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I am Director of the Steve Biko Centre for Bioethics, University of the Witwatersrand (Wits), Johannesburg, South Africa. I hold a Masters degree in Applied Ethics for Professionals from Wits and a Doctorate in Public Philosophy and Ethics from the University of Johannesburg. I have also been awarded the Post-graduate Diploma in Health Sciences Education.

Professionally I see myself primarily as a teacher. The most fulfilling part of my work is engaging with students and seeing them develop their academic skills and their character. Teaching health professionals entails some degree of moral formation, and I think that students are more likely to become ethical practitioners if they are able to ground their ethical consciousness in normative conceptions that are already familiar to them – indigenous values and ethics. To this end, I have worked with my colleagues to transform our bioethics curriculum by teaching African relational moral theory alongside the more familiar theories, and by expanding and enriching the canon of works studied by including significant works done in the African philosophical tradition.

My research interests lie in the area of applied ethics – mainly bioethics and environmental ethics. A major emphasis in my work is on applying African moral philosophical notions to ethical questions. Bioethics discourse and our normative understanding can only be enriched by indigenous moral perspectives. In particular, the notions of solidarity, harmonious relationships, restorative justice and of moral personhood, emphasized in much African normative work, have the potential to deeply enrich bioethics.

I am inspired by, and look forward to the fulfilment of, these words of Steve Biko: ‘We believe that in the long run the special contribution to the world by Africa will be in the field of human relationship ... the great gift still has to come from Africa – giving the world a more human face.’