Introduction to Youth-led Civic Engagement for Tikkun: A Developing Partnership Across Borders (Canada, South Africa and Kosovo)

Yvette Daniel & John Antoniw[1]
University of Windsor

Abstract

This paper serves as an introduction and overview to a compendium of papers that focus on a cross-cultural partnership for youth-led praxis (informed committed action) for Tikkun (healing and reconciliation) in local communities. This Tikkun Project and partnership crosses borders to include five sites, youth researchers, various community organizations, and university researchers from different disciplines. Our Participatory Action Research partnership promotes the skills that participating youth require to further their civic engagement and leadership potential. The specific objectives of this project are: (1) identifying the places and resources from which marginalized youth (in urban, rural, and indigenous milieus) become aware of injustices and seek opportunities for reconciliation in order to facilitate youth-led advocacy; (2) exploring the ways that these understandings are translated into their embodied experiences; (3) informing the development and mobilization of pedagogical models to repair injustices through youth civic engagement; and (4) expanding the partnership.

Keywords: youth, civic engagement, cross-cultural partnership, Tikkun (healing and reconciliation)

Introduction

"In my experiences with community engagement and in volunteering for various organizations, they may have entrenched practices that make it difficult for you to come in and sort of try and make your own mark."

These thoughts expressed by one of our youth researchers provide a snapshot of the challenges and opportunities for youth civic engagement that underscore the main objectives for youth-led action in our partnership development project. In this introductory paper, we provide an overview of the project goals, along with a brief description of the different partnering organizations and sites involved in this partnership. Given the limits of this paper, we caution that it is not possible to address the entire scope and breadth of this cross-national project. This paper serves as a preamble for three other related papers included in this journal. The first paper authored by one of the co-investigators, Dr. Lisa Korteweg, focuses on Indigenous youth in Thunder Bay and presents their efforts in Participatory Action Research for civic engagement. The research design, ethics, and respectful relationality for civic/community engagement has already been initiated by Indigenous youth leaders. Our co-investigator at the Toronto site, Dr. Nombuso Dlamini and her co-authors, provide the second paper which offers insights into an earlier project on female youth engagement. In this paper, there is particular emphasis on the interconnections between urban spatiality and social experiences to explore the issues and challenges facing urban youth, particularly female youth in the shifting and changing urban landscape of Toronto. In the third paper Dr. Frances Cachon, also a co-investigator, explicates the concept of embodiment that frames the lived experiences of our youth researchers to deconstruct and analyze the challenges and possibilities for advocacy for social justice in their communities.

---

[1] Dr. Yvette Daniel is an Associate Professor at the University of Windsor and Principal Investigator for the SSHRC's *Tikkun* youth partnership development grant. She believes youth empowerment is crucial in working toward social justice.

John Antoniw is a recent graduate of the Master of Education program at the University of Windsor. John's research interests surround the barriers that minorities face when engaging with curriculum.

At the time of the writing of this paper we had just completed the first year of a three-year partnership. The first year was largely devoted to developing the partnership, obtaining ethical clearance from the respective universities and consolidating the project. Further, given the different schedules at our international sites, not all sites progressed through the stages at the same time. Therefore, at this stage, we do not have papers from the two international sites in this project, Kosovo and South Africa, so we provide a brief overview of the context and work at these two global organizations and sites. Nevertheless, it is important to note that the work carried out by youth researchers at these different sites focuses on healing, repair and reconciliation, Tikkun, and for greater equity and social justice in their local communities. In the first part of the article, we discuss the concept of Tikkun Olam that undergirds this project and provides the overarching theme for the developing partnership across borders and cultures. Next, we provide an overview of all partners in this unique alliance of people and organizations in geographically dispersed locales to promote youth action for fairness and justice with a brief overview of some of the challenges we face. Lastly, we discuss the methodological framework for this partnership. This is followed by brief concluding comments.

What is Tikkun Olam?

The concept of Tikkun has broad appeal and indicates actions directed at repairing injustices in this world. We began to take a greater interest in this concept upon reading *To Heal a Fractured World: The Ethics of Responsibility* by Rabbi Jonathan Sacks, former Chief Rabbi, philosopher and scholar of Judaism. The discussion of Tikkun in his book is engaging, timely, easy to understand and universally applicable. In fact, Rabbi Sacks was instrumental in promoting Tikkun Olam as a liberal movement for social justice causes. Some argue that such liberal and universal applications dilute the concept. However these debates are not relevant to the discussion. In this project we place greater emphasis on the philosophical principles (although it is important to have a rudimentary understanding of its origins) that are relevant to the contexts of the different partnering sites.

In the original text, the precise term is Tikkun HaOlam that means 'repairing the world' using the definite article 'ha' (Rosenthal, 2005). Its source is in important Jewish religious texts such as the Talmud, Midrash and Mishnah, and in prayers where this term/phrase appears numerous times. In its earlier uses, it denoted legal application for repairing harm. With the advent of Jewish mysticism however, the meaning and use of this term shifted from legal/judicial processes (outlined by sages and judges) to cosmic importance and to the role of human deeds in repairing "the flaws in the universe" (Rosenthal, 2005, p. 225). In current practice, Tikkun Olam underscores the centrality of the actions of humans in this task of repair, healing and reconciliation (Berman & Davis-Berman, 1999; Sacks, 2005). In Tikkun Olam, every small act counts and it is based on the principle of collective responsibility, a kind of social-global project of care and a call to action (although in Jewish mysticism Tikkun was mainly about the soul and fragments of the Divine light, but the metaphor is extended to social action). The notion of constructive engagement with the world is significant in Tikkun and each one of us is bound to others (the emphasis on interconnectedness) through an ethic of responsibility to take action/s in order to repair the fractures manifested in injustices, unfairness, and indignities while transforming the world through healing and reconciliation (Sacks, 2005). Interestingly, the famous astro-physicist Neil deGrasse Tyson (as cited in Orwig, 2014) also refers to our interconnectedness as human beings and being part of the cosmos in one of his most famous quotes:

> When I look up at the night sky and I know that, yes, we are part of this universe, we are in this universe, but perhaps more important than both those facts is that the universe is in us. When I

reflect on that fact, I look up. Many people feel small cause they are small and the universe is big, but I feel big because my atoms come from those stars. There's a level of connectivity (para. 7).

This level of connectivity through Tikkun has served as the inspiration for the researchers, youth activists and community organizations to partner for repair and healing for social justice in this project. Despite the geo-political, cultural, historical, economic, and social variances among participants at these far-flung sites in our partnership, we have come together through a framework that (although Jewish in origin) speaks to youth, university researchers and community organizations. For example, youth are interested in working for social justice in their local contexts. In coming together and sharing their experiences they have found some common issues and the first one being that they feel that they want to be taken seriously and to make their voices heard. The opening quote in this paper that is drawn from one of the youth researchers echoes this sentiment.

Tikkun and the Partnership

The Tikkun Project is unique in its scope and outreach. An ethic of responsibility to others is the foundation for this youth-focused partnership between our Canadian and international sites. Each one of us, in our humanity, is bound to others through an ethic of responsibility to take action/s in order to repair the fractures (injustices and indignities) and transform the world through healing and reconciliation. The recently released Truth and Reconciliation Report of Canada (TRC) (2015) is a stark reminder of the work of healing and repair that is still needed in Canada in order to address the legacy of trauma inflicted upon generations of Aboriginal peoples (First Nation, Metis and Inuit-FNMI) through the residential school system. In post-apartheid South Africa, a TRC was set up to address injustices of the apartheid era. In general, although there is not much faith in the efficacy of these reports, the establishment of these commissions underscores the need for healing and reconciliation as we move forward in the hope of a better future. In post-war Kosovo, no such TRC was established to address the injustices perpetrated during the years of conflict. It should be noted, however, that official government documents, under the influence of the European Union, place great emphasis on the role of youth in nation-building. Youth advocates, in general, have the potential to take on this moral and ethical responsibility for a better world. They are our leaders and movers, and the ones who can make a difference. Therefore, the main principles are: Tikkun (healing, repair and reconciliation), youth leadership for advocacy and change, and embodied praxis-i.e. youth engaging in mindful and thoughtful social action through a lived sense of self and a focus on the lived experiences in which they reject the mind/body dualism.

This partnership project reaches out to marginalized youth from communities at five sites that have collaborated for youth advocacy and engagement. These particular communities in need of healing, change and reconciliation are in South Africa, Kosovo and in Canada. Despite the end of apartheid in South Africa, inequities are rampant and impact youth the most (Swartz, Hamilton Harding & De Lannoy, 2012). Since the end of the Kosovo War, there has been an urgent need to repair relationships and establish trust among Serbian, Albanian, Kosovar and Bosnian youth. In Canada, Indigenous (FNMI) and immigrant youth are disproportionately dropping out or being pushed out, of secondary schools and are at higher risk for police apprehension or incarceration (Reading & Wien, 2009; Korteweg, 2010). These dynamics of social exclusion are equally glaring in urban and rural communities across Canada, South Africa, and Kosovo. At the same time, youth (ages 10-25) have become the world's largest demographic group (UN, 2013). By virtue of their numbers alone, young people have the potential to affect positive social change if provided opportunities for meaningful participation and leadership in civic life.

When looking at how youth are defining citizenship and civic engagement, there has been a noted shift away from interacting with the "traditional" forms of engagement, such as with the state. Instead, youth are gravitating towards action that stems from pertinent issues and utilizing skills such as network building. With these techniques and goals, youth are able to utilize experiences from everyday life as a catalyst for participating and creating change in their locales (Harris & Roose, 2014, p. 801). When we look at understanding what citizenship means, we draw upon O'Loughlin (2006) who described citizenship as community-based, drawing on the aspects of coming together as a community and the feelings we share with each other. It highlights the idea of a "shared embodiment" that creates solidarity amongst individuals. Smith, Lister, Middleton, and Cox (2005) identify citizenship as being the relationship that individuals have with their wider society. Furthermore, citizenship revolves around the feelings that individuals have about their role and position within that society.

As there is no single definition of 'civic engagement', we define it as the ways citizens participate in a community to improve conditions and opportunities (Adler & Goggin, 2005). Marginalized youth disproportionately experience social and economic exclusion due to systemic, legal, and social barriers. Our project seeks to address these inequities by fostering collaboration across borders and by explicitly increasing the capacity of marginalized youth in diverse contexts to challenge inequities through local projects that advocate for healing and change. In line with Quintelier (2008), we contend it is imperative to gain an understanding of the processes that lead youth to become engaged in civic life; especially those who have been marginalized through intergenerational impacts of social injustices. Research of programs that focus on encouraging and developing connected citizens has shown that young people are ready to contribute their talent and to improve their communities (Nicholson, Collins & Holmer, 2004).

Studies of such programs suggest that '[r]ather than 'leading,' adults need to be in the background, monitoring, mentoring, facilitating, but not being in charge" (Watts & Flanagan, 2007, p. 782). Camino and Zeldin (2002) observed that youth seek adult support in the form of coaching, dialogue, and facilitating connections to sources of institutional, community, and political power. In this partnership, adult support at each site is manifested in training youth in conducting research for social action. Youth initiatives for advocacy at the local level are guided by the grassroots stages of initiation where youth come together to create a plan of action or interrogate current action projects; legitimation where they seek local community support for their initiatives; implementation where they carry out their proposed plan of action; and lastly the evaluative reflective stage (Willie, 1994 as referenced in Angara, 2011).

Through our project we are developing and expanding this cross-border partnership for youth-led embodied praxis in social justice. The specific objectives of our partnership are to: (1) identify the places and resources to engage marginalized youth in youth-led advocacy for positive civic change; (2) explore the ways that these new understandings are translated into the youth's embodied experiences of civic engagement; (3) generate data to inform the development and mobilization of educational models to repair injustices through youth civic engagement; and (4) consolidate and expand our partnership to formal and informal educational institutions. In order to achieve these objectives, our first step is researching the manner in which citizenship and civic engagement are practiced in the lived reality of youth at these different sites and to consider the lessons they could learn from each other. We want to understand the perspectives of youth and the roles they play in civic engagement in repairing and healing based on an ethic of collective responsibility. Lastly, through our project and partnership we wish to underscore the extent to which Participatory Action Research serves to accelerate youth civic engagement. Without a strong partnership that combines considerable academic research experience (through the involvement of

five universities), community-related advocacy experience, and the building of partnerships among these various entities, it would not be possible to work towards the goals of this project.

Project Partners: An Overview

We begin this section with the two international partnership development sites. The first is International Progressive Education (IPE) that supports and co-ordinates youth advocacy and civic engagement in Prishtina, Kosovo. Here, we also offer some background context to post-war Kosovo that might be unfamiliar to some readers. This is followed by an introduction to the organization called Equal Education (EE) where youth (called Equalizers) advocate for equality in education in post-apartheid South Africa, and especially in Khaylistha, a township located on the outskirts of Cape Town. Next, we provide information on the Canadian organizations in this project.

International Progressive Education (IPE) and Kosovar Youth Advocates

Since the end of the War in 1999, Kosovo, one of the successor states of the former Yugoslavia (Kransiqi, 2010), continues to exist in a post-war rebuilding phase. The main concern among government officials, NGO's, UN, EU and others heavily involved in rebuilding Kosovo is the ideologies that will shape this new nation state. Since Kosovo has a very young population along with a high unemployment rate, the need to involve youth is particularly pressing. This also means investigating the type of Kosovars that are needed to meet a particular vision for the new state. A new citizenship education program was established in schools and many informal citizenship-learning opportunities/trainings (i.e., human rights training, IPE's civic education schools, etc.) were created by non-governmental organizations. In general, the vision of the new 'Kosovar citizen' is a project of EU, UN, USAID, and hence, it has a strong European influence in all aspects, and especially in education. There appears to be some promise of Kosovo becoming part of EU and for Kosovars to see themselves as Europeans (Clark, 2014; Feltes, 2013; Krasniqi, 2010). This image of the new citizen represents the dominant idea of citizenship in Kosovo. But the ideas often promoted in these settings contradict other ways that people think about what the nation is and who should be its citizens.

International Progressive Education (IPE) founded in 2010 is an educational non-profit organization in Prishtina, Kosovo. IPE is dedicated to expanding educational opportunities for Kosovar youth through educational research on important issues facing young Kosovars, as well as through innovative formal and non-formal educational projects. IPE is also committed to promoting inter-ethnic reconciliation in the Balkan region. In partnership with the American School of Kosovo, the Kosovar and Regional Student Conference about Social Issues gathers high school students from around the Balkan region to present original student-created social scientific reports about social issues. IPE has also become a country partner to the Global Youth Service Day (GYSD), the world's largest celebration of young volunteers. IPE works to recruit and coordinate with local groups and organizations to participate in GYSD. In 2012, IPE implemented the Civic Education School, funded by the US Embassy. This project brought together high school students from various regions of Kosovo to attend a summer long civic education school.

Therefore, one of the first steps in this partnership with IPE and local youth is to understand how young people articulate and embody the ideas for citizenship and advocacy in their daily lives. Through the Tikkun Project in which Participatory Action Research is the main investigative tool, we examine how citizenship is actually practiced and embodied by young people in Kosovo. Further, we gain insights into the role youth activism-related initiatives play in healing the wounds of conflict and to further community relationship building. Finally, based on the Tikkun

concept of repair and reconciliation, we wish to highlight youth potential in "bridging" the divide among the multiplicity of ethnicities in post-war Kosovo nation building efforts. We want to understand how young Kosovars are thinking about citizenship in a way that is much more complex and contradictory than larger theoretical citizenship models, especially the Westheimer and Kahne's (2004) model that is deconstructed and extended with great insights in one of our colleague's papers.

Equal Education (EE) and Equalizers

Equal Education (EE) is a non-profit community organization located in Khayelitsha, South Africa. Since its inception in 2008, EE has focused on developing the political and social consciousness and the leadership abilities of youth through formal and informal training programs. EE organizes and facilitates regular youth group sessions where issues related to education in South Africa and other local and international issues concerning youth development are explored. EE utilizes evidence-based activism to improve the school system, especially schools in crisis in South Africa. EE partners with teachers, principals and local and national leaders in order to have a larger impact on the inequities in the education system. EE youth leaders are called 'Equalizers' and they are involved in many projects, such as assisting a high school in Khaylitsha to fix its leaking roof as well as an amazing campaign to fix 500 broken windows at Lulhaza school (Angara, 2011). Further, EE also employs legal means when they seek to address glaring injustices. For instance, EE sought a court order to force the Education Minister to meet promises made to set a national standard for the kinds of facilities all schools should be required to have.

A small group of Equalizers are youth researchers for our project. These Equalizers will share their projects with youth at the other sites. Just recently, this group completed a project training camp facilitated by the partnership team at that site. Youth researchers (Equalizers) received hands-on training in conducting interviews with peers, ethical considerations and skills needed for transcribing interviews. As these Equalizers embark upon their action projects in the community, we are excited about the possibilities for sharing, learning and collaboration among the sites via the use of social media and then with their participation in a youth symposium to be held in the third and last year of the partnership development process.

Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN) and Youth Amplifiers

Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN) is a political territorial organization that represents 49 First Nations in the province of Ontario, with a population of 45,000. NAN encompasses James Bay Treaty No. 9 and Ontario's portion of Treaty No. 5, and has a total land mass covering two-thirds of the province of Ontario spanning 210,000 square miles. Urban and NAN youth involved in secondary and post-secondary education in Thunder Bay will participate in the Indigenous Tikkun "I-Tikkun" site. Beginning with the Provincial Child/Youth Advocate's report (2014) also known as Feathers of Hope, this project will focus on serving the Youth Amplifiers-leaders of the Feathers of Hope to reach their action goals and recommendations (all established through youth forums' research in the Feathers of Hope report) while the university researchers demonstrate mechanisms and methods for greater social organizing with Indigenous youth for improved democratic and civic engagement (especially in their communities). At this site, an indigenized approach for I-YPAR will incorporate the 4+Rs of Indigenous education (Kirkness & Barnhardt, 1991; Grande, 2004) that emphasizes 1) Repair of the trauma and traumatic effects of schooling from the legacies of the Indian Residential School system and ongoing colonization; 2) Respect for Indigenous youth to self-determine and define their needs for improvement of life and social/societal conditions; 3) Regeneration/revitalization of hope, strength and resilience for youth; in order to bring forth 4) Reclamation/resurgence by youth of their culture, communities, languages and Land practices for

greater civic/democratic engagement. These 4Rs for Participatory Action Research are being articulated and adopted at the other sites as well.

Canadian Civil Liberties Education Trust (CCLET) and Urban Youth Advocates in Toronto

CCLET is a branch of the Canadian Civil Liberties Association (CCLA) in Toronto. CCLET's educational programs involve a unique and much sought after series of in-class workshops, interactive seminars, and lectures on Canadian rights and freedoms for youth. Participants learn that democracy requires them to make choices – and these choices are not only between good and bad, but more likely to be between the lesser of two or more evils. The students are engaged in thinking critically about the conflicts of rights that all people living in democracies face.

CCLET contributes its expertise in the design, development, and implementation of youth targeted-activities to the partnership. CCLET participates in project-related activities at the Toronto site, provides information and a support network at the local level, assists in recruiting youth through their connections with various local organizations, and assists in knowledge mobilization through their association with various organizations at the local, provincial and national levels. The partnership is beneficial to CCLET's objective to develop democratic habits such as critical thinking and active citizenship engagement.

Multicultural Council of Windsor and Essex County (MCC) and Windsor Youth Advocates for Revitalizing Local Communities

Multicultural Council of Windsor and Essex County (MCC) is a non-profit organization that provides community-based services to urban and rural communities in the region. In particular, they are dedicated to providing resources for newcomers to Canada with a focus on settlement and integration. MCC is, in fact, an umbrella organization of community-based organizations with expertise in promoting cultural sensitivity, anti-racism education, newcomer integration, and intercultural relations within the community and beyond. Through their various youth organizations, MCC plays an active role in facilitating access to youth participants and also in facilitating, planning, and implementing knowledge mobilization activities. MCC benefits from the partnership by being able to facilitate small and large-scale adaptation of intervention/pilot programs and modules. Several of the youth researchers are already involved in initiatives supported by the MCC and by other youth leadership initiatives in the region. For example, our youth have initiated a local community garden cooperative in which residents come together to grow and share fresh healthy produce. They also work with new immigrants to help them in the various phases of their settlement, especially supporting young girls and women in accessing services. Further, they participate in anti-poverty initiatives and for programs geared to promoting minority rights and gender equality.

Challenges

There are a number of challenges in a multiple-site project of this nature. Firstly, all the community organizations involved are non-profit, and are subsisting on tight budgets. Therefore, modest funding is provided in order to carry out various activities and to support youth researchers with stipends for their time and commitment. Secondly, geographic distances and time zone differences present challenges that are addressed through the use of digital technologies for synchronous and asynchronous communication to record, relay, and coordinate activities. Thirdly, some of our young researchers might not have enough experience with the proposed methodology

of Participatory Action Research (PAR). They may only have experienced university researchers observing them and not actually including them as active participants in the research and action process. As such, youth are participating in well-organized training sessions to understand PAR methodology so that they become active participants in the project and the partnership. Lastly, cultural differences and language issues among partners also present some interesting and trying moments. For example, the concept of the 'in-kind contribution' is a Western one, which proved difficult to convey to some of our partners. Further, ethical reviews, transfer of funds, restrictions imposed by granting agencies, meeting deadlines, and record-keeping practices are given to different interpretations in different cultural milieus. We continue to address these cross-cultural issues by increasing synchronous personal communication (i.e., phone and Skype conversations) to reduce possible miscommunication that can arise from impersonal and asynchronous email correspondence. To further address this matter, the hub site has a small team dedicated to providing ongoing support to the sites.

Methodological Framework for our Cross-Cultural Comparative Study

We employ Participatory Action Research (PAR) and grounded theory for this Tikkun Project. PAR, in which the youth participant is also a researcher, focuses on engagement, collaboration, and a commitment to social justice. Grounded theory is a process of critical constructivism that emphasizes the reciprocal and emergent relationship between data collection and analysis to shape each other through an iterative process (Charmaz, 2011).

At each Tikkun site, youth researchers are active agents in knowledge construction. This kind of knowledge for advocacy emerges from action and analysis (Willie, 1994). PAR is a generative methodology because it "moves social inquiry from a linear cause and effect perspective, to a participatory framework that considers the contexts of people's lives" (MacDonald, 2012) and is also effective in developing youth leadership skills (Rodrigues & Brown, 2009). PAR interrogates the role of power and existing forms of knowledge construction in order to enable youth to construct knowledge for action guided by the principles of fairness, equity, and social justice (one of our colleague's papers details the practices of this methodology).

PAR is also effective when working with diverse groups that have different ways of understanding and interpreting community action. This variation is important to capture in this Tikkun Project as it may determine what type of activities the youth choose to participate in and support (Balsano, 2005). We adopt a grounded theory approach to allow for ongoing and flexible comparative analysis across our culturally diverse and global locations. Insights into the embodied experiences of youth at each site will enable us to construct innovative frameworks for positive social change across global boundaries.

Emerging Key Themes

Since we have recently completed the first year (and not all sites are proceeding synchronously in their activities) it is not possible to present defined and analyzed data. Nonetheless, from ongoing communication and reporting from the sites and preliminary analysis of incoming data from interviews we have noticed some common themes. These are listed below:
Youth feel that there is not enough being done to motivate and involve youth in civic engagement for change. Mostly youth are being asked to follow along and support adults and initiatives are not easy to introduce and implement. They feel they are not a priority despite formal policies for youth engagement in many places.

Youth feel a lack of autonomy in their civic engagement. They realize that just placating youth is not enough. They want a real sense of meaning and purpose in their activities. For example,

in Ontario high schools, students are required to devote 40 hours of community service. Youth place great value on this service and want meaningful experiences to enhance their understanding of civic engagement.

Youth across the different sites expressed concerns about apathy and disengagement. They interrogated ways to get more young people involved in activities.

Youth underscored the importance of networking to becoming involved and engaged. Networking enhances one's ability to access resources and provides ways to make things happen by finding new opportunities to meet community needs.

Conclusion and Future Directions

The Tikkun Project fosters engagement with youth and by youth to facilitate the co-construction of knowledge in symbiotic collaboration at regional, national, and international levels. Our youth participants, instilled with an ethic of responsibility, take on projects that respond to the needs and gaps in their contexts to focus on redemption and change through small steps. As each small step is a journey toward repair and healing, then each act mends a small fracture (Tikkun) to work toward distributive justice. Youth have the ability to respond or give response-ability (Sacks, 2005) to the needs of their fellow human beings because "we live to give" and to strive for basic human rights and dignity. In the first year, all our team members have worked diligently to consolidate the partnership, obtain ethics clearance from each university, create a training guide for PAR, recruit youth researchers, and navigate the bureaucracy inherent in managing fiscal and other responsibilities of this project. Youth participants/researchers in this Tikkun Project and partnership take pride in their work, and are eager to share ideas through social media and a website we recently created for this purpose. In the final year of our project, we plan to bring youth researchers, co-investigators and community representatives together for an international youth symposium to share, showcase and learn from one another. One thing that has surfaced in this project as we are progressing through the stages, is that we were pleasantly surprised that more people were interested in the project and we expanded our network of connections. As new people got involved, they contributed their ideas and expertise. This project is connecting communities and groups from all different walks of life with the one common goal in mind: to heal and transform the world.

The current project will also be an important step in partnership development for a larger youth project. While the Tikkun Project makes significant contributions to youth civic engagement, it also paves the way for continued research in this field of study. Since Tikkun emphasizes taking small steps in creating change, we need to keep the momentum in order to expand the work started by these youth in our partnership and project. Within this research, youth were able to identify multiple issues that are challenges and opportunities in the process of their work in civic engagement. Each of these issues is worthy of a study in the future. Furthermore, when brainstorming action projects, the youth had so many ideas and areas they wanted to address. The issues raised underscored the need for future research and intense work to address inequities that youth want to work with, with the aim of healing and repairing relationships, processes and practices.

References

Adler, R.P., & Goggin, J. (2005). What do we mean by "civic engagement"? *Journal of Transformative Education*, *3*(3), 236-253.

Angara, H. (2011). The 500 windows campaign: A case study of a youth movement for educational resources in South Africa. *Interactions: UCLA Journal of Education and Information Studies*, *7*(2), 1-26.

Balsano, A. (2005). Youth civic engagement in the United States: Understanding and addressing the impact of social impediments on positive youth and community development. *Applied Developmental Science*, *9*(4), 188-201.

Berman, D., & Davis-Berman, J. (1999). Tikkun Olam: A model for healing the world. *The Journal of Experiential Education*, *22*(1), 24-27.

Camino, L., & Zeldin, S. (2002). From periphery to center: Pathways for youth civic engagement in the day-to-day life of communities. *Applied Developmental Science*, *6*(4), 213-220.

Charmaz, K. (2011). Grounded theory methods in social justice research. In N.K. Denzin & Y.S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of qualitative research,* 4th edition (pp. 359-380). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Clark, J. (2014). Kosovo's Gordian knot: The contested north and the search for a solution. *Nationalities Papers*, *42*(3), 526-547.

Feltes, T. (2013). Youth and democracy: The promotion of youth participation by the international community in Kosovo. *Security and Human Rights*, *24*, 195-209.

Grande, S. (2004). *Red pedagogy: Native American social and political thought*. Rowman & Littlefield.

Harris, A. & Roose, J. (2014). DIY citizenship amongst young Muslims: experience of the 'ordinary'. *Journal of Youth Studies*, *17*(6), 794-813.

Kirkness, V. J., & Barnhardt, R. (1991). The Four R's-Respect, Relevance, Reciprocity, Responsibility. *Journal of American Indian Education*, *30*(3), 1-15.

Korteweg, L. (2010). *The Lakehead Public School Board's Urban Aboriginal Education Project*. Retrieved from: Council of Ontario Directors of Education website: http://ontariodirectors.ca/UA_Pilot_Project/files/Lakehead%20RE/UAEP_FINAL_REPORT_Review%20and%20Research%20Study_LK_July16.pdf

Krasniqi, G. (2010). Citizenship as a tool of state-building in Kosovo: Status, rights and identity in the new state. University of Edinburgh, School of Law. The Europeanisation of Citizenship in the Successor States of the Former Yugoslavia (CITSEE working paper: European Research Council.

MacDonald, C. (2012). Understanding participatory action research: A qualitative research methodology option. *Canadian Journal of Action Research*, *13*(2), 34-50.

Nicholson, H.J., Collins, C., & Holmer, H. (2004). Youth as people: The protective aspects of youth development in after-school settings. *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, *591*(1), 55-71.

O'Loughlin, M. (2006). *Embodiment and education: exploring creatural existence*. Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Springer.

Orwig, J. (2014, November 4). Neil deGrasse Tyson's 'Most Astounding Fact About The Universe' May Bring You To Tears. Retrieved from http://www.businessinsider.com/neil-degrasse-tysons-most-astounding-fact-2014-11

Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth (2014). *Feathers of Hope: A First Nations Youth Action Plan*. Toronto, Canada.

Quintelier, E. (2008). Who is politically active: The athlete, the scout member, or the environmental activist? Young people, voluntary engagement and political participation. *Acta Sociological, 51*(4), 355-370.

Reading, C. L., & Wien, F. (2009). Health inequalities and social determinants of Aboriginal peoples' health. *National Collaborating Centre for Aboriginal Health*. Retrieved September, 15, 2013 from http://www.nccahccnsa.ca/docs/nccah%20reports/LoppieWien-2.pdf

Rodrigues, L., & Brown, T. (2009). From voice to agency: Guiding principles for participatory action research with youth. *New Directions for Youth Development, 123*, 19-34.

Rosenthal, G. (2005). Tikkun ha-Olam: The metamorphosis of a concept. *The Journal of Religion, 85*(2), 214-240.

Sacks, Jonathan. (2005). *To Heal a Fractured World: The Ethics of Responsibility*. New York: Schocken Books.

Smith, N., Lister, R., Middleton, S., & Cox, L. (2005). Young people as real citizens: towards an inclusionary understanding of citizenship. *Journal of Youth Studies, 8*(4), 425-443.

Swartz, S., Hamilton Harding, J., & De Lannoy, A. (2012). Ikasi style and the quiet violence of dreams:A critique of youth belonging in post-apartheid South Africa. *Comparative Education 48*(1), 27-40.

Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) (2015). Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action. Winnipeg, Manitoba.

United Nations (UN). (2013). *International Conference on Population and Development: Beyond 2014*. Thematic paper: Leadership and meaningful participation. Retrieved September 28, 2013 from http://icpdbeyond2014.org/uploads/browser/files/leadership_and_meaningful_participation.docx

Watts, R. J. & Flanagan, C. (2007). Pushing the envelope on youth civic engagement: A developmental and liberation psychology perspective. *Journal of Community Psychology, 35*(6), 779–792.

Westheimer, J., & Kahne, J. (2004). What kind of citizen? The politics of educating for democracy. *American Educational Research Journal, 42*(2), 237-269.

Willie, C. (1994). *Theories of Human Social Action*. New York: General Hall Inc.