

MORE THAN A “THIEF”

De-Essentializing Male Youth Who Employ Destructive Tactics of Resilience in the
Informal Settlements of Nairobi

Research conducted and analyzed by

Reverend Reginah Naya, Andrew Bierlein, Andrew Pflederer, Anne Bausch, Annika
Celum, Carol Wacuka Gitegi, Daniel Peter Kiambi, Eliud Muriu, Eve Sharon Amoth,
Girland Ndirangu Mahugu, Gordon Owino, Joe Rumenapp, Longinos Onyango Nagila,
Martin Mwangi Wanjama, Michelle Tolentino, Mwangi Rebeccah, Tome Abigael
Seleyian, and Wungchipem Raman

Research presented to the

Ghetto in Urban Rehabilitation and Education Center (GUREC), Kenya National Council
of Science and Education, District Officer of the Starehe Division, Trinity International
University, and Nairobi Evangelical School of Theology.

Nairobi, Kenya
June, 2012

ABSTRACT

Male youth in the informal settlements of Nairobi interviewed for this study understand that stealing or being perceived as having stolen makes them vulnerable to summary executions and mob justice—which ensures a short life. They also understand that many believe that youth engaged in stealing, living on the streets, and abusing substance are essentially helpless to change because they are incapable or hopeless for change because it is too late. The essentializing of these youth as “thieves,” “street boys,” or “addicts” living in the settlements described as a “living hell” distorts the identity of the youth and hides potential.

This research helps to de-essentialize simplistic caricatures of male youth in the settlements by revealing complexities which point to pathways of prosocial change. This is done through the emergence of the following categories from the data: destructive tactics of resilience (DTR), co-existent constructive tactics of resilience (CTR), powers the youth perceive have significant influence over them, inner conflict, catalysts to destructive and constructive tactics of resilience, and examples of prosocial change.

At the same time, this research shows that the fear of death was the main factor that catalyzed youth away from DTR, such as stealing. Therefore, it is unknown whether youth would be motivated to avoid some DTR if they did not fear being killed. What is known is that summary executions and mob justice deter but kill complex persons with prosocial value and potential for more.

SUMMARY FOR YOUTH

In the informal settlements male youth who steal, use drugs, and live on the streets are sometimes viewed as merely “thieves,” “drug addicts,” and “street boys,” as if that is all they are. They are then also looked at as helpless or hopeless. However, the research shows that even if you steal, you are **more than a thief**. What others say about you does not define you. By **widening the lens** to see more of your story and by looking carefully at the details of your lives, it is evident that you are **unique and complex**. In that complexity many opportunities are seen that can lead to hope. For example:

1. If you are able to steal successfully, you have many skills that can be used in positive ways.
2. You are already involved in many constructive behaviors.
3. Sometimes you do things you do not want to do. Sometimes you feel badly when you steal or harm someone.
4. There are powers that influence you but there are ways to overcome those that pull you to harmful behaviors.
 - a. Drugs “call you.”
 - b. Sometimes the “situation forces you to steal.”
 - c. You can get a “taste for money” that pulls you to steal—so you can have money without sweating.
 - d. You feel “bodily lust.”
 - e. Some of you think, “better a short sweet life ...”
 - f. Many of your friends have died because of stealing, and you know that if you continue you will probably be killed too. **And death is the end of opportunity—and after death comes judgment (Heb. 9:27).**

- g. Some of your mothers and grandmothers, pastors, friends, and others have been kind to you, cared for you, and spoken to you, and you remember their words and actions.
 - h. The devil and evil spirits can oppress you—and the devil wants to steal from you and kill you (John 10:10).
 - i. Many of you pray to God and know He loves you.
5. Many of you have changed already—you can change. There is hope.
 6. The greatest hope comes from the fact that God loves you and is looking for you.
 - a. If you look for God, you will find that He is looking for you (Luke 19:1-10).
 - b. He is looking for you (Luke 15, like a shepherd who lost a sheep, a woman who lost a coin, and a prodigal son and father). Jesus came to seek and save those who were lost (Luke 19:11-10).
 - c. He sees your abilities and value even when you are dishonest and steal (Luke 16).
 - d. He has power to forgive you, to change you, and to change your futures—and if you turn to Him, He will accept you (Heb. 4) and never turn you away (John 6:37).
 - e. However, if you reject him, death will be the end of opportunity and you will face judgment (**read Prov. 1:10-33**).

CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	2
SUMMARY FOR YOUTH	2
CONTENTS	3
CHAPTERS	
1. INTRODUCTION	5
The Research Concern and Research Questions	5
Research Setting	7
Definition of Terms	8
Delimitations	10
Assumptions and Limitations	10
Significance of the Research	11
2. PRECEDENT LITERATURE	12
Identity and Essentialization	12
Resilience Research	28
Mitigating Essentialization: Representation, Power, and Methodology ...	37
3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	50
Approach and Rationale	50
Participants and Sampling	53
Data Collection	54
Data Analysis	55
Use of Data	56
4. FINDINGS (1): VIEW OF THE RESEARCH SETTING	57

Negative: “Surely Life Is So Hard”	57
Positive: “Not Such a Bad Place”	66
“Categorize it Whichever Way You Want”	70
Conclusion	71
5. FINDINGS (2): A SYNCHRONIC VIEW	72
Destructive Tactics of Resilience (DTR)	72
Co-existent Constructive Tactics of Resilience (CTR)	82
Perceived Power over Them	85
Inner Conflict	89
Catalysts to Tactics of Resilience	93
Examples of Prosocial Change	110
Conclusion	115
6. FINDINGS (3): A DIACHRONIC VIEW	116
Possible Snapshot Essentializations	116
Widening the Lens: Narrative	116
Details Categorized in Sequence that Challenge Essentializations	125
Conclusion	135
7. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	136
Summary of the Categories	136
Challenging Common Nested Essentializations	140
Pathways to Explore to Facilitate Prosocial Change	142
Specific Topics for Further Collaborative Study	144
Illustrations of Relevance	148
Conclusion	151

Appendix

1. REPUBLIC OF KENYA NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION	152
2. MATHARE DIVISION RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION	154
3. STAREHE DIVISION RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION	156
4. REPUBLIC OF KENYA RESEARCH CLEARANCE PERMIT FRONT AND BACK PAGES	158
5. REPUBLIC OF KENYA RESEARCH CLEARANCE PERMIT PAGES TWO AND THREE	159
6. RESEARCH TEAM LETTERS OF PERMISSION	160
REFERENCE LIST	169
MISSIOLOGICAL ADDENDUM	184
MISSIOLOGICAL ADDENDUM REFERENCE LIST	201

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter sets forth the research concern and questions, outlines the research setting, defines key terms, delimits the study, and describes its significance.

The Research Concern and Research Questions

Over the last twenty years children in East Africa have been experiencing an increasingly “more threatening existence” than they have in the past (Kilbride and Kilbride 1990, ix; Ayuku et al. 2004, 309, referring to Bwibo 1982 and Suda 1997),¹ and though there has been a surge in interest in children since the 1990s (Theis 2001, 99), in 1998, 2001, and 2003 it has been argued that the representation, theorization, and research methods related to children at risk have been weak (Scheper-Hughes and Sargent 1998, 15; Schwartzman 2001, 1, 3; Boyden 2003). Still in 2007 Erulkar and Matheka said that “adolescents and young people make up a significant proportion of the slum-dwelling population, yet little is known about their experiences growing up in these poor urban environments” (Erulkar and Matheka 2007, v). However, at the same time, Liebenberg and Ungar contest, “research demonstrates that in many ways youth are doing better than ever before” (Liebenberg and Ungar 2008, 4). This surge in interest, combined with weak research methods, has left room for essentialized, sensational, and unreliable popular and scholarly interpretations of “children or youth at risk” that can divert attention away from the most helpful programs (McCallin 1998, 60; Theis 2001, 101-102) and exploit the youth (Honwana 2006, 15). Furthermore, strategic essentialism, in which members of a group that is “highly differentiated internally” intentionally essentialize and standardize their public image to advance “their group identity in a simplified, collectivized way to achieve certain objectives,” can mislead researchers or play into their hands if their essentialism is more powerful (Eide 2010, 76).

Therefore, the concern of this study is to reveal some of the complexities of two particular groups of male youth in the informal settlements of Nairobi who have employed or employ what will be called *destructive tactics of resilience* (DTR)—such as living on the streets, stealing, and substance abuse (see Gilgun and Abrams 2005, 65). These complexities demonstrate that the youth are not essentially “thieves,” “street boys,” or “addicts,” limited by whatever characteristics make up such labels in the minds of those who use them. Though they are not super-youth who can surmount any obstacle and do not need help of any kind (Masten 2001, 227), they are neither helpless nor hopeless for prosocial change.² The complexities also reveal potential pathways to prosocial change. H, who grew up on the streets sniffing glue and stealing but is now married and lives in a house he rents with his wife and son said, “they think that we can’t change ... but the street people can change” (H 2010, 70, 42, 44).

To address this concern, this study has sought to listen to the voices of these youth in light of the theoretical understandings of resilience research (Ungar 2004,

¹He is referring to M. Bwibo 1982, 2–13 and Collette Suda 1997, 199–217.

²A more serious form of essentializing occurs when a rationale is combined with a negative stereotype (Bennett 1993, 37–38).

2006, 2011), tactical or strategic agency (Utas 2005), social navigation (Vigh 2006) and “tactics of resilience” (Scheper-Hughes 2008). This shifts the focus from “the breakdown and disorder attributed to exposure to stressful environments, to the individual characteristics and social processes associated with either normal or unexpectedly positive psychosocial development” (Ungar 2008, 21). By drawing on the theory of non-essentialism, or what I would call mitigated essentialism, emphasizing variation, temporality, and the effects of network theory in humans and societies (Fuchs 2001), the lens through which these youth are viewed and conclusions are drawn about them is widened. Being attentive to more of the details of the stories as they tell them reveals complexity that helps to de-essentialize the youth, showing them to be more than any simplistic caricature. It also generates insight into issues for further study that can better inform the programs and policies of people and organizations seeking to serve them.

The research questions that address these concerns are: in the informal settlements, or slums,³ of Nairobi:

1. What self-recognized destructive tactics of resilience (referred to throughout as DTR) are or have been used by male GUREC students or graduates (called “Treasures”) as they negotiate the challenges of life?
2. What self-recognized DTR are or have been used by male youth as they negotiate the challenges of life without secondary school?
3. How do the details from the interviews (“widening the lens”) reveal complexity and potential? In other words, what else in a youth’s story reveals that he is more than a “thief” if he steals⁴—and points to pathways to explore for facilitating prosocial change and therefore hope?

The findings will be presented in two ways. In chapter five they will be presented synchronically in order to show common de-essentializing themes that surfaced frequently and give a view of the various DTR and contextual factors that exist among the youth. These are useful for guiding further research. In chapter six they will be presented diachronically in one youth’s life in order to illustrate the interrelatedness of these factors through time.

By interviewing two groups--those who have participated or graduated from GUREC and those who have not attended secondary school--data was gathered that may be useful in determining the effects of a program like GUREC. Therefore, this project focuses on two groups of male youth in the informal settlements. The first is comprised of those who completed, or are completing, a non-formal secondary school (GUREC). The second is comprised of those who are from the same settlements but are negotiating life without secondary school.

³Though many practitioners use the term “informal settlements,” the youth, local residents with whom I worked, and practitioners interviewed referred to the settlements as the “slums.” Therefore, I will use the terms interchangeably.

⁴Sociologically this links to Merton’s theory of interrelated status sets, for “from the sociological perspective of this status set, ‘one is not a man or a black or an adolescent or a Protestant, or self defined and socially defined as middle-class, and so on. Sociologically, ‘one’ is, of course, all of these and, depending on the size of the status set, much more” (Merton 1972, 24).

Research Setting

A description of the research setting will be presented according to the literature in chapter two and according to the youth in chapter four.

The Settlements

This research involved male youth from the Nairobi informal settlements of Dandora, Embakasi, Githurai, Huruma, Kanuku, Kariobangi, Kawangware, Kibera, Korogocho, Lungalunga, Madiwa, Majengo, and Mathare.

GUREC

GUREC, Ghetto in Urban Rehabilitation and Education Center, located in Ziwani, is “a registered community initiative founded in April 2001 to intervene in the limited opportunities facing the ghetto children” (GUREC pamphlet). It is locally initiated, led, and supported. The founder and director, Pastor Regina Naya, is a resident of Nairobi who has chosen to live and serve in the Ziwani ghetto for the last twenty-five years in order to serve the people of the Mathare, Majengo, Huruma, and Korogocho slums,⁵ all located in the Nairobi North District. GUREC’s main source of funding is the local community. To accomplish its objectives, GUREC networks with KENWA (Kenya Network of Women Living with AIDS), the Chief’s Office, local Christians, and a network of pastors of local churches within the informal settlements.

GUREC has three main programs. First, the “learning centre” (GUREC), initiated in 2004, is operated out of temporary buildings that GUREC built on land loaned to them by the government. At the Centre there is a non-formal secondary education program as well as full residential care for orphans, abused children, and HIV/AIDS children. The purpose of the school is to provide an opportunity for education and discipleship to youth living in the informal settlements while the youth maintain contact with their communities. Typically the youth return to the slums because that is where their homes are (ToSN 80). Most do not get jobs that take them out of the slums. However when they go back to the slums, they go back “changed spiritually” and do not engage in destructive activities (ToSN 78) because “that is not where you were bound to be” (ToSN 82). The result is “you start your life once again being another person” (ToSN 80) who will “be very influential to other young men there” (ToSN 82).

Second are the Community Doorstep Support Centres (CDSC); these are GUREC offices located in the heart of each of the informal settlements they serve. The purpose is to facilitate the rescue of children being abused and abandoned, provide counseling for household heads, and recruit students for the secondary education program at GUREC.

Third, the Innovative Nurtured Skills in Development of Entrepreneurship (INSIDE) was initiated to identify innovative business ideas among children and train them to start businesses. For example, a few boys make leather footballs to sell. The goal is to help students start businesses they can develop after finishing secondary school.

⁵The term “slums” is Pastor Reginah’s term.

Definition of Terms

Here terms are defined that are used in the framing of the research problem.

CTR. The term “constructive tactic of resilience” is used to refer to an intentional action that the youth knows has constructive consequences.

De-essentialize. De-essentializing is the process by which variation, complexity, and change are exposed so that the essentialized category is seen to be inadequate to describe a youth’s identity.

DTR. The term “destructive tactic of resilience” is used to refer to an intentional action that the youth knows has destructive consequences but chooses to employ to advance his agenda.

Essentialize. Essentializing, as used here, involves a lack of variation, fixedness in time, and some kind of causal linkage between deep kind-determining characteristics and surface properties and behaviors. It is reducing someone to “essentially” one thing based on perceived behavior or characteristics so that aspects of behavior, attitudes, and characteristics that do not fit the simplistic caricature are ignored and the person is more or less locked into that identity over time. For example, if a young man steals, he is a thief, and “thief” becomes his whole, or his dominant identity for a long time or forever.

Form One-Four. When capitalized as follows, Form One or Form Four, “Form” refers to secondary school class levels.

Kenyan Shillings. The abbreviation KSh refers to Kenyan Shillings. The exchange rate during the time of the fieldwork was about 80 Kenyan Shillings to one U.S. dollar.

Negotiate or navigate the challenges. The term “negotiate” rather than “navigate” is used to explain how youth engage the challenges they face, because the first implies a dialogical engagement while the second implies a unilateral strategy through terrain. Vigh uses the term “navigation” to mean “motion within motion,” that is, a person moving within the social terrain while it simultaneously moves him (2006, 54-55). The process is certainly one of engaging with living and nonliving, static and dynamic forces within the social terrain.

Non-formal secondary school. Thompson’s (2001, ix, x) study on non-formal education in Kisumu, Mombasa, and Nairobi revealed the following common characteristics of non-formal schools:

1. They are not organized within the government formal school structures.
2. Their curricula are similar to formal schools.
3. Because of low cost they are more accessible to students left out of formal schools.
4. Many tend to have rehabilitative purposes.
5. Most are located in poor urban areas.
6. Most of the facilities are temporary structures.

Secondary schools follow Standard Eight, precede university, and are delineated as Form One--Four.

Resilience. Malindi and Theron follow Ungar (2008) and define resilience as “the capacity of individuals to navigate their way towards resources that sustain well-being, the capacity of the individuals’ physical and social ecologies to provide resilience promoting resources, and, lastly, the capacity of individuals, families, and communities to

negotiate culturally meaningful ways to share resilience resources” (Malindi and Theron 2010, 319). I use this definition in this study except do not require that the goal or outcome be to “sustain well-being,” which is contextually defined. For example, choosing a destructive tactic of resilience for short term gain because of immediate threats can be, in my understanding, resilience. When a boy who lived on the streets was questioned about his fear of contracting AIDS through the practice of *kunyenga* (male on male rape to establish and maintain hierarchy within a group of “street boys”) he said, “AIDS? Are you serious? It is like a cloud on the horizon. The pain in my stomach is here, now. It's in me. Don't talk to me about distant clouds, my friend. When you live like shit and die like flies, you can't be bothered by things like that” (Lockhart 2008, 106).

Resilience is tied to agency so if a youth appears to be passively dependent on someone but has manipulated that person into caring for him, he has demonstrated resilience.

Tactics of resilience. Tactics of resilience are defined in this study as practices that move the youth's personal agenda forward. This avoids the problem of having to find a universal definition of resilience, well-being, health, mental health, or success (regarding the difficulty of this, see Vaillant 1977, 5). Because tactics of resilience can contribute to a youth not going to secondary school and can be used by that youth to take care of himself, and even prosper (according to his definition), without school, the reason for focusing on these tactics is threefold. First, with a better understanding of these tactics, organizations such as GUREC may be able to encourage those tactics and more affectively help youth find ways around the obstacles that keep them from secondary school. Second, since many youth ultimately cannot participate in secondary education, understanding their tactics of resilience may point to ways to encourage them as they find ways to support themselves and contribute to the community other than through school.⁶ Third, since tactics of resilience can be destructive or constructive, this study may provide insight into ways of redirecting destructive tactics of resilience to constructive ends.

Standard One-Eight. When capitalized as follows, Standard Three or Standard Eight, “Standard” refers to primary school class levels.

Treasure. Students of GUREC are referred to as “Treasures” by the GUREC leadership and by one another. The label was taken from the Bible: “and the LORD has declared today that you are a people for his treasured possession, as he has promised you, and that you are to keep all his commandments” (Deut 26:18 NIV).

Youth. The term “youth” is used in this study with the awareness of the complexities related to its definition, which are discussed later. The definition of youth varies depending on whether one considers chronology or roles in society ascribed to people as primary indicators. This study follows Achola's example in using ages fifteen to thirty-five to define youth, taking into account “the physical, psychological, cultural, social, and political aspects that explain the Kenyan youth situation” (Achola 2006, 20).

A Note on Direct Quotations from the Interviews

Since English is not the first language of those who were interviewed, direct quotations do not reflect standard English grammar. For the sake of accuracy and

⁶This could be helpful to GUREC as it relates to students with whom they have contact but who cannot come up with the school fees and therefore cannot join GUREC. There may still be ways for GUREC to encourage them by somehow facilitating their resilience practices.

clarity I neither edited the grammar nor inserted “*sic*” at each instance of improper grammar.

Delimitations

It is not being suggested that substance abuse, crime, and other destructive behaviors are always forms of resilience (Heath, Toste, and Zinck 2008, 47). For example, though “becoming an alcoholic is a way of escaping from a situation that a person cannot bear anymore” (Floris 2006, 96) and drinking is a way of “letting off steam allowing situations of despair to become acceptable” (Floris 2006 96, 97), it may be that youth “succumb to crime and delinquencies such as drug abuse ... alcoholism” which implies they are perhaps not using them intentionally as a tactic of resilience (Abeledo and Pierli 2002, 45).

Also, this study is not seeking to justify the use of DTR. This study is in no way meant to justify, romanticize, or make light of DTR. Many, perhaps most, youth who engage in DTR in the settlements, die as a result. For example, there were twenty youth in ToLMN’s gang. Only two are left. One is “mad” and “just collecting things on the road eating,” “taking alcohol” and “sleeping on the roads” and ToLMN is the only one remaining whose “life is upright” (ToLMN 138). Furthermore, when DTR harm others, the DTR are unacceptable and the youth should be restrained. Malindi and Theron seek to point out resilience embedded in maladaptive practices but not to “whitewash the many challenges street youth face or condone antisocial coping mechanisms” (2010, 324).

As used here, de-essentializing is not exchanging one essentialization for another. For example, Bourgois’ research de-essentialized women who were pregnant and addicted to crack “from the monstrous image of the cruel, unfeeling mother” and re-essentialized them “simply as self-destructive rebels” (Bourgois 1998, 348). The complexity of individuals makes them more than one essentialized label.

This study does not make generalizations about male youth or create new essentialized categories. Rather, it reveals details about certain typically essentialized individuals’ lives which demonstrate that the common essentializations are inadequate—specifically that the youth who employ DTR are not necessarily helpless, super-youth, or hopeless for prosocial change. However, this study is relevant to a broad group of male youth in the informal settlements of Nairobi. Though the data regarding students who attend GUREC cannot be generalized without qualification to students who attend other secondary schools, the similar challenges related to going to secondary school in general reported in the interviews suggests a high probability of relevance so that GUREC can, to some degree, function as representative of secondary schools—especially other non-formal secondary schools.

Assumptions and Limitations

One assumption brought to the research is that the youth interviewed, as people, are “complex systems” (Nybell 2001, 213, 220) embedded in a “complex of nested, interconnected [socio-ecological] systems” (Bronfenbrenner 2005, 54; Hiebert 2009, 133-137),⁷ through which harm and support come (de Boeck and Honwana 2005,

⁷This stands in contrast to a reductionistic or stratigraphic approach (Hiebert 2009, 136). It differs from “Chaos theory” in that it is the design of a Creator who also sustains it.

2; Triplehorn and Chen 2006, 225; see also Ayuku et al. 2004, 296). As a result, though they are vulnerable (Kilbride 1992; Lubeck and Garrett 1990), their continued existence is evidence of degrees of resilience which can be used constructively or destructively in the community (Swart-Kruger and Donald 1994, 120). Therefore, if more was known of the lives of the youth interviewed—if they were seen through an even wider lens—their lives would look more different still. In fact, if all of the details of each interview were included to widen the lens, their lives would look different from what has been written. However, space does not allow for that broad of an analysis. Also such an analysis is outside the scope of this study.

This project is about the youths' descriptions of how they negotiate the challenges of going to school and negotiating life without school—not what actually happened since I do not know exactly what happened. Though it is difficult to know how true what the youth are saying is, it is important to hear their voices since, historically, their voices have not been foregrounded (Scheper-Hughes and Sargent 1998, 13; Gilgun and Abrams 2005, 57; citing Ungar 2004). However, comparing the data, there are many repeated themes and examples of resilience tactics which indicate a reasonable degree of truthfulness. Though there is room for exaggeration and falsehoods, my assumption is that the data points to avenues of further inquiry that were previously not so clear.

Significance of the Research

Ungar says that resilience is a theory that can inform action. It is a concept that changes our focus from the breakdown and disorder attributed to exposure to stressful environments, to the individual characteristics and social processes associated with either normal or unexpectedly positive psychosocial development. (2008, 21)

Crawford, Wright, and Masten say that resilience research is “a search for knowledge about the processes that could account for positive adaptation and development in the context of adversity and disadvantage” (2005, 355).

This study found that when more of the story of a youth is known, he is often seen less as helpless in his situations and less as hopeless in terms of reform or prosocial behavior. Essentializing influences policies and programs so that the resilience of youth is not engaged constructively. It is then easier to assume that the youth are helpless and to initiate programs that foster dependency or manipulation when they realize how they can gain from playing the role of a helpless victim (see Utas' discussion of “victimcy” in 2005); to become enamored with a perceived magical quality “as if the individual is capable of surmounting any obstacle” (Dass-Brailsford 2005, 588); or to write them off—marginalizing them or killing them without trial.

CHAPTER 2

PRECEDENT LITERATURE

Literature related to male youth in the informal settlements of Nairobi, youth and violence, identity and essentialism, resilience research, and representation and methodology inform this study. The literature on identity and essentialism frame this study's concern for male youth of the settlements being defined by a small set of fixed characteristics. The literature on resilience research and representation frame the theories and methodology that were employed to show complexity that points to potential for prosocial change.

Identity and Essentialization

Literature on identity is helpful in this study, not so much for trying to understand the identity issues within the settlements such as the role that the “feeling of tribal identity” plays—which, as Mbiti said, varies like temperature (Mbiti 1969, 102) and Tarimo added, varies especially in months leading up to elections (2009, 27)—but because the “male youth of the slums” are often essentialized as an homogenous group⁸ Such essentialized identities can result in the exploitation of the one essentialized, or be exploited by that one to his advantage.

This section situates this study in literature that outlines how dynamics of essentialism and identity function in those viewing the youth and in the youth being viewed and in how such essentialism can be mitigated.⁹

Those Viewing the Youth

There are a number of dynamics and issues that affect how those viewing the youth see them. The literature points out the problems and limitations involved in viewing someone in a non-complex essentialized way. It also speaks to how the processes of interpersonal communication, historiography, and ethnography can fuel essentializations.

⁸Being a Kikuyu youth can be more dangerous because of being associated with Mungiki, and some stories were gathered of neighbors taking up *pangas* against one another in the post-election violence. I am also aware of the argument that ethnic identity may be stronger in an urban setting (Tamiro 2009, 29). However, the data collected in this study did not lead to that conclusion. According to LM, growing up together erases tribal identity markers (42). He says, “the young youths we don’t care about the tribe of others.... our parents are the ones who have those issues” (LM 42). However, the social group “male youth” is sometimes essentialized and often dealt with as a homogeneous unit (see for example, Tarimo and Manwelo, eds. 2009).

⁹I am aware of the philosophical debate concerning essentialism and constructionism as related to identity (see, for example Fuchs 2001, Oderberg 2008, and Azibo 2011). However, that debate is not engaged here since the central issue of this study is the de-essentializing effect of the details of the lives of youth through their voices on the essentialized views of those youth according to DTR they employ rather than on the philosophical questions as to what a human is and how a human can be observed and known. In this regard this study has more to do with psychological essentialism (Medin 1989) than with metaphysical essentialism, though they are related.

A “Kind” of Person

Gee argues that humans acting in a given context are recognized as “being” “a certain ‘kind of person’” (2000, 99). This identity can be constructed based on perceptions of nature, recognized positionality in a society, discourse, and association with certain groups or a combination of them (2000, 100). A person can then be reduced to sociological analytical terms abstracted from the concreteness of their lived realities that do not “capture their entire content” (Merton 1972, 39). Though identities construed in these ways can be temporary and contextually constructed, they can also become fixed. Reducing a person to a simplistic identity construct that does not change, or does not change easily, is a form of essentialism.

No “Kind” of Person

In *Against Essentialism* (2001), Stephan Fuchs counters the idea of a person being a natural kind, arguing that a “person is a variable construct of variable observers, not a natural kind, essence, or constant” (2001, 64). For Fuchs, identity is a result of an encounter in a network that will change when the encounter ends and a new encounter is created. He argues for relationalism over essentialism, claiming that one’s identity is determined by what one happens to be related to at a point in time so that personhood becomes a kind of a temporary network configuration (Sica 2002). Fuchs uses the crude analogy from Bourdieu that feces is feces in the sewage system but becomes art when included in a piece of artwork because of what it is related to. However, counter Fuchs, I suggest not many would want to handle it even if they concede it has become art, and that no one would believe it has become food if it is put on a plate (Fuchs 2001, 9). Though Fuchs may be writing for affect (Sica 2002), he tends to “over-generalize” which borders on essentialism (Fourtnier 2001, 435). For example, he seems to be saying that “personhood is *essentially* a variable construct of variable observers” (2001, 64). Herzfeld noted that anti-essentialists can be as essentializing as anything they oppose (2001, 31).

The Limits of Social and Linguistic Constructs

A more moderate view is put forth by Gergen who says that what one believes to be real about a person is socially constructed but this does not mean that nothing exists outside of social and linguistic constructions. Rather, “whatever exists simply exists, irrespective of linguistic practices” (2001, 806). Any description of what exists is a constructed attempt that can only be approximate. Applied to identities, we are left to approximate understandings.

The Limits of Description

Essentializing identities is problematic because even if an object has an essence that makes it that thing in particular, or as Oderberg says “everything is something or other” (2008, 86), its essence cannot be dependent on how it is described because it may be described in multiple ways—such as a piece of rock, a paper weight, and an ashtray— or a youth, a thief, and a victim—leading to a contradiction of multiple essences (Medin 1989, 183). If its essence cannot be dependent on how it is described, it certainly cannot be dependent on uncritical assumptions people make about it.

Assumed Essentialism

Metaphysical essentialism would require access to the deep inherent essence that makes something what it is, and leaving aside the debate as to whether that

essence exists, there remains the problem of gaining access to it. In response to this, Medin and Ortony introduced the idea of “psychological essentialism” which they define as “not the view that *things* have essences” but that people’s representations might reflect a view that “surface features are frequently constrained by, and sometimes generated by, the deeper, more central parts of concepts” (*italics are theirs*) (1989, 183, 180).¹⁰ In other words, they are not arguing for metaphysical essentialism but that people tend to “assume, or act as though, concepts have essences” (1989, 184).

Medin and Ortony argue that identity properties should be seen on a continuum ranging from “relatively inaccessible, deep properties to more accessible, surface ones” (1989, 185). Fuchs comes close to Medin and Ortony’s idea when he says, “...personhood has various degrees of depth. Most observers see only a fraction of the surface. A select few intimates are invited backstage” (2001, 6).¹¹ There are stronger and weaker linkages between the deeper and surface properties so that deeper properties cause or constrain the more superficial ones to varying degrees. Therefore, whales, looking like fish but being mammals, are an exception to assumed appearances (Medin and Ortony 1989, 186). If there are exceptions when distinguishing fish and swimming mammals under close scrutiny where the various properties and constraining linkages are examined and tested, how much more will there be exceptions to constructed appearances when the connection of accessible properties to deeper constraining properties is more ambiguous and harder to examine and when there may be vested interests in maintaining boundaries? Any representation depends on the credibility of the methodology and integrity of the researcher—whether slum tours or extended, collaborative ethnographies.

In psychological essentialism there is room for exceptions and ambiguity in one’s knowledge and representation of objects. Therefore, people can be unwilling to change how they have classified certain objects even when some properties have changed so that the object becomes more like exemplars of another category (Medin and Ortony 1989, 184). Applied to categorizing people, this is problematic because it allows people to learn about exceptions, complexity, and ambiguity and yet to hold their essentialized understandings.

The data of this study suggests that male youth in the slums, looking like helpless victims or like hopeless demons are actually quite capable and demonstrate compassion. Deeper properties that should constrain assumed appearances are seen in motives, inner conflict, thought processes, and effective catalysts of prosocial change, among other things. I would argue that these are somehow linked to what it means to be human.

Variation and Temporality

Essentialism is “a way of representing or construing” objects, including people (Barrett 2001, 3). Essentialism usually has at least three elements: a lack of variation, fixedness in time or immutability, and some kind of causal linkage between deep kind-determining characteristics and surface properties and behaviors. Strassberg

¹⁰He also says that this is “a psychologically plausible analog of the logically implausible doctrine of metaphysical essentialism” (1989, 183).

¹¹Later he says, “on backstage, you are who you are—whoever you are.... The few intimates who are allowed backstage contribute more to judging who you really are, but they are and remain their own persons as well” (Fuchs 2001, 197). This sounds very much like Oderberg’s essentialist “everything is something or other” and his quote of Butler (1914) who said, ““everything is what it is and not another thing”” (Oderberg 2008, 86).

contrasts essentialization with hybridity, emphasizing “timeless continuity, organic unity, and boundedness in space” (2008). Barrett argues that essentialism “ties various essentialized features *causally* to a central representational node” (2001, 4). Hertzfeld argues that essentialism is often conflated with biological determinism, reification, objectivism, and literalism but its distinction is that it suppresses temporality and attributes “unchanging primordial ontology” to “historically contingent products” of agency and so contradicts or suppresses “local-level and actor-oriented practices” (2002, 288). Kashima et al. define it as possessing “an immutable underlying essence” (2010, 307). Fuchs defines it as the search for “the intrinsic ‘nature’ of things as they are, in and of themselves,” the opposite strategy being relationalism” (2001, 12). It “makes either/or distinctions rather than variable distinctions in degree” and includes “static typologies and rigid classifications” (2001, 13-15). It fails to allow variation and does not take the observer into account (2001, 15-17). Fuchs ties essentialism to common sense and sets it against variation and temporality that is a result of networks. Similarly Mahalingam argues that essentialism is “an early cognitive mechanism” that generates folk biology, folk psychology, and folk sociology (Mahalingam and Rodriguez 2003, 158).

Communication and Essentialism (Kashima 2010)

Kashima et al. argue that interpersonal communication is a “source of the psychological sense of social reality” and can fuel naïve essentializations (2010, 307-308). Their study demonstrated their hypothesis that “speaking about a social category and establishing a mutual understanding about it with an audience” tended to create a shared reality and essentialize the social category (2010, 307). The essentializations were stronger under the following conditions: the social categories were described in dichotomized bipolar traits such as kind and unkind; the sender had ambiguous information; the sender was perceived somehow as authoritative; the receiver had no information (2010, 308-309). A dissenting voice mitigates the essentialization. Essentialization, as they construe it, has two primary features: dispositional attribution and immutability—that is, that the trait cannot be changed by human intervention (2010, 309-310). They found that the stronger the trait disposition attributed, the more widely or consistently it is presumed to be shared by all of the members of the group (309).

Historiography and Ethnography

In this section, historical and ethnographic essentialism are presented together because of the challenges related to capturing the events and experiences of others in writing.

The Complexities of Historiography

The complexities of historiography and ethnography, not to mention the effects of media, demonstrate that there is more to the story than anyone knows—which challenges essentialism.

In his book *History in Three Keys*, Cohen is trying to “gain a clearer perspective of what historians do” (1997, 289). He posits that the past is “known” through the historian’s narrative of the event, the experience of those living then, and the mythologizing done later. His argument is that by investigating event, experience, and myth as related to a historical case, the historian can form a bridge between the past and the present “making possible some degree of useful communication between the two” (1997, 287, 297).

Regarding the narrative of the event, Cohen argues that the reconstructed narration of the past is “fundamentally different from the history people make” (1997, 3), because historians are able to see with “wide-angle vision,” that is, a “plurality of discrete events widely scattered over space (and time)” and hypothesize as to how such events are related (1997, 11). Knowing the outcome, they construct an explanation that is inaccessible to the participants and constrained by their own passions and issues of the times. In addition to this, historical writing attempts to bring order to the seemingly chaotic details of the past which requires “radical simplification and compression of the past” using sources that are not representative of all that was experienced (1997, 4).

Regarding the recovery of the “experienced past,” Cohen argues that participants experienced and apprehended their experience in unique and varied ways because of their “outcome-blindness” (1997, 61). Cultural, social, and geographical factors shaped their perceptions and their motives so that each experienced the time in a unique way. For example, those who were seeking to kill experienced the time in a far different way than those who feared being killed. This is difficult to grasp by historians looking back on the events who see the experiences of the participants only as they relate to the events under study. Besides this, it must be taken into account that only a fraction of experiences are recorded—what is “unmemorable” is often not taken into consideration—and what is recorded is only a replication which cannot preserve what is experienced by the senses (1997, 59-64).

Regarding mythologizing, Cohen uses myth to refer to “assertions about the past” that have entered “deeply into people’s minds (and hearts)” and “acquire a truth of their own” (1997, 212). They become assertions “about what people believe” and these beliefs affect how people feel, think, and behave (1997, 212). Mythologizers seek to draw on the power of the myth for needs of the present (1997, 213). To be credible and persuasive, myths must “be bound by at least a loose conception of ‘truthfulness’” (1997, 214). Mythologizers essentialize history so that having a lot of historical information does not diminish mythologizing (1997, 212 – 214). Cohen says,

The difference between historians and mythologizers is that, where historians deal in (or at least are supposed to deal in) complexity, nuance, and ambiguity, mythologizers generally operate with a one-dimensional view of the past, wrenching from the past single characteristics or traits or patterns that are then portrayed as the essence of past reality. (1998, 214)

He calls this a process of essentialization (1998, 214).

The Complexities of Ethnography

Even if one is able to conduct qualitative interviews, the nature of the data must be understood since people can only convey their experience of pain and suffering “through the distortion of word, image, and sound” (Robben and Nordstrom 1995, 12). Robben and Nordstrom write that “any rendition of the contradictory realities of violence imposes order and reason on what has been experienced as chaotic.... [I]t loses its absurdity and incomprehensibility; paradoxically, the very qualities that we would like to convey” (1995, 12).

In his article, “Ethnographic states of emergency,” Allen Feldman says that the “act of writing itself supposedly lifts physical violence to a symbolic, nonmaterial

level” (1995, 226)¹² and tries to “concentrate *their* experience into *our compartments* to endow their sensorium with coherence” (emphasis his) (1995, 247). The intent thus becomes to “reduce the degree of distortion” by staying close to the “flow of life” through participant observation and first-hand interviews which will evoke greater understanding among the readership (Robben and Nordstrom 1995, 13).

Layers of Essentializations and Conflicting Voices

This study has found layers of essentializations in the literature related to male youth in the settlements that are affected by combinations of sociological, psychological, historical, ethnographic, and strategic essentializing perspectives. These include essentializations of Africa, of the informal settlements, of youth in general, of “youth at-risk,” and specifically of youth who employ DTR. This results in a hybrid or multi-perspectival layered essentialism. The concern is that if an essentialization of a youth employing DTR is nested within essentializations of “youth at-risk,” nested in essentializations of youth in general, nested in essentializations of the settlements, nested in essentializations of Africa, the buried essentialization seems even more certain with no compelling reason to explore it—especially if there are also political reasons for not exploring it.

Essentializations of Africa

In 1997 Tiénou raised the significance of one’s answer to the question “What is Africa?” and argued that the answer for most non-Africans is informed by media and is generally “limited to the superficial, the sensational, and the exotic” (1997, 94). Misery and despair are the chief characteristics so that “the continent’s inhabitants are perceived as helpless children or junior members of the human race and in constant need of benevolent care” (1997, 94).

van Dijk et al argued in 2007 that an “African pessimism” became dominant in development literature around the year 2000 (2007, 1). Anugwom argued in 2004 that social scientists in Africa were caged by the state, Western in perspective, lazy, and self-seeking and are a significant cause of the state of Africa as a continent “in tatters” with a “choking poverty situation among the citizens” (2004, 400).

Essentializations of the Settlements

The settlements are communities characterized by a combination of “insecurity of land tenure, poor structural housing conditions, deficient access to safe drinking water and sanitation, and severe overcrowding” (DIGNITAS 2008, 3) with “limited access to appropriate housing, electricity and sanitation” and “precarious physical, social and legal conditions” that “heavily affect residents’ health” (UN-Habitat 2006, 14). And yet to understand the slums one must look past the visible aspects of poverty and “learn the ways of life of the slum” in order not to dismiss the people as hopeless (Moschetti et al. 2011, 1). Essentializations of the settlements range from “the edge of biological survival” (Floris 2006, 60) to a place that “brings positive values to our lives” (Marennya 2002, 50). Below is a brief review of literature that illustrates these various essentializations. Most are negative.

¹²He goes on, “... bringing it to an equally symbolic end that coincides with the conclusive termination of prescriptive discourse” (1995, 226).

“The Edge of Biological Survival”

An informal settlement of Nairobi is marked by extremes so that life there is described as being on the “edge of biological survival” and “incompatible with the world of human beings” (Floris 2006, 60; citing Agamben 1995). In his *“Puppets or people: A sociological analysis of Korogocho slum,”* Fabrizio Floris describes the slum as “fundamentally the outcome of loss: loss of land, of a home, of one’s village, that is the attributes of identity, of relationships, of memories that are connected to a place” (2006, 60). He says it is a place in which the population grows explosively year by year “though everything is missing” (2006, 16). The slums are places where “people are kept down and oppressed” and violence, rape, brawls, and thievery are “everyday routine” (Floris 2006, 33). The etymology of the Kikuyu word *kurugucu* from which the name Korogocho is derived means “empty” or “worthless”—a definition which “forms the backdrop against which Korogocho is perceived both from within and without” (Achola 2006, 16).

The slums are points of access to Nairobi and its goods and services, though with the accompanying risks of corruption, poverty, and violence (Floris 2006, 64). They are “the spatial manifestations of urban poverty, social exclusion, and inappropriate government policies... [and] represent an active, grassroots attempt by the desperately poor to take care of themselves” (Sclar and Northridge 2003, 1381). Such descriptions set the youth up to be framed in corresponding ways.

Residents live with no security of tenure, constant threats of eviction by landlords or the government, inequitable land allocation, and social economic, ethnic, and religious tensions between tenants and structure owners (Bodewes 2005, 37-50; see also Mwangi 1997, 145). The constant rumors and lack of clarity regarding upgrading creates insecurity while actual upgrading that moves people disrupts the community that exists (Makuku 2003).

Because of the high costs of food and cooking fuel (Olima 2001, 12), most struggle for food (DIGNITAS 2008, 8). This, together with poor accessibility to potable water, water pollution, and poor solid and liquid waste management (Olima 2001, 14-16) leads to poor nutrition, compromised immune systems and high exposure to disease pathogens. Floris references an unnamed study claiming “that there are more churches than toilets” in Korogocho (2006, 56-57). Health services are expensive and inadequate—with the major healthcare resource being “lay healthcare providers, including traditional healers and unqualified pharmacists” (DIGNITAS 2008b, 11; citing JHPIEGO 2007).

Migration from rural areas has resulted in the loosening of traditional family ties (Makuku 2003) and the disruption of the traditional multi-generational “network of relatives” that function as a “system of social support” (Suda 1997, 56). Three out of four households are led by single mothers—most of whom are young adolescents—and many children orphaned by AIDS are “the primary caregivers” for younger siblings (Cheng and Kariithi 2008, 5).

The politicization of ethnicity (Atieno-Odhiambo 2002, 225; Ajulu 2002, 252; Makuku 2003, 2), especially among youth (Dignitas 2008, 11), the “loss of traditional structures that kept people together” (Aderinto 1994), and dense population (Piermay 1996, 10) contribute to the “everyday violence” (Kleinman 2000, 238-239) that is “an intricately layered phenomenon” consisting of political, intellectual, psychological, and lived realities (Robben and Nordstrom 1995, 5).

Drugs and Hungry Mothers

The selling and use of drugs exacerbate the complexities of violence among jobless youth since their availability and drug habits make them easy targets for exploitation (Louw 1996, 91). Furthermore, drug use makes them unable to hold jobs and “hungry mothers can hardly be expected to discourage their children from engaging in the drug trade if that is what sustains the family” (Omitoogun 1996, 38).

“Sub-optimal” Schools

The problems mentioned above seem to “converge in schools” where outcomes are “sub-optimal, largely due to unaddressed issues of health, economic [sic], and social insecurity”—as well as the fact that pressure to participate in crime, drug abuse and unsafe environments around the school causes many to drop out (Cheng and Kariithi 2008, 15, 18). Because of the struggle for food, even students who do well in school are often required to drop out in order to make money for the family (Cheng and Kariithi 2008, 16). The lack of employment opportunities for graduates of secondary schools, early pregnancy, drug abuse, the lack of money for school fees, and the opportunity to make money by illegal means lowers the motivation for students to enroll or complete education (Cheng and Kariithi 2008, 17-18).

“Systematic Suspicion”

According to Marguerat, in many African countries youth and children are viewed with “systematic suspicion” and as a threat—which has resulted in the “summary mowing down of youths in the streets when the occasion presented itself,” making them “the primary source and victims of violence” (Marguerat 1996, 87).

Otieno says that “more than 2/3 of the energetic youths of full productive age and potentials are in the slums” with “no substantial or meaningful economical engagement,” and, as a result, “are more likely to engage in acts of crime as a means of providing for their basic and leisure needs” (2006). In Kenya over fifty per cent of convicted prisoners are between sixteen and twenty-five years old (UN-Habitat 2007, 1).

However, on the occasion of the death of John Ochieng, a social worker who gave his life serving the youth, especially street children, in Korogocho, it was said, Many of the youths who passed through him during their early Christian formative years have grown to be successful people who are serving humanity in different parts of the world. This was evidently clear from the messages of condolences which came from all over the world as soon as the news of his death was announced. (Ogola 2011)

The Underbelly of Nairobi

According to UN-Habitat, two thirds of Nairobi's labor force is employed in the informal sector (slums) and “a considerable share of the city's income is produced and consumed in the slums” (UN-Habitat 2006, 14). For example, millions of slum dwellers “pour out of the city's underbelly to repair its cars, sweep its streets, construct its skyscrapers, and guard its mansions” (Mutiga 2011). While Moschetti et al. state that “many residents of Korogocho work very hard to earn a living” (Moschetti et al. 2011, 1), others say that slums are places where many most youth “are jobless since, when you wake up, you meet with them daily, there is nowhere they go, they just stay here in *mtaani*” (TUVWX 71) and “there are no jobs and no government support” (B 19).

The Voices of Researchers and Residents

Floris concludes, “the context is too complicated It is only through the people’s amazing ability to adjust to situations and to find an answer to these difficult issues that they are able to resolve their local problems themselves” (2006, 33). Such descriptions and caricatures, though containing elements of truth, show just one aspect of the lived realities there and may violate the will of residents concerning how they want to be viewed by imposing an essentializing image on the residents. Though residents recognize the challenges of the slums, some say “it is not such a bad place” (ToQB 36) and others, “you can categorize it any way you wish” (B 219).

Marennya says that “life in the slums, as viewed by outsiders, is considered to be some form of hell on earth” and yet residents speak of positive and negative sides so that while they are places of “despair often lacking a sense of humanity,” living there also “brings positive values to our lives” (Marennya 2002, 50). Since it is still true that “in most of the cases those who write or talk about the slums are not slum dwellers themselves, but outsiders who usually write second-hand information” (Marennya 2002, 50), this study seeks to listen to the varied and conflicted voices of researchers and residents. By doing so, life in the slums is seen as more complex than the hyperbolic, generalized, and reductionistic language sometimes used to describe it. The conflicting voices represented in this description of the research setting perhaps paint a more realistic picture.

Essentializations of Youth and Youth “at Risk”

Essentializations of youth in the literature have a long history and begin with debates regarding the definitions of basic terms such as “child” and “youth” as related to age, rites of initiation, dichotomistic representations, universal constructs, and social constructs. The label “youth at risk” tends to be described and reinforced by strong essentializing language.

The Complex Identity of the Youth

Defining children or youth by age and then attaching defining characteristics is misleading (Bansikiza 2004, 140). The age marking the beginning of adulthood ranges from eighteen (CRC, preamble) to between thirty (Dignitas 2008, 5) and forty-five (Bodewes 2005, 80). Others mark the beginning of adulthood by rites of initiation (Nwaigbo 2004, 191), and roles related to marital status, the ability to work, and spiritual competencies (Kostelny 2006, 20) that were accompanied by training (Ndung’u 2001, 126).

Youth cannot be understood in simplistic dichotomistic representations (Straker 1996, 23),¹³ such as innocent victims or villains—as “problematic byproducts of an endangered world,” that like “toxic waste” must be “contained” (Nybell 2001, 227)—or even “little creature[s] of pure malevolence” that must be destroyed (Hill 1995, 97 and Santos-Granero 2000, 278). Ennew argues that simplistic popular images of street children are “one extra problem that they simply don’t need” (2000, 12).

Though there are some similarities, there is not a universal construct of “‘childhood’ that consists of a standard series of stages in the passage toward adulthood” that is “independent of class, gender, culture, geography, or ethnicity” (Theis 2001, 99-

¹³Straker, Gillian. 1989. “From victim to villain: A ‘slight’ of speech? Media representations of Township youth.” *South African Journal of Psychology*. 19, 20 - 27.

100). Kilbride and Kilbride argue that “every person or society is like *every* other one, like *some* other ones, and like *no* other one” (1990, xii; see also Howana and de Boeck 2005, 4).

In 1990 James and Prout edited a collection of essays drawing attention to an emerging paradigm for studying childhood as a social construction. While they could write in 1990 that research “reveals a variety of childhoods” (1990, 4), still in 2001, a universal model of childhood continued to exert a strong influence (Theis 2001, 99-100).

Childhood and youth as social constructions must be studied in a “complex of nested,” social and bio-ecological “interconnected systems” (Bronfenbrenner 2005, 54) that are simultaneously local and global (Schwartzman 2001, 8) and through which support, protection, and harm come (Triplehorn and Chen 2006, 225; see also Ayuku et al. 2004, 296). Hiebert argues that these need to be seen within an organic system of systems in which causality is multidirectional and in which social, spiritual, cultural, technological, physical, and personal systems are situated (2009, 133 – 137; following Bertalanffy). Nybell suggests that throughout their development, children themselves are “complex systems”—which are not “linear, staged and goal oriented progressions” but are characterized by nonlinear changes, instability, unpredictability, and imbalance—also known as “chaos theory” (2001, 213, 220). Situating children in complex systems is even more difficult than initially expected since it cannot be assumed that “family” is a monolithic construct that is necessary, as the CRC says, for “harmonious development” (Ager 2006, 39 -43).

Essentializing Language Regarding Youth “at Risk”

Though examples describing youth who employ DTR also fit in this category because many of them are considered “youth at risk,” and though literature regarding vulnerability is reviewed below, these examples are included here to illustrate the role they play in the idea of layered essentializations.

Essentializing language used to describe “youth at risk” includes the ideas of the “recovery of lost childhood” (Singer 2005, 207), of children who are scarred for life and become a “lost generation” (West 2004, 106), of “‘a radioactive effect’ of social violence that penetrates its victims and is unconsciously transmitted by them to the next generation” (Gampel 2000, 49) and of “transgenerational indigestible trauma” (Gampel 2000, 59).

Extraordinary

Common essentializations of youth can be divided into at least three categories: extraordinary, negative (demonized), and positive (romanticized). Often certain groups of youth thought of as “at risk” are essentialized as extraordinary (Masten 2001, 227). For example, Masten notes that early in resilience research such youth were labeled “invulnerable” and possessing an “extraordinary strength or resilience” (Masten 2001, 227). She refers to a book review regarding resilience of inner-city children published in *Contemporary Psychology* in 1995 entitled “Superkids of the Ghetto” (Masten 2001, 227).

Negative (demonization)

According to Trond Waage, “youths in Africa have lately been characterized in negative and highly generalized terms as a problem: they’re marginalized, disempowered, and reduced to the status of an underclass; in fact, they are a lost generation” (Kaplan 1994; Richards 1995, Abdullah and Bangura 1997) (2006, 63).

Frederiksen writes that “analyses of the social roles of young men in Africa have served to reinforce the widespread pessimism about the future of the continent,” since these young men are often characterized as “violent, ill educated and without morals” (2007, 73). Scheper-Hughes says of the older children in the *favelas* and squatter camps in Brazil and South Africa that they “are often viewed with suspicion and subject to an over-prediction of violence. They are seen as “dangerous,” that is, as likely to commit a violent crime and as justifying the murderous feelings toward them that are sometimes enacted directly (as in death squad attacks) or indirectly (as in child- and youth- hostile politics and legislation)” — therefore making them endangered (2006, 289).

Koffissan Matthias Adossi in *Conflict resolution and transformation: A participatory approach for youth* (2009) frames youth as trapped, incapable, and volatile with the generalized statement, “most of our young people today are trapped in conflicts on a daily basis, as they do not know how to manage, transform and resolve situations or differences...[and] juvenile delinquency and violence are symptoms of youth's inability to manage, transform and resolve conflict in their lives” (2009, 21). Adossi says that “when conflict is summative, there will be a time when the one youth accumulating it will blast and cause more damage” (2009, 23). After enumerating the issues facing street children Adossi concludes, “this reality is threatening if we let our sense talk to us. It tells us something about the insecurity we are all facing” (2009, 23).

Julius Mwai Ndirangu who holds a bachelor of education degree from Kenyatta University and has counseled high school youth in Kenya for many years,¹⁴ wrote in *Youth in danger: A handbook for teachers, students, parents, pastors and community workers* (2007), “our modern youth are an endangered species” who “are poorly equipped to cope with modern problems and frustrations” (2007, viii). This handbook is written based on the ideas that the battle for youth is won primarily in their minds which “are pliable and therefore vulnerable” and so “defenses must be established early in the lives of our youth, otherwise it will be too late” (2007, vii-viii). Later he makes the statement that “ruining the youth is the strategic plan of the devil” and “poverty becomes a perfect weapon for this” because “it drives them to the very edge of endurance; the youth will have no choice but to fall prey to the temptations” (2007, 72). At the end of the book he says “as the saying goes: ‘you straighten the tree when it is young’. Thereafter it may be too late” (2007, 110).

Ndirangu also says “it is not only the children of the poor slum dwellers who are in danger. Some affluent families may be at greater risk” (2007, viii). This challenges the essentialization of youth in the slums, implying that some of them are able to do better than youth of affluent families.

Because such a large number of youth are from “families in shambles,” Pierli argues that “a great deal of the new generation is psychologically and emotionally wounded due to violence either in the family or in the society or in both” (2009, 14). Youth “are accused of most of the ills that afflict the community” (Abeledo and Pierli 2002, 43, 44).

Achola refers to youth in Korogocho as occupying “a very awkward position” because, being mostly unemployed, “the community tends to associate them with every evil that occurs” (2006, 18). He goes on to say that “every idle youth is associated with insecurity, sexual misconduct, disrespect for adults and generally a threat to development. In so many ways the community has misunderstood them. They’re

¹⁴ From the book it seems that he has not dealt with youth in the slums (Ndirangu 2007, 71).

looked upon as a 'spoiled generation' with a destroyed future" (2006, 18). In fact, "the name Korogocho is so feared that at times, all the youths are viewed as criminals and will not be trusted with employment opportunities" (2006, 18).

These essentialized youth are then perceived as living in an essentialized place like a slum as "a field where doomed alcoholics, street beggars, and all the anthropologically impoverished gather" (Floris 2006, 55).

It is helpful to point out that sometimes even the youth essentialize the youth. ToFG said that because of youth involvement in drugs, sexual immorality, not obeying the authority of the government, "we will not have another generation.... The people we call the fathers and the grandfathers, our generation will not be there" (ToFG 2010, 210-212).

Positive (Romanticization)

Youth can also be essentialized, sometimes by the same authors, in positive ways that border on romanticization. Pierli argues that "by nature youth are peaceful," they like to socialize, "are fascinated by diversity," "welcome differences with interest and curiosity," "are seen as troubleshooters," resent being treated as children, "are fascinated by changes and far less linked to the past and their parents and educators" (2009, 13 – 14).

Adossi says, "in order to survive in a complex and changing society two characteristics of youth are put on a pedestal: their fighting spirit, that is, their determination to overcome obstacles, and their ability to adapt" (2009, 36).

Achola says that "the youth of the slum are, without doubt, immensely talented and have no deficit in the gift of creativity as compared to youths in other more privileged quarters" (2006, 7). He goes on to say that "unfortunately, being idle means the majority of these gifted and talented young people in the slum, helplessly and even unconsciously, lose their precious time and potential in the face of the unbearable, overwhelming realities of Islam" (2006, 7).

Malindi and Theron demonstrated in their research that peer groups on the streets provided important resources for resilience such as encouragement, helping one another to find good shelters, helping one another with schoolwork, sharing meager supplies of food, etc. (2010, 323). The data of this study found the same, though the report of LeRoux and Smith seems to state it too strongly when they say "when **street** children band together, they represent an exceptional companionship system, which replaces the family as a source of emotional and economic support. The group offers protection, support, friendship, and solidarity. Its members generally show strong loyalty to each other" (1998, 694).

Strategic Essentialism of Youth

The recent popular attention given to youth at risk seems to have several negative effects. First, relying on sensational aspects can distort understanding and divert attention away from the most helpful interventions (McCallin 1998, 60). Second, some of these are presentations of profiteers, fundraisers, and uninformed though well-intentioned impassioned advocates who perpetuate images of children at risk uncritically and without credible research (Douglas 1972, 24; see also Theis 2001, 101-102).

This challenge is further complicated by the pervasive role of media in shaping the perceptions and discourses about children at risk. For example, if reality and art merge in media (Fontana 2002, 161) and if ours is a cinematic society—which "knows itself through the reflective gaze of the cinematic apparatus" which is blended

with entertainment, social construction, and commodification (Denzin 2002, 833), then one's construct of youth at risk may be significantly flawed. Swart-Kruger and Donald argue that concern about the street child expressed through the media is "often uninformed and emotive in its judgment" and perpetuates stereotypes that hinder meaningful intervention (1994, 107).

Honwana found in her research of children involved in war in Angola and Mozambique that "NGO's need the victims and their stories to fulfill their sense of mission as providers of humanitarian assistance" and that "the victims quickly understand that their status as victims is crucial to obtaining aid" (2006, 15). Wessels found that images of children can be manipulated by leaders—sometimes by playing up images of vulnerability in order to demonize the enemy and sometimes by playing up images of resilience to avoid having to pay for services to children (2006, 29- 30). de Bruijn interviewed a veteran "street child" who had been living on the streets from age twelve to twenty who sees the NGOs in his community as "stealing from those on the streets" saying, "they 'use' the children as emblems but never seriously invest in their lives" (de Bruijn 2007, 281).

However, when doing research among children at risk, it is difficult to remain "neutral" (Cairns 1996, 23) because, as Garbarino et al. noted, keeping faith with the children they researched required them to write "a very political book" (1991, xxii) and as Swartz and Levett found in their study of the effects of political repression on children in South Africa, "refusing to take a political stand as a professional may be considered immoral" (Cairns 1996, 23).¹⁵

De-essentializing Complexity

A movement toward de-essentialization is evident in Anthropology of Violence and Conflict, where John Abbink says that the "experience of many anthropologists has shown, conflict and violence are a more and more common aspect of the social life of the communities that they study, and often defy easy explanation" (2001, 124). In this light, Musumeci writes, "the one who goes to Africa for a month, comes back and writes a book. The one who stays there some years, writes an article. The one who spends his whole life there, prefers to keep silent in front of its complexity" (2011, 1).

The theoretical beginning of de-essentializing the youth is found in the ideas of de Boeck and Honwana, Utas, and Scheper-Hughes. De Boeck and Honwana argue that youth in African contexts are "both *makers* and *breakers* of society, while they are simultaneously being *made* and *broken* by that society" (2006, 2). Honwana argues that the experiences of child soldiers occupy an interstitial space exposed by the breaking down of socially constructed dichotomized identities such as "civilian and combatant, victim and perpetrator, initiated and initiated, protected and protector" (2006, 4). Utas agrees that the dichotomized categories of victim/perpetrator and civilian/soldier need to be re-operationalized according to more complex understandings (2006, 57). He seeks to "collapse the dichotomy" by arguing that people can occupy both rather than an in between third quantity (2006, 75). Pierli sees youth embroiled in conflicts as "protagonists and victims at the same time" (2009, 15). Adossi says that "youth are both objects and subjects of violence in our society" (2009, 22). Boothby reports of one young Mozambican boy who participated in violence during the day to avoid being killed, but

¹⁵Swartz, L. and A. Levett. 1989. "Political repression and children in South Africa: The social construction of damaging effects." *Social Science and Medicine* 28. 7, 741 – 50.

secretly prayed for forgiveness at night (Boothby et al. 2006, 4). de Bruijn found that the “children at-risk” label denied agency to the street children in N’djaména she studied who demonstrated agency (de Bruijn 2007, 280).

Some youth may essentialize themselves and yet their behavior belies a complexity which de-essentializes them. For example, one boy who lived on the streets, said that there are “eaters” and others who are eaten saying, “you see the eaters... You know all this bad luck that follows me around? Always suffering.... Somebody is always eating and some are always suffering” (Lockhart 2008, 108) and yet his life of navigating through challenges demonstrates resilience—as he “eats” others beneath him.

Those Being Viewed

The theories of boundary maintenance (Barth 1969), situational ethnicity (Cohen 1978), two-level identity construction (Gosine 2002), and the argument that “processes of ethnicization are always at work” provide a framework for understanding the essentialization of youth in the settlements (Tabouret-Keller 1999).

Boundary Maintenance

Having observed that ethnic identity “boundaries persist despite a flow of personnel across them,” Barth argued to shift the focus of ethnic identity “from internal constitution and history of separate groups to ethnic boundaries and boundary maintenance” (1969, 9-10), making boundaries the “criteria for membership” (1969, 38). He then argued that the maintenance of ethnic identities does not depend on isolation of one group from another. Instead, it is strengthened by the interaction of groups through the use of prescriptive and proscriptive rules which signal that the criteria for membership has or has not been met and, therefore, maintain boundaries (1969, 9-10, 15). This results in a “poly-ethnic” rather than a hybrid society because a person is either a member or not (1969, 16). What becomes important in maintaining identity are the social boundaries—or meeting the criteria—rather than the “cultural stuff” the boundaries enclose (1969, 15). The significance of this is that the complexities of the supposed “cultural stuff” are less carefully examined and understood because attention is given to maintaining the boundaries. For this reason not only differences, but also aspects of sameness are overlooked. By shifting the focus this way Barth pointed to the political dimensions of identity (Barnard and Spencer 2002, 293). In other words, boundaries are maintained for a reason though many are actually becoming poly-ethnic because of travel across boundaries. Herzfeld said that since Barth’s focus on boundaries “anthropologists have steadily become more reluctant to speak of ‘ethnic groups’ as such” (Herzfeld 2001, 133).

Situational Ethnicity

However, Cohen accuses Barth of reifying boundaries so that they become too fixed, limiting societies to being poly-ethnic instead of seeing people as having multiple identities and “situational ethnicity” (Cohen 1978, 387). To solve the problem of the reification of boundaries, Cohen proposes that ethnicity is “a series of nesting dichotomizations of inclusiveness and exclusiveness” so that a person can be more or less like another person as compared to a third (1978, 387). This leads to “situational ethnicity” which Cohen describes as

the interaction of two or more persons from separate groups in which labels are used to signify the sociocultural differences between them. It

results from multiple memberships in differently scaled sociocultural groupings, one of which is used to signify the differences between actors in the situation. (1978, 389)

Two Levels of Identity Construction

Gosine writes that in the literature on identity, two levels of identity construction are highlighted and the ways they interact are tension-laden. The first is “the defensively situated, collective identities or essentialisms that racialized communities construct in relation to a dominant culture that represents them in homogeneous and stigmatized terms” (2002, 82). The second “involves the complex, multifaceted subjectivities that such seemingly homogeneous, defensively situated, collective identities can often mask” (2002, 82). Therefore, a large homogeneous group is actually heterogeneous on another level. In the settlements this would explain how, in popular portrayals, a Kikuyu and Luo youth are together “slumdogs.”

The Management of Multiple Situational Identities

Based on the idea that “processes of ethnicization are always at work” (Tabouret-Keller 1999, 336), the situational construction and management of identities may be “fostered by intergroup grievances” (Fishman 1999, 154), as well as intra-group grievances, and is noted for “its changeability in the direction of self-interest” (Fishman 1999b, 450). Padilla argues that these grievances usually have to do with economic and territorial competition (1999, 117).

Strategic Essentialism and Strategic Hybridity

The phrase “strategic essentialism,” was coined by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak in *The Post-colonial Critic*. She stood against discourses of essentialism and yet conceived of strategic essentialism as a necessity from time to time at the expense of theoretical purity (Spivak and Harasym 1990, 11). Noble argues that essentialism and hybridity “are not contradictory modes of identity, but are linked” and both used strategically, providing the Arabic-speaking youth of South-western Sydney “with a repertoire of socially useful subject positions appropriate for different uses, and in different contexts” (Noble et al. 1999, 43). Strategic essentialism is seen in two ways regarding the youth in the settlements. It is seen in how others strategically essentialize them and in how they at times strategically essentialize themselves—or exploit their essentialized position temporarily for their own agenda. This is illustrated further below.

Illustrated in the Settlements

Central to Barth’s theory is that whatever label a person ascribes to herself, she is aligning herself with that group and agreeing to be interpreted and judged as one of that group (1969, 15). That idea together with Cohen’s theory of situational ethnicity (1978) playing out in the context described above, frames the phenomenon of a youth who may background his minority ethnic identity in an election season, ascribe to himself a label that foregrounds his poverty and vulnerability when he is trying to persuade a sponsor to pay his school fee, and also foreground his poverty by not wearing shoes or carrying a cell phone so that police do not ascribe the label “thief” to him within the settlements.

The description of slum tourism below, is an example of how contact has seemed to strengthen and define the boundaries between male youth in the settlements and those not from the settlements seeking to help—perpetuating “conflict between internally experienced and externally defined identities” (Tsuda 2006, 233). The social identity of the youth in the eyes of outsiders may be understood more by virtue of boundary maintenance than by ethnographic exploration of ecological and historical factors. This raises the question as to how boundaries are maintained, and perhaps manipulated. In some cases residents in the slums are passive, allowing outsiders to enter, photograph them, write about them, and start programs. In other cases, such as in slum tourism as described below, some residents exploit the visible poverty in order to manipulate outsiders.

On the other side, to the extent that outsiders mediate and propagate understandings of the settlements through photography and video based on short relationships rather than extended ethnographies and the voices of residents, the boundary is maintained by emphasizing the difference, desperation, or exotic-ness of the one to the other. By repeatedly emphasizing the other’s exotic-ness, one is emphasizing that they are different from us (see also Dowler 2001). In this way, Nthamburi may be correct that self-definition vis-à-vis the “other” becomes somewhat distorted (2009, 69) and fosters essentialization.

Mitigating Essentializations

Robert Merton argued that “the growth of knowledge depends upon complex sets of social relations based on largely institutionalized reciprocity of trust among scholars” (1972, 10-11). It could be added that knowledge of the youth in the settlements requires similar complex sets of social relations requiring reciprocity of trust between outsiders, including scholars and those seeking to intervene, and insiders, including the youth and other local residents. Two myths undermine this.

The first myth is the idea that only insiders can understand issues and only outsiders have unprejudiced knowledge (Merton 1972, 13, 31, 34).^{16,17} Merton argues, “the role of outsider apparently no more guarantees emancipation from the myths of the collectivity than the role of the insider guarantees full insight into its social life and beliefs” (1972, 34). Therefore, their “distinctive and interactive roles in the process of truth seeking” must be considered (1972, 36). Dwyer and Buckler attempt to research from the “space between,” which they define as the recognized similarities between certain outsiders and insiders that give definition to differences seen and enumerated (2009, 60). Depending on how “insider” and “outsider are defined,” the researcher who occupies the space between is neither one nor the other. He is more of an insider than other outsiders because he is doing qualitative research with the insiders and has begun to enter their world through reading literature prior to being with them. However, he is more of an outsider than the other insiders because he has not been socialized into the group

¹⁶This “Insider Doctrine” links to ethnocentrism, defined by Sumner in 1907 as “the technical name for [the] view of things in which one’s own group is the center of everything, and all others are scaled and rated with reference to it” (Merton 1972, 17; citing Sumner, William Graham. 1907. “What we should be doing, sister.” *New York Times*, December 8. Op-Ed.).

¹⁷Simmel developed the thesis that “the stranger, not caught up in commitments to the group, can more readily acquire the strategic role of the relatively objective inquirer” (Merton 1972, 32; citing Simmel 1950).

over time and has not been ascribed insider status (see also Hellawell 2006, 488-490). The point is not to know if one is an insider or an outsider, nor necessarily to become an insider, but to be aware of and wisely live in the tensions of the space between (Dwyer and Buckler 2009, 61).

The second myth is that abstracted, impersonal, and analytical labels “capture their entire content” (Merton 1972, 39). Listening to the voices of the youth as they describe the concreteness of their lived realities illustrates how abstracting their experience to analytical labels and then assuming that what falls outside of those labels does not exist, essentializes them—even if inadvertently (see Merton 1972, 39). Believing that the perspectives of both insiders and outsiders in the settlements will generate more accurate understandings of issues there, I chose to include both perspectives in the research.

Resilience Research

In this section literature is reviewed that frames research within the debates regarding risk and vulnerability, resilience, tactics of resilience, and destructive tactics of resilience.

Risk and Vulnerability

The contested nature and complexities of risk and vulnerability provide a backdrop against which the contested nature and complexities of resilience are seen. The observation that some children with many risk factors do well and others with few risk factors do poorly points to the complexity of the concept.

Researchers debate as to whether vulnerability is defined by universal biological determinants, social constructions, or conditions created by turmoil (La Cava and Nanetti 2000, vii; Kitzinger 1990, 177; CRC, preamble; Lubeck and Garrett 1990, 328)¹⁸. De Berry argues that vulnerability is a product of both biological features and social constructions (2004, 47).

The “generalized use of the 'at risk' label is highly problematic” (Swadener and Lubeck 1995, 3) because it mis-locates problems according to assumptions. For example, Davies argues that the lives of street children in Makutano stood in “stark contrast to common Western perceptions of street children as impoverished, unstimulating, and physically and mentally detrimental,” and were not as vulnerable as assumed (2008, 326). Scheper-Hughes and Sargent note that in postindustrial society one finds the “hurried child” syndrome, or “pampered hostages” among the affluent (1998, 12-13).¹⁹ Brueggemann writes that, “children at risk” can be marked by “excessive trust in technology, excessive confidence in 'therapeutic' society, mad pursuit of consumer goods and the reduction of life to commodity, and the embrace of a pervasive militarism” (2008, 401).

After listening to, reading, and re-reading the interviews of the youth in the slums, Ungar’s words can be echoed, “the more I have listened to people recount tales of lives lived, the less sure I have become of who are failing, who are surviving, and who are thriving” (Ungar 2004, vii).

¹⁸He is citing Edelman 1989.

¹⁹For “pampered hostages” see Field 1995, 51 – 78.

The idea of abuse is not universally defined. Famuyiwa contends that “there is a large hiatus in our knowledge of child abuse in the third world” (Famuyiwa 1997, 338; Meadow 1989; Kempe 2005, 25²⁰; Akhilomen 2006, 237; Korbin 1987, 350; 2003, 434; Montgomery 2001).²¹ There are a number of contested factors that are said to lead to vulnerability. Examples include the weakening of traditional extended family networks (Kilbride 1992, 186; Ayuku et al. 2004, 309; Vérité 2007, 48; see also Nwaigbo 2004; Bansikiza 2004, 139; Cook and White 2006, 66); marginalization (La Cava and Nanetti 2000, 15; Davies 2008, 314); poverty along with having no one to help them (Kempe 2005, 22), parents with poor education and of a low social status, and large family size (Aderinto and Samuel 2008, 45-47; see also Bansikiza 2004, 149).

Scheper-Hughes (2008) concludes:

Human nature is both resilient *and* frail. There are limits to human adaptiveness as the death rates of infants on the Alto do Cruzeiro, of street kids in Bom Jesus, and hungry, marginalized, oppressed and exploited people everywhere. But the medical-social science-psychiatric pendulum has swung in recent years toward a model of human vulnerability (Harris 1997) and human frailty (Buttle 2003) to the exclusion of the awesome ability of people — adults and children — to withstand, survive, and live with horrible events. (42)

Resilience

Literature regarding the history of the resilience research debate, definitions of resilience, and problems in resilience research, provide a framework in which the idea of DTR is situated.

The History of the Debate

The idea of resilience came from applied physics, referring to the ability of materials to regain their original shape after being changed by stress, to the health sciences, referring to patients who recover from disease or trauma, and later into social science research to describe one’s ability to adapt to adversity (Boyden and Mann 2005, 6; Boyden and Cooper 2007, 1) in culturally appropriate ways (Kostelny 2006, 27).²²

Though a link between various stressors and behavioral problems in children was established in research long ago, an accumulation of evidence over the last

²⁰Kempe found that if a child works in place of education, he or she will end up poorer as an adult and will perpetuate the cycle by requiring their children to work instead of go to school. In a study in Tanzania it was found that hours of work had a negative correlation with reading and math skills (Akabayashi and Psacharopoulos 1999, 138).

²¹She is referring to Korbin 1981. She distinguishes as follows: “(i) Cultural practices that are viewed as abusive or neglectful by other cultures, but not by the culture in question; (ii) Idiosyncratic departure from one’s cultural continuum of acceptable behavior; and (iii) Societally induced harm to children beyond the control of individual parents and caretakers” (Ennew 1998, 14; citing Korbin. 1987, 31-56, 34).

²²As related to studying children, the term “resiliency” was first used of children with seriously mentally ill parents and of children in very difficult economic circumstances (Apfel and Simon 2000, 125).

thirty years or so pointing to individuals who seemed to thrive even in the midst of such circumstances (Apfel and Simon 2000, 102), led researchers to investigate what factors were involved in their resiliency (Boyden and Cooper 2007, 2).

Cairns traced data from 1916 through 1990 that generally confirm that most children exposed to political violence did not show symptoms of psychological trauma— (1996, 29, 31-33).²³ Similarly, Boothby argues that behaviors that may be considered “trauma symptoms” may be “normal responses to abnormal circumstances” (2006, 7). However, some hold that the idea of resilience is a result of social pressures and inadequate research methods (Cairns 1996, 31),²⁴ and of “massive denial” (Cairns 1996, 31),²⁵ and continue to speak of children who are scarred for life (West 2004, 106).²⁶

In contrast to these views, Gibbs’ research on Mozambicans challenged the assumption that violence irrevocably scars children, arguing that Western constructs of “innocent” and “vulnerable” can be misleading and that Mozambican youth saw themselves as more resilient than “vulnerable” (West 2004, 106).²⁷ Based on studies of children in violence in Uganda, Boyden concurred, finding that participating in the conflict can be a sign of resiliency as it is “an extremely practical survival mechanism” (West 2004, 106).²⁸ Ennew found in her research in Mogadishu that “in general, street adults have not been street children” (2000, 21). Boothby argued that the vast majority of the former child soldiers he followed for sixteen years had become “productive, capable, and caring adults” (2006, 176). After more than twenty years “working with children in war zones in Asia, Africa, Latin America, and Europe” Boothby and his colleagues claim that they “have been struck more by their purposeful striving toward psychological health than we have by the occasional collapse of their minds” (Boothby, Strang, and Wessells 2006, 2). Dawes recognized resilience but argued for a corrective to an over emphasis on resilience that might underestimate real psychological trauma (Cairns 1996, 31-32).²⁹ Cairns’ conclusion after tracing over fifty years of research on stress and coping was that the empirical evidence suggests that serious psychological consequences are not inevitable, that the salient characteristic of those who do suffer a variety of symptoms is that they tend to become worse over time, and that the research generating these results is relatively weak (1996, 67-69).

In reviewing the resilience literature, Ungar identifies four phases of research that overlap, namely: those which emphasize intrinsic qualities, protective mechanisms, positive youth development focusing on the relationship between assets

²³He recognized that the absence of such symptoms could be a sign of either resilience or traumatization (Cairns 1996, 33).

²⁴Punamaki 1987.

²⁵See Palme 1991.

²⁶See Garbarino et al. 1991, 16; also Quesada 2004, 293; citing Garbarino 1991, 376 – 383, 378.

²⁷See Gibbs 1994, 268 – 76.

²⁸See Boyden 1994, 234-267.

²⁹See Dawes, Tredoux, and Feinstein 1989, 16-43.

children have and healthy development, and the importance of context and culture to resilience in response to a recognized Eurocentric bias (2006, 53-54).

Though in informal settlements, resilience is often overlooked (DIGNITAS 2008b, 3). The senior youth at St. John Catholic Church in Korogocho say that those who dismiss the residents as hopeless have a “mistaken misconception” (Moschetti et al. 2008).

Definitions

Some define resilience more against the backdrop of risk, threat, or trauma, and emphasize outcomes. For example, resilience is seen as “good outcomes despite high-risk status,” “sustained competence under threat,” and “recovery from trauma” (Boyden and Mann 2005, 6; referring to Masten, Best, and Garmezy 1990). Masten defines resilience as a contextual construct which involves adaptation to a threat (2001, 236). Scheper-Hughes refers to it as “a knack for life” (Scheper-Hughes 1992, 446 – 479).

Masten also emphasizes the ordinary-ness of resilience, saying, “resilience does not come from rare and special qualities, but from the everyday magic of ordinary, and normative human resources in the minds, brains, and bodies of children, in their families and relationships, and in their communities” (2001, 235). She has found in her research that resilience “appears to be a common phenomenon that results in most cases from the operation of basic human adaptation of systems” (2001, 235).

Definitions of resilience in the literature often reflect some relationship between youth as actors, and their communities. For example, Ungar defines resilience around three key elements: the youth's ability to navigate to resources, the capacity of the youth's community to provide necessary resources, and the ability of youth and adults to negotiate how the resources are received and applied to the youth's need (2006, 55).³⁰ Therefore, a youth's social ecology and possible pathways to resilience are “as or more important” than the youth's qualities (2006, 55). The practical import of this is that resilience is defined and recognized differently in different communities and so across cultures there are many pathways to resilience (2006, 57-58).

Dass-Brailsford defines resilience generally as “the ability to embrace the challenges of life and to retain openness to the world in the face of adversity” (2005, 575). She distinguishes between what she calls “emergent resiliency” which “occurs under chronically stressful conditions” and “reactive resiliency” which “occurs in the face of sudden stressful events” (2005, 581). In her study of the academic achievement of disadvantaged black youth in South Africa, she found that supportive factors to resiliency fell into three categories: individual characteristics, support from families and role models, and support from schools and communities (2005, 579).

Walklate argues that resilience is a complex interplay between inherent, structural, and experienced understandings (2011, 190). This is a corrective to a positivistic understanding of resilience as a function of inherent and structural factors. In other words, often those who are expected not to be resilient because of apparent inherent and structural weaknesses actually demonstrated resilience in their experience.³¹ By

³⁰Drawing on Ungar's definition of resilience, Kirmayer describes the connection of community resilience to bonding, bridging, and linking social capital, among aboriginal people (Kirmayer 2009, 73-75).

³¹Ungar found in the literature some who said that about 10% of at-risk children are resilient and “beat the odds,” while others say two-thirds of them do and still others claim that they all do. This is very difficult to know for sure because definitions of success and risk vary (Ungar 2004, 45).

assuming one is more or less resilient based on a set of inherent and structural factors such as age, gender, education, place of residence, socio-economic position, legal status, family structure, or community resources rather than looking closely at their actions in relationship to their intentions, the demonstration of resilience may be overlooked. For example, a male youth's resilience in the slums may be perceived by how he is essentialized. If he is seen as a victim because of an inherent inability to cope with adversity in the overwhelming structural poverty, he will be perceived as not being resilient and therefore helpless. If he is seen as a perpetrator because of an inherent disposition to violence developed to cope with adversity in his context of overwhelming structural poverty, he will be seen as resilient but unworthy of help. None of the male youth interviewed in this project fall neatly into either category.

Van Dijk, de Bruijn, and Gewald frame resilience within the idea of agency. Against the "African pessimism" prevalent in the international development literature and in the media around the year 2000 they, among others, published research focusing on the strengths of people and organizations (2007, 9). Following Lonsdale (2000), they situated their ideas in two views of African history:

no matter how constraining circumstances can be in environmental, economic, political or social-cultural terms, African societies have demonstrated time and again numerous ways in which such conditions are negotiated in often unexpected ways.... such conditions never become so totalizing or hegemonic that all creativity in countering or coping with the circumstances African societies are subjected to is annihilated. (2007, 10)

De Bruijn, van Dijk, and Gewald (2007) define agency as "negotiation between structures and actors." As such, it "is not tied to the individual actor exclusively" and it "is bound up with power, politics and the social hierarchies they produce." If the environment is perceived "as a space of uncertainty" then "negotiations, maneuvering and muddling through are essential aspects of agency" (van Dijk, de Bruijn, and Gewald 2007, 5; Berner & Trulsson 2000). This focus on agency led the researchers to the "domains of creativity, inventiveness, and reflexivity" (van Dijk, de Bruijn, and Gewald 2007, 1). Another contribution of this perspective is that it is able to collapse victimizing approaches by better understandings of local processes (2007, 1 – 2).

Problems in the Resilience Research Literature

A number of problems confront researchers engaged with resilience. First, resilience is not a precise term but is a metaphor imported into psychology and cannot be defined with precision or easily measured (Boyden and Mann 2005, 9). It is difficult to separate an idea of resilience from context-specific protective factors (Boyden and Mann 2005, 9).

Second, there is a problem of assumptions. What are considered to be adverse or harmful practices, (like rites of passage) in some places, are seen as healthy and necessary in other places (Boyden and Mann 2005, 10). Related to this is the observation that as of 2005 most of the resilience research was done among children from the industrialized minority world so that the views of childhood and the "right way" to be raised that became the standard were those of the minority world (Boyden and Mann 2005, 10).

Third, while the work of some (Apfel and Simon 2000) suggests that severely traumatized children may make significant progress, "the transgenerational data

... suggests a cautious interpretation of long-term outcomes” (Suárez-Orozco and Robben 2000, 5).

Fourth, focusing on the detached or de-contextualized individual, one may argue that “if one person can survive and thrive” then all, or most, individuals ought to be able to (Boyden and Cooper 2007, 4-5; see also Wessels 2006, 23).³²

Fifth, there is a lack of theoretical clarity to resilience research because of the multi-disciplinary and interdisciplinary approaches which have different conceptual bases (Boyden and Cooper 2007, 6).

Sixth, the various interpretations of adversity complicate the research since resilience is measured against adversity (Boyden and Cooper 2007, 8). As codified within the clinical model of post traumatic stress, this includes the difference between trying to measure a crisis as a temporary abnormality, as opposed to living in “constant crisis” where “‘emergency is not the exception but the rule’ (Walter Benjamin 1969)” (Scheper-Hughes 2008, 36-37).

Finally, the “sheer multiplicity of potential risk and protective factors and the possible relationships among them (reciprocal, conditional, etc.)” together with time as a variable reveal layers of complexity that create “profound problems for resilience research” (Boyden and Cooper 2007, 12; citing Barton 2005, 142).

Language continues to be used which reveals a lack of awareness of resiliency (Jensen 2005, 73-74). Because of the complexities of resilience research, and since evidence seems to point in multiple directions regarding resiliency, Scheper-Hughes may be correct when she says, “the conventional wisdom and understanding of human vulnerability and resilience ... is inadequate” (2008, 42).

Tactics of Resilience

The literature reviewed here provides a theoretical framework of the youth employing destructive tactics of resilience (DTR) in the settlements. The main elements of the framework are the social navigation of the youth (Vigh 2006) whose tactics of resilience (Scheper-Hughes 2006) include tactical and strategic agency (Honwana 1999; Utas 2005).

Strategy and Tactics

In his chapter “Making Do,” which he introduces with the sentence “sly as a fox and twice as quick: there are countless ways of 'making do,’” de Certeau distinguishes between “strategies” and “tactics.” He defines strategy as “the calculation (or manipulation) of power relationships” by a person powerful enough to have delimited his own space from which he manages relations with targets or threats (1984, 36). A tactic, on the other hand, “is an art of the weak” and is exercised in the space of others because there is no other choice (1984, 37). This space for engagement is controlled by the “other” so the tactic is “a maneuver ‘within the enemy's field of vision’” (de Certeau 1984, 37; referring to von Bellow). Youth employing tactics in the crowded slums sometimes do not have safe space to retreat to in order to rest, plan, and become equipped (1984, 37). Tactics are used to take advantage of immediate opportunities of the moment and operate in “blow-by-blow” isolated actions (1984, 37). What is won by tactics cannot be kept (1984, 37). He concludes, “lacking its own place, lacking a view of the whole,

³²See Ungar, Michael. 2005b.

limited by the blindness ... resulting from combat at close quarters, limited by the possibilities of the moment, a tactic is determined by the absence of power just as a strategy is organized by the postulation of power” (1984, 38). It seems like the lines that create space for strategy and tactics are often fuzzy and flexible. How much space is needed? What does that space look like in the life of a youth in the settlements?

Tactical Agency

Honwana developed de Certeau’s distinction between tactics and strategies and proposed the idea of “tactical agency” as applied to child soldiers who engage in behavior to “make modest gains and avoid further injury and harms” as they cope with circumstances in the space of soldiers who have authority over them (2006, 96). Tactical agency is used from a position of weakness by those who may not expect long-term benefits, or have the time or space to consider long-term benefits. Instead, they seize immediate opportunities for some immediate benefit(s) that may have constructive or destructive long-term consequences (2006, 51). Tactical agency is similar to Dass-Brailsford’s idea of “reactive resiliency,” mentioned above, which “occurs in the face of sudden stressful events” while strategic agency is similar to her “emergent resiliency” which “occurs under chronically stressful conditions” (Dass-Brailsford 2005, 581).

Mats Utas further developed this idea, saying that since tactical and strategic agencies are defined and executed in specific social fields occupied by actors with various degrees of power, agency is not something a youth has or does not have, but something he maintains in relation to the changeable configuration of others with variable degrees of power in a specific context (2005, 407). He attempts to “collapse the opposition of agency and victimhood” by proposing the term “victimcy” which he defines as “a form of self-representation by which *agency* may be effectively exercised [tactically] under trying, uncertain, and disempowering circumstances” (2005, 407). In his article “Victimcy, girlfriending, soldiering: tactic agency in a young woman’s social navigation of the Liberian war zone,” he describes this as “one tactic—amongst others—in women’s ‘social navigation’ of war zones” (2005, 407).

Social Navigation

Utas borrowed the idea of “social navigation” from Henrik Vigh, who, in his work on soldiering in Guinea Bissau, calls young men’s tactical agency *social navigation* and defines it as “the way agents guide their lives through troublesome social and political circumstances” (Vigh 2006, 10-11). Utas sees this concept broadly applicable (Utas 2005, 408).

Vigh developed his idea of social navigation from the political sociologist Ralf Dahrendorf’s concept “life chances” which he describes as “in a somewhat vague sense, the sum total of opportunities offered to the individual by his society, or by a more specific position occupied in society” (Dahrendorf 1979, 28). He says,

This then is the concept which I propose: life chances are opportunities for individual action arising from the interrelations of options and ligatures Such patterns [ligatures] are railings to which people can cling as they walk into the mist of their social lives, just as they can be barriers too which they encounter in this mist. (1979, 32)

Just as Vigh found “young people obviously do not embrace their marginality,” this study found that the male youth of the settlements negotiated the challenges they faced in going to school or getting on in life without school – sometimes

in constructive and sometimes in destructive ways (Vigh 2006, 47). Though Vigh writes about the possibilities created by a crisis or war giving new life chances to youth caught in a social moratorium, this study looks at the life chances or possibilities exploited by male youth in the settlements in times when there is no extraordinary crisis. It is similar to his discussion of *dubriagem*, which he defines as social navigation through the fog (Vigh 2006, 51; see note 28).

“Heart-Warming” and Offensive

Tactics of Resilience

In “A talent for life” Scheper-Hughes explores what enables mothers of dying infants, street boys in Brazil, and youth in South Africa to be resilient, that is, “to survive and even to thrive where terror and trauma are ordinary and usual events” (2008, 14). She identifies normalization, narrativity, and reframing as “tactics of resilience” employed by these women that “allow individuals and communities to survive traumatic conditions, with their wits and the wit intact” (2008, 43-46, 19).

Scheper-Hughes notes that though “some of the tactics are heart-warming and easy to identify with” others “may offend ‘our’ sensibilities and tastes, shaped by very different subjectivities, notions of value, human worth, and the good life, meaning always, the life that is worth living” (2008, 43). She goes so far as to say that sometimes resilience involves “manipulation verging on sociopathy” (2008, 47). For example, she discusses the ideas of *jeitoso* and *malandragem* which are forms of trickery and manipulation employed in social navigation to “get out of a tight place” (2008, 47). *Jeitoso* is a personality type, “connoting one who is attractive, smooth, handy, sharp and a real operator” (2008, 47). The person’s art is called *malandragem*:

When a *jeito* involves ‘getting away with murder’ or a ‘taking advantage’ at someone else’s expense, it is related to *malandragem*, the art and tactics of the scoundrel and the rascal: it refers to a ‘badness’ that is also a kind of strength that involves charm, sexual allure, charisma, street smarts and wit. (2008, 47)

It is these sometimes offensive tactics of resilience that are the focus of this study. This study is looking at DTR as tactics of resilience (Scheper-Hughes 2008) because they represent the agency of youth functioning to move forward in some way.

Destructive Tactics of Resilience (DTR)

Two kinds of resilience have been identified and labeled: constructive and destructive. Resilience moves one’s agenda forward—whether strategically or tactically. Constructive tactics set dynamics in motion that do not bring more challenges or destruction into life later. Destructive tactics do.

Destructiveness

Along with the offensive nature of some of the tactics of resilience (Scheper-Hughes 2008), there is a distressing destructive dimension to the behavior of many youth that appears totally destructive but begs exploration.

On a personal level, the most stressful dimension of living in El Barrio’s street scene was witnessing the destruction of the children of my friends and neighbors. I watched dozens of little girls and boys fall apart as they passed from childhood to adolescence. Under my eyes, energetic, bright

eyed children were ground-up by the dozens into what the United States calls its 'underclass.' Within five short years, my little neighbor Gigi metamorphosed from an outgoing, cute, eager-to-please eight-year-old, who gave me a construction paper Valentines card every year, into a homeless, pregnant, crack using 13-year-old 'teenager.' Meanwhile, her older brother, Hector, was transformed from a shy, giggling, undersized 12-year-old into a juvenile inmate, guilty of 'assault with a dangerous weapon.' (Bourgois 1998, 335)

DTR Delimited from Deviant Behavior

This study is delimited from studies regarding deviant behavior in that the focus here is on behavior which is considered destructive by the agent rather than on behavior considered destructive or deviant by society (Malindi and Theron 2010b, 319; Ungar 2006; Chong 2008, 37). Resilience may contribute to harmful or destructive behavior (Davies 2008, 325)—sometimes resorting to criminal or harmful behavior in order to survive (Peters and Richards 1998, 109; see also Boothby et al. 2006, 5; Triplehorn and Chen 2006, 225; Ayuku et al. 2004, 296; West 2004, 106).

The Logic of DTR

Ungar 2004 calls what this study is calling DTR “hidden resilience” (*Nurturing hidden resilience in troubled youth* 2004). Malindi and Theron argue that “resilience can be hidden in alternative, marginal, and often destructive behaviors” (2010b, 319). Floris says that “becoming an alcoholic is a way of escaping from a situation that a person cannot bear anymore” (2006, 96). Drinking is a way of “letting off steam allowing situations of despair to become acceptable” (2006, 96, 97). At the same time, youth are said to “succumb to crime and delinquencies such as drug abuse ... alcoholism” which implies they are perhaps not using them intentionally as a tactic of resilience (Abedelo and Pierli 2002, 45). Achola asserts that youth in the slum “get involved in illegal or unethical activities in the general course of everyday living” (2006, 21). Floris, describing Korogocho, says,

It is a place where you live from one day to the next, ‘you don’t know how long you will go on living.’ Opportunistic behavior and dangers are growing due to this insecurity of life. The temporary reference horizon is momentary, so it may seem quite logical to steal rather than keep your job. (Floris 2006, 59)

An extreme example is given by Heath, Toste, and Zinck who argue that self injury may be “resilient functioning” if it is “anti-suicide” (2008, 40). The most extreme form of DTR may be suicide; if the one chooses it to overcome or escape what s/he believes is worse than death. It is important to emphasize, again, that the aim of this study is not to encourage DTR.

The Problem of Defining Health

Ungar argues that health should be defined by the youth and that definition honored by those serving them (Ungar 2004, 4; Ungar and Teram 2005, 157). In *Adaptation to Life*, Vaillant wrote “cannot health merely be a form of madness that goes unrecognized because it happens to be a good adaptation to reality” (1977, 5). In this light, stealing or prostitution may be “madness” because of the high risk, and at the same

time a sign of “health” because it is an adaptation to reality that enables the person to survive, eat, and move her/his agenda forward.³³

Cause for Celebration and Grief

A close look at the lives of individuals employing DTR in the settlements gives rise to both celebration and grief. I concur with Scheper-Hughes who writes,

In conclusion, while theories of human vulnerability and trauma acknowledge the weight of the world on the lives of the poor, the excluded, and the oppressed, human frailty is matched by a possibly even bio-evolutionarily derived, certainly historically situated, and culturally elaborated capacity for resilience. While for many years searching in the nooks and crannies of oppressed and excluded communities for political mobilizations and organized resistance in the face of terror as usual, I found, instead, forms of everyday resilience. And in the context of these besieged lives existence itself — living and surviving to tell the tale — is more than enough to celebrate. (2008, 29)

However, in light of the destructive effects of DTR on the agent and others, there is also more than enough to grieve.

Mitigating Essentialization: Representation, Power, and Methodology

This section reviews literature that frames the role that methodology plays in mitigating essentializing. The methodology used by the researcher and the way in which he or she represents the people interviewed is a use of power that has been abused and has often resulted in essentialization.

Malevolent and Benevolent Essentialism

There are at least three dangers that result from essentialism when applied to people. First, essentialized identities often go unchallenged because they seem right—like common sense (Fuchs 2001; Mahalingam and Rodriguez 2003). Second, essentializing a group in distinction to one’s own assumes that each is well defined, each with its own nature, and severely hinders dialog (Wagner et al. 2009, 363). Third, the essentialized identity imposed on a youth is very difficult to change no matter what he actually does (Medin and Ortony 1989). This opens the door to representing someone as less than human and unable to be changed and thus legitimizes exploitation to help (Gullestad 2007; see below), genocide (Strassberg 2008, 145), and revenge (Zagefka et al. 2010). Zagefka argues that “the emotional responses of members of both the perpetrator and victim groups will be shaped by the extent to which they see the ingroup as defined in essentialist terms (2010, 719).

³²See also Vaillant’s discussion of the difficulty of standardizing a definition of wellbeing or mental health (1977, 5-7).

Representation and Power

Wagner et al. argue that representation of a group as a well-defined entity and as a natural kind is an “essence-tool” which hinders dialog (Wagner et al. 2009, 363, 368). Denzin’s “interview society” is particularly susceptible to new forms of Said’s *Orientalism*. Photography and video, brief encounters, and uncritical writing are powerful means to developing what this study is calling media constructed and benevolent essentialisms. When these are applied to youth in the settlements, they can make research a type of social voyeurism which fosters Debord’s idea of spectacle and unconscious speculation on the part of those who consume the research. In the settlements of Nairobi, Odede calls this “slumdog tourism.” These ideas informed how this study has sought to represent the youth interviewed for this study.

Orientalism and Slumdogism

This study has found two similarities that suggest that Slumdog tourism may have its roots in Said’s *Orientalism*. First, the presentation of the “other,” especially by scholars and interventionists, strengthens cultural domination by an uneven exchange of political, intellectual, cultural, and moral power (Said 1978, 12). The person from the dominant culture has an idea of the youth in the slums based on his or her experience of those youth via actual contact, which is often brief and mediated (Linhart 2006), and/or via the media, which is problematic as described below (Said 1978, 16). As European travelers to the “Orient” returned “with fragments and scientists and writers domesticated, categorized, and defined them to the West,” editing out what was offensive (Said 1978, 166-167) or just having seen or understood very little (Cohen 1997), many travel to the settlements and return with fragments that they take through similar processes.

Second, Said argued that by giving consent to the cultural domination of the West by failing to produce its own scholarship of the West for itself and by being “hooked into the Western market system”... “the modern Orient, in short, participates in its own Orientalizing” (1978, 325, 324). The strategic essentialism of some in the slums plays into the same pattern. The publishing of research conducted by residents of the settlements, such as the articles published on the web by St. John’s in Korogocho and Pierli and Abeledo (2002), published by Paulines Publications Africa, mitigate this phenomenon. However, the fact that books published by Paulines Publications Africa are not available except in Nairobi and that when they were required reading for a graduate intercultural course they had to be purchased and shipped at greater expense and arrived one month after the course began—keeps them from being read widely.

Photography and Video

Norman Denzin seeks to demonstrate that “the postmodern society has become an interview society” defined as “the society that knows itself through the reflected images and narratives of cinema and television” (2002, 834). This form of entertainment affects identity construction and blurs the distinction between reality and fiction (2002, 833). The “interview society” emerged as newspapers and cinema became prominent, turning “the confessional mode of discourse into a public form of entertainment” so that people in their troubles became a public commodity (2002, 836). Denzin argues there are four epistemological formats of interviews: the objectively neutral format in which the interviewer tries not to influence the story; the entertainment and investigative format in which the interviewer tries to draw out a story that will sell,

asking leading, aggressive, and friendly questions that may lead the interviewee to embellish a story or give more detail; the collaborative or active format in which the interviewer and interviewee tell the story together through conversation; and the reflexive interview format in which “two speakers enter into a dialogic relationship” in which “a tiny drama is played out” and together they “create a small dialogic world of unique meaning and experience” (2002, 839).

With the development of media technology, the interview “is now a ubiquitous method of self-construction” (2002, 833) in which “popular media representations shape and define situated cultural identities” (2002, 834). The representation of reality is “a staged, social production” so that lived realities are “judged against their staged ... video counterparts” (2002, 841). The boundaries between the “everyday world and the world of media” collapse so that “the imaginary becomes real and the real imaginary” (Fontana 2002, 161). This results in a tendency to look at representations of youth in the settlements—someone’s “storied versions” of who they really are (Denzin 2002, 845)—and believe them. For example, summarizing portrayals of African youth as violent, without morals, and at the beck and call of warlords, Frederiksen says, “photos of boy soldiers and drugged gun-toting teenagers at the back of pickups in Liberia and Sierra Leone have, seemingly, summed the situation up” (2007, 73). This seems to be a media constructed essentialism.

Sontag argues that “there is something predatory in the act of taking a picture,” that photographing people violates them “by seeing them as they never see themselves, having knowledge of them they can never have; it turns people into objects that can be symbolically possessed” (1977, 14). It is helpful to ask when you *take* a picture, what are you *taking*? Though it is recognized that what is written about a person is an interpretation, photographed images do “not seem to be statements about the world so much as pieces of it, miniatures of reality that anyone can make or acquire” (1977, 4). A participant told Bodewes, “we are not animals to be looked at like on *safari*, this is our home” (Bodewes 2005, 84).

In Marianne Gullestad’s *Picturing pity* she argues that there is a fine line between exposing injustice and “stereotyping, objectification, and abuse” of the other (2007, 8). Building on the ideas of a “discourse of goodness” and “knowledge regime”³⁴ she develops the theories that a “goodness regime” is functioning when two groups are essentialized, one as the people in need and the other as those helping, in ways in which “it limits the articulation of opposing views and critical analysis” (Gullestad 2007, 24). The feedback processes through which critical analysis would come are hindered by “the need to continuously justify their activities to the various donors” (2007, 277). This is not always one sided because those being photographed can “perform” or “stage” themselves according to their agenda (2007, 9).

This goodness regime is perpetuated through the use of propaganda, photographs, text, and pity to elicit financial and personnel support (Gullestad 2007, 18). She follows Arendt saying that when someone tries to “elicit compassion for people as categories” they end up eliciting pity (Gullestad 2007, 22).³⁵ This could be called “benevolent essentialism.”

³⁴She defines a knowledge regime as “ideas and beliefs that both enable and limit what can be represented, which choices can be made and which actions can be understood as meaningful” (2007, 24).

³⁵She is following Arendt 1990.

Her study of the use of photography in perpetuating a goodness regime raised a number of important issues. First, the regime created relational uneasiness “due to the difficulties of one-party continuously being at the receiving end of *goodness regime*” (Gullestad 2007, 266) and, I would add, at the receiving end of description. Second, the creation and maintenance of social categories such as giver/receiver and the self-image of generosity was juxtaposed against the potential humiliation of the receiver (2007, 266, 274). Third, there was an imbalance in power as related to the issue of control over one's image photographed and used by another (2007, 267). She says,

The power of representation is most crudely exemplified by the relative lack of photographs taken by Africans of colonial officials, missionaries and development experts. The gaze of the colonized upon the colonizers represents a body of photographs that were never taken. What we have is the gaze of the colonizers, evangelizer and developers upon the formerly colonized and the traces in the photographs of how the Africans acted in relation to them. (2007, 32)

Ungar claims that “journalists have tried, but with only a few exceptions, failed to attend to the marginal discourses of adolescents growing up in disadvantaged environments. The media have preferred to paint a monochromatic picture of the risk-taking behaviors socially deviant youngsters” (Ungar 2004, 21). To the extent that knowledge of youth in the settlements is created through media, the accuracy of this knowledge is dependent on the integrity, intentions, and skill of producers. At best, such knowledge is third hand, at worst it is a market-driven, or politically driven, artistic construct.

Brief Encounters

Brief encounters and the use of photography can become a form of social voyeurism which proliferate essentializations and creates conflict.

Slum Tourism: Social Voyeurism

The popular interest in issues of social injustice and the deep or sacred significance attached to encounters can lead to social voyeurism and mediated voyeurism. Calvert defines mediated voyeurism as “the consumption of revealing images of and information about others’ apparently real and unguarded lives, often yet not always for purposes of entertainment but frequently at the expense of privacy and discourse, through the means of the mass media and Internet” (2000, 23). Warah argues that such voyeurism is for entertainment, saying, “for many Kenyans, the film is the worst form of slum tourism because it turns poverty into entertainment in the name of charity” (2011). Odede says, “slum tourism is a one-way street: they get the photos; we lose a piece of our dignity” (2010b).

Odede argues that though some residents of the slums are proponents of slum tourism because it promotes social awareness and helps the local economy, “it’s not worth it” because it “turns poverty into entertainment, something that can be momentarily experienced and then escaped from. People think they’ve really ‘seen’ something — and then go back to their lives and leave me, my family and my community right where we were before” (2010b). He illustrates this below:

For a moment I saw my home through her eyes: feces, rats, starvation, houses so close together that no one can breathe. I realized I didn’t want her to see it, didn’t want to give her the opportunity to judge my

community for its poverty — a condition that few tourists, no matter how well intentioned, could ever understand.

Other Kibera residents have taken a different path. A former schoolmate of mine started a tourism business. I once saw him take a group into the home of a young woman giving birth. They stood and watched as she screamed. Eventually the group continued on its tour, cameras loaded with images of a woman in pain. What did they learn? And did the woman gain anything from the experience?

To be fair, many foreigners come to the slums wanting to understand poverty, and they leave with what they believe is a better grasp of our desperately poor conditions. The expectation, among the visitors and the tour organizers, is that the experience may lead the tourists to action once they get home.

But it's just as likely that a tour will come to nothing. After all, looking at conditions like those in Kibera is overwhelming, and I imagine many visitors think that merely bearing witness to such poverty is enough.” (2010b)

Spectacle

Linhart, describes a short-term trip into a materially impoverished community as resembling “an interactive museum” in which conclusions about the “other” were limited to brief encounters and quick assessments. He says “without spending significant time with the person, visiting his or her home, or even possessing rudimentary knowledge about the person's history, students make quick assessments of their hosts' lives and values” (2006, 455). Without the opportunity to understand what they were observing and experiencing, students were forced by the situation to interpret experiences quickly by “projecting themselves into their cross-cultural interpretations” (2006, 456).

This forced students to stereotype as Hall defines it (Linhart 2006, 458): Stereotyping reduces people to a few, simple, essential characteristics, which are represented as fixed by Nature.... Stereotypes get a hold of the few 'simple, vivid, memorable, easily grasped and widely recognized' characteristics about a person, *reduce* everything about the person to those traits, *exaggerate* and *simplify* them, and *fix* them without change or development to eternity. So the point is – *stereotyping reduces, essentializes, naturalizes, and fixes*. (Hall 1997, 257 – 258)

In addition, stereotyping involves excluding what does not fit within the reduced set of characteristics or identity markers (Hall 1997, 258). It seems to occur more where there are inequalities of power, and, following Derrida, he argues that between binaries such as us/them “one of the two terms governs ... The other or has the upper hand” (Hall 1997, 258; citing Derrida 1972, 41). Therefore, stereotyping is an integral part of what Hall calls “power in representation” which is the power to “mark, assign, and classify” and to “represent someone or something in a certain way” (1997, 259).

When photography is added to the brief encounters as real representations of the “other,” a social relationship, of sorts, is formed that is mediated by the quick assessments and images in the photos. This is Debord's idea of “the spectacle” as he distinguishes this from just a collection of images, saying, “the spectacle is not a collection of images, but a social relation among people, mediated by images” (1970, 12). Over time this mediated social relationship goes through a kind of time decay of understanding, or process of greater essentialization as what was “directly lived” becomes “mere representation” and images supplant genuine human interaction (1970, 12). Linhart observed in the youth he studied that “despite their inability to know” they were quick to draw conclusions favoring “appearances over authentic understanding” (2006, 456). Furthermore, because the short-term experiences happened so quickly, the “implicit emphasis on appearances and spectacle,” in a sense, forced the students to stereotype (2006, 458). He concludes:

the trip is just a spectacle quality, fostered by its brevity, the briskness with which the students move from task to task, and the importance placed on each encounter. As new and unfamiliar images and events presented themselves to the students, they were compelled to formulate quick conclusions to all that they were experiencing. These quick judgments, combined with their spiritual anticipation that God was going to do something special while on the trip, help the students attach deep and sacred significance to the experiences and purposes of the trip. (2006, 459)

“You Will Put Me in a Book”: The Framing and Use of Data

The way in which the researcher frames the data significantly influences how it will be interpreted. Geertz notes that “what once seemed only technically difficult, getting ‘their’ lives into ‘our’ works, has turned morally, politically, even epistemologically, delicate” (1988, 130). There is an immense “gap between engaging others where they are and representing them where they aren’t” (1988, 130).³⁶ For example, Nordstrom argues that there is a legacy within Western epistemology of reifying or thing-ifying violence with generic actors labeled “combatants,” “civilians,” and “casualties” rather than seeing the experience of violence as “an endlessly complex set of people and personalities, each of whom has a unique relationship to the war and a unique story to tell” (1995, 137, 138).³⁷

The literature suggests that the framing of data related to the experience of violence and suffering may be influenced by a number of factors that lead to or perpetuate essentialisms. For example, the researcher might seek to make such situations

³⁶Geertz says, “however far from the groves of academe anthropologists seek out their subjects—a shelved beach in Polynesia, a charred plateau in Amazonia; Akobo, Meknes, Panther Burn—they write their counts with the world of lecterns, libraries, blackboard, and seminars all about them. This is the world that produces anthropologists, that licenses them to do the kind of work they do, and within which the kind of work they do must find a place if it is to count as worth attention... [T]he fact that almost all ethnographers are university types of one sort or another is so familiar as to confound the thought that matters might be otherwise, the incongruities implicit in such a divided existence—a few years, now and again, scuffling about with cattle herders or yam gardeners, lifetime lecturing to classes and arguing with colleagues—have recently begun to be more sharply felt” (1988, 130).

³⁷Olujic asks, “How does one depict war without objectifying the people?” (Olujic 1995, 198).

reasonable and overlook the complexities of people and experience (Nordstrom 1995, 137-138). Research might be framed according to current fads or fashions that are market driven—or driven by the pressures of academia (Olujic 1995, 199). Zulaika writes that the genre chosen affects the representation—“romance, tragedy, comedy, farce, melodrama, warfare, ritual, fantasy – all conjure with their own powers of history and narrative to capture the very essence of terror” (1995, 214). An assumed universal framework regarding victimization, agency, and human rights, may be used which may clash with local frameworks of understanding (Boyden 2004, 247). Researchers who use an assumed universal framework may miss or dismiss data that do not fit within the normative assumptions.³⁸

Finally, the position of the researcher relative to those being researched influences how the data is framed. For example, selective research, which is unavoidable to a degree, and distance (historical, geographical, cultural, emotional) shape the image of the events portrayed and therefore the reaction to them (Olujic 1995, 199). Researchers who are with their informants in situations of violence face conflicting forces which impact how they frame the data. Falla says, “as you immerse yourself, you begin to participate in the myths that exist in every community, and you might lose some of your critical perspective” (Manz 1995, 264). On the other hand, such research has the benefit of generating insights based on adaptation that are better able to test hypotheses (Manz 1995, 264).

Researchers must understand that they shape the message. Writing about Genet’s fieldwork among Palestinians, Swedenburg says that Genet claimed he was not giving voice to the Palestinians because the interpretation was his own:

The construction, organization and layout of the book, without deliberately intending to *betray* the facts, managed the narrative in such a way that I probably seem to be a privilege to witness or even a manipulator ... All these words to say, this is *my* Palestinian revolution, told in my own chosen order. As well as mine there is the other, probably many others. (Swedenburg 1995, 36; citing Genet 1989, 308-309)³⁹

Kakar points out that the interviewee realizes this vulnerability. At the end of his interview with Akbar, Akbar said, “you will put me in a book.” Kakar comments, “the final victory will not be his but mine, he meant, for it will be my version of him and it will be taken as his reality by the larger world outside Hyderabad” (1996, 69). Falla argues that this creative, but perhaps incorrect, representation, can be mitigated by giving the people who are researched an opportunity to see how their voices are reflected in the research (Manz 1995, 272).

Methodology

The literature guided the methodologies in this study as the challenges above were negotiated so as to represent the youth with respect and according to the complexities of their lives. These challenges were mitigated by holding preconceived

³⁸For example, focusing on children's rights may cause the researcher to “treat the young as especially deserving victims, as opposed to conscious agents” (Boyden 2004, 248). Boyden writes, “as a consequence, important topics such as children's moral development, their political consciousness and activism, and hence their motives for enlistment, are neglected in favor of research focusing on impairment to health and other negative war impacts” (2004, 248).

³⁹This is Genet’s book *Prisoner of Love*, translated by Barbara Bray.

understandings tentatively, listening to the voices of the youth in order to seek understanding dialogically while leaving room for the complexities and ambiguity, and working collaboratively.

Holding Preconceived Understandings

Tentatively

Assuming that best practices are necessarily universally replicable is not holding preconceived understandings tentatively. Methodological challenges to qualitative research among youth surface repeatedly in the literature and “best practices” that are assumed to be universally replicable (Roy 2005) can lead to a “mismatch between the agendas of development agencies and the needs of communities” (Lerer 1998, 230).⁴⁰

Pre-existing theories must be held loosely. Robben and Nordstrom argue that when studying situations that involve considerable violence, the researcher should not go to the field to seek “truths” that support “ready-made explanations” or some overarching theory because violence is formative (1995, 4). As necessary as qualitative research is in contexts of violence (Schmidt 2001, 79 and Utas 2004, 209), it does not yield “an uncontested set of explanations” for what has been seen because violence “forges as well as affects identities” (Robben and Nordstrom 1995, 4). As dependence on grand theories “kills” history (Windschuttle 2006), uncritical dependence on theory into which data is forced would “kill ethnography.”

It is important to be suspicious of simplistic explanations. The reality of violent contexts defies definitions of violence that are “too polished and finished” because definitions, identities, and theories are fluid in that they are affected by a combination of, among other things, “vested interests, personal history, ideological loyalties, propaganda, and a dearth of first-hand information” so that such explanations can be “powerful fictions and negotiated half-truths” (Robben and Nordstrom 1995, 4-5). Toyin Falola in his “Violence in Nigeria: the crisis of religious politics and secular ideologies” concurs, arguing that a “monocausal explanation is grossly inadequate” (1998, 12). Therefore, a dynamic approach to understanding violent contexts is called for because it “mitigates against essentialist and singular definitions and against the reification of violence” (Robben and Nordstrom 1995, 4).

Predetermined category labels must be avoided. Caution must be used when constructing identity categories and labels, as well as metanarratives, and then seeking to fit those who perpetrate violence within those constructions. The challenge is to identify emerging patterns from research data without simplistically generalizing. In light of this, certainly Mitchell’s “two bastard theory” is reductionistic, in that retaining the word bastard reduces the identity of the perpetrator to nothing more than that term (Mitchell 2004, 1). In his work on suicide bombers, *Dying to win: the strategic logic of suicide terrorism*, Robert Pape’s more modest statement that in some instances suicide bombings are carried out for perceived altruistic reasons is more attentive to Robben and Nordstrom’s argument (Pape 2006, 171 -198). Even Di Lellio and Schwandner-Sievers’ “legendary commander” (2006), Juergensmeyer’s “cosmic war” theory (2003), and Pitcher’s “divine impatience” (1998), which are more nuanced theories of the perpetrator

⁴⁰Lerer is citing Ferguson 1992.

of violence, must be critiqued with caution, recognizing that if violence is formative, then the “actors” may change in ways that alter the identity markers of any a given theory.⁴¹

Listening to the Voices of Youth

Not Listening

Scheper-Hughes and Sargent argue that “children's voices are conspicuously absent in most ethnographic writing” (1998, 13). In 1998 they hoped that their book would be a step forward in the process of recovering the child’s voice—a process that had “hardly begun” (1998, 15). However, in 2001 Schwartzman—recognizing their work but arguing for an anthropology “which is not just *of* children but *with* children”—accused them of “continuing the tradition of excluding the perspective and voice of children” (2001, 10, 6, emphasis hers). Still in 2004, Utas claimed that the research that has been done more directly among children who have suffered is usually quantitative, based on short-term fieldwork with a very limited number of respondents, often only one, without the use of a recording device, and conducted from within the aid organizations. As a result, the research tends to “yield responses in victim modes” while concealing “many important aspects of lived experience” (2004, 209).

Agendas

Furthermore, adults may hinder or mediate research because of what they stand to lose if children are given voice (Boyden 2004, 249). As late as 2006 de Boeck and Honwana argued that little is known about the views and visions of young people who are still waiting “to be heard and considered” (2006, 2). They cite several works, bemoaning the fact that youth and children still remain “our ‘silent others,’ our *enfants terrible* (Caputo, 1995; Gottlieb, 2000; Hirschfeld 1999, 2002) and are often constructed from the outside and from above as a ‘problem’ or a ‘lost generation’ (Cruise O’Brien 1996) in ‘crisis’ (Everatt and Sisulu, 1992)” (2006, 2).

However, as a result of the work of researchers mentioned above, voices are beginning to be heard. From Korogocho, Fr. Giudici wrote on the St. John’s Korogocho website in 2001 that was established to give voice to the youth and others of the community in Korogocho:

Whether you happened to visit this site by chance or you arrived here by choice, **stop for a while**, get a minute, or five, or even more, and **listen**.... It is the voice of the youth of Korogocho, which will be – we hope – the voice of the whole community of St. John and of Korogocho. They want

⁴¹For example, in “The Legendary Commander: the construction of an Albanian masternarrative in post-war Kosovo,” they present evidence for a master narrative centered on the “sublime sacrifice” of Adem Jashari, a KLA commander who was killed by the Serbs in 1998, and argue that this “captivates Albanian national identity as a mythical tradition of armed resistance against foreign oppressors” and is “constructed by ‘memory entrepreneurs’” (Di Lellio and Schwandner-Sievers 2006, 513-514; citing Jelin 2003, 34). Jashari, and other protagonists who were killed are “not represented as vanquished; they are not considered victims, but as heroes who knew no surrender” (Di Lellio and Schwandner-Sievers 2006, 518). They claim that the Albanian memory entrepreneurs have used cultural scripts that “are based on the notion of resistance until death and the trans-generational obligation to remember and complete the work of martyrs (Di Lellio and Schwandner-Sievers, 2006, 526). However, even if there is truth in this theory, caution must be exercised to avoid forcing all perpetrators of violence into this constructed master narrative.

to possess this site ... though virtual, where these youth, and many others of the community, may be able to tell their own stories, **seen through their own eyes**, understood in their own heads, appreciated or criticized through their own feelings.... They need to overcome the stereotype that we have created and we have inculcated in them, of a Korogocho that is only violence and corruption, alcohol and poverty. They need to grow in the ability of seeing the other Korogocho that is already there but it is not immediately visible. (Giudici 2011, emphasis his)

Listening to the Youths' Definitions

Ungar and Teram wrote a critique of resilience research in 2005 that frames methodological issues in the literature and serves as a guide for this project. They argue that there are two main shortcomings in resilience research—the first is arbitrary definitions and the second is inadequate attention given to social and cultural context (2005, 149).

They ask, “What is health and who decides?” (2005, 154). Definitions of resilience and health have been constructed while the voices of youth – and ways in which they conceive of health and resilience in various contexts – have been ignored. Ungar and Teram argue, “when we fail to listen to children's own stories, we are likely to miss important details of their thriving” (2005, 154). This is especially true when youth act in ways unacceptable to society in resource-poor environments: “what Ungar (2001) called ‘narratives of resilience’ are in fact healthy self constructions hidden beneath chaotic behaviors in resource-poor environments” (Ungar and Teram 2005, 154). Some may argue that if indeed, these unacceptable and sometimes destructive behaviors are actually healthy, then why intervene. Ungar and Teram answer:

We therefore have to come to terms with the contradiction between respecting youth's definitions of resilience and health and our understanding that to gain full citizenship in society, some of these definitions must shift toward common norms, however defined. An extreme postmodernist stance suggesting that youth are healthy as long as they perceive themselves as such and convince others that they are will not advance the interests of youth. (2005, 156)

Ungar and Teram also argued that socially unacceptable pathways to resilience are taken in resource -poor contexts where there are not other options and “within a better -resourced context these youth's definition of health and well-being is bound to move closer to that of mainstream society” (2005, 157). They believe this so strongly that they say “unless we explicitly highlight this point, the relevance of qualitative research with at -risk youth will be questionable” (2005, 157). If the voices of youth are not heard, they argue, researchers will not understand the pathways they purposefully take toward their idea of health. If a definition of health or resilience is imposed on them, they may only be condemned for not attaining it.

Boyden argues that scholarly concepts that are defined solely by the researchers rather than by the youth, presuppose that subjective meanings the youth apply are not significant in shaping their reactions to them (2004, 248). Furthermore, this presupposes that their insights are irrelevant or invalid compared to “the expert knowledge and interpretive skills of the researcher,” that their testimonies are unreliable, that their experiences are similar everywhere, and “that the researcher is in somewhere

privity to these experiences even before interacting with conformance” (2004, 248). She concludes that as a result, individual youth are marginalized.

Boyden, argues that research in which researchers, or outsiders, interpret data exclusively, or even predominantly, through their own pre-existing conceptual categories is flawed (2004, 248). Eyber and Ager concur, in “Researching young people's experiences of war: participatory methods in the drama discourse in Angola,” they argue that research may be distorted if the starting point for the interpretation of people’s suffering is predetermined categories rather than the perceptions of meaning those being researched attach to events (2004, 190).⁴² Researchers may miss or dismiss the connection between the subjective meanings of events constructed by the informants and their reactions. Boyden warns that they may see informants’ insights as irrelevant or invalid compared to their own “expert knowledge and interpretive skills” (2004, 248). Furthermore, they may see the informants’ experiences and rationales as universal, which marginalizes them (2004, 248).

Viewing Fieldwork as a Developing Dialogical Experience

In “Reflections on Managing Danger in Fieldwork: Dangerous Anthropology in Belfast,” Jeffrey Sluka counsels that the researchers must be flexible and consider ahead of time how much they will modify researched goals and methods in response to danger. In a sense, the research takes on a life of its own, not only because of data that is discovered, but because research questions and methods may need to change midstream. Frank Pieke argues in “Witnessing the 1989 Chinese people's movement” that though spontaneous outbreaks of violence may be labeled “accidents,” their study should not be considered “accidental anthropology” but rather “part of an evolving fieldwork experience” (1995, 65). In such situations researchers must be extremely flexible and ready to change their research design (1995, 65). Pieke argues for dialogical fieldwork that is not shaped by the preoccupations of the researchers but focuses on reality as it presents itself to them (1995, 77). Viewing fieldwork as a developing dialogical experience, “rather than the execution of a research plan,” enables researchers to capitalize on sudden and unexpected changes in circumstances (1995, 77).

Seeking Understanding Dialogically

Contexts of violence complicate the typical challenges of cross-cultural interviews.⁴³ For example, Anne Ryen argues that interviewing “is mediated by the relation between interviewer and interviewee, who ... often inhabit vastly different

⁴²Eyber and Ager argue that “to pathologise the war-displaced as traumatized victims is incorrect as it ignores their abilities and efforts to rebuild their lives and their social worlds, as demonstrated in this chapter by the way in which the youths participated fully in social, communal and occupational activities. Labeling war affected people as passive victims may also have a negative impact as international organizations may assume that they already know what is needed and attempt to provide assistance without taking the actual needs, priorities and coping strategies of the people themselves into account” (2004, 204).

⁴³Anne Ryen argues that cross-cultural interviews are not only those that occur across cultural and national borders but those that involve “insider – outsider challenges faced within a society (2002, 336). Ryen focuses on differing ethnicities within societies (2002, 336) but I would suggest that the insider-outsider dynamics are present in contexts of violence because of “us” and “them” identity constructs even when ethnicity is not an issue.

worlds or engage each other with sharply contrasting aims” (2002, 336)—and, I would add, in the case of agents of violence, possibly with suspicious motives. Her thesis is that there is not a technique that enables the interviewer to “get hold of the data in the form they are stored in the interviewee’s cultural reservoir” because data is not “pre-produced, culturally stored, and independent of the interviewer-interviewee relationship” (2002, 336). Pieke maintains that fieldwork, including interviewing, is more than “harvesting data” (1995, 76). It is dialogical, involving “a dialogue with the entire social reality encountered, a chain of events heard about, observed, and, above all, experienced” (1995, 76)— which requires rapport.⁴⁴

Navigating Through Multilayered Stories

In their research of young people's experience of war in Angola, Eyber and Ager found that youths were selective in what they told them and yet interviews provided some insight into their lives (2004, 192). Utas noticed that his informants in Liberia told him one thing and then retracted their statements at the next discussion, so that research was “inevitably a navigation through multilayered stories” (2004, 218, 223, 230). However, by gathering bits and pieces through many conversations, he gathered what he called “not the ‘true story’” but a story that is closer to the true story than any one version he had been told (2004, 230).

Leaving Room for Ambiguity and Avoiding Reification

Andrea Fontana argues that postmodern trends have affected interview methodologies relating to: boundaries between the interviewer and interviewee, the construction of narratives, issues of representation, the respondent’s understanding, giving unarticulated voices center-stage, modes of expression, and the use of electronic media (2002, 162-163). For example, the interviewer no longer establishes a priori categories and questions as if there was a “set of discrete facts to be apprehended in the social world” (2002, 163). Instead, the interview is to be seen as “an interactional event” (2002, 163) or a “site of knowledge production rather than simply a neutral conduit for experiential knowledge” (2002, 166). I would argue that this is not to say there are no true data to be gathered, but that knowledge is being produced in the interview as questions are being formed and asked and responsive answers are being formed. It might be more accurate to talk of “understanding production” rather than “knowledge production” if understanding connotes approximate knowledge. Giving space for authentic ambiguity is important based on the assumption that ambiguity is an inevitable part of one’s grasp of reality. Fontana argues that the interviewer must go after “created, negotiated, face-to-face narratives” so as not to be left with “artificially derived categories that will reify our results and have little to do with the world of everyday life” (2002, 170).⁴⁵

⁴⁴Could what Kosuke Koyama says about how the experience of hunger shapes one interpretation of data be applied to experiencing violence? He says that the millions of people in India “experience history – its hope and despair— with tremendous realism through their famished stomachs. The visitors probably experience it through their (bachelor of divinity) brains ... The global truth ... is that those who can afford to eat much experience history more superficially than those who are not so affluent. A bank account and an abundant diet somehow (I cannot explain it quite satisfactorily) insulate a person from coming to feel the primary truth of history” (Koyama 1999, 17).

⁴⁵Fontana concludes by quoting Paul Rabinow, making the point that whether one is traditional or postmodern in interviewing, “[t]he common understanding they [interviewer and respondent]

Scheper-Hughes calls for a “good enough” ethnography, understanding that the researcher “is an instrument of cultural translation that is necessarily flawed and biased” (1992, 28). Observing, listening, and recording that has been done carefully and sensitively can be “acts of solidarity” and a “work of recognition” (1992, 28). She goes so far as to say “not to look, not to touch, not the record, can be the hostile act, the act of indifference and turning away” (1992, 28). Volf calls this exclusion by abandonment (1996, 75).

Working Collaboratively and Sharing the Results

Critical to mitigating essentialism in representing those who are being researched is working collaboratively and sharing the results. Since “the identity of the researcher inevitably affects the conceptualization, strategies, and conclusions of research, it is important to understand the position of the researcher(s)” (Porter 2005, 159).⁴⁶ To the extent that the research of outsiders working alone is inaccessible to insiders, contributes nothing new, lacks depth, (Smyth 2005, 21), and may interpret data through pre-coded conceptual categories (Eyber and Ager 2004, 190), it may not have a positive impact locally and may perpetuate stereotypes outside (Smyth 2005, 21). Furthermore, since there are limitations to both outsider and insider researchers, these limitations can be overcome by working collaboratively, respecting one another, and acknowledging the different resources, networks, and capacities brought to the research (Smyth 2005, 21-22).⁴⁷

Conclusion

The literature on identity, essentializing, and resilience that inform this study provide the lenses necessary to see complexities in the lives of the male youth that challenge any simplistic caricature that could misguide policies and programs. Furthermore, the literature on representation and methodology guided the methodology employed in this study so as to represent the youth with respect and according to the complexities of their lives.

construct is fragile and thin, but it is upon this shaky ground that anthropological inquiry proceeds” (Fontana 2002, 172).

⁴⁶Porter identifies “outsiders,” “inside- outsiders,” which she defines as “working in the culture, yet outside of mainstream identities,” and “insiders.” (2005, 159; citing Porter 2000, 164).

⁴⁷She cites Merton saying, “it is necessary that you unite the ‘insiders’ with the ‘outsiders’”. You will have nothing to lose except your own pretensions. In exchange you will have a world of understanding to gain” (Smyth 2005, 21; citing Merton 1997, 201). Merton 1972, 9-47; Hermann 2001, 77-91.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter sets forth the research methodology and is organized around the approach and rationale, participants and sampling, data collection, and data analysis and presentation.

Approach and Rationale

The approach to this research was designed in order to reveal complexities of male youth in the informal settlements who employ destructive tactics of resilience that challenge essentialized understandings of them. This involved engaging in collaborative qualitative research to hear the voices of these youth and resulted in revising the research question as part of a dialogical process employed in the field and in data analysis (Pieke 1995; Ryen 2002).

The literature guided the methodology used in an attempt to represent the youth with respect and according to the complexities of their lives. Following LeCompte and Schensul, who argue that the meanings people construct of their communities and lives “are highly variable and locally specific” (2010, 1), and in order to mitigate perpetuating essentializations, the research was designed with the following basic assumptions. First, the complexities of the motives and behaviors of male youth in the informal settlements and the settlements themselves belie common essentializations of them. Second, *etic* understandings are unavoidable and necessary to initially shape the research questions. Third, it is necessary to hold preconceived understandings tentatively (Nordstrom and Robben 1995; Schmidt 2001; Utas 2004). Fourth, it is necessary to listen critically to the voices of the youth in order to gain an *emic* perspective (Scheper-Hughes and Sargent 1998; Schwartzman 2001; Utas 2004; Boyden 2004; Gilgun and Abrams 2005; Ungar and Teram 2005; de Boeck and Honwana 2006; Giudici 2011; LeCompte and Schensul 2010, 2) that can be analyzed together with *etic* understandings to contribute to a metacultural perspective (Hiebert 1994, 69).

Collaborative Research

In the summer of 2009, I was introduced to Pastor Reginah Naya, the pastor of Christ Covenant Church in Ziwani and the director of GUREC, through a mutual friend. Because of how GUREC is situated in the settlements and because of its purpose, we discussed the possibilities of collaborative research and I returned in the summer of 2010 to conduct fieldwork. To mitigate the disadvantages of outsider research (Porter 2005), and to exploit the advantages of collaborative research (Merton 1972), Pastor Reginah and I formed a local research team to shape, guide, and analyze the research.

The Team

A research team of twelve people was assembled. The intent was that the team would consist of a representative leader from GUREC (insider), one or two youth representatives from within GUREC (insider), one or two youth representative(s) not from GUREC, a local external representative (inside-outsider), and me (outsider). Under Pastor Reginah's direction and through local networks a research team was formed which included Reverend Reginah Naya (Pastor of Christ Covenant Church and Director of GUREC), Carol Wacuka Gitegi, Daniel Peter Kiambi, Eliud Muriu, Eve Sharon Amoth, Girland Ndirangu Mahugu, Gordon Owino, Longinos Onyango Nagila, Martin Mwangi Wanjama, Mwangi Rebeccah, Tome Abigael Seleyian, and myself. In addition to these people, a number of local residents assisted us with logistics as well as in discussions about the data.⁴⁸

This group is comprised of and represents youth in general (defined as between the ages of 18 and 35), including those who have attended or are attending GUREC, some who are graduates of other secondary schools, and those who have not attended secondary schools. The purpose for involving youth on the team was to address the concern of the voices of "children" and "youth" being "conspicuously absent in most ethnographic writing" (Scheper-Hughes and Sargent 1998, 13).⁴⁹

The team met at least twice weekly for the purposes of planning, solving problems, shaping questions, transcribing, discussing data, and clarifying issues.

In addition to the team in Nairobi, a team in Chicago collaborated in data analysis. This team included graduate Intercultural Studies students Andrew Bierlein, Anne Bausch, Annika Celum, Joe Rumenapp, Michelle Tolentino, and Wungchipem Raman.

An important aspect of collaborative research is understanding how each party benefits. The intent was that in the process of earning a PhD, I would serve GUREC by working with them to gather data that would be useful to them and to those we interviewed.

Though the research was conducted by the team, I have taken final responsibility for the contents of the dissertation.

My Position

Positionality affects understanding (Dwyer and Buckle 2009, 60). My position is described as a U.S. citizen, Caucasian, Christian, PhD Candidate -researcher who has read related scholarly literature and been trained in qualitative research (Dwyer and Buckle 2009, 61), adequately funded and paying wages, and leader of the team. English is my mother tongue and the team's and informants' second language. I speak neither Kiswahili nor Sheng.

In regards to our research team, my position put me both in the role of leader, and "employer," but also in need of understanding and access, among other things, so that there was a sense of mutuality early on. I introduced the team to qualitative research and concepts from the literature, and they helped me shape research questions,

⁴⁸See Appendix I for letters of the team members giving permission to include their names.

⁴⁹From the literature review I have done, I would agree with Oruwari, that "one of the areas lacking in the literature on urban youth violence is the aspect of discussing issues from the perspective of the youths who are involved" (Oruwari and Owei 2006, 8).

provided access to informants, conducted some interviews, aided in translation and interpretation, and participated in data analysis.

Following Merton's idea of "status sets," our statuses intersected, making us fellow-insiders at certain points, such as members of the research team, but diverged at other points, such as those of ethnicity, socio-economic status, citizenship, residence, language, and experience—so that we lived in the tension of complex socio-cultural identities and relationships (1972, 24). This was discussed openly.

Being in the settlements with the informants and the local research team made me vulnerable with them, though I was there voluntarily and could leave at any time. Being mugged at gun point by a gang of 5-7 youth seemed to win a level of acceptance and shared experience that pulled me closer to the status of a quasi insider.

Narrative of the Research and Revision of the Research Question

Following LeCompte and Schensul, the research questions evolved because of the complexities encountered in the field (2010, 198). The original impetus for this study was the observation of the essentialized, sensational, and unreliable popular and scholarly interpretations of "children or youth at risk" in informal settlements – especially of male youth – that can divert attention away from the most helpful interventions (McCallin 1998, 60; Theis 2001, 101-102) and exploit the youth (Honwana 2006, 15).⁵⁰

Through preliminary research it became evident that male youth who could not attend formal secondary schools were often considered the most "at risk" and most essentialized. Even among some of the youth themselves there is the notion that secondary education is integral, almost necessary, to making it in life. Of those who cannot attend secondary school, some are able to attend non-formal secondary schools, but most are not even able to do that.

As we became acquainted with GUREC and the male youth of the informal settlements, it became clear that the male youth of the informal settlements not in formal secondary schools who are considered to be most "at risk" did not fit the essentialized portrayals of them. Though many of them who participated in GUREC had been involved in what is being called DTR, they were no longer employing those tactics, or were employing them to a much lesser degree, and were developing more constructive tactics of resilience. Therefore, the study was designed to listen to the male youth describe the factors that have contributed to their continued participation in GUREC and into the factors that have contributed to the non-participation of others who have the opportunity to participate but do not.⁵¹

Early in the field work it became evident that the original research question was too broad and that we were gathering significant data that "widened the lens" around youth engaged in DTR, revealing a complexity that challenged essentialized caricatures of the youth engaging them. It also appeared that there was not a significant difference between the youth of the informal settlements who had survived to post

⁵⁰ This becomes complicated as NGOs and ministries use the stories of youth to raise funds for their mission and youth craft stories to obtain aid (Honwana 2006, 15).

⁵¹ The group of youth being studied is delimited by their participation in GUREC or possible participation. This group is comprised of males who have completed primary school and are between the ages of fourteen and eighteen.

secondary school age and graduates of GUREC in terms of their use of DTR and the ways in which they sought to leave these tactics and cultivate constructive tactics of resilience. Therefore, the research questions were revised and became what they are.

By keeping the two groups, those who have participated or graduated from GUREC and those who have not attended secondary school, we were able to gather data that may be useful in determining the effects of a program like GUREC. Therefore, this project focuses on two groups of male youth in the informal settlements. The first is comprised of those who completed, or are completing, a non-formal secondary school (GUREC). The second is comprised of those who are from the same settlements but are navigating life without having attended secondary school.

Participants and Sampling

Permissions

First of all, access required a research permit from the Kenyan National Council for Science and Technology (see Appendix II).

Second, permission was granted by the District Commissioner of Mathare Division (see Appendix III).

Third, permission was granted by the District Commissioner of Starehe Division (see Appendix IV).

Fourth, access to GUREC was granted because of GUREC's interest in the research.

Fifth, permission was granted by every individual who was interviewed. Occasionally the team was met with suspicion because a lot of research conducted in the informal settlements is purely extractive (Boyden 2004, 243; Lee 1993, 156) and is used to raise money through their research and the pictures they take in the informal settlements that does not benefit the informal settlement. Achola says,

people from Korogocho have already had numerous researchers who, to some extent, did not give any feedback to them, or did not share the benefits that could have come from the research. These people have lost confidence in the researchers, claiming that they lull them with empty promises and only use them as a means to their selfish ends. (Achola 2006, 11)

Concerning organizations that come into the settlements to do research, K said, "I don't bother myself about it knowing they will go after a while.... Some come, do their research and then leave so we never meet again" (K 34-36). Therefore, permission was sought through mutual acquaintances who were able to mitigate the suspicion, pictures were not taken of anyone who was interviewed, and representatives of the community were asked to be part of the research team. Furthermore, it was stated to each one who was interviewed that we were not starting a program or bringing money into the settlements but were gathering information that we would return to those who participate with the hope that it will be useful to them and to the community. Though access through mutual friends can result in a homogenous sample instead of providing linkages to other groups, it is often the only way of gaining access to some populations (Lee 1993, 65, 67). This is the method that people on the ground said must be used to be effective.

Participants

Twenty-five male GUREC students / alumni and twenty-five male youth who did not attend secondary school and who were from the same settlements represented by the GUREC students / alumni were interviewed for two reasons.⁵² First, I gained access into the settlements through GUREC. Second, this allowed for a comparative analysis of Treasures and youth who are negotiating life without secondary school and the possibility of gaining insight into the DTR of male youth in the settlements and for raising questions for further research regarding the relationship of DTR and participation in a non-formal secondary school like GUREC. Therefore, the units of analysis are the group of male youth who went to or currently go to GUREC and the group of their peers who did not, but are negotiating life without secondary school.

Informants' Security

To protect informants from exploitation, exposure, and misrepresentation several steps were taken. No pictures were taken of them. They were assigned pseudonyms. Verbal consent was always requested and recorded and they were assured that their real names would not appear in the final paper. To avoid exploitation by making the challenges and suffering of the youth simply “stepping-stones” in my career—though the PhD credential will be that—(Olujic 1995, 197) the research team as well as those who were interviewed will have free access to the findings.

Data Collection

The team refined the proposal, research questions, and methodology. Guiding questions were informed by the literature and then were developed to use in semi-structured informal interviews with youth. Open-ended questions were used, to elicit detail-rich stories from the youth rather than abstract opinion-oriented answers to questions shaped by the pre-existing categories of the researcher.

Interviews were conducted by teams consisting of two interviewers who, between the two of them, were fluent in Kiswahili, Sheng, and English. Therefore, each interview was conducted in the preferred language of the one being interviewed. These teams interviewed youths individually. Stories were elicited rather than abstract explanations or descriptions.⁵³ Interviews were conducted from June 2010 through July 2011.

The project gathered descriptive idiographic data in an attempt to answer nine overarching questions related to male youth from informal settlements (Bernard 2006, 81-88). These questions were:

1. What are the significant self-identified vulnerability factors and personal issues of concern?

⁵²Interviews were also conducted with several mothers, local church leaders, and local organization leaders. Altogether about 125 interviews were conducted but only the fifty interviews of the male Treasures and corresponding youth who did not go to secondary school were analyzed for this dissertation.

⁵³I follow Scheper-Hughes and Geertz who argue that “all humans are story-tellers and meaning-makers” (Scheper-Hughes 2008, 44).

2. What evidence of resiliency is there and what are significant factors that have contributed to their resiliency?
3. What are the push and pull factors that have influenced some to continued participation in GUREC (see brief description below)?
4. What are the push and pull factors that have influenced others to not participate in GUREC or a similar organization?
5. How does power in the socio-ecological system function?
6. What role does identity play?
7. What are the perceptions of both groups as to the nature, roles, and influence of local churches, Jesus, and teachings of the Bible?
8. What influence are these factors, their participation, and their perceptions having on vulnerability factors and issues of concern in the lives of those participating in GUREC?
9. What influence are these factors, their non-participation, and their perceptions having on vulnerability factors and issues of concern in the lives of those not participating?

However, as the research evolved three guiding questions became central to the revised research concern and questions:

1. How do the Treasures and youth who are negotiating life without secondary school recognize DTR as destructive?
2. How do they recognize DTR as resilient?
3. What details from their lives “widen the lens” around essentialized understandings of the DTR?

Data Analysis

Procedure

Most of the interviews took place in the settlements, while some of them took place at GUREC.

The interviews were digitally recorded. Those not conducted in English were translated and all of the interviews were transcribed. The team assisted in checking the understanding of the local argot, insider or cultural humor, historical references, and all Kiswahili and Sheng. This data was discussed with the team in order to test comprehension and contextualization at this level.

The data was then coded according to emerging sub-categories within the pre-existing category of resilience and DTR (Ungar 2004, 2006, 2011; Utas 2005; Vigh 2006; Scheper-Hughes 2008). These categories are: destructive tactics of resilience, co-existent constructive tactics of resilience, perceived power over them, inner conflict, catalysts to destructive and constructive tactics of resilience, and examples of prosocial change. In order not to impose our notion of “destructive” on the youth, we coded DTR according to what the youth defined as destructive. Our goal was to discover locally constructed categories which could be situated in and contribute to precedent literature (Coffey and Atkinson 1996, 32). This involved repeatedly splitting, splicing and linking together various categories (Coffey and Atkinson 1996, 46-47).

Data was then integrated with the literature review. The final analysis will be presented to the team for their comments. Finally, an attempt will be made to discuss the findings with all who were interviewed.

Accuracy

To negotiate the challenge of accuracy, the research was designed and conducted by a team of insiders and outsiders. After interviewing individual youth, follow-up focus group discussions were held a few days later when possible. By comparing the interviews with each other and with the literature there was variation in the experiences related but also consistent themes and complexities that made grandiose or simplistic stories stand out and appear questionable. For example, most of the time the youth did not describe themselves in essentialized ways. They were consistent in describing their strengths and weaknesses, inner conflict, anger, regret, fears, and hopes.

In addition to this, this study is informed by the following assumptions. First, though Fuchs overstates the case saying, “we have no idea what goes on inside other people’s minds,” it is true that we “can only think and feel according to our thoughts of their thoughts and feelings” (Fuchs 2001, 122). So accuracy, at best, is interpretive and approximate. Second, the purpose of this project was to identify issues for further study and paths for further inquiry. Inaccurate and untruthful data can still illuminate these issues and paths. Third, though youth are selective in what they say, that selectivity provides some insight into their lives (Eyber and Ager 2004, 192). Fourth, because of inconsistency for whatever motive, analysis is “inevitably a navigation through multilayered stories” that may not lead to the “true story” but to one that is closer to the true story than any one version he had been told (Utas 2004, 218, 223, 230). Fifth, though we cannot always be certain that what is being said is accurate or complete, the value of the study is that the voices of youth are heard and that repeated ideas and themes give rise to questions to explore. Without listening to their voices, conclusions are drawn about them only through the interpretations of others. In light of the observation that the voices of youth have not been heard (Scheper-Hughes and Sargent 1998, 13; Oruwari and Owei 2006, 8), this is a step in the right direction.

Use of Data

The final copy of the dissertation will be submitted to the Academic Doctoral Office of Trinity International University, GUREC, and the Kenyan Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology. It will also be made available to the District Officers of the Mathare and Starehe Districts. Finally, the dissertation, in some form, will be made available to the research team as well as to those who were interviewed to be shaped and used as they see fit in their communities.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS (1): RESEARCH SETTING ACCORDING TO THE YOUTHS' PERSPECTIVES

Chapter two presented common essentializations of the settlements found in the literature and marked by extreme language and generalizations, especially in negative terms. Listening to the voices of the youth leads to a more complex understanding of the settlements that challenges simplistic and generalized descriptions. For example, the youth variously said that “life is so hard” in the slums that it is “not such a bad place,” and that “you can categorize it whichever way you wish.” These descriptions reveal complexity and potential within the settlements which corresponds to the complexity and potential seen in the youth who employ DTR. Seeing potential in the settlements makes it easier to see potential for individual youth.

Negative: “Surely Life Is So Hard”

ToTU says, “life is very hard in ghetto ... to get by is hard” (82). You have to “work until you get what you want, you have to struggle for the thing, in the slum, it is all about competition who has this and who has this and the place that I am from” (24).

MNO says that “for sure life in Mukuru is very hard.” He describes a common house visit:

we have the problems in the houses you get that if you walk to most of the houses here in Mukuru you would even pity them so much because we visit them, there are times that we go to visit them in their houses and we take for them a little food we read for them some Bible verses. There is a way that if you even walk there yourself you can even cry. You get that the mother is sick, her house is full of water from outside and she is sleeping on the bed and she has children and the husband is also jobless maybe the house is paid at 500 but even getting the 500, you realize that they cannot make it on their own. (410)

D’s construction work varies from day to day, “today you go and get, and you lack tomorrow.” You can be out of work for two weeks “so you have to survive in the ghetto life” (2). When he is out of work and does not have money or anyone to help him “you just struggle” (8). When TU was asked if he faced hardships, he said:

There was a day I was so confused I felt like I was going mad. Sometimes life confuses me until I see the universe has turned against me. I don’t have a job. I pay rent, I have to eat and wear, for right now I’m trying to make it. When you think you’ll drink and be done with stress, stress now multiplies. (100)

And yet, he is networked and able to find food when he does not earn money in a day—either from his friends or his grandma (102). He said, “there are days that I completely lack but I don’t think about my stomach because I have friends. Because when I have, I help them out. When I left [don’t have], they help me out” (104).

Because of Family Situations

“My Parents Left Me”

D said, “life is hard” because “my parents left me” (2).

Many youth have one parent. For example, the youth might have a mother who is sick and no father and so the youth might have to steal to eat (MNO 36). MNO describes his life saying:

it was very hard, I would go to school without shoes, without eating anything you would also go back home and there is no food, the following morning you wake up and the situation is still the same sometimes the books would be a problem. My mother on the other side is hustling and she was not getting anything and things like that. (62)

QR said that “life has been hard” because you are on your own for rent, for clothes to dress like others—“you can’t rob from somebody so that you wear.” Instead, “you have to commit yourself and your commitment is that you go to some place and you find a job, sometimes you lack, sometimes, you sleep hungry” (44).

A “Self-confused” House

ToDE said, “my life hasn’t been that good because my Dad and my Mum have brought me up in ghetto.” For him this involved his parents abusing drugs and alcohol, fighting with each other, and leaving ToDE home alone to care for his younger sisters—and they would go hungry. Sometimes he went to school hungry and said “you have to bear with [your] situation—you find that in ghetto you have to bear with the situation about the diet.” ToDE describes living in the ghetto as living in a “self-confused room” (which is a sarcastic way of referring to a self-contained room) (8).

I can say that if you have grown in the ghetto, you have to be clever, being clever is this way...if your mum has left for you... they could leave for us some money, so if it was that a hundred bob, be clever, you could sit down and calculate, there is *skuma wiki* for 10 and tomatoes for 10 KSh there is paraffin for 10 KSh you know there is...in ghetto you cope with the situation so at least I could budget for that 100 bob until tomorrow I could get that 20 KSh for lunch even if I will not take that breakfast. (ToDE 18)

The Need to Provide for His Family

BCDE who fended for himself and provided for his mother and sister by hustling the streets—collecting and selling metals—from the time he was “very young” said “life has been very hard” (14). He has slept hungry “not one time” and getting daily food is the greatest challenge—“if you just rest then there is no way that you can get it” (24).

M said,

to be sincere the life is difficult since for now the job is hard, food is expensive and the children need to feed, and also the wife needs to wear, and you also you get that mentality that you do that work and you also go to do another work like even stealing. So you find that we have great challenges and this work remains that it is not helping us. Life is very hard. (11)

Because of Friends Who Steal

Speaking of his friends, B said,

You will find that when you have money, someone comes in your house seeking for your help, he is your friend so you won't think ill of him, so where you've hid the money and you have gone let's say you have gone to the toilet, you come back and find the house has been tampered with, he has taken the money and left. (278)

However, another factor is that technology facilitates individualism, "nowadays I am clever if I get money I deposit it in my M-PESA account (mobile banking) so if he comes and checks the house they will not find anything" (280). Another is the realization that "when you have money, you have many friends but when you don't have money the friends are nowhere to be seen" (284).

That is something obvious, friends have to steal from each other, because you may find a friend who his wife has chased him that she wants money to go to the salon, so he comes and you know you have to prepare him something so when you are preparing for him tea that is when he steals. (282)

MNO concurs saying that though his friends are "just peaceful and you can't get them in any problem" (458), he demonstrates a lack of trust in them because he knows that in a group of friends there may also be *watiaji* (betrayers) who want to come into your house just to see what you have, and the implication is that they later steal from you (462). Therefore he says they meet on the road and then go their separate ways rather than hanging out at each other's houses (462).

Because of Drugs

Taking Drugs Leads to Stealing

EF, who did not attend primary or secondary school because his mother did not have the money to pay the school fees said, "there are so many challenges in the ghetto. Life is so hard here you need to survive" (14). What makes it hard is that youth take drugs, and without jobs and the need for drugs, they are led to stealing (16).

"Drugs Are the Things that Have Finished Us Mostly"

MNO highlights the role that drugs play in the difficulty of life here saying, "even as you look at the boys who have involved themselves in drugs, drugs are the things that have finished us mostly" (28).

“Drugs Sold Everywhere”

ToQ says that “what cause a lot of problems in that place is drugs, they are sold everywhere.” If you move from one building, they are sold in the next—*bhang* in the front and *steam* at the back (142).

Because of a Lack of Food

“A Meal Once a Day”

People get a meal once a day (MNO 32). When he began attending “Our Lady of Nazareth” lunch was provided at the school and so his only meal each day was there (MNO 70).

“Morning Will Come”

You wonder what you are “going to take for breakfast” after spending all day trying to hustle “but things are not working out,” it is 2 AM, “and things are dry.” You “try to see whether there is anybody on the road but there is nobody... [and] you don’t even have a shilling.” Finally, “you have to just to accept that you are going home without anything so you know that the morning will come but you don’t know what will happen. You don’t have an idea of how things will be” (LM 10).

Because of a Lack of Education

“If You Are Not Learned ...”

The reason people have such hard lives is because they are not educated and “if you are not learned you cannot get money” (MNO 34).

“I Pity Them”

J speaks of “junior boys” who have not completed Standard Eight stealing, killing, and raping with apparently no fear. He said that he pities them and fears for them because they are young boys (26).

People Do Not Know the Law

BCDE said, “People don’t even know anything to do with the law. People just live; they know that the law is in their hands” (116). As a result, “anything can happen” and “many things do happen” (1171-118). People are robbed and beaten—“that is, this life is just real” (118).

Lack of Medical Care

LM talks about the lack of medical care, so when you are sick, there is nothing you can do—“So here we live out of the wish of God” (24).

Violence

A Small Mistake

J said that what threatens him is stealing and killing—“a small mistake that you do and someone rushes to pick a knife ... or a *panga* whereas it is something that you could just have sat down and talked.” So you have to “keep quiet and only do your work; you just leave many issues with other people as long as you know you are not related to bad things, you just stay on your own” (88).

“Caused by Small Things”

LM said that “fights here are caused by small things” (10). Youth may rape a girl because she does not answer their greeting (10). Many people “host enmity” and so youth “grow up knowing that one day the person will attack you” (10). A fight between two people becomes a fight for the whole village (12b). As a result, many people fear “this ghetto” (10). In fact, “one feels that it will reach to a point where they will kill me ... we will be killed one by one” (10). Others say that those who quarrel die (10).

ST said that sometimes you are “not in good terms with others” and you get into fights on the streets (120). In these fights you can be stabbed with bottles and other crude weapons (122). One took a machete to “cut the other” over twenty shillings. Another slashed someone’s ear—almost taking it off (124).

Accept Rape

LM spoke of “so many people” who were raped but that there is not much one can do—“so the person has to accept that she was raped” and “just tell God to revenge for you” (10).

Every Day

Stealing, killing, and rape happen every day (J 29). J said,

things happen, when something happens another happens, when that is over, you hear that so and so was raped the other day... every day boys go to steal, they go to stab people. Even when you go to this police station, they will tell you that those reports are brought every day. You can’t lack a time that you can fail to hear people complaining that they’ve been robbed off their phone...I have been beaten, you see? (31)

Scared Most of the Time

Growing up in Huruma, ToD speaks of living in a constant state of insecurity, “most of the time you are scared because you don’t know what will happen next” (24). Many girls are raped (100). Because of unemployment “youths who don’t have work to do so they just there chewing *khat* and then at night you just hear someone shouting thief ...” (102).

ToQR speaks of the power and threat of the Mungiki, “those people are very dangerous and they are very powerful and people fear them in that area so we fear anything about them, then you must co-operate so that you can live them in peace” (202).

Because of Authorities

False Accusations

QR has been arrested and taken to court several times, charged with “drunkard disorderly conduct” though he was innocent. Not having money to pay to get out, he accepts and is given community work, rather than refusing and being fined (34).

ToQRS says that life for the youth in the slums is “so challenging” because as a youth you can easily be arrested because you are associated with thieves or you become the object of jealousy because you dress smartly or you are lured into stealing because you compare yourself with others (363).

ToQ says that police “arrest people for nothing” and then “if you give money, then you are set free.” As a result, even when they arrest someone for something serious, the residents think they have just “taken the person as a scapegoat” (228).

Arrested for “Bad Intentions”

ToQRS says that you can be arrested because you are Kikuyu and assumed to be Mungiki (365). Twice ToK was arrested because he was viewed as a youth with “bad intentions” (38). He says, “the police can arrest you for nothing because of the youths. They become as if they are enemies with the youth” (ToK). ToLMNO says that “the situation is worsening” as the police “just come any time and carry the boys even if there is nothing that you have done, they say that no one is supposed to just stay idle” (98).

You Must Wear Slippers

B said that if he is seen to be “clean and smart” or carries a cell phone he is assumed to be a thief. To avoid this perception he has to wear slippers and job clothes (32, 37, 39). ToQ also said that if you are dressed smartly and the police see you, they want to know where you got the money.

H said that police leave the parking boys alone but arrest those who look “smart” and have obviously spent money to dress themselves because parking boys have nothing to give them but the others would have “something little for their tea” (186-188).

At the same time, ToQRS says that there is great pressure to dress smartly and it is a motivator to steal.

It is challenging like you find like a youth can be arrested and also people don’t want others to dress smartly, you find that when you find someone dressing smartly, the other one feels jealousy, and you find that maybe the person will steal from the parent and buy something or that he gets into bad businesses so that they can compare themselves with others you see, that is the big challenge of comparing of oneself with another. You ask yourself why do the others dress smartly whereas I don’t. You become influenced and so you work hard so as to become like him. (363)

There is a lot of pressure to wear nice shoes and clothes.

You know at this age I personally due to peer pressure, it is the big problem, you see your friend is having new shoes, a new shirt even you are influenced and you want to have that shoe and that shirt so you do each and everything so that you get that money. You buy shoes, shirts so that you look smart. You don’t look bad so those are the things we buy, we buy shoes, clothes, chains yes so that you look smart, and you look somehow presentable. (ToQRS 42)

The motivation to dress smartly not only raises suspicion of police but also makes one more vulnerable to being mugged. When ToT was a student and walked around in his school uniform, though someone would be strangled just ahead of him, and he would hear someone else scream behind him, no one bothered him (262). This would happen about four days a week. But now that he is “grown up in a clean trouser and a shoe, they will now put me down” (262).

“Those Up There ... Those Down There”

B identifies those with power and money as “those up there” and the oppressed in the slums as “those down there” (48-51). Help that is given to the people of Korogocho ends up reaching “those up there” which are the rich (45-47).

“Youths in this Place Die”

BCDE says, “there is a way that youths in this place die.” He goes on, “the youths here if it is the issue of drugs, they get lost once they get in. You find a young person entering into *chang’aa* and you take *chang’aa* until you become old and you realize that your lack in life is lost” (106).

My Friends Are Dead

ToD, speaking of his friends, said, “most of them have been killed” (28). BCDE says, “all the friends that we started with, none of them is alive” (56). S said, “...and after all, we saw that most of my friends have died stealing. You see, and not far, just here on this road” (60).

J said it hurts him when his friends are killed because of stealing and other things. He is “not happy with they do” and tries to talk them out of stealing. But they respond to him asking whether he “will give them what to eat?” This hurts J “from within”—“but on the face, you just laugh with the person. You just know that this person doesn’t do good and the last time you will go to bury him. And it is not good... and you see dying as you are young, it is even a curse from God” (52).

“There is No Sparing of the Youths”

Youth are seen as “in the front line of causing violence and havoc” (TUVW 69). Oluoch says, “the name *Korogocho* is so feared that, at times, all the youths are viewed as criminals” and as a “‘spoiled generation’ with a destroyed future” (Oluoch 2002, 43-44; Achola 2006, 18). As a result many are killed: “you find a person stealing and is killed you see? They don’t spare them, there is no sparing of the youths, for the youths, they are just killed” (ToB 95). According to ToB more than 800 had been killed in one year in one settlement—perhaps more because there were 150 killed in one month (97). ToLMNO, however, lamenting the same issue said, “you know two months don’t end before you hear that a boy has been killed in the mtaa” (404).

We heard of groups, purportedly organized by the government, “that were arresting the youths and killing them” (EFGH 22). ToLMNO said, “nowadays the boys are being killed most of the times” by the government (402). One boy he knew was killed though “there is nothing that he had done” (408). The police found him in a pool game. As he was running away they killed him (414). He was a hustler and did not want to sleep in jail—since his parent could not afford to bail him out, he ran (416). When a youth has been killed like this the community joins together and buries him (418). Sometimes a complaint is filed but it does no good, because, “here in Kenya you can’t compete with some things, you can’t move with them” (420).

ToQR said that at times if police come across a Mungiki they will shoot him on the spot. This has been a deterrent to them (214). ToD spoke of the work of a police chief who, calling it community policing, authorized the shooting of youth and reduced crime.

There, in some cases, he shot others, those, the real leaders, some were shot and also he was advising youths in youth concerts like if there is a youth concert like there was a cup, our MP Margate Wanjiru was, it was ... how can I put it...it was a function so Magrate Wanjiru was the guest so she came then that man came and said that he must speak then he told those guys that he doesn't want to shoot anyone else if they change, he doesn't want to shoot anyone else but he wants them to change. First of all it was hard since he just shot...after a short time, he shoots another then the crime really reduced in Huruma. Even Huruma was most safe place more than even Kariobangi. (94)

ToT told how two security officers caught a thief and “beat him so much” that they left him in a critical situation and then took him outside (188). They notified the police but no action was taken (190). They removed him from the compound and the students were told to go to sleep (190). They did not know what happened, but in the morning they found him dead outside the compound because of his severe beating (190).

On the other hand, ToT says that many thieves are in the community “but you can't easily know them” (306). As a result, ToT has only seen one that was killed and heard that one was beaten—though almost to the point of death (306).

ToDE said that many youth are killing and being killed because of stealing (42). Most of them are between seventeen and twenty-seven years old (50). ToDE's friend was in a gang and was shot during the day by his friends in the same gang—who had been smoking *bhang*—because of an argument (46). A friend of his friend tried to defend him and was shot also but did not die (48).

LM said that police have “reduced the youths” meaning, “killed so many” (44). “Many” youths have died innocently because of false accusations (44). For example, he says that a mother may have a grudge against a particular youth and mentions to a policeman who has a reputation for killing youth “that this person is not good” and the youth is killed without a trial (44).

Some are not thieves but are arrested, “put in the boot,” taken to Eastleigh, and killed (LM 44). Once LM went to Eastleigh and saw three youth, each held by one police, taken to a corner, and after a few minutes he heard gunshots (44). He returned to Mathare and then heard that a boy called Joseph was missing. He told those who are looking for Joseph to go to the morgue and Eastleigh, which they did, and found the bodies of the three youth (44).

ST said that sometimes “the government here in Kenya meets with you, like 8pm, they can't even listen to you. If you try to run, you are shot. Since like in the base, many people have been killed who are innocent” (90). One of his friends was killed as follows:

there was one friend who was killed called “*Wamathina*” (ST nick name in Kikuyu referring to a person with a lot of problems) it is about four months now, he was just walking at night at around 8pm and so they met him and then they told him to go and sleep so as he was not going to sleep in the house, he would only come and sleep outside here. He came here and as he went to look for the beddings to sleep on, he was found still walking and so they just shot him. So those things are not good and I fear so much. (92)

ST also says, “sometimes you can’t wait because when these people arrest you, they just shoot you and they place on you other weapons (claiming that you had a weapon) that you don’t understand. You just die” (94).

J said that many work in the car wash during the day and, because they are hard-headed, they steal at night and “most of them have been beaten out there until they have died.” He said, “you work with somebody then you hear that he went to steal and he died.” The police come to the car wash and accuse them of hiding thieves” (72). Those that steal, especially those who brag about what they stole, “forget that ... one day you will be caught ... we will pay your mother to buy the coffin” (72).

However, J says,

you find that they have gone and stolen, they will steal today and tomorrow and even the other day, but one day, he will be caught and be killed that people even complain. You see...but later it is realized that the police didn’t kill them out of nothing but it is something that they were doing. What happens mostly is that they die or contract HIV you see, something like that. (46)

A Journey to Death

LM describes the journey of a friend that led to his death. A certain youth left his home and “joined other bad people.” While with those people he “got that thing” which he defined as “grudges with people.” Though he may not even be able to explain why he is doing it, he does what he is told by the others, even to the point of murder. He was shown by them how to live, and followed—“living with people badly.” He did not listen to warning and eventually came to the point at which his “blood is bad” and he becomes “stubborn.” Even strong warnings like “God can blame you for that that you made a person to die” have no effect. You just have to accept that people like this will die because of their stubbornness (44).

J described the path of a youth to death as one who finds himself at night with nothing and says, “no way, it is dark and I don’t have anything, let me hurt one and then I go to sleep.” He continues:

But when you hurt one, it becomes your day and you...you see, you have not done that you wanted but it is due to lack since you don’t have anything and you can’t just go home and your wife is waiting for you and maybe they have a wife and a little child. Not that the wife will leave to also search for themselves. And that is why many ladies here are not defeated, instead of being defeated when the child is young instead of when the child is big. So at this time you know the wife can’t go to search for herself. And that is the time that their husband dies so much. The guy has the pressure since he knows that the wife can’t go to search and am there and since I don’t have, they go to steal that is how they die. That lady now goes back home you see, that is not good. Those are things that are affecting us here. Lack of job. (56)

Without Hope

BCDE said that youth “out there,” meaning outside of groups like Youth Transformation for Change, do not have hope, a vision, or the knowledge necessary to reach their dreams (110).

Better a Short Sweet Life ...

A common mindset is, “when somebody dies, he dies ... so you better live a good life for one month or one year, an expensive life than to live in poverty.... It is better to live a good but short life than to live a long but poor life” (N 163). ToQ told about his friend who was killed by another youth because he was accused of selling a stolen phone and buying shoes:

He was used of stealing even when he was in primary school, so when he came here, he never stopped and so as we were here, when we closed school...we were with him in the whole of form one and he refused to come back to school and once he continued like that, that year never ended, he was killed in December by his friends, he was given a phone by his friend to go and sell and so he gave a person that phone who went with it to upcountry and so as he tried to convince him that he had given it to a person who had gone to upcountry, that guy accepted. He was so much of a murderer, his name was Taylor. He tried to explain to him that he gives him time up to Sunday. The Sunday never came, he saw him with a new shoe and he thought that that was the phone that had been sold and he spent the money. So he went with him and bought for him *bhang* and he took him down there to Kiamaiko and killed him there. He put him in a sack and threw him. Although he also died recently. (80)

The friend who killed the other was then killed. ToQ said, “he had gone to steal with a vehicle, and so they entered in a vehicle and asked for everything and so they met with the police by bad luck. He died recently” (82).

Positive: “Not Such a Bad Place”

“Okay”

In the midst of these voices saying that life is hard, there are others. ToQRS said “the place is okay although those days it was not good as there were thieves, but the place was just fine. If one would not have influenced himself with things there, the place was just okay” (28). ToQB went further framing Kariobangi as “not such a bad place” (36).

“Interesting ... Good”

LM, who has moved because of conflict that resulted from people holding grudges, said, “but life in ghetto is interesting. It is good. I miss staying here—were it not for those grudges that got here, issues that are not worth it” (34).

What the Rich Kids Miss

ToDE says that the rich kids who live in nice areas of the city miss friendships and stories because ghetto people tell stories.

“The Youths are Not Bad”

ToQB said that in Koriobangi “the youths are not bad” and the bad youth are the minority (36). He frames it this way even though there is “peer pressure ... stealing and doing as your friend is doing not as you are willing” (36).

Because of Family

Laughing and Sitting Together

Though there was a time for ToQB when “things were not well,” since his father got a job when he “comes at home, you are happy as you laugh and sitting together so things were just okay” (44, 40). He also mentions that he and his cousins completed form four and joined universities so “we are thankful that we do not find any challenge” (44).

“All Were in Harmony”

ToLMNO also said that life with his parents before they died, “was not that hard” because “all were in harmony so I was not finding anything bad thing happening” and life in primary school was “also running smooth” (38, 40). Most of his friends go to school (174).

Life Was Sweet

QR said that when he was living with his mother “it was sweet” because “you were not struggling” for rent money “you just stay at your home.” He said, “I would give all thanks to my mother, she was hustling and hustling until we ate and we would sleep” (46-48). When he lived on his own, life became more difficult because he had to come up with the rent (46).

Friends

ToLMNO said he had not had any friends who were thieves (66). He never joined a gang because he had “good friends, I have never gathered those bad friends, those who are thieves” (338).

QR is conflicted about this. When he was living with his friends he said, “life was easy since if one would go and get and another one lacks, we would all share together as brothers” (24). However, it sets you back as well, because you are not able to get ahead financially to rent a personal house and get married. He said, “from the time that I left school, it is like six years and now I should be having my own family and I still don’t have” (26). Also, living alone allows you to make decisions independently. He said, “when in a group, you have to help others out financially [such as paying their share of the rent] when those you live with do not have enough” (120-123).

T explains that groups that use drugs “cause people to drop out of school” because they are just focused on money (8) so “if you separate yourself from the group then you can succeed” (6).

Hardworking “Drop-Outs”

ToQRS says that one of his friends who dropped out of school has not gotten involved in crime—not all do (112). Instead of crime, the youth he knows collect garbage, sell trousers (146), work as deejays, or join acrobat teams (124).

Not Everyone Does Drugs

ToLM has friends who do drugs and yet because he fears God, he has not turned to drugs even though life is difficult. Instead, he prays for God to help him (422) and he pleads with his friends to stop—but they do not (388, 398).

ToN did not get involved with drugs as his brother did because “you know everybody has his own life. I looked and saw that if I don’t follow what I am told, I will get lost. So I followed what my mum was telling me until I have reached to this level” (56).

ToQ used drugs for a while, but his mother convinced him to stop (76).

Because of Education

When asked about his favorite memory during primary school he said “it is hard to remember since life was full of fun. We enjoyed and I was a leader and a prefect so it is hard to remember the best day of all the other days” (ToQB 50).

Because of a Little Money

EF, who did not go to primary or secondary school and has been living off the streets and scavenging in the dump since he was young, said “what I can say? My life is not so bad because I can pay house rent and also I can afford what to eat every day” (50).

ST said that a youth does not stay in the slum because he wants to but because it is the only place he is able to pay rent (168). ST said that “life” (meaning living expenses) “is cheap here” (170). Food is expensive, but in a group, “you join and buy flour and *skuma* and other things, for tomatoes you go to look for them in the market or you are given a *kibarua* (casual work) they will give you the potatoes” (172).

ToDE who said his own life was hard when he was young, talked about the advantages of living in the slums. First, it costs less to live. He said, “you don’t have to go to Nakumatt for shopping” (ToDE). N agreed, saying, that housing in the slums was cheap. He rented a room for 500 shillings per month. In the ghetto “you don’t need that five litre oil ... Gor soda to be in the fridge ... you don’t need gas” (ToDE). Since there are many ways of cooking in the slums he can budget for a family on 100KSh. He says,

In [the] ghetto you find that things are okay, things are not bad. Because where did Jesus come from? He came from the ghetto! So what I can say is that ghetto is fine, the movie we watch the video we have, the games we play, we are okay as the ghetto people. It is only that we undermine ourselves, we see that we can’t make. If we can just realize the potential that we have, you find that it is great, you find that this person in the ghetto, once he wants a *nyam chom* (roast meat) you find that he will have to send people who have done catering. In ghetto you find that we don’t need people who have done catering, you find that there is *mutura*, (roast meat put in the large intestines and roasted) there is soup. There are things

we call *bhajia* (potatoes put in colored flour and fried in oil) you find that many businesses by the way is you can...in ghetto there are many businesses. So you find that if you want that pudding, they are there. So I think ghetto people have the potential but they haven't realized what they can do. (ToDE)⁵⁴

Because of Being a Part of a Youth Group

Though BCDE said earlier that "life has been very hard" (14), he also said,

I just want to say that in this life, there is a demand that you have to be doing something so that we can succeed and it is not as hard as the boys are trying to see it as hard. For me long ago, I would see it as very hard but now that I am in the life of YTC, I start looking at the life differently. It is not hard. (158)

"It Depends on How You Have Based Your Life"

"If You Plan and Take Care of Yourself"

ToC says that "before I joined primary school, of course there were struggles but not a lot of them—few of them" (36). After finishing GUREC, he says, "after I cleared Form Four, life has been okay. I have not seen as if it was bad because it also depends on how you have based your life. If you have put a bad base then, it would be very bad, it would be very harsh. But if you plan and take care of yourself then life will be okay for [you?]" (176). This echoes Floris' words, "despite the bottle necks ... there are various success stories where youth have arisen up against all odds and taken control of their affairs" (2006, 48).

Contentment

When asked about challenges he faces "at home apart from financial instability," ToQ says, "I can't say that I have many problems as I am content, my life is one of contentedness so I don't need many things, like others who want to wear a shoe worth 4500, I don't have such, I am just okay" (136).

If it Happened, it Happened

When ToQRS was asked if he feels drawn back to the place where he has done wrong, he responded with "where you find that maybe I have done something and I just see that, that thing is not okay like failing to attend church and I just see that these things are not good but I just see that if they happened, they happened" (575-578).

Communities Can Change

M, who was well known in Kiamaiko as a "bad person," has changed. Others like him have also changed. Over the years he has lived there "there are changes

⁵⁴It is important to note that ToDE's family has more financial resources than many. (242).

that have come.” For example, “for sure people nowadays do not harass others as before” (57).

“Categorize it Whichever Way You Want”

B said that you can categorize life in the settlements “whichever way you want” because it depends on many things.

It Depends On Your Wife

Another way to look at life is illustrated by B who said,

you can categorize it [life] as hard or easy whichever way you want, it is how you want to stay. It’s like you can get married to someone who can make your life hard she wants money, she wants expensive things and all that but you can also get another one who does not want expensive things and who wants to manage life the way it is and the resources you have the way they come. (219)

“There is No Such Smart Life like this One”

LM says that “there is no such a smart life like this one, because once you have been able to make it in this life, there is no life that you can’t live in since if it is the issue of surviving, they say that you can survive with less than a dollar per day” (2). Also he says,

life here can’t oppress you as long as you are hustling although there are many different ways. There are others who are working others are stealing, they are clever boys it is just that they lack the opportunities because if you can get someone who can make for you armoury (guns) that youth is in the ghetto; he never went to any college he just stays here. (2)

“Life is Fair”

ToU said, “life is fair because it also depends on what you are doing. Maybe if you are a student or a parent, whether you have money or not, it depends on your strength and also how you are helping” (18). Though many assume that life in the slums is hard, ToQB said, “I don’t see as if life was easy nor hard, let’s say that the life was there as God has been there for me, so not that it was good and it was also not bad as such” (18).

“They Still Can Make It in Life”

Advice ToLMNO would give his friends that are his age is that they should “take care in their own life because life is not very nice in the *mtaani*” (396). He would tell them that “they still can make it in life. They should think that...time is not so much gone and that they can make it still” (398).

Entrepreneurial

HIJ was raised upcountry until he finished standard eight. A teacher invited him to live with her in Nairobi and serve as her “house boy.” During that time, he cared for the house and learned how to make lampshades from her. When he had to leave her house, he bought sweets on one street and then sold them to school children in front of a school on another street and sold lampshades. Later he was able to rent a house in Mathare, build houses for others, and continue his lampshade business. Lately he started an organization called, “Youth in the Slums Aiming for Excellence.” All of this was done without help from outside.

Conclusion

Youth gave varied and conflicting descriptions of the settlements, such as, “life is so hard,” “it’s not that bad,” and “you can categorize it any way you wish.” This argues for complexity and potential within the settlements and challenges simplistic descriptions found in the literature. The complexity and potential in the settlements corresponds to the same in the youth.

CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS (2): A SYNCHRONIC VIEW

This synchronic view of prominent DTR and details that emerged through the voices of the youth reveal complexity and point to pathways to explore for facilitating prosocial change. Though synchronic views, like snapshots, give some insight, they can also lead to essentializations since they fail to capture the history and influences behind the snapshot. However, in a diachronic presentation the movement sometimes does not allow for aspects of life to be seen more closely—especially across a certain population. To mitigate this, a synchronic view is presented in this chapter and a diachronic view in the next. Therefore, here contextual and historical factors are mentioned very briefly.

The chapter is organized around categories that emerged from the data and that help to de-essentialize views of the youth who employ these DTR as helpless, super-youth, or hopeless. They also point to pathways to explore for facilitating prosocial change. These will be discussed in Chapter Seven. The categories are: destructive tactics of resilience, co-existent constructive tactics of resilience, powers the youth perceive have significant influence over them, inner conflict, catalysts to destructive and constructive tactics of resilience, and examples of prosocial change.

Destructive Tactics of Resilience (DTR)

The three prominent categories of DTR that emerged from the interviews were: living on the streets, stealing, and substance abuse. Each section below serves to orient the reader to understandings of these DTR as described by the youth and to present data that describe the destructive and resilient elements of the DTR.

Living on the Streets

What is a Street Boy?

Davies said that generalizations “mask a great deal of variation in the actual lives of individual street children” (2008, 314). Though various categories of “street child” are suggested,⁵⁵ the children themselves defy generalizations (Panter-Brick

⁵⁵These categories include: children on the street (who “maintain strong family ties”), children of the street (who may have contact with family but sleep regularly on the street), and abandoned children—all defined in terms of the child’s relationship with his/her “family” or “home” (Ayuku et al. 2004, 295; Le Roux 1996)—both of which are culturally constructed (Kilbride et al. 2000, 7). Van Aker et al. conclude that street children in Nairobi, however defined, have in common that they “are trying to escape a hostile family environment—one characterized by violence, abuse, alcoholism, and alienation” (Van Aker et al. 1999, 395). However, ToSN’s home environment was not hostile. His mother struggled with mental illness but was not hostile. The data of this study fit more with Le Roux and Smith’s “most street children have unfavorable family histories in common” (Le Roux and Smith 1998, 684) and Kilbride, Suda, and Njeru’s conclusion that street boys “often have homes of origin characterized by poverty and parental alcoholism” (2001, 117). Since there was no consensus on the definition of street children, Van Aker et al. crafted a working definition: “Street children are those under 18, who, for various reasons have dropped out of, or never went to school; they have minimal or no ties with their families or relatives, and take care of themselves. These children live in peer groups on the streets, or in slums” (Van Aker et al.

2001, 150) which “belie the ... personal variation behind each street child” (Kilbride et al. 2000, 8). Therefore, the terms “Street Boy” or “living on the streets” in this study do not refer to a reified category but are the terms used by the youth who were interviewed. They describe someone who finds food and money for himself in the community through means other than a regular formal job and regardless of his family situation.

Though stealing and substance abuse are frequently mentioned as a part of living on the streets, they are dealt with separately because they do not always apply to those living on the streets.

Living on the Streets as Resilient and Destructive

Youth who are not given food at home, school, or by other organizations demonstrate resilience by going to the streets to scavenge for food or something to sell. Some sleep on the streets as well, either because they have nowhere else to sleep or merely choose to sleep on the streets. The youth framed living on the streets as a means of surviving and are regularly confronted with the danger of injury, disease, and death—especially as they scavenge for scrap metal and food—and with the sometimes helpful and sometimes harmful interactions with other “street boys.”

Scavenging in the River

Scavenging is often destructive because it is dangerous. F scavenges for metal in the river by finding a deep place where you can “sink” and “put in your head,” move stones, and feel around for metal. Sometimes lorries offload scrap metal and, because there are many who want to scavenge the metal, “you have to use force so that you can get that metal since it is covered by the soil.” This requires a lot of digging and F uses either his hand or a stick while others use a *jembe* (a tool like a hoe). You have to remove the metal as fast as you can and keep what you get in a sack. On days when the others are “of tender age whereby nobody was pushing me” he is able to collect more (258; see also F 52).⁵⁶ Often there are broken bottles that cut F’s hands and then he gets sick, “having the amoeba and other things” (60-68).

Scavenging Food

ST said that you can get sick from scavenged food if you are not careful (96-100). To try to avoid disease he “stays alert” when collecting garbage because “you can hold something bad which can be dangerous” (98). He stays alert by washing his hands (100). For example, now rat poisoning is a danger and boiling, as they did before, does not help (100). Also, though they did not know how many days previous the food had been thrown out they ate it and “could feel that that food is nice because we have nothing in our stomach” (ToSN 204-206).

Help and Betrayal

Youth in the settlements demonstrate constructive resilience by sometimes helping each other, sometimes sharing food and sometimes defending each other against an outsider (ToSN 494-506). Some demonstrate destructive resilience by betraying one

1999, 395). This is close to what the youth in this study reported, though the age eighteen seems arbitrary or imported. Also, to say they have “minimal or no ties with their families or relatives” overstates the situation as reported by the youth.

⁵⁶He can make about KSh 100 for 5 kgs (F 254). The most he has made in a day was KSh 500 (F 256). Often he will gather 2 kgs. and make 40 bob. He spends 20 bob and saves 20 (F 68).

another (ST 270), stealing from each other (ST 278), forcing another to do something against his will, and provoking each other to fight (ST 284). This is destructive because it can bring harm to the perpetrator and victim.

Stealing

The youth describe forms and methods of stealing, distinguish various kinds of thieves, and frame stealing as destructive and yet as a tactic of resilience.

Forms of Stealing

To steal is to “lengthen the hand” (ToB 228). Forms of stealing include, but are not limited to, stealing from supermarkets, hardware stores, individuals—including stealing women’s handbags (ToSN)—pickpocketing (ToTU), carjacking (EFGH 54), breaking into houses (ToLMN 65), and stealing shoes or scrap metal. Instead of stealing himself, T sometimes sells stolen property brought to him. Once, unknowingly, he ended up trying to sell a cell phone to its original owner (9).

Methods of Stealing

Sometimes youth will engage someone in conversation or accuse him of something to get him confused and distracted while others steal from him so that it appears to the public that they are not stealing (ToT 268).

A common form of mugging someone called *ngeta* is the technique of putting a wooden rod or board along your arm, often under the sleeve, and grabbing someone around the neck in a headlock. Often the person passes out but he or she can also die in the process (ToX 72).

ToLMN described how they would terrorize people in Westlands so they would not resist. They harassed and threatened one man until he cried and urinated in his pants. When his wife screamed, they forced a doughnut in her mouth and gagged her with a bandana to deter others from screaming. They forced the mother, father, and sister, all of whom were “fat,” into a small closet (116-120).

On the day TUV’s friend was killed they had gone out together to steal. The first six attempts were successful (4). Using a dagger and a Somali sword they would threaten or stab “the stubborn ones” to make them submit. Their methods and the risk are described below:

My friend had a dagger and I had a Somali sword. His was Taiwan these were the ones that we used to make then submit and then we would rob them my friend would stab the stubborn ones but I didn’t have the guts cause I was new.⁵⁷ On our seventh attempt I caught one person. We had two. He ordered them to give him their valuable. They claimed they didn’t have so he stabbed them thinking that they were lying to him I was so terrified that I left the one I was stealing from to go. All of a sudden I heard the sound of a Land Rover. I went and hid behind Uchumi then I heard a gunshot. I tried to call my friend but he couldn’t hear me due to the screaming but I was watching what was happening. The cops alighted from

⁵⁷TUV does not know if the ones his friends stabbed died but said, “he had really stabbed them badly they looked like they were just going to die” (TUV 16).

the Land Rover and shot my friend's leg when he was trying to escape they shot him twice in the head and he died on the spot. I was confused. I didn't know what to do so I ran and dived in the Nairobi River. The water swept me up to Mathare and I went home. (18)

Youth do not hesitate to resort to violence in the act of stealing (ToT 61-62).

Kinds of Thieves

"Someone Who Steals"

B refers to a thief as someone who steals (215).

Those who "Steal Just at Home"

K says that some steal in neighboring slums while others "steal just at home" (16-18).

"Thieves Very Much"

According to MNO, most who do not work but have money to buy drugs are thieves. This is obvious as you find people who wake up at three in the afternoon "but when you look at his house, he has made it but you can't know...I know most of them are thieves, thieves very much" (46).

"A Real Thief"

ToU looked innocent in Standard Three but "was very bad in terms of manners" because stealing "was not a big deal for me." When "one steals bit by bit that is when it grows and you start stealing other bigger things and you become a real thief—a wanted person stealing vehicles and such things" (102).

"Proud Thieves"

There are those who steal to "get the modern life." There are also those who will not steal "if they get it otherwise." But there are also those "who are proud of stealing." For them crime "becomes a habit and so leaving it is so hard and until the health is taken away from them ... Those are the proud thieves. And they are ignorant that they can die. The ignorance is already so much in them" (BCDE 74).

A Thief with "Bad Manners"

ToT differentiates between a thief with "bad manners," who does not care if he is seen and "just comes by force and robs from you," and a thief who "knows that he is a thief, but he would not like to be known" (306). Most of the thieves in his part of Mathare are the latter—they are here "but you can't easily know them" (306).

"Born with the Blood of Stealing"

EF distinguishes between being "once a thief" but not being "born with the blood of stealing" like his friends who have "the blood of stealing and not fearing anything" (24).

"Ordinaries"

Having a reputation as an ordinary or as a hooligan is a good way to end up dead (TU 86, 90). TU said, "ordinaries are so many and most of them are dead you see" (70). Ordinaries will live a good life, a "nice life when they come to the end of the

road of life” (108). People become ordinaries because they want to dress nice for the ladies (110), because of poverty, and because of drugs (112). Most ordinaries will not work even if they are offered a job because a job might pay only KSh 200 per day but they could get 600 for mugging three people (113-114). TU and his friends do not hang out with ordinaries because they are “destroyers” (120). For example he says, “there was a day that some of them had stolen in Kariobangi and they were being trailed, traced by the cops unawares to them. They came to our hangout place. The cops just appeared and we had to scatter so that we couldn't be arrested. So we decided they shouldn't be coming to our base” (120).⁵⁸ TU says that the difference between ordinaries and hustlers is that “ordinaries are proud and show off [that] they don't struggle a lot. Hustlers [are] always struggling. They don't choose work, they do what comes” (118). Hustlers are weaker because “ordinaries have something” (108).

“Theft is Just Behavior”

BCDE said that someone is not “a thief” because “theft is just behavior.” There is a non-thief way of thinking. A thief way of thinking is “excusing yourself due to your challenges” but stealing is not excusable—“one is not supposed to think of such” (68).

“Once You are a Thief”

MNO's friend was in the habit of stealing and was finally caught. He was killed by a mob by being doused with paraffin and set ablaze with a tire around his neck. When MNO, who had stopped stealing, was asked how he felt about his friend who was burned to death he said, “I felt bad although it was still good... because once you are a thief though you are my friend I cannot like it” (298-300).

Stealing Framed as “Bad”

Though stealing is the easiest way to make “quick cash” money (ToB 228, TUV 1) and to have “a better life ... without sweating” (ToLMN 65, 114), and though it is sometimes required to get daily bread to survive yourself (S 24) and to provide for those who are dependent on you (M 13), it is known to be very dangerous because “once they steal and they are caught, they are just killed” (ToB 228).

Those who steal are referred to as “not good” (EFGH 56). Stealing is referred to as a “bad thing” (EFGH 26) and “horrible things” (ToQR 44). Those who steal know it is wrong (ToT 272). ToX says that *ngeta* (described below) is “a bad habit ... even in the eyes of the Lord” (72). He justified himself by saying, “but on my side I have never killed but I was taking by force since I didn't have any other way” (72). ToX believed that when he was successful in stealing the devil was tricking him to trap him (96) and the money that was stolen was cursed (94).

S called stealing, beating, and robbing people “bad ways” he had to turn to in order to survive (24). He said that before he began to wash cars (by stealing the water) “I was not a good person since I would go to steal and I would do many things” (60).

TU said that “looking for scrap metal going to the streets and snatching people's property... that life ain't good” (34). Sometimes TU searched for scrap metal and sometimes he stole it, saying, “you know if you were lucky and found metal wrongly placed even if it wasn't out of use I'd pass with it” (46).

⁵⁸“Base” is a central meeting place for groups of youth.

M said that when he was stealing, everyone in Kiamaikeo knew he “was a bad person” (47).

B recognized that the stealing he had been involved in was wrong because he desired to teach his son not to steal. If his father had cautioned him, he would not have stolen and ended up struggling as much as he is. If he does not caution his son, and his son dies because of stealing, he will be the cause of his son’s death (270).

ToT believed that when he planned on theft it was because he was “getting lustful” and “the devil was winning me” but “God never wanted me to do that” (282).

The High Risk of Stealing

Death

S frames stealing water by illegally tapping into the water line to run their car wash business as risky behavior—he even says, “we risk our lives” and that “is just the way it is” (74). This is behavior that is not “something that is okay” but they have no choice, “it is not our wish to be doing this” (72-74)—so they “just risk since even God is seeing us, isn’t it?” (74)

ToQ’s friend was killed by his other friends for presumably buying shoes for himself with the money he got for selling a stolen phone for them. They got him high, killed him, put him in a sack, and threw him in the river (80). The one who killed him died not too long afterwards as he was trying to steal a vehicle (82).

T says that friends kill one another because of money (10). For example, “let’s say we went to steal and one of them goes with a larger share or he is given some things to carry and he doesn’t deliver so they say that they were taking a risk and yet he is stealing from them so they kill him” (11).

ToL had 13 friends and only 2 are still alive (ToL).

F’s “very close friend” was constantly drawn by another group of youth to steal with them. Finally his friend was persuaded and went with them to steal from someone’s house in a “story building.” He was “teaching himself” how to steal and was caught. The others knew how to escape but he did not and he was caught and killed (170-178).

ToQR said that if you are caught stealing by the police you will be arrested and taken to jail. However, if you are caught stealing with a weapon, you will be killed (80). His friend was caught with a gun by the police so “they took the gun he had and then they shot him and that is how he died” (170). ToQR also said that mob justice is “very very dangerous” so they look for places to steal where there are not many people (97-99). ToRO said many of his friends who were thieves were shot and killed by police or beaten to death by mob justice (1334-138).

F said that he would not join his friends who invited him to steal with them, and now “most of my friends who have been killed because they were...even me I wanted to...those issues of stealing” (168). He credits God with giving him patience to resist their invitations or “for sure now I would be another person that is dead man” (164-166).

Most of ToD’s friends have been killed because of stealing (28). BCDE says, “all the friends that we started with, none of them is alive” (56).

In 2006 D was involved in a group that was “doing evil” (30). He said that when youth have guns and set out to steal, “that is the time you see them suffering” (114). He realizes that if he would be involving himself in “bad things” he would be dead now (20). He realized that stealing would also bring issues to his parents (28).

Those that H stole with have been killed (104, 106). Two of MNO's close friends were killed while stealing (290).

Two of TU's friends were killed stealing. One was "a close friend" who "was just a good person until he joined a gang." He and another friend robbed someone and his close friend kept part of the loot. A week later the other realized it and killed him. Since then the other one has been killed too (90).

Another friend had "just cleared high school was waiting for his results." He wanted money to go to the restaurant Carnivore, robbed someone, was caught by a mob and killed (TU 94).

Though TU saw ordinaries, he does not admire them because many of them are dead—"if you are known because of good deeds that's okay. But if you're known because of hooliganism, that is not okay. Actually many people like those are dead" (86).

QR said that "you can easily be shot dead or be beaten by the mob" when you are stealing (104).

Two of ToD's friends who tried to steal the offering at a church with a toy pistol were stoned by mob justice. When people outside the church realized what was happening, they chased the youth, caught them, beat them with knives and clubs until they were unconscious, and dropped a stone, called a nine by nine, on their heads to kill them (42-58).

W said that most youth who have lost their lives in the *mtaani* have lost them because of theft. W has not been involved in gangs that steal because he recognizes the danger. He said, "you know I have saved my life, even my friends...in fact another was just killed recently [by the police]. Most of them have died and if I was in that group I would also have been killed but I thank God." Seeing a friend killed by the nine by nine has made W sad, "though not that much because as you know when you tell your friend to stop this and then he sees as if you are under rating him" (81).

Getting Shot

M describes being shot as he attempted to rob a man. It was the end of the month, rent was due, and his father was sick with no money. So he decided to rob someone. In the process he was shot. He could not go to the hospital because the police would have found him there. He went home and allowed the wound to heal as it would. He still has problems with it (27-29).

Being Beaten

TU's friend was caught stealing and was beaten.

We had gone to a place called Mahutim and there's a garage there ... We went and removed copper under a certain lorry that was parked awaiting for repair. My friend Jack was under the lorry and so when we saw the people approaching we ran and left him under the lorry. So he later came to tell us what happened. When he [came he was] bruised. When he was under the lorry he saw the shoes and it's like they figured out he was under the lorry so they caught him and beat him up seriously. When he showed us the bruises we were all filled with fear and sympathy. (52)

Jail

Involvement in crime leads to arrest and jail—and the one who has been in jail “has destroyed his life” because he cannot get a Good Conduct Certificate, required for employment (EFGH 22), and becomes a hardened criminal as a result of his being with other criminals in jail who promise him things when they get out (EFGH 50).

Reasons Youth Steal Even in Light of the Risk

Though stealing is admittedly high-risk and often leads to death, it is utilized by youth to move their agenda forward for various reasons. For some it is thought of as a means to “quick cash” and “easy money” (ToB 228). Stealing is a means to “a better life ... without sweating” (ToLMN 114). Some steal in order to survive (S 24), for daily bread (ToX 42). Some steal in order to run a business so that they do not have to steal more (S 80). While for some it is a choice, for others “the situation forces you” to steal (H 90). Some steal to provide for girlfriends, wives, siblings, children, parents, and grandparents (MN 44, ToLMN 70-71, M 13-21, ToX 68). Finally, there is a common attitude that it is better to live a short, sweet life than a long, difficult one (N 163, ToLMN 64). These are described in greater detail below under “Catalysts of DTR.”

Strategic Substance Abuse

The youth describe various common kinds of drugs in the settlements and frame substance abuse as both destructive and as a tactic of resilience.

Kinds of Drugs

Forms of substance abuse mentioned by the youth include abusing drugs (in general) (ToDE 124-126), sniffing glue (ToSN), *bhang* (marijuana, MNO), chewing/eating *miraa* or *khat* (ToDEF 257) (a stimulant eaten as either stems or leaves, MNO), *chang'aa*, also called “steam” (ToQ 142), drugs injected with syringes called “hard drugs” (ST 212), *kuber*.⁵⁹

Because *chang'aa* and *bhang* are ten shillings—“and you find that you can't easily lack a ten shilling that even if you can go and borrow it from a person, he can give you”—they are cheap and accessible (ToQ 146).

Mixing certain drugs is especially bad. For example, “if you mix *miraa*, *bhang* and the *kuber* once they explode it is over” (MNO 304). A youth who has taken a mix of drugs like this would come into a place where there are people, not see them, take a phone, and not realize that he has been seen (MNO 306-308).

The Identity of a “Real Drug Addict”

ToQ differentiates between “a real drug addict” and others he does not identify as such. He defines the “real drug addict” in this way:

it was this way, for that time, my mother cried as I also have a bigger brother, who is smoking *bhang* just as other people smoke the normal cigarette. He is a real drug addict and there is nothing that you can tell him. All his money...he cannot help himself with his money, whenever he gets money, he spends it all on drugs. My mother had tried to talk to him but it happened that he couldn't change as he started being young. (50)

⁵⁹*Kuber* is tobacco that is dried and ground and acts as a stimulant. According to MNO, it is used mostly by the Mungiki (MNO).

Framed as Bad

ToSN referred to a life of substance abuse as “not the good life” (298). ToDE said, “when you come to your senses you find that you didn’t do something good” (ToDE).

D said that “others say that if you smoke *bhang*, you will be very tough but you find that it is still stupidity” (114).

N hated alcohol because his father was a drunkard who, because of his drinking, could not support the family (18-22).

The Destructive Element of Substance Abuse

MNO highlights the role that drugs play in the difficulty of life here saying, “even as you look the boys who have involved themselves in drugs—drugs are the things that have finished us mostly” (30). TUVWX’s father’s alcoholism was the cause of TUVWX’s parents’ divorce and he says, “that for sure is what is destroying our people” (189). ToLM said *chang’aa* “is killing people” (398). Speaking about the youth, MN said “drugs are destroying them” and “they abuse you” when you try to tell them that (180).

Difficulty of Leaving Drugs

ST said that drugs are “very hard to leave” (220) because “when they enter the blood, they can’t leave easily” (222). ToDE saw the destructiveness of drugs and the difficulty of leaving them in his parents’ struggle to come out of that life (8).

Lethal Boldness

Drugs give a kind of lethal boldness because, being oblivious to danger when high, youth steal in plain sight of people and are killed (ToQ 102, H 166, ST 208). Drugs alter a youth’s mind so he is emboldened to steal—which often leads to death. A friend of MNO’s who was only seventeen years old, took a mix of drugs, stole a phone while others were watching though he did not realize they were there, and was beaten with a stone and died (312). Once when ST was on drugs he went to the area of Satellite, stole a stove, was beaten, and “woke up to my senses in Kenyatta hospital” (216-218).

Idleness and Unemployment

Many youth are “idle” just sitting “in their base eating *miraa*” (MNO 36). They beg for a place to sleep and then wake up and sit around eating *miraa* again (MNO 36). When asked what a typical day is for S, he said, “I just stay idle and eat *muguka* (*miraa*)” (68). He does not work during the day but “just stays around” until about two PM when he begins chewing *miraa* and then starts washing cars in the evening (68).

T said that *bhang* “wrongs people” because even Form Four leavers get jobs but then smoke *bhang* and do not show up for work the next day (4). *Bhang* “makes you lose hope in your life” because “you go and just stand there and there is nothing you are doing and you don’t even think about making your life better...you don’t even think of what you will eat tomorrow for your part you just think that you are fine” (2, 3).

HIV/AIDS

Substance abuse can lead to AIDS because “when one gets drunk, you are no longer yourself. And you get yourself indulging in immoral acts [prostitution is mentioned] (N 143).

Shame

Drunkenness led N to fight within his family which brought shame to his family (216-223).

Rape and Murder

Drugs “reduce the thinking” and can “influence you to rape, to kill such that you can do some things that you can’t do as you are not normal” (ToX 52).

Keeping from School

ToQ said that if he would have continued using drugs just a little more, he would not be in school now (100). ST says that when you are using glue you become “thirsty” for it and “feel that you want to go back to see the friends in the base. This makes them to run away from the schools (204).

Cooking *Chang’aa*

D’s grandmother and mother cooked *chang’aa* and sold *bhang* in order to buy food (124). But D told her that when someone pays ten shillings for a “cup of beer” and then “beats his wife at home while drunk” while his “children are going hungry” or people take *bhang* and beat and rob people—when “this blood is shed, it is shed because of us—as if it were not for us, they could not have done it so I beg you to stop that business” (126). People also began to harass D’s grandmother saying that “grandmother to D is spoiling our youth” and “the grandmother is spoiling their husbands” so D’s family was developing a reputation as “bad people” (128). He said that when someone takes *chang’aa* or *bhang* they think they are okay and feel brave and uninhibited to “even rape someone’s child” and “harass people on the way all because of that *bhang*” (128).

“There is Nothing that You are Thinking”

H also said that sniffing glue hurt him because it makes you unable to think about anything (38). He says, “there is nothing else that you are thinking, you see like now I’m thinking that there is some work there but before if I had a KSh 20 in the pocket and knowing that I will go to buy another, I can’t think of going to look for another work” (38). By the time he learned about these things he was on the streets and was already sniffing glue and using drugs so that “my brains were not thinking about anything else” (58).

At times you find people that you were friends with, yes they were bad but they don’t bother you, you feel so bad only to hear that the following day he is not there [he has been killed]. If you are a person with good brains, you will sit down and think but because of these things that we are using, you will not see this as a bad thing, even the following evening, you will still go to search. (H 166)

Even when H was not under the influence of drugs he said:

that is the time that you could not even think of anything. When you are there, the whole of your brain is about the drugs, when you are under the effect of drugs, you will stay there and say that today is on the market day. Maybe if you have used the drugs for the whole night then coming the following morning you just lack it, you feel that you have lost appetite for

anything even food until you get the drugs as the first thing, the whole brain is not doing any other work apart from the glue. (170)

So when you are under the influence of glue you feel that everything is okay and you fear nothing and you are not cold or hungry, but when the effect wears off you only think about getting more glue.

Reasons Youth Choose to Abuse Substances

Though substance abuse is admittedly destructive, it is utilized by youth to negotiate life for various reasons. Some take drugs “due to lack of options and meaning in life” (TUVW 8). For others it is the promise of “living in such a good life” (ToDE)—or at least dreaming of a good life while you are in your misery (TUVW 16). Drugs “clear your stress” (EFGH 22) and ease the burden of living in such a way that is not fitting for human beings (ToX 50). N drank to escape nightmares or evil spirits (97). Using drugs makes you “forget your problems” (TUVW 14), takes away your hunger (ToLM 392), and keeps you warm (ST 234). Drugs take away the shame of collecting scraps (ST 214) and give courage to fight (N 79) and steal (BCDE 76).

Co-existent Constructive Tactics of Resilience (CTR)

The data demonstrates that in the lives of the youth who employ DTR there are co-existent CTR (as they conceive of CTR); for example, using stolen money to start a business. This points to complexity and potential by demonstrating that they are capable of CTR and therefore neither necessarily helpless nor hopeless for prosocial change.

Learning to Think in New Ways

ToDE described how he used to think like “ghetto people [who] don’t think far” but “just think where they come from and the surroundings.” Now he is learning new ways to think because “God has been changing my life through the places he has been taking me, through the people he has been making me to meet and at least I have seen great things in my life” (ToDE).

Learning to be Content with Little

Though J used to steal, now “I just come here and get something small that I will be content... it is just about being patient and content” (70).

ToX said that it is better to have little with no fear, than to have a lot. He used to risk his life to get money but in these days since he is not stealing “though I get little I know that it is safe” (237).

Making Constructive Decisions

Youth employing DTR believe that they are able to make decisions and their actions confirm that belief. For example, now that he is out of the gang, MN is able to “control” himself because he chooses whether something is wrong or right and decides himself what to do (140).

TUVW is in the process to stop using drugs. He said that his friends can attest that he is “giving it my best” (18). He realized stopping is his decision—no one else can break the addiction for him (18).

H said that the Parking Boys who started a garbage collecting business and now are renting their own houses did not need the help of the church and have changed themselves, saying:

it is just that we decide in our hearts and we decide to wake up by ourselves like now you see we are here, it is just us who have decided. There is nobody who came to tell us, it is just that we stayed here and thought that we have grown. We now even have beards and so this show is not good and so we decided to start a project and that how it stood (86).

Avoiding Situations that Lead One to Steal

MN saw that it was not good to seduce the girl and then “have to cater for her needs” because she may demand you to buy things for her and if you do not have the money “you’ll be forced to steal” (44) being that “bodily lust” could cost being “shot dead” (D 36).

Working Hard for Little Return

M slaughters goats in the day and has to “look for money in another way” in the evening to support his four siblings and three children of his own (15). He has been a thief and, especially at the end of the month when he sees he is not going to have enough, he robs from people (17).

ToX never knew his parents and was raised by his grandmother. He went through a period of doing drugs and stealing with a gang, and worked casual jobs, such as taking care of cows and working in the gardens, during the time he was in classes five and six in order to feed himself and pay his school fees (18-28). Because he was earning so little, he could only attend school for four months. Also during that time he found it hard to concentrate because of his concern for provision of food for his grandmother (28). After finishing primary school he did casual work so that he could leave his grandmother with some money for food and buy a ticket to Nairobi (38).

H and fellow parking boys started a project of garbage collecting when they got tired of “sleeping outside and being disturbed by the police all the time” (90).

Many youth scavenge for scrap metal, not only in dangerous contexts such as the river, but in relatively safe contexts. It is a constructive tactic in that it makes productive use of what otherwise was wasted and would contribute to pollution. F hustled collecting metal and plastics when his parents were drunk and the school did not provide food (8). He can make about KSh 100 for five kilograms (254). The most he has made in a day was KSh 500 (256). Often he will gather two kilograms and make forty bob. He spends twenty bob and saves twenty (68).

Sacrificing to Go to School

As a street boy ToSN believed he needed education and admired the kind of life that educated people had. He believed that education would open the door for jobs that would change his life and enable him to take care of his mother and help his family.

He says “that is all that was in my mind and the chance that I had gotten at that time, I used it for the best of my...the way I could be able to do it” (224, 232). During the time he was using glue and *bhang* he was going to school by playing “hide and seek” because he could not pay school fees. He would slip out of class and hide in the bathroom during attendance and then return and sit in the back (304-320).

Working Together with Others for Mutual Benefit

ST, his sister, and the boy he lives with help each other find money for rent, food, and clothes (62, 112). While living on the streets EF scavenged together with his group so that “when one has a problem, we use that money to solve the problem” (54-56). ToQRST joined the financial “merry-go-round” group in which the members of the group contributed money and took turns using the combined funds to start business and build their homes (78, 120-122).

Acting from Compassion for Others

Having young street boys with them on their base is a challenge because though they have run away from home “you find it difficult to tell the child to go back home” because “you think of the challenges that you have faced at home” (H 20). You understand that a young boy uses drugs “so that he can be able to struggle” because you have used them for that reason (H 20, 28-30).

MN lived on the streets for a year when he was sixteen years old (28). He had to sleep outside in the cold with no blankets (16). It was difficult getting food (16). He said that “actually that life was not good” (16). In fact, he tried to tell other friends he was with “to go back to their homes because I too was once there and I saw that life was not good so I try to inform them about this” (16). MN feels sorry for youth who use drugs and die at the “tender age of eighteen” (144). This “really affects” him so he usually tells the youth that they should not be using drugs—“but telling them is like playing guitar ... so I just look at them” (144).

F knew another “small boy” whose parent beat him “telling him that he is a bad boy and that he didn’t want to go to school.” So the boy quit school and now “feeds from the scrap metals just like me” (238). F and this boy work together sometimes and F shows compassion, saying, “he was struggling so much and if he can narrate to you the story, you can also get very sad” (240).

Managing Stolen Money Well

ToX bought goats and chickens with stolen money, turned a profit and paid for his grandmother’s hospital bill (68). With the money that ToQRST saved he joined the “merry-go-round” he opened a kiosk (78) in which he sells cereals, groceries, cooking fat, paraffin, flour and other things that are commonly used in the houses for about KSh 70,000 (80, 126). During the time while he was mugging he was also saving money through the merry-go-round, and he built his own house (120-122). The merry-go-round grew until there were seventy two people putting in 100 shillings per day (122).

CTR While Abusing Substance

Youth recounted that while they were abusing drugs they continued to look for a way out, to stay in school, to help younger boys on the street, and to avoid becoming addicted (ToSN 334).

No Longer Abusing Substances

Though H eventually was able to stop using substances, he stopped gradually. Having been off of glue while in jail, when he was back on the streets and cold he said, “even if later we came and still took it, we were only sniffing a little and then we stopped little by little and up to today we have never put it in the mouth again” (174).

QR, who used to sniff glue but now has changed, tells youth who are sniffing glue, “today let us not sniff glue” but they sometimes “struggle to strain themselves like an hour and they tell you that the thirst is so much.” So “you tell them that if you were sniffing glue worth KSh 10, you tell them to reduce to around KSh 5 since you can’t stop at once ... you have to gradually stop” (68).

Persevering to Stop DTR

To Find His Mother

While ToSN was living with a relative and using drugs, he was also trying to find his mother so that they could live together so he could move away from his relative and stop using drugs (324). Eventually he found her, begged her to move to Korogocho to rent a room with him, rented a cart and pulled it three hours to get her things and three hours back (342-344).

In Listening to a Friend

B says that after a month of a friend telling him what he was doing was wrong, he saw that what he was doing was indeed wrong. He stopped doing these things and changed (193, 205).

Avoiding Substance Abuse

Though it is very difficult to escape drugs because so many are involved in them and it is easy to land in bad company, in fact, “you can't know how you enter into such a company” (ToDEF 255). ToDEF stays off drugs by staying in the house instead of walking around the neighborhood. This is how he avoids old friends who take drugs (261). He also participates in GUREC, sharing his burdens with other students and finding protection (261).

Perceived Power over Them

The examples of what they perceive to have power over them challenge the romanticized notion of these youth as “super-youth” who can rise above any challenge. They identify perceived forces that alter the course of their lives, “force” them to do certain things that result in harm to themselves and others, and, in fact, have been factors in the deaths of many. The categories that emerged from the data were internal forces, circumstances, substance, people, laws and policies, and spiritual powers. These

powers are listed here briefly and are illustrated in the section below entitled “Catalysts to Resilience.”

Internal Forces

An internal force that the youth describe as having power over them, to some degree, is the lust of money (DE 80) or “the taste for money” (E 43). Money could bring happiness (ToQR 64, ToLMN 92) but if it is stolen, it also could be “aroused” and bring unrest (TUV 7). “Bodily lust” for women moves men to risk their lives (D 36). “The fear of being associated with the underdeveloped” and the power of “flossing” leads many youth into crime (BCDE 72). Some are born with “the blood of stealing” which makes one fearless (EF 24). Pride can lead a youth to attacking someone and to jail (D 34).

When you are doing wrong you “feel it in your heart” (EFGH 70). Attitude is described as “the engine of life” that keeps you moving in either a negative or positive direction (ToDE). The sense of responsibility for someone can make one change (ToDE).

External Circumstances

The youth talk about external circumstances that “force” them to do things. For example, lacking work, money, and food, and having the opportunity to steal, “forces you to anything” (ToQR 44, BCDE 90-96). Speaking of joining a gang and committing crime, one said, “you are taken there by your problem” (TUVWX 105).

Substance

Drugs have power to fool youth (TUVW 20) so that one’s head is “being taken by that thing.” They alter one’s consciousness so that he is “not normal as usual” (ToQRST 54). *Bhang* “carries you” so that “important things pass you” (F 168). Substance misleads you (TUVWX 179). Drugs “have finished us” (MNO 30).

Drugs “enter the blood” and “can’t leave easily” (ST 222). Once you begin to use them “it is like it calls you” (ToQ 104). You become “thirsty” for glue and it pulls you back (ST 204).

Drugs enable youth to “forget some things” (ToSN 326-334). *Bhang* “wrongs people” (T 4). Drugs direct you to steal and you obey—and can be lead to death (MNO 302). When high “you are no longer yourself and you get yourself indulging in immoral acts” which can lead to AIDS (N 143). It inhibits the use of talents (D 132). Drugs can influence you to rape and kill, acts you would not commit if you were not high (ToX 52).

Drugs make you fearless (H 166) and make you lose hope (T 2). When abused, drugs erase memory (H 174). It captures the mind because when you are high, you think about nothing, and when you are not high you think only about getting high (H 38, 58, 166, 170).

Other People

ToQRST’s mother was working before he entered Standard Seven in Nairobi so he was left alone during the day and “forced to stay with other people who

didn't go to school but then involved him in smoking *bhang*, snatching things from people, stealing property, selling *bhang* (56-60) and selling for what he could get" (46-48).

After ToSN's many setbacks and then being thrown out of his aunt's house and sleeping hungry many days, he moved in with a relative in Korogocho knowing that the life of his relative was "not a good life" because they took gum, glue, and *bhang* (298-302). Hunger and the need for a place to live drew him to his relative's house.

Laws and Policies

Youth find themselves caught under the power of a system that perpetuates crime. A "Good Conduct Certificate" and letter are required for many jobs and yet youth who go to jail can never receive such a letter so "many youths have gone to the jail and have destroyed their life." When they are released, though they may be reformed, they cannot get a job. The only perceived option is to return to crime "since for crime, you don't need a good conduct or a letter. You only need to decide to be a thief" (EFGH 22).

Spiritual Forces

God

ToSN believes that God has kept him from being arrested (472). He believes that when the other street boys threw him in the dam and laughed at him while he struggled "drinking water"—leaving him there to die—God saved him (448). ToSN believes that it was by the grace of God that he survived living on the streets and eating rotten food (204 – 206, 508) and that it was God who helped him out of life on the streets (458).

EFGH said, "For now I believe that God is the one who is working in me and you or me as an individual can be whatever I want. Am the one who can make or destroy my life" (70).

ToQB said, "I don't see as if life was easy nor hard, let's say that the life was there as God has been there for me, so not that it was good and it was also not bad as such" (18). Though there were many challenges, God provided. For example, "life wasn't going that well" because he did not have school fees and had to stay home. However, "God would bless us and then I would go back to school" (20).

B believes God is holding him and not letting go (193). He admitted that he "used to do very bad things" and that through the persevering persuasion of a friend "I saw that actually God removed me from where you could not come out by myself and by now I would be dead and I told God for sure God help me so that I may not be able to do another bad thing and I had that hope in God and up to now in God" (187). He went on to say, "God has actually saved me from a lot of things, he has removed me from difficult situations many a times" (171). One day while he was doing his work he was arrested, being accused of being a Mungiki. Neither he nor his mother paid for his release. He was held for three days and then released. He had prayed to God and is convinced that God moved them to release them (171-173). B believes that God has removed him far from his former life of stealing because when he compares himself to the friends he used to steal with, he is married and everyone knows his son belongs to him whereas some of his friends died before they were married and some of them fathered children who are now

fatherless. He says, “I usually tell somebody that if it were not for God I would be dead by now” (191). He also believes that God is the one who can help him not to wrong others (191). Furthermore, he says that, “God has given me hope and I can stay alive without stealing and I am still left with some money” (213). Finally, “some were killed by the police because of stealing but for me I was saved from all that and I told God, just as you have held me continue holding me and never let me go” (193).

ToDE said that though his “life hasn’t been that good because my Dad and Mum have brought me up in ghetto” where they were abusing drugs and alcohol and he was often going hungry and had to learn how to “just bear with the situation,” he said, “so far I can look back and say that it is God, the place that I have come from, it is God” (ToDE).

ToDEF believes God had taken him “far with dancing”—by taking him out of Nairobi, going to a “hotel and being served as a boss, you just look at yourself the way you are and you are asked “hey boss, what do you want?” you know that thing made me... you just wonder and you are proud that is let me say that God has taken me far with dancing I have been very happy and have been given so many things” (281).

TUV said, “after I had the accident I believed God made me survive because if it wasn’t him I’d have been dead by now. He comes through for me even when I was paying the bill. Since that incident I always know that God is there and he exists”(74).

Jesus

ToSN says,

for me I can just say that Jesus did a lot for me because the protection... that I was beaten maybe they could have killed me ... I have heard many who engage in drugs, I was not addicted. I took cigarette, *bhang* ... all those substances, I took everything but I was not addicted and I thank God because even if that time I was addicted, God saved me and now they cannot hurt me and now am preaching the gospel, I am preaching to those kind of guys, I am trying to meet them, if I have a chance to see one of them, I preach to them the gospel. (508)

ToDE said that Jesus has been his shepherd, being a friend and light to him (ToDE).

The Church

I have included the church under spiritual forces because of the way it is spoken about by the youth. The youth do not talk about the church sociologically but spiritually. The focus is not on the people but on the perceived power of the institution.

D said that the church “has made me to be a good person” (124). F said the church “pulled me” from the “issues of stealing” to which his friends invited him—who are now dead (168).

When asked how the church has helped B, he said that when he goes to church to pray the church gives him hope (57). The church makes him spiritually and emotionally strong and gives him strength. Therefore he feels more secure (57). He said that those who go to church are strengthened not to steal because “when you are in church you cannot think of what you will steal but when you are with your friends they

will tell you that today we don't have money let's go and steal when you go to steal there and there you are arrested" (61).

Satan

EFGH said, "I also believe that a good thing, you will feel it in your heart and I believe that anything good is God and anything bad is Satan so when I was doing the bad things, I knew that the devil was taking control of me" (70).

Clan Blood

If a parent dies being guilty of doing evil, such as rape, a "shadow" enters the parent's child "and so the evils that the person was doing is the same that the youth will be doing" (D 130). Some are "spoilt by *bhang* but there are others who are being followed by blood from the clan" (D 130). There are two things that contribute to a youth doing such evil: "if it is not *bhang*, it is clan blood" (D 130).

Cursed Money

ToX says that if, for example, you have shed someone's blood to get money or you have pickpocketed someone or stolen from their home, you "will not know how you are going to spend the money, because that money is cursed" (94).

Inner Conflict

The examples of inner conflict challenge the demonization of these youth as hopeless for reform because they are too evil, unfeeling, and not conflicted. Inner conflict reveals competing values that are typically thought to belong exclusively to one essentialization. For example, the presence of compassion is not expected to be found in someone too evil to be reformed. Perpetrators who are not unfeeling may not be unchangeable.

It is important to qualify this section by stating that there is not always inner conflict. After mugging a man and leaving him unconscious, ToQR "felt nothing because I was in need of money, I felt nothing even I felt happy because I had a phone, I had some money so I felt am okay" (ToQR 64).

Inconsistency with His Own Perceived Identity

"Wondering Whether am Still the Same Person"

ToX finished primary school upcountry and "realizing that life was very hard for me and I was supposed to look at my future life," he did casual work so that he could leave his grandmother with some money for food and buy a ticket to Nairobi. He thought that finding work there would be easy but for four months he had to sleep "under a vehicle and on the streets under the small kiosks," not having "anywhere to call home or anybody that I would know who would give me some place to sleep" (38). He spent over two years looking for a job. Not finding one, he made friends and got involved in "behaviors which was not my expectations to get into such," ending up joining a gang in which they used guns to steal (8) in order to find daily bread (42). He found that life in Nairobi without a job "was very troublesome" because in upcountry he did not even know about drugs, no one was telling him to steal, and he did not end up "doing other things that would leave me wondering whether [I] am still the same person" (42).

Wondering Why I Was Stealing

ToU was stealing the marking scheme for the exam but says, “I was not a fool but I could steal and I wondered, why was I stealing?” (112)

“I Felt That That Was Not for Me”

While ToSN was using glue and *bhang* to “forget some things,” he said, “I knew that that was not the right thing for me to do so I could take it sometimes but I felt that that was not for me” (334).

Anger

If youth approach you to steal from you and you have something they can steal they will not resort to violence (ToT 61-62). But if “by bad luck” you “don’t have” they will often beat and stab you and then run away because it is “not easy” for them to leave you “since they have seen that” you have resisted them (ToT 54). If you do not have anything, they inflict pain on you because of the pain they feel for not having been successful. Since they are risking their lives to steal from you, once they have taken the risk, they become angry when there is no gain and want you to feel some of the pain they are feeling (ToT 60).

Fear

“Living without a Job is Like a Bomb”

ToX cleared Form Four and still cannot find a job. He is fearful because he realizes “that without a job I would still go back to the other things” (8). He goes on to say that having stopped stealing and using drugs, living without a job “is like a bomb which has been set and once it is set—once it blows, it would spoil many things” (8).

A Stronger Desire for Sugar

For ToSN the desire for money to buy sugar was stronger than the fear and experience of being caught and beaten and so he would snatch women’s purses as a young boy (448-470).

Conflicted Fear

ToTU started pickpocketing four years ago when he was fifteen in order to be like his friends and have what they had (24). Most of his friends have died because of pickpocketing. After narrowly escaping himself and seeing one of his friends beaten to death by a mob (see below under “Death of Friends and Fear”) (50), he realized he did not want to die (32), stopped stealing, and joined GUREC. However, a year later after learning that another of his friends had been killed—and knowing that he could be beaten, arrested, or killed by a mob (116)—he chose to leave GUREC and returned to pickpocketing because he had no pocket money to buy sugar for his tea (66-70). He was emboldened to pickpocket again because though he had seen his friends killed by mob violence, he had done it for four years without being caught. He says that pickpocketing is his only source of income right now because, though he could work as a tout on the *matatu* (144-146), being a tout is not his dream (152). He has been pick pocketing again for about a year, but now is asking GUREC if he can return because in GUREC he will learn about God and he needs God’s help to turn away from his old life (84, 86). When asked if he would steal again if he returned to GUREC but did not have pocket money for sugar, he said “no, no, no ... the only thing that I want is not about the sugar and the

money, I want to study and become a better person and leave my old ways and the first thing that I want to do is that I want to know God” (86).

“Shame” and Sadness

MN left home because of disagreements with his mother (14) and yet felt shame before the neighbors because by his leaving they could see that the parents had failed to take care of him (26). He then ended up on the street “with no shelter” (14), no money for food, sleeping on rags, and “when I think that there are blankets at home I just cry” (24).

Against His Will

“One Doesn’t Steal because they Like”

TU said that he “had to” steal because he was a hustler—“one doesn’t steal because they like and I saw that wasn’t a good job” (36). As a result he looked for a job and when he “lacked, it was okay” (36). In other words, he did not return to stealing.

When asked how MN felt bullying, robbing, and beating people, he said that he did these things “against his wish” and “just had to do them because the others were doing it” (84).

“I Was Not Aiming for That”

ToQRST says, “I didn’t want to think that the whole of my life I would be a thug there is something that I was aiming not that my whole life I would be employed, I was not aiming for that” (122).

“... There Was No Otherwise”

When ToSN was living with his relative and taking glue, gum, and *bhang* for a year or two, he said, “although I was not happy about it, there was no otherwise” (300).

H said that when you see a person sniffing glue or taking drugs you look at the person “as if the person is doing bad” and as thieves, thinking that when they see “something like this” (he meant the recorder) they will snatch it and run with it (32). However, “for us” (parking boys), sniffing glue and stealing “is okay because it is not their will, it is just that they lack otherwise” (32). For example, if you do not sniff glue “you feel cold in your body” (32).

Stealing but Wanting to Go to School

ToQR, who stole, wanted to go to school in order to be able to provide for himself and his family (150).

H and the other parking boys who steal met a young boy on the streets who ran away from home and have “brought the child up.” He wants to go to school and they want him to go to school but they do not have enough money to provide enough food, adequate shelter, and other basic needs so the “child goes back to school hungry and then the child can’t get where to sleep or even wash the uniform, so such kind of the things, are the things that make them not to go to school” (210).

Concern and Compassion for Another

Remembering Words of the Family

During the year he was using drugs, ToSN “was remembering the kind of life, the family that I was living with when I was in primary, they were so inspirational, they used to tell me ‘ToSN, you know you are so... education is the best thing you can have.’”

Persuaded by His Mother to Stop

ToQ started using drugs with his friends. He was also selling them to kids from wealthier families. However his mother found *bhang* in his shorts when she was washing them. At that point “I told her that for sure I was using it and we talked nicely and I stopped and that is the time that I requested her to take me to school and so she took me to another school” (40-42). He said that if it were not for his mother, he would have continued using drugs and quit school (62).

“People Were Crying Because of Me”

DE, who on one hand was enjoying having plenty of “easy money” to spend on drugs, clothes, and women being prostituted, began to be conflicted because he realized that every day “people were crying because of me” and “when there are people crying because of you, you find that your life cannot go on well” (68, 76).

Prayer

Asking God to “Be With Me”

ToX had been brought up “in a Christian way” and had not “left God once I started doing this work so I could put God first.” The way he did this is by telling God “today I’m going to steal so be with me.” He concludes, “and so I can say that it was the prayers that I was praying that God was able to have mercy on me and so I never died in the process” (66).

Asking God to Make Him Fear

During the time when DE was mugging people and car-jacking, he prayed and asked God to give him a fear of stealing and being killed so that he would stop (conversation with DE).

Guilt, Remorse, or Uneasiness

“You Will Feel it in Your Heart”

EFGH said that when he was stealing “I knew that I was not doing the right thing... all the time that you are doing something that is not right, you will feel it in your heart” (EFGH 70). This was one factor in motivating him to change.

“Couldn’t Stay Peacefully with That Cash”

TUV would get a lot of money from stealing. Once, after stealing six phones and splitting the money with those who stole with him, they each had KSh 5000. He spent it going to clubs, dancing, “and the rest I’d spend it on ladies” (7). However, he said, “I can’t say I got good money because you couldn’t stay peacefully with that cash in your pocket. It was like aroused because there was nothing constructive you would do with that cash” (7).

“I Wish I Could ... Beg Their Forgiveness”

MN said that life in the gang “affected me negatively and I really wish I could get the people I had robbed and wronged and beg their forgiveness” (94). He has never met any of the people he robbed and wronged (96).

Returning Half

H said that he hates to “hear that one is being harassed” (144). In fact, if he takes 100 shillings from someone, he may give fifty back “since it is yours” because “I just can’t leave you like that” (144). Those he leads think that he is a “good person” for giving some of the money back (148). But he says, “in a real sense, I am not doing the right thing to them” (148). However, others take 100 shillings from them and give them nothing back “so they see that it is better me than the others” (148).

Catalysts to Tactics of Resilience

Catalysts to tactics of resilience show complexity and point to pathways to explore for facilitating prosocial change. Often there were combinations of catalysts that resulted in the employment of a tactic of resilience, whether destructive or constructive—such as the death of friends, getting saved, or a friend or a police officer. These catalysts are seen functioning together in the diachronic presentation in chapter six. Here they are described separately to illustrate the roles that several of these played in many of the youth.

Catalysts to DTR

The internal dynamics and external circumstances described serve as catalysts to various forms of DTR, including substance abuse. The examples under substance abuse indicate that substance serves as a catalyst into a mindset which then combines with internal dynamics and external circumstances that lead youth to certain actions.

Internal Dynamics

Attitude, “The Engine of Life”

ToDE referred to attitude as “the engine of life,” saying, “what has been keeping me going is that the way that I see life, the attitude that I have. Because you see the attitude, attitude is the engine of life, it keeps you moving ... The way I see life attitude I can say has been very good to me” (ToDE).

“... You Get That Lust”

The repeated easy success at stealing and the abundance of money—“the money was so much”—made DE “get that lust” (76), the “lust for money” (80). He says that after a while this leads to the feeling that you are not “normal as usual” without an abundance of easy money (92). When “you are already used of money, you start feeling that life without money will not be good.” So even though “people are crying because of you, you are stealing from people today and tomorrow, every day you are stealing from people” (68, 76).

“Taste for Money”

EF has never gone to school but has provided for himself on the streets. He does not want to go to school at this point because “I have known the taste for money so I can’t concentrate in class” (43).

“Life... Without Sweating”

ToLMN stole in order to have food to eat and so that he could have “a better life” (65). Though he was afraid of being caught, “life was a bit good because I was getting money, getting things without working, without sweating for them just getting things simply as long as you just give an order everybody to lie down, you take things, you go” (114).

For some of ToQR’s friends who still steal, “life is still good ... they have money and they are living good with money they stole from people” (168). ToQR had enough food but stole to buy “smart clothes” (106-112).

The Desire for “Quick Cash” and “Easy Money”

The easiest way to get money is to steal (ToB 228). Within an hour ToQR found a woman, snatched her purse, and made KSh 2500 (50, 64-74). The second time he stole he snatched a purse from a woman and got some money and a cell phone (74).

It was a challenge for TUV to see his friends “smartly dressed” and with money when he did not have enough to pay his school fees. They told him that mugging was an easy way to get “quick cash” (1).

The Power of Flossing

When asked why he believed there is “continuous participation of many youths in the crime,” BCDE said, “it is because of this life ... This life and the things therein may mislead someone.” For example, if your friend’s mother buys nice clothes for him, out of “the fear of being associated with the underdeveloped, this situation forces that you take shortcuts so that you can look for a beautiful lady. And so that your house will be having good things like ... television—others get into that because of flossing” (72).⁶⁰

“The Blood of Stealing”

EF said that though he “was once a thief but I was not born with the blood of stealing but I have my age mates who were born with the blood of stealing and not fearing anything” (24).

Pride

D was persuaded by friends to attack a man who had drawn his girlfriend away from him (30). He was persuaded to attack this man when he considered the fact that “others will say that someone has grabbed from me a lady” (34). He said that he acted out of pride to show people that he is brave (34). While they were attacking him the others fled and he was caught in a trap, arrested, and taken to the industrial area prison where he stayed for a month and a half “suffering” (30). Through this he “realized that anger is loss” and now tells youth that “pride will later lead you badly” so “it is better to just stay weakly even if someone wrongs me” and to “pray for the person to God to change him” (34).

⁶⁰Flossing is wearing or displaying expensive clothes and merchandise to impress people.

The Concern to Not Want to be a “Headache” for his Mother

ToSN and his brother snuck out to the streets for five years to scavenge for food, with all of its dangers, in order not to be a “headache” for his mother, who continued to struggle with mental illness, and could not support him and his brother (200). ToSN’s story is told in more detail in Chapter Six.

Bad Thoughts and Temptation

EFGH described becoming involved in drugs as a struggle that starts in the head with “bad thoughts” which are a result of being “tempted” (22).

Stress

EFGH says that “life is hard especially with a family” and youth turn to drugs “thinking that they will clear your stress” (22).

Sleeping outside in the rain “which made us not to be like human beings” would “force” us to use drugs in order to “make your life easier” and to “easen [sic] life so that you don’t have to think much because like sleeping and being rained on for six months it is not something very easy” (ToX 50).

ST says, “you stay happy since you have seen many things” (234).

QR said that youth use drugs mostly because of stress—perhaps he lost his family, is alone, has run away from Kisumu to Kawangware and the only “brothers” here are the ones using drugs, or is perhaps feeling depressed “and so he has to start smoking *bhang*” (60).

The Desire to Escape to a Fantasy World for a While

Using drugs takes you “to [a] fantasy world where you see all plans are developing well and you got all you need ... [the] drug makes you talk to people whom nobody can see except you.” He says, “like there was a day I saw that I had made a flat up to the fourth floor it was my flat which I had made with my own money” (16).

Nightmares and Evil Spirits

From when N was five years old he had nightmares of someone trying to harm him. He was not sure if they were nightmares or evil spirits, but when he went to sleep they bothered him. He came to hate nights because when he went to bed he would fear that someone would come and grab him by the neck. When he moved to Nairobi and started drinking he realized that the nightmares or evil spirits were not coming—so that made him want to drink. However, occasionally the nightmares or evil spirits would still come when he was drunk (97).

Shame

You do not care how people look at you when you are collecting scraps: “they are so strong but you find that you are using so that you can go to work like when you are going to collect the scraps you don’t mind about people looking at you, you don’t care about anything. You are just okay” (ST 214).

The Desire to Forget Some Things

ToSN was able to manage using glue, to “forget some things” (334).

The Desire for the “Good Life”

ToDE saw youth taking drugs and “living in such a good life” that he began taking drugs (130).

TUVW started using drugs through peer pressure. He was offered drugs by friends with whom he was hanging out. He slowly grew curious as he saw that his “friends were okay and even though they had hard times life seemed smooth.” Then he decided to try them (14). He found that they worked. He said that they “make you high and you forget your problems so I found the experience to be good you don’t feel hungry you’re just fine” (14). When the effect of the drug wears off “you come back to the reality to zero and so you crave for the drugs so that you can continue to dream of a good life them like in your misery” (16).

The Need for Courage

N said, “I was someone who was angry, so when I get angry I could go get drunk and come and fight. If someone would insult me I could not fight him when I was sober, but I could go and drink, so when I drank I got more violent and start making fights” (79).

BCDE used drugs to have the courage to steal. He says, “you can’t steal as you are sober. At that time there is something that you will be using so that you can feel that you are okay, but you are not okay” (76).

Gum, smoking cigarettes, and smoking *bhang* has helped H because it gives him courage to look for money and steal so that he has money for drugs (20).

TUV’s friends introduced him to drugs. He said, “when you have friends and they used drugs you are tempted and pressured and when you take them you will find that you see everyone lower than you are you feel yourself too much and nobody can scare you. You become a Dare-devil” (12).

“Bodily Lust”

When D was asked what caused youth to lose their lives in the slums, he said, “the first thing is love,” meaning “bodily lust.” That lust will drive a young man to risk being “shot dead” while attempting to steal so that he can buy his girlfriend what she wants so she will stay with him (D 36). He says, “you become a thief so that your love can continue” because “without money and such things, your friendship cannot continue” (36). The result is that “the things that are destroying this *mtaa* is things to do with love” (36). MN was led by youth in the gang to seduce girls (44). You might get one who is “smart” and then “have to cater for her needs” (44). He says, “at times she’ll come and tell you I want you to buy me this thing and because you love her and you don’t have the money you’ll be forced to steal” (44). He saw that this “was not good” (44). His friend quit stealing then got a girlfriend and started stealing again (46).

Though some steal not “due to their own wish but rather the problems” others do it because they are “hard-headed,” to go to Reggae (dancing in pubs), to “move out with the ladies,” and to “be recognized.” This “has made the youths to be spoilt” (J 92).

The Idea: “Better a Short Sweet Life...”

N tried to persuade his friends to stop getting drunk and stealing because of the risk of being killed. They responded to him, “when somebody dies, he dies. So you better live a good life for one month or one year, an expensive life than to live in poverty” (163). They would say, “better to live a good but short life than to live a long but poor life” (171). N said that though they saw their friends being killed they “did not care because they escaped death. They could see their friends being killed but still go to rob. They lamented and some could still go to steal money for their friend’s burial

ceremony. It was like they were not fearing God. They later got killed one by one” (173). No one who was part of that gang is still alive (175). N said, “I remember trying to persuade one of them to stop stealing so that he doesn’t get killed but he told me he would steal only one more time to buy a vehicle so that he makes money with it. Unfortunately when I was in Murang’a I heard that he was later killed. I had preached to him and he told me that he will stop but he was killed before he had stopped” (175).

ToLMN also says,

I joined the gang as a thief so at that time we were stealing from the supermarkets stealing from people, pickpocketing people, when people are leaving their houses, you get into and get some things like electronics like radio, phones you steal and you go and sell at least you get something to eat at least you can have a better life. (64)

External Circumstances

Forced to Steal

ToQR says that being stuck at home with no work and no money “it forces you to anything so that you can get money so we used to do a lot of bad things, some were good but I have done the bad things for people” (44).

“The Situation Will Force Us”

The reasons that youth get involved in violence is because, being idle and in need of money, when *wadosi* (rich people) approach offering KSh 1000 or KSh 2000⁶¹ to each person who would commit an act of violence for them to settle a land dispute, “the situation will force us to do it because of money.” When you do not have anything “no one would think that the money is little compared to the things that we were going to do... you just have to go and so you earn” (BCDE 90-96).

D’s grandmother and mother cooked *chang’aa* and sold *bhang* in order to buy food (124).

“The Situation Forces You”

Because of “sleeping outside and being disturbed ... all the time” (H 90), H and his friends would snatch from people—“you don’t want it but the situation forces you since you can’t sleep hungry, you see” (90).

M said that “the first thing that makes us to enter into crime is because of the situation” which includes parents who have not planned and therefore “left a burden to us” (25). M slaughters goats in the day and has to “look for money in another way” in the evening (15). He has been a thief and, especially at the end of the month when he sees he is not going to have enough, he robs from people (17). He said that since boys are killed for stealing, you realize that you are risking your life—and if you are killed, the children will suffer (19). M also carries a gun on his leg because his “friends are carrying it and so you also have to... all this is not your wish but the situation forces you.” With children from all sides (presumably his siblings and his own children) looking to you for provision, the only option is “that you decide to go with these people and risk” at considerable sacrifice. He said, “I have gone through a lot... sometimes being shot, I even have many injuries on the leg” (25).

⁶¹This was the equivalent of ca \$12.50 and \$25.00 in July of 2010.

When F's school fees were due and his parents, sisters, friends, or neighbors could not help him, he would "struggle and ... scavenge and scavenge" to come up with money to pay the minimum fees (20).

"Taken There by Your Problem"

TUVWX joined a gang not because he wanted to but because of his problems. He said, "you don't go there being your wish, you are taken there by your problem" (105).

"Due to Lack of Options"

Youth abuse drugs "due to lack of options and meaning in life" (TUVW 8). ToQRST sold drugs because "life was very difficult and it was just a situation to try and look for the flour" (56).

A Hard Life and Having a Family

EFGH says that because of a hard life and having a family "you even get bad thoughts" and are "tempted to this bad lives in the *mtaani*" and so "you can easily venture into drugs, or you find that you are in drugs" (22).

Hunger

TUVW took drugs because they took away his hunger. Drugs take hunger—"when you swallow the saliva you feel content and you are also chewing there's no much difference from eating"(16). Through chewing a lot you lose your appetite. ToLM's friend smokes *bhang* because it is "like his food" (392).

A Sustained Lack of Necessities

ToX stole for daily bread (42).

BCDE started stealing for daily food at a very young age because he did not think there were other options. He said, "I just joined blindly and according to the system that we are in, here it is like one has to go through crime as the place is very bad" (BCDE 46).

In order to survive, especially around age nineteen when he was in a "hard time," S was looking for money and "had to use other bad ways so that I could survive" (24). S has turned to hustling, stealing, beating people and robbing them, "going out with other youths, and going through another life which is not good—bad things" (24-26).

Occasionally TU gets some work in the "light industries" but "there isn't a daily basis though... today there might be some work, tomorrow there ain't so" (60). So he "just hustle[s] here and there" (62). When asked what he does when he hustles he said, "there's no way that I can lie to you, I hustle through doing illegal things" (60-64).

K said that what makes life so hard is the challenge for money and food. Then he said, "If I just stay here lacking money I will start stealing" (10, 22).

H said that if you steal by choking someone "you can't fail to have something to eat" (102). They only needed to steal to eat because they slept outside and therefore did not need rent money (102). By stealing as a group "they will have to fear" which makes it more certain you will get what you need. An easy target was the "road ladies" (commercial sex workers) (164).

Cold

Gum, smoking cigarettes, and smoking *bhang* have helped H and ST because when they sleep outside they do not feel the cold (H 20; ST 234).

Others

ToQ had access to *bhang* in the settlement and a boy from “a nice family” who lived in a “story house” and was “coming with a lot of money” and bought from ToQ. As this boy started using drugs, ToQ did as well (42).

The Need for the Provision and Protection of Gang Leaders

H was willing to submit to gang leaders and accept the sacrifice and risk of being in a gang for the provision and protection it afforded. He said, “I couldn’t sleep hungry when my gang was having food, or be beaten when my gang was there” (136).

The Responsibility to Care for Others

When ToLMN, the oldest son, was eleven years old, his father died and he saw himself as the provider and protector of the family (10). About one year after his father’s death (26) his father’s brothers came and took everything they had, leaving them with nothing (24, 33-34). ToLMN tried to fight them off with a *panga* [machete] but they overpowered him, tied him up, and left him crying in the empty house with nothing but the clothes on his back (40-45). He lived with his mother’s brother for a while, but when that uncle beat him and chased him out of the house for mismanaging 200 shillings he decided to join a gang and began stealing (65). With the money he got by stealing he rented a house, supported his mother, paid for his brother’s school fees, and bought his siblings shoes, clothes, food, and everything they needed (0-71).

M is the firstborn of seven in his home, and he has three children, and since there is not enough money, he has to “have that mentality to look for money in another way.” M was working in the goat slaughtering business and stealing in order to provide for his seven siblings and three children of his own (13-21).

Substance

Substance catalyzed youth to actions and inaction by altering their state of mind and exercising power over them.

Mind Altering Power

“They [drugs] were fooling me.” TUVW realized that the okay feeling he got from drugs was an illusion, “but they [drugs] were fooling me” (20).

“Your head being taken by that thing.” The influence of ToSN’s relative and the effects of sniffing glue drew him into using it. The glue made him feel dizzy and his head was “being taken by that thing” and it helped him “forget some things” (326-334). ToQRST said “I felt that the emotions of the body changed as if I was drunk I was not normal as usual then this continued this way” (54).

“We could not even remember how we were arrested.” When H and his two friends were arrested on Friday and taken to court on Monday. By that time the affects of the glue had worn off he said, “we were asking ourselves...we could not even remember how we were arrested the previous day” (174).

“It carries you.” F said that when you smoke *bhang* the second and third time “for sure it carries you” (F 168). You become “in a state that nobody understands you” and then “important things pass you” (168).

“You assume there is no problem.” N said, “when somebody chooses to get drunk and really drunk, the mind does not function normally. You assume everything and think there is no problem although there is” (149).

“It is like it calls you.” ToQ said that after you take *bhang* once, “it is like it calls you” (104).

“Thirst...pulls you back.” ST describe being “thirsty” for glue and pulled back to it (204).

“They can’t leave easily.” ST said that drugs are “very hard to leave” (220) “since when you take those things, you find that when they enter the blood, they can’t leave easily.” (222)

Actions or Inaction Catalyzed by Substance Abuse

Lethal boldness. ToQ’s friend had taken some drug, then walked into a “story house” and carried out a TV. Being oblivious to the true danger because of what he was on, he was killed (102). After taking *bhang* “it is like it calls you... there is a way that you feel... I can’t even explain, you feel as if you are the only one, as I was taking it, there is nothing that you could tell me for me to listen to you, we could even fight” (104).

The drugs H was using affected the way he reacted to his friend’s death. He says, “you see that time we were using the drugs such that there was nothing that you would see as great, everything was normal, we would say that it was just a bad lack and that his day had reached and that would be the end of the story and in the evening you could still go to work since there was something that happen” (110).

When asked if he feared anything after sniffing glue H said “no, no, you would feel very okay and feeling that there is nothing that could really like make you afraid” (166b). Sometimes after sniffing glue they would go “bother the cops only” (168).

Leads to fighting and shame. Drunkenness led N to fight within his family which brought shame to his family (216-223).

The directing power of drugs. MNO’s friend stole because “he was being directed by the drugs, the drugs showed him to go and steal and he went and stole” (302).

They “influence you to rape, to kill...” Using drugs makes you able to “reduce the thinking” and can “influence you to rape, to kill such that you can do some things that you can’t do as you are not normal” (ToX 52).

“Drugs...have finished us.” MNO says that “for sure life in Mukuru is very hard.” He highlights the role that drugs play in the difficulty of life here saying, “even as you look the boys who have involved themselves in drugs—drugs are the things that have finished us mostly” (30).

“Makes them to run away from school.” ST says that when you are using glue you become “thirsty” for it and “feel that you want to go back to see the friends in the base. This makes them to run away from the schools” (204). ToQ said, “if only I could have continued a little [using drugs], I could not be in school as at now. If I could have exceeded a little, I could not be in school right now” (100).

“Alcohol misled him.” His parents separated (TUVWX 35) because his father “was taking alcohol so much so the alcohol misled him” (TUVWX 179).

Can lead to AIDS. Substance abuse can lead to AIDS because “when one gets drunk, you are no longer yourself” and can indulge in sexual relationships that can lead to AIDS (N 143).

Chang’aa or bhang leads some men to beat their wives and leave their children hungry, to beat and rob people, kill, rape, and harass people (D 124-128).

Inhibits talents. D said that “without this *bhang*, their talents can work for them and without the drugs, their talents can work” (132).

Catalysts to CTR

Catalysts to CTR do not function in isolation from others and do not function the same way all of the time. For example, it was the combination of DE's friends' deaths, his brother's death, the realization that people were crying because of him, and the words of his grandmother that functioned as a catalyst to his prosocial change (68, 70). Also, for some time, the observation that people were crying because of him did not move him as it did when the factors mentioned above converged in a certain context and at a certain point in time (68, 76).

Though there are many factors that converge to enable them to make a decision, especially one that is difficult, according to the youth there are specific factors that are identifiable as having significant influence.

The Death of Friends

Though ToLMN stole so "at least you get something to eat at least you can have a better life" he continued, "but at the end of it most of my friends were killed and I remained alone and I said that I need to do something and that is the time I got saved and I decided to change my life" (64). He also said that he enjoyed the fruit of his stealing and, "when I give an order to somebody to go down and you refuse, I beat you up and I make sure that I injure you so that you may not come up again" (136). However, after his two friends were killed he "realized that I am not supposed to be a thief" (92).

MN said that at some point he decided to look for honest ways of making money because he realized that the other youth in the gang were misleading him (42).

Reflecting on his days stealing with his friends, B said, "I did change because if you see all my friends that I used to walk with none of them is alive" and if he would have continued stealing "now I would be dead" (187).

Though it was not easy, BCDE stopped stealing when he realized that "what you were reaching to steal is something that cannot even help you and you have risked your life." When the government meets you, they will not be concerned about your level of poverty but "will just kill you" (54). All the friends he started stealing with have been killed (56).

DE had lots of easy money to spend on prostitutes, but one of the main reasons he began to be conflicted was because his friends were being killed and his brother was also killed (DE).

F said that because most of his friends who drew him into stealing were dead, he is able to resist new strong invitations to steal: "when you tell me that let's go this way ... to steal a certain thing, I would say no ... since there are most of my friends who have been killed because they were...even me I wanted to...those issues of stealing (168).

Those H stole with are now dead (104, 106). He says, "the thing that made me to change...mostly the people we were doing that work with ... most of them are not there" (104). H says "in the process of searching, you see if you are caught, they can't leave you, there are those who have been killed, and others have been shot" (106).

J said that he was drawn to working to "feed from his sweat" because youth "go to steal that is how they die" (56).

M stopped being a thief because he realized that "the government is harassing people and you find that boys are being killed and so you... think that if you go to risk your life, you will leave those children there suffering..." (18-19). Seeing his friends dying was also a significant factor in M stopping his drug use (33).

While living on the streets, MN was in a gang. However, “most of them have been killed because some of them were thieves” (34). When he saw that “most of them had been killed I decided to lay low and go back home” (34). The last straw was when one day his best friend came by and invited him to “go and steal some money” (36). He did not join him because he was not feeling well. A while later he heard that they had been killed (36). At that point he decided to quit the gang (36).

Two of MNO’s friends who were very close to him were killed because of stealing (294). He had also been stealing things, including shoes and bicycles that people left outside their story houses. One day his friend stole a television for another person. He did not know that the owner saw him but pretended that he had not seen him. The owner kept quiet for three days, but on the third day came to his house with the mob. His friend tried to run but was caught. He was taken to the road where he tried to run again but was caught. They poured paraffin on him put a tire around him and burned them to death (296). Another of his friends was caught stealing and beaten to death with a stone (312). Knowing that stealing is risky and that he had many plans in life he thought, “it is better I just stay without that money and I would rather sleep hungry and that is what I decided” rather than taking the risk of being killed by stealing (292).

S said that after seeing “most of his friends passing on” he “tried to change” (24).

ST was using *bhang* and injecting hard drugs. But he saw that his friends who were using had been killed, and that the drugs “show you that there is nothing that you can’t. They can make you to feel that you can take someone’s property and no one is seeing you. I had to stop. But I use only one thing” (208).

After joining GUREC, ToD saw the death of his friends as reason to change:

when I went home I was told that my friends were killed, you know that there was another friend who ... was shot dead when he was robbing Equity Bank Kariobangi so when I got there, I was told that one of my friends was shot, another one was shot then this thing, I feel hurt most of the time but I thank God since I can’t get involved with them as in the activities they are doing, since if I hear that this guy was shot, I can’t go on and do what he was doing and he was shot so I just feel that I will be the reason for the to change (28).

When ToF was playing football with friends who were thieves and the police arrived and killed four of them, ToF said, “I felt bad and started regretting why these people died when they were young ... I started changing my life” and “having a positive mind in life” (30-34).

When ToLMN was eighteen (84), he and two friends were fleeing from police after robbing a *matatu*, the two friends were shot and killed.

We were running, I was at the center the other one on my right side and the other one on the left side so the one who was shot first was on the left side the time he was shot I just heard his body down going two steps, the other one was shot so I remained alone (67). I managed to go in my house, the time I sat down, I was just looking up now, crying, my friends are dead what can I do, which way can I go? What will I tell their parents? (74)

ToLMN explains that of the twenty “strong boys” there are only two that are still alive, ToLMN and one other (137-144) and the other is not in good condition, but just drinks alcohol and sleeps on the roads (137-140). Showing marks on his face from being beaten, one from last Monday, ToQRST decided that he would not steal but rather work with his hands (108) after realizing that by stealing he was risking his life, and that it was possible to work.

ToTU started pickpocketing four years ago when he was fifteen in order to be like his friends and have what they had (24). Most of his friends have died because of pickpocketing. ToTU and his friend went to nightclubs on Friday nights (46). They woke up on a particular Friday, did not have cash, and wondered “today are we not going where we usually go?” A friend came by with the fake gun and they broke into a shop and stole KSh 50,000 (50). They were taking a shortcut through a back way and met a woman carrying a handbag which they stole from her. She began to scream and people “started coming from all directions” and ToTU and his friends ran as fast as they could. They jumped over a fence and one of their friends caught his trousers on the fence and the people caught up with him and beat him to death with a *tarimbo*, which is a hard metal piece used in quarries for extracting rocks (50). ToTU and his other friend ran up the hill and watched their friend being beaten to death. His body was left there until the following day when the police took him, and his family, who was well-financed, buried him (56-60). After his friend was killed ToTU realized he did not want to die (32).

After six months of stealing with the gang, the others in ToX’s gang were killed while stealing. Having seen “death with my own eyes you know ... someone dies while you are holding his hand and then the person in front of you also dies but you who is at the center you are not shot ...” was the beginning of a series of events that led ToX away from stealing and the gang (8).

TUV’s first puff of *bhang* was with his friend who was killed as they were mugging someone together. He told TUV that “if I took it I would get the courage to do the job properly so I smoked I felt my head was heavy but I did okay” (13). Since his friend died “I have never puffed *bhang* or used any other drug” (14).

In 2006 D was involved in a group that was “doing evil” (30). One of the main reasons he stopped is because he realized that if he would be involving himself in “bad things” he would be dead now (20).

People

A Combination of People

When ToLMN’s two friends were killed after holding up a *matatu* and he barely escaped, he went to his mother and to his pastor, telling them he wanted to stop stealing and they guided him. His pastor encouraged him to turn himself in to the police, which he did. One policeman in particular met with him weekly and encouraged him. This was the beginning of his life apart from stealing (67, 104, 110).

A woman ToX met who took an interest in his life advised him to turn himself into the police chief, which he did. The chief “had a good heart” and did not take him to court but led him to GUREC (116). This led him out of stealing and substance abuse.

Responsibility to His Little Sister

ST was using *bhang* and injecting drugs when his mother died. As he “just sat down” and realized he was the first born with his little sister he realized he was responsible to care for her. This was a factor in his turning away from drugs (208).

The Persuasion of a Friend

B says that after a month of a friend telling him what he was doing was wrong, he saw that what he was doing was indeed wrong and began to change (187).

The Words of a Grandmother

Though DE had lots of easy money and could hire as many women as he wanted for prostitution, he began to be conflicted because people were crying because of him, his friends were being killed, and his brother was killed. DE was struck by his grandmother’s words after his brother’s funeral. She “sat him down” and told him:

‘my son I hear that you are doing things in Nairobi, that is wrong, then when something happens that is the time that you come to cry here.’ She asked me whether I steal and I told her that I don’t. She then asked me what I do in Nairobi and I told her that I play football; you know I was just cheating her. I was stealing but I didn’t want them to know so she told me that she would not like to hear that I have stolen or touched somebody’s properties. You see, don’t ever touch somebody’s property, it is better if you stay hungry but know that you will not feel hungry for the rest of your life and so I saw that my friends have been killed and my brother has now died. So I decided to stop stealing. I stayed for three days without stealing. (70)

Mother

“I would not like to hurt her.” B, who used to steal and do “many bad things,” loves his mother and believes in God so he prays to God to help him “not to wrong another person” because he does not want to hurt his mother (191).

After ToTU’s friend was killed he realized he did not want to die (32) and leave his mother with a lot of pain. His mother used to cry because of his stealing (32).

In 2006 D was involved in a group that was “doing evil” (30), but he realized that stealing would bring issues to his parents and so instead of stealing he has found hope in putting God first and not stealing—even though he is struggling to find daily food (28).

No one to care for his mother. MN decided to leave the gang and follow the advice of his mother because “I saw I was young and there was no one who could help her other than me so I decided to lie low” (78) which has kept him from indulging in “evil things” so that he is “free and at peace with everyone and I am not a criminal so I can go anywhere” (80).

MNO stopped drinking beer because, “I thought that now I have been born as a single child and my mother would be looking upon me so I thought that if I decide to be a drunkard, who would be checking on my mother? And if I go to her place while drunk, she would even get a heart attack and then she would die” (354b). So he changed completely (356).

Crying to his mother. The time immediately leading up to the day when ToLMN's two friends were shot and killed on either side of him while they were fleeing from police, he was in school—doing school his way—which included attending only when he wanted to, smoking *bhang* in the bathroom, abusing teachers, stealing school equipment, and fighting (86-92). He describes himself as:

so happy, absolutely happy because I was like, they are giving me time to go and steal, they are giving me time to do my own things, to drink to go to pubs to do nasty thing, to sleep with girls to do everything that I want because I don't have restriction to go to school, am just free, waking up, doing my own and taking tea. After taking tea, going to bathroom and after going to bathroom, in a vehicle to town, going into clubs, going back home, stealing, arranging my own things, nasty things that I was doing. (92)

He often did not go to school because:

I needed time to smoke and then time to do nasty things, to steal as in come out of school early to prepare my things to go and steal so I had... I never wanted school life because the teachers were canning me up they were like... everything was just difficult for me I had an attitude that everything is hard to me so that is why I never liked school. (110)

But when his two friends were killed and he escaped he “realized that I am not supposed to be a thief, you are supposed to be doing something good” and “went to my mum—cried to my mum—and told her that I was so sorry and tired with stealing people's properties” (92).

My mother would be very sad. W realized that when he smokes *bhang* or sniffs glue his “mother would be very sad” because I am the only male so I cannot get spoilt.” He goes on, “because if my mother would get me with a bottle (glue), she can even hang herself because she is relying on me” (61).

“His mother was stressed every day.” One reason MN got out of the gang was because he saw that his mother was stressed everyday—seeking help from others to handle him (58). He did not ask for help because he was ashamed (62).

“People Crying Because of You”

DE was very successful in stealing; he was driven by the lust for money, and was accustomed to having a lot of it. But after some time watching people cry because of him, he said, “you rob from a person and you have hurt the other and then you sell so you find that all the time, somebody is just crying because of you. When there are people crying because of you, you find that your life cannot go on well. So you just have to pray to God and I prayed to God and I left all these” (68).

People Crying to God

ToTU who pickpocketed and stole other things said, “you know I found that the money we stole from people, you know they cry to their God” (158).

ToX says that if, for example, you have shed someone's blood to get money or you have pickpocketed someone or stolen from their home, “this person has to cry to God and maybe that amount may not help you and so you can get an amount like

10,000 (the equivalent of ca \$125.00 in July of 2010) but you will not know how you are going to spend the money, because that money is cursed” (94).

A Condition for Marriage

B met his wife while he was living as a thief. A week before they were to be married she found out that he “was a thief” (201). She told him that if he wanted to marry her he had to first stop stealing (203). The week before this is when he had “gotten saved” and forsook stealing. When he explained this to her, she accepted, they were married, and he quit stealing (205).

Seminars and People

QR used *bhang*, cigarette, and gum (shoe gum) (54). Though QR has never entered a church, he learned about the advantages and disadvantages of using these substances through seminars offered by a local church. He also said that after talking to the church people when they would come, “you would feel respected by other people” (62). They “added me the morale to leave the drugs” (64).

Consideration, Others, and Circumstances

ST told how he was able to stop abusing drugs, which “when they enter the blood, they can’t leave easily” (222). He was able to stop his drug use because of the combined influence of a group called Lighty, who helped him by paying his bill at the hospital and gave him “lessons on drugs” (220), the thinking he did after his mother died (224), his experience of “being broke” (224), and an employer who understood him and helped him (224-232). This is explained in greater detail in Chapter Seven.

Observations of Destructiveness

“Later I Noticed ...”

Seeing his friends drop from school motivated K to stop using *bhang*, *khat*, and sniffing glue. He said, “I walked with some friends and we used them like *bhang*, *khat* and sniffing glue. Later I noticed these friends had dropped from school so it sounded hard to me to be in team I decided to quit from it” (110).

“You Would Look at Yourself on the Mirror”

After being off glue for a few days because of time in jail, H said, “you would look at yourself on the mirror and you see yourself that you have changed and you have grown and that you are supposed to change your behavior” (174). H added, “when I was there, I was able to think very well, even if I came out and still continued though not much, the first thing I was able to think that there was need for change, there is a change that should come” (178). Being arrested like this helped him because “I started seeing the badness of this thing” (176).

The Example of a Brother Who is “a Real Drug Addict”

Looking at his brother who was “a real drug addict” and who had quit school, ToQ said, “I looked at this and I saw that if I continue this way, I will quit [school].” He also “saw that there was nothing else that I was gaining at home as if it is getting such kind of drugs” (52).

“Nobody Can Respect You”

H used drugs from 2002 up to 2006 and he does not see any way that using drugs has helped him but it is only hurt him. He said, “I just see as if it hurt me since I can't be respected, even as I walk on the road glue bottle hanging from his mouth nobody can respect you” (36).

“I Saw that My Life Was Moving in a Crooked Manner”

Describing his life under the influence of drugs, ToX says he stopped using drugs in 2004 “since I saw that my life was moving in a crooked manner and the time that you are using the drugs you just stay unconscious and you fail to understand yourself” (52).

“That for Sure is What is Destroying Our People”

Speaking of alcohol, TUVWX, whose father's alcoholism was the cause of his divorce said that he has “never liked it since the beginning” and never “thought of taking alcohol because that for sure is what is destroying our people” (189).

***Chang'aa* is “Killing People”**

ToLM said, “I have tried to tell him to stop taking this *chang'aa* which is killing people” (ToLM).

“Drugs Are Destroying Them”

The reason MN decided not to do drugs is because drugs destroy people (178). Youth on drugs look very old and unwanted while some have wounds, lack teeth, and such things and MN does not want those things to happen to him (178). MN can tell other youth that “drugs are destroying them” but when he gives advice to them, “they abuse you so you decide to leave them on their own” (180).

The Experience of Negative Consequences

“I Saw ... It Made My Family to Separate”

TUVWX stopped using drugs because he saw that drug abuse was what made his parents' divorce (203).

“They Were Just Destroying Things”

One of the reasons MN got out of the gang is he realized that the gang was not helping him. They were just destroying things (56).

Being Beaten

When ToL was ten years old he and some friends stole a bicycle. They were caught by police, taken to jail, and beaten with a rope on their bare backs. His mother was called and came to the jail to plead his case. He was released and then his mother caned him at home on his back. Because of the pain, he said, “from that time I have never tried to steal” (ToL).

TU was influenced to stop stealing by reflecting on the danger of mob justice.

There's a friend of mine called Kama. So it happened that one day we were drunk so we went to Canaan and we saw a man coming. And I think due to the influence of beer we caught and threatened him and he submitted. Now my friend Kama started pickpocketing and then the man

held him tightly and started screaming. People nearby started coming to see why the man was screaming. Me seeing this, I punched the man but he didn't let go of my friend Kama. We had not carried a weapon that would have made the man submit or to be scared, so seeing the man had totally decided to not let go of my friend and the crowd was closing in on us, I decided to run and I left my friend who is mob justiced. But luckily some people intervened and he was saved from the mob. And we later met and we saw/decided that we should stop the habit because it would cause disasters in our lives and also families. (54)

God and Spiritual Entities

God

B believes God has led him to change, saying,

I can tell a person that actually God has removed me far because when I look at those people I used to walk with, me, I have a wife and some of them died even before they were married and with kids so you cannot say that this is so and so child's, so God removed me from a lot of things and I usually tell somebody that if it were not for God I would be dead by now. (191)

When ToX saw his friends killed, he said, "so I saw God and at the same time I saw death and I thought since it is God who has saved me then I thought that there is no need to continue living in Nairobi and so I went home maybe for about six months" (76).

MNO said that God has made him patient and if it were not for his patience he would be a thief because his friends were telling him to steal (344). Furthermore, "if it was not God I don't see...my life would be very bad," (344) in fact he may even be dead (346). He describes this:

by the way let me tell you as we were gambling we would have someone with a knife and another with a gun and you are just gambling there you play with them and someone else is smoking *bhang* and I have never taken *bhang* but I would inhale the smoke so you are playing the cards here, someone has put a knife here another one has put a gun here whereby if you depart, the others go to work (stealing). If I was not here...if it was not God I don't see...my life would be very bad. (344)

When ToT was arrested for a break-in he was not a part of and believed that God had spoken to him in jail—that he should not be involved in any more plans—he was released and chose not to continue stealing (282).

ToDE described how he was able to change the way he thought, saying,

I have been able to change the way I think because earlier I had said that in ghetto people don't think far, people just think where they come from and the surroundings, what I can say is that God has been changing my life through the places he has been taking me, through the people he has been making me to meet and at least I have seen great things in my life. (ToDE)

Prayer to Allah

Through prayer to Allah M realized the affect drugs were having on his friends. This, along with seeing some of his friends dying, led M and his friends to start a group work project that included younger kids (33).

Getting Saved

After the death of ToLMN's friends, while hiding in a house, he saw a flier on the wall that said "if God is for us who can be against us?" (76). He went to the pastor of the church mentioned on the flier, confessed what he had done, and turned himself in to the police—along with the things he had stolen. Instead of arresting him, they required him to report to the police station every morning, lunchtime, and evening, which he did. One police officer in particular would meet with him to pray for him and encourage him (66). This was a turning point away from stealing. He describes this time when his friends were killed as a time when "I got saved [and] realized my senses." He reiterated, "I came to my real senses" saying that "now I was like being changed so those are the things that continued... continued changing me my life" (104, 110).

After his friends were killed, ToX "got saved," which was another step in the process of prosocial change.

Teaching at GUREC

The teaching of the Word of God at GUREC was "food to the heart" for ToX and helped him to turn away from those things that were not "according to the will of God" (124).

The Qur'an

M is motivated and guided in his efforts to help younger youth who are involved in the kinds of "bad things" he has been involved in by his reading of the Qur'an. He said, "you know that the Koran will show you that when you are close to God, God will not give you the risk, and so to be close to God you have to know what God wants and so I have to want to know so much what the Koran says and also to be able to change my life and also change the life of others" (M 43).

Internal Dynamics

Attitude, "The Engine of Life"

ToDE referred to attitude as "the engine of life," saying, "attitude is the engine of life, it keeps you moving ... If you have negative attitude towards the world, the same thing will be coming to your life" (ToDE).

Conscience

EFGH emphasizes the idea of listening to one's heart as a means of getting a sense of what God expects from an individual. He says, "since all the time that you are doing something that is not right, you will feel it in your heart" (70).

Sense of Responsibility

When ToDE's sister joined Form One and his mother did not have enough money to pay for him to go to college he said, "I had to drop and do my stuff to settle my

mind and to settle even in life you find that you need that shoe and that trouser and that shirt and for that you can't go back to your parent as a guy, as a man" (ToDE).

Separation

While ToQ was at GUREC he was able to slowly lose the urge for drugs and stop. He says:

Gurec is okay as in a way that even if you want, you have to stay here and even if you want to get the drugs, it will be hard for you to get them. So you just have to...like if you were used of taking those drugs, you find that the urge for the drugs eventually ends. It ends slowly by slowly for being locked in here. Like now if there is a person who takes drugs here, he has first to finish as I hear that if you stop using...if you stay for long without using it, you stop little by little. (158)

A turning point to stop sniffing glue for H was being arrested and kept in a cell for three days so that he went through a sort of detox. This allowed him to "see clearly the badness of this thing, think clearly about the trajectory of his life." He was arrested with two others and only one of them continues to sniff glue (174).

Observing Constructive Opportunities

While ToQRST was mugging people he realized that "I was a young youth and opted to depend on the work of my hands and just to see how life would be, and life was good" (86). After dropping out of school ToQRST worked as a casual laborer, "acting as a minor worker," with masons (76).

Business Reasons

M and other youth in the area who work in the goat slaughtering business realized that if the people who came to buy goats would continue to be robbed as much as they were, they would quit coming. So they decided to stop robbing them (31).

Examples of Prosocial Change

Examples of prosocial change challenge the idea that youth who employ DTR are hopeless for reform. Examples of the youths' desire to bring change is presented and then examples are presented of prosocial changes that have occurred.

The Desire to Bring Change

"My Desire Is to Remove You Out of the Mud"

After several years of violence and stealing, ToLM now wants to open a home to empower people to use their talents and teach them the Word of God (241). He says, "my desire is that remove you out of the mud that you are stuck in and to put you in a dry road (247).

"Happiness ... to See My Friends Rising"

MNO wants to start a youth group for anyone who would want to join whether they are "using drugs or whatever I would allow all of them to come, then I would try to build them and change them" (466). He would try to persuade them to come

into the group by recognizing their talents to sing, play football, dance, and do gymnastics. He would pick the boys with such talents and then their friends would come and “see that there is something going on with those youths and so they would also join it is a must that they come” (468). After he starts the youth group and it is going well he wants to “move from this place” and live in Runda which is a very prestigious place (496-498). Once he reaches his goal his “happiness would be to see my friends rising” (504). He says, “I would even be happy if one would rise and even be more than me so that he could even help the others to rise. Like if I make five boys to rise, I would be much ahead” (504). Once he reaches his goal he would start a youth group and start a studio so that the artists among them would be able to record their songs for free (508).

“To Make People Know that They Can Make It”

ToDE wants to start his own organization in the ghetto “to make people know that they can make it in life” (ToDE).

Wanting to Help Others from His Experience

ToX knows the “hardness of life without a job, the hardness of life without parents, and also a situation where nobody tells you what is wrong and what is right.” If God will enable him to find the money, he wants to help people who are facing the same struggles he faced (225).

Examples of Change

“I Can Stay Without Stealing”

Through becoming “born again” B no longer does the “bad things” he used to do (213). What motivated him to do this is what he tells his friends, “I am actually saved and the path you are following is not good so come to Christ because he died for your sins and my sins so come and follow him because you even don’t know what will happen when the end times comes but if you are in Christ everything is safe” (213). Sometimes his friends tell him that the business he does, scavenging packaged food from the dump and selling it, is not profitable and yet they have no jobs but have enough money. He replies the job he has “prevents me from indulging in a lot of things because I don’t want to wrong anyone and God has given me hope and I can stay alive without stealing and I am still left with some money” (213).

Better Little with No Fear

ToX said that it is better to have little with no fear, than to have a lot. He used to risk his life to get money but in these days he says “twelve months would easily be over yet I have not held a thousand shillings of mine that is together.” He thanks God “for the little that he gives me which is not dangerous” and he has no fear as he spends it or does anything else because “it is my sweat or it is God who has sent someone to come and greet me.” Life used to be dangerous when he stole “but today though I get little I know that it is safe” (237).

J was attracted to work with a group because:

when I see them, I will not have the mind of idleness or I will not have the pressures of life that I will not get something or it will be this way that I might think to go and steal or other bad things. I just come here and get

something small that I will be content. Even if I get 200 maybe tomorrow I will get 300, there are a time that we can even get a 1000 each when things are okay. It is just about being patient and content. (70)

No Longer Using Drugs

ToQ knows people “who were using drugs and they are no longer using them” (112).

Becoming Teachable, Self-controlled, and Trustworthy

MN found a group of older men (presumably at the mosque) who gave him advice on what to do and not to do, which keeps him from stealing (48). In fact, because of following the advice of these older men, “life is going on well now” (48). These men advise him about where job opportunities are (48). He has money for food and for buying clothes he needs. In contrast, when he follows the youth in the gang “you wake up in the morning you have no money” (48). Following the advice of the older men you can make KSh 50 stretch for about three days” (48).

Reflecting on his “past life” (in the gang) MN says “the past life wasn’t good” (136). Now that he is out of the gang, he is able to “control” himself because he chooses whether something is wrong or right and decides himself what to do. In the gang “you don’t get the chance of reasoning as an individual” (134-136). Life is better now because he can “associate with people freely” (140). Now he is offered opportunities, whereas before when he was rude people did not offer him opportunities (140). Even if a rude person is being beaten people will say “let him be beaten he deserves it,” whereas people intervene if a good person is being beaten (140).

Now MN has learned how to associate with and help others—doing work from which he gets “money in an easier way other than stealing” (40). People call him to do a job and “I can’t lack even KSh 100 of my own (40). This is the difference between his life in the gang and life now. MN says that it took about five months for people who feared him to “get used to” him now (102). What made them “get used” to him was that he “decided that what he was doing was wrong” (104).

From “Parking Boy” to Entrepreneur and Mentor

H was a “parking boy” who lived on the streets with a group centered around a base (4). He was a part of two groups, one called Zion, which was a group for street boys, and one called DECO, which collects garbage (198). H saw that they could not start a car wash because no cars were passing by in this location. He came to the conclusion that this location could benefit more from garbage clean-up, seeing that the place was dirty and seeing other groups collecting garbage in other areas (see H 24, 202). Because of this the group started to collect garbage (90). They started this project because of being tired of “sleeping outside and being disturbed by the police all the time” (90).

When they started this project nobody owned a house and they were sleeping outside or in the kiosks. Now most of them have wives, houses, and are no longer on the street (92, 42, 44). He does not appear as a street boy anymore, “and if you look at me, I am smart even if I tell you that I am from here, you see that no, this person does not belong here and that he has only come” (42). H sees a “very big” difference between his life now and what it was (250). First, he used to stay hungry for a whole day before he got a job. He would carry people's luggage but oftentimes people would refuse

and he would sleep hungry (252). Now he “can't sleep hungry” (252). Second, he used to sleep outside but “now I can't sleep outside no matter what” (252).

H continues to come to the base because, in the first place, he is used to it (260). Second, “this is the place that I feed from.” In other words, if he runs out of food before his paycheck comes at the end of the month, he can get money for food from the base: “here you can just hear a person from that place comes and tell me ‘George there is a pair of shoe that was fitting me but is no longer fitting me,’ so you see, I benefit” (260-262). This place became his base—he says “in short we can call it my office” (264).

H and other older parking boys who are leaders in the groups such as Zion and DECO meet together and say,

in my street, there are many children, what are we going to do? Together they try to network older and younger boys into sponsored courses—and so you can come to like my group and ask me, if I can get people who would like to go for a course and I can give them some people and so we help each other. When I get children, I also bring them to you. (204)

H has helped the boys he has met at his base by teaching them from his experience—it is not that he “in giving stories that I don't know or that I've been told by someone else. It is something that I've gone through” (254). He tells them that if “they want, they change, not that anyone should force you ... I can chase you from this base because you are sniffing this thing, you will go to another base where they are not asking you so have I helped you?” (254). He assures them that they can change, they can stop sniffing glue because “you're not born with it and so you can leave it if you decide” (254). He has seen people change (254).

“You Can Live Without Stealing”

M presents himself as an example to the younger youth since he was known by everyone in Kiamaiko as “a bad person” but now they can see that “even this guy changed, so you can also change” (47). He and his friends invited other youth, most of whom are thieves, “bad people,” who saw that M and his friends “were bad people,” to follow them and change and they decided to follow. He said, “for sure the change starts from me to even the others” (63).

Realizing that life is hard and drugs and stealing are dangerous, M and his friends also have gathered children who were “hired as laborers as in child labour” to “show them an example” and “tell them that we were bad.” They have started a group called “Kiamaiko Talent Initiative.” They have seventy-eight children who do not have parents—some do not even have “next of kin.” They have gathered them to show them “that you can live without stealing or using these drugs.” Instead they can use their talent. By doing this they hope to “stop many things” and also “try to help ourselves in our talents” (35). However, in addition to his work, M still has to steal at times to provide for his wife and children (11-23).

Youth Transformation for Change

Following his year in prison for carjacking and what he calls his subsequent reformation in 2004, EFGH founded the organization called Youth Transformation for Change (54), which exists to help reform those involved in drugs, crime, violence, and prostitution and prevent younger people from getting involved in those things (58).

“I Feel Like I Have Played My Part”

There are many changes now in QR’s life. He said, “if you look at me, you can see...you could not expect that I was staying in a life of being a street boy. Now I have changed and people can attest that I don’t use anything and they respect me and we brainstorm and talk in groups together” (58). Having stopped using drugs, QR is now helping others to stop. There is a group of about ten youth who have changed. Some were unable to stop using everything, like QR, but now only use cigarettes (98-100). QR said that because of this, “I feel like I have played my part in the community since if I see that they have reached to a point that they have changed, I feel very good” (102).

“We Just Sit and Walk”

BCDE talks with other youth in an effort to persuade them to stop stealing (70).

we just sit and walk and I tell them that it was not easy for me to leave that system. There are some of my friends who love me since I accepted myself the way I am and I still love them. And I still show them that we can survive and as we talk, we talk and say that the issues we are talking about crime is not hidden but it is an open reality we had so and so and now he is not there and we had so and so but now he is not there. The other one was beaten, the other one went here and there. And so it is things that we are seeing and they also realize that for sure crime is not worth it. (70)

Not as Bad as He Used to Be

ToSN tells the story of two youth who came to church, one of which was drunk. They were welcomed in by the pastor. They were “so excited to enter the church” and “were led to the prayer of repentance ... were prayed for [and] then they were told to come the Sunday that followed.” One came for two or three Sundays, then he lost track of them because ToSN returned to GUREC. However, when he returned to his home he heard that that the one who had continued for a while, no longer attended church. ToSN contacted him and found him “as a good guy because although he backslid, I don’t know the activities that he engages in but he is not as worse as he used to be” (170).

Hustling, but a Time Bomb

ToX fled Nairobi after his friends were killed. Six months later he returned to Nairobi and hustled to earn his daily bread, later he confessed about his life of stealing to the police chief, and went through GUREC. When he returned to Nairobi he committed to God that he would not steal again. He was able to get employed pulling a *mkokoteni* (a handcart) carrying things, such as potatoes and carrots. He realized “that this work was not as dangerous since you would just work and also eat your sweat.” At this point he felt that “it [life] was good” since he had “arranged” himself and rented a house for KSh 500. On some days he was making “some good money there in Korogocho” but it was hard because he did not get a job every day (82). It was during this time that he described his life like a bomb that was set and may explode, saying, “living without a job is like a bomb which has been set and once it is set once it blows it would spoil many things” (8).

Conclusion

This study has presented a synchronic view of prominent DTR through the voices of the youth. The data is organized around categories that emerged from the data, reveal complexity in the youth who employ DTR, and point to pathways for further study for facilitating prosocial change. These will be discussed in Chapter Seven.

CHAPTER 6

FINDINGS (3): A DIACHRONIC VIEW

A diachronic presentation more clearly reveals the contextual interrelatedness of perceived power, catalysts to tactics of resilience, DTR, inner conflictedness, co-existent CTR, and prosocial change. This continues to reveal complexity, giving evidence that the youth are not helpless, super-youth, or hopeless, and pointing to potential pathways for prosocial change.

The first part of the chapter is a brief narrative of ToSN's life drawn from the interview. The second part is a presentation of details of his life organized around the categories that emerged from the interviews presented with some historical contextual markers since what has happened before and since influences the interpretation of what is captured in the snapshot.

This story of one Treasure is not intended to be representative of male Treasures or male youth who are negotiating life without secondary school but rather illustrative of the de-essentializing affect of widening the lens through a diachronic presentation.

Possible Snapshot Essentializations

As will be seen in the narrative, if a snapshot or short video had been taken of ToSN at different times in his life, he could easily have been essentialized as a "street boy," "homeless," "orphan," "thief," "glue addict," "mad" (crazy), or "hawker."

Widening the Lens: Narrative

Seeing ToSN when he was living on the street, stealing, and sniffing glue, or subdued in a mental hospital, it would have been easy to conclude that he was helpless or hopeless for rehabilitation. However, widening the lens reveals something else. The following narrative is constructed chronologically with potential essentialist labels that could have marked him in certain phases of his life.

From Birth to Fourteen Years Old

"Abandoned"

ToSN and his younger brother grew up knowing their mother, but did not know where their father was and therefore, did not know him. When he and his younger brother were six and three years old, their mother was able to take them to nursery school where they were given porridge and so he says, "so life was not so bad because we usually take porridge in that school." However, ToSN does not know for sure what happened to his mother; she struggled with some kind of mental problems (178-182) and sometimes was taken to a hospital and the boys were left alone because there was no relative near them—making it "hard for us in that age" (184-186). When she was not in the hospital, she worked as a day laborer, usually washing clothes for "rich people" but not able to find work every day (188). When he was nine years old and in Standard Three,

his mother was not always able to feed them (186) and she was not able to pay the school fees (190).⁶²

“Street Boy”

From the time he was nine until he was fourteen his mother was in and out of the hospital for mental illness. He and his brother would often sneak from their house and, instead of going to school, would scavenge on the streets for food as street boys so that when they returned home they would not be a “headache” to their mother. They met up with “other boys who were street boys” who taught them how to live on the streets and get food (186, 192).

Though they got some food this way, it was difficult. They would go to a place called Zimmerman where wealthy people threw their food away (200) and where older street boys harassed them because they were young and new and in their territory, that he called “another kingdom” (192). They had to share what they had found with the older street boys (192).

After a while they had to drop out of school completely because their mother was unable to pay the school fees (194). ToSN and his brother continued to sleep in the house with their mother but spent their days with the street boys (196).

When they were scavenging they found bread and rice and ate it though some of it was rotten. He did not know how many days before the food had been thrown there, but would eat it anyway because he “could feel that that food is nice because we have nothing in our stomach” (206). He said looking back, “it is by the grace of God that I am living because the kind of food that we were taking, it is God” (204-206, 482). While their former classmates continued their studies, ToSN and his brother continued living on the streets.

ToSN described an ambivalent relationship with the other street boys. At times he was taken advantage of and at times defended, at times given food and at times stolen from. He did not consider the other street boys friends, even though “they walked together,” because

they were people you could not trust because they sometimes would come against me, all of them, even those you see as your friends, you take them as friends but sometimes they can form a group to maybe threaten you to go somewhere where they don’t want to go so you can’t say that they are friends, sometimes the older ones can take you for granted. (494)

On the other hand, when it was to their advantage they would defend him: “when we are there and we meet another street boy who is not from our group, they can defend you when they want us to benefit from other people that we don’t know. So we can fight together as a group with others, we could fight” (ToSN 496). They would watch wrestling on television and then fight each other and injure one another (502). They never shared money with each other but they would share food they scavenged from the garbage (504).

Sometimes as street boys they swam in the dams to have fun. He never really learned to swim but the other street boys threw him in the deep water—and since he did not know how to “dance” they laughed at him. He said, “Oh My God!! That was the worst day for me, because I could have died, they were just laughing as I was

⁶²At that time fees were still required for primary school.

struggling and drinking water but God helped me to come out of there, I struggled. And I came out of the deep part” (488). Nobody helped him and he believes they would have let him die because they did not care (492).

“Thief”

Finding food was the greatest concern among the street boys (506). ToSN would steal to buy food. For example, if someone left their shoes lying outside their house, he would take them and sell them. Even if the shoes cost the person KSh 2000 he would sell them just for KSh 100 just because he wanted food (506).

He would also snatch women’s bags so he could buy sugar (448). Running up behind a woman, he would quickly pull it off her shoulders (450). They would scream and he would hide between buildings where they could not get him (454). Sometimes he would get caught and beat up (456). Once about five boys went out together to snatch purses. They grabbed one and the others got away, but he was caught by a few men and beaten. He says, “I was beaten up but I still stood” (464-466). Because he was young they just hit him. If he would have been older they could have killed him (mob justice) (468-470). Looking back he said, “so that is the life that I was living in at that time so I could not be shaken, I continued until God helped me out of that” (458).

From Fourteen to Fifteen Years Old: “Stupid”

Some of his mother’s friends told her what ToSN and his brother were doing but she was unable to pay for the school fees and there was nothing she could do (198, 206). When he was about fourteen years old, his mother married a man from upcountry where she was born. He had a *shamba* (a large food garden) that he farmed and was able to buy their uniforms and took them back to school. ToSN was so happy to go back to school and enter Standard Three—even though he was fourteen years old and most of his class mates were nine.

ToSN said that he himself was very clever because he realized that he needed education and so he capitalized on the opportunity to go to school by working extremely hard in order to do better than the other children (who were much younger than he) (222). Some of the other students, who were about nine years old, thought he was a teacher because he was fourteen (228). He never felt embarrassed being in Standard Three even though his age mates in Standards Six and Seven teased him because he knew he needed education and “because I knew what I wanted” (230). He realized he needed education because as a street boy he used to admire people who “were learned.” He admired the kind of life that they led and realized that education would open the door for jobs that would change his life, take care of his mother, and help his family. He says “that is all that was in my mind and the chance that I had gotten at that time—I used it for the best” (224, 232).

From Fifteen to Sixteen Years Old: “Day-laborer”

ToSN was able to stay in school until his first term in Standard Four. Then his mother and her husband divorced (210-216, 234). Because of this he had to leave school and they returned to Nairobi (236).

For a year in Nairobi he tried to work digging *shambas* for people while his brother went back to the streets. He worked hard digging *shambas* because “although

I was not happy at all ... I tried my best if only I could get something for the family” (240-242).

From Sixteen to Nineteen Years Old: “Stupid”

He decided to visit his friends upcountry and when he did so he was warmly welcomed. His friends were happy to see him and the teachers were as well because of the interest he had shown in education and because of his academic performance. When the teachers found out he was not still in school because he had no one to pay his fees, one of the teachers invited him to stay with her and continue his education there (242).

Feeling bad about his brother who was living on the streets, he asked if his brother could come too, but the teacher refused, explaining that she was offering this opportunity to him because of his academic performance. He returned to Nairobi with the plan of returning the next year to continue his education. The next year he, his mother, and brother went back upcountry because they had relatives there.⁶³ The teacher took him in and a relative took his brother in. Another relative told his mother that she was to go and when she would “get something for” ToSN and his brother, she could come and see them. So she returned to Nairobi (244).

ToSN had left after the first term of Standard Four. Over the time that he was gone, his classmates had progressed to Standard Six. The teacher asked him if he wanted to be placed in Standard Six or Standard Five and he chose Standard Five (246). Even though he did not have the knowledge from Standard Four to begin Standard Five he was determined to catch up while in class. He became the top student in Standard Five. He was sixteen years old at the time and the other students in Standard Five were eleven (248-258).

The teacher, who needed help to work the *shamba* because her husband was in Nairobi, helped ToSN by giving him less work to do—he only had to get grass for the cattle and spend some time working in the *shamba*. This was so that he could give more time to his studies and catch up (260). On a typical day he would get up at five in the morning, milk the cows, take the milk to the dairy, get himself ready for school and be in class by seven that morning. After school he would study until about seven o’clock and then help with some of the work before returning to his books and studying until midnight (266-274).

He encountered more challenges in Standard Seven because he was performing well and some people in the village who were not his relatives started to complain, saying that since he is not from the village “whatever he is using, who will give it back?” (276). They questioned why the teacher had taken him in and the head teacher told him that because his academic performance and behavior were good they decided not to ask any school fees from him. In Standard Six he had become the number two student in the division, which contained about twenty schools, and this made many people unhappy (278). Things continued to be difficult because he was always at the top of his class and “parents continued to complain, and things came hard. For one thing, I was given more work at the place I was living” (276).

He was given much more work to do at the house where he was living. The schedule for milking the cows changed and he had to be up at three AM to milk the

⁶³This was not the village his mother had grown up in, but the village where she was married (280).

cows (about thirty liters). He had to carry the milk to the dairy which was quite a distance away, carrying two gallons through the hills. Sometimes he would meet his classmates going to school while he was taking the milk to the dairy. He would try to make it back to school by seven. After school he would get grass for the cows and help with work in the homestead. Sometimes he had to cook and clean up. By the time he was done cleaning up, because of being up at three AM, he would grab his book and try to study until twelve, but sometimes he fell asleep studying (282).

Some of his classmates told him to run away but he refused. Studying when he could, he was determined to complete his studies because he knew that if he missed this opportunity to complete his studies “it will be worse for me so I better continue with this kind of life” (284). Even though it was difficult, he persevered and finished Standard Eight (288).

Although he studied very hard, the increased workload affected his performance. His goal had been to perform so well on the KCPE exam (Kenya Certificate of Primary Education) that he would be accepted into a national school like Starehe Boys School. However, he did not perform as well on the exam as he hoped and was accepted into a provincial school rather than a national school and there was no money for the provincial school. So he was told “now you can go ... you have completed your study, it is up to you now” (290).

From Nineteen to Twenty-five Years Old

Glue Addict

ToSN turned to his relatives to see if they could pay for him to go to secondary school but they were not able to. He turned to his uncle who said that since he was his sister's son he would try to help him. Though being limited because his own children were studying, his uncle invited ToSN to move in with him and his family in Dandora, one of the informal settlements in Nairobi (292-294).

When he moved in with his aunt and uncle “life began to be hard again.” His aunt told him that he could not live there because it was not his home. Having found out that he was going to a secondary school in Dandora, she demanded to know who was paying his school fees. The truth was that no one was paying for school fees and he was looking for a sponsor. His uncle told him that he could continue living with them and that they would try to find a sponsor for him (296).

When he was in Dandora Secondary and not paying school fees he would meet the teacher in school and be told “you are not supposed to be here!” He said “it was kind of a hide and seek game. I used to hide and seek to study” (306). When they were taking attendance he would hide by going to the toilets and when they had finished he would sneak back into class (304-308). There were about sixty students in the class and the teacher would not notice that he had gone out and come back. He would go to school and do his hide and seek and then return. He said, “what I knew is that I was getting something, the teacher was giving me the direction, I go to the books and I try to search what I’m supposed to do.” However, after that year, which was Form One, he could not continue his studies (356-360).

Meanwhile his aunt treated him very harshly, telling him “you can’t live here, this is not your home.” ToSN begged her to let him stay and “see whether life can be good for me, if I can continue with my study” (ToSN 296). His aunt was furious and finally threw his bag outside and told him to leave one day. He told his uncle that since he did not have a place for him to live he would go and “start another life.” He decided to

move to Korogocho where he knew a relative—but he also knew that the life there was “not a good life” (298).

During this year in Dandora he “slept many days without food” and said “that one was the worst year for me” (474). He could not even afford a cheap soup for ten bob poured over *mandazi* called *chafua* which means “make dirty” (476-480).

The relative he moved in with in Korogocho used gum,⁶⁴ glue, and *bhang* to get high. ToSN said about this life “although I was not happy about it, there was no otherwise” (300). At the same time he tried to find his mother so he could perhaps live with her instead of with this relative who was involved in drugs (324).

ToSN began sniffing glue and smoking *bhang*, mostly glue, because of the influence it had on him (326-330) and “so that I could forget some things” (334). He said, “it is not a good substance, it makes you dizzy like the way you can take *chang’aa* or you can take beer, you feel someone ... your head being taken by that thing” (332). However, he knew that it “was not the right thing for me to do so I could take it sometimes but I felt that that was not for me” (334). Though “the whole of that year was bad for me” he said, “I was remembering the kind of life, the family that I was living with when I was in primary, they were so inspirational, they used to tell me ‘ToSN, you know you are so... education is the best thing you can have.’” He repeated “they were so influential, they were so concerned with my academics” (334-340). Though he could not cope with the life of the slum and what his relative and his friends were doing, he was able to resist succumbing to this lifestyle as a result of the influence this family had on him during primary school. They ultimately “could not influence me with the kind of life they were living, I knew myself ... my destiny differently from the kinds of life some of them were living” (340).

He had been looking for his mother and one day she came to visit the relative he was staying with and they met. He said “because we have met, you are not leaving” (342). He said that they would get a house and stay together and “that is where I will be coming when I come from school” and that no matter how little she had, at least she would have that house (342). She answered that she was living far away and she could not get her belongings from there to here. But he told her that he would get a cart for her and go with her to bring her things. They did that even though it took him three hours each way to pulling the cart by hand (342-344). So she moved to Korogocho and he rented a room (402).

Mad

When he was unable to continue his studies this time, he realized the little he was achieving was not what he needed. So he decided, “God, if you want me to continue with my studies, it is not this way.” He said, “I tried to think of many many things, I think that was why I got depression” (370-372).

His neighbors thought he was crazy because he was behaving like he wanted to die—though he does not remember, he maybe had tried to kill himself. He was angry and resisted but they tied him and took him to the mental hospital in Mathare. There they gave him injections which made him sleep for about three days. While he was unconscious he heard people telling him that they thought he was going to die. He stayed there for two months (370-378).

It was very difficult interacting with people who were mentally ill when he knew that he was not mentally ill (380). But while in the mental hospital, ToSN received

⁶⁴Gum is a type of glue that is inhaled like glue (302).

a vision from God, saying, “that time is the time that God told me something, that is where my call came” (388-400). Though some people did not think he was going to live, he thanked God because he recovered quickly and received his call.

He was sleeping on one of the benches with “the other crazy people there,” just looking up, when the vision came.

God told me “your life is not in here.” That is where my call came and I was convinced. [God said] “you know your life is not here. You know what ToSN, I am going to remove you out of here. You are going to work for me when I have removed you out of here. You are going to resume back to your studies. I didn’t know what God was telling me, I never got the sense of that. I was convinced that God was really talking to me. God [was] speaking in a vision. (390)

He was convinced that God spoke to him in a vision because he could “hear someone speak to me ... I knew that it was God who had told me.” In the vision he also spoke to God, saying, “okay God, you will do this to me, and I have decided that I will follow you God all the days of my life, what you will tell me, I will do, if you don’t tell me anything, I will not say anything ...” (392). This was a major turning point in his life because he was confident that God was speaking to him, there was a pledge of obedience, and he followed through.

After the vision ToSN told one of the matrons in the hospital that he needed a Bible so he could preach to the other patients. She gave him a small New Testament. He read verses to other patients and interacted with people who came from the outside to preach to the patients (392). He also preached to and prayed for the sick.

I was sick and I was taken there and I could pray for them and they could come to hear me ... I could pray, you know the people who are not mental, the ones who are sick or they have spirits ... they have those spirits, some of them fear prayers so I could pray. They could tell me, “you! What are you doing? You are making noise to us!” “I am praying and I know God will remove me out of here, although I am preaching to you.” (392)

Once he prayed for a fellow patient who had come from a rich family. Believing that he had been healed through ToSN’s prayers, he told ToSN that he would give him a job when he got out. ToSN declined saying that he did not want a job but wanted to finish his studies and that he “was so happy” because through a vision God had told him that he would complete his studies—though he said, “I didn’t know how it would happen that I [would] go back to school—because of my age. I was feeling that I am old—am getting old to go to secondary school again” (392).

In the vision God had also told him “you be the shepherd” (394). ToSN says,

in fact I was called the shepherd by God because I was being told [by God] that ... whatever you speak is what I will give you and I told God whatever you will tell me is what I will speak. I knew what that kind of a call was. I knew that I will sing for the Lord. I will do, I will do what God

want me to do. I knew and was convinced that that was a call to work for him. (394)

One day he noticed another patient who was sick and was being told to go wash himself but he could not—nor could he dress himself. ToSN said,

I decided that oh God this is just part of the creation. This is just a man like me so God, why? God used me in that way so that I could wash him, to put on his clothes, [and] help him to dress. And I felt that that was what I was supposed to do as far as am there. That is what I just felt, I felt good in fact, doing that work. (398)

The matron was so happy when ToSN washed this man. He said “the other crazy people would only harass each other” but the matron and other workers were happy and would “call me and encourage me to continue like that until the time they told me that I could go home” (400). Though they said ToSN could go home he did not want to leave, “I told them that I want to continue helping those guys” because “I knew that I was working for God; that is what I knew. I knew that I had a call” (392). However, since the hospital bill was being paid by the social workers and “we were eating, we were sleeping on things that did not belong to us ... I was discharged” (400).

Hawker

With the help of his mother’s pastor, he got a job selling jackets. This pastor was very influential. If it would not have been for him, “maybe I could have gotten lost through the influence of the voice of the notorious boys there” (404). But he thanked God, believing that God connected him with the pastor; “that man of God.” The pastor bought the jackets and would give a portion of the profit to ToSN when they sold (404).

He also got involved in a church. At this time he considered himself “saved” and “I was going to Redeemed gospel Korogocho, I was strong, I entered to a choir, and I used to sing with the choir. And I became strong spiritually. I tried to go to the Bible studies and to this pastor, the one I was working with, [and] to prayers” (406). It was at the end of that year that he heard about GUREC (406).

ToSN heard about GUREC from his friend Eliud and another person. They were friends from Redeemed Gospel Church. He then met the principal, Mr. Nyamu, explaining that he wanted to continue with this study but that he was alone with no one supporting him (412). Mr. Nyamu asked if he had anything, “at least something little ... a few coins” for school fees, a uniform, and a box to put his clothes in to start with. ToSN had been able to save about KSh 3000 which was enough to buy a uniform and a box and he was able to begin. He was very happy to be back in school—especially in a school where they treated him well (408-418).

ToSN was happy to resume Form Two at GUREC because he “spent Form One in Dandora secondary which was not so good to me (ToSN 416). When he went to GUREC he said, “I was so happy, I was so happy. I was so happy.”

GUREC was not a big school with facilities—no laboratory or “great things” but he was happy because GUREC “is the kind of school that I want.” GUREC provided “somewhere to study.” Pastor Regina taught them “so many things biblical” (418). He said,

The food that you get from the Bible, Pastor Reginah, she knows the Bible, she used to tell us about the bible and she used to tell us about the

Bible, about reaching people and giving life to the lifeless and power to the powerless and I felt that that was what I was supposed to do myself. I was a prayer coordinator, intercessor, I was coordinate prayers in the CU and I preached in the CU. (ToSN 420)

He “was happy to even interact with students” and joined a singing group called “Glorious”. ToSN says, “we used to sing to the people and I used to feel that that is good, we are doing the right thing that we are preaching the gospel through that and what was good was that what I felt about GUREC is the spiritual food that they give” (418). When he preached he “felt that now, this is shaping what I am supposed to be ... I had a sense that ... that is what am called to do” (ToSN 422).

Though ToSN did not have the necessary school fees, and was not able to find a sponsor until the second term of Form Three, GUREC did not send him away (432).

Before ToSN attended GUREC, he moved out of his mom’s house in Korogocho, which “is more slum ... more of a ghetto” (88) to Dandora and continued selling jackets. He decided to move because many times (90) other “idle youth,” whom he knew and who referred to him as “pastor” (114-116), would see him carrying his Bible and going to church (142) and would steal the money he got from selling jackets (88-92). One time they confronted him, asked him if he had any money, put him in a headlock with a piece of wood under their sleeve, picked him up, turned him upside down (so things would fall out of his pockets), held him by the legs, pick-pocketed him, and took everything he had (money and his phone). Then they dropped him to the ground and he injured his neck (94-110). There is nothing he could do about this because if he would have said something they would have harmed him (116).

Another time he met them while carrying jackets to sell and they asked what he had. He replied only thirty shillings that he was going to use for lunch. They pulled a knife and reached into his pockets. He told them he was not going to give them the thirty shillings because he needed to eat lunch so he could have strength to go sell his jackets. There were three of them and one said, “just leave him he doesn’t have anything” (122). One of them still wanted to use the knife but the other two talked him out of it saying “you know this guy, another time we are going to meet with him.” ToSN was very angry, because they wanted to take his thirty bob and he had not “taken anything into his stomach” (126).

He resisted their attempt to steal from him because he knew the youth. Though he talks to them, he does not call them friends though he meets them almost every day. He did not want to be friendly because if he would have been friendly they might have gone to his house and “you can’t know their next step because they are thieves, they do evil things like killing, in fact they kill, these are the guys who kill” (136-138). If they would have come at him with the knife he could have just released the money (130). He was confident that they would not use the knife that time because two of them were telling the other to leave him alone (132). When these idle youth steal from him he cannot go to the police because he cannot trust the police (116) because the police can be bribed by the youth (118).

Twenty-five Years Old

Current Situation

At the time of the interview (June 25, 2010) ToSN was twenty-five years old (14) and had cleared Form Four in GUREC (16). He was working on a certificate and diploma for “Successful Christian Leadership Ministry” (56) which is sponsored by Reverend Sagara (58) from Buruburu (60). It is affiliated with a Bible school in the United Kingdom so that the certificate is from there (62). Among “about twenty-five topics” in the program, he was studying hermeneutics, homiletics, evangelism, and pastoral ministry (70).

He was also buying second hand clothes in Gikomba and selling them (18) house to house (20). Being self-employed, he set his own schedule. Previously, he sold clothes every day, but later decided to reserve Tuesdays and Thursdays to attend school (68) (22). In one day he could make between KSh 350 and KSh 450 (ca \$4.25 and \$5.45) (28)—which was not sufficient to cover rent and school fees (30). He paid KSh 1000 (ca \$12.00) to rent one room (32, 34) which has “informal” electricity—sometimes (38). Food for a day cost him between KSh 150 and KSh 200 (\$1.80 and \$2.40) (42). His school fees were 28,000 Ksh (ca \$338) for two years, during which time he would complete a certificate and diploma (44-52).

At the time of the interview ToSN was continuing to engage with youth who had repeatedly stolen from him and injured him—and call him “pastor.” He said that though they tend to respect pastors a little, they still steal from them and beat them. He would engage with them in order to give them the word of God (136-156). He met them on the streets and talked to them about God’s love for them (160). He said that they often respond to him by saying that “they know God and that is all” (162). Sometimes they would be willing to listen but, sometimes they are not (164). Some of them “get saved” and change for two or three months, but when you meet them again “they are the same guys” (166).

Desire for the Future

ToSN explained that he wants to serve in a pastoral role to “help the youths spiritually ... because if it were not for that, myself I could not know where I could be.” He said that “there are many youths in the slums who have wasted themselves and maybe I could be in their traps if it were not for God” (72). When ToSN was young and sniffing glue he could have been essentialized as a street boy with no future, but at the time of this interview (June 25, 2010) at the age of twenty-five (14) he was on track to serve youth who are facing many of the same challenges he experienced.

Details Categorized in Sequence that Reveal Complexity and Potential

Using the categories that emerged from the data, this section presents details in sequence from ToSN’s life which reveal complexity and potential.

**From Birth to Fourteen Years Old:
“Abandoned,” “Street Boy,”
and “Thief”**

During these years ToSN’s mother battled with mental illness and was unable to provide school fees or, eventually, food. ToSN and his brother turned to the streets to provide for themselves, engaging with other “street boys” and stealing.

Perceived Power over Him

Though ToSN spoke of powers he perceived as having influence in his life, he did not speak or act as if he was powerless. He spoke of the power of his mother to provide school fees and the school to provide porridge so that “life was not so bad” (178). The absence of school fees and porridge made life more difficult but did not leave him unable to find food when he and his younger brother were left alone.

Other powers he implicitly recognized as having influence on his life were his mother’s mental illness, those who would or would not hire his mother, hunger that drove him to seek food (even rotten food) that felt nice in his stomach and sustained him (206), and those from whom he stole who would beat him (456).

He also perceived the power that the older street boys had over him. They taught him (186) and sometimes defended him (494). They also harassed him, forced him to share food he found with them (192), threw him into the dam against his will and refused to save him when he was drowning (508), and could not be trusted because they would steal from him and force him to do things he did not want to do (494).

ToSN perceived God (and Jesus) as having saving power over him.⁶⁵ For example, he credited God with saving him from drowning in the dam when the other street boys threw him in (492). He credited God with saving him from harmful effects of eating rotten bread and rice they found, saying, “it is by the grace of that I am living because the kind of food that we were taking, it is God” (204-206). During these years as he was stealing, even though he was sometimes caught and beaten, he believed that Jesus protected him so he was not killed by the beatings. He credits God for bringing him out of the DTR he was engaging in because he continued in them “until God helped me out of that” (458). ToSN credits God for the fact that he has never been arrested (472).

Catalysts to Tactics of Resilience

The catalysts mentioned below are what ToSN described as having a catalyzing effect rather than an authoritative analytical statement I am making.

Within this framework of challenges and powerful influences, there were internal dynamics, external circumstances, and people that catalyzed him to employ tactics of resilience. For example, life being “hard for us in that age,” when ToSN’s mother was hospitalized and he and his younger brother were left alone, together with the resultant hunger, catalyzed him to take responsibility and initiative to find food. His desire not to be “a headache” to his mother catalyzed his going to the streets to provide for himself and his brother (178-182). The other street boys they met taught them how to live on the streets which enabled him to do it for five years (186, 192). Success in stealing and the continued need for food catalyzed him to continue—though he would sometimes be beaten. The feeling of having food in his stomach, even if it was rotten, gave him physical energy and motivated him to continue scavenging (206).

⁶⁵ToSN used God and Jesus synonymously.

DTR

The catalysts within the context of competing powers moved ToSN to tactics of resilience, some of which were destructive. For example, he turned to living on the streets and stealing (178-182). He joined other street boys whom he could not trust and who endangered his life. He found bread and rice, some of which was rotten and perhaps tainted with rat poison, and ate it because they “could feel that that food is nice because we have nothing in our stomach” (206). He stole to get food (506), sometimes stealing shoes lying outside a house (506) and sometimes snatching women’s bags and hiding between buildings where they could not get him (454). Sometimes he would get caught and beat up and he knew he may be killed (456).

Co-existent CTR

ToSN’s ability and choice to maintain his ambivalent relationships with the older street boys and learn from them while at times being taken advantage of, defended, given food, stolen from, harassed, being forced to share his food with them and do things he did not want to do reveals embedded abilities that became tactics of resilience. They were constructive in that he was able to remain in the network of street boys which had become a source of food and protection (192).⁶⁶ The intensity of this ambivalent relationship is seen when the others threw him into the dam and left him there to drown (492).

From Fourteen to Fifteen Years Old: “Stupid”

This is the year when ToSN’s mother married a man who moved the family upcountry and enrolled ToSN in school there where he completed Standard Three and part of Standard Four.

Perceived Power over Him

The man who married ToSN’s mother in this time had power over ToSN in that he moved the family upcountry, paid his school fees, and bought his uniform so that he could return to school (216).⁶⁷

Catalysts to Tactics of Resilience

The marriage of his mother was a catalyst that resulted in ToSN living upcountry and enrolling in school again.

ToSN’s knowledge of what he wanted, belief that education would enable him to get a job, and especially, his love for his mother, were catalysts that enabled him to rejoin Standard Three when he was fourteen years old and his classmates were nine even though his age mates in Standard Eight harassed him (230). He said, “that could not stop me, because I knew what I wanted” (ToSN 230). Speaking of education, he said, “I knew that it would change my life ... I may get a good job and ... take care of my mother.” About helping his family he said, “that is all that was in my mind” (ToSN 232).

⁶⁶It could be argued that because of the destructive elements of living on the streets with other street boys, he capitalized on the opportunity to go to school by working extremely hard in order to do better than the other children (who were much younger than he) (222). Maintaining these relationships would be a DTR.

⁶⁷It is interesting that even though ToSN’s mother’s friends told her that ToSN was living on the streets, she was powerless to provide. Also his age-mates who teased him for being in Standard Three when he was fourteen were powerless to discourage him because he knew what he wanted.

Co-existent CTR

These catalysts moved him to work extremely hard in order to do better than the other children and secure a place in secondary school (222).

Examples of Prosocial Change

When ToSN had the opportunity to return to Standard Three at fourteen years old, he left the streets and returned to school (228).

From Fifteen to Sixteen Years Old: “Day-laborer”

This is the year his step-father divorced his mother and he had to leave school and return to Nairobi. He worked digging *shambas*.

Catalysts to Tactics of Resilience

The divorce of his step-father and mother catalyzed him out of school and back to Nairobi (236).

His desire to provide for his family motivated him to work unhappily for a year digging *shambas*. He said, “although I was not happy at all ... I tried my best if only I could get something for the family” (240-242).

Co-existent CTR

For a year he worked hard digging *shambas* in Nairobi rather than returning to the streets as his brother did.

From Sixteen to Nineteen Years Old: “Stupid”

These are the years in which he went back upcountry, lived with the teacher who invited him, and completed Standards Five, Six, Seven, and Eight.

Perceived Power over Him

The teacher who invited him to live with her and return to school exercised power on his behalf. She also had power over him to require him to work in the *shamba* and to milk the cows. The people of the village who complained about him and his doing well in school created problems that affected him (276). The teacher exercised power again by advocating for him and working so as to enable him to finish Standard Eight though it was difficult for him. Those who decided that he would not receive a scholarship affected the course of his life.

Catalysts to Tactics of Resilience

The interest he had shown in education, his efforts, and his academic achievements when he was in Standards Three and Four catalyzed the teacher’s invitation when he returned for a visit which, in turn, catalyzed his return to school (242). This teacher made it possible for ToSN to have time for school by giving him less work to do—he only had to get grass for the cattle and spend some time working in the *shamba* (260).

Because he did not have the knowledge from Standard Four to begin Standard Five, he was determined to catch up and became the top student in Standard Five (248-258).

When he was in Standard Six upcountry, the parents of other children were complaining, and the teacher was giving him more work to do outside of class,

some of his classmates told him to run away but he refused. His determination to complete his studies fueled by the knowledge that if he missed this opportunity to complete his studies “it will be worse for me so I better continue with this kind of life” (284) was a catalyst to refuse the advice of his classmates who told him to run away (288). This was a catalyst to DTR which was overcome by the catalyst of determination to complete his studies fueled by the knowledge that if he missed this opportunity to complete his studies “it will be worse for me so I better continue with this kind of life” (284).

The increased workload affected his performance so he did not pass the KCPE exam and was only accepted into a provincial school for which there was no money. This together with being told “now you can go ... you have completed your study, it is up to you now” were the catalysts he identified that sent him back to Nairobi, without a job, a place to live, or money to continue school (290).

Co-existent CTR

The CTR of working hard in Standards Three and Four was constructive in that it led to his teacher’s invitation to him to return to Standard Five. When he got the opportunity to return to school a second time, he joined Standard Five though he was sixteen and his classmates were eleven (248-258). He capitalized on the opportunity to go to school by working extremely hard in order to do better than the other children and hopefully secure a position in secondary school (222). He worked hard and became the top student in Standard Five (248-258).

Balancing the hard work that ToSN did in the *shamba* with going to school and earning the rank of second in the division (278), and later the increased work in the *shamba* and around the house show ToSN’s hard work that contributed to his CTR (282).

Instead of taking the advice of some of his classmates to run away when he was being criticized by parents and given more work by the teacher, he refused and persevered until he completed Standard Eight (288). Though his KCPE exam score was not high enough to earn a scholarship, he showed great perseverance and had learned.

From Nineteen to Twenty-five Years Old: “Glue Addict,” “Mad,” and “Hawker”

Having cleared Standard Eight and returned to Nairobi, ToSN lived for a while with his uncle and aunt until she kicked him out of their house. Then he moved in with his relative and began abusing drugs, spent time in the mental hospital, found his mother when he was released, and then attended GUREC. Because ToSN identifies his vision and call from God while in the mental hospital as a significant turning point in his life, the data will be organized around the time before he was taken to the mental hospital, the time he was a patient there, and the time after being released.

Perceived Power over Him

Before the Mental Hospital

During these early years ToSN perceived himself living under the influence of various powers. For example, his uncle had the power to provide him with a place to live. His aunt had the power to treat him harshly so that “life began to be hard again” and eventually threw him out of the house (296).

ToSN used glue and *bhang* because of the influence they had on him, making him “forget some things, dizzy,” and “your head being taken by that thing” (326-334).

However, God had more power than the drugs. He said, “I have heard many who engage in drugs, I was not addicted, I took cigarette, bhang, cigarette, all those substances, I took everything but I was not addicted and I thank God because even if that time I was addicted, God saved me” (508).

During his hardest year, the memories of the Anglican Church he attended upcountry and the encouraging words of the family with whom he lived helped to keep him from succumbing completely to a life of drug abuse (340). He said, though “the whole of that year was bad for me” he said, “I was remembering the kind of life, the family that I was living with when I was in primary, they were so inspirational” (334).

Neighbors who were observing him bound him and took him to a mental hospital (370-372).

In the Mental Hospital

The vision from God in which he was “convinced that God was really talking to me” telling him that his life was not in the mental hospital but that “you are going to work for me, when I have removed you out of here, you are going to resume back to your studies” (390) enabled his quick recovery though some people did not think he was going to live (388).

After Being Released from the Mental Hospital

After being discharged from the mental hospital he went back to Korogocho to live with his mother. With the help of his mother’s pastor, he got a job selling jackets. That pastor was very influential. ToSN said that if it would not have been for him, “maybe I could have gotten lost through the influence of the voice of the notorious boys there (402-404).

He thanked God, believing that God connected him with that pastor who included him in his jacket selling business (404). God helped him by taking him to GUREC which “shaped my life, I was shaped, let me say, spiritually I was shaped” (ToSN 74).

There was nothing he could do about the “idle youth” who stole from him, threatened him, and injured him or they would have harmed him more (142, 88-92, 94-110, 116).

Catalysts to Tactics of Resilience

Before the Mental Hospital

His uncle who took him in helped him to avoid living on the streets or with a relative who was abusing drugs (292-294).

Valuing “getting something” motivated him to play hide and seek while attendance was being taken in order to be able to be in the Form One classroom. He said, “what I knew is that I was getting something, the teacher was giving me the direction. I go to the books and I try to search what I’m supposed to do” (356-360).

His aunt who was angry with him and eventually kicked him out of the house catalyzed him toward living with the relative who led him into substance abuse (296-298) and into what he described as “the worst year for me,” during which he could not even afford a cheap soup for ten bob and “slept many days without food” (474-480).

The lack of school fees led to his not being able to continue his studies after Form One (356-360).

The combination of the “worst year” for him when he “slept many days without food” (476-480), the desire to “forget some things,” and the influence of his relative with whom he was living who used gum, glue, and *bhang*, catalyzed him toward drug abuse (300-334).

However, he knew that it “was not the right thing for me to do so I could take it sometimes but I felt that that was not for me.” Though “the whole of that year was bad for me” he said, “I was remembering the kind of life, the family that I was living with when I was in primary, they were so inspirational. They ultimately “could not influence me with the kind of life they were living, I knew myself ... my destiny differently from the kinds of life some of them were living” (340). These memories, his knowledge of himself, and his sense of his destiny in contrast to those who were leading him into drugs helped so that ultimately they “could not influence me with the kind of life they were living” (334-340).

His mother’s visit, his determination not to let her leave, his desire to live with her, and his desire to make sure she had a place to live (342) resulted in ToSN helping her to move to Korogocho into a room he rented (342, 402).

His inability to continue his studies during the year he was abusing drugs and sleeping hungry, his prayers, and his effort to “think of many, many things” led him to depression, attempted suicide, and finally to a mental hospital (370-372).

The neighbors who bound him and took him to the mental hospital, the staff who gave him injections and cared for him, and the people he heard telling him he was going to die while he was unconscious, were part of the combination of catalysts that moved him to hope and CTR rather than to depression and suicide.⁶⁸

In the Mental Hospital

The vision he received from God while in the mental hospital catalyzed him to read the Bible to other patients, praying for them, and washing them. It gave him hope that continued to the time of the interview. It also catalyzed him toward school again (388-400).

The knowledge that he “was working for God” and “had a call” made him want to stay at the mental hospital to continue serving the patients there (392, 400).

Seeing the patient who was sick and could not wash himself as created by God and “just a man like me” moved him to wash the man (398).

The matron and other workers were happy when ToSN washed the patients and encouraged him to continue until he was released, all of which made ToSN feel good (400).

After Being Released from the Mental Hospital

His mother’s pastor helped him get a job selling jackets which kept him from getting “lost through the influence of the voice of the notorious boys there” (404).

Being stolen from, turned upside down and dropped on his head by the “idle youth” who called him “pastor,” motivated him to move from Korogocho to Dandora (90, 114, 88-92, 94-110).

⁶⁸It is important to note that I am neither evaluating the wisdom and effectiveness of these actions nor arguing for a specific causal connection, but simply observing that they are events he mentioned that came between his depression and prosocial behavior.

Through getting “saved” and being involved in the church, singing in the choir, attending Bible studies, interacting with the pastor, and prayers he “became strong spiritually” (406).

His friend Eliud and another person told him about GUREC (412).

Mr. Nyamu provided the opportunity for ToSN to pay what he could “at least something little ... a few coins” and enroll in school (408-418).

He had saved money and when given the opportunity to go back to school, he was willing and able to sacrifice the 3000 KSh (ca \$36.00) he had saved to buy the required uniform and a box for his clothes.

He thrived in GUREC where in spite of the limited facilities, he had a place where he could continue his studies, become involved in meaningful things like the choir, connect with other people, and be taught the word of God. He was very happy to be at GUREC. When he sang in the choir, preaching the gospel through song, he “used to feel that that is good, we are doing the right thing.” Being fed biblical teaching by Pastor Reginah, “about reaching people and giving life to the lifeless and power to the powerless” he felt that this was what he was supposed to do. So he became the prayer coordinator at the Christian union and to preach there (420-422).

He was greatly encouraged by GUREC because “they never told me to go home because of the school fees, that was the greatest opportunity that I had, because they never told me to go home” even though he did not find a sponsor until the last term of Form Three (432). ToSN said that GUREC “shaped my life. I was shaped, let me say, spiritually I was shaped” (74). In fact he says, “GUREC has changed the lives of many people who have come from here. Spiritually they are being nourished to become people who know themselves and their status with God” (76). GUREC molds people not by having nice facilities (78), but by “the lifestyle of GUREC, the Christianity, the teachings that we get” (78).

The knowledge that if it was not for being helped spiritually he could be in the traps many youth are in who have wasted themselves, motivates ToSN to serve in a pastoral role to “help the youths spiritually” (72).

His anger at the three youth who threatened him with a knife for his 30 KSh he had for food and his hunger motivated him to resist them (126).

His knowledge of and relationship with the “idle youth” who confronted him with a knife to steal his 30 KSh, enabled him to resist them without being harmed (130-138).

DTR

Before the Mental Hospital

ToSN began sniffing glue and smoking *bhang*, because of the influence it had on him and “so that I could forget some things” (326-334).

He was behaving like he wanted to die—though he does not remember, he might have tried to kill himself and eventually his neighbors took him to the mental hospital in Mathare (374-378).

In the Mental Hospital and After Being Released from the Mental Hospital

He does not speak of anything that would be considered a DTR after entering the mental hospital. He identifies the vision and call he received there from God as a turning point in his life and the narrative drawn from the interview reflects that.

Inner Conflictedness

Before the Mental Hospital

The relative he moved in with in Korogocho used gum, glue, and *bhang* to get high. ToSN said about this life “although I was not happy about it, there was no otherwise” (300).

While ToSN was sniffing glue and smoking *bhang* he was also trying to find his mother so he could perhaps live with her instead of with this relative who was involved in drugs (324).

He began sniffing glue and smoking *bhang*, mostly glue, because of the influence it had on him through his relative he lived with in Korogocho and “so that I could forget some things”. However, he knew that it “was not the right thing for me to do so I could take it sometimes but I felt that that was not for me” (326-334).

Part of what kept ToSN conflicted was that while “the whole of that year [while using drugs] was bad” for him, he kept remembering the family he lived with when he was in primary school. He remembered the kind of life they lived and how they inspired him by telling him he was bright and that education was so important. As a result, though he could not cope with the life of the slum and was sniffing glue, he knew that his destiny was different from the kind of life his relative was living (ToSN 334-340).

In the Mental Hospital

It was very difficult interacting with people who were mentally ill when he knew that he was not mentally ill (380).

After Being Released from the Mental Hospital

ToSN seems to be conflicted about the youth who steal and kill (136-138). He explains that they steal from pastors and beat them (152) and therefore wants to move away from the slums. He says, “the best thing is to move from them—come out of the slum and maybe move to another place” (150). But he also says that “it is not advisable to move” because “you change them by giving the word of God that is what I have been doing, in fact, I meet them, I go to them but I don’t like them to come to me” (154).

Co-existent CTR

Before the Mental Hospital

ToSN turned to his uncle for housing rather than returning to the streets (292-294).

He played hide and seek, hiding in the bathroom while attendance was being taken, to avoid being kicked out of school for not paying his school fees (306).

While he was sniffing glue and smoking *bhang* he was also trying to find his mother so he could perhaps live with her instead of with this relative who was involved in drugs (324).

He persuaded his mother to live with him, rented a room for them, and pulled a cart three hours each way (342-344) to move her to Korogocho where they began to live together (402).

In the Mental Hospital

Convinced that God was speaking to him, ToSN committed himself to obey and has followed through in ways that have been constructive for him and for others

(392). For example, he washed fellow patients, cleared Form Four, and during the time of the interview, was studying in another program while supporting himself by selling second-hand clothes, and was reaching out to youth.

While a patient in the mental hospital he washed patients who could not wash themselves and prayed for them (398).

After Being Released from the Mental Hospital

He also got involved in a church, becoming “saved,” singing with the choir, attending Bible studies, interacting with the pastor, participating in prayers, and “became strong spiritually” (406).

He worked when he could in order to pay the rent for his mother who was still suffering from mental illness and unable to pay her rent. He did not mention what kind of mental illness but said that sometimes he cannot communicate with her. At times they argue but there is nothing to argue about. However he said “but I thank God because she is alive, I thank God that at least she is there” (424-426).

He worked during his holidays to buy soap, toothpaste, sugar for his tea, and some other things he is supposed to have at school (428).

He still has not paid the balance of what he owes to GUREC, though he would like to if God would provide the money (434).

He sold jackets with his mother’s pastor (404).

ToSN had saved about 3000 KSh with no one supporting him so that he could pay some school fees and buy a uniform and a box to put his clothes in and enroll in GUREC (408-418).

Examples of Prosocial Change

In the Mental Hospital

Before his neighbors bound him and took him to the mental hospital, he was abusing substance, depressed, and had attempted suicide. After receiving the vision and call from God in the mental hospital he was filled with hope and confidence and was energized by serving other patients (388-400).

After Being Released from the Mental Hospital

Upon release he began to work, completed GUREC, and began to reach out to youth who were trapped in destructive behaviors.

At Twenty-five Years Old

At the time of the interview ToSN was twenty-five years old and was engaged in a post-secondary school Bible course, selling second hand clothes, and preaching to the youth.

Perceived Power over Him

ToSN believed that God could make it possible for him to pay his school fees (50).

Though he abused drugs in the past, the drugs no longer had power over him (508).

ToSN says that “the Word,” meaning the Bible, has power over youth because “if you give the word, it will ... that word won’t come out, even if someone has heard this word and ignore, it will ring in the mind” (510).

Catalysts to Tactics of Resilience

The opportunity GUREC gave ToSN to study, Pastor Reginah's biblical teaching, ToSN's interaction with the students, and GUREC's allowing him to continue though he did not have adequate school fees catalyzed him through completing Form Four, into hustling rather than stealing, and into working on a post-secondary course on theology. He believes these things shaped him to do what God has called him to do, saying, "this is shaping what I am supposed to be ... that is what I am called to do" (ToSN 422).

The money he would make selling second-hand clothes was almost enough for food and rent and so was a catalyst for him to continue through his Bible course (44-52).

The realization that if it had not been for God and for people helping him spiritually he could be in the trap of wasting himself as many youth in the slums have done, catalyzed him to continue serving in a pastoral role to help the youth spiritually (72).

Co-existent CTR

At the time of the interview (June 25, 2010), ToSN was twenty-five years old and was working on a certificate and diploma for "Successful Christian Leadership Ministry" (56) and was almost supporting himself and paying school fees by buying second hand clothes in Gikomba and selling them house to house (14-20).

He was able to avoid being harmed by the youth who stole from him, threatened him, and injured him (114-116).

He continues to engage with youth who have repeatedly stolen from him and injured him—and call him "pastor"—so he can give them the word of God (136-156) and tell them about God's love for them (160).

Examples of Prosocial Change

ToSN has served people in the mental hospital, sold jackets to earn money, become involved with a local church, cleared Form Four after being released, is working on a certificate for "Successful Christian Leadership Ministry" (56) and is supporting himself buying clothes in Gikomba and selling them house to house (18). He also continues to engage with youth who have repeatedly stolen from him and injured him—and call him "pastor"—to give them the word of God (136-156) and tell them about God's love for them (160). He wants to continue serving in a pastoral role to "help the youths spiritually" (72).

Conclusion

The first part of this chapter gives a brief narrative of ToSN's life drawn from his interview. The second part gives a diachronic presentation that reveals the contextual interrelatedness of perceived power, catalysts to tactics of resilience, DTR, inner conflictedness, co-existent CTR, and prosocial change. This has been done in order to reveal complexity and point to pathways to explore for facilitating prosocial change.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study has sought to reveal complexity in the lives of male youth of the informal settlements of Nairobi, demonstrating that they are more than any simplistic caricature and pointing to pathways to be explored for facilitating prosocial change. Specific topics are then suggested for further study and two illustrations are given to demonstrate the relevance of the study.

Summary of the Categories

The categories that emerged in the analysis of the interviews through the lens of tactics of resilience reveal details that reflect variation and temporality.⁶⁹ These categories function in two ways: First, they challenge the nested essentializations of these youth as helpless, super-youth, or hopeless, and second they point to pathways to explore for facilitating prosocial change.

DTR

The three prominent categories of DTR that emerged from the interviews were living on the streets, stealing, and substance abuse. Details about these DTR as described by the youth challenge the ideas that youth who employ them are essentially helpless—because they are actually demonstrating resilience; super-youth—because they are, in contrast, suffering unwanted difficulties and many are dying; or hopeless—because there are examples of prosocial change.

Living on the Streets

The data gathered supports the idea that generalizations “mask a great deal of variation in the actual lives of individual street children” (Davies 2008, 314) and that the youth themselves defy generalizations (Panter-Brick 2001, 150) which “believe the ... personal variation behind each street child” (Kilbride et al. 2000, 8). Living on the streets is described as destructive and resilient since youth frame it as a means of surviving, and yet are regularly confronted with the danger of injury, disease, and death—confirming the conclusion that “their way of living is dangerous” (Van Aker et al. 1999, 394).

Stealing

The youth describe forms and methods of stealing, distinguish various kinds of thieves, and frame stealing as destructive and yet as a tactic of resilience. The kinds of thieves the youth described ranged from “someone who steals” to someone “born with the blood of stealing.” It is framed as “bad” and “bad ways.” One who steals is a “bad person” in the eyes of society and in the eyes of God. Everyone knows it is extremely dangerous because once “they are caught, they are just killed” (ToB 228).

⁶⁹These categories are: DTR, co-existing CTR, and the youths’ perceptions of power over them, inner conflict, catalysts to resilience, and examples of prosocial change.

Nevertheless, youth steal to survive, to provide for those who are dependent on them, and sometimes because it is the easiest way to make “quick cash” to have “a better life ... without sweating.”

Strategic Substance Abuse

The youth describe common drugs in the settlements and frame substance abuse as both destructive and as a tactic of resilience. A distinction is drawn between one who abuses drugs and “a real drug addict.” Substance abuse is framed as “not the good life” and “the things that have finished us mostly.” They are “very hard to leave” because after using glue you become “thirsty” for it. Substance abuse leads to idleness, unemployment, and dropping out of school. Drugs “reduce the thinking” in a youth so that he kills and rapes—“things that you can’t do as you are not normal.” However, drugs provide relief from stress, shame, fear, hunger, and cold. They are used to dream of a good life while in misery and to escape nightmares or evil spirits. They give a lethal boldness by making a youth oblivious to danger so that he steals in plain sight of people. The youth know that when the drug wears off and “you come back to the reality to zero,” you crave more.

Co-existent Constructive Tactics of Resilience

The data revealing co-existent CTR employed by youth who employ DTR demonstrate that these youth are capable of CTR and therefore neither necessarily helpless, nor hopeless for prosocial change. Often, youth are engaged in CTR while living on the streets, stealing, and abusing drugs. Many listen to the counsel of others and learn to think in new ways. Many make constructive decisions such as leaving a destructive gang or overcoming drug abuse. Some have learned to be content with little and many are working hard for little return instead of stealing. Some avoid situations that lead them to steal. Some have sacrificed opportunities for “quick cash” and have persevered in school. There are examples of youth working together for mutual benefit and acting out of compassion for the good of others. There are examples of youth managing money well, though some of the examples involve managing stolen money.

Perceived Power over Them

If it is true that many times youth employ DTR “against their will” and because “the situation forces you to do it” then they are not super-youth who can surmount any obstacle (Dass-Brailsford 2005, 588). Evidence of this can be seen in the deaths of so many of the youth.

Listening to the youth describe powers they perceive are moving them as they negotiate life in their communities (Vigh 2006) points to both actual powers and mere perceptions that must be engaged. The powers mentioned in the interviews include internal forces such as “the taste for money,” “bodily lust,” fear, “the blood of stealing,” and pride. Attitude is described as “the engine of life.” When you are doing wrong you “feel it in your heart.” Youth described being “forced” to steal by external circumstances such as the lack of work, money, and food combined with the opportunity to steal. They felt “taken there by your problem.”

Drugs capture the mind and have power to fool a youth, take his head, alter his consciousness, carry him, enter his blood so he cannot leave them easily, and destroy him. Once a youth has used drugs, they “call” him, make him thirsty, and pull

him back. Drugs enable youth to forget, be fearless, and lose hope. They direct youth to steal, wrong them, lead them to rape and kill, and lead them to death.

The youth spoke about people who had power over them. These people included mothers, grandmothers, siblings, fathers, uncles and aunts, other relatives, police, peers, teachers, older men, and mobs.

They felt the power of laws and policies over them. These include the policies of schools regarding school fees and test criteria. They also include the power of a “Good Conduct Certificate.”

Spiritual forces were talked about often. In the interviews God was always framed as powerful. He was credited with protecting and providing. Jesus was framed as one who protects and is a shepherd, friend, and light. The church is described more in terms of a spiritual power than a sociological power. The church is credited with making a youth good, pulling him from stealing and saving him from death, and keeping him from thinking about stealing. It gives hope, strength, and security. Other spiritual forces mentioned infrequently were Satan, clan blood, and stolen money that was cursed and “aroused” so a youth could not enjoy spending it.

Inner Conflict

Examples of inner conflict challenge the demonization of these youth as hopeless for reform because they are too evil, unfeeling, and not conflicted. These examples reveal competing values that do not fit within an essentialized identity and seem to be excluded in order to perpetuate the stereotype (Hall 1997). Though one youth said he “felt nothing ... even I felt happy” after mugging a man and leaving him unconscious, many spoke of inner conflict. Some felt a sense of inconsistency with their own perceived identity, anger, fear, shame, and sadness. Some described stealing as something they did against their will. Many voiced concern and compassion for others, as well as guilt, remorse, and uneasiness. Some talked of having an awareness of God and praying to God in the midst of behavior they understood that God did not approve of.

Catalysts to Tactics of Resilience

The youth’s accounts of what catalyzed them to tactics of resilience reveal complexity, mitigating the essentializing of youth as helpless or hopeless for reform, and point to pathways to explore for facilitating prosocial change. Usually there were combinations of catalysts mentioned that resulted in the employment of a tactic of resilience, whether destructive or constructive.

Catalysts to DTR

Catalysts to DTR included interrelated combinations of strong internal desires and thoughts, corresponding external circumstances and influences, some form of the philosophy “better a short sweet life than a long life,” and often destructive substances. To an observer the internal desires and thoughts of a youth could seem admirable (such as the desire to care for his mother), offensive (such as some form of “lust” [Scheper-Hughes 2008]), or essentialist (such as “the blood of stealing” that becomes a part of his nature). Corresponding external circumstances were often framed as “forcing” the youth to DTR through some sort of power, lack of other options, and responsibilities over time. Destructive substances contributed to catalyzing youth to action and inaction by altering their state of mind and exercising power over them.

Drugs “take their heads” and carry them so they sometimes do not remember what they have done. Drugs fool them, mislead them, call them, and pull them back. They do not “leave easily.” Drugs give youth a lethal boldness so they steal in plain view of others and are killed. Drugs “direct” youth to steal, lead them to fight, and influence them to rape and kill. They make youth drop out of school, can lead to AIDS, cause them to beat their wives and leave their children hungry, and inhibit their talents. One said, “drugs ... have finished us.”

Catalysts to CTR

Catalysts to CTR interact together, do not function in isolation from others, and do not function the same way all of the time. It was the combination of DE’s friends’ deaths, his brother’s death, the realization that people were crying because of him, and the words of his grandmother that catalyzed him to prosocial change (68, 70). Also, for some time, the observation that people were crying because of him did not move him as it did when the factors mentioned above converged in a certain context and at a certain point in time (68, 76).

The most frequently mentioned catalyst to CTR was the death of friends. In addition, people, especially mothers, and remembering the words of people, interacted with other factors to catalyze the youth to CTR. These other factors included observations of destructiveness, the experience of negative consequences, God, getting “saved” (religious conversion), listening to teaching of the Bible, the reading of the Qur’an, internal dynamics, being separated from the opportunities of employing DTR (such as being held in jail without access to glue), observing constructive opportunities, and business reasons.

Examples of Prosocial Change

Examples of prosocial change challenge the idea that youth who employ DTR are hopeless for reform. Many pass through a season of stealing and doing drugs—and many die in the process—but if they pass through, they can become a prosocial force. Examples of prosocial change in the lives of those who were considered too evil to reform require those looking at such examples to consider as many factors as possible when making decisions as to how to punish perpetrators. Though for the good of society a perpetrator must be stopped, if he can reform, he does not need to be killed.

Youth often spoke of the desire to bring prosocial change, especially to younger youth and especially stemming from their experience of DTR. There were also examples of prosocial change that had occurred. Youth were able to stop stealing and abusing drugs. Some realized that it is better to live with little than to live in constant fear. Youth who were considered “thieves” became teachable, self-controlled, and trustworthy. Some changed from “parking boy” to entrepreneurs and mentors—some were entrepreneurs and mentors while they were parking boys. Some are engaged in trying to persuade others, especially younger youth, to stop stealing and abusing drugs, and engage in prosocial behavior. Some do this by starting clubs.

It is not true that once youth stop stealing and abusing drugs they no longer struggle or return to stealing and drugs. A youth who is not making ends meet through hard work and long hours may turn again to stealing. As ToX said, “living without a job is like a bomb which has been set and once it is set once it blows it spoils many things” (8). Life can be so challenging, especially with a wife and children, that

sometimes while engaged in trying to persuade others toward prosocial change, “the situation forces” a youth to steal again.

Challenging Common Nested Essentializations

Though nested in layered essentializations, the data de-essentializes the youth who employ DTR as helpless, super-youth, or hopeless for reform.

De-essentializing through Layered Essentializations

The literature points to layered essentializations. For example, if an essentialization of a youth who lives on the streets and sniffs glue is nested within essentializations of “youth at risk,” which are nested in essentializations of the slums as some form of “hell on earth” (Marenya 2002) on a continent “in tatters,” characterized by misery and despair, where citizens are caught in “choking poverty” (Tiénou 1997, 94; Anugwom 2004, 400), then the buried essentialization seems even more certain with no compelling reason to explore it or to challenge the uses or representation of it. However, the variation among youth “at risk” who live on the streets in slums that are not a “hell on earth” but have resources and opportunities and are a part of a society known for negotiating constraining circumstances with creativity (van Dijk et al. 2007, 10), begs for further exploration because these youth are seen as resources of wisdom and skill—many of whom are engaged in prosocial transformative processes within the communities, while many more may be engaged.

In terms of being understood, youth who employ DTR may have essentialized sociological labels (Merton 1972; Strassberg 2008) that are viewed through psychological essentialism (Medin 1989) and represented through essentialized media constructs (Denzin 2002, Fontana 2002) and historical descriptions and myths (Cohen 1996). All of this is sometimes complicated by strategic essentialization employed by the youth themselves (Odede 2010). However, the data shows that these labels are inadequate, that youth are multilayered with “disparate needs, cognitive dissonance, and ambiguous beliefs” and therefore calls for further critical study (Fuchs 2001, 118).⁷⁰

In terms of motive, those representing youth who employ DTR may have political (Frederkisen 2007) or benevolent motives (Gullestad 2007) which fuel their desire to represent themselves in ways which facilitate their agenda (Honwana 2006, 15). For example, a youth might be represented as a “street boy”—a victimized “youth at risk,” who is addicted to glue and, having been “scarred for life,” is now part of the “lost generation” (West 2004, 106) roaming the streets in the slums which are on the “edge of biological survival” and “incompatible with the world of human beings,” (Agamben 1995, cited in Floris 2006, 60) in order to elicit sympathy and funds by organizations seeking to help (Honwana 2006). The same youth may be represented in similar ways as roaming the streets, stealing, and committing violence, by others, in order to justify

⁷⁰Fuchs goes on to paraphrase Wiley (1994) saying that the self is “bundles of heterogeneous forces, not sovereign origins of force” (Fuchs 2001, 118). I would disagree with this statement since it requires Fuchs to claim more than he can know by his own method. Moving to a third level of observation, observing Fuchs observe definitions of the self, reveals the limitations of his observations and room for variations in the construal of self he has not seen.

killing him. However, the data that reveal resources residing in the youth and in the communities for facilitating prosocial change, and reveal the change that has occurred and is occurring, should encourage those who seek more prosocial change to further study. Those with ulterior motives may not be engaged by the data.

Neither Helpless, nor Super-Youth, nor Hopeless

The categories that emerged from the analysis reveal variation and temporality which de-essentialize simplistic caricatures of the youth who employ DTR. On one level they help to mitigate conceptions of these youth that focus on vulnerability, “at risk-ness,” victimhood, and weakness, which represent these youth as essentially helpless and justify intervention that is paternalistic. On another level, they help to de-essentialize conceptions of resilience that focus only on constructive tactics as constituting resilience. This ignores existing resilience that could be redirected and engaged in constructive ways. Finally, the categories show complexity in the youth employing DTR, challenging views that focus only on the criminality and destructiveness which contributes to the demonization of the youth as hopeless for prosocial change and justifies summary executions.

The variation and temporality of the details mitigate demonization and romanticization of the youth. They are not purely one thing or another. They cannot be essentialized as helpless because they are necessarily trapped or incapable (Adossi 2009, 21), as “super-youth” (Masten 2001) who are “capable of surmounting any obstacles that arise” (Dass-Brailsford 2005, 588); or as hopeless because they are too evil (Achola 2006, 18) or because it is too late (Ndirangu 2007, 110).

The examples of youth sometimes essentialized as helpless effectively negotiating the challenges in their lives to advance their agendas provide evidence that they are not purely helpless. Examples of ordinary behavior, as opposed to extraordinary behavior, and limitations because of real or perceived power over youth mitigate any romantic construct of “super-youth.” Examples of thoughts and actions that are considered “good” or prosocial by society found in the lives of those considered too evil for reform call that prognosis into question. The data shows that the senior youth at St. John’s in Korogocho are correct when they said “those who dismiss the residents as hopeless have a ‘mistaken misconception’” (Moschetti et al. 2008).

The complexities revealed by this study raise questions about assumptions made by Adossi, Achola, and Ross and Fabiano. Adossi says that “most of our young people today are trapped in conflicts on a daily basis, as they do not know how to manage, transform and resolve situations or differences (2009, 21). Achola refers to the idea of Ross and Fabiano that criminal behavior is “predisposed by a set of cognitive deficiencies” including “inability to solve interpersonal problems and deal with social relationships, a lack of self-control, inability to reason abstractly, low level of control, and inability to feel empathy with others” (Achola 2006, 35). However, the data of this study found the youth demonstrating these abilities while also involved in crime and other DTR (see below “The Ability to Negotiate Complicated Networked Relationships”).

These de-essentialized understandings lead to hope but also to concern since they reveal complexities that are not understood and involve degrees of

unpredictability.⁷¹ Some youth who were considered too evil to reform have become agents of prosocial change while others who were expected to succeed have turned to socially destructive behavior or have been killed. Though de-essentializing is helpful because more accurate understanding informs more relevant policies, it can be overwhelming to approach such policies given that youth are seen as “complex systems” which involve degrees of nonlinear changes, instability, unpredictability, and imbalance (Nybell 2001, 213, 220) situated in nested complex socio-ecological systems (Fuchs 2001; Bronfenbrenner 2005, 54; Hiebert 2008) through which harm and support come (de Boeck and Honwana 2005, 2; Triplehorn and Chen 2006, 225; see also Ayuku et al. 2004, 296).

Pathways to Explore to Facilitate Prosocial Change

In the conclusion to her review of resilience research in South Africa from 1990-2008, Theron argues that “resilience is not rare” and “active steps can be taken to develop and sustain resilience among youth who are placed at risk by ordinary and extraordinary adversities” (Theron 2010, 6). In every account of prosocial change, there was a convergence of a combination of catalysts and CTR. One example is how ST was able to stop smoking *bhang*, injecting hard drugs, and sniffing glue, which, in his words are “very hard to leave” (220) “since when you take those things, you find that they enter the blood” (222). First, a group called Lighty helped him by paying his bill at the hospital and giving him “lessons on drugs” (220). He listened and says that it was at that time he started feeling better and “leaving those things.” He said, “I tried stopping but it is very hard to leave” (220). Second, after his mother died he “thought for awhile” about the fact that his little sister was dependent on him (208). Third, he “started being broke” (224). Fourth, he began to work for a man who had lived on the streets and “had also gone through the street life so he started narrating the story to me slowly and I stopped” (226). This employer also intentionally kept him very busy so he would not have time to use drugs (230). Fifth, he considered the damage that the drugs were already doing to him (232).

There is congruence between the data and the elements of Ungar’s (2006, 2008) and Malindi and Theron’s (2010) definitions of resilience, namely, an interplay between the individual’s abilities, resources of the community, and pathways and processes for negotiating the sharing and use of those resources (Ungar 2006, 55).

Based on this definition of resilience, the data point to pathways described by the youth that led them in a prosocial direction through the specific interplay described. These paths are already well traveled by Treasures and youth who are negotiating life without secondary school and GUREC and other organizations are facilitating this—though with many challenges and many youth who turn back (Van Aker et al. 1999, 400). None of the following require funding or intervention from outside of the settlements, though healthy partnerships would strengthen systems and networks and benefit communities inside and outside of the settlements.

⁷¹Van Dijk et al call this the “promise of agency.” They see agency as the negotiation between structure and actor and therefore a “process of becoming” rather than a “state of being.” Because of the constant movement of actors and structure agency is dynamic (van Dijk et al. 2007, 6). Camfield and McGregor conceive of people as “constrained but active agents” (2011, 189).

Thinking

Thinking about one's responsibilities, future, the affects of DTR on others (especially mothers and little sisters) and oneself, and the death of friends was instrumental in facilitating prosocial change. For some, thinking about how they narrowly escaped while others were killed was particularly motivating (MN 36, ToLMN).⁷²

A negative example of this is when ToSN was unable to continue his studies and realized the little he was achieving was not sufficient. Having prayed, "God, if you want me to continue with my studies, it is not this way" and saying, "I tried to think of many many things" he concluded, "I think that was why I got depression ... They said that I am mad, I have become crazy," and he was forcibly taken to the mental hospital (ToSN 370-372).

Listening to the Advice of Others

Listening and yielding to the advice of others who were talking about the destructive aspects of crime and substance abuse also proved to be a useful pathway to prosocial change. This advice came from mothers, grandmothers, pastors, police, a group of older men, other youth, and seminars. ToDE illustrates how advice from others influenced him:

I have been able to change the way I think because earlier I had said that in ghetto people don't think far, people just think where they come from and the surroundings, what I can say is that God has been changing my life through the places he has been taking me, through the people he has been making me to meet and at least I have seen great things in my life. (ToDE)

Known Pathways to People Who Can Help

It is important to try to understand how a particular "street" boy is networked in the community; whether this network brings support and protection, or harm (Triplehorn and Chen 2006, 225; see also Ayuku et al. 2004, 296). Having pathways to people—such as one's mother, pastor, or a police chief—who can help is critical. F, for example, was networked in a family which includes his mother who was a drunkard, father who was sick, and sisters who were cruel to him. He was also connected to friends, neighbors, and some "Good Samaritans." If his picture would be taken while scavenging in the river he could have been easily categorized as a "street boy" because his network would most likely not have been taken into consideration and the fact that he lived on the streets for only three weeks would not have been considered. The aspect of the youth's history and his connections to community, in light of Bronfenbrenner's socio-ecological model including the chronological dimension, is helpful to reveal details that tend to de-essentialize simplistic caricatures (Bronfenbrenner 2005).

⁷²This became clear in the sections entitled "Observations of Destructiveness" and "Death of Friends" under "Catalysts of Prosocial Change."

Very Basic Living Necessities

Having the very basic living necessities—a place to sleep inside and at least one meal per day—often kept the youth from DTR. K said that what makes life so hard is the challenges to attaining money and food. Then he said, “If I just stay here lacking money I will start stealing” (K 10, 22). Not having at least one meal for more than a couple of days or having to sleep in the cold and rain seem to be tipping points for youth. This does not mean that if the very basic needs are met some will not turn to DTR to floss, avoid shame, pick up some “quick cash” without sweating, and seduce a girl, but that not having the basic needs met seemed to move them to a level of desperation that required and justified their DTR.

Community

Having a supportive community—especially a community of peers—played a significant role in the youth’s resilience. At the same time, avoiding certain people was a tactic that kept youth from being drawn into DTR. It is very difficult to escape drugs because so many are involved in them. It is easy to land in bad company and “you can’t know how you enter into such a company” (ToDEF 255). ToDEF explains that GUREC has been very helpful because of the vast number of students and the feeling of being home. He says that he can share his burdens with the other students and “you can’t get bored” because there are other youth around. He said: “you will just stay happily in school more than you are at home and there are many things like me as a youth I can escape back at home and once you are in school, you are protected” (261).

God

According to the youth, God has played a significant role in putting them on a pathway to prosocial change. The youth credit God for acting on their behalf in the past more than they talked about their trust in God for something for the future. They implied that he protected them when they were doing wrong and did not deserve protection from him.

Specific Topics for Further Collaborative Study

This study connects relevant literature with the voices of male youth who employ DTR in the settlements. The findings cannot be generalized but several topics surfaced that beg for further research.

Identity

No generalization can be made from this study as to the comparative effectiveness of programs like GUREC because a quantitative study was not conducted on what percentage of Treasures met some measurement of success as compared to youth who are negotiating life without secondary school. However, the study does demonstrate that programs like GUREC become catalysts to tactics of resilience. ToSN’s story illustrates the possibility of resilience and prosocial change without secondary school and the benefit of GUREC in catalyzing him to further tactics of resilience and prosocial change. This points to the complexity of individuals and life in the settlements and the hope for change—hope even for those not in secondary school and who continue to

employ DTR to varying degrees. It re-humanizes them and opens up new avenues of inquiry into ways of facilitating constructive catalysts.

Regarding Secondary Education

The data suggest that though the resilient tactics of youth who went to school played a determinative role in their ability to go to school, they were not necessarily greater or better employed than those of youth who employed them in activities outside of school. Similar challenges are faced by both groups and similar tactics of resilience are used in each group. Many of those who did not go to school tried to go using the same tactics. This qualifies the notion that youth who do not have a secondary education are inferior or unable to get on in life. It also points to the observation, consistent with Ungar's (2008) definition of resilience, that whether or not a youth is able to go to secondary school is not only dependent on his tactics of resilience but also on the capacities of the community that are beyond his immediate control. It opens up new avenues of inquiry into how to enhance the abilities of youth by revealing significant tactics of resilience. For example, Achola speaks about community sports being "a pedagogy of life" which "extracts the treasured values from the lives of the 'lost generation'" (Achola 2006, 10).

A School for Hustling

In the literature and the data tactics of resilience are evident in the stories of youth who go to secondary school as well as those who take care of themselves, and even prosper, by their definition, without school. If Ungar (2008) and Malindi and Theron (2010) are correct that individual abilities, community resources, and pathways to those resources are necessary for resilience, then it is imperative to consider all three. The main training options for youth after Standard Eight are secondary schools—formal and non-formal—and vocational schools. According to Erulkar and Matheka's study, youth who enrolled in vocational schools did so because they did not have the fees for secondary school (Erulkar and Matheka 2007, 8). There are still many youth who are unable to pay the fees for a vocational school. With evidence that youth are able to hustle—some very effectively, the informal economy is the primary economy of the settlements, and many youth remain excluded from any kind of non-formal secondary schools and vocational schools because of school fees, teaching youth how to hustle well in a "school of hustling," perhaps modeled as an apprenticeship, could be explored as an additional option to post-Standard Eight education. ToSN's mother's pastor apprenticed ToSN selling jackets and this became a significant catalyst to CTR in ToSN's life.

Embedded Abilities

Embedded abilities in DTR are those abilities that can be used in destructive or constructive tactics of resilience to move a youth's agenda forward. For example, embedded in TU's DTR decision to beat the man whom he was mugging because he was screaming and drawing the attention of a mob who might have carried out mob justice (54), are the embedded abilities of risk analysis, quick judgment, the utilization of resources, and execution of a plan that may be against what one desires to

do. The use of the DTR reveals the embedded ability which might have been used in a constructive tactic of resilience.⁷³

As illustrated in ToSN's life in chapter six, embedded abilities are seen in the intersections of the youth's actions, their inner conflict, and their perceptions of power over them. Embedded abilities are engaged by the catalysts to resilience as illustrated in the examples of prosocial change. They point to pathways to explore for facilitating prosocial change.

Surface and Embedded Abilities

It is easy to identify many abilities embedded in the lives of youth who employ DTR in the settlements. Abilities can be seen on two levels, surface and embedded. There are surface abilities to:

- scavenge
- steal in various ways
- use drugs strategically without becoming addicted
- stop stealing
- stop drug use
- fight
- avoid fights
- sell clothes
- negotiate with police
- endure jail
- endure beatings
- escape from mobs
- share with others
- go without food for a day or longer
- succeed in school
- leave school to work
- return to school
- work hard for little return ...

There are also abilities embedded that could be used for either DTR or CTR. For example, there are abilities to:

- take responsibility and initiative to meet basic needs
- analyze problems
- reason toward a solution
- strategize and devise a plan
- execute plans successfully
- switch to an alternate plan
- persevere when plans fail
- reorganize
- organize people
- negotiate sets of complicated relationships

⁷³They only "might have been" because, following Malindi and Theron (2010) and Ungar (2008), resilience is the intersecting of the individual's abilities, the resources of the community, and the pathways and processes to share and use those resources—and the socio-ecological capacities of the settlements were not analyzed adequately in this study.

- conduct risk management
- postpone gratification
- sacrifice
- learn new ways of thinking ...

Prominent Examples

Two prominent examples of embedded abilities stand out from the analysis that may hold promise for facilitating prosocial change upon further study. They are: the ability to negotiate complicated networked relationships in a context of sustained tension and conflict, and the ability to persevere in negotiating high risk.

The Ability to Negotiate Complicated Networked Relationships

The youth told stories that illustrated their ability to manage relational adversity. They negotiated when to fight and ways to avoid fights, how to reconcile and live in harmony, and how to cope with threats and harm. Youth acted in loyalty in situations of danger, or fled, leaving friends to be beaten or killed, but reunited with no signs of anger because of betrayal (K 112, TU 52). The youth were able to submit to others and lead (EF 22, MN 134-136). They were able to accept sacrifice and risk (ToSN 105, M 27-29). They learned how to persuade people—even earning trust from those who had feared them (MN 134-136). They were skilled at strategizing collaboratively (ToT 282). They also could compete in business. Finally, they knew how to avoid people that would influence them in ways they did not want (ToDEF 261).

The Ability to Negotiate High Risk

Because stealing is known to be dangerous since “once they steal and they are caught, they are just killed” (ToB 228), those who steal successfully and survive demonstrate the ability to negotiate high risk. This involves the ability to learn new behaviors in order to fit into a gang, to frighten or trick people, to use tactics that do not draw unwanted attention, to injure people, to flee, and to hide. Youth learn to do risk assessment and risk management. They are able to strategize, execute plans involving high risk, quickly adapt to an alternate plan, and think on their feet.

According to the accounts of the youth they also have the ability to take measures to ease the stress enough that they can continue. For example, abusing drugs may be caving in to pressure and setting one back or it may be, in some circumstances, a tactic that brings relief that prevents a more destructive tactic, such as suicide, and enables the youth to continue on in life seeking to move his agenda forward—even if it is now more complicated. Stealing may be more resilient than starving and substance abuse more resilient than suicide.⁷⁴ Sleeping outside in the rain “which made us not to be like human beings” would “force” us to use drugs in order to “make your life easier” and to “easen life so that you don’t have to think much because like sleeping and being rained on for six months it is not something very easy” (ToX 50). Taking drugs to take away hunger, not feel the cold, not be afraid to steal, not be ashamed while scavenging, to “forget some things” in order to be able to keep working or continue in school so he

⁷⁴This has to be qualified in that if starving is chosen over stealing because stealing is believed to be morally wrong, then starving would be the resilient tactic. If suicide is chosen because it moves one’s agenda forward then it is a resilient act, though the final one.

could look for his mother, work, and continue in school may be more resilient than succumbing to the alternative of each.⁷⁵

The purpose of studying this further is not to encourage youth to abuse drugs and thus further complicate their lives. However, it is to recognize that abusing drugs may point to an ability or tactic of resilience that points to a pathway to explore for facilitating prosocial change, namely, redirecting that ability.

Redirection

While such “unconventional practices” or DTR can “offend ‘our’ sensibilities and tastes” (Scheper-Hughes 2006), be illegal, and bring harm to the youth or to others, they represent potential points of contact for redirection. Embedded abilities are used to negotiate the challenges faced by youth—some for an immediate benefit and long term cost, others for long term benefit and immediate cost (constructive and destructive). An important question for further research is whether underlying abilities engaged to negotiate challenges with DTR could be redirected to constructive resilience.

This conclusion is complicated by the observation that the findings indicate that motives are not pure. In other words, some youth turn to stealing and violence not only to eat, but because of a “lust for money” that enables them to pay for prostitution and buy drugs. If they have a taste for destructive activities, destructive to others or to themselves, further research will have to engage ethics, philosophy, and theology.

“Seeds of Resilience”

Malindi and Theron seek to move practitioners “away from a deficit approach and to contribute to a transformed perspective” (Malindi and Theron 2010, 318). They argue that “seeds of resilience” are embedded in the “unconventional practices” of resilience so that instead of judging or stereotyping youth, practitioners should acknowledge that the unconventional practices are coping mechanisms which “contain embryonic antecedents of resilience” and they should nurture those (Malindi and Theron 2010, 324). This research can lead practitioners to a multi-dimensional approach which includes recognizing perceived deficits as well as assets.

Essentializing influences policies and programs so that the resilience of youth is not engaged constructively. It is then easier to assume that they are helpless and to initiate programs that foster dependency, or manipulation when they realize how they can gain from playing the role of a helpless victim (see Utas’ discussion of “victimcy” in Utas 2005), to become enamored with a perceived magical quality “as if the individual is capable of surmounting any obstacle” (Dass-Brailsford 2005, 588) or to write them off—marginalizing them or killing them without trial.

Illustrations of Relevance

The relevance of this study is illustrated through the voices of two of the youth.

⁷⁵On the other hand, if one is tricked into abuse (N, for example) or chooses it when it is not necessary, that is, when a non-destructive tactic is known, possible, and would be effective, then that abuse would be considered non-resilient. Non-resilience, as conceived of here, is the inability of a youth to negotiate challenges that affect him in ways he deems negative, and to move his agenda forward. This would be a kind of rigidity, defeatism, or passivity that is determined and shaped by such forces. If such passivity is intentional, it may be a form of resilience—though hard to discern.

“They Think we Can’t Change”

H was a “parking boy” who lived on the streets with a group centered around a base (4). He was a part of two groups, one called Zion, a group for street boys, and one called DECO which collects garbage (198). He and one of his groups of about twenty youth started a project of garbage collecting and other work because of being tired of “sleeping outside and being disturbed by the police all the time” (90). With the “little advice” that people who came and went gave them, they were able to “come up with our own ideas” (90). For example, they realized they could not start a car wash because no cars were passing where they were. But since the place where they were was dirty and they saw other groups collecting garbage (see H 24, 202) they started to collect garbage and succeeded (90). They have “sought and sought and are still seeking” help (96). They do not know what happened to a group of *wazungus* from Denmark who left them aprons, a fork, and other tools for working but “disappeared and disappeared completely” (96).

When they started nobody owned a house, they were sleeping outside or in the kiosks, but as a result of their work most of them now have wives, houses, and are no longer on the street (92, 42, 44). H does not appear as a street boy anymore, “and if you look at me, I am smart even if I tell you that I am from here, you see that no, this person does not belong here and that he has only come” (42). However, he feels marginalized and excluded. H has never entered a church but thinks that they, pastors and people from the churches, ought to be doing things that they are not doing:

like in the streets, they are supposed to come and show us that there is God and also teaching us about God, but since you are a person in the street, they can’t even talk to you. If you try to go and greet the pastor, ‘how are you pastor?’ they start screaming. There is a way they have separated the people in the streets—that whatever they do they think that we can’t change no matter what we are told, but the street people can change. (70)

H said that the Parking Boys did not need the help of the church and have changed themselves, saying “it is just that we decide in our hearts and we decide to wake up by ourselves like now you see we are here, it is just us who have decided. There is nobody who came to tell us, it is just that we stayed here and thought that we have grown. We now even have beards and so this show is not good and so we decided to start a project and that how it stood” (86).

H sees a “very big” difference in his life from what was (250). He used to stay hungry for a “whole day” before he got a job. He would carry people's luggage but often people would refuse him and he would sleep hungry (252). Now he “can't sleep hungry” (252). He also used to sleep outside but “now I can’t sleep outside no matter what” (252).

He has great hope that street boys can change. There were one hundred street boys at the base until 2005. Then people started changing (258). Now all of those who remain except for two are “small boys” (258). He says “I know that there is nobody who can't change” (258). He illustrates this by referring to one about whom he says “the good thing is that I cannot say that, if you look at him, you can say that, that maybe you give him medicine since he cannot listen to you but for me I know that there is nobody who can’t change” (258).

“Live a Good Life”

TUVWX lived in Korogocho for at least five years (2-7). He completed Standard Eight (9) in 1999 when he was thirteen years old (27). He could not continue to secondary school because his parents separated (35) because his father “was taking alcohol so much so the alcohol misled him” (179) and so his mother left him (179). TUVWX decided to remain with his father (179), but due to his abuse of alcohol, his father lost his job and was neither able to feed TUVWX (179) nor pay his school fees (11). So TUVWX went to live with his grandmother (179) who brought him up “for four good years” (35). When she died, he was left with his aunts who took care of him (35).

In 2003 (107) when he was sixteen years old he joined a gang (100-103). He did not want to join a gang but said “you don’t go there being your wish, you are taken there by your problem” (105). He left the gang the same year because he saw that “the life was not good” because the gang leaders “insist that you go even if you don’t want” and so I stopped” (107-109). Also, he did not “want to cause my family problems” (109).

He left his aunts because “it reached to a point that I saw that it was time to stay on my own as I was a grown up and that is when I saw that I should work” (37). He found a job at a slaughter house (13) slaughtering up to one hundred goats per day and making KSh 20 per goat—about KSh 2000 per day (43, 45).⁷⁶ He worked there for “seven good years” (29). The job “lifted me a bit” by “paying me well in a day” (41) so that he was able to afford to get married (50-51) and now he and his wife have a child (37).

However, he had to leave that job and has not been able (13) to find another one, (29) and “without a work, life is hard” (39). He finds himself without help, meaning without money. If he had money he could start a business (53) but “for now, there is nothing that I am doing and there is nowhere where I am expecting” (15). This is particularly difficult because he has a family that he needs to feed and clothe and help to “live a good life” (17). The good life he wants is for his child to continue “up to the end of the education” and for his family to “be well” (57). This, he says, “is what is in my heart” (17). To feed his family now, he does “just little businesses” (20). For example, sometimes he buys something being sold cheaply and then sells it (19, 21). He is not comfortable with this business, however, because he comes into contact with the government (23).

His parents are still living and he visits them occasionally (204-207). They are still separated. His mother said she will go back to his father when he stops “taking that beer” (209) but his father is addicted to beer and “he cannot stop it since he has tried, tried, tried and sometimes he manages stop but he still takes it other times” (209).

TUVWX would like to leave Korogocho because “walking a lot leads to knowing a lot” (61). In an attempt to leave, he applied for a job in the “Farmer’s Choice” company that sells sausage. When he applied they told him they would hire when the building under construction was finished—which could be another eight months (63).

He had a number of friends but said that since several of them have married and others have moved, “we stay far away from each other” (65).

Since the time of the interview on June 18, 2010, he got his job at the slaughterhouse back. In December of 2010 a policeman was killed in TUVWX’s

⁷⁶This is the equivalent of about 20 cents and \$25.00 in July 2010 when the interview was conducted.

neighborhood. The story told to me is that TUVWX was met by police as he was coming home from work at the slaughtering plant, with blood spattered on his clothes, and the police accused him of killing the policeman. Though he denied it, they forcibly took him to a secluded street. A younger cousin followed them, screaming. To avoid the commotion which was drawing a crowd, they then took him to a rock quarry not far away and shot him.

I do not know if there is more to the story and, though not condoning summary execution, there is not enough evidence to determine TUVWX's innocence or guilt. However, the data collected in this study points to the complexity of his life in the settlements and to two relevant points in tension. First, it is the death of friends engaged in stealing that was the strongest motivating factor cited by others who have stopped stealing. He is now added to that list though perhaps he was innocent—and without due process of law the number of innocent youth on that list is unknown. Second, whoever was responsible killed a complex young man who could not be essentialized as either helpless or hopeless for reform. His embedded abilities had been engaged in constructive tactics of resilience as well as destructive ones and he had the potential to facilitate more prosocial and antisocial change that would have affected others in his socio-ecology.

Conclusion

Because this project is not addressing the issue of justice or due process of law, the data presented is only one piece that should be considered in the formation of strategies and policy. The role that this data should play is as follows: The challenging “navigation through multilayered stories” to gather bits and pieces leads to incomplete and imperfect de-essentialized understandings of male youth who employ DTR that are still closer to reality than any essentialized view (Utas 2004, 218, 223, 230). Even one with “the blood of stealing” is more than a thief. Therefore, these understandings are critical for identifying pathways to explore to facilitate prosocial change. The hope of the research team who worked on this project is that the communities will use this data for that purpose and continue gathering more.

APPENDIX I
REPUBLIC OF KENYA NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR SCIENCE AND
TECHNOLOGY RESEARCH AUTHORITY

This is the required research authorization from the National Council for Science and Technology from the Republic of Kenya.

REPUBLIC OF KENYA



NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Telegrams: "SCIENCETECH", Nairobi
Telephone: 254-020-241349, 2213102
254-020-310571, 2213123.
Fax: 254-020-2213215, 318245, 318249
When replying please quote

P.O. Box 30623-00100
NAIROBI-KENYA
Website: www.ncst.go.ke

Our Ref:

Date:

NCST/RRI/12/1/SS/239

12th May, 2010

Andrew Lee Pflederer
Trinity International University
USA

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

Following your application for authority to carry out research on "*factors Contributing to the Continued Participation and Non- Participation in Gurem of Youth from the Mathare Valley Informal Settlements*" I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake your research in *Nairobi North District* for a period ending *15th August, 2010*.

You are advised to report to *the District Commissioner and the District Education Officer of Nairobi North District* before embarking on your research project.

Upon completion of your research project, you are expected to submit two copies of your research report/thesis to our office.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. N. Nyakundi'.

P. N. NYAKUNDI
FOR: SECRETARY/ CEO

Copy to: **The District Commissioner**
 Nairobi North District

The District Education Officer
Nairobi North District

APPENDIX II

MATHARE DIVISION RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

This is the required research authorization from the District Officer of Mathare Division.



OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

Telegrams
Telephone: Nairobi 6751608
When replying please quote

The District Commissioner
Starehe District
P.O. Box 30124
NAIROBI

Ref No: STA/ED/10/2 (142)

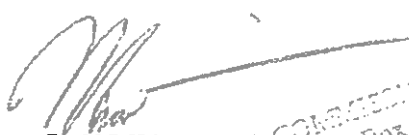
Date: 10th June, 2010

The District Officer
MATHARE DIVISION.

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION
ANDREW LEE PFLEDERER.

The above named has been authorized to carry out research on "Factors contributing to the continued participation and non-participation in Gurem of Youth from the Mathare valley informal settlements". The research will end on 15th August, 2010.

You are therefore kindly asked to offer him any assistance to complete the research.


S. NGETICH
For: DISTRICT COMMISSIONER

DISTRICT COMMISSIONER STAREHE
P.O. Box 30124
NAIROBI

Copy to:- Andrew Lee Pflederer
Trinity International University
USA.

APPENDIX III

STAREHE DIVISION RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

This is the required research authorization from the District Officer of Starehe Division.



OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

Telegrams

Telephone: Nairobi 6751608

When replying please quote

Ref No: STA/ED/10/3

District Education Office
Starehe District
P.O. Box 30144
NAIROBI

Date: 14th June, 2009

Andrew Lee Plederer
Trinity International
University
USA.

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION.

Following your application to carry out research on "factors contributing to the continued participation and Non-participation in Gurem of Youth from the Mathare Valley Informal Settlements."

You have been granted authority to undertake your research in Starehe District for a period ending 15th August, 2010.

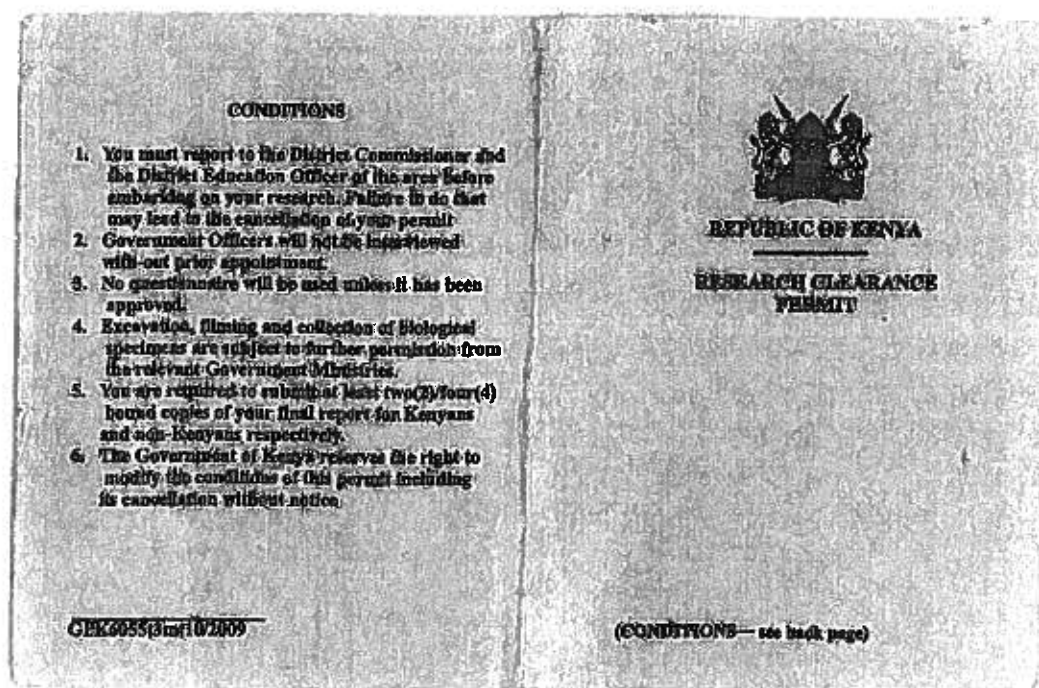
You are advised to submit a copy of your research project, to this office upon completion of your research to assist this office, in its search for knowledge of the matters affecting the community.

C. KICHEMBE
DEO
STAREHE.

DISTRICT EDUCATION OFFICER STAREHE
P.O. Box 74629-00200
NAIROBI

Copy to: District Commissioner
STAREHE.

APPENDIX IV
REPUBLIC OF KENYA RESEARCH CLEARANCE PERMIT
FRONT AND BACK PAGES



APPENDIX V

REPUBLIC OF KENYA RESEARCH CLEARANCE PERMIT

PAGES TWO AND THREE

PAGE 2	PAGE 3
THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT: Prof/Dr./Mr./Mrs./Miss. <u>ANDREW</u> <u>LEE FLEDERER</u> of (Address) <u>TRENTY INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY</u> <u>USA</u> has been permitted to conduct research in _____ Location <u>NAIROBI NORTH</u> District Province <u>NAIROBI</u> on the topic <u>Factors contributing to</u> <u>continued participation and Non-</u> <u>Participation in Cusum of Youth</u> <u>from Mathare Valley informal</u> <u>settlements.</u> for a period ending <u>15TH AUGUST</u> to <u>10</u>	Research Permit No. <u>DSBT/RRE/42/1/88/239</u> Date of Issue <u>12/05/2010</u> Fee received <u>SHS30,800</u>  _____ Applicant's Signature <i>P. J. M. M.</i> _____ Secretary National Council for Science and Technology

APPENDIX VI
RESEARCH TEAM LETTERS OF PERMISSION

I REGINAH M. NAWA (type your name here) grant Andy Pflederer permission to include my name in his dissertation, listed as a member of the research team. I acknowledge that the dissertation will be sent to the Kenyan National Council for Science and Technology and will be made available to the District Officer of Mathare Division and the District Officer of the Starehe Division.

I would like my name to be listed on the document as follows: REV. REGINAH NAWA

Sincerely,

 (signature)

Date: 13/2/12

I CAROL WACUKA GITIGI (type your name here) grant Andy Pflederer permission to include my name in his dissertation, listed as a member of the research team. I acknowledge that the dissertation will be sent to the Kenyan National Council for Science and Technology and will be made available to the District Officer of Mathare Division and the District Officer of the Starehe Division.

I would like my name to be listed on the document as follows: CAROL WACUKA GITIGI

Sincerely,

 (signature)

Date: 17/02/2012

I, Daniel P. Kiambi (type your name here) grant Andy Pfederer permission to include my name in his dissertation, listed as a member of the research team. I acknowledge that the dissertation will be sent to the Kenyan National Council for Science and Technology and will be made available to the District Officer of Mathare Division and the District Officer of the Starehe Division.

I would like my name to be listed on the document as follows: Daniel Peter Kiambi;

Sincerely,

 (signature)

Date: 01/03/12

I, ELIUD MURILU (type your name here) grant Andy Pfederer permission to include my name in his dissertation, listed as a member of the research team. I acknowledge that the dissertation will be sent to the Kenyan National Council for Science and Technology and will be made available to the District Officer of Mathare Division and the District Officer of the Starehe Division.

I would like my name to be listed on the document as follows: ELIUD MURILU

Sincerely,

 (signature)

Date: 08/02/12

I EVE CHARON AMOTH (type your name here) grant Andy Pfederer permission to include my name in his dissertation, listed as a member of the research team. I acknowledge that the dissertation will be sent to the Kenyan National Council for Science and Technology and will be made available to the District Officer of Mathare Division and the District Officer of the Starehe Division.

I would like my name to be listed on the document as follows: EVE CHARON AMOTH.

Sincerely,

[Signature] (signature)

Date: 17/02/2012

I GIRLAND NDIRANGU (type your name here) grant Andy Pfederer permission to include my name in his dissertation, listed as a member of the research team. I acknowledge that the dissertation will be sent to the Kenyan National Council for Science and Technology and will be made available to the District Officer of Mathare Division and the District Officer of the Starehe Division.

I would like my name to be listed on the document as follows: GIRLAND NDIRANGU ~~MATHARE~~
(MATHUGU)

Sincerely,

[Signature] (signature)

Date: 16TH FEB 2012

I GORDON OWINO (type your name here) grant Andy Pflederer permission to include my name in his dissertation, listed as a member of the research team. I acknowledge that the dissertation will be sent to the Kenyan National Council for Science and Technology and will be made available to the District Officer of Mathare Division and the District Officer of the Starehe Division.

I would like my name to be listed on the document as follows: GORDON OWINO

Sincerely,

Gordon Owino

(signature)

Date: 17/2/2012

I LONGINES ERYANGO NAGILA (type your name here) grant Andy Pflederer permission to include my name in his dissertation, listed as a member of the research team. I acknowledge that the dissertation will be sent to the Kenyan National Council for Science and Technology and will be made available to the District Officer of Mathare Division and the District Officer of the Starehe Division.

I would like my name to be listed on the document as follows: LONGINES ERYANGO NAGILA

Sincerely,

Longines Eryango Nagila

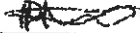
(signature)

Date: 17/02/2012

I MARTIN MWANGI (type your name here) grant Andy Pflederer permission to include my name in his dissertation, listed as a member of the research team. I acknowledge that the dissertation will be sent to the Kenyan National Council for Science and Technology and will be made available to the District Officer of Mathare Division and the District Officer of the Starehe Division.

I would like my name to be listed on the document as follows: MARTIN MWANGI W.

Sincerely,

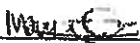
 (signature)

Date: 12/02/2012

I MARTIN MWANGI (type your name here) grant Andy Pflederer permission to include my name in his dissertation, listed as a member of the research team. I acknowledge that the dissertation will be sent to the Kenyan National Council for Science and Technology and will be made available to the District Officer of Mathare Division and the District Officer of the Starehe Division.

I would like my name to be listed on the document as follows: MWANGI MARTIN

Sincerely,

 (signature)

Date: 11/2/2012

I WILLIAM STAREHE (type your name here) grant Andy Pflederer permission to include my name in his dissertation, listed as a member of the research team. I acknowledge that the dissertation will be sent to the Kenyan National Council for Science and Technology and will be made available to the District Officer of Mathare Division and the District Officer of the Starehe Division.

I would like my name to be listed on the document as follows: WILLIAM STAREHE

Sincerely,

William Starehe (signature)

Date: 10/2/2012

I Andrew Bierlein grant Andy Pflederer permission to include my name in his dissertation, listed as a member of the research team. I acknowledge that the dissertation will be sent to the Kenyan National Council for Science and Technology and will be made available to the District Officer of Mathare Division and the District Officer of the Starehe Division.

I would like my name to be listed on the document as follows: Andrew Bierlein

Sincerely,

Andrew Bierlein (signature)

Date: 3/9/12

I Anne Bausch grant Andy Pflederer permission to include my name in his dissertation, listed as a member of the research team. I acknowledge that the dissertation will be sent to the Kenyan National Council for Science and Technology and will be made available to the District Officer of Mathare Division and the District Officer of the Starehe Division.

I would like my name to be listed on the document as follows: Anne Bausch

Sincerely,

Anne Bausch (signature)

Date: 2-18-12

I Annika Celum grant Andy Pflederer permission to include my name in his dissertation, listed as a member of the research team. I acknowledge that the dissertation will be sent to the Kenyan National Council for Science and Technology and will be made available to the District Officer of Mathare Division and the District Officer of the Starehe Division.

I would like my name to be listed on the document as follows: Annika Celum

Sincerely,

Annika Celum (signature)

Date: 2-27-12

I Joseph Rumenapp grant Andy Pflederer permission to include my name in his dissertation, listed as a member of the research team. I acknowledge that the dissertation will be sent to the Kenyan National Council for Science and Technology and will be made available to the District Officer of Mathare Division and the District Officer of the Starehe Division.

I would like my name to be listed on the document as follows: Joe Rumenapp

Sincerely,

Joseph C. Rumenapp (signature)

Date: 2/18/12

I Michelle Sheba S. Tolentino grant Andy Pflederer permission to include my name in his dissertation, listed as a member of the research team. I acknowledge that the dissertation will be sent to the Kenyan National Council for Science and Technology and will be made available to the District Officer of Mathare Division and the District Officer of the Starehe Division.

I would like my name to be listed on the document as follows: _____

Sincerely,

Michelle S. Tolentino (signature)

Date: 02-28-11

I WUNGCHIREM RAMAN (type your name here) grant Andy Pflederer permission to include my name in his dissertation, listed as a member of the research team. I acknowledge that the dissertation will be sent to the Kenyan National Council for Science and Technology and will be made available to the District Officer of Mathare Division and the District Officer of the Starehe Division.

I would like my name to be listed on the document as follows: WUNGCHIREM RAMAN

Sincerely,

 (signature)

Date: 17th FEBRUARY 2012

REFERENCE LIST

- Abbink, Jon. 2001. Violence and culture: Anthropological and evolutionary-psychological reflections on inter-group conflict in southern Ethiopia. In *Anthropology of violence and conflict*, ed. Bettina Schmidt and Ingo Schroeder, 123-142. London: Routledge.
- Achola, Hesbon Otieno. 2006. *Koch life: Community sports in the slum*. Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa.
- Aderinto, Adeyinka Abideen and Etuk Ima Samuel. 2008. Adolescents at risk: A qualitative study of adolescent sex workers in Ibadan. *South African Review of Sociology* 39: 38-50.
- Adossi, Koffissan Matthias. 2009. *Conflict resolution and transformation: A participatory approach for youth*. Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa.
- Ager, Alastair. 2006. What is family? The nature and functions of families in times of conflict. In *A world turned upside down: Social ecological approaches to children in war zones*, ed. Neil Boothby, Alison Strang, and Michael Wessells, 39-62. New York, Kumerian.
- Ajulu, Rok. 2002. Politicized ethnicity, competitive politics and conflict in Kenya: A historical perspective. *African Studies* 61, no. 2: 251-268.
- Akabayashi, Hideo and George Psacharopoulos. 1999. The trade-off between child labour and human capital formation: A Tanzania and case study. *The Journal of Development Studies* 35, no. 5 (June): 120-140.
- Akhiomen, Donatus Omofuma. 2006. Addressing child-abuse in southern Nigeria: The role of the church. *Studies and World Christianity* 12, no. 3: 235-248.
- Anugwom, Edlyne E. 2004. African social sciences and development in the new century: Challenges and prospects. *African Development Review* 16, no. 2: 399-414. <http://web.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.tiu.edu/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=2&hid=113&sid=1eca098b-6c12-47d7-9256-08fa0ba6f20d%40sessionmgr113> (accessed March 10, 2012).
- Apfel, Roberta J. and Bennett Simon. 2000. Mitigating discontents with children in war an ongoing psychoanalytical inquiry. In *Cultures under siege: Collective violence and trauma*, ed. Antonius C. G. M. Robben and Marcelo M. Suárez-Orozco, 102-130. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Ayuku, David O., Charles Kaplan, Herman Baars, and Marten de Vries. 2004. Characteristics and personal social networks of the on-the-street, of-the-street, shelter and school children in Eldoret, Kenya. *International Social Work* 47, no. 3: 293-311. <http://isw.sagepub.com> (accessed October 31, 2009).
- Bansikiza, Constance Fr. 2004. Child labour challenges to society and church in Africa. *Eldoret Pastoral Institute of Eastern Africa* 46, no. 2: 139-160.
- Barnard, Alan and Jonathan Spencer. 2002. *Encyclopedia of social and cultural anthropology*. London: Routledge.
- Barrett, H. Clark. 2001. On the functional origins of essentialism. *Mind and Society* 3, no. 2: 1-30.
- Barth, Fredrik, ed. 1969. Introduction. In *Ethnic groups and boundaries: The social organization of culture difference*, 9-38. Boston: Little, Brown and Company.

- Barton, W. 2005. Methodological challenges in the study of resilience. In *Handbook for working with children and youth: Pathways to resilience across cultures and contexts*, ed. M. Ungar, 135-148. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Bennett, Milton. 1993. Towards ethnorelativism: A developmental model of intercultural sensitivity. In *Education for the intercultural experience*, ed. R. Michael Paige, 21-71. Yarmouth, ME: Intercultural Press.
- Bernard, Russell H. 2006. *Research methods in anthropology: Qualitative and quantitative approaches*. 4th ed. New York: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Bodewes, Christine. 2005. *Parish transformation in urban slums*. Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa.
- Boothby, Neil, Alison Strang, and Michael Wessells. 2006. Introduction. In *A world turned upside down: Social ecological approaches to children in war zones*, ed. Neil Boothby, Alison Strang, and Michael Wessells, 1-18. Bloomfield, CT: Kumarian.
- Bourgois, Philippe. 1998. Families and children in pain in the US inner city. In *Small wars: The cultural politics of childhood*, ed. Nancy Scheper-Hughes and Carolyn Sargent, 331-335. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Boyden, Jo. 1994. Children's experience of conflict related emergencies: Some implications for relief policy and practice. *Disasters* 18, no. 3: 234-267.
- Boyden, Jo. 2004. Anthropology under fire: Ethics, researchers and children in war. In *Children and youth on the frontline: Ethnography, armed conflict and displacement*, ed. Jo Boyden and Joanna de Berry, 237-261. New York: Berghahn Books.
- Boyden, Jo and Gillian Mann. 2005. Children's risk, resilience, and coping in extreme situations. In *Handbook for working with children and youth: Pathways to resilience across cultures and contexts*, ed. Michael Ungar, 3-26. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Boyden, Jo, and Elizabeth Cooper. 2007. Questioning the power of resilience: Are children up to the task of disrupting the transmission of poverty? No. 73 in *CPRC Working Papers*. Paper presented at the CPRC Workshop on Concepts and Methods for Analysing Poverty Dynamics and Chronic Poverty. University of Manchester. October 34-25, 2006.
- Bronfenbrenner, U., ed. 2005. *Making human beings human*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Brueggemann, Walter. 2008. Vulnerable children, divine passion, and human obligation. In *The child in the Bible*, ed. Marcia J. Bunge, Terence E. Fretheim and Beverly Roberts Gaventa, 399-422. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
- Cairns, Ed 1996. *Children and political violence*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Calvert, Clay. 2000. *Voyeur nation: Media, privacy, and peering in modern culture*. In *Critical studies in communication and in the cultural industries*, ed. Herbert J. Schiller. Boulder CO: Westview.
- Camfield, Laura and Allister McGregor. 2005. Resilience and well-being in developing countries. In *Handbook for working with children and youth: Pathways to resilience across cultures and contexts*, ed. Michael Ungar, 57-70. Thousand Oaks: SAGE.
- Cheng, Tiffany K. and Steve Kariithi. 2008. More than a struggle: Ensuring quality education for the next generation in Mathare Valley. Draft intended for discussion purposes (November). DIGNITAS project.

- Chong, Vincent. 2008. Negotiating with agency: Towards an intersectional understanding of violence and resilience in young Southeast Asian men. In *ISSI Fellows Working Papers*. Berkley: Institute for the Study of Societal Issues. <http://escholarship.org/uc/item/8563k17q> (accessed January 1, 2012).
- Coffey, Amanda J. and Paul A. Atkinson. 1996. *Making sense of qualitative data: Complementary research strategies*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Cohen, Paul A. 1997. *History in three keys: The boxers as event, experience, and myth*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Cohen, Ronald C. 1978. Ethnicity: Problem and focus in anthropology. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 7: 379-403. <http://web.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.tiu.edu/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=2&hid=122&sid=d3041452-90a0-4457-b1ea-a12b20b31b7d%40sessionmgr11> (accessed December 28, 2011).
- Cook, Philip and William White (Xelimuxw). 2006. Risk, recovery and resilience: Helping young and old move together to support South African communities affected by HIV/AIDS. *Journal of Intergenerational Relationships* 4, no. 1: 65-77.
- Crawford, Emily, Margaret O'Dougherty Wright, and Anne S. Masten. 2005. Resilience and spirituality in youth. In *The handbook of spiritual development in childhood and adolescence*, ed. E.C. Roehlepartain, P.E. King, L. Wagener, and P.L. Benson, 355-370. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Dahrendorf, Ralf. 1979. *Life chances: Approaches to social and political theory*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Dass-Brailsford, Priscilla. 2005. Exploring resiliency: Academic achievement among disadvantaged black youth in South Africa. *South African Journal of Psychology* 35, no. 3: 574-579.
- Dawes, A. C. Tredoux, and A. Feinstein. 1989. Political violence in South Africa: Some effects on children of the violent destruction of their community. *International Journal of Mental Health* 18, no. 2: 16-43.
- Davies, Matthew. 2008. A childish culture?: Shared understandings, agency and intervention: An anthropological study of street children in northwest Kenya. *Childhood* 15: 309-330. <http://chd.sagepub.com> (accessed October 31, 2009).
- de Berry, Joanna. 2004. The sexual vulnerability of adolescent girls during civil war in Teso, Uganda. In *Children and youth on the front line: Ethnography, armed conflict and displacement*, ed. Jo Boyden and Joanna de Berry, 45-62. New York: Berghahn Books.
- de Boeck, Filip, and Alcinda Honwana. 2005. Introduction. In *Makers and breakers: Children and youth in postcolonial Africa*, ed. Alcinda Honwana and Filip de Boeck, 1-18. Oxford: James Currey.
- de Bruijn, Mirjam. 2007. Agency in and from the margins: Street children and youth in N'djaména, Chad. In *Strength beyond structure: Social and historical trajectories of agency in Africa*, ed. Miriam de Bruijn, Rijk van Dijk, and Jan-Bart Gewald, 263-284. Boston: Brill.
- de Certeau, Michel. 1984. *The practice of everyday life*. Ed. Steven Rendall. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Debord, Guy. 1994. *The society of the spectacle*. 10th ed. Trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith. 2008. New York: Zone Books. (Orig. pub. 1967. France.)

- Denzin, Norman K. 2002. The cinematic society and the reflexive interview. In *Handbook of Interview Research: Context and Method*, ed. Jaber F. Gubrium and James A. Holstein, 833-848. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Dignitas Project. 2008. Community profile research report: Mathare Valley. Nairobi, Kenya: Dignitas.
- Di Lellio, Anna and Stephanie Schwandner-Sievers. 2006. The legendary commander: The construction of an Albanian masternarrative in post-war Kosovo. *Nations and Nationalism* 12, no. 3: 513–529.
- Douglas, Jack D. 1972. Observing deviance. In *Research on deviance*, ed. Jack D. Douglas, 3-34. New York: Random House.
- Dowler, Lorraine. 2001. The four square laundry: Participant observation in a war zone. *The Geographical Review*: 414-423. Questia Media America, Inc. www.questia.com (accessed September 18, 2009).
- Dwyer, Sonya Corbin and Jennifer L. Buckle. 2009. The space between: On being an insider – outsider in qualitative research. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods* 8, no. 1: 54-63. <https://ejournals.library.ualberta.ca/index.php/IJQM/article/viewArticle/2981> (accessed December 20, 2011).
- Eide, Elisabeth. 2010. Strategic essentialism and ethnification: Hand in glove? *Nordicom Review* 31, no. 2: 63-78. http://www.nordicom.gu.se/common/publ_pdf/325_eide.pdf (accessed January 21, 2012).
- Ennew, J. 1998. Shame and physical pain: Cultural relativity, children, torture and punishment. In *Childhood abused. Protecting children against torture, cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment and punishment*, ed. G. Van Bueren, 7-34. Aldershot, UK: Ashgate.
- Ennew, J. 2000. *Street and working children: A guide to planning*. London: Save the Children.
- Erulkar, Annabel S. and James Matheka. 2007. Adolescence in the Kibera Slums of Nairobi, Kenya. Nairobi: The Population Council. <http://www.popcouncil.org/pdfs/AdolKiberaSlums.pdf> (accessed March 5, 2012).
- Eyber, Carola and Alastair Ager. 2004. Researching young people's experiences of war: Participatory methods in the drama discourse in Angola. In *Children and youth on the frontline: Ethnography, armed conflict and displacement*, ed. Jo Boyden and Joanna de Berry, 189-208. New York: Berghahn Books.
- Falola, Toyin. 1998. *Violence in Nigeria: The crisis of religious politics and secular ideologies*. New York: University of Rochester Press.
- Famuyiwa, O. O. 1997. Child abuse and neglect in sub-Saharan Africa. *Psychiatric Bulletin* 21: 336-338.
- Feldman, Allen. 1995. Ethnographic states of emergency. In *Fieldwork under fire: Contemporary studies of violence and survival*, 224-253. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Fishman, Joshua A. 1999. Concluding comments. In *Handbook of language & ethnic identity*, ed. Joshua A. Fishman, 444-454. New York: Oxford.
- Floris, Fabrizio. 2006. *Puppets or people? A sociological analysis of Korogocho Slum*. Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa.
- Fontana, Andrea. 2002. Postmodern trends in interviewing. In *Handbook of interview research: Context and method*, ed. Jaber F. Gubrium and James A. Holstein, 161-176. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

- Fournier, Marcel. 2001. Review of "Against Essentialism: A theory of culture and society" by Stephan Fuchs. *Canadian Journal of Sociology* 28, no. 3 (summer): 433-436. <http://web.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.tiu.edu/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=2&hid=127&sid=7fec1564-7342-49ad-a16e-440801459db4%40sessionmgr112> (accessed March 26, 2012).
- Frederiksen, Bodil Folke. 2007. Politics, popular culture and livelihood strategies among young men in a Nairobi slum. In *African Alternatives*, ed. Patrick Chabal, Ulf Engel, and Leo de Haan, 73-94. Leiden: Brill.
- Fuchs, Stephan. 2001. *Against essentialism: A theory of culture and society*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Gampel, Yolanda. 2000. Reflections on the prevalence of the uncanny in social violence. In *Cultures under siege: Collective violence and trauma*, ed. Antonius C. G. M. Robben and Marcelo M. Suárez-Orozco, 48-69. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Garbarino, James. 1991. *No place to be a child: Growing up in a war zone*. Lexington, MA: Lexington.
- Gee, James Paul. 2000. Identity as an analytic lens for research in education. *Review of Research in Education* 25: 99-125. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1167322> (accessed June 10, 2008).
- Geertz, Clifford. 1988. *Works and lives: The anthropologist as author*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Gergen, K. J. 2001. Psychological science in the postmodern context. *American Psychologist* 56, no.10: 803 – 815.
- Gibbs, Sarah. 1994. Post-war social reconstruction in Mozambique: Re-framing children's experience of trauma and healing. *Disasters* 18, no. 3: 268-76.
- Gilgun, Fane F. and Laura S. Abrams. 2005. Gendered adaptations, resilience, and the perpetration of violence. In *Handbook for working with children and youth: Pathways to resilience across cultures and contexts*, ed. Michael Ungar, 57-70. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Giudici, Fr. Stefano. 2011. Ssss... Koch speaks. http://www.korogocho.org/english/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=687:ssss-koch-speaks&catid=1:latest-news&Itemid=76 (accessed December 18, 2011).
- Goldstein, Donna M. 1998. Nothing bad intended: Comment Child discipline, punishment, and survival in a shantytown Rio de Janeiro, Brazil three. In *Small wars: The cultural politics of childhood*, ed. Nancy Scheper-Hughes and Carolyn Sargent, 389-415. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Gosine, Kevin. 2002. Essentialism versus complexity: Conceptions of racial identity construction in educational scholarship. *Canadian Journal of Education* 27, no. 1: 81-100.
- Gullestad, Marianne. 2007. *Picturing pity: Pitfalls and pleasures in cross-cultural communication. Image and word in a North Cameroon mission*. New York: Berghahn Books.
- GUREC pamphlet. 2008. Nairobi.
- Hall, Stuart, ed. 1997. *Representation: Cultural representation and signifying practices*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

- Heath, Nancy L., Jessica R. Toste, and Lana C. Zinck. 2008. Understanding adolescent self-injury from a resilience perspective: A model for international interpretation. In *Resilience in action: Working with youth across cultures and contexts*, ed. Linda Liebenberg and Michael Ungar, 39-60. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Hellawell, David. 2006. Inside – out: Analysis of the insider – outsider concept as a heuristic device to develop reflexivity in students doing qualitative research. *Teaching in Higher Education* 11, no.4 (October): 483-494. <http://blog.lib.umn.edu/hagel040/writing/Inside%20Out%20Analysis%20of%20th%20eInsider%20Outsider%20Concept%20as%20a%20Heuristic%20Device%20to%20Develop%20Reflexivity%20in%20Students%20Doing%20Qualitative%20Research.pdf> (accessed December 29, 2011).
- Herzfeld, Michael. 1998. Essentialism. In *Encyclopedia of Social and Cultural Anthropology*, ed. Alan Bernard and Jonathan Spencer, 188-190. EBSCO Publishing: eBook Collection. http://www.amazon.com/Encyclopedia-Cultural-Anthropology-Routledge-Reference/dp/0415285585#reader_0415285585 (accessed December 29, 2011).
- Hermann, Tamar. 2001. The impermeable identity wall: The study of violent conflicts by ‘insiders’ and ‘outsiders.’ In *Researching violently divided societies*, ed. Marie Smyth and Gillian Robinson, 77-91. London: United Nations University Press.
- Hiebert, Paul G. 1994. *Anthropological reflections on missiological issues*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.
- Hiebert, Paul G. 2009. *The gospel in human contexts*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic.
- Hill, Francis, 2002. *A delusion of Satan: The full story of the Salem Witch Trials*. 2nd ed. Cambridge, MA: Da Capo.
- Honwana, Alcinda. 2002. Negotiating postwar identities: Child soldiers in Mozambique and Angola. In *Contested terrains and constructed categories: Contemporary Africa in focus*, ed. George Clement Bond and Nigel C. Gibson, 277-298. Cambridge, MA: Westview.
- Honwana, Alcinda. 2006. *Child soldiers in Africa*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- James, Allison and Alan Prout. 1990. *Constructing and reconstructing childhood: Contemporary issues in the sociological study of childhood*. London: Falmer Press.
- Jensen, David H. 2005. *Graced vulnerability: A theology of childhood*. Cleveland: Pilgrim.
- Juergensmeyer, Mark. 2003. *Terror in the mind of God: The global rise of religious violence*. 3rd ed. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Kakar, Sudhir. 1996. *The colors of violence: Cultural identities, religion, and conflict*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Karanja, Lucy. 2010. The educational pursuits and obstacles for urban refugee students in Kenya. *International Journal for Cross-Disciplinary Subjects in Education* 1, no. 3 (September): 147-155. <http://infonomicsociety.org/IJCDSE/The%20Educational%20Pursuits%20and%20Obstacles%20for%20Urban%20Refugee%20Students%20in%20Kenya.pdf> (accessed September 6, 2011).

- Kashima, Yoshihisa, Emiko S. Kashima, Paul Bain, Anthony Lyons, R. Scott Tindale, Garry Robins, Cedric Vears, and Jennifer Whelan. 2010. Communication and essentialism: Grounding the shared reality of a social category. *Social Cognition* 28, no. 3: 306-328.
- Kempe, Ronald Hope, Sr. 2005. Child survival, poverty, and labor in Africa. *Journal of Children and Poverty* 11, no. 1: 19-42.
- Kilbride, Philip L. 1992. Unwanted children as a consequence of the localization in modern Kenya: Methods for special purposes. In *Anthropological research: Process and application*, ed. John J. Poggie, Jr., Billy R. DeWalt, and William W. Dressler, 185-206. New York: State University of New York Press.
- Kilbride, Philip, Collette Suda, and Enos Njeru. 2000. *Street children in Kenya: Voices of children in search of a childhood*. Westport, CT: Bergin & Garvey.
- Kilbride, Philip Leroy and Janet Cpariotti Kilbride. 1990. *Changing family life in East Africa: Women and children at risk*. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press.
- Kirmayer, Laurence J., Megha Sehdev, Rob Whitley, Stéphane F. Dandeneau, Colette Isaac. 2009. Community resilience: Models, metaphors, and measures. *Journal of Aboriginal Health* (November): 62-117.
- Kitzinger, Jenny. 1990. Children, power and the struggle against sexual abuse. In *Constructing and reconstructing childhood: Contemporary issues in the sociological study of childhood*, ed. Allison James and Alan Prout, 157-183. London: Falmer.
- Kleinman, Arthur. 2000. The violences of everyday life: The multiple forms and dynamics of social violence. In *Violence and subjectivity*, ed. Veena Das, Arthur Kleinman, Mamphela Ramphele, and Pamela Reynolds, 226-241. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Korbin, J. 1981. *Child abuse and neglect: Cross-cultural perspectives*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Korbin, Jill 1987. Child maltreatment in cross-cultural perspective: Vulnerable children and circumstances. In *Child abuse and neglect: Biosocial dimensions*, ed. R. J. Gelles and Jane Beckman Lancaster, 31-55. New York: L. Aldine de Gruyter.
- Kostelny, Kathleen. 2006. A culture-based, integrative approach: Helping war affected children. In *A world turned upside down: Social ecological approaches to children in war zones*, ed. Neil Boothby, Alison Strang, and Michael Wessels, 19-38. Bloomfield, CT: Kumarian.
- Koyama, Kosuke. 1999. *Water buffalo theology*. Rev. and exp. ed. Maryknoll: Orbis.
- La Cava, Gloria and Rafael Y. Nanetti. 2000. Albania: Filling the vulnerability gap. World Bank Technical Paper No. 460 in Europe and Central Asia are environmentally and socially sustainable development series. Washington DC: The World Bank.
- Le Roux, Johann. 1996. The worldwide phenomenon of street children: Conceptual analysis. *Adolescence* 31, no. 122 (Winter): 965-71.

- Le Roux, Johann and Cheryl Sylvia Smith. 1998. Causes and characteristics of the street child phenomenon: A global perspective. *Adolescence* 33, no. 131 (Fall): 683-688. <http://web.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.tiu.edu/ehost/detail?vid=6&hid=122&sid=24279279-7f32-4e26-a447-0d0b4a3c9b89%40sessionmgr4&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWhvc3QtbGl2ZSZzY29wZT1zaXRl#db=s3h&AN=1290596> (accessed October, 26, 2009).
- LeCompte, Margaret D. and Jean J. Schensul. 2010. *Designing & conducting ethnographic research: An introduction*. 2nd ed. Lanham: Altamira.
- Lee, Raymond M. 1993. *Doing research on sensitive topics*. London: Sage.
- Lerer, Leonard B. 1998. Who is the rogue? Hunger, death, and circumstance in John Mampe Square. In *Small wars: The cultural politics of childhood*, ed. Nancy Scheper-Hughes and Carol Sargent, 228-250. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Liebenberg, Linda and Michael Ungar. 2008. Introduction: Understanding youth resilience in action: The way forward. In *Resilience in action: Working with youth across cultures and contexts*, ed. Linda Liebenberg and Michael Ungar, 3-16. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Linhart, Terence D. 2006. They were so alive!: The spectacle self and youth group short-term mission trips. *Missiology: An International Review* 34, no. 4 (October): 451-462.
- Lockhart, Chris. 2008. The life and death of a street boy in East Africa: Everyday violence in the time of AIDS. *Medical Anthropology Quarterly* 22, no. 1: 94-115. DOI: 10.1111/j.1548-1387.2008.00005.x.
- Lonsdale, Jon. 2000. Agency in tight corners: Narrative and initiative in African history. *Journal of African Cultural Studies* 13, no. 1 (June): 5-16. <http://web.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.tiu.edu/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=2&hid=122&sid=15b7d036-3da6-4843-bb25-083c886204ef%40sessionmgr104> (accessed March 15, 2012).
- Louw, A. 1996. Conclusion. In *Cities under siege: Urban violence in South, Central and West Africa*, 89-92. Durban: Indicator.
- Lubeck, Sally and Patricia Garrett. 1990. The social construction of the 'at-risk' child. *British Journal of Sociology of Education* 11, no. 3: 327-340.
- Mahalingam, Ramaswami and Joel Rodriguez. 2003. Essentialism, power and cultural psychology of gender. *Journal of Cognition and Culture* 3, no. 2: 158-174.
- Makuku, Imbumi. 2003. Issues of urban ministry. <http://www.strategicnetwork.org/index.php?loc=kb&view=v&id=14243&printerfriendly=Y&lang=> (accessed December 1, 2009). Used by permission of *Church Leader in Africa*.
- Malindi, Macalane J. and Linda C. Theron. 2010. The hidden resilience of street youth. *South African Journal of Psychology* 40, no. 3: 318-326. <http://web.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.tiu.edu/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=2&hid=122&sid=08974543-d2fa-4d82-b784-8a1f5d89da00%40sessionmgr114> (accessed September 13, 2011).
- Manz, Beatriz. 1995. Reflections on an *antropología comprometida*: Conversations with Ricardo Falla. In *Fieldwork under fire: Contemporary studies of violence and survival*, 261-275. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Marenja, Neddy, ed. 2002. The voice of the women from the slums. *The slums: A challenge to evangelization*. No. 14 in Tangaza Occasional Papers, ed. Francesco Pierli and Yago Abeledo, 50-58. Nairobi: Pauline Publications Africa.

- Marguerat, Yves. 1996. Approaches to the analysis of violence. In *Cities under siege: Urban violence in South, Central and West Africa*, ed. Antoinette Louw and Simon Bekker, 79-88. South Africa: Indicator Project South Africa.
- Masten, Ann S, K. M. Best, and N. Garmezy. 1990. Resilience and development: Contributions to the study of children who overcome adversity. *Development and Psychopathology* 2: 425-444.
- Masten, Anne S. 2001. Ordinary magic: Resilience processes in development. *American Journal of Psychology* 56: 227-238.
- Mbiti, John S. 1969. *African religion and philosophy*. 2nd ed. New Hampshire: Heinemann.
- McCallin, Margaret. 1998. Community involvement in the social reintegration of child soldiers. In *Rethinking the trauma of war*, ed. Patrick J. Bracken and Celia Petty, 60-75. London: Free Association Books.
- Meadow, R. 1989. ABC of child abuse epidemiology. *British Medical Journal* 298: 727-730.
- Medin, D.L. and Andrew Ortony. 1989. Psychological essentialism. In *Similarity and analogical reasoning*, ed. Stella Vosniadou and Andrew Ortony, 179-196. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Merkel, Stuart and Jane Otai. 2007. Meeting the health needs of the urban poor in African informal settlements: Best practices and lessons learned. Baltimore, MD: Jhpiego. http://www.jhpiego.org/files/UrbanSlums_Meeting_Health_Needs.pdf (accessed March 15, 2012).
- Merton, Robert K. 1972. Insiders and outsiders: A chapter in the sociology of knowledge. *American Journal of Sociology* 78, no. 1 (July): 9-47.
- Mitchell, Neil J. 2004. Agents of atrocity: Leaders, followers, and the violation of human rights. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Montgomery, Heather. 2001. *Modern Babylon: Prostituting children in Thailand*. Oxford, UK: Berghahn Books.
- Moschetti, Fr. Daniele et al. 2011. The instruments of empowerment: The role of youth ministry in the slums. A paper presented by Fr. Daniele Moschetti, Patrick Otele, Carolyne Lala, Hesbon Otieno, Teddy Obel and Oluoch Japheth. http://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&ved=0CCEQFjAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.korogocho.org%2Fenglish%2Findex.php%3Foption%3Dcom_docman%26task%3Ddoc_download%26gid%3D45%26Itemid%3D73&ei=LovuTo79C8mJgweK6JngCA&usg=AFQjCNG6mHWy24hJa96e4n1w4X7m1xY8Xw&sig2=_Z5CgS2k1qxKna3NklY1hg (accessed December 12, 2011).
- Musumeci, di Benedetta. 2011. All the rest. http://www.korogocho.org/english/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=756:all-the-rest-&catid=1:latest-news&Itemid=76 (accessed December 18, 2011).
- Mutiga, Murithi. 2011. Disaster offered a snapshot of all you need to know about slum life. http://www.korogocho.org/english/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=754:disaster-offered-a-snapshot-of-all-you-need-to-know-about-slum-life&catid=1:latest-news&Itemid=76 (accessed December 18, 2011).
- Mwangi, Isaac Karanja. 1997. The nature of rental housing in Kenya. *Environment and Urbanization* 9, no. 2 (October): 141-159.
- Ndirangu, Julius Mwai. 2007. *Youth in danger: A handbook for teachers, students, parents, pastors and community workers*. Nairobi: Uzima.

- Ndung'u, Nahashon W. 2002. The youth and Africa's future. In *Quests for abundant life in Africa*, 126-139. Nairobi: Acton.
- The New International Version*. 1986. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.
- Noble, Greg, Scott Poynting, and Paul Tabar. 1999. Youth, ethnicity, and the mapping of identities: Strategic essentialism and strategic hybridity among male Arabic-speaking youth in South-western Sydney. *Communal/Plural* 7, no. 1: 29-44. http://uws.clients.squiz.net/__data/assets/pdf_file/0004/77017/Youth_Ethnicity.pdf (accessed December 31, 2011).
- Nordstrom, Carolyn. 1995. War on the front lines. In *Fieldwork under fire: Contemporary studies of violence and survival*, ed. Carolyn Nordstrom and Antonius C. G. M. Robben, 129-154. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Nthamburi, Zablon. 2009. The paradigm of ethnicity: Its influence and relevance in public life today. In *Ethnicity, conflict and the future of African states*, ed. Aquiline Tarimo and Paulin Manwelo, 69-74. Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa.
- Nwaigbo, Ferdinand. 2004. Child labour in Africa: An erosion of human dignity. *African Ecclesial Review* 46, no.1: 176-195.
- Nybell, Lynn. 2001. Meltdown and containments: Constructions of children at risk as complex systems. *Childhood* 8, no. 2: 213-230.
- Odede, Kennedy. 2010. Slumdog tourism. http://www.korogocho.org/english/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=697:slumdog-tourism-&catid=1:latest-news&Itemid=76 (accessed December 18, 2011).
- Odede, Kennedy. 2010b. Slumdog tourism. *New York Times*. Aug. 9: http://www.nytimes.com/2010/08/10/opinion/10odede.html?_r=1 (accessed December 22, 2011).
- Oderberg, David S. 2007. *Real essentialism*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Ogola, Japheth Oluoch. 2011. John Ochieng: The lion lies in the box, humbled by death. http://www.korogocho.org/english/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=759:john-ochieng-the-lion-lies-in-the-box-humbled-by-death&catid=1:latest-news&Itemid=76 (accessed December 18, 2011).
- Olima, Washington H. A. 2001. The dynamics and implications of sustaining urban spatial segregation in Kenya: Experiences from Nairobi Metropolis. Paper presented at the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy course entitled "International Seminar on Segregation in the City," Nairobi: July 26-28.
- Olujic, Maria B. 1995. The Croatian war experience. In *Fieldwork under fire: Contemporary studies of violence and survival*, 186-205. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Oluoch Japheth. 2002. The lighter side of darkness: A youth's testimony. In *The slums: A challenge to evangelization*. No. 14 in Tangaza Occasional Papers, ed. Francesco Pierli and Yago Abeledo, 43-49. Nairobi: Pauline Publications Africa.
- Omitoogun, Wuyi. 1996. Organised street violence: The area boys of Lagos. In *Cities under siege: Urban violence in South, Central and West Africa*, ed. Antoinette Louw and Simon Bekker, 31-39. Durban, South Africa: Indicator.
- Oruwari, Yomi, and Opuene Owei. 2006. Youth in urban violence in Nigeria: Case study of urban gangs from Port Harcourt. No. 14 in Niger Delta Economies of Violence Working Papers. Berkeley: Institute of International Studies: University of California.

- Otieno, Charles. 2006. Youth Initiatives Kenya (YIKE) 2006 Annual Report. <http://youthinitiativeskenya.org/2006/12/29/uptoyoutoo-annual-report-2006/> (accessed December 18, 2011).
- Padilla, Amado M. 1999. Psychology. In *Handbook of language & ethnic identity*, ed. Joshua A. Fishman, 109-121. New York: Oxford.
- Palme Lisbet. 1991. Personal reflections on the new rights for children in war. In *Reaching children in war: Sudan, Uganda, and Mozambique*, ed. C. P. Dodge and M. Raundalen, 1-6. Bergen, Norway: Sigma Forlag.
- Pape, Robert A. 2006. *Dying to win: The strategic logic of suicide terrorism*. New York: Random House.
- Panter-Brick, Catherine. 2001. Street children and their peers: Perspectives on homelessness, poverty, and health. In *Children and anthropology: Perspectives for the 21st century*, ed. Helen B. Schwartzman, 83-98. Westport, CN: Bergin & Garvey.
- Peters, Krijn, and Paul Richards. 1998. Fighting with open eyes: Used combatants talking about war in Sierra Leone. In *Rethinking the trauma of war*, ed. Patrick J. Bracken and Celia Petty, 76-111. London: Free Association Books.
- Pieke, Frank N. 1995. Witnessing the 1989 Chinese people's movement. In *Fieldwork under fire: Contemporary studies of violence and survival* ed. Carolyn Nordstrom and Antonius C. G. M. Robben, 62-80. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Pierli, Francesco and Yago Abeledo. 2002. *The slums: A challenge to evangelization*. No. 14 in Tangaza Occasional Papers. Nairobi: Pauline Publications Africa.
- Pierli, Francesco. 2009. Preface. In *Conflict resolution and transformation: A participatory approach for youth*, by Koffissan Matthias Adossi. Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa.
- Piermay, Jean-Luc. 1996. Urban space and violence in central Africa. *Cities under siege: Urban violence in South, Central and West Africa*, ed. Antoinette Louw and Simon Bekker, 9-19. Durban, South Africa: Indicator.
- Pitcher, Linda M. 1998. The divine impatience: Ritual, narrative and symbolization in the practice of martyrdom Palestine. *Medical Anthropology Quarterly* 12 (March): 8-30.
- Porter, Elisabeth. 2005. Conclusion: Reflections on contemporary research in Africa. In *Researching conflict in Africa*, 156-165. New York: United Nations University.
- Punamäki-Gitai, Raija-Leena. 1987. *Childhood under conflict: The attitudes and emotional life of Israeli and Palestinian children*. Vol. 32 in Research Reports – Tampere Peace Research Institute. Tampere: Tampere Peace Research Institute.
- Quesada, James. 2004. Suffering child: An embodiment of war and its aftermath in post-Sandinista Nicaragua. In *Violence in war and peace*, ed. Nancy Scheper-Hughes and Philippe Bourgois, 290-296. Malden, MA: Blackwell.
- Robben, Antonius C. G. M. and Carolyn Nordstrom. 1995. Introduction: The anthropology and ethnography of violence and sociopolitical conflict. In *Fieldwork under fire: Contemporary studies of violence and survival* ed. Carolyn Nordstrom and Antonius C. G. M. Robben, 1-23. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Roy, Anyana. 2005. Urban informality: Toward an epistemology of planning. *Journal of the American Planning Association* 71, no.2 (Spring): 147-158. http://www.korogocho.org/english/index.php?option=com_docman&task=cat_view&gid=58&Itemid=73&limitstart=10 (accessed December 17, 2009).

- Ryen, Anne. 2002. Cross-cultural interviewing. In *Handbook of interview research: Context and method*, ed. Jaber F. Gubrium and James A. Holstein, 335-354. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Said, Edward W. 1979. *Orientalism*. New York: Vintage Books.
- Santos-Granero, Fernando. 2004. The enemy within: Child sorcery, revolution, and the evils of modernization in Eastern Peru. In *In darkness and secrecy: The anthropology of assault sorcery and witchcraft in amazonia*, ed. Neil L. White and Robin Wright, 272-305. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Scheper-Hughes, Nancy. 1992. *Death without weeping: The violence of everyday life in Brazil*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Scheper-Hughes, Nancy. 2006. Dangerous and endangered youth. In *Inclusion and exclusion in the global arena*, ed. Max Kirsch, 287-318. New York: Routledge.
- Scheper-Hughes, Nancy. 2008. A talent for life: Reflections on human vulnerability and resilience. *Ethnos* 73, no. 1 (March): 25-56.
- Scheper-Hughes, Nancy, and Carolyn Sargent. 1998. Introduction: The cultural politics of childhood. In *Small wars: The cultural politics of childhood*, ed. Nancy Scheper-Hughes and Carolyn Sargent, 1-29. Berkeley: University of California press.
- Schmidt, Bettina E. 2001. The interpretation of violent worldviews: Cannibalism and other violent images of the Caribbean. In *Anthropology of violence and conflict*, ed. Bettina E. Schmidt and Ingo W. Schröder, 76-96. London: Routledge.
- Schmidt, Gregor. 2007. *Becoming self reliant: The impact of vocational training and behavioral skills*. Nairobi: Pauline Publications Africa.
- Schwartzman, Helen. 2001. Introduction: Questions and challenges for a 21st-century anthropology of children. In *Children and anthropology: Perspectives for the 21st century*, ed. Helen B. Schwartzman, 1-14. Westport, CN: Bergin & Garvey.
- Sclar, Elliott D. and Mary E. Northridge. 2003. Slums, slum dwellers, and health. *American Journal of Public Health* 93, no. 9 (September): 1381. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1447975/pdf/0931381.pdf> (accessed December 18, 2011).
- Sica, Alan. 2002. Review of "Against Essentialism: A Theory of Culture and Society." *American Journal of Sociology* 107, no. 5 (March), 1383-1385. <http://web.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.tiu.edu/ehost/detail?sid=7fec1564-7342-49ad-a16e-440801459db4%40sessionmgr112&vid=2&hid=127> (accessed March 26, 2012).
- Singer P. W. 2005. *Children in war*. New York: Pantheon Books.
- Sluka, Jeffrey A. 1995. Reflections on managing danger in fieldwork: Dangerous anthropology in Belfast. ed. by Carolyn Nordstrom and Antonius C. G. M. Robben, 276-294. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Smyth, Marie. 2005. Insider-outsider issues in researching violent and divided societies. In *Researching conflict in Africa*, 9-23. New York: United Nations University.
- Sontag, Susan. 1977. *On photography*. New York: Dell.
- Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty and Sarah Harasym. 1990. *The post-colonial critic*. London: Routledge.
- Straker, Gillian. 1989. From victim to villain: A 'slight' of speech? Media representations of Township youth. *South African Journal of Psychology* 19: 20-27.

- Straker, Gillian. 1996. Ethical issues in working with children in war zones. In *Minefields in their hearts: The mental health of children in war and communal violence*, ed. R. Apfel and B. Simon, 18-32. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Strassberg, Barbara. 2008. Multicultural Perspectives on Issues in Science and Religion. In *Science, Religion, and Society: An Encyclopedia of History, Culture, and Controversy*. Retrieved from http://librarydb.moody.edu/login?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.credoreference.com/entry/sharpsrs/multicultural_perspectives_on_issues_in_science_and_religion (accessed December 21, 2011).
- Suda, Collette. 1997. Street children in Nairobi and the African cultural ideology of kin-based support system: Change and challenge. *Child Abuse Review* 6: 199-217.
- Sumner, William Graham. 1907. What we should be doing, sister. *New York Times*. Op-Ed. December 8.
- Swadener, B., and S. Lubeck, eds. 1995. *Children and families "at promise: " Deconstructing the discourse of risk*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Swartz, L. and A. Levett. 1989. Political repression and children in South Africa: The social construction of damaging effects. *Social Science and Medicine* 28, no. 7: 741-50.
- Swart-Kruger, Jill, and David Donald. 1994. Children of the South African streets. In *Childhood and adversity: Psychological perspectives from South African research*, ed. Andrew Dawes and David Donald, 107-121. Cape Town: David Philip.
- Swedenburg, Ted. 1995. With Genet in the Palestinian field. In *Fieldwork under fire: Contemporary studies of violence and survival*, ed. by Carolyn Nordstrom and Antonius C. G. M. Robben, 25-41. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Tabouret-Keller, Andrée. 1999. Western Europe. In *Handbook of language and ethnic identity*, ed. Joshua A. Fishman, 334-349. New York: Oxford.
- Tarimo, Aquiline. 2009. Competing identities, loyalties, and interests. In *Ethnicity, conflict and the future of African states*, ed. Aquiline Tarimo and Paulin Manwelo, 23-42. Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa.
- Theis, Joachim. 2001. Participatory research with children in Vietnam. In *Children and anthropology: Perspectives for the 21st century*, ed. Helen B. Schwartzman, 99-110. Westport, CT: Bergin & Garvey.
- Theron, Linda C. and Adam M. C. Theron. 2010. A critical review of studies of South African youth resilience, 1990-2008. *South African Journal of Science* 106, nos.7/8. DOI: 10.4102/sajs.v106i7/8.252.
- Thompson, Ekundayo J. D. 2001. *Non-formal education in urban Kenya: Findings of a study in Kisumu, Mombasa and Nairobi*. German Agency for Technical Co-Operation: Nairobi. <http://www.eric.ed.gov/PDFS/ED455363.pdf> (accessed February 26, 2012).
- Thornton, John. 1992. *Africa and Africans in the making of the Atlantic World, 1400-1680*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Tiénou, Tité. 1997. The training of missiologists for an African context. In *Missiological education for the 21st century: The book, the circle, and the sandals*, ed. J. Dudley Woodberry, Charles Van Engen, Edgar J. Elliston, 93-100. Maryknoll: Orbis.

- Triplehorn, Carl and Catherine Chen. 2006. Layers of support: The social ecology of protecting children in war. In *A world turned upside down: Social ecological approaches to children in war zones* ed. Neil Boothby, Alison Strang, and Michael Wessels, 223-242. Bloomfield, CT: Kumarian Press.
- Tsuda, Takeyuki. 2006. Ethnic ascription versus self-definitions. In *Ethnic identity: Problems and prospects for the twenty-first century*. 4th ed. Ed. Lola Romanucci-Ross, George A. De Vos, and Takeyuki Tsuda, 233-238. New York: Altamira.
- UN-Habitat. 2006. Nairobi urban sector profile. United Nations Human Settlements Programme. <http://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&ved=0CCIQFjAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.unhabitat.org%2Fpmss%2FgetElectronicVersion.asp%3Fnr%3D2791%26alt%3D1&ei=ir3uTuWJD4H7ggez7T4CA&usg=AFQjCNE1b5QLV8Qf8G8gmfQPfvrVMFmw&sig2=RYTuCJ2lZKMCxtfyIit5A> (accessed December 18, 2011).
- UN-Habitat. 2007. Global report on human settlements: Crime and violence, city case studies (October). Nairobi: United Nations Human Settlements Programme.
- Ungar, Michael. 2004. *Nurturing hidden resilience in troubled youth*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Ungar, Michael and Eli Teram. 2005. Qualitative resilience research: Contributions and risks. In *Handbook for working with children and youth: Pathways to resilience across cultures and contexts*, ed. Michael Ungar, 149-164. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Ungar, Michael. 2005. Introduction: Resilience across cultures and contexts. In *Handbook for working with children and youth: Pathways to resilience across cultures and contexts*, xv-xxxix. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Ungar, Michael. 2006. Nurturing hidden resilience in at-risk youth in different cultures. *Journal of the Canadian Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry* 15, no.2 (May): 53-58.
- Ungar, Michael. 2008. Putting resilience theory into action: Five principles. In *Resilience in action: Working with youth across cultures and contexts*, ed. Linda Liebenberg and Michael Ungar, 17-36. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Utas, Mats. 2004. Fluid research fields: Studying ex-combatant youth in the aftermath of the Liberian civil war. In *Children and youth on the front line: Ethnography, armed conflict and displacement*, ed. Jo Boyden and Joanna de Berry, vol. 14 in *Studies in Forced Migration*, 209-236. New York: Berghahn Books.
- Utas, Mats. 2005. Victimacy, girlfriending, soldiering: Tactic agency in a young woman's social navigation of the Liberian war zone. *Anthropological Quarterly* 78, no. 2: 403-30.
- Vaillant, George E. 1977. *Adaptation to life*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Van Aker, Brigitte Oostrom, Bénédicte Rath, and Raymond de Kemp. Street children in Nairobi: Hakuna matata? *Journal of Community Psychology* 27, no.4: 393-404.
- van Dijk, Rijk, Mirjam de Bruijn, and Jan-Bart Gewald. 2007. Social and historical trajectories of agency in Africa: An introduction. In *Strength beyond structure: Social and historical trajectories of agency in Africa*, 1-15. London: Brill.
- Vigh, Henrik E. 2006. Social death and violent life chances. In *Navigating youth, generating adulthood: Social becoming in an African context*, ed. Catrine Christiansen, Mats Utas, and Henrik E. Vigh, 31-60. Uppsala: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet.
- Volf, Miroslav. 1996. *Exclusion and embrace: A theological exploration of identity, otherness, and reconciliation*. Nashville, Abingdon.

- Waage, Trond. 2006. Coping with unpredictability: 'Preparing for life' in Ngaoundéré, Cameroon. In *Navigating youth generating adulthood: Social becoming in an African context*, ed. Catrine Christiansen, Mats Utas, and Henrik E. Vigh. Uppsala: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet.
- Wagner, Wolfgang, Peter Holtz, and Yoshihisa Kashima. 2009. Construction and deconstruction of essence in representing social groups: Identity projects, stereotyping, and racism. *Journal for the Theory of Social Behavior* 39, no. 3: 363–383. <http://web.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.tiu.edu/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=2&hid=122&sid=546485cd-de82-4bb2-91ed328d06fe1bd8%40sessionmgr115> (accessed March 3, 2012).
- Walklate, Sandra. 2011. Reframing criminal victimization: Finding a place for vulnerability and resilience. *Theoretical Criminology* 15, no. 179. DOI:10.1177/1362480610383452.
- Warah, Rasna. 2011. Poverty as entertainment: Please put an end to Kibera slum tours. http://www.korogocho.org/english/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=749:poverty-as-entertainment-please-put-to-an-end-kibera-slum-tours&catid=73:social-issues&Itemid=92 (accessed December 22, 2011).
- Wessels, Michael. 2006. *Child soldiers: From violence to protection*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- West, Harry G. 2004. Girls with guns: they are rating the experience of the war of FRELIMO's 'female detachment.' In *Children and youth on the front line: Ethnography, armed conflict and displacement*, ed. Jo Boyden and Joanna de Berry, vol. 14 in Studies in Forced Migration, 105-129. New York: Berghahn Books.
- Windschuttle, Keith. 1996. *The killing of history*. Cammeray, Australia: Simon & Schuster.
- Zagefka, Hanna, Samuel Pehrson, Richard C. M. Mole and Eva Chan. 2010. The effect of essentialism in settings of historic intergroup atrocities. *European Journal of Social Psychology* 40: 718-732. DOI: 10.1002/ejsp.639 (accessed March 23, 2012).
- Zulaika, Joseba. 1995. The anthropologist as terrorist. In *Fieldwork under fire: Contemporary studies of violence and survival*, 206-223. Berkeley: University of California Press.

MISSIOLOGICAL ADDENDUM

Introduction

This is included as an addendum because it is outside the purpose for which I was granted permission to conduct the research by the Kenyan national government and the District Commissioners of Mathare and Starehe. Also, the UN office in Nairobi was helpful to me in the beginning of the research and has requested a copy of the dissertation, and shaping it as a missiological dissertation would not be helpful to them. However, the main objective of the project is to provide data that may be useful to GUREC, the research team, the youth of the settlements who were interviewed, other church-based secondary schools, and local churches who are engaged in leading youth to Christ and in discipling them to be effective servants of Christ who will then disciple others in their communities.

A caveat is in order. This essay relates the ideas generated by this study to a missiology for the youth of the settlements but is tentative and myopic because it does not yet include the voices of the experienced church leaders and believers in the settlements. My family and teaching responsibilities and the timing of the defense of the dissertation prohibited the original intent of developing this in the settlements with the research team and in dialog with church leaders and believers there. This research will be conducted, Lord willing, later.

In “The Training of Missiologists for an African Context” (1997), Tité Tiénou argued that intellectual probity, theological study and reflection, spiritual fervor and credibility, reflection on suffering, and ancillary disciplines that help Christianity contribute to the “moral, political, and economic rehabilitation of the continent” are critical to a sound missiology (1997, 98). He saw the convergence of the growth of the church in Africa, the shared experience of suffering, and the “lack of obvious means of power”—especially money—as a basis for “new directions in missiology” for African contexts (1997, 99). He also saw the need for love over cultural understanding, because cultural understanding can remain distant (1997, 99).

The need mentioned by Tiénou remains for missiology regarding the youth of the settlements. GUREC, for example, is running near capacity and many of the students have professed faith in Christ. Theological perspectives and issues that need to be framed theologically abound. The youth who walk with Christ are subject to much of the same suffering as their peers who do not. They struggle to come up with school fees and money for basic needs. GUREC also struggles financially. At the same time, with presumed cultural understanding, layered essentializations of youth who employ DTR, youth in general, the slums, and Africa remain—and yet breakdown upon close observation. Letting them break down is an act of love.

Therefore, the contribution this project makes to missiology for the context of the informal settlements in Nairobi adds to Tiénou’s list. The ideas I wish to contribute are an attempt at privileging love—not “over cultural understanding” that remains distant (Tiénou 1997, 99)—but through a more complex meta-cultural understanding gained through collaborative research with the youth. The operative ideas

used are a form of essentialism,¹ de-essentializing simplistic caricatures by widening the lens through which the youth of the settlements are viewed, destructive but commendable tactics of resilience prevalent among the youth, and existing pathways to explore further for discipleship.

Essentialism

Several ideas related to essentialism inform a missiology for the youth of the settlements. First, just as essentialism distorts understanding, so does pure anti- or non-essentialism.² A brief theological critique draws necessary boundaries. Second, many people use Scriptural terms to essentialize others because some of the language of Scripture is essentializing language. A closer look at Scripture relieves this tension. Third, even essentializing youth for “good reasons” or for good intentions is actually a form of exclusion and therefore harmful. Finally, essentialization happens subtly and shows up in unexpected places. Brief samples from four works loosely representing various approaches to missiology that value incarnational ministry illustrate this.

A Brief Theological Critique of Anti-essentialism

Though elements of Fuchs’ (2001) theories against essentialism inform the structure of this study philosophically, the doctrine of creation qualifies his ideas in four important ways. First, there is an Observer outside, in a sense, of this world who knows the created essence of things, whatever they are, in all of their interconnectedness, variability, temporality, and eternity. More than that, He loves the world (John 3:16), and acts in networked people and in history (Eph 1:11), and will judge the world (Acts 17:31). Second, the world is not “only unstructured complexity,” containing no information (Fuchs 2001, 17), but rather contains the evidence that God is eternally powerful and of divine nature (Rom 1:20). More than that, “day after day” the created heavens “pour forth speech” and “night after night they display [this] knowledge” (Ps 19:2). Third, creation explains Fuchs’ “‘black boxes’ of cultures” which are the “natural kinds” that “exist, or seem to exist” (2001, 16).³ As vast and intricate as systems and networks may be, their origin, life, and life-sustaining orderly complexity point to sophisticated and designed black boxes. The fact that we have not discerned the essence

¹I am aware of the philosophical debate concerning essentialism and constructionism as related to identity (see, for example Fuchs 2001, Oderberg 2008, and Azibo 2011). However, that debate is not engaged here since the central issue of this study is the de-essentializing effect of the details of the lives of youth through their voices on the essentialized views of those youth according to DTR they employ rather than on the philosophical questions as to what a human is and how a human can be observed and known. In this regard this study has more to do with psychological essentialism (Medin 1989) than with metaphysical essentialism, though they are related.

² Essentializing, as used throughout the dissertation and here, involves a lack of variation, fixedness in time, and some kind of causal linkage between deep kind-determining characteristics and surface properties and behaviors. It is reducing someone to “essentially” one thing based on perceived behavior or characteristics so that aspects of behavior, attitudes, and characteristics that do not fit the simplistic caricature are ignored and the person is more or less locked into that identity over time. For example, if a young man steals, he is a thief, and “thief” becomes his whole, or his dominant identity for a long time or forever (see p. 7 in the dissertation).

³ In discussing levels of observation, Fuchs states that in science there is no final level from which one is able to see things clearly as they are, but there is such a final level in religion where “all rests forever in God” (Fuchs 2001, 28). Though I am not certain whether Fuchs believes this or not, I assume he does.

of things reveals our limitations. The vast variation of things, and their life-sustaining complexities point to created essences that are beyond us still. Many of these will remain beyond us no matter how many of Fuchs' levels of observation are at work (2001, 46-47) since no one can step above the human realm and provide a human outsider's perspective of humans or demonstrate the eternal power and divine wisdom (Rom 1:20) to qualify to be the Creator's counselor (Rom 11:33-36). If the contents of the black boxes are the secret things, they belong to the Lord (Deut 29:29). Fourth, the image of God in created humans (Gen 1:26-27), the judgment of God of individual humans (Rom 14:10; 2 Cor 5:10), and the love of God for individual humans (Mark 10:21) revealed in Christ's death for our sins (Rom 5:10) reveals personhood and agency.

Critical realism serves us well in drawing the distinction that our approximate knowledge says more about us, that is, about our limitedness, than it does about the essences of what we are thinking about (Hiebert 1994).

Using Scripture to Essentialize?

Some of the terms used in Scripture and extra-biblical constructed theological terms can be used to essentialize the youth employing DTR as helpless or hopeless. For example, the biblical phrases "slaves to sin" and "dead in sins" can be applied to people so that it is thought they have no attentiveness to God, ability to stop stealing, or conscience. The theological term "totally depraved" can do the same.

Fuchs is helpful here in noting that, over time, science, and I would add theological constructs within "science" here, that do not allow for variation and the situated-ness of the observers tend to produce "more or less redundant duplicates of what everyone knows" (Fuchs 2001, 12). What is then popularized, simplified, and emotionalized into images, headlines, storylines, and soundbites for benevolent or other reasons becomes less complex and more certain—affecting missiology. After so many convincing presentations of youth as helpless I become more convinced that their only hope is the help I give them, and I assume that I know them and what would help them.

This study argues that these concepts must be nuanced by the observed lived realities. This is not to say that what we observe takes precedence over Scripture, but that our understanding of Scripture is subject to similar personal and cultural dynamics and limitations as is our understanding of humans and contexts. In other words, just as our understanding of people is approximate, so is our understanding of Scripture. This gives freedom to hold apparent contradictions between our observations of people and interpretations of Scripture in tension.

Sometimes the tension is relieved by a closer look at Scripture. Two examples from Paul help to make the point that distinctions must be drawn between created essences, our approximate understanding, and the use of metaphoric language. First, Paul used essentializing language saying that among Jews and Gentiles "there is no one who does good, not even one" (Rom 3:12)⁴—and yet "Gentiles, who do not have the law, do by nature things required by the law ... they show that the requirements of the law are written on their hearts" (Rom 2:14-15). This leads to the conclusion that the

⁴Paul is quoting Pss 14:1-3 and 53:1-3 and yet in both of those passages it is clear that the language is not as absolute as it appears. In Psalm 14 the "fool" who says "there is no God" is linked to the "sons of men" and, among them, "there is no one who does good." However, they are contrasted with "my people" who call on the Lord and are "the company of the righteous." In Psalm 53 the "fool" and the "sons of men" are linked in the same way and contrasted with "my people" who call on the Lord and are called "his people" who are invited to rejoice and be glad.

language was not absolutist but hyperbolic and nuanced contextually. Likewise, Paul's use of "slaves of sin" later in the letter does not mean such "slaves" can do nothing good (Rom 6:15-23).

Perhaps the most challenging example is Paul's essentializing language used of some who are formed as elect objects of mercy and others who are formed as non-elect objects of wrath created to make God's glory known to the objects of mercy (Rom. 9:10-24). Paul's approach and Fuchs' "black boxes" point to the critical idea that created essences can exist beyond our ability to understand (Rom 11:33-36). However, theological essentialism, as used here, reduces revelation to theological constructs that are complete, simplified, and fixed and then holds people captive in them. Paul neither claimed to understand God's elective work (Rom 9:20; 11:33-36)—nor did he claim to know who belonged in which category. That is why he was seeking to "somehow arouse my own people to envy and save some of them" (Rom 11:14) and why he went to great lengths to "become all things to all men so that by all possible means I might save some" (1 Cor 9:22). This is also why he, and other New Testament writers, warned against judging. Though in the case of false prophets fruit reveals nature (Matt 7:15-20), motives are hidden from us in the heart (1 Cor 4:3-5; Jer 17:10) and we have trouble seeing clearly (Matt 7:1-5).

Challenges to Seeing Clearly

The trouble we have seeing clearly relates to at least three problems. One is that we cannot see the other because much is hidden. This is described above. Another is that we cannot see because of the beam in our eye. Without reflexivity, and transformation, we are inept at bringing constructive change to others (Matt 7:1-5). A third problem we have is that we fail to look at ourselves and observe how we are looking at the other. Responding to McGavaran's *A Giant Step in Christian Mission*, Bediako called for reflexive missiology. Agreeing that there is a need for "sensitivity to local people" learned through anthropological studies within missiology, Bediako called for internal dialog between the Gospel and the missionary's own culture and ideology (1989, 62-63). If I see my theology and missiology as unaffected by my culture, I remain blind to the kinds of things I warn the other of.

Essentializing for "Good"

Gullestad demonstrated how essentialism through photography and missionary letters established a "goodness regime" that was used to raise money and recruit missionaries for Cameroon but was not without "side effects" (Gullestad 2007, 265-282). Tiénou argued that representations of Africans as exotic, dark, naked, and pagan have been used as a basis for recruiting missionaries (1997, 94-95). The continued use of this language perpetuates these stereotypes and hinders the consideration of "the significant Christianization of Africa"—it keeps African Christians framed as only the recipients of missions which severely limits their contribution to widely published missiology, and marginalizes them (Tiénou 1997, 95). For example, books published by Paulines Publications Africa are not available except in Nairobi. When they were required reading for a graduate Intercultural Studies course they had to be purchased and shipped at greater expense and arrived one month after the course began. Articles published on the web by St. John's in Korogocho are more accessible.⁵

⁵See, for example, <http://www.korogocho.org/english/index.php?option=com.content&view=category&id=1&Itemid=76>.

Essentialism and Exclusion

Essentializing for the “good” of someone not only distorts understanding, but excludes that person. Drawing on Cornelius Plantinga’s (1995) interpretation of Genesis 1 in where he sees God “separating” and “binding together” in interdependence, Volf argues that exclusion entails cutting the bonds of interdependence and erasing separation so that the other is seen as inferior and not as a part of the interdependent network (1996, 67). This takes place through expulsion, assimilation, subjugation, the indifference of abandonment (1996, 67), and I would add, essentialization. Essentializing cuts the bonds of interdependence by erasing the identity of a youth in all of his variation and temporality and re-constructing him into a simplified and fixed identity.

Relevance to Prominent Missiological Approaches

Examples of essentializations are found in various helpful missiological approaches published in English that value incarnational missiology, meaning they value “the integration of word and deed, the necessity of solidarity with the poor, and the need to inculturate the gospel” (Langmead 2004, 238).⁶ For example, in Gutiérrez’s introduction to the fifteenth anniversary edition of *A Theology of Liberation* he defines “the poor” in their complexities as unimportant “in the eyes of the great powers that rule today’s wider world” and possessors of “vast human, cultural, and religious wealth” (1988, xxiii). He sets “the poor” in contrast with “the privileged of this world”—these privileged people recognize poverty but “problems begin when causes are pointed out to them” (1988, xxiii-xxiv). He argues that the “factors that produce a world divided into the privileged and dispossessed” must be done away with (1988, 59). However, dichotomizing the population to liberate them from structural oppression can inadvertently keep individuals in bondage to the essentialized identities imposed on them and hide local resources and the work God is already doing in a local community. Concerned people can be led to assume that the victims of oppression are rather helpless to liberate themselves.

In the book *Understanding God’s Heart for Children*, which came out of Viva Network’s 2005 Cutting Edge Conference, McConnell, Orona, and Stockley set out to create a “theological foundation for ministry to children—especially children at risk” (back cover). They move in the direction of a missiology informed by de-essentialized and theological understandings of youth and yet perpetuate layers of essentialization that conflict with the data of this study.⁷ For example, describing a group of children who quickly converted a garbage dump into a soccer field McConnell said, “laughter was heard in the hot sun. And little laborers were converted into champions of their own imagination, transported from hell to heaven in a matter of moments” (2007, 15). He goes

⁶ Conspicuously missing from this list are missiologies from within the settlements. I whole-heartedly agree with Chul-Soo Kim that missiology is a Christian discipline that belongs to the whole body of Christ (Chul-Soo Kim 2009, viii). This project is based on this idea, and engaging with missiologies, formal and informal, developing in the informal settlements is the next step.

⁷ They use the term “children at risk” and define it as “children in especially difficult circumstances or in high risk environments”—but those environments are not defined (McConnell 2007, 3). However, the “generalized use of the ‘at risk’ label is highly problematic” (Swadener and Lubeck 1995, 3) because it often mis-locates problems according to assumptions—attributing at-riskness to some who are not, and missing some who are (Davies 2008, 326; Scheper-Hughes and Sargent 1998, 12-13; Brueggemann 2008, 401).

on to say that “while we see glimpses of real joy in the makeshift soccer game, our focus is inevitably pulled to the garbage dump” (15). Later in the volume Wagener argues that all children, regardless of gender, ethnicity, religious affiliation, or socioeconomic status must have access to and complete high quality primary education that is free and compulsory. Disparities in secondary education must be eliminated *so that all young people have equal opportunity to develop their God-given gifts*. (emphasis mine) (2007, 200)

She also says, “Young people also need essential social and emotional resources *in order to be prepared to contribute to God’s purposes for their lives*” (emphasis mine) (2007, 203). The data gathered in this study does not support the idea that education or social and emotional resources—resources she defined as relationships “with adults who consistently care about them,” teach them of rules and boundaries, identify their gifts and talents, and provide support and opportunities so the children can develop those talents—are necessary for them to be “prepared to contribute to God’s purpose for their lives” (2007, 203). This study raises the question of whether essentializing the settlements as “hell” and implying that certain unattainable resources are necessary for children to develop their gifts and live out God’s purpose directs missiology in macro, structural, and possibly paternalistic directions and causes one to miss the pathways to Christ and maturity in Him that exist within the communities as they are.⁸

Jim Harries, Chairman of “Alliance for Vulnerable Mission” argues that to understand a local group of people well, missionaries should serve in a community using only local languages and local resources (2011, 94). He wrote *Vulnerable Mission: Insights into Christian Mission to Africa from a Position of Vulnerability* saying, “for the sake of the future health of church and society in Africa, I say unequivocally that there is an important need for some Western missionaries to operate in a ‘vulnerable way’ in Africa, and beyond” (2011, xiii). The methods of sustained relationships in the local language and in the local ways of living (including resourcing) certainly facilitate de-essentialized understandings. However, throughout his article he continually essentialized “Westerners,” saying, for example, “God’s word is not presented hand in hand with projects, finance, aid, or technology—a fact which Western advocates of holistic mission seem to ignore” (2011, 83) and “the West assumes that physical needs should be met through donated contributions” (2011, 87). The result of this is that the variation which exists among Westerners, for good and for ill, is not allowed to challenge or mitigate his argument.

Writing as a “sympathetic yet critical insider” (2004, xii), Allan Anderson says that Pentecostal missiology brings God and the power of God into the foreground.⁹ Especially in the context of the settlements where visible needs are great, material resources are scarce, and physical suffering and death are prevalent, Pentecostalism addresses the everyday felt needs of people and provides a contextualized Christianity in Africa (2004, 122). However, essentializations are evident according to Allan Anderson’s

⁸Zanotelli, having lived in Korogocho for twelve years, uses the imagery of hell as well. Though his insight is respected because of his embeddedness there, I still maintain that absolutist language hides the variation that is there.

⁹Anderson defines the term “Pentecostals” in his article as including “a wide variety of movements where the emphasis is on receiving the Spirit and practicing spiritual gifts such as prophecy, healing and speaking in tongues. The term includes Pentecostal denominations, a wide range of independent churches (the majority, in Barrett’s statistics), and Charismatics in mainline denominations” (2005, 29 n 2).

“Towards a Pentecostal Missiology for the Majority World” (2005). For example, he says that often Pentecostal evangelism does not give “sufficient consideration ... to the religious experience of the people to whom the ‘gospel’ is proclaimed” so that “the ‘Christianity’ that results remains rather ‘foreign’” (2005, 38). Second, though there has not been a barrier between men and women or clergy and laity because of the conviction that the Spirit was given to everyone, there seems to be a marginalization of “objects” of mission from missiology (2005, 43). Citing what he calls the “widely influential” book by Melvin L. Hodges, *The Indigenous Church* (1953), Anderson writes,

Hodges sees “mission” as “the outreach of the church in foreign lands.” In these and similar writings, the “objects” of mission, now the great majority of Pentecostals in the world, remain marginalized. They do not set the mission agenda; the rich and powerful West does that. It is high time for the Majority World church to produce theologians and missiologists who will challenge the presuppositions of the past and not be content to follow foreign mission ideologies and strategies blindly. (2005, 41-42)

De-essentializing: Widening the Lens

Widening the lens around ideas of Africa, the informal settlements of Nairobi, youth in general, and the male youth of the settlements who employ DTR reveals complexity which helps to de-essentialize these layers of somewhat essentialized identities. This requires engaging history, theology, and methodology.

The History of Africa and Christianity in Africa

With Cohen’s cautions about historiography in mind (Cohen 1997), de-essentializing Africa is facilitated through an understanding of the history of Africa and the church and mission in Africa. Examples of this are Thornton’s argument that Africans were central actors in the Atlantic slave trade (Thornton 1992) and van Dijk et al.’s argument against the “African pessimism” that African societies have repeatedly negotiated a multiplicity of constraining circumstances in creative and “often unexpected ways” (2007, 10).

Understanding how the indigenous and pilgrim principles have played out through the centuries (Walls 2006) because of the translatability of the Gospel (Sanneh 1989) challenges the notion that Africans can be characterized as dark, naked, and pagan (Tiénou 1997, 94-95)¹⁰. Alemayehu Mekonnen argues that though there are challenges in Africa, pessimistic/nihilistic perspectives formed from a distance that paint a picture of “death and endless cycles of suffering” are misleading (Mekonnen 2009, 75). According to Sanneh, by 1985 there were over six million conversions per year in Africa—mostly among the “poor and marginalized” (Sanneh 2003, 15). Bediako writes about the “‘surprise’ ... in the fact that Africa has become so massively Christian” (2004, 3, 5).

¹⁰Tiénou is citing the September 7, 1992 issue of *Time* magazine devoted to “The Agony of Africa” and William Carey, 1792.

Theological Categories and the Youth

Widening the lens reveals variation, temporality, and changeability so that the youth do not fit some of the essentializing categories that have been constructed from Scripture and theology. For example, the youth are more than the simplistic notion of “slaves to sin” (Romans 6) because many of them have stopped stealing—even when they enjoyed the fruits of it. They are more than the simplistic notion of “dead in sins” (Eph 2:1) because their consciences before God are alive and their thoughts are “now accusing, now even defending them . . .” (Rom 2:14-15). They are more than “hated” (Ps 11:5) because they are also “loved” (John 3:16)—evidenced by how, according to their testimonies, many of them were protected by God and saved.

At the same time, it is evident that having engaged in those things the Lord hates (Proverbs 6), many of them have “thrown in their lot” with those who are “waylaying harmless souls” to “get all sorts of valuable things” but have escaped “waylaying themselves”—delivered, by their account, by God (Proverbs 1). They plot violence, but do not believe “God has forgotten” (Psalm 10). There is evidence that “their feet are swift to shed blood” and “ruin and misery mark their ways” but it does not seem accurate to say in an absolute way that they have “no fear of God before their eyes” (Romans 3).¹¹ They recognize He is in authority and they pray to Him for protection.

Theology on the Ground

The way forward missiologically is to engage methodologies that will observe variation under the guidance of God. This requires a view of theology that includes but goes beyond systematic and biblical theology. Walls and Ross argue that theology is driven by the “need to make Christian decisions” so its subject matter rises “out of the actual life situations of active Christians” (2008, 203). They argue that “this means that the normal run of Western theology is simply not big enough for Africa,” and I would add, for the youth in the settlements, because “it offers no guidance for some of the most crucial situations, because it has no questions related to the situations” (2008, 203).

Gutiérrez said theology “rises only at sundown” in the process of “sinking roots where the pulse of history is beating at this moment and illuminating history with the Word of the Lord of history” (1973, 9, 12). Participation in the process of coming to understand people more than any essentialization used of them is a process of liberating them from the identities imposed on them. Thinking of liberation in this sense, Gutiérrez is instructive when he says “in this participation will be heard nuances of the Word of God which are imperceptible in other existential situations and without which there can be no authentic and fruitful faithfulness to the Lord” (1988, 32). Or, as Zanotelli said, “a text of Mark read in a beautiful house in Karen or in a shack in Korogocho has a radical [sic] different meaning” (2002, 17). It is not just participation in a movement that enables one to hear nuances of the Word of God that would have been missed, but participant-listening, and observing individuals in communities that allows one to hear the Word of God even more fully.

¹¹Paul is quoting Ps 36:1 in which the psalmist describes those who have no fear of God. He says, “for in his own eyes he flatters himself too much to detect or hate his sin. The words of his mouth are wicked and deceitful; he has ceased to be wise and to do good. Even on his bed he plots evil; he commits himself to a sinful course and does not reject what is wrong” (Ps 36:1-3). The identity of a “God-fearer” also challenges an absolute interpretation of everyone having “no fear (*φοβος*) of God before their eyes” (e.g. see Cornelius in Acts 10:2).

Methodology

A methodology that leads to making “Christian decisions” having “heard the nuances of the Word of God” is painted in broad strokes by Woodberry’s metaphors of the book, the circle, and the sandals representing the interaction of theory, community, and experience to point the way to *Missiological Education for the Twenty-First Century* (1997, 3).

Hiebert and Tiénou’s “Missional Theology” (2006) lays out a structure for theologizing in context which they say is “a way of thinking biblically about God’s universal mission in the context of the world here and now, with all its particularities, paradoxes, and confusions” (2006, 224). It seeks to bridge “biblical revelation and human contexts” (2006, 225) by integrating systematic, biblical, and missional theology in dialog with the social sciences. The process involves carefully examining the specific situation at hand (phenomenology);¹² examining those observations in community in light of systematic and biblical theology, history, and the social sciences (ontology); and then designing a plan of action (missiology) (2006, 226-230).

Integrating missional theology (Hiebert and Tiénou 2006) with Geertz’s idea of experience-near concepts (1977), Robert Priest argues for experience-near theologizing which utilizes missional theology and emphasizes theologizing in dialog not only with social science theory but with the particularities of each local context and in the terms of the local context (2006, 194).

A similar model being used extensively in the settlements is a version of the pastoral circle model proposed by Holland and Henriot (1983), “revisted” by Wijsen, Henriot, and Mejí (2006), adapted to teach missiology in context by Karecki (2006), applied and critiqued in Korogocho (Pierli and Abeledo 2002), Kibera (Bodewes 2005), and Kangemi (Whelan 2002), and adapted for wider use by Green (2010). The model is a cycle, or spiral, involving incarnation, socio-cultural analysis, biblical/theological reflection, and action. It “seeks to heal the rift between theology and life by using a *praxis*-based approach (Karecki 2006, 137).

Without effective intercultural communication one cannot do missional theology or experience-near theologizing. Karecki’s metaphor of “the person as mystery” orients one to look beyond initial appearances and to avoid erasure of unexpected elements of identity (2006, 144). Because of the cultural and economic differences related to power, it is critical to facilitate Dodd’s “Culture C” by becoming a positive culture of respect (1998). Sorrells and Nakagawa’s intercultural communication *praxis* model is also helpful to negotiate power differences (2008). In order to be critically aware of positionality, perspectivity, and ethnocentrism, they propose a *praxis*-including inquiry which involves understanding: social positioning and power, micro and macro framing of one another and the dynamics of communication in historical and social context, dialog that is transformational, reflection, and action (Sorrells and Nakagawa 2008, 23-26).

Destructive but Commendable Tactics of Resilience Framed Biblically

A missiology for youth who employ DTR in the settlements can be framed by Jesus’ commendation of the unjust steward (Luke 16), Jesus’ three conditions of

¹²This study generated data that informs the first step of missional theology methodology (Tiénou and Hiebert 2006, 226) and the similar pastoral circle (Holland and Henriot 1983, 7).

discipleship (Luke 14), Jesus' identity as our sympathetic High Priest (Hebrews 4), and the metaphor of the Body of Christ (Ephesians 4).

Jesus and the Unjust Steward (Luke 16:1-9)

Jesus' commendation of the shrewd, but dishonest, steward informs a missiology for the context of the settlements because it demonstrates Jesus seeing people in a de-essentialized way.¹³ The parable gives some theological space for seeing value in destructive, and even sinful, tactics of resilience.

Kenneth Bailey in *Jesus Through Middle Eastern Eyes* (2008) argues that the unjust steward in Jesus' parable was condemned as one of "the people of this world" (16:8) though commended for his shrewdness (16:8) and for his trust in his generous master's grace (2008, 340-341). The steward had no other option for finding employment after being fired than by stealing from his master and deceiving the clients—which he did through an ingenious plan for his context. At the conclusion of the parable Jesus went on to teach his disciples to be shrewd, trustworthy, and loyal (16:9-15).¹⁴

The shrewdness, courage, perseverance, and endurance of the youth who employ DTR likewise are to be commended while their deception and violence are not. As in the case of the generous master, many of the youth have received generous grace from God as He has protected them from death as they have employed DTR. Some have turned to God in repentance and are now employing their shrewdness with trustworthiness as they serve God rather than Money (Luke 16:13). This is not to say that DTR ought to be encouraged because the consequences are destructive to the youth and to others, often lead to death, and end up condemned by God.

Our Sympathetic High Priest's Three Conditions of Discipleship (Hebrews 4, Luke 14)

Jesus' three conditions of discipleship need to be seen together with His identity as our sympathetic High Priest and His work of interceding in order to see the fuller picture.

The first condition of discipleship is "hating ..." (Luke 14:26). This is "not of psychological hate, but of renunciation" (Marshall 1978, 592). A man cannot serve two masters when the nature of the relationship requires ultimate loyalty, because he will hate one and love the other (Luke 16:13). Likewise, "discipleship means giving one's first loyalty" to Christ (Morris 1974, 258).¹⁵ Therefore, a youth must obey the Lord's commands and refrain from DTR that violate them—even when it is difficult.

The second condition is cross-bearing (14:26). This is tied in Mark 8 to the promise that "... whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me and for the gospel will save it" (Mark 8:35). The direct application of this

¹³This is not to say Jesus does not know the essence of a man, as He knew Judas (Matt 26:5), or what is in one's heart (Mark 2:8).

¹⁴The unjust steward would be an example of Vigh's social navigation (2006), similar to Scheper-Hughes' *jeitoso* which is a personality type, "connoting one who is attractive, smooth, handy, sharp and a real operator" (2008, 47), and exemplifying tactical and strategic agency (Honwana 1999; Utas 2005).

¹⁵In other contexts the effects of this "hating" are a sense of betrayal, exclusion, and therefore hostility (Hiebert-Meneses 2007; Pao 2007; Malina and Rohrbaugh 2003; Theissen 1978; Ellis 1985; Jacobs 2003; De Vos 2006). However, in the settlements among the youth interviewed in this study, this was not the case. Rather, the implications have to do with obedience and the inability to serve God and money because of seeking after money in ways that are disobedient to God's commands.

command is enduring suffering and death for the sake of Christ at the hands of His enemies (Fletcher 1964; Lane 1974). This is a relevant application in the settlements. A second application is the suffering that accompanies refusing to violate the Lord's commands to meet one's basic needs. The promise is that obedience will lead a youth through loss to gain.

The third condition is surrendering one's possessions (Luke 14:33). The image is of a king attacking a would-be disciple (Bock 1994, 1289; see also Michel 1985, 419). The surrender of possessions is also a surrender of power and autonomy. The relevance to missiology for youth in the settlements is more related to those who have material resources—and therefore a greater sense of power and autonomy. This includes some people within the settlements and others outside of the settlements who are in relationship with the youth. This raises a number of questions as mentioned below (see under "Local and Global or Intra- and Inter-contextual Applications").

Jesus' conditions for discipleship are difficult to meet, requiring great faith and willingness to suffer. Without softening them, they need to be seen as the conditions coming from Him who was revealed to those who had endured suffering, persecution, and the confiscation of their property (Heb 10:32-33) as the one who sympathizes "with our weaknesses" (Heb 4:15) and is "able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them" (Heb 7:25). These conditions are worked out in life in a relationship with Christ marked by His presence, grace, and mercy (Heb 4:16).

The Metaphor of the Body of Christ (Ephesians 4)

Malindi and Theron's definition of resilience addresses the person, the community, and relationships (2010b, 319), and van Dijk (2007) define agency as the relational (community) negotiation of structure and actors through reflexivity. They, along with Fuchs, see this process as unpredictable because outcomes are not tied to any particular actor, or, by implication, to God.

Theologically, the ideas of structure, actor, person, community, and relationships point to the Body of Christ (e.g. Ephesians 4, Romans 12; 1 Corinthians 12–14), obedience (e.g. Eph 4:1-3), and the work of the Spirit (e.g. Romans 8; Galatians 5). As individuals act together within the Body as led by the Spirit, social, economic, and political structures are affected. On the macro level, the future is neither totally undetermined nor unpredictable because of the providence, promises, and presence of God. History is going somewhere and we know the macro plan. However, there is more variation on the micro level than we might expect. Jesus communicated surprise at the great faith of the Canaanite woman (Matthew 15) and the disciples' "little faith" when it should have been more—"do you still not understand" (Matt 16:8-9). Surprise points to agency as defined and qualified above because the person acted differently than expected.¹⁶

¹⁶ Jesus noticed variation, sometimes surprising variation, in, for example, Zaccheaus, Simon the zealot, Matthew the tax collector, the Canaanite woman who had greater faith than the disciples, and the woman of disrepute who washed His feet with her tears.

The missiological relevance of this is that it accommodates and explains the great variation observed on the ground. It mitigates the tendency to impose a presupposed structuralism on a local community in a way that violates its dignity—for example, the notion that structures in the settlements force youth to steal. It warns against expecting a mechanistic response because of supposed embedded structures or even interpretive principles from the Bible. It leaves room for, begs for, great effort to persuade youth to be reflexive and “realize agency” (van Dijk et al. 2007, 6), or realize constrained agency (Camfield and McGregor 2011, 189). For example, the Bible gives commands that require reflexivity of individuals and enablement through the Body and the Spirit to obey. For example, we are told to “remember” (e.g. 2 Cor 9:6; Eph 2:12; Heb 10:32; 13:3, 7; Jas 5:20; 2 Pet 1:15; Rev 3:3), “consider” (e.g. Heb 10:24; 12:3; Jas 1:2), and “make every effort” (e.g. Luke 13:24; Rom 14:19; Eph 4:3; Heb 4:11; 12:14; 2 Pet 1:5, 15; 3:14). Finally, it mitigates despair and frustration because agency is not totally free since God is directing history, is keeping His promises, and is with us.

Existing Pathways to Explore Further

As complexity was discovered in the youth and looked at within a biblical framework pathways to explore for discipleship have emerged—many of which are already well traveled at GUREC and other places in the settlements. I hope that exploring these pathways further will be one result of this study. These pathways may best be explored in a broad hermeneutic community. None of the following require funding or intervention from outside of the settlements, though healthy partnerships would strengthen networks (Ephesians 4) and benefit communities inside and outside of the settlements.

Though the following has emerged from the data of the study, here it is presented in skeletal form because it has not yet been discussed with the team in Nairobi. It should be read as a series of questions to be integrated deeply with the data, engaging the method of missional theology and the pastoral circle together with the team in Nairobi. This is planned for June 2012.

Thinking

The youth described repeatedly how thinking about life and situations was a significant catalyst to constructive actions. Therefore, exploring how to do this even more strategically may be fruitful. In addition to encouraging them to think about their friends who have died, families, future, abilities, and accountability to God, the data suggests the following.

Their De-essentialized Identities

The data reveal an understanding of agency as the negotiation of structure, actor, and God. This stands in contrast with the negotiation of only structure and actor (van Dijk et al. 2007) and in contrast with a sort of spiritual structuralism which sees youth completely bound internally by biblical ideas such as sin (Ndirangu 2007; Adossi 2009) or externally by structural sin (Gutiérrez 1988).

Many of the youth did not want to be known as “a thief.” They felt that they were often acting against their will when stealing or abusing drugs. Therefore, stimulating youth to think about themselves with “sober judgment” (Rom 12:3) and more in line with complexities that exist may be helpful to them in seeing hope. One biblical idea that could be explored in this regard is how their abilities can be surrendered to Christ so what was used in disobedience may be used in obedience as “people of the

light” (Luke 16:8). For those in Christ, another is the idea of their identity in Christ as raised with Him and no longer slaves of sin, still at times conflicted but no longer under condemnation as they walk by the Spirit, and deeply loved by Christ (Romans 6–8).

Tactics of Resilience

Though this needs further study, it seemed that there was a difference in how the youth thought about their tactics of resilience and embedded abilities as opposed to more formal educational and vocational qualifications and achievements recognized by society. Helping them to think about their embedded abilities may stimulate their thinking regarding how they can use these abilities for constructive purposes. This may help them to see how they can obey Paul’s commands, “he who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with his own hands, that he may have something to share with those in need” (Eph 4:28) and “and whatever you do ... do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him” (Col 3:17). Jesus’ parable of the unjust steward (Luke 16) may help them see value in abilities that are misused, and His instructions following the parable about trustworthiness and loyalty may motivate them to redirect those abilities. The parable of the talents (Matthew 25) may incentivize them as well as stir up the fear of the Lord in them.

Inner Conflict

The inner conflict as described by the youth engaged in DTR should be explored in an attempt to understand it in light of Scripture and to look for points of contact. The biblical ideas of conscience, guilt, double-mindedness, and acting against one’s will are relevant (Rom 7). These may be ways in which the Spirit of God is convicting. Hebrews 3-4 could be helpful here in encouraging them to think of the voice of inner conflict sometimes being the voice of the Spirit, and of the danger of “hardening your hearts.”

Catalysts to Tactics of Resilience

The elements of the catalysts and combinations of catalysts ought to be explored with the hope of finding ways to strengthen those that move youth toward Christ and weaken those that move them away from Him.

The Death of Friends

The death of friends was such a strong catalyst for youth who stopped stealing that it should be explored as a theme to develop biblically and discuss with youth. Proverbs 1 paints a vivid picture of the danger of following those who say, “come along with us; let’s lie in wait for someone’s blood ... we will get all sorts of valuable things and fill our houses with plunder; throw in your lot with us and we will share a common purse” (from 1:11-14). They end up in a situation where even Wisdom will not save them because they did not fear the Lord (1:20-32). The whole of Proverbs 1 – 9 is relevant here.

Better a Short Sweet Life

The youth use a mix of tactical agency and strategic agency, but this is nuanced by the common notion among many that a sweet short life is better than a long bitter life. This seems to wane as they see their friends killed. Young girls in prostitution told Fr. Alex Zanotelli, “It’s OK! Die of AIDS or die of hunger, what’s the difference? Or maybe there is! You have a chance of longer life with AIDS” (Zanotelli 2002, 15). This idea as it plays out in the settlements should be explored with the idea as it appears in Scripture. For example, in Scripture this philosophy is recommended if life is meaningless, random, and full of injustice (see Eccl 2:24, 3:13; 5:18; 8:15; 9:7) or if there is no resurrection (1 Cor 15:32). It is condemned if there is judgment coming and

remorseful repentance might lead to salvation (Isa 22:13); if one presumes in his own wealth as security (Luke 12:19); or loyalty demands restraint as when Uriah refused to eat, drink, and lie with his wife while others were at war (2 Sam 11:11).

Better a Bitter Life

ToX said that it is better to have little with no fear, than to have a lot with fear. Having risked his life many times to get money, he now thanks God “for the little that he gives me” and that “today though I get little I know that it is safe” (237). The youths’ comments about how life is better with little but without fear should be explored with the biblical teaching of the same (e.g. Prov 15:16, 17; 16:8, 32; 17:1; 19:1; 28:6). Also, the biblical ideas of “better a bitter life because it is short” lived in obedience to God than a long life of ease lived in disobedience or disinterest towards Him are relevant. This would involve the ideas of the “blessed are you ... for you will ...” passages in Matthew 5 and Luke 6 (see also Rom 8:28; 2 Corinthians 4); passages that speak about the brevity of life (e.g. Ps 39:5; Psalm 90; James 4); and warnings about gaining the world and losing one’s soul (Matthew 16; Mark 8; Luke 9). Other relevant passages are those that deal with the fruit of persevering through trials (e.g. Romans 5; James 1; 2 Corinthians 12) as well as the grace and presence of God in the midst of trials (e.g. 2 Corinthians 12; Hebrews 13). These ideas should be explored with understandings of the youth in the settlements. For example, having come through all that he had, ToSN said,

May I say that when you are saved and working for Christ, that doesn’t mean that you will not meet challenges, the challenges are there even when you are saved but at this time, you are able to accept that yes there are challenge, but you feel that there is hope, there is hope although there are challenges, there is hope, like in the bible, you can talk of people like Joseph, he was a man of God, he was a man of God, the son of Jacob, he passed through, he was a dreamer, but things didn’t just go well because he was a man of God, he was a man of God who knew God. But he passed through so much to become what he was. The time he became, the time he became a king there, the vice president so he had passed through so much and he was a man of God. If you follow that way, you will see many people who are saved, even the New Testament, you will meet people like Paul, he was a preacher, an apostle and a great one but even his life, he passed through so much. At this time we are talking of that, passing through, things are not always good when you are saved. You pass many things but at least you have hope, things will be okay. But when you are not saved, you do things without thinking because life is hopeless. For now I can say that I am passing through difficulties but still there is hope. (528)

When asked if he had ever been without hope as he was before being taken to the mental hospital, ToSN said:

No, in fact, during my call when I was telling you about the vision, I said that I will never think of something that I cannot be able and if there are things that come on my way, which are difficulties, situations that are difficult, that thing cannot make me to be stressed because I have already given my burden to Christ. My burden I have cast it to Christ so even if there are difficulties, I still believe in God and pray and when I pray I become strong. I am stronger and because I am living, hope is something

that makes me to keep going on because when I reflect my background, I see 10 years back, I am not the way I am today, I was a different person. So it means that ten years to come, I will be a different person. (530)

Listening to the Advice of Others and Creating Pathways to Them

Listening to certain people was mentioned often as having stimulated the youth to constructive thinking. Therefore, it may be helpful to identify those to whom they listen, whom they respect, and those who have experienced what they are experiencing. Groups they mentioned were mothers, grandmothers, sisters, older men, older youth peers, pastors, and certain police. Perhaps networks of these people could be strengthened and meetings could be arranged, in a form developed there, to give voice to these people and create opportunities for youth to listen. Furthermore, with their permission, it may be helpful to identify ways in which youth can contact them confidentially, and then make that known to the youth.

Very Basic Living Necessities

Not having at least one meal for more than a couple of days or having to sleep in the cold and rain seem to be tipping points for youth. Therefore, it may be helpful to encourage them to explore ways to work together to creatively and contextually develop some kind of benevolent emergency fund to minimize the frequency of sleeping hungry. Two models described in the data are a base used by a youth group and a financial merry-go-round.

Community

Having a supportive community plays a very significant role in the development of the youths' faith. I cannot address how to strengthen that but look forward to engaging the local team in that discussion. Two issues that arose in the research that need further exploration are how the community can help youth address the real and perceived powers over them and how to cultivate community within the Body of Christ that transcends the boundaries of the settlements.

Perceived Power over Them

The perceived and real powers that influence youth need to be explored. I put this under "Community" because this may be one of the areas in which youth need the help from the community most since they feel that they are controlled, to some degree, by these powers. This includes exploring the relationships between their descriptions of internal powers such as "the taste for money," "bodily lust," fear, "the blood of stealing," pride, attitude as "the engine of life," and "feeling it in your heart" when you do wrong with the biblical concepts of internal power such as sin, lust, fear, and guilt. It includes exploring the relationships between their descriptions of being "forced" to steal by external circumstances such as the lack of work, money, and food combined with the opportunity to steal with the biblical concepts of perseverance, temptation, and work as well as injustice, oppression, and greed in society. They also include trust and the provision of God. As ToDE said, "I can say that when you have Christ, you don't have to struggle, because Jesus gave us the example of the birds they don't work but they eat and they sleep well" (ToDE). He makes much of Jesus' command to "first seek the Kingdom," saying, "you don't need to struggle [because]

when Jesus comes and says that seek first the kingdom of God and the rest will follow you, he knew what he was meaning” (ToDE).

Exploring perceived and real powers includes exploring the relationships between the youths’ descriptions of powerful people in their lives such as mothers, grandmothers, siblings, fathers, uncles and aunts, other relatives, police, peers, teachers, older men, and mobs and the biblical material relating to the influence of those called wise and righteous and that of those called foolish and wicked, the role of and response to righteous and unrighteous authorities (in civic, familial, vocational, and spiritual realms), the response to parents, and the role of the church.

It includes exploring the relationships between descriptions of spiritual forces such as God, Jesus, spirits, Satan, clan blood, and curses with the biblical teaching on the same.

Local and Global or Intra- and Inter-contextual Applications

With recent cautions within recently published missiology in the United States in mind (Maranz 2001; Corbett and Fikkert 2009; Harries 2011), it remains that the Body of Christ transcends local contexts and that we need one another and have obligations to one another in order to grow in the fullness of Christ (Eph 4:12-16; Romans 12; 1 Corinthians 12-14). What does each part of the Body contribute that builds up the whole? What do unity and love look like across contexts to the world (John 17:23)? Is there a necessary application of the command to doing “good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers” (Gal 6:10) on a macro scale and what does that look like? What does loving in word and deed look like across contexts (1 John 3:17-18; Jas 2:14-17)?

There seems to be a fine line between sharing with those in need (James 2) and fostering dependency and leading people to secularism rather than to God (Harries 2011, 93). With the assumptions that there is a time to give, to be the channel of God’s provision, and a time not to give so as not to hinder God’s provision, the objective is to be led by the Spirit and trust in the Lord. If our enemy is hungry and we are to feed him (Romans 12) and if we are to not grow weary of doing good especially to the household of faith (Galatians 5), then we are going to be giving. Said carefully as one who has adequate resources, the growth of faith is more important than the equal distribution of resources according to a supposed universal standard—but also the love of God is not in one who has resources, sees his brother in need, and does not love with actions and truth (1 John 3:17-18). Cultivating faith may require less aid given at times—and less storing up in bigger barns at times (Luke 12:13-21). Cultivating relationships as brothers and sisters in and out of the settlements, recognizing each of our kinds of poverty and wealth—what we contribute to the Body, begs for further research.

God

Local understandings of God should be explored with local understandings of what the Bible teaches about God. The research gave rise to the following ideas about God to be developed. Because the settlements are where the youth are and where many of them will remain—some by choice—it is important to encourage them to develop a theology of walking in fellowship with God in the settlements and trusting Him for daily needs. This includes a theology of suffering in the presence of God. Because “without faith it is impossible to please God” and because historically there has been a trend of cultivating dependency rooted in secularism (Harries 2011, 93),

cultivating faith in God over dependence on sponsors is critical. As the value of their shrewdness in employing DTR is affirmed it is important to bring to their attention the importance of trustworthiness before God and loyalty to Him—the principle that one cannot serve two masters (Luke 16). The implications of the conditions of discipleship need to be worked out as required by the sympathetic High Priest who “always lives to intercede for them” (Heb 7:25). Cultivating the fear of the Lord in the youth is relevant as the risk of death is so high for those engaged in DTR.

Local practices of relating with God should be explored together with what the Bible teaches about relating to Him, and these practices should be cultivated. Practices and relational issues that surfaced in the research included prayer, visions and calling from God, seeking forgiveness, seeking provision, waiting on Him, and His protection from Satan, clan blood, evil spirits, and curses. In addition to these, “abiding in him” and having fellowship with Him in the light should be cultivated.

Conclusion

The objective of de-essentializing youth who employ DTR is not to ignore issues of justice and morality, but to avoid judgmentalism that is based on simplistic caricatures and to learn to see complexity with compassion, and in that complexity, possibilities for redemption—to see that a person is “more than a thief” or more than any essentialization. It is similar to what Jesus demonstrated when He chose the unlikely disciples, especially Matthew, visited Zacchaeus, interacted with the woman from Samaria who had had five husbands and was living with a man, forgave the woman caught in adultery, accepted the anointing from the sinful woman who kissed His feet and washed them with Her tears while the Pharisee showed no comparable respect, told the story of the Canaanite woman who had more faith than the disciples, told the story of the Samaritan who had more compassion than the priest and Levite, “loved” the rich young ruler who refused to sell his possessions and went away from Jesus sadly, and commended the unjust steward for his dishonest shrewdness.

The settlements represent a context in which a mix of biblical metaphors describes the pathway of discipleship. The first is the death of “all my friends” who, while “waylaying harmless souls ... waylay[ed] only themselves” (Proverbs 1). The second is the shrewd but dishonest servant (Luke 16) who uses his skills in loyalty to his master in the community where many are still “waylaying harmless souls.” He is connected to a community of other shrewd and loyal servants, whose sympathetic master stands before God interceding for them.

Pastor Reginah Naya said:

This research will help the church of Jesus Christ to realize the need to deliberately choose to live in the communities with an aim of understanding them more and helping them from within. This is the true demonstration of what Christ did to the world that was hostile to him and even killed him. (July 14, 2009 personal correspondence)

I hope that the research also will demonstrate the positive missiological influence of healthy collaborative research which connects the Body of Christ in ways that benefit the whole.

MISSIOLOGICAL ADDENDUM REFERENCE LIST

- Adossi, Koffissan Matthias. 2009. *Conflict resolution and transformation: a participatory approach for youth*. Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa.
- Anderson, Allan. 2004. *An Introduction to Pentecostalism: Global Charismatic Christianity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Anderson, Allan. 2005. Towards a Pentecostal missiology for the Majority World. *Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies* 8, no. 1: 29-47.
- Bailey, Kenneth. 2008. *Jesus through middle eastern eyes: cultural studies in the gospels*. Downers Grove, IN: IVP Academic.
- Bediako, Kwame. 2004. *Jesus and the gospel in Africa: History and experience*. Maryknoll: Orbis.
- Bediako, Kwame. 2006. "Evangelisation and the future of Christian world mission." In *Proclaiming Christ in Christ's way: Studies in Integral Mission: Essays Presented to Walter Arnold on the Occasion of His 60th Birthday*, 52-68. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock.
- Bock, Darrell L. 1994. *Luke: Volume 2: 9:51-24:53*. Baker exegetical commentary on the New Testament, ed. Moisés Silva. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker.
- Bodewes, Christine. 2005. *Parish transformation in urban slums*. Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa.
- Brueggemann, Walter. 2008. Vulnerable children, divine passion, and human obligation. In *The child in the Bible*, ed. Marcia J. Bunge, Terence E. Fretheim and Beverly Roberts Gaventa, 399-422. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
- Chul-Soo Kim, Caleb. 2009. Preface. In *African missiology: Contribution of contemporary thought*, ed. Caleb Chul-Soo Kim, v-xi. Nairobi: Uzima.
- Cohen, Paul A. 1997. *History in three keys: The boxers as event, experience, and myth*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Corbett, Steve and Brian Fikkert. 2009. *When helping hurts: alleviating poverty without hurting the poor ... and yourself*. Chicago, IL: Moody.
- Davies, Matthew. 2008. A childish culture? Shared understandings, agency and intervention: An anthropological study of street children in northwest Kenya. *Childhood* 15: 309-330. <http://chd.sagepub.com> (accessed October 31, 2009).
- De Vos, George A. 2006. Ethnic pluralism: Conflict and accommodation. In *Ethnic identity: Problems and prospects for the 21st century*. Ed. Lola Romanuci-Ross, George A. De Vos, and Takeyuki Tsuda, 1-33. 4th ed. New York: Altamira.
- Dodd, Carley H. 1998. *Dynamics of intercultural communication*. 5th ed. Boston: McGraw-Hill.
- Ellis, Ieuan. 1985. Jesus and the subversive family. *Scottish Journal of Theology* 38, no. 1 (July): 173-188.
- Fletcher, Donald R. 1964. Condemned to die: The logion on cross-bearing: What does it mean? *Interpretation: A Journal of Bible and Theology* 18, no. 2 (April).
- Fuchs, Stephan. 2001. *Against essentialism: A theory of culture and society*. Cambridge Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.
- Geertz, Clifford. 1977. *The interpretation of cultures*. New York, NY: Basic Books.

- Green, Joel. 1997. *The International Commentary on the New Testament: The Gospel of Luke*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans.
- Green, Laurie. 2009. *Let's do theology: Resources for contextual theology*. London: Continuum.
- Gullestad, Marianne. 2007. *Picturing pity: Pitfalls and pleasures in cross-cultural communication. Image and word in a North Cameroon mission*. New York: Berghahn Books.
- Gutiérrez, Gustavo. 1988. *A Theology of liberation: History, politics, and salvation*. Rev. ed. Trans. and ed. Sister Caridad Inda and John Eagleson. Maryknoll: Orbis.
- Harries, Jim. 2011. *Vulnerable mission: Insights into Christian mission to Africa from a position of vulnerability*. Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library.
- Hiebert, Paul G. 1994. *Anthropological Reflections on Missiological Issues*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.
- Hiebert, Paul G. and Eloise Hiebert Meneses. 1995. *Incarnational ministry: Planting churches in band, tribal, peasant, and urban societies*. Grand Rapids: Baker.
- Hodges, Melvin L. 1953. *The indigenous church*. Rev. ed. Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House.
- Holland, Joe, and Peter J. Henriot. 1983. *Social analysis: Linking faith and justice*. Maryknoll: Orbis.
- Honwana, Alcinda. 2002. Negotiating postwar identities: Child soldiers in Mozambique and Angola. In *Contested terrains and constructed categories: Contemporary Africa in focus*, ed. George Clement Bond and Nigel C. Gibson. Cambridge, MA: Westview.
- Honwana, Alcinda. 2006. *Child soldiers in Africa*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Jacobs, Andrew S. 2003. 'Let him guard pietas': Early Christian exegesis and the ascetic family. *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 11, no. 3 (Fall): 265-281.
- Karecki, Madge. 2006. Teaching missiology in context: Adaptations of the pastoral circle. In *The pastoral circle revisited: A critical quest for truth and transformation*, ed. Frans Wijsen, Peter Henriot, Rodrigo Mejía, 137-150. Maryknoll: Orbis.
- Lane, William L. 1990. *The gospel according to Mark: The English text with introduction, exposition and notes*. Vol. 2 of *The New international commentary on the New Testament*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans. (Orig. pub.1974.).
- Langmead, Ross. 2004. *The word made flesh: Towards an incarnational missiology*. New York: University Press of America.
- Malina, Bruce J. & Rohrbaugh, Richard L. 2003. *Social-science commentary on the synoptic gospels*. 2nd ed. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press.
- Maranz, David. 2001. *African friends and money matters*. Dallas: SIL International.
- Marshall, I. Howard. 1989. *The gospel of Luke: A commentary on the Greek text*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans. (Orig. pub. 1978.)
- McCallin, Margaret. 1998. Community involvement in the social reintegration of child soldiers. In *Rethinking the trauma of war*, ed. Patrick J. Bracken and Celia Petty, 60-75. London: Free Association Books.
- McConnell, Douglas. 2007. God creates every unique person as a child with dignity. In *Understanding God's heart for children: Toward a biblical framework*. Ed. Douglas McConnell, Jennifer Orona, and Paul Stockley. Colorado Springs: Authentic.

- McGavaran, Donald. 1987. A giant step in christian mission. In vol. 16 of *Missionalia*, South African Missiological Society, 65-71. South Africa.
- Mekonnen, Alemayehu. 2009. Christian leadership in Africa: Effectively challenging cultural contexts. In *African missiology: Contribution of contemporary thought*, ed. Caleb Chul-Soo Kim, 74-103. Nairobi: Uzima.
- Michel, O. III. 1985. hypantáō. In *Theological dictionary of the New Testament: Abridged in one volume*, ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley, Gerhard Kittel, and Gerhard Friedrich, 419. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans.
- Morris, Leon. 1974. *The gospel according to St. Luke: An introduction and commentary*. Vol. 3 of Tyndale New Testament Commentaries. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
- Ndirangu, Julius Mwai. 2007. *Youth in danger: A handbook for teachers, students, parents, pastors and community workers*. Nairobi: Uzima.
- Pao, David W. 2007. Family and table-fellowship in the writings of Luke. *This side of heaven: Race, ethnicity, and Christian faith*, ed. Robert J. Priest and Alvaro L. Nieves, 180-193. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Plantinga, Cornelius. 1995. *Not the way it's supposed to be: A breviary of sin*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans.
- Pierli, Francesco and Yago Abeledo. 2002. *The slums: A challenge to evangelization*. In no. 14 of *Tangaza Occasional Papers*. Nairobi: Pauline Publications Africa.
- Priest, Robert J. 2006. Experience-near theologizing in diverse human contexts. In *Globalizing theology: Belief and practice in an era of world Christianity*, ed. Craig Ott and Harold A. Netland, 180-195. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic.
- Sanneh, Lamin. 1989. *Translating the message: The missionary impact on culture*. No. 13 in the American Society of Missiology Series. New York: Orbis.
- Scheper-Hughes, Nancy. 2008. A talent for life: Reflections on human vulnerability and resilience. *Ethnos* 73, no. 1 (March): 25–56.
- Scheper-Hughes, Nancy, and Carolyn Sargent. 1998. Introduction: The cultural politics of childhood. In *Small wars: The cultural politics of childhood*, ed. Nancy Scheper-Hughes and Carolyn Sargent, 1-29. Berkeley: University of California press.
- Sorrells, Kathryn and Gordon Nakagawa. 2008. Intercultural communication *praxis* and the struggle for social responsibility and social justice. In *Transformative communication studies: Culture, hierarchy, and the human condition*, ed. Omar Swarz, 17-43. Leicester: Troubador.
- Swadener, B., and S. Lubeck, eds. 1995. *Children and families "at promise:" Deconstructing the discourse of risk*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Theissen, Gerd. 1978. *Sociology of early Palestinian Christianity*. Trans. John Bowden. Philadelphia.
- Theis, Joachim. 2001. Participatory research with children in Vietnam. In *Children and anthropology: Perspectives for the 21st century*, ed. Helen B. Schwartzman, 99-110. Westport, CN: Bergin & Garvey.
- Thornton, John. 1992. *Africa and Africans in the making of the Atlantic world, 1400-1680*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Tiénou, Tité and Paul G. Hiebert. 2006. Missional theology. *Missiology: An International Review* 34, no.2 (April): 219-238.

- Tiénou, Tité. 1997. The training of missiologists for an African context. In *Missiological education for the twenty-first century: The book, the circle, and the sandals*. Essays in honor of Paul E. Pierson, ed. J. Dudley Woodberry, Charles Van Engen, and Edgar J. Elliston, 93-100. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock.
- Utas, Mats. 2005. Victimacy, girlfriending, soldiering: Tactic agency in a young woman's social navigation of the Liberian war zone. *Anthropological Quarterly* 78, no. 2: 403-30.
- Van Dijk, Rijk, Mirjam de Bruijn, and Jan-Bart Gewald. 2007. Social and historical trajectories of agency in Africa: An introduction. In *Strength beyond structure: Social and historical trajectories of agency in Africa*, 1-15. London: Brill.
- Vigh, Henrik E. 2006. Social death and violent life chances. In *Navigating youth, generating adulthood: Social becoming in an African context*, ed. Catrine Christiansen, Mats Utas, and Henrik E. Vigh, 31-60. Uppsala: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet.
- Volf, Miroslav. 1996. *Exclusion and embrace: A theological exploration of identity, otherness, and reconciliation*. Nashville, Abingdon.
- Wagener, Linda. 2007. Hope for every generation. In *Understanding God's heart for children: Toward a biblical framework*, ed. Douglas McConnell, Jennifer Orona, and Paul Stockley, 196-203. Colorado Springs: Authentic.
- Walls, Andrew F. 1996 / 2000 / 2006. The gospel as prisoner and liberator of culture. In *The missionary movement in Christian history: Studies in the transmission of faith*, 3-15. Maryknoll: Orbis.
- Walls, Andrew F. 2008. Afterward: Christian mission in a five-hundred-year context. In *Mission in the 21st century: Exploring the five marks of global mission*, ed. Andrew F. Walls and Cathy Ross, 193-204. Maryknoll: Orbis.
- Whelan, Gerry. 2002. Theological reflection and the slums of Nairobi. In *The slums: A challenge to evangelization*. No. 14 in Tangaza Occasional Papers, ed. Francisco Pierli and Yago Abeledo, 77-98. Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa.
- Wijzen, Frans, Peter Henriot, and Rodrigo Mejía. 2006 eds. *The pastoral circle revisited: A critical quest for truth and transformation*. Maryknoll: Orbis
- Woodberry, J. Dudley. 1997. Past symbols of interacting theory, reflection, and experience. In *Missiological education for the twenty-first century: The book, the circle, and the sandals*. Essays in honor of Paul E. Pierson, ed. J. Dudley Woodberry, Charles Van Engen, and Edgar J. Elliston, 3-8. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock.
- Zanotelli, Alex, MCCJ. 2002. Nairobi: Heaven and hell side by side. In *The slums: A challenge to evangelization*. No. 14 in Tangaza Occasional Papers, 13-19. Nairobi: Paulines Publication Africa.