

Being an Art Teacher

*"An auto-ethnographic study of different educational
moments in my life"*

Bongani Mkhonza

Submitted to the Faculty of Education

University of KwaZulu-Natal

In fulfillment of the requirements for the

Masters in Art Education

Supervisor: Dr Daisy Pillay

September 2008

University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban

DEDICATION

**This dissertation is dedicated to my late father, Mr I. Mkhonza
who instilled in me the value of education,
and to my mother, Mrs B. A. C. Mkhonza
who I regard as my first teacher and my anchor
throughout my life and my studies.**

DECLARATION

I, Bongani Mkhonza (Student Number: 935346123) hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of my own, original research and has not been submitted, in part or in full, for any other degree or to any other institution for assessment purposes.

Mr B. W. Mkhonza

Date

Supervisor

Date:

Abstract

This auto-ethnographic research emerges from an historical account of my self-understandings, perceptions and intentions, constructed from a journal that was kept of my experiences during the various stages of my development as an art teacher. The study revolves around two pivotal questions: “How have I come to be the art teacher I am?” and “What are the meanings and definitions that have informed my identity as an art teacher in a multiracial classroom?”

I draw upon Brian Fay’s theory of self/false consciousness and show how false consciousness works to liberate the self. It does that through the excavation of different layers of consciousness of self, and offers an understanding of how I came to be and to act in particular situations and moments of crisis. This theoretical position enabled me to understand my struggles as a black, African, male art teacher teaching in a multiracial school.

By engaging in an auto-ethnographic approach I am able to reflect on the self through my journals and artworks (paintings, pottery, photographs and poems) and on the impact of critical moments in my life. It provides me with the lens to zoom in and out of my life experiences and understand the meanings (false/borrowed/assimilated) that I took up as a marginalised black African male interested in learning art in a white-dominated world. By adopting a critical stance, this research reveals both personal issues and broader social structures, institutions and processes, and shows how they are intertwined.

Firstly, the study offers an analysis of chosen critical moments of my life. Secondly, it presents an understanding of those moments and my part in them. Thirdly, it explores the meanings that I came to adopt in those moments of crisis. Fourthly, it reflects on how this self-searching assisted me to liberate myself from false consciousness as a black African male art teacher. It tries to trace the gradual movement from the prison of my past to my development as a teacher in a South African classroom in a new democratic dispensation.

Auto-ethnography provides deeper access to self-understanding, and engaging through this reflective process, I was able to understand and know that educational change can only happen meaningfully if I know and confront my personal and professional meanings and how they have been shaped and continue to inform the choices I make in my classroom daily. As a Black, African, Male, Art Teacher who learnt and lived through the legacy of apartheid, false consciousness was a way of being 'other'.

The realisation of being "a coconut" (Ferguson: 2006) and the meanings of the art world that went with it, proved liberating. "Coconut" is term referring to a black person who does and acts like a white person.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- I would like to express my gratitude to my supervisor, Daisy Pillay, for her motivation and support in guiding me through the research process. Daisy, your passion for teacher empowerment and development is evident through the time and patience that you have shown in supervising this research project. Your love of the teaching profession and your belief in me has helped me to perform to the best ability. It has not been easy; thank you for your great understanding.
- During the course of writing this thesis I relied heavily on the strength of my family. Thank you for making available your resources and time in sacrificial ways.
- To my ex-colleagues at West Ridge High School, the Principal and learners, thank you for allowing me to share our experiences in order to improve the teaching/learning practice.
- To Dr Betty Govinden, thank you for your inspiration and support and for editing my thesis.
- To my family and dear friends, you know who you are; you have touched my life in a positive way, and have contributed immensely on this research process. I thank you.

TABLE OF CONTENTS	Page
Title Page:	(i)
Dedication:	(ii)
Declaration:	(iii)
Abstract:	(iv)
Acknowledgements:	(v)
CHAPTER ONE	1
1.1 Introduction:.....	2
1.2 The Background and Context.....	4
1.3 What is happening in schools today?	6
1.4 Rationale	7
1.4.1 Why teachers’ personal and professional journeys are important.....	7
1.4.1 b Policy Context... ..	9
1.4.2 Art Education Post 1994.....	10
1.5 Research FocusConclusion	12
1.6 Critical Questions.....	14
1.7 Conclusion.....	15
CHAPTER TWO	16
2.1 Literature Review	17
2.2 Literature in South Africa	18

2.3 Review of International Literature	26
2.4 Connecting Literature with theory	31
2.5 Conclusion	34
CHAPTER THREE	36
3.1 Research Methodology	37
3.1.1 Definition of Auto-ethnography	37
3.1.2 Different perspectives on Auto-ethnography	40
3.1.3 Justifying the choice of my research methodology.....	42
3.2 Metaphors in my Auto-ethnography	45
3.3 Art in my Auto-ethnography	46
3.6 Methods of data-capturing.....	52
3.7 Limitations of my Auto-ethnography	54
CHAPTER FOUR	57
4.1 My Journal as part of Data Collection	58
4.2 Bongani Mkhonza’s Journal: as part of data production	61
4.3 Conclusion	96
CHAPTER FIVE	97
5.1 Findings	98
5.1.1 Section A	100
5.1.2 Section B	103

5.1.3 Section C	129
5.1.4 Section D	138

CHAPTER SIX

143

6.1 My journal ahead.....	146
---------------------------	-----

Bibliography	148
---------------------------	------------

Page

Appendix

Illustration 01	1
Illustration 02	16
Illustration 03	36
Illustration 04	57

Art-work 01

Art-work 02

Art-work 03

Chapter One

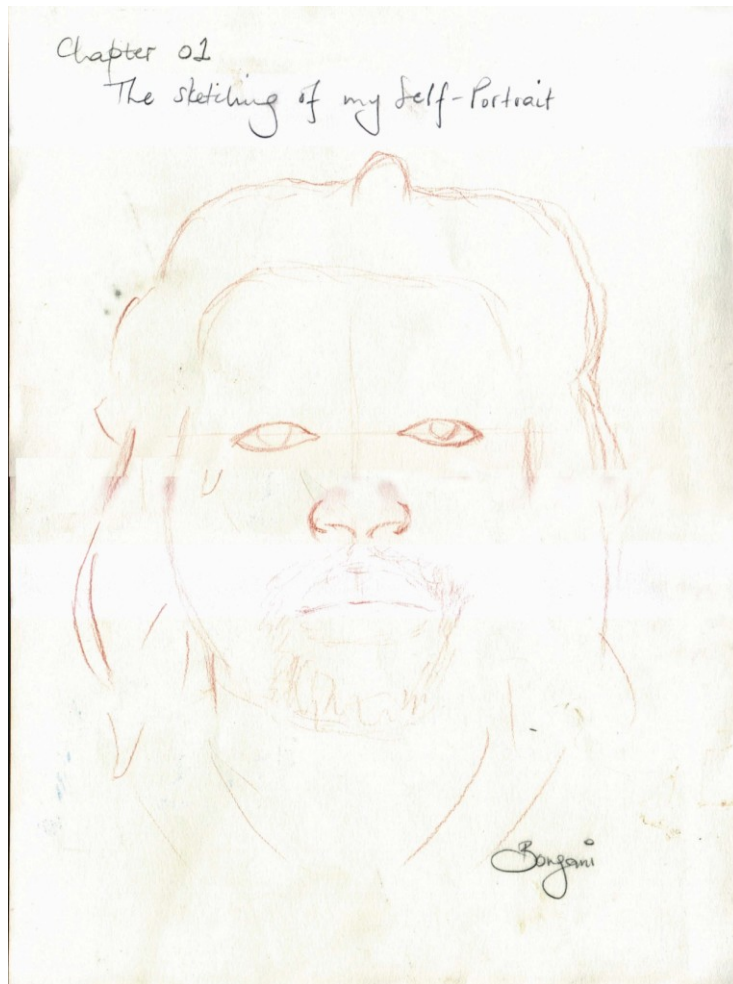


Illustration 01

Sketching the main features of my face - A Self-portrait

The self-portrait in construction represents the key markings of the self under study. These are indicative of the critical moments I outline in Chapter One about my life as an art teacher, the focus for my study, and the questions that I set out to respond to in this auto-ethnographical study.

1.1 Introduction

Standing in front of the classroom! The noise level has reached the highest pitch! These naughty little rats are making me go crazy! I cannot control these children anymore. They don't seem interested at all in what I teach them. May be I should stick to the art that I was taught at the Technikon of Northen Natal but a lot has changed in the art curriculum. I feel frustrated by these changes! How did I become an art teacher after all? Lately, I feel angry, I am not even proud of being part of this school anymore. What am I doing here? I expected to teach art in a well-organised Model-C school, not these rascals who say I am racist! I am one of the few formally trained Black African male art teachers in KwaZulu-Natal. But how come I am feeling so useless and so irrelevant? Who am I? What am I doing here...? (Journal log entry- March 2003)

This critical moment triggers off important questions that I need to ask myself as an art teacher in an ex-Model 'C'ELSEN school, in a different historical moment in South Africa, post-apartheid. These important questions are about my-teacher self and the day-to-day struggles I am faced with in these present shifts. This incident of a learner constructing me as a racist offers me the platform to question what informs the choices that I make daily in my negotiation with learners, my sense of disconnectedness with the learners I come face-to-face with daily, my loss of control and authority as their teacher, my struggle to deal with the numerous changes in the Visual Arts curriculum and the changing schooling contexts, post-1994.

My struggle as a teacher in an ex-Model C school in the early years of the 21st century, as reflected in extract above, provides the context for the study. As part of school desegregation in South Africa, born out of a conscious effort to transform undemocratic apartheid culture and practice by replacing it with an inclusive, democratic education founded on social justice, I was appointed to teach art at Ridge-West High School. The complexities that inform my frustration arise out of what I know and what I am expected to be as an art teacher in a new educational setting in South Africa. A black, African male, I qualified formally in 1999 as an artist and art teacher. I obtained my Bachelor of Arts, Fine Art and Post Graduates Certificate in Education in 2003, at the University of Northern Natal, Pietermaritzburg (now the University of KwaZulu-Natal). I chose to teach art in a secondary school in Durban, KwaZulu-Natal, in a former white school, designated “ex-Model C.” The school had a predominantly white learner population when I started teaching in 2000. This multicultural, multi-racial setting gradually flooded me with new challenges in a context in which I found myself labelled a “*RACIST*”. Why do I experience myself as useless and irrelevant in my position as Art teacher in this school?

In a study like this, several writers, like Ellis (2000), discourage writing in the first person. They discourage it because of a claim that the use of first person active voices brings with it a degree of risk. According to Michael Dyson (2007), subjective writings like this study open you to criticism because of a perceived lack of objectivity. I tend to disagree with his position because writing in the first person brings with it a personal accountability and researchers must move away from the fear of personal exposure.

1.2 Background and context

I want to highlight and reflect on nodal moments in my experience relevant to my development as an art teacher. In this way I want to understand “Who I am” and to seek answers to the question: “How do I make sense of who I am in my responsibility as art teacher?”

The critical ‘self’ in this study is reflexive and includes agency and structure. This ‘self’ will make more visible its previously defined meanings of a self as a black African male art teacher.

This research study will make visible the meanings that I have assimilated during the critical moments of my becoming, to understand the meanings that I have adopted, and to change and challenge meanings that limit and constrain me. It shows how auto-ethnography as a methodological approach opens up possibilities to move me away from a position of uselessness and irrelevance and from labels that describe me as racist”. My narrative journal is the only data production tool for accessing a range of data sources (written remembrances and memories of nodal moments/significant others, personal poems and paintings, photographs) for the self-reflective experience and process I engaged with in my study.

The genre of writing the journal takes on certain spontaneity, a claimed introspective, personal and private space. It therefore shows a mythologizing of self and of other and

offers a good contrast to the academic language in the research report. This journal can be subjected to critical scrutiny but is not the scope of the study. As a tool to reflect critically on my personal, social and professional development, it helps to facilitate the excavations of different moments of my socialisation, with particular reference to the following:

- My Schooling
- My Teacher Education experience
- My Teaching experience

By narrating my life story or how I became an art teacher through this study, previous definitions of 'who am I' will be challenged and re-visited. Polkinghorne (1997: 7) claims that "The narrative provides a more epistemologically adequate discourse form for reporting and assessing research within the context of a post-positivistic understanding of knowledge generation". Finding myself confused and alienated in a school as an art teacher gave me a considerable amount of advantage and confidence to embark on the process of this research. It has also made me to want to probe understandings of who/what I am. What are the already constructed definitions on my practice as reflecting a certain culture? What kinds of limitations are carried within those definitions?

The critical approach adopted in this study will assist me in tracing my journey from the time I came to engage in my formal training as an art teacher to the time in my life when I practised as an art teacher. According to recent theorists of the critical paradigm in teacher socialisation, a student comes to any learning situation with previously constructed ideas, knowledge, and beliefs. The reason why I have included my

experiences prior to my formal art teacher training here, is because I want to argue that there are certain capacities acquired through personal experiences that do affect the way in which we will interpret and make use of new information and experiences that we acquire through different learning sites. This approach I find to be appropriate in understanding my choice of institution for studying to become an artist and art teacher and the school that I chose in my position as qualified art teacher.

Social critical theory as expounded by **Brian** Fay informs this study as I focus on my experiences that acknowledge the ‘self’ as product, and that continues to reproduce and re-construct its meanings. I will not portray myself only as a product of a particular system and passive template for different influences but also involve myself in an active process of reconstructing knowledge through my own experiences, encounters, choices, and interactions with the world.

1.3 What is happening in schools today?

In schools today there have been many positive changes in spite of the fact that South Africa’s democratic government inherited a divided and unequal system of education. Under apartheid, education in South Africa had nineteen educational departments separated by race, geography and ideology. In each department the curriculum played a powerful role in reinforcing racial and cultural inequalities (Department of Education: 2003).

Issues post-1994

After 1994, the process of syllabus revision was started by the National Education Forum with the aim of laying a foundation for a single national core syllabus. The White Paper on Education and Training (1995) was the first curriculum document produced by the National Education Forum with the vision of transforming teaching and learning in our schools in South Africa. The other changes included the desegregation of schools which under the apartheid education system were divided according to different race groups. As a result, there was a major shift from the traditional “aims and objectives” approach to outcomes-based education. This new “outcomes-based” education promoted the vision of a prosperous, truly united, democratic and internationally competitive country, with literate, creative and critical citizens leading productive, self-fulfilled lives in a country free of violence, discrimination and prejudice.

1.4 Rationale

1.4.1 Why teachers’ personal and professional journeys are important

I fell in love with art as a young boy. I fell in love with art as a result of my interactions with the wood crafters that work and sell their art on the side of the road around Mtubatuba and St Lucia. This was the place where I grew up as a boy. This period is important as it shaped my decision to take up a career as an art teacher.

Developing an understanding about my personal journey and how it is woven into the fabric of my wider educational world is important. As an art teacher now in a school, I find it critical to acknowledge the role of schools as the apparatus of social reproduction

and site of cultural reproduction. Unless teachers, like myself, engage meaningfully with challenges such as diversity teaching and learning for multiracial classrooms, curriculum reconstruction (see C2005/RNCS/NCS), particular oppressive practices and traditional barriers to teaching and learning will continue to prevail. Pursuing this study will help me to reflect on the meanings and practices I adopted and how they shaped and continue to shape my life as a black, African male art teacher.

Change in the Constitution of a country or in educational policies and curriculum does not always guarantee change in our consciousness and practices. For me, there is need to actively and personally re-conceptualise the understanding of change, because this does not happen 'automatically'. This re-conceptualising could become central to what makes change in one's practice so challenging. As human beings, our prior understanding of this world is a vital part of what we know. When change comes, we supposedly begin to see things differently. Our prior perception of things is turned upside down, resulting in great confusion, desperation and even resistance in some instances.

This state of mind needs a major shift in consciousness and the development of a new perception of the world. Arendt (2003: 9) makes the point that it is not only about having a conscious need of change, or the need to change, but it is about 'shifting the perceptive' because of a change in consciousness. She stresses the element of transformation, and adds:

...for education belongs to among the most elementary and necessary activities of human society, which never remains as it is but continuously renews itself through birth through the arrival of new human beings. These newcomers, moreover are not finished but in a state of becoming.

In my view, as new changes affect a teacher like me, more research like this is needed to deal with the transformation within teachers' consciousness as a result of changes in policies, curriculum and government. For me as an art teacher, the new Visual Arts curriculum that was introduced in 1997 as part of the curriculum reconstruction process, posed numerous challenges, and I felt compelled to address them in spite of my feelings of uselessness and irrelevance.

1.4.1 Policy Context Pre-1994

It was only in the 1960s that the Polly Street Art Centre in downtown Johannesburg, the Rorke's Drift Art and Craft Centre in Northern KwaZulu-Natal, and the Johannesburg Art Foundation started to offer art classes for black African students, who were excluded from accessing art classes through the South African education system. The education system allowed a miniscule number of black African learners to learn art, as noted by Bongzi Ndlomo (1997). In the mid-Eighties there was a marked change in the activities of the public art collecting institutions which generally serve as an indicator as to who is making art in South Africa. Acquisitions policies changed and previously unknown black artists came into focus, most of them probably as a result of the BMW *Tributaries* exhibition in 1985, curated by Ricky Burnett, which brought to the attention of the art

world artists and art that had not been seen in galleries before. Craftspeople from the rural areas (like Matubatuba, Eshowe and Msinga) began to be recognised for the traditional skills specific to their region and were represented in exhibitions locally and internationally. These were persons who did not have any kind of recognised art education.

The changes in South Africa in the 1990s saw the introduction, for the first time in the history of the country, of a ministry of arts and culture.

1.4.2 Art Education post-1994

“The education system designed for black people generally did not include arts education. Thus were very few black people formally trained as arts educators in any discipline” (White Paper on Arts and Culture: 2003)). Black schools were only permitted to participate in handwork, which was not offered as a formal subject. I completed my schooling career under the Bantu Education System and my art education was limited to handiwork. When I joined the Technikon of Northern Natal to enrol as a fine arts student, this choice was inspired by my love for art. The curriculum experience included European art history and art practices.

All the Art lecturers were white. As a black African male art student at Technikon of Northern Natal, I faced many challenges. Some of these dilemmas included the kind of language that was normally used in history of art lectures, which related to different periods of European art. This language carried within it Eurocentric motifs and nuances that I experienced as strange, unfamiliar and difficult to understand.

I felt useless and alienated. I recall my impressions of those times.

It's a new year but I'm depressed again, depression really sucks, it's hard to know what feelings are real and what feelings are just caused by my depression. Fine Arts brain disorder, I have that too but I don't know what it is. I wouldn't be this fucked if I know what exactly it is, I failed last year, I have to repeat the whole year this year, so I know that caused it but I don't exactly understand how I have come to fail. Maybe I am in denial, I was not serious last year, maybe I have given up on this course. How will I face the other students that I was in the same class with? If they ask me why I am not coming to the third year's class what will I tell them? Ooh okay, I will tell them that I have changed the course. But they will see me wearing those crazy overalls for my painting class. Other students say we (Fine Art students) are crazy. The way we do things, the way we dress up, maybe we are really crazy. I think everyone in this campus suffers from depression, I mean this Tech has gone fucking crazy! Students toyi-toyi (street demonstrations) for no reason, township thugs come here and 'jack-roll' girls away, there is absolutely no rule of law.

Now as a black African art teacher at a former white school, with its character changing to one that reflects multi-racialism, I am again confronted with a similar sense of unfamiliarity, strangeness and irrelevance.

What is the problem? My authority as a teacher is challenged by my learners as well. According to the Bill of Rights contained in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 (Act 108 of 1996), everyone has the right to a basic education, including

adult basic education and further education, which the State, through reasonable measures, must progressively make available and accessible. The NCS (Grades R to 9 for schools) builds on the vision and values of the Constitution and Curriculum 2005.

These principles include:

- social justice, a healthy environment, human rights and inclusivity;
- outcomes-based education;
- a high level of skills and knowledge for all;
- clarity and accessibility, and
- progression and integration.

As we stand today, South Africa upholds one of the best constitutions in the world. The key mission of these changes in the Constitution was to maximise the potential of education in South Africa through the acquisition of knowledge and skills.

1.5 Research Focus

After 1994, many positive educational changes were made but simultaneously presented many challenges in teachers. To meaningfully understand how teachers engage with change, this research study is going to attempt to engage in introspection using myself as a teacher to be researched.

Auto-ethnography research is a methodological approach that I will use to develop an understanding of the nature of struggles between my lived experiences and practices.

By this I am hoping to bridge the gap between what has been achieved (changes in the education system) and the teacher's challenges that mushroomed as a result of dealing with those changes. This research aims at also shedding light on what really happens in schools today.

My study provides the critical space for me to make sense/meaning of my life. I appreciate that meanings have to be continually negotiated in constructing who am I and how I make sense of my life as an 'Art Teacher'. This is crucial given that my socialization into becoming an art teacher was dissonant with the assumptions of the new curriculum underpinned by the notions of equality, social justice, and emancipation. Notions of 'rainbowism', empowerment, social justice, democracy, emancipation, and 'multi-culturalism' do not automatically lead to enlightenment that will empower people to liberate themselves (Mouton: 1993). And as a teacher I need to understand what meanings I already have and how they inform and filter the choices I make daily. This study is thus an attempt to reflect critically on the choices I have made at different moments in my life in becoming an Art Teacher, and what and how I can rework and transform my meanings and definitions in enacting practices as a teacher teaching in multicultural art classrooms. This study will make visible my inner struggles, challenges, dilemmas, contradictions and complexities as I rework meanings of what it means to be an Art Teacher in South Africa.

1.6 Critical Questions

In this study I ask the following two critical questions:

- **How have I come to be the art teacher I am?**

This question traces the nodal moments in my education. I will draw on my journal as the main source of data about my experiences on becoming an art teacher. My journal comprises a record of an assortment of my experiences in the art world, including events, my diary, my sketches and poems from the time I enrolled at the Technikon of Northern Natal to study Fine Arts, to the present.

- **What are the meanings, definitions and practices that have informed my identity as an art teacher in a multiracial classroom?**

What are the educational and personal discourses that constitute who am I? These discourses range from my identity as a black African male to my educational discourses as a student and art teacher in a multi-racial, multi-cultural classroom.

This self-understanding of teachers' knowledge system, attitudes, views, and their beliefs is very crucial for teachers to improve their practice. As teachers, going through such an exercise of 'self-reflection' enables us to learn about the choices we make while working with culturally diverse learners. How do we respect cultural diversity, dealing with misunderstandings and how do we correct our mistakes?

1.7. Conclusion

Chapter One provides the background of this research study. It does this firstly by showing the importance of teacher-centred research that brings to light the day-to-day struggles and challenges facing teachers in the South African schools today. I then show the different kinds of changes that have been taking place in South Africa, changes that can impact on teacher's practices negatively or positively.

Those changes range from the adoption of the new Constitution of South Africa to changes in the Educational system after 1994. Curriculum changes and the shifts such as inclusivity/diversity and content changes, finally raise arguments that I attempt to understand to reflect what is really happening in schools today.

Chapter Two outlines selected examples of literature on teacher-self study in South Africa and abroad.

Chapter Three deals with auto-ethnography as my chosen methodology in this study. Journal writing is the main source of data production. This chapter explores the relationship between the methodology and the theoretical framing with special reference to Brian Fay's theory of false consciousness.

Chapter Four discusses the use of a journal as data production in auto-ethnography research. It also presents my journal entries, poetry, photos, and personal artworks.

Chapter Five presents the data analysis, using Brian Fay's theory of false consciousness as the linchpin.

Chapter Six concludes with a personal reflection on my development to embrace my identity as a black African male Art teacher.

CHAPTER TWO

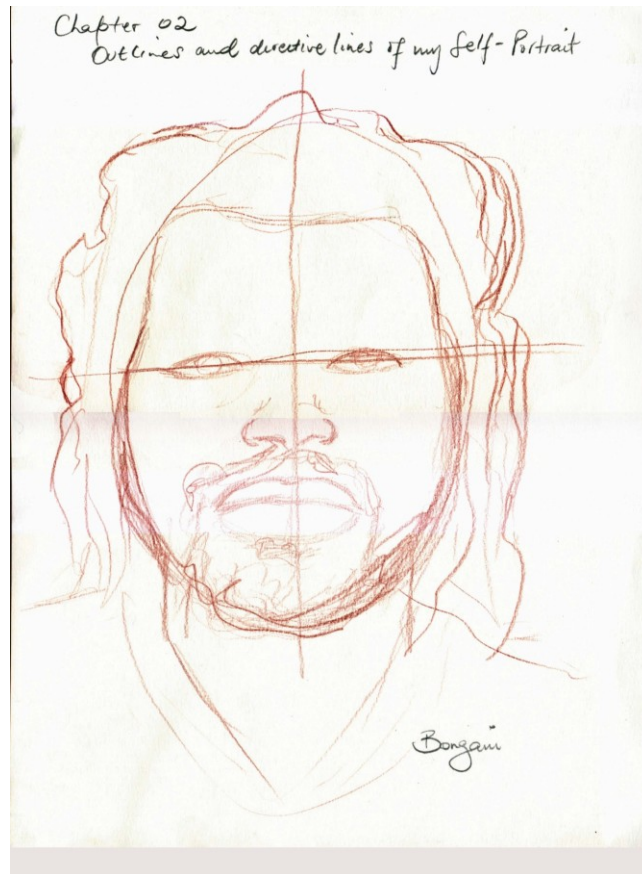


Illustration 02

Outlines of a Self-Portrait

Review of the Literature

The self-portrait in construction above [Illustration 02] represents the outlines and the directive lines that construct who I am. This chapter provides the contours of the literature locally and abroad related to understanding teachers' lives. The literature reviewed, like the outline of my self-portrait, provides an outline of the boundaries of the study and also suggests possible gaps in it. The illustration is meant to be seen as a metaphor of what this chapter is trying to accomplish.

2.1 Literature review

2.1.1 Introduction

Surveys of the existing research in the area of teachers' experiences and especially self-change or transformation attempt to understand teachers' awareness of the 'self' and the potential for reworking one's meanings, practices and ideas against the backdrop of the changing educational landscape in South Africa. There is a dearth of literature on understanding teachers' voices and experiences, their struggles and joys in the South African Education system.

This research attempts to undertake a teacher self-study approach. It seeks to understand how teachers go about their daily practice, how they deal with issues of diversity and change in their classrooms through processes of self-reflection and memory-work. Suffused by the complexities and contradictions I experienced as an art teacher, I began to feel compelled to explore and understand the nature of my struggles, to move from 'what is' to 'what can be'.

By exploring possibilities rather than being stymied by difficulties, I wished to re-define my identity as an art teacher in the challenging and fraught context in which I found myself.

The use of the self as the centre of a research study and the major source of data has become more prevalent in recent decades. This subjective approach, though not looked on favourably from a positivistic standpoint, has gradually come to be seen as an

acceptable practice in research. During the latter half of the 20th century, authors such as Polanyi (1958), a chemist, argued convincingly for the significance and value of subjectivity to the research endeavour. Polanyi wrote of the impossibility of removing the passion and commitment of the observer-researcher and emphasized that these passions and commitments were essential to experiencing and investigating the world. Schwandt (1994: 129) mentions that the connoisseur's eye, as a metaphor for all the senses is in a state of enlightenment and, I would add, elation.

2.2 Review of Literature in South Africa

This section of the enquiry presents a review of South African and International literature related to curriculum change and identity issues, followed by an outline of the theoretical frameworks that informed those studies. The key issues of my research are: self-understanding, narratives, understanding of the curriculum experience, identity change, multiculturalism and diversity in education.

There are a few key South African studies that have informed my thinking and the framing of my study. They are: "*What is it? What is it? What is it?*", a *Teacher's Personal Narrative Inquiry into a Memorable Curriculum Experience*, by Karen Pithouse (2003); *An Assessment of the Sociology of the Undergraduate Curriculum at Four universities in the Eastern Seaboard Region* by Shaheeda Essack (1999); *Exploring Science Teachers' Experiences of Diversity in the Multicultural Science Classroom* (Paideya: 2004); '*Successful Teachers*' - *A Cubist Narrative of Lives, Practices and the*

Evaded by Guruvasagie Pillay (2003), and *An Autoethnography of an Ordinary Teacher* by Edwina Grossi (2006).

There are interesting arguments relating to my enquiry, especially on the issues of 'teacher identity re-definition' as discussed by Pillay (2003), and the post-modern paradigm of writing as discussed by Essack (1999), who describes post-modern writings as those that depart from positivistic certainty.

According to Essack (1999: 105), in a post-modernist view "...doubt has to arise as a result of human experience and not on meta-narrative themes. This lack of certainty is meant to encourage dialogue and communication with others. Furthermore, it strives for an eclectic/local integration of subject/object, curriculum/person, teacher/student and us/others". This statement is inspired by Doll's (1993) definition of curriculum as an open process, curriculum as process, which can be described as a post-modern shift in education. Post-modern shifts view the process of teaching and learning as an open dialogue process where meanings are negotiated and open-ended.

I find this post-modern view aligned to Bakhtin's concept of 'dialogism' (Holquist: 1984). According to Bakhtin's theory of dialogism, self-reflection is an ongoing dialogue that is not limited only externally but can take place internally. I am also excited by Essack's (1999) eclectic insight that she shares on the post-modern curriculum and history. She argues that a radical shift from modernism to post-modernism suggests that there should be a complete break from the past.

However, Doll (1993) is of the opinion that while the post-modern (curriculum) should be free of past domination, it needs the roots of history in order to grow and develop. Rather than rejecting the modern, post-modernism transcends and transforms it.

In this enquiry I use Doll's (1993) idea of borrowing from the past to move forward in relation to re-working and constructing teachers' meanings and definitions. This post-modern view of reality can play a crucial role in the redefinition of teachers' identities. For instance, Pillay (2003: 6) expresses the view that the lives of successful teachers in these present shifts in education "do not mean the 'death' of the traditional image of the teacher, but the possibility of differences we have evaded, erased and not been able to imagine".

In my study, I strongly argue that for teachers to truly understand themselves within the new South African dispensation, they need to go back and reflect on their previous experiences rather than discard the old and known and simply adopt the new and unknown. Pillay (2003: 254) argues further that through historical reflection teachers 'shake off their habitual ways of thinking and working, and the multiple threads of their other identity categorises (gender/race, etc.) are given voices that powerfully awaken them from their pain and self-closure, surprising and forcing them to reconsider their position'.

Essack (1993) points out that the main feature that distinguishes the post-modern from the modern is self-organisation. Self-organisation, in a sense, means that a person needs to review and re-alter his or her position meaningfully so that the internal and external align in relation to the new framework of working in order to emancipate him or herself. .

As Bakhtin is aligned to dialogism, self-organisation allows for change from within and at the will of individuals. Most teachers continue to struggle, signalling the lack of alignment and dialogue between their inner personal meanings and the external/outer responsibility within the normative framework of being teacher.

Drawing on Essack (1993), who lists some basic assumptions of a curriculum that discusses self-organisation with regard to learners, I have deduced basic assumptions of curriculum policies that focus on self-organisation for teachers in the new education culture:

- The teacher is not only the active transmitter of knowledge but also a receiver.
- A teacher's challenges and irregularities become the reason for self-reflection and re-organisation.
- New challenges as a result of new changes do not threaten the role of a teacher but encourage him or her to engage in on-going self-introspection, self-study for self-growth.

In the end, my aim in formulating such a list is not to be prescriptive to teachers who are faced with dilemmas that are caused by change, but to keep the dialogue going. Essack (1993) argues that meanings are constructed through dialogue and without dialogue there

is limited transformation, if any. This study uses auto-ethnography to understand my educational journey in becoming an art teacher.

I hope this will show how I break away from any absolute, singular and categorical framework of my practice as an art teacher.

Relevant policies may also be used to reflect on the subject of teacher education. South African education authorities and policy-makers should desist from using a structuralist approach, which prescribes what is it to be a teacher or learner, where Western standards and political ideologies predominate. We as teachers must not forget that in the past “the philosophy of Fundamental Pedagogy and Christian National Education subjected all teachers, irrespective of race, to the centrally-driven legislation for education, which effectively treated them as agents of state ideology” (Pillay 2003: 13). According to Pillay (2003: 8), structuralist theorists take for granted the “singular definitions of teacher and teaching, which assume that they are universal, fixed, a-historical categories”, but fail to explain the complexities of everyday lived experiences or why teachers make the choices that they do make in their practice.

As South African educators we are recovering from what can be referred to as a ‘politicised Eurocentric’ education system. It is crucial that we do not adopt a simplistic approach towards change without taking into consideration the experiences of ordinary teachers’ lives.

This study of a teacher's life will contribute to interrogating how the complex and contradictory discourses and practices teachers adopt dislocate them from their practices as they interact daily in their classrooms.

Change, I argue, is not necessarily translated into transformation. In order for transformation to take place, we should take into consideration our experiences and our present dilemmas and begin to re-define our future identities as teachers. The purpose of my enquiry is not aimed at looking negatively at past experiences but to critically examine my experiences and other teachers' lives in order to re-interpret and gain a deeper understanding of those experiences. If we do not engage in constructive critique of our past experiences, we are running the risk of being perceived by the world as progressive while we remain tied to traditional pasts and inherited structures that either resist or yield to the new but cannot produce it. Clifford (1988), in *The Predicament of Culture: Twentieth-Century Ethnography, Literature, and Art*, argues that there is a "predicament" when the past is in tension with the present, although he is looking at larger trends.

This research is therefore in line with a dialectic understanding of the South African goal of nation-building, which I consider to be very important in coming to an informed understanding of the self. I have observed that South Africa also reflects the trends in post-modern writings. A great deal has been written, for example, on the subject of disharmonious harmony between the main objectives of our education system and its final products - the graduates - who become teachers, in this case. However, there is a

gap in terms of writings about teachers' lives by teachers themselves. My predicament is informed by complexities and contradictions between what I know and what I am expected to be as an art teacher in a new educational setting which is multi-racial in South Africa.

The self (me) that is researched in this enquiry has found itself displaced by the change in context and culture. In my innermost dialogues, I find myself trapped between the old self and a new self struggling to emerge.

I am strongly convinced that these kinds of challenges are the result of my past negative experiences and the choices that I have made in the past. I place the major focus of my struggles on my curriculum experience during the period of my tertiary education. It is during this time that I felt displaced culturally and academically.

Using Pithouse's (2003) study, 'What is this? A teacher's personal narrative inquiry into a memorial curriculum experience', I want to reflect on the curriculum experience that I went through at the Ingwe University of Technology (formerly known as the Technikon of Northern Natal) when I was studying Fine Arts. Before articulating my judgments on what I can consider to be the nodal challenges at this institution (culturally and academically), I want to, firstly, understand my own curriculum experience at this institution. I use the lens of Dewey's philosophy of experience as articulated by Claudinin and Connelly (1995) and Pithouse (2003). Central to this philosophy are the principles of continuity and interaction. As the researcher and the researched, I will narrate my experiences. The idea of 'I' researching the self' may be seen as being too

subjective by positivists, but Peshkin (1985) discusses the potential to exploit positively the subjectivity of the researcher.

Eisner (1991) presents the researcher as a connoisseur and “instrument,” whose personal schema and past experiences can provide the sensibilities that make investigation possible. For Eisner (1991), the eye of the researcher should not be considered a mechanical device for seeing. Rather, it should be understood as enlightened by human qualities and virtues such as intention, purpose, and frame of reference. Other than creating a frame of reference, the main purpose in this enquiry is to positively transform past identities in order to be self-liberated from the past experiences that constrain my ability to make meaningful change.

According to Pithouse (2003: 35), the principle of continuity “means that every experience both takes up something from those which have gone before and modifies in some way the quality of those which come after”. Pithouse, like me, is enquiring about her past curriculum experience in order to link both past and future experiences, and to make sense and new meanings of these experiences.

Having conversations with myself, and comparing the envisaged education outcomes with my inner contradictions, I began to rethink my position, and to re-define my role as a teacher in a new democratic South Africa. As I struggled in my day-to-day practices, my mind would take me back to my troubling experiences in the institution of higher

learning. But after reviewing the new intended aims of these policies, I gradually appreciated my negative experiences as actually contributing to re-defining my identity as an art teacher. I began to realise that my higher education experiences may be seen in a positive light as experiences that served to re-socialise me and begin a process of re-definition.

The state and institutions devoted to the education of professionals should take into an account that notions of democracy and change in education without proper processes and practices can become just glorious political ideals. If meaningful changes are not properly implemented, such ideals can blind the society, and serve particular political interests at the cost of genuine transformation.

2.3 Review of International Literature

Experience is a powerful teacher, especially if we take the time and make the effort to capture, think about and talk about what we experience. Certainly we all reflect informally on the events of the day. Certain situations stick in our minds. We run them over in our minds, wondering what if... (author unknown)

Beth Lewis (2008) in her study, 'The Value of Self-Reflection - Any Time Of Year, It's Important To Self-Reflect', points out that examining what worked and what failed in the past can lead to future triumphs. Although I agree with Lewis' argument, I believe that such examining can produce only two results, which could be either negative or positive. "Reflection to understand", however, is more than "just examining what you do".

Reflection while trying to understand, should pose questions, seek alternative answers or probe hidden meanings about what you do. As understanding sheds new light, it illuminates the background to past actions.

For most people, self-reflection is a once-off event, but my enquiry is an ongoing process of trying to understand my kind of choices and the shortcomings of the past and influences the adjustments that might be made in the future. According to Lewis (2008), every teacher can benefit from engaging in the exercise of self-reflection. This means examining what has worked and what has not worked in the classroom.

Sometimes it is not easy to examine what we did wrong previously and honestly admit our mistakes. But such self-reflection is critical to move forward as effective classroom teachers who are always striving for the best ways to help our students learn and excel. Trinh T Minh-Ha (1998: 14) has written about the 'Inappropriate Other' as the subject whose intervention "is necessarily that of both a deceptive insider and a deceptive outsider", unless the 'Other's subjectivity is visible'. She implies that such a figure actually lurks within every "I," and if one of the goals of a postcolonial ethnography is to become aware of how subjectivity is implicated in the production of meaning, the Inappropriate Other is the figure to be developed. I am impressed by the way Minh-Ha (1998) describes the Inappropriate Other as the centre in the production of meaning about him or herself.

Minh-Ha (1998) describes auto-ethnography as an intercultural, cross-cultural method to suggest how the Inappropriate Other functions as a time traveler whose journeys are in memory and history. In this research I use self-reflection to critically travel back in time, in order to understand how I dealt with the challenge of ‘othering’ by the dominant culture that I faced on becoming an art teacher.

I also used auto-ethnography as a voice to refuse that position of otherness. As Trinh (1998) puts it, by doing this research study, I also become an "Inappropriate(d) Other," a subject whose being cannot be appropriated by another to serve another's purposes. I use an “I” to re-define who I am as an art teacher. Previously, my meanings of ‘who I am’ were pre-defined for me as a black African man: I was the Other. As an "Inappropriate(d) Other" I have an agency; I use an “I” as an attempt to resist appropriation, and by so doing, I am recognizing and negotiating my situations, including my own subjectivity/identity.

Faith Spitz (2001) also focuses on self-reflection in her work. She includes teachers’ voices on the subject of teacher self-reflection. Although Spitz (2001) emphasizes that organizational change is the result of individuals changing themselves and their personal practice, she tends to look at teacher self-reflection as a process of planning or a process that occurs occasionally.

This view on teacher self-reflection tends to limit teacher self-reflection to just one aspect of classroom practice. My enquiry argues that self-reflection as a process that looks at the

whole identity of a teacher. It includes teacher socialization, teacher identity formation, teacher opportunities, and challenges and issues of change.

Thus, looking at self-reflection from this perspective gives the teacher a voice and control over their own practice. Below are some of the teachers' comments on self-reflection taken from Spitz (2001):

Self-reflection has been important to my professionalism and my growth, especially this year. Because this is all so new, I have been pretty demanding of myself to "keep track of" what I have done this year and consider how it has worked or fallen short. Keeping a portfolio has helped me to document some target areas.

It has also caused me to really reflect on my effectiveness and growth this year. As a result, I am really looking forward to next year for a fresh start.

In all, I feel I truly have grown professionally this year. In essence, my whole year has been an action-research for which I have continually sought resources and opportunities to help me improve.

– Higher primary school teacher

I put a great deal of time into my work but sometimes still feel that I am not doing enough to "challenge" every child to their fullest potential.

Time seems to be one of the factors; the other is having the time to share ideas and work with my colleagues to plan for more individual instruction. One person cannot do it by herself.

I continue to look for new ways to enhance my lessons and am open to new ideas.

Next year, I would like to continue to work on differentiating, especially in the area of math.

- Primary school teacher.

These are excellent comments but they seem to keep the process of self-reflection external and just as a tool for teacher planning. In this enquiry, I include the external and internal voices. One internal voice can talk to another internal voice (Bakhtin's dialogism). These voices may agree and disagree with one another.

Weiner and Cohen's (2003) as well as Taylor and Wasicsko's (2002) presentations at two Eastern Kentucky Conferences on Teacher Dispositions laid the ground work for exploring multiple interpretations of teacher candidate dispositions and their assessments.. Dee and Henkin (2002: 24) focused on "entry point attitudes of pre-service teachers towards cultural diversity...within an urban setting". In Gay's (2002) seminar article "Preparing for Culturally Responsive Teaching," she posits that teacher preparation must provide teacher candidates with a thorough knowledge of cultural differences and how they affect learning. Au and Blake (2003) found that cultural identity influences the perspectives of pre-service teachers. Villegas and Lucas (2002) listed the critical characteristics of the emerging culturally responsive teacher as embracing a sociocultural consciousness, holding an affirming view of students as well as having knowledge about the lives of students. Bakari (2003) challenged teacher education programmes to expose and refine pre-service teachers' attitudes toward African American students, nurture sensitivity in white pre-service teachers toward African

American students and utilize self-reflection as a vehicle for heightened awareness. Garmon (2004) suggested that certain dispositions and the openness students bring to courses on diversity may strongly influence their development of multicultural awareness.

In the previous sections of this chapter, I have presented the arguments of different critical theorists and the literature on the self. I realise that it is impossible to divorce literature on issues of the 'self' that exist in a particular culture, from auto-ethnography. I also find that Critical Theory is an appropriate theoretical framework for auto-ethnographic writing, as most auto-ethnographers critically depict nodal moments of their educational experiences.

My enquiry extends this auto-ethnographic paradigm by attempting to re-define myself and my practice after the depiction of those nodal moments.

2.4 Connecting critical theory to issues of self

I have adopted Brian Fay's (1987) critical theory of false-consciousness for the purposes of this exploration. According to Brian Fay (1987) critical theory seeks to "explain a social order in such a way that it becomes itself the catalyst which leads to the transformation of this social order." This is a critical, 'emancipatory' perspective to educational research. Reflection/introspection takes centre stage in the quest for emancipation.

The act of introspection and reflection on ideas and experiences encouraged me as a researcher to challenge my own thinking and understandings in seeking enlightenment (Fay 1987). In asking myself “who am I and how do I make sense of myself as an art teacher today,” Fay’s theory of false consciousness offers me an opportunity to understand and alter the layers of falseness that blocks meaningful and productive ways of engaging with the changing educational context. This Fay refers to as a state of emancipation.

Fay (1987: 31-32) details the process of false consciousness from the social critical perspective. Firstly, there is a ‘crisis’ in the social system. Secondly, he maintains that this crisis is caused in part by the false consciousness of those that are experiencing it. Thirdly, this false consciousness may be seen as being amenable to a process of enlightenment. This can create possibilities for freedom - freedom to change one’s thinking, acting, and being. Fourthly, Fay posits that enlightenment leads to emancipation, in which a group, empowered by its new-found self-understanding, radically alters its social arrangements and thereby alleviates its suffering. As a researcher, I borrow this theory to read my lived experience as an individual teaching in a particular historical moment in a South African school. Using the four core principles underpinning Fay’ theory of false consciousness, I reflect to understand the self and the meanings that I have adopted to help me “free” myself and become relevant and more engaging.

- Firstly, the crisis moments will describe the moments that were life-changing and

- critical in making sense of my educational journey in becoming an Art teacher.
- Secondly, the crisis moments will be used to excavate the meanings that I created and adopted as an individual in that the different crisis moments described and contributed to states of false consciousness. One example is gaining access to study Fine Arts at Technikon of Northern Natal in 1993 (refer to detailed discussion in Chapter 5 - 5.1.1b).
 - Thirdly, I offer an understanding of how the meanings that I have adopted gave form to the identities I constructed of myself as an individual and as an art teacher teaching in a multi-racial classroom.

This realization is a moment of enlightenment in the reflexive process and affects my understanding of feeling irrelevant and useless.

- Fourthly, this self-understanding described in layer three enables me to radically alter my position and meanings to construct a reworked identity of art teacher in a multi-racial, multicultural South African classroom

Choosing autoethnography as my methodological approach connects with critical theory in that it enables a reflective, interpretative and ‘emancipatory’ process to happen in more satisfying ways (Fay, 1987). In both false-consciousness theory and autoethnography methodology, there is always a reflective component wherein one describes, contemplates and considers what it is that is being thought or felt or is happening. There is always a critical component involving analysis and questioning of motives, purposes and ideology. There is always an evaluative component, though not always explicit, as one takes heed of the worth of the thought and action. There is always also an interpretive

component, as my research questions will raise other questions and responses that will give detailed interpretive accounts of my experiences. To look at life critically is what one does as an artist, teacher or artist-teacher-researcher.

This theory provides a framework of how to understand a crisis through four critical principles. In such critical enquiry, there is always an element of action; there is some kind of application or response to the first-hand accounts of what has been experienced (as described in my journal).

Art making as a research tool under autoethnography, like critical research, involves reciprocity of thought and action, as ideas, feelings, images, objects and selves interact through media in a particular historical and environmental context.

The essence of learning and teaching too is relational and its context is always social (and the social is always contextual), with human beings acting with each other and acting in, with and upon their world.

2.5 Conclusion

This chapter shows that while much educational research has been conducted on teachers' lives, very little scholarly attention has been paid to this genre among scholars in education in general, and art education in particular. Only a fraction of authors have managed to provide a theoretical framework that is pertinent to this type of research.

In this chapter, firstly, the background is set by providing insight into different approaches of how previous research deals with issues of teacher self-reflection. This chapter draws on research that tries to understand how teachers go about their daily practice, and how they deal with issues of diversity and change in their classrooms through a process of self-reflection and memory.

This chapter alludes to a number of issues and debates pertinent to the education system in South Africa. The general idea amongst different authors is that an education system that privileges some and continues to disadvantage others is this country's biggest threat to positive developments in education. My experiences of failing to achieve my grades could be attributed to the kind of education system that I went through, my sense of displacement and the choices that I have made. Narrating my stories of failure, struggle and triumph is critical for my unlearning and relearning as an art teacher. My stories in the following chapters are about how triumphs can come from being a victim of an education system that produced people who remained underskilled, in spite of the time spent at universities. But, I emphasise, one can rise above those challenges and still make a difference.

CHAPTER THREE

Research Methodology



Illustration 03

This is a more clearly defined, but still incomplete, self-portrait. The self-portrait, in construction, displays a symmetrical sketch using pencil as a technique to describe the facial- expressions. Parallel to this, the Methodology Chapter below describes the use of the journal and other alternative tools as a method to explore the self.

3.1 Research Methodology

This research is a qualitative enquiry. In this research I use auto-ethnography as the method of my enquiry. Auto-ethnography is a narrative approach of writing. I have used my personal journal as the main data for this enquiry. This chapter deals with aspects of the research methodology that are relevant to the study. I begin this chapter by defining auto-ethnography, providing different writers' definitions of what auto-ethnography is. I then argue for its use in this study, and proceed to outline different perspectives on auto-ethnography, from the vantage point of different theorists. Fay's theory of multi-consciousness, for example, is a critical theory that provides a major framework to my enquiry. Finally, I discuss my methods of data collection.

3.1.1 Definition of Autoethnography

Labels include "personal narratives", "self stories", "first-person accounts", "auto-observation", "personal ethnography", lived-experience", "self-ethnography", "evocative narratives", "autobiographical ethnography", "interpretive biography", and "postmodern ethnography." (pp.739 - 740)

Auto-ethnographers gaze reflexively, “first through an ethnographic wide-angle lens, focusing outward on social and cultural aspects of their personal experience; then they look inward, exploring a vulnerable self that is moved by and may move through, refract, and resist cultural interpretations. (Ellis and Bochner 2000:139)

The research methodology I am using is the qualitative method called auto-ethnography (Ellis and Flaherty 1992; Ellis 1995; Ellis and Bochner 1992, 2000, 2002; Fox 1996; Quinney 1996, and Ronai 1996). Auto-ethnography is a genre that follows the tradition of ethnographic research. Ethnography is a narrative form of writing and enquiry. Narrative forms of enquiry exist within the hermeneutic paradigm of social enquiry. The main pioneers of hermeneutics are Dilthey and Habermas. For these pioneers an understanding of the social process involves the entry into strange life expressions through a transfer from the fullness of a person’s own experience. What they are expressing is that understanding is gained through the researcher’s ability to use his/her own life experience to enter into the research subject.

To me, that idea sounds more like being a ‘participant observer’, and is ethnographic-orientated rather than auto-ethnography. The ethnographer and participant observer can only relate to a story as an outsider. But then, what is auto-ethnography?

Recently, a group of dynamic researchers (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000; Ellis, 1997; Ellis and Bochner, 2000; Patton, 2002; Reed Danahay, 1997; Richardson, 1995; Tierney and

Lincoln, 1997 and Van Maanen, 1995) began to understand that the subjective was legitimate and that nothing can ever be totally impersonal, or totally independent of the writer. My reading of such literature inspired me to use such a powerful and personal tool as auto-ethnography. According to Ellis and Bochner (2000: 761), “auto-ethnography provides an avenue for doing something meaningful for yourself and the world”. For me, as a confused and alienated black African male art teacher, I felt that auto-ethnography could help me make sense of who I am in a multi-cultural school.

Auto-ethnography is a genre of study that follows the tradition of ethnography research, but the essential difference between ethnography and auto-ethnography is that in the latter the researcher is not trying to become an insider in the research setting. He or she, in fact, **is** an insider. The context is his or her own.

As the world progressed to the 21st century, ethnographic approaches are being acculturated into a post-modern academic world. Theoretically, the post-modern view of the world does not allow one form of knowledge to exist, but multiple viewpoints are acknowledged and valued.

In the process of the changing view of knowledge, to facilitate a more personal point of view that emphasizes reflexivity and subjectivity, the auto-ethnographic form of writing emerged. The term originally, according to Ellis and Bochner (2000), refers to anthropological studies by individuals of their own culture. The definitions of the term are elusive, as there are many genres that fall under its umbrella.

The auto-ethnographer's general assumption is that reality is neither fixed nor entirely external but is created by, and moves with, the changing perceptions and beliefs of the viewer. Denzin and Lincoln (1994) present this multilayered approach as the "fifth moment" in the history of qualitative research. They claim that the distinctions between the cultural and the personal become blurred as the author changes the focus and moves back and forth between looking outward and looking inward. In my accounts about my life, I use 'I' as the first person, a researcher, and the subject researched. The essential reason for this is that auto-ethnography is a self-narrative that places the self at the centre within a social context. This use of 'I' places me as a primary data source, reporting about my experiences and my introspections.

Auto-ethnography, as described by Ellis and Boscher (2000), is a genre of writing that 'displays multiple layers of consciousness connecting the personal to the cultural' (p.739). That tends to explain why I align auto-ethnography with critical theories of multiple consciousness to try and reach some level of understanding of my experiences and then re-construct renewed meanings of who I am.

3.1.2 Different perspectives on Auto-ethnography

I like the clarity Mary Louise Pratt (1999) exerts when expanding on Françoise Lionnet's formulation of auto-ethnography. She says that auto-ethnography is a text in which people undertake to describe themselves in ways that engage with representations that others have made of them.

Nevertheless, there are other ways of understanding auto-ethnography than that of Pratt's. For Lincoln and Guba (1985), auto-ethnographic texts are representations that the 'self' within a certain 'culture' constructs in response to or in dialogue with expectations, texts and policies. This is done to create self-representations intended to intervene in the 'norm,' those modes of understanding which often do not take into account the underlying complexities of that culture. This definition of auto-ethnography, for me, is most relevant to my kind of enquiry. My complexities and contradictions as a black African Male art teacher have inspired me to embark on this research, as I find myself faced with new challenges as a result of new policies in the education system. So this enquiry is indeed responding to and in dialogue with new expectations, texts and policies.

The element of culture is strongly evident in most definitions of auto-ethnography. Linda Brodkey (2004) argues in *Writing Permitted in Designated Areas Only*, that auto-ethnography is the study of a 'culture' through an individual's self-study; here, she states, "personal histories ground cultural analysis and criticism" (27). Auto-ethnography is a kind of research where the researcher researches the self. It is subjective research that falls under the narrative interpretive genre of writing. Clifford Geertz (1973) highlights the subjective nature of auto-ethnography as an interpretive, not merely observational, study of the data of a culture, the socially-established structures of meaning.

Lastly, on the more radical side, when discussing Zora Neale Hurston's 'Dust Tracks', Lionnet (1999: 391) defines auto-ethnography as "open[ing] up a space of resistance between the individual (auto-) and the collective (-ethno-), where the writing (-graphy) of resistance cannot be foreclosed".

3.1.3 Justifying the choice of my research methodology

When I started working on this research, I was confronted by the challenge of having to choose a research method that is relevant to and effective for my study. The main concepts of my study were: 'self-study', 'critical moments of my professional and personal development', and the 'I', as a researcher, making meanings of 'who I am' as an art teacher and as a black African male. Auto-ethnography as defined above presented itself as the most suitable method of enquiry. I will say that one of the main reasons for choosing auto-ethnography is because of its respect for subjectivity and its encouragement of the use of poetic language. This made it amenable to studying art-making and art teaching processes.

Auto-ethnography attempts to get at the underlying meaning, the essence, the ground structure of phenomena as they occur in "lived world" situations. I write, yet not knowing the "final" findings on my research, not knowing the next thing to write about, aware of my feelings of loss and vulnerability that I sometimes experience as a result of the kind of choices that I have made in my life. Writing is the central activity of any auto-

ethnographic inquiry. That may probably be why some writers mention that self-study research has subscribed to the notion of writing as enquiry. Writing an auto-ethnography, based on the above ideas of a self-journey into the unknown, makes me understand the world as a process of discovery and a space for making improvements rather than seeing the world as a space full of facts pointing to a single reality. It gives an individual or a group of professionals renewed definitions of who they are.

3.1.4 ‘Self’ in Auto-ethnography

The use of critical theories will give this enquiry a base for understanding issues from my point of view on this subject of self-reflection. Regrettably, there is a suspicion surrounding auto-ethnography, which, in part, relates to the problematic ‘self’ as the major source of data (Denzin & Lincoln: 2000). This issue raises concerns about the validity, trustworthiness and reliability of the investigation.

By accepting the notions of ‘self’ into their own research as major characters, auto-ethnographic researchers have challenged accepted perceptions about silent authorship, where the ethnographer/researcher’s voice is not included in the presentation of findings, as Charmaz & Mitchell (1997) point out in their recent writings on auto-ethnography. The problematic nature of ‘self-as-the-only-data-source’ in auto-ethnography is further complicated because qualitative researchers have long been encouraged to consider how their personal subjectivity influences the investigative process (Holt: 2003). The investigator has been established as the research instrument in a range of qualitative research traditions (Lincoln & Guba: 1985). In auto-ethnography, the subjectivity of the

researcher is seen as a resource for understanding the problematic world he or she is investigating (Glesne & Peshkin: 1992). The main exercise in this enquiry is to explore my stories within the education culture, so that the bigger problems and challenges facing South African teachers can be understood. In the auto-ethnographic tradition, the use of the investigator's *self* as the focus of the research is problematic, according to Holt (2003).

But, as Sparkes (2002) asks: Why are personal narratives so offensive? I feel that the main offence comes from the viewpoint that qualitative investigators should address credibility, dependability, and trustworthiness of data. According to qualitative researchers, issues of readability, dependability, and trustworthiness are the cornerstones of qualitative rigor. I do agree, but also maintain that theorists such as Garratt & Hodkinson (1999); Sparkes (2000), and Denzin & Lincoln (2000) extend this view by pointing out that the traditional criteria used to pass judgment on qualitative research in general may not be suitable for auto-ethnography. To elaborate briefly, Denzin & Lincoln (2000) talk of the fourth moment of qualitative inquiry which does not subscribe to the evaluative notions of traditional qualitative enquiry. Auto-ethnography is, according to its attributions, a product of a fourth moment of qualitative inquiry.

The development encounter is a multi-faceted, multi-vocal process and a complex site of contestation. It calls for showing how particular events, an encounter, a development, can be woven together with a variety of facts and a battery of interpretations to produce a sense of how things go, have been going, and are likely to go. The development process

offers a chance for a more politically engaged scholar to investigate change, planned and unplanned, in order to gain a better understanding of social transformation through development.

My role as cultural interpreter is very much shaped by my own experiences, both prior to and during my research. Moreover, development is embraced with the explicit intention of changing lives, and collapses notions of detached observation into the lived realities and daily experiences of both researcher and our 'subjects' of study or development.

3.2 Metaphors in my Auto-ethnography

I find it fascinating that auto-ethnographic writing has been depicted by different metaphors. Ellis and Boscher (2000) use the metaphor of a camera which focuses on rarely heard stories. Maanen (1988) mentions the aspect of zooming inward and outward, backward and forward, from one dimension to multiple dimensions. Pinar (1986:58) refers to “the architecture of life”. Other writers depict auto-ethnographic writing through the metaphor of a long journey of discovery. I see this metaphor aptly reflecting our South African journey towards a democratic dispensation. After all, had not Nelson Mandela entitled his autobiography, *The Long Walk to Freedom*?

The process of self-enquiry can result in self-discovery which in turn can create a space where one may grow and improve. South Africa as a country has since 1994, embarked on the journey of self-understanding and self-recovery, moving away from hundreds of years of oppression. I have decided to use the metaphor of a portrait artist producing a painting of himself (a self-portrait). Why art, and why a self-portrait? I consider this to be a very likely question. It is well-known that all portraits (and indeed all art works) are

essentially self-portraits. Much of what I do as an artist can be called portraiture, particularly a kind of self-portraiture (Pearse, 1994; Laurence-Lightfoot & Hoffman-Davis, 1997).

So too does research reveal as much about the researcher as it does the researched. When conceiving of being the person that is the artist-teacher-researcher, the aim is to achieve a segmented yet holistic sense of “self”, which Rollo May (1967: 90) describes as “not merely the sum of various ‘roles’ one plays, but the capacity by which one knows one plays these roles”. The ideas of segmented yet unified roles, of disharmonious harmony - contrary to dictionary definitions of the self - are beginning to dominate our post-modernist dialogues.

3.3 Art in my Auto-ethnography

It must be pointed out that some scholars and teachers are dubious that critical research can be achieved through the arts and that art is as important as other academic disciplines (Eisner: 1991). A recent issue of the National Art Education Association Journal (2006: 52) quoted artist Hung Liu, who said, "A really intelligent artist is a scholar first, perhaps a poet or writer second, and an artist third or fourth." In the process of cognitive development of pupils, art should be an essential commodity in the classroom (Eisner, 1991, 2004).

My love of art as a form of expression was instilled in me at a tender age. I fell in love with art probably because the process of art-making is a process of self-expression that is

unconditional. Although outside auto-ethnographic discussion, Eisner (2004) offers an alternative view of the role of the arts in the schools. He suggests that arts should occupy a central place in the curriculum, because it is connected to the primary educational end of a more abundant mind. Integration and interpenetration of the other areas of the curriculum show the arts as the connecting part of the whole. In my auto-ethnography I view art and art education as a conduit or catalyst (also metaphors!) for allowing an in-depth understanding of the world.

Is this not what auto-ethnography does as well? I am fascinated by the relationship between art and auto-ethnography. Since I have been studying and teaching art over the years in Durban, *art is my life*; it also gives meaning to my life. So does auto-ethnographic research. These similarities can give me a right to call my auto-ethnography a 'work of art in process'. Or even to call it the re-construction of the work of art (a self-portrait).

Teaching art has afforded me an intimate space into the hearts of those pupils that I have been teaching. The process of art-creation can make you feel vulnerable. According to Breyten Breytenbach, writer and poet, art moves beyond the borderlines of conventional control and behaviour. In other words, art becomes more important than your intentions of art making. Similarly, auto-ethnography has been characterised by writers like Reed-Danahay (1997) as the genre of writing that is a boundary-crosser. One would be amazed to realise how many details we do not know about our face until we look closely into the mirror and start to paint ourselves. One's eyes become a window to our own self, the self

that might be struggling, the self that may be confused, the self that is not at peace with itself...

On the one hand, the act of looking closely at yourself in the mirror can be frightening, but coming face-to-face with the reality of how you really look like inside/out can also be liberating. Yet the mirror image is still an image. While liberating, it can also make you 'conscious' of who you really are and how you might need to change.

This is the main aim of my study, to improve my practice in art teaching.

On the other hand, the process of writing auto-ethnography is also a form of self-expression that is very creative. The process of re-construction can make you feel vulnerable but, at the end, it is also 'emancipatory'. These examples of similarities between the process of art-making and writing the auto-ethnography have made me, as an artist, choose 'myself' as a subject of study, a self that exists within a particular culture, with my encounters in education in general, and art in particular.

In many cases, people are afraid of writing about their lives in a certain culture because of the claim that it makes them lose 'control'. Yet, in such a narrative genre of writing, after confronting your fears as a researcher, many meanings about who you really are can be revealed and uncovered. To deconstruct that word 'control', I refer to many things. It may involve giving 'yourself' over to the power of some other person. It may be fear of making yourself ridiculous, or even the fear of the unknown, and unknowable, self.

Based on my own experiences while embarking on this enquiry from the beginning, I realise that feelings of powerlessness, vulnerability, weakness, or ineffectualness are likely. To me, it is exactly that delicate process of playing with possibilities, of controlling the uncontrollable, that is so fascinating about doing auto-ethnography. This process gives you the opportunity to locate and understand where you are as a teacher, in order to improve your teaching practice. This is indeed also a liberating process.

Auto-ethnography views personal experience from the inside, and connects the researcher with his/her cultural contexts. Patton (2002) outlines how our personal journeys are woven into the fabric of a study of the wider culture that is researched. The culture of education in South African (including the policies and curriculum) has been changing drastically over the past few years. In this enquiry, this is the critical culture to be understood by the teachers in their day-to-day practice.

In the context of educational research, this kind of qualitative enquiry implies examining the lived experiences of the people involved. It also reveals some of the complexities that other individuals within that researched culture might be facing. Writing from my own personal experiences as an art teacher, the educational changes made by the state at the policy and curriculum development level, imposed a tremendous amount of pressure and frustration on teachers. I am referring mostly to teachers who were trained from the period before 1994 (that marked the end of the old regime and the beginning of democracy).

This pressure was the result of the policy and curriculum changes that demanded teachers to become, in my view, ‘newly transformed teachers’. To be a newly transformed teacher implies being:

- one who has completely moved away from the old pedagogies of teaching and learning;
- getting rid of the old traditional methods of teaching that have been used and experienced;
- a teacher who has discarded the ideology of a separate education system that had been installed by the apartheid regime for many years, and
- a teacher who takes informed decisions inside the classroom, and makes decisions that serve to reinforce notions of multi-culture.

As a teacher who has gone through separate, apartheid education, who experienced ‘Bantu’ education, who was trained as a teacher using traditional ‘authoritarian’ pedagogies, I find myself at the crossroads, confronted with many questions. How do I deal with:

- having to teach art in a multi-cultural, multi-racial school?
- using the newly-adopted curriculum, which has a strong emphasis on African art, in contrast with the Eurocentric curriculum that was taught?
- having to adopt new methods of teaching like the outcomes-based education?
- having to be a facilitator of knowledge rather than a custodian of knowledge?

This new culture in education was problematic for me and prompted me to engage in this self-study. Trying to understand where these positive changes have left me, I asked myself : Is this major shift a positive or negative one in education?

In my desperation, I sometimes perceive that such new demands and experiences are equivalent to being politically-correct, where we pretend to change the practice by changing its name. As I struggle to make good choices and decisions in my classroom, I tend to refer back to my old systems of thought. Have we really transformed as teachers from the old education system?

I have developed three research questions. In formulating these questions I developed some idea of what I was thinking in terms of each, so that my quest became clearer to me:

- **How have I come to be the art teacher I am?**

This question traces the nodal moments in my educational career. I will draw on my journal as the main source of data about my experiences on becoming an art teacher. My journal comprises a record of an assortment of my experiences in the art world, including events, my diary, my sketches and poems from the time I enrolled at the Technikon of Northern Natal to study Fine Arts, to the present.

- **What are the meanings, definitions and practices that have informed my identity as an art teacher in a multiracial classroom?**

What are the educational and personal discourses that constitute who am I? These discourses range from my identity as a black African male to my educational discourses as a student and art teacher in a multi-racial, multi-cultural classroom.

Using Brian Fay's critical theory of self-consciousness, I want to raise concerns about the kind of tendencies within teachers to accept restrictions imposed on their profession or even inside the classrooms. Teachers accept the moral and social pressures of the new system, but through their past socialisation, actually find it difficult to adjust. One of my main concerns is that new values, good in themselves, become orthodoxies that teachers are forced into imitating, and this leaves many frustrated. It stifles creativity. It limits them in decision-making in the classroom.

Ironically, it can make them impotent because it goes against their own better knowledge, their own better instincts. And ultimately it makes teachers silent and inefficient. I believe that one of the reasons why the education profession has been heavily criticised is because we have so many teachers in the same dilemma as myself, trying to be that 'newly transformed teacher' without truly understanding themselves within these kinds of changes and the kinds of challenges that they are facing.

This enquiry is not meant to attack or criticise policy, but to zoom in and out of teachers' lives, to view their frustrations and their triumphs. I am also not saying that we should remain with the familiar, or that we should move with the known, old traditions of education and culture.

Indeed, we have achieved much good in educational policies in South Africa. But we still need to embark on educational research that will dispel illusions that good policies automatically result in transformation. We must not imagine that change exists, when the

realities that teachers face inside the classrooms may tell another story of the new South Africa.

3.4 My methods of data production

Although auto-ethnography allows a researcher to be flexible in using different methods of data capturing, I have limited myself to a method of data production that puts the connection to the self, as both the experience and the product of the experience (Grossi 2006: 16). Indeed, if we view the purpose of qualitative inquiry as a quest to gain understanding of ourselves, there is no qualitative method *per se*, only methods to gather information with which we construct our qualitative understanding.

The constructed narrative (van Hell, 2003; Grossi: 2006) method is the closest to established research methods of data production used in this auto-ethnography. This is a process where a researcher re-constructs the meanings based on the data that he/she has collected. In this study, after re-constructing my journal, major themes are identified, and then grouped in order to analyse key critical issues and establish a better understanding of my journeys of my becoming an art teacher as told in my journal. Constructed narratives as tools of auto-ethnographic research have helped me as a researcher to select and make meaning of data collected more easily.

Other researchers use co-constructed narrative method to remove a single voice and include multiple voices within the research. The inclusion of multiple voices will add to the trustworthiness and will provide a 'rich array' of interpretations or perspectives

(Gergen & Gergen, 2005: 72). As this research study falls under auto-ethnography, I will as a researcher be researched by me, so there is no need for multiplicity of voices.

This auto-ethnographic enquiry uses my personal journal written in the first person as the main source of data production. The idea of using such data has been accepted as a valid method of data production by auto-ethnographic researchers. I also use secondary data. As McNiell and Chapman (2005: 159) state: “There has been a growth of interest in both textual and visual mass media as secondary data. For example, newspaper reports have been used as main documentary evidence”. Auto-ethnographic texts in my journal appear in a variety of forms: short stories, poetry, artworks, fiction, photographs, personal essays, fragmented and layered writings.

My journal contains in it narrative details of concrete actions, inner/outer dialogues, extracts of my emotional moments, professional and spiritual involvement. All these features are affected by history, social structure and culture, which themselves are dialectically revealed through action, feeling, thought and language (Ellis & Bochner, 2000: 139).

My enquiry will be supported and enhanced mostly by my artworks, my life stories, and pictures. Even the textual imagery becomes visual rather than verbal as I go deeper into details about my life, drawings and paintings which function as kinds of texts (Grossi: 2006). I will keep on referring to the process of painting a self-portrait, confronted face-to-face by myself/my life. The self-portraiture slips easily into Ellis and Bochner’s (2000)

roster of what can be included as auto-ethnography, although it is a term they do not mention in their long list.

3.5 Limitations of my Auto-ethnography

The use of my personal journal as the only data source can be problematic in nature because qualitative researchers have long been encouraged to consider how their personal subjectivity influences the investigative process. But this limitation can be counteracted by the fact that the researcher has been established as the research instrument *par excellence* in a range of qualitative research traditions (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

In the auto-ethnographic tradition, the use of the researcher's *self* as the focus of the research is problematic, but, as Sparkes (2002b) asks, why are personal narratives seen as offensive in research? This researcher is trying to invoke the new ways of data production that are not limited only to the accepted norms.

This auto-ethnographic research can easily fall prey to criticisms of narcissism, which is common, because auto-ethnographies are considered too self-indulgent, introspective, and individualized. Sparkes (2000) and Coffey (1999) caution that those who preach auto-ethnography are "in danger of gross self-indulgence" (2000: 132). However, criticisms of narcissism and self-indulgence represent universal charges applied to all auto-ethnographies regardless of the qualities of the particular venture.

Admittedly, auto-ethnographies can become self-indulgent. It is because of the subjective nature of all auto-ethnography. Then there are misapprehensions of the genre due to a mistrust of the work of self as a new form of writing (Sparkes, 2002b). Writers like Stanley (1993) and Mykhalovskiy (1996) have argued that auto-ethnography is not necessarily limited to the self because people do not accumulate their experiences in a social vacuum. They challenge reductive, dualistic views (i.e. self-other distinctions) of auto-ethnography, and suggest that to write of individual experience is to write of social experience.

Ellis & Bochner (2000) view attacks on auto-ethnography as narcissistic, and related criticisms as working to reinforce ethnographic orthodoxy and to resist change. Such criticisms, in turn, function to preserve the very types of dominant viewpoints that those using auto-ethnographic approaches may wish to question. To me, it seems that there are kinds of criticism that are inescapable in auto-ethnography simply because of its very subjective nature.

CHAPTER FOUR

Chapter Four: A Further Self-portrait: Making Identity more Visible



Illustration 04

This research uses my journal as the major source of data produced. My journal provides evidence of how I responded at various moments to the question: Who am I? What are past experiences that could have created who I am? And how do definitions of who I am enhance or limit my practices as an art teacher in a multi-cultural setting?

4.1 My Journal as part of Data Collection

This research uses my journal as the major source of data produced. My journal provides evidence of how I responded at various moments to the question: Who am I? What are past experiences that could have created who I am? And how do definitions of who I am enhance or limit my practices as an art teacher in a multi-cultural setting?

Telles (2000) presents lived experiences as important and social research and accepts them as sources of legitimate knowledge in qualitative research. Some even emphasize these as more authentic than other forms of qualitative research inquiry. A journal is an open book of somebody's life history, a daily record of events or business. My journal is my own personal document, which is written in a particular style. It includes my dialects, lingo and my own particular style of writing. Included on my journal are my memoirs, photographs, poems, my views and my stories. I have included these items to make visible my nodal moments that have informed the kind of an art teacher that I am today.

Using a journal in this auto-ethnographic research as the main source of data shows a great deal of openness, and could provide the key when discussing possibilities of enhancing personal and collective identities. A journal is not just a book. It is a part of you; a place where you can share your innermost thoughts, feelings and reflections. Your journal is the repository of your experiences. It becomes a guide, a mirror, a confidante and a friend (Gerry Starnes, 1996).

My identities were formed and continue to be formed mostly by my social and my professional life as an art teacher.

Since this is academic research, I will selectively deal mainly with the formation of my professional self and my career, on how I became an art teacher in a changing South African context (this is not to imply that private experiences did not impinge on this development. Indeed, the personal and the professional interface). I use my personal journal to provide answers to my research questions.

According to Dhunpath (2000: 544), auto-ethnographic research methods, based on personal accounts and personal diaries as forms of life history dedicated to the significance of individual experience, have become increasingly popular in educational (social science) inquiry: “I want to suggest boldly, therefore, that (this) approach is probably the only authentic means of understanding how motives and practices reflect the intimate intersection of institutional and individual experience in the postmodern world.” These ideas are strongly supported by Brian Fay’s theory of multi-consciousness and Bakhtin’s theory of dialogism. These two theories emphasize the power of understanding the inner self through inner conversations. Such conversations inform the construction of our self-identities. It is said that our consciousness is like the small tip of an iceberg. What one sees is not all there is; greater substance lies beneath the surface. It is to that deeper, more massive consciousness that we wish to establish a meaningful and ongoing link.

My journal fortunately covers both pre- and post-apartheid eras in South Africa. My main subject of study at the higher education level was Fine Arts. Art was not taught in black schools during the harsh times of apartheid. So it was regarded as an élite subject, dominated by whites.

The main content and practices of Fine Arts were mostly Eurocentric. For me, the experience of enrolling in a formerly white institution, and choosing to study Fine Arts, was a traumatic and an alienating one. After such experiences, I saw the importance of the inclusion of other diversities as being very crucial in Fine Art education in South Africa. As a result I became an Art teacher and a researcher.

Soon after 1994, educational policies and the new curriculum proposed a "multiple perspectives" approach. In the new curriculum, post-apartheid education offers a critical framework from which to 'problematise' apartheid, colonialism and traditionally Western views of colonial ideals in Art History. That change of view created a contradiction for me. For Lionnet and Pratt (1990), auto-ethnography is political and reactive, written in response to a colonizer's [mis]representations of that culture. Self-interpretation is triangulated by the colonizer's representations.

The importance of change and diversity in Art Education, with particular attention to Art History, can be explored in two ways: firstly, by moving towards a programme of studies of pluralism and respect for differences in a broad sense and, secondly, by promoting a sense of belonging and acceptance. In both cases, it is vital to reflect upon my past experiences in order to examine with rigor the concepts of identity formation in the South African educational context.

My journal provides a closer look as I zoom inwards and outwards on how I came face-to-face with the issues of whether to assimilate the dominant culture or to resist. You will appreciate my dilemmas as you read excerpts from my journal and perhaps wonder whether I had a choice or not. My inner struggles, as they are openly revealed on my journal, show how I came to deal with my situation and made meaning out of it. Merriam and Simpson (2000: 97) remind us that “the overall purposes of qualitative research are to achieve an understanding of how people make sense out of their lives, to delineate the process (rather than the outcome or the product) of meaning-making, and to describe how people interpret their experience”.

Finally, by reflecting on the multicultural realities and struggles as contained in my journal, new programmes of Fine Art studies can be developed to help a new generation at university to develop a sense of belonging and acceptance in a diverse South Africa. The journal may be seen as providing a critical framework to understand the world both past and present, and to explore new ways of seeing. As for me, this research is a reconstruction engine working and re-working the meanings of who am I and how my identity was constructed. It seeks to find answers to the question of how that constructed identity enhanced or limited my practices as an art teacher.

4.2 Bongani Mkhonza’s **Journal: *My Dear Friend***

This is a copy of my journal which is comprised of my personal diary of day-to-day events, photographs, and copies of art works, poems and discussions. The title of my journal is ‘*My Dear Friend*’; it is a summary of the critical nodal moments of my

educational life. It was written at different moments of my life but focus on those moments which have shaped who I really am today as an art teacher.

I have strategically started my journal from 1993, which is the year in which I started my tertiary level education, to more recent times when I started doing this research. However, in my recollections I do not limit myself and go as far back as my childhood and my high school experiences when necessary.

Journal

Bongani: Durban, Berea

29 February 1993 My dear friend!

A week ago I have just registered at the University of Northern Natal. My dream has come true. I have been dreaming about this moment ever since I started high school, although I am attending at Technikon Natal because of my practical (fine Art).

I remember my registration day; my father brought me here from the rural Matubatuba. We took a taxi a bit late, around 11h30 mid-day and we arrived in Durban at 13h45. The registration line was still long. Fortunately, those who have applied the previous year were given more priority, and I happened to be one of those already accepted.

From that line we joined the cue for the resident space. We were told that all the residential spaces were full. We were also told that we can go and try the vacant flats in town. My father insisted that he will never leave his son stranded on those flats in Durban. After a while, one lady come and told us that is a space available at the

residential place called the Campbell Hall in Glenwood. But this place is far, it is normally taken by the students with cars. By the look of things in 1993, mostly White students owned cars.

And another thing was that, Campbell Hall was only for boys. That last point really pleased my father as he was never going to understand the fact that I was leaving in a mixed resident (boys and girls)

By the time he left, it was already 17h30 in the afternoon. I almost cried. It was for the first time in my life to leave home. I was given a temporal space inside the campus only for the night then the following morning I will be taken to Campbell Hall. I was so tired; I had to go to bed early. The following day, I called home they told me that my father only arrived that morning. He did not get the transport going it was too late.

Diary:

13 April 1993

Bongani: Durban, Berea

My dear friend! Today is my birthday. It's supposed to be the happiest day of my life but I feel so depressed today. I am so sick of being in charge of my life, I am sick of having to worry about whether I will pass or not this term, sick of being independent but lonely and sick of having to be responsible for myself here in Durban, how I wish to go back home where it's nice and quiet, and be with my with family, with no worries. I know this sounds really selfish but seriously I hate being here in this busy, fast life.

It's so isolated. I am tired of this English I speak everyday. Bongi (my girlfriend from back home) doesn't really understand how bad my life is around here, she never sees my silent misery as I write her letters crying for help. I wish she was here. But how is she going to know because when I see her I always show her a big smile, 'a Zulu man never cries', and that's what my father always told me. What if I just walk to her and start crying? I find it so hard to believe that even my mama probably doesn't even see my pain. I hate not knowing things, this shit called History of Art, and I hate not having a life plan. When the Tech closes, I will go back home and never cum back. I honestly don't even know if my father will give me money to cum back here if I failed this term. The plan is, if I fail, I am not going back home. I will tell them I am working part time here in Durban. Maybe I can raise enough money to take care of myself, get my own place, get Bongi here in Durban and get married. I can just forget about this stupid Tech. I don't think Bongi really wants to move down here, she is more of a slow and steady 'kinda' girl whereas I want everything right now. She's got big plans she wants to finish school and become a town planner. I am so completely lost and confused. I just wish I could believe that everything will be ok.

Funny to think that just 6 months ago I had a perfect life, living at home, perfect job, making a lot of money, had the best girlfriend in the world.

then....I came here in Durban city life, chose to do fine arts, and life just unraveled right before my eyes, I spent too much time trying to get used to these art terminology and big English words, most of the artworks they refer to are so Eurocentric. Art History lecturer speaks of Greek gods and the Italian Renaissance? I live off a shitty R350.00 a month, it's fucked up. But I don't blame anyone for this.

Stop it Bongani... you chose to be here... It's going to be okay whatever happens, things happen for a reason.

Painting is my favorite subject. It gives me a space to explore, to experiment, to make mistakes. But the material, the paints, the brushes are expensive. That Lecturer with bold head speaks so fast, I can't even understand what he says; he looks very irritated yesterday when he discovered that I was one of the people who did not finish the experimental exercises. I must start being more serious about my work. The resident life is a bit too hectic. The partying never stops; they play this white music I can't even understand. Their dancing sucks, but I like the fact that they don't fight in their parties. I wish that I can have a close friend around here. People are so impersonal.

Anyway I need a smoke so ill end it here.

Here is a copy of one of my first paintings that I ever painted at Technikon Natal which symbolises what was happening in my life; what I was going at that critical moment of my life: This images is a photo that was used to paint the painting.

The painting titled "Isle of Capri" was sold to the unknown person so I decided to use this photograph to show how the painting looked like.

Art work no: 01



Art work no: 02

This banner still hangs at the new Wilson's Warf where I recently booked a boat cruise with the Isle of Capri.

Title: The Isle of Capri

Year: 1993

Medium: Oil on canvass

By: Bongani Mkhonza

My personal description of the artwork:

This painting was painted by me as part of the course requirement for my first year fine art degree. To take you back, I had never painted or been taught formally how to paint before. At the high school that I attended, art was not taught formally as part of the school curriculum. I had fell in love with art at first sight as I watched the Matubatuba art crafters working on the roadside as I traveled to and from school. This group of locals used to sell different art and craft items on the roadside for a living. Most tourists support them by buying quiet a lot of these artworks.

As for me, these Crafters were connecting Matubatuba with the rest of the world, as people who could not even speak English come all the way to adore and even buy their artwork.

That to me was more appealing than being a teacher, a police or a soldier as those three were the few given career choices around me. My father was a policeman and mother was a teacher. For me being an Artist was not understood amongst the rural conservative Zulu family.

My parent's best career choices were teaching, policing, and being a secretary in one of the offices in town. To be honest with you, I had never seen an Artist before but just a group of those Matubatuba Crafters. I only had an idea of an Artist from television and movies.

The Isle of Capri painting represented my newly found world and my new surroundings in 1993 as I had moved to an urban city of Durban. This was paradise to me: the sea, the buildings and beautiful people. This is revealed by the choice of colours I have chosen in this painting. Living in the city around the early nineties was mainly white people. This could have been the result of the Group Areas Act. This act prevented people of different racial groups to live together. Only whites were allowed the right to stay in towns and cities. Even in 1993, a lot of years after this Group Areas Act was abolished; still very few black people were staying in Durban central. So living in the city was alienating to me in a way that, all my life I had been a rural Matubatuba boy and there was very little, if any interaction with other black people except for other students inside the campus.

In the painting are a lot of buildings dominated by the sky blue colours, warm yellows and brown silhouettes. I express my sense of loneliness by placing the Isle of Capri as the only boat at the seashore. This is an afternoon scene filled with emptiness, orange lights and the dark blue skies. The painting is flat, when interacting with this painting; one cannot resist feeling disturbed by serenity of empty streets and inappropriate sense of depths into space. This is because of two reasons conscious reasons; the first reason is that,

This painting was painted from the photograph image that I took around the harbor and secondly maybe because of the fact that I had never painted before in my life.

Sub-consciously, this could have resulted from the fact that I was feeling displaced and that I was painting alone after everyone has gone home, as for where this painting is hanged today?

It is still hanging at home in the sitting-room wall. I gave it to my mother as a present as she has always believed in me. I do not know its' worth but it carries with it a lot of sentiments, memories and value.

Poem

By Bongani Mkhonza

Date: 03 October 1993

Title: Live On Love on!

Pigmentation is a sin

The sense of sight is devil

All angels are colour-blind

Is it by choice to embrace pigment superiority?

Or is it by indoctrinations from our histories.

Human beings live on

Wake up and embrace the difference

Rise up and differ to agree

In consciousness there is power

Power that liberate form pigmentation

Live on human being, love on

Do not be polluted by pigmenting theologies

Love on human beings

Throw off the chains of Egypt

But realise that the freedom of Canaan is utopia.

My dear friend

27 April 1994: "Freedom Day"

Matubatuba: out in field!

My dear friend! Well things have been bad out here; living in KZN has been my worst experience. The violence around the townships, what I see on TV everyday is shocking. People are killing each other just because of political difference. At the Technikon Natal we have been distracted several times. At least now we are on holidays. You can feel the tension is in the air. There are threats for a civil war in this country. I am at home at Matubatuba, sitting on top of the hill overlooking UMfolozi River. Across, is a place called Kwesika-Mthethwa, a place where the King Shaka Zulu was raised. It is a beautiful land, not much green but with patches of dark green vegetation and a lot of scattered round houses. This is a vast of land with no apparent boundaries but you see a lot of trails created by people and cattle that walk everyday. Most houses are unfenced but the kraals are heavily fenced with wood logs, twigs and wire. What is interesting is that kraals are big but inside there is no much stock. May be that is symbolical of what I happening in this place.

This place has been the killing ground and the fighting zone of the so-called political wars between the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) and the African Nation Congress (ANC).

Most people especially women and children had fled the area to seek refuge inside the KwaMsane Township where I am right now. This township is a bit safe because most houses are own by policeman and soldiers (from the 121 battalion South African Defence Force training camp). Those soldiers course of judgement is two-folded. Firstly, most of them are people who grew up in the rural Matubatuba, dropped out of school, then became soldiers. Of course the rural Matubatuba is known to be the IFP's strong-hold, secondly, now they live in the KwaMsane Township which is known to be the ANC's zone. Their duties include going around defusing the so-called 'illegal gatherings' that might threaten the government's status-quo.

To be honest with you, there are not to be trusted coz there would take political sides. So the KwaMsane Township was not completely safe.

Most people did not go to vote around here because they fear for their lives. I was lucky that I was in Durban during the voting dates.

'No one should know who voted for what' but that statement was an illusion because everybody know who voted for what. The political division is so visible in this society. During the day everything is always normal but at night you here the people singing, people running and a lot of gun shots. The sounds will start from far and they will come closer and closer, my heart will be beating so fast. If they end knocking at our door, my mama will tell them that we are not home, we went to the University in Durban while we are hiding under the beds or up on the ceiling board. It was quiet funny in a way coz my brother always fell down when we came down from the selling. He was afraid of the dark too, so you can imagine, Ha! Ha! Hah!

It is the afternoon, almost the sunset. It is so quiet today. Everything seems to have come into a stand-still. There are very few cars on the N2 freeway that cut across the township; people seem so tired, so exhausted from disagreements, fighting and killings. A lot of people have disappeared.

Today Nelson Mandela had a speech in one of the stadiums in Johannesburg. I was listening to it from the Radio Zulu but I could not understand much of what he was saying. The language was heavily political with very big English words. What I found interesting were the proposed educational changes. Education is going to be free! We are going to have one national education system, hooray! Most people in the township are excited that the ANC has won the elections but there is a feeling of secrecy about it. It's getting dark; I will talk to you later my friend.

Anyway, it is freedom day today and I feel very poetic.

Poems

By Bongani Mkhonza

Date: 27 April 1993

The conceptions of the failed system

Pocket your oxford dictionaries

Untie those ropes on my gold and diamonds

Review your citizenship and your identity

For the conceptions of your system has failed

When will you learn from your own mistakes?

When will you go back to the drawing board?

Your conceptions were as deep as the shallow end

Your institutions were full of false prophets

Your ideologies were paper thin

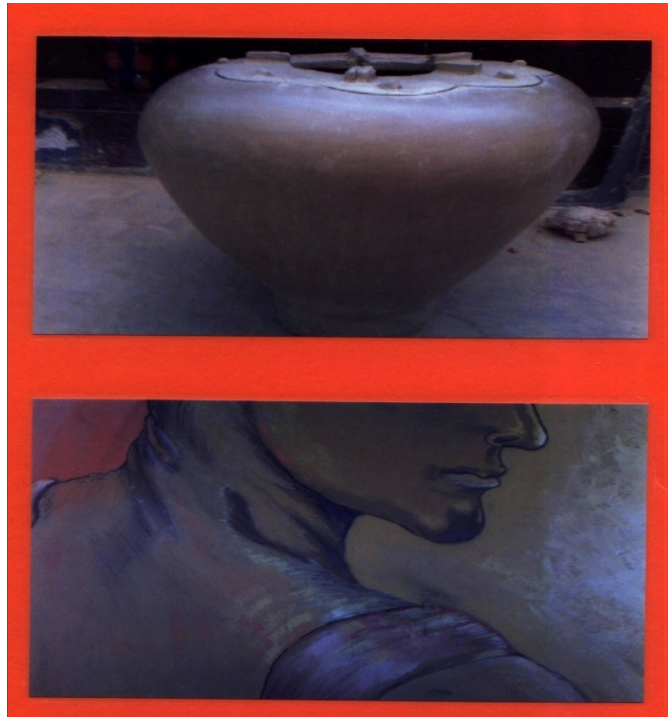
Your believes were looted from hell

Give in or perish in the eyes of your own false conceptions

For it is a poison to your own future generation.

Below is an image of one of the art-works that I have selected as the depiction metaphorically of what was happening inside my life; outside at the higher educational institution that I attended and in the whole country:

Artwork no: 03



Title: A Zulu-Greek Pot

Year: 1994

Medium: Red Terracotta Clay

By: Bongani Mkhonza

My personal description of an artwork:

It is very interesting how the art of art making and the art of writing about the art works are interlinked. The reason why I say that is because, before I started working on this piece, I did not only research about Zulu pots but I also wrote an essay to my lecturer about why Zulu pots can be accepted as 'fine art pieces'. That essay evoked a lot of questions about what kind of art; crafts or any other cultural artifacts should be seriously considered as the works of fine art.

I can recall my first few lessons in ceramics, my lecturer kept on remarking that my pottery was just 'Zulu crafts'. I do not blame him though; I was strongly influenced by Matubatuba crafters.

It could have looked very strange for me to come to the university and start producing Euro-centric ceramics that I had never seen before with my naked eye, that I had not connection with whatsoever.

Artworks are supposed to be the product of a particular culture. Because of our Apartheid past in South Africa, certain cultures were considered by to be minor by the dominant culture. As a result in my experience, art practices of Technikon Natal fine arts considered my cultural productions to be just 'crafts'.

The Zulu pot on the picture was strongly influence by the unique decorative designs of Matuba-Hlabisa region, it carries an influence of Greek geometric shapes as I was strongly influenced by it from History of Art lessons I was doing at the time.

As a result I titled this pot a Zulu-Greek pot. One of the reasons why I gave this pot that title was because of the fact that I wanted to be recognised that I have moved from just being a crafter to become an artist. Consequently, I glazed the inside of the pot, which is contrary to how Zulu pots are made, and I burnished the outside of the pot, which is an ancient tradition of Zulu potters. The pot was pit-fired on the electric kiln first which is a Western way of firing pots to be able to melt glazes at high temperatures. Then the pot was fired again in a self-made bricks kiln with so-dust and cow dung.

Although while making this pot, I did not feel good about it, but the result was amazingly the marriage of cultures. The West meets Africa in the art making and I was the facilitator and the producer of that. Is it not what we are at the present moment (2007) in South Africa? I believe that we truly (not by choice) are a 'rainbow nation' our different cultures have not been diffused to make one culture but we mix very well, we live together in harmony. The whole world is turning towards South Africa for models of living in peace, reconciliation and harmony.

02 March 1996

Bongani: Durban, Berea

My dear friend! Well I just had my smoke and as I was inhaling the deadly chemicals I couldn't help but wonder to myself why the hell I smoke or when exactly I got addicted?? I smoke far too much and I think its taking its toll on my body, I am so unfit. It's a new year but I'm depressed again, depression really sucks, it's hard to know what feelings are real and what feelings are just caused by my depression. Fine Arts brain disorder, I have that too but I don't know what it is. I wouldn't be this

fucked if I know what exactly it is, I failed last year, I have to repeat the whole year this year, so I know that caused it but I don't exactly understand how I have come to fail. May be I am in denial, I was not serious last year, may be I have given up on this course. How will I face the other students that I was in the same class with? If they ask me why I am not coming to the third year's class what will I tell them? Ooh okay, I will tell them that I have changed the course. But they will see me wearing those crazy overalls for my painting class. Other students say we (Fine Art students) are crazy. The way we do things, the way we dress up, may be we are really crazy. I think everyone in this campus suffers from depression, I mean this Tech has gone fucking crazy! Students toy-toy for no reason, township thugs come here and 'jack-roll girls away, there is absolutely no rule of law.

Most students are probably never coming back this year, the Tech has changed and as much as I wanted to see more black students in this campus... I can't help being afraid, do I really want the local students to come and steal our clothes from the washing fence? There are shibeens (informal/illegal bar) inside the residential areas. The SRC has become a party organizing committee. And has anyone noticed how hard it is to make friends these days??? Everyone has no time for each other. You say hello to a stranger down the street and they just ignore you, come on Black people where has kindness gone!!!! Where is ubuntu? (Ubuntu is an African concept of living togetherness).

You invite a student to your room, the next thing your CD's are all missing, guys come out of no where (townships) harassing girls for sex...girls they have never even met. I

am so angry, so sick of this place. I have to pass this year and get the hell out this place...

Diary

Bongani: Pietermaritzburg, Scottsville

March 1998

Dear my friend, it's another new year, for me it is also a new place. I am at PMB as they call it. I am so happy these days. I have been accepted to enroll in Fine Arts and given credits for the courses that I had completed at the Technikon of Northern Natal.

I am making new friends; I have already met my new lecturers. Here lecturers allow you make decisions about your art choices and practices. I feel worth it again. My previous institution has made me to feel worthless, like I am a failure. Even the Art History curriculum here is at least 60% Western and 40% African. I have seen a Black Art Tutor for the first time in my life. Art practical lessons are my favorite although university is too academic. There is more theory than practice. More books than paintings and clay. I will cope thou, I feel motivated again. I can believe it myself, after such a long time, I feel like I know my purpose of life again.

I live in a university resident which is mixed (racially). I sort of remind of the early days at the Tech Natal, but after what I have witnessed at the Technikon, I am happy here. Now I know what I want in life, I know what I came here for. I want to get that degree and get out of here. I feel too old for being a university student. I have passed my first tests with flying colours. Most people think that it is my first

time at the tertiary level, only if they knew! They think that I am quiet intelligent, that I know everything. I can spoil it by telling them that is it actually my fourth year at tertiary level. 'I am loving it' here!

ceramics department at the Pietermaritzburg University of Natal. The newly found passion for ceramics and pottery; the critical eye that I had developed through research and the need to own my own heritage which was sparked by continuing reading the incorrect information about my art and culture as a Zulu, African Black Men.

Artwork no. 04



Title: Intangible Zulu Heritage

Year: Unknown

Medium: a sculpture made of wood, Impala horns,

By: Bongani Mkhonza

My personal description of an artwork

The title on its own has been a debate topic in South Africa for quiet some time.

How can heritage be intangible? What is the intangible heritage? In South Africa, a lot has been sad about the art history of Black people, unfortunately, most of what has been written down on art history of Black people has been written by the Western White researchers, archaeologists and ethnographers. These groups of people claim to have the inside views of the so called oral histories of African Black people. As a Black person, I was compelled to make an artwork that interrogates these issues. These are the issues of absence of the main source in the representation of Black people's cultures and arts.

This artwork has a stand, a base which is black, decorated all around with African designs that you find mostly on African masks and Ndebele houses. On top I have joined the protruding Impala horns almost facing the Zulu pot. To me, this sculpture symbolizes the emptiness in the content of the direct interpreted Zulu arts and cultures to the English Western understanding. By this I simply mean that African arts and cultures can not just be directly simply interpreted.

When Zulu or San people sing and move around fire, it is incorrect to just say that they are dancing. That is a practice, an ancestral connecting ritual between living being and the spirits can not just be directly interpreted as a dance. The oversimplification of cultural concepts by those Ethnographers can result in a lost of meaning.

Mostly African heritage is about experience and the situation not merely about documentation. So if need arises for it to be documented, the experience and situation should be taken into consideration. Ideally it should be re-viewed and documented by its own people who practice and experience it, people who have been in that situation, who are situated within those cultural boundaries.

As I practiced Western art practices at the Technikon of Northern Natal, I have always approached it with caution. I had to learn and study Western Art History before I can claim to have understanding of Renaissance Art or before I can claim to have been influenced by it. Contradictory, these Western Ethnographers believe to have the right to document the lives, arts and cultures of people that they have seen for a minimum period of research, people that have no depth of why they do the things that they do. Even after I have studied and passed the Art History which was dominated by the Western art motifs, I still felt alienated by their art practices, I also felt like an outsider. If I had to be interrogated during the art critic sessions why I painted that style? I always find myself in a corner in trying to justify what is not my own; in describing what is learnt but will not be fully understood as I existed outside its situations and boundaries.

Diary

Bongani: Piertermaritzburg, Scottsville.

December 1999

Hooray, finally I have finished my formal University education, I know that I passed. I was one of the best students this year. In ceramics and Art History, I was also a tutor for the first years. What's next? What now? My lecturer has tried to convince me to take an honors degree in Fine Arts but I said no. I feel too old for being at the University.

I have to go and work. The reality is where am I going to be hired as a Black Artist in a rural Matubatuba? I am going home to Matubatuba. That is where I belong. I will see what I can do. My father is getting old, he needs me. I have not lived at home for the past seven years. I don't even understand their life anymore. I will feel out. What would I do? I don't even have a friend there anymore.

Now I know, after resting for a while, I am going back to Durban. That is where my life is. That is where my friends are. I will look for a job there.

Bad news is that my mother just had a stroke. Thank God she survived, although she is still critical. My father can't even boil eggs himself. He is a good man but he is helpless without my mother. Who is going to take care of my mother if I go back to Durban?

Life is teaching me something, it is teaching me to be strong. This is supposed to be the happiest moment of my life but I am not, after studying for a lot of years. Changing from Technikon of Northern Natal to the University of Northern Natal in Piertermaritzburg, I got what I was fighting for. I have just finished my first degree in Fine Art. I am a Fine Artist ha! ha! ha! (Phone ringed)

While I am writing, I got a phone call from my friends to go celebrate.

Diary

Bongani: Durban, Glenwood

04 July 2000

*I am so happy today I got a job. I am a teacher. I am a teacher in a multi-cultural school. It's right in town, in Durban. I don't have to travel long distances to go to work. I guess it's a blessing from God. Wait a minute,

I have been looking for a job as an Artist since the beginning of this year, now God has offered me a job as a teacher. Once upon a time my father told me a very interesting story about how we human always want to grab things ourselves without asking for his help. The story goes like this:

Once a boy went to a shop with his mother...

The shop keeper looked at the small cute child and showed him a bottle with sweets and said 'Dear Child...u can take the sweets... but the child didn't take. The shop keeper was surprised, such a small child he is and why is he not taking the sweets from the bottle. Again he said take the sweets.... now mother also heard that and said take the sweets... yet he didn't take...

The shop-keeper seeing the child not taking the sweets... he himself took the sweets and gave to the child..... the child was happy to get two hands full of sweets....

When returned to home Mother asked child... Why didn't you take the sweets... when shop-keeper told you to take?

Can you guess the response: Child replies, Mom!, my hands are very small and if I take the sweets I can only take few...but now you see when uncle gave with his big hands.... how many more sweets I got! Moral: When we take we may get little but when God gives... HE gives us more beyond our expectations.... more than what we can hold...

Hooray! Thanks God!!

Diary

Ridge West High

The architectural structure is very old, the paint is off white. The majority of staff members were white Afrikaans females, then few Indians and Coloureds, when I was appointed in 2000 was the only Black African member of the professional staff. At the staffroom the instructions were mostly communicated in Afrikaans.

The majority of learners were White from different parts of Durban and the surroundings. Very few, if any of the learners were from the area, which is mostly informal settlement, poverty stricken community. The school is barb-wired with a tall fence and protected by Charb Security services to prevent the local criminals from entering and harming pupils and the school property. I was warned about the local members of Mayville informal settlement to be very dangerous, since I did not have a car, I must be careful when I walk a catch a taxi home.

I remember my first day at the school, I was introduced to the staff by the principal Mrs Murray and the former deputy principal Mr Brown. The staffroom was very cold with an air conditioner turned very high, it was very quiet and the staff members gave me that look and they gave a very suspicious smile and they said welcome to Ridge West, we hope that you will enjoy your stay here at the school. I wondered why they

are behaving in that nature. Was it may be that they had doubts about my professional qualities? Or is it that because they have never worked with the black African person before? Was it my age may be? I was looking very young at that time when I joined the staff. These are the questions that went through my mind straight after that introduction.

It took me only ten minutes to realise their reasons for greening at me and giving me that unwelcoming welcome. When I applied for the job to work at this school as an art teacher, I was not made aware that Ridge west is a special school. It caters for the very challenging different groups of learners. Most of the learners are hyper-active, some of them come from the abusive upbringing, some are very poor some of them are slow learners and they can not read and write. When I was exposed to this situation I was so angry at the principal for not telling me at first, then I was so angry at myself for not asking her about more about the school before I accept the appointment, but then I realised that even if she had told me before, I was never going to turn her down, I was so desperate for a job, any kind of a job. At the assembly it took the teachers ten minutes to get the learners to settle down and keep quiet. When I met learners I really felt sorry for them. They were adorable 'normal' learners. Physically most of them had no disabilities and few of them have minor disabilities. The one boy that I could recall was Keith Burger who had only one arm who ran to me and said 'Are you the new art teacher that we have been waiting for? I was not expecting a black teacher but we are happy that you are here'. It was amazing to me the honesty most pupils will have on their opinions. Fell in love with them and the school there and

there. I was then taken to an empty class with few chairs, and the head of department said Mr Mkhonza this is your art class...

Bongani: Durban, West Ridge.

25 April 2001

Dear my friend!

Today has been the worst day of my life. I am leaving this stupid school. This morning I woke up with so much energy. I got to work; we had a departmental meeting, as early as 07:30.

Mr. Van der Merve (HOD): Gentleman (my department is called: Man's Practical, it is for the vocational section, no female teachers) Welcome to our departmental meeting!

Teachers: Morning Meneer! (Meneer is an Afrikaans word for a teacher)

Mr. Van der Meerve: Ons sal begin met (Afrikaans: we will begin with...) art practical section, Mr. Makhonza report back to us. Wat as die problem met dat skelemkie sein, wat is se naam? (What is the problem with that naughty-boy, what is his name?)

Me: Hendrick Meneer!

Mr. Van der Meerve: Gentleman, we 'shod' understand that, this is a special school. Most learners here come from either broken home background or very abusive history.

Me: Meneer that brat called Hendrick comes from a very nice respectable home, his father works for the Durban Municipality. He did not have a right to call me racist.

Mr. Van der Meerve: What really happened?

Me: Hendrick stood up while I was busy teaching, walked to Sphiwe (another boy in my art class) and he took an art drawing pack from Sphiwe's desk screaming "all blacks

are thieves!" Sphiwe responded very loud swearing "What are you doing Hendrick you white pig?" Then I had to intervene. I took the pack back to Sphiwe's desk and instructed Hendrick to go back to his desk, if he needs something he must ask from me as a teacher. Then Hendrick got so angry, screaming that I am taking Sphiwe's side because his is Black. "Meneer you are a racist", he said.

Then is when I said that's it, I grabbed him and I dragged him up here to you office Meneer.

Mr. Van der Meereve: Don't' you think that you were a bit harsh Mr. Makhonza

Me: Firstly, I am Mr. Mkhonza no Makhonza Meneer! No one calls me a racist, despite all my unfavorable past experiences; I still am very fair in my judgments. Secondly, that boy is taking that statement from home, from his parents. Most Afrikaans homes are still very racist, they must accept change!

Mr. Van der Meerve: You are being very personal Meneer. This is a very serious case; I will take it up to the Principal Mrs. Protorious

Me: I will that boy's behavior record file, even his performance is deteriorating. I suggest you take him out of my art class.

Mr. Van der Meerve: Baie dankie (Afrikaans: thank you so much!) Meneer, you will here from the Principal.

Me: Don't forget to forward her the minutes of this meeting. Thank you, Meneer.

May be I was a bit too personal, who cares, this people should be told that this is a new South Africa. I must not let my past experiences rule my life. I should pray for forgiveness, that's only a child.

Later on that day....

Standing in front of the classroom! The noise level has reached the highest pitch! These naughty little rats are making me go crazy! I can not control these children anymore. They don not seem interested at all in what I teach them. May be I should stick to the art that I was taught at the Technikon of Northern Natal but a lot has changed in the art curriculum, I feel frustrated by this changes! How did I become an art teacher after all? Lately, I feel angry, I am not even proud of being part of this school anymore. What am I doing here? I am expected to teach art in a well-organised model-c school not these rascals who say I am racist! I am one of the few formally trained Black African male art teachers in KwaZulu Natal. But how come am I feeling so useless and so irrelevant? Who am I? What am I doing here...?

Diary

Bongani: Durban, West Ridge.

24 November 2003

My dear friend, I have not spoken to you in a long time. Life has been great for me. I am achieving a lot. I have just finished my professional education qualification. Now I am a qualified teacher. Teaching here has been quiet a learning experience for me. I have made a lot of friends. It was for the first time for me to relate to people of different races, different cultures, at the same level. The experience has been wonderful.

I have learnt that most reservations that sometimes exist between people of different cultures are in most cases, a result of fear of the unknown, the lack of knowledge and least misinformation about other people I am loving it here, except for the salary that I am getting. (my At least, east now that I am qualified, my salary will go up. I will be paid like a professional.

Now I am so comfortable here. I am t least I have won the school three first prizes at the Royal Show Exhibition, the Principal is so impressed, she really believe in me. I never thought that we will be so close; she gave a hug the day. I felt so wired. The other teachers call me Mac! Is it taken from my surname: Mkhonza. Since they can't pronounce it Mkhonza they pronounce it Mac khonza.

Then it was shortened to Mac or Mr. Mac. There is an Indian teacher; his nick-name is Mr. Babes. He is quiet old but a good friend of mine. He calls me Mac Washing powder. I laugh at it. Some call me the 'blue eyed boy' because I was so close the white teachers something that I had never imagined before in my life.

Well once you get close to other people, different people with different cultures, you realise that we all the same creation. We have the same wants and almost the same fears, worries; I guess we all need love.

What a co-incident, at the background, I am listening to Bob Marley music; the song that is playing is called 'One Love'. The words go like this:

Bob Marley and the Wailers

TITLE: One Love (People Get Ready)

One love, one heart

Let's get together and feel all right

Hear the children crying - One love

Hear the children crying - One heart

Saying', "Give thanks and praise to the Lord

And I will feel all right"

Saying', "Let's get together and feel all right"

Whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa

Let them all pass all their dirty remarks - One love

There is one question I'd really love to ask - One heart

Is there a place for the hopeless sinner?

Who has hurt all mankind just to save his own?

Believe me

One love - What about the one heart

One heart - What about the Lord

Let's get together and feel all right

As it was in the beginning - One love

So shall it be in the end One heart

All right, give thanks and praise to the Lord

And I will feel all right

Let's get together and feel all right

One more thing

Let's get together to fight this holy Armageddon - One love

So when the Man comes there will be no, no doom - One song

Have pity on those whose chances grow thinner
There isn't no hiding place from the Father of Creation

Saying', one love - What about the one heart

One heart - What about the

Let's get together and feel all right

I'm pleading to mankind - One love

Oh, Lord - One heart

Whoa, give thanks and praise to the Lord

And I will feel all right

Let's get together and feel all right

Give thanks and praise to the Lord

And I will feel all right

Let's get together and feel all right.

Picture of myself holding Bob Marley's print:



Photo No: 01

This photo portrays my love and affinity for Reggae music and its icon Bob Marley. I feel that reggae music addresses social issues that relates to my journeys of life. Taking from the lyrics of 'One Love' a song by Bob Marley, the world needs more love and understanding. How do we even start loving one another if we don not understand each other? Research like this one tries to relate stories that can enhance a deeper understanding of who I am.

On the picture: It's me at the center wearing sun glasses, Around me is a group of learners that were chosen as school prefects. February 2005



Photo no: 02

This picture was taken at the team building camp at the Shongweni Dam. In 2005, I was elected by the staff of West Ridge as a Supervisor for the school prefects. This is not just a picture but a record of my experience/ moment that shape who I am today. Captured in this picture is one of my greatest moments and my biggest achievement. In Ridge High School, prefects are one of the main structures. They are well respected by both the teachers and the learners.

For me, and for a lot of other teachers, to be elected to become a teacher responsible for prefects was a high profile position. This group of boys and girls is voted for by the whole school. Then every beginning on the year, they go out for a period of a week to Shongweni Dam. In this camping site they do teamwork exercises which offer this group of learner motivation, confidence and good leadership skills.

They viewed me as their leader, their role model, their father-figure and most of all, their teacher. Believe me that is a huge responsibility. More than what I have

mentioned here, you become a psychiatrist, a doctor, a care taker and an adviser. That position made me to review my role in a society. It changed the way I was viewing myself as just a teacher. It made me to understand that the role of a teacher is not only what you learn from college of at the university. The role that I played to those learners will impact on their leadership skills for the rest of their lives. I also learnt a lot from these learners; they taught me to be more patient, they taught me to be compassionate and from that experience a lot of my past perceptions about different cultures were changed. This research tends to draw from those lived experiences that has shaped who am I as an art teacher.

Poem

Date: Unknown

By Bongani Mkhonza

Title: I have been saved!

I have been to Babylon

I have been to the land of the cults

I have devoured on convicted souls

Souls convicted by the system dressed up in Clergy ropes

I was saved by my own taste of experience

Now I shake all establishments that are sympathetic to the system

My internal explosion is felt in higher and lower places

I launch a struggle to dismantle the chains of the jailed souls

The struggle that borrows slogans from the beheaded heroes

I do not subscribe to philosophies that are paper thin

For fear of the unknown has been conquered

I have been saved

And now I am in Africa!

By Bongani Mkhonza

Date: Unknown but Recently

Title: Ha! Ha! Ha!

Ha! Ha! Ha!

You have been exposed

Ha! Ha! Ha!

Better propose another plan of lies!

Your fabrications are proven non-existing

Your empty promises of golden heavens have never been seen

How can you promise us heavens you have never seen?

How can you tell us to be free if you are still in chains?

Ha! Ha! Ha!

You have been figured out

Your history is written by yourself

So it shall always be friendly to you

You put so much emphasis on paper

What about your' lost soul?

Ha! Ha! Ha!

Diary

Bongani: Durban, Musgrave

September 2005

I have to tell you this; it is the most exciting moment of my life. I don't know where to begin. I won; I won a trip of a life time. No, I did not win;

I was selected to travel five cities in America! Hooray!!! Joviiiiiiiiijoooo!!!(This is an expression of happiness by blowing a whistle!). This trip is sponsored by South African Airways and South African Breweries. A process involved three intense interviews on South African Culture, Sports and Arts. I was chosen with a group of South Africans to travel overseas to represent South African Culture. The arranged countries to be visited include New York, Los Angeles; Miami, Mexico and Brazil. Born Voyage!!!

Here are the pictures of the trip that mark the biggest change in my life. This trip for me was an eye-opener. I have experienced the difference in order to appreciate my own country. The trip showed me the world I had always seen through the edited camera lens of television.

End of my journal.

4.3 Conclusion

This personal journal that I have kept over the years, throughout my education, has been used as data in this study. It represents mostly my experiences and inner-most struggles in life, both socially and professionally. It is a true reflection of my experiences as I saw them. It is my closest friend, one with whom I share my personal and professional experiences. I seek guidance from it, I get angry with it, I confess to it, and I laugh at myself in it. The journal makes use of a variety of genres - letters, pictures, poems, drawings, conversations, pages from my school exercise-books and my inner dialogues.

CHAPTER FIVE



Illustration No. 05

This is a fragmented picture of my self-portrait as a result of the self-reflection. It symbolises the self that continues to be re-constructed so that it understands itself better. This portrait presents my life as site of construction. It is relevant in this chapter as it shows more possibilities, hope, change and how I am being newly constructed as a result of embarking on self-reflection. The false consciousness has shown areas with cracks, if you want to put it that way, within the self that needed shifts and re-construction of meaning makings. It shows also the positive, already-constructed features of my face as a result of choices that I made, and the possibility of where I am going.

Chapter Five

A Further Self-portrait - Fragments of a Life

5.1.1 Findings

This chapter presents a collage-analysis of my life as a black, middle class, African male art teacher. I use Fay's theory of false-consciousness from the critical paradigm as the analytical framework to understand the nodal moments that have shaped and continue to shape who I am as an art teacher. Feeling totally angry, frustrated and 'obsolete' on that fateful day described in Chapter One, I was propelled to undertake this journey of understanding.

As an auto-ethnographic study, this chapter will be drawing on data generated through my narrative journal. The narrative journal draws from a range of different data sources to elicit information about my lived experiences as an art teacher (personal memories of particular moments, incidents experiences, paintings, poems, web images), all used in understanding and reflecting on 'my becoming an art teacher'. Using the four layers of consciousness described by Fay, I develop my analysis under four sections.

Section A identifies and analyses the crisis. Extracting data from my journal, this section brings to the fore an understanding of my crisis as an art teacher in a multi-cultural classroom. The data are analysed under the backdrop of Brian Fay's theory first layer of false consciousness. This layer starts by saying that there is a crisis. . The crisis "puts pressure" on me to reflect on selected moments in my life in and through self study.

I constituted and gave meaning to my teacher self as a possible space for making sense of the struggles I face as a teacher teaching in this new historical moment in South Africa.

Section B has two parts. The first part identifies, explains and analyses five nodal moments in my socialisation into becoming an art teacher. The second part analyses these moments according to Brian Fay's false consciousness theory. The "nodal" moments presented here are described as the turning points in my life as a black African male living in South Africa, growing up and schooling during apartheid but realising and practising my career during the new dispensation. The analysis is a response to the critical question, "**How have I come to be the art teacher I am?**". My analysis in this chapter will try to understand how my meaning-making processes were partly false and a condition for the crisis I face. Section B attempts to understand these nodal moments through the lens of false consciousness as a black African male growing up and living in South Africa. According to Brian Fay, the crisis that an individual experiences is partly caused by false consciousness. The second part tries to understand what meanings; definitions and practices led to my false consciousness.

Section C offers an analysis of possible spaces in and through which my teacher self is constituted and offers enlightenment. In Section C, I present themes supported by extracts from my journal that constituted my false consciousness. The self-portraits, paintings, artworks and photographs are moments of my life as experienced, and are constructions of my meaning-making. These are analysed as possible meanings (moments of

enlightenment) that constitute who I am and how I make meaning of my teacher self, according to Brian Fay's theory of false consciousness.

Lastly, section D shows a reflexive analysis of auto-ethnography as an approach enabling an understanding of my meanings, and experiences of self as a black African male art teacher in a multicultural, multi-racial classroom. Section D is a result of the reflective process that took place through the analyses of Section A, B, and C. Section D analyses how these particular meanings that I took up opened up opportunities for me, as a black, male art teacher in South Africa, and contradictorily blocked me from thinking in new and different ways as an art teacher.

- Sections A and B provide a response to the Critical Question: **How have I come to be the art teacher I am?**
- Sections C and D respond to the Critical Question: **What are the meanings, definitions and practices that have informed my identity as an art teacher in a multiracial classroom?**

5.1.2 Section A

I have been prompted by a crisis in my practice as an art teacher to embark on this self study. My experiences of this crisis were intensified by the changes in the art curriculum and the changes in diversity of races and cultures in my classroom. Section A starts by identifying this crisis then theorising it according to Brian Fay's first layer on false consciousness.

I came face-to-face with challenges as I found myself frustrated, irrelevant, angry and weak. I felt irrelevant because of the my pre-conceived knowledge in art which I felt was becoming outdated, and from not being able to choose which part of the art curriculum I should choose to teach.

May be I should stick to the art that I was taught at the Technikon of Northern Natal but a lot has changed in the art curriculum, I feel frustrated by these changes! How did I become an art teacher after all?

From reading the extract from journal you can start to understand the kind of dilemma that I was facing. This dilemma came after various changes had been made in the art curriculum in 2000. The art curriculum shifted from being exclusive into being more inclusive and more diverse. This is frustrating for me as I have gone through teacher training using the old curriculum which was different. Teacher development courses were offered but there were skills-based and focused more on Outcomes-based Education which is a method of teaching that presupposes an inclusive curriculum.

I was feeling frustrated by the changes in the racial demographics in the school that I was teaching at, Ridge West High School. This school is a former model C school which was strongly populated by white learner before 1994. When I was hired to teach art in this school in 2000, the school had at least 90 percent white learners; and the remaining 10 percent comprised blacks, Indians and Coloureds. For me, as one who had studied at the Technikon of Northern Natal during my teacher training, this was a perfect place. I felt comfortable with the art curriculum that I was exposed to at that Technikon, which I

thought was going to be more relevant here in this school. I was informed that I was one of the first black teachers to teach at Ridge West High School. I was very proud of that status. At that time, I was the only black African male teacher there.

Now I am so comfortable here. I am at least I have won the school three first prizes at the Royal Show Exhibition, the Principal is so impressed, she really believes in me. I never thought that we will be so close... The other teachers call me Mac! Is it taken from my surname: Mkhonza. Since they can't pronounce it Mkhonza they pronounce it Mac khonza. Some call me the 'blue eyed boy' because I was so close to the white teachers, something that I had never imagined before in my life.

Soon after 2002, the number of black learners started increasing. The school started taking more black teachers as well. I got frustrated by this move. I was not teaching in a white Model C school anymore. These changes defeated the whole purpose of my studying Fine Arts and avoiding teaching art in black township school. I felt frustrated by the naughty black learners who were noisy, very loud and who spoke broken English.

I felt angry and weak because I could not understand who I was in that context anymore. There was an incident in the art class that crossed the line. In this incident, one white learner called me 'racist'. That was the crisis moment that made me ask: How have I come to be the art teacher I am? In Section B this question will be addressed by reflecting on my life and how I became an art teacher.

5.1.3 Section B

The first part of Section B will present an analysis of the five crisis moments in my life. These are: Pursuing higher education study –“From rural to urban life”; Studying Fine Arts and struggling through understanding art history; Struggling through student life at Technikon Northern Natal in 1994; Being a student on the move - Teaching in Ridge West (an ex-model C and ELSEN School). The main reason I chose these five moments from my journal is because they define the nodal moments which led to my ‘becoming an art teacher’. These five nodal moments are also crisis moments according to Brain Fay’s theory of false consciousness. According to Fay, crisis moments are a result of different changes in a person’s life. Thus those five moments are life-changing experiences which strongly influenced, shaped and continue to shape who I am today.

Nodal moments

The first nodal moment is the one when I decided to study at the Technikon of Northern Natal, which is presently known as the Ingwe University of Technology. According to Ferguson (2003), up to 1989, tertiary institutions in South Africa were developed to meet the needs of particular race groups. A quota system allowed only a maximum of 8% of members of race groups other than the assigned race group to become registered students at each institution. Once this quota was changed there was a significant “influx” of other race groups, especially to the perceived ‘élite’ historically-white institutions. This section recalls that time in my life, and reflects on pertinent excerpts. I use Fay’s theory of false consciousness which has multiple layers as a lens to read the different crisis moments

Pursuing higher education study –“From rural to urban life

A week ago I have just registered at the University of Natal. My dream has come true. I have been dreaming about this moment ever since I started high school, although I am attending at Ingwe University of Technology because of my practical (Fine Art). I remember my registration day; my father brought me here from the rural Matubatuba. We took a taxi a bit late, around 11h30 mid-day and we arrived in Durban at 13h45. The registration line was still long. Fortunately, those who have applied the previous year were given more priority, and I happened to be one of those already accepted.

This excerpt defines the kind of choices that I made for myself. I had made the decision to come to Durban, from the rural Mtubatuba district, to study in the city, in a former white Institution called the Technikon of Northern Natal, enrolling for a Fine Arts degree. At that point in time I associated those white institutions with purity, liberation, authority, power and wealth in knowledge and monetary gain. I want to aspire to these lofty ideals. I must also point out that given the socio-economic background of black African people of this country then, I was privileged to afford to study at that tertiary institution. My studies were funded by my father, who was employed as a policeman, and who enjoyed a middle-class career. While this support covered my fees, it was not sufficient to see me through all the other expenses that came my way, living in the city.

The 1994 Rector's Report (of the then Ingwe University of Technology) indicated that 44% of the student body was now non-white, and that many required bridging and other

assistance. A 1998 report of the Committee of Technikon Principals indicated a 28, 8% increase of black students at Technikons in the period 1992 – 1997, and a 7, 6% drop in white enrolments in the corresponding period. This trend is set to continue, and Fourie and Naude de Jager (1992) indicate that by 2010, 81% of higher education students in South Africa will be black. Indeed, MacGregor (1999: 9) states that “While numbers at historically-white universities are still rising, formerly black universities are suffering a drastic decline and there are fears that some may not survive.”

Although I was accepted to study at Technikon of Northern Natal, I still faced a number of challenges. These are discussed under themes: fear of failure; not understanding the subjects which were not previously offered in black schools; poverty and struggling to afford a decent student life; not knowing how to deal with challenges of mixed racial, gender and other groupings; and social and academic isolation.

'My dear friend today is my birthday. It's supposed to be the happiest day of my life but I feel so depressed today. I am so sick of being in charge of my life, I am sick of having to worry about whether I will pass or not this term, sick of being independent and sick of having to be responsible for myself here in Durban, how I wish to go back home where it's nice and quiet, and be with my with family, with no worries. I know this sounds really selfish but seriously I hate being here in this busy, fast life'.

From the excerpt above one may deduce that the experience of moving from a rural to an urban context was a critical one in my life. In the city, the expressions, idiom and

vocabulary, are different, even when the same language is used. I was laughed at by other Zulu language speakers because my Zulu language sounded “rural”.

The pace of life in the urban areas is ‘faster’ than that of a rural environment and this is evident in different ways. The move alienated me from my usual practices. It looked very strange at the campus when I saw two guys holding hands or two girls kissing each other. It was for the first time that I became aware of Gay and Lesbian societies. I was not sure how to react. I found myself in a quandary, trying to cope with such a different lifestyle and culture.

‘Studying Fine Arts’

The second critical moment is when I decided to choose Fine Arts as the course of study at the Technikon of Northern Natal.

"A week ago I have just registered to do Fine Arts at the Technikon of Northern Natal.. My dream has come true."

The above statement from my journal reveals the critical moment when I choose to study Fine Arts at Ingwe University of Technology. To me it was a dream come true because I regarded Fine Arts as ‘my ticket to heaven’. I saw this as the beginning of a successful life. According to a research conducted by Gardner (1989), black students see higher education as the gateway to prosperity and a good job. Indeed, some regard entry to higher education as a right enshrined in the Freedom Charter (Nunns & Ortlepp, 1994).

Having been selected for a Fine Arts course, I had high hopes for success (Bargate, 1999). Yet I became aware that students were failing the course in alarming numbers

(Koch and Mallon, 1998) For me to enrol to study Fine Arts was a daring move, one that went against the grain of the historical codes of that time in South Africa.

According to those historical codes, black people would normally finish their high school and get trained as police officers, nurses, or pursue any other ordinary middle-class career.

So I was facing a crisis moment, because I had never done art at high school. I had also not heard of any successful black African artist before I came to study Fine Arts at Ingwe University of Technology. Secondly, it was a crisis moment because, although my parents did want me to study, they refused to allow me to study Fine Arts. As I noted in my Journal: 'For me being an Artist was not understood amongst the rural conservative Zulu family'.

My parents did not understand what Fine Arts was all about; they knew that artists are regarded as poor people who paint people for a living. I insisted on Fine Arts but I promised them that once I had finished the course I would study education so that I could become an art teacher.

According to a 'Google' definition, the term 'Fine' in Fine Arts was derived from its association with 'élites'. Writers give many definitions to the Fine Arts but I like the one that says: Fine-Art is art produced or intended primarily for beauty rather than utility. It includes any of the art forms, such as sculpture, painting, or music, used to create such art, and is therefore used in the plural. It clearly requires highly developed techniques and

skills, and may be associated metaphorically with other activities, as the expression *the fine art of teaching* suggests.

The image that popped up from the Google search for Fine Arts will interestingly illustrates the visual construction of Fine Arts in our minds:



Fine Art (Google first images) taken from Google Images

This (Fine Art) image above is taken from Google images to represent what Fine Art is. To me, this painting symbolises the Western portrayal of beauty, but is deemed “universal”. In my studies, I was experiencing a Fine Arts curriculum that was Eurocentric in reference. But I was being persuaded to believe that that was ‘true’ art and Afro-centric examples of art just crafts.

“This painting was painted by me as part of the course requirement for my first year fine art degree. To take you back, I had never painted or been taught formally how to paint before. At the high school that I attended, art was not taught formally as part of the school curriculum. I had fallen in love with art at first sight as I watched the Matubatuba art crafters working on the roadside as I travelled to and from school”.

In spite of the fact that I did not do art as a subject at school, that art was never offered to most black schools as a subject through the Curriculum of that time, that before I came to Durban I had never seen a formally-trained black artist before, I resisted being seen to be part of those historical codes.

I also experienced the difficulties of meeting academic requirements. I failed History of Art. I was disappointed, but could not help feeling that this was because it was so foreign to me.

Fine Arts brain disorder, I have that too but I don't know what it is. I wouldn't be this fucked if I know what exactly it is, I failed last year, I have to repeat the whole year this year, so I know that caused it but I don't exactly understand how I have come to fail. May be I am in denial, I was not serious last year, may be I have given up on this course. How will I face the other students that I was in the same class with?

Reading this excerpt from my journal, I realised that one of the significant problems for black students at Ingwe University of Technology is a high failure rate. Irvine (1998) states that it was unacceptable, to have high numbers of black (i.e. African) students either not completing their courses or taking five to six years to complete a three-year course. Both Huysamen (1996) and Huysamen and Raubenheimer (1999: 171) agree, indicating that black students have been exposed to an inferior high-school education and are under-prepared for tertiary education.

Using auto-ethnography tools like my journal helps me to question and challenge the traditional boundaries defining 'who am I'. The whole self-study of myself and breaking boundaries, makes me see myself as a symbol. I am a symbol of what it means to be in South Africa before and after 1994. I feel that I represent the symbol of struggle and resistance.

This process of resistance resulted in emancipation. Although I was faced with the challenges of not being well-prepared for tertiary education, and the challenges of failing to meet the academic requirements, I did not give up on becoming an art teacher.

At Ingwe University of Technology in 1997, white students passed 77.4% of their subjects and black students 47, 8%. The results for the Indian and Coloured groups fell between the two figures (Examinations Committee, 1998). This appears not to be confined to Ingwe University of Technology only. Blacquiere (1989) is of the opinion that, academically, wealthy, white, urban English-speaking students get the best results; black, poor rural groups get the worst. The journal extract, then, addresses not only my personal challenges but what most black students were going through at the time. So auto-ethnography research uncovers what is hidden, as it zooms inwards and outwards to uncover and understand lived experiences. It does that with the aim of making the ordinary look extraordinary and to make the extraordinary look ordinary.

My ordinary day-to-day events and moments were recorded in a journal. This chapter deconstructs these critical moments to bring to the fore meanings created by these nodal moments that have shaped who I am.

Student life in Ingwe University of Technology – 1993

The third critical moment is when major changes happened academically and politically at the Ingwe University of Technology campus and all around the country.

Matubatuba: out in the fields!

My dear friend! Well things have been bad out here; living in KZN has been my worst experience. The violence around the townships, what I see on TV everyday is shocking. People are killing each other just because of political difference.

At the Technikon of Northern Natal we have been distracted several times. At least now we are on holidays. You can feel the tension is in the air.

Judging from the abstract above, at the Technikon of Northern Natal in 1993, there were a lot of uprisings and ‘toyi-toyis’ (lecture boycotts). What was happening outside the campus in the country was reflected on the campus. I experienced a lot of pain as I witnessed violent action by students and on television news. Black students continued to fare badly academically.

I sensed a lot of anger amongst black students who were complaining about fees and failing to meet academic requirements. Thus socio-economic disadvantage translates into academic disadvantage, and black students were clearly experiencing greater difficulties

in adapting to the higher educational system, and are thus less successful in their studies (Fourie & Naude-de Jager, 1992; Botha & Cilliers, 1999; Dawes, Yeld & Smith, 1999).

I think everyone in this campus suffers from depression, I mean this Tech has gone fucking crazy! Students toy-toy for no reason, township thugs come here and 'jack-roll girls away, there is absolutely no rule of law.

Most students are probably never coming back this year, the Tech has changed and as much as I wanted to see more black students in this campus... I can't help being afraid, do I really want the local students to come and steal our clothes from the washing fence? There are shibeens (informal/illegal bar) inside the residential areas. The SRC has become a party organizing committee. And has anyone noticed how hard it is to make friends these days??? Everyone has no time for each other. You say Sawubana (hello) to a stranger down the street and they just ignore you, come on Black people where has kindness gone!??? Where is ubuntu???

I have referred to this excerpt to critically analyse how I viewed myself as a black African man. It illuminates how I viewed myself after years of experiencing different forms of academic and social alienation. The phrase above shows that I started referring to other black people as 'they, them or other'. This could have been the result of the kind of experiences that I had gone through at the Technikon of Northern Natal. Firstly, in most art classes I was the only black African man. That experience distanced me from other black African people. I started to view myself as something else than being a black African man. Secondly, as I studied Fine Arts, which was the course regarded for the elites, I started to view myself as the 'élite'. Thirdly, the 'self' as a black African man changed because I had access to what most black African man did not have. I started

fearing other black African people, regarding them as violent. I could not understand why they disrupted lectures? Why did they steal? And why did they become unfriendly? I was reflecting so many stereotypes myself.

As result of increased violence on campuses not only at Technikons; the former University of Durban-Westville was declared “ungovernable” in 1994 (Collings, 1997).

The actions of some students tarnished the reputations of some institutions, although they are supposed to be places of learning. There also is a clear public perception that state universities are disruptive, unsafe and of dubious quality (MacGregor, 1999).

27 April 1994: "Freedom Day" To me Freedom Day was a critical moment, not only of my life, but for all South Africans. Freedom Day is an annual celebration of South Africa's first non-racial democratic elections of 1994. Peace, unity, the preservation and the restoration of human dignity are the hallmark Freedom Day celebrations on 27th April each year. This was a day that brought back hope to my life. As I was struggling to understand meanings of myself personally, 27th April 1994 promised a positive change for all.

The road to democracy was a long and difficult one in South Africa. Since the arrival of the white settlers at the Cape in 1652, the indigenous peoples of South Africa came under white control and domination. Soon all people of colour were denied the vote and hence a say in the running of the country. South Africa was never truly independent or democratic.

The exclusion of the majority of South Africans from political power was at the centre of the liberation struggle and resistance to white minority rule. With the formation of the South African Native National Congress (which later became the African National Congress, ANC) in 1912, the resistance movement became formalised. The ANC strove to improve the conditions of the blacks. A non-racial constitution was eventually agreed upon and adopted in 1993.

The new Constitution came into effect on 27 April 1994, the day the nation cast its vote in the first democratic election in the country. The ANC was voted into power and Nelson Mandela was inaugurated as the President of South Africa on 10 May.

Today Nelson Mandela had a speech in one of the stadiums in Johannesburg. I was listening to it from the Radio Zulu but I could not understand much of what he was saying. The language was heavily political with very big English words. What I found interesting were the proposed educational changes. Education is going to be free! We are going to have one national education system, hooray!

This extract from my journal shows the excitement that came as a result of the renewed hope brought by the imagination of the freedom to come. This freedom for me was mostly related to educational freedom, mainly because of the fact that I was still a student and that I was looking forward to becoming an art teacher in a near future. This moment marked the separation between the past and the present. As Mothata, Lemmer, Mda, and Pretorius (2000) assert, the South African system of education has its foundation in the past and this is reflected in the present. To me this is nodal moment in my life as an art

teacher. It marked the move from the separate, isolated education to multi-cultural/multi-racial free education.

In the minds of many black people like me, this day was the day that signalled the end of all sufferings. I became more excited about my education again. I thought to myself: “Now opportunities are open for all, and I must do my best to become an art teacher.”

The Constitution enshrines equality and non-racialism. Educational policies were later implemented and provided renewed hope for me. Finally, Arts and Culture was introduced to all schools as a subject. To me, that was the critical moment, because it allowed future learners a chance that I was denied. All learners who wish to choose to do Art as a subject are now allowed to do so. What was interesting is that very few professionally trained Art teachers were out there to teach Art. Since black people were not allowed to study Art at the university level before 1994, this means that only black teachers trained under the so-called colleges of education and informal art institutions were out there on the system. As a black person who was studying Fine Arts at university level at that time, it means that I was one of the first products of our freedom. I felt like a pioneer in both the fields of Arts and of Education and I felt a strong need to become an art teacher.

Student on the Move

The fourth critical moment is when I decided to move from Technikon of Northern Natal to the University of KwaZulu-Natal in Pietermaritzburg (PMB):

Dear my friend, it is another new year, for me it is also a new place. I am at PMB as they call it. I am so happy these days. I have been accepted to enroll in Fine Arts and given credits for the courses that I had completed at the Technikon of Northern Natal. I am making new friends; I have already met my new lecturers. Here lecturers allow you make decisions about your art choices and practices. I feel worth it again.

I have chosen to highlight this moment because of its significance on my life as an art teacher. This moment came when I was close to giving up my dream of becoming an art teacher. Moving to PMB really changed my life around and gave me confidence. Changes that were taking place in the South African Government after 1994 were very positive, especially in the education sector. It renewed hope in most people involved in education, people who were not happy about the old system of education. For me, this was the start of great things to come. As a result of those changes, the structure of a course that I was doing at the Technikon of Northern Natal was phased out. I felt a great

need to change from Technikon of Northern Natal to the University of Northern Natal in Pietermaritzburg (UNNP).

One of the reasons for the change was that at that time UNP was famous for its Art Department, especially work in Ceramics. The process of change was not an easy one. Given my determination to become an art teacher and the renewed hope about the future, I had to leave Durban and go to study at UNP. The transformation that was happening nationally was also experienced by individuals at a personal level. For me the change to study at UNP was one of the critical moments in becoming an art teacher.

Hooray, finally I have completed my formal University education, I know that I passed. I was one of the best students this year. In ceramics and Art History, I was also a tutor for the first years. What's next? What now? My lecturer has tried to convince me to take an honors degree in Fine Arts but I said no. I feel too old for being at the University.

I attempt in this paragraph to draw attention to the excitement that I experienced on completion of my degree. This came mostly as a result of the change to enroll at the Pietermaritzburg campus. These moments are intertwined and one leads to the other.

The change from Technikon of Northern Natal to the University of KwaZulu-Natal was a critical moment for me, because I was able to get back my self-esteem to carry on and pursue my dream of becoming an art teacher. Consequently, I finished my Fine Arts

course and started looking for work. According to Brian Fay's third layer of consciousness, the false consciousness must be amenable to the process of enlightenment. The success I experienced at PMB made me amenable to change, to review my false consciousness. For me to study at Technikon of Northern Natal, which was formerly white-dominated, to choose to study Fine Arts, to view myself differently from other black African people, influenced my success at PMB and later on in life. I benefited from that 'false consciousnesses' as a process of enlightenment.

In the excerpt above I ask "What's next? What now?" This should indicate that although I was so happy that I had finally finished studying, I was still apprehensive about getting employed. I knew that even during that time, in spite of the new policies, very few schools were offering Art as a subject of study. Very few black artists were successful and worked independently. These questions expressed my fears and frustrations about my future and my career either as an independent black artist or as an art teacher.

Teaching art at Ridge West High School (ex- Model C and ELSEN School)

My fifth critical moment is when I decided to teach art in a multi-cultural, multi-racial school in Durban.

04 July 2000 *I am so happy today I got a job. I am a teacher. I am a teacher in a multi-racial, multi-cultural school. It's right in town, in Durban. I don't have to travel long distances to go to work. I guess it's a blessing from God. Wait a minute; I have been looking for a job as an Artist since the beginning of this year, now God has offered me a job as an art teacher'.

It was a significant moment of my life when, in July 2000, I was appointed to the special school called Ridge West High School in Durban as an art teacher. Ridge West is a former Model-C Special school, which was predominantly white school during the apartheid regime. It caters for pupils with learning difficulties.

It is situated just outside the Durban city centre.

The extract above from my journal can be deconstructed from different perspective in order to engage in my personal journeys on becoming an art teacher. The first discourse is that of race. As a black African man who went through Bantu education, then studied Art in a white-dominated environment where I was distanced from my familiar cultural and racial practices, teaching in a multi-racial was something new and challenging. As I started assuming Western art practices, I was thrown into a new situation. I asked: does the fact that we have adopted new education policies mean that all stakeholders involved within the culture of education are ready and fully equipped to face the new challenges posed by those changes? This auto-ethnographic research tries to understand exactly those kinds of dynamics facing our education system after 1994.

The second discourse that emerges in this extract is the discourse of Art as a subject of study. To be more specific, I am referring to the content especially in Art History theory. I was exposed to the Art History theory for the first time at the university level in the early nineties. The Art History curriculum was roughly 90% Eurocentric and 10% Afrocentric. By this statement I am not presenting a perception of Euro-centric and Afro-centric as binary opposites. I am well aware that within European art, there are many

African influences, for example in the work of Pablo Picasso. Picasso was a European painter who developed his style of painting called Cubism based on the influences from African Masks. There are African Artists who also cross the divide.

A good example is an artist called Gerald Bhengu who used to draw magnificent portraits of different indigenous tribes. Given the knowledge that portrait drawing was never an African art practice but a European one,, this bears mention. Most Art History references were drawn from European or Western art practices. These imbalances distanced me from who I am as a black African man, moving me from my natural art practices to Eurocentric art practices. As a black African art teacher who went through that kind of education and had become acculturated to Western art, I found I now had to teach the new art curriculum, which is Afro-centric in content. There was irony here. But I saw this as yet another new and challenging experience. I struggled as I made important decisions in my art class everyday, sifting through the different possibilities. Most of my struggles even today, are the result of the false meanings I have imbibed and assumed in my identity as an art teacher.

Bongani: Durban, West Ridge.

25 April 2001

My dear friend!

Today has been the worst day of my life. I am leaving that school. This morning I woke up with so much energy. I got to work, we had a departmental meeting, as early as 07:30.

Mr. Van der Merve (HOD): Gentleman (my department is called: Man's Practical, it is for the vocational section, no female teachers) Welcome to our departmental meeting!

Teachers: Morning Meneer! (Meneer is an Afrikaans word for a teacher)

Mr. Van der Meerve: Ons sal begin met art practical, Mr. Makhonza report back to us. Wat as die problem met dat skelemkie sein, wat is se naam? (What is the problem with that naughty-boy, what is his name?)

Me: Hendrick Meneer!

Mr. Van der Meerve: Gentleman, we should understand that, this is a special school. Most learners here come from either a broken home background or very abusive history.

Me: Meneer that brat called Hendrick comes from a very nice respectable home, his father works for the Durban Municipality. He did not have a right to call me racist.

Mr. Van der Meerve: What really happened?

Me: Hendrick stood up while I was busy teaching, walked to Sphiwe (another boy in my art class) and he took an art drawing pack from Sphiwe's desk screaming "all blacks are thieves!" Sphiwe responded very loud swearing "What are you doing Hendrick you white pig?"

Then I had to intervene. I took the pack back to Sphiwe's desk and instructed Hendrick to go back to his desk, if he needs something he must ask from me as a teacher. Then Hendrick got so angry, screaming that I am taking Sphiwe's side because he is Black. "Meneer you are a racist".

Then is when I said that's it, I grabbed him and I dragged him up here to you office meneer.

Mr. Van der Meerve: Don't you think that you were a bit harsh Mr. Makhonza

Me: Firstly, I am Mr. Mkhonza no Makhonza Meneer! No one calls me a racist, despite all my unfavorable past experiences; I still am very fair in my judgments. Secondly, that boy is taking that statement from home, from his parents. Most Afrikaans homes are still very racist, they must accept change!

Mr. Van der Meerve: You are being very personal Meneer. This is a very serious case I will take it up to the Principal Mrs. Pretorious

Me: I will that boy's behavior record file, even his performance is deteriorating. I suggest you take him out of my art class.

Mr. Van der Meerve: Baie dankie Meneer, you will hear from the Principal.

Me: Don't forget to forward her the minutes of this meeting. Thank you, Meneer.

May be I was a bit too personal, who cares, this people should be told that this is a new South Africa. I must not let my past experiences rule my life. I should pray for forgiveness, that's only a child.

This dialogue above is an extract from my journal and brings to the open the issues of race that I was struggling with as a black African Art teacher in a multi-racial classroom. Firstly, the discourse of race surfaces.

The boy in my class called me racist. Perhaps the way I handled the situation was racist. Having gone through a separate Bantu education system, how can I even claim to understand the dynamics of teaching Art in a multi-racial classroom? After going through

the apartheid system, which carried harsh 'authoritarian' education conditions, those feelings of hatred, insecurity and inefficiency might have made me act or think racially. That is why I had to go through a process of introspection through auto-ethnography in order to understand meanings of who am I as an art teacher in a multi-racial South Africa.

This chapter unpacks how those meanings of who am I (as presented by my journal) were formed. Teachers are faced with new challenges under the new education system and the new curriculum. For teachers from the old education system to continue being relevant, they need to stop assuming that after 1994, they just transformed with the policy. Teachers need to embark on subjective research projects that will allow them to tell their stories to benefit other teachers and policy-makers. Such critical moments shaped who I am today because they challenged the false consciousness that I had adopted as a result of the apartheid education crises that I went through.

Moments and Meanings

The second part of section B tries to understand the crisis moments presented on the first part through the lens of the second principle of false consciousness. The second principle of Brian Fay's multi-layered theory of false consciousness maintains that this crisis is caused in part by the false consciousness of those that are experiencing it. I use Brian Fay's theory of multi-layered consciousness in this research project as it best tries to provide possible meanings for critical moments that I experienced. As an black African

man as I had come to understand myself, I was experiencing a crisis in my practice as an art teacher in a multi-cultural, multi-racial classroom.

Critical theories like that of Brian Fay's helps us sort out our world, make sense of it, guide us on how to behave, and predict what might happen next. In this section, my previously defined understandings of who I am are challenged.

This section addresses the second and the third critical question of this research: How were meanings of who I am formed and how are those meanings limiting or advancing my practice as an art teacher in a multi-cultural multi racial setting?

The first crisis moment was when I decide to enroll at Technikon Northern Natal. This institution was an historically white Institution. For me to escape the situation of being an African, black, Zulu, who is uneducated and poor, I chose to enroll at the Technikon Natal. According to Fay's second layer of critical theory, the crisis can in part be caused by the false consciousness of those that are experiencing it. This was the choice I made in trying to rid myself of poverty, blackness and illiteracy.

I regarded going to the historically white institution as a privilege. I could have chosen to go to any other tertiary institution but I chose the Technikon Northern Natal. According to a research conducted by Gardner (1989), black students see higher education as the gateway to prosperity and a good job. To me, an historically white institution like Technikon Northern Natal was better than any black institution of higher learning. This

was result of false consciousness. Because of the poor black education system caused by apartheid, my meanings were falsely constructed. So as a result, I regarded historically white institutions as the gateway to bigger opportunities.

When I was at this institution, I was faced with a number of challenges. Those challenges ranged from being alienated academically and socially to poor performance in History of Art and the fear of failure. According to Fay's second layer of false consciousness, the reason why I experienced the kind of a crisis as I did was partly because of my own choice: choosing to study at Technikon Northern Natal.

The second crisis moment was when I chose to study Fine Arts at Technikon Natal. I call this a crisis moment because of the kinds of dilemmas that I experienced while studying Fine Arts. For a black African man like me, studying Fine Arts was meant to lead to 'success', not like those Mtubatuba crafters who were selling their artworks on the side of the road. As most of the black artists were called crafters, I wanted to escape that 'belittling' title. I wanted to be recognised as an Artist or an art teacher. According to Fay's theory, this experience was a result of false consciousness, where I was convinced that for the 'self' to escape 'othering,' I had to assimilate the white dominant culture of that time.

I experienced a crisis as I tried to depict art forms and practices that were outside my cultural practices. I failed a number of art courses as I was caught between the European art practices and my own African art practices. According to Fay, this crisis was partly

caused by my choices which were based on my false consciousness. I could have chosen to study any other course but Fine Arts. I could have resisted Eurocentric art practices but I associated European art practices with superiority and saw my own African art practices as inferior.

The third crisis moment was in 1994 when changes happened in my life at Technikon Natal and in the rest of the country. In my life, I was faced with major changes as Technikon Natal started accepting black African students. I was faced with a sense of misunderstanding of these black African students from the townships. At times they behaved aggressively and violently. As I started assimilating the dominant culture at the Technikon Northern Natal, I saw the other black African students differently. They were times when I felt they were a disgrace to my newly-assimilated identity in terms of the way they spoke (very loudly), and their lack of manners, as well as a very poor command of English. They seemed like they did not care about their studies but concentrated on politics and social life. They did not look trustworthy and whenever I lost something I would suspect them. I imagined they saw me differently as well. They did not seem to have accepted me as a black African student like them.

For my part, I viewed myself as better than they were (other black students not living in residences from the townships). At that time I was a Fine Arts student, with white friends, living in the campus residence. They were from the townships - very loud, angry and very poor. They could not even express themselves properly in English. According to Fay's theory, my access to the things that the other black African students did not have,

such as living in a campus residence, studying Fine Arts, and rubbing shoulders with the 'élites' from the dominant culture of Technikon of Northern Natal, led to the false consciousness that I was better than them. That false consciousness was the result of a crisis in the social system.

In South Africa's social system at that time, whites were perceived as better than other races. White students possessed access to things that most black students and other races could not have. This false consciousness was also a result of the crisis of studying Fine Arts at Technikon of Northern Natal which was an historically white institution.

The third crisis moment was when I moved from Technikon of Northern Natal to the University of Northern Natal (now called the University of KwaZulu-Natal). This move was a crisis moment, firstly, because I was running away from another crisis in my life. The move from Technikon of Northern Natal to the University of Northern Natal was an escape from the situation that I was facing at the Technikon of Northern Natal. This situation involved failing to meet academic requirements, being fed up of the student riots and, mostly, looking for a place where I could express my art cultural practices.

According to Fay's theory of false consciousness, this crisis moment was partly caused by my false consciousness. I viewed myself differently as a result of a crisis. For me to think that the University of Northern Natal was somehow going to offer me a better situation than Technikon Natal resulted in the crisis moment where I was faced with a new challenge to adapt, from one historically-white institution to another. As a result of

the crisis that I experienced at Technikon of Northern Natal which constructed my false consciousness, I made a choice to move to the University of Natal.

The fourth crisis moment was when I chose to work as an art teacher at the Ridge West High School. I view this crisis moment through the lens of the false consciousness theory because this school was a former Model C School. My choice again as a black African man to teach in a former Model C School was a continuation of my false consciousness.

I could have chosen to teach in one of the former black schools in a township or rural settlement. As an art teacher who has studied at Technikon of Northern Natal and the University of Northern Natal, I viewed myself as an 'élite' art teacher who possesses art knowledge which is relevant for the previously white schools. This was false consciousness because I found myself in a dilemma as I was expected to teach pupils of all races.

I was also expected to teach them the new art curriculum which was Afro-centric in approach. I found myself at the crossroads as I was confused in terms of decisions of whether to teach the Euro-centric art history that I was taught at the Technikon of Northern Natal or the new Afro-centric curriculum that was prescribed by the new curriculum. For me to remain relevant in the new South African education system, I had to find out who I really was as an art teacher, given the kind of crisis that I went through in becoming an art teacher.

As a result, I decided to embark on this auto-ethnographic research. Using my journal was a perfect tool for drawing on memories of past critical moments that presented a challenge to my practice as an art teacher. Fay's theory of multiple layers of consciousness helped me to deconstruct such narrative events. I used a process of selecting extracts and compiling them into different themes according to the critical importance of occurrences, to bring to light the journey of false consciousness that I went through.

5.1.4 Section C

Section C offers an understanding of my crisis moments as spaces in and through which I constituted self and how I make sense of my life as Art teacher. In Section C data will be analysed with the lens of Brian Fay's fourth layer of false consciousness theory, which maintains that the false consciousness experience by the individual be amenable to a process of enlightenment. Section C addresses the critical question: What are the meanings, definitions and practices that have informed my identity as an art teacher in a multiracial classroom? Section C analyses data that show what meanings and definitions led to my false consciousness. Understanding that my meanings and definitions were false will lead to freedom, according to Brain Fay theory of false consciousness

Section C presents three themes. These are:

- Contextual displacements - "A different home"
- Crafting Curriculum - "A different learning"
- Contrived Relationships – "A different living"

Contextual displacements - “A different home”

Changing contexts presented some sort of false consciousness for me. I was born in the Mtubatuba rural settlements. Having to move a tertiary institution called Technikon of Northern Natal in Durban – in an urban settlement shifted the process of meaning-making in/for me because I was placed in totally different context from that which I am familiar with. The main reason for choosing to study at this Technikon was because of false idea that associated previously white tertiary educational institutions with success and the achievement of big goals.

A week ago I have just registered at the University of Northern Natal. My dream has come true. I have been dreaming about this moment ever since I started high school, although I am attending at Ingwe University of Technology. because of my practical (Fine Arts).

In the beginning of my journal, I reflect extensively on the excitement and fears that I experienced as a result of the contextual change. These changes somehow happen within constraints. As for me, these changes were the early nodal moments that were beginning to shape my goals of becoming an art teacher. Embedded in these nodal moments are moments of crisis. Having been raised in a small rural place in KwaZulu-Natal called Mtubatuba, it was a big move for me to re-locate to a city like Durban in order to enrol as a Fine Arts student.

By the time he left, it was already 17h30 in the afternoon. I almost cried. It was for the first time in my life to leave home.

In my journal, I reflect on how new contexts transformed me into a different person.. I express a great deal of unfamiliarity's in terms of the new environment; new people; new lifestyle and a new course with subjects I had never studied before. Yet I had to do this in order for me to become an art teacher.

I am...sick of having to be responsible for myself here in Durban, how I wish to go back home where it's nice and quiet, and be with my family, with no worries. I know this sounds really selfish but seriously I hate being here in this busy, fast life.

As I recall, it was strenuous for my family; we had to separate and live apart. father had to sleep at the station because public transport was a problem for those long distances.

It's so isolated. I am tired of this English I speak everyday'. 'Bongi (my girlfriend) doesn't really understand how bad my life is around here, she never sees my silent misery as I write her letters crying for help. I wish she was here.

On reflection, money issues, the entrance into a new field of study altogether and the fear of failure were some of my major constraints. I could not understand the accent and the content in most of my Art History lectures. This could be the result of my being socialised in black Schools. In most of the schools that I attended, only black African teachers with a very poor command of the English language taught me; at Technikon of Northern Natal, all my Art Lecturers were white males, with only one white woman. Some of the content in Art History contained words of Greek and Roman origin that were very unfamiliar to me as an black African male.“ ...most of the artworks they refer to are so Eurocentric. Art History lecturer speaks of Greek gods and the Italian Renaissance”.

These hardships in my experiences as a result of being exposed to a different context led to my feelings of being an Outsider.

Crafting Curriculum – “A different learning”

In lectures I spent most of my time with the white students as there was only one other black African student doing the same course. She was female. In residences most of the new students were starting to be more diverse. The Fine Arts curriculum was exclusive in terms of content and practices. The art practices did not include diverse cultures and means of representations. During my Fine Arts experience I was introduced to art practices that were different from my own cultural practices.

This process assisted in transforming my meaning-making. Fine art was the subject of the élite, understood by a few and associated with whites. These meanings were formed in my mind through the Fine Arts curriculum experience at the Technikon.

After two years in Fine Arts as a student I felt more and more like the dominant culture. I started to understand more and more about the white students, especially their music; their style of dressing up and their taste in the arts. By so doing I started to see other black African Students differently.

Everyone has no time for each other. You say hello to a stranger down the street and they just ignore you, come on Black people where has kindness gone!??? Where is ubuntu??'

Black students toyi-toyi for no reason, township thugs come here at the campus and 'jack-roll' (slang referring to taking girls by force) girls away, there is absolutely no rule of law.

At this point I was feeling like an insider in my class. I could speak the language and I could socialise very well but externally at the residence, the feeling was different. Mostly I felt embarrassed by some of the behaviours of black African students. My meanings of who I was were shifting. I started seeing myself differently.

I have been engaging in art as a process and a language of constructing myself. As I reflect from my self-portraits at the beginning of the first five chapters, there is a particular style of drawing that I adopted.

The process of drawing is linear and classical. These portraits are drawn in a linear way because they move from outlines to clearer images. One picture leads to another in a particular way. It is classical in a way that it shows the realism, which means that it depicts me as I look. As I navigated through the process of drawing them in order to make more visible my journeys, it became clear to me that this was the Eurocentric way of drawing that I was socialised into at the Technikon of Northern Natal. What I draw and paint reflects this particular kind of socialisation. The school in which I chose to teach art also reflects this particular kind of socialisation.

This analysis has made me understand that although I am now an art teacher in a multi-cultural classroom, I still carry with the previously constructed meanings of who I am

today. Navigating my style of drawing self-portraits has helped to analyse the kinds of meaning-making that still exists with me.

In Section D, data from my journal which brings to light the different kinds of challenges that I was facing as an art teacher in a multi-cultural classroom, are analysed. Analysing those challenges as a result of different changes that I went through during different nodal moments 'pushed' me into a new space. It is the space of self-understanding.

Contrived relationships: “A different living”

Embedded in my newly found, 'assimilated' culture, were areas of false consciousness. Having gone through the Fine Arts curriculum experience, my relationships with different racial groups were transformed.

How I viewed myself was different from before. David Mura (1999: 97) points out that for some people, the categories of race have caused a whole range of negative experiences. For other people the same categories have enabled them to escape these experiences. For some people the categories of race have excluded them from certain privileges. For others the same categories have availed them of certain privileges.

When I was doing my practical teaching, I did not choose to teach in one of the black schools; I chose to teach in a white Model C school. When I was applying to become a full time teacher, after I had finished my studies, I did not apply to black African schools but I chose to teach art in a previously White Model C school.

I have just finished my professional education qualification. Now I am a qualified teacher. Teaching here has been quite a learning experience for me. I have made a lot of friends. It was for the first time for me to relate to people of different races, different cultures, at the same level. The experience has been wonderful.

After taking traits from what was the dominant group at the Technikon of Northern Natal, I felt a sense of belonging to the art world. For me the art world was very Western in lifestyle, very élite in command and very exclusive in content. Understanding such aspects and being part of this world made me feel more educated and powerful than most black African males which had less knowledge of this subject.

Most people think that it is my first time at the tertiary level, only if they knew! They think that I am quite intelligent, that I know everything. I can spoil it by telling them that it is actually my fourth year at tertiary level. 'I am loving it' here! 'Some call me the 'blue eyed boy' because I was so close to the white teachers something that I had never imagined before in my life.

For me as a black African male, although these crisis moments that I went through in becoming an art teacher resulted in false understandings of who I really am, they also provided for me the space for my emancipation.

I have to tell you this; it is the most exciting moment of my life. I don't know where to begin. I won; I won a trip of a life time. No, I did not win;

I was selected to travel five cities in America! Hooray!!! Joviiiiiiiiiijo!!!!(This is an expression of happiness by blowing a whistle!). This trip is sponsored by South African Airways and South African Breweries. A process involved three intense interviews on South African Culture, Sports and Arts. I was chosen with a group of

South Africans to travel overseas to represent South African Culture. The arranged countries to be visited include New York, Los Angeles; Miami, Mexico and Brazil.

Born Voyage!!!

I was elected by the staff of West Ridge as a Supervisor for the school prefects. This is not just a picture but a record of my experience/ moment that shape who I am today. Captured in this picture is one of my greatest moments and my biggest achievement. In Ridge High School, prefects are one of the main structures. They are well respected by both the teachers and the learners. For me, and for a lot of other teachers, to be elected to become a teacher responsible for prefects was a high profile position.

According to Fay's theory of self-consciousness, the third layer of consciousness articulates that these false consciousness moments be amenable to the process of enlightenment.

The four crisis moments that I have analysed are traced to my self-consciousness that has led to my emancipation. Firstly, attending the Technikon of Northern Natal around the early nineties opened for me many opportunities in the world of art. Today, I am considered as a qualified black African artist. I now appreciate that the kind of 'art skills' that I was taught at Technikon of Northern Natal by the art pioneers cannot be trade for anything.

Secondly, although being exposed to mostly Euro-centric art practices at Technikon of Northern Natal has distanced me from my culture, it has benefited me in that I am able to

maintain a diverse balance that is needed in being an art teacher in a multi-racial, multi-cultural classroom (although I was not aware of it before my self-reflection).

I also learnt a lot from these learners; they taught me to be more patient, they taught me to be compassionate and from that experience a lot of my past perceptions about different cultures were changed.

Thirdly, having been questioned about gaining a better understanding of myself, why I am called racist, has also made me question myself and helped me realize who I really am as a black African male, who was becoming the art teacher that I am.

I am one of the few formally trained Black African male art teachers in KwaZulu Natal. But how come am I feeling so useless and so irrelevant? Who am I? What am I doing here...?

Fourthly, moving to PMB helped to develop different art tastes. It was one of my major developmental moves. I say this because of the kind of freedom of art expression that I received at PMB, the campus that offers Fine Arts.

To graduate with a Fine Arts Degree from PMB opened lots of opportunities for me. Lastly, to choose to teach Art at Ridge West was of great benefit to me. I also granted me the opportunity to embark on and complete this self-search process called auto-ethnography.

Teaching in a multi-racial, multi-cultural school was an eye-opener. I was not aware of my own false consciousness until I was thrown in a multi-racial, multi-cultural classroom. I was so naïve to think that since I studied Fine Arts in an historically white-dominated university, I was better equipped with the best artistic content, skills and the

values to teach. It is only when I struggled to make sense of my day-to-day art practices that I realized that I needed to unlearn and relearn more – hence, the need for this auto-ethnographic research.

Lastly, having gone through these crisis moments has helped me to go through a process of self-discovery. Self-discovery means that I am able to embrace my blackness as one with agency to change and challenge traditional and oppressive practices that imprison and constrain me. I discovered myself as a male, as an artist, as a teacher like never before. I developed self-consciousness and self-awareness. Out of these class, race and gender identity discourses that were previously given to me, I was able to re-define and establish the new boundaries of my ‘self’ as a black African male.

5.1.5 Section D

Section D presents a reflective analysis of critical moments as an appropriate approach that enables an understanding of my experiences of ‘self’ as an black African male art teacher in a multicultural, multi-racial classroom. This enquiry, for me, is a therapeutic self-reconstructive approach in which I, as an individual, have been able to reflect on the historical processes and contexts that have informed and continue to inform the meanings of who am I as an art teacher in the new democratic education system in South Africa. These are challenges I face in my day-to-day practices as an art teacher. What are the

meanings, definitions and practices that have informed my identity as an art teacher in a multiracial classroom?

Reflecting back to Sections A; B and C, I see one major issue, of arriving at a new different space and gaining an new understanding of my meaning makings. Arriving at Ridge West, which is a diverse setting, with my newly formed “coconut” identity sparked the kind of challenges that I started facing. Although I was black on the outside, I was Wwrite in the inside. “Coconut” is a term used to refer to a black person who has been socialised in a white culture. This research project has made me understand why I am in such a dilemma. I ended up arriving at self-understanding that I was not willing to accept at first. I realised that I was in denial of who I really am as an art teacher.

According to Fay’s theory of consciousness, the fourth and final layer of consciousness articulates that enlightenment leads to emancipation in which a group, empowered by its new-found self-understanding, radically alters its social arrangements and thereby alleviates its suffering. Section D shows how this reflective narrative self-research has helped me to reach a level of emancipation that has made me understand who I am in order to improve my practices as an art teacher and to emerge from false consciousness. Auto-ethnography, as used as a reflective methodology in this enquiry, has worked at understanding the processes of my identity formation. My newly adopted identity of being a so-called ‘coconut’ has been constraining me in my practice as an art teacher. By the term ‘coconut’ I am referring to pejorative slang term “coconut”, meaning someone who is black on the outside but white on the inside — or put another way, someone who

looks black but acts “white”. So auto-ethnography emerges as a key method for critical interrogation and ‘emancipatory’ practices.

Both Fay’s theory and auto-ethnography have the underlying consciousness-raising intent, and may be applied for critical pedagogical concerns. Because of the similarities between the two, a ‘problem’, once identified, may be investigated. Critical engagement with the problem opens up opportunities to view it from different vantage points, and solutions may be sought, which can be applied to alter the social system. In my case, I was surprised with the findings of this research. This research made me understand that, firstly, there was a crisis in my practice as an art teacher. Secondly, I came to realize that the crisis was partly caused by my own false consciousness. Thirdly, I appreciated that false consciousness may be amenable to a process of enlightenment. Fourthly, I realized that my false consciousness both benefited and constrained my meaning formation. Lastly, I had to go through a process of self-identity re-construction to understand and re-discover myself in my desire to improve my practice as an art teacher.

Against this background, teachers may similarly consider processes of self-reflection, to continually build on their understanding of ‘Self’, but more particularly, to also actively engage with these understandings for the purposes of ‘emancipatory’ practice. Such newly-found emancipation, when it occurs, can help teachers to improve their practice. New understandings of teachers’ identity formation and the social processes that work to position these identities will allow South African teachers to respond to the new challenges of an ever-changing curriculum. What I have found in this research is that

applying auto-ethnographic methodology has been most appropriate in enabling me to critically interrogate my own identity as an art teacher and those processes of socialization and crisis moments that may have formed my new identity. Auto-ethnography holds significant potential as a method for the engagement of socially ‘emancipatory’ professional practices that identify difference and open up opportunities for understanding the ‘self’.

As a methodology that is primarily interested in excavating the formation of identity, auto-ethnography holds significant potential for the development of critically reflective and genuinely ‘emancipatory’ professional practice, particularly, in Education.

To conclude, this chapter deals with how meanings of ‘who I am as an art teacher in a multi-cultural classroom’, as present in my journal, were formed. In the process of meaning-making I have included Google images to illustrate how the notion of the “universal” is ideologically loaded.

Such images should be questioned and challenged because meaning is dynamic and context-bound.

Fay’s theory of multi-layered consciousness questions the political nature of that very process of meaning-making created by this images, maintaining that some relationships in the world are more powerful than others, that some theorists enjoy more status than others, that some ‘intellectual currency’ is worth more than others.

Personally, this research has helped me to deconstruct my own false consciousness. This chapter reveals how the meanings that I gave myself which resulted in false consciousness about me were formed. Broadly speaking, this research, like other critical research projects, uses critical theory to promote critical consciousness, and aims to break down the institutional structures and arrangements which reproduce oppressive ideologies and social inequalities. It is important also to state that this research project embraces both the negative and the positive aspects of power.

For me, exposed to the discourses of Fine Art through studying it formally, an area which was not normally studied by black African men, I was able to begin a process of already-constructed meanings of myself.

By questioning those meanings, by challenging the status quo, I arrived at a new space where my definitions and my meanings were reconstructed.

As Fay's fourth layer of self-consciousness states, '*enlightenment leads to emancipation in which a group, empowered by its new found self-understanding, radically alters its social arrangements and thereby alleviates its suffering*'. I, labeled as a black African man by the government of that time, constructed my own false meanings of who I am. In this chapter I re-reviewed and re-worked those meanings that result in false consciousness. Finally, this critical auto-ethnography research made me understand my false consciousnesses and how distorted inner meanings about me were formed. The false

consciousness that I experienced has helped me to a process of enlightenment, which has led to the improvement of my practice of teaching.

CHAPTER SIX

Conclusion

Two critical research questions were asked at the outset of this work: “**How have I come to be the art teacher I am?**” and “**What are the meanings, definitions and practices that have informed my identity as an art teacher in a multiracial classroom?**” I found myself at the crossroads of my career as an art teacher and this prompted me to embark on this critical auto-ethnography research. While previous research studies have been conducted on ‘teacher self’, an understanding of teacher self within and through a critical lens offered me an understanding of self that is liberating.

Through this self-study inquiry I have managed to conduct, I am able to view myself differently. After a process of self-reflection, I have realised that I may be what Ferguson (2006) refers to as a “coconut”. “Coconut” is a term referring to a black person who has been socialised into the dominant culture and one who has taken up a different meanings, learnings and understandings as “other”. Resulting in a loss of understanding of him/herself as a black person, this space has the potential to be both enabling and disabling. Arriving at this understanding has given me the opportunity to rework and rethink my meaning-making and my choices in my multi-cultural classroom. I am now in new space where I understand why I have made and continue to make the choices that I have in my position as teacher. This reflexive process will open up opportunities for my practice as an art teacher and how I can move from what is to what should be.

While previous auto-ethnographic enquiries of teachers have been conducted from the psychological perspective, and focus on pre-service teacher’s attitudes in response to cultural diversity, this auto-ethnographic research study focuses on teacher self-reflection from the critical perspective. The critical theory lens is used in this research study to make visible the spaces I created within the dominant structures to open up possibilities for my meaning making as a black, male art teacher. From the critical point of view, the individual works within the dominant structures in order to challenge it. I had to become a coconut in order to gain access to the dominant structures as a way to change and challenge them. Enrolling at the Technikon of Northern Natal (an historically white institution), to pursue a formal career in Fine Arts, are two such spaces that have

threatened to challenge and change my previous definition from being a black African crafter to an Art Teacher.

Through this self-study, I am able to reflect on my life using legitimate academic channels to understand how my false consciousness and the assimilated coconut identity has informed the meaning making of who I am as an art teacher in a multi-cultural setting. This research shows how false consciousness forms part of the de-construction and re-construction of the teacher-self for better ways of thinking and working in South African classrooms. A deeper understanding of my meanings and definitions has opened up other ways of negotiating who I am and how I can make sense of my life as a member of a community of teachers.

6.1 My journey ahead...

The recommendations I am making in this study will affect, in the main, teachers, art education researchers and policy-makers. Every research study is aimed at bridging an existing gap in any particular field. Chapter Two (Literature Review) of this study revealed that there is still a big gap in terms of research that illuminates teachers' lived stories in South Africa.

Teachers, researchers and policy-makers are turning to auto-ethnography as a valuable method of study that reveals what is happening at schools today. In this auto-ethnography, I used my personal journal as part of the data produced. I hope this may

inspire teachers to keep personal journals, and to encourage their pupils to do the same. "This will enable the educator to get to know and understand their learners better" (Grossi, 2006: 231).

In a profession as challenging as teaching, honest self-reflection is key. That means that we must regularly examine what has worked and what has not in the classroom, in spite of how painful it can sometimes look in the mirror (Lewis, 2008). As teachers and researchers go through critical changes in the educational system in South Africa, I encouraged us to ask the following questions:

- Are there any aspects of the profession that I am ignoring out of fear of change or lack of knowledge?
- What resentments do I need to resolve in order to move forward more optimistically and with a fresh mind?
- What types of students do I tend to ignore or do I need to spend more time serving?
- Where did I fail as a teacher in the past? Where did I succeed?
- What can I do to make my teaching more effective while adding to my students' learning and enjoyment?
- What can I do to be more proactive in my professional development?
- Are old teaching habits controlling my teaching style and content?
- Do I still enjoy teaching? If not, what can I do to increase my enjoyment in my

- chosen profession after such critical changes within the educational system?
- Do I bring additional stress upon myself? If so, how can I decrease or eliminate it.
 - How have my beliefs about learning and pedagogy changed over the years?
 - What minor and/or major changes can I make to my academic Programme in order to directly increase my students' learning?

For educational researchers and practitioners:

Teaching is a profession, like any other profession. Change is inevitable. New methods and technologies are put in place as a result of local and global changes. As times change, perspectives change. Educational research must shape and be shaped by educational and social change. Research that includes art and education should be able to use creative metaphors to link it up with the contemporary research methodologies. Auto-ethnography which gives a voice to ordinary teachers should be encouraged in order to improve teaching practice.

Art education, as the subject that I teach, has been changing critically over the last few years. These changes range from art education curriculum to pedagogy. As Chapter Two has shown, until recently not much critical research has been done in South Africa; research that might assist art teachers to reflect on their careers in order to improve the art teaching practice is sorely lacking.

Art education researchers should also use this study as a self-reflection tool, as it can assist them to reflect back on changes in terms the curriculum and implementation strategies. This will help them to evaluate if those changes were effective enough to

prepare art teachers to face wider social changes. I am glad I was compelled by my frustrations as an art teacher to resist being overwhelmed, and to embark on a journey of self-reflection and self-exploration, a journey that continues to reconstruct who I am in this culture of education in South Africa.

For policy-makers:

This research recommends that policy-makers should construct policies with a thorough understanding that new educational policies affect teachers the most. So, policy-makers should not assume that once the policy is passed it will automatically be implemented without taking teachers' voices, concerns and interventions, into account. Change of policies should involve the teachers' research projects like this that attempt to understand their complexities. Finally, it must be acknowledged that changes in the education policies are not complete unless they try to integrate teachers from the old separate education system into the new democratic system of education in South Africa.

Bibliography

Apple, M. (1996). *'Cultural, Politics and Education'* Buckingham: Open University Press.

Arendt, H. (1990). *'Thinking and Moral Considerations'*: A lecture. *Social Research*, 57(1), pp. 417-446.

Arendt, H. (1993). *The Crisis in Education*. New York: Penquin. Arendt, H. (1993). *'The Crisis in Education'*. New York: Penquin.

Britzman, D. (2003). *'Practice makes Practice'*. New York: State University of New York.

Barthes, R. (1975) *'Roland Barthes par Roland Barthes'*. Paris: Sevil.

Babbie, E. & Mouton, J.(2001) '*the Practice of Social Research*'. South Africa: Oxford University Press.

Bakhtin, M (1993) '*Towards a Philosophy of the Act*'. Texas: University of Texas Press.

Beattie, M. (1995) new prospects for teacher education: Narrative ways of knowing teacher and teacher learning. '*Educational Research*', 37(1): 53-70.

Beeby, C.E. (1969) '*The qualitative aspects of educational planning*', Paris: UNESCO.

Beth Lewis:http://k6educators.about.com/od/professionaldevelopment/a/self_reflection.htm 02/05/2008)

Bernstein, R (1976). '*the Restructuring of Social and Political Theory*'. New York: Harcourt Brace Jouanovich Publishers.

Booth, T, (1996) Sounds of still voices: '*Issues in the use of narrative methods with people who have learning difficulties*', in L. Barton (ed.) sociology and disability: some emerging issues. London: Longman.

Brodkey, L (2004) Writing Permitted in Designated Areas Only (Pedagogy and Cultural Practice Series, Vol 4) University of Texas.

Burchell, G., Gordon, C. and Miller, P. (1991) '*The Foucault effect*': Studies in Governmentality, Hemel Hempstead: Harvester Wheat sheaf.

Carr, W. and Kemmis, S. (1986) '*Becoming Critical*': Education, Knowledge and Educational Research.

Charmaz & Mitchell. (1997) '*Self, Substance and Style in Ethnographic Writings*'. Reflexivity and Voice ed. R. Hertz, 193-215. Thousand Oaks. California.

Childs, K.(2005) Just where do I think I'm going? Working with marginalized and disaffected youth and their self-study. In: C. Mitchell, S. Weber & K. O'Reilly-Scanlon

(Eds.). *'Just who do we think we are? Methodologies for autobiography and self-study in teaching.'* London: RoutledgeFalmer. pp. 142-153.

Clandinin, J. D., & Connelly, F. M. (1995). *Teachers' Professional Knowledge Landscapes.* New York: Teachers College Press, Columbia University.

Clifford, J. (1988) *The Predicament of Culture: Twentieth-Century Ethnography, Literature, and Art.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press

Clough, P.(2002) *Doing Qualitative Research in Educational Settings: 'Narratives and Fictions in Educational Research'*. Buckingham: Open University press.

Coffey, P. (1999). *The ethnographic self.* London: Sage.

Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996) **Constitution** of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, was approved by the Constitutional Court (CC).

Denzin, N. & Lincoln, Y.(1994). Introduction: Entering the field of qualitative research. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 1-17). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Denzin, N. and Lincoln, Y.(eds.) (2000) *'Handbook of Qualitative Methods of Educational enquiry'*. London: Sage.

Department of Education (2002) *'Revised National Curriculum Statement.'* Grade R-9 (schools) policy. Pretoria: Formset Printers Cape.

Descartes, R.(1641) *'Principles of Philosophy.'* Montana: Kissinger Publishing.

Dewey, J. (1938) *Experience and Education,* New York: Collier Books. (Collier edition first published 1963).

Doll's E., Jr. (1993), *A Post-Modern Perspective on Curriculum,* Teachers College Press, New York & London.

Dyson, M (2007). Australian Journal of Teacher Education. My story in a professional of stories: *Auto-ethnography –An empowerment methodology for educators*, Monash University, Gippsland Campus.

Eisenstein, E, L. (1979) '*The Printing Press, as an agent of change*', Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Eisner, E. W. (1991). The enlightened eye: Qualitative inquiry and the enhancement of educational practice. New York, NY: Macmillan Publishing Company.

Eisner, E. W. (2004). Multiple intelligences: Its tensions and possibilities. *Teachers College Record, Vol 106(1)*, 31-39.

Ellis, C. (1997). Evocative Autoethnography. In W. G. Tierney & Y. Lincoln (Eds.), *Representation and the Text : Re-framing the Narrative Voice* (pp. 115-139).

Albany: State University of New York Press.

Ellis, C (2000) *Creating Criteria: An Ethnographic Short Story*, Qualitative Inquiry, Vol. 6, No. 2, 273-277. University of South Florida

Ellis, C.(2004) '*The Ethnography I: A Methodological Novel about Autoethnography*'. Oxford: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc. Ellis, C., & Bochner, A. (1996). *Composing Ethnography: Alternative Forms of Qualitative Writing* (Vol. 1). Walnut Creek: AltaMira.

Ellis, C., & Bochner, A. (2000). Auto-Ethnography, Personal Narrative, Reflexivity. In Denzin, K. & Lincoln, Y. (Eds.), *The Handbook of Qualitative Research* (2nd ed., pp. 733-767). Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications.

Ellis and Flaherty (1992). *The Spiritual Warfare of Exodus: A Postpositivist Research Adventure* Ponticelli *Qualitative Inquiry*.1996; 2: 198-219. Sage Publications.

Essack, S. (1999) An assessment of the sociology undergraduates curriculum at the four universities in the Eastern seaboard Region. University of Kwa-Zulu Natal.

Fanon, F. (1990) '*Racial Identity in Post-Colonial Contexts.*' New York: Sage Publication.

Fay, E. (1987) *The Sociology of Black Africa*': Social Dynamics in Central Africa.

Featherstone, M.(1986) '*Consumer Culture and Postmodernism.*' New York: Sage Publication.

Ferguson, J (2007) Formalities of Poverty: Thinking about Social Assistance in Neoliberal South Africa - African Studies Review 50:2 African Studies Review 50.2 (2007) 71-86 Muse Search Journals

Fitzclarence, L., & Hickey, C. (1999, November-December, 1999). The construction of a responsible self-Identity: The why and the what of narrative pedagogy. Paper presented at the Australian Association for Research in Education, Melbourne.

Foucault, M (1986a) *The care of the self: the History of Sexuality* Vol. 3, trans. R. Hurley, New York: Pantheon.

Foucault, Michel (1983). '*This is not a pipe*'; Trans. and ed. James Harkness. Berkeley: University of California press.

Foucault, M (1991) Governmentality, in G Burchell, C. Gordon and P Miller (eds.), *The Foucault effect: Studies in Governmentality*, Hemel Hempstead: Harvester Wheatsheat (87-104).

Foucault, M.(1986) '*The Politics of Michel Foucault.*' Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Fox (1996) "Silent voices: A subversive reading of child sexual abuse," *Composing Ethnography*, pp. 330-356. Sage.

Freud, A.(1946) '*The Psycho-analytic Treatment of Children.*' London: Imago Publishers.

Freud, S. (1900) '*Classics in the History of Psychology.*' New York: Macmillan.

Garrett, D., & Hodkinson, P. (1999). Can there be criteria for selecting research criteria? A hermeneutical analysis of an inescapable dilemma. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 4, 515-539.

Gay and Kirkland (2003) *Developing Cultural Critical Consciousness and Self-Reflection in Preservice Teacher Education* Theory into Practice - Volume 42, Number 3, Summer 2003, pp. 181-187 Ohio State University College of Education Press.

Geerts, C (1973) *The Interpretation of Cultures*. P.15. New York: Basic Books, Inc.

Gergen, M. & Gergen, K.(2005) '*Qualitative inquiry: Tension and transformations*'. Retrieved from <http://www.swarthmore.edu/socsci/kgergen1/web/page.phtml?id=manu31> & ht=1, on 21.06.2005.

Gilmore; Perry David; M. Smith, and Apacuar Larry Kairaiuk.(1997). '*Resisting Diversity*': An Alaskan case of institutional struggle. In *off white: readings on race, power, and society*, 90-99- New York: Routledge.

Giroux, H.(1989) '*Schooling for Democracy*'. *Critical Pedagogy in the Modern era*. Sage, London: Routledge.

Glesne, C., & Peshkin. (1992). *Becoming qualitative researchers: An introduction*. White Plains, NY: Longman.

Goodson, I and Sikes, P.(2001) '*Life-history research in educational settings*'.
Buckingham: open University press.

Goody, J and Watt, I. (1963) Consequences of literacy comparative studies in society and
History, 5. Reprinted in J, Goody, (ed.) (1975)

Grossi, E.T (2006) '*An ordinary teacher*': An Auto-ethnography. Unpublished PhD
Dissertation, University of KwaZulu Natal: Durban, South Africa.

Hall, S & du Gay, P.(1996) '*Questions of Cultural Identity*'. London: Sage

Hargreaves, D.H. (1997) *In defense of research for evidence – based teaching: a
rejoinder to martyr.*

Hell, J. (2003) *University of Nijmegen*, in International Journal of Bilingual Education
and Bilingualism 6(5), University Press.

Henning, E., Smit, B. & Van Ransburg, W.(2004) Finding your ways in qualitative
research. Pretoria: Van Schaik.

Holquist, M (1984). Dialogism: Bakhtin and His World, Second Edition. Routledge,
2002, Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Holt, N (2003). Representation, legitimation, and autoethnography: An autoethnographic
writing story. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 2(1). Article 2. Retrieved
[20/06/08] from http://www.ualberta.ca/~iiqm/backissues/2_1/html/holt.html

Husserl, T.(1970) the crisis of European science and transcendental Phenomenology,
trans. D. Carr. Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press.

[.http://www.wikipedia.org/wiki/critical_theory](http://www.wikipedia.org/wiki/critical_theory): 19.03.2007

Jambet, C. (1992) The Constitution of the subject and spiritual practice, in T, J. Armstrong (ed), Michel Foucault, Philosopher, Homely Hampstead: Harvester Wheatsheaf (233-47).

Jambet, G(1992) *'Inventing Ourselves.'*: Psychology, Power, & Personhood. London: Cambridge University Press.

Jansen, J. & Christie, P. (1990) *'Changing Curriculum'* South Africa: Creda Communication.

Jewett, M. (2004) *A Delicate Dance: Autoethnography, Curriculum, and the Semblance of Intimacy* College of Education at Louisiana State University Press.

Kuhn, T.(1970) *'The Structure of Scientific Revolutions'*, 2nd Edn. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Lakritz, A (1995) Identification and Difference: Structure of Privilege in Cultural Criticism: *In Who can speak? : Authority, and Critical Identity*, ed. Judith Root and Robyn Weigman, 3-24.

Laurence-Lightfoot, S. & Hoffman-Davis, J. (1997). *The art and science of portraiture*, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Le Roux (2006). State-Society Networks and Social Capital: A case of Political Participation in

the Western Cape Province (South Africa) Carolin Gomulia University of the Western Cape.

Lewis, B (2008). <http://k6educators.about.com/b/2008/03/05/best-practices-the-value-of-self-reflection.htm>

Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *'Naturalistic inquiry'*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Lionnet, F (1999) *De la Negritude a la Creolite: Edouard Glissant, Maryse Conde et la malediction de la theorie (review)* Research in African Literatures - Volume 32, pp. 130-131. Indiana University Press

Maanen (1988). *Tales of the Field: On Writing Ethnography*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

March, C.(1997) *'Planning Management & Ideology'*. London: Falmer Press.

Maslow, A.(1970) *'Motivation and Personality'*. New York: Harper and Row.

May, R (1967) *Man's search for himself*. New York: Signet Books.

Mc Adam, D.(1986) *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements*. Michigan: Cambridge University Press.

McCarthy, C. (1986)*Race Identity and Representations in Education*. Rout ledge (UK): Rout ledge University Press.

McCarthy, C(1990) *'Race and Curriculum': Social Inequality and the Theories and Politics of Difference in contemporary...*' Bristol: The Falmer Press.

McLaren, P. & Sleeter, C (1995) *' Multicultural Education, Critical Pedagogy, and the Politics of Difference'*. New York: State University of New York Press.

Mc Neil, P. & Chapman, S.(2005) *'Research Methods'*. London: Routledge.

Minh-ha Trinh T. & Pratibha Parmar (1998) *Feminist Review, Woman, Native, Other* Palgrave Macmillan Journals

Mosaka, T & Chandler, R. (2004) ' *A decade of Democracy*': Witnessing South Africa: Sondela.

Mouton, J.(1993) Positivism. Thomas, S Kuhn and Scientific Realism and Realism in the Social Sciences. In : Johan Snyman (Ed.), '*Conceptions of social inquiry*', Pretoria: H.S.R.C.

Muchmore, A. (2002) Methods and ethics in a life history study of teacher thinking. '*The Qualitative Report*', 7:4.

Mykhalovskiy, E. (1996). Reconsidering table talk: Critical thoughts on the relationship between sociology, autobiography, and self-indulgence. *Qualitative Sociology*, 19, 131-151.

National Art Education Association (2006): Western Region Summer Forum, Kansas City, Mo.

Hosted by the Kansas Art Education Association.

Paideya, V. (2004) Exploring science teachers experiences of diversity in the multicultural science classroom. University of Kwa-Zulu Natal.

Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Pearse, H. (1994). *Autobiography and self portraiture as pedagogy, research and art. NSCAD Papers in Art Education '94*, NSCAD, Halifax

Pearse, H.(2004) A/R/T as living inquiry. Putting my money where my *praxis*. <http://www.quaser.ualberta.ca/cpinfolder/paper/Harrold%20Pearse.htm>, on 09.05.2007.

Peshkin, L. (1985) In Search of Subjectivity—One's Own Alan Peshkin, Bureau of Educational Research University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign

- Picasso, P. (1923) *'Picasso speaks, arts'*, May: 5.
- Pillay, G. (2003) *'Successful Teachers'*, a cubist narrative of lives, practices and the evaded. University of Kwa-Zulu Natal.
- Pinar, W. (1986) *Autobiography and the architecture of self*. A paper presented at the annual. conference of AERA. Washington, D.C
- Pithouse, M. (2003) "What is it? What is it? What is it?" a teacher's personal narrative inquiry into a memorable curriculum experience. University of KwaZulu Natal.
- Polyani (1958) *Personal Knowledge. Towards a Post Critical Philosophy*. London: Routledge.
- Polkinghorne, D. (1997). *Reporting Qualitative Research as Practice*. In W. G. Tierney & Y. Lincoln (Eds.), *Representation and the Text*. Albany: State University of New York.
- Pratt, M (1999) *Critical Passions: Selected Essays*. Eds. Mary Louis Pratt and Kathleen Newman. Durham, NC : Duke University Press.
- Purkey, W. & Schmidt, J.1987) *The invitation to Relationships, An expanded Perspective for professional Counseling*. Englewood Cliff, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Quinney, R. (1996) "Once my father traveled west to California," Composing Ethnography, pp. 357-382. University Press.
- Reed, D. (2005) *Locating Bourdieu*. New Anthropologies of Europe Series. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Richardson, L. (1995) *Writing: a method of enquiry* in N.K. Denzin and Y.S. Lincoln (Eds). *'Handbook of Qualitative Research'*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Roberts, B.(2002) *Biographical Research*. Philadelphia: Open University Press.
- Rogers, C. (1989) *The Carl Rogers Reader*. New York: Houghton Mifflin Books.

- Ronai, C. (1996) "My mother is mentally retarded," *Composing Ethnography*, pp. 109-131. University Press.
- Rose, N. (1989) *Governing the Soul: the Shaping of the Private-Self*, London: Rutledge.
- Rose, N. (1996) *'Inventing Ourselves': Psychology, Power and Personhood*, New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Rosen, H.(2000) *'Speaking from Memory': the study of autobiographical discourse'*. New York: University Press.
- Rousseau, J. (1964b) *'Discourse on the origin and foundations of Inequalities among men'*: Rousseau (1964 a: 77-248).
- Sandelowski, M.(1994) *'The proof is in the pottery'*: towards a poetic for qualitative enquiry in J. Morse (ed.) *'Critical issues in qualitative research methods'*. London: Sage.
- Schaller, J.S. & Tobin, K. (1998) *'Quality criteria for the genres'*. In: J. Malone, B. Atweh & J.R. Northfield (Eds.). *Research and supervision in mathematics and science education*. New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates. Pp. 39-60.
- Schilb, J. (1996) *Between the Ones: Relating Composition Theory and Literary Theory*. Portsmouth, N.H.: Boynton/ Cook.
- Schwandt, T. (1994) *Constructivist, Interpretivist Approaches to Human Inquiry*. In: N.K.Denzin and Y.S.Lincoln (eds) *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, pp. 118-137. London: Sage.
- Sefa Dei: (2000) *Anti-racist feminism: Critical Race and Gender studies*. Agnes Calliste and George J, Eds. Halifax: Fernwood Publishing
- Smart, B.(1986) Foucault: *'A Critical Reader.'* Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

- Sparkes, A. C. (2000). Autoethnography and narratives of self: Reflections on criteria in action. *Sociology of Sport Journal*, 17, 21-41.
- Sparkes, A. C. (2002a). *Telling tales in sport and physical activity: A qualitative journey*. Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.
- Sparkes, A. C. (2002b). Autoethnography: Self-indulgence or something more? In A. Bochner & C. Ellis (Eds.), *Ethnographically speaking: Autoethnography, literature, and aesthetics*. New York: AltaMira.
- Spitz, F (2001) *Through the Looking Glass: Teacher Evaluation through Self-Reflection*. Whitehouse Station Press, New Jersey, USA
- Stanley, L. (1993). On auto/biography in sociology. *Sociology*, 27, 41-52.
- Taylor, C. (1989) *Sources of the Self: the Making of modern identity*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Taylor, H. & Richards, C.(1985) *'An Introduction to Curriculum Studies'*. (2nd Edition). Britain: NFER-NRLSON.
- Tierney, W.G. (1995) (Re) presentation and voice, *'Qualitative inquiry'*, 4(1): 379 – 90.
- Tierney, W.G. (1998) *'Life – history's History': 'Subjects fore told,'* *Qualitative inquiry*.
- Tierney, W. G., & Lincoln, Y. (1997). *Representation and the Text: Re-Framing the Narrative Voice*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Tully, J. (1993) *'Governing conduct' in an Approach to Political Philosophy: Locke in Context*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Wertsch, J.(1998) *Mind and Action*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Van Maanen, J. (1995). *Representation in Ethnography*. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications.

Winterson, J. (1991) '*Oranges are not the only fruit*', London: Vintage.

Yalom, D (1991) '*love's executioner's*: and other tales of psychotherapy; Harmondsworth: Penguin.