



## 2<sup>nd</sup> SOUTH AFRICAN POSITIVE SOCIAL SCIENCES SYMPOSIUM

### 28-29 October 2013

OPTENTIA RESEARCH PROGRAMME



NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY  
YUNIBESITHI YA BOKONE-BOPHIRIMA  
NOORDWES-UNIVERSITEIT  
VAAL TRIANGLE CAMPUS

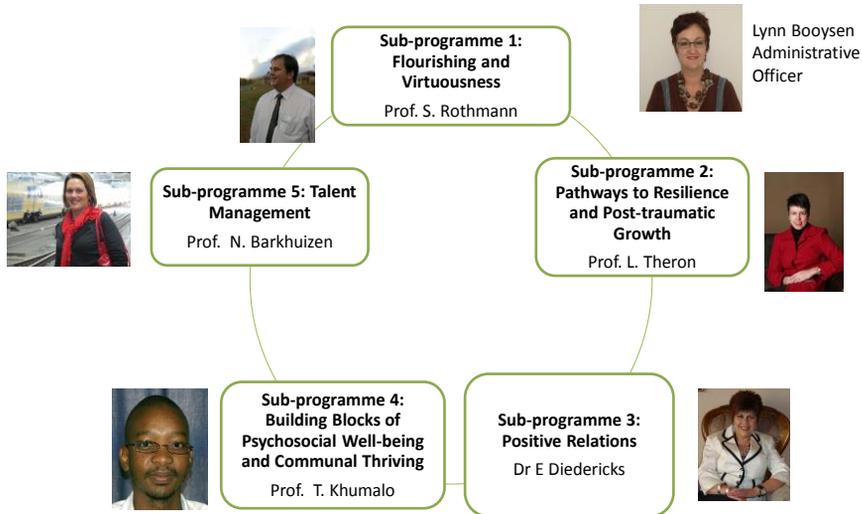
## Mission of Optentia

- The mission of *Optentia* is to develop and organise knowledge for the optimal expression of individual, social and institutional potential in Southern Africa.

OPTENTIA



## Optentia: Sub-programmes



## Diagnostic Overview

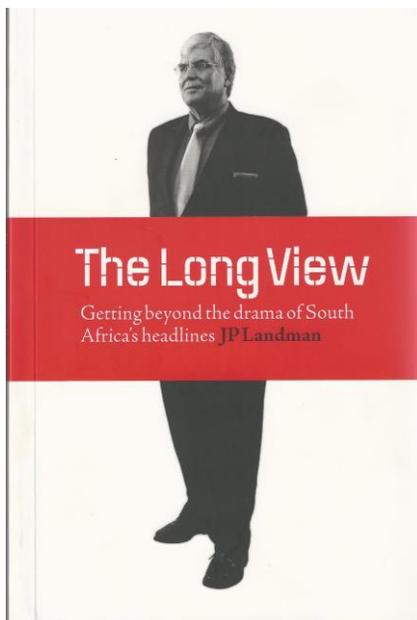


<http://www.npconline.co.za>

- High disease burden
- Divided communities
- Uneven public service performance
- Spatial patterns that marginalise the poor
- Unemployment of too many South Africans
- Corruption
- Resource intensive economy
- Crumbling infrastructure
- Poor educational outcomes.

## Some Statistics

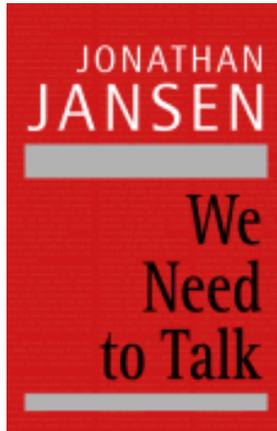
- 39% of the SA population (52 million) is below 20 years of age
- 28% is between 20 and 35
- Two-thirds of the population is younger than 35 years of age
- Critical group is the cohort between 15 and 29 (24% of the population) - affect social stability



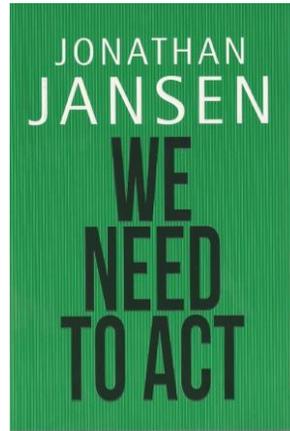
### Headlines vs. Trendlines

- For most of its citizens South Africa is better off than 20-30 years ago, but:
  - Lack of social capital (shared values and norms)
  - Inequality (gap between people)
- The economy is the building block of a successful society
- 'If you don't read the newspapers, you are uninformed. If you do read the newspapers you are misinformed'

## What to Do



2011



2013

## The Symposium Programme



### Education

- Positive education
- Education in the African context
- Positive youth functioning
- Emotional intelligence
- Accountability
- Well-being of students: S-DR
- Sources of meaning: students
- Work engagement of teachers
- Work engagement in HEI

### Work

Employability of the youth  
 Developing young leaders  
 Coaching of young leaders  
 Relationships: Expectations of young people in organisations  
 Rewards in Multigenerational workforces  
 Work participation of refugees  
 Flourishing of I/O Psychologists

### Communities

Family psychosocial well-being  
 Intergenerational relationships  
 Sexual abuse prevention  
 Interventions: women - sexual abuse  
 Capacity and resourcefulness of young people in the face of challenges  
 Strategies to promote thriving  
 Service use and resilience  
 Mentors and their well-being  
 Coping of grandmothers who foster children



Peterson, C. (2013).  
*Pursuing the good life: 100 Reflections on positive psychology*. New York: Oxford University Press.

“... hoping for things that can happen is smart (good), assuming we are motivated by our optimism to act in ways that make the hoped-for thing more likely.”

# Enjoy the Symposium



 **OPTENTIA** RESEARCH PROGRAMME

Enabling optimal expression of individual, social and institutional potential