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PERCEPTIONS OF CLASS
AND INCOME IN POST-APARTHEID
CAPE TOWN

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Perceptions of Class and Income in Post-Apartheid Cape Town

Abstract

The renaissance of studies of class in post-apartheid South Africa has not produced any certainty as to the optimal delineation of classes in empirical analysis. This paper uses data from a 2005 survey in Cape Town to examine the relationships between occupational (or objective) class, self-reported (or subjective) class, race, neighbourhood income and household income. Cape Town is not an industrial city, and thus has small working classes, but (like all South African cities) it does have high unemployment. There are clear relationships between race, education and occupational class (unsurprisingly, given the history of apartheid). The relationships between occupational class, incomes and self-reported class are less clear. The paper concludes with a preliminary analysis of some of the possible consequences of class, in terms of perceptions of the social structure and of government policy, and of racial identities and attitudes.

The promising future of class analysis in South Africa

In the late apartheid period class was the dominant concept in South African social science. Most of the research using class examined its consequences, using class analysis in a loose way to explain broader political conflict and change. Some of this research was highly structuralist (and often functionalist), focusing on the broad dynamics of capitalism and its supposed consequences for governance. Most focused, however, on the nuances of organization, protest and consciousness at the local level, examining how the major changes in the political economy transformed the lives of ordinary people, and how they in turn responded, shaping broader processes of change. Reviews of South African history and social science in the 1970s and 1980s typically focus on the contrast – and intermittent conflict – between these two approaches (see Morris, 1987; Keegan, 1989; Bozzoli and Delius, 1990).

Despite the hegemony of class analysis (in its different forms) in the 1970s and 1980s, there was little systematic, empirical research *on* class, i.e. into the size and shape of the class structure, the foundations of class in the South African context, or the relationship between class and culture. Earlier attempts to map the class structure were bedevilled primarily by their reliance on the very poor data available in population censuses (Davies, 1973, 1979; Wolpe, 1977). Crankshaw's careful analysis (1997) of data from manpower surveys allowed an incisive analysis of aspects of the occupational class structure in the mid-apartheid period, but the data excluded major occupations and did not permit an analysis of households. Class analysis was constructed out of qualitative research, including studies of specific episodes of resistance and even individuals' life narratives. This meant that South African class analysis had a deep appreciation of the kinds of issues embraced within Bourdieu's concept of 'habitus', including especially the complex dynamics between race, gender and class. But it had little understanding of the class structure of South Africa, or of the aggregate class categories that are useful or appropriate in the study of South African society in the late Twentieth Century.

Concern with class fell out of the intellectual tool-kit of South African social scientists very quickly once negotiations began, in the early 1990s, over the precise form of the new constitutional democracy. This was not because scholars demonstrated the irrelevance of class in a democratic South Africa. Social, economic and political life in other capitalist democracies demands class analysis no less than life in undemocratic capitalist countries. If this was not the case, then class analysis – whether Marxist or non-Marxist – would not have survived the adoption of a universal adult franchise in the advanced capitalist countries of the global North in the early twentieth century. Rather, it seems to reflect the difficulties of reconciling a critical, class-oriented analysis with the new emphasis among 'progressive' scholars with public policy-making.

In the early 2000s, however, there are signs of a revival of interest in class analysis. This has been fuelled by two developments. First, from mid-1990s, household survey data has become readily available, allowing more comprehensive analyses of class.¹ In *Class, Race and Inequality in South Africa*, written with Nicoli Nattrass, I analysed the South African class structure at the end of apartheid, using data from a 1993 household survey (Seekings and Nattrass, 2005). One of our concerns in the book was to analyse social stratification within the African population. An aspect of this is the size and growth of the African 'middle classes', which has attracted attention from other scholars also (Schlemmer, 2005; Muller,

¹ One of the first such studies was of the class structure of Durban (Morris and Hindson, 1996).

2006a, 2006b). Peter Alexander and colleagues at the University of Johannesburg are currently conducting innovative research in Soweto, combining quantitative and qualitative data.

The empirical study of class in South Africa might still be in its infancy, but it has the availability of a strong empirical base means that class analysis has a 'promising future' (as Goldthorpe famously remarked, about the advanced capitalist societies of the global North). What makes the future of class analysis in South Africa especially promising is that the new possibilities of empirical class analysis can be combined with a rich tradition of historical and sociological work on 'habitus'. This means that South African scholarship has the potential to escape the confines of 'Northern' class analysis – i.e. the traditions of class analysis derived from the study of, principally, Britain (where industrial capitalism first emerged on a large scale) or, to a lesser extent, North-West Europe and North America. As South African historians have long known, processes of class formation in Southern Africa – i.e. the making of the Southern African 'working classes' (and other classes) – have been very different to the world portrayed by E.P.Thompson and others for late eighteenth and nineteenth century Britain.

Identifying the relevant categories for mapping class in a society like South Africa is no easy process, and will require a mix of qualitative and quantitative research. This paper does not do this, and thus entails a limited contribution to this project. What this paper does is use a new quantitative dataset from Cape Town to begin to examine the relationships between occupational (or what might be called objective) class, self-reported (or subjective) class, income (at both household and neighbourhood levels), and race.

It builds on the 'objective' class schema set out in *Class, Race and Inequality*. This class schema distinguishes not only between the owners (or managers) of capital and the rest of the working population, but also between different sections of the non-capitalist working population, and between classes defined by their access to the labour market and an underclass defined by its systematic exclusion from it. Our ten-class schema (which could be reduced to three clusters of classes, see Figure 1) was provisional. It satisfied weak versions of the tests of 'internal' (or criterion) validity (i.e. it has coherent theoretical foundations) and 'external' (or 'construct') validity (i.e. it has observable consequences) (see Seekings and Natrass, 2005: ch.7). But the schema would need to satisfy stronger tests of both forms of validity if it was to be truly compelling.

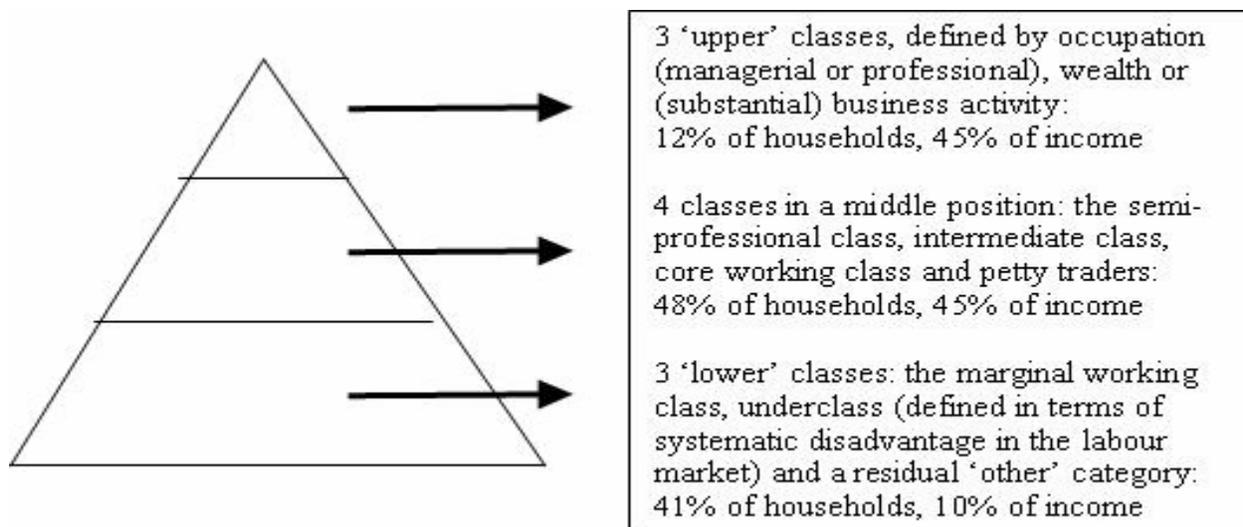


Figure 1: The Class Structure of South Africa

Studies of the South African 'middle class' offer competing understandings of what counts as 'middle class' in the South African context. Schlemmer (2005) applies an American conception of the 'middle class', but tailored for the South African context. He identifies the 'middle class' on the basis of education, occupation and 'LSM', i.e. the composite measure of income and household assets that is used in the advertising industry's All Media Product Survey (AMPS). His is a very restricted definition of a 'middle class', including only about 6 percent of all working people. He excludes households (or 'families', as he writes) who are not in LSMs 9 and 10, and thus had (in 2003) incomes below R12,000 p.a.. Although they might not be poor,

'they have constrained household budgets, their discretionary spending is limited, and they have to expose themselves to considerable debt in order to acquire the accoutrements of a middle-class lifestyle. They are marginal to the core of the middle class and hence this study excludes them. They are a sociologically distinct "lower middle" class.' (*ibid*: 118)

Teachers, for example, are thereby excluded from Schlemmer's 'middle class'. Muller (2006a, 2006b), in contrast, uses a more expansive concept of the middle class, divided into an upper middle class (comprising technicians and associate professionals such as teachers and nurses) and a lower middle class (of clerks and artisans). Whereas Schlemmer's middle class is really the elite, Muller's middle class is in the middle between a sizeable 'upper class' – comprising managers,

senior officials and professionals – and the working classes. Muller’s middle class is much larger and less affluent than Schlemmer’s.

The contrast between Schlemmer and Muller highlights the important point that there is no unique and clearly ‘correct’ class schema for South Africa. Much more work needs to be done on the strengths and weaknesses of alternative schema.

This paper begins to explore aspects of class in one South African city, Cape Town. It uses data from the 2005 Cape Area Study (CAS). This survey covered aspects of diversity and inequality. It was designed as both part of an ongoing study of Cape Town (that includes a series of surveys) and part of an international, multi-city study of aspects of urban life. The 2005 CAS was funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation as part of its grant to establish the Centre for Social Science Research at the University of Cape Town. Face-to-face interviews were conducted with a representative sample of about 1200 individuals in 65 enumeration areas. Fieldwork was conducted in African areas by a UCT-based team of Xhosa-speaking fieldworkers and in coloured and white areas by Citizen Surveys. Interviews were conducted in the interviewees’ preferred language. As with (probably) all surveys in South Africa, the sample in richer neighbourhoods, i.e. comprising mostly white people, cannot be considered to be reliably representative, because of low access and response rates (see further Seekings *et al.*, 2005).

Class in Cape Town

The city of Cape Town is not typical of South Africa as a whole in terms of its social structure. It is most obviously distinctive in terms of its racial composition and cultural character. Not only do African people comprise a minority of the city’s population, but until recently they comprised a tiny minority. As recently as the 1970s, 90 percent of Cape Town’s population was white or coloured. Given the cultural differences between white and coloured people, on the one hand, and African people, on the other, Cape Town has a distinctive cultural character.

The social structure of Cape Town is not the same as that of South Africa as a whole. Cape Town’s poor are not poor in national terms. Nor are all of the classes identified in Figure 1 present in similar proportions in Cape Town, as we shall see further below. Cape Town also has a markedly different racial and cultural structure to the rest of the country, and there is a distinctive and substantial overlap between race and class: the African minority is overwhelmingly poor, and the white

minority is overwhelmingly affluent, although the coloured population spans the range from poor to rich. This makes it difficult often to distinguish between the effects of race and class.

Our analysis of class in Cape Town remains very preliminary. Data from the 2005 Cape Area Study (CAS) allows for the classification of households, but so far we have only coded the data for respondents themselves, not for other members of their households. This means that we have ‘direct’ class positions for some of our respondents – i.e. those respondents who are in the labour force, and have occupations or are unemployed – but not ‘mediated’ class positions for the others (or for those respondents who do work or are unemployed, but are not the breadwinners in their households). Our measure of class is thus a measure of individual occupational class, with little attention to property and no measure of the systematic disadvantage entailed in the concept of the underclass.

Class	% of working people	% of people in the labour force	% of total
Upper class (UC)	16	11	8
Semi-professional class (SPS)	8	5	4
Intermediate class (IC)	44	31	22
Core working class (CWC)	18	13	9
Small businesses (WE3)	4	3	2
Marginal working class (MWC)	10	7	5
Unemployed		29	21
Not in labour force			30
Total	100	100	100
<u>Source:</u> CAS 2005, weighted data			

Table 1 shows the individual occupational classes of CAS respondents as proportions of working people, of all people in the labour force (i.e. excluding students, the retired and ‘housewives’ who are neither in nor want paid employment), and of the total sample. If our sample is representative, then Cape Town has a large upper class and intermediate class, and small core and marginal working classes. This is not surprising, given the weakness of the industrial sectors and the prominence of service sectors in Cape Town.

Table 2 shows some of the characteristics of the larger occupational classes. Unsurprisingly, white people predominate in the upper class. Coloured people form one half of the semi-professional, intermediate and core working classes – i.e. almost in exact proportion to their share of the population as a whole. African people feature disproportionately in the ranks of the marginal working class and unemployed. Women are more common in the semi-professional class (teachers and nurses) and the marginal working class (domestic workers). There is also a clear relationship between education and class.

		Occupational class					
		UC %	SPC %	IC %	CWC %	MWC %	Unemp- loyed %
Racial composition	African	3	12	17	37	62	53
	Coloured	32	49	49	48	32	39
	White	58	32	30	3	2	5
	Other	8	6	4	12	4	3
	Total	100	100	100	100	100	100
Gender	Male	66	41	59	62	22	41
	Female	34	59	42	37	76	59
	Total	100	100	100	100	100	100
Education	Not passed matric	10	9	44	65	84	73
	Passed matric	90	91	56	35	16	27
	Total	100	100	100	100	100	100
	Of which: Some post-matric education	74	66	30	14	4	15
<p>Note: Unemployed uses the broad definition, i.e. including non-searchers. Race is defined using apartheid-era classification; other includes Indian, 'other', 'refused' and 'don't know'.</p>							

Individual occupational class and household class will differ if the individual is not the breadwinner in the household *and* the breadwinner is in a different individual occupational class. We do know that three-quarters of the respondents who were, individually, in the upper class, semi-professional class, intermediate class and core working class, were the breadwinners in their households, so we know that there is a close (albeit inexact) relationship between individual and household class in most

of these cases. The proportion was lower among those people who were, individually, in the marginal working class, and among the unemployed it was less than one half. Many of the unemployed are not, therefore, members of the underclass, but are rather the unemployed, direct (i.e. co-resident) dependents of working people.

Neighbourhood income is an alternative measure of class, given that the advantages of higher class generally convert into both the capacity and the ambition to live in richer neighbourhoods. Neighbourhood income will be an unsatisfactory proxy for class in cases where neighbourhoods are heterogeneous in terms of their class composition (and probably therefore also in terms of income distribution). Whilst it is unlikely that manual labourers will be living in the same neighbourhoods as lawyers and managers, it is likely that there will be unemployed people – and even households in which no one is employed – in the same neighbourhoods as working-class and even perhaps middle class households.

Neighbourhood income is calculated on the basis of data on household incomes from the 2001 Population Census, at the level of the local government ward. Cape Town comprised, at that time, precisely one hundred wards. For each ward, the Population Census data can be used to calculate a mean household income. These means are then used in the analysis of data on political attitudes and behaviour from the 2005 CAS. This raises two further problems. First, relative incomes might have changed between 2001 and 2005. Secondly, the sampling units – or enumeration areas – used for CAS were much smaller than the wards for which we have mean household income data. On average, each ward comprises about fifty enumeration areas, so that it is possible that the mean household income in a ward is different to the mean household income in any particular enumeration area. CAS did ask about individual earnings and household incomes, but these data are also yet to be cleaned thoroughly, and in any case should be viewed with some caution.

The neighbourhoods included in the CAS sample can be divided into five neighbourhood income quintiles, using the Population Census data. Table 3 sets out some key characteristics of each quintile. Whilst (at least) 77 percent of the poorest quintile are African (or, to be more precise, report that they were or would have been classified as African under apartheid), only about 10 percent of the third, fourth and fifth quintiles are African. Conversely, almost no one in the three poorest quintiles was white. White people were concentrated in the two richest quintiles. Coloured people were spread across the entire range of income quintiles, but were concentrated especially in the second, third and fourth quintiles.

There are also clear differences between the neighbourhood income quintiles in terms of education levels and labour market status. In the poorest quintile, three out of four adults interviewed had not passed matric. In the richest quintile, the proportion was just 20 percent (and this might include some young men and women who are still in school). In the CAS sample, there were more unemployed than working adults in the poorest quintile, but in the richest quintile there were nine times as many working as unemployed adults.

Table 3: Selected characteristics of CAS realized sample in each neighbourhood income quintile, using weighted data

		Neighbourhood income quintile					Total %
		1 %	2 %	3 %	4 %	5 %	
Racial composition	African	77	40	10	9	11	31
	Coloured	15	54	83	60	7	42
	White	1	0	0	28	76	21
	Other	7	5	6	3	6	6
	Total	100	100	100	100	100	100
Education	Not passed matric	77	65	66	51	20	57
	Passed matric	23	35	34	49	80	43
	Total	100	100	100	100	100	100
	Of which: Some post-matric education	9	21	21	26	61	27
Labour market status	Working	35	47	55	58	63	51
	Unemployed	39	27	17	15	7	22
	Non-participants	27	26	27	27	29	27
	Total	100	100	100	100	100	100
Class	Upper class (UC)	<1	2	3	7	22	7
	Semi-professional class (SPS)	<1	4	3	8	5	4
	Intermediate class (IC)	11	19	26	23	20	19
	Core working class (CWC)	8	10	12	8	3	8
	Small businesses (WE3)	4	2	2	<1	2	2
	Marginal working class (MWC)	7	10	3	4	5	6
	Unemployed	37	24	19	15	6	21
	Other	33	29	31	34	38	33
	Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

Note: These are statistics on the weighted CAS sample, *not* of the Cape Town population; therefore, for example, the total racial composition above is not identical to the actual racial composition of Cape Town, according to census and other data. Race was defined as how the respondent reports he or she was or would have been classified under apartheid; ‘other’ includes Indian, ‘other’, ‘refused’, ‘don’t know’ and missing. Unemployed uses the broad definition, i.e. including non-searchers.

Table 3 also shows the composition of each neighbourhood income quintile by the occupational class of the respondents. There are a large number of ‘others’ in each quintile: these are respondents who neither worked nor were unemployed, i.e. they were studying, retired, or were ‘housewives’. Disregarding these ‘others’, there is a weak relationship between neighbourhood income quintile and individual class. In the top or richest quintile, three times as many respondents are in the upper class, semi-professional class or intermediate class, as are in the working classes or are unemployed. There are many more unemployed in poorer neighbourhoods. The core working class tends to live in middle-income neighbourhoods, whilst the marginal working class tends to live in poorer neighbourhoods. The intermediate class is, in Cape Town, a heterogeneous class, living in a wide range of neighbourhoods. Table 4 provides examples of an actual household in each quintile, drawn from CAS.

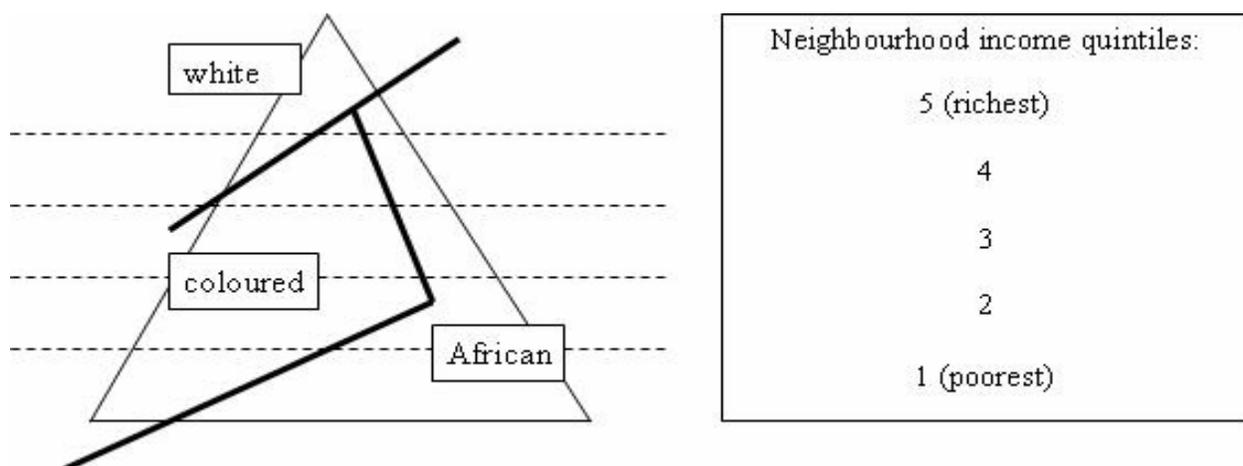


Figure 2: Race and neighbourhood income quintiles in Cape Town

The Cape Area Study did collect data on individual earnings and household incomes, but this data requires additional cleaning before it can be used with confidence and precision. Furthermore, given the difficulties in collating a full picture of earnings and income – the South African parastatal statistics office uses a very detailed income and expenditure survey – it is likely that the data will remain flawed, even when cleaned. Neighbourhood-level data might be a better measure of a household’s economic position and possibilities because it probably reflects wealth as well as current income.

Table 4 shows the relationship between neighbourhood income and self-reported household income. Table 4a shows the distribution inclusive of ‘refused’ and ‘don’t know’ responses. Table 4b shows the data net of these. Households in the richest

neighbourhoods (i.e. NIQ 5) report the highest incomes, and household in the poorest areas (NIQ 1 and NIQ 2) report the lowest, but there is little difference between the third and fourth neighbourhood income quintiles in terms of self-reported household incomes.

		Neighbourhood income quintile					Total %
		1 %	2 %	3 %	4 %	5 %	
Table 4a	0 – 1,000	34	21	9	8	0	15
	1,001 – 3,000	40	28	21	16	7	23
	3,001 – 5,000	16	19	23	18	13	18
	5,001 – 10,000	3	8	27	18	20	15
	> 10,000	1	1	5	6	30	8
	refused	2	13	8	25	19	13
	dont know	5	10	7	8	11	8
	total	100	100	100	100	100	100
Table 4b net of refusals and don't knows	0 – 1,000	37	27	11	12	1	19
	1,001 – 3,000	42	36	24	25	10	29
	3,001 – 5,000	17	25	27	27	18	22
	5,001 – 10,000	3	10	32	28	28	19
	> 10,000	1	2	6	9	43	11
	total	100	100	100	100	100	100

Numbers can only go so far in representing the groups of real people that comprise classes. Detailed qualitative research is required to go beyond these data on Cape Town – or, more precisely, on people in Cape Town. As a preliminary measure, however, individual cases can be extracted from the Cape Area Study to illustrate the kinds of people and households that fall into each of these neighbourhood income quintiles and classes. Eight examples are given in Table 5.

Table 5: Examples of households in CAS sample in each neighbourhood income quintile

Quintile	Example	Household class
1	Sipho Mamase (aged 49) lives in a shack in Philippi together with his wife and 5 year-old daughter. He has grade 6, and helps to deliver milk; she has been unemployed for years, but is still looking for work.	MWC
2	2A: Eunice Maseko lives with her elderly parents and brother in a brick house in Khayelitsha. She cleans offices; her brother is a security guard; both have matric. 2B: Wayne Platjje lives with his wife, two children, and unemployed brother in Bonteheuwel. Wayne's wife doesn't work, and he himself has a part-time job as a roofer.	CWC CWC?
3	3A: Cheryl Julies shares a house in Woodlands (Mitchell's Plain) with her elderly mother, her two children, and her sister. Her sister is the only person working; she is a machinist in a clothing factory. 3B: Mr and Mrs Abraham live in Macassar, outside the Strand; he works in a Pick 'n' Pay supermarket, and she is a buyer's assistant for a chain of clothes shops. They have one child.	CWC IC
4	4A: Sandy Jooste lives with her husband and 8 year-old daughter in Strandfontein. She is a teacher, but her husband is unemployed and looking for work. 4B: Archie Solomon is a mechanic, and his wife is a dressmaker. They live in Bothasig, together with her elderly mother.	SPC IC
5	Dave Reid lives with his wife and 23-year-old daughter in Claremont (in Cape Town's Southern Suburbs). Dave is an engineer, his wife is an accountant, and their daughter is in university.	UC
<u>Note:</u> These are pseudonymous examples from CAS 2005.		

Self-reported class

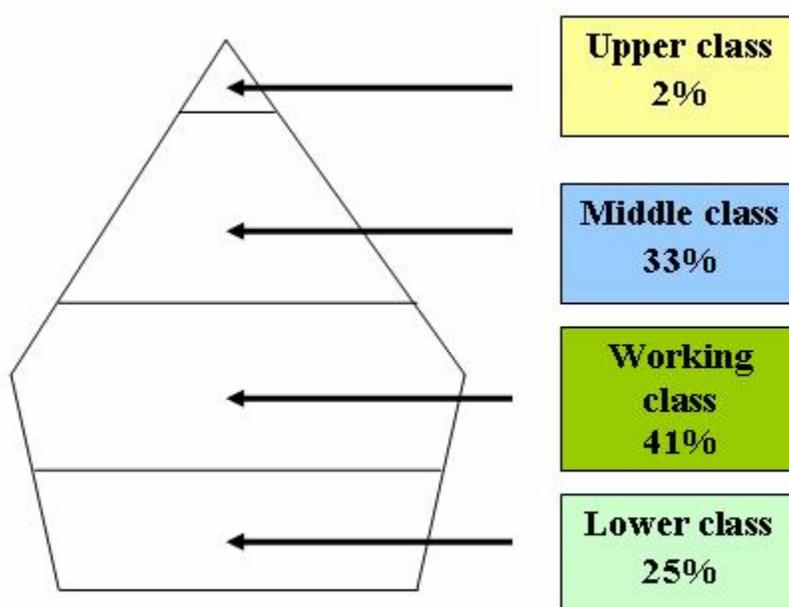
Objective and subjective class generally differ: Sociologists employ different systems of classification to a country's people themselves, although the two are likely to inform each other. The interviewees in CAS were asked about their class:

'People sometimes think of themselves as being in a class. Would you say that you are in the upper class, middle class, working class or lower class? *If respondent asks for a definition of class, say that "Class is defined in terms of what it means to you".*'

These options are not open-ended: interviewees could not choose to respond ‘proletarian’, for example. Nor do these ‘subjective’ options accord with the ‘objective’ categories employed in our ten-class schema. Our pre-survey tests suggested that they were categories with which people felt comfortable. Indeed, only 2 percent of respondents were unable or unwilling to select one of these four response options. It must be noted that respondents were interviewed in their homes, not at their workplaces; had they been interviewed at work, they might have chosen different responses, i.e. self-reported class might be conditional on the context in which the interview takes place.²

Self-reported class is represented in Figure 3. Only a small proportion of respondents selected ‘upper class’. One-third selected ‘middle class’, more than four-tenths chose ‘working class’, and the remaining one-quarter chose ‘lower class’.

Figure 3: Self-reported class in Cape Town



There is a clear but inexact relationship between subjective (or self-perceived) and objective class, as we can see in Table 6. Most people who we classified as upper class, on the basis of their individual occupations, classified themselves as either upper or middle class. Most people who we classified as intermediate class, almost

² This was suggested to me by Peter Alexander, based on his and his colleagues’ research in Soweto, outside Johannesburg.

all of those whom we classified as core working class, and most of those whom we classified as marginal working class identified themselves as working class. Most unemployed interviewees said that they were lower class.

Table 6: Class and self-reported class (as % of total)

‘Objective’ class	Self-reported (‘subjective’) class			
	Upper/middle class	Working class	Lower class	Total
Upper class (UC)	7	4	0	11
Semi-professional class (SPC)	2	3	<1	5
Intermediate class (IC)	11	18	2	31
Core working class (CWC)	2	9	2	13
Small businesses (WE3)	1	2	<1	3
Marginal working class (MWC)	<1	5	3	7
Unemployed	8	6	15	29
Total	31	47	23	100

There are various reasons why people might identify themselves differently to the way that sociologists classify themselves. First, they might have mediated class positions that are different to their individual occupational positions. One of the households described in Table 4 above (household 3A) included a respondent, Cheryl Julies, who was herself unemployed. But because her sister was a machinist, Cheryl’s mediated class position would be core working class, even though her own individual occupational class was ‘unemployed’. Similarly, in household 4A, had we interviewed Sandy Jooste’s husband, we would have found that he was unemployed, but because Sandy is a teacher his mediated class position is in the semi-professional class. Many of our unemployed respondents – perhaps more than half – have mediated class positions that placed them in one of the other classes.

There is also a clear relationship between neighbourhood income and self-reported class, as we can see in Table 7. People in low-income neighbourhoods are much more likely to say that they are lower class, whilst people in the rich neighbourhoods are much more likely to say that they are middle or even upper class. Again, the poorest and richest quintiles are very distinctive, but the pattern in the middle three quintiles is less clear.

Table 7: Self-reported class, by neighbourhood income quintile

	Neighbourhood income quintile					Total %
	1 %	2 %	3 %	4 %	5 %	
Upper class	<1	<1	<1	<1	5	2
Middle class	14	28	31	32	63	33
Working class	29	42	56	53	28	41
Lower class	56	29	13	15	4	25
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: CAS 2005, f6; results are exclusive of 'don't know'; n=1,171

Table 8: Self-reported class, by race

	African (%)	Coloured (%)	White (%)	Total (%)
Upper class	1	1	4	2
Middle class	13	31	64	33
Working class	32	51	30	40
Lower class	54	14	2	24
Total	100	100	100	100

Table 9: Correlates of self-reported class

	Self-reported middle class		Self-reported working class		Self-reported lower class	
	Model A	Model B	Model C	Model D	Model E	Model F
UC	0.50 (0.06) ***	0.23 (0.09) ***	(base)	(base)	(base)	(base)
SPC	0.23 (0.1) **	0.06 (0.1)	0.26 (0.08) ***	0.2 (0.1) **	0.26 (0.08) ***	0.2 (0.1) **
IC	0.24 (0.06) ***	0.11 (0.07) *	0.21 (0.06) ***	0.16 (0.07) **	0.21 (0.06) ***	0.16 (0.07) **
CWC	(base)	(base)	0.3 (0.06) ***	0.25 (0.08) ***	0.3 (0.06) ***	0.25 (0.08) ***
MWC	-0.21 (0.06) **	-0.22 (0.06) **	0.19 (0.08) **	0.21 (0.09) **	0.19 (0.08) **	0.21 (0.09) **
WE3	0.1 (0.12)	0.07 (0.12)	0.18 (0.11) ^	0.16 (0.12)	0.18 (0.11) ^	0.16 (0.12)
Unemployed	0.14 (0.06) **	0.16 (0.07) **	-0.17 (0.06) ***	-0.2 (0.07) ***	-0.17 (0.06) ***	-0.2 (0.07) ***
Has matric				0.08 (0.04) *		0.08 (0.04) *
African						
coloured		0.2 (0.04) ***		0.2 (0.04) ***		0.2 (0.04) ***
White		0.41 (0.07) ***				
Percentage of residents in neighbourhood without matric				0.01 (0.00) ***		0.01 (0.00) ***
Percentage of residents in neighbourhood with matric (only)				0.01 (0.01) **		0.01 (0.01) **
Percentage of residents in neighbourhood with post-matric qualifications		0.01 (0.00) ***				
Pseudo R2	0.04	0.18	0.09	0.14	0.09	0.14
N	792	756	792	751	792	751

Note: Probit regressions. All variables are dummy variables except for the last three (percentages). Standard errors in parentheses; significance shown at * 10% level, ** 5% level, *** 1% level, and ^ almost 1% level; probit coefficients are marginal effects (dF/dx). Data are weighted.

African people are far more likely to report that they are 'lower class', coloured people are more likely to report that they are 'working class', and white people are much more likely to say that they are 'middle class' (see Table 8).

The correlates of self-reported class are examined in Table 9. For each of the self-reported middle, working and lower classes, we report two probit regressions. The first probit regression in each pair regresses this subjective class against occupational class (all dummy variables). The second regression in each pair adds a number of other variables, but only ones that are appropriate. Thus, there is no significant correlation between self-identification as working-class and either neighbourhood income or the racial composition of the neighbourhood, so these latter variables are not included in Model D. Neither neighbourhood nor household income correlate significantly with *any* of three self-reported class categories.

People are more likely to identify themselves as 'middle class' if they have an 'upper class' or 'intermediate class' occupation, and are less likely to do so if they are in domestic employment (marginal working class) or are unemployed. Even controlling for occupation, they are more likely to do so if they are coloured or (especially) white. If they live in a neighbourhood with many residents with tertiary educational qualifications, they are also more likely to identify themselves as middle class (but neighbourhood income has no effect). People are more likely to identify themselves as working-class if they are in any occupation except upper class. This not true of people who are self-employed, even in very small businesses, nor of the unemployed (who are in fact less likely to see themselves as working class). Even controlling for occupation, people with matric and coloured people are more likely to see themselves as working-class. The only neighbourhood-level variable to correlate significantly with working-class self-identification is the educational profile of the neighbourhood. People with tertiary qualifications are less likely to identify themselves as working-class. A very similar pattern characterizes self-identification as 'lower class'.

This is broadly intuitive, except for semi-professionals (i.e. teachers and nurses) and the unemployed. Teachers and nurses appear to tend towards a working class identity rather than a middle class identity. The unemployed are very surprising. This might reflect the fact that the unemployed include some well-qualified people, mostly school- and university-leavers, who are looking for work, but perhaps aspire to be or see themselves as middle class.

Further analysis is required into the determinants of whether (or when) someone identifies him- or herself as ‘middle class’ rather than ‘working class’, or ‘working-class’ rather than ‘lower class’? Preliminary analysis suggests that, among coloured people, neighbourhood income is significant in subjective class identification. Further research will hopefully reveal whether *relative* income (i.e. relative to other households in the neighbourhood) or *relative* occupational class (i.e. relative to other individuals in the neighbourhood) is an important factor.

A fuller analysis of class needs to go much further than this. In *Class, Race and Inequality*, I argued that South African had a distinctive ‘underclass’ defined in terms of systematic disadvantage. Lacking skills, qualifications, and above all social capital, some of the unemployed are unlikely to get a job and are thus confined to chronic poverty. Social capital is important because people get jobs through word of mouth, i.e. through friends and family who themselves have jobs and know when vacancies arise, not through responding to advertisements in newspapers or in labour agencies. Social capital is also important in enabling unemployed people to move to areas where there are more jobs. The underclass was, in the early 1990s, primarily rural in character. The typical member of the underclass was the son or daughter of a family of farmworkers evicted off commercial white-owned farms in the 1970s or 1980s, removed into one of the ‘bantustans’ where there was no land and schools were appalling, whose only family connections were to the goldmines which – from the 1980s – were cutting back drastically on new employment, and who lacked the connections in towns even to move to them (Seekings and Natrass, 2005: ch.8). Urbanisation has probably increased the urban underclass. Analysing the underclass adequately requires longitudinal data and data on social capital (for which data on household composition might be an adequate proxy). The Cape Area Study data have not yet been analysed in these ways. Language is probably also an important constitutive element in the class structure.³ A grasp of English and, to a lesser extent, Afrikaans opens up a wide range of opportunities. A full analysis of the class structure in Cape Town requires an analysis of language.

³ Neville Alexander has persuaded me of this.

Who gets what? Perceptions of the social structure

The Cape Area Study asked a series of questions about the social structure, only some of which will be reported in this paper. Interviewees were asked how rich or poor they were, ‘relative to other people in South Africa’, on a scale that ran from 0 to 10 where 0 was ‘very poor’, 5 was ‘average’ and 10 was ‘very rich’. Despite the fact that incomes in Cape Town are way above the national average, only about 20 percent of interviewees said that they were above average.

Tables A1 to A3 (in the Appendix) show the relationship between each of neighbourhood income, individual occupational class and self-reported class, with self-reported relative income. In each case, there is a general pattern, but there are also many exceptions to this pattern. Interviewees in the poorest quintile or the lower classes (whether defined objectively or subjectively) saw themselves as markedly poorer, and interviewees in the richest quintile and higher classes as richer. But there were some households in poorer neighbourhoods or lower classes who saw themselves as having average or above average income, and some households in richer neighbourhoods or higher classes who saw themselves as having below-average incomes. This might reflect the reference group. Although the question explicitly asked about incomes relative to ‘other people in South Africa’, it is possible that some people assessed their incomes relative to people in their neighbourhood or class.

	Self-reported relative income	Household income	Neighbourhood income quintile	Occupational class (7-pt scale)	Self-reported class (4-pt scale)
Self-reported relative income	1				
Household income	0.3125	1			
Neighbourhood income quintile	0.2472	0.5761	1		
Occupational class (7-pt scale)	-0.3122	-0.5699	-0.4052	1	
Self-reported class (4-pt scale)	-0.3797	-0.4669	-0.3977	0.4347	1

Table A2 also reveals a sharp contrast between individuals in the intermediate class and those in the core or marginal working classes. The former are markedly less likely to describe themselves as poor or very poor. There is an even more striking in Table 10, between the self-reported working class and the self-reported lower class. It is unlikely that these differences are spurious. Clearly some people who are ‘objectively’ core or marginal working class, by our definition, and who are probably not very poor in South African terms, *see themselves* as lower class and as very poor.

Table 11 reports the results of regressing self-reported relative income on household income, neighbourhood income, race, self-reported class and occupational class. The first five models (A to E) treat all variables except race as continuous variables. The last model (Model F) disaggregates the two class variables into separate dummy variables for each class or self-reported class category. Household income correlates positively and significantly with self-reported relative income. The higher the household’s income, the more likely they are to locate themselves towards the rich end of the 11-point scale. Neighbourhood income also correlates positively and significantly (see Model B), but the effect disappears when self-reported class is added into the model (Model C). The ‘higher’ a respondent’s self-reported class (i.e. middle class rather than working class, or working class rather than lower class), the richer the respondent considers himself relative to other people. Coloured respondents are significantly less likely to see themselves as rich (conditional on household income, neighbourhood income and self-reported class), but there is no significant relationship between being white and self-reported relative income (Model D). There is a weak relationship between occupational class and self-reported relative income (Model E). Model F shows that there are no significant relationships between the disaggregated occupational class categories and self-reported relative income, but seeing oneself as ‘middle class’ has a strong effect.⁴

⁴ The small cell sizes for each occupational class category reduces the likelihood of finding a statistically significant relationship. If the upper class, semi-professional class and intermediate class are combined into one category, the correlation between this aggregate category and self-reported relative income approaches statistical significance at the 10% level.

Table 11: Correlates of self-reported relative income (11-point scale)

	Model A	Model B	Model C	Model D	Model E	Model F
Household income (5 categories)	0.48 (0.05) ***	0.41 (0.06) ***	0.29 (0.06) ***	0.29 (0.06) ***	0.2 (0.08) **	0.22 (0.08) ***
Neighbourhood income quintile		0.11 (0.52) ***	0.01 (0.05)	0.02 (0.07)	0.03 (0.07)	
Self-reported class (3 categories)			-0.76 (0.09) ***	-0.76 (0.1) ***	-0.71 (0.12) ***	
Self-reported middle class #						1.51 (0.23) ***
Self-reported working class #						0.93 (0.22) ***
Self-reported lower class #						(base)
Occupational class (7 categories)					-0.08 (0.03) ***	
UC #						0.21 (0.34)
SPC #						0.2 (0.4)
IC #						0.1 (0.24)
CWC #						(base)
MWC #						0.13 (0.32)
WE3 #						-0.23 (0.43)
Unemployed #						-0.37 (0.25)
African #				(base)	(base)	
Coloured #				-0.27 (0.16) *	-0.33 (0.2) *	-0.35 (0.16) **
White #				-0.01 (0.3)	-0.06 (0.3)	
Adjusted/pseudo r2	0.09	0.1	0.17	0.16	0.17	0.17
N	941	940	917	869	610	610

Note: Coefficients are unstandardised. All variables except race are dummy variables in Models A to E. In Model F, all class variables are dummy variables. Standard errors in parentheses. Dummy variables are indicated with an #. Significance shown at * 10% level, ** 5% level, *** 1% level. Data are weighted.

Interviewees were shown the four pictures in Figure 4, and read the following:

‘These four pictures show different types of society. The first picture represents a society with a small elite of rich people at the top, a few people in the middle, and a large number of poor people at the bottom. The second picture represents a society that is like a pyramid, with a small elite at the top, more people in the middle, and a lot of poor people at the bottom. The third picture shows a society in which most people are in the middle. The fourth picture shows a society with lots of people at the top, some in the middle, and very few at the bottom. Which of these pictures, in your view, describes South Africa today?’

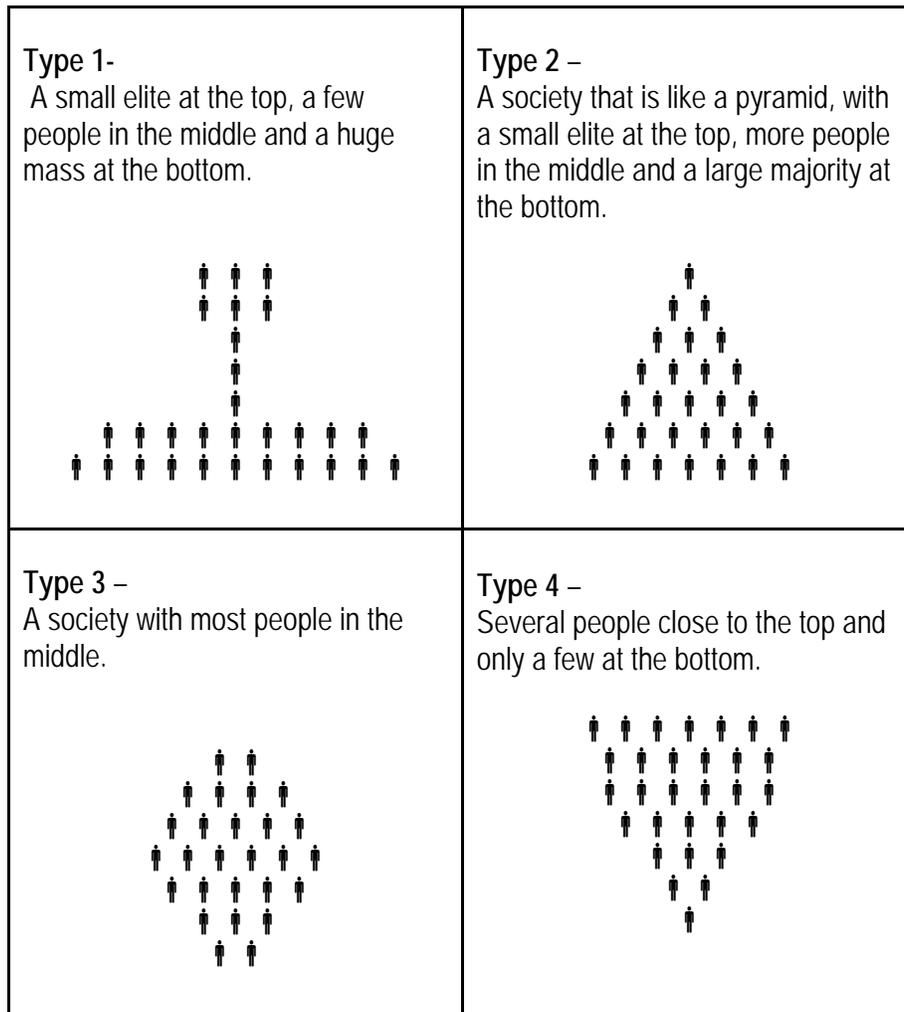


Figure 4: Pictures representing differently structured societies

Type 2 (the pyramid) attracted the most support, being chosen by 38 percent of our respondents, but type 1 (the bipolar distribution) attracted almost as much support (30 percent). Type 3 (the onion) was selected by 19 percent of our respondents, with type 4 (the inverted pyramid) being selected by only 10 percent. The remaining 3 percent of respondents said that they did not know. There was only a weak relationship between self-placement on the rich/poor scale and how respondents saw society, although people who saw themselves as rich were less likely to choose the bipolar distribution.⁵ There were no significant differences according to either objective or subjective class.

Class and perceptions of inequality

Having established that interviewees do have some sense of the social structure and their places within it, we need to explore whether class or neighbourhood income shape perceptions of who is benefiting in the new South Africa, and what the government is doing to affect this. Relevant questions in CAS include the following:

About poor people:

B.11: Would you say that the number of poor people in South Africa today is larger, the same or smaller than ten years ago?

B.12: Do you think that the government is doing too much, enough, or too little for poor people in South Africa?

B.13: Do you think that the number of poor people in South Africa in five years time is going to be larger, the same or smaller than it is now?

About rich people:

B.15: Would you say that the number of rich people in South Africa today is larger, the same or smaller than ten years ago?

B.16: Do you think that the government is doing too much, enough, or too little for rich people in South Africa?

B.17: Do you think that the number of rich people in South Africa in five years time is going to be larger, the same or smaller than it is now?

⁵ We had hoped to include an additional question in the survey, asking respondents to place themselves on their chosen diagram. In piloting the questionnaire, however, we found that too many respondents were unable or uncomfortable doing this. So we omitted this question from the final instrument.

About the interviewee him/herself:

B.22: Is your overall financial situation today better, the same or worse than it was five years ago?

B.23: Do you expect that your overall financial situation in five years time, in 2010, will be better, the same or worse than it is now?

More than two-thirds of the interviewees felt that there were more poor people in South Africa in 2005 than there had been ten years before. There were no clear differences according to objective class, subjective class or neighbourhood income. At the same time, more than two-thirds of our respondents said that there were more rich people in South Africa in 2005 than there had been in 1995. On this question there were some differences by subjective class and neighbourhood income, but these were not big differences, and there was little difference by objective class. A higher proportion of people in poor neighbourhoods and a lower proportion of people in rich neighbourhoods said that the number of rich people had grown. Similarly, a higher proportion of self-reported lower class people and a lower proportion of self-reported upper or middle class people said this.

With regard to the future, over half of the interviewees felt that there would be more poor people in South Africa in 2010 than in 2005. Almost two-thirds said that there would be even more rich people in 2010. Poor people were less pessimistic that the numbers of poor people would grow, and more optimistic that the numbers of rich would grow. Unexpectedly, when we asked separately whether the numbers of rich 'African (black)' and rich white people would grow, African interviewees were much more likely to say that the numbers of rich white people would grow and much less likely to say that the numbers of rich African people would grow. In other words, interviewees tended to think that South Africa would become an even more unequal society. The poor were less pessimistic about the growth of poverty but more confident that rich white people would continue to prosper.

Interviewees of all classes concurred that the government was contributing to this trend. About two-thirds of our sample felt that the government was not doing enough for poor people, but three-quarters felt that it was doing too much or enough for rich people. People in rich areas were more critical of the government's performance in fighting poverty, but were much less likely than people in non-rich areas to say that the government was doing 'too much' for the rich.

More of our interviewees (40 percent) thought that their personal financial position had improved over the past five years, than thought it had remained the same (31 percent) or deteriorated (25 percent). There was a weak relationship between neighbourhood income and this assessment, but a strong relationship between how rich or poor an interviewee thought he or she was and how they assessed their position had changed. People who thought themselves poor were much more likely to say that their position had worsened; people who considered themselves rich were much more likely to say it had improved. It is unclear what causes what, as the direction of causality could plausibly run in either direction.

Overall, it is not clear that rich and poor people in Cape Town have very different perceptions of who has gained and who has not in the new South Africa. There is a general concern with poverty, although the poor seem less anxious than the rich, and are also more impressed with their own changing financial situation. The poor are, however, more concerned with the growing numbers of rich white people. There is a general concern with the government's performance. The poor are more impressed by what the government does for the poor, but are more critical of what it does for the rich.

What about grievances? Asked 'what is the most important problem facing the country that the government should address?', interviewees in every income quintile said 'job creation' or 'unemployment' far more often than any other problem. Crime was the second most frequently selected problem in every quintile. This is in line with what just about every post-1994 survey has found. But asked about specific services provided by government, responses are influenced by class. Table 12 reports the proportions of interviewees in each income quintile who say that they are dissatisfied with each of a set of government services. Whilst discontent with some services (clinics, public transport, police) is broad across neighbourhoods, discontent with other services (electricity, water, housing, refuse collection) is more acute among the poor. These patterns are mirrored if we analyse responses by objective or subjective class.

Table 12: Dissatisfaction with government services, by neighbourhood income quintile

	Neighbourhood income quintile					Total
	1	2	3	4	5	
Electricity	40%	17%	23%	15%	6%	21%
Water	34%	19%	17%	19%	11%	21%
Public health clinics or hospitals	56%	60%	60%	52%	47%	55%
Bus and train services	36%	39%	49%	43%	42%	47%
Police	38%	38%	55%	38%	28%	39%
Road repairs and construction	50%	39%	41%	32%	25%	38%
Housing	69%	54%	58%	48%	36%	53%
Refuse collection	44%	17%	19%	15%	10%	22%

Source: CAS 2005, c28-36, weighted data

Class, racial identities and attitudes

We have seen that most people readily select a class identity from a list, but how important are these class identities relative to other identities, notably racial or cultural ones? As well as asking respondents what class they saw themselves as being in, we asked about racial and cultural self-categorisation. We then asked which of these three possible identities was most important to them.

Over 60 percent of all respondents and of respondents in each major racial category said that their cultural identity was the most important to them. The most frequently selected cultural identities were Xhosa, South African and Christian. One in five selected their racial identity as being the most important (although some chose a racial category as their cultural identity). Only about one in six respondents selected their class identity as the most important. Overall, objective class seems to make little difference to the perceived importance of class identity, although there were some intriguing patterns within racial groups. The coloured upper and semi-professional classes were much less attached to class identities than the coloured intermediate and core working classes. Among the African sub-sample, people who see themselves as working class are slightly more likely to see

their class identity as paramount than those who see themselves as either middle or lower class. The same is not true among coloured people. Within the white sub-sample, self-reported upper or middle class people are most likely to say that class identity is important.

The Cape Area Study allows for detailed investigation of how class – and self-reported class – correlates with or shapes experiences of and attitudes towards racial integration. Only one variable measuring racial integration does correlate closely with class variables:

In the past seven days, have you spent a social evening or some free time with friends or acquaintances who are not [the same race as you], either at home, going out to eat, or at a community or religious gathering?

Self-reported middle and working class respondents were more likely to say they had done this than self-reported lower class people. Respondents in upper class, intermediate class and (to a lesser extent) core working class occupations were more likely to say they had done this. But this was not true of respondents in semi-professional occupations (i.e. teachers and nurses). Most teachers work in mono-racial schools, so this is perhaps unsurprising.

Class variables are of limited importance, either across the whole population or within racial groups, with respect to other measures of racial integration. The survey asked about the racial mix of the respondent's five closest friends and, if the respondent worked, the five people with whom he or she worked most closely. Class effects here were either weak or non-existent. Coloured respondents who identified themselves as working-class were less likely than other coloured respondents to say that all of their friends were coloured, but the objective class categories were not significant. Within the African population, self-identified middle class respondents were most likely to say that all their friends were African (but, again, objective class categories were not significant). (This seemed counter-intuitive at first, but perhaps it is related to the predominance of teachers within the African middle class in Cape Town). The only objective class category to correlate with the racial mix of friends was the category of 'unemployed', which is almost certainly a heterogeneous 'category' that should be considered as multi-class. But it is noteworthy that, among both coloured and African respondents, unemployed people were more likely to report having mono-

racial sets of friends. More surprisingly, occupational class seems to make no difference to whether respondents report working with racially-mixed groups.

Neither the objective nor subjective class variables were significant in explaining racial prejudice (although neighbourhood income was).

In Brazil, it is often suggested that there is a relationship between class and perceived race, i.e. that people in higher classes see themselves as whiter than their 'objective' skin colour would suggest. In South Africa, anecdotal evidence suggests that some coloured people may have tried or aspired to 'pass for white'. (At the same time there are others, including most notably the late African National Congress leader, Walter Sisulu, who 'passed for African'!). The more-or-less rigid racial classification system of apartheid and the deep linguistic and cultural roots of the 'racial' distinction between African and white/coloured probably reduce the likelihood of any correlation between class and perceived skin colour. The Cape Area Study asked respondents to rate their skin colour. There is no significant correlation between class and skin colour among either African respondents or coloured respondents.

Conclusion

This paper entails a preliminary analysis of survey data on aspects of class in contemporary, i.e. post-apartheid, Cape Town. The 'findings' must be regarded as especially tentative for two reasons. First, this paper does not draw on any qualitative research. Secondly, the analysis of objective class is still limited to the analysis of individual occupations and takes no account of household composition. Wright explains the importance of including 'mediated class positions' in the analysis of class:

The central point of trying to assign a class location is to clarify the nature of the lived experiences and material interests the individual is likely to have. Being 'in' a class location means that you do certain things and certain things happen to you (lived experience) and you face certain strategic alternatives for pursuing your material well-being (class interests). Jobs embedded within social relations of production are one of the ways individuals are

linked to such interests and experiences, but not the only way. Families provide another set of social relations which tie people to the class structure. (Wright, 1997: 523-24).

Elsewhere we included mediated class positions in an analysis of the class structure of South Africa (Seekings and Natrass, 2005), but we have not done this yet for the Cape Town data analysed in this paper.

This paper has shown several things. First, it demonstrates clearly how the class structure of Cape Town differs from that of South Africa as a whole. Cape Town is a city without much industry. Two out of three working people are in occupations that are classified here as 'upper class' (managerial and professional), semi-professional (teachers and nurses) or intermediate class (white collar, artisans, and so on). These classes include one-third of all respondents in the survey, including the unemployed and non-participants in the labour force.

Secondly, there is a clear relationship between race, education and occupational class. White people predominate in upper class occupations, coloured people in the range of occupations categorized as semi-professional, intermediate class or core working class. African people predominate only in the marginal working class (comprising primarily domestic workers) and among the unemployed.

The relationship between objective and subjective class was not tidy. Very few people identified themselves as 'upper class'. People in occupations that we categorise as upper class tended to identify themselves as 'middle class', and some even identified themselves as 'working class'. Our other objective class categories all tended to identify themselves as 'working class', whilst the unemployed tended to identify themselves as 'lower class' (although about one quarter chose 'middle class' and one quarter chose 'working class', indicating the likely heterogeneity of the unemployed). Regression analysis suggested that race and some neighbourhood-level variables were significant in subjective class categorization.

Most respondents concur that inequality is increasing, with growing numbers of poor and rich people at the same time. The rich seem more anxious about poverty than the poor, whilst the poor are more impressed by the government's performance in addressing poverty and with their own changing financial positions.

Finally, on whether class affects experiences of or attitudes to racial integration, the evidence is mixed. Further research into this is clearly needed.

Overall, this analysis of the Cape Area Study data is preliminary, but hopefully provides a basis for further research using the survey data themselves, combining them with qualitative research, and comparing them with data from other cities around the world.

Appendix

Table A1: Neighbourhood income quintile, by self-reported income

	Neighbourhood income quintile					Total %
	1 %	2 %	3 %	4 %	5 %	
Very poor (0-2)	36	22	18	10	8	19
Poor (3-4)	19	28	25	28	11	22
Average (5)	32	39	47	47	42	41
Above average (6-10)	13	12	10	15	39	39
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: CAS 2005, b7; results are exclusive of 'don't know'; n=1,193

Table A2: Individual occupational class, by self-reported income

	Individual occupational class						Total %
	UC %	SPC %	IC %	CWC %	MWC %	Unemployed %	
Very poor (0-2)	4	3	8	21	21	40	19
Poor (3-4)	16	29	22	26	37	22	22
Average (5)	46	48	52	39	36	26	41
Above average (6-10)	33	20	18	13	15	11	39
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: CAS 2005, b7; results are exclusive of 'don't know'; n=1,193

Table A3: Self-reported class, by self-reported income

	Self-reported class			Total %
	Upper/middle class	Working class	Lower class	
Very poor (0-2)	8	13	46	19
Poor (3-4)	14	29	22	22
Average (5)	48	45	23	41
Above average (6-10)	30	13	9	39
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: CAS 2005, b7; results are exclusive of 'don't know'; n=1,193

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