

Abstract

The Rainbow Nation discourse in South Africa is meant to create a liberatory myth that unites the nation in its cultural and racial differences. However, discourses of multiculturalism are translated, as well as performed, differently within and between various levels of society. The thesis looks at how Rainbow Nation ideals are appropriated by the Non Governmental Organization City at Peace, as well as the young people involved in the City at Peace programme. Ideas about culture and race are negotiated and performed differently because both these terms have shifting meanings depending on context. Race, for example, is often conflated with culture in multicultural ideology (Gunew 1997: 23), but race actually informs class in lived South African realities (Mbola 2008; Kindon and Knight 2004; Dolby 2001). And yet, people may adhere both to 'race as culture' and 'race as class' through different performances pertaining to context. Drawing on Judith Butler (1990), the thesis looks at different levels of performativity of multicultural discourses that reiterate what I call the 'culture'/ 'race' complex, or the assumption that cultural/racial differences are root causes of conflict in South Africa today. The 'culture'/ 'race' complex overlooks how class and gender relations also contribute to tensions and abuse in the country. The thesis argues that misdiagnosing the root causes of conflict in South Africa also leads to a misunderstanding of appropriate conflict-resolution strategies. Many young people in South Africa see themselves as active agents in the making of a 'new' South Africa, and subscribe to Rainbow Nation ideals. However, while Rainbow Nation ideals may provide something to hope for, it is crucial that hope also instigates *appropriate* action for change. The 'culture'/ 'race' complex suggests that cultural/racial differences need to be overcome to better the country; the thesis argues that tensions and abuse in South Africa are both interpersonal and structural, and must include gender and class in consideration of how difference leads to conflict.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

The studio is musty and the walls need a coat of paint. The only furniture in the room consists of three benches pushed up against the far wall, opposite a row of barred windows. Drums are huddled to the right of the seating arrangement. I sit down on one of the benches and face around forty young people as they play ice-breaker games, on this first day of rehearsals of the City at Peace programme. City at Peace is a Non-Governmental Organization. It is March 8th, 2008. These young men and women, some just teenagers, others on the verge of leaving their teenage years behind, are part of the third City at Peace group in Cape Town to work together on a musical production based on their life stories. The telling of life stories identifies conflict in young people's lives in order to brainstorm non-violent resolutions, and youth perform both the conflict and resolutions in the musical production to promote non-violence in the making of life choices. This afternoon, the NGO's Artistic Director, Vincenza, calls on the group to take part in a game meant to identify both commonalities and differences within the group. Vincenza draws an imaginary line on the black wooden floor, and the young people stand behind it. Vincenza asks the individuals to step across the line if they relate to what Themba, an alumni, is about to read out. Once across the line, Vincenza asks the young people to think about how they feel for a few moments, and look around to see who else is on their side of the line before returning to their original position. Themba reads:

“Step across the line...

if you are... Asian or Indian.” No one steps forward.

if you are... Black.” Most people step forward. They step back.

if you are... Coloured.” Three people step forward. They step back.

if you are... multiracial.” No one steps forward.

if you are... Muslim.” Four people step forward. They step back.

if you are... Jewish.” No one steps forward.

if you were... raised in a rural area.” Six people step forward. They step back.

if you were... raised by a single parent.” Thirty people step forward. They step back.

if... your parents are farm workers, domestic labourers or unskilled workers.”

Thirty five people step forward. They step back.

if... neither of your parents completed elementary school.” Twenty people step forward. They step back.

if you are... not from South Africa.” No one steps forward.

if you have... a physical disability.” No one steps forward.

if... your first language is not English.” Thirty five people step forward. They step back.

if... you or your family has had problems with drugs or alcohol.” Fifteen people step forward. They step back.

if... you or your family has been in prison.” Thirty people step forward. They step back.

if... you live in an informal settlement.” Fifteen people step forward. They step back.

if... you or someone in your family is gay or a lesbian.” Eight people step forward. They step back.

if... someone in your family or a close friend is HIV positive or has died from HIV.” Twenty people step forward. They step back. (Field notes, 03/08/08)

The above describes my first visit to the City at Peace programme, which coincided with the beginning of the 2008 programme in Cape Town. My initial visit left me with the impression that City at Peace was attempting to deal with differences as a source of potential conflict by focusing on people's commonalities. In other words, young people could relate to one another based on particular life experiences rather than simply feeling alienated by difference. As my fieldwork unfolded, I realized there were numerous differences within the group, and yet many young people shared similar difficulties. Their life stories pointed to the need to address the instability of family relations, economic disparities for 'blacks' in South Africa, which hindered their life chances, as well as women's subordinate roles in South African society. However, as the year progressed, I noticed that the City at Peace programme focused on 'race' and 'culture' (and conflated both terms) as the main differences to be overcome in order to resolve conflict in young people's lives, which suggested that 'cross-cultural interaction'¹ was somehow inherently 'violent' or 'unnatural' (Tihanyi 2006: 106). And yet, interracial and even intraracial contact does not necessarily lead to conflict resolution, or even positive outcomes (Tihanyi 2006: 20). The notion of cross-cultural contact as a source of tension in South Africa dates back to the end of the 1960s when cultural boundaries were assumed to be the cause of difficulties in understanding and adapting to different ways of life (Sharp 1988: 79). Although the notion of 'cultures' as bounded entities that necessarily clash with one another has long been challenged (see Benhabib 2002; Wedeen 2002; Wright 1998; Thornton 1988; Ortner 1984, 1996; Bhabha 1994), young people within City at Peace named 'race' and 'culture' as contributors to interpersonal tensions, even though their life stories suggested other sources of difficulties.

My research questions the use of multicultural discourses as a means to address interpersonal and structural tensions and abuse in young people's lives. Multicultural discourses tend to frame current-day relations between South Africans as rife with difficulties due to cultural and racial differences. Framing problems in South Africa in this way assumes that people should simply work on overcoming their cultural and racial differences to achieve conflict resolution. Both young people and City at Peace endorsed this idea, which I dub the 'culture'/ 'race' complex. I do not question the reality that interpersonal conflict exists based on cultural or racial differences. However, I move beyond the assumption that cultural/racial differences are the root causes of conflict in South Africa to consider the historical *effects* of cultural/racial differences in shaping difficulties, problems, tensions and abuse young people identify as central to their lives. It is important to historicize 'race' relations in South Africa to adequately address the challenges young South Africans face today.

¹ See also Geertz (1963) for a discussion on how 'culture' may hinder development.

Young people and City at Peace endorse the idea that cultural and racial differences must be overcome in the making of a 'new' South Africa through their reproduction of multicultural discourses. Why are multicultural discourses reproduced if they perpetuate a partial view of conflict in South Africa, one that only considers interpersonal relations based on cultural/racial differences? To address this question, I look at how discourses of multiculturalism are reproduced, both by City at Peace and its participants, through performance. I consider how the reproduction of multicultural discourses that focus on accommodating cultural and racial differences (White Paper 1997) may actually hinder the making of a 'new' South Africa because it overlooks the effects of family difficulties, class, and gender relations that also contribute to current day tensions and abuses. As the thesis describes, the reproduction of multicultural discourses also allows for the *challenging* of the 'culture'/ 'race' complex because of the instable process of translation and performance of multicultural discourses. I chose City at Peace as my field site because it frames its programme on multicultural discourses which make use of Rainbow Nation ideals that celebrate the possibility of a nation living peacefully together regardless of differences of 'race' or 'culture'.

The Rainbow Nation

The historical legacy of cultural segregation has contributed to the rise of the Rainbow Nation discourse in South Africa (Martin 1996: 6). Multicultural discourses not only speak about 'culture' but also about 'race' (Gunew 1997: 23), as is the case with South Africa's Rainbow Nation discourse. South Africa was first described by Archbishop Desmond Tutu as a Rainbow Nation following the first democratic elections in 1994. The Rainbow Nation concept was later taken up by Nelson Mandela to espouse hope for the future in a multiracial society:

We enter into a covenant that we shall build a society in which all South Africans, both black and white, will be able to walk tall without any fear in their hearts, assured of their inalienable right to human dignity- a Rainbow Nation, at peace with itself and with the world. (Nelson Mandela, 10 May 1994 in Martin 1996: 3)

The term Rainbow Nation emerged as a nation-building tool that sought to unite a segregated country. During apartheid, legally distinguishing 'ethnic groups' (conflated with 'culture'/ 'race' and language), for example, allowed for the relocation of people to respective 'homelands' in the 1950s (Sharp 1988: 8). People were categorized both by the colour of their skin and the language they spoke. After the Second World War, while North America and Europe were beginning to question the foundations of racial classification, South Africa continued to enforce it with apartheid policies that were based on the idea that the country consisted of irrevocably racially and ethnically

different categories of people (Boonzaier 1988: 63). Today, the rainbow metaphor intends to *celebrate* a range of differences within South Africa, in an attempt to overcome the structural violence committed against ‘non-whites’ during apartheid.

The Rainbow Nation is meant to create a common myth of belonging for the country (Ramphela 2001: 6). The Rainbow Nation myth is especially important because it provides South Africans with a sense of shared future (Ramphela 2001: 6). However, it is not enough to blindly endorse the Rainbow Nation discourse of multiculturalism without acknowledging that many differences between South Africans should not be celebrated but *addressed*: especially in regards to the gross economic disparities resulting from racial segregation and gender imbalances. ‘Race’ signifies *interpersonal*, or socialised, interracial conflict within multicultural discourses (see Erasmus 2008; Boonzaier 1988; Thornton 1988), but I argue that ‘race’ should also be considered as related to *structural* violence and conflict in relation to politics and power (see Gilroy 2005; Kindon and Knight 2004; Fanon 1986; West 1988). By focusing solely on cultural/racial differences as the main causes of social tensions, multicultural discourses overlook how family, class and gender affect people’s lived experiences in South Africa, and more importantly, how family, class and gender contribute to social and structural difficulties both in relation to ‘race’ and regardless of it (see Chapters Four and Five). The organization City at Peace perpetuated Rainbow Nation ideals through its reproduction of multicultural discourses.

City at Peace

The first City at Peace programme started in 1994 in Washington D.C., U.S.A., to deal with issues of intra-city racial conflict. The Cape Town programme is an adaptation from the original American City at Peace programme. City at Peace programmes exist throughout the United States in New York, Baton Rouge (Los Angeles), Santa Barbara (California), Charlotte (North Carolina), and abroad in Israel and South Africa. The City at Peace organization in Cape Town was founded by the Artistic and Managing Directors, Vincenza and Solomon, in 2005. Vincenza is American and was involved with the City at Peace programme in Los Angeles throughout her teenage years. Solomon is from Botswana and has experience running a theatre-based program for youth called ‘ghetto artists’ in Francistown. In the South African setting, the Directors place great emphasis on bringing ‘youth’ together from different racial categories² and ‘extremely different backgrounds’ (City at Peace pamphlet 2008) in an attempt to create ‘meaningful relationships’ (by which they mean ‘long-lasting’ relationships) between the young participants. Although the programme is in

2 City at Peace’s use of racial classification maps onto apartheid’s Population Registration Act of 1950, which classified people according to ‘white’, ‘black’, and ‘coloured’ categories (with Indian/Asian being subcategories of ‘coloured’).

English, participants are free to express themselves in another language if they do not feel comfortable speaking English (for the 2008 programme, isiXhosa was often the language of choice for many participants).

City at Peace in Cape Town is a 'youth' focused organization. For City at Peace, 'youth' generally means young people between the ages of thirteen and twenty although City at Peace alumni, some being as old as twenty-eight, may also be involved in the programme. The category of 'youth' as pointed out by Durham (2006: 126) is a 'social imaginary', and as such, City at Peace's use of 'youth' as a category is highly specific to the programme. Most 'youth' in the City at Peace programme were teenagers, a state characterised as transitional between childhood and adulthood. However, there are no clear markers of who is, and who is not 'youth'; the category of 'youth' is situational (Durham 2006: 117). For example, Durham (2006) discusses the changing roles and responsibilities of 'youth' in Botswana at the beginning of the millennium, through the government of Botswana's re-imagining of 'ideal citizenship'. The government of Botswana revises notions of youth agency to promote the possibility of a 'liberatory' effect of 'empowerment' for youth to become active and productive citizens (Durham 2006). In a similar vein, City at Peace emphasises the possibilities of change inherent in the category of 'youth', while focusing on the hope for positive and 'liberatory' change stemming from non-violent conflict resolutions.

Between forty and fifty 'youth' came to the City at Peace rehearsal in 2008 but this number dwindled to between twenty-five and thirty as the year progressed. City at Peace is mainly youth-led, with interns and the production team (usually alumni) leading the cast, and the Directors taking on supervisor roles. The Directors recruit young people in February of each year by running auditions within schools and community centres. Participating schools³ and centres range from highly affluent to impoverished areas in and around Cape Town. Vincenza explained that although acting skills were an important aspect of choosing programme participants, she also considered young people's enthusiasm and interest in social change because youth were expected to participate in 'community change' (see below) on completion of the programme. The specific goals of the programme, as described in the City at Peace recruitment flyer (2008) are:

- 1) Cross-cultural collaboration- learns how to and has the experience of, building meaningful cross-cultural relationships and working together in a diverse context.
- 2) Non-violent conflict resolution- gains the experience of resolving the conflicts he or she faces and learns how to, and is committed to, resolving conflicts he or she will face without resorting to violence.
- 3) Leadership- understands his or her responsibility and accountability to others, the

3 Participants in the 2008 programme were from the following schools and centres: Cape Town High School; Camps Bay High School; Harold Cressy High School; Milnerton High School; St-Joseph's Marist College; Herschel Girls' School; Fezeka Senior Secondary School; Manyano High School; Oscar Mpetha High School; The Homestead; Phoenix High School; Manenberg High School; Silver Stream High School; and Cape Peninsula University of Technology. Also, one of the alumni was a student at the University of Cape Town.

- community and the world around him or her, and learns to act on that recognition.
- 4) Community Action and Responsibility- gains the awareness of his/her responsibility to his/her community and is capable of leading positive change in his/her community.
 - 5) Sense of Future- gains the confidence that he/she can be a powerful force for positive change in that future, and has the skills to plan and achieve results from the future.
 - 6) Performing Arts Productivity- gains self-expression skills in various mediums (sic) and honest creativity in representing real life through the arts.

As the name of the organization suggests, City at *Peace* strives to promote peace. One way that City at Peace attempts to achieve peace is to endorse ‘cross-cultural collaboration’ in the context of conflict resolution, to help youth objectify conflict and consider non-violent resolution within their own lives. City at Peace aimed to address “how language or different cultural norms can cause misunderstandings which lead to conflict” (personal communication with Vincenza, 08/06/08). Generally, ‘conflict’, for City at Peace, is understood as “any sort of conflict the kids are facing in their lives” (personal communication with Vincenza, 08/06/08). The participants of City at Peace begin the programme year by identifying ‘conflict’ in their lives through the telling of their life stories. The 2008 programme participants identified ‘conflict’ both as traditionally understood as serious disagreements and/or struggles, but also as any kind of hardship. In the traditional sense of the word, the participants identified the following conflict: robbery, domestic violence, trouble with the law, parental divorce/separation, sexual harassment, and prison. Other hardships included in the young people’s definition of conflict, were: drug and alcohol abuse, peer pressure, relocation, suicide, hunger, gossip, neglect, witchcraft, addiction (especially in regards to the chatting programme MXit⁴), poverty, teen pregnancy, HIV/AIDS, and challenges of completing school. The participants’ identification of conflict in the 2008 programme did not mention cultural and/or racial differences although the City at Peace programme is framed by a multicultural discourse that considers ‘cross-cultural collaboration’ to be a necessary aspect for achieving conflict resolution.

City at Peace is a valuable research site because the organization subscribes to a discourse of multiculturalism that reproduces the idea that cultural/racial differences are the root causes of tensions in South Africa. City at Peace emphasises the need for ‘cross-cultural collaboration’ in its documents, and endorses ‘cross-racial collaboration’ within the rehearsal setting to address the assumed tensions between its culturally/racially different participants. Furthermore, as a theatre-based organization, City at Peace provides a literal space for performances that exposes, through the end-of-year production, how family, class and gender must also be considered, besides, or on top of, cultural/racial differences, in understanding young people’s difficult life experiences. As an organization that has been transposed to Cape Town from America, as well as being run by two foreigners, City at Peace demonstrates the multi-layered process of meaning-making and translation

⁴ See www.mxit.co.za

that occurs in making sense of cultural/racial tensions. For example, City at Peace's discourse on multiculturalism, although framed by Rainbow Nation ideals, is also informed by the Directors' personal understandings of 'culture'/'race'. The Artistic Director's view on the need for 'cross-cultural understanding' is influenced by her experience of the American City at Peace programme that aims to resolve social tensions within racially mixed neighbourhoods. However, as the thesis demonstrates, in the Cape Town City at Peace context, 'cross-cultural understanding' is not necessarily the most pressing issue related to social change, since most young people live in very segregated areas. Therefore, City at Peace allows for a problematization of 'cultural/racial differences' as the root cause of tensions in South Africa by providing a space for analyzing discourses of multiculturalism within a conflict-resolution organization.

Discourses of Multiculturalism: Messy Translation & Performances

A recurring theme in the thesis relates to the ambiguity and uses of taken for granted terms, such as 'culture' and 'race'. Throughout the thesis, I demarcate this slippage of terms by referring to 'culture'/'race' and assume both 'culture' and 'race' to be part of discourses of multiculturalism. It is important to recognise that the 'messiness' of 'culture'/'race' contribute to the difficulty in knowing exactly what is meant by 'multiculturalism'. Within the thesis I demarcate three 'levels' of multicultural discourse: the Official Rainbow Nation discourse; City at Peace's Formal interpretation of multiculturalism; and young people's Informal understanding and use of multicultural discourse (following Soudien 2001; see Chapter Three). These three levels of discourse are messy both in the translation from one 'level' of discourse to another but also in the ways these discourses are performed (both figuratively and literally). Following Walter Benjamin, translation relates both to the deconstruction and transformation of discourses (Primavesi 1999: 54). I speak about the performance aspect of multicultural discourse drawing on Judith Butler's (1990) notion of 'performativity' to describe the process of repetition and normalization of the 'culture'/'race' complex, or the idea that cultural/racial differences are the root causes of tensions in current-day South Africa. Both translation and performance contribute to the instability of multicultural discourses. Although ideas about cultural/racial differences are reproduced within and between the different levels of multicultural discourses, there is always the possibility that understandings of 'culture'/'race' will not be 'copied' throughout the discourses in exactly the same way, especially because both 'culture'/'race' are unstable terms that shift in meaning. In other words, translation and performance allows not only for a reiteration of the 'culture'/'race' complex but also for 'race' and 'culture' to change in meanings (see Chapter Three).

The thesis focuses on the normalization and internalization of the 'culture'/'race' complex

even though in South Africa, the lived experience of racialization does not *necessarily* instigate social tensions (though structural relations because of the effects of racial classification, may shape interpersonal ones). Rather, the *effects* of racial classification have been instrumental to the maintenance, and in some cases exacerbation of, different types of structural and interpersonal tensions and abuse. I explore how ‘race’, class, and gender intercept in the shaping of tensions and abuse in South Africa, and how ‘culture’/ ‘race’ cannot be considered independently from gender and class disparities. As the opening case study to this chapter suggests, most City at Peace participants have been brought up in single parent households, with parents who have limited education and work in low-paying jobs, and where crime and imprisonment have affected most of the participants’ lives. Here, it is not so much ‘culture’/ ‘race’ that are the instigators of difficult life experiences, but rather the realities of being economically deprived because of the effects of apartheid’s racial classification on their parents’ and their own life chances. The thesis examines the significance of performativity both in reproducing, and creating a possibility for resisting (Benhabib et al 1995: 111), discourses of multiculturalism (Yon 1999: 626).

Scope, Methods, and Challenges

My research participants ranged from the ages of thirteen to thirty, drawn initially from the City at Peace programme and snowballing to include participants’ friends. At the beginning of the 2008 City at Peace programme, there were approximately⁵ forty to fifty young people attending the rehearsals most of whom came from township areas⁶. Within the City at Peace participants, I worked closely with eleven young women (between the ages of thirteen and twenty), seven young men (between the ages of sixteen and twenty-eight), and twelve male friends of City at Peace participants, with ages ranging from approximately eighteen to thirty. All of these participants were self-defined as ‘black’.

Throughout my research, participant observation allowed me to gain the trust of the young people within the City at Peace programme and thus contributed to a central aspect of my data collecting. I attended a total of thirteen four-hour rehearsals from February 2008 to November 2008, and engaged in extensive informal discussions during these with topics ranging from the immediate rehearsal setting, to general questions about the young people’s lives, to more specific topics relating to my research. I conducted a drawing exercise at the City at Peace office in which I asked

5 The number of participant fluctuated depending on who came to rehearsal. The number 45 (the total of males and females) is based on the total number of youth who were surveyed in a pre-program evaluation in March 2008.

6 Twenty-five participants were from Langa, Nyanga, Gugulethu or Crossroads; thirteen from Khayelitsha; two from the Southern Suburbs; one from the Northern Suburbs; one from the Atlantic Seaboard; and three from Mitchell’s Plain, Heideveld, Manenberg or Hanover Park. This data is taken from pre-program surveys carried out in March 2008 by City at Peace.

eight young women and one young man to illustrate their past, present and future to cross-check their life stories as well as to learn about their aspirations for the future. This exercise allowed me to gain insight on young people's visions of themselves in the 'new' South Africa, which for some, included visions of a peaceful and diverse multicultural country. I also conducted interviews with seven participants and assigned journals with open-ended, research-related questions to five participants, three young men and two young women. I recorded a total of six group discussions from the City at Peace office, my own home in the Observatory suburb as well as a research participant's home in the Samora Machel township. There was some overlap in participants in group discussions as well as other research activities. Although I was able to become well acquainted with many City at Peace participants, I realize that their personas were specific to our relationship and that their identities were always situational. They 'performed' their identities differently according to context.

I had access to quantitative data, collected by the City at Peace interns at the beginning of the 2008 programme year. This data provided me with information on the young people's home languages, self-identified racial classifications, school, religion, type of housing, motive for joining City at Peace and issues which most concerned them, both within their neighbourhoods⁷ and within the country. I also had the opportunity to sit in on City at Peace activities such as the telling of life stories, games, warm-up exercises, and performances. I attended a total of three performances; the first was part of a puppetry festival at the Baxter Theatre; the second was at a youth festival at the Waterfront; and the third was the final production, which also took place at the Baxter Theatre. City at Peace documents, publications and websites⁸ informed my understanding of the programme's public representation and inner workings. I also met the international sponsors of the City at Peace programme (for Cape Town), which highlighted the external demands City at Peace faced in terms of funding.

Data collection was often challenging. Most of the young people attended school and lived far from the city centre, making it difficult to schedule meetings outside of the regular City at Peace rehearsals, held on Saturdays. Some of the youth did not own phones, so it was difficult to get in touch with them. Most young people were not consistent or on time in coming to meetings scheduled outside of City at Peace rehearsal times. Often, the group discussions held at the City at Peace office and at Samora Machel were disrupted by newcomers wanting to join the discussions which disturbed the balance of the conversation; depending on who was present, people became more or less vocal in their opinions. It took some time for me to gain the trust of the young people with whom I worked and have them invite me to their homes. When I finally went to Samora

⁷ City at Peace used this word within the survey.

⁸ www.cityatpeace.org.za (Cape Town) and www.cpnational.org (USA)

Machel with a young man from City at Peace, I quickly realized I was out of my comfort zone, walking in the township. It took some effort to appear nonchalant whereas I oftentimes felt surprised, shocked and uncomfortable with the surroundings. Furthermore, the house in which group discussions were conducted was noisy, which at times made it difficult to hear the conversation clearly when I replayed it back on my recorder.

In terms of the writing process, a technical difficulty involved the choice of language. I use the racial classifications of 'white', 'black', 'coloured' (including Indian/Asian), which reflects apartheid's Population Registration Act of 1950, and City at Peace's and young people's use of the categories. I am aware that these terms are problematic and that they are perpetually validated (against the suggestion that 'race' is socially, rather than biologically constructed) through their continued use. Identifying people in this way is situational to South Africa, and context-specific. I could find no better alternative than to mark the problematic nature of these groupings with quotation marks.

Ethics

In February 2008, Vincenza introduced me to the City at Peace participants, on the second day of rehearsals. She did her best to explain my role as researcher, and I also broadly described my project as research dealing with youth, South Africa and conflict. The young people asked questions about my research and were encouraged to become involved only if they wanted to be. I have given all research participants pseudonyms to protect their identities. Participants directly involved with my research have signed consent forms outlining my research methods and goals.

One ethical issue which at first seemed to conflict with my research was one of the ground rules of the City at Peace programme: 'Everything that goes on in City at Peace stays at City at Peace'. This rule especially applied to one of the core events of the programme, the telling of life stories. However, Vincenza asked the cast for permission in having me collect and use data from this year's City at Peace programme, and I became an exception to the ground rule of secrecy. The ground rule is meant to discourage gossiping about one another's personal information and lives with the outside world; since I use pseudonyms throughout my research, I can still speak about young people's experiences without necessarily naming or identifying them. Furthermore, the life stories eventually get transformed into musical productions which are performed onstage, and so my use of their life stories can be considered a similar type of transformation, albeit for a different (academic) audience.

Chapter Outline

Chapter Two introduces the theoretical framework that guides my analysis. The literature review touches upon the shifting meanings of ‘culture’/ ‘race’, discourses of multiculturalism, ‘conflict’, and performativity. Chapter Three looks at different levels of multicultural discourses, and how the Rainbow Nation discourse gets appropriated by City at Peace, and young people. This chapter explores the translation between the different levels of multicultural discourses to exemplify the instability of meaning-making in regards to ‘culture’/ ‘race’. This chapter highlights the often contradictory and confusing uses of ‘culture’/ ‘race’ in multicultural discourses in order to illustrate the instability of these terms. The performativity of multicultural discourses throughout different levels of society makes it difficult, but not impossible, to break free from the idea that ‘culture’/ ‘race’ are sources of interpersonal conflict, as explored in Chapter Four.

Chapter Four examines how multicultural discourses reproduce the ‘culture’/ ‘race’ complex without considering how ‘race’ is linked to class in actual lived experiences. Although young people are able to reiterate, or perform, discourses of multiculturalism in relation to conflict, these discourses do not necessarily resonate with young people’s life experiences that deal with difficult familial relations, and low economic statuses. This chapter suggests that ‘race’ should be considered as linked to class in attempting to understand the tensions and abuse in young people’s lives.

Chapter Five analyses gender and power dynamics within young people’s discourses and performativity, and how these relate to conflict. Because multicultural discourses do not address gender, it is difficult for young people to challenge discourses of power that imply that ‘culture’ may be used as an excuse for the continuation of patriarchal gender norms. This chapter suggests that by challenging gender performativity, it is possible to destabilize patriarchal norms. To achieve emancipation from the patriarchal effects of apartheid society, this chapter argues that it is not necessarily cultural/racial differences that should be addressed, but rather, the effects of reproducing imbalances of power between genders.

I make the distinction between racial classification and class, in Chapter Four, and gender, in Chapter Five for analytical reasons. Since City at Peace and young people often speak about ‘culture’/ ‘race’ as separate to class and gender, I also analyze them separately to illustrate the difficulty in keeping these categories distinct from one another. However, ‘culture’/ ‘race’, class and gender intersect (see Ascencio 1998; Bhavnani 1994; Heise et al 1994), and even with my attempt at distinguishing between the three categories, it is inevitable that they are often mentioned together within the thesis.

Chapter 2: The ‘Culture’/ ‘Race’ Complex and the Performance of Rainbow Nation Ideals

In one of my research activities, I asked participants to complete daily journal entries framed around research-related questions. One of the questions I asked explored how young people understood the notion of a Rainbow Nation: “What is the Rainbow Nation and is South Africa, to you, a Rainbow Nation? If not, could it ever be a Rainbow Nation? If yes, what makes it a Rainbow Nation? Is this something that you wish for your country?” Lindiwe, a City at Peace participant, wrote:

To me, my country South Africa is a rainbow nation. It has four different races residing and officially in South Africa, NEVER MIND THOSE NOT OFFICIALLY. It also has 11 official languages. It understand[s] all the different cultures according to each race. And now it is in practise of social change, as the South Africans understand one another. (Journal entry, 08/26/08, italics original)

Lindiwe’s journal entry exemplifies how Rainbow Nation ideals are meant to create ‘understanding’ based on the coming together of different ‘cultures’/ ‘races’. In speaking about a culturally/racially diverse South Africa society, where “South Africans understand one another,” Lindiwe expresses an imaginative horizon that gives hope for South Africa’s future as a culturally and racially unified country. I consider how ‘old’ and ‘new’ ideas of ‘culture’ (Wright 1998) are intertwined within people’s understandings of multiculturalism. Then, I turn to Crain Soudien (2001) to explore different levels of multicultural discourses in relation to Rainbow Nation ideals, City at Peace, and young people, and the messy translation and interpretation that occur between and within these levels of discourse. I consider the shifting nature of ‘race’ as a floating signifier (Hall 1996) within multicultural discourses to think about how ‘race’ disguised as ‘culture’ and ‘race’ signifying ‘class’ result in completely different perspectives in addressing interpersonal and structural conflict in South Africa. And I use Judith Butler’s (1990) idea of ‘performativity’ in order to conceptualize how discourses of multiculturalism are perpetuated throughout different levels of society by repetitive performance and naturalization of the ‘culture’/ ‘race’ complex. Butler’s (1990) concept of performativity both illustrates how discourses of multiculturalism are reinforced through repetition and normalization, and also how repetition allows for a space to challenge the norms created by performance. To begin, it is crucial to consider the emergence of multiculturalism, and the ways in which people utilize both ‘old’ and ‘new’ ideas about ‘culture’.

Multiculturalism: ‘Old’ and ‘New’ Understandings of ‘Culture’

Multiculturalism, as a national ideology, emerged in Canada, America and Australia after World War II in response to policies of forced assimilation that sought to absorb First Nations

People and Aborigines within the greater society (Sharp 1994: 12). Discourses of multiculturalism were meant to redeem the value of cultural differences (ibid). However, 'culture' is a complex term that is not easily defined; by the 1950s, Kroeber and Kluckhohn (1952: 149 in Wright 1998: 7) pointed to 164 different definitions of what anthropologists referred to as 'culture'. Furthermore, what Wright characterises as 'old' and 'new' ideas of 'culture' posit different ways of thinking about 'cultural difference'. Wright (1998: 8) outlines 'old' ideas of 'culture' referring to bounded, small scale, unchanging, self-reproducing entities with specific characteristics where 'cultures' have 'authentic' shared meanings managed by "identical, homogenous individual." 'New' ideas of 'culture' point to "culture... as an active process of meaning making and contestation over definition, including itself" (Street 1993: 2, in Wright 1998: 10). Furthermore, Wright (1998: 10) states that within 'new' ideas of 'culture', 'culture' is considered 'unbounded' in the sense that people may simultaneously draw from local, national and global influences. Here, 'culture' is considered a historically specific process that is never a coherent whole (ibid). In other words, 'old' ideas of 'culture' point to a static, bounded, timeless entity whereas 'new' ideas of 'culture' consider processes of transformation involved in the production and reproduction of what people define as 'culture'. It is important to distinguish between the differences in understandings of 'culture' in order to consider the many ways 'culture' is mobilized within politics and power relations. Endorsing 'old' ideas of 'culture', for example, have had significant political, social and economical repercussions during apartheid, by categorizing people according to specific ethnic and cultural criteria (see Kindon and Knight 2004; Erasmus 2008; Western 1996; Boonzaier and Sharp 1988). As the thesis illustrates, the use of 'old' ideas of 'culture' within multicultural discourse also has significant political, economical, and social consequences.

In the last twenty years, 'culture' has become part of public discourses of decision-makers in various levels of society (Wright 1998: 7). I am concerned with how 'culture' is used within multicultural discourses, especially focusing on how 'culture' comes to signify 'race' in City at Peace and in young people's discourses. Wright (1998: 11) suggests that 'culture', as a means to speak about national loyalty, has come to signify a new type of racism: cultural racism (Gilroy 1993; Barker 1981; Smith 1994). For example, in Britain in the 1980s and 1990s, the New Right used 'culture' to justify defending 'one's own kind', which indirectly pointed to racial differences (Wright 1998: 11). Here, the New Right "mobilized 'culture' to reinforce exclusion, using it as an euphemism for renewed racism, with profound implications for public policy and people's lives" (Khan 1995: 6 in Wright 1998: 11). Therefore, discourses of multiculturalism speak about 'culture' but also hint at racial differences. In addition, minority groups may conflate 'culture' and 'race' (Gunew 1997: 23) for political reasons, in order to present themselves as homogenous groups in attempting to secure resources or recognition from the state. Therefore, as Gunew (1997: 23)

suggests: “Multiculturalism is often perceived as a covert means of indicating racialized differences.”

In South Africa, the perspective that cultural and/or racial differences are root causes of tension stems from continuing assumptions about cultural/racial differences that informed apartheid policy and the everyday lives it shaped. ‘Friction theory’ assumed that conflict would inevitably occur when different ‘races’ came together (Western 1996: 85). Many ideas about cultural/racial differences as linked to interpersonal conflict live on in the ‘new’ South Africa. For example, City at Peace’s organizational model was predicated on the assumption that the coming together of young people from different cultural and racial backgrounds would inevitably be difficult *because of* cultural/racial differences. Although City at Peace’s 2008 pamphlet mentioned the need for ‘cross-cultural collaboration’, ‘culture’ was not defined, nor was ‘culture’ mentioned within the rehearsal setting. Rather, as I’ve shown, *racial* diversity was at the core of the Directors’ concerns. Mid-way through the programme year, one of the Directors attempted to recruit ‘coloured’ youths to join the cast because at the time, all participants were ‘black’:

Maude: But why is it so important that there are ‘coloured’ or ‘white’ kids in the cast?

Vincenza: Race is too important an issue to be brushed aside. Right now the cast is not representative of what the programme is about.

Maude: But isn’t there still diversity within the cast?

Vincenza: Yes, there’s cultural, economic, background differences, and the kids can still gain from the experience, but it’s not worth it to have the show go on with the current cast. (Interview, 05/28/08)

For Vincenza, there was a need to have racial diversity in order to achieve the goals of the programme, which include conflict resolution, or else it would not be “acceptable to take the show out as it [was]” (Interview, 05/28/08). City at Peace’s multicultural discourse was confusing because although its public documents emphasise ‘culture’, in practice, ‘race’ and racialised differences were assumed to be important.

Discourses of multiculturalism are complex precisely because of the difficulty in defining what is meant by ‘race’ and ‘culture’. Discourses of multiculturalism suggest that there is a need to overcome cultural/racial differences in order to unify the country. In order to live harmoniously together, however, Kymlicka (1992: 140) points to the need for the liberal state to assist minority ‘cultures’ in preserving their cultural rights through special allocations acknowledging their cultural differences. According to Kymlicka (1992: 140-141), ‘cultures’⁹ provide the framework to guide how people decide to lead their lives but the state and legal protection of minority ‘cultures’ should only be granted to the extent that the ‘cultures’ at stake support “the right of individuals to decide

⁹ Kymlicka has been criticized for ascribing to ‘old’ ideas of ‘culture.’ See Song (2005: 474).

for themselves which aspects of their cultural heritage are worth passing on.” Unfortunately, as the thesis describes, people’s endorsement of ‘culture’ is not always beneficial to the whole ‘cultural group’; for example, ‘culture’ may be used as an excuse to uphold patriarchal gender roles in the household, making it difficult for women to challenge cultural norms (see Chapter Five). Therefore, it is not enough to consider how ‘culture’ is understood and mobilized by the state, but it is also crucial to explore how ‘culture’ is *lived*. Although multiculturalism policies may be created by the state, it is also important to look at how discourses of multiculturalism are interpreted by the masses to consider the effects of endorsing ‘culture’. I examine City at Peace’s and young people’s uses and understandings of ‘culture’ and ‘race’, to gain a better perspective of how multicultural discourses are performed, lived, and reproduced in everyday life, and how they relate, or not, to conflict in young people’s life experiences.

‘Conflict’: Tensions and Abuse in Young People’s Everyday Realities

Throughout the thesis, I speak about conflict by referring to ‘tensions’ and ‘abuse’ in young people’s lives. ‘Tensions’ refers to interpersonal and structural difficulties that are not necessarily violent; ‘abuse’, however, points to the exacerbation of ‘tensions’. I make the distinction because it is important to look at how interpersonal and structural tensions may magnify conflict to the point of violence. City at Peace’s definition of ‘conflict’ was “any sort of conflict the kids are facing in their lives” (personal communication with Vincenza, 08/06/08). The main conflict, or difficulties, in my research samples’ lives, I found, pointed to family tensions and abuse, structural challenges of making ends meet, and for women, the violent effects of patriarchal gender norms (see Chapter Four and Five). Multicultural discourses fall short of describing conflict because they only refer to interpersonal tensions (and possibly abuse) resulting from cultural/racial differences. However, I argue that the experience of social and structural tensions and abuse is much more complex than people being unable to look beyond each others’ ‘cultures’ and ‘races’.

Tensions and abuse in young people’s lives were both interpersonal and structural¹⁰. By structural violence I refer to the structural constraints shaped by apartheid laws that have limited the opportunities of ‘racially underprivileged’ people in South Africa: the ‘non-whites’. For example, the creation of the ‘homeland’ system in the 1950s relocated ‘Africans’ to poor, rural areas of the country, always on the periphery of cities (see Western 1996: 66-70; Kindon & Knight 2004). The marginal locations of the ‘homelands’ spawned low-income areas, with high unemployment rates. ‘Homelands’ essentially became labour reserves, where ‘blacks’ awaited employment opportunities

¹⁰ See Chapter One, p. 6, for a list of ‘conflict’ City at Peace participants identified in their lives.

from the formal-sector in the cities, while the reserves themselves were high in unemployment (Kindon & Knight 2004: 200). Thus apartheid's spatial segregation based on racial and ethnic categories has had significant economic repercussions. Present-day Eastern Cape province now incorporates the former Transkei and Ciskei. The province remains impoverished¹¹.

Although the 'homeland' system has been dismantled, today, many 'Africans' reside in areas where 'homelands' used to be, and the residents still experience the structural violence of living in poor, peripheral areas with little employment opportunities. Even around Cape Town, the effects of social and spatial segregation are noticeable: most 'whites' live in suburbs and most 'blacks' live in townships, on the periphery of the city. In a discussion with Themba, a City at Peace participant and his friend, Dumisani, about present day Cape Town, Themba mentioned that there is a "lack of relationship between 'white[s]' and 'black[s]';" Dumisani retorted: "White people, they stay in the suburbs, [and] black people, they stay in the township" (Interview, 11/09/08). Townships are violent areas compared to the suburbs¹². Although people are no longer forced, by law, to live in particular areas, the effects of spatial segregation from apartheid live on. Dismantling the 'homeland' system has not necessarily provided opportunities for ex-'homeland' residents to improve their lives, either by relocating or accessing better employment opportunities. The legacy of apartheid's 'homeland' system of relocating racially classified 'Africans' to peripheral, rural areas in the 1950s continue to contribute to the social and economic struggle for survival (see Western 1996: 66-70; Kindon & Knight 2004). Therefore, the effects of being 'non-white' in South Africa continue to affect socio-economic status: 'race' affects class. Tensions, abuse and violence in South Africa today must be historicized to understand the difficult life experiences of many South African youth.

As the thesis demonstrates, young people in my research sample often spoke about tensions stemming from cultural/racial differences (see Chapter Three). I turn to how discourses of multiculturalism reproduce the 'culture'/'race' complex, and how this idea continues to endorse the idea that conflict, in South Africa, is more of a social, rather than structural *and* social, problem.

¹¹ For example, a study by the South Africa Institute of Race Relations (May 2008) indicated that 57% of the population in the Eastern Cape did not have access to running water. Furthermore, in 2007, 25% or more of the population in the Eastern Cape lived on less than R250 per month. State grants are a significant source of income in many impoverished households.

¹² Consider the following statistics of reported crime for April to March 2004-2005 in four of the main townships where participants from the City at Peace programme were from: Gugulethu, Langa, Nyanga and Khayelitsha. By comparison, I have added the suburb of Rondebosch (where the University of Cape Town is located).

April to March 2004- 2005	Murders	Rapes	Common assault
Gugulethu	146	204	992
Langa	55	204	992
Nyanga	263	343	690
Khayelitsha	213	306	1,136
Rondebosch	2	7	38

(http://www.saps.gov.za/statistics/reports/crimestats/2005/western_cape.htm)

Official, Formal, and Informal Discourses of Multiculturalism

I attempt to make sense of how multicultural discourses are used and understood through three levels of discourse: Official, Formal and Informal (Soudien 2001). In my analysis, the Official discourse refers to Rainbow Nation ideals. The Formal discourse represents City at Peace's understanding of multiculturalism, based on Rainbow Nation ideals. And finally, the Informal discourse is the everyday exchange that goes on between peer groups about multiculturalism. Soudien (2001: 312) suggests that different levels of discourses "provide a working interpretive space for individuals and groups and are fluid and changeable. None of these discourses is stable or internally consistent and coherent." Moreover, within discourses, there may be subdiscourses as well as contesting discourses (Soudien 2001: 313). Following Soudien's suggestion of the messy nature of each level of discourse, I suggest that even within specific discourses, all levels of discourse may be present in the complicated process of meaning-making. For example, even within Informal discourses of multiculturalism, young people may adhere to the Formal discourse in their language and performances. Contradictions arise within and between the levels of discourse because people may have differing understandings of 'race' and 'culture'. Furthermore, as ideas about 'race' and 'culture' get interpreted from one set of discourses to another, meanings may shift which challenge the stability of reiterating 'culture'/'race' as necessarily relating to conflict. Following Stuart Hall's notion that 'race' is a 'floating signifier' (1996) I show how in contemporary South Africa, 'race' may signify 'culture' as well as 'class'.

'Race': A Floating Signifier

Racial classification is a system of meaning-making that attempts to group people in different categories based on the colour of their skin. As a socially constructed concept, 'race' has been justified and critiqued by missionaries, anthropologists, and scientists (Hall 1996). 'Race', then, has acquired different meanings throughout time¹³. Hall (1996) aptly describes 'race' as a 'floating signifier' because of the continuous shifts in meanings associated with 'race'. During apartheid in South Africa, racial classification was used as a means to justify the unequal balances of power between 'whites' and 'non-whites'. The segregation resulting from racial classification created extreme social and economic stratification within the country. Therefore, when speaking

For example, 'race' before the 18th century in Europe, was not especially significant in classifying people because it was often explained away as the effects of the environment (Smedley 1998). It was not until the industrialization of Europe that 'race' was used to classify and rank people using the medical authority of the times (Sanjek 1994). Here, the meaning of 'race' changes in significance over time, as a social construction.

about 'race' in South Africa today, it is important to recognize the economic repercussions of apartheid's racial classification system and the social structures and relationships it instantiated. South Africans frequently use 'race' and racial terminology to designate what are in fact class relations. The Rainbow Nation discourse, however, speaks about how cultural differences make up the nation (Martin 1996: 6), and how the diversity of 'races' represent the different colours that make up the rainbow. Here, 'race' and 'culture' are mutually imbricated and conflated.

Unfortunately, the Official discourse of multiculturalism overlooks the lived realities of racial classification in regards to class, and conflates 'race' and 'culture'. Although Nelson Mandela claimed that within a Rainbow Nation "all South Africans, both black and white, will be able to walk tall without any fear in their hearts" (1994 in Martin 1996: 3), it is also assumed that "different cultures [make] up one rainbow nation" (Martin 1996: 6). For example, as one young man from City at Peace explained in describing the Rainbow Nation:

South Africa is a diverse country whereas there's a lot of mixture. It is a Rainbow Nation. Because for example a rainbow consists of many colors to form one. So in South Africa, *different cultures, different races*, different religions [...] form one. (Interview with Gift, 09/11/08; my emphasis)

Here, both racial and cultural diversity are considered necessary aspects of the Rainbow Nation. The three levels of discourses, Official, Formal, and Informal, hold to the idea of 'race' as 'culture', and furthermore, that cultural/racial differences lead to social tensions. The repetition of the 'culture'/'race' complex becomes evident in City at Peace's and young people's performativity of 'culture'/'race' (see Chapter Three). Performativity refers to young people's continuous reproduction and naturalization of the idea that cultural/racial differences are the root cause of much conflict in South Africa. Here, young people reproduce 'old' ideas of 'culture' (see Wright 1998) as well as the reinforcement of racial classifications as biological 'truths', rather than social constructions.

The thesis argues that understandings of 'race' as 'culture', as understood by City at Peace and its young participants, and 'race' as 'class' (see Mbola 2008; Kindon and Knight 2004; Dolby 2001) necessitate different strategies to achieve conflict resolution. When people conflate 'race' with 'culture', the remedy for injustice is to overcome racial/cultural barriers in order to get along. When 'race' is understood as a proxy for 'class', redress requires addressing economic disparities. The meaning and use of 'race' must shift from referring to 'culture' to describing class in order to begin addressing structural difficulties in South Africa. Furthermore, gender inequalities and breakdown in familial relations are completely left out of the discussion, even though they also contribute to social and structural tensions and abuse. In South Africa, gender hierarchies continue

to profoundly affect women¹⁴ and their experiences of gender-based violence, even if the liberal South African government claims equality for all (see Moffett 2008; South African Constitution 1996). It is difficult, but not impossible, to shift the meaning of ‘race’ because ‘race’ as ‘culture’ is constantly reproduced through instable translations, as the next section describes.

Performativity: ‘Culture’/ ‘Race’ Complex

Judith Butler (1990: xv) uses the term ‘performativity’ to describe the ‘performance’ of gender as “a repetition and a ritual” of gestures and movements that become normalized and internalized within a certain framework of social ‘rules’ through time. For example, biological females become socialised as women by acting in specific (feminine) ways, determined by society, that relate to their biological sex. Wearing dresses, makeup, and high heels are some of the ways that women may express their femininity on a daily basis. ‘Womanhood’ is continuously reinforced by the repetition of the performance of femininity, or the reproduction of acts that have been internalized by society to signify femininity. In Simone de Beauvoir’s words, women are not born women; they become them (1949). I use Butler (1990) to consider how what I call the ‘culture’/ ‘race’ complex becomes naturalized through people’s reproduction of multicultural discourses and contributes to their misdiagnosis of the root causes of social and structural tensions and abuse. Through the continued reproduction, or performance, of the idea that ‘culture’/ ‘race’ is to blame for conflict in South Africa, this idea continuously reinforces itself, contributing to further entrenchment that ‘culture’/ ‘race’ is the root cause of conflict in the country. The concept of performativity is especially apposite to my research because although it points to the repetitive aspect of reproducing social givens, it also acknowledges that the copying of social norms may become skewed or challenged because no copy is ever identical (Butler 1993a: 244). For example, drag challenges the conventional performance of gender by having men wear women’s clothes. Here, “the critical promise of drag does not have to do with the proliferation of genders... but rather with the exposure of the failure of heterosexual regimes ever to fully legislate or contain their own ideals” (Butler 1993b: 26). In other words, the reproduction of gender norms can be challenged by deviancy that occurs in the repetition of gender performance. Through the very process of translation between gender ideals and the performance of gender, there is the possibility of challenging social norms.

¹⁴ See Ibeanu (2001) for discussions on structural violence against women in Nigeria, and Odendaal (1993) for Namibian examples.

Within the thesis, I use Butler's notion of performativity in two ways: to describe the continued reproduction, or performance, of the 'culture'/ 'race' complex in multicultural discourses and the naturalization that occurs in speaking about cultural/racial differences as the root cause of tensions and abuse; and I also use performativity, as Butler does, to describe the naturalization of gender roles (see Chapter Five). Similarly, Homi Bhabha (1994: 2) speaks about the performance and constant negotiation involved in the making of 'culture', and how 'culture' is anything but a 'natural' given, though it is considered as such. It is important to consider the *process* involved in the reproduction and naturalization of the 'culture'/ 'race' complex, because this process allows for a space of negotiation, and not only, of identical reproduction (see Bhabha 1994). Although multicultural discourses may base themselves on Rainbow Nation ideals, the performances of multicultural discourses, by City at Peace and by its young participants, do not only reiterate Rainbow Nation ideals, but also challenge them. The destabilizing process occurs when the copy, or translation of discourses of multiculturalism, are corrupted by challenging the proposed social norms (for example, that 'race' and 'culture' unproblematically relate to one another, as described by City at Peace and the youth). By exploring differing meanings of 'culture' and 'race' through the process of interpretation, it becomes possible to challenge the 'culture'/ 'race' complex, and consider the effects of class and gender as contributors to conflict.

The reproduction of multicultural discourses makes it difficult, but not impossible, to challenge the discourses of power that are continuously reproduced through performativity. As the opening case study suggests, Rainbow Nation ideals trickle down to City at Peace's young participants, with 'culture' and 'race' going hand-in-hand to describe difference. Lindiwe naturalizes the concept that each 'culture' has a 'race' by stating that South Africa "understand[s] all the different cultures according to each race" (Journal entry, 08/26/08). It is crucial to expose the dangers in linking 'culture' to 'race', especially in relation to conflict, because this view oversimplifies the causes of tensions and abuse. Conflict in South Africa, as elsewhere, is manifold, as are the approaches to conflict resolution¹⁵. Tensions and abuse must be considered in their particularities, rather than generalizing the causes of conflict. It is not enough to endorse cultural/racial diversity as a means to address the historical injustices that stem from cultural and racial classification in South Africa. I argue that the reproduction of the 'culture'/ 'race' complex, through the translation of multicultural discourses from Rainbow Nation ideals, dangerously endorses 'old' ideas about 'culture' and 'race' that are not progressive in the making of a 'new' South Africa. It is necessary to destabilize the reproduction of bounded nature of 'culture' and 'race'

¹⁵ The Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation (CSVR), for example, is an organization that seeks to address conflict and violence in South Africa through a variety of approaches. Some of its programmes include strategies that promote criminal justice; address gender-based violence; support peace-building; explore transitional justice; institute clinical interventions for trauma; and look at youth violence. See www.csvr.org.za.

to begin understanding the complexity of conflict in order to develop viable conflict-resolution strategies for South African youth. The following chapter examines young peoples' reproduction and normalization of the 'culture'/ 'race' complex, and the varied ways in which my research sample link 'cultural/racial' differences to conflict.

Chapter 3: Discourses of Multiculturalism: Contradictions and Coalitions

Within the City at Peace programme, many young people endorsed the idea of living in a Rainbow Nation, where people of different ‘races’ and ‘cultures’ could live together. In one group activity, I asked eight young women and one young man to draw their past, present and future and then to explain their drawings to the group. Siphokazi’s drawing illustrates how the Rainbow Nation discourse translates into young people’s vision of a better future for South Africa. Siphokazi comes from the Eastern Cape and when she moved to Cape Town when she was three, she did not have many friends until she started school, in Gugulethu, a township. Her school had limited resources, with shortages of desks, chairs and no tools for science labs. Her present (at the time) consisted of many friends, hard work, and the desire to finish grade 12. Regarding her future, Siphokazi drew multi-coloured people surrounding her home. She explained that: “I want to live in a South Africa where people will not be seen as black or white but will be seen as people” (10/11/08). She further stated that although South Africa is a democracy, racism is still a problem and she would like to see people looking beyond each other’s ‘races’.



Siphokazi’s drawing of her future. Note the differently coloured people that represent a diverse South Africa. (10/11/08)

Siphokazi’s hope for the future illustrates how discourses of multiculturalism resonated for some of the young people at City at Peace. The Rainbow Nation discourse provides something to hope for, and something to work towards, in making South Africa a better place to live. Siphokazi explained her dream of a non-racial future: “I think it’s possible it just depends on individuals. I think that it’s possible if you want it to happen then it’s up to us to make it happen” (Interview, 10/11/08). As Siphokazi states, it is important for people to work together in seeking to address inequalities in South African society. However, one difficulty in making South Africa a better place lies in the fact that the ‘culture’/ ‘race’ complex is continuously reproduced through multicultural discourses, and cultural/racial differences are naturalized, through performance, as root causes of conflict. Within my analysis, the production of multicultural discourse occurs within Rainbow Nation ideals, and gets reproduced within City at Peace, and youth, or Official, Formal, and

Informal levels of analysis (Soudien 2001). Throughout the process of reproduction, translation occurs between discourses of multiculturalism, which reproduces different sets of discourses because translation is both a deconstruction and a transformation of the original discourse (Primavesi 1999: 54). The translation of multicultural discourses is unstable because discourses are never identical copies of one another; and, within multicultural discourses, both ‘culture’ and ‘race’ may change in meaning, adding to the instability of the terms of discourses (Hall 1996).

It is the unstable nature of translation of both ‘race’ and ‘culture’ within multicultural discourses that allows for a challenging and unhinging of socially internalized norms, for example, that cultural/racial differences are the root causes of tension and abuse in contemporary South Africa. This chapter illustrates the instability of translation between City at Peace and the multicultural discourses offered by some young people, as well as the ways that ‘race’ operates as a floating signifier (Hall 1996). The purpose of the discussion is to provide the framework for analysing, in Chapter Four and Five, the difficulty in addressing structural and social difficulties in young people’s lives, using the ‘culture’/ ‘race’ complex.

Formal Discourse: City at Peace

City at Peace’s programme is framed by a multicultural discourse that assumes bringing together a ‘diverse’ group will contribute to better understanding and relationships between people. ‘Hietaa!!’¹⁶, the City at Peace newsletter (April 2008) defines the organization as:

A youth development organization that uses the performing arts to teach a diverse group of young people about cross cultural understanding, non-violent conflict resolution and leadership for social change.

As I showed in the opening of Chapter One, City at Peace emphasizes differences between programme participants, but the organization understands difference in terms of ‘race’ and ‘culture’ rather than other matrices of difference such as gender and class. The 2008 City at Peace pamphlet states:

Youth have opportunities for honest and open dialogue with other youth from extremely different backgrounds. The focus is not simply on ‘making friends’ with youth from another culture, but on building working relationships to create integrated leadership for community-based social change.

City at Peace focuses on ‘cultural difference’ in its written documents but the importance of racial

¹⁶ It has come to my attention that ‘Hietaa!!’ should actually be spelt ‘Heitaa!!’, although City at Peace uses the former spelling. Translated in English, ‘Heitaa!!’ is a slang Tsoitaal greeting, similar to ‘heya!’ or ‘wassup!’ in English.

diversity comes to the fore in the actual rehearsal setting. For example, as the programme progressed, all of the self-identified ‘coloured’ youth dropped out, as well as the only ‘white’ girl¹⁷. Rather than simply continuing with an all-‘black’ cast, the Directors staged new auditions targeted only at ‘coloured’ youths, as described in Chapter Two. Racial diversity was paramount in the Directors’ concerns. Ten new ‘coloured’ youth, six young women and four young men, were recruited but none of them stayed for more than two rehearsals. Reasons given for the drop-outs included: the newcomers had difficulty integrating in already-formed friendships within the group; they felt excluded by the use of Xhosa within the programme setting; and they were not interested in attending weekly rehearsals. The City at Peace programme endorsed ‘cross-cultural collaboration’ within its written documents but within the rehearsal setting, the programme focused on representing racial diversity. Both cultural and racial diversity were considered necessary facets of the programme.

To complicate matters further, ‘culture’ was not clearly defined in City at Peace documents, leaving both the Directors and the participants to interpret cultural diversity differently. For the Artistic Director, ‘culture’, as defined by differences in language¹⁸, correlated with ‘race’. In other words, Vincenza assumed that ‘whites’ speak English, ‘coloureds’ speak Afrikaans, and ‘blacks’ speak an African language. Vincenza linked racial differences to language differences (which to Vincenza, were interchangeable with ‘culture’):

Even in schools that are mixed like Camps Bay High, there’s kids that are from the townships that go there. But they don’t...[mix]. There’s no, like, conversation about what that means... I’ve sat in the hall in Camps Bay High waiting to have a meeting with the teachers. And you see the group of white kids walking by and you see the group of kids from the township walking by, especially because they are divided by language. (Interview, 03/26/08)

Here, Vincenza’s assumption that young people are “divided by language” according to their ‘race’ overlooks the fact that language is learnt regardless of ‘race’. However, Vincenza understood language (and ‘culture’ as language) to contribute to the divide between ‘whites’ and ‘blacks’ without considering that some ‘whites’ speak Afrikaans, or that ‘blacks’ and ‘coloureds’ speak English. Vincenza understood ‘culture’/language an obstacle in overcoming racial differences, which echoes City at Peace’s Formal discourse that emphasises the need to address cultural and racial differences to engage in conflict resolution. To Vincenza, it seemed ‘natural’ that ‘whites’ and ‘blacks’ did not walk together in school because of their ‘culture’/ language divide, without

¹⁷ The ‘white’ girl had clashing school activities that eventually replaced the weekly City at Peace rehearsals.

¹⁸ Recall in chapter one Vincenza’s explanation of ‘cross-cultural collaboration’ in reference to conflict resolution: “how language or different cultural norms can cause misunderstandings which lead to conflict” (personal communication with Vincenza, 8/6/08). Vincenza interchangeably uses differences in cultural norms and language to explain conflict.

considering that the language of instruction at the school was English for all; here, Vincenza performs, or reproduces, multicultural discourse by naturalizing the idea that cultural/racial differences contribute to social problems. Vincenza's understanding of cultural/racial differences was informed both by the Official discourse of multiculturalism and her own observations that reinforced the notion that racial (and linguistic/cultural) differences were keeping people apart, which in turn shaped City at Peace's vision. The performance of multicultural discourse was reproduced both within City at Peace's Formal discourse (in its written documents) as well as the Directors' Informal understandings regarding 'culture'/'race' as generating conflict. As I show below, participants of the City at Peace programme also internalized and naturalized multicultural discourses that reflected the relationship between cultural/racial differences and social tensions.

Informal Discourse: Youth

For young people in the City at Peace programme, the terms 'culture' and /or 'race', were freely used but rarely scrutinized. The Rainbow Nation discourse, that assumes that cultural/racial differences need to be overcome in order to achieve conflict resolution, was often reproduced and taken for granted by young people in my research sample. Young people often explained violence and conflict by using stereotypes predicated on cultural and racial differences. And yet, Rainbow Nation ideals did not always resonate with the young people I worked with. Some believed cultural differences to be too difficult to overcome in South Africa; 'cultural clashes' were considered insurmountable, and a unified South Africa impossible. For example, in a discussion on the possibility of overcoming cultural differences to unite the country, a young woman from the City at Peace programme proclaimed that "South African culture, no that will never happen. Because [...] the provinces are divided according to the culture in each so... nothing can change"¹⁹ (Interview with Lindiwe 08/14/08). The young people in my research sample reproduced and naturalized the 'culture'/'race' complex, without considering other contributing factors to tensions and abuse.

The use of 'culture'/'race' throughout the following case studies illustrates the various ways in which the 'culture'/'race' complex is reproduced within multicultural discourses. It is important to note the instability of people's translation of ideas in describing how cultural/racial differences relate to tensions and abuse. Although the young people in my sample reproduced, or performed, the idea that cultural/racial differences were root causes of social and structural tensions in South Africa, there was no consensus on *how* 'culture' and 'race' created and exacerbated tensions and abuse. Therefore, even though discourses of multiculturalism were reproduced by the young people

¹⁹ Interestingly, Lindiwe also endorsed Rainbow Nation ideals (see opening of Chapter Two). Lindiwe's contradicting stances illustrate the situationality of her utterances. Young people's opinions always depended on where they were, and whom they were speaking with.

in my research group, the translation of ideas relating to multicultural discourses, varied. The examples below exemplify how some young people view cultural/racial diversity an important aspect of bringing together South Africans whereas others consider cultural/racial differences as barriers to unifying the country. The instability in the translation of multicultural discourses and the significances of cultural/racial differences will be taken up in Chapter Four to explore where discourses of multiculturalism fall short in their promises of building a 'new' South Africa. For now, I examine the performance of multicultural discourses by young people, through the repetition of 'race' as conflated with 'culture'²⁰, and 'cultural difference' as it relates to tensions and abuse, to illustrate the naturalization of the 'culture'/'race' complex.

In the following case study, Themba speaks about 'culture', 'race' and social and structural tensions. Themba was an enthusiastic City at Peace participant, and at the time of the interview, he was in his third year participating in the programme. Themba was in his final year of High School, and was actively involved in both school activities and community events. In 2006 Themba took part in the performance of 'talk shows' that engaged audiences from schools and the community in speaking about a range of topics which included poverty, crime, HIV/AIDS, sexual abuse, and family disputes (Interview, 03/06/08). He also took part in performances in his township community, Samora Machel, using puppetry as a tool to address sensitive topics that would be more difficult to speak about without the puppet masks (Interview, 03/06/08). Through his active involvement in activities focused on social change, both within and beyond his community (by participating in City at Peace, for example), Themba's acquaintances were many and varied. Themba embraced the idea of cultural and racial diversity, especially in his own life. Themba was an advocate of cultural diversity because he felt that learning about each other's 'cultures' could lead to "love between the cultures:"

In terms of 1994 people were not just communicating or staying with people from other cultures, there was a lot of fight[ing] because there was not understanding because of who you are and where you are coming from [...] You could not see a white man staying with a black man. Other than only the black man knows he can get the money from the white man by doing what he wants. But there is a fear in facing a white man and saying 'hey I don't like what you are doing to me'. Most times the black people are believing in the traditional way but the white man can tell you that 'hey you must believe in God' or whatever and then because of you know that if I argue with this person I will never have any things to go in my stomach [black people forgo their traditional ways to avoid conflict with the white man in order to have food security]. But now we learn all these culture, we learn all these things, there is love between the cultures. (Interview, 03/06/08)

Here, Themba interchangeably speaks about people having different 'cultures' and racial classifications, and also links 'culture'/'race' to differing positions of power within society. In

²⁰ The conflation of 'race' with 'culture' by young people is also echoed in Tihanyi's (2006: 91) work with South Africa students.

Themba's example, the 'black' man is forced to do as the 'white' man says as part of the capitalist order in South Africa. The 'black' man is dependant on the 'white' man for survival, and does not have the power to speak up for himself in relation to religion. By learning about "all these cultures," according to Themba, it is possible to overcome the difficulties of 'cultural differences', which in Themba's analysis also relate to class disparities in his reference to food security. Themba's reproduction of the 'culture'/ 'race' complex suggests that social and structural tensions between 'blacks' and 'whites' in contemporary South Africa can be resolved by learning about each other's 'cultures'. Themba's reproduction of cultural/racial differences as root causes of conflict, therefore, correlate both with City at Peace's and the Rainbow Nation discourses on multiculturalism. Themba's performativity of multicultural discourse, or reproduction and naturalization of the 'culture'/ 'race' complex, reinforces the idea that cultural/racial differences cause social tensions. And yet, even though Themba reiterates the 'culture'/ 'race' complex, he also believes that it is possible for South Africans to overcome their cultural and racial differences. It is as though for Themba, adhering to such a multicultural discourse provides him with an imaginative horizon that shapes the possibility of living within a culturally and racially unified society, a similar view to Lindiwe in the opening vignette of Chapter Two. By focusing on cultural/racial differences as the root cause of tensions, however, Themba fails to acknowledge the need to address class disparities instead of, or in addition to, learning about other people's 'cultures'.

His point of view about the need to bring people together across 'cultural' and 'racial' divides was echoed by other young people in the City at Peace programme. Patience also suggested that 'culture' was responsible for keeping people apart, an unsurprising claim in the South African context because under apartheid laws, people were relocated to live in ethnically defined 'homelands' (Kindon and Knight 2004; Western 1996; Martin 1996; Boonzaier and Sharp 1988). At the time of my research, Patience was a young woman of eighteen, self-identified as 'black', finishing her matric²¹ and on her way to starting a degree in Law the following year. She aspired to become a judge. Patience understood 'cultural differences' to be an important contributor to racism, and emphasised the need for racially different people to learn one another's 'cultures':

I think it's [cultural diversity] really important because if you just focus on your own culture, your own self, your own language, that's being selfish. You don't even know how to say hello in a different language besides English. You don't even know how to react when you see someone from a different culture or religion, you just feel isolated with your own self. You don't explore and expand your own mind. You just see these things on T.V. That's why there's loads of racism going around. It's because we don't go... in one group or in one place where we can be like "oh hello, how are you?"
(Interview, 09/11/08)

According to Patience, different 'cultures' led to misunderstandings between people, which led to a very specific type of problem: racism. Furthermore, Patience linked 'culture' to language barriers and religious differences. Here, Patience naturalized the 'culture'/ 'race' complex in her reiteration that cultural misunderstandings lead to racism. However, it is important to recognize that Patience's understanding of 'culture' was not *only* informed by discourses of multiculturalism but also by her

²¹ The Grade 12 equivalent in South Africa.

own lived experience of racialization, language and religion. Patience lived in an almost exclusively 'white' area of the Southern suburbs. She explained that she first decided to join City at Peace because she was interested in the 'diversity' aspect of the programme: how you could meet "blacks, coloured, and whites" (Interview, 10/02/08). Being part of the City at Peace programme was an opportunity to meet people outside of her usual group of friends, which was predominantly made up of 'whites' and 'coloureds'. Even though her school was 'integrated'²², her suburb predominantly consisted of 'whites' and she was inclined to go for 'white' and 'coloured' young men in seeking romantic relationships. Her own experiences of being 'black' in a 'white' suburb of Cape Town informed her understanding of difference, and of the importance of getting to know people rather than immediately judging them according to their 'culture' and/or 'race'. And, perhaps her concern in overcoming cultural/ racial differences was also due to her own longing to be accepted within her group of 'white' peers, both at school and in her neighbourhood where she was a 'black' minority. Patience's reproduction of the 'culture'/ 'race' complex was informed by Official and Formal multicultural discourses, as well as her own everyday, informal, interactions. It is important to note that her performativity of multicultural discourses continuously self-sustained and naturalized the idea that cultural/racial differences exacerbated social tensions.

Because of the continued reproduction of the 'culture'/ 'race' complex, some young people in my sample immediately dubbed social tensions as a result of cultural differences. Multicultural discourses were internalized and reproduced to the point that they continuously reaffirmed the 'truth' that 'cultural/racial' differences caused social tensions. Tebogo, a City at Peace participant, gave an example to illustrate his perspective on how a conflict situation was due to cultural differences. Tebogo was twenty-seven years old at the time of my research. He self-identified as 'black', and spoke Tswana. He grew up in Zimbabwe. He went to the University of Botswana to study psychology but chose to focus on music instead by playing gigs in clubs, and eventually failed his university course. In the telling of his life story, he pointed out that because he had little direction in his life, he lost a woman he loved and was still attempting to finish his bachelor's degree in Cape Town (Field notes, 04/26/08). Tebogo's own understanding of 'culture' was informed by his experiences of being a foreigner in South Africa. Tebogo explained, during a group discussion including myself and Patience, that cultural differences were to blame in instigating misunderstandings at a social gathering:

²² Under apartheid government, schools were racially segregated. South Africa's democratic government of 1994 desegregated the national education system and schools became 'integrated' in the sense that they could not refuse admission based on 'race'. See Meier (2005).

Tebogo: Actually once I almost got into a fight at a party because of cultural difference.

Maude: Tell me about it.

Tebogo: This lady is in the kitchen and we are drinking wine so I left the bottle. I tell her to make sure that the only person who opens it is me. So I come back later so she's just chilling in the kitchen. I come back and what do I say to her... jokingly: 'hey, what happened to my wine? Did someone drink it? Did you drink it? Nah, you couldn't have drunk it'. You know and there was this other guy there who was Xhosa, and he got really offended. She found it funny, she was laughing, but he got offended.

Maude: Why?

Tebogo: Because I can't talk to a pregnant woman like that.

Maude: And that's a cultural difference?

Tebogo: I think it is!

Maude: Maybe he's just an asshole.

Tebogo: Everybody else agreed with him. Ok, my friends were agreeing with me but it looked like I had done something really bad like a taboo. And what I didn't understand is why didn't she say anything about it. He really wanted to fight. Actually he kicked me. I was like 'whoa'!

Maude: Was it that you were speaking to her in a disrespectful way, or that you assumed that she would steal from you...?

Tebogo: No... I was talking to this lady from the beginning.

Patience: Or maybe he was jealous.

Tebogo: Yeah that's what I thought, maybe he was jealous 'cause I'm cute. (Interview, 09/11/08)

At the end of our discussion, what Tebogo initially presented as 'cultural difference' as a cause of misunderstanding was replaced by jealousy. Although Tebogo eventually reconsidered the cause of conflict, his *initial* explanation linked cultural difference to social tension. For Tebogo, it was 'natural' to immediately name 'cultural differences' as the reason for the disagreement at the party because he had internalized the 'culture'/ 'race' complex. Tebogo reproduced the idea that cultural differences override other types of differences which may lead to disagreements. Tebogo's understanding of multicultural discourse, as it relates to social tensions, was informed both by his involvement with City at Peace as well as his own life experience. It is my interpretation that Tebogo labelled the situation as a misunderstanding based on 'cultural difference' because the woman he was speaking to (and the subsequent man) was Xhosa whereas he is Tswana. Tebogo initially interpreted the conflict as the breaking of a Xhosa taboo which he did not know about because of his unfamiliar knowledge of Xhosa 'culture'. The clash of 'cultures' represented in Tebogo's story is reminiscent of Huntington's (1997) theory: that in the post-Cold War period, civilizations would clash on issues of 'cultural' and religious identities. However, as Edward Said (2001) pointed out in a critique of Huntington's (1997) argument, there are a plurality of identities within civilizations that cannot be grouped under the umbrella heading of 'cultures'. To say that the West is the West and Islam is Islam without acknowledging differences within these overarching labels overlooks the actual internal dynamics within these so-called civilizations, which leads to stereotypical classifications (Said 2001; see also Gupta and Ferguson 1992). Tebogo's

understanding of cultural differences was based on the far reaching effects of ‘cultural misunderstandings’. The normalization and internalization of the ‘culture’/ ‘race’ complex was reproduced in Tebogo’s own life through his understanding and performance of discourses of multiculturalism, or performativity.

Even outside of the City at Peace context, I found other young people ascribing to the ‘culture’/ ‘race’ complex. In a discussion in the Samora Machel township, I met a young man around the age of thirty, who was dubbed ‘Mr. Phil’²³ by the other ‘black’ men in the discussion group because he was considered the wisest of all; another compared him to the clever character of Brain in ‘Pinky and the Brain’²⁴, where two laboratory mice attempt to take over the world with Brain hatching the plan and Pinky following suit. ‘Mr. Phil’ explained away his nicknames by suggesting that he was older than most of the young men and therefore had more life experiences which he could use to advise others. In our discussion, ‘Mr. Phil’ proved to be both socially and religiously conservative, insisting that racial segregation could not change in Cape Town. ‘Mr. Phil’ had strong opinions about ‘culture’. In fact, for him, ‘culture’ had aggressive and confrontational components:

Mr. Phil: Maudey, have you ever seen a herd of cattles?

Maude: Yes.

Mr. Phil: When there are two bulls in one herd what is going to happen?

Maude: They are going to kill each other?

Mr. Phil: Yes so that is clear as it is. Because that bull needs to rule, needs to be the owner of the herd. So the reason you see so many different cultures and political parties, everyone needs to be a bull. (Interview, 11/16/08)

‘Mr. Phil’s’ portrayed ‘culture’ as a powerful metaphor of a bull pointing to the difficulty in having different ‘cultures’ living together harmoniously. For ‘Mr. Phil’, conflict was inevitable in the bringing together of ‘cultures’, a reference to apartheid’s policies of segregation, which justified separating people that were ‘ethnically’ different in order to avoid conflict (see Western 1996: 85). ‘Mr. Phil’s’ use of ‘culture’ mirrored ‘old’ 19th century ideas that ‘culture’ is both self-contained and self-regulated (Thornton 1988: 19; Wright 1998). In the South African context, this view of ‘culture’ was especially dangerous during the apartheid government where the protection of (white) ‘culture’ was used as an excuse to justify oppressive policies (Thornton 1988). ‘Mr. Phil’ considered ‘cultural differences’ to exacerbate social tensions to the point of violence. For him, ‘cultures’ could not come to live harmoniously together. Here, the Rainbow Nation discourse failed to translate into an imaginary horizon that inspired any hope for the making of a ‘new’ South Africa.

23 In reference to the talk show host Dr. Phil (see <http://www.drphil.com>).

24 A segment of the animated series *Animanics*, popular in the '90s.

The reproduction of the ‘culture’/ ‘race’ complex does not always translate identically throughout different levels of society. For some in my research sample ‘cultural/racial differences’ were considered surmountable differences in the making of a ‘new’ South Africa. For others, like ‘Mr. Phil’, ‘cultural/racial differences’ would always be a source of irresolvable conflict. In both cases, however, the ‘culture’/ ‘race’ complex was not questioned, and it was assumed that cultural/racial differences contributed to social tensions and/or abuse. Therefore, young people’s performativity of multicultural discourse both reproduced and normalized the ‘culture’/ ‘race’ complex even if young people did not agree on the effects of cultural/racial differences on conflict. The various uses and understandings of ‘culture’ and ‘race’ contribute to the struggle of addressing social and structural difficulties in young people’s lives, as will be explored in Chapters Four and Five.

Conclusion

In the case studies above, ‘having a culture’ created distance between people, by defining difference: whether this difference related to ‘race’, language, religion, or power relationships. Although the problems associated with cultural differences varied, they all pointed to instances relating to social tensions and even abuse. For example, some of the young people discussed above considered ‘culture’ and ‘race’ to create power differences in the interpersonal as well as structural relations between ‘whites’ and ‘blacks’ (see Themba’s discussion); others considered cultural differences to be the core cause of racism (see Patience’s discussion). Young people in my sample understood ‘culture’ and ‘race’ differently, and they also differed on the types of problems that cultural/racial differences seemed to cause. In other words, the young people performed the reproduction of multicultural discourse differently because there was no consensus on the effects of cultural/racial differences on social and structural tensions and abuse. Furthermore, young people’s performativity of the ‘culture’/ ‘race’ complex was precisely a *performance* because it did not necessarily resonate with their actual experiences of conflict, as the next chapter will demonstrate. To begin addressing social and structural tensions and violence in South Africa, it is crucial to look at how conflict is experienced by youth. The next chapter highlights how racialization in South Africa relates to class, and the relationship between economic disparities and lived experiences in order to examine how multicultural discourses fall short of linking racial classification to the actual lived experience of racialization, and the tension and abuse that may result from it.

Chapter 4: 'Race', Class & Life Experiences

“People fight over money, people kill over money.” (Interview with Gift, 09/11/08)

Throughout my research, many discussions on tensions and abuse revolved around the effects of economic and social stratification resulting from racial segregation during apartheid²⁵. The previous chapter examined how young people understood cultural and racial differences to contribute to social tensions and sometimes even violence²⁶, and the reproduction of the 'culture'/ 'race' complex in multicultural discourse; this chapter explores how racialization relates to the socio-economic realities of my research sample, as well as familial difficulties that are often informed by structural violence. Although young people performed, or reproduced and naturalized, the 'culture'/ 'race' complex, from their own life stories it became evident that difficulties in overcoming 'cultural/racial differences' were not at the forefront of their problems. Rather, social and structural difficulties linked to their parents being classified as 'black' during apartheid, affected the young people's experiences of tensions and abuse in contemporary South Africa. Young people in my sample were aware that social and economic deprivation affected their personal struggles though they did not necessarily link racialization to the history of structural and social violence against 'non-whites'.

Young people in the City at Peace programme described tensions and abuse as central aspects of their life stories. Their awareness of violence was not limited to their immediate environments; they were also concerned with the level of conflict in South Africa in general. In a survey conducted at the beginning of 2008, 43% of the sample (n = 46) identified gangsterism, crime, violence and/or rape²⁷ to be their biggest concerns in their neighbourhoods while none of the group named racism or 'cultural clashes' as problems. Regarding their most important concerns in the country as a whole, 63% of youth pointed to gangsterism, crime, violence, and/or rape, while one person in the group identified racism as his biggest concern. Many of the young people's homes were located in areas fraught with violence²⁸, which was a much more immediate area of concern within their everyday lives than the need for 'cross-cultural/racial understanding'. As one of the cast members, Themba, explained, one of the reasons he joined City at Peace was to get out of the township once a

²⁵ It is important to note that as early as the 17th century, the South African Cape was already a racially defined society that hierarchically organized 'races' (See Hendricks 2001). Colonial discourse informed racial and cultural hierarchization through the endorsement of difference and discrimination (Bhabha 1994: 67). The history of racialised segregation and the class structures it instantiated long preceded apartheid; apartheid was just one form of the workings out of racialised capitalism.

²⁶ Recall 'Mr. Phil's' comparison of 'culture' to bulls killing each other in Chapter Three.

²⁷ Only the female participants named 'rape' as a problem, both in their neighbourhoods and South Africa as a whole.

²⁸ See crime statistics for township areas in Chapter Two, p. 17.

week for rehearsals to be “faraway from things that are happening that aren’t good”²⁹ (Interview, 03/06/08).

The following case studies describe the far reaching effects of tensions and abuse in young people’s lives. Because racial differences have historically been etched into the socio-economic landscape, in the present young people continue to be shaped by its legacies even where racial classification does not legally exist. It is important to note that the difficulty in addressing conflict in young people’s lives is complicated by the different significances of ‘race’ in multicultural discourses and young people’s actual lived experiences. ‘Race’ as linked to ‘culture’ and conflict in multicultural discourses necessitates different intervention strategies than the difficulties resulting from the economic repercussions of being racially classified ‘black’ during apartheid. Although many young people in my research group had never been racially classified by apartheid because they were born post-1994, all of the young people have inherited the socio-economic repercussions of their parents’ or guardians’ racial classifications legalized by apartheid. And yet, discourses of multiculturalism still provided some young people with something to hope for, as described in the following section.

Young People’s Life Stories: Tensions, Abuse & Hope

As part of the City at Peace programme, each participant had to present aspects of his/her life story to the group. The following stories exemplify some of the hardships faced by the City at Peace cast. Offered during the weekly workshops and rehearsals, they formed the basis for the final production.

I’m thirteen, turning fourteen in September. I was born near Cape Town. I grew up in the Eastern Cape. My grand-parents and my aunts raised me. I moved back to Cape Town to live with my parents. I used to live in a full house. I didn’t know my parents but I got used to them. In school, I didn’t want to go to primary but I thought high school was awesome. In 2001 I started grade one. I went from pre-school to grade one. The teacher asked me to name the five vowels, and even though I knew them I was too shy to answer. I got a hiding for not knowing the answer. I went to the headmaster’s office. [...] I don’t like my parents but they like me. I’m not sure to [about] my parents [she is not entirely comfortable with her parents]. When I was six and seven it was a nightmare. My father was abusing my mother and I was involved. Now we are a happy family. My mother had a baby in 2006. I grew up in the Eastern Cape. I never knew my parents. I’m too lazy to cry. People say I’m an empty person. In 2003 my mother lost her aunt. I’m trying to open up to my parents. I may seem happy. People say that I’m two-faced. (Nokhaya, 04/05/08)

²⁹ By “things that aren’t good” Themba is referring to the high level of crime in his township, Samora Machel. Philippi township, which is the neighbouring township to Samora Machel, had the following crime statistics for 2004/2005: 557 cases of common assault; 77 documented rape cases; and 20 instances of murder. Although these statistics are relatively lower than other areas, such as Gugulethu, Langa, Nyanga and Khayelitsha (see above), they are still comparatively high in relation to the Southern suburb of Rondebosch.

Note how external features of Nokhaya's life have contributed to her self-perception of being "two-faced," "empty" and "too lazy to cry." The conflict in Nokhaya's life continues to deeply affect her even if she claims that now she lives with a "happy family." Honwana and de Boek (2005: 4) state that "the ways young persons are perceived do not always coincide with their self-definitions" but Nokhaya's self-perception illustrates just how far-reaching external factors affect her self image. The effects of family problems and instability also seem to be important factors in young people's lives:

I have three 'half' brothers and one 'half' sister, and one brother. I used to live with my mother, my father and my brother. Then I lived with my father. He met another woman. That was 1995. I hate that year [kids laughs]. That woman didn't like us. She used to do funny things to us, like giving us the wrong food [food that had gone bad, or unsuitable food]. In 1996, it was just me and my brother. We told the bus driver that we wanted to leave Cape Town. We didn't like the situation. In 1997 I started school. In 1999 I was nine years old. I went to my mother's home [in the Eastern Cape]. I lived there with my grandmother. I was happy there. Then I came back to Cape Town. (Vuyo, 04/12/08)

The instability, especially because of relocation, in young people's lives contributes to the exacerbation of conflict within family settings. Although the frequency of moves were straining for young people, in dealing with conflict situations, young people such as Vuyo also took initiative to find alternative solutions, such as moving in with grandparents for support in times of need³⁰. The following stories also illustrate the extent of relocations and some difficulties associated with adapting to new environments:

I was born in the Eastern Cape. I stayed with my mom and seven brothers. My father died before I was born. In the Eastern Cape I stayed with mom and sister. There was no food. I decided to come to Cape Town. My mom told me to come see my uncle. When I came here, I saw new cars. The first day was nice. The second day, my uncle told me to look after his cows. My uncle wanted me to wash his shoes... I would get old food, so I asked my neighbour for food. In 1995, December, I asked my older brother if I could go with him. I stayed with my uncle. I was crying everyday, begging to go. (Mpumelelo, 04/12/08)

When I was three years old, my mother died [...] I came to the Eastern Cape. I knew that dying meant that I'd never see him or her again. I was crying. My father decided to leave me in the Eastern Cape with auntie, my mother's sister. I didn't want to stay with her. There was no other way. I stayed. Everyone in the family came to Cape Town. I cried the whole day because I wasn't in Cape Town. My auntie had three babies, two girls and one boy. (Khaya, 04/12/08)

Many of the young people in the City at Peace programme had experienced difficult living

³⁰ Note that Nokhaya was also raised by her grandparents.

situations because of changes in family structure, with deaths, and/or divorcing parents. Furthermore, single parent households³¹ struggled to find money, food, employment and adequate housing to support the family. In the twenty-eight stories I documented, eleven young people (39% of the sample) mentioned relocation (often from the Eastern Cape to Cape Town), and thirteen, or 46%, described fluctuating family structures³². One explanation for the high levels of instability and insecurity in family structures can be linked to the historical repercussions of structural violence stemming from racial classification. Western (1996: 339) explains the mass movement of people from the Eastern Cape to Cape Town because the living conditions of the Eastern Cape are “dire,” and the promises of metropolitan Western Cape plenty. Many young people in my study group came to Cape Town in the hopes of a better future, but family and extended relatives sometimes hindered the experience of relocation. For example, Themba’s move from the Eastern Cape to Cape Town was not made easier by his relatives.

When Themba was one year old, his father left Themba’s alcoholic mother. His mother then abandoned Themba at his father’s deserted workplaces. Themba’s uncle came to visit the child that day, found him and took him in. Since then, Themba has been juggled from relative to relative and is now living in the Samora Machel township (in the West Metropole) with extended family. His father has subsequently died, and his mother is presumably still alive, but Themba’s family will not disclose her location to him. Themba’s living situation is precarious. He claims that his relatives treat him badly and often prevent him from going to Cape Town (to participate in the City at Peace programme, for example) because they want him to stay home and do chores. The outside of his relatives’ house is littered with discarded items and Themba’s own room consists of a small makeshift container behind the house which heats up in the summer and is deathly cold in the winter. Themba is self-employed to pay for his expenses. He cannot, and does not, depend on his relatives for money. At times, Themba could not attend City at Peace rehearsals because he had no money for transport. Themba’s story illustrates some of the difficulties in moving from the Eastern Cape to Cape Town and the struggle to establish oneself in a new environment where resources are limited. Themba’s story suggests that even if Cape Town had little to offer, staying in the Eastern Cape held even less opportunities.

The legacy of the apartheid ‘homelands’ continue to affect young ‘black’ people’s lived experiences of structural violence especially in the realm of access to employment (see White 2001). All of the young people in my sample, except one young woman, were of legal age to work

³¹ Recall the opening vignette of Chapter One that points to thirty of the City at Peace participants being raised by single parent households.

³² See Simkins (1986: 16-42) for an analysis of family structure and breakdown according to ‘race’. Simkins (1986: 37-38) notes the importance of the migrancy system for ‘black’ Africans in contributing to the instability of households.

and most were unemployed³³. Kindon and Knight's (2004: 214) study on unemployment in South Africa notes that:

residence in a homeland³⁴ still entails a substantially greater risk of unemployment than residence elsewhere. A black worker living in a homeland is about 21 percentage points more likely to be unemployed than a black worker living in a non-homeland region. This indicates that, despite the considerable loosening of apartheid segregation laws by 1994, the former homeland regions still continued to act as labor reserves whose residents were at a great disadvantage in the labour market.

However, even beyond the ex-‘homeland’ areas, ‘black’ Africans are more likely to be unemployed than people of any other racial categorisation: “The raw unemployment rates by race suggest most discrimination against Africans, followed by coloureds, and least discrimination against Indians” (Kindon & Knight 2004: 218). Furthermore, ‘black’ Africans have a 41% rate of unemployment in South Africa whereas the unemployment rate for ‘whites’ is 6% (Kindon & Knight 2004: 201). Reasons given for the high proportion of unemployed ‘black’ Africans stem from being subjected to poor access and quality of education during apartheid, which hindered “employment-enhancing characteristics” that have impacted the new generation in their chances for employment (Kindon & Knight 2004: 218). As one City at Peace participant, Noluthando, who grew up in the Eastern Cape, explained- there is an urgent need for the government to provide resources to people in the Eastern Cape, such as education, agricultural assistance and employment, because people residing in the Eastern Cape simply resorted to relocating to Cape Town, which exacerbated social problems in the Western Province (Noluthando, 08/14/08). Lindiwe, also from the Eastern Cape, added that many ‘black’ people in the Eastern Cape live basic subsistence lifestyles that contributed to insecure livelihoods: “If they [people in the Eastern Cape] don’t plough, there’s no food” (Interview, 08/14/08).

The above life stories suggest that young people’s experiences of conflict is complex. Young people experienced difficult living situations because of familial relations that broke down, and the resulting instability that followed. Within my research group, one of the reasons for the high level of instability within families had to do with the legacies of structural violence in South Africa that had impacted the parents’ chances of pursuing education³⁵ and securing employment. In turn, young people experienced violence, poverty, neglect, abuse and relocation. Here, young people’s lives were not hindered by ‘cultural/racial differences’, but rather because of their parents’ ‘cultural’/

³³ With the exception of Themba, who was self-employed; one young man who was interning as a cook; and two City at Peace participants who were paid interns.

³⁴ ‘Homelands’ no longer exist today, though Kindon and Knight (2004) still use the term in their work. By ‘homeland’, they are actually referring to ex-‘homeland’ areas.

³⁵ See opening vignette of Chapter One: twenty City at Peace participants have parents that have not completed elementary school.

'racial' differences as defined and enforced by apartheid. Why, then, were young people adhering to discourses of multiculturalism that emphasized the need to address racial and cultural differences, whereas social and economic disparities were clearly aspects of everyday struggle?

One possible explanation relates to the Rainbow Nation discourse providing a 'liberatory' ideal of hope and social change for the country. Many young people in my sample believed that by working together, it would be possible to make South Africa a 'better' place. In a discussion with Themba, Dumisani and Sam about the importance of diversity, Themba expressed his desire for people to come together to work towards social change: "You know what, the main is working together, fighting together, living together, understanding each other... or know[ing] about the concept of diversity, you know. Being part of any culture and beliefs and values are very important" (Interview, 11/09/08). Furthermore, the young men in the discussion group emphasised the need for youth to be part of the process of change towards the making of a better South Africa, but also acknowledged that young people were a vulnerable group. Themba further stated:

It's very important to have relationship[s] with other cultures, you see. [...] It's the youth that is going to develop some better place[s], some more things. So those people who make a lot of money, who don't want to use the knowledge to like to maybe deliver [resources], develop the new structure or the new things in South Africa. They are using these things [money] to kill this youth. And when you kill the youth, you kill the South Africa. Because the South Africa is depending on the youth. (Interview, 11/09/08)

To which Sam replied: "It's all on us to make a change" (Interview, 11/09/08). In another discussion with Gift, a participant of City at Peace, the young man described "living in the new democracy" as living with "no criticism, and racism, and living life to the fullest" (Interview, 09/11/08). Therefore, even if achieving 'cross-cultural understanding' was not necessarily relevant in solving the tensions and abuse in young people lives, the prospect of a culturally/racially unified country provided something to hope for. Themba often emphasized the importance of getting to know 'diverse' people especially in the City at Peace context. For Themba, City at Peace represented a space for change and social support. As Themba explained:

If you want to change or you want to do something in your community, there's things that you want to change, its where you are going to find all those things [at City at Peace]. It's where you are going to find how to get things done in your community.(Interview, 03/06/08)

Themba endorsed City at Peace's discourse on the need for cultural diversity but his actual concerns related to social change in his community. Themba explained that he had already created and produced a performance in his community which addressed poverty, HIV/AIDS, crime, sexual abuse, domestic violence and abandonment (Interview, 03/06/08). Although Themba subscribed to

City at Peace's discourses on multiculturalism, he was still aware of causes of conflict, besides or instead of cultural/racial differences, which affected his community. Themba's story reflected the contradictions in young people's use of the 'culture'/ 'race' complex to explain social tensions and violence whereas their actual lived experiences pointed to the difficulties of socio-economic realities and family breakdown. Themba hoped for a better community as well as a 'new' South Africa by reproducing discourses of multiculturalism that focus on social transformation in his conversations with me and others at City at Peace, but shaped his understanding of conflict based on his own life experiences.

It is problematic for young people to continue reproducing the 'culture'/ 'race' complex because this type of multicultural discourse overlooks how racialization affects social and economic realities. Confusion and contradictions arise not only in identifying the causes of tensions and violence, but also in creating viable conflict-resolution strategies; young people see themselves as part of the solution and take initiative in resolving difficulties. However, if the root causes of tensions and violence are misdiagnosed, it is difficult to create a viable strategy for making South Africa a 'better' country. Much tension and abuse in young people's lives could not be resolved by involving 'black' Africans in 'cross-cultural/racial' workshops to address cultural/racial differences. Rather, young people could benefit from family counselling programmes, or career workshops.

Young people in the City at Peace programme had various ideas about how 'cultural/racial differences' led to tensions and violence (as explored in Chapter Three), and they also had different ideas about how these difficulties should be addressed. One discussion between three City at Peace members, two young women and one young man, illustrated the dangerous implications of reproducing the 'culture'/ 'race' complex in South Africa, and the subsequent solution to resolving 'race'-related problems.

Cultural/ Racial Differences as Conflict: Racist Repercussions

Lindiwe described her reservations in the coming together of different 'races' in South Africa, although she subscribed to discourses of multiculturalism that endorsed the coming together of racially and culturally different people. Her understanding of multicultural discourses was influenced by different levels of discourses: Official discourses that framed the Rainbow Nation ideals; Formal discourses that reproduced multicultural ideas within the City at Peace setting; and Informal discourses stemming from discussions with peers. For example, recall the opening of Chapter Two where Lindiwe described South Africa as a place that "understand[s] all the different cultures according to each race. And now it is in practise of social change [South Africa is engaged

in social change], as the South Africans understand one another” (Journal entry, 08/26/08).

Lindiwe’s own understanding of ‘race’ relations, however, suggested a very particular perception of racial differences that was not all-inclusive. In a discussion involving Patience, Noluthando and myself, Lindiwe spoke about South African Chinese:

Lindiwe: ...Like the Chinese they are foreigners, some of the foreigners. But they aren’t constitutionally registered yet.

Maude: Do you think they will become...[registered]?

Lindiwe: [interrupting] No.

Patience: [interrupting] Yes the Chinese have already been registered as South African.

Lindiwe: Oh my God.

Patience: ...By which one by one they will get registered and make it [South Africa] multicultural...

Maude: [to Lindiwe] What? Lindiwe, speak!

Lindiwe: ...I don’t think the Chinese should be... recognized as South Africans.

Maude: Why?

Lindiwe: I mean being a member of the nation means something else and Chinese I believe, they are so creative [laughing]. You know everything is made in China. And like I don’t understand why they are here. I really don’t. (Discussion, 8/14/08)

To situate Lindiwe’s viewpoint about the Chinese, it is necessary to look at the political events that were happening around the time of this discussion. In June 2008, the Pretoria High Court recognized South African Chinese as ‘black’ in terms of the Broad-Based Economic Empowerment Act (BEE) and the Employment Equity Act (Mbola 2008). Under apartheid, the Chinese were officially classified ‘coloured’, and thus suffered economic injustices from being classified non-white. The inclusion of the Chinese within the BEE is meant to repair some of the historical economic injustices of the apartheid era, *not* grant them citizenship as they are already South African citizens. Lindiwe and Patience operate with two misunderstandings in this conversation. The first is that they misunderstand the facts of the Constitutional Court application: they appear to think that the Chinese nationals are applying for recognition as Black South Africans. Secondly, they misunderstand the historical economic injustices for which South African Chinese sought redress. Furthermore, Lindiwe racially stereotyped the Chinese by mentioning the ‘creativity’ of the Chinese in producing cheap goods, referencing the national fear of subsequent local job loss. Here, Lindiwe’s understanding of racial classification, in her understanding of Chinese nationals, pointed to how she considered some ‘races’ to be linked to social tension: in this case, as economic threats to ‘true’ South African nationals. Lindiwe concluded that having many ‘races’ within South Africa could only lead to further conflict and confusion: “If a child grows up two years old with a lot of races in her country, a lot of cultures, what will she listen to? Her mentality will tell her: what is happening at the moment?” (Discussion, 08/14/08). Although Lindiwe performed discourses of multiculturalism at certain times (in her journal, as well as within the City at Peace context), these

discourses actually exacerbated her own fears about cultural and economic erosion due to racial diversity in South Africa. In other words, Lindiwe feared that culturally and racially different people would negatively impact her own 'culture' and economic opportunities in South Africa.

Lindiwe's solution to addressing conflict in South Africa was radical. She suggested that South Africa should either be ruled by a king as a dictatorship or South Africa should go back to apartheid and forced removals:

Lindiwe: Everybody should respect the king and the king will work with his cabinet and then tell the rules to the people... and if they are failing to do so [follow the rules] then they will be punished and there must be forced removals.

Maude: Isn't that like apartheid?

Patience: Yes!

Lindiwe: Yeah, it should go back there because I believe it was right. (Discussion, 08/14/08)

The above discussion suggests that different interpretation of 'race' relations result in different solutions to resolving what the young people identify as conflict. Discourses of multiculturalism may inform young people about the need to accept cultural/racial diversities within South Africa, but information does not translate directly into their lives or opinions (see Dolby 2001; Walker 2005), nor does it undo the inheritances of apartheid classifications of 'race'. Lindiwe struggles to accept the Chinese in South African society because she feels they threaten South African 'culture' as well as economic opportunities for South Africans. Her fears regarding employment are founded on the fact that many 'black' South Africans struggle to secure jobs, as suggested in Kindon and Knights (2004) study breaking down unemployment rates by 'race'.

Conclusion

Racialised difference is naturalized in the everyday lives of South African youth (Tihanyi 2006; Dolby 2001; Walker 2005). However, the tensions and abuse associated with the historical repercussions of being racially classified cannot simply be resolved by overcoming cultural/racial differences. It is difficult to address conflict in young people's lives without considering the effects of class and familial relations. As Simkins (1986: 39) asserts: "Ragged and rough working-class environments are ones in which economic misfortune can easily lead to household disorganization." 'Household disorganization', in my research sample's life stories, point to familial relations that break down as well as high levels of relocation for young people. The reproduction of the 'culture'/ 'race' complex falls short of addressing the structural and social tensions and abuse that shapes many young people's lives. Multicultural discourses do provide some young people with hope for the future. However, hope needs to be substantiated with action if positive change is to occur in

South Africa. The next chapter explores the importance of challenging discourses of power in the shaping of a 'new' South Africa, and how conflict must also be considered in relation to gender and patriarchy.

Chapter 5: Gender & Power Dynamics

If the liberation struggle was meant to free us from oppression, it must have been to free us all from all kinds of oppression. If the struggle was truly for liberation, it was for all kinds of liberation. Liberation has no plural. Being an indivisible whole, liberation cannot be partitioned. It is radical. To opt for anything else is to endanger it. (Kopane Ratele, cited in Smith 2001: 211)

During my research, I found that many young people, male and female, produced and reproduced patriarchal discourses, both in their personal performances of gender roles as well as the figurative performances on stage, at City at Peace. Here, by patriarchal discourse, I am referring to the inequalities between men and women, though patriarchy may also refer to inequalities between men and men (see Collier 1988; Collier and Rosaldo 1981; Rosaldo 1980; Yanagisako and Collier 1987). Patriarchal norms, in my work, refer to the ways in which young people, and the Directors, at City at Peace perpetuated unequal power relations between young men and women by normalising the imbalances of power. Patriarchy is not singular in that it is created, expressed, and enforced in a myriad of ways through different times and spaces and so it is possible to find similar *and* differing instances of patriarchy throughout space and time. There is no singular experience of patriarchy, as there is no singular experience of gender. The patriarchal 'norms' I speak of in my work are specific to my research but not necessarily unique to the research context.

It was disturbing that few people (both the Directors and the cast) noticed the perpetuation of unequal power relations between young women and men. In only one instance during my research did a female cast member challenge her male counterpart in speaking about women's abilities in the workplace (an example to be taken up later in the chapter). This chapter demonstrates the reproduction of patriarchal discourses, by young people, to consider how gender dynamics factor into conflict and conflict resolution processes and/or possibilities. The imbedded nature of gender performativity (Butler 1990), where people act out, or perform, certain roles that reflect their gender, makes it difficult for young people to step beyond stereotypical ways of considering gender roles, and limits women's access to social, economical and political agency. Performativity does not occur in a vacuum, but rather, it is shaped by constraints that involve class, 'race', 'culture', interpersonal relations, and a plethora of other influences. As an historically produced form of knowledge (Bhavnani 1994: 27), gender must be considered as a facet of social production and reproduction in concurrence with questions of racialization and class.

I argue that it is necessary to consider gender relations in attempting to address tensions, abuse, and structural violence in South Africa, and that simply looking at 'cultural/ racial differences' as instigators of social conflict through discourses of multiculturalism will *not* lead to a

challenging of patriarchal discourses. Rainbow Nation ideals do not lead to implementation of gender rights, especially within the home. I will consider the onstage performativity of gender, in a scene based on the young people's life stories, followed by an analysis of young people's performativity off-stage. This chapter evinces the gaps in the Rainbow Nation discourse in order to begin considering how interpersonal power relations, in relation to gender, are a crucial aspect of understanding, and beginning to resolve tensions, abuse, and violence in South Africa.

Onstage Performativity: A Scene from the 2008 Production

The following scene was part of the 2008 City at Peace production. It was created and produced by young people based on their life stories:

Scene 1: The Danger of Having Many Boyfriends

A young 'black' woman, Mavis, and 'black' man, Rob, walk onstage hand in hand, flirting.

Mavis: So Rob, it was really nice seeing you today... I had fun spending time with you...

Rob: Yeah well, you look good on my arm babe, are you coming to the party tonight..?

Two much younger girls, Xoliswa and Suzy, walk onstage while the couple continue their conversation.

Xoliswa: Do you see that girl? [referring to Mavis] That's my neighbour, she's so cool. She always has all of these boyfriends and they have flashy cars and look good. They always buy her nice things. I wish I could be like Mavis. She has it all!

The young girls walk offstage.

Mavis: Will you pick me up tonight, Rob? I want to go to the party.

Rob: Of course babe, I'll be there in my BMW.

Mavis' phone rings.

Mavis: Oh, sorry, I have to get this, it's my mom calling. But I'll see you later baby!

Mavis and Rob embrace, Rob leaves, and Mavis answers her phone.

Mavis [answering her phone and talking to another man]: Hey baby, what are you up to? Missed you sweetie...

Later in the scene, Mavis goes to the party with Rob, and she gets raped. The moral of the story the young people have told is that because Mavis has many boyfriends, she puts herself at risk, which explains the rape. The scene concludes with Mavis admitting to Xoliswa that it's not cool to have many boyfriends.

There are numerous issues to be raised regarding the above scene. First, there is the demonizing of Mavis because of her choosing to have numerous sexual partners; her subsequent rape is explained because it seems that she 'asked for it' by being 'promiscuous'. Considering Mavis as 'promiscuous' maps onto the normalization of sexual dominance that justifies men having multiple partners because it makes them 'manly' while women are

expected to be monogamous for fear of being labelled 'slutty'³⁶. The scene suggested that women could avoid being raped by not challenging men's masculinities, where it is fine for men to have multiple partners (even 'manly') yet deviant and threatening for a woman to date many men. It is necessary to question the 'normality' of men's masculinities in justifying violent sexual acts in order to shed light on the patriarchal discourses of power that aim to control women's sexuality. For example, one 'excuse' justifying rape in South Africa points to a "degradation of masculine pride"³⁷ that leads men to rape to reaffirm their manliness (Moffett 2006: 134). Clearly, sexual violence must not be excused on any level, and it must shift the blame from women to the perpetrators of violence. Furthermore, naming the 'promiscuity' of women as a just cause for rape can be used as an excuse that blames women's 'cheeky' attitudes that 'force' men to rape (Moffett 2006: 138). Sexually violent men react to women who

dare to practise freedom of movement, adopt a confident posture or gait, make eye contact, speak out for themselves: in other words when women visibly demonstrate a degree of autonomy or self-worth. (Moffett 2006: 138)

The 'unacceptable' behaviour of women described above is then 'disciplined' through sexual violence in order to remind women of their 'place' in society (Moffett 2006: 138). Women's subordinate 'place' in society can be partially explained by the legacy of apartheid, which perpetuated controlling policies of subordination (Moffett 2006: 132). However, focusing solely on sexual violence as a result of racial segregation overlooks the *gendered* discourses that help to maintain control over women's bodies. Multicultural discourses that endorses the 'culture' / 'race' complex overlooks the violence that occurs *regardless* of 'race' as a result of patriarchal discourses of power that live on in democratic South Africa.

A second issue relates to the fact that the rapists' actions are not called into question: only Mavis' sexual 'deviance' is. Ignoring the criminality of rape in the scene normalizes the act of rape as an inevitable reality for 'promiscuous' women. As Moffett (2006: 138) warns, rape comes to be considered a 'corrective' behaviour where men 'teach women a lesson' which somehow legitimizes rape beyond the reaches of the law³⁸. The performativity of gender roles in Mavis' scene unquestionably endorses the idea that men have control over women's bodies by sustaining a patriarchal discourse of women as victims of male

³⁶ See Asencio (1991) "Machos and Sluts: Gender, Sexuality, and Violence among a Cohort of Puerto Rican Adolescents" for a discussion on the normalization and internalization processes involved in the making of 'macho' men and 'slutty' women.

³⁷ The "degradation of masculine pride" has also been used to explain South African men's increase in violent and criminal behaviour. See Simpson and Kraak (1998).

³⁸ See also National Research Council (1996) for a discussion on rationalizing the behaviour of sexual violence.

aggression. Rape represents patriarchal control, and in Mavis' case, it is suggested that Mavis, in fact, 'asked for it' herself and got what she deserved. The violence is thus twofold: there is the actual violence represented in the scene, as well as the symbolic violence by which gender norms are internalised and reproduced as natural, incontrovertible facts.

Another major problem with the above mentioned scene lies in the 'resolution' to the conflict: Mavis admits to her young neighbour that it is not 'cool' to have many boyfriends. This resolution is not only unrealistic, but it also serves to perpetuate patriarchal discourses of control over women's bodies by disallowing Mavis to make decisions about her own sexuality. It is important to recall that the performed scenes by City at Peace youth are meant to objectify conflict in order for young people to consider non-violent resolutions to similar problems in their own lives. Sex and sexuality are extremely intimate spheres in people's lives which, for the most part, are kept private; therefore, it can be difficult to change people's sexual behaviours. A brief discussion with a City at Peace alumni, Dikeme, illustrated the absurdity of the scene 'resolution'. As we were watching the rehearsal of the scene unfold before our eyes, Dikeme started telling me about his own sexual history. He described his first two sexual encounters, and commented that he did not love either of the men he slept with. His new strategy in finding 'true love' consisted of dating many men at once. Perplexed, I asked Dikeme how he could tell me about having multiple partners when the scene occurring merely a few feet away shunned having 'many boyfriends'. Dikeme replied that he was not *sleeping* with all of the men he was seeing but *going out* with them (Discussion, 08/09/08). My discussion with Dikeme highlighted the complexity of sexual behaviour and the impossibility of dictating young people's sexuality through unrealistic scene resolutions. Indeed, the only consequence of the scene resolution I noted was its perpetuation of patriarchal discourses of control over women's bodies because no one in the City at Peace programme questioned the gender stereotypes performed onstage. The next section considers the normalization of gender roles in the actual (off-stage) performativity of young people.

Off-Stage Performativity: The Naturalization of Gender Roles

The performance of gender roles, as described using Butler's (1990) concept of performativity, occurred both onstage and offstage for City at Peace participants. The following young woman's life story illustrates the internalization of gender roles and norms that may lead to violence against women:

I will be fifteen in October. My older sister is in Eastern Cape with my grand-mother. Everybody is happy at City at Peace but something always holds you back. I've always been in Cape Town. When I was five years old I lived with my father, mother, older sister. [...]

The first day of grade seven, a cousin was walking me through school. I wanted to know everyone but realized I couldn't know everyone [she wanted to become acquainted with everyone in the school]. My father called me to say to go to my aunt's house. I told my sister to follow after me, after school. I left my house, and was going to school when I met a guy. He was nice, we were used to him; we even called his mother auntie. We stopped by his house. We were watching T.V. Something banged my head. He hit me until he knew that he could kill me. He told me that I should leave. He told me I should go to my aunt's house. I collapsed at the door. They tried to wake me up. I told them what happened. They didn't really believe me. I was taken to the hospital. I was dying, I was paralyzed for eight days, and stayed in the hospital for three months. After that, I was not comfortable with boys. I lived in my own world for like three or four years [...]

I'm tired of crying, there will always be something bad, and you need to find your way. I have to get out of the cage, I need to stop being insecure. My life doesn't have to be like this. *Boys behave a certain way and I realized that it would always be like that.* [...] One day I will be happier than this. I will become a doctor, a mother, a mentor, an actor. You'll always have something to cry about but be strong. (Thembeke's life story, 4/5/08; my emphasis)

Thembeke's life story is disturbing. She has suffered extreme violence. And in her comment "boys behave a certain way and I realized that it would always be like that," she seems complicit in naturalizing masculine aggression. Naturalizing violence against women makes it difficult to challenge the taken-for-granted gender roles which often associate men with agency/aggressiveness and women with passivity³⁹. It is important to investigate how gender roles come to be internalized as 'natural' givens, in order to question the social order. Gender analysis is crucial to discussions on 'liberatory' ideals, such as the Rainbow Nation discourse, because it outlines the power relations between the sexes in order to address and transform inequality (Sow 1997: 45). Thembeke's internalization of masculine aggressivity illustrates Butler's (1990) idea of gender in which the reproduction of acts and discourses contribute to the normalizing process of defining gender according to sex. Thembeke understands women to be a certain way, and men to be another, without considering that gender relations could be any different. The normalization of gender roles thus represent unquestionable 'biological truths' rather than social constructions.

Another City at Peace member, Ayanda, also perpetuated gendered stereotypes in a discussion involving Patience and Lindiwe (08/14/08). The discussion revolved around the 'bad'

³⁹ See, for example, Emily Martin's article "The Egg and the Sperm: How Science Has Constructed a Romance Based on Stereotypical Male-Female Roles" for a discussion on how scientific language describes the female egg in 'feminine' terms that allude to passivity, and the 'masculine' sperm is considered an active agent (1991: 489). Furthermore, see Mayback and Gold (1994) for a discussion on the implications of considering males to be sexually aggressive and women as sexually passive in relation to violence against women.

influence of 'Western culture' on 'traditional African values' in relation to gender roles. He considered that his 'cultural values' (which reflected deep seated patriarchal tendencies) were being eroded because of the need to become 'civilized' by Westernization:

Ayanda: Yeah! Maude, do you know the reason why we say that that [his own] culture is bad. It's because that we are civilized now.

Maude: What do you mean?

Ayanda: It's because of like... the changes [in society] that have been okayed now. That's why we say that culture is so bad.

Maude: What do you mean 'bad'? Your culture⁴⁰ is bad?

Ayanda: I mean it's not good for us, you see. [...] For me, it feels like women just want to prove themselves, like "we can do anything that can be done by the men." Of which, they [do] a great job. They are like taking the... the job of the kitchen very less [seriously] now. [But] it's a great thing to take care of a kid for nine months. Carrying a kid for nine months and at the same time taking care of your kid since day one until she goes to varsity or he goes to varsity. Now that thing is so very less [important] because people [women] want to be leaders as well, you see. And they are forgetting their culture! I'm not saying that it's not good for them to be the leaders. But it's like... taking care of the kid it's nothing [not important] now. It's nothing [not important] to cook for your husband. It's nothing...

Ayanda's discussion of women's roles draws on and idealises heterosexual male dominance that shuns the woman to child rearing and household maintenance. This type of discourse is counterproductive in including women in the production and acquisition of knowledge; for example, in Ayanda's case, he considers women becoming 'leaders', outside of the home, as second to women staying home to cook. Furthermore, Ayanda's discourse hinders women's right to become financially independent by devaluing the worth of women's work outside of the home, and it perpetuates the subjugation of women in relation to men in African societies (Sow 1997: 35; See also Braam and Hessini 2004). However, it is also important to consider that African women located in the private realm may also hold great power elsewhere. For example, Aborampah (1999) speaks about women's important roles and power in the mourning rituals of the Akhan of Ghana. And so, it is possible that some gender roles also *empower* women⁴¹.

For Ayanda, his desire for women empowerment is limited by his conceptualisation of gender roles. He struggles to give positive value to women's rights while maintaining control in the household; women do a "great job" of being equal to men *but* equal rights also threaten family dynamics. It is important to note that the realities of South Africa's political economy also threaten traditional gender roles because of men's inability to find work and provide for their families

Note my use of 'culture' as a reified, homogenised whole. My use of 'culture' fits Wright's (1998) model of 'old' uses of culture.

⁴¹ See also Messick (1987) for a discussion on how women's private, subordinate, domestic weaving activities in North Africa affects gender relations.

(White 2001; Ngwane 2003). Simkins (in Burman and Reynolds 1986: 38) report that by 1980, in rural 'homeland' areas, 60% of households were headed by women. Ngwane (2003) speaks about the struggle for male migrant workers to create idealised households with strict gender roles that relegate women to the private sphere upon the return of their husbands, at Christmas time. For example, women's preparation of the homes for their husbands' return contributed to a '(re)domestication' of women (Ngwane 2003: 695) who otherwise occupy both the private and the public sphere while their husbands were away. It is a constant struggle for migrant men to reaffirm their position within the household, especially because of men's difficulties in providing for their families. By the mid 1980s progressive job loss in the country made it difficult for men to secure employment; meanwhile, women, especially by the mid 1990s, secured more employment as domestic workers with the rise of the middle class (Ngwane 2003: 698) further contributing to the threat of gendered household dynamics. Therefore, the 'threats' against male gender roles are two-fold: men are unable to properly support their children through paid employment, preventing them from being the providers of the family; *and* women may seek work because of their husbands' inability to find work (White 2001). Ayanda's view of gender roles was challenged by Patience, who pointed out that women are equal to men according to the law, thus explaining women's desires to join the work force:

Patience: It's because they [women] have rights now. They have 50/50 rights. Did you know that?

Maude: [to Ayanda] Are you saying it's a bad thing [that women have rights]?

Ayanda: It's not a bad thing, Maude. I'm going to the point of like... they are having this 50/50 thing, they want to drive... one of the guys was saying they want to drive bulldozers. Imagine that these bulldozers are affecting the men in the kidneys. How about you, as a woman?

Patience: No! There's no difference between a woman and a man, it's a difference in the spirit.

Ayanda: Patience, you must do a research.

Here, Patience moves beyond the confines of multicultural discourse to uphold women's rights regardless of 'culture'. Patience's viewpoint illustrates the possibility of addressing gender inequalities by stepping outside of the bounding sphere that protects 'cultures' (in what Wright (1998) describes as the 'old' definition of the term) at all costs. Meanwhile, Ayanda justifies different societal roles between men and women by adhering to the assumption that women have fragile bodies that should be protected both *by* men, and *against* women's own judgement in career choice. Ayanda perpetuates the gender stereotype of men being strong and protective⁴² whereas women are weak and unable to think for themselves. Furthermore,

Moffett (2006) makes the point that even when South African men may think they are being progressive in defending women's rights, they may still be perpetuating patriarchal discourses. For example, a Men's March

note that Ayanda uses 'culture' to justify the subordinate position of women in South African society⁴³. Ayanda's understanding of 'culture' once again points to varying uses of the word, and multiculturalism's inability to define what is, and what isn't 'culturally' relevant (Yon 1999: 625). Because 'culture' has so many meanings, as described in Chapter Three, it is possible to use 'culture' as an excuse to justify behaviours, actions and 'traditions' that would otherwise be difficult to uphold. For example, Hatch (1983) describes the difficulty in being unquestionably culturally relevant in an example describing the Yanomamo's tendency for violent behaviour towards their women. According to Hatch (1983: 92) Yanomamo women suffer greatly because "violence is an expression of the people's values." Tolerating Yanomamo 'culture' at all costs, then, makes it difficult to question the very basis of violence against women, which may well be an expression of patriarchal societal norms. Similarly, Ayanda's use of 'culture' may be used *against* achieving an emancipatory ideal for South African women (though he may consider women in the kitchen to be part of his personal, patriarchal ideals of liberalism).

Song (2005) goes so far as to say: "Multiculturalism can have the effect of reinforcing gender inequality" (See Deveaux 2000, 2003; Okin 1998, 1999; Shachar 2001). Kymlicka (1992: 141) suggests that liberal theory, in regards to multiculturalism, cannot justify special rights for any 'culture' that goes against its own members. Therefore, theoretically, 'cultures' cannot be defended at all costs, and Ayanda's use of 'culture' to control women should not be upheld. However, discourses of 'culture' and 'multiculturalism' are uneven and unstable across different levels of society. And, discourses of 'culture' take on different forms in the public and private sphere, that map onto women's uneven rights in public and private arenas. Men, in a sense, 'control' 'culture' by dictating the ways in which 'culture' is mobilized both within and beyond the household. Men's ability to negotiate 'culture' in this way is reminiscent of the 'culture/nature' debate that ascribes 'culture' as 'tame', 'cooked' and 'male' whereas 'nature' relates to 'wild', 'raw' and 'female' (MacCormack and Strathern 1980: 8). The definition and defence of 'culture' lie in the male realm, and therefore men have the possibility of 'using' 'culture' as they please, regardless of the effect 'culture' has on women. Ayanda chooses to endorse 'culture' to his advantage with women being relegated to taking care of their husbands. Consequently, women's rights, both in the private and public sphere, are affected by the ways in which 'culture' is mobilized by men. Although women are

on National Woman's day (2003) in South Africa had the slogan "Hands Off Our Women," where the Anglican Archbishop announced "... real men don't rape women and children... we want our women, our wives, sisters and daughters to walk freely in our streets." Women continue to be represented as men's property, where if the men are not predators, they must be the protectors (Moffett 2006: 143-144). See also Braam, T. and L. Hessini (2004) for a discussion on how tradition and 'culture' affect African women's abilities to make choices about their own bodies.

considered equal to men in the South African Constitution⁴⁴, men are considered head of households.

In a discussion between five young men and I at the Samora Machel township, Junior also endorsed the idea that men control the household. Junior explained that regardless of corporal punishment laws, the father of the house could have his way:

Whatever the government says, [I] don't care about it, I'll uphold my own values. That's how my parents were groomed. I don't agree to giving children rights, we have the right to groom kids, the government can't come into our home. Rules are meant to be broken. The government is all corrupted and telling us how to raise our children [...] In my father's house, my father says: "It's my house, my rules, you have to obey."
(Discussion, 10/12/08)

Junior's point of view suggested that the private sphere's laws are not dictated by the government, but rather, by the man of the house. Although our discussion focused on how to raise children, Junior's suggestion that "rules are meant to be broken" could also extend to stripping away women's (public) rights in the household. Indeed, Junior seems to want to follow in his parents' footsteps, where his father owned the house (and subsequently exerted certain rights towards the people residing within it), dictated the rules, and demanded obedience⁴⁵. The household remains a patriarchal space of male domination that does not allow women to exercise their equal rights as South African citizens. Discourses espousing 'equality for all' do not necessarily resonate within family dynamics. In fact, because of the historical effects of migrant labour, gendered family dynamics are exacerbated in an effort to reinstate the roles of men and women within the family (Ngwane 2003). Narratives and rituals are used to reinstate men as heads of households even though in contemporary South Africa, women are often the breadwinners, and as such occupy the public sphere (See White 2001; Ngwane 2003). However, the symbolic and literal relegation of women to the private sphere is important especially during the homecoming of husbands, in an attempt to reinforce, and continuously normalize, men's control over women and the household (Ngwane 2003). Therefore, as the new generation of South African youth attempt to make sense of

⁴⁴ The Bill of Rights outlines, on the section on "Equality" (Ch. 2; section 9) that:
1. Everyone is equal before the law and has the right to equal protection and benefit of the law;
2. Equality includes the full and equal enjoyment of all rights and freedoms. To promote the achievement of equality, legislative and other measures designed to protect or advance persons, or categories of persons, disadvantaged by unfair discrimination may be taken;
3. The state may not unfairly discriminate directly or indirectly against anyone on one or more grounds, including race, gender, sex, pregnancy, marital status, ethnic or social origin, colour, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, conscience, belief, culture, language and birth;
4. No person may unfairly discriminate directly or indirectly against anyone on one or more grounds in terms of subsection (3). National legislation must be enacted to prevent or prohibit unfair discrimination.
(<http://www.info.gov.za/documents/constitution/1996/96cons2.htm#9>, accessed May 15, 2009)

⁴⁵ According to Junior; I did not have firsthand insight into Junior's household.

multicultural discourses that give positive value to difference, it is clear that gender imbalances are overlooked within these discourses. Young people struggle to work towards a better future while continuously reproducing unequal power relations.

Conclusion

Knowledge is produced and reiterated in discourses of power through racialised, gendered and class-based processes, which must be considered intertwined in order to begin addressing social, political and economic conflict in South Africa. It is essential to examine *all* aspects of social inequalities in order to gain a better perspective of how to engage in social change to begin working towards a 'new' South Africa. Discourses of multiculturalism that fail to take account of gendered dynamics may perpetuate inequalities within South African society because 'culture' may be used as an excuse for the subordination of women. Confusion arises for young people who wish to endorse the values of living in a harmonious South Africa while upholding 'traditional cultures' that may be read as going against equality between men and women.

The performativity of gender roles has far reaching effects on women's lives. The subordination of women becomes normalized as the 'natural' place of women in society, which in turn, affects women's abilities to defend their rights both within the private and public sphere. The normalization of gender roles can dangerously perpetuate violence against women, as the City at Peace scene involving Mavis and her 'boyfriends' illustrates. Not only is male aggression taken for granted, but women come to internalize their inevitable victimization. Thembeke's life story also depicts the complicity women have in perpetuating their gendered position within South Africa society. Gender performativity makes it difficult to challenge gender roles because both men and women's continuously endorse and naturalize gender roles. However, it *is* possible to question patriarchal discourses, as Patience does in reminding Ayanda that women have equal rights to men. Patience is not taken seriously by Ayanda; in fact, he tells her that she should "do a research" because even though men and women may be equal before the law, physical differences still keep them apart. Nevertheless, the very challenge that Patience puts forth destabilizes Ayanda's patriarchal discourse. It is this space of instability that must be exploited, in order to begin moving towards a 'new' South Africa. The performance of gender roles does not represent biological truth, but rather a social construction. Therefore, the social *deconstruction* of gender performativity, by challenging the 'normalcy' of gender roles, may eventually lead to a reconstruction of men and women 'naturally' being equals both within the public and private spheres.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

Maude: How can people take care of each other in South Africa? Patience: By being honest and loving. 'Cuz most of us are not like that. Yes South Africa is honest and loving but most of our people still need to get out of the past and in with the present. (Discussion, 09/11/08)

The above comment made by Patience during a group discussion illustrates her desire to break free from the past in order to move towards the making of a 'better' South Africa. Unfortunately, moving forward also necessitates a reflection on the past that is sometimes painful to recall. Over ten years after the democratic elections of 1994, South Africa still faces many challenges that cannot be addressed without considering the damage of apartheid. The continual reproduction of cultural/racial differences as instigators of conflict, by City at Peace and young people in my sample, point to the difficulty in moving away from an emphasis on difference to begin considering how South Africans may work together, regardless of 'race' or 'culture', in the making of a 'new' South Africa. In order to move towards a unified country, it is important to outline the social construction that legitimizes the continued perpetuation of cultural/racial differences. As Bhabha (1994: 2) states: "The representation of difference must not be hastily read as the reflection of pre-given ethnic or cultural traits set in the fixed tablet of tradition." The production of 'culture' is performed and normalized, as is the endorsement of the 'culture'/ 'race' complex. Therefore, as society changes, it is also possible to shift the ways in which South Africans view and live out 'culture' and 'race'.

The idea of a multicultural nation, while attempting to celebrate differences, also has the potential to allow for old notions of cultural and racial incompatibility to persist (Martin 1996). Consider young people's views, described in Chapter Three, of cultural/racial differences instigating conflict. Although young people do not agree on what types of conflicts or disagreements cultural/racial differences cause, there is no questioning of the 'culture'/ 'race' complex. Furthermore, there is confusion and contradictions as to what is meant by 'culture': sometimes 'race', language, religion, or customs for example. Discourses of multiculturalism are reproduced through performativity, but the process of translation, from Rainbow Nation ideals, to City at Peace, and to the young people in my research sample, is not uniform. Therefore, multicultural discourses are not simply reiterated, but also challenged by shifts in understanding of 'culture' and 'race'. Destabilizing the normalization of the 'culture'/ 'race' complex is significant in identifying other causes of conflict, besides or on top of cultural/racial differences, that contribute to tensions and abuse in young people's lives. As described in Chapter Four, two important aspects of young people's troubled lives point to residual structural violence from the apartheid era as well as the breakdown in familial relations. Since multicultural discourses do not address these challenges, it is

unlikely that adequate conflict-resolution strategies will result from them. However, multicultural discourses are helpful in one capacity; they provide an imaginary horizon for young people to hope for a 'better' South Africa.

Although multicultural discourses offer young people an idealised view for the future of their country, it is important to transform hope into action. As described in Chapter Four, many young people take it upon themselves to shape the present and future they envision, even if they have had difficult lives. Many young people see themselves as the solution, and stress the importance of investing in today's generation. However, conflict-resolution strategies that address the pervasive inequalities in contemporary South African society must first identify which types of tensions or abuse plague the lives of young South Africans. Though discourses of multiculturalism, as perpetuated by City at Peace and my research sample, point to cultural/racial differences as the core cause of problems, I argue that this view does not problematize 'culture', 'race' or the underlying nature of 'friction theory' that assumes 'cultural clashes' to be inevitable. Furthermore, conflict must be considered in terms of the breakdown of familial relations, the legacy of structural violence, and the perpetuation of patriarchal discourses in South African society, which, according to my research sample, appear to be at the forefront of their life difficulties.

Unfortunately, discourses of multiculturalism get appropriated by organizations such as City at Peace that do not critically engage with uses and understandings of racial classification and 'culture' as understood and put into practice by young people in South Africa. Multicultural discourses also filter down to young people's peer groups. All levels of society reproduce discourses of multiculturalism that continuously reiterate the notion that racial and cultural differences must be overcome to move towards a 'better' South Africa. It is easy to fall into the trap of believing 'culture'/'race'-related conflict is at the core of South African societal problems because of the legacy of apartheid that segregated different racial groups. However, in contemporary South Africa it is crucial to look at the social, economical and political *repercussions* of racial classifications that continue to emphasise imbalances of power throughout South African society. Although undoubtedly tensions expressed in racial and racist terms exist throughout the country, 'race'-related interpersonal conflict is not the only problem to be resolved. Patriarchal norms, for example, are rampant throughout many aspects of South African society, making 'liberatory' ideals of the Rainbow Nation inaccessible to women (Martin 1996: 4).

In many parts of Africa today, youth consist of the majority of the population⁴⁶ and yet they are overlooked and left to fend for themselves (Honwana & De Boek 2005: 1). It is important to consider young people's performativity in attempting to make sense of social struggles and the

46 Especially because of low life expectancy rates due to high morbidity associated with HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria.

possibilities for breaking through reproductions of discourses of power. Young people's performativity in relation to 'race', 'culture', class and gender reflect both aspects of the past and also possibilities for the future in the unstable translation and interpretation process that occurs throughout different levels of society. It is crucial to deconstruct taken for granted norms, such as the 'culture'/ 'race' complex in order to identify which aspects of South African society should be addressed in the making of a 'better' South Africa. The past is an inescapable fact of the present. Paying attention to the subtleties of the past in young people's discourses and the not-as-subtle legacies of interpersonal and structural violence allow for a more complex consideration of conflict, and lays the foundations for better conflict resolution strategies for the future of South Africa's next generation.

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