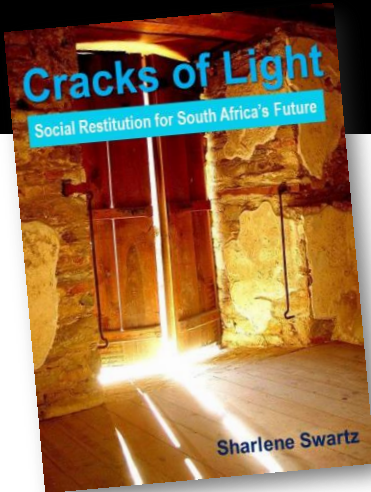


# Cracks of Light: Social Restitution for South Africa's future

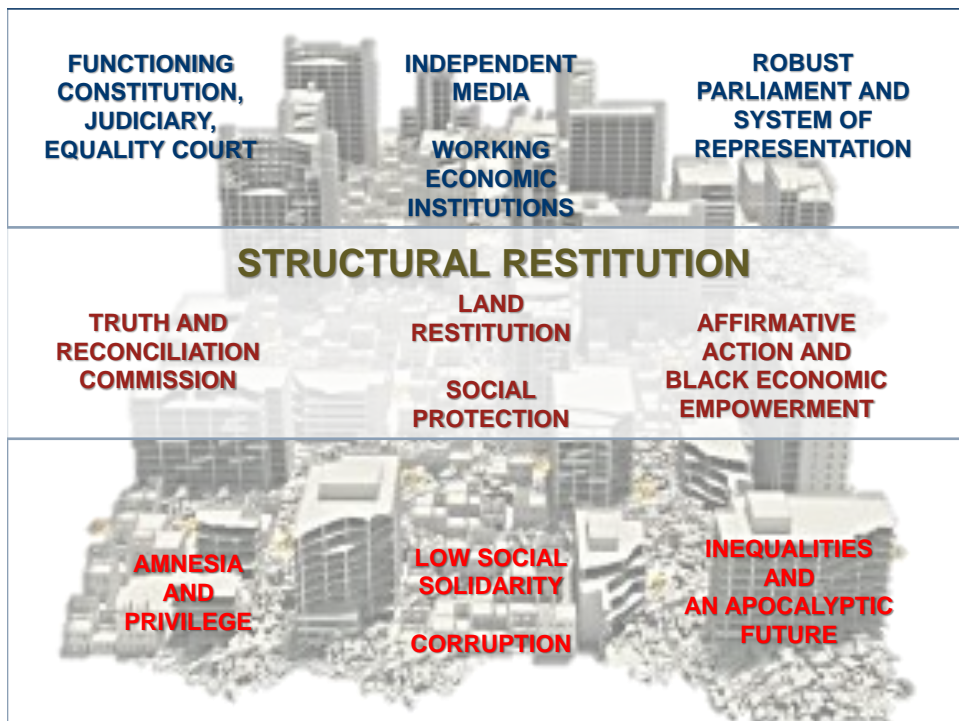
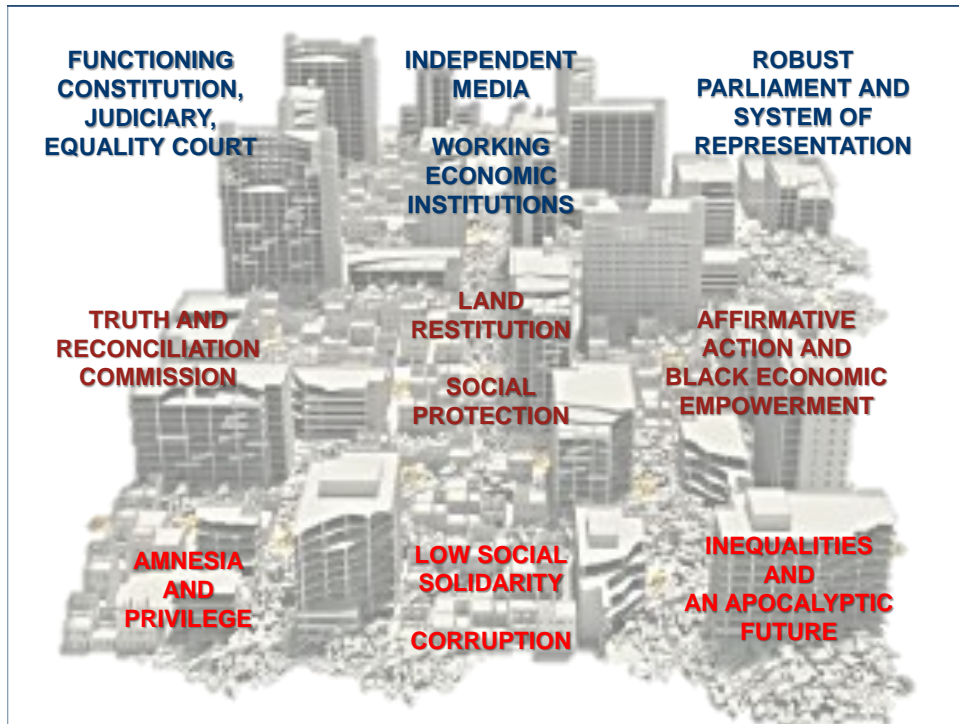


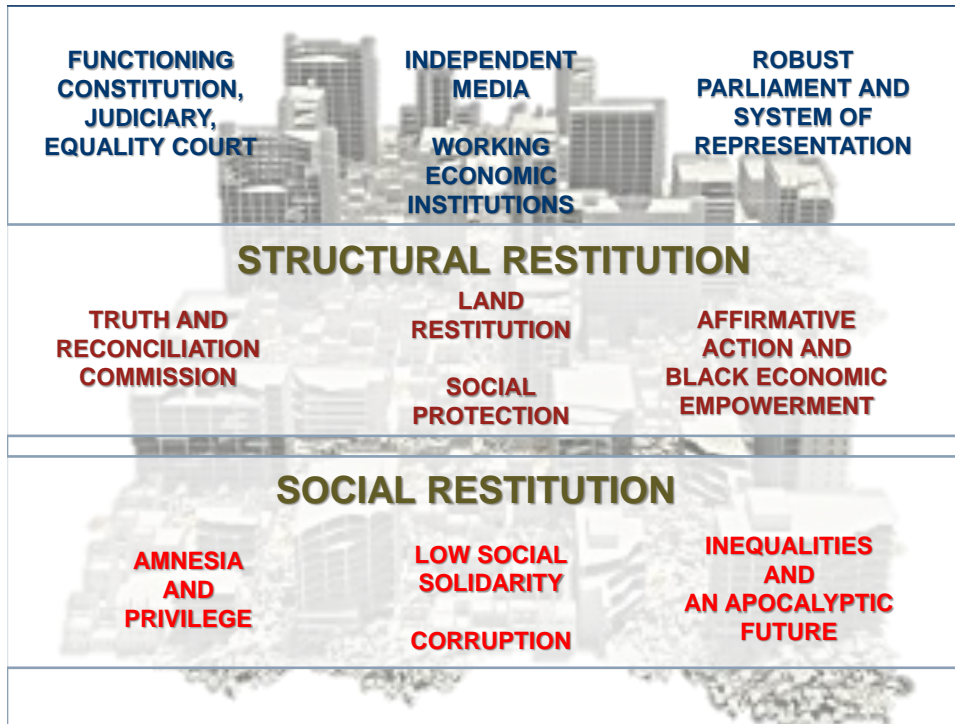
## Sharlene Swartz

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- Adj. Assoc. Professor of Sociology, University of Cape Town
- Visiting Fellow, Harvard FXB Center for Health and Human Rights

23 October 2014  
Princeton University







## An African Proverb



When is the best time to plant a tree?

**Twenty years ago.**

When is the second best time?

**TODAY.**

# Theoretical foundations



1. Eleazar **Barkan** – Restitution beyond legal remedies
2. Steve **Biko** – Black consciousness and Xolela Mangcu – 'Consciousness of blackness'
3. Nancy **Fraser** – recognition and redistribution
4. Iris Marion **Young** - Social connection and solidarity
5. Peggy **McIntosh** – Disrupting privilege
6. Pierre **Bourdieu** - Redistributing capitals
7. Todd **Calder** - Forward looking restitution
8. **Troyna and Soudien** - Antiracist, human rights ed.
9. **Social restitution and the Restitution of Personhood**

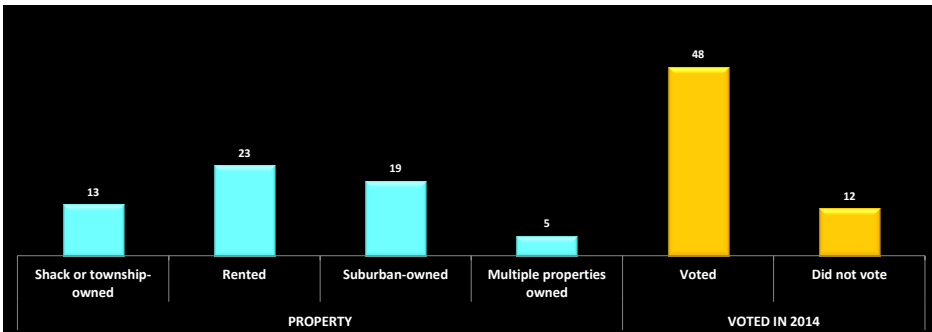
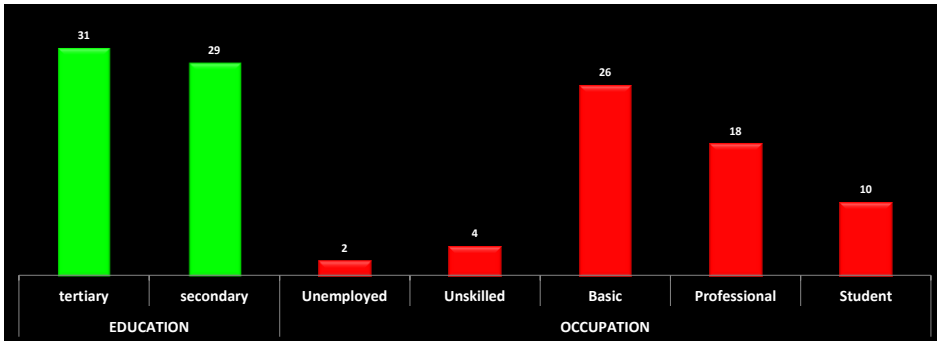
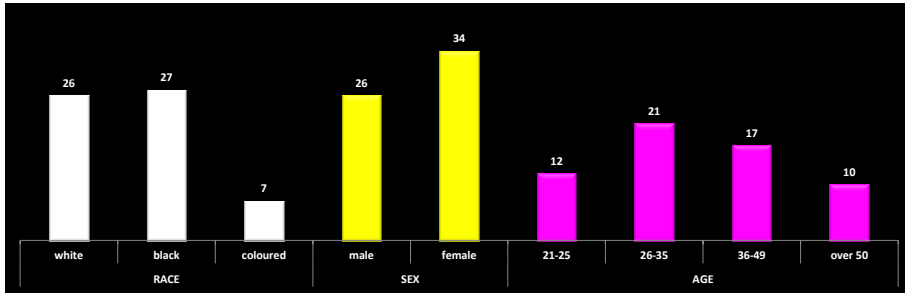


# The study



1. Started off with a few conceptual ideas:
  - The restitution of personhood
  - Action at multiple levels
  - New locations of actors
2. 60 interviews – 60-90 minutes; people well known to researchers
3. Demographically but not statistically representative
4. Across 'races' – 'Black', 'White' and 'Coloured'
5. Generations – 21-25, 26-35, 36-49, and over 50
6. Class – education, suburbs/townships/rural, property ownership





# Interview questions



1. What are the things in our country that bring you hope/despair?
2. How were/are you affected by our country's past history?
3. In what ways does the past still affect people today?
4. What does the term 'restitution' mean to you?
5. How do you respond to these two stories?
6. How would you label yourself with regards to the past?
7. What has been done so far to make things right?
8. When will we know when we've done enough?
9. What gets in the way of people making restitution?
10. What do you think will happen if nothing more is done?
11. What ideas do you have for making things right?



# Labels Activity



When thinking about the past, what labels would you give yourself? Choose from the list or add your own.

❖ Architect of injustice	❖ Implementer of resistance to injustice
❖ Architect of resistance to injustice	❖ Informer
❖ Beneficiary of injustice	❖ Inheritor of benefit
❖ Beneficiary of resistance to injustice	❖ Inheritor of dishonour
❖ Bystander	❖ Ostrich – someone who put their head in the ground and avoided things
❖ Collaborator	❖ Perpetrator
❖ Dishonoured by injustice	❖ Rescuer
❖ Dishonoured by resistance to injustice	❖ Victim
❖ Implementer of injustice	

- How easy or difficult is it for you to choose a label?
- Which labels do you like/dislike? Why?





# Story-Response



## 'A Stolen Bicycle'

*Jabu and Johnny are two boys who live next door to each other. Both have bicycles. One day Johnny steals Jabu's bicycle. Jabu tries hard to get it back but can't. Of course they stop being friends. A year passes and they do not talk or even look at each other. But Johnny misses his friend and goes over to Jabu's house one day and says 'Jabu lets be friends again'. Jabu agrees and so they shake hands and make up. A few days later Jabu says to Johnny, 'Johnny, what about my bicycle?' to which Johnny replies 'Look Jabu, this is about becoming friends again, not about bicycles'.*

- How does this story relate to your own country?
- What could the bicycle be?
- How useful is this story when speaking about helping people come to see their role in injustice?



# Story-Response



## 'Unlevel playing fields'

Imagine two teams are playing a soccer match, but the pitch is tilted at a 45-degree angle. The side playing downhill is unfairly advantaged and is able to run up a score of 19-2. At a certain point during the match the advantaged team is helped to realise that the match is not fair and that the playing field must be levelled before the game can continue. Some want the score to remain in place and think it's fair merely to carry on playing on a level field. Others want to level the scores as well as the pitch and start again. Yet others do not want to continue the game but want new rules and time to let the team who have been playing uphill recover from their exhaustion, injuries and sense of hopelessness, before replaying the match.

- How does this story relate to your own country?
- What should happen next?
- How useful is this story when speaking about helping people come to see their role in injustice?



# Social restitution - 5 ideas for 'making things right'



1. A new discourse – social restitution
2. Disrupting the 'move on' trope - the past in the present
3. (Re)locating actors beyond victim, perpetrator, bystander
4. Individual/community level action - systemic impact, that restores personhood and redistributes 'capitals'
5. A methodological intervention – 'dialogical coming to see'



## Social restitution



1. Restitution as 'Making things right' for unjust gain; restoring humanity
2. Social – since not institutional (legal or government)
3. A groundswell of individual and community action with potential systemic outcomes
4. Forward-looking, restorative rather than punitive
5. Motivated by understanding – Past in Present (PinP)
6. Forward-looking critical active social restitution: Redistributing all forms of capital through collective agency





# The effects of the past on the present



1. The past is everything, the past is nothing but an excuse
2. Conflicted about the past
3. The positive effects of the past
4. Black South Africans understand the deep effects of the past on their lives
5. Do white South Africans recognise these effects?



## PRESENT

PAST

### BLACK RESPONSES



**Racism: The unending story of being demeaned, excluded and dehumanised**

- *Vukani* – excluded from restaurants as a bank director
- *Luxolo* and *Donovan* – an absence of confidence
- *Siziwe* – church says poverty is okay, fear of white people
- *Sibu* – judged for being black
- *Evelyn* – inferiority, shaking in a room of white people
- *Lyanda* – not human



## Sipho, 56, Black, Male



It's very difficult to talk about the apartheid era because it brings so much pain and I might even go to bed without eating because I just lost my appetite talking about the past. ... [But] **I don't mind even though you have opened old wounds that haven't properly healed** .... Our past left us with so many emotional scars as well as physical scars ... I just wish that no person who was part of the struggle would live in poverty. ... I still feel that apartheid still exists.



## Mayaya, 34, Black, Female



This traffic officer stopped my dad and **my father's demeanour - and just how he became this nobody** - and he was using language like: 'Yes, yes, *baas*' [boss]. ... how this man that I respected and possibly feared just came across like this little mouse against this man - this young white man. ... It made me angry.

...

I've gone to **business meetings** where I've had someone who works with me, but junior to me and they're a white person, and ... [the people I'm meeting with] will address this white person and proceed **to give me the files to hold** and carry. And I'll just smile and I'll take them, and then I'll hand them over to my assistant and say: 'Here you go. So, if we can just start the meeting.' **But it's psychological.**



## Mayaya, 34, BF (cont.)



There is **white superiority and black inferiority**... "It's made me not trust white people ...I've found white people from Cape Town to be very **patronising**. Extremely. I've found black people in Cape Town to be very **timid** and very **subservient**.

...

There're lots of scars and wounds ...a lot of prejudice against differences. There's a lot of **anger**. There's a lot of hope for certain people, like me. There's a lot of **opportunity** as well. ... A sense of **gratitude** because you cannot imagine living in the South Africa that people describe. ...There's a sense of helplessness as well. So the past has made me grateful. Given me a sense of **helplessness**.

## Zethu, 40, Black, Female



I can go to a store at the Waterfront [shopping mall] and **be undressed and asked for an ID by security**. Or when I'm about to pay be told something is expensive as if I didn't see the tag and all of that. I can deal with that. But when you kick my kid, it just rips me apart.

...

**'I give you permission to smack them'**. One thing my son is big, he's huge... he plays rugby. I said: 'Punch them and I'm happy now to go to the office to have a chat about that'. That's when it stopped. I reflected on that and I thought: 'Gee, **till today the only language racism can understand is violence**. Really?' ... [but] I've never been called in... **Anyone who calls him a baboon or whatever, anything racist, you know, he smacks them.**

# PRESENT ~~PAST~~

## BLACK RESPONSES



### Results of an intentionally unequal and inferior education

- The shame of limited prospects and shattered dreams – *Fundiswa*
- Frustration of job reservation and economic effects of the opportunity ceiling - *Ricky*

### Alienation when you do make it

- *Olivia* – 'I feel like an alien - I don't fit in'
- *Thamsanqa* – 'I'm forced to live in a world not my own'

### Physical effects of poverty and inequality

- *Evelyn's* story of land, property, dyslexia, participation



## Welile, 24, Black, Male



I went to [township schools] ... then after CPUT. It's not the best education. **You start to see that when you get to varsity - that the education that you had is not the same education that other people had.** When I got to varsity **I had to work twice as hard** as another person that went to a suburban school. I didn't have any **computer** knowledge when I got to varsity. .... The **language** barrier was another obstacle. All of those things. The level of the education that we had. Things that other people told me that they learnt in grade 10 I didn't know. ...It was sad, but one thing that I told myself - I was already in varsity - it's either do or die. **So when other people were out partying I had to study.** I had to put in that extra effort because I knew other people know exactly what they're going to be writing and I don't.



# PRESENT ~~PAST~~

## WHITE RESPONSES



### **Geographical separation**

- 'I don't have black friends' - Luke

### **Power and privilege, racism**

- Rose- Shame and guilt about deference, power, complicity
- Sandy- 'People assume I'm racist'

### **Strong emotions**

- Luke - 'why were there no discussions while I was growing up?'

### **Affirmative action**

- Jack - 'I thought they were going to throw us away'

### **Limited understanding of deep apartheid's effects**

- 'We don't know what to do about the past'



## Graham's conflicts (29, white, male, marketer)



I want to help

People without work, food or housing... this is the government's fault

I had no involvement or input or control

I had greater opportunities to education and jobs

I don't honestly feel I have a responsibility

I dislike the labels which accuse me of creating the injustice

The past are still very much affecting people in South Africa...low levels of education ... inability ...to get good jobs

Leads to... crime and violence, which affects everyone



## Graham (cont.)



PD thinking that the well earning white people owe them  
I can't say things have changed for me over the last 20 years.  
Finding work ... so many appealing jobs are only for BEE applicants.

Jabu feeling as though he is owed something and that now injustice is alright.

This is not right and a reflection of our government's corruption.

The previously advantaged [need] to realise how much they benefited

The government needs to stop thinking of themselves



## White guilt and shame



Noah: Personally, I feel guilty for being white and **worry that people resent me because of the colour of my skin and my wealth** (21, white male, student)

Hillary: I'm constantly faced with trying to reconcile the heritage that I am born from, which was the oppressors ... versus me trying to be an active member of society. ...**grappling with white guilt** and 'Do I have a right to certain opinions when it comes to redress and transformation?'. '**Do I have a place politically within South Africa?**' (21, white, female, student)

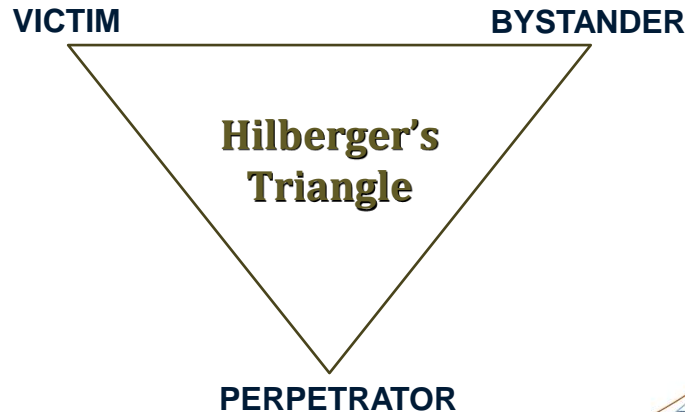
Sandy: It makes me **ashamed** of white people for what they allowed, and it gives me empathy for moving forward and more impetus to want to help to achieve equality (38, white female, homemaker)





# [Re]locating actors

3



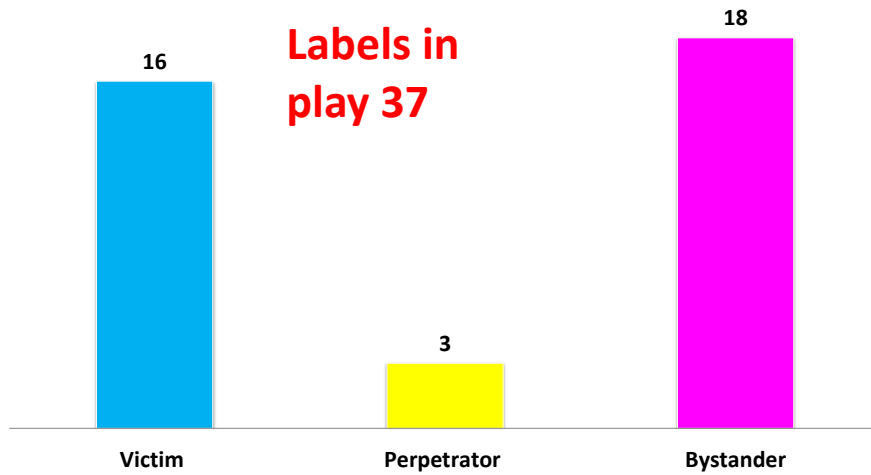
## Adding descriptions and NEW categories ...



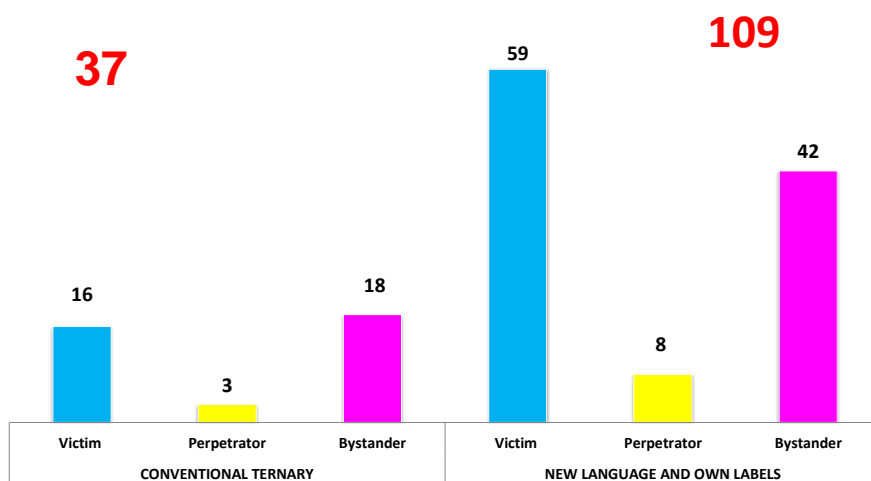
1. Adding 'architects' and 'implementers' to PERPETRATORS
2. Adding 'ostrich', 'silent' and 'avoider' to BYSTANDER
3. Adding 'dishonoured', 'harmed' and 'damaged' to VICTIM
4. NEW: Adding 'RESISTER' ('resistance to injustice' – architect and implementer)
5. NEW: Adding 'beneficiary' ('privilege', 'inheritor' – both unjust gain and gain as a result of a successful opposition)



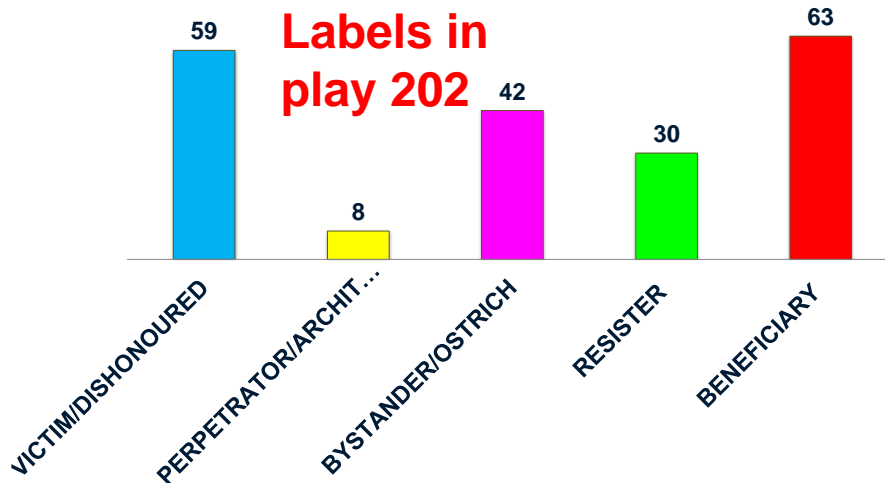
## Conventional 'Victim-Perpetrator-Bystander



## Changing language and add own labels

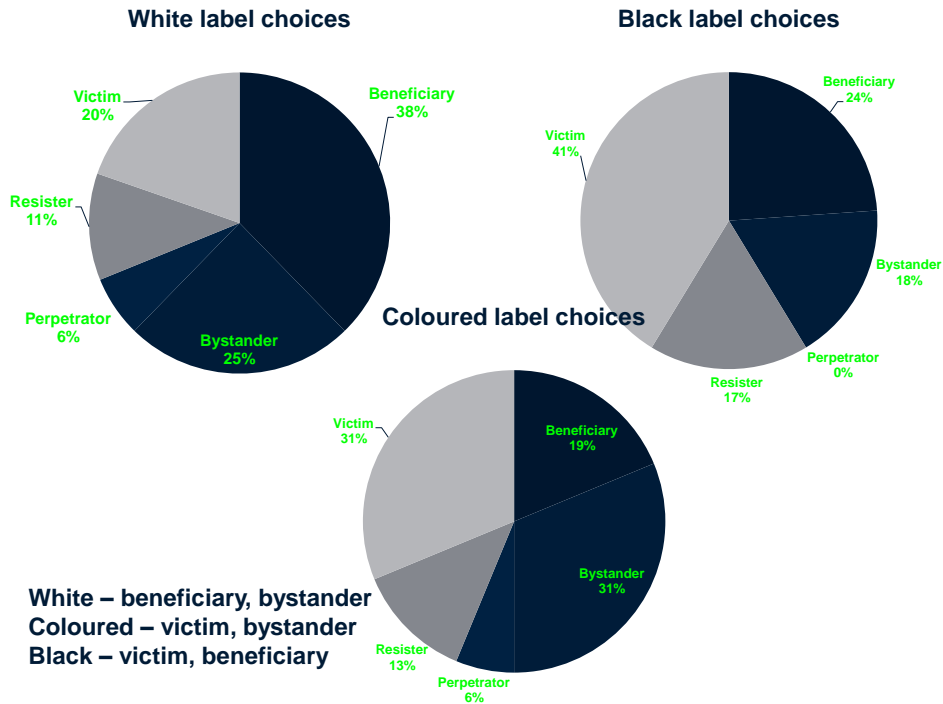


## Adding 'Resister' and 'Beneficiary'



## What changing language achieved

1. More recognition (37 Hilberger  $\triangle$ ; 202 in Swartz  $\square$ )
2. Discussion becomes nuanced
3. Debate, reflection and (possibility of) movement ensues
4. Categories no longer racialised
5. VICTIM category is destigmatised; 'damage' controversial
6. A new discussion about BENEFIT begins – as *beneficiary* of injustice and *beneficiary* of resistance to justice
7. Opportunities for **current** RESISTING come to the fore
8. PERPETRATOR category remains unpopular - even with architect and implementer distinguished
9. BYSTANDING /silence/avoiding - no longer neutral; ostrich both funny and awkward



## Race differences



1. **Victim** labels were chosen by twice as many black people as white people
2. **Resister** labels were chosen by more blacks than whites or coloureds
3. **Bystander** labels were chosen by less black people than coloured or white people
4. **Beneficiary** labels were chosen by more white people than black or coloured people
5. **Perpetrator** labels were chosen by no black people

# Generational differences



1. Perpetrator labels – only over 36
2. Resister labels - similar numbers across all ages (15%)
3. Beneficiary labels - similar across all generations (30%)
4. Bystander labels - twice as many older people than younger people
5. Victim labels - twice as many under 50 as older



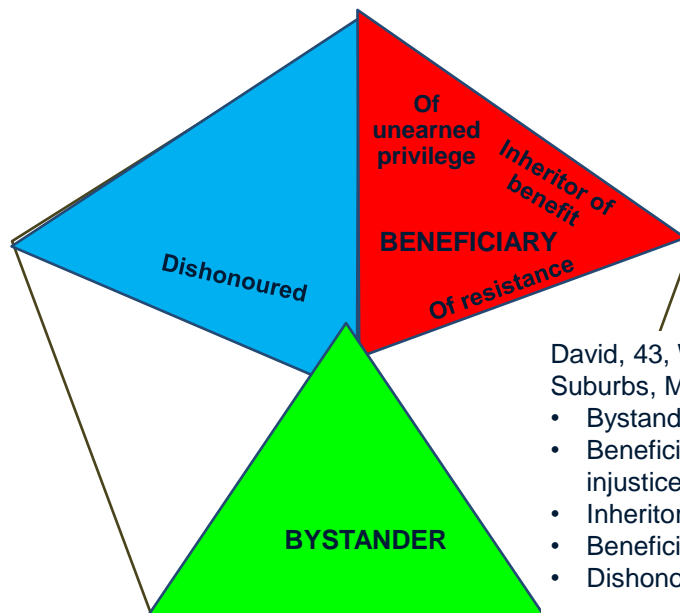
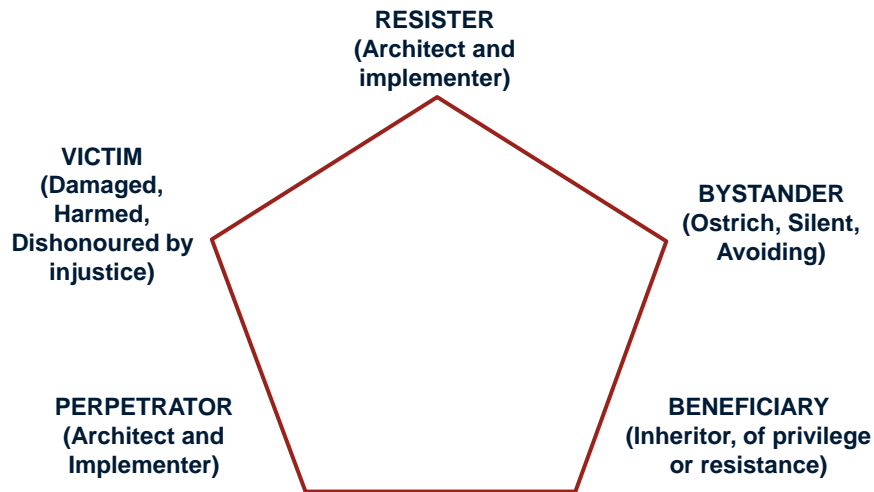
# Class differences



1. **White working class** twice as likely to label themselves **bystanders** than *white middle class* participants (**resisters**)
2. **Coloured middle class** coloured twice as likely to label themselves **victims** as *Coloured working class* participants
3. **Black middle class** much **less** likely to call themselves **victims** than black working/precariat class
4. **Black middle class** and **black precariat** twice as likely to label themselves **beneficiaries** than *working class*



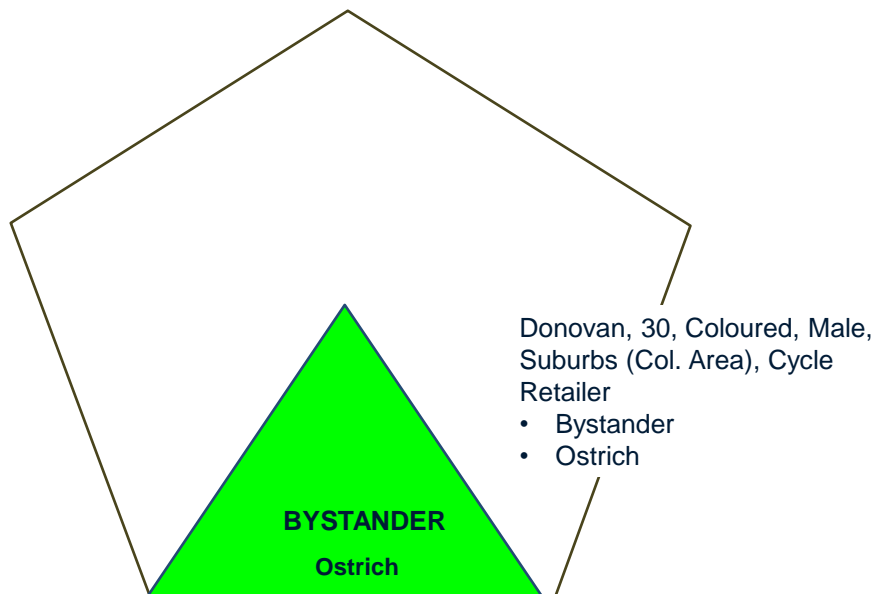
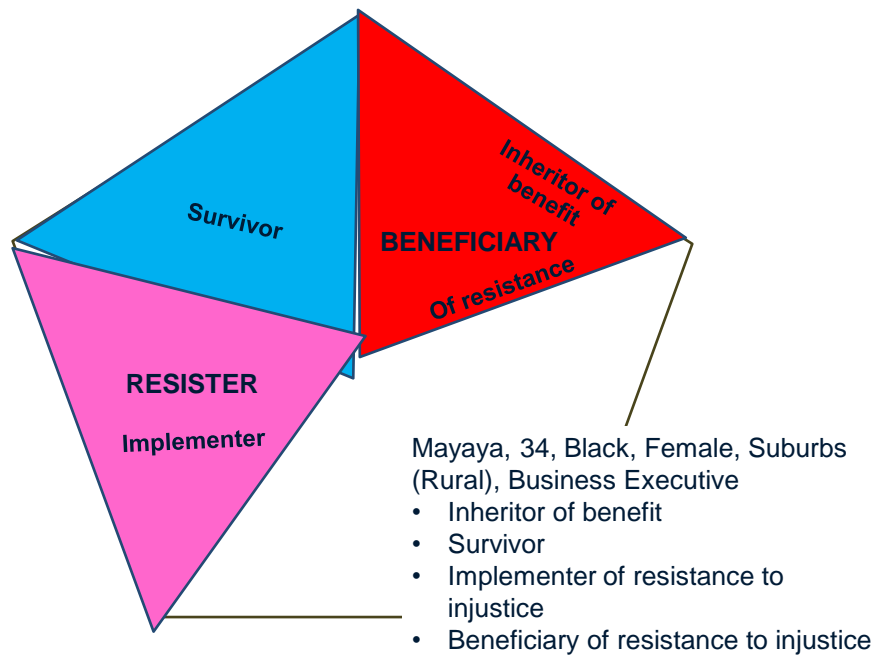
# Restitution Pentagon



David, 43, White, Male,  
Suburbs, Medical Specialist

- Bystander
- Beneficiary of resistance to injustice
- Inheritor of benefit
- Beneficiary of injustice
- Dishonoured by injustice

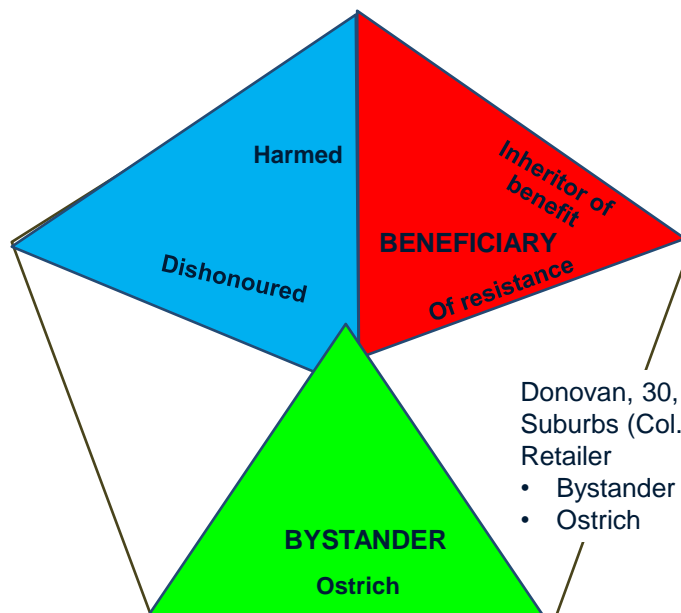




# Donovan, 30, Coloured male, bicycle technician



[The past] affects your mindset to some degree - **your confidence**, to some degree. Because if you meet someone of a different colour - and I'm referring to the lighter colour - you automatically think they're looking down on you ...So that messes with your head a little bit. Especially when I started working. ... a lot of the customers are white, more well off people. So I get a lot of that ... the way someone will talk to me. ... I'm the only coloured rider that rides downhill. ... A lot of the guys that race are Afrikaans...So I'll see a bit of cockiness, maybe, from them looking at me, but to me I've got to prove it in my riding.



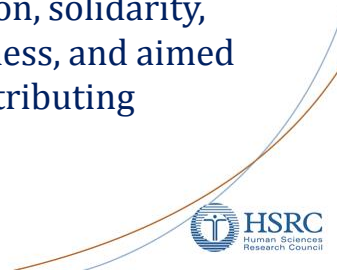
Donovan, 30, Coloured, Male,  
Suburbs (Col. Area), Cycle  
Retailer

- Bystander
- Ostrich

## ACTIVE social restitution, resorting personhood, multiple domains



Acts and attitudes, operating in multiple domains, towards making things right in broken spaces (spaces where injustice has occurred) based on principles of recognition, connection, solidarity, dialogue, critical (race) consciousness, and aimed at restoring personhood and redistributing capitals.



# In multiple domains



## INDIVIDUAL

1. Pay for someone's education
2. Partner in business development
3. Take a salary increase holiday
4. Pay/receive restitution wealth tax
5. Pay/expect restitutionary wages for domestic workers.
6. Contribute skills and finance to local CBOs
7. Share inheritances
8. Mentoring
9. Learn/help someone learn an indigenous language

## COMMUNITY

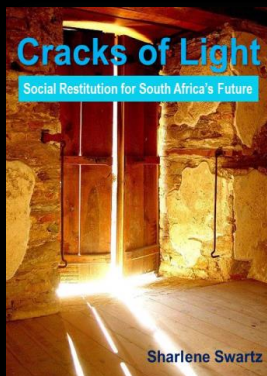
1. Start PinP community dialogues in churches, schools, workplace
2. Debt forgiveness for those affected by SA's past
3. Start a new political party that's not racialised
4. Develop a common purpose based on 'being for others'
5. 'Model C' the townships
6. A campaign for improved dinner party conversation
7. Community service across social boundaries
8. Ensure balanced media stories

# Methodological - Interviews as Intervention



1. Way of seeing
  - Not caring to see
  - Distorted seeing
  - Coming to see
  - Seeing clearly
2. Creating communities of action
  - Ideas for change
  - Catalyst for discussion groups





## **PART I TIME FOR CHANGE**

*Chapter 1* Restitution as a transforming conversation

*Chapter 2* Ways of seeing: Why we are divided about South Africa's past and how to deal with it

## **PART II THE PAST IN THE PRESENT**

*Chapter 3* Racism: The unending story of being demeaned and dehumanised

*Chapter 4* Opportunity denied: The effects of an intentionally inferior education

*Chapter 5* White responses to South Africa's past

## **PART III MAKING THINGS RIGHT**

*Chapter 6* Locating yourself in the past

*Chapter 7* Meanings and responses to 'restitution'

*Chapter 8* Restoring personhood

## **PART IV TURNING TOWARD TOMORROW**

*Chapter 9* Ideas for everyday action

*Chapter 10* A theory of social restitution