[Young people, navigational capacities & the role of youth work]

Sharlene Swartz

3rd Commonwealth Conference on Youth Work,
Qawra, Malta, 6-8 November 2018

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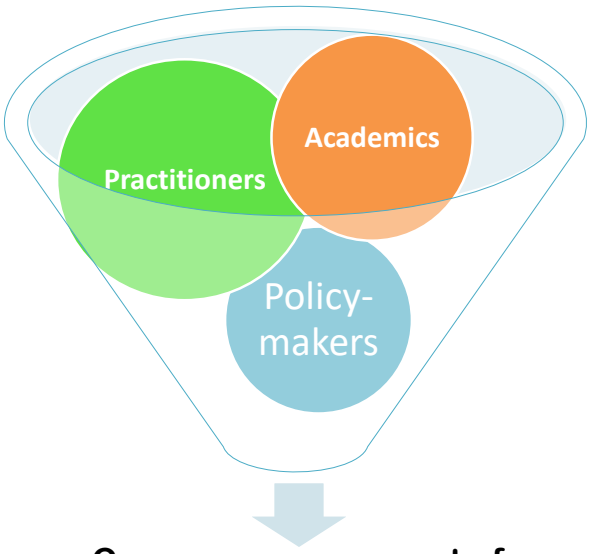
Social science that makes a difference



Can we agree on a set of navigational capacities for youth (as mediated by youth workers)?

The roadmap

1. What kind of world are young people heading for?
2. What are navigational capacities and how can they help?
3. How can Southern thinking help?
4. What do youth workers (practitioners, academics and policy-makers) need to do to benefit from this thinking?

- [With a little help from Banksy (North) and South Africa (South)]

WHAT KIND OF WORLD ARE YOUNG PEOPLE HEADING FOR?

Issues that youth must navigate

1. Inequality, hyper-capitalism - the commodification of everything, and calls for redistribution
2. Populism and protest, political failure, migration
3. Decolonisation of knowledge, of being
4. Racism, sexism, intersectionality, privilege
5. Violences of multiple forms – physical, symbolic, structural, and ecological doom
6. A world without work/with new forms of work (4IR)

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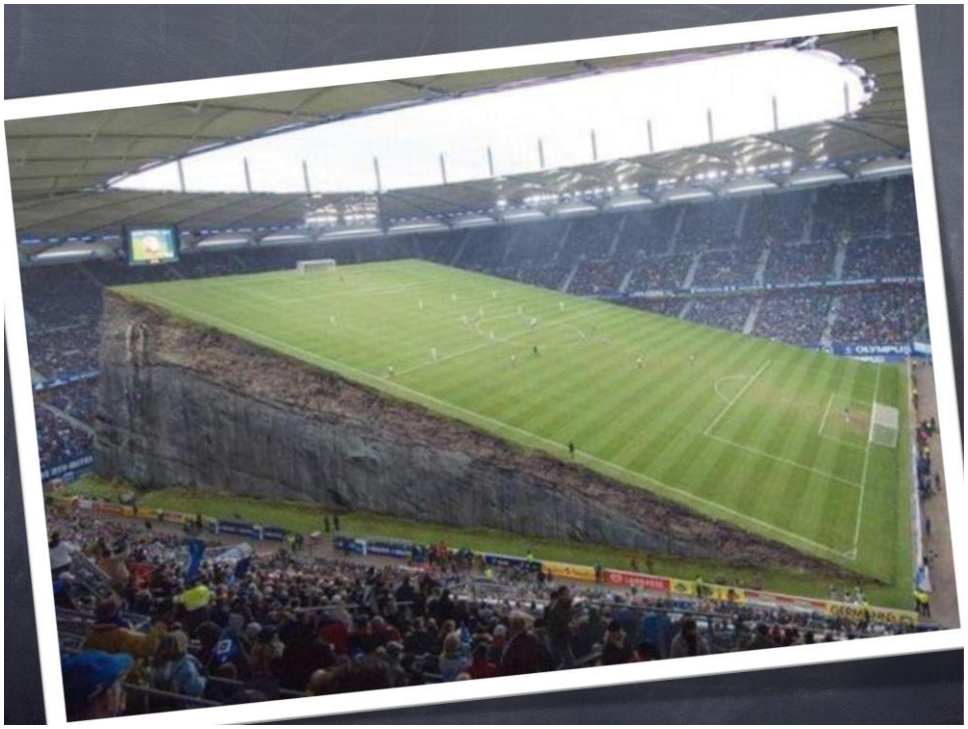

OUR PARENTS WERE SOLD DREAMS IN 1994...
WE ARE JUST HERE FOR THE REFUND!!!

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NOT MAKING
HISTORY

EDUCATION
ES A POWER
FUL TOOL

I AM NO LONGER ACCEPTING THE THINGS I CANNOT CHANGE. I AM CHANGING THE THINGS I CANNOT ACCEPT.

Issues that youth must navigate

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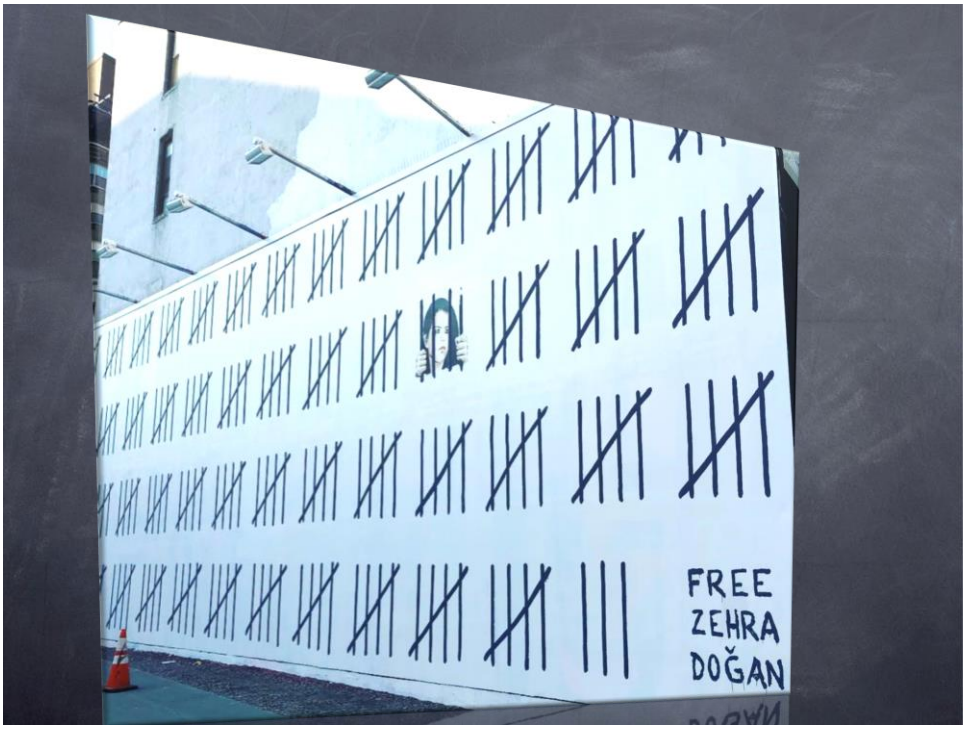
MIGRANTS
NOT WELCOME
GO BACK
TO
AFRICA
KEEP
OUR
WORMS


FREE
ZEHRA
DOĞAN

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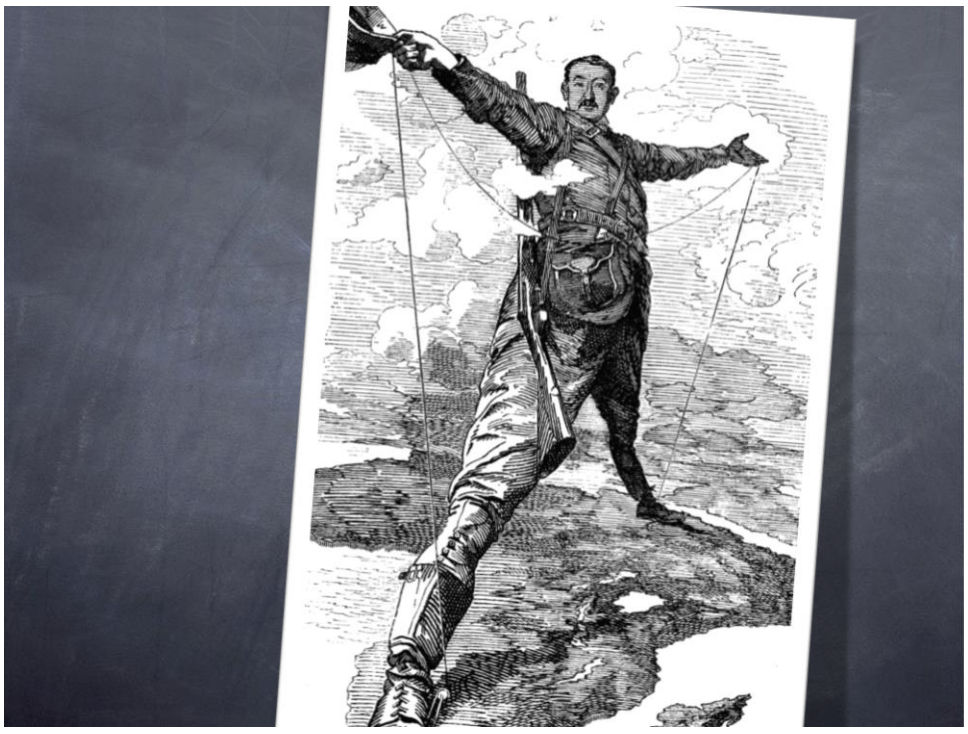
RHODES
MUST FALL



The British Empire

The Belgian Empire

Franz Fanon (1925 – 1961)

1. Violence as structural, symbolic and physical
2. "Human encounters that are non-oppressive, reciprocally beneficial, and mutually nurturing of human development"
3. Restoring humanity and regaining personhood - not by aspiring to captors' ways of life, but in maintaining 'collective rhythms'
4. Revolution for equality, dignity, and a 'redistribution of wealth', a question to which "humanity must reply… or be shaken to pieces by it"
5. "Hunger with dignity is preferable to bread eaten in slavery"

Decolonisation's struggles

1. The claim of Northern/Western universality, timelessness
2. Killing of indigenous knowledge and language (epistemicide and linguicide)
3. Obliterated histories of dispossession, colonialism, enslavement and empire/appropriation at its heart
4. Dismemberment – (unbelonging), and thus racial and cultural alienation

Ndlovu Gatsheni (2015) and Connell (2007)

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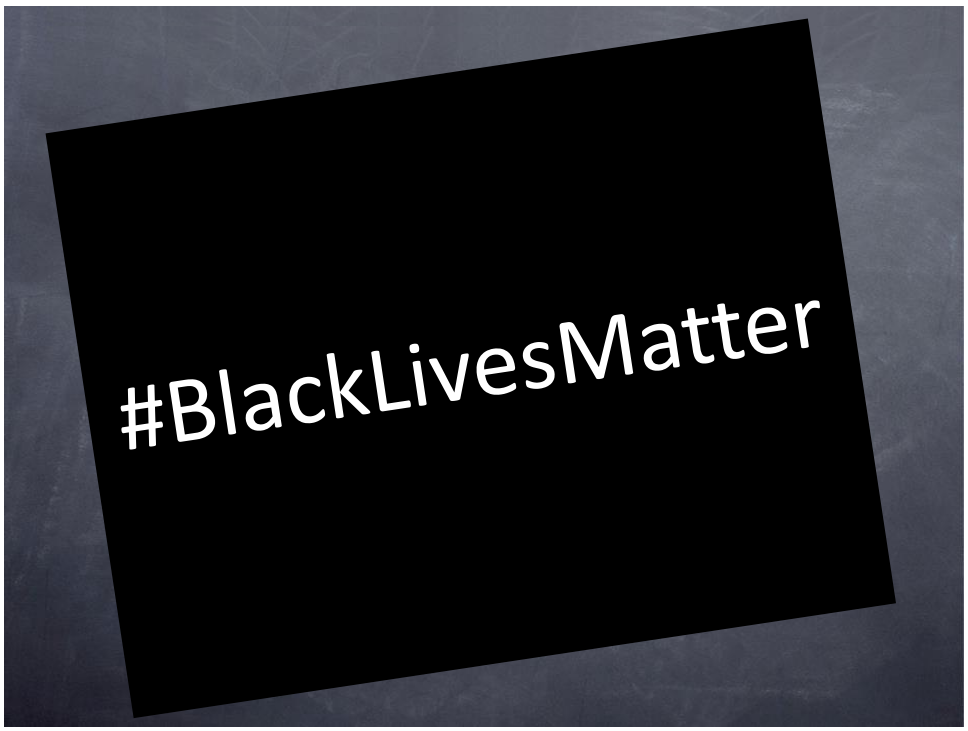

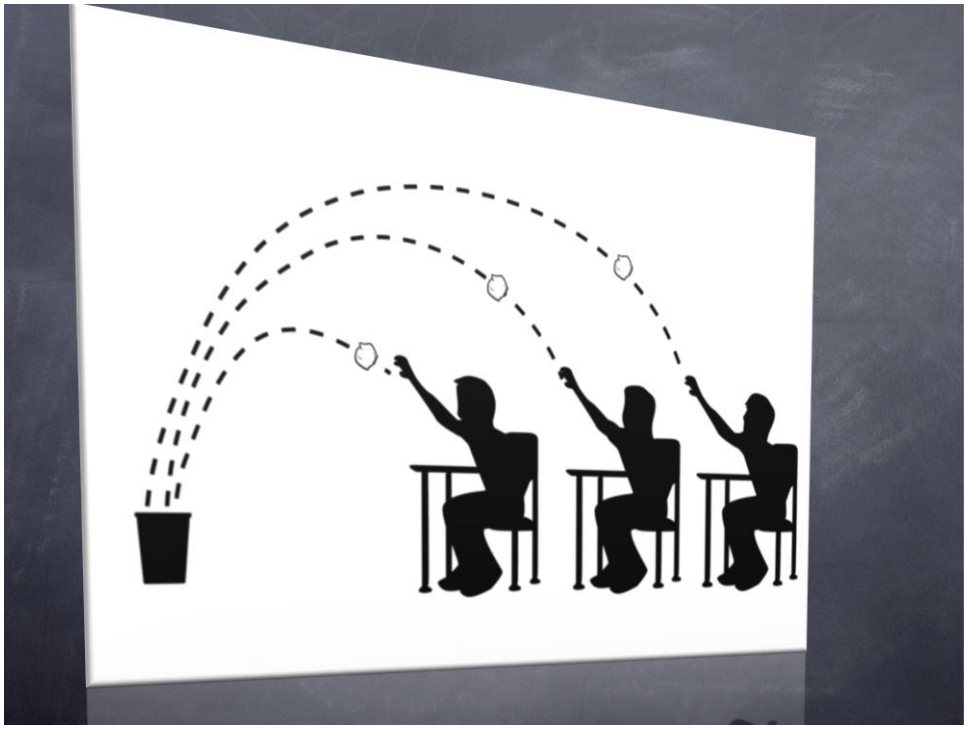

Issues that youth must navigate

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NO
PARKING
MBI

Issues that youth must navigate

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#FEESMUSTFALL
Love & support from Grade 2D
#Business MAN
#Pilot
#Sportsman
#Business man
#Police
#Doctor Keevaan
#Animator
#Engineer
#Doctor Mere
#Engineer
#dentist
#Scientist #Khathu
#Astronaut
#Nurse
#teacher
#Singer

CANCELLED
DREAMS

NO FUTURE

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0
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Six Navigational Capacities for new kinds of young people

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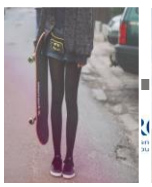


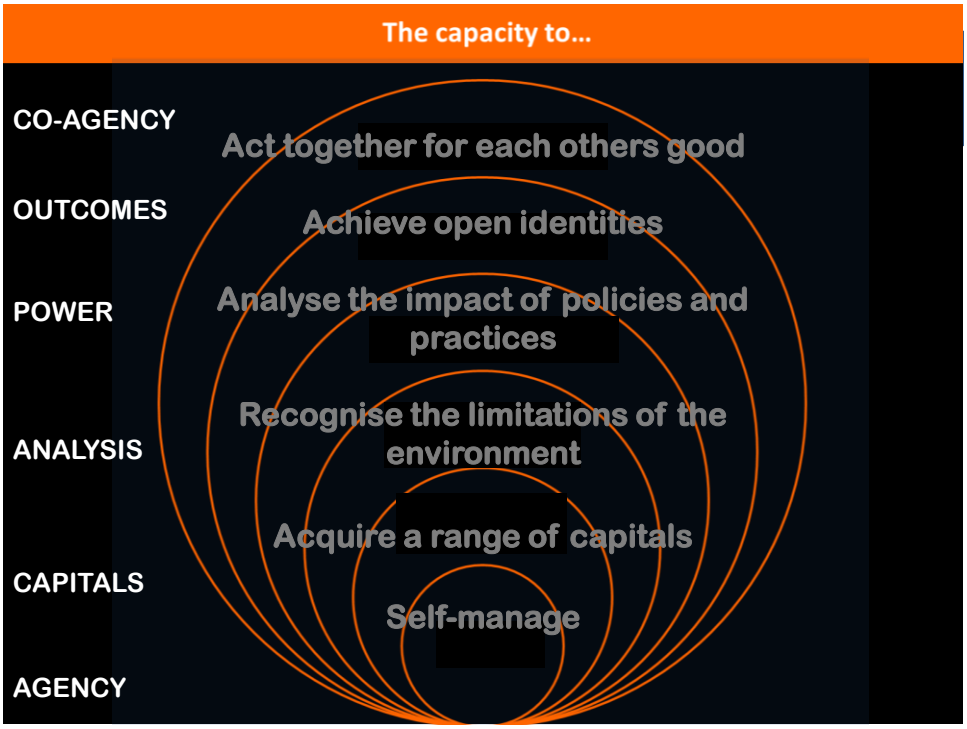
NAVIGATIONAL CAPACITIES

A metaphor about strategies and outcomes for youth development in changing and adverse contexts

- **Differing terrain**
- **Different vehicles**

ence

The capacity to…
Act together for each others good
Achieve open identities
Analyse the impact of policies and practices
Recognise the limitations of the environment
Acquire a range of capitals
Self-manage


The capacity to…
CO-AGENCY
OUTCOMES
POWER
ANALYSIS
CAPITALS
AGENCY
Act together for each others good
Achieve open identities
Analyse the impact of policies and practices
Recognise the limitations of the environment
Acquire a range of capitals
Self-manage

The capacity to…

1. Organise
2. Advocate
3. Freedom
4. Aspire
5. Evaluate
6. Embrace
7. Analyse
8. Confront
9. Hustle
10. Connect
11. Resist
12. Reflect
13. Articulate
14. Present
15. Accumulate
16. See
17. Plan
18. Overcome

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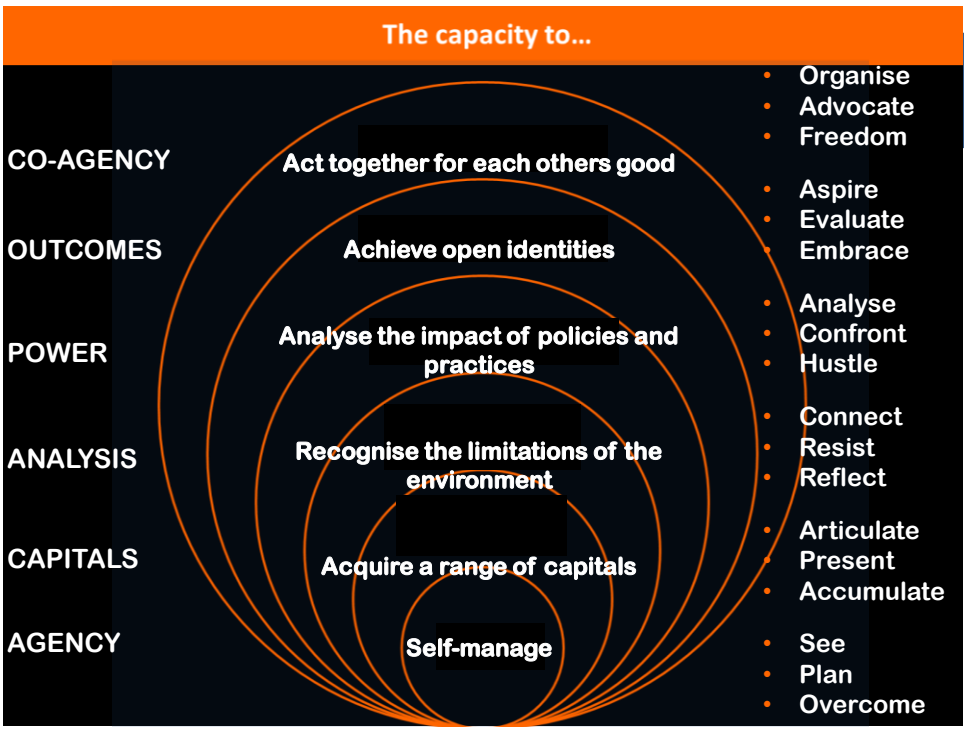

How can Southern thinking can help?

Theory from the South (Comaroff, 2012)

"Western enlightenment thought has, from the first, posited itself as the wellspring of universal learning… it has regarded the non-West … the global south-primarily as a place of parochial wisdom, of antiquarian traditions, of exotic ways and means. Above all, of unprocessed data... reservoirs of raw fact: of the historical, natural, and ethnographic minutiae from which Euromodernity might fashion its testable theories and transcendent truths, its axioms and certitudes, its premises, postulates, and principles" (p. 1).

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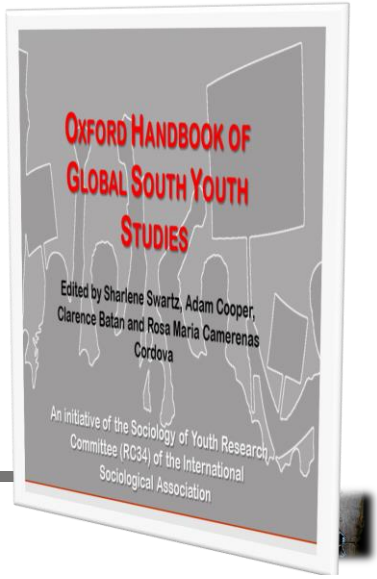
Theory from the South

The South has much to offer: "Critical concerns of the present age-concerns about **personhood**, **identity**, **difference**, and **belonging**, about the **state**, **sovereignty**, **governmentality**, **citizenship**, and **borders**, about **law**, **liberalism**, and **democracy**, about **labour** and the **politics of life**, about **history** and **memory**" (p. 19)

The South has new experience of all these issues.

OUP Handbook of Global South Youth Studies

1. 50 chapters
2. 15 invited
3. 130 submissions
4. For undergraduates, graduates and teachers
5. A project of RC34 of ISA – a global (not decolonised) space



Principles

1. Lead with the new and original, that combines theory and lived reality
2. Offers view points and vantage points from the South, for the South, AND for the World
3. Not homogenous e.g. the small South within the South
4. Aim to define the field of Global South Youth Studies, and offer a roadmap for Global Youth Studies
5. Contributors predominately from the Global South or from the diaspora or aboriginal communities in the North
6. Committed to a community of practice

Part 1

- Knowledge
- The South
- Southern Youth
- Youth Studies
- Southern theory

- Personhood
- Intersectionality
- Violences
- Consciousness
- Precarity
- Fluid Modernities
- Ontological insecurity
- Navigational capacities
- Collective agency
- Emancipation

Part 3

- Methodologies
- Research
- Interventions
- Learning
- Homogenisation
- Policy
- Social compacts
- New kinds of people

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WHAT DO YOUTH WORKERS NEED TO DO TO GET ON THE TRAIN?

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Embrace the **GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION** from where you practice/make policy/research in youth work.

We are not merely part of a globalised world on an equal footing. We are in different power relations to each other. Knowledge is power. Power dictates knowledge.

Paolo Freire

"the interests of the oppressors lie in 'changing the consciousness of the oppressed, not the situation which oppresses them', for the more the oppressed can be led to **adapt** to that situation, the more easily they can be **dominated**. To achieve this end, the oppressors use the banking concept of education… " (Freire, p. 74)

Paolo Freire

"In problem-posing education, people **develop their power to perceive critically *the way they exist* in the world** *with which* and *in which* they find themselves;

they come to see the world not as a static reality, but as a reality in process, in transformation… the teacher-student and the students-teachers **reflect simultaneously on themselves and the world** " (Freire, p. 83).

Bhabha: "[We must] interrupt the Western discourses of modernity… We must not merely change the narratives of our histories, but transform our sense of what it means to live"

Walter Mignolo: "What did we know (how did we live?) before we were colonised, enslaved, conquered?"