
Crossing from violence to nonviolence: pedagogy and memory

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Abstract

This qualitative case study addresses the use of memories of violence in a workshop with ten young student leaders in Durban. The pedagogy included the use of guidelines and gender-based groups as ways of enabling safety. A particularly direct discussion of gender and its relationship to violence followed, though violence in relation to other social identities was also explored. Walkerdine's work (2006) on border crossing is used to analyse the data from the records of discussion and evaluation comments. The argument is that such a pedagogy enabled participants to address some of the sedimented connections that held them to relationships based on violence. Generally, if we understand violence as caught up in social identities, work on memories of violence will require attention to dynamics related to the identities present. While gender's relation to violence is central in this context, further cases in which the pedagogy is structured around other social identities would extend our understanding.

The education of young people in a violent society needs to enhance equity and inclusion rather than violence and relations of domination. How best then do we deal with their memories of violence? Can our pedagogy in fact draw on such memories as a resource which can be transmuted into a conviction for nonviolence? If it can, what pedagogy is then appropriate?

This article poses such questions in relation to young people in South African society. It argues that violence is caught up in the specific social identities and histories of people, and that through these histories violence has become ingrained. Transition to nonviolence may draw on memories of violence. Such transition requires creating conditions of sufficient safety to enable students to recognise and challenge the relationships which foster violence.

This article reports on a qualitative case study of the use of a particular pedagogy in a three-day workshop held with ten student leaders from three

schools in Durban. It used their memories of violence as a resource for their learning about violence and nonviolence.

In addressing the memories of violence, the pedagogy had these elements: ways of creating conditions of safety to enable participants to speak freely, and a deliberate addressing of social identities (primarily gender) in the educational process. It drew on the assumption that it is more effective to speak even of bad memories than to silence them (Stone, Coman, Brown, Koppel and Hirst, 2012). The purpose of the article is to provide insight into the use of that pedagogy through its mapping of the dynamics of this specific case, and to consider the broader implications for work on violence.

Violence is here understood as systemic; its use is consistent with the notion of ‘structural violence’ (Galtung, 1996), in which physical violence, even implicit, is caught up in relations of power and subordination (Waterston and Kujac, 2007), or with the notion of ‘social suffering’ (Kleinman, 2000). This reading assumes continuity from structural inequality to the personal experience of everyday violence:

Interrogating structural violence – the subtleties and complexities of power relations and the microeconomics of difference – historically and locally gives attention to the multiple ways in which this violence is reworked through the routines of daily life as well as enacted through social relations and social institutions (Green, 2004, p.220).

Use of this conceptual framework has implications both for the pedagogy used in this case and for the research strategy. For a pedagogy that promotes *nonviolence*, it requires a vision of society in which relations are based on equity and not on domination or subordination. It requires also an awareness of how violence has constrained the lives of students and teachers.

Nonviolence is not restricted to situations of conflict, but informs thinking and actions more generally. It extends beyond the narrow choice of nonviolence as a means to an end (Sharp, 2005). Harris (2010) makes a distinction between non-violence (the replacement of violence by other ways of defeating an enemy) and nonviolence (built on love and respect for opponents). It is further seen in Gandhian terms as a principle that informs human relations and the aims and processes of development (Gandhi, 1939); it also sees it not so much as pacifism as a process of struggle for justice (Terchek, 1998).

The implication of this framework for the strategy of the case study is that there is a need to situate participants in the context of structural relationships, as is done below.

Research design and trustworthiness

This article reports on a qualitative case study; the particular case is the use of memories of violence in a three-day workshop. The rationale for using a qualitative approach is the need to engage in depth with language and the meanings given in a particular interaction – for example, to the use in this data of such words as ‘violence’. In this study participants start to use the term ‘violence’ to describe ways in which men speak about themselves, which is not the everyday use of the term. Conceptual complexity favours an approach in which the researcher and reader can see how such concepts are embedded in language; the ability of a qualitative approach to clarify and distinguish concepts is a particular strength (Mahoney, 2010).

Williams and Morrow (2009) argue that to achieve trustworthiness the qualitative researcher needs to give particular attention to the integrity of data, balance between reflexivity and subjectivity, and clear communication of findings.

Integrity of data is here addressed by the verbatim use of discussion, as well as checking to ensure that what is used is consistent with the discussion that was not selected. This is enhanced by the consistency of data from various sources – data sources were the researcher’s notes, verbatim recordings, images and writing on newsprint and evaluation forms. In addition, the researcher checked with participants how they understood the interactions before asserting his own interpretation.

The balance between reflexivity and subjectivity is dealt with through making visible to himself and the reader the researcher’s own handling of his memories of violence and by identifying some of the limits to his knowledge of participants’ subjectivity (for example, his not being present in groupwork).

Clear communication is addressed in part by the fullness of the description of the context and the history leading up to the study, to enable the reader to

judge the credibility of the findings. This brings into sharper relief what is different in the case study from the previous history. A reference to a subsequent case makes the comparison stronger.

Analysis of the data focused in particular on those moments characterised by contestation over attachment to or letting go of attitudes and ways of relating, in accordance with the theoretical framework (see below).

For further development of theory on this pedagogy, comparisons could usefully be made across cases (Mahoney, 2010), most effectively where a similar pedagogy is used either with a slightly different context or structured around other social identities.

Violence in the regional context

Memories of violence are here linked to the history related to social identities in South Africa. In part this is to challenge stereotyping of violence in relation to race (Valji, Harris and Simpson, 2004). In part it connects memory work to the social, political and economic forces that generate violence in the lives of people: “the method aims at exploring and theorizing how individuals construct themselves into existing social and power relations” (Jansson, Wendt and Ase, 2008, p.231).

This case study was undertaken in KwaZulu-Natal, an area deeply affected by violence in colonial and apartheid times. The military conflicts at the time of Shaka’s rule, the conditions of the indenture of Indian labour, the imposition of the patterns of racial control under the British and subsequently the Union governments, and the specific racial initiatives of the apartheid regime, all involved populations in violence (Maylam, 1986). This was not simply the ‘founding violence’, the imposition of rule by the conqueror (Mbembe, 2001). For example, British rule over Zulu people worked through indirect rule with indigenous patriarchy (McClendon, 2010); there is evidence that gender relations amongst Zulu people became more unequal with time (Hunter, 2005).

The violence associated with racial domination reached far. For example, if one listens to African people speaking of family life, the family divisions and gender violence described often relate to the dislocation of family life that

followed from forced labour migration. This reading of historical violence thus is not a simple account of repression of a people; race, gender, age and ethnicity were all caught up within complex relations of inequality. However, the context is also replete with traditions of resistance, many of which involved physical force as well. There was both violent and nonviolent opposition to government. This area was the crucible for the development of Gandhian satyagraha, or passive resistance, for the development of Black Consciousness from the late 1960s, the mass strikes of 1973, and resistance to apartheid that culminated in the late 1980s. This was also a period of extreme repression by the state and its agents, leading to the deaths of thousands of people.

It is hard to categorise resistance to apartheid in terms of its being violent or nonviolent (Seidman, 2000); resistance also drew for its themes on what Unterhalter (2000) refers to as both ‘heroic’ and ‘violent’ masculinities. This history does not comfortably pit nonviolence on one side and violence on the other.

The implications of these histories of violence for the present are first its ready availability. South Africa is a very violent society, with, as one example, unusually high rates of homicide (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2011) and of domestic violence (Vetten, 2005). Violence in schools includes corporal punishment, sexual harassment, and attacks on scholars and teachers (Burnett, 1998; Vally, 2002). Secondly, it is vital to note that individuals’ experiences of violence are very different depending on their social identities. Violence in schools, for example, may take very different forms depending on one’s race, gender and class.

Pedagogies to address violence

Writing on pedagogy seldom assumes that the experience of violence will be addressed within education. For example, Arnot (2006, p.83) notes that “the mass violation of women’s human rights through. . . gender-based violence is . . . not generally considered an appropriate topic for citizenship education in schools”.

Two approaches foreground within their theory the need to address learning in relation to societal violence. Gandhian education treats violence as a

central problem that education must address. The development of young people as just and nonviolent citizens is a central aim. However, there is little account of how the experience of violence is addressed; rather the emphasis is on overcoming violence through such methods as “the teaching of world religions, service learning, and setting an example” (Damm, 2011, p.3). Within schools, an emphasis on craft work and engagement with the physical world is also important in such pedagogy. Similar approaches deal with the problem through the use of contemplative approaches (Zajonc, 2006). Missing in descriptions of Gandhian education (Pillai, n.d.) is the Gandhian sense of nonviolence as struggle (Terchek, 1998).

Within critical pedagogy, violence is acknowledged as an integral part of the problem of domination. “Critical pedagogy keeps at its center the need to problematize both the overt and covert exercise of domination–subordination in social structures. . . .” (Nagda, Gurin and Lopez, 2003, p.167). Accounts though of how such pedagogy addresses the specific experience of violence are limited.

Pepinsky (2005) gives an account of a university course that focused specifically on memories of child abuse with the aim of advancing healing and peace-making. He acknowledges the difficulty of doing this, not least the uncertainties around accuracy and honesty. Central to this was the creation of a teaching environment that acknowledges emotional struggle.

A similar approach was adopted by Hollander (2000), who invited students to keep a journal of experiences of fear, violence and safety and to discuss these within class. Her approach enabled students to move beyond a view of violence as individual experience to understanding it as a form of social control. Skumsnes (2007) analyses her teaching of a course for social professionals which brought into group discussion students’ anonymous narratives of experiencing or witnessing violence. The effect was to enable students to make explicit the links between theory and their practice as professionals. Waterston and Kujac (2007) describe the teaching of a student-centred and critical ‘co-investigation’ course that addressed a range of violence from genocide to ‘everyday violence’, including the writing by students of ‘intimate autoethnographies’.

These are diverse accounts, but have in common the pedagogical use of memories of violence, the measures that need to be taken within such

education to ensure safety, and the links that emerge between violence and social identities.

Such accounts also make a point that while including such work within education requires ethical care and may provoke difficult reactions, its exclusion has serious ethical implications. “. . .we must question the ethics of ignoring the emotional and psychological (while privileging the intellectual and abstract), even as we consider the challenges of bringing wounds to the surface”. (Waterston and Kujac, 2007, p.514)

Theoretical framework

This article takes as a framework for exploring and reflecting on the data the work of Valerie Walkerdine (2006, 2011) on border crossing. Her specific account of border crossings as transformations in the world of class of work (Walkerdine, 2006) deals also with the broader issues of how subjects are expected to make transitions smoothly, but are always constrained by the burden of emotions and practices of the past. In reality, such transitions are fraught with pain and grief (Hey, 2006) because they require the leaving behind of memories, of connections, of embodied responses. In relation to her own experience, Walkerdine states of the working class, “they lived it [class] all the time, they understood exactly what class meant. They experienced it in the body, they experienced it socially, they experienced it emotionally. . .” (Walkerdine, 2007, p.189).

Such a theory extends its reach to a range of identities (Walkerdine, 2007). It addresses the capacity of people to make changes that they desire and hope for, including for social change. Such change needs to engage with the kinds of knowledge that are most difficult to work with – the affects, practices and habits that are built up over time, that become ingrained in social identities. In a South African context, for example, social change requires that white people leave behind the expectation that their needs will be prioritised over those of others. Potentially, in such transitions subjects can mourn what needs to be left behind and move on, developing new capacities. Potentially, also, the new learning is limited and caught by unresolved attachments to the past.

How would this apply to transitions related to violence? I take as an example my own memories in which violence is implicated. As a youngster growing

up in apartheid South Africa, the child of middle-class parents from the UK, English heritage was constructed through images of the British national anthem, and the smells and sounds on a visit to England. It became evocative of peace, in contrast to my gathering awareness of violence in South Africa – and despite my knowledge of British imperialism. However, later I visited Winchester Cathedral, the ancient seat of English heritage. As I walked through it I began to read the memorials to British soldiers who died fighting for Empire in wars designed to subjugate local populations. I could not but recognise how my own sense of self had been caught up in memories, of sensory impressions, which silently drew me back to colonial relationships. Violence had been mediated by social identity, and social identity by violence, for myself as much as for the young people in this study whose experiences were so very different.

Unless such memories are addressed afresh, and there is grieving over what needs to be left behind, tradition and culture are invoked in ways that do fresh violence (Moletsane, 2011).

Walkerdine's framework was drawn on for the analysis of data in this study. Transcripts of the actual discussion, notes made by the researcher, newsprint written and presented by participants, and written evaluation comments were the data sources for the discussion. The data was scrutinised to identify in particular those points where there was reference to transitions, to comparisons between past and present understandings, for points of conflict where the generally unsaid was raised into specific focus.

Background to the case study

This study focuses on the use of the pedagogy outlined above within a workshop held in December 2010 with ten participants. To understand the context and the ethical implications of this work, it is necessary to describe the preceding events.

A student leader had approached the researcher in 2009 with a request that the International Centre of Nonviolence (ICON) teach nonviolence to members of Learner Representative Councils (LRCs) from three schools, two from a working class township near central Durban, and one closer to the city centre. All students in these schools were African. As a result of this approach, I and five co-facilitators, mainly student teachers, led a three-day residential course

with 30 student leaders, selected to represent a range from Grades 9 to 11, and to provide a balanced gender representation. The fact that all participants were African reflected how this developed and was not a purposeful choice. The initial session of the course developed through prolonged discussion a set of guidelines for the work, such as confidentiality and respect. Immediately participants wanted to speak about their experience of violence, some of which had been traumatic. I introduced the participants to peer counselling as a way for them to speak about violence within a supportive environment. As part of the workshop, groups also developed and presented short dramas of school situations, in which both violence and the resistance to violence were depicted.

A specific problem in the process emerged when the researcher required that the choice of a partner for counselling be made first by the youngest girls and last by the oldest boys. Many of the girls selected girls, leaving older boys with little choice but to work with other boys of their age. This revealed that some older boys had wanted to select as their counsellors girls in whom they were interested; they then protested that “if I listen to another boy carefully people will think I am gay”, and “he will not be serious, he will want to make fun of me”.

In this case I insisted that the boys not give in to these assumptions, and that they could work effectively with boys. After that session of counselling some volunteered their perception that their fears were shown to be incorrect. There was other evidence that some boys handled the peer counselling supportively with both boys and girls as partners – a girl revealed an incident of serious abuse to a boy in the counselling and he asked if she wished to report it formally, which she did with his assistance. I was left with a sense that tensions around gender were left unresolved. A disquiet heightened by a girl’s comment on an evaluation form that she had been subject to harassment despite the aims of the course.

In the period after the 2009 course, there was further engagement – a one day workshop, and about ten short meetings at one of the schools in the township with those who chose to attend. These events focused mainly on the use of peer counselling around current issues facing them.

In mid-2010 there was a development involving one male participant, whom I refer to as Dumisani. My godson was at the one school that had sent leaders to the workshop, and I had been elected a member of the school governing body

(SGB). A group of girls had written to the SGB accusing the principal of sexual harassment, an issue that was referred to the provincial authorities and the police. Their response varied from inaction to outright blame of the girls. According to evidence presented later to the SGB, Dumisani had found a girl crying. She said that her hand was bleeding as the principal was hitting latecomers at the gate with a stick. Dumisani asked the principal to stop. There was no response, so he stood in front of the principal and told the latecomers to go past him.

The reaction by the principal was to summon the chairperson of the SGB to interrogate Dumisani as to what he had done. Under pressure, he repeated the allegation by girls about sexual harassment. The principal and chairperson then brought the matter to the SGB and insisted that the boy be expelled, a move successfully blocked by other members of the SGB, including myself. The events led to further pressure on the provincial authorities, and the principal resigned.

This account serves to indicate why gender became a particular focus. It indicates also the diversity of boys' handling of gender issues – the public assertion of a stereotyped homophobic, 'hegemonic' masculinity, as well as a direct challenge to patriarchy and sympathetic listening.

The case study focuses on a three-day workshop which was intended to provide more understanding of how young people from the same group would develop if work on the memory of violence was more intensive. Selection of participants was undertaken on the basis of who had shown leadership in the earlier workshops (such as Dumisani). The age range was from 15 to 19 years. Those invited readily agreed to participate; the period was just after the end of their examinations.

Ethical clearance, which included the possibility of referral to expert counsellors, was granted by Durban University of Technology. In the event such counselling was not needed.

Findings

This section presents an account of the workshop, focusing primarily on those aspects where there was contestation over issues of gender. It organises the findings by the stages of that process.

Introduction: The workshop began with an explanation of the purpose: ICON wished participants to become leaders of nonviolence, and to think of themselves as leaders in an international context. Time was spent on formulating guidelines for the interactions within the class; this was a familiar issue with those present. A particular debate was explored about publication of their images; they were emphatic that they wished to appear on the ICON website. I explained that, as before, much of the work would be undertaken in groups and pairs; one advantage would be that this would give ample opportunity to address the issues in their first language, isiZulu (though most spoke English with facility).

Division: I then referred back to the earlier workshop and the issue of gender in relation to violence, and asked them to move into a boys' group and a girls' group. This was an intervention drawn from the use of caucus groups in social justice education, where it has been used as a way of enabling freer discussion (Adams, 1997). The task was first for each person to speak about an early memory of violence, secondly for the group to prepare a report on what it was like doing this work in a gender-based group and on what needed to be communicated to the other group. The youngsters complied readily.

I posed the question to the boys about whether I should join as a male or not join as an adult, and they indicated the latter. Thus the separation was not only on the basis of gender, but also age – and perhaps also on the basis of my professional status.

Assertion: It was immediately evident that the girls were very happy in the group, with animated and responsive speech. In contrast, the boys seemed to be uncertain and to lack direction. At the conclusion of the group work, I asked the girls and then the boys to talk first about what that experience had been like.

The girls commented thus:

'It was nice and helpful chatting with the girls: we got straight answers that we would not have got if boys had been there.'

'Some of things that we were going through, other girls had also been going through.'

The boys' views the separation was more equivocal:

'Boys are confident with boys, we are scared when with girls.'

'The disadvantage was that we need to focus on what girls' experience has been. We need to combine.'

The girls then presented what they had written on newsprint [spoken comments in brackets]. It expressed assertiveness, an understanding of violence as caught up in the sense of self and of others, and references to painful emotions:

Men use their power to take advantage of women's vulnerability [our experiences were similar, where men used their physical power to make women be afraid of them, and fear them]

Secrets do contribute towards violence

Starting point for men to be violent is the anger they carry inside them, because they say men don't cry, so by them distressing they cause violence to women. . .

Never trust people who are close to you cause they can frame you to violence

What I have realised is that women are the ones who are the number 1 victims...

How does it feel like when you are causing violence?

Contestation: This portrayed men very much as the source of violence, and drew a defensive reaction from the boys, who swung into a defence of their socialisation:

Boy 1: Men don't cry – we are too secretive, it is not easy for us to show our feelings to a woman, or to our friends.

Girl 1: What is the reason as to you not expressing what is eating you up inside?

Boy 1: It is the way we are built. . . Dumisani can't talk to me and tell me has a problem, and start crying, whereas for a female it is easier to do this, because we are built like this.

Boy 2: It is for pride, you are showing weakness.

Girl 2: What feature says I am built to cry and you not?

Boy 1: You are soft.

Girl 2: We are also proud. We are all built to cry.

Girl 3: It all goes back to the old stereotyped thing, we as Africans especially, men are supposed to be stronger than women. . . I don't understand the material, 'we are

built like that'. Men are supposed to be in rehabilitation centres? When men are angry, they are meant to sit alone? You are shutting me out, isn't that related to violence? . . .

Girl 4: I don't think it is the way you are built; it is from that culture thing.

In this tussle boys initially present masculinity as essentialised – “it is the way we are built” – while the girls insist that masculinity is a cultural formation, one caught up in racial history: “the old stereotyped thing, we as Africans especially”. It is subject to criticism and change; girls use the term ‘violence’ here as *cultural violence* (Kent, 1993). The stance over the nature of masculinity taken here by the girls parallels that taken by scholars of masculinity since Connell’s seminal work (Connell 1987, 1995). What they are faced with is a particular kind of masculinity that was formed under specific historical conditions and is failing both them and boys. However, the boys’ response can be seen not just as assertion of traditional superiority; the socialisation makes things ‘not easy’ for them; there is vulnerability and implicit loss.

Walkerdine describes how “particular constellations of feelings and ways of being become quite sedimented within our bodymind” (2006, p.34). The sense here is of girls’ using the workshop structure to claim new ways of relating, while the boys demonstrate an attachment to the old. They might also, in terms of the sequence of the workshop, be preparing a defence of the image that they knew they would next be presenting.

Their newsprint presented a drawing of the face of a young woman, rather European in features, with long eyelashes and jewellery. Next to an arrow to the eyes was ‘inner attraction’; ‘outer attraction’ referred to the lips. Elsewhere on the sheet were statements like ‘In order for communication to happen between the genders, both must be able to reach a common understanding/ interest.’

Boy 1: This is the lady we came up with, her name is Bridget, she says, hi!

Boy 4: When a man and women are sitting together, the common thing is love between them. This is how communication happens. The second is money, girls love money and guys have money [outraged laughter from women].

Girl 2: You are insulting us.

Boy 4: . . .after the conversation between them, what is meant to happen next? The

guy will not be saying what he meant, he will be speaking just to impress. . . That one is not so good, she can be my friend and she can bear my secrets.

Girl 3: . . .It all goes back, it is easy for you to communicate with a lady friend if she is not attractive...

Here the boys become tied up in a dilemma: on one hand, they articulate the need for ‘a common understanding’, on the other they present relationships with women as driven by physical appearance and men’s money. That these boys are unlikely to have money may be one reason for the laughter from the girls.

At the same time there is an expectation that girls will be emotionally supportive, but that can be realised only when she is ‘not so good’, i.e. in appearance. The form of masculinity being expressed here is that of the *isoka*, the ‘player’ who pursues sexual relationships with women. This is the ‘sedimented’ masculinity that reappears, and the boys seems constrained to articulate it despite an implied ambivalence – their acknowledgement of the need for partners to provide emotional support to each other; there is a need for someone to ‘bear secrets’. Hunter, in his study of Zulu masculinity in a nearby township (2005, p.220) writes: “Gender is more than simply the one dimensional expression of male power but, as historical analysis of the *isoka* masculinity demonstrates, embodied in male vulnerabilities and weaknesses.”

Resolution: The tussle continued in the discussion, until the boys began to shift their ground:

Boy 4: What we know in a relationship is that the guy should be a stronger partner in the relationship.

Girl 2: How does this ‘stronger part’ go? You are meant to carry all the burden? . . . sengidiniwe [I am angry] now.

Boy 3: The frustration we get from our inner part is part of the violence you see. This thing refers to our pride, that we need to be respected by a woman, to be [his own name]. . . We need self-introspection before communicating with women. We don’t know what we want and what we have. . . I don’t know myself and I don’t know how to solve my problems. Here this situation tells us, we need to clear our minds and clear ourselves before communicating with women.

Girl 1: Bravo, bravo!

Boy 3: It’s educating both genders. We cannot educate women about what we need until we have done some introspection.

What started as an assertion of masculine power turns to a recognition of confusion and acknowledgement of weakness. Yet this is not simply retreat; the boys end with a reference to reflection; they are humans with needs, and the lack of understanding across genders may be mutual. What seemed at one point the assertion of an entrenched notion of masculinity now seems to be part of the process of what might be read as ‘grieving’ for it. It is as if the boys needed to demonstrate just how difficult it is to abandon an attachment to what had cast you as being in command. Walkerdine (2006, p.25) discusses the task of mourning as “to gradually adapt to the reality of the situation and to move on.” Here the boys start to cut adrift from an old way of relating and in the process open up new possibilities for moving on.

This contestation thus involved conflict, but it was conflict of a kind that served to clarify, rather than a conflict that fed into violence. Kent (1993) refers to conflict as the ‘incompatibility of preferences’; here the point expressed by a boy about the need for communication opens up nonviolent ways of handling conflicting preferences, or possibly even reframing them to find areas of mutuality with girls.

The claim I make here is not that the boys went through some permanent conversion to a more sensitive masculinity. There was though some specific evidence of realisations that they saw as significant. In the evaluation comments, one wrote: . . . *there were things that we didn't know about ourselves as boys that we realised. . .* Another: *I definitely had a different mindset about the girls/women, and learnt more about them and also about how us boys/men think and feel about our emotions.*

Further application: After this interaction, the workshop moved into further work in memories of violence, using drawings, undertaken first in pairs and then in the full group. There was at this point a marked shift to a more balanced and easy process in the group, in which gender was no longer a point of tension. There was an atmosphere of mutual support and a sense of shared pain that crossed genders.

Finally the group developed a statement about their work to go onto the ICON website. Some elements of this statement addressed issues of tradition in relation to social identities, others more current concerns:

It was fun for us to work in separate gender groups. . . Stereotypes that classify men as powerful and women as weak are wrong and contribute to violence. We

challenge the idea that women must stay in the kitchen and do chores. If we could swap jobs, it would be fun and cool.

There are attitudes that certain crimes done by men are 'cool', such as hijacking, or that it is OK for women to do things like shoplifting. This is completely wrong.

Unemployment is the cause of insecure citizens with no respect for others, resulting in xenophobia and discrimination.

It is hard for some young people to have self-acceptance given their backgrounds and the ways they are living. Some of us pretend to be rich when we are poor. . .

We have a cultural value of respect, and the way we do things should reflect the respect we feel for others. Sometimes this idea has been misused by older people to justify abuse. Younger people and older people should respect each other. The domination of English excludes our language. . .

This discussion criticises existing practices related to gender, class, nationality and age. However it reframes instead of discarding older values and associations. Respect (*ukuhlonipha*) is a traditional value, but is here extended to addresses inequality of age; the domination of English is challenged. Instead of the attachment to established practices and attitudes, here is a freshness as sedimented practices are brought into scrutiny and new relationships formed.

Shortly after this I and a co-teacher used a similar strategy of gender-based groups in a class on violence – again with African students, but all adults. This led to quite emphatic statements that those present would not have been able to speak freely in the presence of the other gender. However, in this class there was much greater difficulty in continuing the discussion outside the gender groupings. The younger group had demonstrated greater facility and flexibility in making shifts in their way of handling gender, an indication perhaps of the advantage of youth in addressing social identities. The comparison points also to the value of further studies that draw on multiple cases.

Discussion

Walkerdine (2006, 2011) accounts for the difficulties people have in breaking away from established ways of being. Developing young people as leaders who can work for nonviolence within a violent society requires a difficult

transition. She argues that we need to create sufficient safety in education to enable such transitions; here I maintain that the pedagogy described in the case study is one way of doing that.

The pedagogy in use in this study had these central elements: it focused on the memories of violence as a way of developing a commitment to nonviolence, it involved measures to build the safety necessary for open discussion about painful memories, and it used gender-based discussions as a specific measure to enable greater safety. Use of this strategy of division led into a period of assertion, followed by contestation and finally a resolution. In turn there was further application of the development to other areas of social identity.

It is argued that such a pedagogical approach can provide the safety and opportunity necessary to support the complex and difficult transitions needed if we are to address the violence caught up in social identities and in our attachment to associated practices and ways of thinking and feeling (Lucey, Melody and Walkerdine, 2003, p.293). The point is not that work with young people and memories should always be based on a gender division, but rather that the strategic use of separate groups at one stage enabled a discussion that would otherwise probably not have occurred.

The implications of this approach are thus that any work on the memories of violence should take into account the specific social dynamics that constrain free discussion. For example, if this group had included disabled youth as well as able-bodied, or not only African youth, the specific dynamics around ability and race would need to be addressed. To assume that discussion on violence can take place freely across the divisions that are connected to the violence is naïve.

Conclusion

When we work with ourselves and others for nonviolence, we confront the many ways in which our social relations have been caught in violence. A pedagogy for nonviolence needs to work with awareness of the attachments that we carry, and the difficulties of simply moving on from them. Using memories of violence can, it is argued, provide the possibility of freeing oneself from those attachments.

The act of speaking one's memory of violence though presents both opportunities and constraints. It takes place in the present social context, and can be shaped or silenced by the dynamics of that context. It is this challenge that a pedagogy for nonviolence must address.

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