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# UWT Experiences in the Townships of South Africa, Bridging Borders, Breaking Bread

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# UWT EXPERIENCES IN THE TOWNSHIPS OF SOUTH AFRICA

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*BRIDGING BORDERS, BREAKING BREAD*

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## Abstract

In late August, 2017, twelve students representing all academic levels (undergraduate, masters, and doctorate) from all three University of Washington campuses (Tacoma, Bothell, Seattle) journeyed to Cape Town, South Africa, where they participated in a three-week UWT study abroad course. Students examined a range of community development activities and gained an understanding of pressing “township” development issues, including a range of conflicts between business interests and community needs. Students also learned how schools and non-governmental organizations have sought to empower and transform communities. This paper synthesizes key reflections of this remarkable urban experience from Professor Fern Tiger, Christopher Knaus and three of her students: Maija Thiel, EdD candidate, Education Autumn Diaz, Senior, IAS, Psychology, and Anneka Olson, MA candidate, Community Planning.

# UWT Experiences in the Townships of South Africa:

## Bridging Borders, Breaking Bread

By Fern Tiger

In late August, twelve students representing all academic levels (undergraduate, masters, and doctorate) and all three University of Washington campuses (Tacoma, Bothell, Seattle) journeyed between 24 and 38 hours (via diverse routes, connecting through London, Paris, Dubai, Frankfurt) to arrive in Cape Town, South Africa – to participate in an intense three-week UWT course: “South Africa in Transition: Examining Community Development and Education as Transformation.” The exploratory course was a collaboration between the Urban Studies Program and the School of Education, and was co-led by Professor Fern Tiger (Urban Studies) and Professor Christopher Knaus (Education).

Once on the ground (following three pre-departure classes to orient students to the intent of the course, the history and politics of South Africa, township life, and the role of schools and NGOs), students were assigned to one of four organizations operating in Philippi, a dense, impoverished Black township located about 20 minutes from the vibrant, wealthy, and predominantly White city of Cape Town. Philippi’s 200,000 residents live in shoddily-built, dirt-floor shacks, sharing water spouts and non-flush toilets with thousands of neighbors. Apartheid, the strict racist policy of segregating and economically and politically oppressing the nonwhite population in South Africa ended in 1994, but just a few hours in places like Philippi provide evidence that although the laws have changed, the situation for most Blacks has not. Despite the claims of equality following the demise of apartheid, Philippi — like scores of other townships where more than 50% to 60% of the population is unemployed and another 20% under-employed — experiences poverty as the norm, yet sits in the shadow of Cape Town – a city visited annually by millions of tourists from around the world who never see what lies beyond the spectacular waterfront and prosperous downtown. If

one only ventures to the popular tourist destinations, it’s possible to return to the U.S. believing that South Africa is predominantly White. Yet, in reality, Whites comprise just 8 or 9% of the population.

In the nearly 25 years since the shift from apartheid to democracy, many new resources flowed into the country to increase access to housing, food, schools, and infrastructure. While improvements cannot be ignored, racial disparities remain the norm by every measure. Thus, localized efforts by NGOs and schools situated within townships have emerged as important, albeit slow and under-resourced, ways to make progress.

The purpose of the UWT program was to examine a range of community development activities and to gain an understanding of the successes and challenges of addressing pressing township problems, including the conflicts between business interests and community needs. More important, students sought to learn how schools and NGOs might empower and transform communities to address their own issues in ways that government and philanthropic funding have so far proven unable to resolve.

UW students spent the bulk of their time working with South African Education and Environment Project (SAEP), Nal’ibali, CESVI, and Sinethemba Secondary School – getting to experience on-the-ground community development efforts. Students were eager to learn how a young democracy deals with its racist past and what has changed over 25 years. They ruminated over what the US was like 25 years after the Civil War (and how much further American communities need to go to address racial and economic inequities). Students dwelled on what this could all mean for living and studying back home in the Pacific Northwest. It’s important to note that nearly 50% of South Africa’s population is under the age of 25 – meaning that half of the population was born after the downfall of apartheid. These young people are often called the “born-frees,” but

given the reality of the lives of the youth we met and the intensity of the continued (though technically unsanctioned) racism Black youth experience, they resent this label and don't feel they are free at all.

What the class saw was the clear marginalization of Black people, with Whites living in housing that looks and feels a lot like homes in Tacoma or Seattle or any other developed urban city. White families had wi-fi and solar panels and dishwashers, two-car garages, and good schools whose government funding is supplemented by tuition and fees, thereby excluding most children of color. Black township families live in small structures that lack basic facilities, dirt roads, minimal transportation options, and limited food choices. Township schools are free but have 50 students to a classroom; teacher absence is high, so students are often in classrooms unattended or merged into groups of 100 students with one teacher.

There are never enough books for all the students ("learners") and in many classes seven and eight students huddled around one book in order to do their lessons. While students attending White schools have carefully tended yards, soccer fields, swimming pools, and lush gardens, Black township schools are overcrowded, have concrete yards, no shade, and poorly-constructed buildings with cracks, leaks, and minimal maintenance. There are rooms called "libraries" but they rarely have books, and if they do, they are outdated and Eurocentric. One school had four computers to be shared by more than 1,400 students and all of the teachers; still only a handful of teachers knew how to use the computers and the school lacked the funds to register software or for Internet service. Thus, the computers are rarely used, placing Black students far behind Whites to engage in 21st Century jobs.

The NGOs in Philippi and elsewhere attempt to fill gaps in resources and services that the government does not provide, and which schools and families cannot even fathom how to address. But NGOs are strapped for funds, spend a good deal of time competing with one another for meager funds from the few foundations and businesses

that fund in the country. Staff at both schools and NGOs are passionate about the work they do but lack the training to make big changes. Violence in the townships is rampant and schools and NGOs are safe havens for children and adults. Amid these situations, students are expected to sit for exams that determine their future educational opportunities (which are minimal).

Despite these seemingly impossible conditions, the residents of Philippi were wonderful hosts. We felt welcome, we felt safe, we were honored to be brought into homes, offices, organizations, and families. It was a sobering experience; it was a true learning experience; it was a bonding experience. It was a chance to understand resilience, power, and structural inequality. It was an opportunity and a challenge. The course was about the transformation of a country, but in the end, it was probably more about the transformation of twelve students who left with more questions than answers and a greater desire to understand their own role in a global society.

Amid intense conversations in the community and back at the hostel, the deep dive into a new and different culture, and reflections on the deficits of our own democracy, students managed to climb Table Mountain; to get to the beach; to attend an international conference and a theatrical performance; to meet with one of the writers of the South African constitution; to walk diverse neighborhoods; to visit local universities, museums, and music venues; and perhaps most memorable – to experience amazing local cuisine throughout the Cape Town area and to have created global friendships.

What follows are the reflections from three students: Maija Thiel, EdD candidate, Education; Anneka Olson, MA candidate, Community Planning; and Autumn Diaz, Senior, IAS, Psychology.

# Education and Community Development in South Africa: From Empowerment to Solidarity

Maija Thiel (Puyallup Public Schools; Ed.D. student)

Christopher Knaus (School of Education)



In early fall, just as students began to settle into the 2017-18 school year, two faculty members (Christopher Knaus and Fern Tiger) led a study abroad to Cape Town, South Africa. A multidisciplinary collaboration between the School of Education and Urban Studies, the intent was to provide an exploratory overview of community-led development, with hands-on experiences within impoverished township communities. For three weeks, 12 students (undergraduates, graduate, and doctoral students from across the three UW campuses) spent the bulk of their time working with one of three organizations ([South African Education and Environment Project](#), [Nal'ibali](#), and [Cesvi](#)) or at [Sinethemba Secondary School](#), getting to know on-the-ground staff and community development efforts. Apartheid, the official White supremacist government policy that segregated by race, had ended some 24 years

prior, and we were eager to learn about how a country moves towards democracy, and what that could mean for our work in the Pacific Northwest.

To visitors from the U.S., the most obvious marginalization in South Africa involves the dramatic racial segregation that apartheid legislated, where White families still live in housing that mirrors middle class communities in the U.S., with Wi-Fi, solar panels, two-car garages, dishwashers, and huge flat screen televisions. Those White families send their children to well-resourced schools (the public schools that serve White children augment state funding with tuition that can be upwards of \$10,000, thereby excluding children of color, most of whom come from impoverished communities). The familiarity with which Americans experience Cape Town and the largely White surrounds belies the apartheid-era conditions that shape townships. Indeed, most visitors to South Africa remain in White-populated areas, venturing into Black communities only through organized township tours or when observing shack housing along the road to some other tourist destination. The infrastructure of segregated South Africa, however, belies the numerical reality: South Africa is only 8-9% White.

Most of the 80-82% Black population survives in abject poverty. A tour guide at the District Six Museum explained how a vibrant multiracial community was demolished to make room for White settlement; those displaced were sent to formal township communities some 20-30 kilometers away. She explained how the apartheid government designed neighborhoods, roads, and schools based on the Nazi regime. Our daily experiences in Philippi, a township with an official count of over 200,000 residents, reinforced how the very structures of apartheid still limit the lives of Black South Africans. The enormity of the intentional dehumanization created by apartheid racism was apparent as vast townships reached as far we could see in every direction. Giant light poles extend above houses, reminding of maximum security prison yards.



Compared to schools that enroll White students, township schools reflect and sustain the country's systemic post-apartheid racist structure. Each of the secondary schools visited in Philippi (Sinethemba, Sophumelela, and Zisukhanyo) include exclusively non-white enrollment in overcrowded and barely resourced classrooms. While schools that enroll White students have pristine outdoor swimming facilities located in luscious school gardens, township schools are centered around prison-like cement courtyards, where mothers prepare giant pots of soup in closets, serving children their often only daily meal. Teachers use chalkboards propped in front of smartboards because they do not have computers, Internet, or training to use either. Students attending better resourced impoverished schools, may visit empty science labs and desperately outdated computer labs once a year (one school's computers were refurbished in 2005). School libraries are non-existent or sparsely stocked with culturally inappropriate (or downright racist) books that were published in the 1980's in the U.S. or Europe. Despite high teacher absences, there are no substitute teachers, and students are often in classrooms (or roaming in outdoor spaces) alone. Students and teachers are faced with the impact of daily community violence while preparing for examinations used to compare the educational effectiveness between well-resourced and pathetically under-resourced students.

It was devastating to realize that schools offer only the pretense of education for township learners, while expansive opportunities are provided for White students just several miles away. The impact of our experiences in Cape

Town challenged our fundamental beliefs and practices. We came face-to-face with the reality that many societal problems, and particularly those involving racial inequities, may be too large or complex to solve in a lifetime. No matter what supports the government, non-governmental organizations, communities, and individuals engage in, it is difficult to imagine how such conditions could be transformed.

Back home, good intentions, limited personal experience, and unchallenged ignorance continue to result in a desire to empower the marginalized. Most efforts to address structural inequality at home reinforce deficit lenses, urging students to overcome through adopting a grit-orientation, and essentially pull themselves up by their bootstraps, maintaining the system of oppression that schools unintentionally reinforce. We return from South Africa sobered by the enormity of our challenges, and buoyed by the reality that ours is a global struggle to transform not just educational approaches and methods, but infrastructures, orientations, and purposes. Our very survival is at stake.

## Boundary Lines: Reflections on Three Weeks in Cape Town

Anneka Olson

When people—friends, coworkers, my partner, my parents—ask about my three weeks in Cape Town, a clean narrative eludes me. Mostly, I think about two bookends.

The first was sitting in an ice cream shop a few days after I had arrived, at the edge of the Bo Kaap neighborhood and the Central Business District (CBD), making a jumbled painting of a minaret sandwiched between a modern-looking office and retail building and wondering what I could possibly be doing for the next few weeks. I had already seen most of the museums that I hoped to; walked the neighborhood; visited the Company Gardens in the center



A mosque and commercial building in Bo Kaap, a historically Muslim neighborhood on the edge of Cape Town's CBD.

of town and taken some photos and made a painting; walked along the bus station and talked to vendors. What, exactly, could fill all of this time over the next few weeks? Had I already seen what I had come to see?

The second: My last day, I rode in a cab to Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens, towards the edge of Cape Town, driven by a Black South African my age named Mphumzi. When I told him I was from the U.S., he started asking questions. Where should he go if he visited? What did I think of South Africa? How long had I been here and why? I could barely get the answers out, and he began enthusiastically gesticulating and talking about his hopes to travel to the U.S.—so much, in fact, that we missed our turn. Backtracking to find the way, he told me about his plans to start a tour company that would specialize in giving township tours. *Are you from a township?* I asked him. Yes, he said. *Which one?* I asked. *Khayelitsha*, he responded. I told him that I had briefly visited. He seemed skeptical—why had I visited? What had I done? I explained that I had gone as part of my student group with two architects who had worked on some of the libraries and parks. He seemed relieved that I hadn't gone on a commercial township tour and then launched into a long critique: Tourists arrive in a big bus; they ogle at the poverty; they go home. All of it, he said, inspires shame. Instead, he said, these tours ought to celebrate the things that are

unique about these places, about the things that are working: open-air markets with fried chicken vendors, local musicians, initiatives to build community and reduce crime. Oh, I told him, in my field of study (now I was the one excitedly gesticulating)—in urban planning—we would call that an asset-based approach, when you celebrate and build upon the good things about a community rather than only looking at what's wrong with it. We spent the rest of the car ride talking about how he might market the tours to

visitors: What might they want to see? How could he frame his tours as different, as a celebration of the uniqueness of his community?

These bookends, for me, highlight how much happened during these three weeks. Though it perhaps should have been obvious to me, I realized that Cape Town, and the Western Cape in general, is much bigger than the small cluster of CBD neighborhoods that most tourists frequent. There are myriad more neighborhoods, some cleared and some growing; some Black and some White; some dating



Company Gardens with colonial-era government buildings.

back to the colonial era and some only recently receiving electricity or a row of seldom-emptied municipal toilets.



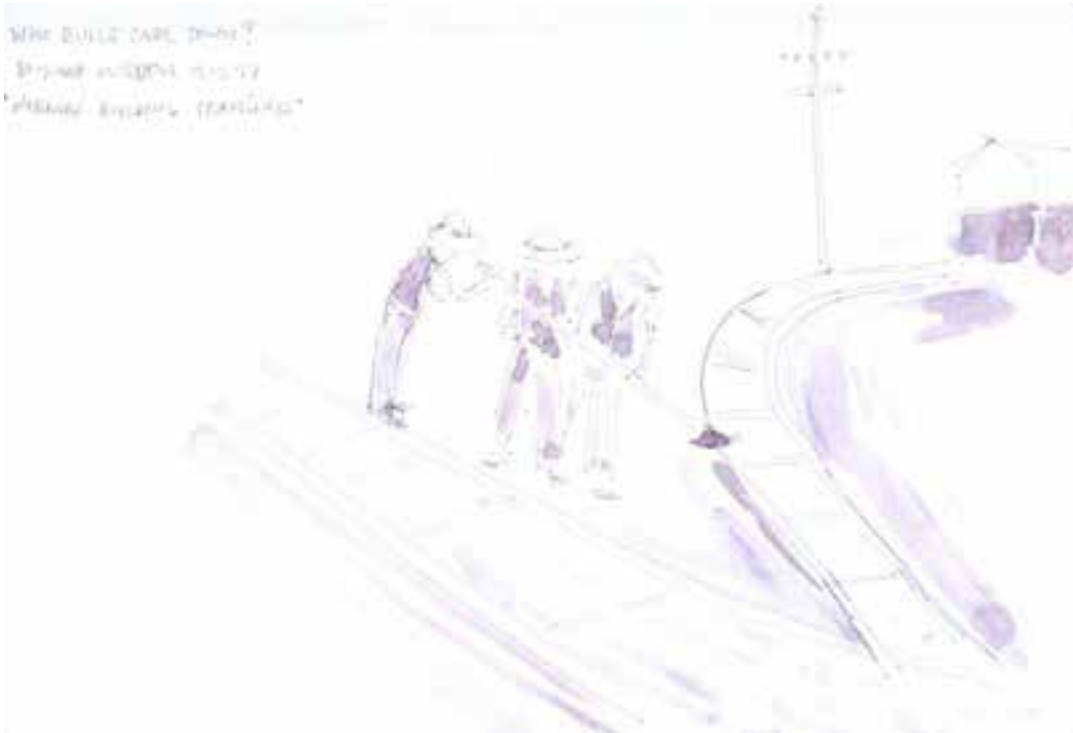
Each of these places has its own, distinct identity; each also represents the severe economic stratification, racial segregation, unequal capital accumulation, and concentration of power that remains two decades after the official end of apartheid.

Though readings and films had prepared me for it intellectually, the incredible fragmentation of these two Cape

“blighted;” the red lines on FHA insurance maps; freeways or train tracks that cut through and divide.

Yet to even speak of two Cape Towns is necessarily complicated. One can speak of a White and a Black Cape Town; a rich and a poor Cape Town; of the central city with its affluent suburbs and the Cape Flats with their townships.

But all townships are not the same: Some have cinderblock



“Who Built Cape Town?” From a historic photograph of workers building tram lines that hangs in the Bo Kaap Museum.

Towns still surprised me. Though I thought myself a sage traveler—I had seen poverty and informal settlements throughout Central America—the scale of poverty in Philippi Township still caught my breath. But perhaps even more surprising was the scale of the prosperity in downtown Cape Town. The lines are drawn, spatially, quite strikingly. This kind of spatial inequity is repeated in urban areas throughout the world. But the fact that these lines were drawn so *intentionally* in Cape Town has the effect of raising them off the map so that they are newly legible. The scale and drama of this segregation does not minimize its ubiquity. I find it impossible to think about those lines without thinking of all of the invisible boundaries in places with which I’m more familiar: regulations that determine which areas can access resources and which can’t; boundaries between “historic” places and those that are

houses and electricity; some barely have public toilets. The stratifications of race are far more complex than I had initially assumed. And the boundaries between these spaces are more porous than was immediately obvious to me, with a significant number of people who live in townships regularly commuting to downtown Cape Town to work and then home again at night.

All of this is not to say these boundaries do not persist on both a micro and a macro level. I found myself internalizing these distinctions down to the level of the neighborhood, the street, the storefront. I realized some time into our trip that I was subconsciously sorting places into White and Black spaces. One morning, I climbed Kloof Street

to find breakfast. I wanted to get a view of the city, so I climbed higher than I had intended. As I did, my awareness of my own whiteness dissipated—and as it did, I realized how much more comfortable I started to feel. I picked a café that seemed lifted out of Kirkland or Port Townsend or University Place. Everyone working there was Black, none of the clientele were, and I started to wonder about the map in my mind—how my mind codes places, and draws these boundaries, without my realizing or wanting it to, and how significantly it shapes my behavior. Not that this was a surprise. I knew it, intellectually, but something about spending time in these dramatically different places—and especially the daily travel between Philippi and downtown Cape Town—made it newly visible.

But these two bookends also helped me to realize something else, which is that my conversation with Mphumzi would have been impossible earlier in the trip. The fact that I had spent time, however brief, in his neighborhood created some shared terrain—and perhaps even built some trust—that would have been otherwise lacking.

Though my visit to Khayelitsha was cursory, incomplete, and barely scratched the surface, the fact that I had seen his hometown was important.

Our conversation also picked up a thread that I had been wondering about during the three weeks in Cape Town: the importance of (and challenges with) taking an asset-based approach when thinking about strategies for essential service delivery, development, empowerment, and organizing in township communities. Clearly, despite the enduring inequity of this spatial segregation, the townships are not going away. These townships are rooted communities with their own identities, their own histories. And it is neither logistically possible nor politically expedient to think of replacing the townships with housing closer to Cape Town's downtown. The question then becomes how to build on what these communities already are to make them places that can better provide for their residents—places that are safe and healthy, have economic and cultural opportunities, and are fair and just.

Does it matter if I, as an outsider, understand the assets of

a community that isn't mine? I think this question is more than an intellectual exercise. Without considering a place's assets, it seems impossible to shift the narrative to include township residents in a meaningful way, especially when so much development work is still driven by outsiders—in downtown Cape Town, at the Gates Foundation, at USAID, at the UN: the folks who lie on the other side of these many invisibly-drawn boundaries.

Though the boundaries are everywhere visible, if you look for them. I invited Mphumzi to come with me into Kirstenbosch, a place he had never heard of and couldn't imagine why people would pay for. But once inside, he began identifying plants by their Xhosa names, and a group of women on a tour gathered around him as he explained their medicinal uses (at one point, he called his dad to corroborate.) His future as a tour guide came to life. After he left to go back to work, I wandered deeper into the gardens. I stopped to read an interpretive sign and was surprised when I read that the thorny hedge around me had been planted in the 17th century by Jan van Riebeeck—considered to be the Dutch “founder” of Cape Town—to create a dividing line between the newly-arrived Europeans and the Khoi who they encountered. The sign presented this fact in a way that emanated a focused, historical neutrality. But of course, this boundary, this line, is anything but neutral.



A bucolic scene at Kirstenbosch, with Jan van Riebeeck's hedge in the background.

# Reflections

## Autumn Diaz

This study abroad experience, having been my second time to Cape Town, was a re-entry into a country that I had already grown to love. As an 18 year-old visiting Cape Town for the first time, my experiences there deeply stuck with me for the next four and a half years until I was able to return. The disparities, both economic and racial, were evident. However, with a young mind that lacked critical consciousness, I never thought to truly evaluate why South Africa was the way it was. Moreover, I'm not sure that I really cared about each of these separate issues equally.

After my first visit, it was the economic disparity that stuck with me. Now, after this second visit, it is the racial disparity that truly haunts me because it is so ingrained in each aspect of South African society. It is around every corner, whether you are walking around Cape Town's breathtaking Company Gardens or the streets of one of the many townships. Systemic racism still lives and feels like a heavy anchor on one's soul, especially when, as a mere visitor of South Africa, you are able to make deep connections with those who are oppressed by it.

Before making these connections, I was already re-entering South Africa with an entirely new perspective based upon my accumulation of education on both South African history and the social injustices faced by its people. This includes apartheid, housing crises in townships, and the blatant racism and history of South African colonization by European countries. I went to South Africa four and a half years ago with no knowledge of any of this history or these social issues.

This new knowledge greatly helped me to understand my experiences in South Africa four years prior and, in the interest of remaining transparent, I felt very disappointed in myself for never attempting to further investigate my experiences. Through my education at UWT, we have discussed

a plethora of social issues and each time I could see how these related to South Africa, however I never pursued the specific contexts further. In May, three months before we were set to depart, I finished reading Dr. Chris Knaus's book, *Whiteness is the New South Africa*, and, with my eyes completely open, I was finally ready to return to my beloved South Africa and re-conceptualize what I had seen.

What I did not account for was how difficult this accumulation of knowledge would make my experiences. Each day in South Africa brought new and heavy challenges to absorb. Even if we were partaking in a day of shopping and dinner at the beautiful beach of Camps Bay, it felt impossible to fully enjoy what I was experiencing after spending the previous day in the heart of the townships. It was as if I was feeling constantly unbalanced, in a never-ending state of dissonance.

Referencing my studies in psychology, it is human nature to justify and balance dissonance. We always want to feel good about ourselves and the decisions we make, but I couldn't find this within myself anywhere in South Africa. Then, almost two weeks into our program, while reading Trevor Noah's autobiography about growing up in pre- and post-apartheid South Africa, he stated that black South Africans were moved to townships away from any resources or infrastructure so that their disparity would not have to be seen, and therefore held in the white consciousness. Therefore, in a nutshell, it occurred to me exactly how white South Africans avoid this dissonance I was feeling - They continually keep township living conditions out of their view, and therefore the consciousness of their privileged lives.

From my friends in South Africa, who are white, along with random white strangers I encountered, I learned a lot more about this dissonance-settling dynamic. However, what

I learned was not easy to digest. To give an overview, I observed three very important opinions: 1) Victim-blaming is a very powerful way to settle dissonance, and therefore not feel obligated to help said victims, 2) Part of this victim blaming lies in the belief that white South Africans truly believe they are superior to black South Africans, and 3) Although no white South African will outwardly admit their racist tendencies, these tendencies are so clearly explicit that taking measures to implicitly evaluate them does not even seem necessary.

Much like comments made in the U.S. regarding racial disparities, what I heard from various white South Africans regarding black South Africans is that they are still in poverty because they are “lazy”, “not willing to work”, “not very smart”, and, my personal favorite, that these stereotypes are true because they have had “so much time” since apartheid ended to change their circumstances. Unlike the white South Africans I spoke with, I do not want to settle my dissonance in these disgusting ways, or any other way that results in dehumanization or my lack of caring. For this reason, I am very grateful for my time in the townships spent with the beautiful children and my new, life-long friend Thabisa.

In South Africa, I shadowed a literacy mentor named Thabisa through a non-governmental organization (NGO) called Nal’ibali. We travelled from preschools to primary schools and after-school book clubs to read, sing, and simply talk with children in the township of Philippi. These experiences resulted in powerful humanization. While spending time with the children is always a powerful and fun experience, as I had done this during my first time in South Africa, my current biggest takeaways are due solely to the time I spent with Thabisa.

Whether it was spending time in her shack or traveling with her in one of the township taxis, I was able to be immersed in a culture and lifestyle I would have, in no other way, been granted access to. The fact that I got to have this experience still feels so surreal. As a visitor of South Africa,

you are told not to go into townships at night, not to go into a shack, and not to go into a township taxi. However, I got to do all of these things. While I understand there are reasons for these precautions, I am so thankful to have had these experiences. Throughout them, conversing with Thabisa, I had the most humanizing and powerful experiences I could have ever hoped for.

By creating a friendship with Thabisa, she was able to open up to my classmate, Marcos, and I and tell stories of her life that were heavy for us to swallow. Most notable were her experiences of racism and the violence she had both seen and been a victim of throughout her life. While I will not share these experiences in detail out of respect for her privacy, I will simply state that these stories completely changed the way I saw South Africa and the township life. From these stories, combined with my observations in the townships we visited, I more clearly saw the devastating trickle-down effect apartheid has had on every single black individual. Moreover, I hurt - and will continue to hurt - for my new friend and her beautiful daughters. After Thabisa shared these stories, I felt heavy heartache for hours as I lay alone in my room at the hostel we resided in during our time in South Africa. It was as if I was feeling some of the pain she has felt in her life and, as I remember these hours, I can feel this pain once again. In retrospect, I would say this was the first time in my life in which I truly felt raw empathy.

These experiences of humanization, whether it was through my time with Thabisa or with the children whom Nal’ibali serves, results in an array of emotions. Most notably, anger towards colonization and the powerful apartheid government that created these self-perpetuating poverty cycles for black township residents. While in South Africa, our cohort had the pleasure of watching a play called “The Fall”, which tells the stories of the students involved in the

Rhodes Must Fall and Fees Must Fall movements at the University of Cape Town in 2015. This production helped me further harness and understand the anger and despair I was beginning to feel. Seeing young people of color tell their story of how they dutifully fought - and continue to fight - the unjust society in which they live reaffirmed my emotions. Moreover, it was simply inspiring to see people I identified with using their voice and creating power for themselves.

Compared to my first time in South Africa, this trip was completely different in many ways. Not only did I arrive with a different mindset, I left with many new insights that have forever changed me. The first takeaway that has a great impact on my life is that I now have a better understanding of how large the scale of the problems are that the people of South Africa face. I now see that no single person can't fix this entire country. Moreover, it is not something that will be done in just a few generations. Truthfully, I am not sure exactly how it will be done.

However, I know that fighting for real institutional and systemic change needs to happen and - just as I had seen in "The Fall" - this is done by creating a sustainable, critically conscious generation of young leaders to carry on this fight. Through my experiences in South Africa, I found it challenging to have hope for equality, equity, and social justice. However, I now know that it is with these young leaders where my small glimmers of hope do lie. Lastly, I can now so clearly see the echoes of similar social issues between the U.S. and South Africa. While this wasn't so obvious previously, the similarities are undeniable. With South Africa, we will continue on in our struggle.