

# EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH RECENTRING, REFRAMING AND REIMAGINING

ACUSAfrica Conference, Ghana

Plenary Panel

Sharlene Swartz

11 October 2023

**ACUSAFRICA**

ADVANCING CRITICAL UNIVERSITY STUDIES ACROSS AFRICA

**CONFERENCE**

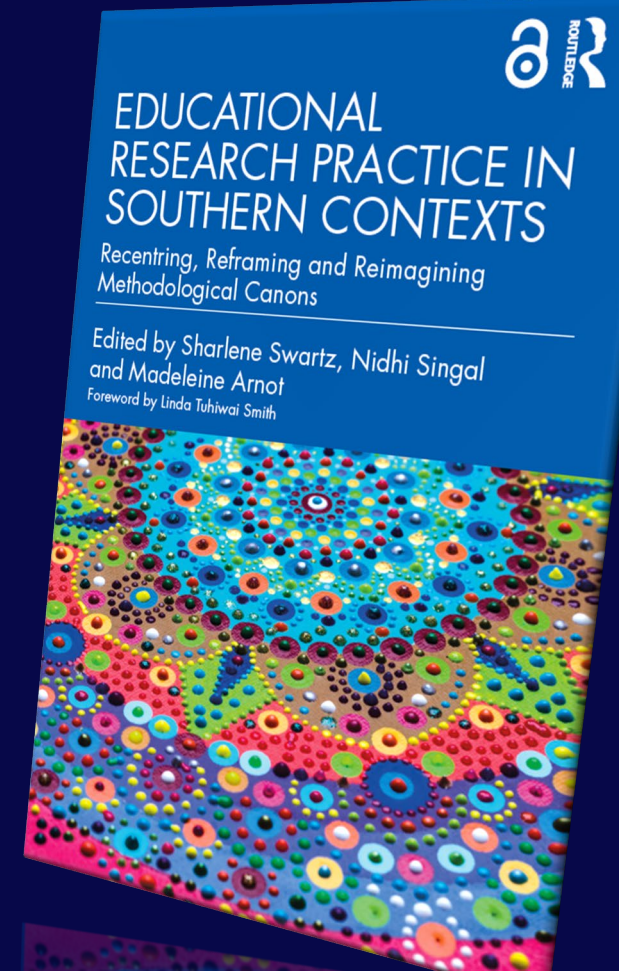
Charging towards critical canons  
of knowledge production in the  
African university



science & innovation  
Department:  
Science and Innovation  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

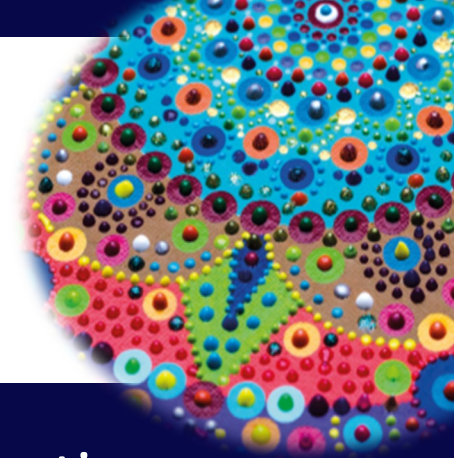
SABELO NDLOVU-GATSHENI (2020, P. 369)

“ de-imperialising, de-Westernising,  
de-patriarchising, de-racialising,  
de-corporatising, de-canonising,  
and de-secularising ”

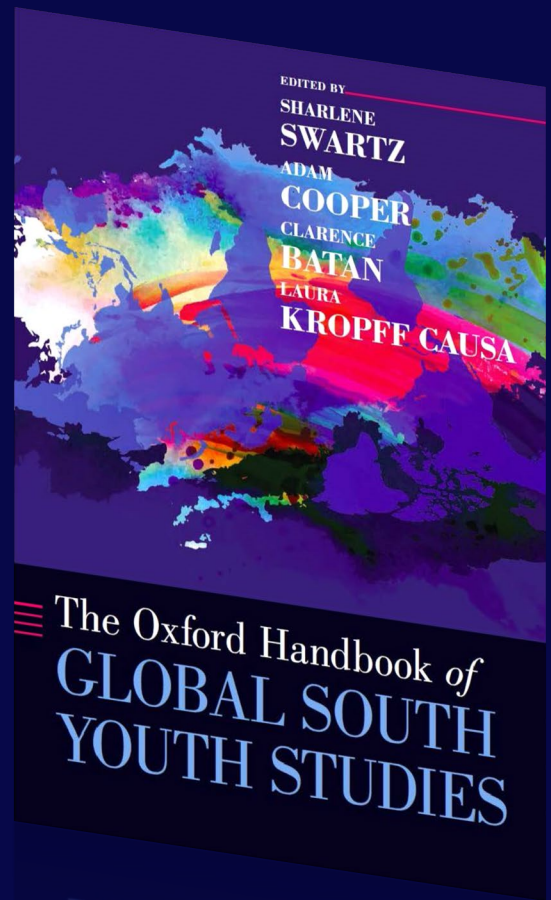
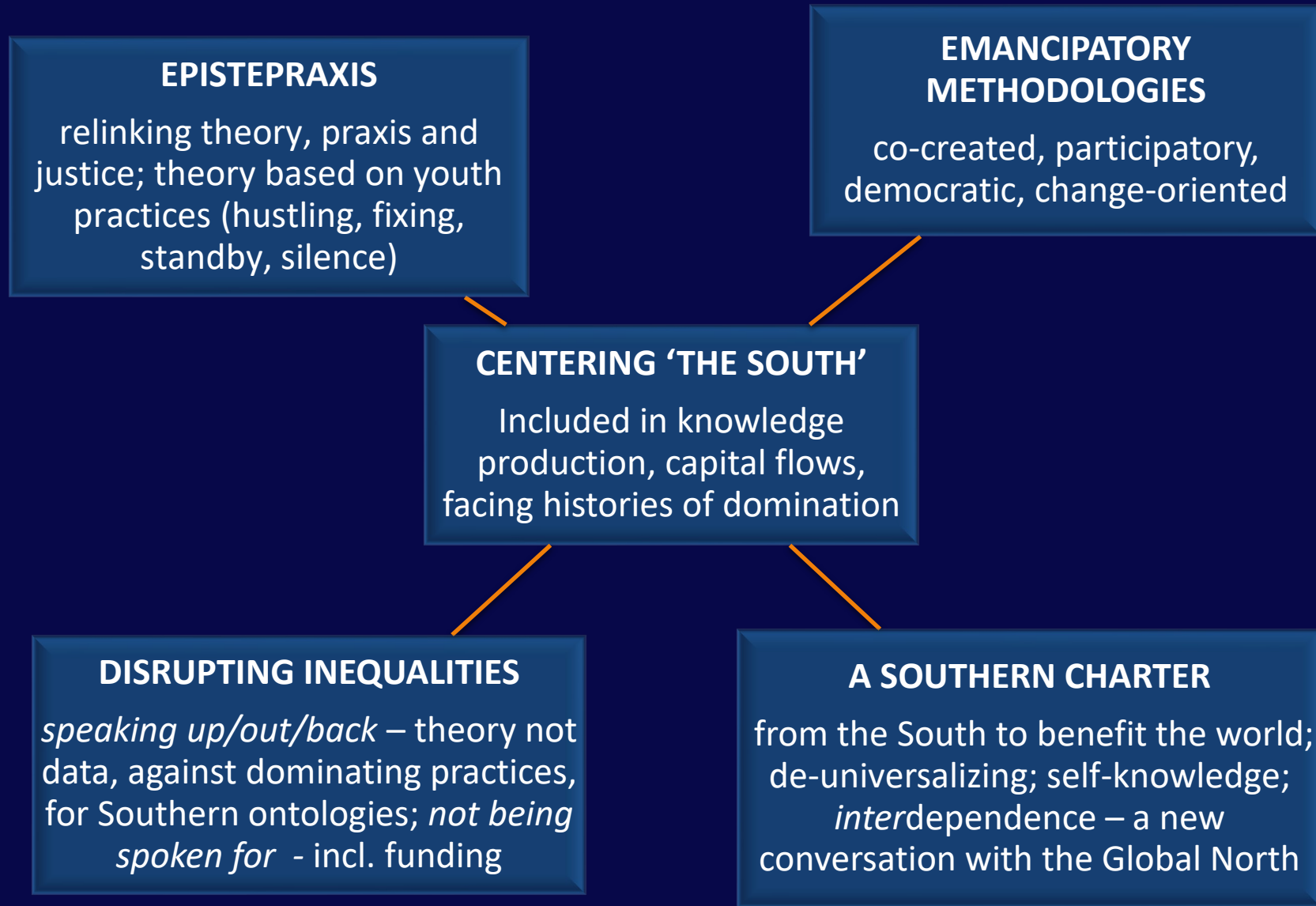


# BOAVENTURA DE SOUSA SANTOS

## *EPISTEMOLOGIES OF THE SOUTH* (2015)



“ It is time for a new relationship between knowledge creation, grassroots practices, and politics ... an epistemological tradition that follows Brazilian educator, Paulo Freire and South African Black Consciousness leader, Steve Biko in intentionally catalyzing social justice by centering the oppressed, one that most importantly, **“starts from the premise that social practices are knowledge practices”** (Santos, 2015, p. 157), that draws on **“subjectivities that rebel against conformist, routinised, repetitive social practices and are energized by experimenting with liminality... eccentric or marginal forms of sociability”** (Santos, 2015, p. 98). ”



YOUTH STUDIES  
GLOBAL SOUTH  
THE OXFORD HANDBOOK OF

# DECOLONISING YOUTH STUDIES AND EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH

## EPISTEPRAXIS

relinking theory, praxis and justice; theory based on youth practices (hustling, fixing, standby, silence)

## EMANCIPATORY METHODOLOGIES

co-created, participatory, democratic, change-oriented

## CENTERING 'THE SOUTH'

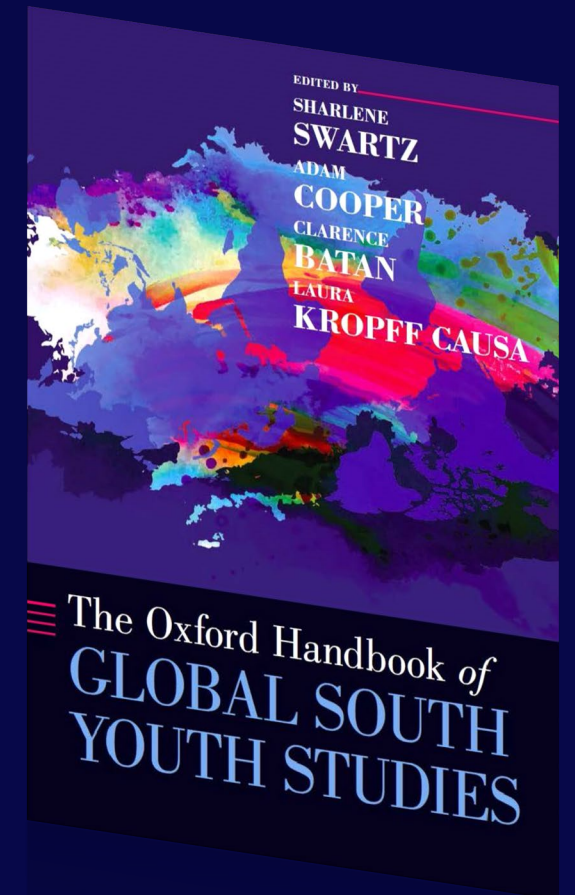
Included in knowledge production, capital flows, facing histories of domination

## DISRUPTING INEQUALITIES

*speaking up/out/back* – theory not data, against dominating practices, for Southern ontologies; *not being spoken for* - incl. funding

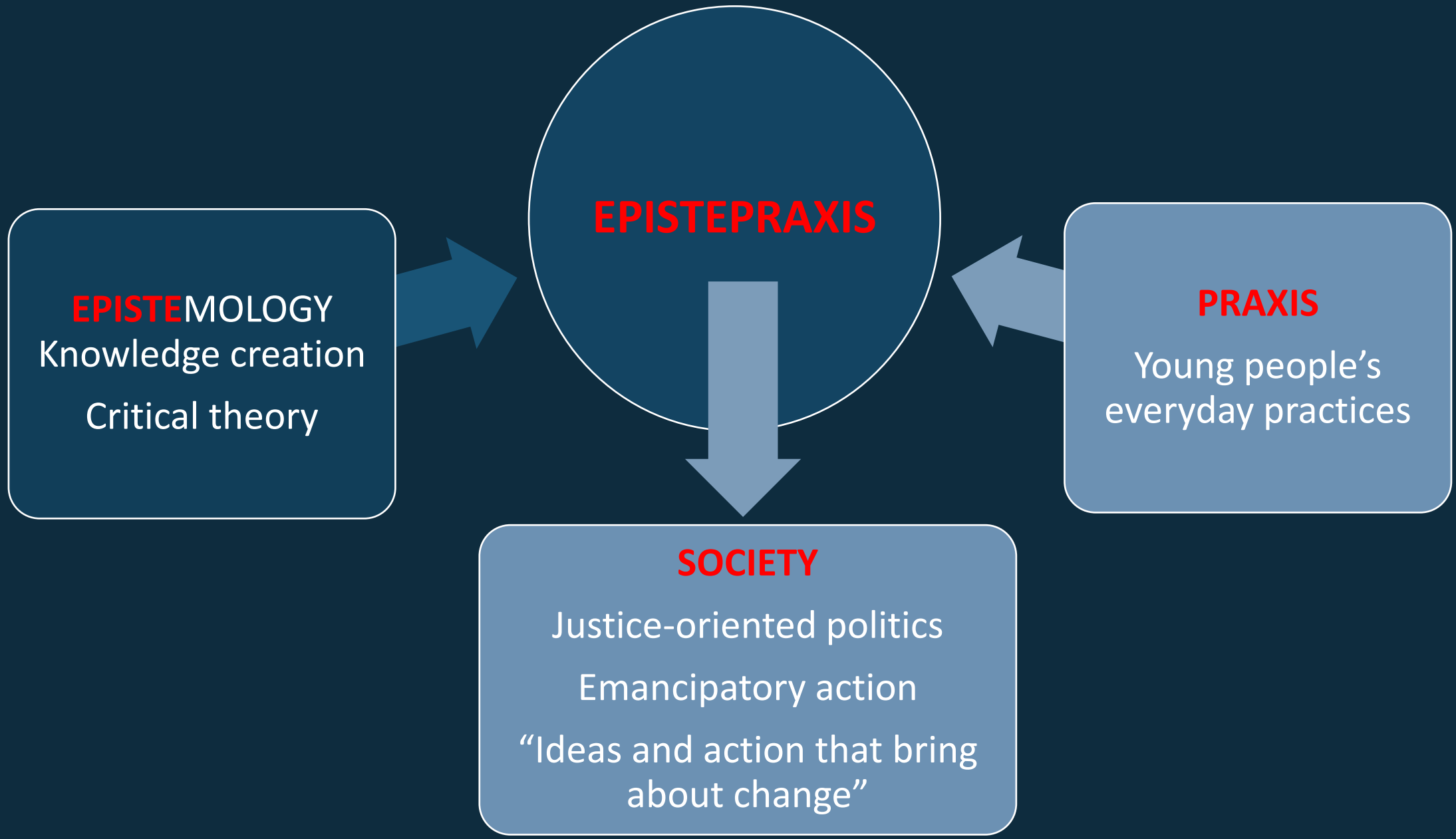
## A SOUTHERN CHARTER

from the South to benefit the world; de-universalizing; self-knowledge; *interdependence* – a new conversation with the Global North



YOUTH STUDIES  
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# DECOLONISING YOUTH STUDIES AND EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH

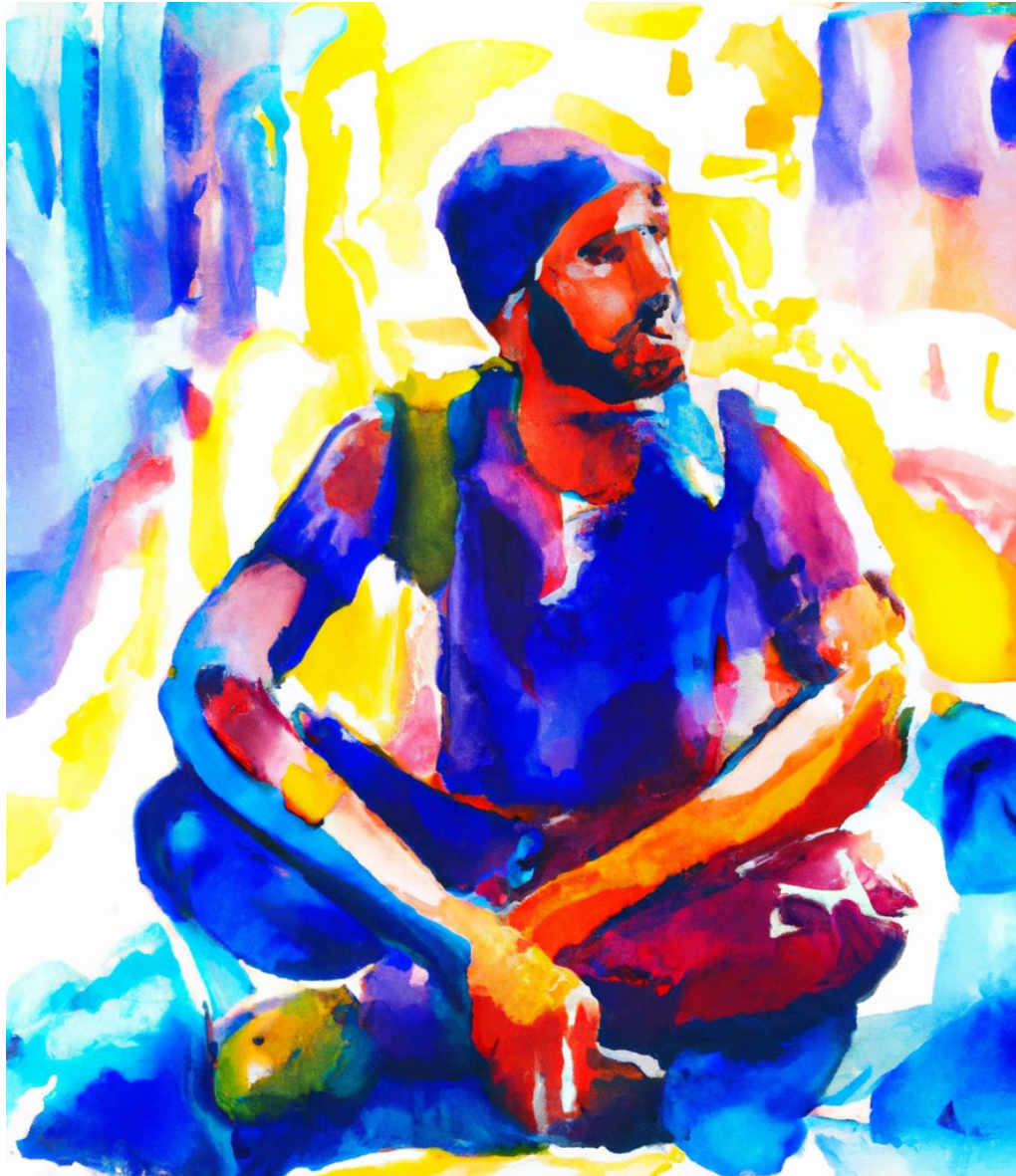


# EPISTEPRAXIS



“ Youth in the Global South emerge in the postcolonial world in relation to material, social and political precarity, with their everyday practices constituting embodied forms of knowing. Research with Southern youth therefore involves working alongside, documenting, and acknowledging these practices. An exercise that constitutes a form of ‘epistep Praxis’ – challenging the boundaries between knowledge, practice and politics ... this notion of epistep Praxis asks how the Global South can contribute to a global Youth Studies that seeks to promote socially just outcomes for youth and forms of knowledge production that are more democratic ”

(Cooper, Swartz, Batan and Kropff Causa, 2021 *Handbook of Global South Youth Studies*)

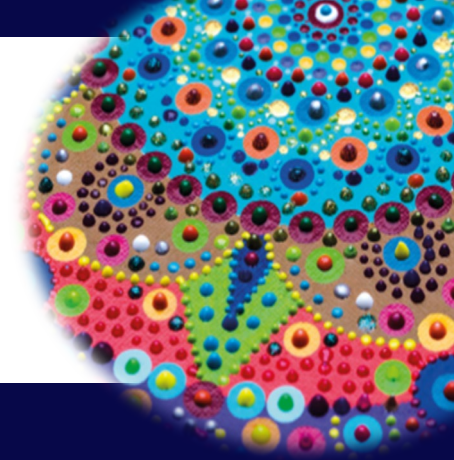


# EPISTEPRACTIX

1. Intentionally linking theory with practice and justice outcomes
2. Recognising the practices of youth in the global south as knowledge
3. Employing research methodologies that are more likely to create theory-justice-practice outcomes
4. Operationalising and evaluating our efforts towards this aim



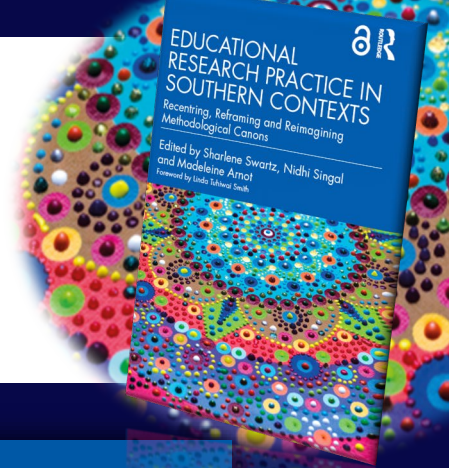
# A SOUTHERN CHARTER FOR GLOBAL SOUTH SCHOLARS



Informed by the report of *The South Commission* led by Julius Nyerere (1990)

1. Solidarity and self-reliance
2. Move from subordination to interdependence
3. Responsibility for change rests with those from the South
4. Development of the South of benefit to the South and to the world

# EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH PRACTICE IN SOUTHERN CONTEXTS

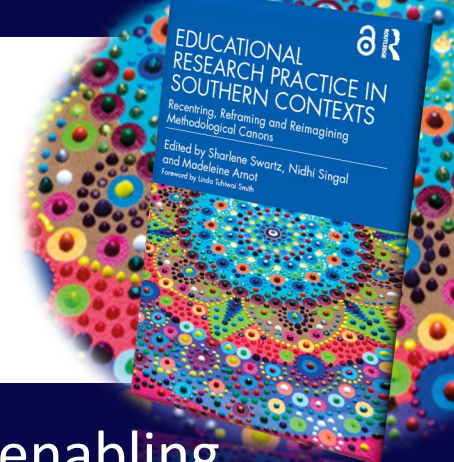


Bringing together a unique collection of 18 insightful and innovative internationally focused articles, *Educational Research Practice in Southern Contexts* offers reflections, case studies, and critically, research methods and processes which decentre, reframe, and reimagine conventional educational research strategies and operationalise the tenets of decolonising theory.

This anthology represents a valuable teaching resource. It provides readers with the chance to read high quality examples of research that critique current ways of doing research and to reflect on how research methods can contribute to the project of decolonising knowledge production in and about education in, for example, Africa, South Asia, Asia, and Latin America. It grapples with everyday dilemmas and tricky ethical questions about protection, consent, voice, cultural sensitivity, and validation, by engaging with real-world situations and increasing the potential for innovation and new collaborations.

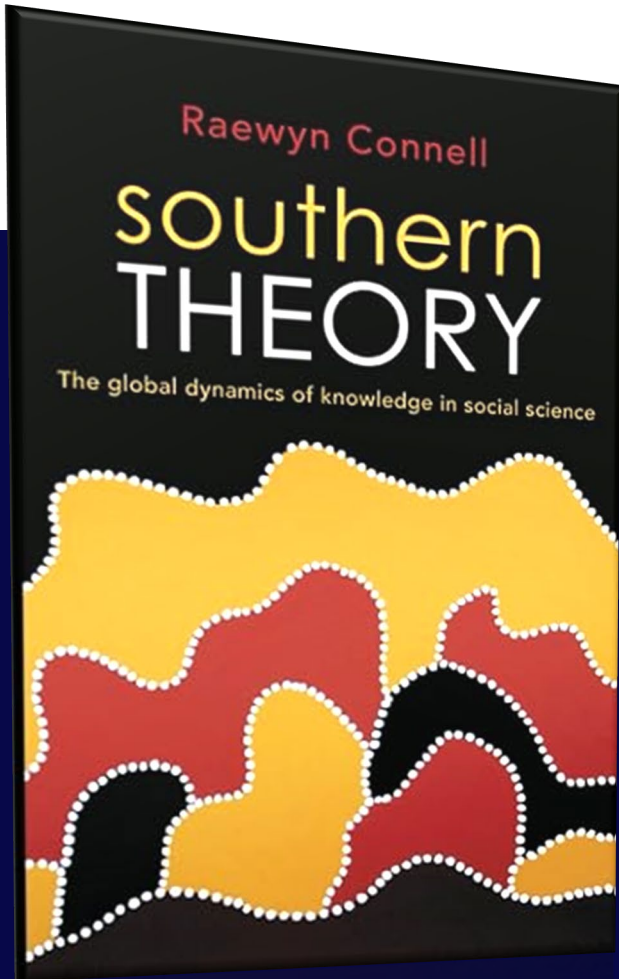
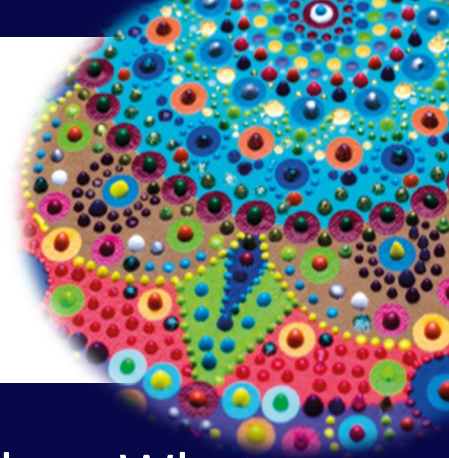


# WHAT ARE THE METHODOLOGICAL CANONS THAT NEED TO BE DECENTRED AND THEN RECENTRED, REFRAMED AND REIMAGINED?



- Ownership and voice
- Hegemonic theory
- Confidentiality and consent
- The South as case studies, the North as universal theory
- Contextually appropriate methods
- Acknowledging historical, political, economic, religious and cultural contexts
- Aiming for just outcomes and emancipatory practices
- Fair representations
- Partnership and reciprocity, enabling research
- Different ways of being, knowing and doing
- Community modes of teaching and learning
- Hierarchies of respect and honour
- Considering histories of enslavement, domination and exclusion
- Not assuming Northern experiences are universal nor homogenizing southern experiences

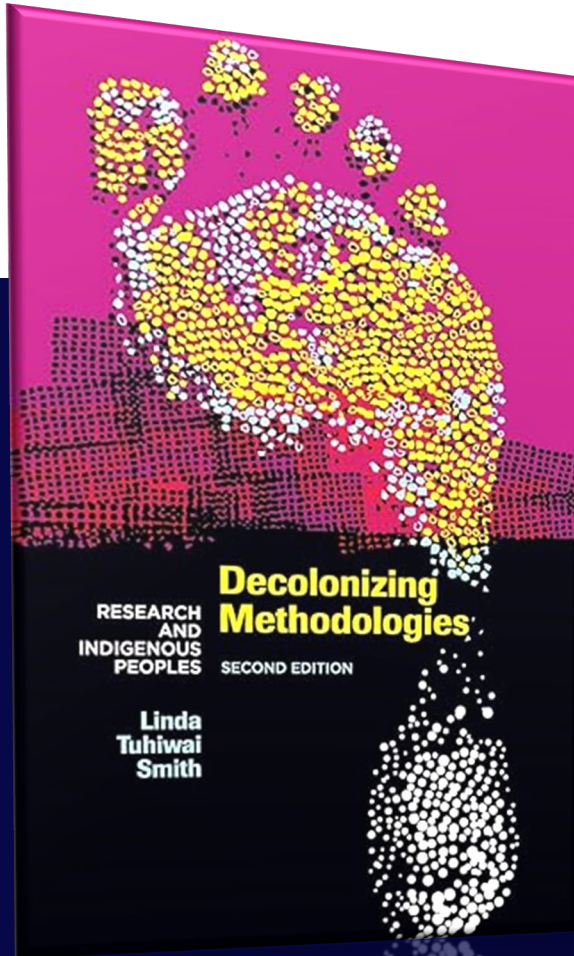
# DEBATES, EXPERIENCE, METHODS



“ There’s much talk now of decolonizing knowledge. What does that mean for education, and specifically for research in education? Sharlene Swartz, Nidhi Singal and Madeleine Arnot have put together a unique and wide-ranging collection, across continents and cultures. This book gives us distinctive perspectives on **conceptual debates, hands-on research experience, and a remarkable range of research methods, from statistics to poetry, all considered from global South positions.** ”

(Raewyn Connell, 2023)

# REIMAGINING EDUCATION RESEARCH PRACTICES - FROM THE SOUTH TO NORTH



“

Researcher practices, the practices of education research are where I started my journey as a decolonising and Indigenous researcher and where, in the beginning, **I fell out of scope and felt out of place.** Being out of place was and is about **orientation to place**, to the direction a researcher faces as well as being about **context**. In simple terms **“With whose lens do we see and hear? With what frame do we foreground and centre our focus?”** **“What do we try hard not to see, hear or accept because the literature told us those things do not exist?”** and **“How can we reframe, recentre and reimagine research methods?”**

”

(Linda Tuhiwai Smith, 2023, p. x Foreword)

# A BOOK IN THREE PARTS

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Recentring southern experiences of education, knowledge and power

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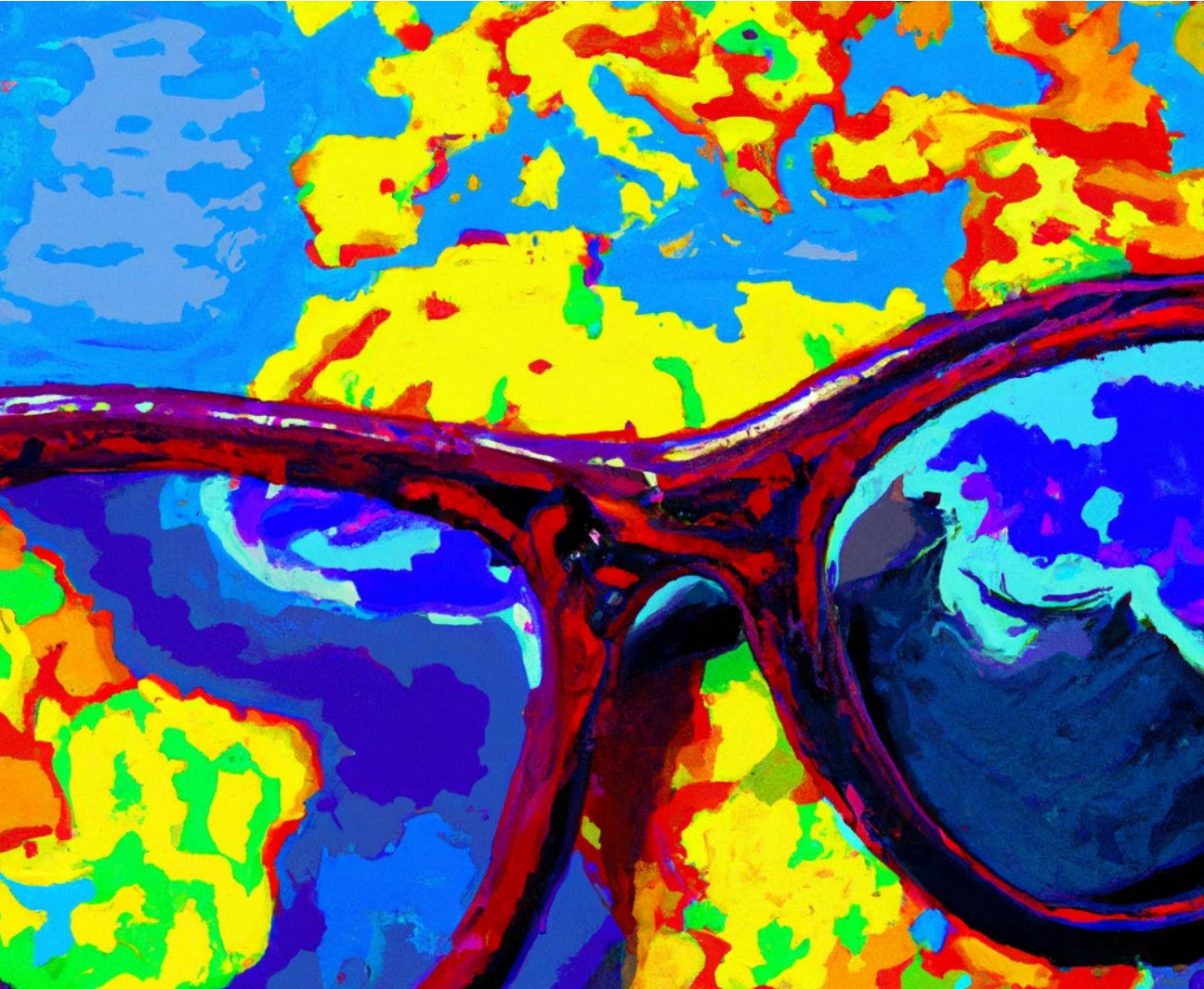
Reframing the codes, rules, and rituals of educational research practice

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Re-imagining educational research approaches for emancipation



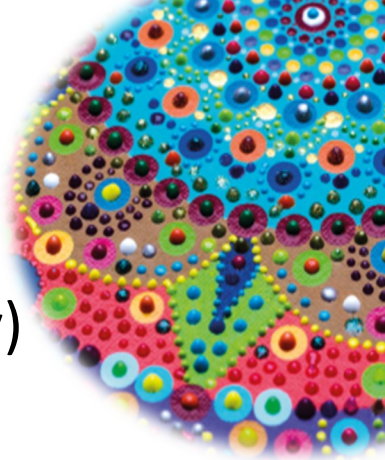
# RECENTRING SOUTHERN EXPERIENCES OF EDUCATION, KNOWLEDGE AND POWER



1. Postcolonial research ethics (Tikly & Bond)
2. Researching disability and education (Singal)
3. Hegemonic gender theory (Fennell & Arnot)
4. Indigenous anti-colonial knowledge as 'heritage knowledge' (Sefa Dei)
5. Postcolonial models, cultural transfers in Latin America (Sauter & Pozo)



# REFRAMING THE CODES, RULES, AND RITUALS OF EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH PRACTICE



1. Reflexivity and the politics of knowledge: Researchers as 'brokers' and 'translators' (Sriprakash & Mukhopadhyay)
2. Non-Chinese researchers conducting research in Chinese cultures (Katyal & King)
3. (Re)Centering the spirit: A spiritual black feminist take on relationships in research (Morton)
4. Ethical issues and dilemmas in language education research in Bangladesh (Hamid)
5. Informed consent: Tensions and accommodations in Pakistan (Shamim & Qureshi)



# RE-IMAGINING EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH APPROACHES FOR EMANCIPATION



1. Indigenous data sovereignty (Walter & Suina)
2. Using focus groups to its strengths in Tanzania (Jakobsen)
3. Social Network Interviewing as Southern emancipatory innovation (Swartz and Mahali)
4. Getting the picture with visual methodologies in South Africa (Mitchell)
5. Polyvocality in through collective poetic inquiry (Pithouse-Morgan, Naicker, Chikoko, Pillay, Morojele & Hlao)
6. Researching family lives and schooling in Punjab: A habitus listening guide (Naveed)
7. Pedagogy of absence, conflict, and emergence: Decolonising education in the Native American, Afro-Portuguese and Romani experiences (Tom, Suárez-Krabbe & Castro)