ok? Do you like some tea? Can I bring food?" You know.

I: [...]

Sally: And they are going to come to tell you "Aunty 'so and so', she [the sick child] [would] like food. And then you give her a plate and she [one of the children] goes to her [the sick child's] room and gives it to her.

Sally: Sometimes they are very kind. They are caring. It depends on what they did to each other. But they are very kind. They are caring. They know it is your birthday. Sometimes they even remind you like “aunty, do not forget on Monday to order things for this one. It is her birthday”.

I: [...]

Sally: So they have that family caring, but inside them they know that we are not blood sisters and brothers. So whatever happens, it is easy for them to fight [...]. (January 2013)

Instability seemed to be the only characteristic of peer social networks at Mangaliso that the participants could be certain of, prior to the theatre programme.

Inclusion and Cohesion

Over the first two months of the theatre programme, the group and I engaged in theatre-based exercises aimed at bringing the members of the group closer together, encouraging them to form new bonds or strengthen existing ones. The exercises required the group to include everyone in the completion of certain tasks. These exercises led the participants to reflect upon how their behaviour during group activities affected the dynamics of the group, as well as what it was like to feel included during the theatre group activities. These exercises were effective tools for enhancing social cohesion in the group. This was reflected in the comments that the participants made during our second FGD in March.

While only two participants stated that they felt included among the other participants in January 2013, all the participants stated that they felt included in the group two months into the programme. For example, Jack said:

Jack: I feel a part of the group because everybody works together and we help each other. (March 2013)

The participants unanimously agreed that the theatre programme strengthened the ties between them (March 2013). The participants made conscious efforts to include each other more and more as the theatre programme progressed. I recognised that this was attributed to the group-building exercises we engaged in, and also to the ways in which

I modelled social norms of inclusion to the group. I was very conscious of giving everyone in the group an equal opportunity to participate in the workshops and performances. As Mandy said to me:

Mandy: I do feel a part of the group because you never leave us out, you make a plan for everybody. Like in the play everybody has got a part, no one is left out. (March 2013)

The group was conscious of my efforts to accommodate everyone, and they seemed to adopt that behaviour between themselves too. Outside of the theatre workshops, the participants were not afforded many opportunities to truly bond. The participants were in constant competition with each other, whether for the attention of the CYCWs or for the title of being the toughest one in the group in order to avoid being victimised. In addition, their mistrust of each other made forming relationships daunting.

The theatre exercises that focused on group-building (or on the formation of strong social networks) brought the focus of the group to one common objective. The fun and interactive nature of the exercises engaged the group completely in attaining the objective. More importantly, it brought focus to the fact that the participants needed each other to reach their goals.

The objectives – for example making a paper aeroplane – were of no particular benefit to any of the participants. There was no competition, as everyone was on the same team. The only benefit was that, as Jack said “it just felt good to work together” (Naguran, 2013). The engagement in the theatre-based group-building activities was one of the first engagements that required the participants to work together without gaining something concrete or tangible in return. The group-building exercises gave the participants a platform to explore the dynamics between them that had not been afforded before – despite the fact that the participants lived on the same premises.

The theatre exercises required the group to cohere, and they did. Because every group-building exercise could not be completed without the cooperation of everyone, they could all see that they had a role to play. This made every member feel as though they

were a part of the group. This sentiment is reflected in the participants' comments above. The strengthened social networks between the participants was reflected in the improved ways in which the participants worked together. Mandy and Jack shared examples of how they worked well together in a team:

- Mandy: There used to be a lot of fighting when we used to work in a group. Now you have... taught us not to fight. You taught us things that we did not know before. We were always fighting before. [...] Now we learnt that it is not good to fight in groups. We are meant to work together. That is why it is called groups. (March 2013)
- Gordon: Me and my friend, we were doing practical today [at school] and we had to make a square. [...]. We had to make a square thing out of bricks and we were doing it. We do everything the way we want to. If you do not like something we will talk about it, and all the other people were looking at us. They did not do their work. They were just looking at the way we were doing our things, and [... how we] worked together. (March 2013)

Gordon confirmed that his ability to work cooperatively with his friend was developed through his experiences during the theatre workshops (March 2013). This is an example of how the participants were able to implement in their lives outside the CYCC what they had discovered during the theatre sessions. This can be attributed to the active testing phase of experiential learning that the theatre programme offered. The theatre exercises that focused on group-building required the participants to test how best they could work with others to achieve a predetermined objective. Having found that certain strategies were successful during the theatre workshops, the participants were confident in applying these strategies outside the theatre workshops and outside the CYCC.

Over the weeks, I watched how the participants learnt how to handle themselves and others during group tasks. I marvelled at how rapidly I saw strategies change from week to week. I marvelled at how the group let natural leaders emerge, and how much more sensitive the emergent leaders became to the needs of the others in the group. I watched how that sensitivity almost completely eliminated the need for the competitiveness that the participants had so explicitly displayed, often for my attention, in the weeks before. In the space of two short months, the participants had really learnt how to work together towards a common objective.

Simultaneous Advance and Retreat

As mentioned earlier, I convened the FGD that was conducted with the participants four months into the programme in May, only two days after the fight that occurred between Paul and Jack. As I discussed above, this fight had major implications for the trust that the participants harboured towards each other. The diminished trust brought about by this incident had negative repercussions on the strong bonds that the participants had formed with each other during the preceding four months. The fight had created obvious rifts that had implications for the participants' sense of inclusion within the group.

When asked if the participants felt included in the group, only Lauren responded, sharing that she felt excluded from the other participants. She said,

Lauren I don't like also being in a [CYCC] because then most of the people talk behind your back. [...] Like if Sindi is like my friend and I act like I am her friend, and then like, [...] if she is not there, I talk behind her back. I don't like that because then it makes me feel left out [...].
(May 2013)

This is contrary to her response given in the previous FGD, and I am certain that the fight that occurred over the weekend influenced her response. As discussed earlier, the volatility of the institutional environment in which the participants lived made maintaining secure and trustful bonds, built through cohesive activities, very difficult. The institutional environment and the reasons it provided for children to behave aggressively towards each other (page 132) perpetuated the instability of relationships that the children had been subjected to all their lives. What was remarkable, however, was the children's resilience and ability to bounce back after traumatic experiences. This was evident in the comments they made after the theatre programme had ended. These comments are addressed later on (page 175).

While the participants might have been preoccupied with the fight, they did not let the fight completely destroy the bonds they had created. Four months into the theatre programme, the CYCWs were able to provide evidence of strengthened social networks between the participants, and increased loyalty within those networks. For example, Trudy shared an incident of when the girls in her cottage did not like the way a boy

from another cottage was treating Mandy, and pulled together to give Mandy some advice:

Trudy: There was an incident yesterday when one of the boys was shouting and swearing [at Mandy]. I was sitting here and they were playing stones. They discipline each other. “You said it is your boyfriend but how come he is your boyfriend when the boy can shout [at you] like that?” They discipline each other. I was just listening. “Just dump that boy.” “No it is over now. No it is over, you know.” They discipline each other. I was just listening. [...]. Lauren was telling her – “you know as this boy is shouting and swearing everybody, what if you go out with him and get married? Don’t you not think he is going to abuse you?” I was listening yesterday. (May 2013)

The girls regarded the way in which the boy treated Mandy as disrespectful. Instead of confronting the boy for this, the girls chose rather to bring it to Mandy’s attention. This choice was reflective of the fact that the girls recognised that Mandy had the power to change how the boy spoke to her by breaking up with him. This is an area that was explored during the theatre sessions – the way we choose to react to how people treat us gives us power over the way they treat us in the future.

The way in which the girls came together to advise Mandy to not let the boy speak to her in that way was reflective of the strengthened social network that existed among the girls. What was extraordinary about this particular example is that the girls came together to protect Mandy from harm without having anything to gain in return. This reflects a shift of consciousness towards offering assistance to others without agenda.

Supporting Trudy’s observation of stronger peer social networks, Sipho also noticed that the group was far more cohesive in May than they were prior to the theatre programme. He said:

Sipho: They are [...] coming up the stairs [to the theatre venue] with smiley faces, walking together. And I think you never had any problem of them fighting as well...because I [didn’t need to] resolve anything, [for example] anything that started from drama or happened while they were on their way to drama [...]. Also, our children they tend to also have tendency of boys and girls [being separate] but with them [participants in the drama programme] they don’t see that [separation]. They see each other as a group. They [were] also given an opportunity

to put something together [the plays] and they enjoy it and they did enjoy it and they performed the best. (May 2013)

Sipho's comment reflects that the theatre project provided ample opportunity for social cohesion between the participants, especially across gender divides (this is further discussed on page 176) and that there were fewer fights between the participants as a result.

Although there was evidence to support that the fight between Jack and Paul did not completely destroy the peer social network that had been created during the theatre project, the children chose to focus on the damage that it caused. Nevertheless, the participants' resilience served them well in repairing the damage.

Finding Friendship

By the end of the theatre programme, it was clear that the participants did not let the fight over Mandy that occurred between Jack and Paul defeat them as a group. The participants continued to attend theatre sessions regularly (this was not common practice for extra-mural activities in the CYCC). They were willing to give each other second chances, and to continue to work towards building strong bonds with each other. Based on my observations, their commitment to the work and to each other remained consistent because the theatre group and the programme provided the participants with benefits that they could not get elsewhere. For example, in the theatre group and during the theatre workshops, the participants did not feel threatened by each other, nor did they feel the need to compete with each other because they were all given an equal opportunity to participate and feel as though they were an important part of the group.

The trust that the participants had built up with each other created an environment in which they felt safe, and therefore they did not feel as though they needed to pretend to be anything that they were not. As discussed in Chapter 3, interactive arts projects bring people together and provide neutral spaces that are conducive to the development of friendships, partnerships and cooperation (Matarasso, 1997). Most importantly, the

group provided its members with a sense of belonging. As discussed earlier, trust is largely related to one's sense of belonging (Morgan & Swann, 2004). The participants came to value what the group and theatre programme offered them, and ultimately were not prepared to throw away what they had created because of a fight. Even in the volatile institutional environment, the theatre group was able to rekindle the bonds and trust that they had created within their social network after a traumatic experience. The theatre programme provided them with a space in which to do that. These sentiments were reflected in the comments the participants made during the final FGD. I was moved by the contrast in the ways the participants spoke about their relationships with each other after the theatre programme.

Mark: Drama hasn't only taught us not to be like bullies or drug addicts, we've also learnt trust and to gain people's bonds and we have learnt [to have] a better relationship than like usual. So far we [are] like best friends, like whenever we see each other we [are] like, "hey friend" or "hey doll", or "hey girl". [...] Team work is very important to us especially in our cottage but sometimes people don't appreciate it. So [...] because we have learnt a lot from drama [for example] to be friends, team work and trust, [...] we've got like a better bond than before 'cause we barely used to know each other from beginning. (June 2013)

The theatre intervention gave the participants a rare opportunity to really get to know each other and intimately explore the dynamics that existed between them, and how best to work together to achieve a common purpose that was mutually beneficial to them all. From Mark's comments above, it is clear that the theatre intervention did indeed create strong bonds between the participants and therefore create a stronger social network between them.

I was particularly interested when the participants told me that the theatre programme provided among the first opportunities for boys and girls at Mangaliso to interact with each other (June 2013). In an informal conversation with Jackie, I was told that the staff at Mangaliso discouraged boys and girls from interacting with each other for fear that, living in such close proximity, such interactions might encourage under-age sexual interactions (Naguran, 2013). During the theatre workshops however, the girls and boys had opportunities to interact, get to know each other and see each other in new ways.

For example, the participants would often share stories from their personal life experiences that earned the empathy of their peers. This was particularly true in the case of the boys, who initially felt as though they needed to constantly act tough, but over time they let their guards down and allowed the girls to see their insecurities. This was an uncommon experience for the participants because, as discussed in earlier, in an environment of mistrust, the participants feel the need to give an aggressive impression and not expose vulnerabilities. This increase in trust between participants made the participants feel as though it was safe to expose their vulnerabilities to each other. This exposure of vulnerability created and strengthened social networks across gender divides. Sindi mentioned that the girls, for the first time, saw the boys for who they really were and this made the formation of friendships across the gender divides a lot easier. She said:

Sindi: What I like about drama is that we act and everything and we have fun. But as Mark said [...], we do not get time or opportunities to meet friends [of the opposite sex]. But here [in the theatre class], like [for example with] the boys... I never ever knew Mark [...] his real side of him, but then the nice thing about it [drama] is now we know it, and we have the chance [to meet]. Like now, we are meeting each other [we are together]. (June 2013)

It only occurred to me after the theatre programme, when the participants made these comments, that one of the reasons the commitment to the theatre programme was so strong was because the participants did not otherwise have a chance to interact with the friends of the opposite sex they had made during the programme, and they had come to enjoy each other's company. As far as I know, no romantic or physical relationships developed between the participants during the theatre programme or as a result of it. What developed were deep and healthy friendships that the participants came to value.

The ways in which the participants learnt to create healthy bonds with each other during the theatre workshops also had positive repercussions for their lives outside of the CYCC. Lauren and Sindi shared that they were able to make new friends at school. For example, Sindi said:

Sindi: The new friend [... name of friend] the other time she was alone. She did not have friends. She was lonely at choir and after that I said “what is your name?” and after that she answered me and after that I said “come sit with me. It seems like you are so lonely and then we became friends and after that she welcomed me [...]. (June 2013)

One of the themes that arose repeatedly during the theatre sessions was how bad it feels to be excluded. This allowed the participants to empathise with those who they thought might be feeling excluded, and to reflect on what they could do to help people feel included. Through still images and enacted scenes, the participants explored ways in which they could approach others to become included in a certain social group, as well as how they could help to include others. One of the ways that Mandy suggested was to approach people who looked as though they were being left out, and invite them to join them or their group. The behaviour that Mandy modelled in this exercise was adopted by and practised by Sindi and Lauren at school (June 2013). The theatre intervention equipped the participants with the ability to extend social networks to make others feel included.

The theatre project was successful in cultivating bonds between the participants of the theatre programme, thereby creating peer social networks. Although those networks were not always stable because of the volatility imposed by the institutional environment, the networks created through the theatre programme still provided the group with a sense of belonging, togetherness and friendship that was almost non-existent at the start of the theatre programme.

The participants’ comments were supported by Sipho (June 2013) and the residential CYCWs. For example, the CYCWs noticed that the participants were more inclusive of other people during their daily activities after the theatre programme, indicating strengthened peer social networks. A person’s sense of belonging comes from their closest social networks (Putnam, 2000). The comments below reflect this.

Sally: Ja they work more as a team especially Gordon [... he] likes to cook, he likes to involve others to come and join him with cooking, he likes to do team work.

Trudy: Ja they [the girls] work well together even with their hair they sit down and help each other, comb each other putting ponies and all that thing. (June 2013)

The CYCWs noticed that the participants involved others in social activities, and attributed this to the theatre intervention.

The establishment of peer social networks provided the participants with social support that made them less vulnerable to being victimised and therefore gave them less reason to act in ways that were aggressive. In this way, the networks aided in creating a trusting environment conducive to implementing non-aggressive social norms that were modelled during the theatre sessions. In addition, the participants watched each other and enforced conformity to norms that had collectively been agreed upon.

3. Reciprocity: You Get What You Give

“They hit me, I hit them back”

As discussed earlier, reciprocity refers to a variety of forms of exchange of exchange – both cooperative (positive) and retaliatory (negative). Prior to the theatre intervention, none of the participants felt that relationships in the CYCC were positively reciprocal (January 2014). The participants were not able to provide any examples of positive reciprocity between peers, but provided plenty of examples of when their peers acted out of self-interest only. For example, Sindi shared an account of when she felt that Lucy took more than she was willing to give:

Sindi: She [Lucy] asks for your sweets like, “Sindi please give me some of that”. Like on Friday, I was going to my granny’s house. I had a pack of popcorn, butter flavour. It was my favourite flavour and I did not know that [Lucy] liked it. [...] She asked me for some and after that she said give me all [the popcorn]. Then after that [...] she said “then, if you do not want to [give it to me] you can just leave it”. And after that I had to give her. And then after that she [...] asked me how much are they. [...] I said “three rand fifty”. [...] She said that “oh, I am going to give you two rand because you already ate some”. And I only ate five or three [pieces of popcorns] there.

I: Does she share with you, Sindi?

Sindi: Yeah but sometimes, not all the time.³⁹ (January 2013)

Kate also indicated that one of her peers was not willing to reciprocate the sharing of material goods. She said:

Kate: And then sometimes like [name of child] she asks me for some of my things and I be like “ok you can have some”. And then she will be coming with something and I will be like “please can I have some?” and she will be like “*hayibo*, what makes you feel so special”. (January 2013)

What is interesting is that, although I asked the participants if they or others behaved in ways that are reciprocal in nature, the participants only chose to speak about the non-reciprocal acts of others, not themselves. To me, this was indicative of the participants’ limited abilities for self-reflection prior to the start of the theatre intervention.

During the weeks leading up to the intervention, and during the intervention itself, I noticed that all the participants did not value the need to assist those who had assisted them. I will use the example of the booking of the venue for our drama sessions. I met the group on Tuesday afternoons. Also on Tuesday afternoons, another volunteer offered mathematics tutoring to some of the High School learners in the CYCC. This group had booked the chapel venue for their sessions, and we had booked the hall for ours. On one occasion, I wished to show the participants a DVD of a professional storyteller I had met in the USA. I had told the participants about a performance of his that I had watched in the USA, and they were eager to see some of his work. Because the chapel had a television in it, I asked the volunteer if we could swap venues just for that week. She obliged. I set up tables and chairs in the hall for her and her group and we watched the DVD in the chapel.

A few weeks later, the chapel carpets were being cleaned and the mathematics group was unable to use the chapel for their session. I explained to my group that the chapel was being cleaned, and asked if they would be willing to work outside, on the grassy

³⁹ This was also an example of how Lucy used the power in the CYCC that she had acquired through aggression, to extort material goods from her peers. Here, Lucy did not (need to) threaten Sindi with aggression. Sindi felt obliged to give up her popcorn because Lucy would have hurt her eventually if she did not.

patch in front of the hall, to accommodate the mathematics group. We had often enjoyed playing games and having discussions on this sunny patch before. The group refused. Lauren remarked, “That’s their problem, this is our venue.” When I reminded the group that this same lady gave up her venue for us a few weeks back, Shanthi answered “That was so long ago, and when we used the chapel they didn’t tell us that they would be using our venue.” It was only after much protest and persuasion that my group agreed to work outside. This was one of quite a few incidents in which the attitudes and actions of the participants showed me that acting reciprocally was not something that they valued highly. This incident, and the comments presented above, give evidence that levels of positive reciprocity were not high between peers at Mangaliso prior to the theatre intervention, or two months into the intervention, when the incident about the venues occurred.

While the participants were not able to provide me with examples of positive reciprocity, they were able to provide me with plenty examples of negative reciprocity. For example:

Lauren: When they [CYCWs] treat us bad, we treat them back. (January 2013)

Kate: They [other children in the CYCC] hit me, I hit them back. (January 2013)

Amy: I got sweets [and] then I did not want to share with [name of child] and Heather. I gave the others but not Heather and [name of child]⁴⁰ so then they said that they do not want to be my friend anymore because I did not give them.

I: Why did you not want to share with them?

Amy: Because they did not share with me. (January 2013)

Much like in the trust walk, knee tag and Colombian hypnosis exercises used in the workshops, the participants gave evidence that when others treat them badly, they in turn treat others badly. Levels of negative reciprocity were incredibly high prior to the theatre intervention.

⁴⁰ This is also an example of relational aggression – the ways in which the participants acted to isolate each other from peer social networks prior to the theatre intervention.

Negative reciprocity becomes likely when someone blames another person, rather than themselves, for the other person's behaviour towards them (Gilbert, Fiske & Lindzey, 1998:487). This was true in the case of the participants. The participants felt that the onus was on others to determine how those others would be treated by them. I found that the participants could readily recognise that the behaviour of others determined how they would be treated by the participants, but not their own behaviour to determine how they would be treated by others. This was because of the participants' inability (or unwillingness) to reflect on their actions prior to the start of the theatre intervention. The participants also failed to recognise that they had the power to choose how they treated someone, regardless of how that person may treat them.

In the light of the above discussion of trust between peers at Mangaliso (page 26), it is likely that the participants' negative reciprocity was in the interest of self-preservation. As mentioned earlier, children who have experienced abuse and/or neglect tend to have a reduced capacity to form and maintain meaningful and intimate attachments with others, and may deliberately engage in behaviour that threatens or disrupts bonds formed with others out of fear that close bonds will result in hurt or disappointment (Breire, 2002:3). This was the case for the participants in this study. Reciprocating good treatment opens up the potential for deep and meaningful relationships to blossom, and also the potential for disappointment and hurt to come from those relationships. The reciprocation of bad treatment, however, ensures that any possibility that the formation of healthy relationships is sabotaged, preventing any potential damage that could have come from those healthy relationships.

In the exploration of how reciprocal relationships affect economy, economists Ernst Fehr and Simon Gächter (2000:159) argued that the will to reciprocate harmful behaviour with punishment is stronger than the will to reciprocate friendly behaviour with reward. Further, as was discussed in Chapter 3, those who have experienced child abuse often behave in ways that are retaliatory and vengeful for perceived justice, and feel morally justified in doing so (Bloom, 2001). This was definitely the case for the participants in this study. One of the instances in which we saw this was during the knee

tag exercise (page 103) when the group banded together to punish Gordon for not wanting to release them when they were frozen. The group did not see the need to band together to reward those who did release them. The participants prioritised the reciprocation of harmful behaviour in an effort for justice.

From the data presented above, it was clear that levels of negative reciprocity were high prior to the theatre intervention, while no trace of positive reciprocity was present.

“I think it’s 50/50”

During the final FGD after the theatre intervention, only one participant, Lauren, responded to the question on reciprocity:

I: Question ... do you see “give and take” in the group [...]?

Lauren: No because if I give someone like chips or bubble-gum they won’t come back to say “Lauren, there we go, you can have this because you paid me, you gave me something and now I am returning it”.
(June 2013)

The element of reciprocity was only addressed in the last month of the theatre intervention, and we therefore had not spoken about reciprocity in an FGD since January 2013. Lauren’s response was no different to what it was prior to the theatre intervention. Based on Lauren’s comment alone, there was no substantial evidence to indicate that there was either an increase or decrease in levels of reciprocity in the CYCC as a result of the theatre intervention.

However, from my observations, one example stands out. The last of our theatre sessions together fell during the week of Sindi’s birthday. During the week of one of the participants’ birthdays, I would bring a cake and birthday candles to Mangaliso with me. We would sing “Happy Birthday” to the birthday boy/girl and let them cut the cake. Sindi would always make sure that she would make a birthday card for all the participants to sign to present to the birthday boy/girl during our little birthday parties.

When the participants saw me arriving with Sindi's birthday cake, they realised that no one had made Sindi a card. The participants asked if I could please stall the birthday party and theatre session by fifteen minutes and keep Sindi busy with me during that time. When I asked why they needed that time, Shanthi said that they forgot to make a birthday card for Sindi. She pointed out that Sindi always made cards for everyone else and considered how she would feel if they did not make one for her (Naguran, 2013). This showed that the participants were mindful of reciprocating good deeds. For me, this event stands in complete contrast to Shanthi's comment regarding moving out of our venue to accommodate the mathematics club (page 181) and reflects an increase in how much Shanthi and the rest of the group, had come to value reciprocity.

In correlation with my observations, Siphos and Trudy's comments in the following exchange indicated that the relationships between the participants were reciprocal after the theatre programme.

- I: Okay, okay. Do you think that they [participants] give as much as they get? So ... if I lend you something, will they lend me something in return... or do they take advantage ...?
- Trudy: Ja I think so, because sometimes [...] we discourage [the participants] to lend clothes and all that. But sometimes you can see that when at school, it's a civvies [day] and someone don't have a jean or what, they say "No I am going to give you mine, I lend [name of child] my jean but when you [name of child], you come back, wash my jean and give it to me. *Ja*, they help each other [...]. (June 2013)
- I: And do you find that there is give and take? Like, if there are some people who are giving more than they are receiving? [...] Do some kids give more than others but will not get anything in return?
- Siphos: I think it is 50/50. (June 2013)

As mentioned above (page 182), the participants' levels of mistrust for each other prevented them from forming relationships with each other that were positively reciprocal prior to the theatre programme. During the course of the theatre programme, the levels of trust that the participants harboured each other increased. As discussed in Chapter 3, trust is strongest where norms of reciprocity are most active (Castillo & Carter, 2002). This increase in trust influenced the participants' willingness to create

positively reciprocal bonds with each other that were based on trust. The participants came to trust that any kindness they showed towards each other would not necessarily result in disappointment, but could possibly be repaid, as had been modelled during the theatre sessions. We had spent a lot of time modelling norms of positive reciprocity during image and forum theatre exercises that the participants internalised and were able to practise with each other. The birthday card anecdote is an example of this.

Also, the modelling and practice of positive reciprocity created an environment that was conducive for the implementation of new social norms that were alternatives to aggression. The participants came to trust that kindness would be repaid with kindness within the theatre programme, and therefore did not feel the need to give an aggressive impression to their peers for fear that they may otherwise be victimised.

Finally, the participants' increased ability to reflect on their own actions impacted levels of reciprocity in the group. As mentioned above, negative reciprocity becomes likely when someone blames another person, rather than themselves, for the other person's behaviour towards them (Gilbert *et al.*, 1998:487). The theatre programme developed the participants' ability to reflect on their actions (page 138). With this kind of self-reflection, acts of negative reciprocity became less likely because the participants started to consider the ways in which their behaviour affected the behaviour of others. An example of this was when Mark commented during an informal group discussion that, looking back, he realised that many of the situations of conflict he was involved in during his time at the CYCC could have been avoided if he had behaved in ways that did not further aggravate what he considered in hindsight to be an insignificant point of conflict (Naguran, 2013).

The theatre programme modelled new social norms of positive reciprocity in an environment of mutual trust and self-reflection. This opened the way for the formation of positively reciprocal bonds between the participants.

Conclusion

In this chapter I engaged the ways in which the theatre programme generated trust, peer social networks and reciprocity at Mangaliso CYCC, as well as how the generation of these three elements created an environment conducive to the implementation of new, non-aggressive social norms.

The theatre intervention allowed participants to explore dynamics of trust between them and offered an environment that was conducive to the cultivation of trust. As a result of the theatre project, the participants were more willing to put their trust in each other than they were prior to the start of the theatre intervention.

The relationships of trust that were formed as a result of the theatre project laid the foundation for the formation of social networks between the participants in which reciprocal bonds were present. The theatre process offered participants the opportunity to explore the dynamics between them and required the participants to form bonds with each other in order to complete tasks assigned to them during the theatre workshops. The sharing of insights into the participants' personal experiences also brought the group closer together and went a long way towards creating bonds and friendships, particularly across gender divides. The participants created social networks that did not exist between them prior to the start of the theatre intervention.

The social networks that the participants created between them assisted in the modelling and establishment of the new social norms in the CYCC. The members of the network would watch each other, and enforce upon each other the norms that were modelled during the theatre process. Participants also found support in the network of participants when they faced adversity from others when actively testing and implementing the new social norms. These networks also worked to minimise the vulnerability to which the participants were exposed as individuals, and as a result, also minimised the need for the participants to aggress for the purpose of protection.

The improvement in levels of each of the four elements of peer social capital (trust, reciprocity, social norms and social networks) shown throughout this chapter enabled a

decrease in aggressive behaviour in the CYCC that I argue was a result of poor family social capital. The increase in peer social capital compensated for the deficit in family social capital, which was a source of behavioural problems such as aggression, and brought about positive social change in the CYCC.

In the next chapter I will discuss how the theatre programme affected the participants' self-confidence and sense of agency.

CHAPTER 8

Imagining the Future

Introduction

In this chapter, I engage the ways in which participation in the theatre programme affected the participants' self-confidence and sense of agency.

1. Self-Confidence

“They were very confident and happy and free”

The experience of child abuse often damages a child's self-esteem and self-confidence (Craddock, 2006). Further, a child's sense of self is largely determined by the functioning the family to which the child belongs (Bin Yaacob, 2006). The participants of this programme were removed from the care of their dysfunctional families, placing them at high risk of a diminished sense of self.

Participation in any dramatic process builds self-esteem and self-confidence (Auger & Heather, 2009:287). Josie Auger and Jane Heather (2009:287-288) attribute this increased confidence and self-esteem to the cooperative and collaborative nature of the work that builds strong and positive human connections.

This was true for the participants of this study. Sipho noticed an improved sense of self-confidence in the participants while they were performing, four months into the theatre programme:

- I: When you watched the play how did you feel about it or what was your experience like, what did you think of it?
- Sipho: I was impressed especially with my children in terms of ... they've acquired some skills and they've managed to showcase their talent. They were very confident, very happy and free and the fact that there was the rehearsals and some training [skills development]. The presentation was very awesome. (May 2013)

As presented throughout this section, participation in the theatre programme created strong social networks between the participants, which provided them with a sense of inclusion and belonging. As per Auger's and Heather's (2009) argument above, this sense of connectedness improved the participants' self-confidence which was evident in the performance. The development of theatre skills throughout the programme led the participants to discover talents in themselves that they did not know they had. This contributed to the participants' improved self-confidence and self-esteem. This argument is supported by Sindi's and Mark's comments about discovering their unknown talents (page 199). The skills they learnt and the confidence they acquired during the theatre intervention was evident to Sipho (and to myself) during the forum theatre performance.

The participants' improved levels of self-confidence were also evident after the theatre programme in their ability and willingness to act in opposition to established social norms in the CYCC. Reporting incidents of conflict, which goes against established norms of conflict resolution, is a reflection of increased self-confidence. Sipho said:

Sipho: Yes, some they are able to express themselves now, come up and say how they are feeling and wanted to be listened to instead of keeping quiet. (June 2013)

As discussed earlier (page 147), the participants found support in the network they created with each other when they faced resistance from their peers when they tried to establish new social norms around conflict resolution in the CYCC. Despite this resistance, the participants persevered. The network that the participants created with each other boosted the self-confidence of each of them. It was through this self-confidence that the perseverance in establishing new social norms in the CYCC was possible.

2. Agency

The Perceived Power of Circumstance

Prior to the theatre programme, only Sindi felt as though she could affect change in the CYCC. She felt as though she could do so by increasing positive communication. Here are her comments:

- I: Do you feel like you can change your life or life in the [CYCC]? [...]
- Sindi: Yes
- I: Tell me why, my darling.
- Sindi: All we have to do is just talk. Do not just keep quiet because it does not help to keep quiet. [...] Because if you keep everything inside, when you are older it is going to come back. Like why did I not do this to that person, why did not I do that to that person. (January 2013)

I was informed by Jackie (informal communication, 2012) that when Sindi first came to the CYCC, she was very shy, reserved and quiet. The CYCWs did not know how to assist or support her because she would not communicate her feelings to them. At the time of this interview, Sindi had been in the CYCC for almost three years. She is now one of the most articulate and spontaneous children in the CYCC. Sindi's life changed dramatically, and for the better, once she began to come out of her shell and communicate her feelings. Sindi recognised the power of communication as a tool for change because communication has been a powerful tool in her personal development.

Shanthi recognised that there are some things that were within her power to change, but not others. Here is an example:

- I: Shanthi, do you feel like you can change your life?
- Shanthi: Yes but not all the stuff in my life.
- I: Okay, what do you feel like you can change?
- Shanthi: [...] If I have test coming up and then I do not actually study. I just leave it... and then, like, I see other people playing and then I really want to [play with them] and then I just leave [studying]. I just tell the aunty [...that] I am done learning. So then I just leave my stuff there

and then I go play. And then when it comes to the test, then I get like a low mark. So I want to start learning.

I: [...] Good. And what do you feel like you cannot change?

Shanthi: It is really embarrassing.

I: That is okay. You do not have to say it. (January 2013)

The example she used here, studying for a test, is something that requires self-discipline and involves very few other people. Shanthi was not confident that she has the potential to effect change beyond herself.

The other two participants who responded, Lauren and Amy, believed that they had no agency for change (January 2013). As discussed in Chapter 2, a diminished sense of agency is a common effect of child abuse.

As was also discussed in Chapter 2, victims of abuse tend to prematurely foreclose potentially positive opportunities. From my interactions with the participants prior to the theatre programme, it was also clear to me that most of the participants did not only have little confidence that they could change their environment or influence those around them, they also had little confidence that they could even change themselves.

In contrast to the participants' responses, the CYCWs interpreted the children's attendance at school and life skills courses as an indication that the children feel as though they could change their lives and their communities. I asked Trudy:

I: In your experience, do the children feel as though they are able to change their lives or their communities?

Trudy: Yes, they are aware of that, yeah [...]

I: Can you tell me how they think they can change their lives or their communities?

Trudy: They still do go to school, which means they believe in education. [...] They are involved with life skills that will help them to think in a much better way and in a positive way. So they do believe that even if it is a small change, it will make a big change and a big difference in

their lives and outside when they leave the organisation.
(January 2013)

The CYCWs could not provide me with examples of when the participants took the initiative in bringing about positive change to their environment. I was not convinced that the participants' attendance at school and life skills programmes were reflections of a strong sense of agency. Attending school and life skills programmes are not optional for the children, and rates of truancy at school and in the programmes were high prior to the start of the theatre intervention. Based on this and the participants' responses above, it was my finding that prior to the theatre intervention, the participants felt as though they were products of their circumstances, which they could not change.

“We learn things in drama to change our lives”

Two months into the theatre programme, the participants demonstrated an increased sense of agency by their willingness and ability to act in ways that influenced the actions and behaviour of those around them. Some of the participants shared accounts of having tried to instil change in their immediate environments by intervening in situations of conflict that they had witnessed. Here are the comments:

Sindi: There were two girls fighting, their names are Maggie and Doreen. There was this teacher who just did not care about us⁴¹. [...] Then after that me and Mandy, like took them to the corner [...]. We told the teacher “Miss we are just having a little time with these girls”. And after that we went to the corner. We asked them “how did it start?” Doreen was like angry and shouting and we said, “calm down there is [no reason] for shouting”. And then after that she calmed down. She also went to drink water and after that she came back. [...] When Doreen went [to drink water] we told Maggie, “Please do not fight. It is just a practice. There is nothing to fight about. We are supposed to be a team”, [...]. And then after that Doreen came back and then we said “you two must discuss this both of you and then I want to see you guys being friends again”. (March 2013)

Lauren: And then now this boy and this [other] boy started fighting. [...] I just jumped in the middle, I cut their hands and then after that I was like “why were you fighting?” And then they said, “because he threw my jet around”. So I am like [...] “stop fighting”. (March 2013)

⁴¹ This is also indicative of the participants' perception that they have no adult support and therefore need to deal with matters themselves. This was discussed on page 138

Jack also indicated a sense of agency by recognising that everyone has a choice in the ways in which they react to situations and circumstances. He said:

Jack: Everybody has a chance to make a choice. (March 2013)

By exploring and testing new approaches to conflict resolution in image and forum theatre exercises during the theatre sessions, the participants were able to see how their behaviour and reactions to conflict can affect the situations with which they are faced, and therefore their immediate environment. The participants recognised that they had the power to change circumstances. They believed that they had something to offer that could change what was unfolding before them, and they did. The participants were then willing and able to harness their power to change situations by applying the conflict resolution methods that they had explored during the theatre sessions, in their everyday lives. The participants attributed their willingness to intervene to change situations in which they found themselves to the theatre work.

The above examples also reflected the establishment of new social norms among participants with regard to conflict resolution. While participants were likely to respond to conflict with aggression prior to the start of the theatre intervention, the participants now recognised, practised and encouraged others to practice non-aggressive means of conflict resolution.

While the theatre intervention had a positive effect on increasing the participants' sense of agency, the theatre programme also seemed to have developed, in Lauren's case, an unrealistic sense of what is possible, and made her feel as though she could play an active part in ending her mother's alcoholism. This is reflected in the following exchange:

Lauren: Oh yes I can.

I: Yes tell me how, Lauren.

Lauren: Okay, in finding a way to stop my mother drinking ...

I: Okay, can you tell me a little bit how?

Lauren: Like going to ... I can tell her to stop what she is doing and then she can stop and then I go back to her. (March 2013)

Through the changing of enacted scenarios, Lauren was able to test out different behaviours and see what impact that behaviour made to that particular situation. Lauren was always keen to test new behaviour, and always seemed astonished by the ways in which she was able to so drastically affect the behaviour of those around her by changing her own behaviour. In this sense, the theatre work allowed Lauren and other participants the opportunity to gain insight on the influence they have on others and in their immediate environments.

I argue that it was this opportunity that increased Lauren's sense of agency. However, an increased sense of agency made Lauren falsely believe that she could assist her mother's recovery from alcoholism. Lauren's mother's alcoholism was the one circumstance that Lauren wanted to change the most. Lauren did not feel responsible for her mother's drinking problem because her mother was an alcoholic long before Lauren was born (informal communication, 2012). She did, however, feel responsible for her mother, and the theatre programme gave Lauren the sense that she could play an active part in influencing her mother into sobriety. In reality, however, there was little Lauren could do to stop her mother from drinking.

Much like Boal's forum theatre, where the oppressed can only change their own actions and not the actions of the oppressor, Lauren could only change her own behaviour, and not her mother's. It was only her mother who could stop herself. Perhaps because both theatre of the oppressed and theatre of the oppressor methods were used in this theatre process, and because the participants could replace the oppressed or the oppressor (although they could only replace the oppressor if they truly identified with and recognised themselves as the oppressor in the scene or image), Lauren felt as though she had the power to change her "oppressor" as well as herself. This false sense of agency was potentially dangerous for Lauren. I alerted Jackie, the senior CYCW, to this unrealistic sense of agency that Lauren had acquired. This unrealistic sense was no doubt exacerbated by the feeling of responsibility she had towards her mother. I was not

equipped to address this issue with Lauren myself because I am neither a psychologist nor a social worker. Jackie reminded Lauren that her mother was being provided with all the professional support she needed, and that her mother's alcoholism was not her battle to fight. She also reminded Lauren that she could, and must, continue to exercise her new found agency in her own life, but should not take responsibility for the actions of others.

During the subsequent theatre sessions I was careful to bring focus to how the children could harness their agency to effect social change in their own lives (and by extension in their communities) without feeling as though they were responsible for changing the actions of others. They could, however, play a part in creating an environment that encourages other people to behave in ways that are valuable for a community as a whole. The ultimate choice for behaviour change, however, comes from the individual themselves, not from external influences.

Two months into the theatre programme, Jackie's comments corresponded to those made by the participants. She indicated that she felt as though the participants believed they could change their lives.

Jackie: [...] They can change, their lives and community.

I: Do you think they think they can?

Jackie: I think they do, they do because they are positive about it.
(March 2013)

Although this correlates with the comments made by the participants during the same time period, Jackie could not provide examples of actions that supported her claim, as in most other cases during this FGD. This was interesting to me because during this FGD Jackie was uncharacteristically reserved. Jackie seemed despondent and not willing to invest a lot of time or energy in activities of the CYCC – including this theatre intervention which she had played a key role in making possible. Her resignation the week following this interview made me suspect that she had had a disagreement with

the management of the CYCC, and that this disagreement had impacted the way in which she responded to the questions I asked.⁴²

For me, this was again indicative of how the institution restricts personal choice. The institutional environment not only restricts the personal choices of the children in the CYCC, but also showed me that the staff, too, are restricted. The residential CYCWs were initially afraid to speak about the realities of the institutional conditions for fear of the potential repercussions of casting themselves and the institution in a bad light. Jackie's behaviour was also restricted by the institutional environment. While I do not know the details of Jackie's disagreement with management, I got the sense that her disagreement prevented her from being as forthcoming with information as she had been in the past. I do not think this had as much to do with confidentiality as it had to do with exhaustion. I got the sense that Jackie's fallout with management had left her too exhausted to continue to fight for change in the institution, and that she had withdrawn the energy that she formerly invested into extra-curricular activities as a result. As discussed in Chapter 2, service conditions, stress and burnout were pervasive factors that led to the paralysis of adequate service in CYCCs. This made me wonder how much the institutional environment, of which Jackie had been a part, had affected her own sense of agency.

“Yes and No”

Four months into the theatre programme, Sindi maintained that she had the ability to change her life and her community (May 2014). Her response had been consistent throughout the theatre programme.

Heather and Shanthi did not feel as though they could change their lives. Heather did not give a reason. Shanthi shared that she had tried to change certain habits but failed in her attempt. She said:

⁴² I have no reason to believe that her resignation or her disagreement with management was in any way related to the theatre intervention.

Shanthi: No, 'cause it is really hard to change yourself. 'Cause like [...] I don't really learn [for tests]. [...] So this term I wanted to start to study and stuff like that, but it really [didn't] work out. (May 2013)

In a previous comment, Shanthi felt that she could change herself but not necessarily her environment. She used the same example as she used here, saying that she felt as though she could change the fact that she does not study for tests. She had not, up until this point, been able to change that about herself and appeared to have lost hope that she ever could. Shanthi took responsibility for not studying. While Shanthi's own self-discipline played a large role in not studying for tests, there were other factors at play that may have limited her ability to do so effectively.

Educationists Sara Munson and Madelyn Freundlich (2008:2) argue that children in residential care are less likely to do their homework and receive help with their schoolwork than children who live with functional families. Reasons for this include changes in schools and delayed enrolment in schools as a result of out-of-home placements, unclear lines of accountability and responsibility in terms of school work, lack of coordination between the school, CYCC and child; and the lack of a consistent and knowledgeable educational advocate (Munson & Freundlich, 2008:2). These factors limited Shanthi's ability to study effectively for tests in the CYCC and made her feel as though she was incapable of studying efficiently to improve her grades, thereby diminishing her sense of agency.

Gordon felt as though the people around him affected his agency for change:

I: Gordon, do you think you can change your life?

Gordon: Yes and no.

I: Tell me why.

Gordon: The positive side [...is that] I [have] friends [and] I can tell them what to do, and no because [of] those people [who] do things to me that are not nice. (May 2013)

Here, Gordon echoed the same sentiment as he did earlier, sharing that the behaviour of others greatly influences his personal decisions. This, again, reflected Gordon's ability

to consider his individual behaviour choices in relation to broader contextual factors. However, the friends he referred to here are the participants in the theatre group. He recognised that he was part of a network of people who encouraged each other to change the ways in which they responded to conflict. The theatre intervention created this network. Gordon felt as though he had influence and agency within the group. However, he also felt that he was not able to change the harmful and manipulative ways in which people outside the theatre group treated him. This sense (as discussed in Chapter 2) is common among victims of abuse.

Through the creation of a social network between the participants and the subsequent changing of social norms within that network, which also carried through into the participants' everyday lives (page 144), Gordon recognised his ability for change and agency – even if he felt that that agency was limited.

Four months into the theatre programme, Sipho also recognised that the theatre programme cultivated an increased sense of agency.

Sipho: Yes, especially through play, you know when it is being addressed in a play kind of form, it does make a difference. Rather than sitting with a child, telling the child how bad he is or she is and what are the consequences and all that stuff. I think from [...] watching it [plays], [the child] is also aware that they can do something about [the issues addressed in the play]. (May 2013)

Sipho recognised that the participants became aware of their ability to change their environment. He also recognised that an experiential learning process is more effective than simply talking to a child. As discussed in Chapter 3, applied theatre actively creates an environment of critical consciousness and increased agency. By inviting participants to change the action of the scene (or alter a still image) and to explore and test new behaviour that can incite change, the theatre project brought focus to the fact that the participants' actions can potentially change their immediate environment.

Imagining a Different Future

The participants' comments reflected a significant increase in their senses of agency at the end of the theatre project. As mentioned in Chapter 2, the loss of agency that victims of abuse suffer leads them to believe that planning positive courses of action for the future is futile because they cannot change their circumstances. At the end of the theatre project, the participants began to dream of following fruitful careers in performing arts, indicating that they believed they could change their current, unfavourable circumstances to include successful careers. Here are the comments:

- I: Do you think that you are able to change your life? Yeah, Mark?
- Mark: Probably ... because drama has given us like an opportunity to express ourselves and to like stretch the talent we did not know [we had]. And I am sure all of us see that we have good acting skills, so maybe when we do not have the option like to do our dream job, we can turn to acting and try it out.
- I: Okay. Cool. Sindi?
- Sindi: Drama has changed my life because you know I did not know how to act really. But now it is, like, myself standing on stage, people watching me on TV like I am famous. It feels so ... good.
- I: So good, okay. And do you think you can change your life?
- Sindi: Yes. (June 2013)

Trudy made a comment of a similar nature, saying:

- Trudy: *Ja*, I think so because even when they are talking, they are talking about when they are big, what are they going to be and all that. I want a big house, I want to have my own family. *Ja* so they think they like to carry on with the drama. [Mark] said he wants to be on TV. (June 2013)

Applied theatre practitioners and researchers Angela O'Brien and Kate Donelan (2008:3), found that through participation in applied theatre projects, at-risk youth can "rebuild their sense of personal and social identity, shape and represent their views of the world and re-imagine their future". For Sindi and Mark, the theatre intervention uncovered talents that they did not know they had, and this made them view their

futures with optimism. Sindi and Mark came to imagine futures that are alternate to their current realities and that involved success in their careers.

Sindi maintained that she could effect change through communication, as she did prior to the theatre intervention (June 2013). As a result of the theatre programme, however, she also came to realise that she can affect change in the CYCC through inclusion of others in activities:

- I: Okay. Do you think that you can change the [CYCC]? Sindi?
- Sindi: Yes.
- I: Tell me why.
- Sindi: Because when [...] you are playing [...] you can like make up a little game that you are playing for yourself. [...] And after that you call one person, the other person calls another person, then after that you can start talking, communicating, telling about life and tell them the things you should do and not do and you can change [the CYCC] by [doing] this. Also, you can like be nice to them; just change yourself before you change them and see their side before you like...yeah, see their sides, know more about them [...]. (June 2013)

Sindi's comment indicated that she felt she could change the CYCC through the active building of social networks. The theatre intervention brought focus to what can be achieved through effective social networking between the children in the CYCC. Through the enactment of short scenes, we also actively explored ways in which the participants could start to create stronger social networks in the CYCC. Some of the options that the participants suggested during the sessions, such as including others in social activities and communicating effectively with others, are reflected in Sindi's comments.

As a result of the theatre intervention, Sindi recognised the necessity for strong social networks and identified practical ways in which to start to create stronger networks. Furthermore, she recognised that implementing these practices would bring about change in the CYCC.

As mentioned in Chapter 2, children who grow up in violent environments tend to foreclose opportunities to change their own lives. This seemed to be the case for Lauren prior to the theatre programme. However, the theatre programme offered Lauren (and the other participants) a non-threatening and fun medium for the exploration of change, which the participants engaged with enthusiasm. Through engagement in the theatre programme, Lauren came to realise that she did have power to effect change. Here is her comment:

Lauren: Yes, I think I can [change my life]. Yes, I think can because I have changed a lot this time and I did not fight with one person at school or at home. (June 2013)

The theatre intervention focused on non-aggressive means of conflict resolution. The theatre intervention equipped Lauren with the skills she needed to be able to deal with conflict in a non-aggressive manner, and she was able to implement these skills in her everyday life. The fact that she was able to change something about herself as a result of the theatre programme made her realise that she did in fact have power for change. The theatre intervention brought about an increased sense of agency in Lauren.

The belief that the participants felt they could change their lives is indicative of an increased sense of agency expressed after as compared to before the theatre programme. It is clear from what has been presented throughout this chapter that the theatre programme created an environment of critical consciousness in which the participants were able to explore and harness their agency for change.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have discussed how the theatre programme affected the participants' self-confidence and agency. Through participation in the theatre project, participants were able to identify ways in which they could influence change in their environment and cultivate the self-confidence to act on those changes. The theatre process also allowed the participants to imagine futures for themselves that were different to their current realities.

“THAT’S A WRAP”

In this study I have discussed how the “culture of violence” left behind by the apartheid regime had been embodied by the participants of this study, and manifested itself at Mangaliso CYCC. This study has focused on aggressive behaviour at Mangaliso as a symptom of diminished family social capital resulting from the impact of disintegration that the apartheid regime has had on the family structure.

Although attributing aggression at Mangaliso to the legacy of apartheid frames the issue as one of a social and political nature, this study has not ignored the issues of personal behaviour choice and personal accountability in aggressive actions. Through the combination of sociodrama and psychodrama techniques (the work of the Geese Theatre Company, theatre of the oppressed and theatre of the oppressor), this study has addressed the issue of aggression at Mangaliso on a social and political level as well as on a personal level.

The theatre programme that formed the basis for this research, in its combination of sociodrama and psychodrama techniques, was effective in generating peer social capital at Mangaliso. Theatre of the oppressed structures, such as image theatre and forum theatre, allowed participants to model new social norms that were alternate to aggression. The participants adopted these new social norms and implemented them both within and outside the theatre space, in their everyday lives. Theatre exercises focusing on the formation of trust, reciprocity and the building of strong social networks created strong, trusting and reciprocal bonds between the participants. In these bonds, the participants found a sense of belonging that offered them a sense of safety and social support.

Having identified aggression at Mangaliso as a behavioural issue stemming largely from low family social capital, this study set out to determine if an increase in peer social capital could affect aggressive behaviour at Mangaliso. The results of this study have shown that an increase in peer social capital, brought about by the participation in activities based in sociodrama and psychodrama that each focused on the generation of

one (or more) elements of social capital, did indeed affect levels of aggression at Mangaliso. The adoption of less aggressive social norms, coupled with strengthened peer social networks, increased trust and increased reciprocity created an environment that was conducive to the implementation of new social norms. This resulted in a noticeable decrease in the frequency of incidents of aggression at Mangaliso CYCC.

While this programme set out only to increase peer social capital as a means of addressing social norms of aggression at Mangaliso, increased peer social capital was also responsible for changing social norms of truancy, theft and not reporting incidents of aggression to adults in authority. This is attributed to sociodrama techniques that allowed participants to model new social norms that created an environment more conducive to forming trusting bonds. The combination of sociodrama and psychodrama techniques employed in this study brought focus to the individual's role and agency within broader social structures. This study shows that, as a result, participation in the theatre programme increased the participants' sense of agency and self-confidence which aided the participants in implementing less aggressive social norms in the face of adversity.

This study is significant in the field of applied theatre. Firstly, this project introduces applied theatre to the South African residential child-care system. Furthermore, while there are several applied theatre programmes that aim to address bullying, these programmes all address bullying in the school setting. This study introduces a programme that addresses bullying in the child residential care setting. This study also introduces a theatre programme specifically and primarily aimed at increasing social capital that creates an environment conducive to other positive social action.

This study also has significance for Mangaliso CYCC and, by extension, the South African child-care system. I started this dissertation with a quote from Nelson Mandela, who asserted that "we owe our children – the most vulnerable citizens in any society – a life free from violence and fear". Currently, CYCCs in South Africa do not often provide the children in their care with an environment that is free from violence and fear. The theatre programme that forms the basis of this study, through its combination

of sociodrama and psychodrama techniques that enabled the generation of social capital, has offered its participants an environment in which they are safer from physical harm and in which they feel more supported by (and less threatened by) members of their peer group. This generation of social capital that was brought about by the theatre programme also acts to offset the severely damaging impacts that low family social capital has had on the children. Introducing initiatives focused on peer social capital into the South African child-care system can reduce the negative impact of the children's family experiences. The introduction of such interventions will also act to transform the "culture of violence" that has found its way into the child-care system, and help to keep children protected from further abuse from peers.

For these reasons, I would like to recommend that initiatives focused on building social capital be integrated into the core functions of the child and youth care system in South Africa. Offsetting the negative impacts of children's family experiences, providing a child with peer social support and keeping them protected from peer abuse is of vital importance to the holistic development of the children in the child-care system and cannot be confined to being dealt with during "extra-mural activities". I recommend that all CYCWs be trained to facilitate programmes that focus on the generation of peer social capital, and that these programmes be implemented on a continuous basis.

Because the issues addressed in this study stem from poor family social capital, I further recommend that the families of the children in the child-care system also be given access to initiatives aimed at generating family social capital. This will ensure that the children will continue to receive the benefits of belonging to strong social networks, even once they leave residential care, to navigate their way through the world. For, as John O'Donohue (1998:22) so rightly says, "The hunger to belong is not merely a desire to be attached to something. It is rather sensing that great transformation and discovery become possible when belonging is sheltered and true."

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Interviews and Focus Group Discussions

1. Semi-structured FGD, participants of the theatre programme, Mangaliso CYCC, 29 January 2013.
2. Semi-structured FGD, residential CYCWs, Mangaliso CYCC, 31 January 2013.
3. Semi-structured FGD, participants of the theatre programme, Mangaliso CYCC, 19 March 2013.
4. One-on-One Interview, senior CYCW, Mangaliso CYCC, 19 March 2013.
5. Semi-structured FGD, participants of the theatre programme, Mangaliso CYCC, 14 May 2013.
6. Semi-structured FGD, participants of the theatre programme, Mangaliso CYCC, 21 May 2013.
7. Semi-structured FGD, residential CYCWs, Mangaliso CYCC, 17 May 2013.
8. One-on-one interview, senior CYCW, Mangaliso CYCC, 17 May 2013.
9. Semi-structured FGD, participants of the theatre programme, Mangaliso CYCC, 18 June 2013.
10. Semi-structured FGD, residential CYCWs, Mangaliso CYCC, 21 June 2013.
11. One-on-one interview, senior CYCW, Mangaliso CYCC, 21 June 2013.

Appendix 1

Emailed student

(F)



20 February 2013

Ms Lerisa Ansuya Naguran 206508137
School of Arts
Howard College Campus

Protocol reference number: HSS/0084/013D

Project title: Theatre for Social Capital: A case study of Mangaliso¹ Child and Youth Care Centre, Durban, KwaZulu-Natal.

Dear Ms Naguran

Expedited Approval

I wish to inform you that your application has been granted full approval.

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment/modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number. Please note: Research data should be securely stored in the school/department for a period of 5 years.

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

Yours faithfully

.....
Professor Steven Collings (Chair)
/px

cc Supervisor Dr Miranda Young-Jahangeer
cc Academic leader Professor Sihawukele Ngubane
cc Ethics coordinator Dr Shamila Naidoo
cc School Administrator Ms Alice Palan

Professor D Wassenaar (Chair)
Biomedical Research Ethics Committee
Westville Campus, Govan Mbeki Building
Postal Address: Private Bag X54001, Durban, 4000, South Africa
Telephone: +27 (0)31 260 2384 Facsimile: +27 (0)31 260 4609 Email: brec@ukzn.ac.za
Website: <http://research.ukzn.ac.za/Research-Ethics/Biomedical-Research-Ethics.aspx>
Founding Campuses: ■ Edgewood ■ Howard College ■ Medical School ■ Pietermaritzburg ■ Westville



INSPIRING GREATNESS

Appendix 2

11 October 2012

Dear Ms. LA Naguran

RE: Feedback on the request to conduct research at [REDACTED] Child and Youth Care Centre entitled "Theatre for Social Capital: A Case Study at Managlisio* Child and Youth Care Centre, Durban, KwaZulu-Natal".

We confirm we have no problem with you conducting your research at [REDACTED] Child and Youth Care Centre and we look forward to working with you.

Yours in Child and Youth Care,

Director of [REDACTED] Child and Youth Care Centre

*The name of the Child and Youth Care Centre has been changed in the title of the research in order to protect the identity of the research participants

Registration No.: [REDACTED]