Racial Category Membership as Resource and Constraint in Everyday Interactions:

Implications for Racialism and Non-Racialism in Post-Apartheid South Africa[1]

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Abstract

The anti-apartheid struggle was characterised by tensions between the opposing principles of *non-racialism* (as exemplified by the Freedom Charter) and *racialism* (as exemplified by Black Consciousness). While non-racialism has become a central value in post-apartheid South Africa, tensions remain between the ANC government's long-standing commitment to non-racialism and its continued use of race-conscious policies and appeals to black nationalism. These tensions are also reflected in the writings of social scientists, who have questioned how we might address "a rejection of the actual 'existence' of races as well as the overwhelming existence of the social construct in having shaped – and still shaping – the life chances of citizens" (Maré 2001:80; cf. Posel 2001b:75-76). While questions of this nature are clearly important and complex matters for policymakers and social scientists to grapple with, I show in this paper that they are also lively concerns for ordinary people in South Africa – and that an examination of everyday interactions in South Africa can provide illuminating insights. Specifically, I employ an ethnomethodological, conversation analytic approach to examine some ways in which speakers' racial category memberships (or identities) are treated as resources for action or constraints on action. My analysis demonstrates that racial category membership can contribute to speakers' production of particular courses of action, lend additional weight to actions, and assist recipients in recognising the actions speakers are producing. Conversely, racial category membership can make it more difficult for certain categories of people to produce a particular action, at a particular moment, for particular recipients. I conclude by discussing the implications of these findings, and argue that they point to the contingent and situational operation of what I call *practical non-racialism* (as well as *practical racialism*), which contrasts with the strict or principled non-racialism proposed by some race scholars.

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Under the apartheid system (1948-1994), South Africa was arguably the most racialised society the world has ever seen, with hundreds of laws ensuring that one's racial category shaped one's position and chances in virtually every sphere of life (Frederickson 2002; 2001a; Posel 2001b). The first democratic elections in 1994 ushered in a new era under a governing party (the African National Congress) with a long-avowed commitment to non-racialism. However, more than a decade after the collapse of apartheid, race remains a ubiquitous feature of everyday life in South Africa (Maré 2001; Winant 2001).

While the continuing relevance of race at the level of the state and public policy have been fairly well documented (see, for e.g., Louw 2004; MacDonald 2006; Maré 2001; 2005; Moodley and Adam 2000; Posel 2001b; Winant 2001), less is known (as was the case during the apartheid period) about the role of race in everyday life and at the level of individual episodes of interaction (Winant 2001). Although a number of studies have made valuable contributions in this regard, they have generally utilised observational (e.g., Dixon and Durrheim 2003; Durrheim and Dixon 2005; Pattman 2007) textual (e.g., Franchi and Swart 2003; Nuttall 2001; Unterhalter, Epstein, Morrell, and Moletsane 2004) or self-report interview or focus group methodologies (e.g., Duncan 2003; Durrheim and Dixon 2000; Pattman 2007; Walker 2005). Few studies have examined the situated use of racial categories in naturally occurring interaction (but see Barnes,

Palmary, and Durrheim 2001 for one notable exception).[2] As a result, little is known about how race becomes relevant, and how it is dealt with once it becomes relevant, in everyday interactions in which its relevance has not been pre-specified by a researcher. That is, if it is researchers who introduce race as a topic in the course of a research interview or focus group, and in accordance with their own research interests, then the resulting data will be ill-suited for addressing questions regarding the consequentiality of race for ordinary people in South Africa as they engage in ordinary actions-in-interaction (cf. Heritage and Atkinson 1984; Stokoe 2009; Wilkinson and Kitzinger 2003).

In this report, I take up these issues, demonstrating some ways in which an analysis of how participants' racial identities become relevant in ordinary episodes of interaction may offer relevant insights into post-apartheid racial dynamics, particularly with respect to debates around the opposing concepts of *racialism* and *non-racialism*. I begin with a brief discussion these concepts, followed by a description of the ethnomethodogical, conversation analytic approach that I adopt in addressing these matters, and the data that I analyse in doing so. I then describe some relevant conversation analytic research on social categories, before describing the treatment by participants in my data of racial category memberships (or racial identities) as either resources for action or constraints on action. I conclude by discussing the implications of these findings for understanding how the consequentiality of racial category membership is reproduced in the post-apartheid context, and how this relates to the foregoing discussion of tensions between the concepts racialism and non-racialism.

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[2] By "naturally occurring interaction," I mean interaction that was not produced for research purposes, and hence was not driven by researchers' particular interests, but instead would have occurred even if researchers were not observing or recording it (see Clayman and Gill 2004).

Racialism and Non-Racialism in South Africa

Racialism and non-racialism have been prominent concepts in South African politics for at least several decades, as reflected by their importance within anti-apartheid struggle movements. Frederickse refers to non-racialism as the "unbreakable thread" of resistance to apartheid (Frederikse 1990), a characterisation that reflects the centrality of this concept for much of the anti-apartheid struggle. During this time, non-racialism offered a means to bring together a number of strands of apartheid resisters, subvert the rigid boundaries constructed by apartheid and begin to move beyond categorical divisions and towards a unified society (Maré 2001; Norval 1996). By the early 1950s, following its emergence as a leading apartheid resistance organisation, the African National Congress (ANC) played a prominent role in popularizing the concept of non-racialism as an anti-apartheid value (MacDonald 2006). However, despite the prominence of non-racialism as an anti-apartheid buzzword for the ANC and other organizations, the term often lacked content (Maré 2001) and held varied and sometimes ambiguous and contradictory meanings (MacDonald 2006). This resulted in a lack of clarity with respect to the implications of non-racialism for the status of racial categories in everyday life in a democratic South Africa, and confusion and inconsistency with respect to the practical meaning of non-racialism for ordinary citizens.

In contrast to the non-racialism of the ANC, other anti-apartheid movements and organizations, including the Pan-Africanist Congress (PAC) and the Black Consciousness Movement (which was most strongly associated with Steve Biko), adopted what could be described as racialist approaches to the struggle. For example, while the demands of the Black Consciousness movement were similar to those of the ANC's non-racialism, calling for "an open

society, one man, one vote, no reference to colour" (Biko 1996:123), Biko criticized non-racialism for foreclosing the use of racial consciousness and solidarities in resisting racism. Furthermore, Biko argued that that racial integration would be artificial unless whites and blacks first overcame the respective superiority and inferiority complexes that had resulted from segregation and oppression (Biko 1996).

These tensions between racialism and non-racialism, along with the abovementioned contestation and ambiguity with respect to the definition of non-racialism, have remained a prominent feature of politics in the post-apartheid era. Despite the ANC's long-standing commitment to non-racialism, there remains persistent contestation in government discourse between appeals to black supremacist rhetoric and a focus on black nationalism, and more moderate claims that people of all races have a part to play in the new South Africa (Louw 2004; Seidman 1999). These tensions are apparent in government rhetoric, "which affirms specifically racial interests as it disclaims race and which de-racialises the interests of blacks while racialising those of whites…making racialist appeals while professing the ideology of 'non-racialism'" (MacDonald 2006:123).

Similar tensions have emerged between the status of non-racialism as a central value in the new constitution and the use of race conscious affirmative action and Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) policies to redress the injustices of apartheid. As Posel (2001a) notes, legislation aimed at reversing the effects of apartheid thus continues to rely on, and thereby reproduce the relevance of, apartheid racial categories in its implementation and the measurement of its success (cf. Stone and Erasmus 2008). On the other hand, however, Sharp (1998) argues that uncritically adopting non-racialism provides no guarantees of a better outcome, given the way in which it has been selectively appropriated to obscure continuing

structural racism and hence perpetuate the legacy of apartheid (cf. Winant 2001). By this reasoning, the self-same categories that served as the basis for oppression under apartheid must now become the basis for the deliberate establishment of an equitable society to replace the deliberately racially stratified society of the past (Posel 2001b).

An Ethnomethodological, Conversation Analytic Approach

In addition to describing the abovementioned tensions between racialism and non-racialism, social scientists have demonstrated a reflexive orientation to them in their reflections on the contemporary study of race in South Africa. For example, Maré (2001:80) asks,

> how do we address a rejection of the actual 'existence' of races as well as the overwhelming existence of the social construct in having shaped – and still shaping – the life chances of citizens; how do we avoid our own intellectual curiosity and critical training being blunted through the acceptance, for whatever reason, of these categories of race? (cf. Kottler and Long 1997:60; Posel 2001b:75-76).

While these are clearly important and complex questions, an ethnomethodological approach to sociology (Garfinkel 1967; Heritage 1984) might propose that they are equally important and complex for ordinary members of society as they are for social scientists and policymakers. Ethnomethodology aims to investigate "the body of common sense knowledge and the range of procedures and considerations by means of which ordinary members of society make sense of, find their way about in, and act on the circumstances in which they find themselves" (Heritage 1984:4). In this way, the problems posed by race in post-apartheid South Africa could be re-specified as "members' problems," resulting in an analytic focus on the locally situated self-administration of the post-apartheid racial order by ordinary members of

society. This involves attending to the ways in which race as a social structure is constituted by members' locally situated uses of common-sense racial knowledge, and their practices for making sense of and managing the contingencies of everyday action with respect to race.

Conversation analysis (see, for e.g., Sacks 1995; Sacks, Schegloff, and Jefferson 1974; Schegloff 2007a), which grew in conjunction with the ethnomethodological theoretical tradition described above, provides an approach to studying social order in this way, focusing analytic attention on audio- and video-recorded interactions. Schegloff (2006:70) has described interaction as "the primary, fundamental embodiment of sociality," pointing out that "talk-in-interaction"[3] figures centrally in the concrete activities of virtually all the institutions that make up the macrostructure of societies. As a consequence, one way of studying social order at its point of production is to examine talk-in-interaction in various settings, an approach which has revealed much over the past several decades has revealed much about the importance of interactional mechanisms in the production of social order in a range of social institutions.

In addition to allowing for the study of social order at its point of production, a focus on recorded interactional data offers a number of other important advantages. Firstly, interactional data provides a means to ground analytic claims in the orientations of the participants themselves, as a result of the way in which participants in interactions display their understandings (or analyses) of what has just happened through the way(s) in which they respond to it (Heritage 1984). In this way, consistent with the ethnomethodological preoccupation with privileging participants' categories over those of analysts, researchers' analysis of the data can be "checked" against the analysis provided by participants, internal to the data, by virtue of the

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[3] Schegloff uses the term "talk-in-interaction" to describe "exactly what the term names – talk in interaction" (see footnote 1 in Schegloff 1991).

interactional nature of the data (Sacks, Schegloff, and Jefferson 1974; Schegloff 1992; 1997).

Secondly, the use of recorded data allows for repeated viewing and/or listening that can reveal

the importance of seemingly insignificant details that might be overlooked on the first

viewing/hearing. This is consistent with the conversation analytic assumption that "no order of

detail can be dismissed, *a priori*, as disorderly, accidental, or irrelevant" (Heritage 1984:241) –

an assumption that is supported by the vast body of conversation analytic research that has

accumulated over the past few decades**.** Thirdly, recorded data allows for detailed transcripts of

the data excerpts on which the analysis is based to be included in the write-up of the analysis,

and for the data itself to be played at oral presentations of the findings. This provides readers and

audience members with an independent empirical basis for judging whether they find the

analysis persuasive.

An ethnomethodological, conversation analytic focus thus provides a set of tools for a

detailed examination of the ways in which South Africans orient to, use, and self-administer

racial categories and racial common-sense in individual episodes of interaction. In this way, the

continuing role of race in South Africa can be studied by examining what race is for ordinary

people, and how it matters for the way they act in everyday situations, even when they are

engaged in activities that are not necessarily *about* race per se, but for which race comes to be

treated as relevant or consequential (cf. Whitehead and Lerner 2009; Wilkinson and Kitzinger

2003).

Data Corpus

The data corpus for the study consists of audio recordings of shows broadcasted on three

different South African radio stations, namely SAfm, 702 Talk Radio (often known simply as

702), and Kaya FM. These stations were selected on the basis of at least some of their broadcasts having a high degree of interactivity (with a substantial proportion of time allocated to interviews and calls from listeners), as well as being available through live streaming radio online, which made it possible to use software to capture the audio in .mp3 format as it was broadcasted. A total of approximately 115 hours of broadcasts were recorded, consisting of several hours of pilot data that were recorded in May 2006 and May to June 2007, in order to assess the feasibility of using radio broadcasts as a data source, with the remainder of the data recorded over a three-month period from March to June 2008. These recordings yielded a total of 616 stretches of interaction in which race was made relevant (either overtly or tacitly). The analyses that follow are based on the subset of cases in which the racial identities of either the speaker or recipient(s) were observably treated as relevant.

The data sources were selected so as to include 1) both government-operated (SAfm) and independent (Kaya FM and 702) radio stations, 2) stations that broadcast to a wide audience, either through conventional radio[4] or streaming online, and 3) shows broadcasted at various times throughout the day, from early morning to late night. On this basis, and based on the geographical and other self-identifications provided by callers in the data, it is likely that the recordings that make up the data corpus were heard or participated in by people from a broad cross-section of South African society.

It is important, however, to emphasize that the data corpus is by no means intended or

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[4] SAfm broadcasts throughout South Africa; Kaya FM broadcasts primarily in the Gauteng Province, which is approximately level with KwaZulu-Natal as the most populous province in the country, and contains the largest city in the country (Johannesburg, which is also the financial centre of South Africa) and the Administrative Capital of South Africa (Pretoria); and 702 broadcasts in both the Gauteng Province and (through its sister station, 567 Cape Talk) in the Western Cape Province, in which the Legislative Capital of South Africa (Cape Town) is located.

claimed to constitute a random or nationally representative sample, either of South African speakers or of interactions in post-apartheid South Africa. In light of this, it is worth pointing out several limitations of the data corpus. Firstly, as a consequence of my own limited language skills, I have only included English-language data. Secondly, the data only includes those speakers who have access to the radio broadcasts and a telephone, thus excluding a significant number of South Africans. Thirdly, the majority of the data was collected from one particular institutional context (radio broadcasts and listener call-ins), and it is likely that certain features of the data are products of the unique interactional organization of this context, rather than occurring similarly in South African society more broadly. For example, the host, callers and guests (except in the case of in-studio guests) do not have visual access to each other, may not know things about each other that co-participants in other contexts might know, and may be producing their conduct as much for the overhearing audience as for each other. Moreover, opportunities to participate, particularly for the potential callers in the overhearing audience, are limited by structural features of the context – that is, audience members who wish to respond to something that a speaker has said on air can do so only if they are successful in calling in and having their call taken, and only after at least a short delay following the production of the utterances of the speaker to which they wish to respond. Clearly, factors such as these may affect the ways in which interactions in this context unfold, compared to those in other contexts (for a more thorough description of the interactional organization of radio call-in shows, and the relevance of speakers' categorical identities in such interactions, see Fitzgerald and Housley 2002).

While these limitations should be borne in mind in evaluating the findings, it is also important to point out that a central concern for conversation analysts (and for many other

qualitative researchers) is not with determining whether the interactional practices under study are used widely or frequently within a population – but rather to demonstrate the *possibility* that these practices *can* be used in some kind of interactional context. That is, if an interactional resource or practice is used even by a limited number of speakers in a limited number of contexts, then it could *at least potentially* be used by other speakers in other contexts. In addition, a certain generic set of interactional contingencies, and resources through which they can be managed, are available to all members of a society no matter what particular context their interactions are taking place in. Moreover, in producing their conduct in publicly-broadcasted interactions, speakers implicitly propose that their actions are intelligible to a wide range of listeners who should be able to recognize and make sense of it as social action, independently of the context in which it is produced. Thus, while many of these contingencies and resources may be specially adapted to the demands of particular institutional environments (Drew and Heritage 1992), they are all built on a basic set of materials that have many features in common across speakers and contexts.

The contingencies faced by participants of South African radio broadcasts as a result of the ongoing significance of race in everyday life, and the practices that can be used to manage these contingencies, may thus be similar in many ways to those faced by speakers in other interactional contexts. In short, to the extent that race matters for the actions of South Africans, it probably does not only matter when people are speaking on radio broadcasts, and it probably does not only matter for people who speak on radio broadcasts. However, the constrained range of conversational topics covered on such radio shows may make such broadcasts a particularly rich site for the emergence and relevance of societally institutionalized categorical identities – that is, given that discussions on these shows are generally restricted to matters that may be

relevant or of interest to a broad overhearing audience, the category memberships that tend to be virtually omni-relevant in society as a whole are likely to surface recurrently in these interactions. As a result, these broadcasts provide a perspicuous setting (Garfinkel 2002) in which to investigate the ways in which categorical identities with a generic, society-wide significance (including, among others, racial category membership) become relevant and are managed in interaction.

The aim of the present study is thus to develop detailed descriptions of some interactional contingencies and practices, rather than to make distributional claims about their operation or frequency of occurrence. However, once these descriptions have been adequately developed, they can be tested against additional data sets in order to assess the degree to which they are prevalent in other interactional contexts, or among particular categories of people (racial or otherwise) (Schegloff 1993). Moreover, as I argue below, even if the interactional practices I examine occur relatively rarely, or are completely absent in some contexts, their operation in any given context may still reflect the extensive operation of a broad racial common-sense.

Analytic Procedure

All data were listened to, and rough transcripts were produced of all stretches of interaction in which race was treated as relevant, either explicitly or allusively (see Whitehead 2009). This overall collection of race-relevant stretches of interaction was then divided into sub-collections that shared common features in terms of the practices employed by speakers, or speakers' orientations to the contingencies through which race came to be treated as consequential. Careful transcription[5] and analysis, using conversation analytic techniques (see, for e.g., Sacks,

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[5] A list of these transcription symbols is shown in Jefferson (2004), and can be accessed at

Schegloff, and Jefferson 1974; Schegloff 2007a; 2007b), of all of the instances in each sub-collection were conducted as the sub-collections were developed, with emerging hypotheses about the sub-collections being iteratively refined and tested against each new data instance identified as a candidate for inclusion.

<p style="text-align:center">Social Categories, Common-Sense Knowledge, and Action</p>

In his early work on social categories, or in his terms "membership categorization devices" (MCDs), Sacks (Sacks 1972a; 1972b; 1995; also see Schegloff 2007c) showed the way in which categories serve as repositories for, and organize, bodies of common-sense cultural knowledge. This common-sense knowledge is knowledge that ordinary people have about what people of particular categories are like, how they behave, and so on (Schegloff 2007c). Although this knowledge may not be scientifically or factually accurate when applied to any particular member of a category, and (especially in the case of some sets of categories, including race) it may be morally or politically contested, it has "the working status of 'knowledge'" for the ordinary people who treat it as such (Schegloff 2007c:469). Thus, categories are "inference-rich," meaning that once a person is taken to be a member of a category, anything known about that category is presumed to be so about them (Schegloff 2007c). In addition, categories are associated (again, through common-sense knowledge) with particular kinds of activities or conduct, which Sacks termed "category-bound activities" (Sacks 1972a:335).

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www.liso.ucsb.edu/Jefferson/Transcript.pdf. Also, see www.sscnet.ucla.edu/soc/faculty/schegloff/TranscriptionProject/index.html for a "Transcription Module" on Conversation Analytic transcription, which includes links to sound files exemplifying the features of speech production that the various transcription symbols are used to represent.

As a result of these features of categories, the identification of an actor's category membership serves to mobilize common-sense knowledge about that category and, as a consequence, can be treated as an account for (or explanation of) the action(s) produced by the actor. This was demonstrated, for example, in Sacks' (1972a) analysis of the first two sentences of a child's story: "The baby cried. The mommy picked it up." Sacks notes that hearing the "mommy" in the story as being the mother of the child involves treating the use of the categorical reference "mother" as an explanation for her actions: she picked up the crying child *because* she is the child's mother – and because picking up a child when it cries is an activity bound to the category "mother." Similarly, we hear the baby's category membership as accounting for its actions – the baby cried *because* it is a baby; because the activity "cry" is bound to the category "baby." Furthermore, Sacks observes that these associations between categories and activities can serve as a basis for praising or degrading members' actions. For example, a baby who does not cry in circumstances that might warrant crying may be praised for "acting like a big boy," while an older child who cries may be sanctioned for "acting like a baby." (Sacks 1972a:336).

Sacks (1972b) also observed that the common-sense knowledge associated with categories, and the relationships between members of particular categories, may implicate rights and obligations with respect to producing particular actions at particular times. For example, when one is in trouble, those who they have rights, or even obligations, to turn to for help are those of particular categories, including family members, friends, and professionals – and conversely, those in trouble do not have rights or obligations to turn for help to incumbents of categories such as "stranger" or "non-professional." Categories can thus shape both how it is that

people can be seen to be properly acting in particular ways, and what would be understood as appropriate or inappropriate actions given particular circumstances.

Recent research building on Sacks' work has elaborated on these findings. Kitzinger's (2005a; 2005b) analyses of a set of suicide prevention calls originally reported by Sacks (Sacks 1972b; 1995) and calls to an after-hours doctor's office further demonstrated how social categories can serve as accounts for action, and are routinely treated as such by speakers. These analyses showed how references to kinship categories enabled callers to produce unremarkable, non-accountable reasons for their emotions or actions (including the action of calling on behalf of a family member in need), with the mere mentioning of a category serving as a tacit account for their actions. In addition, they provide evidence for the role of category-based rights and obligations in the production of action, as calls for help made by family members of an individual in need being treated as non-accountable suggests an orientation to rights and obligations to behave in a "caring" manner associated with kinship. This is consistent with other studies that have shown similar orientations on the part of participants to such category-based entitlements (see, for e.g., Gill 1998; Raymond and Heritage 2006; Whalen and Zimmerman 1990).

Recent work by Stokoe (2009; 2010) demonstrates the way in which membership categories may recurrently become relevant in particular types of action sequences, such as complaint sequences, as speakers draw on the common-sense knowledge associated with categories in producing actions. For example, callers formulating complaints in calls to a neighbour dispute line in Stokoe's (2009) data could amplify or qualify the "complainability" of the conduct in question by linking it to the category membership of those implicated in it (cf. Schegloff 2005). Similarly, speakers used categories in producing denials of accusations and

complaints made against them, claiming their own category membership and/or the category

membership of those they were alleged to have acted against as evidence for their denials of

having acted in such a way (Stokoe 2009; 2010). These findings show some ways in which

categories can function "as constituent features of members' methods for accomplishing action"

(Stokoe 2009:75). This is consistent with Schegloff's observations that characterizing an action

itself – that is, deciding, given at least two possible alternatives, what action a given utterance

can be understood to have implemented – may also be shaped by the category membership of the

actor (see Schegloff 2002; 2007c).

Schegloff (2007c) suggests that further analyses are needed of the ways in which

membership categories become relevant, and consequential for the conduct of participants,

through the ordinary workings of talk-in-interaction. In the analysis that follows, I take up this

challenge, showing some ways in which some of the features of membership categories with

respect to action described in the foregoing discussion result in racial category membership

being treated as either a resource for action or a constraint on action by participants engaged in

ordinary actions-in-interaction.

Racial Category Membership as a Resource for Action

A first way in which the properties of social categories described above were observably

consequential in my data was in cases in which participants used them as resources for enabling

the recognisability and intelligibility of actions – especially in circumstances in which there was

potential ambiguity. This is illustrated by Excerpt 1, in which a caller raises a question about the

implications of a ruling by the Human Rights Commission (HRC) that the Federation of Black

Journalists (FBJ) had acted unconstitutionally in attempting to exclude white journalists from

one of their gatherings. In the course of formulating his question, the caller reveals his racial

category membership, and it contributes to the action he's producing being hearable as a

question, rather than (for example) a complaint dressed up as a question.

Excerpt 1:

[80 — SAfm Eric Miyeni 4-9-08]

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1    C:     .hhh U:m: thee (.) the ruling: uh=eh by the Human:

2           Rights Commission u::m: in terms of .hhh

3    H:     Y[es. Yes. Yes.

4    C:      [u::m

5    C:     Ja the- the whole FBJ thing. [I just want to maybe you

6    H:                                  [Yes.

7    C:     could clarify something for me.=

8    H:     =>Ja what's that.<

9    C:     Eh u:m: (.) .hh affirmative action: I- in my

10          understanding: white people: .h (0.2) cannot get certain

11          jobs: becaus:e (.) simply they are white. If I and a

12          white person go into an interview, .h[h u:m: and we are

13   H:                                          [Mm hm.

14   C:     both well qualified, u:h I sh- I'm supposed to be the

15          first preference, and get that job. .h[h

16   H:                                           [Ja s- underlining

17          "supposed" [of course.

18   C:                [Ja. You know the fact is I'm black, I should

19          get that job. h Now I wanna a- I- I wanna find out you

20          know in terms of the ruling, .h[hh u:m: what does the

21   H:                                    [Mm.

22   C:     HRC think, do you- did you- have you got any idea or
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23              maybe am I mis<u>un</u>derstanding affirma[tive action (    )

24      H:                                              [I THINK YOU KNOW

25              IT'S A <u>VE</u>RY subtle point. (Yeah) from what I understand,

26              .hh y[ou <u>can</u>not say, (.) "for th<u>is</u> job, (.) <u>on</u>ly blacks

27      C:           [(Ja         )

28      H:      must apply." Now [you are being a <u>ra</u>cist. .h[h But you

29      C:                       [(Yes.)                         [Hm.

30      H:      can say "this job is open to <u>ev</u>erybody, but if <u>two</u>

31              people, .h one (0.2) previously ad<u>van</u>taged" as they call

32              it, "and one (0.4) previously dis<u>ad</u>vantaged and ↑still

33              dis<u>ad</u>vantaged and I have to <u>choose</u> between the two, .hh

34              know that I will take the other one." .hh S[o,

35      C:                                                [Okay.

36      H:      the- the basis is different. ((continues))
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After introducing the topic he is calling about, and receiving the host's go-ahead to proceed with his question (lines 1-8), the caller mentions affirmative action (line 9), and proceeds to produce an account of his understanding of the operation of affirmative action policy (lines 9-12, 14-15 and 18-19). As he does so, the caller inserts himself (lines 11 and 18) as a hypothetical job applicant in a scenario in which affirmative action policy would become relevant. By placing himself in this scenario rather than a generic "black person," the caller tacitly identifies himself as "black," in contrast to the hypothetical "white person" (line 12) he would be competing against for the job. Once he has constructed this scenario, and received alignment from the host with respect to the understanding of affirmative action conveyed by it (see lines 16-17), the caller returns to his stated reason for calling, connecting the HRC's ruling

with affirmative action policy by asking about the implications of the ruling for what the HRC might "think" about affirmative action (lines 19-20 and 22-23).

A question such as this might ordinarily be vulnerable to being heard as being not a genuine question, but instead (in light of the HRC's ruling about the constitutionality of the FBJ's attempts to exclude white journalists from a gathering) as a pointed criticism of the constitutionality of affirmative action dressed up as a question. However, by revealing his racial category membership prior to asking the question, thus making relevant the common sense knowledge associated with his racial category, the caller provides his recipients with a resource for understanding it as a question rather than a criticism. That is, it enables recipients to hear the question as coming from a (black) person who stands to benefit from affirmative action, rather than from a (white) person with a self-interested reason to criticize it[6] – therefore making this more clearly hearable as a genuine question, perhaps borne of concern about the implications of the HRC ruling for the future of affirmative action, rather than as an opportunistic attempt to use the HRC ruling as ammunition against affirmative action.

The host's response to the caller's question (lines 24-26, 28, and 30-34) reveals his analysis of the caller's question as having been a genuine question, as he explains the distinction between the Human Rights Commission's ruling on the FBJ and the affirmative action policy the caller has asked about, providing an account of why the ruling should not be taken as an

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[6] Further resources in this regard are provided by the Caller prefacing his question with the request, "maybe you could clarify something for me" (lines 5 and 7), and his suggestion following the question that "maybe I am misunderstanding affirmative action" (line 22). That is, these utterances provide further evidence that the Caller is working to produce his question to be heard as a genuine question, rather than a criticism – but neither one would preclude an interpretation of him as a critic of affirmative action engaging in pseudo-naïve questioning in the service of criticism.

indictment of the constitutionality of affirmative action. Moreover, the caller's subsequent response treats the host as having adequately understood and responded to his question, as he accepts the host's account (line 35), rather than pursuing an attack on affirmative action in the way that he may have done had his original question been designed as such.

This demonstrates the way in which the constitutive nature of categories in the production of action serves as an interactional resource, contributing to the recognisability of an utterance as implementing one action rather than another, and circumventing the interactional difficulties that may result from misrecognition. In addition to serving as an interactional resource (perhaps as a by-product of doing so), the use of (racial) categories in this way serves as a vehicle for tacitly invoking common sense racial knowledge about South Africa's past and present, and the connections between them. For example, knowing that the caller (as a black person) is a potential beneficiary of affirmative action rests on knowledge of what categories of people were disadvantaged under apartheid – and drawing on this common sense knowledge serves as a way of renewing the connection between the racialised arrangements of the past and the racialised interests of the present. By using categories in this way, and treating their use as unproblematic and recognizable, the caller and host collaborate in reproducing the commonsense knowledge associated with them (cf. Stokoe 2009).

The use of racial category membership can be seen similarly at work in Excerpt 2, in which a speaker uses a racial self-identification as a means for heightening a positive assessment of, and display of appreciation for, one of his recipients, Archbishop Desmond Tutu (who is on the line as a guest on the show).

Excerpt 2:
[184 — SAfm Eric Miyeni 4-28-08]

```
1     C:    Um uh uh uhuh Bishop, really, uhuh huh! .hh

2     H:    M[m.

3     C:     [So good to talk to you:. Really sir.

4           (0.6)

5     G:    God bles[s you.

6     C:            [It's an honour, it's an honour sir, it's an

7           honour.

8           (2.8)

9     C:    Anyway. .h I [just wanted to say sir, .hh the fact that

10    H:                 [Ja.

11    C:    you (.) (t-) (0.3) ten:d your humour .h with (.) your

12          religion, (0.2) has actually made you a unique person.

13          .hh Really. pt=.h This means so much to so many of us.

14    H:    Mm::. [Mm.

15    C:          [E::h really. Really it has. .h And uh you'll

16          never know how much (.) you've (.) meant to us. .hh Um:

17          (.) I(h)'m t(h)alk(h)ing ab(h)out white South Africa.

18          ((smile voice)) .hh [And uh really sir, (0.2) um (.)

19          uh:: sir we honour you

20    H:        [Mm.

21    C:    and uh I respect you. .h Really sir. .h Thank you very

22          much.

23    G:    G[od bless you and thank you.

24    C:     [Thank you.

25    C:    (The-)

26          (0.4)

27    H:    Oh sorry we l(h)o(h)st Richard there. ((smile voice))

28          Thank you so much that's a lovely call. ((takes next

29          call))
```

After noting how much Tutu has meant to "us" (lines 13 and 16), the caller specifies what he meant by "us" – "white South Africa" (lines 16-17) – thereby revealing that he is a white South African. This self-identification seems to specify a basis upon which the caller, in praising Tutu's work, represents more than simply another of the millions of people worldwide who have been virtually unanimous in their positive regard for what Tutu has achieved. It does this by displaying that the caller is praising Tutu *as* a white South African, thereby drawing on common-sense knowledge about the categories of people who would ordinarily, and historically, be understood as having been the primary beneficiaries of Tutu's work. That is, the caller here seems to be oriented to a possible common-sense assumption that Tutu's work has primarily benefited black South Africans. In light of this, the caller's racial category membership may be seen as adding additional weight or authority to his praise, by virtue of delivering the praise from the perspective of one who has not been a member of the category that have historically been assumed to be the primary beneficiaries of Tutu's work. In addition, the caller may be treating effusive praise of this sort for a black person by a white person as somehow transgressing normative racial alignments, and thereby as being remarkable by virtue of breaching expectations in this regard. Thus, by claiming that Tutu has meant a lot even to white South Africans like him, the caller is amplifying his positive assessment of Tutu's importance.

It may well be the case that, from the outset, the caller was designing his praise to be heard as coming from him as a white South African, and thereby as being noteworthy, and that he made his racial category membership explicit only when his recipients showed no recognition of what he was doing as being remarkable in any way. Evidence for this is shown in the way in which the caller on several occasions throughout the call pursued a response from Tutu, with his

mention of race being produced as one of this series of pursuits of uptake, following the failure of several previous attempts. The first of these pursuits occurs at line 3 where, following a possibly complete assessment ("So good to talk to you") after which Tutu does not immediately respond, the caller adds an increment[7] ("Really sir"). This increment creates another transition relevance place[8] at which a response from Tutu is relevant, but he does not respond during a 0.6-second silence (line 4). Following this silence, Tutu does address the caller, albeit with a somewhat minimal show of appreciation for the caller's assessment, at line 5 ("God bless you"). Further pursuits by the caller occur at lines 6-7, as he repeats "it's an honour" three times; line 12, as he produces a positive assessment of Tutu; line 13, as he adds and increment to and elaborates his previous assessment; line 15, as he adds two further increments to this assessment; lines 15-16, as he produces a more global assessment of how much Tutu has "meant to us;" and lines 16-17, as he produces his racialised specification of who he means by "us." The caller's mention of race thus follows a sustained and consistently unsuccessful series of pursuits of a response from Tutu, which strongly suggests that the caller employed his racial category membership as a resource in the service of his continued pursuit of a response. As it turns out, this particular pursuit is no more successful than the previous ones, and the caller has to produce several more (see lines 18-19 and 21) before eventually receiving uptake from Tutu (line 23) and being put out of his misery shortly afterward as his call was lost (see lines 25-29).

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[7] For discussions of turn increments see, for example, Ford, Fox and Thompson (2002); Lerner (2004); Schegloff, (1996).

[8] A transition relevance place (TRP) is a recognizable place at which transition to a next speaker may possibly occur. See Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson (1974) for discussion of possible completion of turn constructional units (TCUs), and transition relevance places.

Thus, by identifying himself racially in this way, the caller may have been making explicit something he treated as potentially recognizable earlier on, thereby retrospectively making clear why his praise for Tutu was potentially noteworthy. That is, explicitly formulating what type of person one is as a basis for the action one is conducting is an alternative to figuring that others can already recognize and know this. In this sense, there may have been a presumption on the part of the caller that his recipients would be able to recognize him as a white South African, and by virtue of that recognize the kind of action he was producing, and only when they failed to produce any uptake that would serve as a display of such recognition did he explicate the basis for why his actions should be treated as remarkable. In light of this, Tutu's lack of uptake may have been a way of tacitly resisting the racial common-sense upon which treatment of the caller's actions as noteworthy appears to rest.

In contrast to Excerpt 2, in which the recipient did not overtly display any recognition of the use to which the speaker was apparently putting his racial category membership, Excerpt 3 shows an instance in which a recipient actively uses a speaker's racial category membership as a resource for aligning with the speaker's actions. Prior to this excerpt, the host has criticized the South African government, claiming that they have failed to provide sufficient support for small and medium-sized businesses, and a caller has produced a similar criticism, with host and caller agreeing that the government is "dysfunctional" with respect to supporting such businesses. Subsequent to this alignment, the caller secures the host's go-ahead to express "one more comment" (see lines 1-3), before criticizing the decision to hire a highly-paid "imported coach" for the national football (soccer) team, rather than making use of "local talent" (see lines 4-11). In aligning with this position, the host apparently tacitly treats the caller's racial category

membership as a basis for authority in expressing such a position, when it would otherwise be written off as being racially motivated.

Excerpt 3:

[176 — SAfm Eric Miyeni 4-28-08]

```
1    C:    And- and (sure) one more comment if you don't mind
2          [(me telling you) so, .h is that e- uh y- you have thee
3    H:    [That's fine.
4    C:    sort of: football arena where .hh you have a: imported
5          judge for a: .h imported (c-) coach for a to- too
6          ridiculous amount .h of money to mention. .hh How about
7          taking it on the chin, (.h) and having a local person,
8          .h running from top to bottom, .h and let (.) this
9          country try and .h (live with) what it can do? .h
10         Instead of trying to have this ridiculous farce going
11         on, .h and use the local talent .h [(maybe      ) to
12   H:                                        [ABsolutely!
13   C:    actually (.) let this country grow. .h [And not (in/the)
14   H:                                            [Boudewijn,
15   C:    reverse.
16   H:    I couldn't agree with you more. I'm so glad you- I mean
17         I'm glad we- we got you to call. .hh Because every time
18         you say something like this it sounds like you're just
19         pushing for black this black that. .hh But it's the
20         small .hh and the [medium business.
21   C:                       [(I'm not-) I'm not p- .h I'm not
22         pushing for black. Because that's a mistake in
23         itse[lf.
24   H:        [Exactly.
```

```
25   C:    You mus- you must push .h you must push for what's
26         there, what you have in your [hand.
27   H:                                 [(What's) right. Yes.
```

The host begins his response by expressing strong agreement with the caller (lines 12 and 16), before showing his pleasure at having the caller phone in to express these views (lines 16-17). He then produces an account for this pleasure, claiming that "every time you say something like this it sounds like you're just pushing for black this black that" (lines 17-19), thus suggesting that in *this* case the view being expressed by the caller is *not* hearable as racially motivated in the way that it would be in other cases. In this way, the host treats the caller as having special authority to make claims of this sort, whereas other people who might make them would likely be treated as simply having a racial bias. The host thus treats the caller's claims, which were ostensibly concerned with national interests, as being hearable as being euphemistic ways of "pushing" for racialised interests if produced by a (type of) speaker other than the caller.

While the host does not explicitly specify the basis for his treatment of the caller as having this type of special authority, he does make the caller's racial category membership available as the "obvious" solution to the puzzle of why this would be the case (cf. Whitehead 2009). That is, by claiming that the position the caller has expressed is hearable as "pushing for black," while implying that it is not hearable as such when coming from this particular caller, the host invites listeners to consider what characteristic of the caller might provide for his exemption from an assumption of racial bias as a basis for expressing this position. This puzzle can be solved by assuming that the caller is white – and thus that the host is treating him as such, even though he has not overtly revealed his racial category membership at any point during the call.

In this way, the host appears to be oriented to the caller's racial category membership as consequential for understanding what he is doing, treating him (by virtue of being a white person doing what he is doing) as adopting a principled stand on the matter at hand, rather than taking a self-serving and thereby possibly racially biased position. In doing so, the host uses the caller's race to buttress the claims that he (the host) has previously made, and that the caller has aligned with during the course of the call. In other words, the (black) host treats his own prior claims as vulnerable to accusations of self-interested racial bias, and recruits the (white) caller's added authority in support of them, treating the caller's racial category membership as evidence that their shared position is valid independent of potential racialised interests.[9]

Further evidence for this analysis is provided in the caller and host's subsequent responses. In lines 21-22, the caller treats the host as having suggested that he is in fact "pushing for black," and denies that he is doing so, claiming that this would be "a mistake in itself." The host then treats what the caller has just said as a statement of the position that he himself previously had independently held ("Exactly," line 24) (see Li's 2007 analysis of the use of the word "exactly" in this type of sequential environment). The host thus confirms that he was not accusing the caller of "pushing for black," effectively reasserting his appreciation for the caller doing something that could not (given who the caller is) be treated as "pushing for black," even though it would be treated as such if other people did it.

As in Excerpts 1 and 2, the (in this case more tacit) use of a speaker's race as a resource for action both rests on and reproduces common-sense knowledge associated with racial categories. Here, knowledge about what (racial) categories of people would benefit from

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[9] Paradoxically, this involves using race (in the form of the Caller's race-based authority) to defeat the use of race (in the form of potential accusations of racial bias in expressing a position).

increased emphasis on making use of "local talent," and thereby what categories of people would potentially be seen as self-interested in demanding such an emphasis, underpins the host's treatment of the speaker as having enhanced authority to take the position he has taken. This may be particularly so in the context of a discussion of football, which both historically and in post-apartheid South Africa has been seen as a "black" sport (Nauright 1997; Pelak 2005). This may thus be another case in which common-sense knowledge of past and present, and the continuities between them, are reproduced through the use of race, and the connection of racial categories to particular material interests, in a situated interactional moment. In addition, it demonstrates how ostensibly national interests come to be (re)produced as racialised, through the treatment of claims about national interests being treated as possible euphemisms for racialised interests. This, in turn, points to the continuing mundane consequentiality of historical racial divisions and race-specific interests for contemporary actions-in-interaction.

In contrast to the tacit use of race shown in Excerpt 3, Excerpt 4 illustrates a speaker's highly explicit use of race as a resource for action, as a caller invokes his racial category membership as an account for his actions (or lack thereof) in defending himself against criticism from the host. In this case, the caller has complained about the lack of outrage among the South African media and government officials about the situation in Zimbabwe.[10] Following an extended series of complaints by the caller (exemplified by the caller's utterance at lines 1-3), and resistance to the complaints on the part of the host, the host asks the caller where he was born (lines 4 and 6). After the caller responds, revealing that he was born in Zimbabwe (line 8),

_____

[10] At the time at which this call took place, Zimbabwean President Mugabe was reported to be refusing to release the results of a recently-held general election, amid accusations that he was attempting to cling to power despite having been defeated in the election.

the host uses this as a basis for undermining the complaints he has made against the South
African media and government, claiming that "Zimbabweans are spending a hell of a lot time,
.hh telling South Africans to toyi toyi[11] and not telling each other to do the same" (lines 17 and
19-20).[12] In defending himself against this criticism, the caller uses his racial category
membership as an account for why it is difficult for him to protest in the way that he is calling on
others to do.

Excerpt 4:
[229 — SAfm Eric Miyeni 5-12-08]

```
1      C:     The AN- the ANC has kept quiet when all the world is

2             shouting about what's going on in Zimbabwe. <The ANC is

3             just k- silent.

4      H:     W- is- uh w- where- [where were- whe- where were you

5      C:                        [(              )

6      H:     bron born Brian?

7             (0.6)

8      C:     In Zimbabwe.

9             (.)

10     H:     °Mkay. All right.° You know why- I don't understand why

11            you guys like sometimes .hh do this much agitation

12            outside Zimbabwe.
```

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[11] The toyi toyi is a dance strongly associated with public political protests in South Africa, particularly during apartheid but also following the transition to democracy. The association between the dance and the act of protesting has resulted in the term "toyi toyi" becoming synonymous with "militant protest."

[12] In doing so, the host uses the caller's presumed (on the basis of his country of birth) citizenship category as a resource for criticizing the caller, making this an instance of the use of a social category other than race as a resource for producing action.

```
13           (1.8)

14    C:     W- sorry why we don't?

15    H:     .hh Like you know, you- you know w- eh=I'll tell you

16           what I feel. As Eric. And I've said it on this show.

17           .h[h I feel like Zimbabweans are spending a hell of a

18    C:        [Mm hm.

19    H:     lot time, .hh telling South Africans to toyi toyi and

20           not telling each other to do the same.

21           (0.2)

22    C:     Tch ja I try- I do.

23           (0.8)

24    C:     I do toyi toyi.

25           (.)

26    C:     I do what I can yo[u know but there's- .hh for a- for a

27    H:                       [Mm.

28    C:     white person it's not easy because then i- you- .hh

29           you're conceived to be racist °or something.°

30           (0.6)

31    H:     Ja.

32           (.)

33    H:     Well I hope people hear you man and they: do the toyi

34           toying you know. [.hh I just think the majority of South

35    C:                      [(Mm.)

36    H:     Africans .hh are just too hungry (.) to toyi toyi. About

37           Zimbabwe. ((call continues))
```

Following a short silence after the host's criticism, the caller responds, claiming that he

tries (line 22) – with the word "try" here implicating a failed attempt to do what the host has

suggested he should do (see Schegloff 2003). The caller then cuts off and reformulates his

response, saying "I do" (line 22). His emphasis on the word "do" contrasts with the host's

implication that he does not protest in the way that he's calling on others to do, and serves as a

defence against the host's criticism on the grounds that it cannot accurately be applied to him.

The silence (line 23) following this claim, at a place at which it was relevant for the host to accept

or reject the caller's defence, may project incipient rejection of the defence by the host (cf.

Pomerantz 1984; Schegloff 1987). The caller, possibly recognizing this pause as a sign of trouble,

then repeats his defence, elaborating it to include a specification of what he does ("I do toyi

toyi," line 24), again emphasizing the word "do" in contrast to the host's implication that he does

not.

Following another, shorter, pause (line 25) during which no uptake from the host was

forthcoming (again possibly signalling incipient rejection of the caller's defence), the caller

reformulates his defence ("I do what I can," line 26). This time the caller emphasizes the word

"can," which implies some kind of limit to what it is possible for him to do with respect to

protesting about the situation in Zimbabwe. The host responds shortly after the word "can,"

suggesting his willingness at this point to accept the caller's defence, but the caller has already

begun to elaborate, going on to provide a racialised account for the limits to his ability to protest

that he has just alluded to ("for a white person it's not easy because then i- you- .hh you're

conceived to be racist °or something,°" lines 26 and 28-29). The caller thus explicitly claims a

lack of authority (as a white person) to perform particular actions on the basis that doing so

would make him vulnerable to accusations of racism. Moreover, he implicitly claims that the

same actions, if performed by a black person, would *not* be conceived as racist. He thus orients to

racial category membership as constitutive of how an action would be interpreted – as an expression of racism masquerading as political protest rather than a sincere act of political protest.

As in the previous excerpts, this use of race draws on common-sense knowledge of the past and present. That is, knowing why the caller could be accused in this way rests on knowledge about the history of racialised conflicts in Zimbabwe, and associations between governments and racial categories (with the Zimbabwean government being associated with "black") – and may also draw on common-sense knowledge of accusations of racism that white critics of the post-apartheid South African government have faced (see, for e.g., du Preez 2004). As a result, any criticism of the caller based on him being a white person criticizing the Zimbabwean government would simultaneously serve to racialise the Zimbabwean government, by virtue of treating the caller's criticism as racially motivated.

The host's responses following this account mark a move from disagreement with and criticism of the caller to alignment with him. After a pause (line 30) he agrees with the caller's account (see line 31), thereby marking his acceptance of the defence the caller has produced. In doing so, the host moves from initially having questioned of the caller's right (on the basis of his status as a Zimbabwean) to criticize South Africans' actions with respect to Zimbabwe, to aligning with the caller's claim that it is difficult for him (on the basis of his racial category membership) to criticize Zimbabwe. He thus moves from a position of treating the caller's citizenship category as primary, to one of accepting that his racial category trumps his citizenship category in this case. This illustrates a way in which alternative ways of categorizing people, and the relative importance of these possible alternatives are made relevant and

negotiated – and the eventual acceptance of the primacy of race in this particular case may reflect and renew the relevance of the colonial and racial history of countries like Zimbabwe and South Africa.

After another brief pause (line 32) following the host's initial response, the host further marks his acceptance of the caller's account and his overall agenda, aligning with his pleas for a greater degree of protest about Zimbabwe by expressing his hope that people will hear him and "do the toyi toying" (lines 33-34). This continues the host's movement into alignment with the caller, serving as an expression of sympathy for the caller claim (which the host had initially criticized) that South Africans should be doing more to protest the situation in Zimbabwe. Although the host then produces an account of his own for why the majority of South Africans are unlikely to protest about Zimbabwe (they are "just too hungry," line 36), this account further reflects his shift towards aligning with the caller. That is, by accounting for why South Africans aren't protesting, the host tacitly treats the caller's suggestion that they should be doing so as a legitimate (albeit, given the circumstances, unrealistic) one, in contrast to his previous dismissal of the caller's suggestion by virtue of it being produced by a Zimbabwean. In coming to alignment with the caller in this way (similarly to Excerpt 1 above), the host collaborates in the racial common-sense mobilized by the caller to account for his actions (cf. Stokoe 2009).

This case thus demonstrates a speaker's use of his racial category membership as an interactional resource, to account for his (in)ability to protest about Zimbabwe, and in doing so to defend himself against a criticism levelled at him by the host. In addition, however, it illustrates a speaker's claim that race serves to limit his ability to produce particular actions, along with a recipient's acceptance of and alignment with that claim. This represents the converse

of the other cases that I have discussed in this section, suggesting that not only can race serve as a resource for action, but also as a constraint on action. I turn in the following section to an examination of some instances in which participants orient to racial category membership as such.

Racial Category Membership as a Constraint on Action

An instance of a speaker's orientation to racial category membership as a constraint on action is shown in Excerpt 5. In this case, a caller who is complaining about government responses to concerns about violent crime, and about the violence of South African society concedes that "the whites are to blame" (lines 19-20) for the things about which he is complaining. By doing this, he displays an orientation to his diminished authority as a white person to produce such complaints, while at the same time defensively pre-empting the use of his racial category membership as a basis for undermining his complaint.

Excerpt 5:
[255 — SAfm Eric Miyeni 5-19-08]

```
1    C:    Eric,

2          (.)

3    H:    M[m.

4    C:     [Um:: I- I- I do:n't want to sound like I'm beating a

5          drum here but=h (0.6) the government (.) denial=hh geez

6          I tell you man, (0.2) it s:ickens me to my stomach.

8    C:    .h[h Because last week we had the minister saying, .hhh

7    H:      [Mm.

9          (0.3) uh:: you know, (.) n- "South Africans are not like
```

```
10          this:.” I mean we wo- live in one of the most violent

11          (.) countries in the world.=

12   H:     =Mm[:.

13   C:        [Okay? .h Now I’m not saying all South Africans are

14          violent,

15   H:     No most of u[s are Alec.

16   C:                 [(but    ) But- [but the fact is is that

17   H:                               [Fact.

18   C:     we have a (.) terribly violent society and- and yes:,

19          (.) you know, >th- th-< the whites are to blame for

20          that. (.) Uh: under the apartheid [system. But the fact

21   H:                                        [Mm mm mm=hhh

22          of the matter is it continues. .hh And people do have a

23   C:     choice to stop.

24          [.hh

25   H:     [Mm:.
```

Although the caller does not directly identify himself as white in this instance, by producing this concession he orients to the possibility that a recipient could treat him as being a member of the same racial category as those that could be blamed for producing the conditions about which he is complaining, thereby invalidating his complaint. It is further noteworthy in this regard that the caller precedes his concession with the word “yes” (line 18), thereby designing it as a response to a hypothetical counter to the complaint he has just produced. The caller then re-asserts his complaint once again, thereby using the concession as a means of pre-emptively shaping the range of responses available to recipients who could potentially seek to undermine his complaint (cf. Antaki and Wetherell 1999; Whitehead and Wittig 2004). That is, by acknowledging his vulnerability to the kind of racialised counter that might be used to undermine

his complaint, he ensures that such a counter could not subsequently be produced without being a repetition of a charge he has already admitted to. In this way, he renews the relevance of a response to the substance of his complaint, while constraining the relevance of a response that would use his racial category membership as a basis for undermining his complaint.[13]

As in the data examined in the prior section, and consistent with the prior research described above, the caller's production of this concession shows his orientation to the common-sense knowledge associated with his racial category membership in a number of ways. Firstly, the caller treats shared racial category membership as a basis for shared blame, such that simply being a member of the same racial category as those responsible for something makes one vulnerable to being targeted for blame for it, and involves having limited rights to complain about it. This, in turn, rests on the common-sense association between the category "white" and the violence of the apartheid system, which the caller explicitly mentions in his concession (line 20). Moreover, the assignment of responsibility for apartheid's atrocities is treated as continuous with potential blame for post-apartheid social conditions that can be linked to the apartheid past – thus providing a basis for the caller's effort to break this past-present link with the claim that

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[13] Two other features of the caller's utterances further display his concern with how his complaint might be responded to. Firstly, he prefaces his complaint with the claim, "I do:n't want to sound like I'm beating a drum here" (lines 4-5). In doing so, he treats what he is about to do as not being novel, and as the sort of thing that could be responded to with accusations that he *is* "beating a drum." Secondly, in the course of producing his complaint about violence in South Africa, the caller claims that he is "not saying all South Africans are violent" (line 13-14). In doing so, he displays his concern about the potential for being accused of making unsustainably broad generalizations about South Africans, and moves to pre-empt such accusations. He thus establishes from the outset a defensive orientation with respect to what is to follow, setting the scene for the defensive racialised concession that he subsequently produces.

"the fact of the matter is it continues. .hh And people <u>do</u> have a choice to stop" (lines 20 and 22-23). It is noteworthy in this regard that the caller formulates those to blame as "the whites," thereby excluding himself from the category he is formulating – in contrast to a formulation such as "we whites." In this way, although he displays an orientation to potentially being blamed for the very thing he is complaining about as a result of his racial category membership, he simultaneously positions himself outside the culpable category, thereby further distancing himself from any responsibility for the blameworthy actions of its members. In this way, the speaker's conduct is shaped and constrained by, while simultaneously reproducing, common-sense knowledge about his position within South Africa's racialised social order, both past and present.

The host's response to the caller's concession is consistent with the above analysis, as he displays his understanding of the caller's actions in line 21. Although this response consists only of minimal tokens ("mm"), the host's production of these tokens shows his recognition of (and possibly alignment with) the point the caller is making. In addition, the timing of the host's response is significant, as it occurs just after the point at which the caller has made explicit the basis for his concession that "the whites are to blame," immediately after he has linked the culpability of white people with the apartheid past (line 20). Thus, consistent with the data examined in the previous section (especially Excerpts 1 and 4) the recipient displays his understanding of, and collaborates with, the racial common-sense the caller is oriented to.

Despite the caller's pre-emptive management of what he treats as limited rights associated with his racial category membership, the concession he has produced may provide a basis for recipients to discount his complaint precisely because of his acknowledgment of his limited rights to produce it. Conversely, however, had he not done anything to pre-emptively

manage the consequentiality of his racial category membership for his actions, recipients may still have heard and responded to his complaint as coming from someone with limited rights to produce it – indeed, this vulnerability is the basis for the work he does through his concession. In this sense, participants' racial category membership may simultaneously be a constraint for some and a resource for others, depending on what they are doing at any particular moment. Excerpt 6 provides a further illustration of this, demonstrating the potential consequences for a speaker of not pre-emptively managing the ways in which his rights to produce a particular action may be constrained. This case involves a guest, a wealthy businessman who is using his own money to wage a legal battle to prevent the government from disbanding the Scorpions, an elite crime-fighting unit tasked with investigating corruption.[14] During a lengthy interview prior to the excerpt below, the guest has displayed no apparent orientation to the implications of his racial category membership for his opposition to the disbanding of the Scorpions. However, in responding to the case in favour of the Scorpions that the guest has set forth during the interview, a listener (communicating via a text message, which the host reads on air) uses the guest's racial category membership as a resource for undermining his arguments.[15]

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[14] The Scorpions unit has been criticized for alleged partisan political motivations in its decisions on which investigations and prosecutions to pursue, and the government has proposed disbanding it and incorporating its current personnel and duties into the regular police force.

[15] The listener's ascription of the racial category "white" to the guest involves a presumption on the part of the listener since, as mentioned above, the guest has not shown any apparent orientation to his racial category membership, and has not overtly revealed his racial identity in any way. The basis for the listener's presumption may be the guest's (hearably white) accent and name. In addition (as described below), the listener's accusations involve treating the guest's actions as bound to the racial category "white," which may serve as an additional basis for the listener's ascription of the guest's racial category membership. In responding to the listener, the guest tacitly

[18 — Kaya FM John Perlman 5-5-08]

```
1    H:    Okay and this one, "John your fairly unknown guest is

2          just a white attention seeker. .h He can use the money

3          that he amassed because of apartheid to better the lives

4          of many people, .h instead of this cheap publicity

5          stunt. .h He can use his riches to make good the victims

6          of apartheid he has benefitted from. .h The Scorpions

7          must go." Okay. (.) One listener .h who's- you('re)

8          doing completely the wrong thing, .h uh: Hugh Glenister

9          (a) response?

10   G:    .hhh=pt=.hh (0.2) U:m=hh okay. hhh (.) The wealth I've

11         created in actual fact has (.) actually occurred after

12         (0.6) u:m: (.) nineteen ninety four. .hhh U:m: (.) and

13         (.) I was one of those who fought (.) for the very (.)

14         change that we have in South Africa. .hh Um: (.) the one

15         concern I have is that I fought very hard against the

16         previous bunch of bullies in the eighties, .hh a::n:d

17         the current behaviour (0.2) o:f certain people within the

18         government i- (.) reminds me so much of the eighties,

19         and that scares me. .hh And that's why I took the action

20         that I took.

21   H:    Okay, Dumi is calling from Protea. Hi Dumi?
```

confirms the accuracy of the listener's presumption by resisting the listener's accusations (as described below)

without challenging the listener's claims about his racial category membership.

In the text message (as read by the host), the listener accuses the guest of being "just a white attention seeker" (line 2). This compound formulation serves to conflate the racial category "white" with the attribute "attention seeker," packaging them together as a complete and recognizable unit. In doing so, the listener treats "attention seeker" as an attribute not just of this particular guest, but also as bound to the racial category "white" more generally. In addition, however, the description of the guest as "fairly unknown" adds additional weight to the claim that he is a "white attention seeker" by claiming that he is not well-known enough to get attention without doing the sorts of things he has been doing in attempting to prevent the disbandment of the Scorpions. The listener thus treats the guest's actions as having no merit, by virtue of being motivated by his attempts to get attention, rather than (for example) by a principled belief in the cause for which he is fighting. In this way, the guest's racial category membership makes him differentially vulnerable to charges of selfish motivations in his production of ostensibly civic-minded actions, even if he has not previously oriented to it as such. At the same time, however, the guest's racial category membership serves as a resource for the listener to undermine the arguments that he has made, thus illustrating the way in which one participant's constraint can be another's resource.

Several additional features of the listener's accusations, and the guest's response to them, are noteworthy. Following the claim that the guest is "just a white attention seeker," the listener draws explicit racialised links between the apartheid past and the present, claiming that the guest's wealth was "amassed because of apartheid" (line 3) and that he has "benefitted from" "victims of apartheid" (lines 5-6). In doing so, the listener invokes a common-sense narrative of apartheid-era creation and protection of white wealth and exploitation of black citizens, using the guest's financial status and racial category membership to position him as a continued

beneficiary of apartheid at the expense of its victims. He thus treats the guest as having limited rights to oppose the actions of the current government by virtue of his relationship to the prior apartheid system.

Following the host's invitation to the guest to respond to these accusations (lines 7-9), the guest resists them by working to dislocate himself from the position in which the listener has located him. He begins by claiming that his wealth was created following the end of apartheid (lines 10-12), thus resisting the listener's claim that he was, and continues to be, a beneficiary of apartheid. By using the phrase "in actual fact" in the course of making these claims about the origins of his wealth, the guest designs his utterance as a counter to the listener's claims, and draws on his primary epistemic access to matters of his personal wealth (cf. Heritage and Raymond 2005), thereby treating the listener's accusation as being speculative and mistaken. He then claims to have "fought (.) for the very (.) change that we have in South Africa" (lines 13-14), thereby claiming to have been an active opponent of apartheid, and thus further resisting the claim that he benefitted from apartheid by exploiting its victims. Finally, he draws a connection between the apartheid regime and the current government (lines 17-18). By referring to the "*previous* bunch of bullies" (line 16; emphasis added), he implies that the *current* government is similarly describable as a "bunch of bullies." However, he is then much more cautious in his explicit formulation of the current government, referring to "certain people within the government" (line 17-18) rather than applying the term "bullies" to the entire government. He thus equates the undeniable villainy of the apartheid government with the actions of the present government, and claims the measures he is taking against the current government to be of the same sort as his struggles against the apartheid regime. In this way, he reformulates his actions in non-racial terms, proposing that what he is doing is concerned with opposing bullies, rather than

being about race, thereby further resisting the listener's use of racial common-sense in constructing the accusations against him.

This interactional work on the part of the guest illustrates the potential consequences of not taking pre-emptive action to manage the constraints for what one is doing associated with racial category membership. Dealing with race up front, as the speaker in Excerpt 5 did, makes it readily available as a resource for recipients to interpret and respond to an action. However, not dealing with it up front provides no guarantee that a recipient will not use it as a resource for holding speakers accountable for their actions (cf. West and Fenstermaker 1995), as the listener in Excerpt 6 did – and in such cases, the original speaker is faced with performing the kind of retrospective work that the guest in Excerpt 6 performed in response to the recipient's use of his race. However, in this case the guest (unlike the caller in Excerpt 5) never admits to the relevance of race for what he is doing, instead treating it as completely irrelevant. In this sense, taking pre-emptive action (as in Excerpt 5) has the advantage of dealing with possible trouble before it arises and the disadvantage of admitting to the possible relevance of race when it might otherwise never have been treated as relevant, while not taking pre-emptive action (as in Excerpt 6) has the converse advantage and disadvantage. In sum, this points to an overall structural warrant for participants to monitor their own conduct for its possible treatment as race-relevant and, in cases where they find potential race-relevance, to make a choice between managing it pre-emptively or risking facing the kind of interactional trouble and producing the kind of retrospective management that might result from not managing it pre-emptively.

Clearly there are no easy solutions to this problem, and participants must grapple with it moment-by-moment, and on a case-by-case basis, with no guarantees of avoiding trouble no matter what choices they make. Moreover, as shown by Excerpt 7 below, the choices available to

participants may be even further limited by the sequential position in which a particular action on their part is made relevant. While the speakers in Excerpts 5 and 6 had a choice as to whether (and how) to manage the constraints associated with their racial category membership prior to (or in the course of) producing an action, in Excerpt 7 a guest is placed in a position of producing a response to an action from a caller who has already treated his (the guest's) racial category membership as relevant to his response. In this case, the guest is "Baby Jake" Matlala, a diminutive former world champion boxer, who responds to a caller's question about what it was like for him to fight against white opponents. There is substantial evidence in Matlala's subsequent response for the way in which, once the caller has introduced the possibility of racial motivations on his part in his boxing career, Matlala's racial category membership provides an interpretive frame that hangs like a shadow over his response. This can be seen in his orientation to ordinary descriptions of his activities, and use of words that would normally be completely unproblematic for a boxer, as potentiating racial interpretations, thereby shaping and constraining how he formulates his response. Even though he did not make the choice to introduce race, and even though he denies its relevance in interpreting his past actions, his racial category membership results in interactional difficulties for him, and thus has visible consequences for the way in which he produces an answer to the caller's question.

Excerpt 7:
[209 — SAfm 5-5-08 Eric Miyeni]
```
1    H:    .hh S'bu hi.
2          (1.0)
3    C:    tch Eric?
4    H:    Yes.
5          (0.7)
```

```
6    C:    I just want to ask w- eh: one question from- from eh

7          uBaby Jake. [(I'm/As the/a) rugby player, .hh for me to

8    H:             [(Yeh?)

9    C:    tackle the white (guy) is always nice. How (was/is) it

10         like f::or him for him then (.) to- to fight against

11         the- the- the white guy?

12         (0.5)

13   H:    Uhuh h[uh huh huh HUH huh was- was your fighting ever

14   G:          [hhhhh HA HA NAI .hhh hhh he he he he

15   H:    racial[ly tinged?

16   G:          [.hhh ↑NO! DOH DOH (DOBES-) .HH I (knew it was

17         the) same weight same division. ((smile voice)) ↓I'm

18         gonna h- p- win. (.h) [I'm gonna beat this guy. .h Not-

19   H:              [J(h)a.

20   G:    I mean not racially I mean I'd- for me there was not h

21         .hh (.) like in mind >at the< time [you know? (°B't

22   H:                                        [Mm:.

23   G:    eh-°) (.) Bu' if I fighting one, (.) I'm gonna punch

24         him. .h [Y'know? But I know the crowd would be as (a)

25   H:          [Mm:.

26   G:    m: motivate (too) say "ai no" they would- (were) on my

27         side. .hh [Even if you don't know me, .hh [but they'd

28   H:              [Ja.                            [Eh heh heh

29   G:    favour me and (then) the other guys you know. .hh But on

30         the end of the day me you d- alwa:y: re- I mean I jis'

31         cross the >what you call?< .hh Racial barrier. (.hh)

32   H:    Mm.

33   G:    Black, white, (.) they always: you know on my side. But

34         I (mean doh) dey were not co- it was jus .hh who's your
```

```
35          better boxer here? .hh Tall or short?

36    H:    Ja.

37    G:    So de short one wins. .hh S(h)o i(h)t w(h)as m(h)e he

38          [(.h he) uh he heh .hh You know?

39    H:    [J(h)a.
```

In producing his question, the caller constructs a racialised parallel between himself and Matlala. First, he identifies himself as a rugby player (line 7), then he reveals that it is "always nice" (line 9) for him to tackle white opponents, and then he asks Matlala about his experience of competing against white opponents during his boxing career. The caller thus tacitly identifies himself as black (in contrast to the white players he enjoys tackling), and tacitly treats Matlala as a co-member of his racial category who may have derived the same enjoyment from competing in a contact sport against opponents of another racial category. One basis for such enjoyment would be common-sense knowledge of racial power relations and tensions, perhaps particularly in the later years of the apartheid period, during which much of Matlala's boxing career took place. During this time in South Africa, sporting contests (at least for those sports in which black athletes were allowed to compete against their white counterparts) constituted virtually the only arena in which black people could engage white people on an equal footing, and could even get away with enacting physical violence against them without risking severe consequences. In this way the caller uses his own racial category, and his category co-membership with Matlala, as a resource in constructing his question as a "friendly" one based on potential common experiences rather than a more "hostile," accusatory one (cf. Excerpt 1 above). At the same time, however, it is a question that implicates possible racial motivations on Matlala's part, and any affirmative

response to it from Matlala's would constitute an admission that boxing was a vehicle for violent racial retribution, rather than (or at least in addition to) being a sport or a vocation.

Following a pause after the caller has completed his question (line 11), the host and Matlala both (following a pause in line 12) orient to the "loaded" nature of the question, laughing in overlap with each other (lines 13 and 14). In doing so, they break contiguity between the question and answer by treating as non-serious an action that was apparently designed to be serious, and by delaying a response to the question. The host then invites Matlala to respond by reformulating the caller's question ("was your fighting ever racially tinged?") in lines 13 and 15. The host's reformulation further breaks contiguity between the caller's question and Matlala's answer by again delaying a response, and also by virtue of being less extreme than the question actually produced by the caller (using the word "ever," in contrast to the caller's use of "always" in line 9, and the formulation "racially tinged," in contrast to the caller's expression of enjoyment of his physical confrontations with white players). Despite this downgraded version of the question, Matlala immediately produces a strong denial of any such racial motivations on his part, coming in loudly in overlap with the host (see line 16) at just the point at which he could recognize the host's reformulation of the question as retaining the racialisation of the caller's question (i.e., after the first part of the word "racial"). The loud and prosodically-marked way in which he produces the word "no" at the beginning of this denial may be a way of rejecting not just the proposition being put to him, but also the presupposition that his response could possibly have been anything other than a strong denial (see Raymond's 2010a analysis of the use prosody in this way in the production of "yes" and "no" responses to questions).

After producing this initial denial, Matlala elaborates on his response, first describing his awareness of all his opponents as being from the "same weight division" (line 17) as him,

thereby emphasizing the equality or similarities between him and his opponents, in contrast to the (racial) differences the caller (and then the host) had emphasized. He then describes what he would do when fighting a white opponent, visibly orienting to his racial category membership as a constraint in doing so. This can be seen in the repairs in line 18 as he initially says "I'm gonna h-" (possibly headed towards "hit"), then repairs to "p-" (possibly headed towards "punch") before finally saying "win." These repairs apparently serve to change the course of Matlala's response from describing violent actions ("hit" and "punch"), to instead describing the outcome of the contest ("win"). In this way (even though, as a boxer, violent actions were part of his job), Matlala avoids describing engaging in the type of violent actions that the caller referred to in his question. He thus displays an orientation to the possibility that, in the context of the caller's question, and by virtue of him being a black boxer talking about fighting white opponents, such descriptions could be heard as evidence of racial motivations in his professional activities.

Matlala then displays this orientation more explicitly when, continuing, he says "I'm gonna beat this guy" (line 18), before adding "Not- I mean not racially I mean I'd- for me there was not h .hh (.) like in mind >at the< time you know?" (lines 18 and 20-21). In producing this disclaimer, he treats his just-prior statement of intention to "beat this guy" as potentially being heard as having reflected the kind of racial motivations that he has been denying, and works to discount such a hearing. Then, continuing further, he states, "Bu' if I fighting one, (.) I'm gonna punch him" (see lines 23-24). This mirrors the formulation he produced at lines 17-18 ("I'm gonna h- p- win"), and provides strong evidence that when he repaired from "p-" to "win" in that utterance, he was initially headed towards "punch." Thus, despite his evident difficulty in doing so, Matlala reframes the caller's interpretation of his bouts against white opponents (as a black athlete taking pleasure in physically beating white opponents), offering an alternative

interpretation – that of a boxer doing what his profession requires of him, without regard to the race of his opponents.

Following this reframing, Matlala offers an additional non-racial interpretation of his boxing exploits. He begins by describing the way in which the crowds provided him with motivation as a result of always supporting him, and thus how he crossed the "racial barrier" in that respect (lines 24, 26-27, 29-31, and 33). He then apparently begins to deny that the crowd support for him was race-based, saying "But I (mean doh) dey were not co-" (line 34), providing another illustration of the way in which the racial framework of interpretation introduced by the caller is continuing to shape his conduct. After abandoning this formulation, however, he provides an alternative account for the crowd's support for him, first suggesting that it was merit-based ("it was jus .hh who's your better boxer here?" – lines 34-35), and then introducing the "height" membership categorization device as a basis according to which boxing fans may have visually distinguished him from his opponents ("Tall or short?" – line 35). He thus proposes what he treats as a non-politically-charged set of categories as a replacement for the charged set of categories proposed by the caller, suggesting that it was height rather than race that accounted for his popularity, and thereby treating the imagery of a shorter man beating up on a taller man as less likely to disturb recipients' sensibilities than that of a black mean beating up on a white man. And height serves as an ideal device for his purposes in this regard, given that (as the shortest world boxing champion ever) he was invariably shorter than his opponents – as he laughingly alludes to in line 37 ("So de short one wins. .hh S(h)o i(h)t w(h)as m(h)e").

The data described in this section demonstrate that there may be disagreements or contestation between speakers and recipients in terms of their treatment of race as a constraint. For example, in Excerpt 6, a speaker was held accountable as a member of a particular racial

category for having produced a particular action despite not showing an orientation to his racial category membership as a constraint. Similarly, in Excerpt 7, a speaker treated his racial category membership as shaping and constraining his response to a prior speaker who had not treated race as a constraint in the same way. This type of contestation may be evidence for the nature and degree of the social transformation that South Africa has undergone in recent years, with newly emerging normative constraints around race being managed and negotiated in ordinary episodes of interaction. They can also, however, result in profound interactional trouble, and even termination of interactions, as shown in Excerpt 8. In this case, the host terminates a call from a caller who has produced racialised complaints about bussing of students from the area in which they live to attend schools in other areas, which she claims is resulting in overcrowding of suburban schools.

Excerpt 8:
[427 — 702 Overnight Live 4-7-08]
```
1    C:   Okay now the w- the (.) what the lady was talking about

2         bussing,

3         (.)

4    C:   what is happening is that there are schools in the

5         township(s), .h but children are being bussed from the

6         black townships, (.) into the suburbs, (0.5) uh which is

7         causing overcrowding in thee u:m (0.2) Model C schools

8         in the suburbs, .h and the schools in the townships are

9         being empty.

10        (0.2)

11   H:   Bu- u- (.) bu: but I mean people have to go to school.

12        (0.4)
```

```
13    H:      [So::

14    C:      [They have to go to school. .h [What I'm saying is they

15    H:                                     [Okay.

16    C:      are bussing black children, (.) from the black areas, .h

17            into the (0.4) erstwhi[le white areas, into the Model

18    H:                            [.hh

19    C:      [C schools, (they're overcrowding them,)

20    H:      [Bu- i- I you know I'm sorry. Millie, this:

21            [this black areas and-

22    C:      [Yes I'm a racist.

23            (0.4)

24    H:      Ah well then I'm not go[nna talk to you anymore.

25    C:                            [(      ) No no- ((call is

26            cut off))

27            (0.3)

28    H:      Bye Millie. ((Host takes next call))
```

In her initial formulation of this complaint, the caller racialises the areas from which the children are bussed, referring to them as "black townships" (line 6), and claiming that bussing is resulting in "overcrowding" in suburban schools, while "the schools in the townships are being empty" (lines 7-9). In doing so, she implicitly racialises the children in question, and treats them as illegitimately-present outsiders with respect to the schools they are attending. This is further reinforced by her formulation of the suburban schools as "Model C schools" (line 7): "Model C" is the term for schools that under apartheid were reserved for white students, and were located in "whites only" suburbs, but starting in the early 1990's were opened up to students of other race groups. Thus, referring to the schools in this way may implicitly draw on their (previous) association with exclusively white student bodies, in contrast with the implicit formulation of the

children from the "black townships" as black. As such, this complaint draws on common-sense knowledge about apartheid-era patterns of spatial segregation and racial exclusivity of the highest-quality schools, as well as constituting an objection to post-apartheid breaches of this exclusivity.

In response to this complaint, the host disagrees with the caller on the basis that "people have to go to school" (line 11). Although he does not directly take up the racialised character of the complaint, his (non-racial) formulation of the children as "people" may be an "embedded" way of countering the caller's racialised formulation of them (cf. Jefferson's 1983 analysis of "exposed" and "embedded" corrections), by virtue of specifically declining to distinguish between black and white children in the way that the caller has done. When the caller does not respond during a 0.4-second pause (line 12), the host produces a "stand-alone 'so'" (Raymond 2004), which projects an unspoken upshot of what he has just said and prompts the caller to respond (see line 13). This provides the caller with the opportunity to back away from complaining about specifically racially-defined students, and instead to engage with the issue as one of how best to provide schooling for all the students concerned. However, after conceding (partially in overlap with the host's "so") that "they have to go to school" (line 14), the caller repeats her complaint, unequivocally re-asserting its racial character, and thereby failing to display any recognition of the possible embedded correction produced by the host through his non-racial reference to "people." She begins by marking what she is about to say as a reformulation of her prior utterance ("What I'm saying is" – line 14), before repeating her claim about the link between the bussing of children and overcrowding in "Model C" schools. In doing so, she heightens its racialisation, referring racially to the children, the place they are bussed from, and the place they are bussed to, in contrast to the prior iteration of the complaint in which

only areas the children are bussed from was explicitly racialised. The caller thus produces her complaint as being specifically about *black* children being bussed into *white* areas, thereby making more explicit the abovementioned common-sense links to apartheid-era segregation, and her complaint about post-apartheid breaches of it.

The host quickly responds to this heightened racialisation of the caller's complaint, projecting that he is gearing up to speak with an in-breath (line 18), and then speaking in overlap with the end of her turn (line 20). He initially projects his disagreement with her by starting with "Bu-" before cutting off and restarting twice, and eventually producing an apology. This apology may be a way of foreshadowing that he is headed towards a "dispreferred" (e.g., disagreeing or sanctioning) action (see, for e.g., Pomerantz 1984), and possibly also of conveying that he has been withholding such an action until this point, but is not going to do so any longer. It also provides the caller with a further opportunity to back away from what she has done before he actually produces the action he is projecting. As he continues, he specifies the nature of his objection to what the caller has done, repeating her use of "black areas" (line 21) and thereby treating it as the problematic aspect of her prior utterances and thereby inviting her to rectify that particular aspect of how she has formulated her complaint. At the same time as he does this, however, and before he even makes this basis for his objection explicit, the caller projects where he is headed, and that he is about to locate her uses of race as the problematic features of her complaints, speaking in overlap with him and acknowledging that she is "a racist" (line 22). Moreover, by preceding this admission with the word "yes," she produces it as a response to a projected (but not yet produced) accusation from the host, rather than being a self-initiated description, thus further displaying her recognition of where his utterance was headed. In this

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way, both the host and the caller independently locate the problem with the caller's complaint as being concerned with its racial character.

After a pause following this acknowledgment from the caller, the host ends the call, citing the caller's self-proclaimed racism as his reason for doing so ("Ah well then I'm not gonna talk to you anymore" – line 24). In this way, having provided the caller with multiple opportunities to back away from the racialised character of her actions – and having seen the caller do the opposite, eventually openly proclaiming her racism – the host terminates his interaction with her. Thus, while the caller displayed no apparent orientation to her racial category membership as a constraint on producing a complaint of this sort, the host treated the caller's actions as objectionable enough to warrant ejecting her from the broadcast. Consistent with Whitehead's (2009) analysis of "categorizing the categorizer," it is specifically by virtue of the caller being a (hearably) white speaker producing such a complaint that the caller's actions come to be treated objectionable in this way. That is, by racially categorizing those she is complaining about, the caller provides a warranted basis for her recipient to racially categorize her, and to treat her complaint as being racially motivated (Whitehead 2009) – specifically by virtue of constituting an objection by a white speaker against the encroachment of black students into [formerly] exclusively white schools. Moreover, by acknowledging that she is "a racist," the caller treats this as being precisely what the host has done in response to her actions. The host thus tacitly uses the caller's racial category as an interpretive resource in determining that her conduct was objectionable, on the basis that she wasn't properly oriented to the constraints associated with being a person of her category producing conduct of this nature, and the caller simultaneously displays her analysis of this as the basis for the host's objections.

Conclusions

The data I have presented above demonstrate some ways in which, as a result of the common-sense associated with them, racial categories can serve as both interactional resources and as constraints, both for speakers and recipients. Racial category membership can contribute to speakers' production of particular courses of action, lend additional weight to actions, and assist recipients in recognizing the actions speakers are producing. Conversely, racial category membership can make it more difficult for certain categories of people to produce a particular action, at a particular moment, for particular recipients.

These findings suggest a two-sided mechanism through which racial common-sense can be reproduced in ordinary interactions. The first side of this mechanism involves race being reproduced as a result of its usefulness in getting things done, which provides speakers with a systematic, structural motivation to continue using it to help them achieve the interactional outcomes that they are designing their actions to achieve (see Excerpts 1-4 and 6-8). The second side involves race being reproduced as a result of speakers orienting to it as limiting or constraining their actions, and shaping the way they produce their actions accordingly – and because failing to do so in cases where recipients may treat race as a constraint on speakers' actions, even if the speakers themselves do not, can result in interactional difficulties (see Excerpts 4-8). These two bases for the reproduction of race together constitute a single mechanism in the sense that racial category membership may simultaneously be a resource for one participant and a constraint for another – and may be a resource for one participant precisely by virtue of being a constraint for another. As a result, speakers can be held accountable for any race-relevant conduct they produce, which provides a strong warrant for speakers to monitor their actions moment-by-moment for possible race-relevance, and to choose whether and how to

shape their actions accordingly. If they do not do so, they have no guarantee that others will not, with interactional trouble as a potential outcome. Similarly, recipients can monitor speakers' actions for their race-relevance, and decide moment-by-moment whether to use any possible race-relevance as a basis for holding speakers accountable (cf. West and Fenstermaker 1995; Whitehead 2009; Wieder 1974).

It is important to note, however, that in much (or perhaps all) of the data on which this analysis is based, the participants are not setting out specifically to reproduce race. Instead, they are simply engaging in the business of everyday life, doing the sorts of ordinary things that people do (questioning, answering, assessing, complaining, and so on), and treating racial category membership as relevant for how they do things and even what they are doing. In this sense, race comes to be reproduced not as a result of participants' active efforts to reproduce it, but instead as a "by-product" of whatever actions they happen to be engaged in (cf. Kitzinger 2005a; 2005b). Thus, while it is certainly possible for race to be introduced as a topic for discussion in its own right, in many cases it emerges as a result of being treated as relevant for whatever other topic is being discussed, pointing to the way in which it is intertwined in many complex ways with the everyday concerns of ordinary people in South Africa. Furthermore, even when race does become a specific topic of discussion, in many cases the common-sense basis for the treatment of *a participant's racial category membership* as consequential for action is not specifically taken up as a topic and interrogated by the participants. Instead, it is largely collaboratively produced as a taken-for-granted, known-in-common backdrop against (and through) which actions are produced and rendered intelligible (cf. Garfinkel 1967; Stokoe 2009).

In light of these features of the data I have examined, it seems likely that the instances in which racial category memberships are observably oriented to as relevant represent only a tiny

"tip of the iceberg" of cases in which people act in accordance with the resources and constraints presented by their racial identities without the relevance of race ever becoming visible. That is, it appears that the cases in which participants visibly treat their racial category membership as relevant for their conduct are recurrently those in which something "special" is happening – for example, cases in which there is potential ambiguity in participants' actions (e.g., Excerpts 1 and 7), cases in which actions are not properly recognized as having been produced by a particular category of participant (e.g., Excerpt 2), cases in which participants are acting at the margins or boundaries of what their category memberships normatively entitle them to do (e.g., Excerpts 3, 4, 5, 6 and 8), and so on. Such cases stand in contrast to the likely considerable majority of cases in which participants take for granted that others can recognize what they are doing and what type of person they are without the need to make it explicit, only do the sorts of things that they are normatively entitled to do, and so on (Raymond 2010b). In this way, racial identities may be pervasively relevant in shaping participants' conduct in largely implicit and taken-for-granted ways, while only relatively rarely becoming explicitly or observably oriented to as doing so.

These findings have a number of implications for the literature on race in South Africa discussed in the foregoing sections. Firstly, in contrast to studies of race in everyday life in post-apartheid South Africa that have employed methodologies through which race was pre-specified as central to the topical agenda of the talk or texts that participants produce, my analysis shows some ways in which participants' racial category membership can become contingently relevant in everyday interactions. As described above, this demonstrates how racial identities, and race as a form of social organization, can be reproduced as a "by-product" of what people are otherwise engaged in doing, even when it is not centrally *about* race. Secondly these findings show, at the level of ordinary interactions, how common-sense knowledge of South Africa's racialised history

continues to shape people's actions in the present. Similarly, they demonstrate how the continuing significance of race at the aggregate level of society as a whole are both reflected and reproduced in individual episodes of interaction.

Taken as a whole, these findings also have implications for the abovementioned research on the tensions between racialism and non-racialism, and for questions of what non-racialism in post-apartheid South Africa looks like, and whether and how it can be achieved. The recurrent treatment of racial category memberships as constitutive features of how people produce actions, what actions they will be understood as producing, their rights and authority (or lack thereof) to produce particular actions at particular times, and so on, can be thought of as a kind of *practical racialism* – a set of ways in which people come to treat racial identities as relevant on the basis of the practical demands of unfolding interactions. Conversely, in cases in which participants do not treat racial category memberships (or, indeed, other features of racial social organization) as relevant for what is happening in an interaction, or resist the treatment of them as such, they can be thought of as adopting a position of *practical non-racialism*. In this sense, *practical* racialism and non-racialism can be thought of as not being mutually exclusive options – it is possible for individuals to flexibly adopt either position on any given occasion, based on their assessment of the particulars of the situation, rather than choosing to apply only one or the other across all possible situations. These positions of practical racialism and non-racialism are thus contingent and situational, in contrast to the kind of strict or principled (and therefore mutually exclusive) versions of racialism and non-racialism some race scholars have proposed (see, for e.g., Alexander 1985).

Of course, as the above analysis demonstrates, there can be disagreements or disputes with respect to which position is most appropriate for a particular situation, and on such

occasions the tensions between (practical) racialism and non-racialism are realized at the level of individual episodes of interaction. Such moments may provide evidence for the consequentiality of the post-apartheid social transformation of South Africa, and for the ways in which speakers may reproduce or resist racialism in their everyday lives. However, the regularity with which speakers in my data oriented to the relevance of racial common-sense, and the regularity with which recipients collaborated in the co-production of a racialist position rather than problematising it, points to how difficult it would be to insist on a principled, cross-situational non-racialism. That is, if every instance of the use of racial common-sense were resisted, leading to disputes or interrogations of the common-sense knowledge involved at the expense of continuing or completing the main business of the interaction at hand, then those initiating such interrogations would risk being treated as incompetent or deliberately provocative, by virtue of being seen as refusing to recognize or accept what all members of society are assumed to know (cf. Garfinkel's 1967 "breaching experiments"; also see Heritage 1984) – and ironically, such disputes would likely result in reproduction of race in a more direct and visible way than would be the case if the interaction was allowed to continue on its original course.

In this sense, the pervasive and recurrent emergence of race in post-apartheid interactions, such as those in my data, both serves as a vehicle for continuing racialism, and as a significant obstacle to achieving a strict form of non-racialism. Thus, not only are proponents of strict non-racialism up against those committed to maintaining some form of racialism (in the form, for example, of race-conscious social policies or strategic use of racial solidarities), but they must also grapple with the myriad ways in which, for ordinary people in South Africa, the racialisation of the past continues to inform conduct in the present. My data suggest that the way in which many ordinary South Africans address these difficulties is by adopting a flexible

approach that allows for either practical racialism or practical non-racialism, contingent on the particulars of the situation, and for pragmatic choices about whether to object to another's use of race. For example, it appears that the types of uses of race (or displays of racialism) most systematically and strongly resisted by co-participants are those that are treated not simply as racialist, but as *racist* (as exemplified by Excerpt 8). In contrast, many apparently harmless or non-malicious uses of race are generally not resisted and are frequently collaborated with. Moreover, speakers who use race in ways that may be treated as harmful or malicious, but who display some kind of awareness of the delicacy of their actions (and thus the constraints posed by their racial category membership) in doing so, appear to largely escape the kind of consequences that the caller in Excerpt 8 experienced.[16] In light of this, an alternative for those who favour a non-racialist South Africa may be to adopt a more contingent, situational definition of non-racialism, in line with the kind of practical non-racialism apparently already being practiced by many ordinary South Africans.

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[16] In a future report I examine some of the ways in which speakers can show this kind of awareness, and thereby manage their use of race (also see Whitehead 2009).

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