

**‘COLOURED’ IDENTITY AND REFLECTIONS OF
THE ‘OTHER’ IN COMMUNITY DISCOURSE: A
CASE STUDY OF WENTWORTH**

by

Briana R. Meadows

Submitted as the dissertation component (which counts for 50% of the degree) in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Development Studies in the School of Development Studies, University of KwaZulu-Natal

30 May 2008

DECLARATION

Submitted in fulfilment / partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Masters in Development Studies , in the Graduate Programme in Development Studies , University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban, South Africa.

I declare that this dissertation is my own unaided work. All citations, references and borrowed ideas have been duly acknowledged. It is being submitted for the degree of Masters in Development Studies in the Faculty of Humanities, Development and Social Science, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban, South Africa. None of the present work has been submitted previously for any degree or examination in any other University.

BRIANA MEADOWS

Student name

20 FEBRUARY 2009

Date

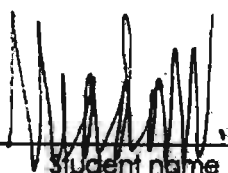
Abstract

This project explores the persistence of racial frameworks amongst Coloureds in Wentworth, Durban, using perspectives from discourse analysis as a methodological and theoretical framework. In-depth focus groups and interviews with Wentworth residents were conducted to investigate the continued socio-political relevance of such frameworks in the context of their own identity as 'Coloured', especially where these relate to residual racial hierarchies of the colonial era. Three sample groups were utilised to reflect the community's socio-economic spectrum, which enabled a class-based discussion of the way 'Colouredness' and ideals such as national reconciliation may be reflected by different socio-economic groups.

Preface

The work contained in this document was undertaken in the partial fulfilment of a Masters Degree from the School of Development Studies at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. The project was researched in Wentworth, Durban, and was supervised by Professor Richard Ballard (University of KwaZulu-Natal).

This is to declare that this research is my own work, and has not been used previously in fulfilment of another degree at this University, or any other. Any use of the work of others has been fully noted in the text.



Student name

20 FEBRUARY 2009

Date

List of Contents

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Abstract..... | i |
| Preface..... | ii |
| List of Contents..... | iv |
| Acknowledgements..... | v |
| 1. Introduction..... | 1 |
| 1.2 Aims and Objectives: Key Research Questions | 4 |
| 1.3 The Study Area: Wentworth..... | 6 |
| 1.4 Structure of the Thesis..... | 11 |
| 2. A Review of the Literature and Theory..... | 12 |
| 2.1 Race Theory and ‘Race Thinking’..... | 14 |
| 2.2. Conceptualising ‘Coloured Identity’..... | 16 |
| 2.3 Internalisation of European Racial Hierarchies..... | 20 |
| 2.4 Coloured Politics in the Transition to Democracy..... | 23 |
| 2.5 Reconciliation and Social Cohesion in post-apartheid South Africa..... | 25 |
| 3. Research Methodology..... | 29 |
| 3.1 Theoretical Issues: Knowledge, Ethnomethodology, and Discourse..... | 30 |
| 3.2 Data Sources..... | 32 |
| 3.3 The Sampling Method..... | 37 |
| 3.4 Data Analysis..... | 40 |
| 3.5 Limitations of the Study..... | 41 |
| 4. Data Analysis..... | 42 |
| 4.1 Participants’ Expressions of Colouredness..... | 42 |
| 4.2 Colouredness and Marginalisation..... | 45 |
| 4.3 European Racial Hierarchies..... | 49 |
| 4.4 Defining ‘the Other’..... | 57 |
| 4.5 Desegregation..... | 67 |
| 5. Discussion of Findings..... | 73 |
| 6. Bibliography..... | 80 |
| 6.1 Primary Sources..... | 80 |
| 6.2 References..... | 81 |
| 6.3 Unpublished Dissertations..... | 88 |
| 7. Appendices..... | 89 |
| <i>Appendix A: List of Acronyms</i> | 89 |
| <i>Appendix B: Letter of Invitation to Residents</i> | 90 |
| <i>Appendix C: Schedule of Interview Questions</i> | 91 |
| <i>Appendix D: Terminology</i> | 93 |
| <i>Appendix E: Demographic Breakdown of Participants</i> | 95 |
| <i>Appendix F-G: Op-Ed Articles</i> | 96 |
| <i>Appendix H: Previous Works on Coloured Identity</i> | 97 |

Acknowledgements

As with all sizeable pieces of research, this project owes its existence to a handful of individuals other than the author. My supervisor, Professor Richard Ballard, ultimately bore the brunt of my insecurities and procrastination, and always managed to do so with patience and encouragement. Each of our meetings were truly inspirational and highlighted for me all of the questions involving social identities which are continuously rolling around inside my head. Undoubtedly there will be oversights and oversimplifications, and I take full responsibility for these.

Many other friends and Staff at the School of Development Studies served to push me along and offer criticism where needed. I would especially like to thank Richard Devey and Mike Morris for their humour and guidance. I also wish to extend a special thanks to Administrator Lesley Anderson for her (always) pleasant, detail-driven support to the SoDS student body.

I am truly indebted to Justin Barnes, who took me under his wing at Benchmarking and Manufacturing Analysts while I was a student at UKZN.

I must express my love and gratitude to my close friends in Wentworth, without whom my work would be much less inspired. I am especially thankful to the Greene Family, Carol and Ronald Augustus, and Muriel 'Cooks' Wyngarrd for their support and encouragement over the years. I must also thank Catherine Gordimer, Desmond D'Sa, and Derrick McBride for their help and friendship.

I should also acknowledge my mother, Kathleen, and my father, Michael, for their love and patience throughout the years I've been away from home.

There is obviously the community of Wentworth to thank, for whom my words are probably not sufficient. My deepest appreciation is here expressed, both for being my friendly and generous neighbours and for helping me with this long overdue social research. I am especially grateful for the focus group and interview participants, who patiently answered my many questions and brought up so many more, which I may never have thought of on my own. These individuals showed great generosity with their time to support academic research that they might have seen little personal benefit from. Their willingness to bring a foreign researcher into their homes to share such personal information about their backgrounds, families, and experiences speaks to the hospitality and openness that South Africans are well known for among expatriates. The humility and bravery of these individuals has truly left a mark on me. It is their story that I have attempted to relay here, although as the following pages reveal, this account is merely a reflection of my own experiences within the complex issue of multi-racial identity in South Africa.

Borderlands

To live in the Borderlands means you
are neither *hispana India negra española*
ni gabacha, eres mestiza, mulata, half-breed
caught in the crossfire between camps
while carrying all five races on your back
not knowing which side to turn to, run from;

To live in the Borderlands means knowing
that the Indian in you, betrayed for 500 years,
is no longer speaking to you,
that mexicanas call you *rajetas*,
that denying the Anglo inside you
is as bad as having denied the Indian or Black;

Cuando vives en la frontera
people walk through you, the wind steals your voice,
you're a *burra, buey*, scapegoat,
forerunner of a new race,
half and half — both woman and man, neither —
a new gender;

To live in the Borderlands means to
put a chile in the borscht,
eat whole wheat tortillas,
speak Tex-Mex with a Brooklyn accent;
to be stopped by *la migra* at border checkpoints;

To live in the Borderlands means you fight hard to
resist the gold elixir in the bottle,
the pull of the gun barrel,
the rope crushing the hollow of your throat;

In the Borderlands,
you are the battleground
where enemies are kin to each other;
you are at home, a stranger,
the border disputes have been settled
the volley of shots have shattered the truce
you are wounded, lost in action
dead, fighting back...

To survive the Borderlands
you must live *sin fronteras*
be a crossroads

- Gloria Anzaldua, 1987: 194

1. Introduction

‘Race matters...not only as a means of rendering the social world intelligible, but simultaneously as a way of making it opaque and mysterious. Race is not only real, but also illusory. Not only is it common sense; it is also common nonsense. Not only does it establish our identity; it also denies us our identity. Not only does it allocate resources, power and privilege; it also provides means for challenging that allocation’ (Winant, 1998: 90).

1.1 Background

Since the first democratic elections in April 1994, South Africa’s African National Congress (ANC) government has achieved considerable progress in terms of reversing the racist apartheid state apparatus by redistributing capital and opportunity across colour lines. Yet, racism and ‘race thinking’¹ remain prevalent in the national discourse, and is evidenced in the racial composition of (and allegiances to) political parties, the ascension of neo-nationalist minority groups, and the raging affirmative action debates at universities and in the workplace. Despite the government’s commitment to ‘national reconciliation’ (Mbeki, 1999: 96), much work remains in translating these efforts into meaningful results for the racially divided working-class.

The face of racial prejudice in South Africa has changed dramatically since democracy, with new manifestations of racial discrimination being increasingly witnessed among South Africans of colour². Previous research on post-apartheid race relations show that non-white South Africans have begun to display signs of resentment towards other non-white groups, an attitude which is generally expressed in negative racial stereotyping and

¹ Mare, 2001: 1

² For the purposes of this paper, the terms ‘people of colour’ or ‘non-white’ will be used to describe South Africans classified as ‘African’, ‘Indian’ and ‘Coloured’. I have chosen not to use the term ‘black’ in this instance, which is commonly used in the government and academic discourse to describe all groups oppressed under colonialism and apartheid. This decision was based on the fact that the focus group and interview participants, who I quote extensively in Chapter Four, use the term ‘black’ to describe indigenous ‘Africans’ (e.g. Zulu, Xhosa, Venda, etc). Thus, for sake of continuity, ‘black’ will be here used in accordance with the usage of my informants in Wentworth.

self-enforced social segregation (Stevens, 1998), as well as a general lack of trust (Burns, 2006). This may be particularly true of South Africa's Coloureds³, who despite having an intermediate status under colonial rule — and to a lesser extent, under apartheid (Muzondidya, 2005) — seem to possess a community self-perception of being systematically marginalized from the nation's new prosperity (Stevens, 1998). This attitude is echoed in common Coloured adages such as 'not white enough, not black enough'⁴ and 'we are the jam' (Adhikari, 2006: 484).

The chasm between Coloureds and other non-white South Africans has been apparent since the early days of the democratic transition, when in the 1994 elections Coloured voters in the Western Cape were found to have largely supported the National Party (NP), the architects of apartheid oppression (Lodge, 1995). This discord between Coloureds and other non-whites was again highlighted by the rise of Coloured separatist groups, such as the Kleurling Weerstand Beweging (KWB), the Brown Democratic Party, and the December 1st Movement (Adhikari, 1998; Stevens, 1998).

Adhikari suggests that historically, demographic factors have largely contributed to Coloured marginalisation (Adhikari, 2006). For example, throughout the 20th century, Coloureds have always comprised less than 9% of the national population, and due to apartheid planning, their provincial concentration has remained highly uneven, with approximately 90% of Coloureds living in the Western and Eastern Cape regions, and 40% of these residing in the greater Cape Town metropolitan area (Adhikari, 2006).

This project explores the persistence of racial frameworks amongst Coloureds in Wentworth, Durban, using perspectives from ethnomethodology and conversation analysis as a methodological and theoretical framework. Focus groups and individual interviews

³ Here, the term Coloured will not be placed in inverted commas, but will be used in accordance with the South African legal classification to describe 'a phenotypically diverse group of people derived largely from Cape slaves, indigenous Khoisan peoples, and other blacks...popularly regarded as being of 'mixed-race'' (Adhikari, 1991:110).

⁴ Mohamed Adhikari. 2005. *Not White Enough, Not Black Enough: Racial Identity in the South African Coloured Community* Ohio University Press

were conducted with Wentworth residents to explore the cultural rationale behind the problematic social and political demarcations described above, questioning why these persist in the 'new' South Africa in which national reconciliation and development have been described as indispensable, self-enforcing ends. Ultimately, these interviews were utilised to help unpack the negative perceptions that many Coloureds seem to have towards South Africans labelled 'Indian' and 'African' under the colonial racial classification system, and perhaps reveal a grassroots understanding of what 'national reconciliation' may entail for Coloureds in the post-apartheid context. Let it be noted that it is not the aim of this author to problematise any particular 'racial' group or class; this project instead seeks to emphasize the need to address racism on a broader social level in order to achieve the stated goals of national reconciliation and development.

1.2 Aims and Objectives: Key Research Questions

There are three explicit aims of this study:

- To offer an interpretation of how participants represent the 'Other' in the interview discourse, especially where this may relate to residual and/or internalised racial hierarchies of the colonial era in South Africa. This necessitates a closer look at how participants relate to and describe their own 'Colouredness'.
- To make further distinctions as to the effect of *class* on participants' reflections of the 'Other'. In other words, how do participants describe and relate to their socio-economic states, and what is the relationship between participants' socioeconomic status and their attitudes toward other race groups, especially so-called 'racial-threat'⁵?
- To use these findings to draw conclusions about the status and future of the national reconciliation project in South Africa.

⁵ Stevens, 1998: 204

Although the historically constructed category of 'Coloured' has been problematised in the academic discourse⁶, it is clear that many individuals still find 'Colouredness' to be a meaningful and politicised self-identifier. My conjecture is that since democracy, many self-identified 'Coloureds' have become increasingly embittered toward other South Africans of colour, due in part to a common perception that 'Africans' and 'Indians' have made unearned economic and political gains since the 1994 transition, while Coloured advancement seems to have remained static. Furthermore, and despite their shared ancestry and overlapping histories of oppression, many of these negative attitudes towards Africans in particular may have persisted due to an internalization of the colonial racial stratum, in which 'whiteness' has been associated with civilization and refinement, while 'Africanness' has been associated with notions of barbarism. My expectation is that the heightened racial tension will be highlighted by participants' efforts to seek differentiation from (and avoid certain key associations with) their 'African' counterparts.

However, I anticipate significant content discrepancies between the 'low-income' and 'middle-class' interview groups. This hypothesis is based on an assumption that affluent participants will generally belong to more highly skilled professional groups, and may have the benefit of higher education levels, both of which would affect the socialization of these individuals, and perhaps even serve to bridge cultural gaps. However, it is also feasible that the affluent participants will offer more outwardly tolerant interview responses, perhaps due to a professional socialisation towards 'political correctness'.

Likewise, I expect that participants from less privileged backgrounds may demonstrate a greater inclination to seek differentiation from other South Africans of colour in the interview discourse. This expectation is based on the assumption that the lower-income participants are likely to experience heightened employment competition with other low-skilled groups, which combined with their lower education levels, may result in increased

⁶ See Chapter Two

instances of racial and cultural intolerance, as well as less optimistic perspectives regarding reconciliation in the democratic era.

1.3 The Study Area: Wentworth

Wentworth, constructed as a 'Coloured' area under apartheid-era racial planning, sits in the South Durban Industrial Basin, eThekweni's largest industrial centre. As a community, Wentworth may be most recognised for its local industries and resulting environmental pollution, drug infestation, as well as an epidemic of gangsterism that plagued the area in the 1980s and 1990s.

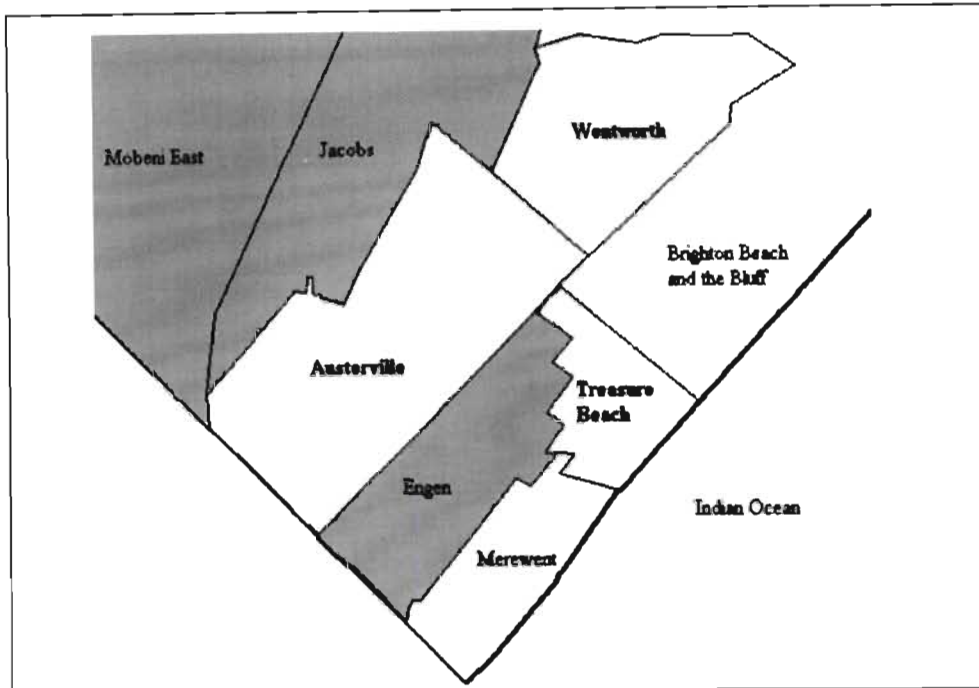
Under the Nationalist Party's Group Areas Act, thousands of Coloureds were forcefully relocated to Wentworth, then called Austerville, from other parts of the Durban⁷, as well as other parts of the country⁸. Although Wentworth had previously been a 'mixed' suburban area, white residents vacated the vicinity completely by 1961 (Rankin, 1982), by which time Wentworth was home to approximately 40% of the Coloured population of Durban (Wiley, et al, 1996). In 1963, Austerville was officially named a Coloured Group Area (Wiley, et al, 1996.).

Today, Wentworth/Austerville carries a population of approximately 27,000 (Chari, 2006). As seen in Figure I (p. 7), Wentworth is enclosed by industry on its north, west, and eastern perimeters. The Engen oil refinery, which the locals mockingly refer to as 'the ship that never sails', is Wentworth's neighbour to the east, while Jacobs industries provide a solid western boundary. Wentworth also includes the more affluent Treasure Beach residential area, which is buffered from Wentworth proper by the Engen oil refinery.

⁷ Including Berea, Overport, Mayville, Cato Manor, Clairwood, and the City Centre (Chari, 2004: 4).

⁸ Including areas throughout Natal, the Transkei, and the Transvaal (Wiley et al, 1996).

Figure I: Map Of South Durban Basin



The Wentworth community provides Durban with primarily skilled and semi-skilled workers, and to a lesser extent, professionals with university or vocational qualifications. Although the community is beset by industry, the majority of Wentworth's breadwinners do not work in the area, but instead commute to work — primarily by *combi*⁹ and public buses — or 'work out' on short-term contracts in other regions. However, unemployment in Wentworth is reportedly amongst the highest in Durban (Gule, 2004), with recent census data indicating over 30% unemployment amongst the 15-65 year age group¹⁰ (Chari, 2006: 429). According to Statistics South Africa, a significant proportion of the Wentworth

⁹ Privately owned mini-bus service used primarily by low-income South Africans.

¹⁰ Primary contributors to this unemployment are provided as: illness or injury, inability to find work, refusal to work, and unemployed seasonal workers (Chari, 2006: 429).

population is considered 'not economically active'; in these scenarios, households' incomes may come from government grants, 'waged illegal work', as well as unpaid 'care-work' (Chari, 2006: 430). The census employment data reveals that Wentworth's men tend to work in manufacturing and construction, whilst women largely find employment in wholesale/retail, social services, and manufacturing (Chari, 2006).

Like most communities designated as 'Coloured', Wentworth is highly diverse in terms of religion, ethnicity, and origins¹¹. Most residents identify either as Roman Catholic, 'saved' Christian, or Protestant¹², although there is also a small but influential proportion of Muslims. The primary language is English, although Afrikaans and isiZulu are also prevalent, particularly with regards to slang and colloquialisms¹³.

From its inception as a 'Coloured area' until today, overcrowding and poor housing conditions have characterised the Austerville/Wentworth community. During the 1960s and 1970s, many families lived in tents, shacks, and other informal housing¹⁴. Designed initially as a residential area for white military personnel, Wentworth's barracks were later remodelled to serve as civilian housing, with these showing highly variable degrees of quality. For example, while the barracks in today's Assegai neighbourhood were renovated into modest duplexes¹⁵, the barracks on Tara and Duranta Roads (known as the 'Rainbow Chickens'¹⁶ housing units, or simply as 'the Barracks') are 'sub-sub-economic flat-roofed, two-roomed'¹⁷ informal dwellings, and are among the poorest quality housing in Wentworth today¹⁸. Chari (2006) observes that:

¹¹ Including Mauritians and St. Helenians (Gule, 2004)

¹² Including Anglicans and Lutherans

¹³ See Appendix D 'Terminology'.

¹⁴ 'Dorothy': ± 60, female, Barracks resident, focus group interview, April 2007

¹⁵ McBride, Personal Interview, 2007

¹⁶ Rainbow is a large-scale, battery chicken producer, which began operation in Durban's Cato Ridge in the 1960s (Carte, 2007). Although chicken was once an occasional luxury in affluent South African homes, it is now a staple food for the South African working-class.

¹⁷ Rankin, 1982: 45

¹⁸ Located directly opposite the Engen oil refinery, these units are today owned by Metro West. Barracks residents complain of poor living conditions and a lack of service delivery, and have reportedly been waiting to be allocated government-issue flats for thirty years (Barracks resident [Sophia], Focus Group Interview, 2007).

‘The Group Areas Act was something of a blessing in that it offered improved housing to Coloureds and, therefore, it would seem, drew them into a structural relationship of complicity with the planners of apartheid. However, this complicity was primarily a presumption, and residents drawn from far and wide into cramped flats next to refineries found their lives shaped by new forms of violence and constraint’ (Chari, 2006: 427-428).

Local community leaders agree that housing shortages continue to be one of the biggest developmental challenges facing Wentworth since democracy, as there have not been new housing units erected to accommodate the community’s growth. Although many Wentworth residents own or rent homes, a large percentage of residents live in poorly maintained government-owned flats. Others live in outbuildings, garages, or small out-door add-ons known as ‘wendy houses’, which often have sub-standard plumbing and electrical facilities. According to local Ward Councillor Aubrey Snyman:

‘The people are crying out for houses. There are people living 13 in a room! How can you feel happy living in a country with housing shortages like that?’
(Snyman, Personal Interview, April 2007).

Wentworth does however benefit from a number of developed community facilities, including a central community hall, primary health care clinic, an HIV/AIDS clinic, Rent Office, Association for the Disabled, Durban Mental Health, Durban Children’s Society, Parkama Training and Recruitment Centre, John Dunne old age home, Wentworth Hospital, Wentworth Police Station, a post office, and the Durban Beehive internet resource centre (located at the local library).

Furthermore, a number of local civic bodies¹⁹ have been established over the past 20 years to address social ills and development challenges related to housing shortages, overcrowding, poor service delivery, domestic abuse, youth issues, substance abuse, unemployment, HIV/AIDS, and environmental racism. However, Wentworth does not seem to be the 'hotbed of political activism' described by Chari²⁰, as these organisations generally do not enjoy a mass support base²¹. In fact, many Wentworth residents may lend an outward impression of apathy in terms of creating long-term plans²² or 'dreaming big dreams'²³, as evidenced in the rate of learners leaving school, the increasing social acceptance towards teenage pregnancy, as well as what seems to be a community tolerance regarding alcoholism and drug abuse. This attitude of indifference appears to be systemic, and may be attributable to such factors as chronic poverty, unstable employment, fragmented families, under-resourced schools, and the absence of a culture of learning in Wentworth.

Also adding to this sense of apathy is community perception of itself as the *systematically* marginalized. This attitude may be caused in part by feelings of 'in-betweenness' (Sonn & Fisher, 2003: 9), as well as by a history of political and economic disenfranchisement during the colonial and apartheid eras, and throughout the last 15 years of democracy. Indeed, one of the most commonly uttered phrases in Wentworth is 'Before we weren't white enough; now we're not black enough'. It is from this point of departure that I will begin in Chapter 2 'A Review of the Literature and Theory'.

¹⁹ Including South Durban Community Environmental Alliance (SDCEA), We Help Our Children (WHOC), Wentworth AIDS Action Group (WAAG), Wentworth Development Forum (WDF), Wings of Love, Women of Wentworth (WOW)

²⁰ (Chari, 2006: 427)

²¹ In many respects, churches may be the most important institutions of *broad-based* social change in the Wentworth, and these have been effective in implementing youth initiatives to counter gang culture (Chari, 2005), providing hospice care for the infirm, and as well as 'places of safety' for orphans and vulnerable women.

²² 'T': 'Other people would think before. They plan stuff for the future. A Coloured person is just up for the next day. He takes each day as it comes' (Woodstock resident, ± 30, male, Woodstock focus group interview, May 2007).

²³ Ruby: ±25, female, Woodstock focus group interview, May 2007

1.4 Structure of the Thesis

Chapter 2 provides the literature review and also functions as the theoretical backbone to the study. Methodology is presented in Chapter 3, and Chapter 4 discusses the process and outcomes of the ethnomethodological approach undertaken. Chapter 5 offers a discussion of the research findings.

2. A Review of the Literature and Theory

'Borders are set up to define the places that are safe and unsafe, to distinguish *us* from *them*. A border is a dividing line...a vague and undetermined place created by the emotional residue of an unnatural boundary. It is in a constant state of transition. The prohibited and forbidden are its inhabitants' (Anzaldua, 1987: 3).

Bloom suggests that the prolonged and tumultuous conflict between 'black' (or in this case, 'indigenous') South Africans and their European oppressors has obscured the infinitely complex social and psychological struggles of the Coloured population, which likewise experienced political, economic, and social marginalisation under colonial and apartheid rule (Bloom, 1967: 139).

Much of the early literature documenting Coloured life points to the fact that while Coloureds have to a great extent shared in the culture of whites — Afrikaans-speaking whites in particular — they have simultaneously and systematically been rejected from the social, economic, and political benefits offered by white culture (Mann, 1956; Dickie-Clark, 1964; Bloom, 1967). It has been speculated elsewhere that this feeling of Coloured alienation may have resulted in a trend for upwardly mobile Coloureds to seek social and political differentiation from their 'African' counterparts as part of a strategic effort to gain political and economic rights, and thus, Coloureds were at times complicit in upholding white supremacy (Adhikari, 1994, Stevens, 1998). In 1962, Chief Albert Luthuli wrote of South Africa's Coloured community:

The Coloured people as a whole are...divided in their attitude to white supremacy. Some of them reject it because it is an immoral creed, but many of them resent it because they are not included in it. These seek identification with the whites, and find only rejection. At the same time they avoid identification with Africans. Their dilemma is pitiable, they cannot make up

their minds which world to live in (Luthuli, 1962: 134, *quoted in Bloom, 1967*).

Today, there are highly divergent discourses regarding a universal 'Coloured identity'. The first of these suggests that the shared history of the Coloured community itself represents a unique group culture, although this identity is said to be fluid and constantly evolving (Adhikari, 2005). Advocates of this view may suggest that the people who today self-identify as 'Coloured' are merely reacting rationally to a prolonged, shared group experience in which people from highly heterogeneous backgrounds had to find a way to live together (Martin, 2001: 249). A perhaps related interpretation suggests that while Coloureds have indeed forged a distinctive culture, this largely occurred at the level of the Coloured elite, and therefore may not be applicable to the larger Coloured population (Adhikari, 1994).

A second, alternative discourse categorically dismisses the notion of a collective Coloured identity, as well as the term 'Coloured' itself, on the grounds that it is a divisive categorization meant to obscure the oppression felt by all people of colour under the colonial and apartheid regimes (Adhikari, 2005). According to this critique, the only appropriate racial classification is one that articulates the shared struggle of people of colour under colonialism and apartheid, e.g. the ruling white minority versus the oppressed 'black' masses (Martin, 2001: 250).

This chapter reviews the relevant literature regarding South African Coloured identity, which has grown substantially over the last quarter century. The first section examines the theoretical underpinnings of racial identity, including race theory and essentialism versus non-essentialism debates. The second section discusses the effects of colonial racial hierarchies upon Coloured identity by exploring the opportunism and complicity of the early Coloured elite, as well as government's role in exploiting this complicity. The fourth part provides a brief discussion of the renewed sense of Coloured identity in the mid-1990s, drawing upon Coloured voter behaviour in the first democratic elections, as well as

the rise of Coloured political organisations. I conclude with a review of recent studies on post-apartheid reconciliation.

2.1. Race Theory and 'Race Thinking'

According to Winant (2000), race can be defined as 'a concept that signifies and symbolizes socio-political conflicts and interests in reference to different types of human bodies' (Winant, 2000: 172). López (2000) takes it a step further, saying:

'Race' is defined as a vast group of people loosely bound together by historically contingent, socially significant elements of their morphology and/or ancestry. Race must be understood as a *sui generis* social phenomenon in which contested systems of meaning serve as the connections between physical features, faces, and personal characteristics. Race is neither an essence nor an illusion, but rather an ongoing, contradictory, self-reinforcing, plastic process subject to the macro forces of social and political struggle and the micro effects of daily decisions' (López, 2000: 165).

From these definitions, this project begins with an understanding of race as a concept used to construct, classify, and simplify groups of people based upon physical appearance and lineage, and is driven by the historical, economic, and political forces that continuously shape the world we live in. This project does not consider the validity or truth of the race concept, but instead recognizes it as a pervasive, ongoing process as well as a powerful self-identifier.

Hirschman (2004) suggests that the development of Social Darwinism in the 19th century was the most influential period of 'race-making' in world history²⁴ (Hirschman, 2004:

²⁴ Similarly influential in the process of 'race-making', he says, was the period of enslavement for the growth of the New World plantation economy and the spread of European imperialism soon thereafter (Hirschman, 2004).

392). It is well documented that colonial era race theorists drew upon Darwinist principles to justify the subjugation of people of colour, using 'scientific' methods such as phrenology and skull measuring to 'prove' the evolutionary backwardness of Africans in particular (Bank, 1996). Ultimately, this group was assigned labels such as 'primitive', and 'uncivilised', said to have smaller brains, and were generally regarded as a substandard 'species' (Van Dyk, 1993: 77-78). In this regard, a commonly invoked analogy (both in popular discourse and period literature) was that of 'maturity' (Ballard, 2002: 80), in which whites were depicted in paternalistic roles, whilst Africans were characterised as children. Although biological explanations for racial determinism have been discredited in the academic community due to 20th century findings in genetics, these ideas clearly continue to carry popular influence in terms of 'race thinking' (Maré, 2001: 77), and have certainly been influential in the formation of South African identities and race relations.

Alternative interpretations of race and have gained influence in recent years, many of which assert the notion of race as a social construct. Many Marxist theories, for example, have served to subvert the early Darwinist conclusions on race, arguing that people of colour the world over have been systematically exploited for the purposes of expanding capitalism, by providing a cheap pool of labour to deflate the wages of the working-class (Wolpe, 1972; Bonilla-Silva, 1997). More recently, critical race theory has recognised that law both shapes and is shaped by local perceptions of race, in a process that can lead to an eventual normalization of racism (Horowitz, 2003).

While it may be evident that the construction of race began as a project by imperialist powers to oppress and exploit specific population groups, and hence retain economic and political power, many of the tenets of 'race thinking' have become deeply entrenched in the minds of colonised people as well as non-colonised societies (Hirschman, 2004) — a fact which makes the historiography of race critical to this study of racial identity in South Africa.

2.2. Conceptualising 'Coloured Identity'

This section discusses the various conceptualisations of Coloured identity by academics from the early 20th century to the present. I begin with a discussion of proponents of a unique Coloured identity, including the essentialism versus constructivism debates implied therein. Secondly, I will review popular arguments for the negation of a Coloured identity.

2.2.1. *Essentialism and Constructivism in Coloured Identity Formation*

In line with the Darwinist mindset of the time, much of the early thinking on Coloured identity was informed by an *essentialist* approach to race, which assumes the original existence of pure racial categories. The essentialist approach therefore supports the view that Coloured identity is biologically determined, existing as a result of miscegenation between indigenous Africans and the European settlers who began arriving in the Cape in the 17th century (*see* van der Ross, 1986; Marais, 1968). From this perspective, racial hybridity is therefore the key determinant of 'Colouredness' (Adhikari, 2005).

A second approach is that of *construction*, which understands identity to be socially and politically invented at both institutional and individual levels (Omi & Winant, 1994). A constructivist would argue that racial identities are inventions of the colonial state, and that therefore those being labelled play insignificant roles in the process of shaping this imposed identity (*see* Hommel, 1981; du Pré, 1994). The constructivist approach met with increased popularity in the 1980s by leftist scholars and activists, who argued that the racial categorizations of the Nationalist Party was a consciously constructed divide-and-conquer tactic intended to prevent South Africans of colour from forging a cohesive resistance struggle (Adhikari, 2005).

In recent years, more critiques have emerged against the essentialist mindset, and more specifically the essentialist depiction of Coloured people as lacking agency in defining themselves. Adhikari (2006) states:

By assuming 'colouredness' to be either an in-bred quality that is the automatic product of miscegenation or an artificial identity imposed by the white supremacist establishment on a weak and vulnerable people as part of a divide-and-rule strategy, this diverse historiography has denied 'Coloured' people a significant role in the making of their own identity (Adhikari, 2006: 468).

It is in recognition of the above view that this project is categorically interested in the way that 'Coloured' interviewees define themselves, and how they relate to and describe their social and national identities.

A relevant example of this conflict between essentialist and constructivist frameworks is illustrated by the theory of the Marginal Man, which was proposed by J.W. Mann (1956), and later elaborated upon by South African scholar Hamish F. Dickie-Clark (1964, 1976). The Marginal Man theory is described as when 'by birth or other reasons, individuals are placed in a marginal situation between two not entirely compatible social positions, then they develop a distinct configuration of personality traits' (Dickie-Clark, 1964: 1). The Marginal Man (or group) is thus trapped between two cultures standing in opposition to each other, but does not fully participate in either culture. Whilst the Marginal Man may seek identification with the dominant group, he is frustrated by his continual exclusion from it; nonetheless, opportunities for identification with the subordinate group are typically rejected, due to a perception that this will result in a loss of social and political status.

While Everett V. Stonequist and Robert E. Park of the Chicago school popularized the idea that the 'racial hybrid' is inherently subjected to psychological conflict due to an inability to gain acceptance (Christian, 2000), Dickie-Clark argued that these psychological characteristics are not an *essential* or inevitable result of belonging to a mixed-race group, but were rather a cultural *construction* of marginality within a particular societal context (Dickie-Clark, 1964).

It may be useful to compare the constructivist observations of Dickie-Clark with the findings of psychotherapist Frantz Fanon, whose *The Wretched of the Earth* (1963) explores the ‘colonised personality’ (Fanon, 1963: 204) of Algerians during their struggle for independence in the mid-20th century. Fanon concludes that psychological conflict is a predictable result of the dehumanising effects of colonisation — as opposed to an inherent quality resulting from belonging to a particular racial background. In Fanon’s words:

‘Because it is a systematic negation of the other person and a furious determination to deny the other person all attributes of humanity, colonialism forces the people it dominates to ask themselves the question constantly: *In reality, who am I?*’ The defensive attitudes created by this violent bringing together of the colonised man and the colonial system form themselves into a structure which then reveals the colonised personality. This ‘sensitivity’ is easily understood if we simply study and are alive to the number and depth of the injuries inflicted upon a native during a single day spent amidst the colonial regime’ (Fanon, 1963: 203-204).

In Fanon’s view, the mental and physical injury continuously endured by colonial subjects will almost inevitably result in a set of problematic behavioural or personality traits marked by identity struggle and even violence. In the following section briefly review criticisms of a universal Coloured identity, before turning to European racial hierarchies.

2.2.2. *Problematizing Coloured Identity*

Despite the ever-expanding body of literature documenting the Coloured experience, some academics have problematised and even negated the existence of a Coloured identity or culture, arguing that the basis for a Coloured identity cannot be justified by the traditional *essentialist* modes of interpretation (e.g. miscegenation), the *constructivist* policies and practices of government, nor by the deliberate efforts of Coloured communities to fashion a group identity for themselves (e.g. the Coloured Teachers’ League).

In his essay entitled *Myths and Attitudes: An Inside Look at the Coloured People*, self-identified 'Coloured' academic R.E. van der Ross synthesises the essentialist and constructivist critiques through a summary of what he claims are popular misconceptions of the Coloured group. Perhaps most importantly, van der Ross claims that Coloureds are not a homogenous people descended from the same 'racial mixture' (e.g. 'Hottentots' and 'slaves'), but are instead heterogeneous by definition (van der Ross, 1979: 2). Van der Ross also disputes the view that Coloured people favour the preservation of a Coloured identity, and that they necessarily prefer to live together (van der Ross, 1979: 2).

Martin (2001) argues that due to their heterogeneity, there is no evidence of an intrinsic or naturally occurring Coloured identity in South Africa. Rather, Martin suggests that this 'imposed' group identity may have grown into a deeper kinship over many years of shared struggle, in which Coloureds 'had to invent a way of living together':

'If, even today, after 1990 and 1994, a section of the South African population continues to be called coloured, if many people still use that word to talk about themselves, it is because systematic and recurring practices of designation and segregation have cemented a distinctive community from heterogeneous elements. It is also because the men and women who have been, so to speak, 'locked in' the same group for over three centuries had to invent a way of living together, which eventually contributed to consolidating their difference from the other South Africans. It is finally because many of these men and women thought that this style of community living was the foundation of their social universe and adopted, even though reluctantly sometimes, the appellation 'coloured' which had been originally imposed on them by others' (Martin, 2001: 249).

Interestingly, Martin highlights that this Coloured identity, once 'imposed', was eventually adopted as a self-identifier after centuries of a 'forced' shared history led them to '[consolidate] their difference from other South Africans' and seek a common banner to

rally under. This is a useful point to begin a discussion of Coloured's internalisation of European racial hierarchies.

2.3. Internalisation of European Racial Hierarchies

This section discusses the historical development and maintenance of South Africa's racial hierarchy, both by Coloured community itself and external actors in government and academia.

2.3.1. *Complicity in the Early Coloured Community*

Adhikari (2006) identifies four elements of Coloured identity, which have persisted for nearly two centuries. He argues that 19th century 'Coloured' political leadership and petty bourgeoisies created, firstly, an *assimilationist* group identity with the hope of ultimately sharing in the benefits of white culture and citizenship. According to Adhikari, this assimilation, compounded by the insecurities of an *intermediate status*, manifested in a problematic association with 'whiteness' and a concomitant distancing from 'Africanness', evidenced in the prizing of European ancestors and 'white' phenotypical features such as straight hair and fair skin, as well as a general rejection of African culture in place of Western culture. Adhikari further observes that *negative associations* have historically defined Coloured identity; that is, 'Colouredness' remains an identity characterized by what it is *not*, as opposed to a set of attributes that this identity includes. Finally, Coloured identity has been significantly shaped by the group's *marginality*, namely its relatively small population size and lack of political power. This sense of marginality, Adhikari argues, explains the practicality and opportunism of 'Coloured' politics²⁵, as well as the incremental nature of its tactics (Adhikari, 2006: 475-486).

²⁵ Muzondidya agrees: 'In the political sphere, [Coloured identity] was an experience marked by both collaboration and resistance: collaboration with the colonial regime in the exploitation of the masses and alignment with the masses in resisting their discrimination' (Muzondidya, 2005: 2).

The means by which Coloureds may have sought to 'assimilate' to white culture has taken several forms. The emphasis placed on key physical features such as skin tone and hair texture notwithstanding, 'passing' also involved adoption of certain cultural mannerisms and behaviours — where Coloureds, largely hailing from an Afrikaner cultural background, clearly held an advantage over Africans. Education, as dictated by the canon of white South African culture, was also a preferred means of winning points on the 'civilisation scale' (Martin, 2001: 253).

Adhikari's (1994) anecdotal case study of the Teachers' League of South Africa describes the manner in which Cape Town's Coloured petty bourgeoisie²⁶ sought to develop and politicise Coloured consciousness as part of a 'separatist' tactic to ensure that Coloureds could remain in an intermediary position in South Africa's hierarchical racial order, between the white ruling group and the subordinate Africans (Adhikari, 1994: 105-108). Despite their rejection from the white South African Teachers Association (SATA), after which the Coloured Teachers' League fashioned itself, the Teachers League nevertheless sought to uphold policy that kept Coloured education in a position of privilege over African education, and discouraged African membership. In this sense, the Coloured elite seems to have fundamentally adopted and exploited the racist principles that provided the basis for the white class' 'right' to rule, and arguably used assimilation as a means to demonstrate their own level of 'civilisation', despite the fact that they often found themselves barred from the privileges of white society (Adhikari, 1994: 106-108).

2.3.2. The Coloured Threat: Government's Response

Although the colonial and apartheid governments clearly perceived miscegenation as a threat to the hierarchical colour-coding scheme upon which their right to rule had been established, the manner in which the 'Coloured threat' was interpreted and counteracted varied significantly.

²⁶ Circa 1880

Most politicians and policymakers advocated the standard political line, which held that a clear socio-political boundary between whites and Coloureds must be definitively drawn and maintained; however, it is clear that the white ruling class was at times willing to reach across the colour line to the Coloured population when this could serve their political purposes. Such was the case in the 1924 general elections²⁷, when General J.B.M. Hertzog²⁸ sought to forge ‘cultural links’ between Afrikaners and Coloureds, while also attempting to downplay any alliances between Coloureds and Africans (Ramutsindela, 2002: 50) — a transparent attempt to manipulate Coloured identity as a means to consolidate Afrikaner political power. Perhaps it is not very surprising that following this opportunistic outreach for political support, Afrikaner nationalists quickly resumed their social and political rejection of Coloureds, as such an alliance could pose a threat to the Afrikaner narrative of racial purity (Ramutsindela, 2002: 50).

Others, however, proposed that Coloureds showed potential to meet with white standards if civilisation, suggesting the possibility of future integration of Coloureds into white society. Former Commissioner for Coloured Affairs, I. D. du Plessis, was one such official who took an active interest in Coloured integration. In a 1955 report²⁹, du Plessis argued that Coloureds were far more advanced than their African counterparts in terms of cultural refinement and intelligence, concluding that Coloureds should ultimately be incorporated with the Afrikaner population, albeit in a subordinated role (van der Ross, 1979). Martin (2001) suggests this qualified ‘acceptance’ of Coloureds was an apparent divide-and-conquer tactic, as careful status distinctions were drawn between the varying mixed-race classifications, where ‘Malay’ culture, for example, was clearly given precedence over ‘Coloured’ culture (Martin, 2001).

South African Prime Minister H.R. Verwoerd also perceived Coloureds as a lesser threat

²⁷ Although under white rule, people of colour were disenfranchised until the end of the 20th century, certain ‘non-whites’ in Natal and the Cape were briefly extending voting rights during 1910-1936 (Ramutsindela, 2002: 49).

²⁸ Prime Minister of the Union of South Africa (1924-1939)

²⁹ I.D. du Plessis (1955) ‘The Coloured People of South Africa: Some Aspects of Their Present Position’ *Die Kleurling in die Suid-Afrikanse Samelewing* (Cape Town) pp. 14-27

than the African populace, primarily due to their smaller demographic size, although he argued that the ‘principle of apartheid’ must nonetheless be maintained³⁰. This stance was embodied in Verwoerd’s ‘positive rehabilitation programme’ for Coloureds, as well as his Department of Coloured Affairs³¹, which he described as:

The instrument by which the Coloured is consciously developed culturally, economically, in his local government and in all other spheres as a separate racial group. It must also protect the Coloureds against infiltration and competition by other racial groups...The aim is to ensure that White and Coloured develop side by side, each retaining his own identity (H.F. Verwoerd, 1960, *quoted in Bloom, 1967: 144*).

The discussion of the previous pages has shown that whilst the white minority used a variety of tactics to frame popular perception of Coloureds — a dangerous in-between borderland where the battle to preserve racial ‘purity’ must be waged — Coloureds, at times, also accepted, internalised, and in the case of the Teachers’ League of South Africa, implemented hierarchical racial frameworks to preserve the possibility of ascending the social ladder towards whiteness. However, with the transition to democracy in the 1990s, this began to change, as a more radicalised Coloured movement emerged, which advocated stronger assertion and protection of a Coloured identity by political parties and institutions.

2.4. Coloured Politics in the Transition to Democracy

Ramutsindela (2002) asserts that ‘the history of politics of [South Africa] is, to a large extent, that of nationalisms’ (Ramutsindela, 2002: 48-49). This appears to be particularly

³⁰ ‘The Coloureds represent a minority group of the population and they do not, therefore, constitute the same danger to the numerically superior White (as the Africans)...We definitely do not accept, however, that there will be integration or intermingling of the political structure for the Coloured and the White man, neither in the municipal sphere nor in any higher sphere’ (H.R. Verwoerd, in Horrel, *op. cit.* pp. 14-148, *quoted in Bloom, 1967: 143*).

³¹ H.F. Verwoerd (1960) ‘Positive Rehabilitation Programme of the Government Concerning the Coloured People (Cape Town, Department of Coloured Affairs, 1960).

true in the case of the 1994 elections, in which race and ethnicity served as fairly predictable determinants of party support (Lodge, 1995).

Electoral behaviour appeared much more complex with regard to Coloured voters, however, who have been largely credited with the Nationalist Party's victory in the Western Cape. Some have attributed this token of loyalty to a long-lasting desire for assimilationist acceptance into white culture (Adhikari, 2006), although it seems equally plausible that these Coloured votes for the Nationalist Party were viewed by the Coloured voters themselves as votes *against* perceived African-led parties, such as the African National Congress (ANC), Pan-African Congress (PAC), and Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP)³².

Yet, the elections also served as a forum for a new wave of Coloured political organisations (e.g. KWB, the December 1st Movement, the Brown Democratic Party), which in seeking to carve out a meaningful role for themselves in the new democratic society, attempted to downplay differences of language, class, and religion within the Coloured community, with the apparent goal of promoting and consolidating a nationwide Coloured ethnic group as its voter base (Wicomb, 1998).

Here Wicomb (1998) discusses the profound impact of this Coloured political revival on the reclamation of the term 'Coloured', questioning the validity of a 'fixed meaning' of Colouredness:

'...Our electoral behaviour, which ensures that the Western Cape is the only region without an ANC parliamentary majority, coincides with the resurgence of the term *Coloured*, once more capitalized, without its old prefix of *so-called* and without the disavowing scare quotes earned during the period of revolutionary struggle when it was replaced by the word *black*, indicating both a rejection of apartheid

³² 'The issue that makes me vote is that I'd rather give my vote to another ruling party than give it to the ANC, because I believe — and I don't know how true that is — that if you don't vote, the vote automatically goes to the ANC' (Catherine Gordimer, Personal Interview, April 2007).

nomenclature as well as inclusion in the national liberation movement. Such adoption of different names at various historical junctures shows perhaps the difficulty which the term 'coloured' has in taking on a fixed meaning...' (Wicomb, 1998: 93).

In the post-apartheid context, Coloured identity has clearly become a controversial and contested political stake, which is invested with complex ideologies, histories, and insecurities. There is no consensus on the horizon, and to date there has no Coloured organisation of repute which has emerged on the national stage to defend 'Coloured interests' (SACP, 1996; Martin, 2001: 255).

2.5. Reconciliation and Social Cohesion in post-apartheid South Africa

Much of the literature about South Africa's successful democratic transition highlights the process and outcomes of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) (*see* Gibson, 2004; Graybill, 2002). However, the TRC has met with criticism due to its failure to achieve meaningful results on a grassroots level (Wilson, 2001), as well as for its primary focus on gross human rights violations, which by nature excluded a significant portion of aggrieved South Africans who may not have met the criteria stipulated by the Commission (*see* Henrard, 2003; Horowitz, 2003).

Evaldsson (2005) discusses the lack of resonance that the TRC had on a local level, identifying disagreements between conceptions of reconciliation by 'elites' and South African citizens 'on the ground' (Evaldsson, 2005: 90). Her findings suggested that most South Africans did not closely identify with a psychological understanding of reconciliation, nor did they find inherent value in uncovering the truth concerning apartheid's human rights atrocities — two points that served as the philosophical underpinnings of the TRC. Instead, Evaldsson's respondents had a far less political or historical understanding of the concept, conveying that reconciliation would primarily

involve forgoing the past entirely and working toward improved race relations in their daily lives. Evaldsson's study concludes that despite the importance of national or macro interventions, which do indeed affect popular perception, there has been comparatively little emphasis on the micro or local level (Evaldsson, 2005).

Other critics have focused on the economic and social justice aspects of South Africa's transition, citing increasing inequality in the democratic era as a hindrance to the reconciliation and development project (*see* Bond, 2006). A related school of thought has pushed for reparations as a reconciliatory measure for South Africans who suffered from varying forms of abuse at the hands of the white supremacist state³³ (Valji, 2003).

Recent years have produced a number of illuminating studies regarding the impact of internalised racism on national reconciliation, as well as the general social cohesion of post-apartheid society. Stevens' 1998 study, for example, examines interview discourse among self-identified Coloureds in the Western Cape, revealing that participants shared a heightened sense of 'racial threat' from groups labelled 'African'³⁴ (Stevens, 1998: 204). This threat was generally described as economic in nature, with many participants expressing feelings of exclusion from employment opportunities due to affirmative action policies, which participants claim have disproportionately favoured 'Africans' over other racial groups. Stevens' respondents also expressed scepticism about the professional competence of 'Africans', a trend which he argues exceeds complaints of tokenism, and actually reveals a deeper racial stereotype that 'Africans' are ill-equipped to adequately complete tasks other than menial labour (Stevens, 1998: 215). The study's findings support Adhikari's (2006) argument that Coloureds feel trapped between 'black' and white cultures and political alliances, and perhaps more significantly, have not yet successfully overcome colonial racial hierarchies.

³³ The call for reparations for victims of apartheid has been pursued by Jubilee South Africa (JSA) (*see* Rustomjee, 2004).

³⁴ e.g. Xhosa, Zulu, Sepedi, Setswana, Sesotho, Xitsonga etc.

Duncan (2003) discusses the racial identifications of 'self' and 'other' that emerged in focus groups conducted with Coloured participants from the Western Cape in 1992 (n=27) and 1999 (n=7), suggesting that socio-political and historical context may have influenced the way in which participants negotiated their group identity. For example, the 1992 study lead Duncan to conclude that there were 'no meaningful differences' in participants' descriptions of people of colour — rather, the trend for racial differentiation appeared to be a largely 'black versus white' binary (Duncan, 2002: 152, *quoted in Collier, 2005: 298-299*). In the 1999 study, however, racial classifications used to describe non-whites ('African', 'Indian' and 'Coloured') were utilised to a far greater extent by participants, while the black-white binary was less pronounced (Duncan, 2002: 152, *quoted in Collier, 2005: 298-299*).

Burns (2006) examines the role of race in trust games played by South African university students. Burns found that in a strategic setting, African students were both less trusting and less trustworthy towards other African players, as witnessed in their tendency to make and receive considerably lower monetary offers than white or Coloured participants³⁵ (Burns, 2006: 810). Interestingly, while Burns found that Africans' game strategies demonstrated 'outsider bias', Coloured participants' strategies demonstrated an 'insider bias', where Coloured players made significantly higher offers to other Coloured players, while making relatively small offers to African partners (Burns, 2006: 810)³⁶.

The findings of these studies seem to suggest that Coloureds not only continue to feel marginalised in the 'new' South Africa, but also that Coloureds seem to sense a growing chasm between themselves and other non-white South Africans. This estrangement between Coloureds and other groups ('Africans' in particular) has manifested not only in a heightened sense of economic threat (Stevens, 1998), but also in a lack of trust between Coloureds and other racial groups (Burns, 2006). Finally, the 'insider bias discussed by

³⁵ No 'Indian' category was provided for in this study.

³⁶ The game strategies of white students manifested differently, however, with white players either opting not to engage in the game with a black player at all, or appearing to be completely unaffected by the race of their partners in those cases where white players did choose to participate (Burns, 2006: 810).

Burns (2006: 810) seems to illustrate that Coloureds do possess a group bond, even if this bond is based primarily upon their shared sense of marginalisation and lack of trust towards other groups.

The critiques outlined in the previous pages suggest that national reconciliation remains an incomplete project and that the reconciliatory process should again undergo review. It appears evident that post-apartheid reconciliation cannot take the shape of government initiatives only, but must occur everyday at the level where people from different walks of life interact. This raises the decisive question of what it will mean for South Africans to have such widely contrasting understandings of the common goal of reconciliation. I will return to this question in Chapter Four 'Data Analysis'.

3. Research Methodology

It has been suggested that the history of South Africa's Coloured population has been largely neglected, even by historians (Adhikari, 2006). Furthermore, the bulk of existing research regarding Coloured life has been conducted in the Western Cape, where Coloureds comprised as much as 61% of the provincial population in 2001³⁷. This trend has resulted in a research gap regarding Coloured life in other regions, such as KwaZulu-Natal, where Coloureds accounted for approximately 3.6% of the provincial population in the same year³⁸.

Although recent years have witnessed a growing scholarship of Coloured life in Durban³⁹, this project aims to confront some of the unresolved issues regarding the persistence of racial frameworks amongst Durban's Coloured community in Wentworth, especially where these attitudes serve to uphold the divisive racial hierarchies imposed under colonialism and apartheid. The second item of research interest is to explore the influence of *class* on participants' perceptions of contemporary race relations in South Africa, questioning whether socio-economic status serves as a determinant of racial attitudes.

Finally, it is my goal to synthesise these findings to draw conclusions regarding the status of the national reconciliation project, as perceived by those who were classified as Coloured under apartheid. This concept is elusive and difficult to measure, particularly as many Wentworth residents are from under-privileged backgrounds, and may not be able to directly speak to the topic of reconciliation in the academic context where it has traditionally been situated.

Due to the highly exploratory nature of this project, qualitative approaches were utilised. The remainder of this chapter outlines the specific research methodologies employed, including the collection of primary and secondary data, descriptions of the research

³⁷ Statistics South Africa (2001)

³⁸ Statistics South Africa (2001)

³⁹ See Chari (2004, & 2006). There have also been a number of unpublished dissertations regarding Coloured life in Durban (Fynn, 1991; Jones, 1998), which have likewise proven invaluable to this research project.

instruments, sampling method, as well as a summary of the process of conversation analysis followed. I will conclude with the potential limitations of the study.

3.1. Theoretical Issues: Knowledge, Ethnomethodology, and Discourse

This project begins on the premise of *relativism*, which holds that ‘reality’ is not fixed and cannot be entirely separated from the observer’s perceptions of it, as the perceptions one holds are inextricably linked to the concepts and theories that one has consciously or unconsciously subscribed to (Cameron, et al, 1999).

This project also embraces concepts of *ethnomethodology*, the sociological discipline which examines how people interact, make sense of the world they live in, convey this understanding to others, and thereby produce and uphold the prevailing social structure (Cicourel, 1999; Garfinkel, 1984). The ethnomethodological perspective is therefore based on an assumption that ‘facts’ of a particular culture are produced through continuous practices of its constituents. Ethnomethodologists are interested in the processes by which members of a society collectively negotiate their social reality, and therefore must look to the indicators that are held as important to the subjects themselves, as well as subjects’ ‘everyday rationality’, conversational language, and daily events (Titscher, et al, 2000: 104). Where a positivist research approach draws a line between what can be definitively observed and what cannot, ethnomethodologists assign significant research emphasis to the subject’s account of themselves (Jaworski & Coupland, 1999).

Gill (2000) writes that the social sciences experienced a ‘linguistic turn’ in recent years, due to a shift in ideologies brought by a mounting dissatisfaction with positivism⁴⁰, as well as with the epistemologies used in traditional social science research (Gill, 2000: 173). In

⁴⁰ Positivists are reluctant to make assumptions about the reality of ‘entities, forces, or mechanisms’ which they are incapable of directly witnessing, and rather study the world of observable phenomena, where factors such as frequency, distribution, and patterning can be described in removed, official language (Cameron et al, 1999: 143).

its stead, researchers have increasingly looked toward alternative frameworks that recognise the role of the observer’s own perspective. From this new epistemological standpoint, researchers are in a better position to answer research questions involving knowledge, social relations, and identity (Fairclough, 1992).

According to Gill (2000), discourse analysis is generally characterised by four themes: an interest with discourse itself, an assumption that discourse is both *constructed* and *constructive*, a focus on the ‘action’ or ‘function’ orientation of language, as well as the rhetorical organisation of discourse (Gill, 2000: 174). Table 1 below outlines the predominant traditions of discourse analysis, as well as some of the major researchers in each field.

Table I: Categorizing Types Of Discourse Analysis

| Research Emphasis | Relevant Works |
|---|--|
| 1. Critical Discourse Analysis; Critical Linguistics; Critical Language Studies ⁴¹ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fowler et al (1979) • Hodge & Kress (1988) • Fairclough (1989, 1995) |
| 2. Discourse Analysis as associated with Post-structuralism ⁴² | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foucault (1977, 1981) |

⁴¹ Critical Discourse Analysis and Critical Language Studies explore the relationship between language and politics, and the manner by which language use influences popular perception of an occurrence or phenomenon (Gill, 2000).

⁴² Foucauldian Discourse Analysis takes a post-structuralist approach, where the concern is not with the specific details of texts, but rather with the historical context of discourse (Gill, 2000). The Foucauldian perspective is interested in the relationship between discourse and subjectivity, particularly as this involves the role of language in constructing social and psychological realities and institutions (Jaworski & Coupland, 1999). The Foucauldian tradition argues that the ‘discursive resources’ available within a culture will have tremendous implications for those who live within that culture, providing certain ways of interpreting the world (Willig, 2001: 107). Foucauldian Discourse Analysis also examines the function of discourse in the larger socio-political practice of legitimizing and reproducing existing power structures and institutions, especially where the dominant discourse has become so embedded that it is regarded as ‘common sense’ (Willig, 2001: 107).

-
- | | |
|---|--|
| 3. Speech-Act Theory; Ethnomethodology; Conversation Analysis | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Garfinkel (1967)• Sacks et al (1974)• Coulthard & Montgomery (1981)• Atkinson & Heritage (1984) |
|---|--|
-

Source: van Dijk, 1998; Gill, 2000

This project is primarily interested in the ‘bottom-up’⁴³ approaches of ethnomethodological and conversation analysis. Here the action orientation of discourse is key, and the analyst must consider discourse not as a ‘mere epiphenomenon, but as a practice in its own right’ (Gill, 2000: 175), owing to the fact that individuals utilise discourse functionally to achieve certain goals (Potter & Wetherell, 1987: 54; Jaworski & Coupland, 1999). In other words, discourse necessarily occurs within a social environment, where human beings are perpetually working within their ‘interpretive context’, and constructing discourse to suit this context (Gill, 2000). This suggests that to understand the action orientation of discourse, the analyst must be aware of the *situated* use of texts, which exists within a course of continuous interaction (Taylor, 2001).

3.2. Data Sources

3.2.1. Primary Data

Several types of primary data were utilised for this research. Firstly, it was necessary to become familiarised a range of primary documents, including government reports and policy papers. The Labour Force Survey produced by Statistics South Africa also proved useful for the background section of this report.

⁴³ (Maynard and Clayman, 2003: 176).

To gain insight into differing perspectives regarding social cohesion in the country, party topic papers were likewise utilised, mostly notably the South African Communist Party's (SACP) online newsletter, *Umrabulo*. Op-Ed articles regarding Coloured life were also highly useful in terms of tapping into public attitudes.

The bulk of the primary data, however, came from the focus groups and individual interviews (discussed below), which were conducted with household informants, as well as community leaders.

3.2.2. Focus Groups and Individual Interviews

This project sought to embrace a non-directive interview approach, which would begin with limited assumptions and utilise open-ended questions to encourage participants to share their experiences without pre-stipulated boundaries (Kruger, 1998). It is essential to acknowledge, however, that within the context of discourse analysis, the interview cannot be regarded as a means to reveal absolute truth, but should instead be considered an interactive production of meaning through the interpretation of language (Kvale, 1996: 226). In other words, the interviewer's role should never be mistaken as impartial (*ibid.*).

Focus group interviews were selected as a primary research tool in light of the limitations sometimes associated with traditional, one-on-one interviews⁴⁴. In the scope of this project, the primary advantage of the focus group interview tool is the use of social interaction to produce data and insights that may not be possible outside of a group setting (Morgan, 1988). By design, focus group interviews provide a conversational environment in which participants may be more willing to engage in self-disclosure, especially where this requires 'trust, effort and courage' (Kruger, 1998: 23).

⁴⁴ Perhaps the most obvious disadvantage of any type of interview is that these draw from 'verbal behaviour and self-reported data' (Morgan, 1988: 16), suggesting that participants may provide feedback which indicates how they *wish* to be perceived, instead of how they actually *are*. However, while Stevens (1998) claims that delicate or controversial subject matter may be more difficult to broach in a traditional interview, Ferreira and Puth (1988) argue that the informal dynamic offered by focus groups stimulates increased interaction, particularly where sensitive topics are concerned.

Morgan and Spanish (1984) argue that the most significant advantage of focus groups are their technical 'compromise' between participant observation and individual interviews (Morgan & Spanish, 1984: 260). Like participant observation, focus groups are a highly effective tool for the researcher concerned with social interaction and collective meaning-making; at the same time, focus groups, like interviews, provide valuable insight into attitudes and experiences of participants (Morgan & Spanish, 1984). That is, when a focus group discussion is administered effectively, the emerging discourse is rich with insights and contradictions that may not arise in either the respondents' own casual conversations, or in response to preconceived interview questions (Morgan, 1988)⁴⁵.

Furthermore, focus groups appear to be useful in facilitating the opinion-formation process. As Krueger (1988) argues, a shortcoming of traditional techniques (e.g. surveying or interviewing) is that these methods presuppose that informants have already developed their opinions on the topic, and further assume that attitudes are formed outside of a social context. Moreover, if participants do indeed influence each other during the course of the focus group interview, the researcher may be able to increase her understanding of how and why that shift transpired (Krueger, 1998).

While the literature suggests that focus group participants should not know each other (Morgan, 1988), it was decided for this particular project that participant anonymity was not a necessary condition for enabling constructive focus group discussions. Moreover, in a community as small as Wentworth, arranging completely blind focus group interviews was probably not feasible. Ultimately, these small focus group discussions were designed to be small and intimate, which allowed each participant ample opportunity to participate, while still providing a sample large enough to generate diverse feedback (Krueger, 1998).

Before the focus group interviews commenced, participants were informed of the criteria for selection, thus familiarising them with their role and importance to the investigation. It

⁴⁵ While the authors acknowledge that this 'compromise' may suggest that focus groups are neither as effective as participant observation in terms of witnessing 'authentic' interaction, nor as useful as individual interviews insofar as direct probing of information, they argue that focus groups nonetheless achieve far superior *combined* results than either method in their own right (Morgan & Spanish, 1984).

was likewise helpful to establish discussion guidelines, which were intended to foster a non-judgmental environment conducive to eliciting varying perspectives (Krueger, 1998). While Kruger (1998) warns that some participants will defer to the opinions of participants who appear more educated or influential, this was generally not the case, although in ‘the Barracks’ focus group, a male participant [Roger] was withdrawn from the discussion due to his tendency to be verbally domineering and abusive, which served to ‘shut down’ the responses of his female counterparts.

Morgan’s warning about the limitations of ‘verbal behaviour and self-reported data’ (Morgan, 1988: 16), was a major concern in light of the sensitive nature of the research topic. However, it was the perception of this researcher that participants were excited to engage in the discussion topics, and had no qualms about disagreeing with their group members. Interestingly, most participants did not appear to be preoccupied with appearing ‘politically correct’, as evidenced in the abundance of racialised terminology employed⁴⁶.

3.2.3. The Questioning Route⁴⁷

The same discussion prompts were presented in both the focus groups and the individual interviews, with only slight modifications to the phrasing, depending on the background of the respondent(s).

The questioning route was divided into four parts, with the first section consisting of brief biographical questions relating to participants’ occupation and the duration of their residency in Wentworth. Participants’ ages are typically presented as estimates, unless this information was volunteered.

The second section of the interview probed participants to discuss the term ‘Coloured’ itself as well as any feelings conjured by this label, and also to explore the possibility of a

⁴⁶ See Chapter Four ‘Data Analysis’

⁴⁷ See Appendix C for the full interview schedule.

universal Coloured identity in South Africa. These questions aimed to evaluate respondents' attachment to a notion of Coloured culture, and to gauge the degree of differentiation expressed in relation to other non-white South Africans in particular.

The third section posed questions relating to respondents' political allegiances and opinions about the progress of the current government. This was not intended to function as a survey of participants' political intentions, but rather as an open-ended discussion to explore what kind of language participants may employ. These questions were particularly useful in terms of understanding how interviewees describe and relate to the progress of the national reconciliation project.

In the final stage of the interview, participants were asked to discuss how they learned about the concept of 'race', as well as how they would educate their own children on the matter. This part of the conversation was very useful in terms of accessing narratives about the reproduction of racial thinking and exploring how racial attitudes may be inherited through family.

Ultimately, the phrasing and sequencing of the questioning route was intended to arouse discussion and reveal latent attitudes, as opposed to uncovering particular 'facts'. Care was taken by the facilitator not to 'control' the interview too much, and thereby encourage participants to create narratives that were meaningful to them.

3.2.4. Participant observation

Beyond my role as the researcher, I was also a resident of Wentworth for over 12 months in 2006 and 2007, with continuous personal exposure to the community for nearly three years. This fact carries with it an element of first-hand knowledge and, undoubtedly, biases. However, I believe that my personal involvement in the community was invaluable in terms of informing my choice of interview prompts, as well as enabling me socially engage in a manner that community members (of all backgrounds) could relate to.

During this time, I found it helpful to attend community meetings where racial and class discourses would likely arise, namely those involving community policing/crime, service delivery, and industrial pollution.

3.3. Secondary Data

This report relied on several types of secondary data. Firstly, this project required an extensive literature review of social identity discourse, especially where this involved racial hybridity/miscegenation, and the historiography of race in South Africa. It was also necessary to draw upon a range of related topics to inform the theoretical background, such as race theory and postcolonialism. A number of unpublished dissertations were likewise utilised.

It was also helpful to revisit relevant literature on social science research methods, particularly those involving ethnomethodology, focus group interviews, sampling methods, and conversation analysis.

3.3. The Sampling Method

As this study is qualitative and highly exploratory in nature, sample size and criterion for selection of participants were not strictly controlled in the manner typical of quantitative research (Mouton, 1988). Rather than a statistical sample of Wentworth residents, this study utilised a multi-stage/cluster sampling technique, whereby three 'representative' neighbourhoods were selected based on estimated socio-economic status of residents.

The first sample area, known locally as 'the Barracks'⁴⁸ is a block of informal housing situated along Tara and Duranta Roads, which has a community-wide reputation for severe poverty, sub-standard living conditions, and poor service delivery. The second sample

⁴⁸ Discussed in Chapter One (p. 7)

group, a working-class section of flats known as 'Woodstock', faces similar challenges, although the rate of permanent employment among these residents may be higher than those of 'the Barracks'. The final sample area, Treasure Beach, was selected to represent 'middle-class' Wentworth residents, who tend to be property owners and have generally benefited from more education than the other two sample groups.

It was initially envisioned that focus group participants would be recruited via a formal letter of invitation, which outlines the research objectives and criterion for participation, urging interested parties to respond by post or telephone in order to participate in group discussions with other residents in their pre-selected sample area⁴⁹. However, this approach proved unsuccessful in the designated low-income areas ('the Barracks' and 'Woodstock'), where zero responses were received. Therefore, an alternative recruitment approach was undertaken, which involved simply walking through these sample areas, meeting with residents to introduce the project, and verbally inviting residents to join in focus group discussions. It should be noted that in 'the Barracks' and 'Woodstock' neighbourhoods, residents spend considerable time outdoors socialising with neighbours and supervising their children, which made recruitment via the 'walk through' approach highly effective.

In the Barracks, this recruitment process took place over two afternoon visits, and involved visiting a number of homes and establishing relationships with potential informants. Organising the Woodstock focus group interview required less effort, however, and residents eagerly signed on to the project. Although every effort was made to hold a corresponding focus group interview in Treasure Beach, this did not materialise, and individual interviews were instead arranged with the Treasure Beach respondents (see below).

Two focus group interviews were conducted in Wentworth in April and May 2007. The first focus group discussion was held in 'the Barracks' (n=5), whilst the second took place in 'Woodstock' (n=4). 'The Barracks' focus group was comprised of middle-aged and

⁴⁹ See Appendix B 'Letter of Invitation to Residents'

elderly respondents with long histories in Wentworth, dating back to the forced relocations under the Group Areas Act. Of the four females and one male represented, all were unemployed at the time of the interview, although two participants reported receiving grants/pension payments. The 'Woodstock' focus group interview was comprised of younger participants, all between the ages of 25 and 31 years of age, with one male and three females represented. Three of the four Woodstock participants were unemployed at the time of the interview. While care was taken to ensure a balanced representation of employed and unemployed residents, it is important to consider that both the Barracks and Woodstock communities experience high rates of unemployment, and therefore the focus groups should be reflective of this reality.

While organising these focus groups, it became apparent that many males were reluctant to participate in a group interview. It is impossible to state precisely why, however it may be noteworthy that in the first scenario at 'the Barracks', several male residents approached for interview were intoxicated. The second situation at the 'Woodstock' flats also proved to be equally challenging, and ultimately, individual interviews were arranged with four males (ages 24 to ± 60) from the working-class Ogle Road flats in order to rectify the demographic representation of the sample. Two of these four male participants were permanently employed, one was self-employed, and another was unemployed at the time of the interview.

With regards to the Treasure Beach sample, the letters of invitation proved to be much more effective means of recruiting participants. However, several respondents withdrew from or postponed their interview commitments, which lengthened the process considerably. Furthermore, it soon became clear that the Treasure Beach respondents were hesitant to participate in a focus group interview with their neighbours, whom they reportedly did not share personal relationships with. Ultimately, individual interviews were arranged with four Treasure Beach participants (ages 23 to ±50) in September 2007 to achieve the desired sample size. Three females and one male were represented, and three of the four participants were employed at the time of the interview. All four of the Treasure

Beach participants are university educated, and live in houses owned by themselves or their families.

Individual interviews were also conducted with community leaders: Ward Councillor Aubrey Snyman⁵⁰, activist Catherine Gordimer⁵¹, former political prisoner Derrick McBride⁵², a social worker from Durban Children's Society in Wentworth⁵³, and a representative from the Wentworth community policing forum⁵⁴.

3.4. Data Analysis

The primary goal of the conversation analysis process employed was to identify and understand the ways in which the varying sample groups express and relate to their position in society, as well as the way they may differentiate themselves from other South Africans of colour (e.g. 'Africans' and 'Indians').

3.4.1. *Application of Conversation Analysis*

Upon completing an interview or focus group, a thorough transcription of the interaction was quickly produced to ensure that important aspects of the discussion were not omitted. The transcription process therefore involved intense familiarisation with the texts produced during the fieldwork, as it was necessary to include as many features from the original interaction as possible, including not only verbatim speech, but also hesitation, 'semiosis'⁵⁵, overlapping speech, and intonation. For this process, it was useful to draw upon the transcription system proposed by Jefferson (Atkinson & Heritage, 1999).

⁵⁰ Interviewed in his office at the Wentworth community hall, April 2007.

⁵¹ Interviewed in her office at the Wentworth Development Forum on Clinic Road, May 2007

⁵² Interviewed at his home in Ellery Avenue, Wentworth, May 2007

⁵³ Interviewed in her office at the Durban Children's Society in Austerville Road, September, 2007

⁵⁴ Informally interviewed at a the Wentworth Police Station in Austerville Road, May 2007

⁵⁵ 'Semiosis is meaning-making through language, body language, visual images, or any other way of signifying (Fairclough, 2001: 229).

The initial period of analysis involved identification of *discursive objects*, or themes, and examining the ways in which these are conveyed in the conversation texts. To accomplish this, thematic patterns were highlighted and coded using a simple word processor cut-and-paste function. During the coding process, it was crucial to remain aware of the *action orientation* of the discourse, which is useful in identifying the *subject position* within the text, and may also serve to highlight 'networks of meaning' (Willig, 2001: 110). In this early stage, themes were noted as inclusively as possible, including both explicit and implicit references, so that any trends identified in the later stages of analysis could also be incorporated (Gill, 2000). Ultimately, the data analysis proved to be a highly experimental process in which hypotheses were developed and subsequently validated or discredited upon closer examination of the data (Potter & Wetherell, 1987).

3.5. Limitations of the Study

Perhaps the greatest limitation of this study is the differing qualitative methods utilised between the lower income Barracks/Woodstock sample areas (focus groups) and the Treasure Beach sample (individual interviews), which undoubtedly affected the final texts produced by each group. The inconsistent use of sampling techniques is also a legitimate criticism, although it is less clear how this discrepancy affected the study. Finally, the under-representation of males in the focus group interviews (and the subsequent decision to interview males individually) was also a significant point of concern.

These variations, while significant, appeared to be unavoidable, and steps were taken to ensure that a demographic balance of the interviews was maintained. Furthermore, because the ultimate value of this study relies on quality and depth of the interview responses, it was decided that the comfort and trust of participants was more important than sample uniformity. Finally, while it may be useful to further explore the reasons why the Treasure Beach residents (and males more generally) were reluctant to participate in group discussions, these enquiries are beyond the scope of this project.

4. Data Analysis

Using the ethnomethodological conversation analysis approach outlined above, this chapter aims to unpack the research questions presented in Chapter One. The findings largely uphold the initial hypothesis that class would be a powerful determinant of the racial attitudes voiced by respondents, as well as their views regarding the status of reconciliation in South Africa. Furthermore, the data confirms that racial hierarchies remain prevalent in the mindsets of Coloureds in Wentworth, and that the extent to which these are expressed seems to be influenced, again, by one's socioeconomic status.

4.1 Participants' Expressions of Colouredness

Virtually all participants held that there is no distinctive or universal Coloured identity, although participants' *expressions* of how they relate to the concept of 'Colouredness' differed significantly between sample groups, where the lower-income participants were decidedly more negative than their middle-class counterparts.

In the Barracks focus group interview, respondents said that Coloureds lack a distinctive culture, as opposed to Indians (and Africans, presumably), who 'carry their culture forward'.

Briana: Well, would you say that Coloureds have a culture or identity that makes you different from other race groups?

Sophia⁵⁶: I don't think so, eh?

Johanna⁵⁷: No.

Winona⁵⁸: Other people have their traditional things, and we also had it with our family⁵⁹, but our generation doesn't do what they did. But other people, like the Indians...

⁵⁶ **Sophia:** ±65, Female, Barracks resident, pensioner, Focus Group Interview, April 2007

⁵⁷ **Johanna:** ±65, Female, Barracks resident, pensioner, Focus Group Interview, April 2007

Sophia: They carry their culture forward...

Winona: Yes, but see, we have no culture. We're just put out there to live, you know?

Winona's final statement ('We're just put out there to live') reveals a deep-seated pessimism she feels toward everyday life, although it is unclear at this point if her dissatisfaction is rooted in her experience as a Coloured in Wentworth, or as a resident of the infamous 'Barracks'. This pessimism was echoed in one very revealing moment during the 'Woodstock' focus group discussion:

Briana: What makes Coloureds different from other racial groups in South Africa?

T: I think it's our lifestyle.

Ella: And our attitude... You can't just go to a Coloured and scare a Coloured. Even if he can't do anything, he's going to say something to show you, 'Me, I'm not scared of you,' but inside you're panicking! But right, we've got that attitude.

Linette: That 'I don't care attitude'. Because really, you got to fight for each day. I think that's why all Coloureds have developed this type of attitude. Because really, where are you going to end up if you don't put up this brave face? We're stuck in the middle. We're going nowhere.

According to the 'Woodstock' respondents, the only feature that meaningfully differentiates them as Coloureds is their lifestyle and brave attitude, which has apparently been forged by their feelings of marginalisation, cynicism towards the future, and their sense of having to 'fight for each day'. This 'lifestyle' or 'attitude', which they characterize both as 'I'm not scared of you' and 'I don't care' suggests a once painful, ongoing condition, now normalised, that manifests in an outward display of strength in order to survive.

Interestingly, when presented with the same question about their Coloured identity, the Treasure Beach respondents enthusiastically invoked the cultural diversity of the

⁵⁸ **Winona:** ±45, Female, Barracks resident, unemployed, married to 'Roger', focus group interview April 2007

⁵⁹ Winona is from a traditional Zulu family. At a young age, she married a Coloured man [Roger] at the insistence of her parents, who wanted her to marry a man with 'white' features.

Wentworth community, describing Coloured culture as an ‘amalgamation’ of different South African customs, traditions, cuisines, and linguistic characteristics.

Briana: What do you think makes Coloureds different from other racial groups?

Wanda⁶⁰: I think we belong to a very small group whose traditions and cultures have all been melted. In the Coloured community, the one thing that’s been binding for certain groups is religion — the majority are Catholic....Some other groups, you need to learn to dance, you need to learn to cook...We haven’t got that. We grew up on curries, on breyanis...We just take from whichever group and whatever’s good for us. We haven’t got something so uniform that you can say, ‘this is the Coloured community’. But the diversity is definitely a positive.

Briana: How would you describe a Coloured person, or even Coloured identity?

Belinda⁶¹: Um (pause) from a cultural point of view, I think... it’s so difficult to cluster an identity, because people are from such different backgrounds, and at times, hold such different values. But if I speak directly to the community that I grew up in, um (pause) you know, religion played a very important role in our lives, and generally you were either Catholic or you were saved, as an example. So religion is very important. Alcohol is part of our socialising (pause) the key part of our socialising, really. We love to braai. We love any excuse for a party. Um (pause). Ja. I think that’s generally it.

Briana: What makes Coloureds distinctive from other social groups in South Africa?

Wade⁶²: Socially, we take from all the cultures, so we’re an amalgamation of all the races. There’s no Coloured nation as such. We grew up on bunnies⁶³. We grew up on phutu⁶⁴. We grew up on Afrikaans dishes. We speak all the languages...We can mix with anybody.

Wanda and Belinda both provide somewhat shallow, descriptive responses when compared to those of the ‘Barracks’ and ‘Woodstock’ interviewees who were quick to discuss

⁶⁰ **Wanda:** ±45, Female, Treasure Beach resident, Personal Interview, September 2007

⁶¹ **Belinda:** ±35, Female, Treasure Beach resident, Personal Interview, September 2007

⁶² **Wade:** ±30, Male, Treasure Beach resident, Personal interview, May 2007

⁶³ A ‘bunny’ (also called ‘bunny chow’) is a South African Indian dish consisting of a hollowed half- or quarter- loaf of white bread, which is filled with curry.

⁶⁴ Phutu is a traditional South African maize meal, grainy in consistency, which is generally eaten with hearty meats/gravies or with *maas* (sour milk).

personal feelings. It is unclear whether these Treasure Beach respondents are not personally familiar with the pain and marginalisation described by their low-income counterparts, or if they are perhaps offering more standard sociological/cultural responses due to their own preconceived ideas about what information the researcher may be interested in.

Wade's statement that 'we can mix with everybody' may be a testimony to the to middle class privilege, and is an interesting contrast to the accounts offered by the low-income respondents in the following sections.

4.2. Colouredness and Marginalisation

As the above excerpts begin to highlight, there is a clear demarcation between the expressions of Colouredness made by the middle-class interviewees in Treasure Beach, and the low-income/working-class focus group participants from 'Woodstock' and 'the Barracks'. However, a collective sense of racialised political marginalisation was a unifying trend throughout each of the sample groups, as well as the interviews with community leaders. This marginalisation was generally characterised as economic (attributable to unfair affirmative action policies), or social/cultural, with some respondents saying that they simply don't know how they as 'Coloureds' fit into the new South Africa.

4.2.1. Not White Enough, Not Black Enough

Twenty-one of the twenty-two interview participants (95.4%)⁶⁵ described feeling perpetually marginalised by South Africa's past and present ruling parties, invoking some variation of the common adage, 'Before we weren't white enough, now we're not black enough.' A less common but equally illustrative example of the Coloured sense of 'in-

⁶⁵ With 'Belinda' [Treasure Beach] as the exception

betweenity'⁶⁶, 'We are the jam' (Adhikari 2006: 484), is echoed in the passage below, in which Ward Councillor Aubrey Snyman discusses the continued marginalisation of Coloureds since the transition to democracy:

Briana: What about your constituents here in Wentworth? Have things changed much for them [since 1994]?

Councillor Snyman⁶⁷: No. We are marginalised in this new government in the sense that there is a majority, and the majority is blacks. So what tends to happen, because of where they're coming from being underprivileged and impoverished and so on, the focus is more on the blacks than on the Coloureds. The Coloureds have been perceived as being close to the whites in the apartheid era, and yet we were the actual *sandwich*. We were the actual *filling* in the sandwich...

Briana: So you're saying that life hasn't changed very much — it's just that there's another party oppressing you?

Councillor Snyman: That's right. That is quite true. But you're using the word 'much'. I'm saying it hasn't changed at all.

To illustrate his point, Councillor Snyman compares the unequal development progress made in the neighbouring African township of Umlazi with that of Wentworth. According to the Councillor, Umlazi has benefited from major infrastructural upgrading over the last ten years, whereas he claims that there have been no developments in Wentworth since the democratic transition.

Councillor Snyman: ... I'm not saying that Umlazi is okay, but for where Umlazi *is* and where it has *been*, you can see there's progress (pause) but in Wentworth, that now needs to be questioned. Why? Is it because we are in the wrong party? ...Or is it because of the colour of our skin? And that has always been the case. The colour of your skin. In the apartheid era, we were not white enough; now under the ANC, we are not black enough.

⁶⁶ Sonn & Fischer (2003: 10); Bulhan (1980)

⁶⁷ **Councillor Aubrey Snyman:** ±50, Male, Ward Councillor, Chairperson of Austwent Taxi Association, Personal Interview, April 2007

Jack expressed a similar perception of political exclusion (and at times, political exploitation) experienced by the Coloured community:

Jack⁶⁸: We are marginalised as either not white enough or not black enough. When they need us for political things like voting, then we are included in the dispensation. Policies are still made on racial lines.

4.2.2. *Affirmative Action and Perceived Marginalisation*

Nearly all participants explained that their sense of marginalisation is rooted largely in systematic job market inequities, which they say is attributable to affirmative action policies.

Linette: I think that during apartheid everyone tried to be white because whites had the advantage of everything...So you used to get some of these Coloureds that want to be white...That's where you get your jobs, your this, your that. And now that apartheid is no more, and it's the black that took over, everyone wants to be black, because if your surname is not Mkhize, then you don't stand a chance of getting nothing. It's like we now are stuck in the middle. You have to try be black now to get ahead in life.

Briana How would you 'try to be black' to get those advantages?

Ella: ...It's not *what* you know now, it's *who* you know. If I know an Mkhize or a Cele, maybe I can get there.

Linette: Even this one job thing that they had, and we went there. They actually stopped us before we could get into the gate. 'You're not black. We're not taking Coloureds, we're not taking whites.' They even tell you straight...We're not going to go there and give our certificates and give our this and give our that and get a job. We will not get a job because we are not white enough and we're not black enough. We're just Coloured.

Ruby⁶⁹: We're a lost race.

⁶⁸ **Jack:** ±60, Male, Ogle Road flats resident, Self-employed (taxi owner), Personal Interview May 2007

⁶⁹ **Ruby:** ±27, Female, Woodstock resident, unemployed, focus group interview, May 2007

Marvin⁷⁰: We all don't have the same opportunities, because we have affirmative action now, which makes it harder for other [non-African] businessmen and workers to find jobs...The only time you really think about it [racism] is when you're going for a job. Like, the one time, I went for a job interview and there was just me, an Indian guy, and a black guy. We were all called in one at a time for the interview, and because of affirmative action, the black guy got the job.

In the first excerpt, 'Woodstock' residents discuss the frustration of being perpetually in limbo between privileged groups ('whites' during apartheid and 'blacks' in the democratic era). Their comments draw attention to the historical phenomenon of Coloureds attempting to 'pass' so they can improve their standard of living.

Both passages reveal that interviewees believe that they are not given adequate consideration for employment because affirmative action policies dictate that the Africans will be given first priority. In this regard, the reality of whether hiring policies are racist is not nearly as important as the speakers' absolute conviction that this is true. It is also worth explicitly noting that the interviewees do not find any reconciliatory or transformative value in the current employment equity legislation (although this is its stated purpose), but instead perceive these policies as African opportunism, which represents grave injustices against Coloureds.

As a community surrounded by industry, many residents (as well as local civic organisations) have argued that providing Wentworth residents with a reliable flow of waged work should be considered part of local firms' social responsibility obligations. This point is particularly poignant in the impoverished 'Barracks' neighbourhood, which is located directly opposite the Engen oil refinery on Tara Road. Sophia, a Barracks resident of over 30 years, said:

⁷⁰ **Marvin**: 24, Male, Ogle Road flats resident, Spraypainter (Toyota), Personal Interview, April 2007

'We have Engen there, we have SAPREF, we have Mondi, and they don't employ many people from here. They're not, which they should be doing. They're taking people from *outside* to come work here'.

Although Sophia doesn't specifically say so, she is clearly referring to 'African' employees when she says the 'people from *outside*' are receiving contracts at the local plants.

Community leadership also expressed concern regarding what they consider to be poor implementation of affirmative action policies, which they say wrongfully penalises Coloureds, Indians, and whites. It is interesting to note, however, that despite this negative view of the outcomes of employment equity legislation, these community leaders make mention of and are sympathetic to the reconciliatory goals of such policies.

Councillor Snyman: ... Because a lot of jobs are mostly being given to the blacks. They call it 'black empowerment'. The Employment Equity Act is here to address the indifferences of the past, just to give you an example. The EEA is spelled out very well insofar as the Indians, Africans and Coloureds are considered 'blacks', but not when you are applying for a job. When you're applying for a job, they want a *black*...a black South African that in the apartheid era was classified as an 'African'. They don't want a Coloured or an Indian...

Catherine Gordimer⁷¹: First of all, they [government] should actually be creating jobs for people to get along together because with this new Black Economic Empowerment, jobs are not being created for the other races [Indians, Coloureds and whites]...The other race groups were privileged during the apartheid regime, yes, I'm not denying that. But...there is no healing happening, there is no bridging of that gap.

Two of the Treasure Beach respondents (Wanda and Wade) expressed similar prerogatives regarding Coloureds' marginalisation in the post-1994 era, although interestingly,

⁷¹ **Catherine Gordimer:** ±45, Female, Veteran activist and Ward Committee member, Personal Interview, May 2007

presented these views in terms of the Coloured role within the changing racial hierarchy in South Africa.

Wanda: The only negative thing, I think...before with apartheid, we were, um, better (pause) a bit better than Africans, because we were mixed. And especially if you were fair with blue eyes, you could pass as a white, and you'd find that a lot of people did that and got jobs. But you weren't *white*, you know? And then now, we're not black enough...to get jobs.

Wade⁷²: Politically, the blacks have far more opportunities than us. We're oppressed by blacks, I'm talking Xhosas, Zulus, all the ethnic tribes. They have all the opportunities. Statistics will tell you that it goes Black, Indian, Coloured, and then white, but I don't see it that way. I think blacks have the whole big chunk of the pie.

Clifford⁷³: You think that the Indians are before us?

Wade: I certainly do.

Clifford: Well, only because they got money.

Wade: Well, money goes with politics.

Clifford: And affirmative action?

Wade: There are more Coloureds unemployed now than ever before. An Indian will always have a *graaf*⁷⁴.

It is worth emphasising that Wanda describes Coloureds as being 'better' than Africans during apartheid, 'especially if you were fair with blue eyes', although it is unclear if she is indicating that *she believes* Coloureds were better or if they were merely viewed more favourably by the ruling white regime. Whatever the case, her frustration with being neither 'white enough' nor 'black enough' to enjoy a satisfactory career is evident.

⁷² **Wade:** ±30, Male, Treasure Beach resident, unemployed, University of Natal graduate, Interviewed with Clifford, May 2007

⁷³ **Clifford:** ±30, Male, Ogle Road flats resident, unemployed, Interviewed with Wade, May 2007

⁷⁴ Job (Afrikaans)

Wade's frustration as a young, unemployed university graduate is articulated when he says that 'They [Africans] have all the opportunities'. He further elaborates on his sense of Coloured marginalisation by noting that although Africans are a demographic majority and thus have the political influence to oppress Coloureds, Indians escape this oppression to some extent because they have maintained financial power.

4.2.3. *Revisiting the Marginal Man Theory*

The discourse emerging from the interviews with low-income residents necessitate a review of the 'Marginal Man' and 'colonised mind' theories introduced in Chapter 2. In the Barracks focus group interview, participants had a very emotional exchange regarding the suffering and injustice experienced by Coloureds in South Africa.

Roger⁷⁵: I identify myself as being a Coloured...My father was a white man that never ever spoke proper English. He was a quarter Xhosa. Then he met my Mummy and my Mummy comes from the Transkei...They came down here...(long pause, begins crying) and they made us.

Briana: You don't have to answer the question if it's bothering you. Do you need to go, Roger?

Sophia: It hurts!

Roger: We never asked for what we were given! We never asked! I never asked to be a Coloured. I never said, 'Please, Lord, make me a Coloured'. No, it was given to me. Tell me, why is it that we must always be paying to people who give us nothing in return? (Pause) Thanks, I need to go.

Briana: Okay, I understand. I'm sorry that my question upset you.

Winona: It's an upsetting thing.

Roger: It's a very sentimental thing (indiscernible crying). Even the Indian has got it better than us; he has India. The white man has Europe and the Asians have Asia. We have no land. They put us on trains and put us in quarters together and shove us around. They shunned us.

⁷⁵ **Roger**: ±50, Male, Barracks resident, unemployed, married to Winona, focus group interview, April 2007

Roger's emotional response was undoubtedly exacerbated by alcohol, however there is no reason to doubt his sincerity. Furthermore, Roger's intense feelings of vulnerability and social exclusion (e.g. 'why is it that we must always be paying to people who give us nothing in return?' and 'They shunned us.') was verbally confirmed by Sophia and his wife, Winona, and his tears received an empathetic response from the other focus group participants as well. Roger's comment that 'We have no land. They put us on trains and put us in quarters together and shove us around' echoes some intellectuals' claims that Coloured identity was born in response to forced relocation into close living spaces, and the subsequent need to 'invent a way to live together' (Martin, 2001: 249)⁷⁶.

To some extent, the responses offered by Roger serves as a reminder of Dickie-Clark's Marginal Man theory, which asserts that a person of mixed-race, in feeling trapped between two cultures standing in opposition to each other, may develop a predictable set of psychological maladies. However, although Roger apparently feels trapped between black and white societies, and certainly feels rejected by whites, nowhere in the interview does he Roger indicate that that he has avoided identifying with Africans because he believes doing so will entail a loss of status.

Here Jack articulately explains that the problem of individual social identity is extremely common in the Coloured community, and suggests that this frustration may be so powerful that it leads Coloureds to engage in harmful behaviours.

Jack: ...When we go for jobs we're told we're not black enough, and under the old apartheid regime we weren't considered white enough to count. This causes a lot of confusion in our minds. People like me have to ask 'What does *Coloured* mean? Who the hell am I?' And it causes frustration, because no one will acknowledge us. And that's why we drink a lot, that's why they're violent, because there's something in them that hasn't been put to use. It's a worm in their mind that keeps on waking them up and they can't find answers. This is one of our problems, Coloured people in South Africa

⁷⁶ See also van der Ross (1979: 2)

In contrast to Roger's testimony, the anger, frustration and propensity for violence described by Jack loudly echoes Fanon's warning of the 'colonised personality'. When Jack says, 'What does *Coloured* mean? Who the hell am I?' the reader can almost feel the dehumanisation Jack has suffered in the past and the anger he continues to feel, because even in democratic South Africa, Jack does not feel that his life has been 'put to use'. Finally, Jack's description of the 'worm' keeping him awake is also an emblematic parallel to Fanon's colonised man, who is restless, furious, and ready to fight back (Fanon, 1963: 203-204).

Ultimately, the interview data from the low-income sample groups in particular powerfully suggests that these participants feel excluded from the political and economic benefits enjoyed by their African counterparts. This finding represents a revealing contrast to situation of apartheid, in which Coloureds felt *socially* (as well as politically and economically) excluded from the ruling white class, who they seem to have primarily identified with. Whereas during apartheid Coloureds often tried to 'pass' or assimilate to what may be called 'white culture', the participants do not appear interested in assimilating to African culture or appearances now that Africans are a demographic and political majority. From here, I turn the discussion to the prevalence of the European racial hierarchy in South Africa.

4.3. European Racial Hierarchies

'We're very proud of being Coloured and proud of the history of that. See, if you were a Coloured back in 1956, a Coloured was second (laughs). The white man was first and the Coloured was second, and then Indian and then Black. I'm proud to get to be Coloured. It's good to be Coloured because we're still second' (Clifford, Personal Interview, 2007)

The interview discourse overwhelmingly indicates that colonial racial hierarchies continue to be influential in the Wentworth community, regardless of the age group or socio-economic background of respondent. The adoption of the white standards of beauty

emerged as a predominant theme, as did the relationship between physical appearance, social acceptance, and even intelligence. Whereas the low-income interviewees may unconsciously adhere to these standards and attitudes, the Treasure Beach interviewees demonstrated a more contextual understanding of the phenomenon, and in cases of Wanda and Candace, even problematised these practices to a certain extent.

Belinda, a married mother of three living in a large Treasure Beach home, describes the reaction of her five-year-old son when he was not invited to the birthday party of a white classmate.

Belinda: So he came home to me and he says... 'Kevin Strydom said to me that I can't come to his party because I'm not white.' And I think that's the first time it hit me that this is still an issue.

Briana: What did you do?

Belinda: I fought back a lot of tears, and I explained to him that people are all different, and we must be happy that we're different, and I remember something that he said. He said that he doesn't want to be light brown, he wants to be (pause) what's the word? 'Peach'. He didn't say 'white', he said 'peach', because you know they have that peach colour in their cokie pen set, and they use that colour as flesh colour. He said he doesn't want to be 'light brown'— he made a distinction between 'light brown' and 'dark brown', because I am 'dark brown' and he and his father are lighter...

The reaction of Belinda's son (saying he wants to be 'peach' as opposed to 'light brown' like himself or 'dark brown' like his mother) is a poignant reminder that even young children become cognizant of the influence that skin colour has on one's social standing. It is perhaps also worth mentioning that this was the only time in the interview when Belinda became visibly upset, whereas the low-income respondents in particular were more outwardly affected during the interviews.

The issue of hair texture was likewise raised by a number of respondents, regardless of their age or socioeconomic background. In fact, hair type proved to be one of the most common features that respondents used to describe another Coloured person.

Ella: She's much darker than me and her hair is a bit worse than mine. She's like...

Briana: 'Worse'?

Ella: You know, coarser. If you look at her you maybe say she's black, but hear her talk and she's Coloured.

Wanda: When a child is born — and this happens a lot, even now — what the grandparents and the parents check first is if the hair is straight and the child is fair. (Sarcastically) What type of hair the child got is a big issue, you know?

Candace: In the job market, I think that's gone, but in everyday life within the community, people look at you and judge you on your features...My friend had a baby on the Saturday, and two of my aunties went to visit her, and the first thing they said was his hair was straight. When I saw him, I thought, you know, 'Thank god he's healthy!' They shouldn't think like that.

Only Treasure Beach residents Wanda and Candace problematised these associations between white features as ideal and 'black' phenotypical features as undesirable, although both admitted that they also found themselves succumbing to these standards at times by straightening their own hair.

Here, Candace tells a story about her reaction to being teased on the playground at school for looking 'black', but suggest that the extent to which such standards are internalised by young people is largely influenced by the attitude of one's parent.

Candace: I used to think, like 'Oh God, I'm *black* and I have black hair!' But then I went home and told my mother that, and she told me that black is beautiful. So because I got

taught that, I loved that, you know? If God came down and said 'I'll make you white', I'd say 'No thank you'. I'm comfortable in my own skin. So, it's what you get taught at home.

In the passage below, Wanda argues that learners with characteristically 'African' features are often dismissed as less intelligent than their 'white-looking' classmates.

Wanda: And when you're fair, and you are white-looking, you're treated differently in school. I found out in school, even when I passed my matric⁷⁷...my friend who was pretty, fair, had straight hair...I got a mention⁷⁸, and her sister came up to me and said, 'How come you got a mention and Daphne didn't?' So I looked at her and thought, 'Ok, you're looking at my features and you're thinking I'm stupid.'

In the following passage, Mr. McBride also gives mention to the hair issue, and elaborates on the apparent tendency of many Coloureds to embrace their white ancestors, while often failing to learn about or even relegating their African heritage.

Briana: How would you describe a Coloured person?

Derrick McBride⁷⁹: The Labour Party had a meeting here in Durban, and there was one member, I can't think of his name, but he was addressing whites. He has straight hair — because you know hair is such an important thing in the Coloured community! He said 'Do any of us resemble the San?' That is one of our *greatest* problems, is to try to deny our origins from black... You know what's the greatest destroyer of the Coloured people? '*The father is a white man!*' (Whispers, as if imitating community gossip). That thing is terrible. 'My grandfather is a white man,' and so on. You come into any Coloured home and you'll find a picture of a white ancestor.

Briana: Never mind the fact that they've never met them!

Derrick McBride: Ja! (Laughs). My wife, too. Her father was an Afrikaner, and so there he was [on the wall], and in the album too. But she never had one of her grandmother.

⁷⁷ Grade 12

⁷⁸ An academic distinction

⁷⁹ **Derrick McBride:** ±70, Male, Personal interview, April 2007. McBride is a veteran activist of the liberation struggle. A former Robben Island detainee, Mr. McBride was found by the TRC to be a victim of gross human rights violations. Today McBride remains an active community organiser, and owns a 'tuck shop' in his Assegai neighbourhood.

Briana: And I know that you told me before that her grandmother was an African woman...

Derrick McBride: That woman should have been cherished. She was belittled. I have lots of stories like that.

From the above excerpts it is easy to conclude that the respondents (and perhaps Wentworth residents more generally) tend to associate so-called 'white' physical features with beauty. This trend was witnessed across all of the sample groups, although interestingly, these comments regarding physical attractiveness were almost always made by women and generally concerned the attractiveness of other women, or of children (with Mr. McBride's observation about the Labour Party speaker as the exception). This finding would perhaps suggest that men in the Coloured community are not physically scrutinised to the same extent as Coloured women.

The interview discourse is less clear on whether participants tend to associate whiteness with intelligence, although several respondents suggested that Africans in particular may be viewed as intelligent than other racial groups.

4.4. Defining 'the Other'

This section explores participants' use of racial stereotypes and other social identity differentiators (e.g. 'us' versus 'they'), and aims to understand the action orientation and subject position in the texts produced.

Negative stereotypes of Africans were by far the most common in the interview data collected. Interestingly, most participants acknowledged having limited exposure to Africans in a personal capacity, and several participants qualified their negative sentiments towards Africans with statements such as, 'But my granny is an African. She doesn't speak

a word of English⁸⁰, or 'You get your decent ones⁸¹.' In this regard, it seems that these highly racialised stereotypes function as a 'meaning making' tool in a context of continued self-imposed racial segregation.

4.4.1. *Africans as Perpetrators of Crime*

Nearly all household informants⁸², regardless of age, gender, and to a lesser extent, socioeconomic background, reported a perception that Africans pose a threat to their property and personal safety.

Ella: Now look what's going to happen to us when Zuma comes? We're going to have even less hope now because we're going from black to *more black*. And what happens when it's super black? We won't even go outside. We won't even be able to stand by our bus stops anymore. As it is, we're afraid to jump into a combi with a black driver because we know that most of them buy their licences. Our taxis are tipling on the freeway when they're going to town.

Ruby: I used to like black people.

Ella: I also used to.

Ruby: My mother's a black woman. She's an Mkize. My sister was gunned down like an animal.

Briana: That was a robbery or what?

T⁸³: Taxi violence.

Ruby: She was going to work and they shot her by the taxi.

Ella: You know them. You know, if I saw a black man burning on fire, I'll stand and I'll look. As much as I hate the sight, I'll just look. I can see a white or an Indian, and I'll still try to help them.

⁸⁰ **Linette:** 27, Female, Woodstock resident, common law partner of 'T', unemployed, Focus group interview, May 2007

⁸¹ **Ella:** 27, Female, Woodstock resident, unemployed, Focus group interview, May 2007

⁸² as opposed to community leaders

⁸³ **T:** ±30, Male, Woodstock resident, common law partner of 'Linette', permanently employed by Toyota SA, focus group interview, May 2007

Linette: See with them, they get away with a lot. They get away with murder. They rape 9 month-old babies. They can rape, they can kill, they can murder as they please, and they get away with it.

The above passage quite clearly illustrates the speakers' perception that Africans threaten their personal safety (e.g. African combi drivers are reckless, Africans perpetuate taxi shootings, Africans sexually assault children). Linette's comment about the impending doom of a Zuma presidency, although not verbally confirmed by others in this excerpt, is indeed a commonly held view amongst Wentworth community members. Ruby's comment 'I used to like black people' (immediately echoed by Ella's 'I also used to') confirms what may have seemed obvious, however Ella's subsequent statement that she would watch 'a black man burning on fire' rather than help him reveals a feeling much more passionate than mere dislike.

Dialogue that followed later in the interview provided more insight into aversion that the 'Woodstock' interviewees feel towards Africans:

Linette: We can't even go into town. Who goes into town? We go to the Pavilion because town is too black.

Ella: People bump into you and they can't even say 'sorry'. They too rude.

Linette: You actually go far out to do your shopping in peace because it's not so full. You can still shop and take your time. There [the CBD] you must be in and out because...

Ella: Your bag will be grabbed. Your chains...They [are] like ants!

T: They're so slippery. You don't even realise your things are gone until you jump in the taxi and it's time to pay.

Briana: So you've been robbed before?

T: No.

Ella: No, we haven't been. We see. You see it happening.

There are several issues at play here. Firstly, the speakers explain that they avoid town⁸⁴ because it is crowded, 'too black', and that Africans lack courtesy. What is perhaps most interesting about this passage is that although the interviewees say they fear being robbed by Africans in town, the speakers report that they have never been robbed by Africans themselves.

Lyle, a thirty-something professional from the Ogle Road flats, likewise described having an aversion to Africans, due to a belief that they are more likely to commit crime.

Briana: Do you feel like people from different racial backgrounds can get along easier today than they could 15 years ago? Can they live amongst each other harmoniously?

Lyle: People pretend well. But once you've got an experience with something and that's your mindset (pause) it's very difficult to break that. And when you have poor experiences, and most of us do, and it's sad to say this, but most of the poor experiences with us and Africans are experiences of crime. The perpetrators are black people. So everyone in South Africa, including blacks, are resistant to blacks.

Marvin expressed a similar view, while also invoking the stereotype that African men are more likely to engage in bestiality and other sexually violent acts.

Marvin: I think it's about time that Coloured people get a say, because black people are having their day out here and they're still doing their own thing. They're breaking into people's houses. They're hijacking. They're shooting and killing one another. They're raping their mothers. They're raping goats. Serious! I just read in the paper that this Ou⁸⁵ is getting locked up for sleeping with a goat. This man slept with his gran — like, raped his gran... Those people must be killed. They can even get hung, I don't really care what.

⁸⁴ Also known as the City Centre. The parameters of the Durban 'City Centre' may be considered to include everything between Victoria Embankment (including the Central Business District), the Beachfront, Warwick Road, as well as Old Fort and Umgeni Roads (Ballard, 2002: 115).

⁸⁵ Guy; fellow (slang)

Although he does not explicitly say so, Marvin seems to be suggesting that these senseless acts of violence occurring in South Africa are a result of having a black majority in government ('I think it's about time that Coloured people get a say, because black people are having their day out here and they're still doing their own thing'). What Marvin is perhaps suggesting is that these crimes are being tolerated by the 'African' controlled government because Africans are committed the crimes.

Jack, a middle-aged taxi owner from the Ogle Road flats, spoke about the 'self-imposed prisons' that South Africans are living in because the rampant crime, which he says is directly attributable to a sense of entitlement by Africans.

Jack: It's changed for the worse [since 1994]... We live in a country where you have to be building a prison for yourself. We live in self-imposed prisons. Have you been to Jo'burg?

Briana: I stayed in Soweto for a few months.

Jack: And have you seen the other sections, maybe the more up-market areas?

Briana: I have.

Jack: They live in communes with electric fences. You can't live that way. I look at America and other countries where people don't even have fences around their property. They're so relaxed. And you can't have that here because black people are under the impression that 'I own everything, you own nothing. I walk in and take what I want'.

And later:

Jack: You weren't here during apartheid. Our cities were safe, clean. Our cities were First World cities. They don't want to mention race when they're talking about crime because they know it's their people. It's like they've given their people an unspoken agreement. Our crime is so violent. You got what you want from the person, why do you have to torture or kill them? Like this guy, they ransacked his house and glued him to his bike. The undercurrent is a hate that they don't want to admit. This whole country is psychologically damaged. These people won't admit it. That's how they are; they can't be trusted.

The initial part of Jack's statements reveals a feeling of sentimentality expressed by the majority of the low-income respondents, for the days when South Africa was ruled by whites and the cities were 'safe' and 'clean'. Jack claims that the ANC has unofficially sanctioned the crime committed by Africans, due to in-group loyalty ('they know it's their people'). He also suggests that the use of excessive violence is indicative of race-based hatred that Africans feel towards other groups ('the undercurrent is a hate that they don't want to admit').

4.4.2. *The African as Uncivilised*

'I would say that the greatest percentage of Coloureds don't know Africans. The idea of the African is the one that does this or that for you, it's not the intellectual' (Derrick McBride, personal interview, May 2007)

Depictions of Africans as lacking civilisation were prevalent in the household interviews with residents from 'the Barracks', 'Woodstock' and Ogle Road. Jack, a self-educated business owner, perhaps had the most to say in this regard.

Jack: We lived amongst Indians, whites and Coloureds. It was more or less good. The Africans is a different story...If you go to their rallies, their rallies are totally African. And this is a multi-racial, multi-cultural country, so what are you going to do? Me as a Coloured, if I go there, I must listen to African freedom songs and African speeches. Nothing will be said in English. So tell me, how am I supposed to *live* with people like this? These people are the last people out of the Stone Age. I'm gonna make some comments — you might think it's derogatory... If you've been in South African long enough, you'll find that these people can't even think, because they don't have that history with the written word. They can do whatever you tell them or show them to do, they pick it up very fast, but they can't think laterally and this is their downfall. Other people are doing their thinking for them. We have a think tank consisting of mainly whites and Indians and maybe a few Africans

Jack's complaint about African rallies where 'nothing will be said in English' suggests that he interprets the use of African languages (which Jack does not speak fluently) to be an *exclusion* of him. When he says 'This is a multi-racial, multi-cultural country, so what are you going to do?' what Jack really seems to be saying is that in the 'new' South Africa, he is forced to tolerate these aspects of African culture which annoy him.

Jack's later statement that 'These are the last people out of the Stone Age' draws upon social Darwinist framework (discussed in Chapter 2), which holds Africans as uncivilised, unintelligent, or even childish. Jack demonstrates his awareness that his views may be perceived as politically incorrect when he says 'I'm gonna make some comments. You might think it's derogatory', but then begins citing examples to support his initial claim (e.g. 'they don't have that history with the written word' and 'they can't think laterally'), before he implies that the country's African leadership is intellectually ill equipped to lead the country, and have 'other people doing their thinking for them'.

In the following passage, Jack credits the positive developments in Africa to European colonisers, while downplaying the devastation that colonialism wreaked upon people of colour. Jack also continues to cite evidence of his attitude that Africans are uncivilised.

Jack: If you look throughout Africa...We are going nowhere. The whites came here and they developed everything. They brought seeds and different breeds of cattle and began planting. White people came along and developed the country...and all these countries had to be given back their independence. What have these people done now? They have destroyed everything from inner conflict, tribalism. They want to make a big noise about racism, but tribalism is the downfall. That's the Achilles heel of Africa is the tribalism. They slaughter one another here by the millions and I tell them, 'the colonialists never came here and killed ya'll. Maybe one or two of ya'll got killed in conflicts, small amounts, but look at the other side of the coin. Countries got well developed, prosperous. Then ya'll got independence because they felt sorry for ya'll with the new world order...Now you people are starving again. Ya'll in conflicts ever since the Second World War'.

Jack's sympathies clearly lie with not only white South Africans, but with white colonisers. In Jack's view, 'giving' independence to Africans initiated the 'downfall' of the continent. His statements seem to fundamentally equate 'tribalism'⁸⁶ with financial and political instability, backwardness, and mindless killing. Moreover, Jack's apparent distaste for Africans is reinforced by his frequent use of phrases such 'these people' and 'you people', which appear to function as a means of differentiating himself, as a Coloured, from the negative characteristics he has ascribed to Africans. Because Jack has obviously taken an interest in history and African politics, it is worth emphasising his statement that 'the colonialists never came here and killed ya'll [Africans]. Maybe one or two of ya'll got killed in conflicts, small amounts...' when he is probably well aware of the number of Africans who were killed under colonial rule.

4.4.3. *Participants' Depiction of Indians*

Negative stereotypes presented of Indians were also prevalent in the interviews and focus groups, where people of Indian origin were assigned labels such as 'forward', 'cunning', and were generally characterised as opportunists.

Councillor Snyman explained that this racial conflict dates back to the 1949 riots at the Market in Durban, but has been exacerbated by the common perception that Indians 'lean towards whites'.

Councillor Snyman: These things get carried onto new generations. And in the workplace, the Indians were always recognised good administrators. They were people that always seek favour by the bosses, and hence that created a lot of animosity. So yes, even in the job environment you'll find that, because Indians always lean towards whites. So to try to get rid of that kind of stigma wasn't easy because it carried on for generations on end.

⁸⁶ Here, 'tribalism' does not seem to be used in its original context referring to 'the customs, beliefs, and social organisation of a tribe' (Encarta, 1999), but is instead used to denote loyalty to a 'backward' African political system.

The Barracks focus group participants did not hesitate to express their negative views about Indians, who they say appropriate a disproportionate share of local jobs and economic opportunities.

Winona: It's like this movie, Blood Diamond. Have you seen it?

Briana: Yes. Leonardo DiCaprio has a top accent, right?

Winona: Okay. That movie tells you a lot about Africa itself...But there's no Indians in that movie. Some people look and say, 'This country is rich', but the Indians are taking over everything. Even if you work, you do have a problem with one nation — the Indians. When they come in, they can strip everyone of their jobs. They take the little bit that you thought you had just because they've got their needs and they don't think of...

Dolores: Anybody else.

Winona: ...the next person. If you go through anywhere and ask the person how they lost their job, it's more of the Indians...Even that time I gave birth — that time I was in Addington hospital — then it wasn't Indians, it was whites...We were treated much better. We were recognised as human being, so you could also recognise the next person as a human being. You could take an extra pair of your shoes, and even if you like them, could give them to the individual who hasn't got. We could see and give to the nationality, but now you can't. You say, 'I don't want to give Indians, they take our jobs!' And they've made the country more crooked.

Despite the length of this passage, it does not reveal the precise nature of the speakers' grievance towards Indians, aside from the observation that Indians 'strip everyone of their jobs'. However, one can discern from Winona's statement about the inability to 'recognise the next person as human being' that feels outward hostility towards South Africans of Indian origin. In Winona's prerogative, even giving a pair of shoes to an Indian would be unthinkable because she feels that they have taken so much from her already.

In the following passage, Wade and Clifford discuss their feelings towards Indians, who they believe are also distrustful towards Coloureds.

Wade: You know, we're more aware of how other groups see us more than how we see them. Indians don't trust us. If they're cool with us, we're cool with them...

Briana: I've heard a lot of [Wentworth] residents speak that way about Indians. They're often called 'back-stabbers', 'snys', et cetera.

Wade: That's really the way that we think they see us.

Clifford: For me, Indian people...okay, I don't trust them. I don't. I don't trust them. I like those guys. They're soft, but...

Wade: I have a lot of Indian friends. When I go out with them, I have a ball. We have a good time, but I'm always aware of what these Ou's are thinking about me.

Clifford: They can be very cunning.

Wade in particular appears reluctant to say anything about Indians that may be perceived as too controversial, and in fact, throughout the interview, Wade urged Clifford to retract or re-think his use of racial stereotypes. However, it also emerged during the course of the interview that Wade was raised in a family that is very distrustful of whites, a factor which may have influenced the way he chose to portray his community to a white researcher.

Wanda, a middle-aged University of Natal graduate and Masters candidate, also seems to distance herself to a certain extent from the negative stereotypes that her community (and in this passage, her family) have towards Indians. However, she concedes that Indians are resented due to their perceived history of 'sucking up' to management.

Wanda: My father's Mauritian. He gets very offended when someone calls us Hindu. It's like 'Oooh, I'm *Indian*?' (Laughs)

Briana: That's very interesting. The other day, I was by the tuck shop and one woman called her child an 'Indian', presumably because he was misbehaving?

Wanda: My mother-in-law tells me that the best Indian is a dead Indian. That's because they all used to suck up to management.

Roger from 'the Barracks' appears to have no qualms about expressing his resentment towards Indians in the following passage.

Roger: I can look like a coolie⁸⁷. I can look like a Coloured. I could look like a white man (pause) you know, if I do myself up. I get mad at being called a coolie. I'm not a coolie! [Spits] I have no coolie blood in me.

Roger's statement that he is angered at being mistaken for an Indian echoes Wanda's anecdote about her father (*see previous passage*), and is made more compelling when Roger spits for emphasis.

Armed with this information about the nature and origins of respondents' resentment toward Africans and Indians, we turn to the topic of desegregation in Wentworth.

5. Desegregation

With the exception of the Treasure Beach interviewees, most participants reported apprehension about the inevitable desegregation of their community, especially with regards to the increasing African presence in Wentworth. Councillor Snyman acknowledged that his constituents feel 'overcrowded' by Africans, particularly due to the growing trend of African learners attending Wentworth schools.

Briana: In the last 15 years or so, there have been a lot more Africans coming to Wentworth to live and to send their children to school here, as well as to use the sports facilities. Have your constituents brought this up with you? How do you think they feel about this?

Councillor Snyman: It hasn't really affected the community in the sense that it's becoming an issue, but people do feel overcrowded by these blacks that are coming in, but the reason these blacks are coming in is because they want to educate their children, and they want a better education so far as English is concerned... But yes, Coloured people do have a problem with African children coming into the schools here, because they come in

⁸⁷ Highly derogatory term for a South African of Indian descent.

numbers, and they kind of outnumber the Coloureds. And there's times when they find that their children can't find a place in the schools because the school is full⁸⁸.

The common perception that Africans are inclined to commit crimes, especially violent crime, was cited by a number of participants as justification to continue to live in racially segregated communities:

Briana: Do you feel like it's a problem to share your sports facilities and schools [with Africans]?

Ruby: No.

Ella: No. We all need an education.

Briana: And what about coming here to live?

Linette: That would be a problem. Me personally, I wouldn't like that...

Ella: But you get decent ones. We have decent ones. But not if they're living full-time.

Linette: ...because if they're living over there, it's one thing. But then they get their brothers and their uncles and their sisters...and you get some very unpleasant ones. Touching our little children.

Ella: They get friends who are coming to visit and their friends are perverts. We don't know, because you can't trust them anymore. You can trust them when they're in front of you, but these that are coming to visit? You look again and your daughter is gone. You say, 'Oh God'. So you have to stay outside and watch now. You're not safe in your area now, where you were always safe before.

Marvin: Alright. Let's talk about Africans. The people that move here might not be the ones that steal, that break into people's houses and hold them at gunpoint, knifepoint, whatever, and rob them, but those people know people and they're gonna get visitors, maybe their visitors steal, rob and kill and all of that. And they're gonna plan...Maybe they're coming to visit — your name is Briana, hey?

Briana: Yebo⁸⁹.

⁸⁸It should be noted that Councillor Snyman expressed his own support for learners from all race groups to attend school where they please. With regards to Wentworth parents' concern that their children are being displaced from local schools, Councillor Snyman says there is an early registration process available to Wentworth residents, although these parents often fail to meet the pre-registration deadline.

Marvin: Maybe they're coming to visit Briana, okay? It might be all your family and whatever, right, but they bring a friend and this guy's a thief, a rogue. He's coming to your house to visit, but meanwhile, he's scoping *my* house. He's thinking, 'There's something nice, there's something nice.' He's gonna come break in, and meanwhile I had this neighbour living here for so many years, and nothing ever happened to my house, but these guys come and put guns to my head and threaten me. So I think it's better that we just live apart. Not apart, but just live in different communities.

Ruby and Ella from the 'Woodstock' interview begin by saying that they do not take issue with Africans children attending Wentworth schools because 'We all need an education,' however Linette and T never respond to the question. Marvin also agrees (although not in the excerpt provided above), that learners should be able to attend school where they please. These statements seem to suggest that they do not necessarily reject the idea of sharing part of their living/social space with Africans.

It is not surprising, however, given these respondents' previous statements about African criminality, that they would feel apprehensive or fearful about an influx of African neighbours. It is interesting to note how Linette, Ella, and Marvin create scenarios of new African neighbours, who may or may not be 'decent', translating into an incursion of visiting friends and family members, which would in turn lead to criminal acts against the original Coloured residents. Marvin concludes his story by saying, 'So I think it's better that we just live apart.' From these statements we can draw the conclusion that the speakers feel that their community in Wentworth is one of the last safe places for them in the 'new' South Africa.

Jack seems less resistant to the idea of desegregation. He admits that Coloureds share in 'African heritage' and can thus 'understand' certain African customs, such as 'slaughtering a beast', however he says that any Africans choosing to live in his community must abide by local 'standards'.

⁸⁹ 'Yes' (isiZulu)

Jack: It doesn't affect us as long as they behave. I mean, when you're in Rome, do as the Romans do. Don't come in here and (pause). Some African customs we can't stop, like slaughtering a beast, because Coloured people have also got African heritage, and we can understand. But if you want to come in and pile a house up with 20 people...of course you must keep up the standards and keep the place clean. Play the music in a civilised manner. Live with the community.

Briana: So it sounds like it would be okay if it was just a few families at a time, but you don't want to be overwhelmed?

Jack: The African people want to come and live amongst us. Let me tell you about African people. An African cannot be an Indian person, they cannot be a white person. All he can do is upgrade to a Coloured because our community is such that we can be Indian-looking, white-looking or African-looking. So it's easier for them to come to us because of our Westernised way of living. They want to get away from some of the culture of their people that they can't stand.

Although Jack qualifies his acceptance of Africans moving to Wentworth in a number of ways (e.g. 'keep the place 'clean'⁹⁰, and play music in a 'civilised manner'), he suggests that he is empathetic towards his African counterparts when he says that the best option for upwardly-mobile Africans is to 'upgrade to a Coloured', and thus take advantage of their 'Westernised' (e.g. superior, civilised) lifestyle.

The Barracks focus group interview highlighted a different set of social and economic justifications to remain in racially segregated living spaces — namely, a sense of relative deprivation and a perception that an increased African presence will impose greater strain on already scarce community resources.

Winona: ...And then they come here, they put homes here and most of us can't afford homes. They come here, and...

⁹⁰The presumption that Africans are more likely to be unclean and rundown the 'standards' of the neighbourhood is a race-based prejudice commonly imposed on the African community. See Ballard (2002: 174) for an analysis of squatters' presumed threat to health and hygiene.

Briana: Who comes here?

Winona: The Zulus. They get homes here. They get school here...

Sophia: Hospitals! Don't forget that.

Winona: They get hospitals here. They found our cemetery here. They come to take the little bit we had. My family's all buried here, but I can't because it's all taken. So it's all moving towards more privilege for them.

This excerpt shows that 'the Barracks' interviewees feel overcrowded by the increasing African presence in Wentworth, and Winona's statement that 'they put homes here and most of us can't afford homes' more specifically suggests a feeling of relative deprivation, which is confirmed by her later statement that 'They come to take the little bit we had'. What is perhaps most interesting about this passage is that Winona herself was born of a Zulu family, although at the insistence of her parents she married a Coloured man (Roger), and started a family in Wentworth. Winona's use of terms such as 'they' and 'them' to denote Africans indicates that her allegiance currently lies primarily with the Wentworth Coloured community, and she perceives Africans as a privileged class that is absorbing an undue share of Wentworth's public resources.

Here, Marvin explains his view that public resources may be easily shared, however desegregation would likely result in problematic cultural disjuncture.

Briana: What about things like the sharing of Wentworth sports facilities or going to school together? How do you feel about that?

Marvin: No, sports is okay. School facilities is okay. We can share all that. But just live separately because we have different cultures. We don't want people cutting goats and sheep and all that in their yard because it's not a nice thing to look at. Everyone has their own religion and all, but Indians, they believe in things that I (pause) I don't believe in. When I see people praying to people with these hands and elephant trunks, that's like scary shit there, so that's why it would be hard. Wentworth is mostly Christians, Muslims and Catholics. And now we're gonna be seeing peoples' flags and bamboo poles and the small

temple. I'm not criticizing, it's just that we don't believe in that, and it will confuse our youth...

Clearly, Marvin does not like the idea of Africans or Indians living in Wentworth, and he communicates this idea in several ways. He first seems to be targeting Africans when he says 'We don't want people cutting goats and sheep and all that in their yard'. Although he does not elaborate on this topic other than to say 'it's not a nice thing to look at,' he seems to be indicating that he finds these practices uncivilised or backward. In the second part of the excerpt, Marvin goes on to say that he does not want to live amongst Indians because he would be opposed to the outward display of their religious beliefs ('flags', 'bamboo poles'). While Marvin says that these practices would lead to a misguidance of the Wentworth (Catholic or Christian) youth, he also seems to be calling Indian faith backward.

Minimally, the data presented in this chapter illustrates the pervasiveness of harmful racial frameworks in the Wentworth community. However, the discourse that emerged in the interviews with low-income residents in particular revealed a worrying lack of social harmony across non-white race groups, which is manifesting in a heightened sense of economic marginalisation and relative deprivation in the face of scarce resources, as well as an aversion to desegregation. On the other hand, the middle-class Treasure Beach respondents tended to describe post-apartheid society more positively, admitting that inequalities persist, but that these will be corrected with time and hard work.

5. Discussion of Findings

‘We cannot combat race prejudice by proving that it is wrong. The reason for this is that race prejudice is only a symptom of a materialistic social fact... Our proof accomplishes nothing. The white man’s ideas about his racial superiority are deeply rooted in the social system; and it can be corrected only by overthrowing the system itself’ (Cox, 1944: 452).

Since democracy, the South African government has made significant advances in terms of addressing the human rights atrocities of the past and acknowledging current inequities by, firstly, undergoing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission process, and later by implementing a range policies and initiatives in response to the continuing development challenges faced by historically disadvantaged African, Coloured, and Indian communities. Promising developments of the democratic era include the adoption of one of the most progressive constitutions in the world, the creation of a multi-racial middle-class, and the ongoing national discourse regarding the importance of nation-building, multiculturalism, and national reconciliation.

The research findings do however suggest that fifteen years into democracy, South African society remains largely divided along deep-seated social cleavages, which are witnessed along both racial and class lines. Whereas in the struggle against apartheid, South Africans of colour largely united under the ‘black’ banner to overthrow the illegitimate Nationalist Party regime, the post-1994 mentality represents a considerable shift. Today, low-income and working-class South Africans of colour are increasingly competing for scarce resources (e.g. low-skilled jobs, affordable housing, well-equipped public schools), which seem to exacerbate cultural and racial intolerance. These social cleavages, if left unaddressed, present the danger of counteracting the achievements of the liberation struggle.

In understanding participants’ reflections of ‘the Other’, it is useful to first look at how they reflect on themselves. The interview data does not support the notion of a universal Coloured identity or Coloured culture, but instead echoes Adhikari’s (2006) claim that in many ways, Coloured identity is defined by what it is *not* (Adhikari, 2006: 480). Although

Treasure Beach respondents were quick to discuss components of Wentworth culture, such as its religions and multicultural cuisine, they agreed that this culture was by no means universal and could not be extrapolated to apply to Coloureds beyond Durban. This lack of group identity was poignantly summarised by 'Barracks' resident Winona: '...We have no culture. We're just put out there to live, you know?'

Perhaps the most observable difference between the middle-class interviewees in Treasure Beach and their counterparts from low-income neighbourhoods is that the Treasure Beach residents were reluctant to participate in a group interview. There could be several explanations for this reluctance, but it is the opinion of this author that the hesitance of Treasure Beach residents to be interviewed with their neighbours is attributable to a decreased familiarity or lack of personal relationships amongst neighbours in that residential area. By contrast, in Wentworth's low-income areas, neighbours tend to share close (if not friendly) relationships, which may be characterised as networks of social support. These networks have long functioned as survival strategies for low-income families, where the specific areas of support include supervising each other's children, lending money, or sharing food with neighbours experiencing temporary need. This familial system of support is not unique to poor areas of Wentworth⁹¹, however it serves as a powerful reminder of the compromised, vulnerable situations that many Wentworth residents find themselves in, and also presents an interesting juxtaposition to the financially secure, independent lifestyles of the Treasure Beach residents.

The question of how participants describe and relate to their *own* Coloured identity is an important one, as it helps the researcher understand where the speaker is situated in the narrative they create through the interview. Perhaps not surprisingly, the research findings show that participants' responses to this topic were largely influenced by their socio-economic status. When asked to discuss what 'Colouredness' means to them, the low-income participants were generally very eager to share their feelings, vulnerabilities, and opinions, even when doing so was obviously difficult for them. When presented with the

⁹¹ This practice is in fact observed in poor areas throughout South Africa.

same question, the Treasure Beach interviewees were far less prone to divulge personal information, and instead focused their answers on religion, food, music, fashion, and 'cultural' activities like braiding and dancing. Again, the reason for this difference is not precisely clear, although it is possible that the Treasure Beach participants, as university graduates and professionals, interpreted the question of Coloured identity in a purely academic framework, especially in the context of being interviewed by a white, foreign academic. Regardless of how respondents interpreted the question of 'Colouredness', however, it is apparent that the low-income interviewees see their marginalisation as an integral part of whom they represent as Coloured South Africans, while the middle-class respondents did not express feeling this way.

A second, related aspect of these findings show that despite an outward image of apathy or indifference that many low-income participants may project, their lifestyles are in fact highly *reactive* in the sense that they find themselves continuously adapting to erratic life circumstances. This reactive lifestyle or personality was most evident in the testimony the young 'Woodstock' residents, who described a need to 'wear a brave face' and maintain a 'tough' outward attitude as they 'fight for each day.' These statements suggest that the projection of a 'thuggish' or indifferent image is part of a common coping strategy. Indeed, the culture of violence in Wentworth is long-lived; the township was notorious for gang wars in the 1980s and 1990s, and today Wentworth Hospital continues to treat an inordinate number of victims of violence. The exact origins of Wentworth's cycle of violence is not for this research to decide, yet the reactive lifestyle outlined above draws obvious parallels to Fanon's 'colonised personality', where prolonged, dehumanising repression of a group generates anger, identity crises, and may ultimately result in displays of violence. This conclusion is supported by Jack's observation that Coloureds drink excessively and behave violently because 'there's something in them that hasn't been put

to use. It's a worm in their mind that keeps on waking them up at night, and they can't find answers.'⁹²

With regards to participants' reflections on 'the Other', the interview discourse clearly shows that respondents are, to varying degrees, repeating the hierarchical racial framework adopted from European colonisers. This was most observable in participant's strict adherence to the colonial racial labels of 'white,' 'African,' 'Indian,' and 'Coloured.' In this regard, 'whiteness' was generally conveyed as ideal (e.g. physically beautiful, intellectually advanced, civilised, etc.), while 'blackness' often invoked associations with danger, intellectual inferiority, sexual deviance, and backwardness. In fact, race and race-related labels were the primary descriptive instruments used by participants when describing another person (e.g. 'African', 'Indian', 'dark'/'fair', 'coarse hair'/'straight hair', etc.). The use of negative stereotypes toward other non-white groups was also common amongst participants, as were other social differentiators such as 'us' versus 'they', a testimony to the continuing influence of the colonial mindset on South Africans' social perspectives.

As hypothesised in Chapter 1, the findings confirm that socioeconomic status may be the greatest determinant of one's racial and social attitudes. For example, whereas the working class respondents clearly conveyed a perception of 'racial threat' from Africans (and to a lesser extent, Indians), the Treasure Beach interviewees were more likely to distance themselves from or problematise the use of racial stereotypes. The exception to the rule was a concept of African criminality, which nearly all participants invoked. Interestingly, these views on African criminality were also expressed differently across interview groups, where low-income respondents voiced much more concern about sexual assault and sexual deviance of Africans than their middle class counterparts.

⁹² To be clear, in exploring the life experience or suffering of disadvantaged residents, my intention is not to characterise them as inherently vulnerable, weak, or lacking agency. On the contrary, I believe these interviewees display strong character, effective social networks, and incredible bravery and stoicism.

The interview data suggests that participants' relationships with Indians are far less strained than their relationships with Africans. While nearly all household informants (with Belinda as the exception) engaged in some level racial stereotypes of Indians, these seemed to be primarily reflective of current economic conditions (e.g. job competition), and to a lesser degree, political resentment dating back to the apartheid era, when Indians were perceived as being opportunists. To be clear, in contrast with Africans, Indians were never characterised as dangerous, intellectually incompetent, or uncivilised⁹³. Ultimately, it seems that in constructing and maintaining these group perceptions of what 'African' or 'Indian' identity means, participants may be simultaneously carving out a *positive* identity for themselves (e.g. 'This is what I am not').

The social disjuncture revealed in the fieldwork interviews is of course corroborated by recent sociological research, which has shown that in the post-1994 environment, non-white South Africans have increasingly embraced specified racial identities (e.g. 'Coloured', 'African', 'Indian'), suggesting a significant departure from the struggle-era identity as collectively 'black' (Duncan, 2003). Wicomb has described this as a divisive shift in mentality, which limits efforts for national reconciliation (Wicomb, 1998). The 'problem of identity', Wicomb says, 'destabilizes the post-apartheid tale of national unity, because the new democratic society is reliant upon the previous structures of apartheid' (social, economic, epistemological), and 'thus it is axiomatic that different groups created by the old system do not participate equally in the category of postcoloniality' (Wicomb, 1998: 95).

While the racist colonial mindset apparently continues to influence many Coloured South Africans, the interview findings suggest that negative racial attitudes have been further enflamed in the post-apartheid context by factors such as unemployment, poverty, a common perception of government corruption and cronyism, and the threat of crime, especially violent crime. Importantly, the interview discourse suggests that working-class Wentworth residents in particular tend to view ANC corruption as the root cause for the

⁹³ Marvin, a 24-year-old male from the Ogle Road flats, was the only respondent who suggested a backwardness of Indians.

high rate of Coloured unemployment (i.e. unfair implementation of affirmative action policies), and also seem to perceive the ANC as complicit to some degree in African-perpetrated crime. Here it is crucial to acknowledge that many interviewees view the ANC as both African-led and African-centred, which seems to result in some participants' political frustration being transferred to the greater African population in South Africa.

Finally, turning to a way forward for interracial reconciliation in South Africa, the differences between the low-income and middle-class respondents' testimonies cannot be overly stressed. Although the majority of interviewees agreed that a meaningful reconciliation would necessarily entail increased employment opportunities for Coloureds and a crackdown on crime, this is where the similarities end.

Because the Treasure Beach interviewees generally described a less critical view of the post-1994 environment, it is not surprising that they would perceive the government-led national reconciliation project more favourably than their working-class counterparts. Here Belinda offers her views on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, as well as post-apartheid society more generally.

Belinda: I think the TRC did a lot for our country in terms of healing, although I don't think you can ever heal all wounds. And the TRC was a nice opportunity for at least a good percentage of the people that were carrying enormous emotional baggage to let go of some of those things...There are obviously still some negative aspects, but I think life has really opened up. I think people are not so hung up about the race issue. There will always be that smaller percentage who still hold a bit of baggage, but in essence, don't we all?

Belinda's account of the TRC presents an interesting contrast to the interviews of low-income residents who were either largely unfamiliar with the TRC, or were more critical of the TRC process and outcomes. For example, Lyle, a 30-something professional from the Ogle Road flats, dismissed the TRC as pretence because it 'benefited *some* political terrorists...*black* political terrorists, and not white political terrorists.'

When asked to engage on the topic of what reconciliation would mean for them, the Treasure Beach participants focused primarily on government interventions to promote multicultural tolerance, especially where these would target South African youth. Belinda and Wade both suggested active desegregation of schools and residential areas as strategies for government to consider. Wanda and Candace both indicated that although targeted youth programs would be useful, the progress of interracial reconciliation is ultimately determined by the roles that parents choose to take in educating their children about social issues.

Conversely, when posed with the same question, residents of the 'Barracks', 'Woodstock' and Ogle Road neighbourhoods were very unambiguous in stating their preference that Wentworth should remain a primarily Coloured community and that minimally, Coloured residents should retain first-priority access to Wentworth community resources (e.g. cemeteries, hospital, and the local schools).

The differences between the low-income and middle class participants' perspectives on reconciliation highlight a critical insight about the nature of the problem in the 'new' South Africa: class trumps 'race'. While many working class people of colour may continue to hold some special allegiance to their racial group, racial identity and racial 'loyalties' seem to be decreasing in importance to those South Africans who have ascended to the middle class. Although still living in Wentworth proper, the Treasure Beach interviewees to some degree appear to be out of touch with the plight of the poor, working class in Wentworth. This raises the decisive question of what the ramifications will be as the townships gradually desegregate and the middle class eventually relocates to more affluent areas: Will working class South Africans of colour 'invent a way of living together'⁹⁴? Only time will tell.

⁹⁴ (Martin, 2001: 249)

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1. Winona
2. Johanna
3. Dolores
4. Sophia
5. Roger

Focus Group 2: 'Woodstock'

1. Linette
2. Della
3. Ruby
4. T

6.1.2. *Household Interviews*

1. Marvin, Ogle Road flats
2. Jack, Ogle Road flats
3. Clifford, Ogle Road flats
4. Wade, Treasure Beach
5. Candace, Treasure Beach
6. Wanda, Treasure Beach
7. Belinda, Treasure Beach

6.1.3. *Interviews with Community Leaders*

1. Aubrey Snyman, *local ward councillor*
2. Catherine Gordimer, *Wentworth Development Forum*
3. Derrick McBride, *veteran activist*
4. Anonymous respondent, *Durban Children's Society*
5. Anonymous respondent, *Wentworth Community Policing Forum*

⁹⁵ Names in inverted commas are pseudonyms.

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7. Appendices

Appendix A: List of Acronyms

| | |
|--------|---|
| ANC | African National Congress |
| AZAPO | Azanian People's Organisation |
| ASGISA | Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative-South Africa |
| BEE | Black Economic Empowerment |
| CBO | Community-Based Organisation |
| CA | Conversation Analysis |
| CDA | Critical Discourse Analysis |
| CEIWU | Chemical, Engineering and Industrial Workers' Union |
| DCS | Durban Children's Society |
| FGI | Focus Group Interview |
| GEAR | Growth Employment and Redistribution |
| GNU | Government of National Unity |
| KWB | Kleurling Weerstand Beweging |
| KZN | KwaZulu-Natal |
| LFS | Labour Force Survey |
| NGO | Non-Governmental Organisation |
| NP | Nationalist Party |
| NUMSA | National Union of Metal Workers in South Africa |
| RDP | Reconstruction and Development Programme |
| PDI | Previously Disadvantaged Individual |
| SACP | South African Communist Party |
| SAIRR | South African Institute of Race Relations |
| SAMWU | South African Metal Workers Union |
| SPREF | South African Petroleum Refinery |
| SDCEA | South Durban Community Environmental Alliance |
| SoDS | School of Development Studies |
| SSA | Statistics South Africa |
| TRC | Truth and Reconciliation Commission |
| UKZN | University of KwaZulu Natal |
| WAAC | Wentworth AIDS Action Campaign |
| WDF | Wentworth Development Forum |
| WHOC | We Help Our Children |
| WOL | Wings of Love |
| WOW | Women of Wentworth |

Appendix B: Letter of Invitation to Residents

Dear Resident,

Would you be interested in discussing your views about Coloured identity and living conditions in democratic South Africa? I am an American currently studying for my Masters degree in Development Studies at the University of KwaZulu-Natal in Durban. My experience living in Wentworth has made me very interested in the way Coloured people feel about their role in the 'new' South Africa, and especially their experiences with the changing race relations in the country. As part of my research, I would like to hold small group discussions with Wentworth residents in which we would discuss:

- Your background
- Your experiences living in Wentworth
- What does being 'Coloured' mean to you?
- Your thoughts on how life has changed since democracy, and
- Your opinions about race relations since 1994

To address these questions for my research, I will be scheduling group discussions with residents in April 2007. These discussions may last 1 to 2 hours, and will be arranged at a time and place that the group is comfortable with. I am also willing to speak with you individually if you are not comfortable discussing these issues with a group.

Important:

This research is solely for academic purpose and will not be used for any commercial purpose.

There is no commitment from you, and you may choose to withdraw from the project or end the discussion at any time.

Your participation is fully anonymous. Your name will not appear in my research report.

I understand that this may not be an easy favour, but I believe that 'Coloured' communities in Durban are under-researched, and your participation would help bridge crucial research gaps between previous projects about Coloured life. Having lived in Wentworth for nearly a year, I also know that community members are eager to discuss their perceptions about the new South African society, even if you have not had the chance to sit down for a formal group discussion before.

If you know anyone else who might want to participate (including others in your household or extended family), please pass this on to them as well. Participants must be 18 years and older.

Please phone, sms or e-mail me if you would like to participate, or have any questions about my project.

Regards,
Briana Meadows

Postal Address: 55 Beaunior Avenue, Wentworth, Durban 4052

Email address: meadows@riseup.net

Telephone: 084 529 6181

Appendix C: Schedule of Interview Questions

For the record, please state:

- Name (Community Representatives)/Pseudonym
- Age, and
- How long have you lived in Wentworth

I. Coloured Identity

- Q: Under colonial and apartheid-era South Africa, people of your background were named “Coloured”. What is your reaction to the word “Coloured” today? Do you still see yourselves this way, or would you like to move beyond the old racial categories somehow?
- Q: How would you describe a Coloured person? Feel free to list anything that comes to mind.
- Q: Do you think there is such a thing as a ‘Coloured identity’? For example, do all Coloureds in Wentworth have something in common? Do they have something in common with folks from Sydenham or Newlands, or even Coloured folks in the Western Cape? In other words, is there a Coloured culture that you can describe?
- Q: What makes Coloureds different from other racial groups in South Africa? Are there any social or political differences between these groups? If there are differences, would you say that these differences are natural (like, occurring since the we are born), or might South African history and politics shaped you this way?

II. Politics of the ‘new’ South Africa

- Q: Do you belong to any particular political party? Would you mind sharing your voting history with me?
- Q: How do you feel your life has changed since 1994? Has your living conditions or status changed significantly? What might be the causes of these changes?
- Q: Since the transition to democracy, the SA government has issued a lot of statements about the need for “national reconciliation”. Can you think of anything the government has done to achieve this goal, and have these been successful? What do you think the government could (or should) do to achieve this goal?
- Q: What would you name as your major community development challenges in Wentworth? Do you feel like you have the power to make the changes you want to see in your community, and in the South African government more generally?
- Q: So we’ve been talking a little about the problems facing your community—do you see the problems facing Wentworth’s development as being similar to the problems faced in, say, Indian or African communities? Do you think that you all generally have the same problems and want the same things?

- Q: How would you describe the relationships between previously disadvantaged South Africans today? Do you feel like 'African', 'Coloured' and 'Indian' communities live harmoniously? Do they share power appropriately? Respect each others' cultures?
- Q: Many Coloured people, like whites, are now leaving South Africa in increasing numbers. How do you explain this, and have you ever thought of doing so?
- Q: We have spoken about a lot of the challenges you and your community have faced, but how do you expect your future to look? Do you feel optimistic that things will change for the better?

III. Race Construction & Perpetuation

- Q: Now we're going to shift topics a little bit. I want you to try to remember where you first learned about 'race'...Maybe it was from your parents, maybe it was at school. I want you to tell me about how race was explained to you, and what you learned.
- Q: Do you think you have played a part in teaching others about race? How would you educate your own child on this matter?
- Q: Do you think that racism is perceived as a problem in Wentworth? Is it something that ever comes up in your day-to-day conversations with neighbours, friends and family?
- Q: How do you think the attitudes of younger generations compare with those of the older generations who spent their formative years living under colonialism and apartheid?
- Q: In the last 15 years, there have been more Africans in Wentworth. Some have moved here, others have sent their children to school here, others use the recreational facilities, and the like. How do you feel about this?

Appendix D: Terminology

- Aunty** n. term of respect for older women
Bali n. an old man
Block n. one thousand Rands
Boss n. term of respect; husband
Bra n. friend (also, “bru”)
Braino n. *also Bruin-o.* a “Coloured” person
Buckled adj. married
Button n. Mandrex, a designer narcotic
Charro n. a person of Indian origin
Cherry n. a girl or woman
Clip n. one hundred Rands
Dagga n. marijuana
Dalla v. (Zulu) to make or create
Darkie n. a person of indigenous African origins
Dizzy adj. Confused; dumb
Dop n. an alcoholic beverage; v. to consume an alcoholic beverage
Doss v. to sleep
Durban Poison n. marijuana (see *dagga*)
Ek se (Afrikaans) literally, “I say”
Fro n. (Afrikaans) wife
Graaf n. (Afriakkans) a job or duty
Gwayi n. (Zulu) a cigarette
Gulley n. ‘hood
Icki n. designer drug MDMA; also known as ecstasy
Jol n. a club; v. to date casually, or to cheat on one’s partner
Jwayela v. (Zulu) to take advantage
Jux v. Sexually excited
Larney n. a wealthy man
Lekker adj. (Afrikaans) nice; pleasant
Laaitle n. (Afrikaans) a child; a younger person
Ma n. mother; an attractive young lady
Ma n. grandmother
Mammu n. *derogatory* ‘Indian’
Marcher n. money
Muthi n. (Zulu) medicine; also, black magic
O n. a man or boyfriend
Poke v. to stab
Possie n. home
Raw adj. Uncouth or uncivilized; lacking social grace
Red adj. Sexually excited; angry
Rock n. crack cocaine
Skeifie v. a pull on a cigarette

Stekkie *n.* a girl or woman

Tik *n.* designer drug crystal methamphetamine

Tune *v.* to talk

Twa *adj.* pregnant

'Up the pole' pregnant

Vito *n.* a white person (abbr.: vit)

Vy *v.* to go

Appendix E: Demographic Breakdown of Participants

Table II: Focus Group and Interview Participants: Gender, Age, Location

| No. | Name* | Gender | Age** | Location |
|-----|---|--------|-------|-----------------|
| 1. | Marvin | Male | 24 | Ogle Road Flats |
| 2. | Winona | Female | 40 | Barracks |
| 3. | Johanna | Female | 60 | Barracks |
| 4. | Dolores | Female | 50 | Barracks |
| 5. | Sophia | Female | 60 | Barracks |
| 6. | Roger | Male | 45 | Barracks |
| 7. | Linette | Female | 27 | Woodstock |
| 8. | Della | Female | 27 | Woodstock |
| 9. | Ruby | Female | 25 | Woodstock |
| 10. | T | Male | 28 | Woodstock |
| 11. | Jack | Male | 60 | Ogle Road Flats |
| 12. | Wade | Male | 28 | Treasure Beach |
| 13. | Clifford | Male | 30 | Ogle Road Flats |
| 14. | Lyle | Male | 30 | Ogle Road Flats |
| 15. | Glenda | Female | 50 | Treasure Beach |
| 16. | Camden | Female | 23 | Treasure Beach |
| 17. | Belinda | Female | 34 | Treasure Beach |
| 18. | Ward Councillor Aubrey Snyman | Male | 50 | - |
| 19. | Catherine Gordimer | Female | - | - |
| 20. | Derrick McBride | Male | 70 | - |
| 21. | Police Forum Representative | Female | - | - |
| 22. | Representative from Durban Children's Society | Female | 45 | - |

*Real names were only used in those cases that interviewees *chose* to speak in their capacity as 'community representatives'.

**Some ages listed are estimates

SUNDAY TRIBUNE PERSPECTIVES MAY 21 2000 5

tribletter@nn.independent.co.za

† PARKER
VECTOR



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Coloured people are still losing out

As a 45-year-old unemployed South African, I cannot help but notice that available jobs are going mainly to blacks, Indians and whites. This is very sad because coloureds were also part of the oppressed masses. We also received inferior education and now we are being sidelined.

Is this real democracy? My people are losing their jobs and being replaced by Indians and blacks. This is a serious issue and has to be addressed.

Many of my people have white surnames and because of

this we can't get work. Affirmative action is definitely not working. Sad to say nepotism, favouritism, racial discrimination and partiality are still rife in this so called new South Africa.

Many of my people left this country because of apartheid, and have not returned.

I don't really blame them. Why should they? Apartheid is now working in reverse.

In KwaZulu-Natal, provincial minister Sbu Ndebele wants to raise a monument in honour of the Indians.

What a waste of taxpayers' money Coloured people are getting evicted from their homes in Newlands East and Wentworth because of the high rate of unemployment in these areas.

I want to know what the national government is doing about this. It promised jobs, housing, and a better life for all South Africans.

Six years down the line nothing has changed.

In fact, the situation has got worse.

REL
Redhili

Appendix G: Op-Ed Articles (continued)

Dispatch Online, 1 April 2005

“Race still rules”

BEING a 17-year-old scholar, I have noticed that racism is still in our country.

If it has been 10 years of democracy, then why do we have to say what race we are at school for government purposes?

If we apply for employment, why do we state what race we are? We should rather be judged on the ability we have to succeed.

There have recently been two Hansa Pilsner advertisements screened on television, one where a white male says "I hate being white," and he explains the reasons for his statement. The second, also Hansa Pilsner, shows a black male who says "I hate being black."

After viewing both, I started thinking to myself: "I hate being coloured, if it means I will be discriminated against and be told that I am a mixed-breed, I hate being coloured if we are later going to be known as an extinct race."

What about us, if this country is ruled by two race groups?

Another advert on SABC 1 says: "Take another look at Mzansi."

It shows South Africa during the apartheid era, but with a twist. The white people have traded places with the black people.

The problem is that we as coloured people were also affected during apartheid, and we also suffered. If this is the new South Africa in 2005, what will it be like in 2015? Will there be an us?

- Enrico Smith, *Buffalo Flats*

Appendix H: Summary of previous works on Coloured Identity

| Year | Theorist | Relevant works |
|--------------|--------------|--|
| 1927 | MacMillian | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Cape Colour Question |
| 1956 | Mann | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Problem of the Marginal Personality |
| 1957 | Marais | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Cape Coloured People 1652-1937 |
| 1964 | Dickie-Clark | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Marginal Situation: A Sociological Study of the Coloured Group |
| 1970s-1980s | Van der Ross | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Myths and Attitudes: An Inside Look at the Coloured People • The Rise and Decline of Apartheid: A Study of Political Movements Among the Coloured People of South Africa 1880-1985 |
| 1987- | Goldin | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making Race: The Politics and Economics of Coloured Identity in South Africa |
| 1990 | du Pre | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Separate but Unequal: the Coloured People of South Africa: A Political History |
| 1990-present | Adhikari | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Between Black and White: the History of Coloured Politics in SA • Not White Enough, Not Black Enough: Racial Identity in the South African Coloured Community • Hope, Fear, Shame, Frustration: Continuity and Change in the Expression of Coloured Identity in White Supremacist South Africa 1910-1994 |
| 1996 | James | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Now that we are Free: Coloured Communities in a Democratic South Africa |
| 1998 | Wicomb | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shame and Identity: The Case of the Coloured in South Africa |
| 2000-present | Chari | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political Work: the Holy Spirit and the Labours of Activism in the Shadows of Durban's Refineries • Political Work: Mobilization and Negotiation in the Shadows of Durban's Refineries • Post-apartheid livelihood struggles in Wentworth, South Durban |
| 2000 | Erasmus | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coloured by History, Shaped by Place: New Perspectives on Coloured Identities in Cape Town |
| 2000 - | Farred | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where does the Rainbow Nation End? Colouredness and Citizenship in post-apartheid South Africa • The Black Intellectual's Work is Never Done: A Critique of the Discourse of Reconciliation in South Africa |
| 2005 | Muzondidya | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walking a Tightrope: Towards a Social History of the Coloured Community of Zimbabwe |