The Spirals Trust

Vision:
Communities of people
making conscious choices
that enable personal transformation and social change
which deepen democracy.

Mission:
Spirals facilitates open-ended, creative processes
with individuals, organisations and communities
that raise awareness about individual and group identities and values
enabling people to challenge and confront personally and contextually
in a supportive learning environment.

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Themba Lesizwe – SA Network for Trauma Service Providers
Eastern Cape NGO Coalition
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I believe if I had to characterise in one word the past year of remarkable work carried out by the Spirals Trust, I would be drawn to use “partnership.” Though the life-changing workshops of Spirals continue, we have witnessed a growth of relationships with other organisations desiring to incorporate into their own processes, the insights, methodology and success of various workshops and programs that are part of Spirals. It is, I believe, the natural progression of an organisation that has as part of its visionary principles the inclusion of fresh ideas and experiences into the very fabric of its life. The often risky and open-ended goal of Spirals is to enable people to make conscious choices that help to bring about personal transformation and social change. To be faithful to this vision, Spirals has an obligation to allow itself to transform and evolve.

In partnership, Spirals has found itself shifting from primarily one-off interventions to more ongoing and sustainable processes, often in tandem with other NGO’s. Last year’s internship program that drew participants from various organisations was a way of exploring this, with valuable learnings about what to continue and what not to do again. The interns returned to their organisations taking with them skills and insights that would enhance their own work.

Spirals has also continued its work of making connections and surfacing issues around identity in new ways. I am exceptionally proud of the very creative and original work organised by the Poverty, AIDS and Trauma consultation that took place early in 2005 and the splendid and moving documentary that resulted. The fifteen-minute video leaves viewers with a profound awareness of the relationship between poverty, AIDS and trauma as powerfully told by those who live in the midst of it. For a number of people it was the first time they had made the connection. The documentary will be both a challenge as well as a superb teaching tool for years, and I congratulate the Spirals team, the funders and those who worked so sensitively with Spirals to produce it.

Not surprisingly, the Board of Trustees has been in continual evolution. New members have been incorporated bringing with them needed skills in the areas of law, finance, education, politics and lengthy experience in the NGO sector. These skills have enabled the Board to take a more active and consultative role in the future direction of Spirals. Our hope is to bring to the table resources that will both help as well as to relieve some of the inevitable pressures on the Director and the Administrator.

It is the proven belief of those of us involved in the Spirals Trust that partnerships—people taking responsibility, offering themselves to others, sharing ideas and experiences in concrete ways, and embracing the deepening reality of ubuntu—are the essential DNA of democracy, of new life and of freedom.

Faithfully yours,
Br. Timothy Jolley, OHC
Well, it’s now official: the life of Spirals is never boring! During the year covered by this report, the dialogues and connections of this work have multiplied and expanded in dynamic ways.

Sometimes the intensity and volume of work has felt overwhelming, but whenever we have needed guidance or support, it has come. It keeps us humble and ever aware of the fact that this work is about more than any of us really understand. But in the midst of it all, there has been a growing sense of ownership and confidence in who we are and the possibilities of what we want to do. As has been pointed out elsewhere in the report, though, this could not have been possible without the feedback, challenges and encouragement of the many friends, partners and stakeholders with whom we engage.

The response to the question “so, what do you really do?” is usually to say that the work of Spirals is primarily caught up in the questions we ask, the way we invite people to choose how they want to engage with them, and the methodologies we use in exploring their implications. This year has seen those methodologies grow and expand, thanks to the remarkable people and generosity that have surrounded the video work we have been fortunate to embark on. I am proud of the way we continue to enable shifts for people, and our growth in integrating Rights Based Approaches into personal and social transformation. The challenge of the year ahead is going to be how we consolidate our new and emerging methodologies – and continue to hold the questions in life-giving ways.

Theresa Edlmann – Director

It has been a successful year for the Spirals Trust in terms of growth and development and this was not going to be possible without help from Trustees and Friends who were always there and giving us support when the going gets tough. The internship programme has played a major role in transforming individuals by helping them to turn their adversity to be university and allow the individuals to learn from misfortune and pain. The process did not just turn adversity into ambition, it managed to develop strong partnerships with other organisation outside Grahamstown which made us proud of the fact that Spirals work is expanding and growing not just around Grahamstown but to other parts of the of the country, where people who are humbled and passionate about this kind of work can be able to use what they think will be useful in their contexts.

Thami Matiwana – Administrator

A word of thanks... to Petro Werth for her diligent and faithful work as our Bookkeeper, and to Hajiera Davids for her work as Administrative Assistant during 2004.
The Spirals Internship Programme

The Internship Programme – conceived at the 2003 annual Strategic Review – has been a significant part of the life of Spirals. The process began in March 2004, and will be completed in July 2005. The aims of the internship are:

1. To run a 12-month internship programme with a selected group of committed individuals
2. To reciprocally develop and nurture the capacity of members of the group to facilitate, research and develop the work of Spirals and their own work
3. To engage with the contexts and organisations interns come from in order to deepen the programme’s engagement with current and contextual issues of identity

Structure of the Process

Recruitment workshops were conducted in Grahamstown, Port Elizabeth, Queenstown and East London. Fifteen people were then invited to return for a selection process in July 2004, and it was decided to divide the internship into three strands:

1. A facilitation group comprising the following participants:
   - Valerie Dietrich, Ikhala Trust
   - Moira Boshoff, Catholic Care Ministers
   - Wela Zozo, Project for Conflict Resolution and Development
   - Thami Matiwana, Spirals Trust
2. A video intern who would explore strategies for creatively documenting issues of identity emerging through Spirals’ work: Vuyiswa Mhlauli from Ubuntu Community Development Project

Facilitation Group

This group has met for two days each month. Up until February 2005, the workshops followed a rhythm of reflection, journaling, personal story-telling, work-shopping a particular model or theme, and creative exercises. The rest of the process from March 2005 will be planned, facilitated and written up by the participants themselves.
In December 2004, participants were asked to write letters of reflection and evaluation on the process so far. The following are excerpts from these:

- It was really great to be embraced by special people like you. I don’t know whether you have realised how special each one of you is to me and the way we interact with one another. I must say Spirals Internship programme was a godsend because it has made lots of changes in my emotional and spiritual growth.

- When I look at my expectation about the process, it came into the point that I didn’t expect at all of transforming me. There was a sense of unity, trust and honesty among us which make things easy for me and the different skills that has been brought to the process was amazing. Talking about the sisterhood there was a sense of understanding which helps the process to move in the same pace no one was left behind.

- Things that I like about the internship workshop was that nobody try and drive the process into any direction, the process drove it self. For the first time in my life I could feel that I’m not alone there are people who can feel the pain that I was feeling and they were willing to travel the journey with me and they inspired me in so many ways and I knew that I could trust them. It was not easy for me to open myself and talk about some issues, but the internship process taught me something that I will never forget – that talking about a problem does heal.

- The other thing I like in the workshop was the Transformation Game because most of the things did make sense after the game. I started to understand the situation and forgive myself through communicating and listening and open to myself – trusting that through my effort I can get through, the strength, courage and faith I can be able to find myself back.

- Materials that were used like the reading packs and the video were right for the occasion because I remember reading Key Principles of Paulo Freire when he said “education needs to be transformation – this means not just passing on knowledge, but we are challenged and empowered to transform our own personal lives.” I understand this clear because it happened to me personally. And also the Poverty paper by Martin Terre Blanche, because most of the things he said about the poverty, I have experienced what poverty can do to innocent kids.

- This process does have a future more especially if we take what we learn from these internship workshop and apply them to our work place, when people that we work with can be able to see these things, more especially those who work with other organisations.

- I have found that after each monthly training I have deepened my thinking and reflection processes on human behaviour, that of my own and others, and what lies behind different forms of behaviour.

- I have learned the enormous value of dialogue, hearing each others’ stories and the richness, healing and understanding that results.

- I have also become much more aware of the impact of repeated trauma events on people’s lives and especially how that leads to violence.

- I am excited and afraid by what I have learnt because on one hand it is so liberating and empowering and on the other hand needs courage to believe in oneself and go with the gut!
**Video Internship**

The video internship was an unexpected component of the programme – it emerged from both the selection process and the issues that were discussed at the annual Spirals Critical Review process which was held in July 2004. The fact that Vuyiswa was a strong candidate and that she had a video background came together very synchronistically. The other component that made this possible was the support and commitment of the Rhodes Journalism Department’s Television School, which has agreed to us borrowing equipment free-of-charge and allowed the editing and production of the documentary to take place in their facilities.

Vuyiswa received computer training (Stanford College in East London kindly charged very reduced fees for this), as well as an update on the latest video skills and technology in preparation for making the video documentary with Stephen Buchanan from the Rhodes Journalism Department. She also participated in the February session of the facilitation group.

**Connecting Trauma, AIDS and Poverty**

In December 2004, a two-day consultation was held exploring the identity-related connections between Trauma, AIDS and Poverty as part of the internship process. Members of the facilitation group hosted sessions of the process, while the video team (Stephen Buchanan and Vuyiswa Mhlauli) filmed the proceedings and produced a documentary about the issues emerging. Copies of this documentary have been given to each participant in the process, as well as other stakeholders locally and internationally – for them to use as a resource and tool for dialogues.

The participants in this process were:
- Judy Silwana, Masivuke Centre, Keiskammahoek
- Nokulunga Kwababana, Masivuke Centre, Keiskammahoek
- Pumla Ntlabathi, Centre for AIDS Development, Research and Evaluation (CADRE), Grahamstown
- Siyanda Ndlovu, School of Psychology, Howard College, KwaZulu Natal University, Durban
- Bernie Dolley, Ikhala Trust, Port Elizabeth
- Janet Trisk, College of Transfiguration (CPSA), Grahamstown
- Martin Green, Treatment Action Campaign (TAC), Port Elizabeth
- Prof Cobus Zeelie, Port Elizabeth Technikon
- The Spirals staff and interns
Learnings for Spirals

The internship has been a completely new departure for Spirals, and has been a very rich and rewarding one!

Some of the strengths have been:

• The way in which we have been able to integrate the open, dialogical, creative ethos of Spiral’s other work into this process.
• How this ethos has invited and enabled amazing levels of commitment and passion from the facilitation and video research interns.
• Being willing to risk trying out the video documentary aspect of the project, which is likely to become a substantial part of the organisation’s work in the future.
• The role of the Rhodes University Journalism Department’s Television School, and Stephen Buchanan in particular, in enabling the video research project to get off the ground.
• The diversity of backgrounds and areas of work of the interns, and the different kinds of input they have brought to the work.
• Seeing the levels of personal and professional growth of the interns – and that the intended spirals of expanding development outlined in the original concept for the process have become a reality through
  – Increased trust, confidence and professionalism
  – Improved subject area and discipline knowledge
  – Increasing sophistication
  – Developing skills and competencies
  – Symbolic capital and meaning, conceptual familiarity
• A corresponding deepening of reflection and conceptual understanding for the facilitator of what Spirals has been developing intuitively and practically over some time.
• The incorporation of new models and practices into the work of both Spirals and the interns.
• The establishment of a network and base of future partnerships, areas of co-operation and support for both interns and organisations represented in the group.
• The success of the Trauma, AIDS and Poverty consultation and documentary, and the possibilities they have created for future connections between delegates and participants, as well as similar future events.

Some challenges and questions we need to work with:

• Whether the recruitment process we used was the most effective way to set up a process like this.
• How to sustain the strength, energy and focus of the current group.
• How to continue building new relationships in similar ways in the future.
• How Spirals uses its limited human resources effectively in facilitating the existing internship, enabling new interns and running other Spirals programmes.
• That the current facilitation group’s commitments to their own organisations means that the process has not addressed the need to develop facilitation capacity for Spirals as much as was intended – leaving us with the need to find new options in this regard.
Other partnerships, workshops and activities

Rhodes University: Advanced Certificate in Education – Life Orientation

Spirals has been invited by the Rhodes University Education Department to be part of a team of facilitators working with 156 educators from schools in Qumbu, Mount Frere, King Williams Town, Peddie and Grahamstown. These educators are in the process of implementing the Life Orientation curriculum – a new Learning Area in the Outcomes Based Education system being introduced by government. The four components of the course are: personal well-being, citizenship education, career and career choice, physical well-being.

Material from the Spirals Manual has been incorporated in the development of the course, and educators have been using this material in their classrooms.

There are two ten-day sessions a year for each group, jointly planned and facilitated by Corrine Knowles, Athina Copteros and Theresa Edlmann, and the participants also write assignments and examinations. Participants have given extremely positive feedback about the value of the course for them in their own transformation, in understanding Outcomes Based Education, and in implementing the Life Orientation curriculum.

College of Transfiguration

The College, training institution for Anglican priests in Southern Africa, was the birthplace of Spirals as a concept in 1999 – and it is good to keep growing the work in this context.

The 2004 Leavers class participated in a six-month Spirals programme, and the academic staff took part in a brief Spirals session in January 2005. It is hoped to expand the programme to include all 2005 students, and to run a follow-up programme with past participants in November 2005.

Settlers Hospital

The staff and management of the local government hospital in Grahamstown asked Spirals to facilitate a series of workshops exploring the strengths, needs and hopes of staff members – to feed into their strategic planning.

Kat River Catchment Forum

Spirals and the Kat River Catchment Forum have developed a joint funding proposal to run an extensive programme with 36 rural villages in the mountains of the ex-Ciskei homeland. The aim of the process would be to explore how these villages can develop strategies to take ownership of their own development and identities. While we continue to connect and meet as partners, funding has not yet been forthcoming.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PARTICIPANTS / ORGANISATION / EVENT</th>
<th>COMMENTS</th>
<th>NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Staff members and clients of Raphael's AIDS Centre</td>
<td>A follow-up meeting to some of the work done previously with this group – to address conflicts that had emerged.</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Local Rotary members</td>
<td>A session to explore strategies that would enable the Citizen of the Year Award to be less competitive and &quot;white&quot; and more inclusive / celebratory.</td>
<td>12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Members of the Aicedale Community</td>
<td>A forum meeting called by Aicedale residents to discuss ways to co-operate in addressing HIV&amp;AIDS in their community.</td>
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<td>UBOM! Eastern Cape Drama Company Learnership participants</td>
<td>A dynamic and exciting group of theatre practitioners who benefited a lot from seeing how creative methodologies can be a tool for transformation and healing. Several participants have stayed in touch since the workshop, and one has asked to be a volunteer with Spirals during 2005.</td>
<td>18</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eastern Cape Care Ministers (two workshops)</td>
<td>A weekend workshop at uMariya Monastery with care-givers mostly from the Port Elizabeth area. An intense process, with a lot of pain and trauma surfacing during discussions.</td>
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<td>Alternatives to Violence Project workshop with Nombulelo School students &amp; staff</td>
<td>This was co-facilitated with 2 facilitators who came down from Johannesburg. The impact of the workshop has been positive, and there is discussion about ongoing workshops</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ikhala CBO Summit</td>
<td>Theresa co-facilitated this session with Bulelwa Nqweniso – using Forum Theatre to deal with leadership, conflict, ethics and the identity of small community organisations with the leadership of 30 grassroots organisations from various parts of the Eastern Cape</td>
<td>50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grahamstown Diocesan AIDS Consultation</td>
<td>This was a consultation by different groupings from the Anglican Diocese of Grahamstown to develop a strategy to address AIDS co-operatively and effectively.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grasrug Besproeingsraad AGM</td>
<td>Theresa was invited to speak at this meeting of farmers in the Karoo about race issues – particularly between staff and farmers. It was a very open, direct and transformative time. The organiser said at the end of it &quot;The status quo has changed after this evening. We will never speak about these issues in the same way again – there are new options now.&quot;</td>
<td>40</td>
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<tr>
<td>Students from Goucher College</td>
<td>Theresa spent a few hours with a visiting group of students discussing the work of Spirals and issues of transformation in SA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Department of Social Development government officials in Worcester</td>
<td>Thami co-facilitated this workshop in the government's Victim Empowerment Programme together with Derek Lyut of Nieu-Bethesda Development Foundation.</td>
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Radio Documentary

IDASA’s Radio Democracy Project produced a documentary about the work of Spirals and how we have “mainstreamed” AIDS in our work. It has been put on their web page, and can be heard on http://radioafrica.oneworld.net/article/view/78351/1/

Themba Lesizwe

As an affiliate of Themba Lesizwe, Spirals was invited to send a delegate to their 2nd annual Victim Empowerment Conference in Durban in August 2004. This was a valuable learning experience and great networking opportunity.

Siyanda Ndlovu’s paper at the conference on Trauma in Context led to his being invited to the AIDS, Trauma and Poverty consultation in December. Thami’s co-facilitation of the Victim Empowerment Process together with the Nieu Bethesda Development Foundation was a result of networking at this conference. Also, the staff’s invitation to participate in the Therapeutic Spirals Model training workshop in February 2005 came out of this event.

Staff Development

- The Administrator attended a Financial Management workshop funded by Interfund
- Both staff members attended a Graeme Codrington lecture entitled “Mind the Gap” – on generational identities
- Both staff members attended the Therapeutic Spirals Model workshop facilitated by Vivyan Alers and Jacinda de Freitas – dealing with psychodrama methodologies.
- Theresa had a day’s supervision on organisational leadership and strategic direction with Penny Ward of Mutengo consulting. This has developed into monthly telephonic supervision sessions.
Eastern Cape NGO Coalition

The Spirals Director has continued her term of office as Convenor of the Makana Region of the ECNGOC. And the Spirals Administrator has done sterling work in assisting with administrative tasks.

Activities and programmes have included:

- Convening regular membership meetings
- Representing the Region at Provincial Executive meetings, the Provincial Council and Operational Planning workshops
- Engaging with the Household Livelihoods Survey conducted by the Urban Services Network, and the Community Based Planning process led by Khanya in the Makana Region
- Attending the bi-monthly meetings of the Eastern Cape Human Rights Working Group hosted by the Public Servants Accountability Monitor (PSAM)
- Assisting with the redrafting and funding of the “Know Your Rights” booklet through Scape together with PSAM
- Attending the Scape Output to Purpose Review to present developments in the Makana Region
- Attending the Mainstreaming AIDS workshop facilitated by IDASA
- Convening and acting as a service provider with five other local NGO’s for a Youth Empowerment Programme with Young Ward Leaders in the local municipality
- Working with other members in lobbying for the establishment of a Local Intersectoral AIDS Council
- Co-ordinating a research process to establish a profile of NGO’s and CBO’s in Makana area
- Attending the SANGOCO North West Congress to make a presentation on the development of the ECNGOC Makana Region
Spirals Methodologies: Exploring the Embodied Nature of Identity and Conflict

An important thread in the story of Spirals and in the development of its methodologies is the fact that it grew out of a desire to address conflicts relating to identity; to understand the nature and role of conflict – and the possibilities of creative, participative workshop methodologies in addressing the challenges raised by conflict.

Conflict is a universal human phenomenon, and often the catalyst for creativity. One of the reasons we need stories and embodied ways of understanding ourselves is the fact that we are constantly dealing with and understanding at new levels both the implicit and explicit conflicts that are caught up in what it means to be human. The reality of conflict as an inescapable component of life means that conflicts are not always “bad”, although the experience of them may be challenging and perhaps painful. Instead, at the heart of a conflict is a range of creative possibilities, each with their own potential dramatic scripts.

Equally, however, not all conflicts can be “resolved” in the sense that they disappear – on the contrary they may be deliberately set in motion or continued in the interest of some kind of change. What creative and dramatic methodologies can offer is an opportunity to understand the experience of historical and current conflicts, and the underlying causes – as well as a safe environment in which to explore options that could result in positive and transformational change in a situation. This is done in a context where individual and group work are able to feed into each other.

Spirals workshops work best when the group is a heterogeneous as possible, because the range of voices and ideas and perspectives feeds the dialogical process and enables the tracing of different – sometimes conflicting - narratives. A performative, embodied approach to expressing these narratives and conflicts gives participants a tangible forum in which to explore these at a range of levels.

Sometimes naming the dissonances is all that can be done – imposing co-operation would involve silencing important voices and concerns in a situation. It has similar overtones to the idea that people with different identities in the South African context should reconcile. While reconciliation is a noble and important process, the pressure to reconcile when in reality there are irreconcilable dynamics and dissonances in a situation runs the risk of being as oppressive as the past we are only in the early stages of emerging from. Dealing with conflicts is not only about developing skills to co-operate – it is also about learning to creatively live with paradox and unanswerable questions.
Whatever the details of the process, the key issue in what happens during a Spirals workshop is that the space is provided for conflicts to be articulated and the narratives that have caused them to be explored so that glimpses of new narratives and dramatic possibilities have the opportunity to emerge. The empty space of the workshop circle becomes a safe space in which to allow the needs and the often intense emotions associated with different types of conflict to be explored, acted out, and new options generated.

In the South African context, the embodied nature of conflicts – many of which have been traumatic and violent, and systematically involved physicality as a tool for shaping and experiencing identity – make embodied methodologies for transformation important.

Reflections on the Video Documentary

Stephen Buchanan

With media becoming a decidedly corporate affair, the idealists and “purists” among media practitioners are tending to feel somewhat disillusioned about the South African media landscape. We do have “hard” programming (news, talk shows, investigative journalism), but the focus here seems to be on the doings and opinions of the elite: national and local government, big corporations and powerful institutions. These are the groups with the resources to make their voices heard – often, and consistently.

There are some wonderful exceptions to this, of course. But how often do these kinds of programmes go unnoticed? How often is a brilliant documentary buried in 10:30 p.m. time slot – never to be repeated, with little fanfare to announce its brief appearance? More importantly, perhaps, is the question of how to actually get an audience to engage with such programming – an audience that is bombarded with the glitz, glamour and titillation of soap operas, “lifestyle” magazine shows, American sitcoms and one of the most sophisticated advertising industries in the world.

This is where the video documentary project of Spirals Trust seems to be filling a gap. Firstly, the content is not restricted by the need to be “entertaining”. This doesn’t mean the videos are boring! But the audience is all that matters, and it’s an audience that appreciates seeing the story told with depth and sensitivity. We have explored issues around HIV/AIDS, for example, in a way that I believe stands out markedly from what we are used to seeing represented in mainstream media.
The second unique thing about this project is the way the media is distributed. Home VCR’s and DVD-players were introduced to allow people to rent videos or tape broadcast programmes – we’ve turned them into a way to reach an audience. There’s nothing apparently “revolutionary” about this, until one considers the implications of bypassing the “usual” distribution channels altogether. The “product” is targeted precisely to the people who were directly involved, or to those who are passionately interested in the subject matter! No need to find an audience of millions: a few hundred people playing this (in their homes, offices, conferences and workshops) is enough to make an enormous impact.

Ultimately, I believe that we are making the best use of a powerful medium. Video is still the most effective technology we currently possess that can give someone a sense of actually “being there”. I think we typically see it being used for so many mundane purposes that we underestimate its incredible story-telling power. What better way to explore issues “in context” than to take a video camera into that context and allow people to tell their stories for themselves, in their own words – even in their own homes. The medium of video also allows us to connect emotionally with people in ways that other media seldom do.

I have seen the Spirals video project achieving what few other media concerns today are managing to do: creating dialogue; actively engaging people and their opinions; forming opinions rather than merely representing them; researching, exploring and reflecting on issues that deserve our attention. What else is the media for?

Narrating South Africa

Barbara Seymour, a student from Connecticut College in the USA, spent four months with Spirals as an intern in 2004. In addition to participating in Spirals activities, she was tasked with writing up her experiences – in particular the inevitable deconstructions of identity that took place in a context so different to her own. The following is a brief excerpt from what she submitted to Spirals on her return to the USA in June 2004:

This writing is an attempt to make the best use of my time here, to turn my experience from good, merely because I’m here in another part of the world, to great because I am struggling and working to make sense of my life here. In the book Mountains Beyond Mountains, Tracy Kidder writes about Paul Farmer, a singular philanthropist and doctor focused on Haiti. When Farmer explains Haiti to people, he calls it “narrating Haiti.” Thus, this is my attempt at narrating my South African experience.

It begins on February 8th when I arrive from Madrid, Spain, in Johannesburg airport for a stop-over before heading to Port Elizabeth. In the domestic terminal I simply sit and watch the world go by, I am particularly intrigued by a bunch of teen-
age black guys dancing to music that only they seem to be able to hear, a group of black women in brilliant traditional dress buzzing in a language I cannot understand and a throng of Muslims taking over the whole seating area next to my gate. I cringe at an obviously American family dressed to the nines in safari gear; they are talking so loud it would be hard to miss their southern accents. I feel like telling them that they are embarrassing our country, but its time to board.

I arrive in Grahamstown at night, so my first impressions are the next day as the family I’m staying with gives me a brief tour. People here have asked me if I was surprised to see that I was in civilization here, with cars, clothes, and grocery stores. I guess they have met some pretty ignorant Americans! I was not shocked; but I was wide-eyed and fascinated by the town laid out in front of me. From kids of all skin tones wandering town in their uniforms, to the clear divide between town and the township; I was filled with a desire to understand this town and its people.

Since then, I have heard Grahamstown referred to as a crucible. There is the centre valley of Grahamstown, with the whites on one side and the blacks on the other, just sort of glaring at each other. The journalist Allistar Sparks (Beyond the Miracle Jonathan Ball Publishers, Johannesburg, 2003) points out that in the new South Africa, this divide is becoming increasingly an economic one rather than a racial one. The majority of whites are still the upper class but, increasingly, small numbers of blacks are entering this elite class. Undoubtedly true, but there are still a far greater percentage of blacks than whites living below the poverty line. One has just to take a five-minute drive around Grahamstown to see that it’s true.

One of the most obvious differences is between the pristine private campuses (St. Andrews and DSG) and the decrepit township schools. I cannot help but cringe slightly as I see the St. Andrews boys or DSG girls wandering downtown in their starch uniforms. The sight of them on a Saturday morning with their boaters on is like some sort of deranged time warp. The only difference is that there is now a smattering of black students amongst them, an ever present reminder that a lot has changed, but there is still a long way to go. My initial reaction to all this was to feel a little bit embarrassed that I’m white and middle class. Wow. Wait a minute there. In the US, I am middle class. Here in South Africa, I would suspect that my family’s US dollars make me upper class.

Grahamstown, like most of South Africa, was once divided into sections: white, Indian, colored, and black. To this day, people still live mostly in these divided zones. Maybe it will be the generation that has grown up in mixed schools and actually had the chance at education that is able to make a change here. But that is, only if their parents can afford the schools fees, if they manage to find a way to get to school, and if they pass. This is all also from an academic standpoint. When I actually drive through the township, such thoughts fade away. It is so bleak and desperate. How can one talk of academic perspectives or reasonableness or upcoming generations? What about these people, here, now? Why must they wait for the future?

Suddenly I feel like I am not doing enough. But I am relieved that I have my nice, clean, big, white washed house to go back to. I am
relieved that I have running water and electricity. I am relieved that I live in an area safe from the crime, domestic violence and rape that trouble the “other side” of town.

And I think how easy it would be to stay on “my” side and live my happy little life and not think about “these people” and “their” troubles. But that is not why I am here. Not here in Grahamstown. Not here on this earth as a person. I cannot really escape the inequalities of this world by retreating to my nice house in my nice neighborhood. The whole point of the barricade might be to keep them (the “other”) out, but I have not lived behind the barricade my whole life. The sights, sounds and smell of the destitute would haunt me.

One of my first days in Grahamstown, I find myself wandering down Beaufort Street. The street is teeming with black people, the sidewalks crowded with people selling fruits, phones, clothes etc. My heart beats a little faster and I look around for another white person. There is no white skin in sight. A few minutes later, one street over and surrounded by whites, I chastise myself. I am embarrassed that I felt uncomfortable on Beaufort Street. I am embarrassed that my reaction was to look for whites. The more I think about it though, the more natural it seems. It is probably the first time in my life that I have been surrounded by group of people that were not white. I can think I am as unbiased, unprejudiced, “unracist,” as I want. But what does that really mean?

I remember going to a workshop at college, entitled “What’s the Deal about Whiteness.” They focused on the fact that whites must embrace their whiteness and accept it, not try to make it disappear in order to make everyone equal. The sentiment I came out with was that I was just as guilty as anyone else of trying to pretend that my being white was not important, that it did not give me certain advantages. The fact that I am white does give me certain privileges, much the way my being American does. This does not make me racist or prejudiced. But too often, in the US, it is thought that we are “beyond such things.” We believe that we are a highly developed democratic nation with equality for all, free from racial tensions and inequalities. That is not the truth.
## Summary of Financial Statements

### Income

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2004</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Donations Received</td>
<td>329 892</td>
<td>213 048</td>
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<tr>
<td>Income Generated</td>
<td>44 395</td>
<td>39 276</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interest received</td>
<td>9 546</td>
<td>21 863</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other income</td>
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### Expenditure

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<tr>
<td>Accounting Fees</td>
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<tr>
<td>Advertising</td>
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<td>Bank Charges</td>
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<td>Cleaning</td>
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<td>Computer Requisites</td>
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<tr>
<td>Depreciation</td>
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<td>Donations</td>
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<td>Electricity and water</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Interest paid</td>
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<tr>
<td>Internship expenses</td>
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<td>Legal Fees</td>
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<td>Levies</td>
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<td>Postage</td>
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<td>1 942</td>
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<tr>
<td>Refreshments</td>
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<td>2 434</td>
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<tr>
<td>Relocation Costs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rent paid</td>
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<td>5 054</td>
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<td>Repairs and maintenance</td>
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<td>Security</td>
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<td>Telephone and fax</td>
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<td>Transport</td>
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<td>Travel and accommodation</td>
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<td>4 444</td>
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<td>Workshop expenses</td>
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<td>45 880</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>408 935</td>
<td>402 285</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Balance as at 28 February 2005 | 162 600 1

Donations received from: C.S. Mott Foundation, USPG, uMariya uMama weThemba Monastery, Ikhala Trust (Scape Challenge Fund), Wheat Trust, Kodak Express Grahamstown (digital camera), Interfund (Financial Management workshop)

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