

**Pamela Dube (Inanda student, 1980-1984); Siphokazi Koyana (Inanda student, 1981-1985); Nomsa Makhoba (Inanda student, 1981-1985); Nozizwe Maneli (Inanda student, 1981-1985); and Vuyo Ncwaiba (Inanda student, 1984-1985). Interviewed together in Johannesburg, 1 June 2009.**

Maneli: I'm Nozizwe Maneli. I got to know about Inanda, I think, from one of my aunts who had been there many, many years ago. I think in the 1950s, 1960s, she used to be a student there, and my mother decided to apply. And I went there--I actually don't remember going for an interview at the school, but anyway, I was accepted, and so I started there in 1981.

*Was Maneli your name when you were a child?*

Maneli: Yes, Maneli is not my married name. Still keeping, fighting very hard to keep it.

*How was Inanda described to you by your family?*

Maneli: By my family--my aunt actually described it as one of the institutions which instilled discipline, and a Christian school, which she believed would make me a better person. That's how she described it. For me, my experience, you want to know? My experience--I found that the people that I met at Inanda are my best friends, I mean, I still keep them as my friends. The people I met at university, I'm not as close to, as I am to the people from Inanda... And actually I find that I can--that our friendship is deeper, in the sense that the things that we share--there's innocence and honesty in our relationship, and I feel, you know, at times that someone is not happy about something, they'll tell you that they're not happy. Unlike other friends along the way, they tend to just drift away without saying what their problem is... And also, the other important thing was that we were teenagers when we went there, and most of us went to Youth for Christ. Even those of us that didn't go to Youth for Christ, we can still relate to each other about religious matters freely, and we seem to understand what we're talking about... We tend to also encourage each other--or maybe I say, I was encouraged by my friends from Inanda to continue with school...

*Why do you think Inanda friendships were so much closer?*

Maneli: I think that if you grow up in a home, and you are brought up with certain values, those values are the ones that keep you grounded, and I think maybe we grew up--we were young, we were teenagers, we were at a point where you could be influenced by so many things, and I think our background, our Christian background that was there at the school, and the values that were shared by the principal, even by others, are the ones that, you know, grounded us and made us who we are now.

*Okay, thanks. Pam, can you introduce yourself and give a bit of background?*

PD: My name is Pamela Dube. I come from a township in South Coast, KwaZulu-Natal, called KwaMakuta, which is a very--at the time I grew up, it was quite semi-rural, and had a big impact on my actually having really been so grateful that a school like Inanda exists. Because there were some, you know, expectations for a girl child to grow a certain way, and you already had people thinking, you were going to be their future wife or something. Maybe it was just in the circles that we moved, partially, when we were kids, when you have extended family members having three wives and so on, so that's how, somehow, you were also seen. I remember even at that time I used to go to the city sometimes and put on a scarf--not the city, the nearest small town--when I was in a position to really venture on my own, and I used to go with my sister most of

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the time, but even on my own--and I would put a headscarf so that I wouldn't attract attention, and at that time, if you had a headscarf--

*They thought you were married.*

PD: You know, at least you're somebody's fiancée or something. You know, I can't believe that sort of extent that I went through, because there was this constant attention, you know, young girls, especially when you're just becoming teenagers. So anyway, when we went to one rural area to visit relatives, in KwaMaphumulo, which is in northern KwaZulu-Natal, there was a visitor, a young lady, well to us she looked like a young lady... In that area then, there was this thing like, these children are from the township--it was around '76 actually, because we were regarded as like, you know, the bad ones bringing the bad influences from the townships to this area. But anyway, the main exciting thing that happened one of the vacation times there was that this young lady came, she was related to our aunt, and she was all excited, and she looked very special, and there was something that stood out about her. And when she talked about the school where she went called Inanda Seminary, and that it wasn't far from Durban and all that, I thought, my goodness, everything she said about this place, I thought, this is where I want to go.

*And how old were you at that time?*

PD: I was born in '66. I was ten, but can you imagine? Around ten I was already having this pressure of having to hide my, you know, femininity, or my womanhood, or whatever... So when I heard then about Inanda I was so excited, I couldn't wait until I was thirteen or fourteen, to finish my Standard Five and go to this school. So when I got home and told my mother about it, that was when I got to know that my mother had also been to a boarding school, but it was a Catholic one.

*Was it Mariannhill?*

PD: It was some old, poor Catholic school, co-ed, I think she just had a really bad experience there, because she wasn't Catholic, that she never really shared much about her experience there. Even when she used to talk about it, she wouldn't tell us that it was a boarding school. She would talk about the strictness from the nuns, and how Catholics if you're not Catholic the pressure they would exercise. But then after telling her about this school, this Inanda, she said she'd heard about it, and then I asked her if I could please go to the school when I finished my Standard Five. She said it's probably very expensive, even she had gone to a very poor school where they used to eat not properly washed beans with bits of worms in them and such. Luckily enough actually when I was doing Standard Five my mother remembered that was what I wanted to do. In Standard Five she was already thinking of where to send me, because the township schools were not quite okay... She was a nurse, so--she was the main income, bread-winner, as compared to my father, who was working as a delivery driver for a pharmacy so he didn't really get much money but was very supportive. So when we were talking about where I should go my mother reminded my father that we had said Inanda, so she wanted to look into this, what's happening in the school, and I remember she looked into how much it was, it was something like

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five hundred rand. I tell you, that was a lot of money... but I think my mother was just persistent, it was like, we'll find a way. I remember going through the interview--I mean, each step of the way was just exciting, the whole thing of, first of all, the application was accepted, then I was called for an interview... I even remember the book I had to prepare to read before then--it was just so exciting, I memorized everything I could from that book. But it was English literature and I loved it in any case... What I'm trying to say is I went there because I really wanted to--for me it was-- I had been looking for something like that all my life. You know, a place where girls would grow without any expectations, too many expectations that are confined around getting married and becoming, you know, somebody's wife... For me, it felt like really a place of safety, but a place where I could grow and be exposed to other things. I wasn't thinking as far as intellectually, but I just knew that I was going to be--educated better than I would have been in the township, and I was going to meet girls that, you know, my peers, and we would be experiencing the same thing, so I was really eager to go there and to be at Inanda. When I got there I wasn't really disappointed--it doesn't mean like everything was smooth-sailing--I was very excited but also very grounded about it... It was me and a childhood friend who stayed in the neighborhood... who was a daughter of one of our township school teachers [that went to Inanda together from her town]... We all three got to the school, so we used to be together most of the time. Things like initiation and all that, we went through all of that. But luckily for me, uMah had prepared us, told us that this is what is going to happen, and we shouldn't be concerned by such things. And then she also pointed to something else out and said, at some point, sooner or later it's going to happen, because when girls are together, at some point, they start--something about--I didn't know anything about being lesbian and all that. She wasn't going to say 'lesbian' or anything like that, but she did say that when teenagers--and I thought, this was the first time my mother was as direct as she was about anything that had any sexual connotation... But it really helped me when I got there. And also, I think, the fact that we had been brought up very boyish with my sister, especially myself, so I think it was sort of a warning--that you know, when you get there, don't get confused. [All laugh.] .. But I also liked the history of Inanda, I had heard a bit from this young lady, uGugu. She was there when I got to start at Inanda. I did Standard Six, and she was in Standard Ten, she was about to leave, so we sort of had a protector. But she wasn't a very useful protector because she was the nice giggling type; nobody took her seriously, we had to take care of ourselves. Nobody was scared of her... I was fully involved in all things that happened at Inanda, from ringing the bell... prefect... dispensary at the school clinic.. I volunteered at the dispensary.. I always had a thing about healing, and making everybody better, and everybody always thought I was going to be a medical doctor, though I didn't really think of healing in that context, but I really liked the idea of making people feel well. So then I had these special privileges like being able to stay over at the dispensary to look after people that were sick, and of course they got to use warm water [for showers; all other students had cold water]... My sister took over this duty when I left... There were challenging times as well, of course, when I would look at tree lined avenue outside the gate and think, I want to go home, I have had it with this place, but it was just this process of growing up, and having to deal with, you know, feeling confined in this space, which had its issues. There were issues also, you mentioned religion, I had always been brought up also in a very Christian way, but some--you know, some of the questions that came up--there was this lady that came... as our religious

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studies teacher. I didn’t come very often to her afternoon Christ sessions for me--it was often about the scary parts of the bible, the judgment day... and I was thinking everything I was doing I was being judged about... I took everything too seriously... and it was scary in a way... And I felt that she did not want us to question a lot... I used to have such issues with not being able to ask the questions I had about religion. It wasn’t just her approach even with the principal then there were some time religion related things that came up that I thought were too strict, which didn’t accommodate the fact that we were just growing young people who needed some sort of understanding at some point... I wasn’t confrontational, I was just quietly resistant sometimes when these incidences happened--that stubbornness... But in any case, that was my experience of Inanda... The shared values resonated with the values that I had from home... That ‘whole shine where you are’ thing, for me that was like, wow, who found this motto of ‘shine where you are,’ cause I could really see that happening. That same person I saw the first time, this Gugu, I thought she was something special, and I always thought that everybody who went through Inanda was very special... Even in town you would just recognize an Inanda girl, not just by the uniform... We just always liked to encourage each other... There’s always this thing about Inanda girls, because we went through similar processes, we had similar aspirations about becoming something, about contributing to the world, you know. I mean, I’ve met people ( ex-Inanda girls) who would feel sort of inadequate because they didn’t go farther with their degrees...their studies and I would say they’ve got to keep going with what they have or pursue at whatever cost whatever they still aspire to be. It’s really about, be the best where you want to be, but even now, you are really the best... They would shine, whatever they were, and they would have this aspiration to do more, to really contribute, and I think we share a lot around that.

*Do you want to introduce yourself now? Our beginning question is just, where you’re from, how you came to Inanda Seminary?*

VN: I’m Vuyo, Vuyo Ncwaiba. I’ve always been [all have kept their surnames]. It’s interesting that we’ve all kept our surnames, it’s interesting. I’m from East London, in the Eastern Cape, and I got to know about Inanda from my cousins, in fact. I went to Inanda when I was in Standard Nine. Because of where I did high school, I had lost a year of school, you know, during the boycotts and stuff, when I was in Form One, 1980, where I didn’t write exams, so in 1981 I had to repeat, and my dad felt, you know, this township thing is a waste of time. So we must find you a school, a good girls’ school where you’ll be locked in, and study, and focus, and, so that’s how I got to know about Inanda. I was quite keen on it, on going there, because I used to interact with my cousins, and they used to say all sorts of wonderful things. And I had felt that I had had a taste of township life, you know, as a teenager, and change would be good. So applications started, off I went to Durban for an interview--my first trip to Durban--and it was going to be a good thing, because people used to fly to Inanda from, you know, the Cape, and it was a big thing... It was the academic side that was a major focus, hey, because that’s how my family is inclined... It was exciting. And it different. I think for me it was also a bit different because I was older when I went there, I was in Standard Nine already, and I used to find that the girls were sometimes too excitable, you know, when I arrived. Sometimes I couldn’t get over

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that. They were so different from the township girls that I grew up with, in a number of ways. Their interests--you know, when you're growing up in the township, everything goes. From wanting to go to the bioscope--Inanda, for heaven's sake, there was no bioscope... So it was quite different for me, but I adjusted fairly easy, because my family was very, very strict. Even the bioscope thing in the township, we would never really go, we would look at everyone enviously for going. So Inanda was a great experience, especially educationally for me. Initially it was difficult, because even the year before I went to Inanda we didn't have a full academic year. 1983, it was a very, very, very challenging time for education in this country. Initially, it was a big jump... well, I actually stayed, I made great friends, Nomsa being one of them... She was one people who was so kind to me. I had a big issue with my subjects--the year before I came to Inanda I had not done well in physics, and I told my dad I wanted to do physics. And the principal was adamant I was not going to do physics because my symbol was too bad. And I was taken instead to the accounting class, and Nomsa was there, and Constance Ramphete. They were so sweet and kind... There was also an opportunity for creativity, which I liked very much. We would have jazz groups, singing, acting, things like that. Which is something that I liked from a tender age... It was lacking at the school I came from... at Inanda I had a chance to showcase what I thought I had in terms of singing and drama. **Stepping out of Inanda, I must say, I felt we got a very good grounding, that gave us high levels of self-esteem, as individuals. Leaving Inanda you could almost feel you could conquer the world and do everything and anything that you wanted to do. You had the mentality that there were no limitations. You must just fly to whatever. I think also, looking at people that came before us, you would always find a member. I can almost say, if you have ten high-profile women that are sitting in some occasion, chances are at least one of them would be coming from Inanda. And I think that made us have a superiority complex. You would go out there, and you would feel like, 'You know what? I come from Inanda, and I'm going to make this happen. That would annoy other people, but who cares.** So even when I left Inanda, I had that sense. Some little things that the principal used to say and instill some values and discipline and such, I didn't find difficult to follow, because my mom is almost the same, you know, in terms of discipline and little things. I remember how Mrs. Koza would make an issue of the way that you would stand, even in chapel [all make noises of agreement]. You cannot be leaning against the chairs, even if you're dying. Little things like that, you know. You must stand tall, and be proud. This is you, doing whatever, you know. I sort of carried that, because my mom was also like that, you know, that when you do something, it's either you do it or you don't... At university, in the workplace--that's why the 'shine where you are' kind of thing, you know, we carry. Everywhere you go, and whatever you touch, you feel, I've got to make it work, because this is how you've been groomed... And also, you can't probably let the name down. As much as you are 'Vuyo,' you are also somehow carrying that 'Inanda' kind of thing, you know. And therefore, whatever you do, you tend to remember that. And even people around you will know that you come from Inanda. In fact my boyfriend says, when he met me, he thought Inanda was the only girls' school in this country [all laugh]. Because then he met the members, my friends, and the we talk about Inanda, and then we talk about how important we are, and all sorts, and he'll be like, 'Was there another school here?' Sometimes I think we need to be mindful not to piss off other people,

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because sometimes we do, you know. But not intentionally though, we must say. We just really feel we must carry the flag up high and keep going... We encourage each other... Just trying to be the best of whoever you... Nobody says you must all be doctors, or all be accountants, or whatever. But whatever you are, be just the best. That was instilled in us... [We have tea, some chatting for a bit.]

SK: Is it my turn?

*Yes, it's your turn now.*

SK: OK. Siphokazi Koyana, and I did not want to go to Inanda, because I was afraid I would have to learn a new language, because I am Xhosa, you see. I did not know that Zulu was so similar to Xhosa... So when my mother said she was thinking of me going to Inanda--I had met a few girls from Inanda... there were some girls from Mthatha.

*So you're from Mthatha.*

SK: I'm from Mthatha. There were some girls from Inanda who had gone to primary school with me, who were a few years ahead of me. So they left Standard Five and went to Inanda... As luck would have it, I topped the class in Standard Five. And I thought, wow, if I can top the class in Standard Five... December 1980... I can do it at Inanda too... Then I went to Inanda, much against my extended family's desires. They thought I was still too young, my mother shouldn't send me away when I'm still so young. I was eleven in 1980... My aunts and uncles were like 'Lunga--my mother--you should not send her away while she is so young.' They were not so keen. But my mother had made up her mind already. So, she had decided. So I went... I think I had gotten a bit more confident after being number one in class, that I really could do well. I loved it. I really enjoyed Inanda. I got there, and from the minute the car drove down the avenue, I was like, wow, I love this place, and I have never stopped loving it since... [The number two student from her primary school] also came to Inanda with me. We were good friends... Our parents were very good friends. Her father was a professor and so was mine... My father died soon after we arrived, but my mom and her mom were friends. Her mother was the librarian at the university, my mother was a student there... She was from America, so she was just clever...

*And what is your full name? Your first name is Nomsa.*

NMak: Nomsa Makhoba.

*I think you were on the email list, hey. And how did you come to attend Inanda?*

NMak: Well, I didn't know anything about the school. My parents knew about it, so they made that decision for me.

*Were you from the Durban area?*

NMak: No, I was born in a village called Hlabisa.

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*That's northern KwaZulu-Natal?*

NMak: Northern KwaZulu-Natal, two and a half hours north of Durban. So yeah, also between 1981 and 1985. What's the second question?

I was just initially asking where you were from, how you came to attend Inanda Seminary. But you can say a bit about your experiences there as well. I'll ask more specific questions later.

NMak: I think coming from a village--I think when I went to Inanda, we didn't even have a TV at home. Now going to this school, being a 'have-not,' being amidst the 'haves'--

VN: So you thought [laughs]--

NMak: It either made you or it broke you, because you looked at your circumstance, you looked at people like uVuyo, you looked at people like the Sebes when they came to school--

VN: Oh, you can't class me with them.

SK: You can't compare!

NMak: Their convoy of cars, to bring one child to school! And you come in this worn-out van, sitting in the back, your hair's full of dust and everything. So it could be quite intimidating. But for me, I think it was one of the most important experiences of my life, because it shaped me. And I got to appreciate who I am and where I come from. And it made me comfortable with what I have, and what I don't have. So it never made me aspire to be someone I'm not. I developed my own character, my own dreams. But being there was obviously an eye-opener, because you get exposed to all of these things that you didn't know anything about. But also, because of the kind of principal that we had, MaKoza. I think she opened up our minds to a whole lot of possibilities. And for me, I think the one value or culture I took out of Inanda was the spirit of excellence. Just wanting to be the best that I could be. In fact I never look at myself as a woman. I look at myself in terms of abilities and limitations. So if I have an opportunity, I'll go into with my opportunities to see what I can and cannot do. But I never say, 'I am a woman, and therefore--because it's a man's world.' I don't look at myself that way. So Inanda really was--I think for me, it grounded me. Made me dream a lot more than I ever did. And really opened my mind to a whole lot of possibilities. And I think that culture has developed even more... but that's where it started. Never limit yourself, just be the best you can be.

*For all of you, when you were at Inanda, what was the awareness of students of political events going on in the outside world? Obviously, the early 1980s were very difficult times to be a student in South Africa.*

*Were there any formal political organizations going on at Inanda's campus, or was that discouraged?*

NMak: [Comments off the record]

PD: At Inanda, there were also ways about getting to know sometimes about what was going on. I think we were aware--well, maybe at least at the time when I got there, in 1980--of what was going on politically. Because there were, now and again, also threats of getting rid of the school, or something like that, because we were an independent school.

*They never had any money.*

PD: But also because some people would come to Inanda and we would have these suspicions that they were being hidden at Inanda for some reason or another.

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*I met someone at a party in Durban who mentioned that he had hidden from the police at Inanda in the 1980s.*

PD: No, they would come, just as teachers, I remember--they would come there and be teachers, but they were not necessarily qualified teachers. But also even before I counseled with the teachers that I knew about this, also as much as you were underground, we also had our connections, in terms of knowing what was happening outside. Even though when I came from KwaMakuta, which was more--well, some areas were... Inkatha. In the area where we came from, in our neighborhood, there was ANC underground stuff that was happening. But I remember in 1980, there was a principal, a vice-principal that came. There were all these strikes, and so on, and he was believed to have been a spy, and the Standard Tens, they were the ones who got us actually to appreciate what was happening, that there were things like the spies, the Special Branch--we didn't even know about Special Branch. I knew about ANC, and of course IFP, and I knew there was this ANC that was shaking, you know, and the 'terrorists,' and now Special Branch. So one got a rude awakening that there are these people that you think are with a certain group but are actually, they are spies, and this is happening. So one got to know about it. And I used to love reading a lot. Actually I started reading some of the banned literature, also indirectly, while I was still at Inanda. You know there was the African Writers series, and so on.

*How did you read that? Did other students bring it to the school?*

PD: No, no, just teachers. It was also in the library. Not that much, but especially the ones that were from Ngugi... Even Naidoo, even people who you just didn't think would... There was that old man also, who started? Mr. Lewis. He also was very--I think he was from the UK, and also used to, you know, have some books, and he would lend people books, but he used to keep a really low profile. I think it was also just people who took a chance of having access to literature or something that the rest of us wouldn't have. John Francis of course came later, the sort of poetry that some of us wrote was influenced by the people that we had contacts with within Inanda. So we were aware, in a way, but it wasn't really--it wasn't really something that was discussed in chapel. We were a bit protected, it was just unspoken, really in the public arena.

*There was no IFP influence at Inanda?*

PD: No, no.

NMan: I would say the IFP influence was through MaZondi, because I remember--

*This is Cybele Zondi.*

NMan: This is Cybele Zondi, yes. I remember there was this year when there was a strike, and I think after that strike we had to go and account actually why we ran down the avenue, I don't know if you all remember that incident. She was actually quite upset with the people who--because, I think there was a time when she called a meeting for the Inkatha members, and we didn't go, because we didn't know what it stood for, and she was actually quite upset with those that didn't attend the meeting. So probably she wanted to influence, in her own way, but I guess

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some of us who were from the Joburg area were like, 'Why should we get involved in this Zulu thing?' Because it was more Zulu than anything else. But for me, I think I was protected in a way, being at Inanda and so on. My sister--I have a sister who comes after me, who came to Inanda at Standard Nine level--she was at the townships during that time, and I get to hear that she was actually very involved with the politics in the townships.

*You're from Johannesburg?*

NMan: From Pretoria. She was actually very involved in the politics in the townships, and my mother actually wanted her to get out of the townships, because she could see that she would be in danger. She was amongst the people that were really outspoken. But also, from the family side, there used to be this uncle who would come, and nobody should talk about the uncle's presence in the house, and must never talk about him anywhere, even amongst each other. You just know that he's here, but he's not here, that type of thing. And I remember in 1984, we had to go to Botswana--I was one of the bridesmaids for one of my cousins--and then I got to learn afterwards that he was actually amongst the three that started the 1976 uprisings. But then, the unfortunate thing was that when we came back from that wedding in Botswana, there were several people that were killed. And, you know, it was hush-hush, don't talk about it, nobody should know, that kind of thing. And I got the sense that the principal was protecting us from not getting too involved. Because even when the thing happened, when the vice-principal was alleged to be a spy, she tried to control the situation, because it was actually the Standard Tens who were pushing that the vice-principal must go.

*So who accused him of being a spy?*

NMan: The Grade Twelves... I think it was well-handled, because things didn't really get out of hand at the school, and he left with his daughter, and I understand a few months or a few years later he was killed.

SK: He was accused of being a spy and the Grade Twelves wanted us to close the school down, for us all to go home, if the principal didn't send him away.

*This was in 1980?*

SK: 1982. The principal finally sent him off, so we never ended up going away. I think, looking back, we were overprotected. We were not told anything about politics at all, and in that regard, our innocence was preserved, despite the turmoil that was happening in the country. That was the good side--our innocence was preserved. The bad side was, we were totally clueless. We left Inanda not knowing what was going on outside the Inanda gates. **And you go to varsity, or you go to your town, or your township, and you'd be the naive one who didn't know what was happening because we weren't exposed to it very much at school.**

VN: **I think that's where I had an advantage, if you want to call it that, because I had been through those experiences, literally, having been outside in the townships in 1980, which was a very critical time, that we even lost a year of school. And 1983 as well. And also for me, from my mom's family, they were a very highly political family and I was always aware of anything and everything. I knew the history of the**

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**ANC even from the age of ten. You know, and that’s one of the things that used to amaze me when I got to Inanda, because I used to think they were--**

**SK: So clueless.**

**VN: Oh, yes. So excited about, you know, little things, and I remember, for instance, people used to complain that we had a maths teacher that had favorites. And he would bring food, and you know, Chicken-Licken or Kentucky... and people would complain...**

And it’s not a big deal.

VN: Little things like that. And I used to think--

SK: Grow up!

VN: It was, as Siphokazi says, politically. And also, issues about relationships and boys, and it was protection, and protection, and nobody said anything--at least at home sometimes, your parents would say, ‘It’s important, you must not sleep with boys, because if you sleep with a boy you will fall pregnant. Factually. But at Inanda, you’ll never get it. In fact, it would be like, ‘A boy will give you electricity.’ No, ‘umfana, umba ngozezi!’ You’ll get electricity.

*Who would say that?*

VN: The matron.

*Who was the matron then?*

VN: Mrs. Lugwana.

SK: Sunday mornings, before we had breakfast, we had half an hour to an hour of sermonizing and lecturing, and it was often the matron who would take the stage... She would try to scare us about boys. Especially towards the holidays. Then she would tell us, ‘When you get home, you must be careful, boys have electricity,’ and you are eleven years old, thinking, ‘What about electricity?’

*What was the expression in Zulu?*

SK: Bafana bamba ngozezi! But then we did have biology classes when we went through the reproductive system...

VN: I remember once they brought this specialist to speak to us in the hall, a white lady who came and explained something about the eggs in your body breaking--and someone said, what about the egg shells?

NMan: I think we were disadvantaged to a certain extent, because if anything, if anybody did sleep with a boy, everybody would say, ‘Watch her, look at her’... I remember one of the ladies, she was much older than us, she had this boyfriend... We were naive and ignorant. And I think the principal maybe tried to protect us, but I think it was maybe to our disadvantage, because I remember one time, one of the girls was pregnant, UZanele, and then we were called to the chapel because this lady was pregnant. And they didn’t say, you know, one of you ladies has fallen, but it was like ‘You know what? You are terrible people. You look like innocent kids,

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but you are full of worms inside. You are like a flower that is all closed up, and it's being eaten by worms. You are rotten. You must just go now and pray for your sins'...

*Who would say that?*

PD: I really didn't like that. And it just reminded me of my mother who never sat with me and told me that because I am menstruating these things can happen. She just said, 'Now that you are menstruating, know that when you sleep with boys you will get pregnant.' And I was very offended, because I thought, 'I don't sleep with boys. Why should she put it like that?' ...

That's how they treated us even then. If there was someone who was suspected of being pregnant after the holidays, we would be subjected to the whole school--everybody--the whole school would be subjected to an examination, which would include checking the breasts and--

VN: Those were the things I was talking about. As much as I loved being at Inanda, those were the things that should have been handled much better... I mean, for me, the whole thing, and also the whole Christianity thing, because I was really seriously--religious--but when one of the ladies in Youth for Christ, somebody who was really involved, got pregnant, the way she was treated--it really just got me. Remember Nomtando? I was still there when she got pregnant, and the way it was handled...

*Were there a lot of students who got pregnant?*

All: No.

SK: Out of 400 girls, it was maybe 2 a year...

PD: There was somebody in the Youth for Christ division, and I was thinking, my goodness, she's just another, you know, young person like myself, she was such a good person, it doesn't mean you are less good... Some of them were just more curious than us, who didn't go home and experiment and talk about these electricities. [all laugh] How it was handled, for me, was always such an issue... I didn't have a boyfriend, I didn't even engage in these things, but I guess I had seen enough to know at home--where I came from, the worst thing to do was to get pregnant. But the only place where I felt safe and I felt we had the opportunities to be guided in a different way, it was just as bad, and in fact worse. And that used to really frustrate me... These were people we identified with.

SK: There were also a few instances where there were fetuses found in the drain... There was a man who was a groundsman, who took care of drains, and I understand there were reports that he had found--not often--fetuses, and all would be called into chapel and criticized, 'You're all rotten apples inside.' And if you're eleven years old, you're like, 'What are you talking about?'

NMan: It was very painful when it was one of our friends, we were very close, we had started Grade Eight together, and we were in Grade Eleven, it was the beginning of the year... She had a boyfriend. Everybody knew that she had a boyfriend that she was sleeping with. I think, by Easter time, it was discovered that she was pregnant. She was, I think, fifteen or sixteen then... We were all subjected to the examination... She had to be taken to the doctor because it was alleged that she had had an abortion. Anyway, she was expelled from the school...

*SK: All I remember was when Nomvula came back from the holidays, and she had experienced sex. She was so proud. She was saying, it was so good!*

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VN: And she would be so explicit sometimes, hey.

NMan: We regarded sex as a taboo. But I was exposed in that I went to visit her at her home...

PD: Because of those pressures of people coming back and bragging, during my time I felt like I was out, because I didn't have any boyfriend, any story to brag about. So I brought a picture from the next-door neighbor. You didn't have to brag, you just put the picture there. But then, the worst thing was coming home and just forgetting about this picture, and I had packed it up among my things, and I remember this time when my sister was in this box, and my mother saw this picture facing up... UMa couldn't believe that I just had this picture to pretend with my friends that I had a boyfriend... My father rescued me, this was the first time when my mother really went berserk... Even my sister got beaten. It was a big thing...

*In terms of where students were coming from at Inanda when you were there, were the majority of students still from KwaZulu-Natal?*

Makhoba: The majority were from KwaZulu-Natal.

SK: But there were some people from outside.

Manele: Hey, I would say it was a mix.

PD: Because really the issue was affordability...

Manele: Really, it was a mix...

SK: Some from even outside, as far as Swaziland.

Makhoba: Even from Zambia...

SK: I'd say half KZN, and half divided amongst the rest of the areas, from as far down as Cape Town, up to Swaziland.

*What did you all do after Inanda, and how did you feel that your high school educations prepared you?*

SK: What did I do? I got an opportunity, via the principal actually, because she had heard about this opportunity to go to America. So I went to America, and I studied, did the BA at Smith College.

*Another women's institution.*

SK: Yeah. It was actually very nice for me, because it was this continuity... It was still a girls' school, so the lesbianism and all that was still part of it, and the bonding and not having men around, girls could be wild. And even when men came to visit... everybody wanted to see this guy.

*Were you the only girl from Inanda to attend Smith?*

SK: No, there were two of us, there was also another girl called [name], and then after that I went to Yale and did my masters, then I came back to South Africa and lectured for two years at Rhodes.

*What did you get your masters degree in?*

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SK: African literature. I did my BA in African American studies, literature and history as well. Then my masters degree was in African Studies, but my major was literature. Came back to Rhodes, where I lectured with my husband, came back to America for the doctorate at Temple University, and then I became an academic.

*You got your doctorate in African and African American Studies as well?*

SK: In English.

*Did you feel that Inanda prepared you well?*

SK: Oh, definitely. It was just an older group of Inanda girls, they were just white. Again, it was that same spirit of women being excellent, without having to please any man. Just being able to discover who you are as a woman, and grow into your own self, in a very protected and safe environment where you are encouraged to excel and to break boundaries. You know Smith has their own history as a women's institution.

*Smith is very similar to Mount Holyoke, the school on which Inanda was based initially.*

SK: Inanda was based on Mount Holyoke?... I used to go Mount Holyoke a lot, the schools were like sister schools. So I liked that Inanda prepared me for that environment. But to tell the truth, I think Inanda had not prepared me for life with men. Even Smith didn't do much to prepare me... I missed out on all of that... By the time I really met boys I was working on my masters degree [laugh]... [Describes how she fell for a man at Yale and he asked her to a party-- which turned out to be his engagement party; then she dated a guy with another girlfriend.] I was totally clueless... I could not be the discreet, feminine flirt... As a result I find with my daughter, I can't give her much advice. It's a good thing my husband is so street-smart...

*Are you a professor now?*

SK: ... In America, I am. To be a professor in South Africa, I have to do much more... I am a senior lecturer... I recently changed professions, because I left the university in December 2007.

*You were at Rhodes?*

SK: At Wits. Now I am sort of starting on a new career path trying to be an entrepreneur [consultant] of sorts... In South Africa, it doesn't really pay well to be a serious academic... It's like the doctor's strike... The government expects them to serve masses and masses of people without compensation... We are supposed to help generations of people be skilled workers and better citizens and we don't get a cent for it. So now I'm going to the area of skills training. For me it is a nice bridge between the academic world and the business world.

*And for everyone else--where did you go from Inanda?*

VN: I also went to university, started at Rhodes, doing a B.Comm. degree. It was way too difficult, and I left.

SK: You were having too much fun.

VN: There was no gate!... For goodness sake, there was no gate. There were no out-of-bounds, you could walk in and out. But I finished up at Durban-Westville, I went back to Durban, and

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that's where I completed my B.Comm. degree. And straight after that I went and worked in the banking environment, I worked for FNB... I absolutely loved it... I spent three and a half years at FNB. It was a training in fact, after that I was supposed to get to a management position... So I left and came up to Joburg and started working here as an accountant for an investment holding company, and I realized I didn't like accounting... After three years I went back to banking. Corporate banking, Ned Bank... Basically, I've worked for all the major banks in this country... Then I went into management, marketing and sales... I started my own consultancy. Now I do something I'm very passionate about... enterprise development, which is part of the BEE scorecard... [She also has three sons]

PD: After leaving Inanda, I had the feeling I would come back someday as a school principal at Inanda. But in any case, I went to the University of Natal in Durban, and I was lucky to have a scholarship to study BA, specializing in English literature and speech and drama. Really for me, even though I had thought when I was at school the expectation was that I would do medicine, really for me languages were my first love... and also writing plays, and poetry, and so on... But it was also the time of the 1980s, and Natal University--it was just at the time when you could go without having to apply.

*Yeah, so you were among the first cohorts of black students.*

PD: Yes, especially the ones who stayed on campus. Already there had been those who stayed at Alan Taylor, and who did medicine and all that... I was actually told the reason why I had been put in residence. I had an A in English, and then I got the scholarship, and I was told they would put me there as an experiment to see if we could stay-- [all laugh]

*An experiment!*

PD: But in a way, it was good that they were direct with me. So I made sure, because I had that [Canadian] scholarship, that, I mean--actually for me, it was the first time to know what a scholarship means--then I was lucky throughout my university career that I kept it. Really my parents never had to pay for anything, it was just bursaries and stuff like that, because I just got the clues to work harder every time, and that's something I knew already from Inanda. So I managed to, you know, do my three years, not that it was easy, but--we were told also, if you do English--especially at that time, if there was a black person trying to do English, psychology--I was told forget philosophy, you'll go crazy. So I did psychology and sociology... By the time I did Honours, again, the scholarship issue came up. At that time, only white students were able to get the HSRC. I hated the HSRC at that time, I never knew what the HSRC stood for. But it just seemed like white students had an easy time if they wanted to do postgraduate study...

*The Human Sciences Research Council, yeah.*

PD: At that time, black people didn't get any help from the HSRC. But at that time fortunately I happened to notice something about a German scholarship called the DAAD. So I asked the financial aid office... I did get it... While I was doing my Honours year, I heard that it was

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possible that they were taking some South Africans to Germany, as it was a German scholarship. But I didn't hear anything about that anymore until I finished my Honours, and I got my job... [Didn't want to be an actress because you were always playing someone's girlfriend, wife, or a maid. Decided possibly to lecture.] While I was at university, I used to tutor... the Black Students' Society, the sort of activist group, we used to tutor high school students doing matric, so that was my interest in teaching... [Worked at a private school in Joburg, then left to run a scholarships office at University of Natal-Pietermaritzburg. Only two black women at integrated private school. She then received a scholarship to go to Germany--stayed in Germany for ten years, studied at University of Siegen, near Cologne, worked, learned the language, married, and divorced. Travelled around Europe quite a bit. Went to Canada. Received her doctorate in Comparative Literature from the University of Siegen in 1996, focusing on oral literature in Canada and South Africa. Visited the United States. Interested in postcolonial literature. Joined Department of Education in South Africa after her return in the late 1990s. Worked there for six years, dealing with higher education policy issues.] Even in the Department [of Education], they would talk about Inanda. It was amazing how many people I met who were from Inanda. You know... the senior women in the department were almost all from Inanda. There were not that many senior women anyway, but they were all from Inanda. When I came, there were three, and they were all from Inanda, though different years... [Then works in nuclear energy policy management, dealing with international relations, human capital development.] The Inanda spirit, I tell you, is there in one form or another... The whole drive of wanting to be the best where you are...

*Quickly--what did the two of you do after graduation?*

Maneli: I went to MEDUNSA to do medicine... Most of the kids at MEDUNSA were from the high schools in the townships, and I found that they were very scared to communicate with the white lecturers that we had. And the white lecturers--they were prejudiced to a certain extent. So if you went up to a white lecturer and challenged them, they were like, 'who are you, who do you think you are.' After that, if they got the impression that you knew what you were talking about, they would listen to you. So I think Inanda helped with that English rule, that you have to speak English all the time. So I wasn't scared to talk to them, and it was easy for me to express myself. I went on in medical school, it was okay... It was good that Inanda made us be scared of boys... I took time. I think taking time helped me to define who I am... But then I was naive... I did medicine, and I worked... For me, having been to Inanda, it was easy for me to go to any other institution and not be scared to work in another institution, whilst other people [at MEDUNSA] that I'd been to scared with were scared to venture out... I did my institution at Bara, came back, and didn't have any problems. Decided to go to Cape Town, where we were only two Africans in the department, and the one lady was from Ghana. In fact, I was the first South African to go to that department. It wasn't easy, I must say. But it's something that you get as a member, to persevere...

*What department was this?*

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Maneli: It was in anesthetics, anesthesiology, I did my internship there... I managed to go to Hershey, Pennsylvania, and I worked there as an international visiting consultant, and then I came back, and now I'm working for the military... in Pretoria.

SK: Just to go back, Meghan, to how Inanda prepared me for tertiary studies. I mentioned the environment was similar because it was a girls' school. But I must say, academically, I was very strong. Even though Inanda was a South African school, and a black school at that, it prepared me for the rigor of American, small, elite colleges. I was on the dean's list... Inanda prepared me enough to go to America and be on the dean's list... effortlessly...

Makhoba: After Inanda I was determined to be a chartered accountant... [Ended up going into marketing, worked for Woolworth's in Durban for three years in management, left and worked for Tastic and Unilever, worked for Total Oil. Traveled in the United States. Worked for Ithala in Durban, got a masters in business leadership through Unisa. Tried to open a salon, but it didn't work out. Has worked for engineering and construction companies.]

SK: Did anyone mention about JMB?... MaKoza signed us up to take the JMB exam... I understand that Inanda did so well that the white people who were in charge of it got jealous and decided to fail us... In our group, only two of us got exemptions... After that, our principal took us out of the JMB system, back into the NSC system...

[Talking about Oprah's school] Maneli: I was really disappointed when she decided to open that school, because I thought the money she was bringing in was going to be for Inanda... You see, if Oprah can agree to be present at a dinner where we are fundraising for Inanda...