

**HOUSES WITHOUT DOORS: DIFFUSING DOMESTICITY  
IN DIE BOS.**

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SOCIAL SCIENCE DEGREE, DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL ANTHROPOLOGY,  
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**Houses without Doors:  
Diffusing domesticity in Die Bos.**

**Abstract.**

This ethnography is the product of fourteen months of communication with residents of a squatter settlement near Somerset West in the Western Cape. The thesis explores the ways in which domestic relationships altered over the research period, locating these changing patterns in the contexts of informal settlement in the region. I show that in the context of the settlement the use of household as an analytic term was problematic because domestic relationships were fluid and ephemeral, making it difficult to establish patterns of 'belonging' over time. Network approaches are more effective than household in describing social relationships, but networks were also problematic in that they tend to assume patterns of reciprocity which were not always echoed in the behaviours of residents of Die Bos.

The thesis concentrates on three main areas of social interaction. I explore labour relationships within and between households, showing that a focus solely on households obscures the processes of labour allocation within domestic units, and those which occur across their (permeable) boundaries. I examine changing patterns of commensality among some members of the population of Die Bos, showing how movement and labour were intimately linked with eating patterns. Here I show how the most effective way of describing these patterns is in terms of networks of informal interaction which are formalised briefly. I then discuss of how movements of certain sections of the population render the boundaries of domestic units extremely permeable. I conclude by showing that although the notion of household is useful in some contexts in describing interactions in Die Bos, it tends to assume too much homogeneity and constancy to describe accurately the fluidity of social relationships. Network approaches are possibly of greater use in such descriptions, but are shown to be problematic in that they assume constancy (although of a lesser degree than households) in interaction.

**Note concerning the title:**

This thesis is entitled 'Houses without Doors'. I have chosen the title because it so accurately reflects the social and physical environment in which the residents of Die Bos live.

The shacks in Die Bos do have doors. However, during the daytime the doors are usually left open, so that anyone may enter. Most activities (including washing clothes and cooking) occur outside, in the public domain. Thus there is little need to enter a shack, since its occupants are usually to be found out-of-doors.

The title is also an appropriate metaphor of the relationships which I discuss in this thesis. Social interactions in Die Bos were extremely fluid, constantly changing. This was reflected in rapidly altering patterns of fuel-consumption, patterns of labour related to fuel, and in individual movements. In effect, the houses of Die Bos did not have doors which kept members of one domestic unit apart from members of others. Household boundaries were permeable - in the same way as would be a house without doors.

**Note on Terminology.**

Throughout this report I use the terms prescribed in the (then) Population Registration Act (as amended) in quotation marks. This does not imply acceptance of either the terms or their legitimacy.

Sexual relationships in the settlement were seldom cemented by formal marriage rituals. I thus use the terms 'girlfriend' and 'wife', 'boyfriend' and 'husband' interchangeably, as did the residents of Die Bos. This does not mean that there was less commitment to a relationship between boyfriend and girlfriend than there would be if the couple were formally married; indeed, some of the relationships among men and women in Die Bos which were not formal marriages had lasted for many years.

There is a difference between 'squatter' and 'informal' settlements. In official terminology, the former refers to illegal occupation of land, whilst the latter are settlements which have legal status (i.e. are recognised by the state as being legitimate settlements), but where housing does not meet the criteria of municipal by-laws. Such settlements have also been described as unserviced informal housing areas, or land-invasion areas. In terms of the official terminology, the settlement in which I conducted the research presented in this thesis was a squatter settlement.

At the time of research 1 Rand was equal to approximately 0.3533 US dollars.

**Acknowledgements.**

On the completion of a piece of work such as this, there are many people to thank.

My thanks to the residents and my friends in Die Bos, to whom this ethnography is dedicated. They gave of their time and energy unstintingly, and I enjoyed being with them. Thank you to the children, who taught me so much of what life in a squatter settlement was like, and who brightened my walls with pictures and my space with singing. Thanks to all the adults who answered my ignorant questions patiently, who taught me Afrikaans, and tried not to laugh at my stumbling attempts to communicate. The committee of Die Bos were helpful and caring, and members of the Helderberg Advice Office spent much time assisting me and answering questions.

Especial thanks are due to my supervisor, Dr. A. D. Spiegel, for his patience and endurance. He gave me much assistance and spent many hours discussing this work, often giving up his own precious time in response to panicked pleas.

Thanks also to members of the Department of Social Anthropology at the University of Cape Town, who told me it was possible, gave advice and feedback, loaned me a caravan in which to stay, and equipment to use in the settlement.

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*Houses without doors.*

*To the people of Die Bos*

**Contents:**

<b>Abstract.</b>	<b>i</b>
<b>Note concerning the title.</b>	<b>ii</b>
<b>Note concerning terminology.</b>	<b>iii</b>
<b>Acknowledgements.</b>	<b>iv</b>
<b>Dedication.</b>	<b>v</b>
<b>Contents.</b>	<b>vi</b>
<b>List of cases.</b>	<b>viii</b>
<b>List of figures.</b>	<b>ix</b>
<b>List of illustrations.</b>	<b>x</b>
<b>Map 1. Die Bos in regional perspective.</b>	<b>xi</b>
<b>Map 2. Die Bos in local perspective.</b>	<b>xii</b>
<b>Map 3. Die Bos and immediate environs.</b>	<b>xiii</b>
<b>Chapter 1. Introduction and Methodology:</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Beginnings.</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Text and Context: Introduction.</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>On not working in a vacuum: Methodology.</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Quantitative data collection.</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Qualitative data collection.</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Intensive research.</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Chapter 2. Competing Tools of Analysis</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Households: International literature</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>and conventional use.</b>	
<b>Households, developmental cycles and</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>African research.</b>	
<b>Network approaches to micro-level</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>interaction.</b>	
<b>Chapter 3. Die Bos: Contextualising the research.</b>	<b>57</b>
<b>Squatting in regional context.</b>	<b>58</b>
<b>Die Bos: Location and History.</b>	<b>63</b>
<b>The settlement: Organisation and structure.</b>	<b>66</b>
<b>Amenities.</b>	<b>70</b>
<b>Social institutions.</b>	<b>71</b>
<b>Substance abuse and violence.</b>	<b>72</b>
<b>Social groupings.</b>	<b>73</b>
<b>Population profile.</b>	<b>75</b>
<b>Age and sex.</b>	<b>77</b>
<b>Education.</b>	<b>80</b>
<b>Employment.</b>	<b>82</b>
<b>Income.</b>	<b>85</b>
<b>Conclusions.</b>	<b>86</b>

<b>Chapter 4. Domains of Labour: The allocation of fuel-related tasks.</b>	89
Fuel collection.	92
Social meanings of fuel collection.	97
Age and status as determinants of fuel-related labour.	97
Children's labour.	103
Crosscutting domestic unit boundaries; the allocation of tasks outside domestic units.	109
Conclusions.	117
<b>Chapter 5. Creating Commensality: Fuel sharing and household construction.</b>	120
Blurring boundaries: Fuel, food and people in Die Bos.	120
Creating boundaries: Fuel-use and defining households through networks.	147
Conclusions	153
<b>Chapter 6. Mobility and Transformation: individual movements and changing domestic units.</b>	155
Previous movement patterns.	155
Households and movement.	156
Residential mobility: Comparative data.	164
Patterns of movement prior to residence in Die Bos.	167
Movement within Die Bos.	170
Intra-settlement movement in Southern African literature.	170
Effects of intra-settlement movement in Die Bos.	172
Movement into and beyond Die Bos.	176
<b>Chapter 7. Conclusion.</b>	184
<b>References.</b>	194
<b>Appendix A. Questionnaire, Nov. 1991</b>	
<b>Appendix B. Questionnaire, June 1992.</b>	

**Case Studies. .**

Case 4.1:	Age and status as determinants of labour	97
Case 4.2:	Older children's independent fuel-related work	104
Case 4.3:	Young children's independent labour.	104
Case 4.4:	Children's supervised labour.	106
Case 4.5:	Collection and household divisions of labour.	107
Case 4.6:	Collecting wood for other households.	110
Case 4.7:	Changing contexts of labour.	111
Case 4.8:	Temporarily utilising others' labour.	113
Case 4.9:	Creating rights to potential commensality through labour.	114
Case 4.10:	The collective labour enterprise.	115
Case 5.1:	Stable household membership	121
Case 5.2:	Changing commensal and residential patterns	123
Case 5.3:	Eating, sleeping or living together; the case of Baby's domestic unit.	134
Case 5.4:	Using fuel to demarcate rights in domestic labour.	148
Case 5.5:	Redefining household boundaries.	151
Case 6.1:	Seeking a place to live.	159
Case 6.2:	Ou Rose, Anna and the effect of frequent moves on Anna's domestic unit	172
Case 6.3:	"Where are my children to go?"	177
Case 6.4:	Changing labour and well-being by movement.	179
Case 6.5:	The collapse of commensality.	182

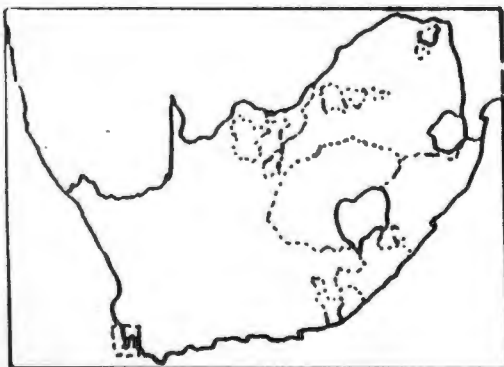
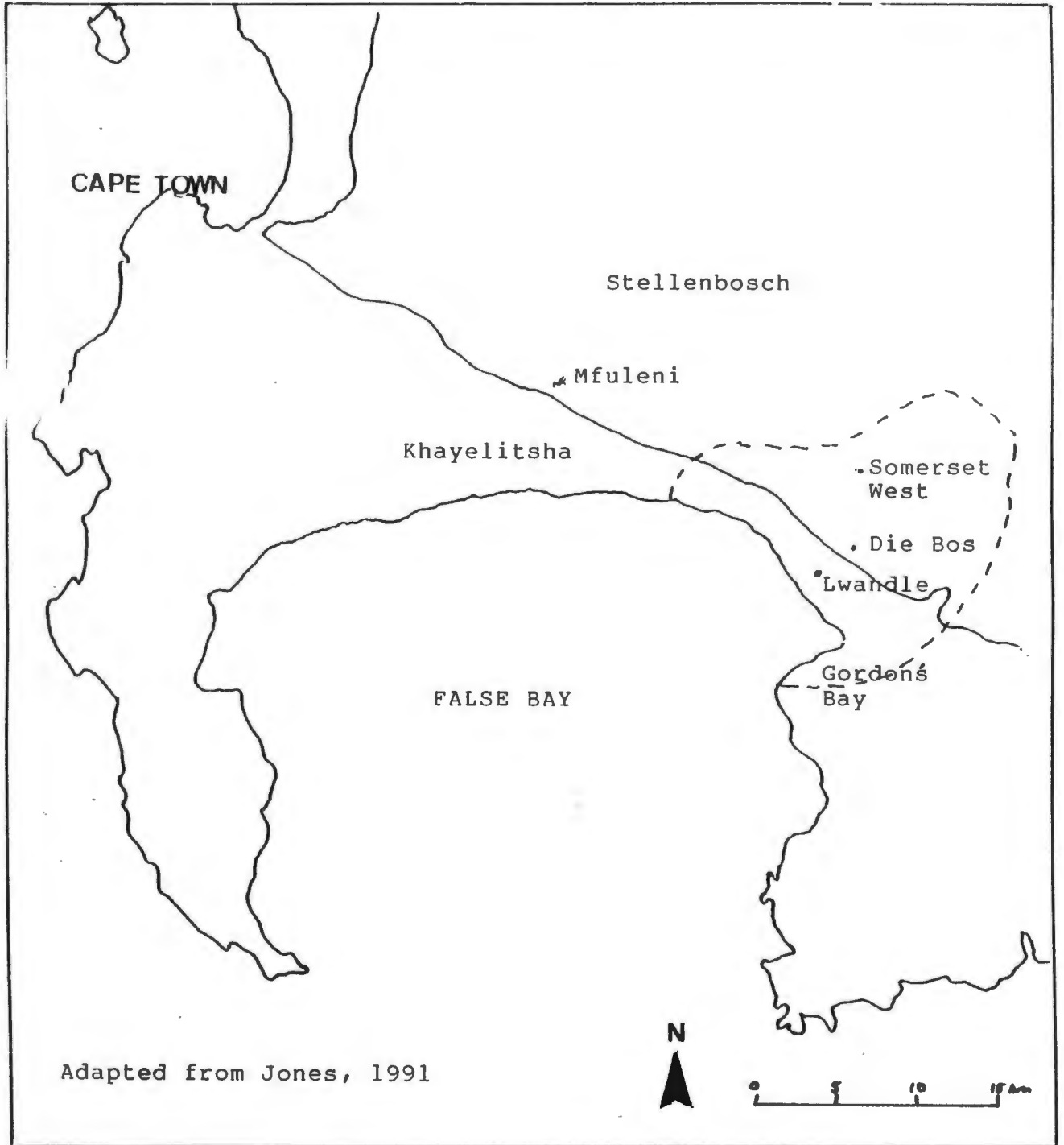
List of figures.

Fig. 1.1:	Field work periods and intensity.	15
Fig. 3.1:	Squatter settlements in the Hottentot's Holland Basin, and authorities administering them.	62
Fig. 3.2:	Percentages of households using various fuels, Nov. 1991 and June 1992.	71
Fig. 3.3:	Growth of structures and population of Die Bos, Oct. 1990 - July 1992.	76
Fig. 3.4:	Number of rooms per structure, Die Bos. Nov. 1991.	77
Fig. 3.5:	Population of Die Bos by age and sex, Nov. 1991	78
Fig. 3.6:	Population of Die Bos by age and sex, June 1992.	79
Fig. 3.7:	Population of Die Bos, Nov. 1991 and June 1992, by sex.	80
Fig. 3.8:	Education levels attained by adults in Die Bos, Nov. 1991 and June 1992.	81
Fig. 3.9:	Percentages of adult population of Die Bos employed, unemployed or receiving state aid, Nov. 1991 and June 1992.	82
Fig. 3.10:	Employment of adults in Die Bos, disaggregated by sex and sector, Nov. 1991.	84
Fig. 3.11:	Employment of adults in Die Bos, disaggregated by sex and sector, June 1992.	84
Fig. 3.12:	Reliability of employment, disaggregated by sex and sector, June 1992.	85
Fig. 3.12:	Household income ranges, Nov. 1991 and June 1992.	86
Fig. 4.1:	Fuel collectors, Nov. 1991 and June 1992.	92
Fig. 4.2:	Fuel collectors, Nov. 1991.	93
Fig. 4.3:	Fuel collectors, June 1992.	93
Fig. 4.4:	Fuel-related work: Collection in Erica's household, March to July 1992.	108
Fig. 5.1:	Summary of membership (residential and commensal) of, and fuel used by, Katherina's household, Jan. - June 1992.	131
Fig. 5.2:	Summary of residential and commensal relationships and fuel used in Baby's shack, Nov. 1991 - July 1992.	143
Fig. 6.1:	Veronica's movements and those of her children Shawn and Sakhiwe, 1977-1992.	162
Fig. 6.2:	Places of origin of residents Die Bos in comparative perspective.	165
Fig. 6.3:	Birth places of respondents in Die Bos, by province.	166
Fig. 6.4:	Cape respondents' places of birth.	168
Fig. 6.5:	Frequency distribution of residential experiences of respondents.	169
Fig. 6.6:	Ou Rose's residential and commensal patterns, Nov. 1991-Sept. 1992.	174
Fig. 6.7:	Anna's changing domestic unit, Nov. 1991 to Jan. 1993.	175
Fig. 6.8:	Paulina's movements and work experiences, Jan 1992 - June 1992.	181

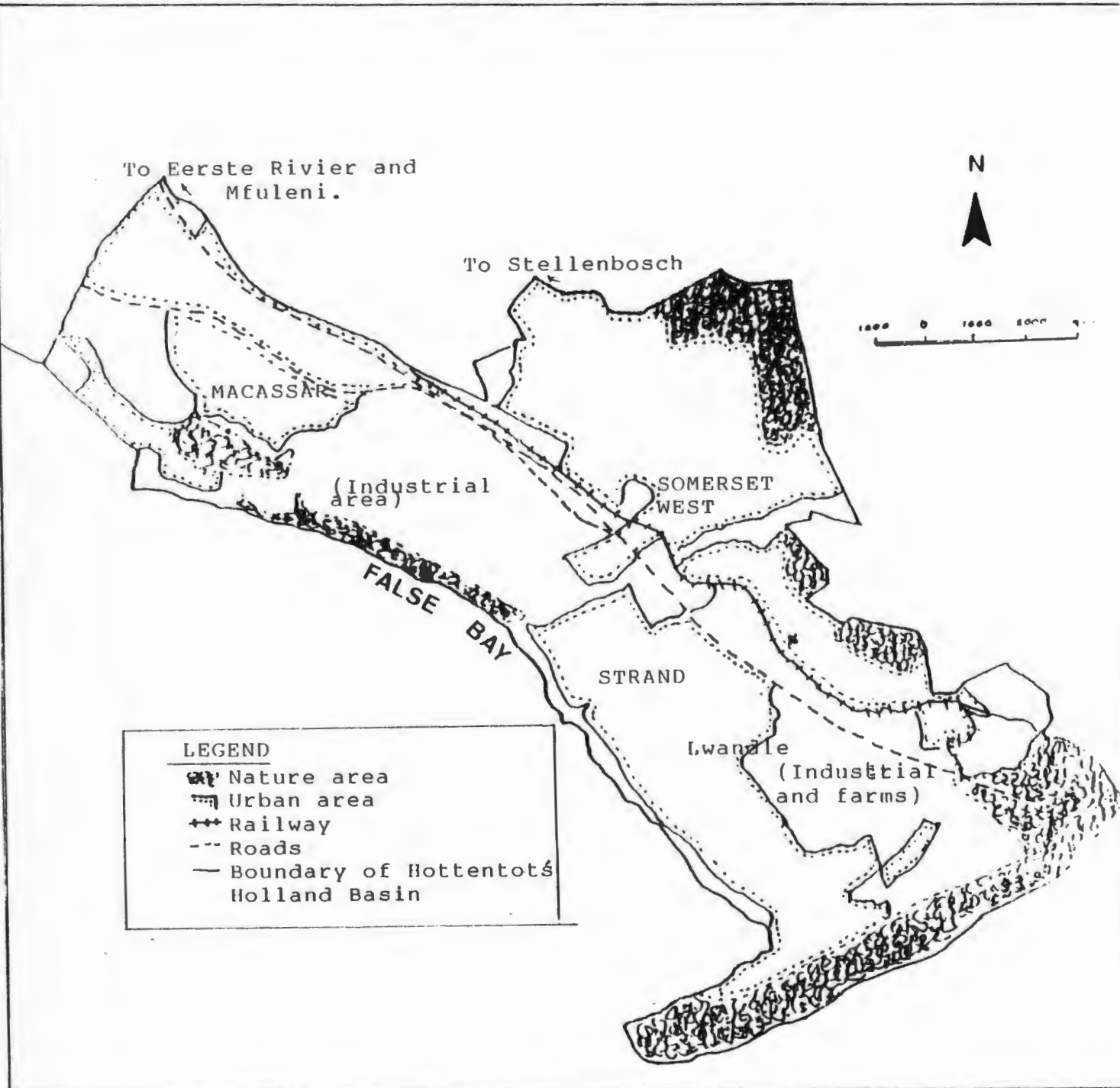
**List of illustrations.**

Next to the road, Die Bos: Angelina's letterbox.	67
Raindrops keep falling on our heads.	68
Some of the Rastafarians of Die Bos.	74
Women and children collecting woodfuel.	94
Tamsy using wood-heated flat irons. Jane is watching.	99
Children collecting kindling.	105
The Rastafarian wood enterprise.	116

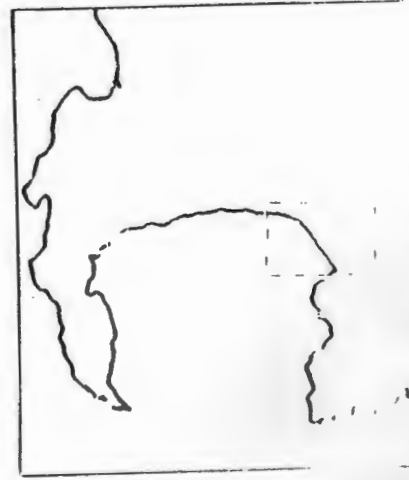
MAP I.



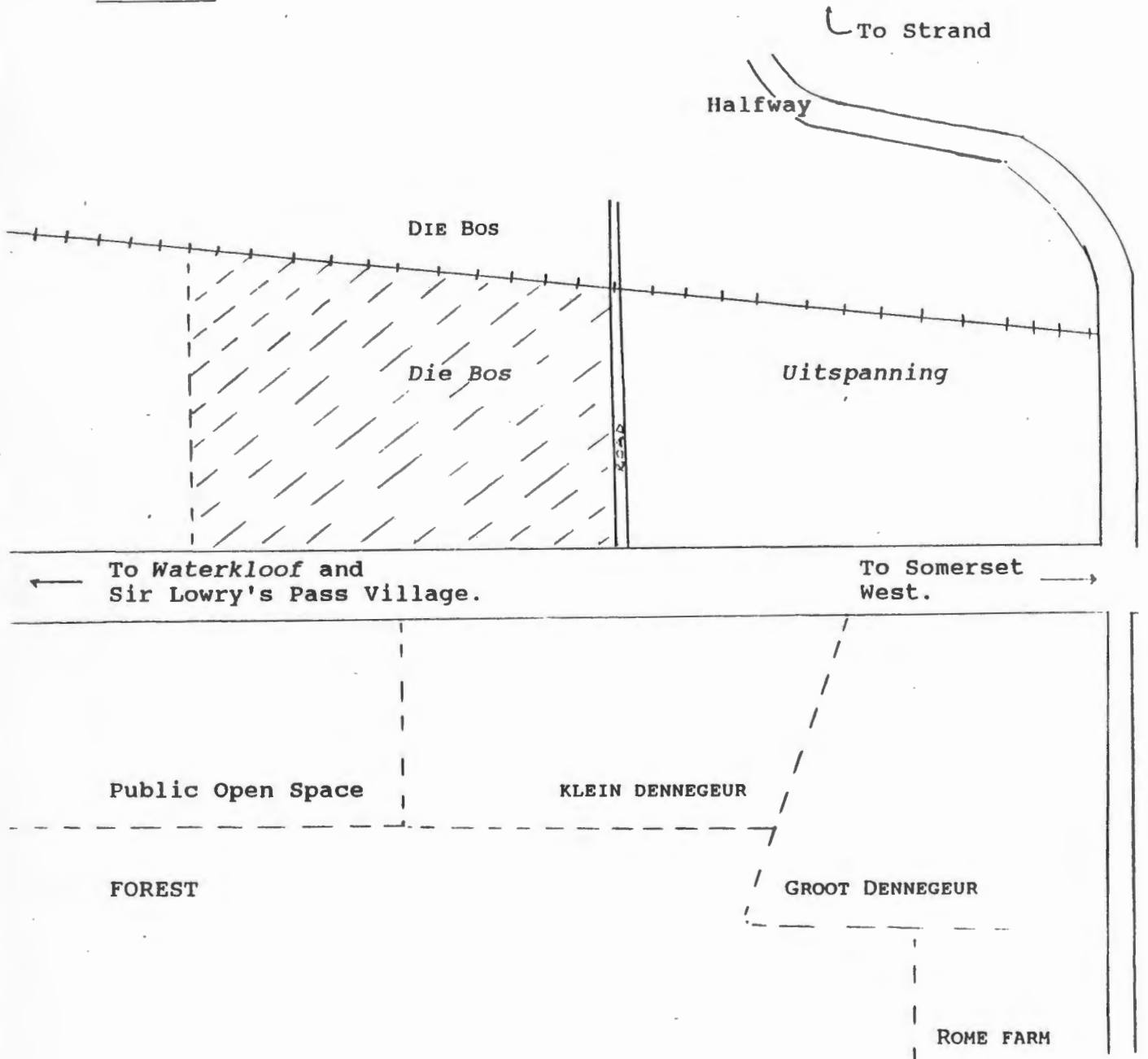
MAP II.



adapted from Regional Planning Guide,  
Hottentots Holland Basin Area,  
1989.



MAP III

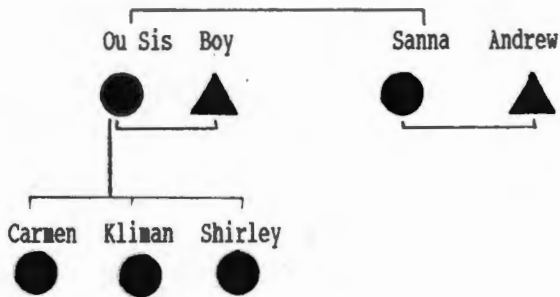


*Italics* = Informal Settlements  
SMALL CAPS = Farms  
Shading = Research area.

Chapter One.  
Introduction and Methodology.

Beginnings . . .

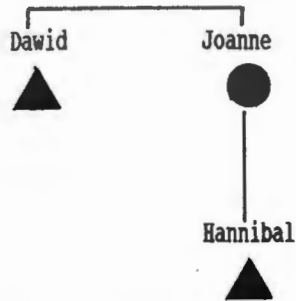
Carmen, Kliman and Shirley were Ou Sis's daughters. Ou Sis lived with her boyfriend, Boy, in Die Bos. The children ate at her shack each day, but slept at Ou Sis's sister's shack 200 metres away. Ou Sis's sister was called Sanna.



Sanna and her husband cared for Ou Sis's daughters, paid for their school fees, taxi fares and uniforms. They answered appeals from the school, and received the children's school reports. As far as the school was concerned, Sanna was their guardian in the absence of their mother. Yet their mother was not absent; she lived in the settlement, and the children spent their afternoons playing inside her house . . . .

\*\*\*

Hannibal was a 15 year old boy. His mother lived with her boyfriend in a nearby informal settlement called Waterkloof. Hannibal did not attend school, although his mother thought he did. Instead he spent his days in the settlement helping his friend Gladys by collecting fuel and water and caring for her baby. In return he was fed. He occasionally slept at his mother's brother's shack in the settlement, but usually went back to his mother in Waterkloof each evening.



In October Gladys's boyfriend took a job as a construction labourer in Cape Town. Loath to lose their shack in Die Bos, Gladys asked Hannibal to 'house-sit' it in their absence, which he did . . . .

\*\*\*

Shawn was also 15. He was resident in Die Bos when I arrived, but left at the start of the new school term in January 1992, returning to his mother's mother's house in the nearby township of Mfuleni. He alone of all of his mother's four children left the settlement. The others remained with their mother and (step) father in Die Bos . . . .

\*\*\*

Thelma was the 12 year old daughter of my neighbour, Poenkies. When I began my research she was sleeping at Baby's house. Thelma's mother, step-father and three half sisters were all resident in Die Bos. Thelma alone of all the children slept apart from her kin. She did, however, eat with them every morning and evening. Later in the research period she began to sleep over at my neighbour, Margie's house, continuing to eat at her mother's shack . . . .

\*\*\*

In a seven month period, Susan lived in four different shacks in the settlement. Her 4 year old daughter, Meidjie, did not live with her in many instances, instead living with other residents of Die Bos. First Susan left her boyfriend,

## *Introduction and Methodology.*

Price, and moved in with Price's sister, Baby. She then left Baby's and moved in with her new boyfriend. Her daughter remained at Baby's shack, eating and sleeping there. Susan then moved into a labourer's cottage on a neighbouring farm. Meidjie went to live with her, then the child returned to Die Bos, once more sleeping at Baby's house, although she now took her meals with her mother and the latter's boyfriend . . . .

\*\*\*

Thelma and Korporal had their own *pondokkie* (shack) in Die Bos. However, one day they decided that they no longer wished to live there, so they moved in with Baby, for whom both had been performing domestic labour (such as water and fuel-collection, and laundry). They remained there for two weeks, then their daughter, usually resident with Thelma's brother in Grabouw, came to spend the holidays with them. Thelma, Korporal and their child returned to their own shack, but continued eating at Baby's house . . . .

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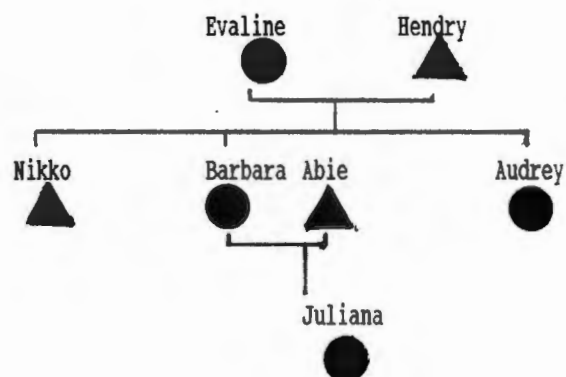
Ann's step-sister left Die Bos to take up 'live-in' domestic work in Cape Town. She left Zenobia, her four year old daughter with Ann, her boyfriend Denver and their child Amerentia. No support was received for the child, and Ann's step-sister did not visit Die Bos . . . .

\*\*\*

Oom Kallie was 76 years old when he arrived in Die Bos in April 1992. He moved into the house of Pan's girlfriend, Katherina. Pan left Katherina shortly thereafter. Oom Kallie bought a shack in Die Bos, and he and Pan moved into it. Oom Kallie supported Pan out of his pension, but Pan did not spend much time in the settlement at this time, using the shack only to sleep in. Oom Kallie continued to eat at Katherina's house, but slept in his own shack . . . .

## Introduction and Methodology.

Evaline and Hendry had a large shack with a vegetable garden that Hendry nurtured. Evaline's son, Nikko, sometimes resided with them. Her 14 year old daughter, Audrey, slept in the house, but did not eat there. Instead she ate at her sister's shack near to Evaline, or with friends.



Evaline did not provide any support for the child other than offering her a space in which to sleep at night. Frequently, however, Audrey did not avail herself of this and instead slept at her sister's shack. Her sister's child, meanwhile, lived with kin in Genadendal. . .

\*\*\*

**Text and Context: Introduction.**

In any social field much of the raw data of observation relates to behaviour that in itself is random or haphazard: the order imposed upon the material is achieved only after patient sifting and analysis on the part of the observer (Epstein, 1971:77).

This thesis is an attempt to understand the kinds of social relationships and processes described above by examining the ways in which domestic units were constructed and reconstructed in a squatter settlement called Die Bos. I show how micro-level relationships of production and consumption, and, to a lesser extent, reproduction, did not occur within clearly bounded households, but were instead spread across the settlement through intricate and extremely fluid networks of personal interactions, such as those described above.

The ethnography presented in my thesis is the product of a total of 14 months of contact with residents of a squatter settlement known as Die Bos near Somerset West. Six months of this interaction consisted of intensive participant-observation. The research grew out of mandate from the South African National Energy Council (NEC) which sought qualitative information about the impact of fuel-use on ten urban women. The original mandate specified that research was to take place in both a formal housing area and a 'peri-urban' (informal) settlement.<sup>1</sup> I therefore began research in a formal housing development, New Crossroads, and the informal settlement of KTC in Cape Town in June 1991. However taxi-related violence in the area escalated rapidly, coming to a head in October 1991, at which point it became impossible to conduct qualitative research. I approached the NEC, and obtained permission to suspend the research in Cape Town and to relocate it in an informal settlement elsewhere.

---

1. The NEC mandate did not differentiate between informal and squatter settlements. See notes on terminology, p. iii.

## *Introduction and Methodology.*

Very little is known about the rapidly burgeoning squatter settlements in the Western Cape (see Mehlwana, 1993; Dewar, Rosmarin and Watson, 1991). Given the limited demographic data pertaining to such settlements, I chose to concentrate on the area between Cape Town and Sir Lowry's Pass (along the N2 highway - see map 1), as previous research in the Social Anthropology department at UCT had been conducted in the Lwandle hostels near Strand (see Jones, 1991), and it was hoped to build up a database of resources in this area. I therefore drove along the highway, stopping at each settlement adjacent to the highway and asking to be introduced to leaders of the settlements. <sup>2</sup>

On one such excursion I drove past Die Bos, and, as usual, asked to be introduced to someone in authority in the settlement. I was surprised when the chairperson to whom I was introduced was a woman. I was eager to conduct research in a settlement where the majority of members of the residents' committee were women (5 out of 8), and where all the formal positions of power on the committee were held by women. Dinah, the chairwoman of the residents' committee of Die Bos, was pleased to have 'outsiders' express an interest in the settlement, and agreed to negotiate on my behalf for permission from the residents for me to conduct research in Die Bos, and if possible to live there. I was also pleased that, since most people in the settlement spoke Afrikaans and English, I would not need a Xhosa-speaking assistant. I was therefore able to use funds allocated to a salary for assistants to conduct a survey of the settlement. I moved into Die Bos in late November 1991 (see methodology, below).

My aim in living in Die Bos was to fulfill the requirements of the NEC research mandate by establishing the impact of fuel on women. I soon discovered that the scope of the NEC mandate was too limited, as children and men also performed fuel-related work. I therefore expanded the focus to

---

2. All the settlements at which I stopped had a residents' committee, comprising several residents from the settlement who represented it in interactions with 'outsiders' and mediated disputes within the settlement. In all instances save Die Bos, the chairpersons of the committees were men.

explore the effects of fuel on 14 households (see Ross, 1993).

The focus on household also became problematic, however. In assessing fuel-use patterns, I became aware of the frequent inter-household movements and the insecurity of tenure which characterised life for certain people in the settlement. These movements blurred the etic boundaries of households, making it difficult for me as a researcher to determine who 'belonged' in which domestic unit, and thence to establish flows of fuel and food. It became apparent that commensal patterns cross-cut household boundaries, as did the allocation of fuel-related labour. Social relationships in Die Bos did not appear to be concentrated in clearly demarcated households, but were rather based on networks of interactive, rapidly changing alliances. Stack's description of social relationships among black urban poor in America aptly contextualises the theoretical concerns of my research:

In The Flats the responsibility for providing food, care, clothing, and shelter and for socializing children within domestic networks may be spread over several households (1974:90).

A concern with describing and exploring the social relationships mapped in the introduction to this chapter is the central theme of my thesis. 'Using a fuel as a starting point from which to trace social interactions, I examine the interactions generated around fuel-related production and consumption in the settlement. In particular I explore the ways in which individual needs for interpersonal interaction (what I have termed 'moral' concerns) articulated with personal needs expressed through 'instrumental' concerns. Section two of the present chapter describes the methodological approaches which enabled examination of interactions. Chapter two provides a theoretical context to the study. Tensions in anthropological literature between issues of morality and instrumentality are explored through the analytic tools of household and network, respectively. The chapter locates social relationships in Die Bos as

## *Introduction and Methodology.*

occurring within both households and through networks in the settlement, and sets the scene for the detailed analyses of tensions generated by moral and instrumental imperatives which follow.

Chapter three provides a context to the remainder of the thesis by describing Die Bos in the context of the larger South African political-economy. I discuss data derived from the two surveys which I conducted in the settlement, and locate the resultant information in the context of productive relationships and residential patterns of workers in the Western Cape.

I then use the data described in chapter three to begin to examine more closely the social relationships engendered around fuel in Die Bos. Chapter four illustrates how it is important to disaggregate 'the household' in order to examine the ways in which work was allocated within domestic units. It also explores the ways in which the allocation of domestic labour (particularly that related to fuel) cross-cut presumed household boundaries. In the light of this it is not possible to delimit where domestic units in Die Bos begin and end. It is also not practical, since, to all intents and purposes the residents of Die Bos who appear here did not live in discrete social units, but interacted in terms of social alignments which changed so rapidly that even the notion of network seemed too fixed to make easy sense of them.

Chapter five examines changing commensal patterns in the settlement, with concomitant implications for our understanding of the functioning and stability of domestic units over time. Here I show how membership in domestic units in the settlement was extremely fluid. Rapid changes in personnel (discussed in chapter six) were particularly evident in making their effects felt at the level of food-preparation and fuel-sharing. In this context, fuel became a useful tool through which to view social interaction, as it enabled me to bypass traditional concerns with 'the household' by examining interactions around a material and

social process - that of food preparation. Networks of people interacting mainly (although not solely) around concerns with food sharing were generated in the settlement. These networks too, tended to be fluid and frequently activated for only short periods.

Chapter six, the final substantive chapter of the thesis discusses the movement patterns of residents of Die Bos and their descendents, both prior to and during residence in Die Bos. I also discuss movements of non-residents into and out of the settlement, and the effects of such movement on enumerating and defining membership of domestic units. The chapter reiterates the main thrust of the argument: that social conglomerates in Die Bos were fluid and rapidly changing. Here I locate the fluidity of social interaction in people's pasts (i.e. their previous movement patterns), in the present (by exploring movement patterns in Die Bos) and potentially in the future (by examining the movement patterns of a new generation of children). The chapter also explores the dynamic tensions which arose between moral and instrumental imperatives in a context of deprivation.

Chapter seven provides a concluding summary of the findings of the preceding chapters. It pulls together the threads of labour, commensality and movement which have been presented in separate chapters, reiterates the changing nature of social relationships in Die Bos, and explores the complexities of moral and instrumental interactions.

#### **On Not Working in a Vacuum: Methodology**

'Ethnographers do not work in a vacuum, they work with people'. (Fetterman, 1989:120).

Two research methods inform this ethnography. Surveys of the settlement conducted in both summer and winter provided a baseline of data within which to contextualise data derived from a six-month period of intensive participant-observation, and a subsequent period of five months of less intensive research. The strength of conducting research in

this manner is that surveys allowed for a baseline description of the entire settlement at two given points in time, while intensive qualitative research enabled this data to be corroborated. Participant-observation was thus firmly grounded in data which pertained to the entire settlement.

This methodology section is divided into two parts. In the first I discuss the quantitative data collection techniques I used in my research, while in the second I explain the methods I used in Die Bos to elicit qualitative data.

1. Quantitative data collection.

Part of the NEC mandate hypothesised that there would be significant differences in summer and winter fuel-use patterns in informal settlements. In order to determine whether there was a measurable difference in fuel-use patterns over the two periods, surveys were conducted in both seasons. In both surveys the processes of administering questionnaires were similar, although different personnel assisted in each case.

The first survey, conducted in November 1991, was based on a questionnaire adapted from one used in earlier research in the Cape Townships. The latter survey had been concerned with assessing the use of alternative fuels in houses supplied with electricity (Theron, 1992). The questionnaire aimed to gather data on the demographic features of households, to identify the fuels people used, their fuel costs in the contexts of household income and expenditure, and their fuel-use appliances. It was adapted to make it more applicable to an informal settlement which had no access to electricity, and to include questions pertaining to patterns of previous residence. The resultant questionnaire was administered by four anthropology students (two at third-year level and two at second-year level), and myself over a week-long period in November 1991.

The students were recruited through the Department of Social Anthropology at the University of Cape Town. All assistants

## *Introduction and Methodology.*

were required to speak at least Afrikaans, and preferably also Xhosa, as these were the main languages of interaction among people resident in the settlement. Three men and one woman responded. Of the four assistants, the woman and one man spoke both languages, and had worked on the project from which the original questionnaire was abstracted (see Theron, 1992). They were thus familiar with aspects of the questionnaire. Prior to administering it, all four assistants were briefed as to the nature of my research and their role in it. The questionnaire was also discussed, comments noted and, where necessary, the questionnaire was adapted. Students were paid R10 for each fully completed questionnaire, a sample of which is included as Appendix A.

A questionnaire was administered to one adult in every structure in the settlement, giving a 100 percent sample of occupied residential sites. Having completed no more than five household interviews based on the questionnaires (which I felt to be the maximum number that could be administered effectively without a break), each assistant returned his/her completed questionnaires to a caravan which served as my base in the settlement throughout the research. Here I checked questionnaires for accuracy and omissions. If data was incomplete, assistants returned to the relevant site to complete the interview with their informant. Processes of verification of this kind were also useful in that I was able to probe for personal details of respondents, thus providing a useful means of countering what Fetterman (1989:64) calls misrepresentation - systematic (albeit unintentional) biases on the part of assistants and respondents.

Data from the questionnaires was entered on a spreadsheet using Quattro-Pro software, and trends in fuel-use and changing residential and demographic patterns were analysed.

The same process was followed in June 1992, at the end of the research period. Again students were approached for assistance. This time they were not paid. Four students,

## *Introduction and Methodology.*

all of whom spoke fluent Afrikaans, and my supervisor, Dr. Spiegel, assisted in the administration of questionnaires.

The questionnaires administered in June were modified from those of the previous November (see Appendix B). The section relating to patterns of residence and mobility prior to residence in Die Bos was excluded, and new sections regarding the absence of offspring, the presence of lodgers, and movement patterns within the settlement were included. The results of the latter section of the questionnaire were not particularly useful, as questions were designed to explore the movement patterns of lodgers renting space in houses in the settlement. However, since questionnaires were administered wherever possible to the 'head' of the household, rather than to lodgers, movement patterns of the latter tended not to be reflected in the survey data, which merely recorded the presence of lodgers rather than their movement patterns. Some movement of lodgers was evident from participant-observation techniques, however, and is discussed in chapters three and six.

Assistants were again required to return completed questionnaires to the caravan where I collated and checked them, and discussed assistants' observations. Of the 132 sites in Die Bos at the time, 118 were covered in the survey. The remaining fourteen were not occupied at the time of surveying. Some people usually resident on these sites were staying with friends elsewhere in the settlement at the time (and were therefore included as members of the shacks in which they were temporarily resident). Others were absent altogether from Die Bos. The survey thus covered a 100 percent sample of occupied residential sites. Participant-observation techniques both prior to and after the surveys meant that data relating to some of the movements of people usually resident in the unoccupied, and therefore unsurveyed, 14 sites was available. Survey data was later entered onto a database and analysed.

The problem of uncontrolled squatting in the Hottentots Holland Basin generated several other sources of data

## *Introduction and Methodology.*

pertaining to Die Bos and other settlements. In addition to the data derived from surveys I also had access to the informal records of the residents' committee which administered Die Bos. Two formal censuses of the settlement were undertaken by the committee during the research period, in response to requests made by the Cape Provincial Administration (CPA).<sup>3</sup> While the committee records were not always accurate, they were useful when examined in conjunction with my own survey data in tracing changes in personnel throughout the settlement. I thus had data pertaining to at least the names of heads of households for the entire settlement gathered in November 1991 (survey 1), March 1992 (committee census 1), June 1992 (survey 2), and July 1992 (committee census 2). By comparing the censuses and my survey data I was able to trace some of the domestic units which existed in Die Bos over time. Also available were results from a survey conducted by the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC - see Emmett, 1992) in March 1991, and another undertaken for the Stellenbosch municipality by an independent contractor in October 1990 (Moss in Emmett, 1992). Quantitative data relating to Die Bos was thus available from October 1990 to July 1992. (See figure 3.2 which describes the changing number of structures and people resident in Die Bos between October 1990 and July 1992).

Analysis of data derived from my two surveys, from those of other bodies (HSRC and Moss, in Emmett 1992) and from the committee records, enabled some comparison of the construction of the settlement across a short period of time. Information relating to the processes of change is however, not available from survey data undertaken on this scale, since the available quantitative data simply reflects an image of the settlement at given times over approximately two years. As Ellen (1984:258) points out "the quality, extent or interconnectedness of social relationships" cannot be the subjects of surveys. Consequently, qualitative research conducted between November 1991 and June 1992 was particularly useful in that I was able to use the processes

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3. The CPA was proposing to build new site and service schemes near the Lwandle hostels and required demographic data to establish whether it was feasible to do so.

of change that I observed to explain some of the patterns which were evident from quantitative research methodologies. Qualitative research also enabled me to assess the validity of findings from the surveys

## 2. Qualitative Research Methods.

Between November 1991 and June 1992 I lived in Die Bos<sup>4</sup> in a caravan owned by the University of Cape Town. I also visited Die Bos once or twice a week between June and September 1992, and less frequently thereafter. The research period was broken intermittently owing to outbreaks of violence in the area and my own illness. I had been asked not to live in the settlement between Thursday nights and Monday mornings as rates of substance abuse and levels of violence, while always high, were particularly so during weekends.<sup>5</sup> Sporadic violence exploded early in January 1992 when gang-fighting after an attempted robbery at a local shebeen resulted in the deaths of three men. Members of the committee asked me to stay away from the settlement for two weeks, and thereafter to visit only during the day until the murders had been thoroughly investigated. Shortly after this I was also absent from the settlement for a month-long period whilst ill. During both absences I communicated with members of the Helderberg Advice Office (an organisation which acted as a facilitator for the squatters interactions with local authorities during the processes of attempted eviction), who kept me informed of events in the settlement.

Overall, I was resident in the settlement between November and December 1991, and from March 1992 until the end of May, with daily visits in early January 1992, and throughout June

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4. I did not ask for permission to reside on the land from the local landowner who was contesting the squatters' residence on the land, as I believed that this would give credence to his claims. This was reiterated by residents, the committee and the Helderberg Advice Office, who believed that the farmer did not hold title to the land and therefore could not evict the squatters. Apart from two visits by the local police to ascertain my presence and status as a researcher I experienced no overt opposition to living in Die Bos.

5. During the research, and subsequent to my moving out of the settlement, five people were killed in gang-related violence within the settlement, one woman was murdered in a domestic dispute and numerous others were injured during incidents of domestic violence.

and part of July of that year. I also visited once-weekly throughout August and part of September. From October 1992 to January 1993 I visited Die Bos at least twice a month, each time recording changes in the settlement and its personnel. Types of fieldwork, and the periods of residence are tabulated below:

**Figure 1.1 : Fieldwork periods and intensity.**

Period	Fieldwork	
	Qualitative	Quantitative
End Nov - middle Dec. 1991            1991	On site	Survey 1.
Jan 11-27 1992.	Visiting daily	
March - June 1992	On-site	<i>Census 1.</i>
July 1992	On-site/ visiting daily	Survey 2.  <i>Census 2.</i>
Aug - mid. Sept 1992	Visiting weekly	
Oct - Jan. 1992   1993	Visiting twice/month.	

On-site = living in caravan, Mondays to Thursdays.  
 Visiting = day-time visits.  
*Italics* indicates periods of data collection by the residents' committee.

**Intensive Research:**

I took up residence in Die Bos, having discussed my research with, and asked for residence permission from, the chairwoman of the settlement over the preceding two weeks. She had negotiated with residents of the settlement for acceptance of my presence and research prior to my arrival (I suspect that she used her position of authority to grant me access without having directly approached residents, although this is purely conjecture on my part), and she and her committee of seven people were present to introduce me to residents on the first night of my arrival. Prior to

## *Introduction and Methodology.*

that I had already attended a forum for squatters in the area, held by the Helderberg Advice Office, and met some of the members of the residence committee of Die Bos. I had also spent several hours examining the information pertaining to Die Bos held by the Advice Office, and visited the chairwoman in Die Bos at her home in the settlement. I was thus already familiar with some of the people and the history of the settlement before I began participant observation.

Below is an extract from my journal recording my first evening in Die Bos and the 'community meeting' at which I was introduced to residents in Die Bos:

So here I am sitting in my own house in a squatter camp. My supper is cooking on the gas stove . . . my paraffin lamp is on . . . and Poppy [the chairperson's daughter] has just drawn me a picture of her house - with light bulbs and smoke from the fire on which supper is being cooked . . . . The camp is surprisingly quiet considering there are 300 people here. I hear a radio or TV and occasional voices, and of course, noise from the road, but on the whole it's peaceful.

I got to meet the community tonight . . . . Dinah [the chairwoman of the residents committee] came to call me while I was cooking supper, saying that most of the people were ready. I walked out and found about 70 or so adults standing in the court-area near Dinah's house . . . . Dinah introduced me and then I chatted a bit . . . about the research and my assistants. Dinah then asked the people to be kind to me and not to hiss or blow kisses [i.e. not to harass me] . . . .

Although I had been introduced to numerous adults that evening, and in the preceding few days, they were initially reticent to talk to me, the more so because they had just been issued with eviction notices by a local (white) land-owner (see chapter 3 and footnote 4 in this chapter). As a result I concentrated on observation of a few households. By selecting seven domestic units, mostly those of neighbours, I was able to see who visited, who ate where, etc; in short, how the composition of domestic units changed over time. I learnt of social networks between those houses and others with which I was not familiar, and so

incorporated those new houses into the number of sites with which I interacted frequently. Eventually I was familiar with some 60 domestic units, of which I had regular contact with 44. I was also knowledgeable about events in several other houses, bringing to almost 100 the number of households with which I had some contact, although this contact varied in frequency, regularity and intensity of interaction.

In almost all instances it was children <sup>6</sup> who provided my entry into domestic units. Flocking to the caravan, they were daily visitors. I allowed them to draw and write, to play with toys and to sing. They drew pictures of their houses, and told me their life histories. From them I learnt that the residents had varied patterns of mobility, ranging from stable to rapid changes in residence. I later found these patterns reflected in adult movement histories (see chapter six). Children also told me their thoughts about living in Die Bos, reflecting some of the confusions and contradictions I later discovered were experienced by their parents. <sup>7</sup>

There was no prescribed sample of children from whom I obtained data. Each time a child whom I did not know arrived at the caravan, I elicited a name, the names of the child's parents or other adult with whom s/he lived, and where possible, other kin resident in Die Bos and elsewhere. As I came to know the children better I learnt more about their lives. Formal interviewing of children was not successful, as interviews rapidly became stilted and monosyllabic. Instead, I concentrated on observing

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6. The concept of childhood varies widely across cultures and through time (Cf Aries, 1962). In the Southern African context not even the definition of when a child was no longer a child was fixed, but was determined differentially across so-called 'race' categories. (Cf Burman, 1988). Throughout this text, therefore, I use 'children' and 'youth' interchangeably to refer solely to an age category; i.e. people under the age of 18.

7. A good example of this occurred when I asked the children what they called the settlement. I had been told by the chairwoman of Die Bos, among others, that the land on which the squatters were resident did not belong to a local landowner, Morkel, whose farm 'Die Bos' was adjacent to the settlement and who was attempting to evict the squatters. The answers to the question I put to the children varied, but the chairperson's daughter told me that the settlement was called 'Morkel's Bos', thus neatly summarising some of the ambiguity experienced by the residents about squatting on that land.

## *Introduction and Methodology.*

children's changing networks of interaction, and on meeting their 'significant adults' (i.e. the adults with whom they then resided and who were responsible for their well-being). In the end I knew some twenty children, and had brief life histories for eleven.

I did establish one formal forum of young people who met with me regularly. Five children, four of whom were girls, aged between the ages of thirteen and fifteen kept diaries for me for varying lengths of time. Two girls kept their daily diaries for two months, while the other two wrote when they wished. Only one boy was old enough and willing to join the group, but he was unable to participate for long as he left Die Bos to live with his maternal grandmother in February 1992. These five adolescents visited the caravan once a week for several weeks in the evenings, where they wrote up the events of the day and chatted about their expectations for the future. From them I learnt a great deal of what they believed to be the 'correct' way to behave, and what activities they considered appropriate for people of their age. I also learnt much about the movements of adults and other children within the settlement and beyond its boundaries through their talk and through eliciting genealogies of relatives.

The children were an important source of information in my research, as well as sources of access to adults. After I had been absent from the settlement for long periods it was the children who told me of events which had transpired in my absence. "Anna's 'man' is dead", "Jemima is living with us", "Ou Rose's house burnt down", "There was a fire down the road and four houses were burnt" were the cries with which I would be greeted. Children's input was crucial to my research, adding fuel to the argument that children are substantially more aware of their environment than they are usually given credit for (Cf Reynolds, 1989, 1991a, 1991b; Jones, 1991; Kotze, 1986).

One section of the population with which my interaction was initially extremely limited was the men. While others have

## *Introduction and Methodology.*

experienced sexual harassment in the field (Cf Waldman, n.d.), such harassment, while prevalent, did not pose major difficulties for me whilst resident in Die Bos, in part because the chairwoman had asked residents not to harass me. I was, however, discouraged from interacting with men in the settlement - mainly by female committee members who could not guarantee my safety when interacting with men (many of whom drank heavily). One man appointed himself as my guardian, and discretely followed me for the first few days of research, and later when I returned after a long absence. Each evening that I was resident in the settlement he would pass the caravan and check that I was indoors and the doors locked. I subsequently learnt that several other people, both men and women, covertly did the same. On the frequent occasions when obscenities or advances were made I either ignored them or responded loudly enough that others could hear, which usually resulted in an end to the suggestions <sup>8</sup>.

Adults were more reticent than children, and initially it was difficult to approach them. My first attempt to initiate records of fuel-use among ten women early in the research period failed, and even later was only partially successful. People did not have the time or inclination to keep detailed records for me, especially as they were not remunerated for doing so. Eventually I established formal interviews with several women introduced to me by the chairwoman, and prevailed upon them to keep fuel-logs (records of fuel-use) for me. Several neighbours also kept fuel-logs for intermittent periods. More effective than formal methods of data collection however, were informal discussions while performing household chores. I accompanied my neighbours wood-collecting, chatted while they washed dishes, washed clothes with them, shopped for them, and ferried people to hospital and town, following up brief chats in the car with visits to their homes. I also took people to nearby towns such as Stellenbosch, Eerste

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8. In addition to this, my Afrikaans was not sufficiently fluent to understand colloquial suggestions. I also retaliated when I felt that a situation was becoming too dangerous. For instance, on one occasion when my patience had been tried too sorely I hit the man making advances, and thereafter experienced no problems either with him or with other men.

Rivier, Sir Lowry's Pass Village and Macassar to visit kin, thus learning more of kinship and social networks.

I seldom conducted formal interviews with people, except while recording life histories. In part this was a deliberate strategy which I felt to be appropriate given tensions in the settlement over potential evictions. It was also a function of my incomplete knowledge of Afrikaans<sup>9</sup>. As Agar (1980:90) has it, "In the informal, everything is negotiable". By this he means that the stress in informal interaction does not lie on the researcher to pre-determine the direction of interaction. Instead the strength of informal conversations is that they enable informants to direct the conversation towards topics which interest them, and in so-doing to illuminate something of their central concerns. I therefore preferred to begin a conversation centering on topical issues (such as murders, abuse, alcohol, and so on) or on information given to me by children, and thence to obtain or verify data<sup>10</sup>. I was incorporated into residents' networks of support and reciprocity, especially concerning material needs, such as transport to and fees for emergency hospital visits. By establishing links of loan and repayment I met numerous people, mainly women in the beginning, but later men. I, too, borrowed and repaid goods from people (mainly women) in the settlement, creating still other social networks from which to extrapolate data. Whilst not objective anthropology in the way Malinowski (1922) has advocated, this type of interaction has been used elsewhere to good effect (see for example, Stack, 1974), and was certainly useful in gaining access to various people in Die Bos. In addition I attended funerals, church services in the settlement, fund-raising bazaars held by some of the committee members, made hospital visits and supported home industries.

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9. Where necessary people in the settlement would translate conversations into English or would talk to me in English. However, I did not wish to use interpreters when discussing personal matters. I therefore elicited such data informally.

10. All of the data which is presented in this ethnography has informed consent from the relevant persons. Consent has also been given to the use of respondents' first names and nicknames.

## *Introduction and Methodology.*

Throughout informal interactions my camera was a useful ethnographic tool. I frequently took photographs of people and the settlement, and was invited to many rituals as 'photographer'. Such occasions included the ritual initiation of a traditional healer, the opening of a community hall in the settlement, Christmas and Easter functions, fund-raising bazaars, and funerals. As Collier (in Fetterman, 1989:83) has it:

Photography is a legitimate abstracting process in observation . . . . It is one of the first steps in evidence refinement that turns raw circumstances into data that are manageable in research analysis. Photographs are precise records of material reality [in this case giving a record of changes in physical structures and their layout in the settlement].

Through the medium of photography I met numerous people who would otherwise have tended to keep their distance from me, but, keen to have photographs, invited me to their houses and introduced me to kin. Much of my data collection was thus precipitated through photographing people and the settlement. The photographs also record a useful social history, a pictorial history of physical alterations in the layout of the settlement which reflects changing social interactions.

My attempts at formal data-gathering, such as spot observations (by which to record activities throughout the day - see Reynolds, 1991a) were unsuccessful, as were attempts to have children recall activities from the previous day. Children invariably told me that they had 'played' the previous day, even when I had observed them collecting water and fuel or leaving the settlement with adults. Monitoring daily activities of men and women using spot observations was difficult as they tended to stop whatever they were doing when I arrived. In part this was because my grasp of Afrikaans was limited, so people spent a considerable quantity of time explaining things to me, and were thus unable to work simultaneously. I did record the activities of my neighbours, but not of other residents in the settlement. Other more successful formal methods of

## *Introduction and Methodology.*

data collection used besides the surveys were children's diaries, life history records and kin diagrams of both children and adults, and formal life-history interviews with neighbours and acquaintances. The latter comprised questions relating to previous residence, present job or income status, and changing personnel status within houses. I also enquired about kin networks and social resource networks existent within and beyond the confines of Die Bos. Fuel records kept intermittently by 14 women told me a little about the financial affairs of domestic units, reflected in the changing quality of foods prepared and fuels used in preparation.

For the most part, however, I relied on informal methods of data collection. In many ways this was an advantage, as I found that formal methods of interviewing and recording (such as interview schedules and tape recorders) tended to discourage conversation. In the politically unstable state of residence precipitated by eviction notices, it was not advisable to be seen to be recording information at the beginning of the research period, and when I later tried to use a tape recorder during conversations, people frequently asked me to turn it off. I therefore jotted notes throughout the day in the privacy of the caravan, and in the evenings wrote them up into a diary. Agar (1980) notes the various problems associated with the keeping of fieldwork diaries, in particular the difficulties of accurate recall over a long period. I tried to counter this by verifying data wherever possible by observation or by discussion with people concerned and, if appropriate, with others in the settlement.

Residents of Die Bos were not my only informants. As Ellen (1984:67) points out:

It is becoming more and more widely accepted that the 'village community' is a myth . . . . This is not to say that villages do not exist: of course they do, but rarely if ever as isolated, self-contained entities. In fact they exist as part of a wider society . . . .

## *Introduction and Methodology.*

In an effort to situate Die Bos within the wider society of the Hottentot's Holland Basin, I also conducted research beyond the settlement, informally interviewing residents of other squatter settlements in the area, kin of residents in Die Bos, home-owners in Somerset West, and adolescents who visited the settlement in search of drugs. With approval from the residents' committee of Die Bos, I contacted the land-owner who was trying to evict them so as to document his side of the story. Unfortunately, despite frequent attempts, a meeting did not materialise.

In addition to interacting with non-residents I met with members of various organisations involved in Die Bos: the Helderberg Advice Office; committee leaders from other settlements; church leaders who visited Die Bos. I discussed the administration of Die Bos with representatives from HISCA (the Helderberg Interim Squatters Civic Association) and members of TEAM (The Ecumenical Action Movement), a development organisation concentrating on grassroots participation. I also conducted formal interviews with estate agents selling property near to and adjoining squatter settlements in Somerset West, and with the Town Clerk of Somerset West.

The findings presented below, then, are an amalgamation of data derived from different data-collection techniques, both formal and informal, and from residents within the settlement and people beyond its boundaries. While I concentrate on processes and changes in domestic units within the settlement, such change takes place within (and is a product of) the wider context of the South African political-economy. It is the context of oppression which characterised *apartheid* which has impacted historically on the formation and continued existence of the settlement, and which continues to have a direct effect on the people who reside in Die Bos (see chapter three). Thus, although the thesis is based in the micro-level interactions of individuals on a day-to-day basis, it is also situated within a macro-level context of change and uncertainty,

*Introduction and Methodology.*

which provide the background to an understanding of the issues presented in this thesis.

## Chapter 2.

### Competing Tools of Analysis.

This chapter locates the processes of what I have called 'domesticity' - practices and functions of (re)production and consumption at the micro-level - in a body of literature describing human social organisation and interaction. Given the high rates of fluidity which were evident in the settlement in which I conducted research (see chapters 3-6), the present chapter is structured around the problem of locating and describing such phenomenon within a theoretical discourse.

Theoretical approaches to the study and description of micro-level interactions have tended to contrast the processes of individual action and motivation with right-generation and activity in groups. Both criteria are important in individual decision-making patterns, particularly in so far as these are related to processes of domesticity. However, anthropological approaches, while locating individuals within society, have tended to focus on either group or individual rather than on both.

In the chapters which follow I explore the relationships between 'moral' (group-oriented) and 'instrumental' (ego-centred) activity as they were expressed towards and through processes of domestic group formation and dissolution in Die Bos. Morality here involves the need for, and culturally-defined and sanctioned processes of, providing for others through group interaction and reproduction.

Instrumentality, on the other hand, involves concerns with maintaining oneself, with providing for oneself and one's own needs. In so far as the literature which I use to describe and locate this ethnography in a theoretical approach is concerned, 'household' tends to exemplify concerns with morality, while 'network', with its emphasis on ego-centeredness, characterises instrumentality. While recognising that the two approaches cannot be separated when actual social activity is observed, there is nonetheless a

tension between the theoretical approaches. In order to examine the ways in which domesticity was diffused in Die Bos, this chapter is divided into two parts. The first section deals with households, in particular critiques of conventional household usage, and domestic development cycles. The second part explores network approaches. The division in the chapter is not merely fortuitous; it reflects the moral/instrumental dichotomy which pervades literature dealing with micro-level dynamics.

As I show in this ethnography, domestic units in the informal settlement in which I conducted my research are best described in processual terms (i.e. terms which take account of changes over time, and of the impact of individual agency within domestic units). This is because the boundaries of households in Die Bos were not fixed, and roles of individuals within the units (and indeed, the personnel themselves) changed rapidly over time. Rapid change was a direct result of high turnover of personnel within the settlement, and between it and other areas in the Cape, which in turn were a function of low land- and income-security, high levels of violence and limited material resources (save for access to other people and their resources). Thus network approaches, which have individuals and their situational requirements as a central theme, appear to offer a more useful way of describing the fluidity of social interactions in Die Bos. Note, however, that interaction took place through the processes of generating and dissolving households, and that while many of the units which I observed in the settlement were constituted for instrumental reasons, they were also driven by moral imperatives. Note also that, as we shall see, there are difficulties in the literature in distinguishing between groups and networks<sup>1</sup>, which render use of the network concept extremely problematic. Both households and

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1. Not least because, as Lomnitz (1977:132) points out, you cannot ask an informant about his or her reciprocity network, since it does not objectively exist. The same applies to households, although in most instances if one were to ask about the latter, one would obtain a list of at least those people who were co-residential. Households (like networks) do not exist 'out there', but are rather a simple, shorthand means of allowing the researcher to describe some of the complexities of social interaction. As a result they are an approximation rather than a reflection of reality.

individual patterns of interaction were important in shaping the ways in which domesticity occurred and was transformed in Die Bos, for, although the etic boundaries of households were difficult to determine, (some) people did operate with an idea of belonging in certain domestic units (see chapter 5).<sup>2</sup>

**Households: International literature and conventional use.**

There are essentially two ways in which household is addressed in literature pertaining to social organisation. The most prevalent form is in terms of structural attributes, whence the household describes putative social structures within and between which human relationships occur. Thus 'the household' is presumed to be the locus of the relationships of a distinct group of people who interact (both among themselves and with members of other, like groups) in terms of their belonging and status in that unit. Such interaction can be said to imply morality, in that people act as members of a group, in terms of their status and roles in those groups. The problem with the structure-orientated usage of household is that it assumes that households are distinct from one another, and that change does not occur rapidly. In other words, households-as-structures do not take into account processes of individual self-interest, where individuals may act in ways which are contrary to group maintenance in order to maximise their own advantages. When households do alter, conventional household models presume that change occurs in an orderly and predictable manner (for example through some form of universal developmental model), and in ways which are therefore directly comparable with changes in other households across cultures and time. Structural approaches to the study of interaction thus assume too much similarity

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2. It should be noted that in any social interaction which occurs over time there are elements of both morality and instrumentality. My concern here is with a body of literature which distinguishes between the two approaches. The present chapter therefore addresses the issue of individual and group roles in social relationships as though they occur independently of one another, because this is how they are presented in much literature. The remainder of the ethnography will, I hope, show how the two concerns are intricately linked and highly adapted to the material and social conditions of life in Die Bos.

in domestic units, whilst simultaneously disguising variability within domestic units, and in particular disguising the role which individuals play in group formation and dissolution (cf. Guyer, 1981:89; Peters, 1983).

Household has been used as an analytic term in literature throughout the world. Laslett (1969, quoted in Netting, Wilk and Arnould, 1984: xiii) argues that "a convincing case can be made out in favour of the household as the fundamental unit in pre-industrial European society for social, economic, even educational and political purposes". (See also Laslett, 1972). Similarly Netting (*ibid*) argues that:

[t]he family household is an institution sensitive to minor, short-term fluctuations in the socio-economic environment and a prime means by which individuals adapt to the subtle shifts in opportunities and constraints that confront them.

Despite the ease with which it is used as an analytic term however, there is no single widely accepted definition of household. Frequently conflated with 'family' (as above), both terms are surrounded by confusion, not least in respect of how they are defined and presumed to operate as distinct social entities. The distinction between family and household is important for the purposes of this ethnography, for domestic units in Die Bos were not necessarily the locus of relationships based solely on kinship.

The confusion between kinship and household is, according to Netting et al (1984:xxviii) due to the confusion of morphology and activity. It is also, in part, a product of ethnocentric perspectives of human relationships, particularly those promulgated by anthropologists raised in traditions of European and American anthropology and culture. Stemming partially from a concern with structure and function, anthropology in the West has, by and large, tended to view social relationships as occurring within and between definite and distinguishable social groupings, each defined by visible boundaries. Theories of household

functioning were thus derived in part from an attempt to explain variations in the ways in which people of different cultures (the now ubiquitous "other" - see Kuper, 1988) performed particular social, political and economic functions, especially in so far as these concerned production, consumption, the allocation of resources, and reproduction. The highly structured theories of descent prevalent in the early parts of this century, which sought boundaries through their emphasis on corporateness, gave way to concerns with more micro-level interactions, especially after critiques of lineage theory showed the limitations of analyses based solely on kinship (cf. Leach, 1963; Barnes 1962). The problem was, as ever, one of the unit of study. In order to represent social relationships accurately the number of people involved in research had to be limited, but it had to be limited in a meaningful way. 'The family' - people related by kin and affinal ties - became a common unit of study, particularly among urban researchers. At any point in time 'the family' was presumed to be finite; an autonomous, independently operating unit of reproduction, production and consumption.

Much early anthropological literature took as its basis the assumption that households comprising families were a universal phenomenon (see Laslett, 1972), and that differences in residential and commensal patterns must therefore have functional (i.e. economic) value and meanings. From this it was a short step to attempting to delineate the variations of residential and commensal patterns and determining reasons for the variation (see Flandrin, 1976). The result was a typology which remains in common usage today; the 'extended family', 'nuclear families', 'stem' and 'joint' families, 'co-resident family members', and so on. Notwithstanding the frequency with which such typologies are used (see for example Rowland, 1991; Jabbra, 1991; Weinstein, Sun, Chang and Friedman, 1990; Douglass, 1984), and the apparent cohesion implied in the terms, few are used in any consistent manner throughout the vast literature pertaining to 'family' and 'household'.

Typologies also tend to ignore social processes which occur within and between domestic units, presenting households as static and unchanging over time. As Netting et al put it: "The household was akin to the kinship system - and just as resistant to change" (1984:xviii). Their book indicates that there are numerous problems with the use of the household/family concept. Firstly, people do not always base social interactions around precepts of blood and affinal ties. Frequently 'the family' or 'household', however defined, is of secondary importance in individuals' daily activities which centre around other institutions, especially businesses and the interactions which occur in and around them. A too-close focus on household thus ignores processes of individual agency in favour of structure. Secondly, the definition of family and family function is not sufficiently broad to make sense of those people who, while dead or absent<sup>3</sup> are still considered to be active participants in family life.<sup>4</sup>

Households and family may be conflated in terms of co-residence, but, as Netting et al state, "physical location, shared activities and kinship need not be empirically overlapping" (1984:xx). It is at this point that the analytic distinction between households and family can be drawn; households need not comprise kin. Carter (1984) points out that it is essential to differentiate between the household and the kin components of domestic groups. He argues that the household is the task-oriented dimension of domestic groups, differing from kinship in that it is defined by:

. . . shared tasks of production and/or consumption, regardless of whether its members are linked by kinship or marriage or are coresidential (p. 45).

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3. One such example is 'ancestors' of many African societies; people who, while deceased, continue to have a vital role to play in the interactions of living relatives. Such ancestors retain rights to the products of relative's labour, and are considered to be members of domestic units, in absentia, as it were. See for example, Hunter, 1958; Kopytoff, 1971. Migrant labourers also retained rights in domestic units from which they were absent - cf. Ferguson, 1985; Murray, 1981; Spiegel, 1982, 1990, my discussion later in this chapter.

4. However, Murray's definition (see 1976:55-56, and my discussion below) may be sufficiently broad to include these kinds of personnel variations.

Barlett neatly, but necessarily rather ambiguously, sums up the wealth of conflicting theories relating to households, stating that the household has been demonstrated to be:

. . . a flexible component of human cultural organisation, exhibiting a wide variety of forms, providing a framework for many types of activities, and responding to different pressures from the larger political economy (1989:1).

For the purposes of the ethnography which follows, I describe households in the terms that both Bartlett and Carter use, although my use of the term has been tempered with respect to a body of critical literature developed in the past ten to fifteen years, particularly (but not solely) in Southern Africa. The application of the developmental cycle model to systems of production in Southern Africa has, as we shall see, led to serious questions being posed about the nature and reliability of household models (Spiegel, 1982; Murray, 1987; Guyer and Peters, 1987), while the variations in size and stability of domestic units over time has emphasised the need for a reassessment of uncritical usage of household as a discrete social entity. This is particularly evident in Die Bos, where large fluctuations in household membership and commensal patterns were recorded over a short period of time.

Critiques of household have been levelled at the failure of the approach adequately to describe movement (Carter, 1984; Spiegel, 1990), absenteeism (Spiegel, 1990; see also Murray, 1981), differentiation between domestic units (Spiegel, 1980; Peters, 1983; see also Bozzoli, 1991), and differentiation within domestic units (Guyer, 1981; Guyer and Peters, 1987). Criticism has also been levelled at ahistorical usage of households: in order to reflect social relationships accurately, all units of study need to be located within the larger political-economy of a region (see Murray, 1981; James, 1985 and Spiegel, 1982, 1990; all of whom explore the social location of households within the macro-level context. Also Martin and Beitel, 1987 and Smith, Wallerstein and Evers (1984), who explore households

as a manifestation of particular social relationships within the world economy<sup>5</sup>). In addition to this the interactions between and within units needs also be examined (see Guyer, 1981). In the absence of data which locates households firmly within particular contexts and details relationships between individuals, domestic units and the macro-context, Wolf's criticism (1982) of the bounded society as a "pool-hall" world in which bounded entities exist isolated from and independent of the rest of the world - becomes especially pertinent.

One approach which is a partial exception to the above critique of households is that which centres on processes of change as a result of 'developmental cycles'. The use of such cycles, originating in the West with Goody (1958) and Fortes (1958), and intensified with the translation and publication of Chayanov's (1925) Peasant Farm Organisation in 1966 (Thorner, Kerblay and Smith, 1966), has been widespread in both international and Southern African literature. Such studies are crucial in understanding the ways in which households systematically change over time. Modifications of domestic units were seen to be tied up with the processes by which households reproduced themselves in a standard 'life cycle'. Thus it was recognised that domestic units were intricately linked with the status of personnel within households.

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5. Arguments presented by Smith, Wallerstein and Evers (1984) and Martin and Beitel (1987) are prime examples of world-system economic theories that build on the determinism of Engels' argument. As Smith et al have it:

. . . the form of 'households' as we know them today . . . are not 'responses' to a capitalist world, but part and parcel of that world. Households are seen neither as isolates nor as small units of social organisation related to national economies, but instead as basic units of an emerging world system (1984:7-8).

Martin and Beitel (1987) reflect this, arguing that the family/household/domestic unit is the basic unit of consumption and production of labour and its products. Like Engels, both arguments thus envisage the domestic unit as being a product of and for capitalist production and consumption. The 'family' resident in 'the household' thus becomes the basic reproductive unit in which future labour for the capitalist enterprise is generated, nurtured and socialised into dependence on the products of that labour.

Through the developmental cycle model, domestic groups could be viewed as responsive to changing social climates. Chayanov (1966, original 1925), for example, explored Russian peasant production in terms of family-household and the 'natural history' of the family through a full generational cycle (i.e. from marriage of one couple to the marriage of their offspring). As he pointed out, "the upper and lower limits of . . . economic activity" of the family farm was defined by "family composition" (p. 53). His argument thus parallels that of Fortes, which saw households as going through a process of development "analogous to the growth of a living organism" (Fortes, 1958:2). Chayanov's discussion of peasant production also includes a section which deals with the difficulties of defining the family, which is "far from always equated with the biological concept underlying it and is supplemented in content by a series of economic and household complications" (Chayanov, 1966:54. For further discussion see pp. 55ff). His analysis had a great impact on studies of peasant production and the household during the 1970s and 1980s, especially in relation to on-going concern with Marxian economics (see Tannenbaum, 1984), and the formalist-substantivist debate (*ibid*). The fluidity of social relationships thus altered structures that helped to order human interaction.

However, the fit between theory and experiences on the ground was not accurate. For the most part the model described by Fortes (1958) was ahistorical (see also McGough's critique of Chayanov's developmental cycle model, 1984), and did not allow for regional variations nor for uneven relationships of power and production (see Spiegel, 1982; Sharp, 1987). The model's failing was quite simply that it tended to replace one typology with another, providing evidence, like the descent models, of the "butterfly collecting" practices which Leach (1963) so deplored.

Critiques of developmental cycles focused on the ways in which divisions of labour within and beyond households were assumed to be natural, so that women were automatically associated with domestic functions in the private realm, while men were assumed to be sole actors in the public domain.<sup>6</sup> According to McGough (1984:193):

Chayanov's model, by itself, is not concerned with the fact of differentiation within the domestic units of production. By treating the family<sup>7</sup> as a more or less autonomous, homogeneous unit, the model does not deal with male exploitation of females and the exploitation of juniors by their elders. Such facts are crucial, however, to the functioning of the system . . . .

Thus, one problem which appears to be inherent in domestic cycles is that they fail to explore adequately the ways in which individuals operationalise domestic groups in order to exert their own control within them. Also the models tend not to explore the ways in which boundaries of domestic units are fluid and shifting, constantly being realigned with changes in political, social and economic climates.

Of course, it is possible to construct a gender-sensitive, historically-located model of developmental cycles and households, and there are several instances of research reporting on domesticity in Africa which have achieved this (see especially Murray, 1981 and later discussion in this chapter). Nevertheless, as Guyer points out, the household has generally been used as an unambiguous unit of analysis because underlying its use is an assumption that it is homogeneous, and governed by the laws of economics, such that the household "control[s] resources and [makes] joint decisions about their allocation" (1981:98). Guyer (1981:89) therefore notes:

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6. See Moore (1988) for an excellent review of responses to Engels and others. Boserup (1970) explores women's roles in agricultural production, showing that women were not solely confined to the private realm, but that female oppression was related to access to land and to agricultural practices. See also Meillasoux (1981).

7. Note confounding between household and family here.

. . . it is becoming clear that there is no set of stages through which family structure, economic conditions, fertility, urbanization, and so on, change together, in step, and in the same direction.

#### Households, developmental cycles and African research.

Many of the theories pertaining to household structure, formation and function described in the international literature have been applied throughout Africa.<sup>8</sup> Domestic units have variously been seen as units of reproduction, particularly of a workforce for capitalist markets (notably for South African mines - cf. Wolpe, 1972); as units of consumption; and as units of production within a rural (and, it is often implied, pre-capitalist) mode. Critical research relating to household in Southern Africa has mainly been conducted in rural areas, where the exigencies of the migrant labour system have been most visible. Much of the data is fairly recent in origin. For example, Murray's seminal work, Families Divided (1981) was published only 12 years ago. Questions relating to the effects of labour migration (mainly male) in the labour reserves of Southern Africa (see for example, Beinart, 1982; Bundy, 1979) have resulted in research concerning the effects of absenteeism on migrants' domestic units which remained in the labour reserves. Describing the effects of labour migration in Pondoland between 1900 and 1950, Beinart (1980:86) states that "migrancy, along with other changes in the economy, created tensions over the control of resources within the family".

Research into such tensions produced exciting findings. Murray (1981), for example, shows how families remaining in Lesotho while their menfolk became migrants were differentially dependent on remittances. The processes of labour-sending have moral concerns at their root; as Murray (1981:102) points out: "A man's absence as a migrant labourer is a condition of his family's survival". In other

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8. Here I concentrate mainly on Southern African material.

words, in order for rural families to maintain their status as families, members of those units had to leave the physical confines of the homestead so as to assure its continued survival. Spiegel, too, illustrates the extreme dependence of non-migrants on remittances from migrant workers (1980, 1982, 1990), and the practice of 'dispersing dependents' (1987) in order to maximise gain and spread remittances over as wide a social field as possible (See also Sharp, 1987; Nelson, 1987; Kotze, 1986). However, the degree of dependence upon migrant remittances and the ways in which this was dealt with have differed not only between domestic units but also by geographic location. Initial uncritical application of data across Southern Africa meant that some authors ignored regional differences (e.g. Giliomee, 1982 and Spiegel's response, 1982). In response to, and as a warning against, inappropriate applications of the development cycle model, Sharp and Spiegel (1985) discuss geographic and social differentiation in remittance receipts, showing regional variation in processes of labour-sending and remittance-receiving. There is, nonetheless, a common theme in all the arguments: that domestic units are fundamentally altered by the absence and return of migrants (see also Ferguson, 1985 and 1990).

In order to account for the rights and obligations which absent migrants create and (sometimes) maintain within rural households,<sup>9</sup> two categories of people who exercise rights in and fulfil obligations for rural domestic units have been defined. The *de facto* category comprises people considered to be members of a household who are actually present in a unit at the time of research. *De jure* membership, on the other hand, consists of "people who are emically regarded as members of a particular domestic or residential grouping even if they are temporarily absent" (Spiegel, 1990:258).

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9. Rights of this nature are usually retained by remittances and through children, wives and cattle (the latter being used to generate social relationships with other men).

In this regard, Murray argues:

It is helpful to retain the term household . . . because the household remains the unit of economic viability whether or not its members are physically dispersed at any one time (1981:48).

Murray's definition of household recognises the complex interactions which occur between resident and non-resident household members, and is especially useful for understanding social relationships engendered around domesticity in Die Bos. A household may incorporate non-resident, non-commensal members, so that it is:

. . . an aggregation of individuals within which are concentrated the flows of income and expenditure generated by the activities of its members (1976:54-55).

The concept of *de jure* and *de facto* membership has enabled sensitive studies of how the links between migrants and their rural bases were sustained through time. However, it should be borne in mind that any person who was a *de jure* member of a household in a rural area, was likely to be simultaneously a *de facto* member of another residential (if not commensal, productive and reproductive) aggregation elsewhere. Thus, while the distinction between *de jure* and *de facto* has been used to good effect in places,<sup>10</sup> the usefulness of an analytic concept which enables one category of people to hold different types of membership in more than one household simultaneously has become questionable. In this regard it is useful to explore a case described by Kotze (1986:20): S.S, aged eight, lived with his mother when she returned from the urban area in which she was employed. During her absence he was supposed to live with his maternal grandmother, but instead resided with other kin (both maternal and paternal) or a friend. As Kotze (*ibid*) points out, the child generated "multiple membership" in an attempt to overcome the insecurity of his residential association and filial link with his mother. This case provides a neat summation of the problem with the *de jure*

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10. See for example Ferguson's discussion of the 'Bovine Mystique' [1985 and 1990], which explores the relationships that absent migrants and rural kin create through cattle.

and *de facto* concepts, for the child does not appear to fit either category. In effect he is activating personal networks to generate instrumental ends.

The process of generating multiple domestic memberships was widespread in Die Bos, where household membership changed so frequently that it was difficult to enumerate. However, unlike migrants, once individuals in Die Bos left the domestic unit in which they were latterly staying, they did not consider themselves to hold inalienable rights in those households, although they recognised that rights to residence and commensality could be re-created (see chapter 5).

It seems to me that what is more important than knowing whether a person is a *de jure* or a *de facto* member of a household is exploring the ways in which membership of households change over time. In the case of migrants that would involve extensive longitudinal studies (Murray, 1981; 1992). In Die Bos however, fluidity and movement were so great that the ways in which membership of domestic units were constituted and changed over time are easily accessible. Thus, knowing that a person is a *de facto* member of one household whilst also a *de jure* member of another does not explain the processes which have led to that situation, nor does it enable greater understanding of interpersonal relationships within and between households. While useful in that the *de jure* and *de facto* dimensions have enabled a clearer perspective of how rural domestic units cope (or do not) in the face of unrelenting poverty, the distinction does not have relevance for every context, and, as we shall see, is not applicable in the informal settlement in which I conducted my research, where residence and commensal rights were ephemeral, and morality, expressed through household formation, was tempered with individual movements in search of improved living conditions.

Despite the normative idea that particular people ought to belong in households, Murray's book Families Divided (1981) is important in that it introduced to Southern African literature the effects of macro-level policies on the micro-level, daily functioning of small groups of people. He presents a cohesive analysis of how labour patterns in the reserves were reproduced and sustained by patterns of migration and remittance, patterns which appeared cyclical in the political-economic climate of Lesotho in the 1970s. He argues:

The developmental cycle is a concept whose analytical strength lies in its capacity to reconstruct observations of the complexity and variety of everyday life within a temporal frame (1981:247).

When used in conjunction with an appropriate developmental cycle model, household was an extremely powerful unit of analysis, as Murray's and Spiegel's work has shown. Frequently, however, household was used uncritically in much the same way as descent theory had been in the past. Little attention was paid to rural heterogeneity, nor to differentiation within households, prompting Spiegel's response (1982), and that of Sharp and Spiegel (1985), which pointed out that households in different regions were not comparable. The fluidity of household construction was also frequently ignored. The developmental cycle model was shown to be context-specific (Spiegel, 1982; Sharp, 1987). The developmental cycle has, it is argued, been applied to Southern Africa with little concern for material (Spiegel, 1982; Murray, 1987; Guyer, 1981) and historical (Peters, 1983) differentiation in areas other than those for which it was originally devised.

Concurrent with reification of the Lesotho version of the developmental cycle, households *per se* were unquestioningly applied as one of the central tools of analysis in both rural and urban studies in Southern Africa. Studies centering on the village (Krige, 1988), 'ward' (Delius,

1983: Schapera, 1947) and other political organisations were replaced by those which took households as their main focus; the household unit being sufficiently small to allow detailed examination of interpersonal relationships. <sup>11</sup>

In part the emphasis on homogeneity among households prompted a major critique of household approaches to studies of social organisation. The feminist critique of household rests on the fact that divisions of labour within households were not recognised as changing over time (Moore, 1988), and that individuals' personalities and experiences were seen as unimportant to the continued existence of the unit over time. The treatment of households as internally static units tended to ignore intra-unit social and material differentiation and to limit the crucial depiction of movement. As I show in chapter 4, internal differentiation of labour within domestic units is crucial to an understanding of processes of change within such units over time. Similarly, patterns of movement altered the appearance of domestic units substantially in Die Bos (see chapter 6).

It is personal mobility which provides our entry point into an understanding of the fluidity of domestic units, and the role of individuals in determining the shape of domestic interaction over time. This returns us to the core issues of morality and instrumentality, in that movement in Southern Africa (especially migration) has been crucial to the continued existence of rural households. Indeed, movement provides an important critique of uncritical use of developmental cycle models and of household, both of which give an overwhelming impression of homogeneity. Not only is movement an overt context of the functioning of labour-sending rural areas, but high rates of mobility are also prevalent among and between domestic units in urban areas. Dewar, Rosmarin and Watson (1991) state that 85 percent of respondents presently resident in Khayelitsha, Cape Town's

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11. As I show later in this chapter however, there are occasions where household is too small a unit of study to make sense of some social relationships, in particular those related to agricultural production (cf. Quinlan, 1983).

sprawling new shanty-town, had resided elsewhere in the Western Cape prior to Khayelitsha (1991:32), and that:

In addition to these macro patterns of movement from area to area, there is also considerable micro movement within areas such as Khayelitsha: movement occurs from shack areas to core housing and to areas of formally provided home ownership units (1991:32).

My own research in Die Bos indicates high rates of mobility within the settlement. Over a seven month period 66 out of 100 domestic units experienced personnel changes of some sort. While some of the movement I recorded can be attributed to changes of the type described by domestic cycles (such as marriage), much of the mobility of residents in Die Bos had other root causes, closely linked to insecurity of tenure, and to violence. Emmett's report (1992), focusing on the whole Hottentot's Holland Basin, including Die Bos, also depicts vast population movements throughout the area, both of people born locally and those born beyond the boundaries of the Western Cape. This kind of data is not unique. Studies of informal settlements all report similarly high rates of mobility experienced by residents (cf. Maree and Cornell, 1976; Dept. Community Health, 1990).

In addition to conventional descriptions of adult movement patterns, those of children are able to tell us a great deal about how unstable systems of domestic interaction are. Reynolds has shown (1989) that no child in her sample of 15 seven-year olds in Crossroads, Cape Town, had lived in less than 3 homes. Children who participated in Jones' research (1991) had been separated from their parents for extensive periods, and had experienced frequent movements themselves (see Kotze, 1986, van der Waal, 1992), resulting in drastic alteration to the structures and functions of the domestic units into and out of which they moved. Spiegel (1987), Sharp, (1987) and Izzard (1985) report changes in Southern African practices of child-rearing as a result of movements of both adults and children, as does Nelson (1987) from data derived from East Africa.

All of the above data has important ramifications for our use of 'households' as an analytic concept. When the data compiled by these researchers is combined with critiques such as that of Guyer (1981:89) who argues that, like lineages, households may "disguise far too much of the variability in the way things get done", the household concept becomes increasingly opaque. As Peters (1983:105), following Guyer (1981) points out:

. . . many of the dynamic processes that are crystallized in particular household forms or particular configurations of disadvantage cannot be grasped by taking households as primary units of analysis. To do so often leads to erroneous conclusions because critically important relations *within* households and *between* them are not taken into sufficient account.

Feminist critics in particular posed vital questions for the usefulness of the household concept, arguing that relationships within households (see Guyer, 1981), particularly the labour-based interactions of women and children (see Schildkrout, 1983), were obscured by too great a focus on the household unit. Thus as Moore (1988:59) states: "Feminist critics have argued that an overemphasis on the bounded household leads to a misleading conception of households as autonomous units". The relationships between men and women, and later among women, provided a crucial starting place for explorations into activities and power relationships within households.<sup>12</sup> Power relationships between men and women, between old and young women, between adults and children, and among children, all indicated that households were not bounded nor homogeneous units which

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12. The literature which deals with power relationships between women is too large to go into here, but see Moore (1988:43ff), for a succinct summary of feminist critiques of households. A facet of the feminist critique is the argument that frequently 'gender-sensitive' research assumes that women form a homogeneous category which can then be used as an analytic category without further examination or differentiation. However, feminists critics argue, that since women are not a homogeneous category, "'women' cannot stand as a sociologically relevant category of analysis" (Moore, 1988:80). Females thus experience different kinds of social relationships, depending on their stage in the life cycle, among other things. For a sensitive analysis of women's relationships with other women see Jeffrey, Jeffrey and Lyon (1989), who show that in households in India power is not solely concentrated in the hands of men: older women - particularly husband's mothers - are able to exert control over the activities of their younger daughters-in-law, who repeat the process in the future.

could be compared directly with one another. This was further stressed with the recognition that power relationships intercepted and crosscut households. As Wong (1984:59) comments, the stability of household as a unit of consumption and reproduction rests on an acceptance of the unequal nature of access to productive resources. <sup>13</sup>

The crisis in applying analytic constructs which did not fit data on domestic arrangement reached a climax in 1987, when a special edition of Development and Change was devoted to the topic. Here the notion of household as 'process' rather than as 'structure' was reintroduced (Guyer and Peters, 1987, after Guyer, 1981). Processual visions of householding appear to offer the way forward for a research unit which had lost much of its predictive and explanatory power. Since we are dealing with "populations engaged in continuous cultural build-up, breakdown, anabolism, catabolism, rearrangement, organisation, reorganisation" (Wolf, 1981 in Guyer, 1981:89), our terms of analysis must reflect such social fluidity. Essentially process-oriented models view households as one of many possible forms of social organisation, each of which have their own roles to play in structuring interaction and survival, and in the description of these. Process-oriented visions of household are better able to take into account material and historical differentiation and the impact of people's movements when exploring social relationships than are conventional uses of household.

'Process' is not a new idea. Much of the data relating to process and change already exists in covert form within Southern African ethnography. Changes in personnel and functions of various institutions have been crucial to anthropological studies, even early ones. Especially important in view of the failure to explore change in other literature relating to Africa (see for example Evans

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13. Wong argues that household definitions of this nature are of necessity patriarchal, which then makes incomprehensible the preponderance of female-headed households in some contexts (particularly among the poor, the rural families of migrants and among sections of the population experiencing rapid urbanisation - see for example, Stack, 1974).

Pritchard's depiction of social relationships among the Nuer, 1940) was Hunter's Reaction to Conquest (1936/1958) which showed that responses to colonial intrusion in Pondoland were not homogeneous, and had effects which were felt at levels beyond that of the village (i.e. at homestead level, although this is not an overt aspect of her description). Beinart (1982) has expanded on the idea of heterogeneous and small-scale response to colonialism in the period 1860 - 1930 in the area, commenting that:

To specify the degree of differentiation within Pondoland at a particular moment requires a static analysis of a community which was in flux. The settlement units, which must be the basis for such an analysis, were rapidly dissolving and being reconstituted; the trajectory of each homestead's fortunes depended on a complex of factors (1982:151, my emphasis).

Recognition of change has not been limited to the outward appearance of homesteads. As we have seen, the vast literature which explores labour migration in Southern Africa, for example, tacitly examines one aspect of fluid domestic arrangements - that of movement - although the emphasis on migration has detracted from more detailed studies of such arrangements and the processes of change they experience.

Recent work (see for instance, Kotze, 1986; Niehaus, 1987; Ferguson, 1990; Spiegel, 1990; van der Waal, 1992) has shown that household boundaries are permeated by flows of people and goods between them. Explorations of processes such as redistributive mechanisms or child-fostering practices have begun to illustrate the ways in which rural domestic units connect and reconnect themselves in complex, overlapping social fields. Similar processes are found elsewhere and in other social institutions in Southern Africa, particularly where there is frequent movement in the population. Child fostering practises are a case in point: In an important piece of work Reynolds (1991b) has shown that frequently the main care-giver in a child's upbringing is not a biological parent but other kin or non-kin. Children move between care-givers, and such movements between domestic units must

alter arrangements within such units, rendering the boundaries permeable. Greater focus on the ways in which rural households are interlinked is required in order to explore individual agency in the processes of social interaction.

Movement patterns such as those described in this chapter and later in the ethnography (see chapter 6) provide a clear illustration of the fluidity and permeability of domestic units. So, too, do changing commensal and labour relations within and between residential units (see chapters 4 and 5 below). Almost all literature dealing with production in rural areas focuses to some extent on how labour is divided along gender or age lines (see Richards, 1969; Reynolds, 1991), and on how co-operative groups of people perform various chores such as field-clearing and sowing (i.e. relate how labour is divided across homestead or household boundaries. See also Hunter, 1958). For example, Marks (1986:22) describing production in Zululand at the turn of the century, states:

Although agricultural production for subsistence was undertaken mainly within individual homesteads grouped in kin-based villages, **cooperation between homesteads** and villages was crucial for the production of the surplus necessary to maintain the chiefly class, and for the system of exogamous marriage practised by the Nguni (My emphasis).

There is also a growing literature which examines the unequal nature of labour-based or livestock-based interaction between groups of people in rural areas (see Ferguson, 1990; Keegan, 1986, for example). While it is not my intention to explore this literature in full, I give here an example of the ways in which such literature illustrates shortcomings of analyses which use households as discrete units of social interaction. Ferguson (1990:152) points out that:

Livestock is never the concern of one household alone. Of all types of property, it is the most embedded in social relations of the rural community. Bridewealth payments . . . are one form of this embeddedness, and **nearly every household is in this way linked to other**

households through long-term, ongoing bridewealth debts and credits. . . . But bridewealth is not the only way that households may be linked through livestock. It is common . . . for owners of livestock . . . to place animals with friends, relatives and neighbours on a long-term basis (my emphasis).

People thus perform labour tasks outside their own units for gains which are the product of dispersal from other units (see Murray, 1981; Spiegel, 1990; Quinlan, 1983). The allocation of labour and wealth outside single households thus blurs household distinctions based on production and consumption criteria. It is not accurate simply to state that people live and work in discrete social units, for the aggregations of work outside of such units disprove this. Quinlan's research emphasises the location of work outside of households particularly clearly, showing that households are sometimes units of analysis too small to make sense of processes of rural production (1983). Thus he argues that: "Relationships of production in the rural community have become defined by communal control over rather than individual ownership of resources" (1983:ii). Similarly practices of food-sharing also obfuscate attempts to delineate individual households.

Household, then, is a problematic term of analysis. People do cooperate on occasions in interactions which are concentrated within specific domestic units. This does not mean, however, that all their interactions occurs within these units, nor does it mean that households are corporate entities. As feminist critics have demanded, new approaches to the study of the domestic/private realm are necessary in order to make sense of interaction, change and differentiation within domestic units and between individuals in domestic social aggregations (see Moore, 1988; Guyer, 1981, 1987, and discussion above). One such approach may be through studies of informal networks, which locate individuals rather than social groups or forms at the centre of processes of interaction. These approaches to the study of society are discussed below. While the analytic value of network analyses is questionable, they can be seen

as extremely useful in the context of research in Die Bos, and other settlements which exhibit high rates of movement, in that they enable fluid social relationships to be explored and described.

### **Network Approaches to Micro-level Interaction**

Moore's comment on Stack's (1974) book All Our Kin (which explores strategies for survival among the urban poor - see discussion below) is a pertinent introduction to the uses of network studies:

The important point is that the material and moral support needed to care for and socialise community members is provided by the domestic network and not by 'bounded' households or the nuclear family (Moore, 1988:63).

Network analyses have been used in the past to explore the complexities of interpersonal relationships engendered around (re)production and consumption. This form of analysis, initiated in the 1950s, was designed to break away from the rigidity of structural-functionalism, and to generate explorations into individual social relationships. A part of transactional analyses, network analysis sprang into popular anthropological literature with the publication of Barnes' (1954) studies of the social relationships of parishioners in a Norwegian town. Barnes used his analysis to illustrate the shortcomings of structural-functionalist approaches to 'non-groups' (Boissevain, 1968) or 'informal groups'. As Boissevain points out:

There is a range of social phenomena which have received little attention . . . . These are the forms of social organisation that lie somewhere between interacting individuals, on one hand, and formal corporate groups, on the other (1968:542).

Barnes' research (1954) indicated that people did not interact solely in terms of the structures applied by anthropologists of the time (kinship, neighbourhood, geographic location), but also interacted with people who fell outside these boundaries. This led him to coin

'network' as an analytic rather than metaphorical term.<sup>14</sup> Barnes conceived of a network as the total possible field of social interactions. Interacting people in this field created a 'set'. Sets were not permanent, nor corporate groups, but were activated in response to particular events or needs. They were thus constituted around unstable and rapidly changing social relationships, which, by virtue of the focus of anthropology at the time, had tended to be ignored by social researchers. The instability and fleeting nature of network relationships provide an apt description of social interactions among many residents of Die Bos, among whom friendships and sexual relationships were frequently (but not always) short-lived. As I show in the remaining chapters of this ethnography, however, the residents of Die Bos were not solely concerned with instrumental relationships, such as network analyses imply. Frequently individual networks were invoked and activated in order to generate more permanent social groupings, such as households. That domestic units tended to be short-lived was a function of both the environment in which residents found themselves, and the fleeting nature of the networks which generated domestic units in the first place.

The usefulness of the network approach in analysing informal interactions of the nature I have described as existing in Die Bos ensured that the concept was rapidly incorporated into the analytic models of anthropologists and sociologists, albeit with varying degrees of cohesion. Bott (1957) utilised network analysis to describe and explain relationships within marriages among couples in London. Her research found an interesting and complex correspondence between what she called 'jointness' in marriage (sharing household chores, socialising together etc) and small social networks. Unlike Barnes' model of networks, in which a network was the entire population who were connected to one another in some recognisable (and measurable) way, Bott's

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14. It had been used as a metaphor of social organisation for some time prior to Barnes' (1954) publication. Radcliffe-Brown, for example, used the term in describing social relationships. However, its application was metaphoric rather than analytic, as he did not go on to specify the "properties of those interconnections which could be used to interpret social actions" (Mitchell, 1969b:2).

work saw networks as being egocentric and finite. Thus a network was:

a social configuration in which some, but not all, of the component external units [i.e. external to ego] maintain relationships with one another. The external units do not make up a larger social whole [and] are not surrounded by a common boundary (1957:217).

The result of Bott's work was to concentrate attention on egocentric networks as an informal mechanism of social interaction, and investigations into networks began to proliferate.

In Southern Africa, Mayer (1961) used similar referents to those of Bott to describe processes of urban adaptation among 'Red' and 'School' Xhosa-speaking people settled in Port Elizabeth. His notion of network incorporated a finite number of people in interaction of varying degrees of closeness - resulting for Red Xhosa in what he termed 'encapsulation'. Both his and Bott's work were significantly different to that of Barnes in that they used egocentric descriptions of networks to describe individual interactions, rather than using Barnes' 'sets'.

Network analysis was incorporated still further into Southern African studies after Mayer published Townsmen and Tribesmen in 1961. Mitchell (1968; 1973) argued that network approaches could be usefully incorporated into studies of African urban areas where "the elaboration of a conceptual framework for studying social change is perhaps the most important of the tasks confronting contemporary social anthropologists" (Banton, quoted in Mitchell, 1968:47). This was particularly the case given the rigidity and static nature of anthropological analytic terms (such as notions which assumed that if rural dwellers came to urban areas they must simultaneously become 'detrribalised') which were used in urban areas. Networks were used to explore a variety of social relationships. These included single interpersonal interactions (Epstein, 1969a); the spread of gossip and norms (Epstein, 1969b); voluntary association

operation (Wheeldon, 1969); the ways in which crises were manipulated or dealt with, and visiting patterns among village-dwellers and farmers in a highveld town (Southern, 1962). (See Mitchell, 1969a for further illustrations).

Network thus provided a useful tool of description to an anthropology emerging from structural-functionalism, in that it recognised the agency of individuals in generating and manipulating social forms. However, it was difficult to use analytically in several respects. The first was that to collect adequate and accurate data relating to networks would require that painstaking collection of detail be undertaken for each participant in the network, rather than a concentration on a small number of individuals (see Mitchell, 1969b; Noble, 1973). Secondly, the referents used to describe networks were not common. As Mitchell points out (1974:11), the lack of criteria defining networks makes it difficult to check others' work, or to compare data derived from different sources. As I have shown above, Bott's definition of network differed in important respects to that proffered by Barnes. Attempts to clarify the terminology and analytic basis of the theory were complex. Barnes' model had proposed several different criteria by which interactions in networks could be determined mathematically, so as to allow comparison of networks (or, as Barnes (1954) and Mayer (1968), call them, sets and quasi-groups). These were refined by Mitchell and others (Mitchell, 1969; 1973) and by Boissevain, (1973; 1974). Networks were now not simply aggregations of people interacting in particular manners, but were aggregations of people whose activities could be measured and recorded on a number of different levels (including the intensity of interaction, its density, the frequency of their contact, the rapidity with which one person could be reached using the network , and so on).

However, the manipulation of the mathematical properties of density and frequency of contact required that one be able to quantify social relationships accurately - and to quantify them in a standard manner. To do this, all

societies had to be categorised in standard terms, which brought one face to face with the aims of structural-functional approaches. Since the aim of network theories was to offer a way out of the stalemate of structural-functional approaches to the study of social relationships, in particular in what Banton (1968) calls 'complex' societies, comparison on the basis of standardised interactions was problematic in that standardisation assumed that all societies were constructed on the basis of simple social units which could be extrapolated from their context and compared with all other societies.

Complexities such as those described above made it very difficult to define unambiguously what networks were and (as we shall see) when they were networks and not some other (structural) social mechanism (such as identifiable groups). Bosissevain (1968) explained that networks were egocentric (i.e. were not the same as Barnes' networks, which described the entire social field within which sets were located); "The personal network of each person is distinct although it may touch and very often partly overlap that of others" (p. 526),<sup>15</sup> although others (see for example, Lomnitz, 1977) argued that groups could also be involved in networks. Mitchell (1969) argued that groups could not be effectively considered part of networks without due care, as:

a group is itself an abstraction derived from a consideration of selected aspects of the total social behaviour of the people considered to be members of the group. (1969:14).<sup>16</sup>

Bosissevain saw networks as fitting into conventional understandings of society in that they could be seen as being fluidly situated along a continuum from individual to group (1968:544), the latter being "evolved social forms" derived from networks, which "are . . . logically prior to groups and society" (1968:545). In his later paper (1973)

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15. As we shall see, overlaps in social networks had important ramifications for the forms and stability of some domestic units in Die Bos (see chapter 5, especially cases 5.2 and 5.3).

16. He offered a partial solution by allowing that social networks could be oriented to groups if "the links connecting the groups all represent the same level of abstraction" (p.15). Groups, then, could be considered to be interacting in networks if the links between them were comparable.

## *Competing Tools of Analysis.*

Mitchell argued that groups, quasi-groups and networks are all analytic (rather than actual) constructions, and that therefore to dichotomise them is based on false premises since ultimately they all derive from the same source - that is, in the mind of the analyst. Thus an analysis of social relations in terms of networks is not a substitute for analysis in terms of institutions (Mitchell, 1969:49), but is a different way of exploring social relationships. In the context of Die Bos, both households and networks formed important measures by which the processes of household constitution could be explored. This thesis synthesises the two approaches, with households forming one measurement of social relationships in Die Bos and networks another. It will be shown that people in Die Bos did not appear to live in conventional households, but nor did the networks they activated, especially in order to deal with domesticity, appear to be of any long duration.

Despite the problems experienced in applying network approaches practically, they were an important addition to anthropological thought. They up-ended the question of how social forms were perpetuated by locating the individual as a conscious manipulator of situations. In this way people could be perceived as agents creating advantage for themselves by mobilisation of 'non-groups'. Conceptualising interactions in this way is useful for an analysis of the complex and fluid social relationships evident in Die Bos, but is also problematic in that the notion cannot be used in more than a descriptive manner. Given that networks are (by definition) unstable and fluid, there is little analytical (as opposed to descriptive) value in the notion, since all that one can do with it is to label as networks the briefly-formed and rapidly disintegrating social relationships which formed around domesticity in Die Bos (Spiegel, 1993; personal communication).

The network approach continues to be used, although with considerably less rigor than urged by Barnes (1954), Boissevain (1974) Boissevain and Mitchell (1973) and Mitchell (1969). Networks, with their emphasis on

interpersonal transaction, have been especially utilised in explaining survival among the urban poor. To illustrate this I draw on two studies from a large literature dealing with the urban poor in the American continent.<sup>17</sup> The studies by Stack entitled All Our Kin (1974) and Lomnitz (1977) - Networks and Marginality: Life in a Mexican shantytown - are selected here because the data contained within them are similar to my findings in Die Bos, as presented in the next four chapters. There were however, significant differences in social relationships in Die Bos compared with those in the settlements described by Stack and Lomnitz, notably in the limitations of kin-based reciprocal relationships in Die Bos.

In both Stack and Lomnitz' writings, networks are envisaged as informal interactions based on redistribution and reciprocity, and are enacted primarily through kin and close friends. Stack's description of networks is centered on reciprocal exchange in an urban black community in North America. She argues that economic insecurity created processes of interaction and exchange among residents of ghettos. Exchange relationships were not solely market-based but were reciprocal, carrying with them the obligation to give and to receive, so that the circulation of goods occurred side by side with the circulation of rights (cf. Mauss, 1954). Alongside this flowed a circulation of people, especially children, who were placed with adults other than their primary caregivers in a process of generating rights and obligations among adults. (The movement of children in Die Bos is explored in chapter 6 below). Co-operation was usually generated among kinsfolk, with domestic organisation being "diffused over many kin based households which themselves have elastic boundaries" (Stack, 1974:93).

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17. See, for example, Lewis, (1961; 1968a; 1968b) all of which expound on Lewis's theory of the culture of poverty. See also Valentine's response to Lewis's poverty construct dated 1968, which argues that Lewis's culture of poverty is too family-oriented and lacking in analyses of social structures, and Perlman's (1976) critique of marginalisation theory which argues that far from being marginal to society, the urban poor actually sustain it. See also Lloyd (1979), Sharff (1985), Scheper-Hughes (1992).

Lomnitz (1977) argues similarly, although her work is analytically more rigorous than Stack's. Lomnitz describes several different forms of informal reciprocal interaction, including those based on kin relationships, and those generated through close-knit male associations. She writes that reciprocity networks among residents of the shantytown Cerrada del Condor served to redistribute resources among a population characterised by chronic insecurity of income. Lomnitz argues that both individuals and groups can become involved in networks (i.e. networks can be ego- or exo-centric [1977:133ff]), and that these are particularly based on kinship (both fictive and actual) and on male interpersonal interactions through the institution of *cuate* - which contains a set of dyadic relationships "centered around some common interest...[which] may become suffused by intense personal emotional attachment and a relationships of mutual assistance" (1977:177).

It is at this point that a confusion in Lomnitz's terminology and use sets in, a confusion which is evident in Stack's analysis, and appears to be inherent in practical applications of network analysis over time. Lomnitz uses networks to describe the relationships of assistance generated in the shanty-town. But from her descriptions of these networks they appear to be groups, based on kin (actual and fictive), and on interpersonal non-kin relationships which endure through time. It may be that Lomnitz is describing quasi-groups; "a coalition of persons . . . between some of whom there is a degree of patterned interaction and organisation" (Boissevain, 1968:550; see also Mayer, 1968). If so, then the networks she describes are not networks in the earlier accepted terms of the word, but are metaphors of social group. Indeed, the difficulty of distinguishing between group, quasi-group and network over time was in part why the network approaches to the study of social relationships fell into a decline after the 1970s.

Despite the apparent demise of transactionalist theories, and those relating to networks in particular, the network concept is useful in assessing individual motivations and actions. To some extent the problems of describing networks over time in Die Bos was obviated by the short period of research. It also seems that the networks which were activated in the settlement were of considerably shorter duration than those described in much other literature. Network was thus a useful means of describing such relationships, even though the analytic value of the terminology is limited. I use network terminology extensively throughout this thesis, in the same sense as that employed by Boissevain:

The ego-centric social forms are not true groups. . . Nor do they form a lasting coalition, but dissolve when the central ego vanishes from the social scene or changes his [sic] mood. In spite of their apparent vagueness and instability, these social forms are of great importance to most people. All persons . . . are members of such coalitions, and most spend a great deal of time manipulating them for their own ends, or being manipulated through them (1968:542).

The networks I encountered in Die Bos were ephemeral. Few lasted longer than two or three months, and many lasted just a few days. At the end of their existence most social relationships which had generated co-operation were broken off and links severed. They could be (and were) renewed when occasion arose, but did not appear to take on any corporate properties, thus making them substantially different from the networks described by Lomnitz, and to a lesser extent, by Stack. Networks observed in Die Bos come closer to those described in the earlier literature pertaining to networks, by analysts such as Boissevain (1968) and Mitchell (1969). They were linked to domestic units through complex processes of right-generation, dissolution and maintenance. In this way, domestic units became the location of struggles between imperatives to form groups through which to deal with the demands of daily life (households) and personal attempts to improve their individual positions. There was thus a constant tension in

the settlement between the processes of domestic unit formation and those processes which led to the dissolution of households over short periods.

The four chapters that follow all explore domesticity in Die Bos, highlighting some of the concerns encountered when trying to assess social institutions in terms of either networks or households. Chapter Three describes the contexts of research, locating Die Bos within the political-economy of the Cape and, more specifically, within the Hottentot's Holland Basin. Chapters 4 through 6 examine the effects of frequent movement, commensality and labour-sharing on the composition and stability of domestic units over time. They focus on these issues as another response to Spiegel's (1980) prompting (see Jones, 1991:125) that individuals, their social networks and their exploitation of those networks become a renewed focus of attention in Southern African anthropological research.

### Chapter 3.

#### Die Bos: Contextualising the research.

Rickety tin-and-board dwellings, the result of a chronic housing shortage, are a common feature in every African township . . . . They lack services and amenities. They are the product of both population growth and old government policy which halted provision of housing in urban . . . areas in an attempt to arrest further African urbanisation (Mashabela, 1990:9,11).

This chapter provides a context for the following chapters which discuss the ways in which the allocation of labour, fuel- and food- sharing and movement all formed and subverted the etic boundaries of domestic units in a squatter settlement called Die Bos. The present chapter begins with a brief history of squatting in the Western Cape, locating patterns of squatting in the Hottentot's Holland Basin within processes of informal settlement in the Western Cape. This provides a regional context within which to locate the research area.

This done, I turn to a discussion of Die Bos, its physical location, legal status and relationships with 'outside' authorities (land-owners, municipalities, the Cape Provincial Administration). I then explore the settlement in greater detail. A brief introduction to the daily life of residents describes the amenities and social facilities available in the settlement. I also discuss the high rates of substance abuse and violence which were an everyday part of life in Die Bos. Finally I provide a demographic profile of the population based on survey data. Here I compare the age and sex breakdown of the population with data from other settlements in the Hottentots Holland Basin. I show that the majority of adult residents of Die Bos had limited education, their schooling having frequently been terminated early so that they could search for jobs. As we shall see, the jobs which they found tended to be concentrated in the lower income strata, especially as a result of limited education and skills. This had important implications for the kinds of work for which most adults in Die Bos were able

to be employed, and thence had measurable effects upon incomes and income distribution, both within individual domestic groups and across the settlement.

### **Squatting in regional context.**

Squatting as a cost-effective means of acquiring shelter has a long history in the Cape Peninsula, having been observed by Jan van Riebeeck as early as 1655. The poor of all ethnic groups [sic] have employed the stratagem for centuries in the face of the authorities' inability and often obdurate unwillingness to cope with a critical housing problem. (Horner, 1983:1).

Informal settlements have not only a long history, but are also an increasingly fast-growing phenomenon of South Africa's urban areas. These constitute one response to state attempts to control urbanisation through formal legislature and covert control mechanisms such as determining access to housing. Below I briefly outline some of the processes which have given rise to informal settlements. The discussion is not intended to be exhaustive; it serves merely to locate Die Bos within the spatial and temporal contexts of squatting in South Africa, and more specifically within the Western Cape.

Historically, policies of urbanisation in the Western Cape have differed from those applied elsewhere in South Africa because of the special emphasis that was laid on 'Coloured'<sup>1</sup> labour in the region. In 1954 the Western Cape was declared a 'Coloured' Labour Preference area, the argument being that 'Coloureds' had historical rights to residence in the region and that as a result of these claims they should be protected from an influx of 'Black' workers from homeland areas. In essence the Regulation and its amendments proposed that in the area defined by the Eiselin line<sup>2</sup>:

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1. See notes on terminology, p. iii.

2. "[The] Cape south of the Orange River and west of the magisterial districts of Gordonia, Hopetown, De Aar, Hanover, Richmond, Murraysburg, Aberdeen, Willowmore, Uniondale and Knysna" (Hendrie, 1983:95-96).

[e]mployers in the Western Cape who needed workers were first to apply to the Department of Labour for Coloured workers. If suitable Coloured labour was not available, a certificate issued to the employer to this effect was to be submitted to the Black labour officer who would only allow contract workers from outside the area to be employed if African workseekers who qualified to remain in the area were not available. (Hendrie, 1983:97).

Horner explains the policy succinctly, arguing that 'Coloured Labour Preference' was more a strategy designed to control 'Black' urbanisation than one devised to protect 'Coloured' labour (1983:14). The result of the legislation was to shift labour requirements to migrant workers, who could be (and were) controlled through stringent applications of influx control measures (West, 1983:17).

The Coloured Labour Preference Policy added another dimension of control to the legislation which already existed over 'Black' populations in the Cape. The Natives (Urban Areas) Act of 1923, with its 1945 and 1952 amendments had gradually increased legislation determining who had rights to reside in urban areas and how to deal with people contravening the laws (see Oliver-Evans, 1992, for a thorough analysis of the legislation as it applied in the Western Cape). Although the measures did not reverse the trend of 'Black' people coming to the Cape (*ibid.*), the freeze on 'Black' housing announced in the Western Cape in 1966,<sup>3</sup> was to generate huge illegal settlements.

Meanwhile, 'Coloured' squatting was also on the increase. Drawing on data from the state's Department of Community Development, Horner (1983:8-10) shows that by 1976, 21 600 'Coloured' families (approximately 108 300 people) were without officially sanctioned housing and were squatting in the Peninsula. By 1991 the number of residents of informal settlements in the Western Cape was estimated to be 330 000 (Urban Foundation, quoted in Crankshaw, n.d:5).

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3. By 1976 "not a single new housing unit had been built in the Peninsula's African Townships for two years" (Horner, 1983:9).

Legislation devised to control squatting<sup>4</sup> gave the state and landowners wide powers to evict and to punish squatters, and to prohibit the formation of informal settlements (Budlender, 1988). They also limited the access of squatters to courts to challenge official action (Howe, 1982:3).

Despite the legislation, squatting continued to increase.<sup>5</sup> The state's response to squatting was punitive; many squatter settlements (such as Modderdam and Unibel) were destroyed completely, and people were forced to relocate elsewhere (See Kiewiet and Weichel's discussion of Crossroads, 1980; Silk's writings on Modderdam, 1981; and Cole's interpretation of events in Crossroads, 1986). Even where some gains were won (as in Crossroads - see Cole, 1986), this did not determine the end of squatting, and informal settlements in the Cape have continued to mushroom.

The freeze on black housing had not applied to housing for 'Coloureds', for whom new strategies of cheap housing were devised in the early 1980s. Nevertheless these strategies fell far short of expectations, especially in so far as they were devised to draw surplus funding from the private sector (Glover and Watson, 1984). By 1985 there was a national backlog of 'Coloured' housing amounting to 52 000 houses (De Vos, quoted in Wilson and Ramphela, 1989:125). Estimates of the need for 'Coloured' housing by the year 2000 were 93 000 houses over and above those supplied by the state (Morkel, 1988). The backlog of 'African' housing in the Western Cape was even more appalling; by the year 2000 it was estimated that there would be an estimated deficit of 2 695 000 houses (Morkel, 1988).

In addition to severe shortages of housing, there were great movements of people under other *apartheid* laws. The infamous Group Areas Act relocated approximately 30% of the

4. These included the implementation of the Prevention of Illegal Squatting Act no. 52 of 1951, the 1959 Trespass Act No. 8, Act No. 72 passed in 1977 which amended the 1951 Prevention of Illegal Squatting Act, and the Slums Act No. 76 of 1979.

5. Horner (1983:9) states that in 1981 there were 21 600 'families' squatting in the Peninsula - despite the creation of New Crossroads, and increased housing in Guguletu, Nyanga and Langa.

## Contextualising the research.

'Coloured' population to their 'own' areas within Cape Town (Horner, 1983). What proportion of the 'African' population was relocated in urban areas is not certain, particularly as most Africans in urban areas were considered to be temporary sojourners. Clearly, the policies of the state in the Western Cape were designed to limit 'African' urbanisation, but also to control 'Coloured' labour through the Coloured Labour Preference Policy and the Group Areas Act. (See also West, 1983; Oliver-Evans, 1992). Policies of control resulted in huge movements of people within the Western Cape and between the Peninsula and other regions (such as homeland areas), and a vast increase in the incidence of squatting. The residents of informal and squatter settlements throughout the Western Cape were likely to have experienced some effects of these movements. This was certainly true of residents in Die Bos, who had experienced specific patterns of movement. Examples of these patterns are taken up in chapter 6, which explores the construction of domestic units over time among highly mobile people.

Changes in resident populations as a result of *apartheid* legislation were not restricted to the Greater Cape Town area alone. The effects of *apartheid's* urbanisation policies are especially apparent in the Hottentot's Holland Basin, where the only housing officially sanctioned by the state for 'African' residence was the hostel complex established at Lwandle, now severely overcrowded (see Jones, 1991), and the township at Mfuleni (see maps 1 and 2). Housing for 'Coloureds' was also limited; Sir Lowry's Pass Village was declared a 'Coloured' area under the Group Areas Act, and a section of Somerset West (known as Garden Village), and Halfway were also declared 'Coloured'. The townships of Macassar, Firgrove and Faure were similarly for 'Coloured' occupation.

Given the huge backlog of housing in the Western Cape, and the increase in squatting, it is not surprising that there has been a massive growth in informal settlements in the Hottentot's Holland Basin, although, as Emmett (1992) points out, growth has not simply been the product of an influx of

newcomers to the area. He shows that the residents in the shack settlements appear to have long histories of complex movements and changing residence patterns within the Basin area, and had not simply arrived after the abolition of influx control in 1985.

The seven shack settlements identified by Emmett (1992) in the Hottentot's Holland Basin between March and April 1991 housed approximately 3 870 people in 987 shacks. In addition to the seven identified by Emmett, there were a further 5 informal settlements in the Basin area whilst I was conducting research in the region. Some settlements were sanctioned by the state (Waterkloof and Sun City), while others (such as Die Bos) were illegal. The status of settlements was complicated by the systems of local and regional authorities which administered them. These are summarised in figure 3.1:

Figure 3.1: Squatter settlements in the Hottentot's Holland Basin, and authorities administering them.

Settlement	Location	Authority
Blikkiesdorp } Seabreeze } Casablanka }	Near Strand	Strand municipality
Ambulans Park } * Remhoogte } *	Near Somerset West	Somerset West municipality
Die Bos } Waterkloof }	Near Somerset West	Cape Provincial Administration.
Dennehof	Gordon's Bay	Gordon's Bay municipality.
Sun City	Sir Lowry's Pass Village	Western Cape Regional Services Council (WCRSC).
Madala se Bos	Near Macassar	WCRSC
Zandvliet Farm	Near Macassar	WCRSC
Belleglen	Near Macassar	WCRSC

\* These settlements were relocated to Waterkloof in September 1991.

Thus although the settlements fell into the same regional planning area (Hottentot's Holland Basin), administered by the CPA, each was dealt with as the relevant local authority saw fit. This is particularly evident in the case of Die Bos which has a history of frequent disruption by local authorities.

**Die Bos: Location and History.**

Located between Somerset West and Sir Lowry's Pass Village (see Maps 1 and 2), Die Bos falls outside of the boundaries of Somerset West's municipal jurisdiction.<sup>6</sup> As Pinnock (1989:150) points out:

Urban planning cannot be separated from political and economic considerations. Indeed ideas only become effective when they connect with a particular constellation of social forces.

The processes of urban planning which have resulted in deficient housing for 'Coloured' and 'Black' people in The Western Cape have directly reflected *apartheid* ideologies. However, there is another level at which urban planning can be said to reflect the ideals of particular (powerful) sections of society. This is at the level of practice, for example when there is no certainty about which authorities are responsible for settlements and how, or indeed whether, they perform their duties satisfactorily.

This is precisely the situation in the case of Die Bos. Despite the proximity of Die Bos to Somerset West, the municipality of that town offered no services during the research period. Instead, the settlement fell under the auspices of the Cape Provincial Administration (CPA), and the Stellenbosch municipality, which, I was told by residents, is responsible for caring for the road along which Die Bos is situated. Since the settlement is illegal,

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6. During the research period the Somerset West municipality would have nothing to do with Die Bos. As I was told by the Town Clerk " There are no squatter settlements inside the boundaries of Somerset West". Later, however, amenities such as sanitation were supplied by the municipality, apparently acting on behalf of the CPA, although residents of the settlement were unaware of the municipal role as unofficial agents for the CPA in this matter.

the question as to the authority responsible for the area is crucial when decisions about administration and evictions are required.

Some of the present residents of the settlement, who had been vagrants in the area, recall having been evicted from the area by the Stellenbosch municipality several times before and during 1988. On each occasion they simply moved across to a neighbouring farm and re-established themselves opposite the previous site.

As the numbers of vagrants grew, so too did the size and permanency of their structures. From 'vagrants' the people became 'squatters', illegally occupying the land on which they were resident. As one woman (previously a *bosslaaper*<sup>7</sup>) described the process on her return to the settlement, the residences had changed from "chicken coops" which had to be erected each evening and taken down every morning, to "ghettoes" - free-standing shacks.

Following the evictions of vagrants, another attempt to evict the squatters occurred in 1989,<sup>8</sup> when a local farmer claimed to be renting the land on which the squatters were resident. He evicted them by bulldozing their shacks (a method which has several antecedents in the Cape - cf. Cole, 1985; Silk, 1981; Kiewiet and Weichel, 1980). The squatters rebuilt their shacks on Klein Dennegeur, a neighbouring farm (see map 3), as they had previously been wont to do. They were evicted from that site shortly afterwards, and returned again to the site at Die Bos.

Further attempts at eviction in 1990 by another local land-owner were unsuccessful, as the squatters (by then numbering about 150 people and having established a committee to fight the evictions) were able to argue that they had no

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7. Lit. 'bush-sleeper'. The term was used in Die Bos to describe vagrants. Outsiders frequently used it also as a pejorative description for shanty-dwellers. I use it solely to refer to vagrants.  
8. Unfortunately the only records I was able to trace of the proceedings of this and subsequent attempts at eviction were in a file at the Helderberg Advice Office, which had unfortunately been lost. What is presented here is what I was able to confirm from residents and members of the local Advice Office.

alternative residence. They won a stay of execution (settled out of court) until such time as a satisfactory residential alternative was created.

The alternative was to be Waterkloof (see maps 1, 2 and 3), a 'legal transit settlement' some 2 km from Die Bos. By the time I began research in Die Bos two squatter settlements in the Hottentot's Holland Basin ('Remhoogte' and 'Ambulans Park', both administered by the Somerset West municipality) had already been relocated to Waterkloof. Stories of violence perpetrated on newcomers there abounded.<sup>9</sup> As a result, people resident in Die Bos refused to leave their site to live in Waterkloof, despite new eviction notices received on the 4th December 1991 (two weeks after I began research). Their refusal was vindicated when a Human Sciences Research Council survey into squatting in the Basin area found small informal settlements rather than large ones<sup>10</sup> to be the most acceptable solution to problems of uncontrolled squatting in the area (Emmett, 1992).

Meanwhile the CPA made an attempt to create a site and service scheme<sup>11</sup> near the hostels of Lwandle (maps 1 and 2). This did not come to fruition during the research period owing to opposition from local shack communities and ratepayers in the Strand area who were not consulted about the decision. Similarly, attempts to relocate other settlements to Waterkloof met with great opposition from the residents of the settlements involved.

The refusal of residents of Die Bos to leave their site, and the failure of concrete action to come from CPA proposals meant that the squatters remained on site throughout 1992.

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9. This was especially the result of opposing committee structures within the settlement; HISCA (Helderberg Interim Squatters Civic Association) representatives and WECUSA (Western Cape Squatters Association) came into conflict over ideologies. Both settlements which were moved to Waterkloof adhered to HISCA principles, while WECUSA was the main political organisation in Waterkloof.

10. Prior to the forced removals of 'Ambulans Park' and 'Remhoogte' settlements in 1991, there were 500 shacks in Waterkloof (Emmett, 1992). By the end of my intensive research period this number had grown to more than 1 000 shacks.

11. Where squatters were to be allocated sites provided with amenities such as running water and toilets.

### *Contextualising the research.*

On December 9th, 1992 new eviction notices were issued, but at the time of writing the residents of Die Bos are still on the site.

This brief history allows us some glimpses into changing policies towards squatting in the Hottentot's Holland Basin. Initially vagrants were harassed by police, and evicted from their customary camp-sites at Die Bos by the Stellenbosch municipality. New forms of harassment were then undertaken by local land-owners. Waterkloof was established as a legal 'transit' settlement, provided with water and refuse collection, for occupation until such time as permanent residential sites could be identified. Meanwhile the growth of settlements in the Basin area prompted the CPA to take action to create a site and service schemes near Lwandle; a programme that to date has not met with any success. The role of the state and state functionaries appears to have changed from confrontational practices to policies of negotiation. However, the attitudes of land-owners in the area remain confrontational.

#### **The settlement; organisation and structure.**

Die Bos itself is situated in a small glade between the Somerset West - Sir Lowrie's Pass Village road, and a railway line along the same route. (See map 3). Triangular in shape, its widest side extends for only 200 metres, while at its narrow end near Somerset West there is enough space only for a line of single-roomed houses. At the time of the first survey in November 1991, there were 102 domestic structures in the settlement, housing 329 people. By the completion of intensive participant-observation in June 1992, the number of structures had increased to 130, in which a total of 380 people were resident. Household densities - approximately three people per structure - were thus low throughout the research period.

At the time of research the settlement was not formally planned, and consisted of a higgledy-piggledy conglomeration of shacks made of wood, plastic, and 'zincs' (corrugated iron). Innovative building materials were common; one shack

had a wall built from estate agents' "for sale" signs, others had walls plastered with newspaper articles and reject wrapping paper. Some shacks had gardens, laboriously cultivated using water carried from the nearby dam (see below). Many houses were painted bright colours - a *shebeen*<sup>12</sup> for example, was bright pink and pale blue. At the beginning of research there were very few fences demarcating properties, although by late 1992 such fences were becoming commonplace. Attached to the fence surrounding one woman's property was a small wooden letterbox - an anomaly in a settlement where one's only address was 'Next to the road, Die Bos'.



**'Next to the road: Die Bos': Angelina's letterbox.**

Dogs and children wandered freely throughout the settlement. Piet, the huge cockerel belonging to the chairwoman of the settlement's committee lorded it over young children, attacking them when they approached too closely, and causing much hilarity (and blood-letting). Rubbish was piled up in heaps alongside the grass near the railway line and on the verges of the road. Every few months it was burnt, and the

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12. A *shebeen* is a place of entertainment which has its origins in South Africa's 'black' townships. *Shebeens* stock liquor (in the past this was frequently illegally obtained - cf. Scharff, 1984), and serve as centres for discussion.

pungent smell of refuse and smoke filled the air, while the laughter of the children playing near the flames echoed throughout the settlement. During the day Die Bos hummed with activity; people washing and cooking outdoors, men chopping wood, women and children collecting fuel, babies being fed. There were always many people outside, except when it rained and people huddled under blankets and smoked, talked or drank in dark houses, the floors of which were covered in pots to catch water from leaking roofs.



**Raindrops keep falling on our heads....**

Smoky *gally bliks* (perforated drums filled with coals and used as heaters) made eyes water indoors, as did the smell of paraffin, marijuana and wine. Occasionally there would be the sound of crying or howling, for physical abuse and fighting were common in the settlement, especially during weekends. And always, everywhere, there was the sound of children.

Informal divisions crosscut the spatial layout of the settlement, which was usually perceived by residents as consisting of three parts. The end closest to Somerset West was frequently left out of community discussions and seldom sent representatives to meetings<sup>13</sup>. The central sector (in which I lived throughout the research period) was defined as lying between the two main accesses to the settlement, 'Aberdeen' and 'Main' Streets (see map 3), and most of the *shebeen*-owners, both *spaza* shop<sup>14</sup> owners and six of the eight residents' committee members lived in that area. The third section was commonly known as 'Crossroads', and fell at the wide end of the settlement, closest to Sir Lowry's Pass Village. 'Crossroads' was named after its famous Cape Town counterpart because, unlike residents of other sectors of Die Bos, the area tended to be inhabited by Xhosa-speakers who originated in the homeland areas of Transkei and Ciskei. These boundaries did not appear to limit interaction between people who came from different sectors.

As we have already seen, the settlement was administered by a local governing body - the 'communittee' (community committee). Elected to negotiate with local authorities and landowners over threatened evictions in 1988, the committee consisted of eight people during the research period, five of whom (including both the chair- and vice-chair-persons) were women. They mediated disputes, authorised occupation of sites for those seeking residence, and negotiated with local authorities on behalf of the residents of Die Bos. During the research period they were in the process of receiving training in community government from TEAM, a grassroots development organisation. The chairwoman was also active in local politics, and was a member of HISCA (Helderberg Interim Squatters Civic Association), one of the two local civic organisations.

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13. Indeed, one woman was refused help by committee members when her shack burnt down in April 1992 because she had not attended community meetings during December 1991 when the squatters were faced with eviction.

14. Informal cafes, stocking food and dry goods. *Spaza* shop owners frequently operate without licenses to sell goods. In Die Bos both *spaza* shops also operated as *shebeens*.

**Amenities.**

At the time of research there were no amenities in the settlement.<sup>15</sup> Two night-soil buckets, the contents of which were disposed of in neighbouring bush by their owners, were the only toilets. Other people made use of neighbouring bush to relieve themselves, and children often squatted in the spaces between houses. No water was available save for a small overflow stream from a nearby dam. This water could not be used for drinking purposes. Water had to be collected in 20 litre cannisters from neighbouring Klein Dennegeur (See map 3). Water supplies here were, however, frequently cut-off in an attempt to eliminate trespassing. When this happened, most people collected water from Somerset West - a 2 kilometre walk. According to Emmett's survey (1992), running water was the first priority of 75 per cent of the residents of the settlement.

The settlement did not have its own clinic, nor a creche<sup>16</sup>. Children who did not attend school roamed freely around Die Bos during the day. A mobile family-planning unit attended the settlement once a month, monitoring child growth and dispensing prophylactics. When medical emergencies arose, the nearest hospital with an out-patient's service was 5 km away - a trip in which transport alone could cost up to R30 if taxis were called out during the night. The admission charge of R5 at the casualty and out-patients sections of the hospital was frequently too high for destitute residents.

Unlike neighbouring Waterkloof, there was no rubbish collection service in Die Bos. Most people claimed to burn their refuse (Emmett, 1992), but in fact usually dumped it alongside the houses. The piles of rubbish which accumulated around the settlement posed a grave fire hazard.

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15. After my research ended a delegation of committee members convinced the Town Clerk of Somerset West to provide water, refuse collection and basic sanitation for the settlement (see footnote 5). During the research, however, no such amenities were available.

16. In May 1992 a hall was built in the settlement, and in August, after the research had ended, a creche was established there. A woman resident in Die Bos was paid R100 per month by TEAM to care for children under 6, three days a week from 9.30am to 1.30pm.

According to Emmett (1992), Die Bos residents' second highest priority was a supply of electricity in their houses. This is ironic for high voltage electricity supply lines run through the centre of the settlement (i.e. outside the houses), but were inaccessible to the residents, who relied on a combination of other fuels for cooking, heating and lighting purposes (Ross, 1993). Fuel-related accidents were common in the settlement<sup>17</sup> especially among children. As we shall see in chapters 5 and 6, fuel-collection was an important daily chore, and collection processes could be used by residents to create rights in domestic units other than those in which they slept. Figure 3.2 gives an overview of frequencies of use of each fuel-type in November 1991 and June 1992.

Figure 3.2: Percentages of households using various fuels, Nov. 1991 and June 1992.

	% Nov. 1991	% June 1992
Wood	52	78
Paraffin	48	58
Gas	39	38
Candles	94	92
Car Batteries	10	16
Dry Cell Batteries	no data	41

#### Social institutions.

There were some social amenities in Die Bos. Several of the churches in Somerset West held ministries in the settlement once a week or monthly. Many people attended these, particularly women and children. Very few of the residents ever left the settlement to attend churches elsewhere, and, other than informal gatherings of Rastafarians, no other religious orders operated within Die Bos.<sup>18</sup>

17. During the research period 6 houses were razed as a result of fuel-related accidents.

18. Indeed, the only followers of Islam resident in the settlement left Die Bos in 1992 because they had come under pressure from residents about their religious views.

Two *spaza* shops supplied bread, sweets, vegetables and fruit, alcohol, paraffin and candles. In addition to the shops there were several *shebeens*.<sup>19</sup> One of the *shebeen*-owners planned to open a restaurant adjacent to his *shebeen*, the building of which was underway when research ended. This is important, for the creation of a communal eating area would be likely to alter commensality patterns considerably (see chapter 5). Die Bos also boasted a hall; a wooden structure used for a myriad purposes. The first structure of its kind in the Hottentot's Holland Basin, it was used as a venue for prayer meetings, for church services, for funerals, as a meeting place for political discussions, and as an entertainment centre. After my research had terminated it also became a creche for children under the age of 6 (see footnote 16).

#### **Substance abuse and violence.**

Substance abuse levels were high. There were very few domestic units in which all the members abstained from alcohol and drugs, and the free availability of the latter meant that there were often non-residents in the settlement who came to purchase drugs. As a result the settlement was extremely dangerous at weekends. During my 14 months of association with residents of Die Bos there were several incidents of violence related to alcoholism and drug-abuse. These resulted in the murder of five people, and injuries to several more. Some were the result of gang-related warfare (see Scharf, 1988, who shows how gang-warfare in Cape Town is frequently linked to the illegal dispensation of alcohol). Others were incidents of domestic violence. Reprisals frequently took the form of attempted arson.

Domestic violence was a frequent product of alcohol abuse, especially during weekends when alcohol intakes increased substantially. Both men and women drank heavily at weekends, although men appeared to become more aggressive than women, most of whom were accustomed to frequent abuse resulting from alcohol-related aggression. Several women

19. I knew of seven shebeens in the settlement - a large number, considering that there were only 380 people in the settlement, approximately half of whom were under the age of 18.

were regularly accosted, one member of my sample was hospitalised three times during the research period owing to her boyfriend's abuse,<sup>20</sup> and one woman was murdered by a drunken boyfriend. I did not, however, document any cases of child abuse save for one instance.<sup>21</sup> Domestic violence thus appeared to be overtly directed almost solely at women.

### **Social Groupings.**

Although the settlement consisted of both so-called 'Coloured' people and Xhosa-speakers, in approximately equal proportions, given the intermingling of people in the settlement it was neither possible nor appropriate to record such demographic details. The terminology and categories of the now defunct Population Registration Act were, however, frequently invoked by residents during periods of conflict.

The only category which was easily distinguishable in Die Bos, prominent mainly because of their abstention from alcohol, and their distinctive appearance, were the Rastafarians, who formed a clearly-established and long-lasting social group. There were eleven Rastafarians (2 of them women) resident in Die Bos over the research period, although many other non-resident Rastas ate with them. The strict dietary rules of Rastafarians and their communion through marijuana tended to keep them apart from social interaction with other residents of the settlement, although frequently non-Rastafarian men smoked marijuana with them. Rastafarians ate in their own houses or with one another, but never ate with 'outsiders'. It was they who were responsible for keeping the peace in the settlement, frequently mediating disputes among residents, but also participating in interactions with local authorities (such as the police and landowners).

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20. On one occasion he hit her over the head with a broom, on another he beat her so severely that she was almost concussed, and on a third he sliced her neck open with a razor.

21. This, of course, did not mean that such abuse did not occur, merely that it was hidden, unlike violence against women, which was overt.



**Some of the Rastafarians of Die Bos**

There did not appear to be any other fixed social groupings within Die Bos. Networks among residents in the settlement were fluid and constantly changing. Interpersonal relationships were characterised by tensions wrought from lack of privacy (see Glover and Watson, 1984), and by high rates of movement between sites, and into and out of the settlement. Women, in particular those who were unmarried, tended to be most likely to leave the settlement or to move to other shacks. As a result women's social networks, centering neighbours and friends, were constrained by their movements, which in turn were frequently governed by their

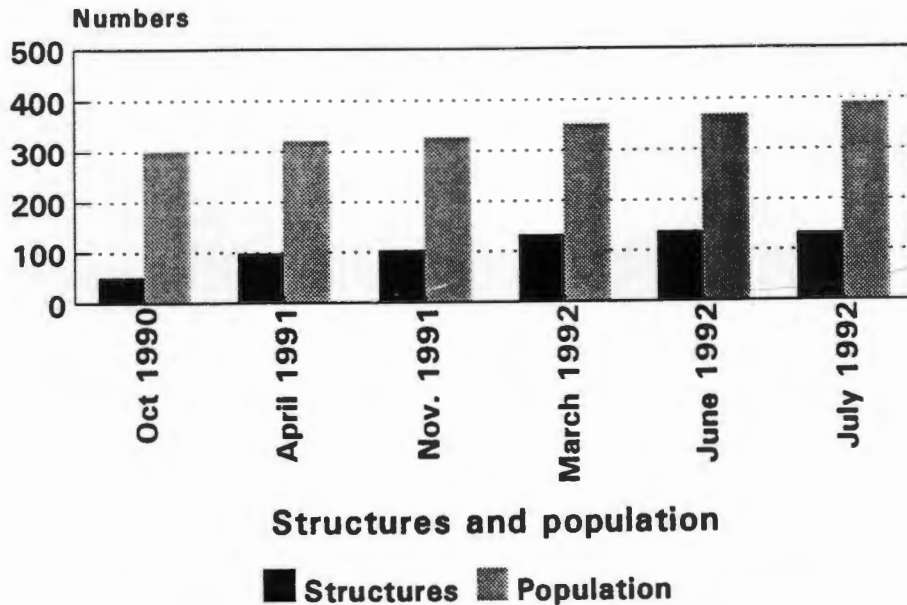
relationships with men. The end result of this was that there was a rapid rate of change in social affiliations, particularly amongst women.

The fluidity of social relationships exemplified by women's changing social arrangements is a core concern of this thesis. To contextualise later discussions on this topic I now turn to an investigation of some of the population characteristics of Die Bos to try to determine some of the features which enabled (indeed, determined) frequent movement and the complex relationships of interdependence evidenced in the settlement.

#### **Population profile.**

The population of Die Bos is not static but growing, mainly as a result of the influx of young adults and children, and the instability of domestic units which resulted in frequent fission and fusion (see chapter 6). The settlement increased by some 30 houses and 60 people during the seven month period of intensive research. Prior to my research, two separate surveys estimated the number of structures to be 50 in October 1990 (Moss, in Emmett 1992:106), and 97 in April 1991 (Emmett *ibid.*). There was thus a large growth in the settlement in the six month period preceding Emmet's April 1991 survey, a smaller growth rate between May and November that year and a large increase between November 1991 and June 1992 - approximately half as many shacks as were built in the October 1990 to April 1991 period. The research thus took place in a context of rapid growth and changes in the settlement. The changing population is represented in figure 3.3.

Figure 3.3: Growth of structures and population of Die Bos, Oct. 1990- July 1992.



Figures for Nov. 1991 and June 1992 were derived from my research. Those of March 1992 and July 1992 were derived from data obtained from the committee of Die Bos. The remainder are taken from Emmett, 1992.

In 20 months the number of shacks in Die Bos almost tripled. The increase in numbers of shacks did not appear to be attributable to any one specific event. There was a large increase in 1992, notably of people evicted from farms, and of kin of residents who had set up their own structures. Many of the new structures were also the product of changes within existing households; e.g. young people setting up homes of their own, and lodgers who built their own residences.

It was apparent that there was a high rate of movement within Die Bos, particularly among those people who did not have long-term established relationships. During the research period, 66 of approximately 100 domestic units were recorded as having undergone major changes involving the movement of personnel into and out of houses in the settlement (what van der Waal, 1992, calls 'residential

mobility'), or into and out of the settlement itself ('geographic mobility'). The population of Die Bos, then, exhibited a high degree of spatial mobility. Both women and men were constantly on the move as their personal relationships and fortunes changed, and children usually found themselves shunted back and forth in response to their parents' arrangements. These changes in the patterns of domestic residence are explored in chapters 4 and 6.

Of the 102 structures in the settlement in November 1991, 44 per cent consisted of a single room. The number of rooms in each structure is summarised below in figure 3.4:

Figure 3.4: Number of rooms per structure, Die Bos, Nov. 1991

Percentage of structures	No. Rooms
4	1
7	2
13	3
4	4
0	5
1	6
1	7
<b>TOTAL % : 100</b>	

Given that frequently there were insufficient beds for residents within each shack I did not collect data pertaining to bed occupancy rates. However, it was not uncommon for large numbers of people to share limited bed space; in one shack five people (three of whom were children under the age of 18) shared a double bed. The Slums Act of 1979 states that siblings of the opposite sex should not share bed-space, and that there should be sufficient room in a house to prevent children of the opposite sex sharing bedrooms. This was clearly not the case in Die Bos.

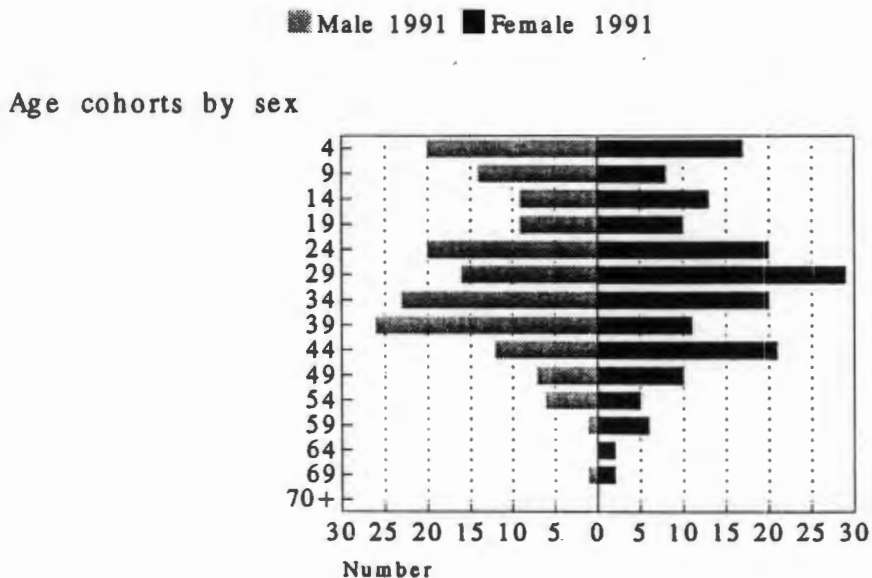
#### - Age and Sex

The highly mobile population of Die Bos was young. The average age of the 329 people resident in Die Bos the time of the first survey was 29. This implies that there was a large number of children and young adults in the settlement,

a finding replicated in other research on squatter settlements.<sup>22</sup> As Emmett comments: "A relatively young population with one or two small children per household is often found in the shack settlements [in the Hottentot's Holland Basin]" (1992:108). This was the case in Die Bos, where 16 percent of the total population of the settlement was under the age of 6.

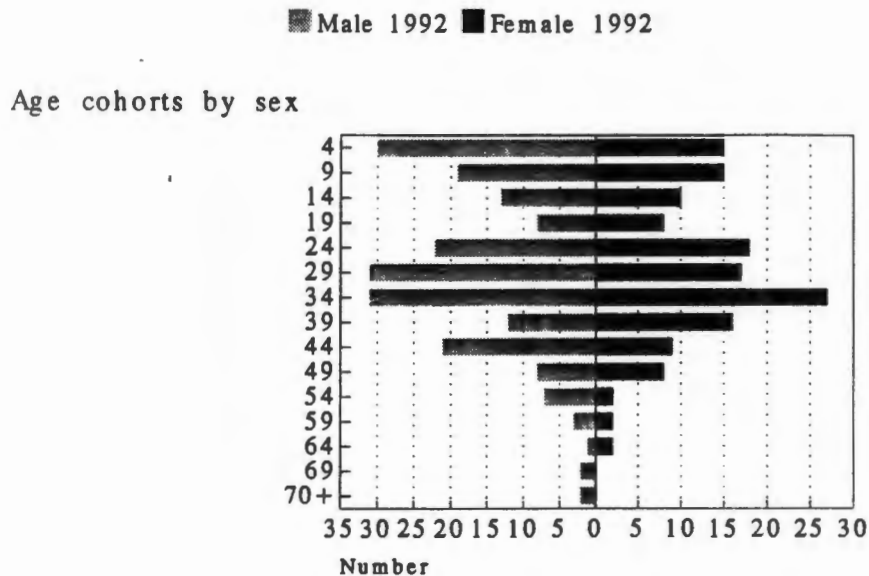
There were few adolescents in the settlement. From figures 3.4 and 3.5, describing the age-sex distribution in the settlement in November 1991 and June 1992 we see a trough between the age cohorts describing children aged 5 to 25.<sup>23</sup> Indeed, only 25 youths between the ages of 13 and 19 were reported as being present in the settlement at the time of the November 1991 survey. From the second survey, which sought more data on this issue, it was learnt that there were 118 offspring of residents in Die Bos who did not live in the settlement. The effects of the absence and presence of these offspring are discussed in greater detail in the chapters which follow.

Figure 3.4: Population of Die Bos, by age and sex. Nov. 1991 .



22. Cf. Maree and Cornell, 1978 for data on Crossroads. The University of Cape Town's Department of Community Health (1991) found that 38% of the population of Khayelitsha was under the age of 15.  
 23. Note that this pattern is common among residential areas in South Africa previously defined 'Black', as children were frequently sent away to attend schools in homelands. See Maree and Cornell, 1978.

Figure 3.5: Population of Die Bos, by age and sex. June 1992

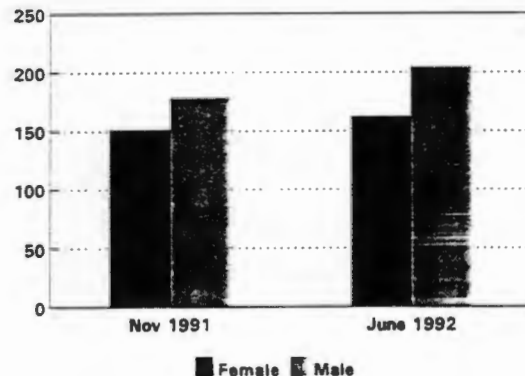


Of the people resident in Die Bos during November 1991, men outnumbered women by 10 percentage points. By June 1992 the population had swollen to 380 people, for whom we have data about 349 (the remainder were not resident at the sites allocated to them at the time of surveying). Of those people covered by the survey data, 157 (45 per cent) were women, and 192 (55 per cent) men. Thus although the population of Die Bos had increased by approximately one sixth, the ratio of men to women had remained fairly constant. This is illustrated in figure 3.6. Elsewhere in the informal settlements of the Hottentot's Holland Basin the trend is reversed, and women outnumber men (see Emmett, 1992:107). The same is true in informal settlements in the Peninsula region, where women again outnumber men. Indeed, Harrison and McQueen (1992:8) argue that the preponderance of women indicates that

. . . migration patterns for Khayelitsha are now dictated by normal pressures of urbanisation and are not artificially constrained by political forces.

The roles of gender in processes of urbanisation in the Hottentot's Holland basin are not yet clear. Nevertheless, the ratio of men to women in Die Bos has important meanings in the contexts of work and income, for, as we shall see, men's work was less secure and reliable than women's, and men were therefore reliant on women's incomes for part of the year.

**Figure 3.6: Population of Die Bos, Nov. 1991 and June 1992, by sex.**



**- Education**

Data from the November 1991 survey indicates that of the adult men and women resident in Die Bos, 17 per cent had received no schooling. In June 1992, by contrast, 11 per cent of the adult population of the settlement had no education and the education standard of a further 11 per cent was not classifiable as respondents did not know the educational achievements of residents in their domestic units. The difference in the figures is likely to be the result of the increase in numbers of residents between the two survey periods; 40 adults were recorded as entering the settlement in that period.

Using cumulative frequencies to examine the distribution of adults (i.e. those over the age of 18) who attained each educational standard (see figure 3.7), in both survey periods around 50% of the adult population had less than a Standard 5 qualification. After this the drop-out rate appears rapid; in November 1991 only four residents of Die Bos were recorded as having attained a standard 10 education, while in June 1992 five people had standard 10 education. Residents of Die Bos nonetheless appear to be

better educated than residents of other settlements in the Hottentot's Holland Basin, where 50 per cent of the population were recorded as having attained only Std 3 or below (from Emmett, 1992:112). Literacy rates of 48 per cent of the population over age 13, estimated by Emmett (1992) for Die Bos, are approximately the same as for other settlements in the Basin. These rates of literacy are considerably worse than those reported for Khayelitsha, where 77.3% of women were found to be functionally literate (Cooper, in Harrison and McQueen, 1992:18).

**Figure 3.7: Education levels attained by adults in Die Bos, Nov. 1991 and June 1992.**

Std	Nov. '91	Nov (CF)	June '92	June (CF)
Unknown.	3	3	30	30
No ed	37	40	31	61
Sub A/B	13	53	12	73
Std 1	12	65	18	91
Std 2	11	76	14	105
Std 3	18	94	24	129
Std 4	23	117	30	159
Std 5	30	147	26	185
Std 6	35	182	30	215
Std 7	18	200	22	237
Std 8	17	217	19	256
Std 9	9	226	9	265
Std 10	4	230	5	270

**CF = Cumulative Frequency.**

These figures are lower than might be expected given that approximately half the population was so-called 'Coloured' and therefore (theoretically) had access to education of a higher standard than 'Africans' (cf. Wilson and Ramphele, 1989). The low levels of education in Die Bos were explained to me by one woman who said "We've got no education because we had to leave school and help our parents. We left early to get jobs".

- Employment.

Jobs obtained tended to be in the least skilled types of employment, which were also the worst paid and had the least legal protection for workers. Figure 3.8 examines the differences in general employment and unemployment patterns among adults in November 1991 and June 1992. The table does not indicate the reliability of employment, nor does it differentiate between full-time or partial employment. Nevertheless we can see a general pattern of decreasing rates of employment between data derived from summer and winter surveys. Clearly, jobs tended not to be permanent, and there were large seasonal variations in employment and incomes.

**Figure 3.8: Percentages of adult population of Die Bos employed, unemployed or receiving state-aid, Nov. 1991 and June 1992.**

	‡ Nov 1991	‡ June 1992
Employed	71	61
Unemployed	25	32
State-aid	4	7
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

In November 1991 71 per cent of the adult population was recorded as being employed. This figure is comparatively high as employment was seasonally skewed with the advent of the fruit harvesting season when women were employed on a casual basis. Nevertheless, employment levels are significantly higher than those reported by Wilson and Ramphela (1989:92) for Cape Town in 1982, where unemployment varied between 6 and 9 per cent of the population, depending on the stringency of definitions of unemployment. Note, however, that in the more recent research conducted in the Basin area, Emmett estimates that 16 per cent of economically active persons in informal settlements were unemployed in 1991 (1992:124). The Hottentot's Holland informal settlements thus house an extremely high proportion

of unemployed people. This is especially the case when questions of underemployment (see Simkins, 1982) are examined. Simkins found in his research that people who were recorded as employed were frequently working for significantly less time than they were able or willing to work. (See Wilson and Ramphela, 1989:84ff for a discussion of definitions of under- and un-employment). This was true of Die Bos, where underemployment was a distinctive feature of employment among residents of Die Bos, especially during the winter months.

In part the variation in employment rates in Die Bos is attributable to seasonal farm labour (see figures 3.9 and 3.10 which indicate employment among residents of Die Bos by job sector). In both summer and winter, adult workers were concentrated in domestic and building sectors; the former, which traditionally has limited legal protection for workers. A noteworthy feature of domestic employment was that frequently those so employed worked only once or twice a week. Thus although they were recorded in the survey as being employed, they were actually 'underemployed'; i.e. their labour-power was not used to its full potential. This was particularly true of the winter months, when employment became considerably less reliable for both domestic workers and building labourers. Figure 3.11 indicates the reliability of employment in June 1992, showing that, as domestic workers (either chars or gardeners), people's job security, and thus the reliability of their income, was limited. This was particularly the case among gardeners who generally did not work (or earn) when it rained. Indeed, low job security was pervasive among all sectors of employment identified, particularly for men. Much of the labour requirements for building contractors, for example, was variable; people worked when there were contracts to be filled, but they were themselves contract labour. Thus although they may have had long work histories with a particular company, their conditions of work were tenuous.

Figure 3.9: Employment of adults in Die Bos, disaggregated by sex and sector, Nov. 1991.

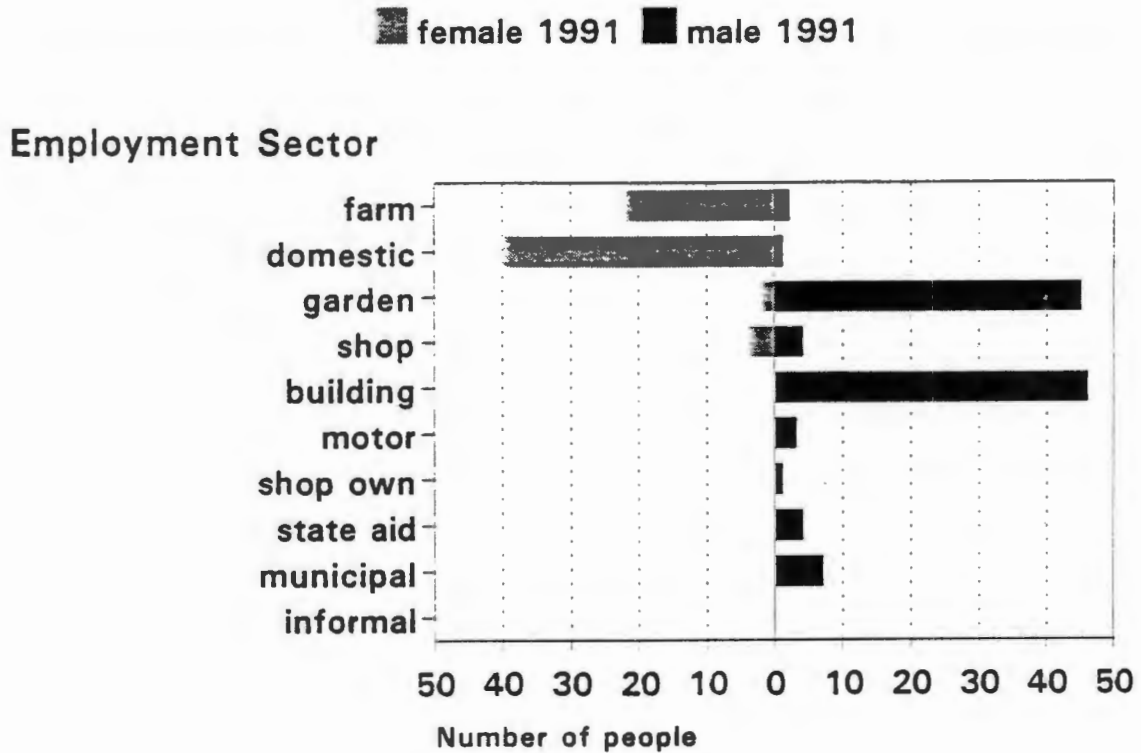


Figure 3.10: Employment of adults in Die Bos, disaggregated by sex and sector, June 1992.

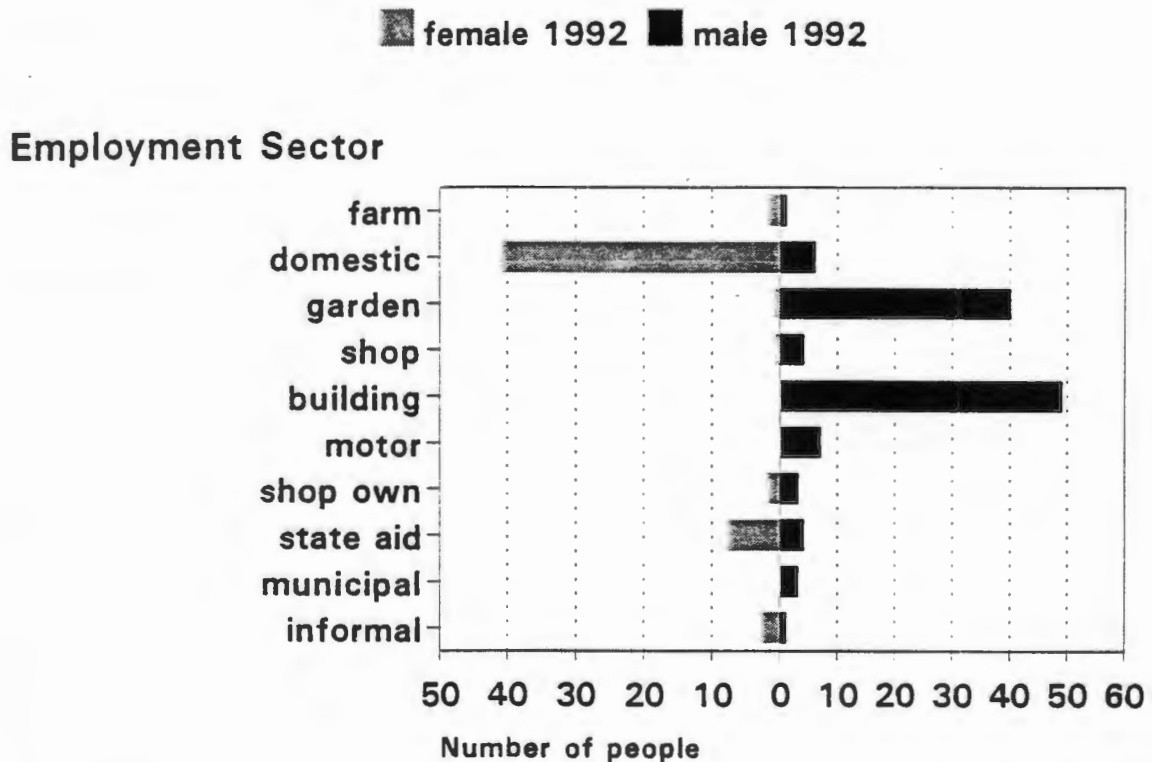
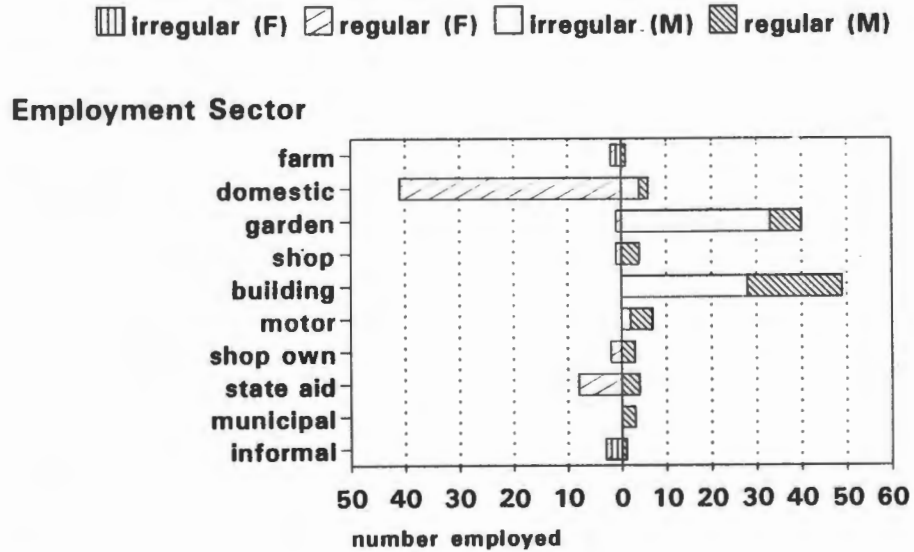


Figure 3.11: Reliability of Employment disaggregated by sex and sector, June 1992.



June 1992

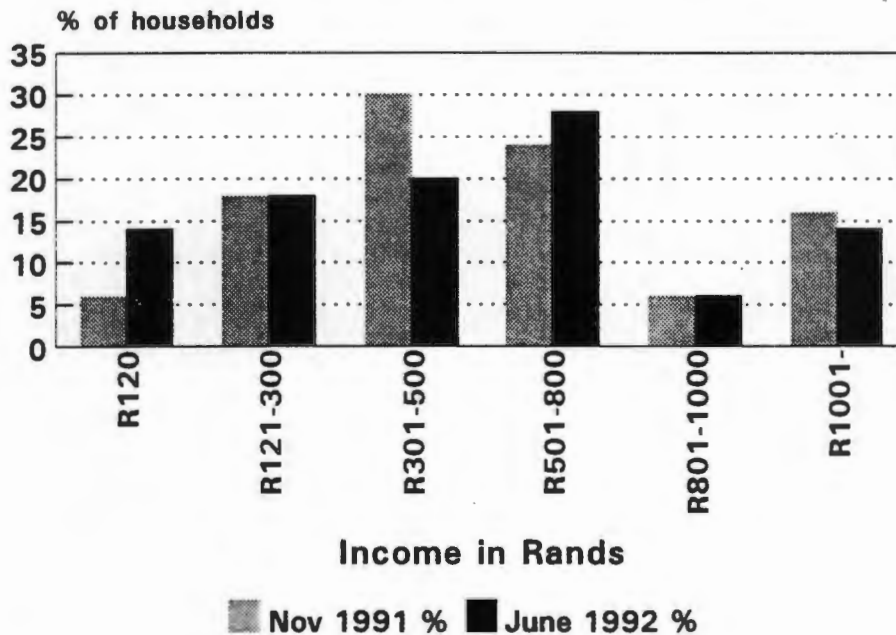
The reliability of employment has important implications for the ways in which people structured social interaction through domestic units, especially in winter. Examining figure 3.11 we can see that although the bulk of employment appears to be male, it was in fact women who brought in regular incomes, as most of the work done by men was weather-dependent. Because women's work tends to be underpaid (particularly in the domestic sector - see Cock, 1984), the unreliability of male employment meant that in winter, when money was most needed, it was least likely to be available. This in turn meant that men were more reliant upon women's income, which had important ramifications for the patterns of movement and commensality which occurred throughout the winter months (see chapters 4 and 5).

- Income

Money was always a bone of contention among residents of Die Bos. The median ranges of income distribution in Die Bos are depicted below (figure 3.12). As depicted in figure 3.12, the median income cohort per household in November was in the R301 and R500 range, while in June it was in the

range R501 and R800. Here a cautionary note regarding actual and anticipated incomes must be sounded: the figures given here for June reflect respondents' projected rather than actual earnings. Also, as Emmett points out (1992:129), variation in income within the settlements is considerable. As is illustrated in figure 3.12, this is indeed the case.

Figure 3.12: Household Income Ranges, Nov. 1991 and June 1992.



### Conclusions.

This chapter has located Die Bos within the context of squatting in the Western Cape and the Hottentots Holland Basin. I have shown that there is a severe backlog of housing in the Western Cape, and that this, combined with influx control mechanisms, has determined the kinds of informal settlement which have been established in the Cape. Die Bos is one of those settlements. It has an on-going history of attempted evictions, a history which directly reflects the changing policies of local authorities to the issue of dealing with innovative responses to the housing crisis in the Basin.

The demography of the settlement during the research period accords with many other informal settlements in that it comprised a young population, the members of which had low

incomes and were concentrated in the lower socio-economic brackets. At first glance rates of employment appear to be high. However, many of those employed worked either seasonally, or by contract, or only worked on certain days in the week. The labour force resident in Die Bos was thus underemployed, and incomes were erratic.

There were, however, significant differences between the population of Die Bos and populations of other informal settlements in the Western Cape. Die Bos comprised residents who, for the most part, were born in the Western Cape and who had been (at some stage) farm labourers. In other settlements in the Western Cape for which this kind of data is obtainable, residents have mainly originated in the homeland areas of Transkei and Ciskei (Seekings, 1990; Dewar, Rosmarin and Watson, 1991; Harrison and McQueen, 1992; Emmett, 1992). Since this was not the case in Die Bos, the places of origin of residents has important implications for the kinds of movement and residential patterns which they have experienced in comparison with residents of other informal settlements. This is one of the concerns of chapter 6, which explores the effects of movement patterns of residents and their offspring on both emic and etic boundaries of domestic units.

The chapters which follow take as their starting point the patterns of fuel-related activities exhibited by residents in Die Bos. My original research mandate required a specific exploration of the impact of fuel-use on women (and thence on individual households). However, as we shall see, too close attention to discrete units such as households tends to overlook cross-cutting relationships engendered through fuel activities, such as the divisions of labour which exist within domestic units. Some of the issues of fuel-based relationships were addressed through both surveys, and are described in the following chapters, where I deal with fuel-sharing and household definitions (chapter 5), and with movement (chapter 6). Chapter 4 deals solely with labour. It is important to note, however, that the issues are not as discrete as their presentation in the

*Contextualising the research.*

various chapters might suggest; the chapter divisions are for heuristic reasons only, and case study data therefore runs across chapters.

## Chapter Four.

### Domains of Labour: The allocation of fuel-related tasks.

"It is scarcity and not sufficiency that makes people generous". (Evans-Pritchard, quoted in Lowmütz, 1977:190).

As I have shown in chapter 2, our understanding of the social contexts in which (re)production and consumption take place tends to depict such activities as occurring in bounded and static units. The construction of social relationships centring on domesticity in Die Bos, and their regulation through institutions such as domestic units, were made particularly visible through patterns of fuel-use which showed how and where rights and obligations accruing through food and fuel-based relationships were generated and accumulated in the settlement.

One of the valuable aspects of using a single set of relationships (e.g. those engendered around fuel) through which to view social interactions is that the networks of relationships built around material concerns become significantly more evident than if one were simply trying to determine statuses (e.g. 'who belongs to this household'). Another advantage is that changes over time can then be traced without conjecture as to who ought to belong in particular places at given times.

During the research period it soon became evident that commensal patterns did not correspond neatly with units of residence or reproduction, and frequently did not correspond with units of production either. Thus the domestic units with which I am mainly concerned in this thesis did not necessarily house activities concerned with (re)production, consumption, production or co-residence under one roof, or within one stable set of social interactions. Instead, as we shall see, these functions were spread across several different sets of social relationships. Thus a set (or network) of people interacting on issues concerning food (e.g. fuel-collection, food preparation, and so on), was not

necessarily the same set which interacted concerning co-residence or production. The functions usually perceived as being located within 'a household' were frequently located in networks of interaction which fell outside those house structures. As Crehan comments:

'The consumption of domestic work' is closely linked to production and distribution, even if the units in which these activities take place are not identical and . . . change over time. [Also] (r)elations within households are not necessarily equal . . . (Crehan, 1992:111).

This chapter explores the changing relationships generated through the allocation of fuel-related labour<sup>1</sup> among residents of shacks in Die Bos. As Guyer (1987) has pointed out, our concern with bounded social institutions such as households may obscure other relationships of equal importance in regulating social interactions. Using fuel-based relationships as a point from which to investigate social interactions I argue, following Guyer, that a specific focus on households as labour units may obscure too many other relationships: those between men, children and fuel, between men and women, between different residential and domestic units, between individuals and 'the community' and so on. As Guyer points out:

. . . [A]ssumptions about the division of labour by sex lend support to a theoretical approach which closes off areas of enquiry [and] distorts the research record . . . (1983:19).

Much of the literature dealing with relationships of work tends to focus either on households as units of production and consumption (see chapter 5) or on gender-based divisions of labour. Such focuses obscure many other relationships of labour. The tendency to see particular kinds of work as "women's work" obscures relationships between women of differing status, and hides work done by others such as children (see cases 4.2, 4.3 and 4.4), and men outside the household (see cases 4.7 and 4.8). Fuel-related labour was not undertaken solely by women in Die Bos, as my original

1. Fuel-related labour mainly refers to fuel collection and cooking. It also includes washing, where hot water is used, and heating of houses.

research mandate <sup>2</sup> implied. Nor was it undertaken specifically within the confines of isolated domestic units. Instead fuel-related labour in the settlement was undertaken flexibly, both within households and between them, and it and changed frequently.

In this chapter I examine some of the contexts in which the processes of undertaking and performing work related to fuel in Die Bos took place. The aim is to show how domestic tasks were allocated on the basis of various criteria, of which household membership was just one. To this end I examine age and social status divisions, the contexts of children's work, and allocations of fuel-related chores which took place across the boundaries of domestic units.

Rather than focusing purely on households, then, this and the following chapters take fuel as a central point and trace social interactions which occurred around it. This enables an accurate depiction of changing processes through which rights and obligations were engendered over time. Here I explore such processes in the context of fuel-related production - in this case, fuel-collection. Because fuel-collection was a public labour activity rather than one which occurred within the privacy of domestic structures (as fuel consumption sometimes but not always did), this is taken as the central theme of the chapter. This should not, however, be taken to imply that the divisions of labour within the private sphere were any less complex than those which pertain to fuel collection.

Earlier, interrupted research in the Cape townships illustrated that much of the work related to fuel (washing, cooking, collecting etc) was undertaken not so much by women heads of household as by others, notably their children or younger women in the domestic unit. This finding ties in with research elsewhere, where, as the private realms of 'household' and that of 'women' is unpacked, women's work becomes differentiated into that performed by young women,

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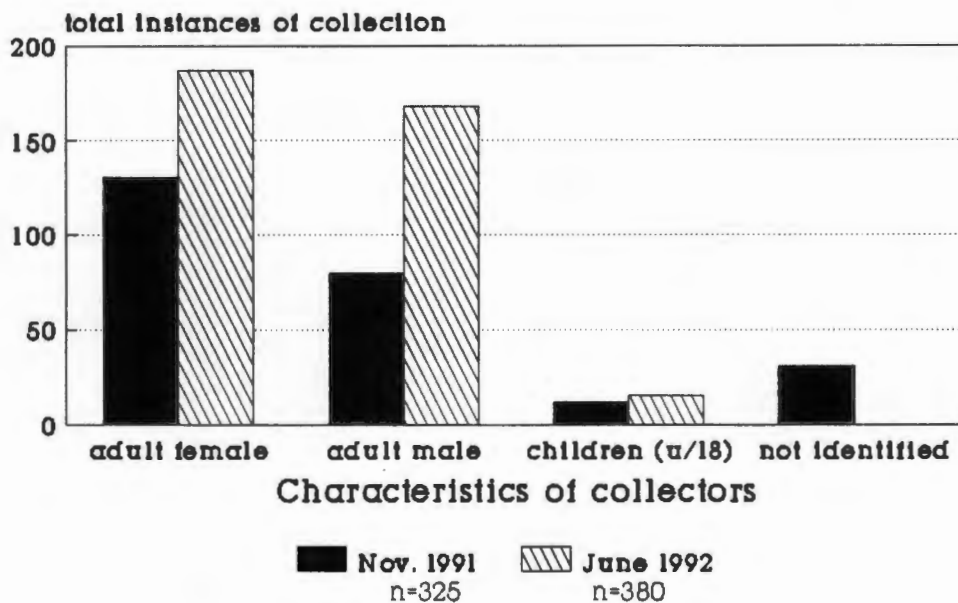
2. This was to assess the impact of fuel use on urban women.

older women and children (see for example Schildkrout, 1983, Reynolds, 1991a). Such differentiation is discussed below, and has, as we have seen in chapter 2, been an important facet of critiques of analytic concepts, such as households, which obscure domestic divisions of labour.

### Fuel Collection

That fuel was of central concern to many people is clearly illustrated by the number of people who collected fuel in the settlement. In the November survey 39 per cent of the total population of the settlement collected some kind of fuel, while the June survey recorded 52 per cent of the population as collecting fuel. The summer/winter differences in fuel collection patterns are described in figure 4.1.

Figure 4.1: Fuel collectors, Nov. 1991 and June 1992.



Fuel collection thus involved more than one third of the settlement in summer and half the total population in winter. Since one-quarter of the population comprised children under the age of 13, we can see that a large proportion of the settlement's adults (but also their

children) were involved in fuel collection. The types of fuel collected by men, women and children are depicted in figures 4.2 and 4.3.

Figure 4.2: Fuel collectors, Nov. 1991.

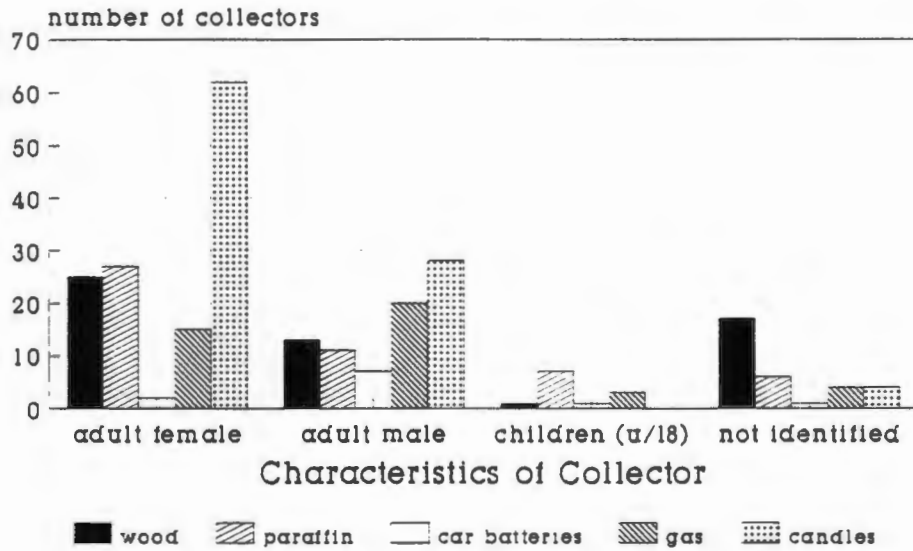
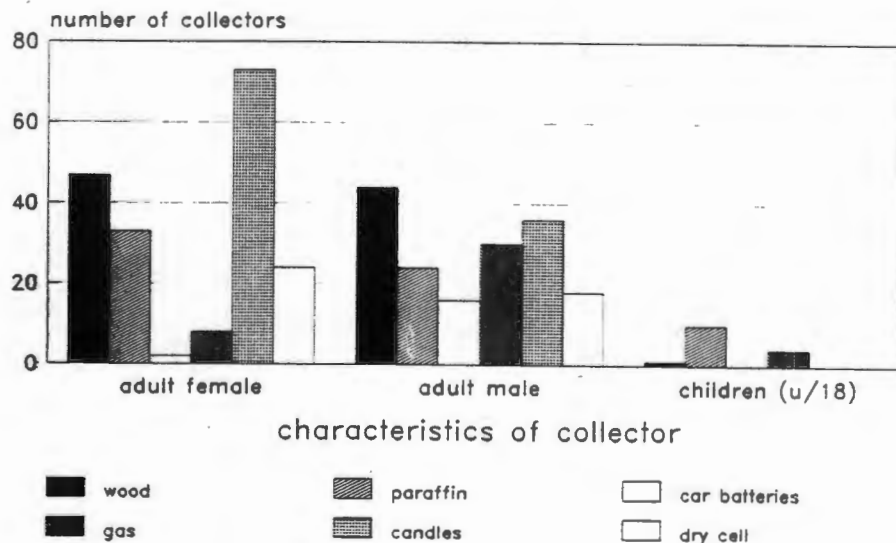


Figure 4.3: Fuel collectors, June 1992.



Tabulation of responses to the question "Who collects each fuel" for each fuel type in November gave a total of 131 instances of women collecting various fuels for the 102 households in the survey, 80 men, and 12 children. This

total of 194 collectors illustrates that it is not always the same people who collect fuel in each domestic unit, nor is it people of the same age or gender status in each domestic unit who collect or purchase all fuels. In addition there were 31 responses that whoever was in the house at the time, or whoever required the fuel, collected it. In fact, as participant-observation showed, in many of these instances children were sent, especially if the requirements were candles or paraffin. They were seldom sent to collect wood without adult supervision (although they often accompanied adults), and even more seldom sent to refill gas bottles or recharge car batteries.



**Women and children collecting woodfuel.**

Figures of fuel collection from the winter survey differed significantly from those in the summer survey. The proportion of people in the settlement collecting fuel in winter was greater than was the case in summer, and the instances of men's labour appear to have been considerably greater. In part this may be due to the exclusion of the category 'not identified'. However, participant observation also indicated that the number of men collecting fuel increased in the winter months. This was mainly as a result of the insecurity of their jobs. Because a large proportion of the men were employed in sectors where their work was

good-weather dependent, they were at home in the winter months and were therefore available to collect fuel. In summer this was not the case.

When examined in terms of each fuel there appears to be a clear gender distinction regarding collection of various fuel types. More women than men collected wood, paraffin, candles and dry cell batteries, the last two usually being included with the household grocery shopping which is generally undertaken by women if they are resident in a household. Men were more often sent to collect gas and car batteries.

As stated above children were seldom sent to collect gas or car batteries, or, indeed, other fuels. This stands in distinct opposition to the findings of my earlier research in the township areas closer to Cape Town, where I found that in fact children are the main collectors of fuel. Part of the explanation for this may lie in the close proximity of spaza shops to houses within the townships and the fact that gas and car batteries could usually be recharged at businesses quite close to home. In New Crossroads, for example, there was a source of paraffin and candles within 200 metres of every house in the survey area. In Die Bos this was also true, with one important exception. There was only one spaza shop which stocked paraffin. While it was less than 300 metres walk from each house in Die Bos, if people did not wish to shop there then they either went to Somerset West or Sir Lowry's Pass Village. To a large extent this precluded the use of children as fuel collectors; distances to be travelled to each of the centres were greater than those in the Cape townships, and there was more road-traffic<sup>3</sup>. The responsibility for fuel collection thus fell on adults.

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3. This is extremely important. The road connecting Sir Lowry's Pass and Somerset West was thoroughfare for the many taxis serving the three informal housing areas in the area in addition to the formal housing areas. In the six months I was resident in Die Bos there were three serious accidents involving pedestrians, two of whom were children.

This however, does not mean that children's labour was not used at all in fuel-related activities. Children's work may be important, if not crucial, yet it is often obscured by the more visible work of adults. An extract from 14 year old Cheryline's daily diary will illustrate her fuel-related work in Die Bos, in addition to giving an indication of other domestic chores:

3 May 1992.

I got up, washed myself, brushed my teeth, combed my hair, got dressed and ate. When I was finished eating I cleared the table. I made my bed, washed the dishes and swept. Then I washed my school clothes and hung them up. When they were dry I ironed them and hung them up.

Further entries indicate that she also helped cook for members of the domestic unit before the arrival of a new lodger. Cheryline's diary also shows that she was one of the few children who was sent to refill gas bottles. I discovered that this was not only for her mother but also for other households in the settlement.

28 April 1992.

When school came out I made up the beds, washed the dishes and filled the gas.

Although children's work in connection with the collection of fuel was not evident from the surveys, participant-observation indicated that in fact children did have a great deal to do with fuel collection, especially of wood. This reinforces Masondo's (1989) findings that children were a great asset to men in Khayelitsha commoditising wood, as their labour was crucial in obtaining sufficient fuel to sell. Much of the literature pertaining to women's domestic labour also mentions children's labour in the contexts of fuel, although very little of it examines children's work independent of adult work.

My research in Die Bos found that men did less fuel-related work than women, although theirs was significant in that it tended to involve collection of heavy fuels. Women tended to be more involved than men in the chores which

incorporated fuel, such as cooking and cleaning. Part of the reason for this may lie in the fact that more men than women were employed, thus more women were more likely to be at home during the day in summer, although in the winter months this trend was not as apparent.

### **Social meanings of fuel collection**

Having described the labour contexts in which fuel-related activities occurred, I now turn to an examination of the social meanings generated around fuel-collection. The following section examines the contention that work related to fuel within domestic units is not simply 'women's work' (because of its location within the domestic sphere), but is cross-cut by age and status, by children's labour and labour of people outside the domestic unit - in short, by relationships of power and reciprocity within and between domestic units.

### **Age and status as determinants of fuel-related labour**

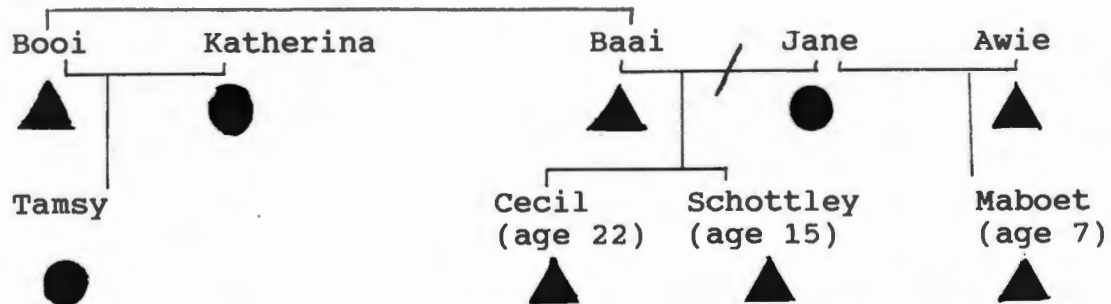
In order to examine the issues of the allocation of fuel-related work I begin with a discussion of the contexts of one woman's labour in the three residences in which she lived during the research period. Here I show how divisions of labour within domestic units were not simply gender-based, but were derived from particular relationships of age and seniority. In addition the case study serves as an introduction to the next two chapters.

#### **Case 4.1: Age and status as determinants of labour.**

Tamsy, who was in her 60s, arrived in Die Bos in December 1991. Prior to this she had been a domestic worker on a farm in Stellenbosch. This was not her first contact with the settlement, however. She and her boyfriend (now deceased) had been *bosslaapers* (vagrants) in the area many years before, and she had continued to visit there after she had left because she had kin living there.

This kin was in the form of Jane and two of her three children. Jane's first husband had been Tamsy's father's brother, and Tamsy had 'grown the children up' (i.e. cared for them while their parents were at work).

Tamsy's kin in Die Bos



During the Christmas period of 1991 Tamsy decided to take up permanent residence in Die Bos and give up her job. She lived with Jane and her common-law husband, Awie, and took over all the housekeeping duties while Jane was at work and learning to become an *igqirha* (in her words a healer or 'fortune teller').

The domestic unit relied on wood, paraffin and candles for their heating and lighting fuels. Tamsy did not collect any of these, instead sending one of Jane's younger sons to do so. Maboet was too young to collect wood alone, so Schottley usually did this chore. (Cecil, the oldest of Jane's sons, was employed in Somerset West at the time.) Tamsy did all the cooking in the house, all the cleaning, washing and ironing. The latter two tasks took her the longest to perform, and she did them every day. Warm water would have to be prepared to wash, using a woodfire. The clothes were soaked, scrubbed and hung out to dry in the morning. While they were drying Tamsy would have a drink of *umqombothi* (traditional beer) which Jane left out in a jug for her, and then sweep and tidy the house. Meanwhile Schottley would collect wood and paraffin and scrub the two irons. A fire was made or rekindled in the *gally blik* (perforated drum used as a cooking or heating appliance), and the irons rested on a grid to heat.

Once the clothes were dry Tamsy would begin to iron - a tedious job. Irons lose their heat quickly when heated over a fire; one hot iron will iron effectively for only five minutes. For example, to iron a pair of trousers using such a method takes between ten and fifteen minutes, or two or three irons. Sometimes when there was a little extra money in the house Jane would allow Tamsy to use the paraffin stove to heat the irons, as this was quicker. But for the most part Tamsy ironed using wood-generated heat.

Once this chore was completed, usually at about three or four o' clock, Tamsy would begin to prepare the evening meal. The members of the domestic unit ate one main meal a day, and sometimes this was the only food they would get for 24 hours. Schottley would be sent to buy paraffin each day from the spaza shop; the two bottles (at R2.50) would last one and a half days, as the stove was faulty.



**Tamsy using wood-heated flat irons. Jane is watching.**

Thus far we have seen that Tamsy did most of the chores in the household. Schottley and Maboet collected fuel and water for her, but all other work was done by Tamsy. In order to understand this we need to examine the age relationships between herself and her kin.

Jane, although much younger than Tamsy, was classified by both women as being Tamsy's social elder by virtue of the fact that she had been married to Tamsy's father's brother. Because of this, and the fact that she had offered Tamsy a place in her shack, the household duties were assumed by Tamsy, despite her age. Jane's position of authority over Tamsy in this regard is best examined through their own kin terminology. The children all addressed Tamsy as *ouma* (grandma) although she was in fact their cousin. They used

the term in order to accord her the respect that her age required. Tamsy, however, referred to Jane, both in her presence and absence, as "my mother". This acknowledged the social seniority that was Jane's by virtue of her kin relationship to Tamsy. Despite their age difference Jane was Tamsy's father's brother's wife, and this deserved appropriate respect. This kin terminology persisted even though Jane and Tamsy's uncle had been separated for several years and Jane had another common-law husband. Such relationships regulated the control of labour in the house so that Tamsy, as Jane's social junior, and as the homeless one, performed all the menial functions there.

The situation changed in mid-May:

Ouma Betty was a resident in one of the labourer's cottages on Klein Dennegeur farm (see map 3), and a woman whom Tamsy had known for some 20 years. She died on the 18th May 1992. As a friend of the deceased, Tamsy moved into Ouma Betty's house during the mourning period and remained there after the funeral. Ouma Betty's kin, also resident in the house, offered to allow Tamsy to remain there, so she decided not to return to Jane's shack. At Ouma Betty's brick-built cottage (which Ouma Betty's daughter, Rea, had inherited) Tamsy did not need to cook or clean as there were two young women there who did so. Her only job was to take over the child-minding that Ouma Betty had done before her death, for which she was paid R5 per day.

Tamsy immediately began to put on some of the weight that she had lost while living and working at Jane's. Her persistent cough (which she believed to be TB) left. She was accorded a position of respect in the new domestic unit because she had become Ouma, the oldest and most experienced of the people there. Each day she had clean clothes that she had not had to wash, and meals that she had not had to prepare. It was her turn to be socially senior, and to have other people work for her.

Sadly for Tamsy, this state of affairs lasted only two months. In July 1992 the farm was sold and the tenants of the cottages evicted. Tamsy did not wish to return to Jane's shack where she would once again become junior to Jane. Instead she moved into a nearby shack owned by kin of Ouma Betty, who offered to take Tamsy in and refused to allow her to work because of her age. In return Tamsy contributed a small portion of her newly-gained disability grant to the household. In this way she was still able to maintain friendly

relations with her nearby kin, whilst also maintaining her social superiority in the household, expressed by the fact that she did not have to work, and still retains the title "Ouma".

This case illustrates the importance of examining gender-based divisions of labour within households. It is not sufficient to say that women perform most household chores (including collection and use of fuel) without examining the contexts in which this work is allocated and performed. Domestic units are neither homogeneous nor static. As we have seen in case 4.1, social relationships based on kinship predominated in the allocation of work in one household, while relationships of seniority based on age and income predominated in the other two. This type of labour division is not uncommon, either in Die Bos or in social relationships between people in most societies.

There may be a distinct trend towards women doing particular kinds of work, as in Die Bos, but this should not be allowed to overshadow other relationships which affect the allocation of work in particular contexts. Some people (especially men) may be able to control women in relationships where they are not involved in the labour market, but on the domestic front and in winter when many men did not work, other types of power relationships existed within the settlement, such as those based on status and age described above. In this respect, control over children is important, for as Kotze (1986:33) points out, children represent the final point of convergence of adult power. As we shall see, the ability to command children's labour is an important aspect of social interactions generated around fuel.

This is particularly evident in case 4.1, where in Jane's home all fuel collection was done by children. This was not recorded as such in either survey; Jane said that she did all fuel collection. When asked, however, Schottley knew the price of paraffin, in addition to recalling the dates the prices of fuel at the *spaza* shop had risen. He also knew most of the people who sold candles in the settlement

and the prices in each place. He collected wood frequently. On one occasion (13 May) he and his brother collected 26kg of wood, some of which the latter dragged home and the remaining 19kg of which was wheeled home by Schottley in a borrowed wheelbarrow. Schottley then spent the afternoon sawing the wood into logs, some of which were used to make a fire to heat Tamsy's irons.

In Rea's home (previously Ouma Betty's) there were no children capable of collecting fuel or performing fuel-related jobs. Nor were there any resident men. The division of labour thus could not be made along gender lines, and instead was made along lines of age and income. Tamsy contributed all her newly-gained disability grant to the household. This had not been necessary in Jane's home when Tamsy received her first pension payout shortly before she left the house. This was because Jane, her husband and her eldest son were all working and contributing their income to the household. In Rea's home, however, money was scarce. Income from one resident's once-weekly char job was used to support herself and her daughter, and her boyfriend when he was out of work. Rea, too, worked once a week as a char, and her money was used to support herself and her baby. It was thus Tamsy's income which could be placed at the disposal of the domestic unit as a whole rather than used solely for individuals. Given this and her age she was exempted from domestic chores. The fact that there were no children old enough to collect fuel meant that this task fell to the young women in Rea's house. In Tamsy's later home a similar pattern occurred. The head of the domestic unit was 40 years younger than Tamsy. It was his girlfriend who did household chores and fuel collection, although the head often collected wood, and bought candles on his way back from work. Once again seniority in terms of age meant that Tamsy's work was limited. This was reaffirmed by economic decisions; Tamsy contributed some of her income to the household, and therefore was (in the eyes of the head) entitled to board and lodging. As a result she was not expected to work.

The case provides an apt illustration of the central concerns of this chapter by illustrating the inadequacy of assumptions that fuel-related domestic work is simply women's work. In many instances what is considered to be women's work has other discrete divisions within the category so defined. Thus children such as Schottley and his brother collected fuel, Tamsy performed fuel-related work in some instances and not others, and the male head of the third domestic unit played a role in fuel collection. The case illustrates the need to disaggregate composite social entities so as to explore relationships extant within them.

### **Children's labour**

As we have seen above, divisions of labour are not simply a question of gender. Although the surveys we conducted in November 1991 and June 1992 did not record much children's activity concerning fuel, the following three case studies will provide illustrations of the ways in which children's work is utilised by parents and others. Their labour is an important contribution to the functioning of domestic units, although it is often 'invisible' - that is, adults do not always recognise the work that children perform unless it pointed out to them. As Reynolds points out:

Children's work offers an interesting example of how issues can be hidden, obscured, disguised. Although neither the parents nor the children . . . measure the contribution the children make it is valued nevertheless (1991:xxviii).

Children's work is often subsumed under the category of women's work, even where they work without adult supervision. This belies the direct economic and domestic benefits their work provides, while obscuring the relationships of power which exist within and between domestic units, expressed through control over children's production.

**Case 4.2: Older children's independent fuel-related work.**

On the 7 May 1992 Sakhiwe, who was 11 and Kelvin, a 12 year old epileptic, collected wood for their female kin. Neither child attended school during the research period, and they were therefore available to perform fuel-related chores. Sakhiwe dragged a total of 17.5kg of branches home, which he and another friend, also aged 12, spent 1.5 hours cutting into logs on an improvised saw horse. Kelvin collected a 10kg maize-meal sack of tinder and straw to be used as kindling.

More common than the independent labour of children, however, were numerous incidents of very young children performing fuel collecting activities either within the settlement or while accompanying adults. In part the latter was the product of women's roles in their domestic units; if men were away working then women cared for the children. This meant that the children had to accompany them on fuel collecting trips. What is unexpected is the quantity of work those children actually performed.

**Case 4.3: Young children's independent labour.**

Erica (see also case 4.5 and 6.3) decided to cook pan scones. Her boyfriend was away, and there was no wood in the house. Erica was reluctant to go and collect it herself because she was taking care of several children. She was temporarily not on speaking terms with her closest neighbours, so was unable to ask for them for some of their fuel as she usually did. Instead she sent Tasha (her 3 year old daughter) and 3 other young children to forage for pine cones and kindling in the settlement. The children were gone for 15 minutes, and each returned with a handful of twigs and some cones which Erica then used to light the fire and cook the food.

The children were not gone long, but their labour freed Erica to do her washing. This was an important part of her daily chores as her two lodgers would only pay their R30 per week board if the washing was done daily. Since the domestic unit relied heavily on that income (and in fact went onto Welfare supplies<sup>4</sup> when the lodgers left), the children were performing an important function.

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4. A local social welfare organisation provides food packages for children for those adults who can prove that they and their children are destitute. A package usually consists of powdered milk, granulated cooldrink, sugar, flour, beans. It is designed to provide sufficient nutrients for one child for a month. The packages Erica got, ostensibly for her daughter, were actually used to feed the child and two to five adults each month.

In other instances children regularly accompanied adults on wood collection trips. In the photograph below, two young girls (both aged 4) are seen on one of their regular wood collection trips, accompanying the mother of one of the two. The children collected wood with her virtually every day. They would tie kindling into handkerchiefs and carry it on their heads, just as their mothers and other adults did. The loads were not heavy - two to three kilograms - but were useful as kindling. This was especially the case in winter where kindling collected had to be stored and dried out to use as tinder.



**Children collecting kindling.**

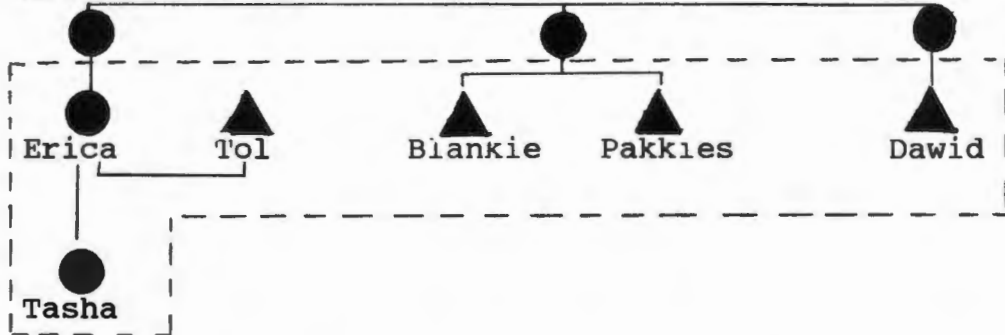
As one woman said,

Okay, it's not much, what they do, but otherwise I'd have to do it. At least it's useful for the fire and the kids can come with us when we collect so we don't always have to worry where they are and what they are doing. They are slow and we

Case 4.5: Collection and household divisions of labour.

Erica and her child Tasha (see case 4.3) lived together with Erica's boyfriend in her uncle's house. With them were three other people, all Erica's kin.

Erica's kin resident in her domestic unit.



Until April 1992 none of them was employed. The three lodgers ate elsewhere prior to obtaining jobs, but Erica's boyfriend ate at home with her. He usually collected wood for the household. One day in March Erica asked me for a cup of samp and beans to cook for their dinner. She had not received her child support from Tasha's father, on which she, her child and her boyfriend depended. She thus had no money for food. She and her boyfriend had argued over this, and she did not dare ask him to collect wood for her. She could not ask her neighbour for fuel or food as she usually did (see case 4.8) because although she had a reciprocal arrangement in relation to obtaining fuel from him, the neighbour was her boyfriend's kin and had sided with him in the argument. Erica's dependents did not eat that night.

A few days later her boyfriend found a job, to start the following week. To make up for his argument with Erica he spent a day chopping a pile of wood for her. Later, once he started work on a construction site, he brought scraps of timber and branches home for her.

In early May they had another dispute in which she threatened to throw him out of the house (which her uncle had now given to her). Suddenly he ceased bringing wood home, and refused to gather or chop it for her. She resorted to asking her neighbour again. This time he agreed, in exchange for some of the food she cooked with it.

Once again, having cleared the air over their argument, the flow of wood commenced. Erica's boyfriend agreed to put more than the R30 per week that he had previously paid into 'house funds' for food, and with his increased input in July Erica decided to buy wicks for her paraffin stove and a 20 litre container of paraffin, thus ending her reliance on his labour in fuel collection, although increasing her reliance on his cash input.

The rather complicated fuel-work patterns which resulted can be simplified by tabulation, although it should be noted that this places more order on the events than actually existed. For ease of reference I pick out some of the dates when labour divisions altered, although data for the precise periods of change were not always obtainable and are not fully represented in figure 4.4.

**Figure 4.4: Fuel-related work: collection in Erica's household, March to July 1992.**

Date	Fuel collector	Fuel
Early March	Boyfriend	W.
20-22/3/92	No-one	
23-27/3/92	Neighbour	W.
28/3 - 20/5/92	Boyfriend	W.
21-22/5/92	No-one	
23/5/92-30/5/92	Neighbour	W.
31/5 - 30/6/92	Boyfriend	W.
Early July	Erica	P.

W. = wood.

P. = paraffin.

Note: This table does not include 3 year old Tasha's fuel-related labour as her contribution was erratic, as described in case 3.3.

Interpersonal tensions within the domestic unit were expressed, among other ways, through fuel activities. Erica's boyfriend refused to collect wood after he and Erica had argued, and she refused to do what she considered to be his work. As a result there was no cooked meal on those days they had been arguing. As tensions decreased the boyfriend began to collect fuel again, but each time they resurfaced his labour contribution to the domestic unit ended. Eventually Erica decided to use paraffin as her main fuel, even though this was more expensive than wood, because by doing so she would be able to circumvent her boyfriend's manipulation of his labour contributions to the household, although she was now dependent on his cash contributions.

Allocations of fuel-related work are thus neither static nor permanent, even in the short term. Erica's decision to change to paraffin re-ordered labour divisions in the household. She became responsible for fuel collection rather than her boyfriend, thus limiting the power he had been able to exercise in the domestic unit by withholding his labour, but opening the unit to new forms of his exercise of power by making them at least partially dependent on his cash remittances for their fuel purchases.

**Crosscutting domestic unit boundaries; the allocation of tasks outside domestic units**

Thus far I have examined fuel and labour in terms of domestic units, so that it appears that each such unit has discrete (albeit flexible) divisions of labour. This is not always so, as we will see. This section of the chapter discusses how the boundaries of households appear to dissolve through some performances of fuel-related tasks. The allocation of labour outside domestic unit boundaries has the effect of blurring precisely where those boundaries lie. The section thus also provides an introduction to the central concerns of chapter 5, which examines the ways in which fuel-based social relationships were activated in order to generate and dissolve domestic units.

Labour was allocated outside the domestic unit in many instances in Die Bos, examples of which are explored below. In some instances children collected fuel for the units in which they resided and also for others, sometimes in return for cash, and sometimes not. Men frequently performed fuel-related chores for women outside their own domestic units. This had returns too, usually in food, but sometimes in residential and/or commensal (i.e. eating together) rights. Women performed fuel-related work (especially cooking and washing) for other women, also in return for cash or commensal rights. The ways in which labour was allocated and performed in these contexts makes it difficult to establish boundaries of domestic units, and carries with it the implication that it is impossible (and nonsensical) to

try to understand interaction in terms of interpersonal relationships within domestic units alone (an idea explored in greater detail in chapters 5 and 6).

The first case study explores the roles that children play in fuel-collection for households other than their own, showing how children resident in one domestic unit may provide labour for others.

**Case 4.6: Collecting wood for other households.**

Having been accustomed to collecting fuel for his own domestic unit (case 4.2), 11 year old Sakhiwe also began collecting wood for people other than his mother. For R2 he would collect a load of wood (usually about 10kg), drag or wheel it home in a barrow borrowed from a neighbour, saw it into pieces and deliver it. This tied in with his water collecting enterprise where for R2 he would cart 2 loads of water from the dam across the road.

Money from these jobs, although erratic, was contributed to his mother, and was used to buy candles and paraffin. Sakhiwe retained rights in the products of his labour. For example, one day when he entered the house and saw his mother singing and dancing around two lit candles in full daylight (as she said she had been commanded in her sleep by her ancestors to do) he chastised her for wasting their fuel. "Yes, ma, but it's daytime and tonight we will cry when it's dark and there's no candle for us. Why are you wasting them?" he asked. She paid no apparent heed. Sakhiwe shrugged and left to collect more water. Veronica later snuffed the candles, saying that she had to save them "or Sakhiwe would be mad".

Sakhiwe was not the only child involved in fuel collection of this sort, although his work was somewhat different from that performed by other children. This was because his work crosscut the boundaries of domestic units, whereas theirs tended to be concentrated within such units, and was not always available to people outside the boundaries of their units. There were many instances of this. We have already seen extracts from one 13 year-old's diary showing her role in fuel-related work, and we have examined the contexts of children's work in case 3.1. All the children in that instance were old enough to collect fuel alone: the eldest

residential child there was 15, and his brother was 7 years old. The latter was too young to collect wood alone but old enough to be sent to purchase paraffin at the *spaza* shop.

It was not only children's labour which was available to people outside specific domestic units. There were several cases of people offering their labour for reimbursement (either in cash or in kind) in Die Bos. Below I examine several such instances. The first case (4.7) explores the altering relationships of labour allocation, especially with regard to fuel-related chores, that resulted from an individual's movements between houses in Die Bos. In the second case (4.8) we see how fuel is offered occasionally when others have need of it. This was not an institutionalised process in any way, unlike in case 4.9 in which a man and his wife offered their labour in return for certain rights in households of which they were not originally members. These rights were originally commensal, but later switched between residential and commensal rights (see also case 5.3). The final case in this chapter (4.10) explores how fuel-related labour potentially crosscut all the unit-boundaries in Die Bos by offering fuel to anyone within the settlement rather than by confining the products of labour to certain units or contexts. This enables us to see that fuel-use is not restricted to the domestic context of small interactive units. Instead it is a part of the complex and constantly changing relationships within the settlement, ultimately providing links with the world beyond the physical boundaries of Die Bos.

**Case 4.7: Changing contexts of labour.**

Jemima arrived in Die Bos early in 1992.<sup>5</sup> During the six month research period she lived in 3 different houses, her moves in each case profoundly altering the divisions of labour within the households. While resident in one home she performed chores which included cooking and washing (although not fuel-collection *per se* as this was performed by a non-resident man). When she moved to the second home she took on the

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5. Her movements are discussed in chapter 6.

responsibility for collecting wood, in addition to doing all the cooking and washing, which the household head had been unable to perform in the past (case 6.3). She then moved to a third home where she was responsible for washing and cooking, taking the bulk of work off 13 year old Cheryline's shoulders (see diary extracts above). Either the head of household (Cheryline's father) or Cheryline continued to collect gas after Jemima's arrival. However the bulk of other fuel-related chores fell to Jemima rather than to Cheryline or her mother.

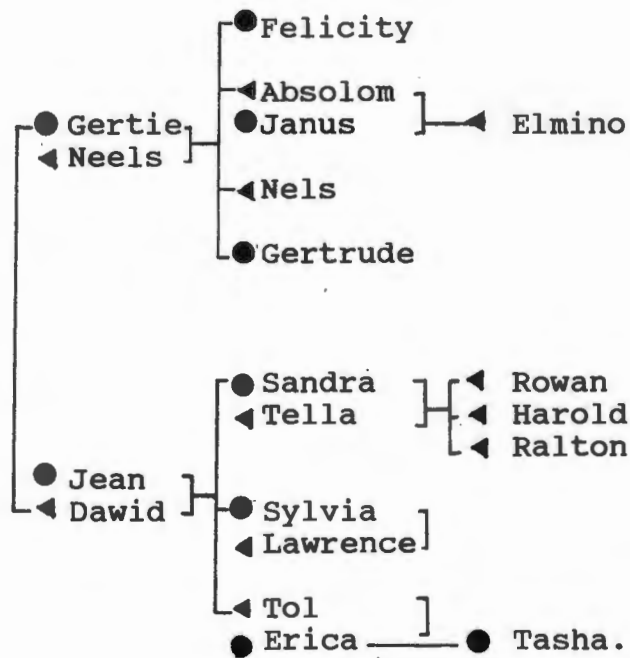
In each home Jemima's presence altered the ways in which fuel-related and other domestic work was performed, and made it possible to reallocate labour. In some instances (her first and third residences) she was responsible for fuel-related chores such as washing and cooking, although not for fuel-collection *per se*. In the second home Jemima was responsible for all fuel-related activities, including collection. In return for her roles in these domestic units she was granted residential rights for as long as she continued to perform domestic duties. In some instances (notably prior to taking up residence in the third house), Jemima had been offered commensal rights in that house because of the fuel-related chores that she performed there. She opted to be paid a small cash sum instead, until she moved into the house. Jemima's mobility had measurable effects on the ways in which work was allocated within domestic units over time, for each time she arrived and left a residence new decisions would have to be made and implemented regarding the divisions of labour.

Such changes in labour divisions within domestic units were not only a product of the movements of personnel, but were also a reflection of intra-household tensions and inter-household relationships. In some instances fuel-sharing linked households, confusing boundaries (as is discussed in chapter 5). In other cases when labour was not forthcoming in a domestic unit (see case 4.5), other networks were used to create fuel resources. A case study will illuminate this:

Case 4.8: Temporarily utilising others' labour.

Neels and his immediate kin were Tol and Erica's closest neighbours, and engaged in a network of exchange of fuel for food or coffee with Erica (see cases 4.3 and 4.5). They were reliant on wood as their primary fuel. Since Neels was unemployed he collected wood. When asked why he said "It means I can work for my family now that I can't earn for them".

Neels Kin in Die Bos



Neels collected wood frequently, and had a stockpile of logs at the side of his home. He did not sell these, but was not averse to allowing others to use them when in need.

When Erica and her boyfriend argued (see case 4.5), Erica was frequently left without a fuel source as she refused to collect wood herself. In such cases she would ask Neels for wood, which, for the most part, he would supply since, as he said, he was Erica's boyfriend's uncle by marriage. In return he received coffee or food.

Neels not only supplied fuel to kin, however. In winter he sometimes provided wood for a woman whose husband was away at work and therefore could not collect it. In return each time, he received a plate of food.

Neels's labour was thus not only instrumental in ensuring his own household's needs, but also functioned to meet other household's fuel needs as well. In so doing he also managed

to provide extra foodstuff for his domestic unit as a result of the repayments of the fuel. His infrequent labour for others thus informally linked his destitute domestic unit in with other domestic units in flexible reciprocal relationships.

A second case further illustrates the ways in which households are tied together in social relationships centring on fuel which crosscut the boundaries of domestic units. In this case work performed by people outside the domestic unit enabled them to manipulate the boundaries of that unit in such a way that they were later able to claim some rights to temporary residence there.

**Case 4.9: Creating rights to potential commensality through labour.**

Korporal and Thelma had their own shack in Die Bos, a tiny plastic home with room only for a bed and a table. Most of their days were spent out of doors, usually around Baby and her neighbours' houses. Korporal collected wood and water for Baby, in addition to taking her gas bottle to be refilled. He also did domestic chores for other women in the settlement, caring for children and collecting water, gas and wood.

Both Baby and her closest neighbour, Gwen, were reliant on Korporal's work as neither was at home during the day. In return for this, both women paid him and Thelma (who did housework for both women) either with *wyngeld* (money for alcohol), or in kind.

In April and May 1992 Thelma and Korporal became commensal members of Baby's domestic unit. In June they resided in her home in addition to eating there, and in July they returned to sleep in their own home although they continued to eat at Baby's.

Korporal and Thelma's work thus sustained both Gwen and Baby's households in addition to their own. Their labour was available to three households, linking them into a web of reciprocity which crosscut household boundaries, to the extent that in June Korporal and Thelma actually became residents at Baby's home for a while (case 5.3), and ate there for several months. This made it almost impossible to determine where the boundaries of Baby's domestic unit began and ended.

Divisions of labour in such instances were made outside the boundaries of domestic units and involved reciprocity of various kinds. It was Korporal and Thelma's labour for Baby and Gwen which kept their own domestic unit functioning as neither he nor Thelma were permanently employed. The networks of labour and social obligation that this created generated webs of social interaction around fuel. Such networks were widespread in Die Bos.

The contexts of fuel-related labour thus cannot be seen in terms of the functioning of small, independent domestic units. As we shall see below, some instances of fuel-related work served to link the settlement into larger social conglomerates. In May 1992, a group of Rastafarians decided to begin a fuel-enterprise - an activity which, according to them, was aimed at aiding the community by offering wood for sale (i.e. commoditising collection in order to offer to many households functions which a few individuals from each usually performed). At the time all the unemployed Rastafarians aimed to sell wood which they had collected in order to put money in their own pockets while saving others the effort of collecting wood for themselves.

**Case 4.10: The collective labour enterprise.**

On the 6 May 1992 a group of five Rastafarians (including one woman) spent a morning deep in the forest collecting wood which they chopped into lengths of approximately 1.5m whilst there. The gathering of this wood lasted six hours and involved several trips.

The same group of Rastas then set up a simple saw horse and two of them began sawing the wood into logs of approximately 30cm. Another split these with an axe, while the remaining two took turns with the sawing. A sixth Rasta, crippled by polio was given the task of tidying the bundles.

This group of six, resident in two separate shacks, had decided to sell the wood that they chopped. They announced that it would be available within the settlement at R5 for 100 pieces. They also had plans to market wood to the residents of formal housing in Somerset West as barbecue-fuel. When there were no sales after the first day, they did not seem perturbed, but

pointed out that in winter when people did not want to collect their own wood their sales would soar. By August 1992, however very little of the wood had been sold, and the Rastafarians had begun using it for their own fires.



**The Rastafarian Wood Enterprise.**

This enterprise (although unsuccessful during the research period) illustrates the ways in which relationships centred around fuel create webs of interconnecting obligation and reciprocity in the settlement. It shows that labour is not concentrated within isolated static domestic units. Instead we are forced to view the wider contexts in which work is allocated and performed.

## Conclusions

I began this chapter by arguing that although statistical data derived from the two surveys illustrated that women in independent domestic units were responsible for much of the collection of fuel, it is not sufficient to accept this at face value. I thus explored the changing dynamics of labour allocation within domestic units in terms of age and status differentiation, and control over children's labour. I then turned to examine the ways in which labour allocated beyond single households linked groups of them into networks of exchange and reciprocity. Finally I have shown that the Rastafarian enterprise was directly aimed at linking the entire population of wood-users in the settlement. The Rastafarians also planned to sell wood outside the settlement, thus creating linkages with the 'outside' world, and reiterating the connectedness of micro- and macro-spheres. This case study therefore provides an apt illustration of how Die Bos's fuel patterns are reflected and repeated in interactions within and beyond the settlement.

Thus far we have discussed the contexts of fuel-related labour and how these contexts change over time and with the introduction of new personnel into domestic units. Such activities were therefore not fixed roles in the functioning of domestic units in Die Bos, but were rather heavily reliant upon tensions and changes in households. As we have seen, interpersonal relationships clearly affected the ways in which fuel-work was allocated and performed in households. Inter-household movements had profound fuel and work implications for each house in which mobile people resided. Children performed important functions of fuel collection, and some also played important roles in other fuel-related chores, such as washing and cooking. Moreover, fuel labour was not restricted to each individual household: there was an element of inter-household sharing which could result in enterprises such as that of the Rastafarians and, on a much smaller scale, those of children. Fuel-related

divisions of labour were thus not based simply upon gender or upon membership in a particular domestic unit, but were constructed in terms of other social criteria, such as age, group and network affiliates. Fuel-related activities, then, were allocated on the basis of extremely fluid relationships and individual functions, upon divisions of labour within individual domestic units and between and among them rather than in terms of categories of women's and men's work concentrated in a particular household. Survey data implied that collection (especially of wood, paraffin and candles) is work done mainly by women (see figures 4.2 and 4.3). However such data obscure many of the complexities which were a product of inter- and intra-household divisions of labour. Some of these issues have been explored above.

All fuel-related work, then, is the product of, and leads to, fluid social relationships, mediated by relationships of power. The various ways in which work was allocated within and between domestic units was a visible product of this process. In much of Africa at large (see, for example Oppong, 1983), men are engaged in active wage labour and are therefore able to control women's production by virtue of their access to resources not directly available to women. In such instances women are able to circumvent men's power, especially by using the productive capacities of children (Schildkrout, 1983). In Die Bos, however, it is clear that relationships of labour do not reflect a simple gender division of labour. The exercise of power is not concentrated in men's hands, thus controlling women's labour, nor within the boundaries of domestic units (however these are defined). Instead divisions of labour are based on varying and relative concepts of space and power. Even in relation to fuel, the allocation of labour is a somewhat contested terrain, constantly shifting in response to the internal (i.e domestic) and external environment.

A main theme of this chapter and of those which follow is that households in Die Bos were not discrete entities. They frequently changed personnel and labour roles, and members

of domestic units were linked with others in complex relationships, all of which can be made visible by an approach centring on the material functioning of households, such as on who produced and consumed fuel-related products. The discussion is continued in chapter 5 which examines the contexts of fuel- and food- sharing.

**Chapter Five:**  
**Creating Commensality: Fuel sharing and household  
construction**

"These ties of reciprocity counteract the vicissitudes of poverty by evening out the risks of uncertainty and insecurity. They create a veritable economy of the poor, in which the guiding principles are not those of the market, but strategies which serve to bend off and blunt its negative forces". (Wolf quoted in Lomnitz, 1977:xii).

This chapter examines commensal relationships in Die Bos, exploring the complex social networks that were generated around people's fulfillment of their need for nourishment. The chapter is divided into two. I first examine changes in households and fuel patterns as a result of changing networks, movement and concomitant effects on commensality. I then discuss how sharing fuels can and does give rise to conflicts about who has rights to the products of domestic labour (in this case fuel and food), and how these are expressed and mediated. The chapter illustrates the complex nature of social networks established through commensality in Die Bos, the effects of such networks and their changes on domestic units, and the frequency of alteration in relationships generated through food- and fuel- sharing in the settlement.

**Blurring boundaries: fuel, food and people in Die Bos**

To provide a baseline for the discussion which follows I begin by examining what appeared to be a relatively stable domestic unit over the research period. While this unit approximated generally accepted definitions of a household, in that it was the locus for a stable set of (re)production, consumption and co-residential patterns during the research period, I have no wish to imply that the domestic unit described in case 5.1 was any more stable than others in the settlement over the long-term. Since the personnel and fuel types in this domestic unit remained constant during the research period, I use it simply as an heuristic core around which the fluctuations evidenced in other domestic units can be compared and discussed.

**Case 5.1: Stable household membership.**

Dinah, her boyfriend Donavon, and their two daughters Poppy and Blommie, lived in a large ghetto (shack) in Die Bos. Dinah was chairperson of the committee which governed the settlement. In addition to holding down this demanding position, she was regularly employed as a char woman, working in Somerset West and Strand. Donavon was employed as a labourer for a construction company in Somerset West. His job and wages were thus reliant on the vagaries of the weather and the political economy of the region as a whole (see chapter 3). During the 7 month period of research he did not work for 3 months.

To accord with Donavon's Rastafarian diet (which excluded meat, caffeine, salt and vinegar), meals usually consisted of vegetable stews with a high cabbage and potato content, which Dinah prepared on her gas two-plate stove each day after her return from work.

Dinah did all the cooking in the house. In her absence (over the Christmas period, when she and her daughters went to visit Dinah's parents in Riebeeck West), Donavon did not prepare food at home but ate with the other Rastafarians in the settlement, usually at his cousin's home, where they cooked over an open fire.

Dinah also did all the housework, even when Donavon was not working. On her return from work every day she collected groceries for that evening's meal. Arriving in Die Bos, she prepared tea and a meal for herself and Poppy, then swept, tidied and made the beds.

The residents were reliant on gas and paraffin as their main cooking and lighting fuels. Fuel was seldom shared with other people, nor did members of the domestic unit regularly rely on others for food or fuel (although Donavon relied on others for supplies of marijuana). However this does not mean that they did not use other people's fuel. For example, Dinah made frequent use of a neighbour's gas oven, in return for which she gave the neighbour some of the food she cooked.

This brief overview of Dinah's domestic unit is important for our discussion in several respects. Since Dinah's jobs were secure, and guaranteed a minimum income of R350 per month, there was sufficient income to meet basic material needs even when Donavon, a building labourer, was unemployed (see chapter 3 for a discussion of the reliability of incomes in the building sector). Fuels and food were not usually shared. The domestic unit can thus be defined using

any one of the common household criteria; common residence, kin relationships, the practice of 'eating out of the same pot', the use of the same fuel, or sharing income. This does not however imply that the residents of the structure lived independently of others. As I have described above, Dinah used a neighbour's oven to bake, Donavon ate with other Rastas while Dinah was away, and shared their fire every night and every morning while preparing his *ganja* (marijuana). These direct fuel links indicate the ways in which domestic units among squatters were not isolated from other households, even while they retained a fairly stable personnel. Such links are not unusual; many 'neighbourhood' ethnographies comment of the frequency of contact between neighbours (see for example, Hannerz' 1969 description of American slums, Scharff, 1981 who explores ghettos, and Scheper-Hughes, 1992, who describes ties in Brazilian shanty-towns). What is unusual in the case of Die Bos is the intensity and frequency with which networks of interactions change over short periods, as we shall see below.

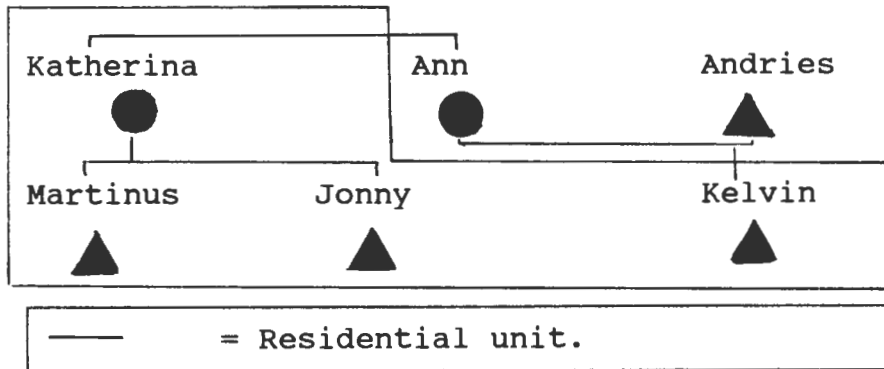
Case 5.1 has described a domestic unit which was stable over the research period. While not unique, such stability, particularly in terms of commensal patterns, was not common among residents of households in Die Bos. Below I use several cases revolving around fuel- and food- sharing to describe the complexities of the ways in which domestic units were structured and altered over the research period. These stand in contrast to case 5.1 in that they exhibit great changes in personnel, in commensal patterns and in income over the research period. The discussion begins with a case which describes the intricacy of social interactions centered on fuel and food. The case illustrates that fuels are a central point around which people gather in interactions, and that a fuel-centered approach to the study of processes in domestic units in Die Bos has therefore been a useful means through which to view the ways in which people organise themselves and generate and maintain social relationships. Several of the people presented in case 5.2 have appeared in chapter 4, and will reappear elsewhere in

different contexts, illustrating just how fluid social relationships are. Note also that changing commensal patterns are closely linked to movement patterns, the topic of chapter 6.

Case 5.2: Changing commensal and residential<sup>1</sup> patterns.

Katherina had been resident in Die Bos for approximately eight months by the end of my intensive research period in June 1992. When she arrived in the settlement she stayed with her sister's boyfriend, Andries, for a few weeks. Her sister (Ann) was not resident in the settlement at the time, having a home with her employer's during the week. Katherina decided to build her own home, and left Andries' home, taking with her Kelvin, her sister's epileptic son. Accompanied by her own two children and Kelvin, she moved into a large single-roomed house, which she divided into a living and sleeping area.

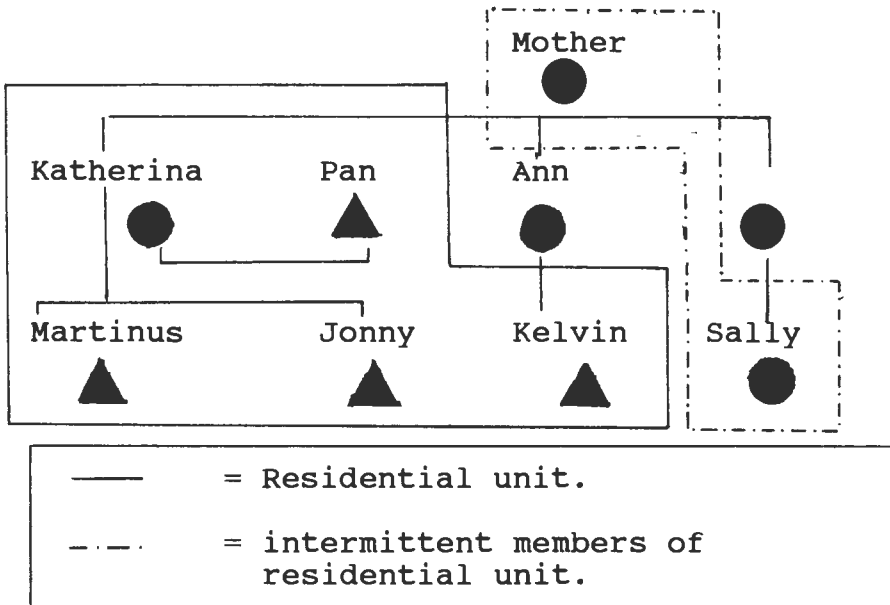
Kinship diagram, Jan. 1992.



When I met Katherina she was using a paraffin pressure stove with two burners as her main cooking appliance. On this she cooked for herself, the three children and her boyfriend Pan, as well as occasionally for her mother and sister's daughter, Sally, who came to visit from Macassar, having left Die Bos when Andries and Ann separated.

1. Throughout this chapter I use 'residential' to refer to people who ate and slept under the same roof.

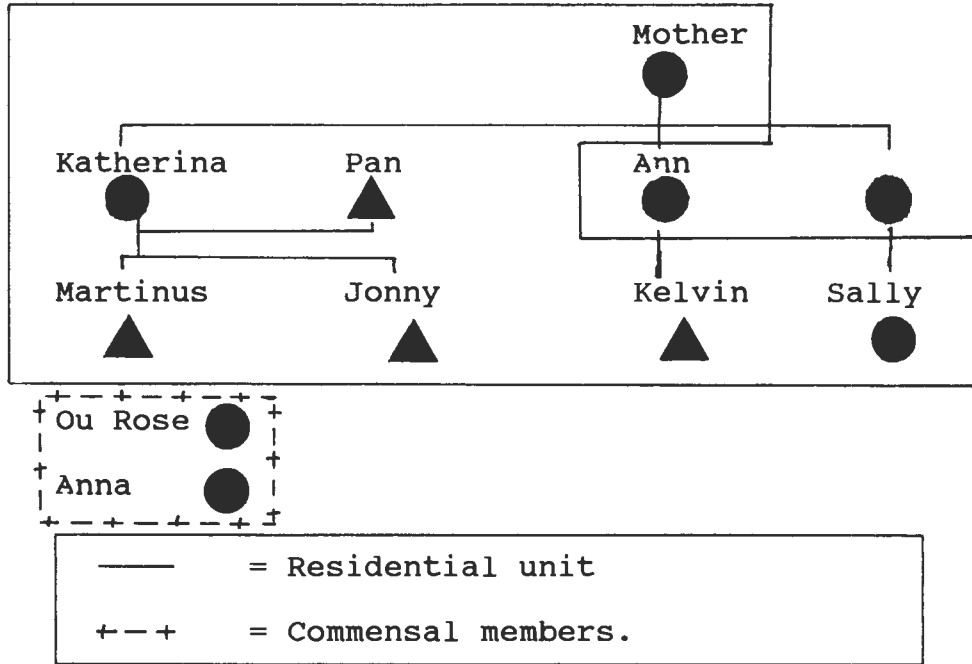
Residential and commensal relationships concentrated in Katherina's shack, Feb. 1992:



In about March 1992 Ou Rose (case 6.2) decided that she no longer wished to eat at her own home. She thus approached Katherina who agreed to cook one meal a day for her on condition that Ou Rose allow her to use her gas cannister and ring. Ou Rose agreed and, for R50 per month taken from her disability grant, she ate at Katherina's house each evening. Sometimes she would herself prepare the food so that the meal was ready when Katherina returned from her job as a char.

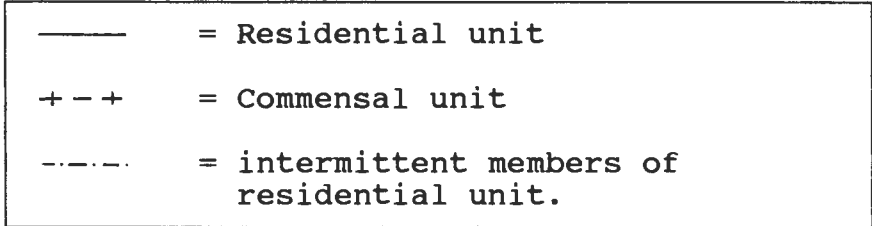
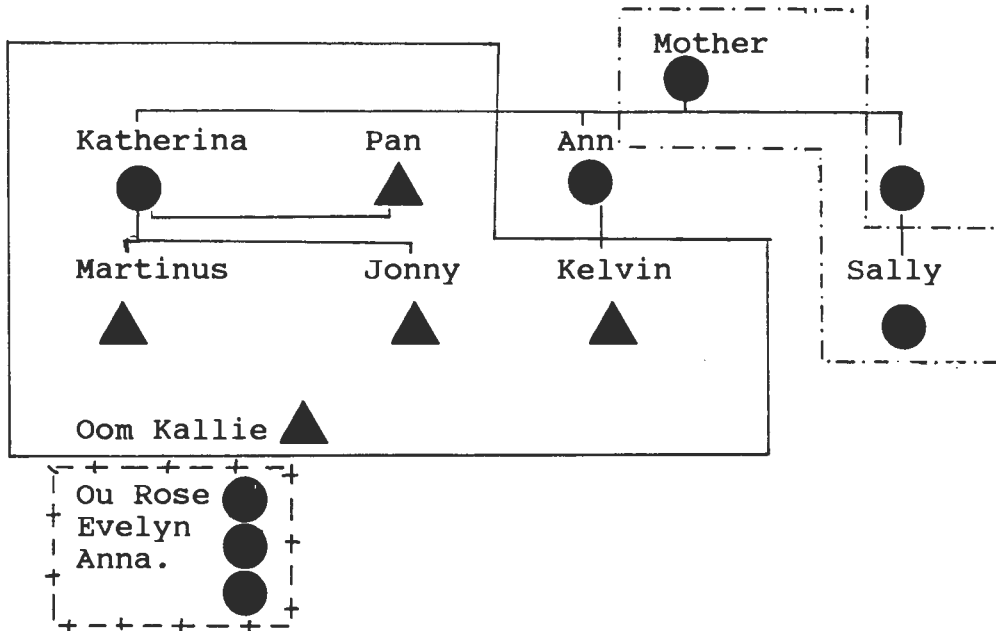
At that time, then, Katherina's household was reliant on Ou Rose's gas stove as their main cooking appliance and fuel. The paraffin burner was stored. Lighting was provided by candles. The five residents ate together, along with Ou Rose, Anna (see case 6.2, an intermittent visitor), Katherina's mother and her sister's daughter, the latter two being resident for "a short holiday". These commensal and residential patterns are depicted in the diagram below.

Residential and commensal relationships concentrated in Katherina's shack, March 1992.



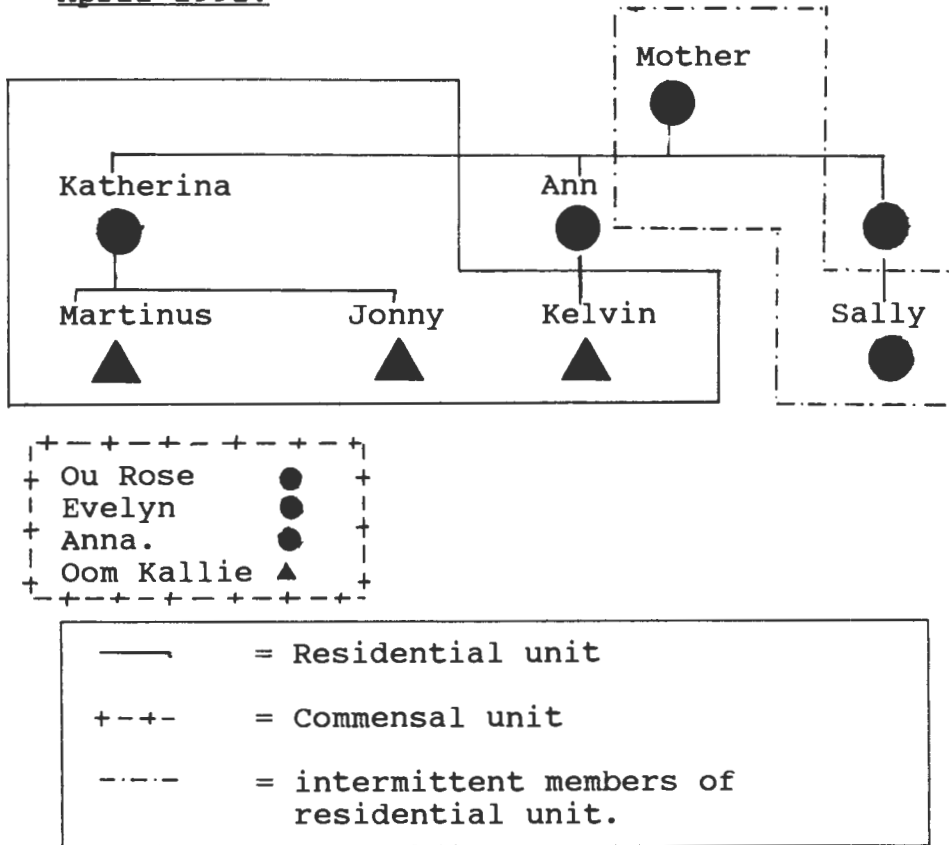
In April Pan invited a friend, Oom Kallie, to stay. Oom Kallie was 76 years old, and received a state pension of R350 per month. Previously resident on a nearby farm, he decided to leave and join Pan at Katherina's. He too paid R50 per month for food. Occasionally Katherina also cooked for Evelyn, another resident of Die Bos, who would come to visit Katherina's mother and Ou Rose. Evelyn did not contribute to the costs of her meals, nor did she reciprocate in kind.

Residential and commensal relationships concentrated in Katherina's shack in early-April 1992:



Late in April Pan and Katherina had an argument, and Pan and Oom Kallie moved into a recently-vacated shack opposite Katherina's. Pan no longer ate in Katherina's house, although Oom Kallie continued to do so. But he also began supporting Pan, who had no work at the time. Sometimes Pan would use Kallie's money to buy food and cook for both of them on Oom Kallie's primus stove, but most of the time Oom Kallie either ate at Katherina's home or went without food.

Residential and commensal relationships concentrated in Katherina's shack in late-April 1992.



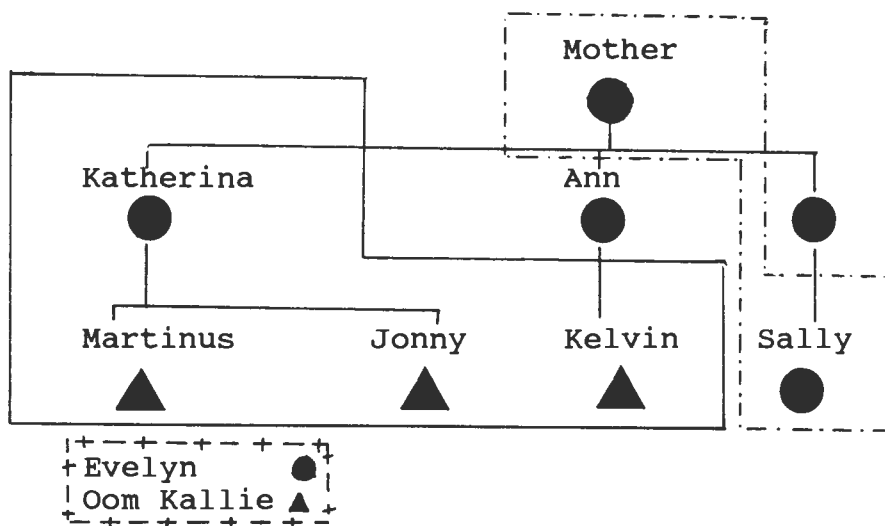
Meanwhile in late April, Anna, another resident of Die Bos who had eaten intermittently at Katherina's in the preceding 6 weeks, had enlarged her tiny shack and was looking for a companion. Ou Rose had burnt her house down accidentally in mid-May while drunk, and so decided to live with Anna. She left her gas stove at Katherina's, and moved into Anna's home (see case 6.2). At that point Katherina's paraffin stove had come into use again. Katherina's mother, who had decided to stay in Die Bos for a while, was afraid of using gas to cook on, believing that it was poisonous. Instead she used the paraffin stove, although she allowed Katherina to use the gas when she was cooking.

It was at this time that Katherina lost one of her jobs as a char. Her income decreased by R30 per week, and the commensal members of the domestic unit became increasingly reliant on vegetables for food as she could no longer afford meat.

Early in June Ou Rose and Anna had an argument, in part centered on the gas cannister still at Katherina's, which Ou Rose had refused to bring to Anna's house where she was staying. Ou Rose moved out of Anna's

house, stopped eating at Katherina's, and went to live with Baby, taking the gas cannister with her and away from Katherina. This left Katherina reliant on wood and paraffin for cooking purposes. At this point her residential household consisted of herself and the three children, with her mother and Sally visiting intermittently. Kelvin continued to collect wood, although Katherina sometimes went herself.

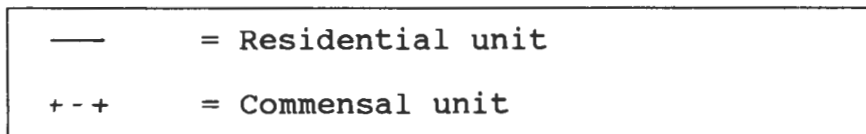
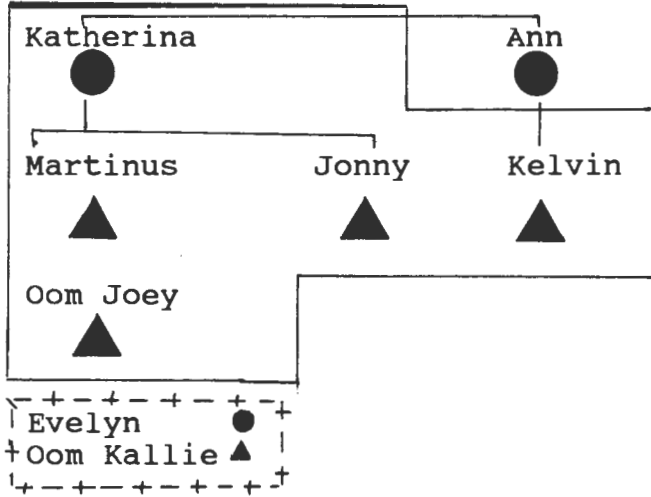
Residential and commensal relationships concentrated in Katherina's shack in early-June 1992.



—	= Residential unit
+--+	= Commensal unit
.....	= intermittent members of residential unit.

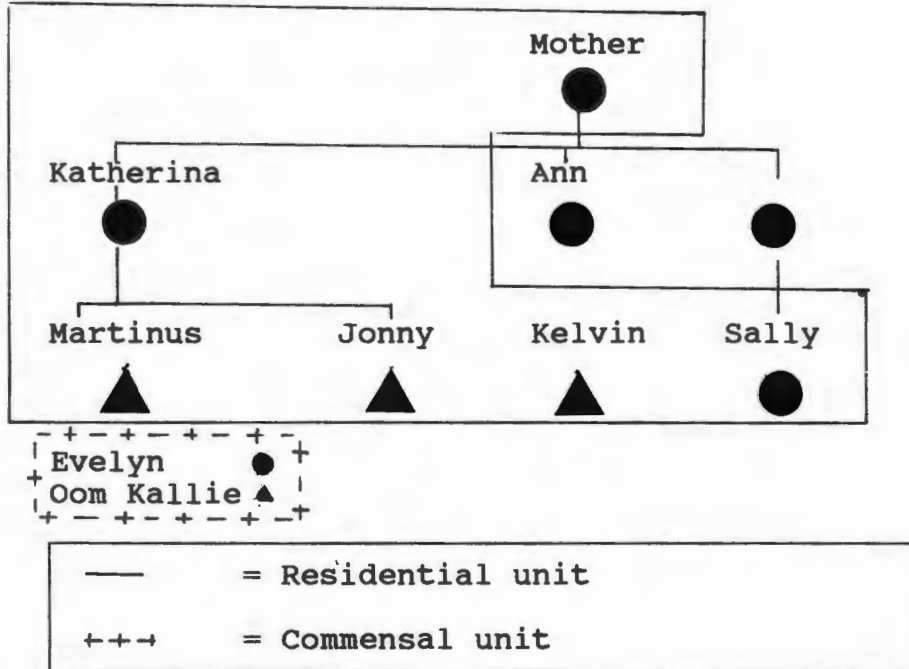
Oom Joey, an elderly lodger at a friend of Katherina's, heard that there was space in the house now that Katherina's mother had departed again, Pan had moved out and Ou Rose was no longer eating there. He left his previous lodgings and moved into Katherina's house, paying R50 per month from his pension as rent and for food. He did not have any appliances to offer Katherina for use in the household, and did not help with the household chores as Ou Rose had done. In mid-June he decided to leave, and went to Macassar without notifying Katherina of his departure.

Residential and commensal relationships concentrated in Katherina's shack until mid-June 1992.



From mid-June until the beginning of July Katherina's mother and her sister's daughter returned to Katherina's household in Die Bos. Katherina was now employed only twice a week, and was looking for extra income to help feed her residential domestic unit, which consisted of herself, the three children and the two visitors. Kelvin was ill and Katherina began collecting firewood more regularly. It was winter and bitterly cold and wet. Katherina had a fire burning all day outside, and a *gally blik* inside at night. She began to prepare her food increasingly early in the evening so that the outside fire could be used, saving on paraffin expenditure.

Residential and commensal relationships concentrated in Katherina's shack, end of June 1992.



A table summarising Katherina's changing household and related fuel use is depicted below. It describes the residents and eating associates who clustered around her in each month, and illustrates the ways in which these people and their interactions with Katherina altered the appearance of her domestic unit.

FIGURE 5.1.  
SUMMARY OF MEMBERSHIP (RESIDENTIAL AND COMMENSAL) OF, AND  
FUEL USED BY KATHERINA'S HOUSEHOLD; JAN 1992 - JUNE 1992.

Month	Residents	Non-resident Eaters	Fuel
Jan.	Katherina 2 S, ZS		Paraffin
Feb.	Katherina, 2 S, ZS, H. Also Katherina's M and ZD who visit intermittently.		Paraffin
March.	Katherina, 2 S, ZS, M, ZD.	Ou Rose Anna	Gas
April.	Katherina, 2 S, ZS, Oom Kallie moves in. H out. M and ZD visit intermittently.	(Ou Rose out) <i>Evelyn</i>	Gas and Paraffin
May.	Katherina, 2 S, ZS M and ZD visit intermittently. Oom Joey in. Oom Kallie out.	Rose takes gas (end May) <i>Evelyn</i> <i>Oom Kallie</i>	Paraffin and wood.
June.	Katherina, 2S,  ZS, M and ZD visit intermittently.	<i>Evelyn</i>  and D.	<b>Wood and paraffin</b>

CODES: M = mother  
S = son  
ZD = sister's daughter  
ZS = sister's son  
H = common-law husband / boyfriend  
*Italics* indicate non-residents who eat at Katherina's  
intermittently.  
**Bold print** indicates the predominant fuel at each stage.

As figure 5.1 illustrates, the commensal and residential patterns of others whom Katherina supported altered the appearance of Katherina's domestic unit considerably over the research period. This is most easily visible by assessing the changes in Katherina's fuel-use patterns. Initially her household was reliant upon paraffin. This reliance then switched to gas with the advent of Ou Rose and her gas cannister. When Ou Rose took the cannister away, the household again became reliant on paraffin, which they were able to afford because of the cash contributed by Oom Joey. His departure, combined with the loss of one of Katherina's jobs, meant that income in the domestic unit was substantially reduced, and as a result wood became the primary cooking fuel.

Changes in Katherina's household were effected both by people who were temporarily resident there and the networks of those who ate there. The latter tended to generate what Boissevain (1969) calls 'dense' patterns of interaction; that is, the networks included people who interacted frequently and closely with one another in addition to their interaction with ego (in this case Katherina). The affiliations tended to be extremely short-term, however, seldom lasting for more than a few months at most. In Katherina's household, kin relationships were not important in structuring networks of commensality; indeed, none of the exclusively commensal members of her household were her own kin, or related to one another. Kinship became more important when determining residential membership, however. Katherina's mother, and her sister's daughter were intermittent members of the unit. Katherina's sister's son lived with her in the shack for the entire research period, and expected to continue to do so. Her boyfriend spent some time living with her, introducing a friend with whom he claimed classificatory kinship through his mother. There was thus a differentiation in closeness of affiliation with the household in terms of kinship, so that it appeared that people who were kin, or who claimed to be kin, were able to generate rights to full residence in domestic units, while

those who were not kin tended to remain solely commensal members. Note, however, the fluidity with which the shape of Katherina's household changed over short periods, both in terms of commensal and residential membership.

Case 5.2 also illustrates that residential mobility and changing commensality generate other material changes within a domestic unit, as made visible through changing fuel-use patterns. Katherina's domestic unit underwent a series of changes in personnel, in income, and as a result of both of these factors combined, in fuel use. Her changing fuel-use patterns over the research period enabled me to assess alterations in the processes of fuel and food allocation which crosscut the apparent boundaries of her domestic unit (i.e. which included people other than those resident in her shack), incorporating non-kin into networks of support and sustenance.

Another case will show how Katherina's changing fuel-use in the contexts of the movements of other people into and out of the domestic unit was not unique in Die Bos. Indeed, case 5.3 illustrates even greater complexities in the ways in which changing commensal patterns affected the generation and maintenance of domestic units. Case 5.3 also shows that while kinship was an important criterion in obtaining residential access to Katherina's household, it was not the only way (nor necessarily the most important way) in which social relationships such as co-residentiality and commensality were generated in the settlement. The case illustrates how increases in household income enabled more people to move into the domestic unit, and explores the idea of instrumentality versus morality in terms of domestic unit formation.

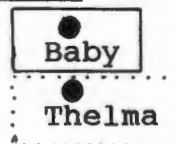
Case 5.3: Eating, sleeping or living together; the case of Baby's domestic unit.

Baby (aged 48) was one of the early residents in Die Bos. She had been a squatter in and around the settlement for approximately six years. She was not married and did not have a boyfriend. Two of her three children were dead, and her sole surviving daughter co-resided with her boyfriend in Die Bos.

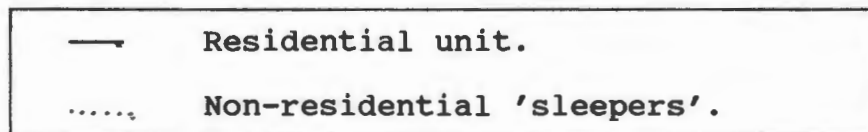
During the period of research Baby's household and eating groups changed significantly and frequently.<sup>2</sup>

From November 1991 to early February 1992 Baby lived alone in her shack. An 11 year old girl, Thelma, was sent to live with her to keep her company. Thelma did not, however, eat with Baby but rather ate at her parents' shack and simply slept at Baby's house. In part Thelma's presence accorded with both instrumental and moral concerns. Her parents and half-sisters lived in a tiny shack with only one bed. Sending Thelma to live with Baby thus decreased some of the pressure on space which existed within their shack. However, this was not the only reason which was given for Thelma's absence from her parental home. Her mother told me that Baby lived alone, and Thelma was sent to live with her to keep her company in the evenings.<sup>3</sup> Here the moral concerns behind creating households are evident; in this case the need for social interaction.

Residential relationships concentrated in Baby's shack, and household income, Nov 1991 - Dec. 1991.



Household Income: R400

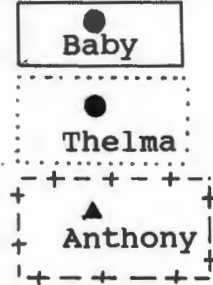


2. Because she was not one of my original sample group many of these changes have not been recorded directly from her but rather from the movements of people who were in the sample.

3. This was not the only case where Thelma was sent to live with single women. She frequently stayed with one of my neighbours in the evenings when the latter's husband was working night-shifts. Again I was told it was to prevent the woman concerned from "being lonely or scared in the night".

In January, Anthony, a friend of Baby's brother, began to eat at Baby's after his wife had deserted him.

Residential and commensal relationships concentrated in Baby's shack, and household income, Jan. 1992.

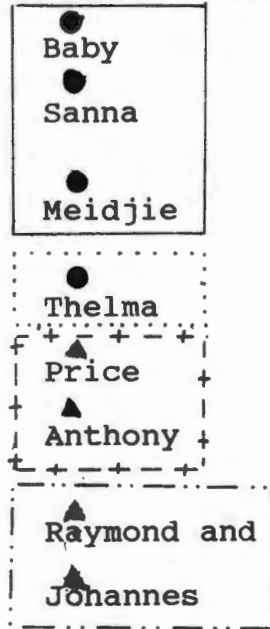


Household Income: R400

—	Residential unit.
.....	Non-residential 'sleepers'.
+ - +	Commensal members

In mid-February Price (Baby's brother) began to eat at her home after his girlfriend Sanna and her child Meidjie left him and moved in with Baby. Sanna did the housework in return for their lodging. At this time, then, Baby provided food for herself and her brother Price, as well as for Sanna and Meidjie. Anthony and Price were both unemployed and did not contribute to the cost of their food. Baby bore all these costs, paying for groceries out of the money that she earned each day as a domestic worker in Strand and Somerset West. She used gas as her main cooking fuel at this time, sending "someone trustworthy from the camp" to refill her 1.5 kg cannister in Somerset West every week. That "trustworthy" person was usually Korporal, whom we shall meet again shortly.

Residential and commensal relationships concentrated in Baby's shack, and household income, mid Feb. to end March 1992.



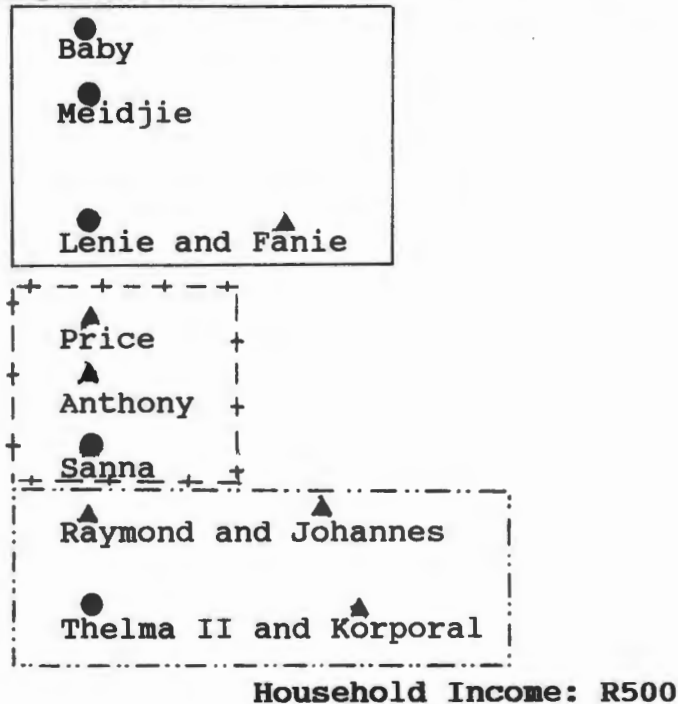
Household Income: R400

—	Residential unit.
.....	Non-residential 'sleepers'.
+ - +	Commensal members.
- - - -	Intermittently commensal

In April Thelma returned to sleep at her parents' house. Sanna moved in with her new boyfriend, John, but left Meidjie at Baby's. For two weeks Sanna continued to eat at Baby's. Subsequently she began to cook at John's house, and Meidjie ate there although she continued to sleep in Baby's shack. At about the same time, Lenie and Fanie, friends of Raymond, one of Baby's neighbours to whom she occasionally gave food along with his housemate Johannes, decided to move into the settlement. While they were building their home they resided with Baby whom they had known while growing up in the Karoo town of Aberdeen. In return for their residence Lenie did Baby's housework for her each day. This included washing clothes and tidying the house as well as preparing food. Korporal continued to collect gas for Baby. Around about this time Korporal and his girlfriend Thelma (hereafter Thelma II to differentiate her from the Thelma who had left) began to eat regularly at Baby's house although they still slept in their own home. Korporal took

on all the heavy chores for Baby's household, including collecting water and, when necessary, wood. He also continued to collect gas for Baby. Thelma II took over the chores that Lenie had been doing once Lenie and Fanie moved into their own home. Baby was able to sustain this number of people as her wages had increased from R400 per month to R500.

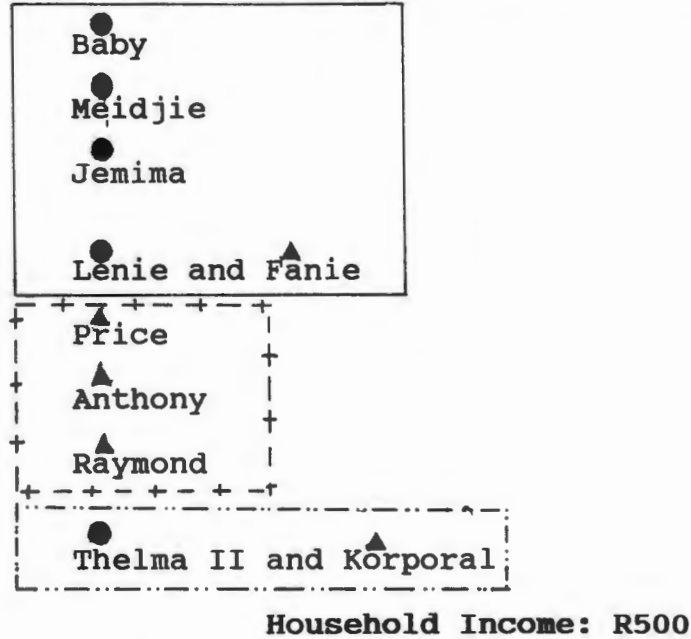
Residential and commensal relationships concentrated in Baby's shack, and household income, April 1992.



—	Residential unit.
+--+	Commensal members.
-.-.-	Intermittently commensal.

Just before Lenie and Fanie moved out, another lodger came to live and eat at Baby's home. This was Jemima, who stayed with Baby for several weeks, and took on housework as a form of rent. But she soon moved into Anna's larger, less crowded house where her rent took the form of domestic labour (see cases 3.7 and 6.2).

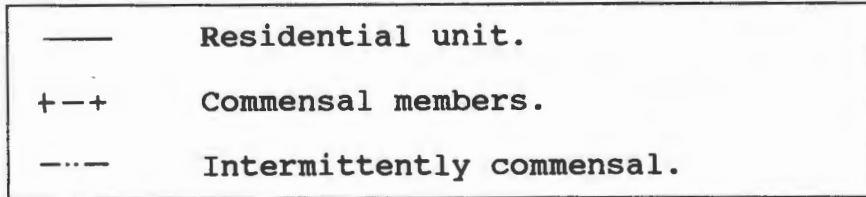
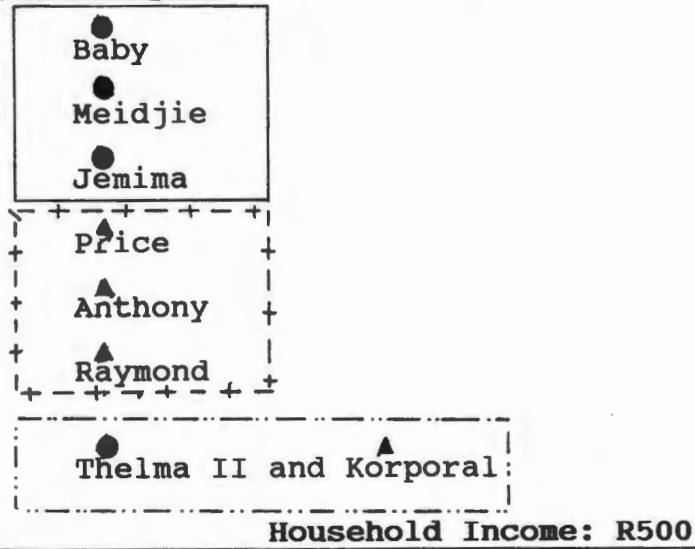
Residential and commensal relationships concentrated in Baby's shack, and household income, early-May 1992.



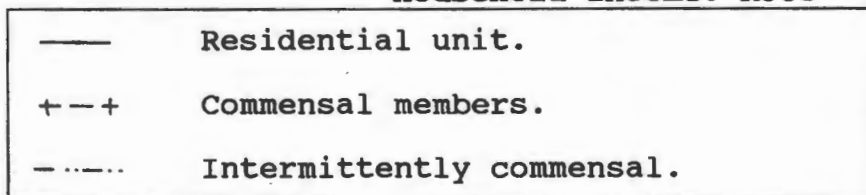
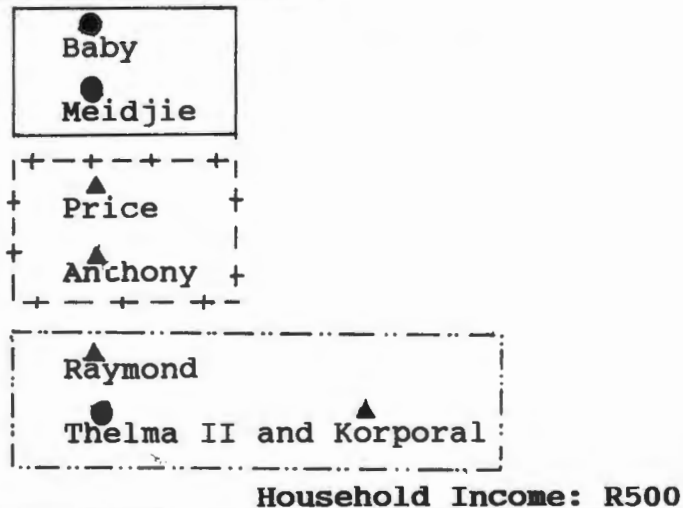
————	Residential unit.
+--+	Commensal members.
.....	Intermittently commensal.

Meanwhile an argument between two co-residential residents of Die Bos, Anna and Ou Rose (see case 6.2), led to the latter moving into Baby's house early in June. Ou Rose had known Baby for many years, as both had been early squatters in the area. Until this point I had seen very little interaction between Baby and Ou Rose, but Ou Rose was able to call on Baby to give her shelter on the basis of their shared past of evictions, and by offering material resources; in this case cash and the use of Ou Rose's gas cylinder. Baby had her own gas appliances, but Ou Rose took her gas cannister and ring from Katherina's household and used them at Baby's. She then moved the gas to Gwen, a neighbour of Baby's, where she and Thelma II began to cook for themselves during the day, while still eating at Baby's at night. Thelma II continued to clean Baby's house.

Residential and commensal relationships concentrated in Baby's shack, and household income, mid-May 1992



Residential and commensal relationships concentrated in Baby's shack, and household income, end of May 1992.



In June Blankie also began eating at Baby's home. He had previously been resident at the shack of one of my neighbours, but left when there was an influx of personnel into that

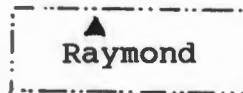
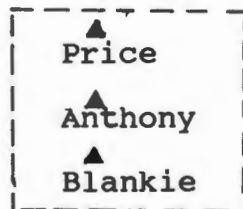
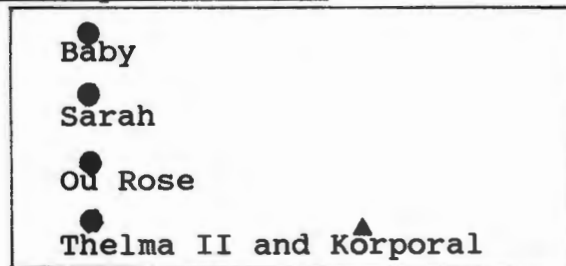
Creating Commensality.

shack. He began living with a group of young bachelors, and paid Baby R30 per month for food.

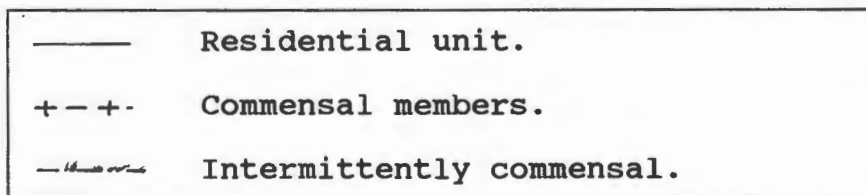
While Ou Rose was living with Baby, Thelma II and Korporal decided not to live in their small shack which was near to where Ou Rose's shack had been. They too moved in with Baby, ostensibly to be close to Ou Rose. Note, however, that Korporal and Thelma II had both been performing domestic labour for Baby for some time prior to their arrival as residents in her house. They had been commensal members there for several months also.

At this point, then, Baby was cooking for all the above people as well as Price, Anthony, and occasionally Raymond - Fanie's friend. Thelma II and Korporal remained at Baby's for approximately three weeks until their daughter, a 12 year old, came from the distant town of Calvinia to spend her school holidays in Die Bos, whereupon they all moved back into their small shack. But they continued to eat at Baby's home.

Residential and commensal relationships concentrated in Baby's shack, and household income, early-June 1992.

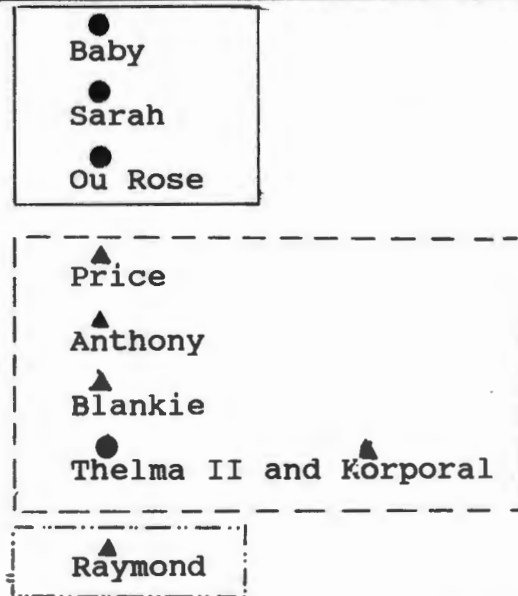


Household Income: R580

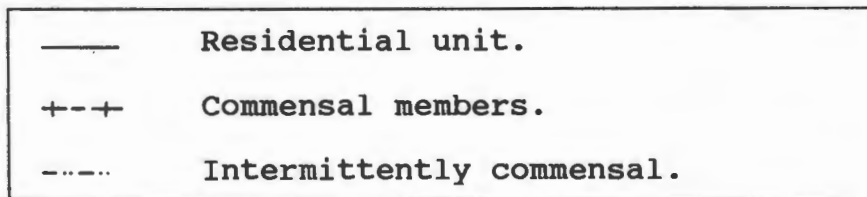


Ou Rose moved back into Anna's house at the beginning of July, a few weeks after Baby's daughter Sarah arrived in Die Bos. Sarah stayed with her mother for a short while, then late in June moved in with Andries, who had been Katherina's sister's boyfriend (mentioned earlier).

Residential and commensal relationships concentrated in Baby's shack, and household income, middle to end of June 1992.

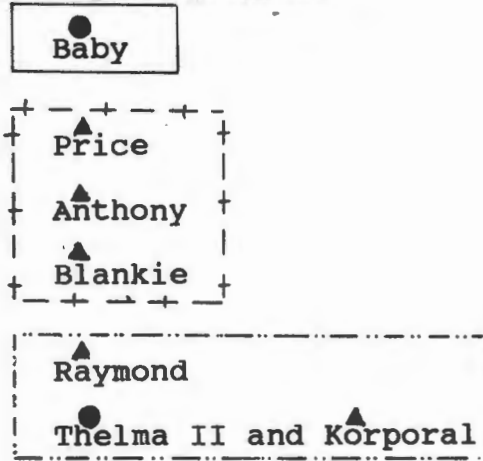


Household Income: R580



Between the November 1991 and June 1992 surveys Baby's household had undergone some convoluted changes in personnel. The June survey states that there were two people resident in the household at the time; herself and Ou Rose. By the time that final house numbers were allocated in July 1992 Baby is recorded as living alone in the house, just as she had been when the survey was conducted in November 1991.

Residential and commensal relationships concentrated in Baby's shack, and household income, early July 1992.



Household Income: R530

—	Residential unit.
+--+	Commensal members.
-...-	Intermittently commensal.

Again the changes in these relationships are depicted below in tabular form. Figure 5.2 distinguishes between people who considered themselves (and were considered by others) as **residents** in the households, those who just slept there (included under the title 'sleepers'), and 'eaters' who did not sleep at Baby's home but ate meals with her with varying degrees of regularity.

Figure 5.2: SUMMARY OF RESIDENTIAL AND COMMENSAL RELATIONSHIPS AND FUEL USED IN BABY'S SHACK, NOV 1991 - JULY 1992.

Sleepers	Residents	Eaters	Fuel
Nov. Thelma	Baby	Price, <i>Raymond Johannes.</i>	Gas
Dec. "	"	"	"
Jan. "	"	" + Anthony.	"
Feb. "	Baby, Sanna, Meidjie	"	"
Mar. Thelma out	"	"	"
Apr.	Baby, Meidjie. Sanna out Lenie & Fanie	" + Sanna <i>Thelma II</i> and <i>Korporal.</i>	" + wood
May	Baby, Meidjie. Lenie and Fanie out Jemima in & out.	Price, <i>Raymond, Anthony, Thelma II</i> and <i>Korporal,</i>	"
June	Baby Sarah in & out. Thelma II & Korporal in & out. Ou Rose in.	<i>Meidjie</i> Price, Anthony & <i>Raymond.</i> <b>Blankie.</b>	2x gas & wood
July.	Ou Rose out.	" + Thelma II & Korporal	wood & gas

*Italics* indicate people who ate at Baby's intermittently. **Bold print** indicates people who contributed cash for their upkeep.

As is evident from figure 5.2 and its accompanying case material (case 5.3), the membership of Baby's domestic unit varied on several criteria, the most important of which were residence and commensality. Whilst ostensibly the only member of the unit for much of the research period, Baby was in fact supporting several other people, some of whom performed chores for her (i.e. were involved in productive relationships within the domestic unit - see for example case 3.7). Baby was responsible for feeding some people who did not reside with her, but not for providing their shelter (except in the case of Ou Rose, who paid for board and lodging, and Thelma, who did not eat at Baby's, nor contribute to the household). The commensal relationships which surrounded Baby did not confer membership in her household *per se*, but did make it very difficult for any analysis of where her obligations and rights began and ended over time, particularly in so far as members moved into and out of her domestic unit frequently. Commensal and movement patterns of other people thus blurred the edges of Baby's household.

The people who moved into and out of the ambit of Baby's domestic relationships were seldom kin, save for her brother who was a commensal member of the domestic unit throughout the research period. In some instances residence was obtained through 'home boy' type links (see Mayer, 1963), as was the case with Lenie and Fanie, who originated in Baby's natal town. In other cases rights of residence in Baby's shack were obtained through work performed for Baby - as was the case with Jemima, Sanna, Thelma II, and Korporal. Sanna also obtained residence for herself and her child by 'claiming kinship' on the basis of her sexual relationship with Baby's brother. Some commensal members of the domestic unit generated rights through their cash contributions to Baby. Both Ou Rose and Blankie paid for their food, and occasionally Ou Rose contributed labour. The latter two activated several other network links in the settlement over the course of the research, moving frequently and eating with different people (see case 6.2).

Other people who were solely commensal members of Baby's domestic unit are more accurately described as members of a network with Baby at its centre. (Those who lived in her shack, by contrast, formed 'groups' of interacting people in the sense that they shared joint interests in the maintenance of the house and the social relationships within it. <sup>4</sup> These groups were, however, short-lived). Commensal relationships in Baby's shack were of two varieties. They were either fleeting (as with Thelma and Korporal prior to their residence there), or long-term (as with Baby's brother Price). It appeared that links of one variety (such as through networks) could become either more or less stable over time. However, the research period was not sufficiently long to determine whether the network affiliations manifested in some commensal relationships were likely to become long term.

The shape of the domestic units in cases 5.2 and 5.3 was thus determined by the nature of the social relationships generated by residents and commensal members of the units, both prior to and during interaction with the heads of household. In case 5.3 we learned that some people had known Baby in childhood, and based their access to residence in her shack on shared memories of this, thus using memory as a resource to obtain shelter. The interactions of other members of Baby's household were considerably less long-term or enduring. Such social relationships determined the fluid nature of domesticity in Die Bos. Some of the commensal members of the domestic unit described in case 5.2 became commensal and/or residential members of the domestic unit in case 5.3, and later generated other such social relationships, in effect tying sections of the settlement together through social interaction. In this way some people's changing eating and residential patterns made their

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4. By group I mean that the people concerned were involved in more than simple or one-off interactions. Instead they acted in terms of belonging in a certain unit, and were considered by others to belong (see Sharp (1988:13ff), even where this was in the short-term and no further interaction took place.

social networks visible over time as various portions of their networks were activated. I explore this idea further in chapter 6, where I turn to an examination of individual movements.

Social relationships engendered around domesticity in Die Bos were extremely complex, not least because of the fluidity of their nature. The links between individual action and domestic unit formation are contained within this complexity, and offer a way of exploring the problem in more detail. What we have seen in case 5.2 and 5.3 is the interaction which occurs when instrumental and moral imperatives are concentrated in contexts of dire poverty. The people who generated rights of either commensality or residence in Baby's domestic unit (case 5.3), for example, did so in order to satisfy instrumental needs, mostly those to do with shelter and nutrition. But those were not the only reasons why they clustered around Baby. They were able to do so because there was another element involved; an interaction based on social rather than solely material needs. They formed members of domestic units not only because it was in their material interests to do so, but also because creating group-centred interaction was necessary to social well-being. Intimately linked with material self-interest, then, were moral imperatives. However, social (as opposed to merely material) interaction could be sustained only for so long as the material structure which maintained it was not overloaded. When that happened, and the household head was not able to support such large numbers of people on her earnings, people left the domestic unit, or network links with other people in the settlement were activated in order to generate further material resources. Underpinning all material interactions such as those engendered around fuel and food consumption, then, were social relationships. The process of creating such links, and their gradual undermining through the erosion of material resources contributed to the picture of instability of households in Die Bos.

Cases 5.2 and 5.3 clearly illustrate the difficulties of using analytic terms which assume that social entities are bounded and act independently of one another. Commensal patterns may correspond with residential and production patterns, but this is not necessarily the case. Case 5.1 illustrates a coincidence of production, reproduction, distribution and co-residence defined in terms of kinship relationships. However, the contrast of cases 5.2 and 5.3 shows that these criteria do not necessarily coincide neatly. People may generate rights to some aspects of consumption (in this case commensality) as a result of their own production, such as domestic chores (see chapter 4), or payment for food. However, commensal members of domestic units do not always perform productive labour for those units. This is not to say that the boundaries of social entities were translucent to all residents in Die Bos. As we shall see, fuel and fuel-related labour could be used to determine who had rights in households, thus delineating the extent of permeability of domestic social relationships, and defining the limits of social networks.

**Creating boundaries: Fuel-use and defining households through networks**

This section of the chapter examines the ways in which tensions over fuel were used by people to clarify boundaries of social relationships based on fuel- and food-sharing. Above we have explored how both processes of sharing blur the edges of households. Here I explore the tensions which arose over fuel-sharing activities and discuss how the resolution of these (and indeed their emergence in the first place) enabled people, especially women, to define where their households and their responsibilities to others began and ended. Using fuel as an analytic tool, I also show how these people chose their criteria for determining inclusion/exclusion within domestic units on the basis of rights to the products of fuel-collection (food and heat), and how such criteria were manipulated.

Case 5.4: Using fuel to demarcate rights in domestic labour.

Poenkies usually collected firewood, her main fuel, with two or three other women. Poenkies and her neighbour, Olive, collected 29 kg of wood between them one day. The wood was to be used for cooking food and heating water for coffee. The two women went to the forest together and collected their wood in the same place. When they returned Poenkies stacked her wood against the wall of her shack as usual. Olive, whose main cooking fuel was gas, stacked her wood against another wall of Poenkies' house. When asked why, she explained that she and Poenkies were neighbours (and also drinking partners), and that since she used Poenkies' fire in the mornings to make coffee, she also helped to collect wood for it.

Poenkies confirmed this, saying that she collected wood for her own family. "It is cold in the mornings and my children must be up early to catch the bus [to school]. I have to have the fire so they can get warm". As I observed it, the morning fire was usually surrounded by Poenkies' children, Olive and her boyfriend, Poenkies and her husband, Aubrey, and often some of the Rastafarians, who meet one another there and share their first marijuana cigarette of the day.

On one occasion, prior to the wood collecting occasion outlined above, Betty, a friend of one of Poenkies' daughters, came to stand near the fire. There was already a large group of people there: Poenkies and her family, Olive, and four Rastafarians. Betty had not eaten yet as her mother and step-father were arguing and there was no food prepared, so Poenkies gave the child some food. Betty pushed her way closer to the fire to get warm as it was a bitterly cold morning, whereupon Poenkies began to shout at her, saying "I collect [wood] for my children when it's cold. Go and ask your mother for wood for my fire if she is too lazy to make her own. And if there is a fire at home then go there. Do not take up my children's space in the warmth!". Betty did not seem afraid, and stayed where she was, and after a while Olive began to braid her hair.

Later I asked about the outburst, and learnt that it had not really been directed at Betty at all. "After all", said Poenkies, "What do children know? They know it is cold and that there is a fire. They know fires need wood, but to them wood collection is just an adventure. It's not hard work. Children can use the fires. No, it's the adults I was talking to". In essence she was directing her comments at the Rastafarians, who, although they had not contributed wood for the fire, used it most mornings as a meeting place to get warm, share their greetings and perform rituals centered on marijuana. Poenkies' objection was not to their

presence, but to the fact that they did not provide fuel in exchange for their use of the heat, which, she believed, restricted her children's access to the warmth generated. She was also angry because wood collection is dangerous and arduous, and the Rastafarians (all male) did not help either her, or any of the other women with whom she collected wood, to gather fuel although they used the fires generated from the fuel for their own social interactions. (These are described in greater detail in case 5.5). The tension was exacerbated by the fact that the Rastafarians had begun their own wood-selling enterprise (see case 4.10) but were not contributing any of that wood to her fire.

In order to preclude similar tensions developing between herself and Poenkies, Olive thus always supplied Poenkies with wood. The wood remained Olive's in name, but was collected for the express purpose of sharing with Poenkies so that she and her boyfriend could legitimately share the fire in the mornings. Olive did not use the fire for any purpose other than warming herself, or occasionally boiling water for coffee and to wash dishes. At the end of the day she sometimes took some of the coals from the fire to use as a heater inside (by shovelling them into an enamel dish and placing this on the floor).

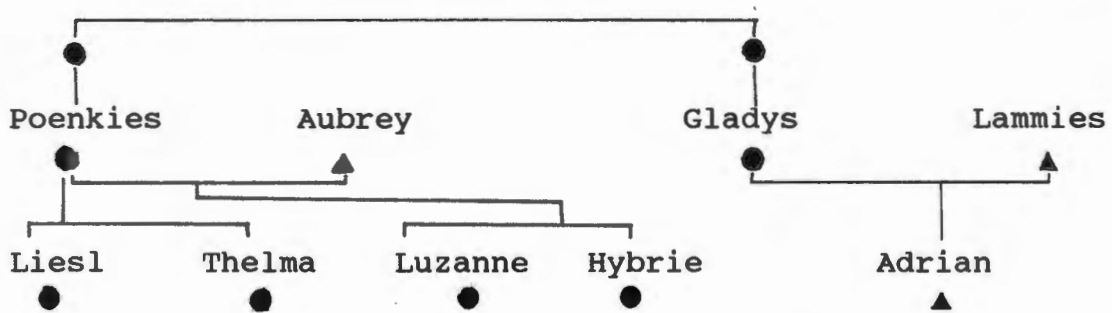
The relationship between Poenkies and Olive was thus carefully regulated. Olive made certain that she was not seen to be taking advantage of Poenkies by providing her own firewood for Poenkies' fire. In this way she was able to maintain a social relationship with Poenkies unhindered by fuel-provision constraints. The two women were also drinking partners, and although other relationships of this nature tended to be fleeting ones because proximity of living in the settlement exacerbated tensions, Poenkies and Olive were able to regulate their relationships through the medium of fuel.

In addition to expressing tensions over access to warmth (and thus, indirectly, to labour), the interchange described between Poenkies and the Rastas also illuminates other issues relating to power, in particular those concerning women's relationships with one another. At first glance it may appear that the conflict in case 5.4 was based on gender issues; the expectations of men versus those of women.

While this is plausible, I believe that such an analysis would be simplistic, assuming as it does that tensions between the sexes are always generated through a process in which men's expectations, rather than those of women, have to be countered.

The social processes underlying Poenkies' comment were considerably more complex than a simple gender distinction allows. One of the Rastafarians who was at the fire and who was thus indirectly chastised was the father of Gladys' (see case 5.5) child. Gladys, who along with her lover and their child, lived opposite Poenkies, was the Poenkies' cousin - Poenkies' mother's sister's child.

Diagram depicting kinship relationships between Poenkies and Gladys.



Poenkies and Gladys were wood-collecting partners, and Poenkies had no wish to upset the *status quo* with Gladys by alienating the latter's lover. Similarly, one of the other Rastas was the 'husband' of Dinah, chairwoman of the settlement. Poenkies frequently did washing for Dinah, for which she earned approximately R10 per week; money which was crucial when her husband was unemployed.

By ostensibly addressing her commentary at the child in the above case study, Poenkies was, as we have seen, refusing the Rastafarians rights to her labour. She did this in such a manner as not to antagonise the women related to the Rastas, with whom Poenkies was in frequent interaction, and upon whom she was sometimes reliant. The case study thus explores not only the expectations of men and women in relation to one another, and how these expectations are

negotiated, but it also tells us a great deal about the nature of power relationships between women. Poenkies did not chastise the men directly because the women with whom they were associated were powerful in the contexts of her daily life; Gladys in that she was kin, and thus could be called upon in times of need, and Dinah because she was a source of income for Poenkies, in addition to being a 'big-woman' in the settlement and powerful in her own right.

Case 5.4 has shown how fuel can be a source of conflict in social interactions, especially those which take place around food or fires. The Rastafarian interaction with Poenkies illustrates this. However, a direct result of the way in which Poenkies defined her household on the occasion described in case 5.4 was that a different set of social relationships were generated between Rastafarians and other residents of Die Bos - a set of relationships defined in such a way as to include Rastafarians as entitled to fuel- and food- sharing in a unit in which they were not resident. Case 5.5 illustrates this.

**Case 5.5: Redefining household boundaries.**

Fire is a core element in Rastafarian social interactions. In the evenings (and afternoons if it is cold), groups of Rastas gather around fires to discuss their philosophy and share a 'joint' (marijuana cigarette). The action of sharing ganja in this way is highly symbolic; the drug is used to link members together by facilitating their meditative processes and thus their links to Jah (God). Every morning the Rastafarians (who were either concentrated in the building sector or unemployed) met one another before going to work (getting on with the profanities of daily life in 'Babylon') to interact in this manner. They greeted one another with ritual blessings and hand-shakes, made their 'pipe' (the neck of a bottle crammed with paper and then marijuana which they lit and smoked), and shared it around the group. All of this took place around a fire.

When Poenkies (case 5.4) made her comments about people using the fire without having provided fuel, she was pointing out to the Rastafarians who were present that they were contradicting one of their own rules. By using the fire without recompense they were in fact making use of her labour to improve their own lot (since the fire was central in their interactions with one another and thence with Jah). They took

the hint, and shortly afterwards began to congregate and eat at Gladys's fire. Since she was co-habiting with a Rastafarian man she accepted their presence and the fuel-related work this meant (i.e. collecting and cooking) as part of her responsibilities toward her boyfriend and his beliefs, an attitude which was no doubt engendered by the free availability of marijuana from the Rastas. In exchange for the fuel and food that they consumed, she was able to obtain marijuana whenever she wished.

The Rastafarians were told off by Poenkies for not providing fuel for the fire at which they congregated. She was angry because the Rastafarians had begun a collective wood enterprise (see case 4.10), yet certain of them were using her fire and fuel rather than their own, and none drew on their supply to recompense her. Their response was to move to Gladys's fire. However, since Gladys was the chief collector of firewood in her household they stood to receive the same response from her. By making *ganja* available to her they were able to mediate potential fuel disputes while still being able to interact satisfactorily among themselves. Poenkies was thus able to delineate the boundaries of her household (i.e. by deciding that the Rastafarians were not eligible to benefit from the products of her labour). In so doing she obliged the Rastafarians to move their social interactions to Gladys's fire. This enabled Gladys to redefine the boundaries of her domestic unit to include the Rastafarians. Clearly both women were operating with an idea of how their domestic units were to be constructed - an idea of belonging. However, the ways in which criteria of inclusion and exclusion were applied to the situation meant that as an analyst I was left with the problem of depicting these decisions and activities. The analytic boundaries of the two households were thus blurred both synchronically and diachronically, so that at any one time it is not clear what criteria to use to define the household.

## **Conclusions**

This chapter has concentrated on commensal relationships in order to show how functions and processes usually associated with households were frequently performed outside both the etic and emic boundaries of domestic units in Die Bos. The end result was a visible concentration of particular kinds of consumption processes (such as fuel- and food- sharing) among sets of people who did not share other social interactions usually assumed to be subsumed under the term household.

This is not to say that people did not operate with a notion of belonging in particular social relationships, nor that there were no households which did incorporate the expected overlapping interactions of (re)production and consumption in Die Bos. Case 5.1 has shown that there were incidences in which relationships and processes usually associated with households were indeed concentrated among one set of people, or under one roof. Similarly, cases 5.4 and 5.5 have illustrated that people were able to reconstruct the boundaries of their domestic units by determining who had rights to the products of particular kinds of labour (especially domestic labour). The core concern described in this chapter is not that people do not operate with an idea of belonging in domestic units, but that the boundaries delineating social relationships based on production and consumption are considerably more fluid and changeable than is allowed by the concepts which we analysts employ. There were some 'households' in Die Bos. But there were also social relationships which cannot be subsumed under so fixed an entity. These were constantly altering in response to the social and economic climate in which residents found themselves, and were actualised through changing networks which individuals constructed, with themselves at their centres.

Thus far we have seen that functions usually associated with households could be spread across a number of different social relationships, so that people interacting in one set of relationships (such as eating) did not interact in another (e.g. reproduction or production). We have also seen that individuals played an important role in determining the shape of households and the roles filled within domestic units by activating networks in response to instrumental and moral imperatives. The following chapter, the final substantive chapter of this thesis, explores the fluidity of social relationships and network generation still further, by examining the movement patterns of residents and their offspring.

## Chapter Six.

### Mobility and Transformation: Individual movements and changing domestic units.

"We are not studying a static model of structure at a given period of time, nor one which remains constant through time. We are studying the process of creation. But let me be more specific". (Boissevain, 1968:544).

The complexities of the processes by which domestic units are constructed and altered over time can most easily be assimilated by examining people's movement histories, both between different settlements and within any one settlement. Movement patterns of residents in Die Bos tell us a great deal about how fluid the boundaries of domestic units are, and how frequently these boundaries are broached. In this chapter I explore how people's past movements (i.e. prior to residence in Die Bos) and their movements within Die Bos affect the formation of domestic units. I also examine movement patterns of a generation of children<sup>1</sup> who were not resident in Die Bos at the time of research but who held rights to residence through their parents' presence in the settlement. In exploring these issues I build on a wealth of data relating to migration (cf. Murray, 1981; Ferguson, 1990; Spiegel, 1991), on a small literature which explores mobility within informal settlements in South Africa (cf. Dewar, Rosmarin and Watson, 1990; Seekings, 1990) and on a similarly small literature relating to children's movements (cf. van der Waal, 1992; Jones, 1991; Reynolds, 1989; Kotze, 1986).

#### Previous Movement Patterns.

Movement patterns of male migrant labourers have been a core topic in much anthropological and sociological research in Southern Africa. Less common has been literature which describes women's movement or migration patterns, or those of children. Equally limited is discussion which connects movements, especially those of women and children, with

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1. Children refers to those under the age of 18. See footnote 6, chapter 1.

changes in the formation of domestic units (although Murray, 1981 and Spiegel, 1990 explore the effects of male absence on rurally-based domestic groups, and van der Waal, 1992, whose study of movements of adults and children in Gazankulu illustrates the adaptations of residential dynamics in response "to the place of the settlement in the South African economy" - p. 30). Below I examine some of the existing literature on the subject and relate it to the high rates of mobility experienced by virtually every resident in Die Bos prior to their arrival in the settlement.

Households and Movement.

There is a paucity of literature exploring movement patterns of women and children, and in the ramifications of movement generally for our knowledge of how domestic units are constructed and change over time.<sup>2</sup> Studies of movement in Southern Africa have tended to focus on labour migration,<sup>3</sup> particularly that of male rural dwellers to urban areas. A wealth of literature explores how men get to urban areas or mines and what kinds of associations they join when they arrive (cf. Mayer, 1961, 1980; McNamara, 1980; Kiernan, 1977; Hellman, 1948; Lukhele, 1990. See also Mitchell, 1956, with reference to Zambia). Southern African literature also explores the role and continuity of 'home boy' groups (Mayer, 1961); processes and effects of, and reasons for, remittance sending (cf. Ferguson, 1990; Murray, 1981; Spiegel, 1980); and the complexities of managing social relationships which stretch across vast distances.

Most writing on the subject of migration has taken one of two stands. The earlier studies assumed linear migration patterns in the direction of towns (cf Hellman, 1948). Later writing argued for the existence of cycles of oscillating migration, repeated down the generations. This kind of labour cycle has come to be included as part of a developmental model of domestic unit functioning in homeland

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2. See discussion in chapter 2. There are some exceptions to this, such as the work of Murray (1981); Spiegel (1990); Kotze (1986); van der Waal (1992).

3. Note that to a large extent this means a focus on black workers.

areas (see chapter 2). The literature therefore tends to imply that men migrate while women remain in rural areas, maintaining children and homesteads for the return of their menfolk. Even such sensitive research as that conducted by Murray (1981) tends to take this view.<sup>4</sup> Very little literature exists which explores patterns of movement within urban areas or intra-settlement mobility, or focuses on urban households and their stability.

Women's movement is seldom mentioned in literature exploring mobility. Yet, as Izzard (1985) shows to be the case in Botswana, women have been itinerant and migrant workers for long periods of time, leaving their children in the care of kin whilst they work in urban areas to support them. Work such as that of Ferguson (1991), which examines the composition of Copperbelt mining compounds and of women's roles and activities within them, is an important addition to a literature which tends to be male-centred. Ferguson shows that the widely accepted patterns of male labour migration in Africa were not the only ones. Women, too, migrated from rural areas - either with their menfolk or independently - and also took up residence in urban areas, moving between districts in one town in order to maximise their advantages (frequently gained by offering sexual services - cf Ramphele, 1986, who has shown how women in Western Cape hostels move around in such attempts). Ferguson's work is similar in theme to Parpart's study of gender and class on the Copperbelt (1986), which found that not only were women present on the mines (frequently at the behest of mine-owners), but that they played an active role in local politics.

In South Africa, by contrast, there is little gender-sensitive data which explores female migration although Bozzoli (1985); Gugler (1989) and Ramphele (1986) begin to explore some of the dynamics of women's movement patterns.

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4. Murray qualifies this with the explanation that migrants in his research tended to be mine-workers. Thus "The skewed age and sex distribution of absentees reflects . . . the fact that labour contracts are not available to women" (1981:40).

On the question of where women originated, what their obligations elsewhere are and how these are (not) fulfilled, Southern African literature remains curiously silent.

Similarly silent is literature which relates to children's movements, either with or independent of, their parents or kin. Reynolds (1989) has shown that children resident in Crossroads had lived in several different places before their seventh birthdays. She has also shown that children have frequently spent large proportions of their time with adults other than their biological parents (1991b). Jones, too, has documented extensive movements among young children, in this case those resident in the hostels near Strand (1991). He has argued that:

. . . the majority of them had been subject not only to intermittent separation from their parents, but also to frequent movement between different households and different places of residence (1991:134-5)

The fact that children reside independently of their (mobile) parents and frequently of their siblings has important ramifications for our understanding of 'households'. As Stack (1974:62) has shown, children are 'shared out' as part of a conscious strategy to deal with poverty. No longer can a domestic unit be assumed to be simply a reproductive unit. Indeed, its reproductive functions cannot be taken for granted. Instead we need to examine individuals, their movements and their social networks in order to make sense of the larger social aggregations in which they live. With this in mind, I now turn to an examination of the movement patterns of residents of Die Bos, prior to their arrival in the settlement. Case 6.1 provides our entry to the discussion.

**Case 6.1: Seeking a place to live.**

Veronica was born in 1958 in Somerset West. While she was still a child she and her family (her mother, father, and two brothers) left their brick-built home near Elsie's Rivier and became squatters at Waterkloof (near Somerset West). In those days there were not many squatters, and the area was officially a graveyard.

She would not speak of her whereabouts between the ages of 10 and 18, resuming the story in 1976 when she, her mother, her sister and one brother with his wife and child moved to Mfuleni (the so-called African township near Somerset West) where Veronica's mother managed to rent a house.

Meanwhile Veronica was pregnant with her first child, Shawn, who was born in 1977 at Mfuleni. Shawn's father deserted her and she moved to a farm in Stellenbosch with another man, Dede, whom she married after bearing his child, Sakhiwe. Shawn remained in Mfuleni with his mother's mother, the latter's second eldest son and his family, and her two youngest sons and daughter.

From Stellenbosch Veronica and Dede moved to Moddersvlei when Dede's seasonal work was over. Here they were squatters. Caught by the police and 'hassled' for passes one day while collecting wood, they moved to Crossroads near Cape Town. Police harassment continued, according to Veronica, and Dede sent Veronica and Sakhiwe to live in the Transkei with his second oldest sister and her children, where they built a small wattle and daub house. Dede continued to work in Cape Town and sent remittances to them monthly. He also visited his family at Christmas and Easter (see Reynolds, 1984 for a discussion of how absence affected fathers' relationships with their children).

While in the Transkei Veronica gave birth to Tomega, Dede's daughter. Shawn meanwhile was still living in Mfuleni with Veronica's mother where he had begun school.

Three years after Veronica settled in the Transkei Dede's remittances ceased. She believed that he had found a girlfriend in Cape Town whom he was supporting. "What could I do?" she asked. "The children were hungry; I couldn't stay there no more". She left her sister-in-law's site, having borrowed the fare to reach Cape Town, and sought her husband. He was, as she had feared, living with another woman. She returned to her mother's home in Mfuleni. It was 1988, she had three small children and was unemployed.

She sought out Shawn's father. He was living in the hostels at Lwandle,<sup>5</sup> but was not able to offer her any financial help. Veronica had to make alternative plans.

Shawn was sent to Durban to kin of his grandmother. He stayed with them for two years, returning to Somerset West in 1990. Veronica moved to Stickland, outside Bellville, where she found work in a factory. According to Sakhiwe, who went with her, they were squatters there. He recalls being afraid of police, believing that they would catch him and his family while they were collecting wood and send them away or take them to prison.

In late 1988 she met Jeffrey, who became the father of her last child, Shadrack. They lived together in various places; lodging with others in Stickland, squatting in Khayelitsha's Site C, and with various kin in and around Cape Town and Somerset West. Sakhiwe had meanwhile gone to live with his father in Site C, as Veronica could not support him.

Shawn returned from Durban in 1990 and began living with his mother's mother in Mfuleni again. Veronica and Jeffrey meanwhile moved to Die Bos where they built a tiny one-roomed shack. Veronica paced out its dimensions for me one day: the living, eating, and sleeping space for two adults and two children was 2m by 3m.

Meanwhile Veronica's mother had decided to buy her home in Mfuleni. Shawn remained with his grandmother, along with his mother's youngest sister. Also resident there were Veronica's oldest brother, his wife and their two children, two children of Veronica's second eldest brother, and also an elderly male lodger.

Shawn (who, in 1991, was 15 years old) had a job working over weekends and during holidays as a shop assistant at the local spaza in Die Bos. He worked a 14 hour day serving behind the counter, earning R100 per week. At weekends and holidays, therefore, Shawn was to be found living with his mother, his half-brothers and sisters, and his mother's boyfriend in Die Bos.

Much against his wishes, Shawn returned to Mfuleni when school opened at the beginning of 1992. His attempts to become resident in the shebeen-owner's house failed when his grandmother refused to allow him to leave Mfuleni, and his mother told him that if he stayed in Die Bos he would have to live with her. He ran away from Mfuleni and eventually became a boarder at school.

Sakhiwe, Tomega and Shadrack continued living with their mother and Shadrack's father in Die Bos until September 1992, when Veronica was ejected

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5. Jones, 1990, describes living conditions in Lwandle hostel, and Ramphele, 1989, provides a discussion of prevalent gender relationships in Western Cape hostels.

from the residents' committee and evicted from Die Bos for allegedly embezzling community funds. She returned to her mother's house for three weeks with Jeffrey and her three children, and later was rumoured to be living in Waterkloof.

Veronica's movement patterns were frequently dissimilar from those of her children, which were also dissimilar from one another. Figure 6.1 helps to illustrate this by tabulating the movement and residence patterns of 15 year old Shawn and those of Sakhiwe (aged 12), plotted against the residence patterns of their mother. When Shawn's movements are compared with those of his half-brother, Sakhiwe, we begin to get a sense of how complex the movement patterns of individuals within reproductive units are. Note that figure 6.1 does not include either of Veronica's youngest children (whose movement patterns from birth mirrored those of their mother). Nevertheless it is clear that children's movements are not necessarily the same as those of either parent. Such testimony is born out by Izzard (1985), as well as by Reynolds (1989, 1991) and by Jones (1991), all of whom point out that children experience great movements, frequently independently of parents. In this respect van der Waal's recent work in Gazankulu is informative. He states (1992:21) that:

The creation of new relations between men and women, the ending of such commitments and the resulting departure of wives [in addition to absentee migrants] not only affect two individuals, but also the children born out of such and previous relations.

In his study of the mobility of children in Berlyn, Gazankulu, 26.8% of children resident in the area had experienced some form of fostering in 1990, usually with matrilateral relatives. Some of the children were fostered in several different places in that time. Thus he argues:

Children ... experience the accumulative effect of absent, patriarchal fathers, dependent and working mothers, regular changes in the arrangement for their daily care and accommodation and miserable educational opportunities. Children therefore have to face circumstances which do not permit them to expect much security from their parents, from a nuclear family or from any set of adults.

Figure 6.1: Veronica's movements, and those of her children Shawn and Sakhiwe, 1977-1992.

Year	VERONICA		SHAWN		SAKHIWE	
	Place	Place	Place	Carer	Place	Carer
1977	Mfuleni	Mfuleni		M, MM		
1978	Stellenbosch	"		MM	Stellenbosch	M
1979	"	"		"	Moddervlei	M
1980	"	"		"	Mfuleni	MM
1980	Moddervlei	"		"	Crossroads	M
1981	"	"		"	"	"
1981	Crossroads	"		"	"	"
1982	"	"		"	Mfuleni	MM
1983	"	"		"	Transkei	M
1984	Transkei	"		"	"	"
1985	"	"		"	"	M
1986	"	"		"	"	"
1987	"	"		"	"	"
1988	"	"		"	"	"
1989	Stikland	Durban		MMK	Mfuleni	MM
1989	Site C.	"		"	Site C.	F
1989	Mfuleni	"		"	Mfuleni	M, MM
1990	Die Bos	Mfuleni		MM	Die Bos	M
1991	"	"		"	"	"
1991	Mfuleni	"		MM, M	"	M, MM
1992	Waterkloof	Macassar		School	Waterkloof	M

Carer = Person primarily responsible for child-care.

Note: The movements recorded do not differentiate between various places of abode in each area - they are given by geographic location only. Thus we are not told in how many houses Veronica lived in Stellenbosch, just that she was there for a few years.

M = Mother (plus various of her children and their fathers).

MM = Mother's mother (and other kin resident in latter's house)

F = Father (and his girlfriend and children).

FZ = Father's sister (and her children)

MMK = Mother's mother's kin (exact relationship unknown).

Data pertaining to the separation and mobility of children, their parents and siblings is important because it points to problems with assuming that a household contains a discrete reproductive entity (nuclear family), or has boundaries which are difficult to broach. As case 6.1 has shown, children have their own complex histories of interaction within various domestic units. The case, while long, thus provides a useful entree to discussions of changing household composition and boundaries. From the movements of Veronica and her children, we are able to infer the complexity of interactions within domestic units. For example, quite apart from other residents in her house, Veronica's mother brought up Shawn, provided accommodation and food for Veronica on at least three occasions, and frequently cared for her other children, too. The boundaries of her domestic unit were thus constantly being stretched and changed to accommodate Veronica and the changing requirements of her immediate kin. When one considers that all of Veronica's five brothers and two sisters (and their families) had lived with Veronica's mother at some stage in the past five years, the complexities of defining where that household began and ended are clear.

Veronica's case is not an exception. Like her, many residents of Die Bos were born in and around Somerset West, and had lived their lives in its immediate environs. In this respect the settlement differs considerably from the demography of other informal settlements in the Western Cape, where residents tend to have arrived from elsewhere. Unfortunately the data derived from surveys in Die Bos was not sufficiently sensitive to account accurately for intra-settlement movements, which must therefore be inferred from information relating to places of origin.<sup>6</sup> In the present

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6. Nevertheless, some insight into intra-settlement movement is provided by an exploration of movement within Die Bos (which is the topic of the second part of this chapter).

section of this chapter I show that while residents of Die Bos tended to have been born in the Western Cape this did not preclude frequent movements within that geographic location.

Residential Mobility: Comparative Data.

Comparative data on movement patterns of residents in the Western Cape is scarce. However, some inferences about movement can be made on the basis of respondents' places of origin. Emmett (1992) argues that of his sample of informal settlers in the Hottentot's Holland Basin, 52 per cent had originated in the Transkei and Ciskei homelands or in the Eastern Cape. Of these, only nine percent had come directly from those areas to the Basin. Dewar *et al* also argue (following Seekings 1990) that "the primary places of origin of those entering the city [Cape Town] are the homeland areas, particularly the Transkei" (1991:21). Indeed, Seekings found that only 11 per cent of respondents in Khayelitsha originated in the Western Cape (1990:41), with 71 per cent having originated in Transkei, and the remainder elsewhere in Southern Africa. This trend did not hold true in Die Bos, where only 14 per cent of respondents originated in homeland areas. For ease of reference the differences between places of origin of respondents in Die Bos and those in other settlements are depicted in figure 6.2.

Figure 6.2: Places of origin of residents of Die Bos in comparative perspective.

Place of Origin	Die Bos*	HHB**	Khayelitsha***
Western Cape	50	47	11
Transkei/Ciskei	14	34	71
Elsewhere in S.A.	36	19	18
<b>TOTAL PERCENTAGE:</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

NOTES:

HHB = Hottentots Holland Basin

\* = Data derived from survey, Nov. 1991

\*\* = Data derived from Emmett, 1992

\*\*\* = Data derived from Seekings, 1990.

As figure 6.2 shows, considerably more respondents in the Die Bos sample were locally-born than is apparent in other areas. This is important in that local origins directly reflect different kinds of movement patterns from those experienced by people living in other nearby informal settlements. The differences in the patterns of places of origin described in figure 6.2 may be the result of a preponderance of people who were previously farm labourers in the Western Cape among those now resident in Die Bos. 50 percent of respondents in Die Bos had been born on or lived on commercial (as opposed to subsistence) farms.<sup>7</sup> As a settlement of displaced farm workers, Die Bos may thus represent a change in farming practices to seasonal labour (especially using 'African' labour<sup>8</sup>), or to increasing mechanisation.<sup>9</sup>

7. Unfortunately, there is little literature which explores the movements of farm workers, and that which does exist tends to posit either a simple linear or stepped migration from farms to towns (cf. Manona, 1984) or a circulatory pattern between farms and towns (see for instance Levy, 1977). Data presented elsewhere, however, (cf. Waldman, 1992) suggests that this is not always the case. Waldman argues that among farm workers in the Boland it is only young women who 'escape' the farms and do not return. Others go to town and return to farms, or circulate among kin on farms in the area. Nevertheless, at the time of my research a large number of adult residents in Die Bos, not only single women, had been agricultural workers.

8. This may be particularly so after the repeal of the 'Coloured Labour Preference Area' policy. See discussion, chapter three.

9. This is conjecture, as I did not conduct research into this aspect of residence. However, life histories of residents in Die Bos strongly suggest that this is so, a hypothesis which is also

In order to understand the effects of movement on processes within domestic units we need to explore the nature of mobility among residents in Die Bos. Figure 6.3 begins to assess the geographical extent of people's mobility by depicting places of birth of residents in Die Bos by province and homeland.

**Figure 6.3: Birth-places of respondents in Die Bos, by province.**

Province	% of respondents
Cape	79
Transvaal	4
Orange Free State	0
Natal	3
Transkei	9
Ciskei	5
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>100</b>

From figure 6.3 it is apparent that most respondents were born in the Cape Province. It is noteworthy that, despite fairly high rates of both geographic and residential mobility particularly between farms (apparent from life history interviews although not from survey data), and the limitations on 'black' and 'coloured' housing in the area, few of the residents had been squatters before settling in Die Bos. Indeed, 67 percent of residents in Die Bos were first time squatters, and no respondents were recorded as having been resident in more than three informal settlements. This accords well with Emmett's data, which indicates that only five percent of shack dwellers in the Hottentot's Holland Basin had lived in other shack

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suggested by the demographic differences between Die Bos and other settlements in the Western Cape. As Emmett (1992:118) points out: "The agricultural sector is not a substantial source of employment within the Basin". This holds true for residents of Die Bos, of whom only two percent were employed on full-time (as opposed to seasonal) agricultural contracts at the time of research (see chapter 3), compared with 51 percent who had been farm labourers at some stage in the past. The migration patterns of seasonal farm labourers is an area for future research.

settlements.<sup>10</sup> Evidence that squatting in the Basin is a product of a need for housing rather than the result of a huge influx of people from elsewhere can be found in Emmett's calculation that 65 percent his sample had lived in the Hottentot's Holland Basin area before becoming squatters. In Die Bos the proportion was even higher; 85 of the 102 first-survey respondents (83%) had lived in the Hottentot's Holland Basin before moving to Die Bos, and, as we shall see, 41% of those respondents born in the Western Cape were born within a 50km radius of Somerset West.

Patterns of movement prior to residence in Die Bos.

Given that the majority of residents surveyed in Die Bos in November 1991 were born in the Western Cape, and most were first-time squatters despite the limited availability of cheap housing in the Hottentot's Holland Basin, it is interesting to determine how closely people's mobility has remained associated with that area. Figure 6.4 explores the origins of Cape respondents (78 of a total of 102 respondents), showing that most (65%) were born in the fruit-growing areas of the Cape, close to Somerset West.

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10. However, note that Seekings argues that 47 percent of shack residents in Khayelitsha had come from squatter settlements elsewhere in the Cape Peninsula. It is clear that there are significant differences between the populations of the two areas in terms of residential and mobility patterns, and in their places of origin. Future research should concentrate on these issues in order to conduct such comparisons.

Figure 6.4: Cape respondents' places of birth.

Area of birth <sup>11</sup>	No. respondents.
1. Cape Town-Paarl-Sir Lowry's Pass Village	32
2. Worcester-De Doorns	9
3. Grabou-Riviersonderend	10
4. George-Port Elizabeth	11
5. Laingsburg-Northern Cape Boundary	16
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>78</b>

From figure 6.4 it is evident that many of the present residents of the settlement have tended to remain close to their places of birth. However, this does not preclude high rates of mobility, although, as we shall see, such mobility was not reflected in survey data which had aimed to investigate migration histories for all the survey respondents.

Inaccuracies in survey data arose when people were asked to recall where and for how long they had lived immediately before Die Bos, then prior to that, and so on, back to the place of their birth. When comparing survey data with that derived from life-history interviews it was clear that the surveys had not fully recorded the frequency of movement. For example, Veronica (aged 32), who appeared in case 6.1, moved to at least ten areas in her life <sup>12</sup> according to her life history obtained during the period of intensive research. Her completed survey questionnaire records only 3 of those moves. In part the discrepancy between survey data and that derived from participant-observation was a result of interviewing processes in the surveys, in which interviewers pressed for data which was not always readily accessible. It may also have been the result of a wish

11. Note that areas 1 and 3 lie within 50 kilometres of Die Bos by road.

12. This does not tell us in how many houses she lived within each area, however. See note, figure 6.1.

among respondents to have the interviewing process completed as soon as possible. An alternative explanation (as is the case with Veronica's data) may be that the survey data represents the number of different areas (as opposed to sites, farms or houses) to which people moved.

Bearing in mind the problems associated with survey data as it relates to frequency of movements, figure 6.5 describes the total number of places in which respondents claimed to have resided (i.e. including residence in Die Bos). Note that all respondents were adults, therefore this excludes all those children who were born in Die Bos, and also excludes the movement patterns of other members of each domestic unit. Also note that the movement patterns of children cannot be inferred from those of their parents, for, as we have seen in figure 6.1 above, movement patterns of children and adults are not necessarily the same.

**Figure 6.5: Frequency distribution of residential experiences of respondents.**

No. of residences	No. of respondents
2	15
3	48
4	26
5	8
6	3
7	2
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>102</b>

Despite the discrepancies between survey and participant-observation findings, the data derived from the surveys is important in that it provides a context in which to locate movement histories such as that described in case 6.1. In effect, the data illustrates that members of the population of Die Bos had moved from their original domestic units, into and out of others, and were in the process of doing the

same in Die Bos, or of setting up their own units. We have seen that Die Bos is peopled with residents who have moved from area to area, frequently within the Western Cape, and often close to their birth-places. This points to patterns of movement dissimilar to those of African populations migrating from homeland areas. Unfortunately there is insufficient data relating to this subject to do anything more than speculate as to why the differences should exist. I have suggested that they are due, in part, to the exigencies of the local fruit-based economy, which requires seasonal (rather than permanent) labour. Future research could profitably concentrate in this area. My concern here is with the implications of movement for micro-level analyses. I have shown that the population of Die Bos has a history of movement. I now turn to an examination of what the effects of that movement are on processes within domestic units.

#### **Movement within Die Bos.**

The effects of movements are most easily visible when examined in the context of contemporary intra-settlement mobility (or what van der Waal calls 'residential mobility'). Internal mobility in Die Bos was extremely high, and the settlement thus provides a useful means of exploring the immediate effects of movement on domestic units, particularly in view of the limited data which relates to intra-settlement movement in Southern Africa.

#### **Intra-settlement movement in Southern African literature.**

There is very little literature which documents the frequency of movement within (as opposed to between) urban settlements. Dewar *et al* argue (with specific reference to the African population of Cape Town) that "[i]n recent years there has been a high degree of intra-urban movement of African people within Greater Cape Town" (1991:33), and that ". . . there is also considerable micro-movement within areas such as Khayelitsha" (1991:33). According to a report of the University of Cape Town's Dept. Community Health

(1990), this movement occurs mainly in response to the need for housing. This is verified in Seekings's research (1990), where an overwhelming majority of people moving from elsewhere in the Cape Peninsula to Khayelitsha did so in response to criteria relating to housing, such as cheaper conditions there, or bad conditions elsewhere.

Briefer references to movement within settlements in other literature also place housing as a high priority. Other than those sources discussed above, most other references to intra-settlement movement relate to hostels. Ramphele (1986) illustrates processes of movement and competition between women for access to male bed-holders<sup>13</sup> in hostels, while Oliver-Evans describes "the fluidity of accommodation arrangements at the compound in terms of relationships between bed-holders and dependants" (1991:221).

The need for shelter was an important criterion in accounting for some of the movement within Die Bos, but there were other factors which also played an important part in changing roles of and processes within domestic units.<sup>14</sup> High rates of mobility observed in Die Bos were partly a product of the insecurity of people's employment which rendered them dependent upon others at certain times of the year. Such mobility was also determined by the nature of the housing in which squatters lived, particularly as shacks were prone to burning down, to leaking and to collapsing. The insecurity of tenure, employment and social interactions (especially short-lived sexual relationships), and high levels of domestic violence and substance abuse, also contributed to the extreme fluidity of movement that characterised life in Die Bos.

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13. 'Bed-holders' is used to describe those people who have rights to residence in hostels (cf. Ramphele, 1986). Such rights are usually expressed through access to beds rather than on other space criteria.

14. cf. Also Oliver-Evans (1991:166), who describes how men move within compound settlements in order to maximise links with home groups (amakhaya).

Effects of intra-settlement movement in Die Bos.

There is no doubt that there was an extremely high rate of movement within the settlement. During my seven month period of intensive research I documented personnel changes in 66 of 100 domestic units. Some of these changes included people leaving Die Bos or arriving in the settlement, people moving lodgings, taking in other people's children, and sharing food and fuel. Some of these issues have been addressed in chapters 4 and 5. Here I confine myself to a discussion of mobility within Die Bos.

Case 6.2 traces the movements of two women within the settlement, illustrating how the etic boundaries of domestic units in Die Bos were continuously blurring due to the passage of people between them.

**Case 6.2: Ou Rose, Anna and the effect of frequent moves on Anna's domestic unit.**

Ou Rose was about fifty years old at the time of research. She had lived in Die Bos for five years and drew a state disability grant of R230 per month because she was chronically affected by arthritis and bronchitis (which she was certain was tuberculosis). When I first arrived in Die Bos she and her boyfriend Stemment were living in a tiny one-roomed shack in the central area of the settlement.

In March 1992 Stemment was hospitalised over the long term as his TB had worsened. He now returned to Die Bos only on occasional weekends. Ou Rose was left entirely alone in her shack. She drank heavily and rapidly began to lose because she no longer cooked for herself. The door to her shack was not secure and she accused people of stealing her groceries. There were also rumours of an attempted rape. Her condition deteriorated rapidly.

The shebeen owner, who allowed her credit on his shop's 'book' became concerned and suggested that Ou Rose take her meals with a friend. Ou Rose approached Katherina (see case 5.2), who agreed to cook for her once a day for a payment of R50 per month.

In late April Ou Rose burnt down her house one evening with a candle while drunk. She moved in with her crippled friend Anna. Anna had recently enlarged her house and had taken in a lodger, Jemima, who did all the housework which

Anna was unable to perform (including collecting firewood) in exchange for lodgings (see chapter 5 for a more detailed discussion of shared labour, and case 4.7 for a detailed examination of Jemima's movements). Ou Rose continued to eat at Katherina's house while sleeping at Anna's. When Jemima left to stay in a different house in Die Bos, Anna and Ou Rose began to argue about the allocation of labour in the domestic unit.

In June Ou Rose decided to leave Anna's house, and made arrangements to move into with a neighbour, Baby (see case 5.3). She also stopped eating at Katherina's and contributed R50 per month to Baby's household.

The roof of Anna's house collapsed shortly thereafter, and Anna moved in with another friend in Die Bos, paying for food. After living there for a month she returned to her own house, which had been repaired. She and Ou Rose patched up their differences and Ou Rose once again moved, this time from Baby's house to Anna's.

In September Ou Rose moved out of Anna's house and into an empty shack, for which she paid R100. Anna was once again alone, but not for long. Her boyfriend, released from prison, returned to Die Bos and took up residence with her. He remained there from October to December 1992, when he was murdered in the shebeen next door to Anna's house.

Jean, a friend of Anna's, who had previously been resident in Die Bos but had run away from her boyfriend, returned to the settlement on hearing of the murder, and took up residence in Anna's house in January 1993. At that stage Ou Rose was still alone in her shack.

By tabulating some of these data we are better able to see the changes experienced by Ou Rose and Anna over time. Figure 6.6 depicts Ou Rose's residence and commensal patterns between November 1991 and September 1992:<sup>15</sup>

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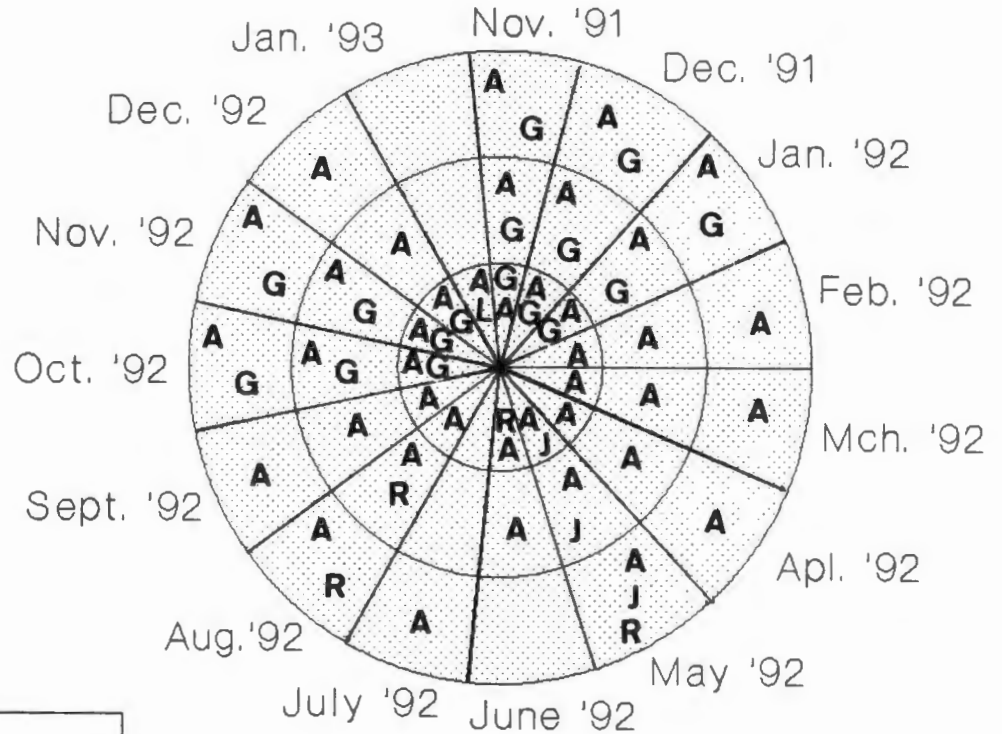
15. Further details of the effects of her movements are provided in cases 5.2 and 5.3 which explore changing commensal patterns.

**Figure 6.6: Ou Rose's residential and commensal patterns, Nov. 1991 to Sept. 1992.**

Month	Residence	Ate with:
Nov-March	Own home	Self
March-April	Own home	Katherina
May	Anna	Katherina Anna
June	Anna Baby	Anna/Katherina Baby
July	Baby Anna	Baby/ Anna
Sept.	Own house	Self

In the space of 10 months Ou Rose moved four times, finally returning to living and eating alone. Anna moved only twice, but the ramifications of movements of others on her domestic unit were vast. As can be seen from figure 6.7, turnover of residents in Anna's shack was high. The blank spaces in the figure indicate when she was absent (except for January 1993, for which complete data was not obtained). In the 14 months for which I have data Anna sheltered 3 lodgers and moved twice:

Figure 6.7: Anna's changing domestic unit, Nov. 1991 to Jan. 1993.



A=Anna  
 G=Gert  
 J=Jemima  
 R=Rose  
 L=Jean

Note: The inner circle represents the first third of the month, the middle circle represents the second third, and the outer circle depicts the final third of each month. Names which appear in the first third and not the second therefore refer to people present for only that first part of the month. Names which are spread across the entire segment (i.e. across all 3 parts of each segment) indicate that those people were present for the entire month.

The movements of these two women were not unique in the context of Die Bos. Each such movement within the settlement had an effect upon both the domestic unit people left, and the one(s) into which they moved. Such effects were increasingly complicated by inter-household commensal patterns (see chapter 5) and the sharing of labour across presumed boundaries of domestic units (chapter 4).

**Movement into and beyond Die Bos.**

Thus far I have discussed how the movement patterns of both adults and children prior to arrival in Die Bos, and adults' mobility within the settlement, blurs the boundaries of households. Another factor which complicated any understanding of households in Die Bos was the existence of a number of people who did not live in the settlement but who visited, or were potential visitors as a result of other's residence. Questions incorporated into the June 1992 survey were designed to tap such data (see Appendix B). Respondents were therefore asked to name and give the ages and whereabouts of their offspring not present in Die Bos. While the structure of the questions may imply a normative assumption about who ought to be present, this was not the intention. From participant-observation I had noted that frequently the changes in households were the result of young descendants visiting for extended periods. The questions included in the survey were designed simply to establish how many visitors could be expected to be immediate kin.

The population of Die Bos is not what is usually expected of a developing area. It is unusual in terms of international models of underdeveloped countries in that instead of a large number of children and teenagers, and an increasingly smaller number of adults and the old aged (reflecting high birth and mortality rates), what we see in Die Bos is a dearth of youths (see chapter 3): children between 13 and 19 years of age represented only seven percent of the total population of Die Bos.<sup>16</sup> The June 1992 survey, which gathered details of non-resident descendants under the ages of 18, indicated that there were 118 offspring of adults resident in Die Bos who did not live with their biological parents. In all, only 17 percent of the children aged between 13 and 19 who were offspring of residents in Die Bos

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16. Note that unequal distributions of this nature are prevalent throughout the Western Cape, reflecting the exigencies of an apartheid system which forced people to leave their children in rural areas while working on contracts in urban areas. See Maree and Cornell (1978); Seekings (1990).

were present in the settlement during the research period. The fact that these youths were not present permanently in Die Bos does not however, imply that they lived permanently elsewhere either. Non-resident offspring were frequently highly mobile, just as were those children whose past movements I have already discussed (case 6.1 and figure 6.1 above).

Below I present two cases which explore the mobility of youths, and discuss what impact their movement had on the domestic units into and through which they moved. Case 6.3 examines circumstances which resulted in two youths becoming boarders with non-kin in Macassar, while case 6.4 shows how one child's movements altered labour processes and material well-being in five different domestic units to varying degrees and, in some cases, with varying frequency.

**Case 6.3: "Where are my children to go?"**

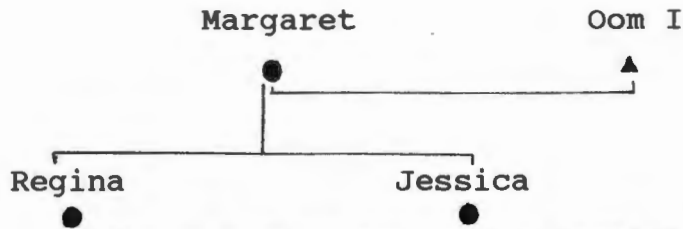
Regina (aged 17) and Jessica (aged 13) were the two teenaged daughters of my neighbour Margaret. At the beginning of the research period they were resident with Margaret's brother in the Karoo town of Calvinia, some kilometres distant. They attended school there.

In January 1992 Regina came to live with her mother and step-father in Die Bos. She had been unable to retain her place at high school in Calvinia, and was hoping to register to write her Matric examinations in Somerset West. The school was unable to accept her, and she decided to seek work.

She obtained a job as a fruit-packer in Stellenbosch in February 1992, and contributed most of her income to her mother, with whom she continued to live. However, having experienced sexual harassment while living in the settlement, she was unhappy about remaining there.

In March 1992 Jessica, Regina's sister, arrived in Die Bos to live with Margaret and her husband, because her uncle (Margaret's brother) had decided to leave Calvinia.

Margaret's resident kin, March 1992.



There was no space for Jessica at the high school, but her mother was determined that she should not miss a year of education. Margaret approached a friend, resident in Macassar, and asked if the two girls could lodge with her family. An agreement was reached. Regina continued to work at the fruit factory, and Jessica was found a place in a school in Macassar. The two girls visited their mother in Die Bos at weekends.

Margaret's household had consisted of herself and her husband prior to the arrival of her children. At that time it was Margaret's husband's income which had sustained them. When Regina joined them she contributed her salary to the running of the domestic unit, which had grown following the arrival of Regina's sister. The sisters had then left, and lodged elsewhere (altering processes and interpersonal relationships within the domestic unit in which they boarded - see case 3.4), returning to Margaret at weekends. Regina continued to contribute her income to her mother, who did not pay for the children's lodgings. Over a three month period, Margaret's domestic unit had consecutively housed two, three, four, two (and intermittently four) people. At each stage the income in the house had been different and differently distributed. When Regina first arrived one wage had to be diffused between three household members. While Regina was working there were two wages coming into the house, and three and later four people among whom to distribute the wages. When both Regina and her sister left, the former continued to remit her wages to her mother, with the effect that (apart from weekends) there were two wages sustaining the two members of Margaret's household. Margaret's domestic unit was thus better off once her daughters had visited and left than it was prior to their arrival.

The mobility of the youths described in case 6.3 and the effects such movements had on the functioning of domestic units is reflected in the life stories of teenagers (sometimes) resident in Die Bos (see for example, Shawn's

movement history in case 6.1). In some instances the rates of movement among youths were extremely high, with concomitantly vast effects on a number of domestic units, as is illustrated in case 6.4, which describes a seven month period in one young woman's life.

**Case 6.4: Changing labour and well-being by movement.**

At the beginning of the research period, Paulina was resident with her mother's sister in a formal housing unit in Eerste Rivier. As her pregnancy neared full-term, she ran away from Eerste Rivier (where she had been living for several years) to Sir Lowry's Pass Village, where her boyfriend was living in a backyard shack with his mother. They resided there for some weeks, and then he and Paulina built their own shack. They lived there until March 1992.

Paulina's baby, Wilhelmina, was born late that March. Her aunt had suggested that she return to Eerste Rivier for post-natal care, as the baby was premature and sickly, and Paulina (aged 16) was very young. Paulina moved to Eerste Rivier, where she lived for two weeks before running away again, this time to her mother, Irene, in Die Bos. Her boyfriend joined her there for several weeks while unemployed. In Die Bos Paulina's life altered dramatically. Irene was reliant on wood and paraffin for cooking and heating fuels, and it had been she who collected all the fuels and did all the cooking until Paulina arrived. When the latter took up residence in her mother's 2m x 3m shack, however, all the household chores were turned over to Paulina. As we see from Paulina's diary:

14/4/92.

During the day I cleaned my mother's house. When I had finished cleaning the house I washed my child's nappies. Then I listened to the two o' clock story [on the radio], but before the story began I fetched water. Then I cleaned the house up again and rested. That night I did some more [cooking].

15/4/92.

Last night I went to the hospital with my child. I stayed there overnight. I was there all morning, and when I came home the house was not yet clean. I was furious! I washed my child's nappies and then I cleaned the house. When I had finished doing all this [including warming up the leftovers from the previous night's dinner] I bathed my child.

Paulina's diary shows us how her mother allocated work to her when she was present in Die Bos. (This brings us full circle to the central concerns of chapter 5, which explored the allocation of labour within and beyond household boundaries). Each time that she was present in her mother's house, the labour patterns in Paulina's mother's domestic unit altered so as to reallocate labour to Paulina. Each time Paulina left Die Bos, the patterns in her mother's unit changed again, this time to accommodate her absence.

Paulina was able to exercise an option to leave Die Bos as her boyfriend (who had subsequently found work on a farm in Sir Lowry's Pass Village) had offered her residence there. Since the strains of the work-load in her mother's house in Die Bos were too great for her to cope with along with her sickly child, Paulina again left Die Bos, returning once more to Sir Lowry's Pass Village, where she and her boyfriend became lodgers in a labourer's cottage on a farm. Paulina no longer had to cook or to collect fuel, as the landlady performed these functions.

However, Paulina continued to visit Die Bos intermittently over the next two months (May and June 1992) as her baby was constantly ill and Paulina needed financial help from her mother to pay for her child's regular hospitalisation. Each time she returned her duties were to buy paraffin and prepare meals.

When Paulina, her boyfriend and their baby were living in Die Bos with Irene and her boyfriend, Wilson, no extra money was coming into the domestic unit. Irene's char job and Wilson's gardening brought R550 per month into the house. This money had now to be stretched to accommodate an extra two adults and a baby, with the result that the number of cooked meals decreased to one a day.

Over a period of seven months Paulina's movements had direct and measurable effects on the material well-being of the domestic units in which she lived. In some places she did not contribute either labour or cash to the running of the domestic unit (at her mother's sister's house, and while lodging on the farm, where her boyfriend paid their rent). In other places she was expected to contribute labour to the functioning of the domestic unit, thus lightening the loads previously carried by women (her mother and her boyfriend's mother), but also contributing to a demise in the material

well-being of the unit as limited incomes were stretched to accommodate extra people. Paulina's movements and work experiences in each place are tabulated in figure 6.8.

**Figure 6.8: Paulina's movements and work experiences, Jan. 1992 to June 1992.**

Date	Place resident	Perform work
Jan.	Eerste Rivier (Mother's sister)	No
Mid-Feb.	Sir Lowry's Pass Village (Boyfriend's mother's house)	Yes
End Feb.	Sir Lowry's Pass Village (Own shack)	Yes
Mid-March.	Eerste Rivier (Mother's sister)	No
April.	Die Bos (Mother)	Yes
May.	Sir Lowry's Pass Village (Own shack) Intermittently resident in Die Bos. (Mother)	No  Yes
June.	As above	

Cases 6.3 and 6.4 have shown the high rates of mobility of descendants of residents in Die Bos. Such mobility occurred not only into and out of Die Bos, but between various other domestic units elsewhere. Thus in case 6.4, Paulina moved six times in seven months, in addition to spending intermittent periods with her mother.

What this chapter has attempted to do is to examine how movement is a constant context of the lives of all residents in Die Bos, both adults and children, prior to residence in Die Bos, within and beyond the settlement. Movement

patterns raise important questions about the models through which we view society, especially those models which assume that people operate in independent, homogeneous units which do not change over time except in predictable directions at predetermined times. One such model is that of 'household', frequently used to describe a presumably discrete entity housing interpersonal relationships and regulating social interaction. If, however, such units are discrete, then how do we make sense of movements between them? And if they are universal, then what do we make of data such as the following case, which sums up the contents of this and the preceding two chapters by describing the reactions of a *bosslaaper* on returning to a previous sleeping site to find a shack settlement there:

**Case 6.5: The collapse of commensality.**

When Anna and her boyfriend Gert (see case 6.2) first arrived in the area now known as Die Bos, they lived in a small blue tent which they assembled every evening and dismantled each morning. They ate at a communal fire with approximately 10 others, sharing with the other *bosslaapers* the food that they bought with the income from Gert's infrequent gardening jobs, and that others had obtained.

After complications arose with local landowners, Anna and Gert left Die Bos for several years. When Anna returned to Die Bos, the settlement was somewhat larger, the houses resembling houses "not chicken coops". The communal fires and communal eating were gone; instead people cooked mainly indoors, using paraffin and gas rather than on fires outside. It was at this point that she made her comment relating to the absence of communality in eating: "Now the people started eating inside, and we didn't eat all together any more. Instead we mostly ate on our own inside our own place". Anna was saying that the creation of shacks decreased the previously high incidence of commensality among *bosslaapers* as they now cooked in a private domain (i.e. inside) rather than in the public domain represented by the outdoors.

Although reluctant to talk of the early stages of her life, we can see that the lifestyle Anna and Gert led until building their shack was not conducive to social structures such as 'households'. Erratic incomes made it vital for the *bosslaapers* to share food and fuel rather than relying on their own limited incomes. Thus the social meanings and obligations engendered around fire-sharing and commensality

among the early squatters were essential to their continued survival. The fire became a symbol of obligations woven into social networks of survival. An absence of permanent housing (even of so rudimentary a nature as shacks), limited and unreliable incomes, and the fluid nature of social interaction among *bosslaapers* makes it difficult to classify their living spaces as households. This being so, we are led to question the universality and applicability of the concept. It is more useful to describe such social relationships in terms of networks of interaction, but as I have shown in chapter 2, networks are descriptive rather than analytic tools.

## Chapter 7:

### Conclusion.

Black families in The Flats and the non-kin they regard as kin have evolved patterns of co-residence, kinship based exchange networks linking multiple domestic units, elastic household boundaries . . . These highly adaptive structural features of urban black families comprise a resilient response to the social-economic conditions of poverty, the inexorable unemployment of black women and men, and the access to scarce economic resources of a mother and her children as AFDC recipients (Stack, 1974:124).

This ethnography has described the ways in which residents of a Western Cape squatter settlement created extensive, but short-lived networks of support which stretched across and beyond the settlement, linking individuals into complex and extremely fluid social interactions. So rapidly changing were these compounded knots of interacting individuals that they often appeared to have no boundaries save those imposed with situational immediacy. I have shown that although some people lived in stable domestic units which were loci of specific relationships of consumption and (re)production over the research period, many of the residents of Die Bos were not part of such stable sets. Fluidity and change characterised the social relationships described in this ethnography, so that even the networks of interaction which were generated in order to deal with problems of shelter, food and child-caring were not stable over time and frequently were short-lived.

The limited literature which explores domestic patterns of production and consumption beyond the boundaries of households tends to imply that while households may be elastic, permitting much change in personnel and function, networks generated among people are permanent, or at least of long-duration. Thus Lomnitz (1977) is able to write of networks as being the means by which people survive in impoverished conditions, without accounting for changes in the networks themselves. Networks thus come analytically to replace households as the stable units of society, the corporate groups of structural-functionalist analysis. This correspondence between network and group is pervasive in

much of the literature which attempts to locate survival strategies of the poor within such strategic interactions as networks. While network approaches do allow for individual agency, placing the individual as ". . . the central point of a shifting network of relationships, recruited from many fields, which he manipulates for his own ends" (Boissevain, 1974:554), many of those who use the approach tend to depict networks as enduring. Thus while trying to avoid structural-functionalist perspectives, network theories actually generate forms of analyses of social organisation which approximate those of structural-functionalism.

Residents in Die Bos did generate and activate networks, and did sometimes live in units which approximated stable households. However, the relationships engendered among any one cohort of residents at a particular time were rapidly changing, and these impacted on residents of other units in a kind of domino effect. Thus the events in one individual's life were likely to have ramifications far beyond simply one domestic unit.

Changes in individual lifestyle or habits and networks were not haphazard, but occurred in response to events either in households or in the lives of individuals concerned. The forces which generated social change of the kind described throughout this ethnography were similar to those which created flexibility in domestic arrangements in Latin American shanties: "Extreme scarcity of space and severe economic constraints produce new residential patterns and a rearrangement of domestic functions" (Lomnitz, 1977:99). Domestic rearrangements such as those described for Die Bos were frequent and drastic, reflecting the tensions experienced by residents as a result of insecurities of income and space, of extremely high rates of substance abuse and of violence in the settlement. All these factors served to create great fluidity in social interaction, as people (especially women) sought ways of dealing with the problems they faced both on the domestic front, and in the face of macro-level constraints such as the lack of housing and employment. Insecurity was further exacerbated in that

residents were under threat of eviction throughout the research period. Their alternative to living in Die Bos was to move to Waterkloof, a transit settlement, which also had limited security of tenure and was commonly considered to be an extremely violent area.

The fluidity of social relationships in the settlement cannot be viewed apart from the economic, social and political positions in which residents of Die Bos found themselves. Concentrated in the lower income brackets of the job market, they experienced high rates of un- and under-employment, which were both structural and cyclical processes. Structural unemployment is a salient feature of the South African landscape (see van der Waal and Sharp, 1988). Cyclical unemployment in Die Bos (in this case seasonal unemployment) appeared to affect men the most, as their jobs tended to be those which were good weather-dependent (such as builders and gardeners). Given that the Cape Peninsula is an area of winter rainfall, men's unemployment during the period of winter fell precisely when money was most required.

Using fuel-related issues such as fuel-collection, food preparation and commensal patterns, and movement patterns, I have shown that domestic units in Die Bos were constantly in flux, always in a state of being redefined and redrawn. Residents of Die Bos were able to manipulate their interactions with others to generate rights in various domestic units over time. In some cases people began to create networks aimed at precisely this objective long before they had any intention of utilising them. In other cases, people generated rights in households shortly before activating them. The processes of generating such rights were manifold, but did not always (or even often) involve kinship. While much of the writing which applies to shanty settlements, especially in the Americas, suggests that kinship is the primary means through which individuals create social interactions, this was not necessarily the case in Die Bos, even where people had kin in close proximity.

How then were rights in households generated and maintained? In some instances it was through the performance of labour, either within a domestic unit - in order to retain a place already occupied - or for units in which the people concerned were not (yet) resident. In chapter 4 I have shown that too close a focus on households *per se* tends to obscure the intricacies of social relationships pertaining to labour divisions within and between them. Similarly I have shown that in Die Bos fuel-collection (among other types of labour performance) could be, and was, used as a means to create obligations that others would be obliged to uphold, giving "a return gift for a gift received" (Mauss, 1953:5). In Die Bos gifts of material items were frequently given with the expectation of a reciprocal return. Such gifts took the form of a cup of sugar, money, etc. But exchanges were not confined to material goods. Child-caring and labour performance were also considered to be gifts which required repayment in the future. Gift-giving to generate rights in domestic units was considered to be different from 'work', for which reciprocity was not acceptable. For example, several women washed laundry for others in the settlement. Some of these were paid by the day (usually between R5 and R15 depending on the quantity of washing and whether the washer had to collect water). The labour that these women performed was considered to be 'work'; that is they expected to be paid either in cash or with food or goods immediately their labour was performed. Other women were not paid immediately, nor was their payment in material goods. Instead they were paid in kind - with the offer of meals, of a place to sleep, of child-caring and so on.

Labour was an important means through which people were able to generate rights to commensality or residence in certain households over time. Other ways of creating such rights lay in 'claiming kin' - using 'home boy' relationships (Mayer, 1961) and putative kinship links to enforce a sense of obligation among others. Newcomers arrived in Die Bos, frequently at the behest of kin, who assured them that they

would find a site in the settlement. Kin were thus instrumental in obtaining residence in the settlement initially, but their importance appeared to diminish as newcomers became more settled. In times of need it was not kin who were called upon as frequently as non-kin, as with the latter, social relationships similar to informal networks could be generated and maintained for short periods. Kinship relations on the other hand required maintenance of relationships over extended periods. Thus, among non-kin, different networks could be mobilised in response to particular circumstances. When the issue had been resolved the network could be allowed to lapse. Kin-based relationships tended to be more lasting, creating greater obligations for a longer period when invoked. Given the high rates of un- and under-employment which characterised life in the settlement, the resources to sustain intense, long-term relationships of the type that would be generated by kin networks were scarce. Consequently people in Die Bos often appeared to steer clear of activating kin-based networks, instead utilising other relationships of friendship and reciprocity. Of course there were some kin-based reciprocal arrangements. Some of these have been explored in chapter 5, which showed how, in two domestic units, rights to residence were created through kinship (cases 5.1 and 5.2), while in another household (case 5.3) kinship played a noticeably smaller role in determining who was entitled to claim shelter and food.

The emphasis on non-kin in determining interactions among residents does not mean that kin-based social relationships were not important. Chapter 6 explored the ways in which household boundaries were rendered permeable by the movements of people into and out of them. In many instances the movement patterns exhibited were founded initially on kinship relations; people utilised their kin as primary resources for generating living space. It was subsequent to having obtained dwellings that residents of Die Bos appeared to utilise other non-kin relationships to negotiate problems in the processes of daily life in the settlement.

The ways in which both kin and non-kin were utilised by residents in the settlement obscured the etic boundaries of domestic units in Die Bos. Patterns of residence, commensality and fuel-related labour-sharing in the settlement interfused domestic units. The idea of household as it has been applied in much literature is simply too static and bounded to explain these processes, and the practical applications of network approaches, whilst allowing for fluidity of social arrangements, are problematic in that they tend to assume that interactions continue over the long-term, thus making it difficult to distinguish between groups and networks of interacting people. As van der Waal states:

What we . . . find on the level of personal and social experience in the rural areas of Southern Africa is quite removed from theoretical preoccupations (van der Waal, 1992:1).

Networks are an appropriate way of describing domestic relationships in Die Bos, not only because they recognise individual agency, but also because they enable depiction of the impact of the larger political-economic environment in which interactions are constrained. Network approaches are thus effective in describing the impact of macro-level changes on individuals and their domestic functioning. However, their shortcoming is in explaining how it was that processes of interaction were given meaning and durability through time and space, especially given that individual (ego-centred) social relationships tended to be short-lived. The question thus becomes not "Why was mobility so salient a feature of the settlement?", but "What conditions made people move, and how were these conditions expressed, negotiated and moderated throughout the settlement?". In order to assess these processes of meaning-generation and -maintenance we need briefly to explore how people and the services they performed were given social value.

I have already argued that there is a tension in much literature which explores domestic relationships in terms of concerns with self and with others (see chapter 2); a tension which is expressed precisely in terms of ego- versus group-centredness (or household versus network). In Die Bos this tension was particularly evident in the processes of formation of domestic units and of 'overloading', in which moral imperatives to share with others (albeit in reciprocal exchange relationships, such as labour for board) gave rise to situations in which more and more people were attracted to specific settings (see especially cases 5.2 and 5.3). When a point of saturation was reached, in which the domestic unit could no longer viably support the number of people living in it, then processes of instrumentality set in and people either left the domestic unit of their own accord, or were asked to leave by the person upon whose patronage they were reliant at that time.

To explore this further, I build here on a proposal by Appadurai (1986a:13) that:

the commodity situation in the social life of any "thing" be defined as the situation in which its exchangeability (past, present, or future) for some other thing is its socially relevant feature (1986:13).

From this he argues that the flow of commodities (including services) "is a shifting compromise between socially regulated paths and competitively inspired diversions" (1986:17).

When we apply this proposal to Die Bos we see that limitations of shelter, food and income in the settlement enabled some people to exchange their labour for these limited goods. The ways in which labour became an acceptable medium of exchange in the settlement require further research. Similarly processes by which individuals were able to transform social links, such as (putative) kinship into access to material resources require further research. Clearly, however, such processes would require

complex and on-going negotiations in order to give meaning to kinship and labour, transforming them from categories of interpersonal interaction or work into socially recognised rights of access to goods and other services.

While Appadurai's article is problematic in that his definition of commodity is very broad (encompassing all aspects of exchange, rather than the very specific processes Marxian analyses call commoditisation, and ignoring social meanings contained within goods - see Comaroff and Comaroff, 1990), it is useful in that it explores values inspired in and by "things" through the ways in which they are circulated in society. His argument allows that services (such as fuel-collection and domestic labour, and social relationships) can be exchanged for other valued "things" (such as food and shelter). Since there was an apparently standard expectation in Die Bos that labour of the kinds explored in chapter 4 could be exchanged for shelter and/or food, we move from the realm of gift-giving to the practice of exchange in which labour was performed for present and future needs and to generate obligations among others in both the present and future.

The argument Appadurai presents is particularly important when comparative value and wealth of goods and people are considered. As Ferguson (1992) shows, wealth in different commodities is not necessarily comparable on a "linear-folk continuum of wealth and poverty" (1992:57). Wealth determined by access to people is thus not the same as access to land or to livestock, and these forms of wealth are qualitatively different, so that they can not be directly compared.

How does this relate to the fluidity of social relationships in Die Bos? It seems to me that the way in which social relationships in Die Bos were generated and maintained was a product of complicated (and dynamic) processes of wealth conversion (especially between cash, people, shelter and labour), which were accentuated and attenuated by issues of morality and of instrumentality, as these were expressed

through the mechanisms of household (de)construction. Clearly both group- and self-interest are closely linked in the contexts of diffusing domesticity in the settlement; households are formed for both moral and instrumental reasons, and individuals join domestic groups for instrumental reasons (self-interest) and for reasons related to group interaction. What I have aimed to show in the ethnography is that the processes by which individuals are brought into domestic units and ejected from (or voluntarily leave) them involve a complex interplay between the forces of self-interest and morality (group-centredness). The creation and dissolution of large and highly complex domestic units in the settlement can be seen as being part of what Ferguson (1992), following Appadurai calls "paths" of power generated through patterns of commodity movement.

Ferguson's argument that "exchange is culturally regulated and guided along approved paths" (1992:55) is crucial to an understanding of fluidity of domestic units and mobility of individuals. People gain power by converting others' labour or movements to relationships of dependence. However, this power is not absolute, nor is it directly exchangeable in contexts beyond those for and in which it was specifically generated. Those who are in relationships of 'clientship' are able to move within the settlement, either to other domestic units, or ultimately to shacks of their own in which, if they are able, they can generate relationships in which others are dependent upon them, much as they had been elsewhere. Processes of movement of this nature are made where better opportunities arise elsewhere, or where individuals believe that the claim they are able to make within specific households does not equate the effort that goes into constructing and maintaining such relationships, or, of course, where the material base of the patron can no longer sustain extensive (and intensive) clientship. The exercise of power in making such decisions thus rests with both the individual and with others over whom s/he has limited control, thus making all interpersonal interaction inherently political.

## Conclusion.

Relationships engendered around sustenance in Die Bos then, were profoundly political, at both the macro- and micro-levels. Macro-level forces determined the kinds of employment to which residents did (not) have access, the forms of housing which they were forced to adopt, and the specific forms of exploitation which they had experienced under *apartheid* policies, and which was manifested in their daily struggles for survival. Political processes are visible in the struggles of residents to stay on the land which they were occupying, to remain in sexual relationships, and to maintain domestic units. The ways in which each of these objectives was achieved (or not) was the result of engagement with other people in processes which were simultaneously competitive and cooperative. Thus each micro-level process incorporated individuals into knots of interaction at various levels of intensity, and with varying degrees of impermanence, giving rise to the complex and rapidly changing social amalgamations which I observed in Die Bos.

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**APPENDIX A: QUESTIONNAIRE, NOV. 1991.**

My name is..... and I'm from the University of Cape Town. I am helping FIONA ROSS to do a survey of the kinds of fuel that people use, and of the people here in DIE BOS.

The project is being done for the National Energy Council. It has nothing to do with the farmers, or with the municipality. FIONA will be here often, and her work will be written for the University and for the National Energy Council. Please be aware that the reason for the project is to prioritise fuel needs. We are not able to help you in the short term. What the project aims at doing is making information available to policy-makers so that they can make decisions which are more in line with what it is that the people really experience, and with what they need.

Thank you for your help in talking to us. If you are unsure about anything please feel free to ask either me or FIONA.

**A: INTRODUCTORY QUESTIONS**

1. Name of respondent: .....

Male	Female
------	--------

2. Are you the head of the household?

Yes	No	If no, who is?
-----	----	----------------

3. How long have you been at this address (in years)? ..... 

**B: SITE AND HOUSEHOLD INFORMATION**

1. How many people are there living on the property? Please fill in the table:

	Number of people	Do they eat together?		Do they contribute to household income?	
		Yes	No	Yes	No
Main house:					

2. Descriptions of buildings: fill in the following table:

	No. of rooms	Wall material	Roof Material	Ceiling:		Insulation (inside roof):	
				No	Yes	No	Yes
Main house:							



4. Estimates of other income: fill in the following table:

	Estimate of Money/ month
Sent by family living away:	
Pensions:	
Rent from tenants:	
Other (specify):	

5. Estimates of household expenditure: fill in the following table:

HOUSEHOLD ITEM	Estimated expenditure per month
Food:	
Clothing:	
Transport:	
School fees and books:	
Remittances sent to family elsewhere:	
Umgalelo/ Stokvel groups:	
Rent/ bond:	
Other (Specify):	

We are also interested in learning a little about where it is that people have come from, and how long they have stayed in each area. Please fill in the table below, showing who it was that you stayed with, and for how long. It is especially important to know what relationship the people you stayed with had with you, e.g. parents, grandparents, friends, lodgers etc. This will give us an idea of what resources people use when trying to find housing as well as how effective those resources are over time. If you were forcibly removed from any of these places please indicate this also. (Put an [F] in brackets after the date).

NAME (of respondent).

dates

place.

persons.  
name and  
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**C. ENERGY USE**

1. Which of the following fuels are used in the main house? Tick where appropriate.

FUEL TYPE:	Frequently (Daily)	Seldom	Never
Wood			
Paraffin			
Car batteries			
Gas			
Coal/ charcoal			
Candles			
Other (specify):			

---

### 3. Wood

ACTIVITY	Reason for using wood
Daily cooking:	
Cooking traditional meals:	
Brewing:	
Heating water:	
Heating house:	
Other (Specify):	

3.1 How much wood do you use per week (bundles)? ..... 

3.2 Do you buy it?

No	Yes	From where?
		What does it cost (per bundle)?

3.3 Do you collect it yourselves?

No	Yes	From where?
		How long does it take to collect a load?
		Who collects it?
		Who goes along?

**4. Paraffin**

ACTIVITY	APPLIANCE TYPE (fill in brand name where possible)	DETAILS (where appropriate)	NUMBER OWNED	REASON FOR USING PARAFFIN, ..... (only fill in where paraffin appliance is being used)
Cooking:				
Heating water:				
Heating house:				
Lighting:				
Other (Specify):				

4.1 How much do you use? Fill in the table:

Size of bottles/ cans normally bought:	Cost per bottle/ can:	Length of time these bottles/ cans usually last:	Number of bottles/ cans used per month:

4.2 Where do you get it from? .....

4.3 Who gets it? .....

4.4 Who fills heaters/ stoves/ lamps? .....

**5. Coal / Charcoal**

ACTIVITY	APPLIANCE TYPE (fill in brand name where possible)	DETAILS (where appropriate)	NUMBER OWNED	REASON FOR USING COAL/ CHARCOAL,  (only fill in where coal/ charcoal appliance is being used)
Cooking:				
Heating water:				
Heating house:				
Other (Specify):				

5.1 How much do you use per week? .....

5.2 Where do you get it from? .....

5.3 Who gets it? .....

5.4 What does it cost? .....

**6. Car Batteries**

ACTIVITY	APPLIANCE TYPE (fill in brand name where possible)	DETAILS (where appropriate)	NUMBER OWNED	REASON FOR USING BATTERIES, (only fill in where batteries <u>are</u> being used)
Entertainment:	Television:			
	III Fl:			
	Radio:			
Other (Specify):				

6.1 How often do you recharge them? .....

6.2 Where do you recharge them? .....

6.3 Who takes them to be re-charged? .....

6.4 What does it cost? ..... 

7. Gas

ACTIVITY	APPLIANCE TYPE (fill in brand name where possible)	DETAILS (where appropriate)	NUMBER OWNED	REASON FOR USING GAS,  (only fill in where gas appliance is being used)
Cooking:				
Heating water:				
Heating house:				
Lighting:				
Other (Specify):				

7.1 How much do you use? Fill in the table:

Size of bottles normally bought:	Cost per bottle refill:	Length of time these bottles usually last:	Number of bottles used per month:

7.2 Where do you refill gas bottles? .....

7.3 Who goes to refill bottles? .....

8. Candles

ACTIVITY	Reason for using candles,
Lighting:	
Other (Specify):	

8.1 How many do you use per month (packets)? .....

8.2 Where do you buy them? .....

8.3 Who buys them? .....

8.4 What do they cost? .....

If you had a choice of fuels what would you use? (List in order of preference).

What appliances would you buy? (List in order of preference).

What wouldn't you buy?

How would you pay for them? (Eg Cash, HP etc)

Can you afford these?

What problems do you presently experience with your fuels?

What problems do you think there would be with others?

**APPENDIX 8: QUESTIONNAIRE, JUNE 1992.**

Name of INTERVIEWER

SITE No.

**INTRODUCTORY QUESTIONS**

Name of respondent: .....

Male	Female
------	--------

Are you the head of the household?

Yes	No	If no, who is?
-----	----	----------------

How long have you been at this address (in years)? .....

**MOVEMENT WITHIN DIE BOS.**

1. How many places have you lived in while resident in Die Bos?

Give names of heads of households for each place.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.

State whether you paid rent in each of those places, or if you did some form of housework there as a form of rent.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.



Do you or your present spouse have children who are not resident in the camp? (Give names).

NAME.	WHERE STAYING.	WITH WHOM.

Is there anyone in the house who was not resident here two weeks ago?

If so, who, and how long are they staying?

Estimates of other income: fill in the following table:

	Estimate of Money/ month
Sent by family living away:	
Pensions:	
Rent from tenants:	
Other (specify):	

Estimates of household expenditure: fill in the following table:

HOUSEHOLD ITEM	Estimated expenditure per month
Food:	
Clothing:	
Transport:	
School fees and books:	
Remittances sent to family elsewhere:	
Umgalelo/ Stokvel groups:	
Rent/ bond:	
Other (Specify):	
ENTERTAINMENT (eg ALCOHOL, DRUGS TOBACCO etc).	

## ENERGY USE

Which of the following fuels are used in the main house? Tick where appropriate.

FUEL TYPE:	Frequently (Daily)	Seldom	Never
Wood			
Paraffin			
Car batteries			
Gas			
Candles			
Other (specify):			
DRY CELL (eg Torch) BATT.			

Wood..

How much wood do you use per week (bundles)? .....

Do you buy it?

No	Yes	From where?
		What does it cost (per bundle)?

Do you collect it yourselves?

No	Yes	From where?
		How long does it take to collect a load?
		Who collects it?
		Who goes along?

How much do you use? Fill in the table:

Size of bottles/ cans normally bought:	Cost per bottle/ can:	Length of time these bottles/ cans usually last:	Number of bottles/ cans used per month:

Where do you get it from? .....

Who gets it? .....


Who fills heaters/ stoves/ lamps? .....

CAR BATTERIES

How often do you recharge them? .....

Where do you recharge them? .....

Who takes them to be re-charged? .....

What does it cost? ..... 

GAS.

How much do you use? Fill in the table:

Size of bottles normally bought:	Cost per bottle refill:	Length of time these bottles usually last:	Number of bottles used per month:

Where do you refill gas bottles? .....

Who goes to refill bottles? .....

CANDLES .

How many do you use per month (packets)? .....

Where do you buy them? .....

Who buys them? .....

What do they cost? .....

DRY CELL BATTERIES (eg. torch/radio batteries)

Where do you buy them?

How often do you buy them?

Who buys them?

How much do you pay?