

CURRICULUM VITAE – DR MTA ARMSTRONG

Contact Email: academic.consultants.literacy@gmail.com

Mobile: +27 845780744

UNIVERSITY EDUCATION

RHODES UNIVERSITY

(2004 – 2006) - **Bachelor of Arts** in *Psychology and Art History and Visual Culture (AHV)*

1st Year – Psychology 1, English 1, Geography 101, Geology 101, AHV 1.

2nd Year – Psychology 2, AHV 2, Art Practical 1.

3rd Year – Psychology 3, AHV 3, Art Practical 2.

(2007 - 2008) – **Bachelor of Arts (Honours)** in *General Psychology* (with Distinction)

Coursework: Psychological Assessment & Evaluation, Research Methodology, Psychopathology, Human-Animal Interaction

Practical: Psychotherapy, Forensic Psychology & Statistics

Thesis: *'Animal Abuse: The Psychological Effects and Experiences of Individuals Working in the Animal Industry'*.

This thesis examined the psychological impact of animal abuse on people who worked in contrasting areas of the animal industry. Through the use of qualitative interviews and a thematic analysis, it explored different cultural views, opinions as well as personal experiences of animal abuse. Additionally, this body of work examined complementary psychological coping strategies and developed therapeutic interventions unique to each case.

(2009 – 2011) – **Master of Arts** in *Research Psychology*

Thesis: *'An Art-Based Support Programme for the Amelioration of General Psychological Distress in Marginalised Children in South Africa'*.

This study commenced with in-depth research into the effects of poverty on children such as exposure to violent experiences, drug abuse and living with HIV/AIDS. This aided in developing and implementing an art therapy-based intervention programme for a primary level shelter school catering to abused and neglected street children. It aimed to assist children who had been identified as evidently struggling with stress and anxiety, self-negativity, violent tendencies, as well as behavioural issues stemming from exposure to extreme poverty. After implementation, there was a noted reduction in psychological distress, and physical aggression, as well as an increase of self-worth and confidence within the selected participants.

(2013 – 2018) – **Doctorate of Philosophy** in *Higher Education* (Centre for Higher Education Research, Teaching and Learning)

Thesis – ‘Learning to Learn: A Critical Realist Exploration into the Home Established Learning Practices of a Marginalised Community in Port Elizabeth’.

This intensive, critical ethnographic study aimed to identify and explore the home-based literacy practices of a marginalised community. Being part of a wider research project to access ‘social inclusion’ trends in South Africa, this interdisciplinary study included a theoretical and conceptual framework of psychology, linguistics, sociology, and anthropology. It looked at how traditional literacy and learning practices in South Africa have become increasingly fragmented as a result of the residual of Apartheid. Through assessing the level of schooling preparation that marginalised children had obtained before they began formal education, it was discussed how this could translate into educational throughput rates and their chances of obtaining a degree in tertiary education.

PUBLICATIONS:

1. Armstrong, M., & Boughey, C. (2020). Learning to learn: Children’s language and literacy development in a marginalised community in Port Elizabeth. *Perspectives in Education*, 38(2), 201-212. <https://doi.org/10.18820/2519593X/pie.v38.i2.13>

2. *Mindful Healing: Trauma-Informed Stabilization Treatment (TIST)* (Accepted for Online Publication, 2012):

Technical translation article which aimed to clarify the specifics of undergoing TIST after experiencing one or a series of traumatic events to potential psychotherapy clients.

3. *The Collective Healing of Transgender Communities* (Accepted for Online Publication 2021)

4. *Biphobia, Bisexuality and Mental Health* (Accepted for Online Publication 2021)

5. *A True Notion of Equality? Exploring LGBTQ Rights in the US* (Accepted for Online Publication 2021)

6. *Spinning the Emotion Wheel* (Accepted for Online Publication, 2021):

Technical translation article which outlined the development and implementation of the emotion wheel in a personal capacity or in psychotherapeutic intervention in cases where a client is unable to identify their emotions which can hinder emotional processing.

7. *The Benefits of Reading Series* (The Book Curator) (Accepted for Online and Print Publication, 2021):

1. Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving can be as Easy as ABC (the connection between critical thinking and problem-solving skills & reading).

2. Weaving a Web of Positive Social Abilities (Empathy development & reading).

3. Reading as a Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious Stress-Relieving Experience (Stress relief & reading).

8. *Mediation as a Technique to Alleviate Nicotine Cravings during Pregnancy* (Accepted for online Publication, 2021)

Technical translation identifying the dangers of smoking during pregnancy as well as highlighting the effectiveness and advantages of meditation while quitting smoking during pregnancy.

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS:

(2018) - **Higher Education Learning & Teaching Association, of South Africa (HELTSA)**
(Oral Presentation/PowerPoint): '*Learning to Learn: A Study of Children's Language and Literacy Development in a Marginalised Community in Port Elizabeth*'

OTHER PRESENTATIONS:

(2020) – **Junior Colleges, South Africa (Online Presentation):** '*Building Literacy and Independence around the House*'

(2020) – **The Schoolhouse, Tanzania (Online Presentation):** '*Main Factors to Take into Account when Moving Classrooms Online as a Result of COVID-19*'

(2018) – **Rhodes University Research Sessions (Oral Presentation/PowerPoint):** '*Ethics in Critical Ethnographic Studies*'

ACADEMIC BURSARIES & SCHOLARSHIPS:

(2004, 2005, & 2006) – Old Rhodian Fitzsimmons Bursary

(2007 - 2008) – National Research Foundation

(2008 - 2010) – National Research Foundation

(2013 - 2015) – National Research Foundation, Scarce Skills.

ACHIEVEMENTS:

(2008) – Full Academic Colours

(2008) – Deans List placement

(2011) – Golden Key Membership

WORK EXPERIENCE:

2019 – Current - *Academic Writing and Research Consultant (International)*

- Assisting with academic queries relating to psychology, linguistics, anthropology, sociology politics, philosophy, education, leadership and management.
- Providing supplementary supervision to students on Master's, Doctoral and Doctorate dissertations in the social sciences and management fields
- Consulting on research design, methodology and research development
- Providing guidance for preparing journal papers for publication
- Providing support to students embarking on the defence of their PhD dissertations
- Technical translation articles
- Survey development and analysis for private research
- Researching and developing white papers
- Assisting numerous international university departments and schools with policy development and curriculum structure
- Consulting with international universities departments and schools to increase social inclusion and lower racial and sexual orientation stigma
- Assisting ESL students with preparations for IELTS and TOEFL university entrance exams
- Teaching academic literacies, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills

Please see the following links for my online work profiles:

1. <https://www.kolabtree.com/find-an-expert/meredith-armstrong>
2. <https://www.upwork.com/freelancers/~017831c12bd005c551>

(2019 – Current) *Feel Write Centre (PTY) LTD – Port Elizabeth (ZA) Co-Director/Founder, Editor and Writer*

- Mentorship for ESL university students
- Assistance with writing structure, academic vocabulary and research design
- Consulting on thesis development and the writing process
- Copy editing and proofreading of academic theses, essays, and journal articles
- Compiling university departmental reports

(2010 – 2012) *Thomas Nationwide Transport – Utrecht (NL) Global Accounts Representative*

- Apple Inc. Computers Product Manager.
- Initiate and maintain good client-based relationships through fast-acting assistance to provide customers with timely and effective solutions.
- Initiate, research and complete investigations through implementing corrective measures and report completion in cases regarding missing, damaged and stolen goods, fraud detection, delayed transportation commitments as well as general customer queries and providing quotes.

(2010) *Rhodes University - Grahamstown (ZA) Chief Invigilator – First Year Entrance Assessments (Benchmark Research)*

- Providing training and coordination of a team of 8 invigilators for national university benchmark examinations.
- Facilitating examination process of approximately 500 university students per examination.
- Preservation of exact standardised regulations as well as maintaining a controlled and safe environment to ensure uncontaminated research results.

(2007 – 2009) Rhodes University - Grahamstown (ZA) Tutor Facilitator and Essay Marker

- Facilitation of discussions and clarification of theory to undergraduate psychology students.
- Marking and grading content of undergraduate psychology tests, and assignments.
- Monitoring progress and decline of academic standards, plagiarism detection, in addition to maintaining a register and mark sheet.

(2005 – 2008 Vacations) Rhodes University - Grahamstown (ZA) Supervisor

- Opening and closing of sports areas each day.
- Instructing and overseeing daily duties of sports staff and ensuring overall safety.
- Checking pool cards, collecting payment, daily cash-up and answering the telephone.

(2002 – 2010) 'The Red Café' & 'The Highlander' – Grahamstown (ZA) Manager

- Opening and closing of the establishment, as well as overseeing the day-to-day running of the restaurant.
- Supervising and coordinating employees and kitchen staff.
- Arranging cash-up, payment packages and shift lists of employees.

OTHER QUALIFICATIONS AND ACTIVITIES

LEVEL 1, 2 & 3 FIRST-AID – St John Accredited First Aid Cadet (1994 - 2003)

CERTIFICATE IN REMEDIAL WORK – Developing and implementing therapeutic measures for children with learning, mental and physical disabilities (2006)

CERTIFICATE IN COUNSELLING – Family crisis counselling (The Family and Marriage Society of South Africa) (2007)

CHAIRPERSON OF 'FED NUTRITION' – Community-based charity educating marginalised communities of nutritional requirements and sustainability (2015 – 2017)

CHAIRPERSON AND FOUNDER OF 'STAR BRAINERY' – Community-based charity assisting marginalised children with educational literacy, psychological, physiological and social development. Educating parents on life skills, childcare and how to support their children's education (2018 – 2020)

CHAIRPERSON OF CRAIGTON BC – Controlling the functioning, public relations, and maintenance of Craigton Apartment Block (2016 – 2021)

FINANCIAL MANAGER OF CRAIGTON BC – Managing accounts, funds and salaries on behalf of owners and trustees in addition to reviewing daily, weekly, monthly and annual budgets (2016 – 2021)

TRUSTEE OF CRAIGTON BC – Dealing with internal resident conflict and mediation (2016 - 2021)