Tonal Landscapes:
Re-membering the interiority of lives of apartheid through the family album of the oppressed

By

Siona O'Connell
(OCNSON001)

Submitted to the University of Cape Town
in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy
Centre for African Studies, University of Cape Town.

Date of Submission: 10 February 2012

Supervisors:
Professor Anthony Bogues, Africana Studies, Brown University
Dr. Nick Shepherd, Centre for African Studies. UCT.

Declaration

I, Siona O'Connell hereby declare that the work on which this thesis is based is my original work (except where acknowledgements indicate otherwise) and that neither the whole work nor any part of it has been, is being, or is to be submitted for another degree in this or any other university.

I authorise the University to reproduce for the purpose of research either the whole or any portion of the contents in any manner whatsoever.

Signature:

Date:

Remembering is never a quiet act of introspection or retrospection. It is a painful re-membering, a putting together of the dismembered past to make sense of the trauma of the present. (Bhabha, 1994: 63)

Abstract

This research seeks to be a methodological contribution to the fields of visual and memory studies. It enters these conversations through the family photograph found in the home of forcibly removed ex-residents of Roger Street, District Six, Cape Town in an attempt to think about ways of living during and after apartheid.

Through this study, practically and theoretically, I engage with the challenges of restorative justice and contemplate how the family photograph may be engaged as a transactional object of translation in this contested area. I look at apartheid through District Six land claims and address as well, questions of trauma, memory, and freedom in the aftermath of apartheid. This dissertation therefore seeks to place three seemingly distinct literatures in the same frame: that of photography, that of memory, and that of justice and freedom.

Conflicts over land, both local and global, range across the continuum, where long-term residents are displaced to make way for new developments and the other extreme where residents are forcibly displaced, violently evicted. What is clear in all of these instances, however, is that the problem cannot be reduced to one of monetary remuneration, that the land itself is imbued with meaning that cannot be measured in monetary terms. It is important to recognize – not only that land/place may mean different things to different people, but also that it can mean multiple "things" to the same person. Unless we recognize the multidimensionality of the meanings of land, as well thinking about what it means to be oppressed, any attempts to engage in restitution or restorative justice are destined to fail.

This thesis attempts to think through how an ordinary object – the photograph – can be used to gain an interior look into how oppressed people lived during apartheid, and how they

continue to live after its demise. Antjie Krog's book, *Country of My Skull* draws attention to the issue of death during apartheid. What this thesis does is to look at what happens to those who lived through apartheid and how they deal with the aftermath. It looks at the move from death to life.

The family photograph may at first glance appear to have little in common with the issue of restorative justice. They both however speak of public and private, of remembering and mourning, of death and life, of absence and presence. They are both prone to multiple interpretations, as well as being at the cutting edge of contemporary and political debates. Taken together, the family photograph and visual studies form a forceful space, initiating inter-disciplinary dialogue and providing a creative and scholarly engagement that has both local and global implications.

Contents

Acknowledgements

I am indebted to Professor Anthony Bogues for his guidance and inspiration. His commitment to my project has ensured that the completion of this PhD was a life-changing event.

I need to thank Dr Nick Shepherd for believing in my work from the very beginning.

Thank you to the staff of Africana Studies at Brown University for hosting me as a TRP Fellow in 2010 as well as Beverley Sutherland-Lewis at the University of the West Indies for her assistance during this program.

My thanks to UCT Post Graduate Funding Office, The Harry Oppenheimer Institute, The National Research Council and The National Arts Council.

In addition, I would like to extend my thanks and gratitude to following individuals: Dr Harry Garuba of the Centre African Studies for believing in my teaching abilities; Mrs. Lilian Jacobs who is a constant pillar of strength; Dale Washkansky for his friendship and assistance in design, Christoff van Wyk for design, Teena Dewoo for research assistance, Dr Rick Rohde for many engaging hours of conversation and debate and Brett Syndercombe for his unenviable role of editing.

I am humbled by the constant inspiration and love of my sister, Lesley O'Connell and the joy of my nephews, Oliver, Mila and Noah. I thank my parents, Patrick and Elaine O'Connell for their enthusiasm, participation, encouragement and guidance. I am indebted to them for the many hours of conversations that forms the basis of this thesis. In this vein too, I thank my uncle, Professor Brian O'Connell, my aunt, Wendy O'Connell, Ismail Bassler, Moreldia Davids, Achmat Hoosain, Riefie Isaacs, Fatima Solomons, Dr Kevin Adams, Fr Gerard Masters, Adrian Lackay and Tina Smith.

My thanks and love to my father for proof-reading.

My gratitude is extended to Euan Keir for quietly being in my corner.

Finally, my love and thanks to my son Seumus, to whom this body of work is dedicated.

List of Acronyms

Iziko SANG: Iziko South African Gallery

Iziko SAM: Iziko South African Museum

TRC: The Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

UCT: The University of Cape Town.

WCOHP: Western Cape Oral History Project

Keywords

Apartheid

Archive

Photography

Oppression

District Six

Land Claims

Memory

Trauma

Restoration

Freedom

List of Figures

Figure 1

Untitled

Black and White Photograph

120 x 160 mm

CHAPTER 1

Deferred Dreams, Obscured Lives

In search for resolution

This letter issues a warning to those, including me, who step into this shadowing realm of ghosts and photographs, whose steps inevitably trespass into the sites and traces of death, of lives effaced, of genocide. A letter to those who are living the trespass through indirect memories, who are removed from its rawest imprints. …[It] communicates through the inevitable distance of postmemories and is underlined with a plea not to re-create the violence through the inevitable trespass.[1]

Photography implies that we know about the world if we accept it as the camera records it. But this is the opposite of understanding, which starts from not accepting the world as it looks.[2]

History in the present is not about burden or mourning; it is about accounting for the population of the dead. But this dead population is not dead, because their actions leave traces that work to configure the world. In this sense, our present historical actions are dialogues between the living and the dead. … To engage in this dialogue we remember wounds, but more importantly, we hear the cries produced by wounds.[3]

Ordinary Images

I start this journey of mine with a wedding photograph of my parents, Patrick O'Connell and Elaine Singh, taken on 3 January 1965. Their wedding album, the only formal album in their

1 Liss, A. (1998). Trespassing through shadows: memory, photography, and the Holocaust. Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press.
p. xi.

2 Sontag, S. (1973). On Photography. New York, Farrar, Strauss and Giroux.
p. 23.

3 Bogues, A. (2010). Empire of Liberty: Power, Desire and Freedom. Hanover, NH, University Press of New England.
p. 116

collection of family images, is commanding; my fingers are drawn to the padded, yellowing covers and the opaque tissue leaves that keep the images apart. In this album, all the images are humble black-and-whites and 8″ x 10″s. I see my mother as a twenty-year-old bride, immaculate in her bespoke hand-stitched dress, complete with veil, bouquet, manicured nails and discreet jewelry. She is beautiful by any standard, as she stands next to her groom, who, whilst he appears gawky in an ill-fitting off-the-rack suit, is confident that he has landed the most beautiful girl in the world. Further images in the album show other family members. These are the usual bridal attendants — brothers, cousins and nieces, my maternal grandmother "Lettie" Singh, as well as my paternal grandparents, Herbert and "Drina" O'Connell. In addition to photographs taken of the marriage ceremony inside Holy Cross Catholic Church in Nile Street, District Six, most of the other images have been taken in the Company Gardens[4] in Government Avenue located in Cape Town's city centre, a mere stone's throw from the Houses of Parliament and the South African Museum — institutions which have no small bearing on this work. I have no idea why I have chosen to look specifically to these images in an attempt to make sense of my place in this world; why I am resorting to the study of these flimsy pieces of fading and stained paper as a way to resolve my seeming struggles of metaphorical homelessness. Am I overly ambitious when I ask these images to assuage my past and to attend to my future and that of my son — as we navigate our lives in a world that puts price tags on our skins? Am I looking to these images to end my search for relief from disrupted landscapes and lives? Am I looking to end the continual deferment of dreams? I am hoping that these images may attend to the injuries of my past and free me from the rigid strictures of composition I experience within this corporeal frame in which I, the reluctant case in point, have been unwillingly implicated.

The photograph intrigues me, particularly the family photograph. I am drawn to the magic[5] of the camera and its ability to play with light, resulting in 4″ x 6″ pieces of paper[6] of numerous

4 "The garden was formally established in 1652 by Dutch settlers who sought to establish a victualling station to service and re-provision spice-trading sailing ships on the long sea route to the east. It was superimposed on a landscape that was occupied occasionally by indigenous hunter gatherers and modified by pastoralists who used the area in the standard migratory agricultural pattern of the time". See http://www.capetown.gov.za/en/parks/facilities/Pages/CapeTownGardens.aspx .

5 Although the darkroom fascinates me, I refer to the writing of French theorist, Roland Barthes, who comments on the seemingly otherworldly quality of photography - "we keep in mind the magical character of the photographic image". (Barthes: 1980: 42).

6 Traditionally photos have been in sizes such as 4" x 6 ", 5" x 7", 8" x 10" and 14" x 11". I have as yet not found any images that are the focus of this paper, which are larger than 8" x 10", perhaps because larger prints were more expensive. The 4" x 6 " size appears to be the standard of the era.

coloured, or black and white grains. A seemingly innocuous object, a photograph is constituted by present – and absent marks, a positive — dependent on its negative for its existence.[7] It is paradoxical in its composition, being at once objective and invested, natural and cultural.[8]

I realise that between and through these grains a palimpsest unfolds, snapshots of birthday parties, youth group outings, first communions and weddings – there are seldom images of funerals. Perhaps it is that in every photographic image, these nondescript pieces of paper so often found in dusty cardboard boxes, we witness the meanderings of the dead. These old snaps deliver a summons for us to look, to answer, to provide a voice for those silenced and unable to speak — the muted. This call demands that I step into the frame as a hesitant witness, knowing the burden of representation and the difficulties and dilemmas of retrospective witnessing. It is to these family photographs that I must now respond; looking to find resolution in the many ghostly faces that will emerge from this archive. A resolution free from nostalgia, knowing that parts of this exploration will be incomprehensible, open-ended, that the witnessing is perhaps impossible.[9] It is a response to an appeal, one that is impossible to ignore, for as Emmanuel Levinas writes

> The face is not in front of me …but above me: it is the other before death. Secondly, the face is the other who asks me not to let him die alone, as if to do so were to become an accomplice to his death.[10]

This thesis will look at the meaning imbued in the place of District Six — through the family photograph. This work traverses the lines between death and life, and asks us to consider the interiority of lives during, and after, apartheid. It will attempt to tease apart, through the archive of the family album, just what it means to be displaced, to be told that you do not belong,

7 This refers to the film camera that relies on the capture of light on light-sensitive film producing a negative image, from which a positive may be printed by again using the exposure of light.

8 Thomas Stubblefield in discussing Roland Barthes. See Stubblefield, T. (2009). Between the Officer and the Artist. Photographs, Histories and Meanings. M. Kadar, Perreault,Jeanne, Warley, Linda. New York, Palgrave & MacMillan**:** p. 167-184.

9 Liss, A. (1998). Trespassing through shadows: memory, photography, and the Holocaust. Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press.

10 Levinas, E., Kearney, Richard (1986). Dialogue with Emmanuel Levinas. Face to Face with Levinas. E. Levinas, Kearney, Richard. Albany, SUNY Press.
p. 23-24

that you do not matter. It will look at the notion of home and belonging within the larger conversations of citizenship in South Africa. Through the family album, (the notion of which will be discussed) I will engage with the challenges of restorative justice, attempting to re-member the place of District Six as one that has the potential for dialogue, transformation and empowerment. It will look at remembering, forgetting, injury and trauma. The album of the oppressed offers a space that can provide an illumination into the ethical questions that Anthony Bogues poses: "What kind of human beings are we …And how therefore shall we live?"[11] This story therefore is fundamentally a 'black'[12] story, with all the attendant violence and trauma that is embedded in the 'black' body. The study will therefore try to understand how the family album of a 'black' family may be engaged as a forum; as a transactional site of translation, and in so doing, will strive to present my imaginings of how freedom may yet look in South Africa.[13]

This memory work is underscored by an understanding that apartheid and colonial contusions, regardless of temporal distance, have to be attended to and as such I offer that it is precisely the temporal and other displacements in the photograph that can bridge this chasm. The temporal gap – the distance in time and space between when the camera shutter is released and when the processed image is viewed - disrupts linearity and implicates the viewer in that time and space. In looking at a photograph, one is placed within and outside the frame – looking at and defining the Other - and is simultanelously aware of both the passage and the freezing of time. As Zaslove and Lowry suggest, photography does not simply blur boundaries, it breaks into the processes of memories and dreams.[14] It is in this disorientation that new, critical and dialogic meanings can be made, acknowledging that there are multiple points of view in the unstable present and tenuous future. The photograph as an image is important because it connects memories, histories and languages in a very real way. Photographs are

11 Bogues, A. (2010). Empire of Liberty: Power, Desire and Freedom. Hanover, NH, University Press of New England.

12 I have been profoundly influenced by the writings of Frantz Fanon, and as such, I struggle with racial categories. Having lived my entire life as a 'coloured' woman, I will therefore refer to racial terms in this manner throughout this thesis as a deliberate comment on the categorisation of people according to their skin colour. Also, 'coloured' will be referred to as 'black', although I will look at this term in its complexities in the South African context later in this thesis.

13 On the notions of the imagination, freedom and the human, I draw heavily from the work of Professor Anthony Bogues, particularly his 2010 book, *Empire of Liberty: Power, Desire and Freedom.*

14 Zaslove, J., Lowry, Glen (2006). Talking Through: The Space Around Four Pictures. Locating Memory: Photographic Acts. Remapping Cultural History A. Kuhn, McAllister, Kirsten E. New York, Oxford, Berghahn Books**:** 247-268.

never simple representations; on the contrary they convey sets of meanings that are embedded in very palpable social, political and economic frames. The photographic album, particularly the autobiographical album, is considered by sociologists and psychologists to be particularly fluid, they propose that these albums "encode memory, or camouflage them behind ritual or psychological screens".[15] Photographs are more than the two dimensional objects that they at first appear to be, for in their materiality and place that they occupy — their multiple overt, opaque and covert representations — they offer a haven for the imagination to take root.

This study will be of this archive which may facilitate and undergird the broader questions of restorative justice in the South African context and what it means to be human, by largely examining the definitions, understandings and limitations of restoration in post-apartheid South Africa. These questions have profound implications for post 1994 South Africa, as they seek to confront "legacies of historical injustice and historical trauma"[16] which continue to play themselves out in often tragically violent ways on several socio-economic levels in South Africa. How may an alternate visual archive look, one that can imagine the production of a different kind of knowledge? I propose that it is in the ambiguity of the family photograph found *in the home*, in the multiplicity of its meanings[17] in *that* space that we may see another archive of District Six, one that will open up exploration, underscored by an understanding that fixing meanings is an impossibility, which in turn means we must attend to "practices of looking".[18] And, it is in this looking that I hope that this place, District Six, and its ex-residents, can re-imagine the unenacted rites of mourning and attend to their unaccounted losses — some seventeen years after the first democratic elections in South Africa.

The roots of the archive, asserts Algerian born theorist Jacques Derrida in his 1995 essay *Mal d'archive* (*Archive Fever*) lie in the etymology of the word 'archive'. The word has a connection to the Greek work *arkheîon* (meaning place, address) of the a*rchontes* (those who rule and command).

15 Langford, M. (2006). Speaking the Album. An Application of the Oral-Photographic Framework. Locating Memory. Photographic Acts. Remapping Cultural History. M. a. K. Langford, A. Oxford and New York, Berghahn Books**:** 223-246.
p. 226.

16 Bogues, A. (2010). Empire of Liberty: Power, Desire and Freedom. Hanover, NH, University Press of New England.
ch.2.

17 Kadar, M., Perreault, Jeanne., Warley, Linda (2009). Introduction: Ambiguities, Distortions, Shifts. Photograhs, Histories and Meanings. M. Kadar, Perreault,Jeanne, Warley, Linda. New York, Palgrave MacMillan**:** 1-8.

18 Baetens, J. (2007). Conceptual Limitations of our Reflections on Photography: The Question of Interdisciplinarity. Photographic Theory. J. Elkins. New York, Routledge**:** 53-73.

In this essay Derrida maintains that the past continues to haunt the present and announce the future. Derrida reminds us that the word 'archive' is rooted in the Greek word *arkheîon* and *archontes*.[19]

David Bell astutely sums up Derrida's understanding of archives, power and violence where the notion of gate keeping, knowledge and rule of law is inscribed both in and by the archive. As Bell says:

> [I]n this space, set off from public place, rulers have the right not only to store official documents, but also to interpret them. The right to govern is always already a hermeneutic right, the right to assign meaning to and to make sense of the documents which, taken together, furnish the foundation and justification for the law.[20]

Derrida comments further on the archive, saying:

> The disasters that have marked the end of the millennium are also the *archives of evil*: hidden or destroyed, off limits, stolen, repressed.[21]

I concur with post-colonial theorist Achille Mbembe who claims that the archive is also about death:

> Archiving is a kind of interment, laying something in a coffin, if not to rest, then at least to consign elements of that life which could not be destroyed purely and simply. These elements, removed from time and from life, are perfectly recognisable because it is consecrated: the archives. Assigning them to this place makes it possible to establish an unquestionable authority over them and to tame the violence and cruelty of which

19 Bell, D. F. (2004). " Infinite Archives." Substance **33**(105: Special Issue): 148-161.

20 Ibid.
p. 150 - 151.

21 Derrida cited by Steedman. Steedman, C. (2001). "Something She Called a Fever: Michelet, Derrida and Dust." American Historical Review: 21.
vp. 10.

the 'remains' are capable, especially when these are abandoned to their own devices.[22]

An archive has several routines, among them gathering, selecting, and preserving records. Within these activities, strategies of representation help to create and preserve the world within which these archives are placed. How then are we to imagine a different archive? What are the ways of resisting this power? Is it possible to access these spaces through an unmediated lens? Importantly, how may subjectivities — power, imagination and freedom — be re-figured through the archive? How may it be redeemed and re-imagined? For as Derrida, in referring to Sigmund Freud insists:

> We are *mal d'archive;* in need of archives… It is to burn with a passion. It is never to rest, interminably, from searching for the archive, right where it slips away. It is to run after the archive. …It is to have a compulsive, repetitive, and nostalgic desire for the archive, an irrepressible desire to return to the origin, homesickness. […] An archive without archive, where, suddenly indiscernible from the impression of its imprint, Gradiva's footsteps speaks by itself. [23]

'Black' bodies

Among my earliest and fragmentary memories are those of District Six, an iconic area in terms of forced removals in the history of South Africa. Apartheid South Africa, having been born out of colonialist practices that were economic in nature, ensured that this area, named the Sixth Municipal District of Cape Town in 1867, was well versed in forced removals. This started in 1901 when 'black' South Africans were removed and continuing until the ultimate removal of some 60 000 residents by 1982. [24]

Frantz Fanon's work has particular resonance when thinking through the meanings of the

22 Mbembe, A. (2002). The Power of the Archive and its Limits. Refiguring the Archive. C. H. Hamilton, V.; Pickover, M.; Reid, G.; Saleh, R.; Taylor, J. Cape Town, David Phillip. p. 22.

23 Derrida, J. (1995). Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression. Chicago, The University of Chicago Press. p .90.

24 See the District Six Museum's page at http://www.districtsix.co.za/frames.htm. [Accessed 16 August 2009].

family album of the 'black' family in South Africa. Born in 1925 in the French colony of Martinique, this psychiatrist and anti-colonial activist and theorist of the groundbreaking work, *Black skin White masks* published in 1952, raised powerful questions of race, corporeality, the gaze and the epistemic violence of colonialism. He raises key questions as to the by-products and detritus of colonialism.

> The white man wants the world; he wants it for himself alone. He finds himself predestined master of this world. He enslaves it. […] I was not mistaken. It was hate; I was hated, despised, detested, not by the neighbor across the street or my cousin on my mother's side, but by an entire race. I was up against something unreasoned.[25]

As a 'black' man, whose life work and experiences underscored his being, Fanon articulates the invention of the human, and is preoccupied with the question of the 'black' body not being human.

> A feeling of inferiority? No a feeling of non-existence. Sin is Negro as virtue is white. All those white men in a group, guns in their hands, cannot be wrong. I am guilty. I do not know of what, but I know that I am no good. [26]

His other work, *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961) was written when Fanon's body was under siege (he was dying from leukemia), and while he was living in an Algeria which was in the midst of an active liberation struggle. Fanon is therefore well versed in the language of violence, and raises the issue of violence in relation to colonialism and liberation. He stresses the violence of the practices of colonialism. Torture, as evident in the Algerian war of independence, is indicative of this violence perpetrated on the 'black' body. The idea of "historical catastrophe",[27] therefore has particular significance when thinking through and dealing with the still-present "problem of

25 Fanon, F. (1967). Black Skin White Masks. New York, Grove. p. 97,107.

26 Fanon, F. (1967). Black Skin White Masks. New York, Grove. p. 118.

27 Bogues, A. (2010). Empire of Liberty: Power, Desire and Freedom. Hanover, NH, Dartmouth College Press.

the black" — as Du Bois suggests[28]— and in particular, her body.

Fanon is also preoccupied with the body, as there are significant visual and non-visual ways in which oppression marks the body. Identity, space, and the body in space are all articulated through the body itself. As blackness is conveyed through the visual, visuality is paramount in Fanon's writing. Before anything, blackness is seen and, after that first viewing, the 'black' body is constructed as different, lacking in relation to the cornerstone of civilization and humanity, the white colonialist figure. Visual representation and the gaze are fore-grounded as sites of power and knowledge, measuring the tones of the skin as signifiers of racial difference,[29] this act of grading itself becoming part of the civilized colonial skill set.

In *The invention of Africa: Gnosis, philosophy and the order of knowledge,*[30] the Congolese philosopher Valentin Mudimbe looks at the Western propensity of double representation. Double representation, being at once similar, but different and lacking, sees 'black' bodies as reduced to being simply white bodies blackened; 'black' bodies are thus reduced to representations of the white norm. This double representation is eloquently demonstrated in Mudimbe's reference to Hans Burgmair's painting *Exotic Tribe* (1508) – one in a series of paintings illustrating Bartolomäus Springer's overseas travels. Although Burgmair reads Springer's descriptions he does not engage with those described by Springer. On this basis, and from this distance, Burgmair creates his version of the "blacks in Gennea".[31] Since his realm of experience and knowledge is limited (he did not have the luxury to refer to Springer's photographs) the artist uses white models to paint 'black' bodies. The models do little more than to mirror Burgmair's own cosmos back to him, and yet while they are thought to be same, they are also perceived nonetheless as other:

> There is another level, a more discreet one. It establishes a second representation that unites through similitude and eventually articulates distinctions and separations, thus classifying identities… on the one hand, signs of an epistemological order which, silently but imperatively, indicates the processes of integrating and differentiating figures within

28 Du Bois, W. E. B. (1903). The Souls of Black Folk. New York, Library of America.

29 See Hall, S. (1996). The Afterlife of Frantz Fanon: Why Fanon? Why now? Why Black Skin White Masks. The Fact of Blackness: Frantz Fanon and Visual Representation. A. Read. Seattle, Bay Press**:** 12-37.

30 Mudimbe, V. (1988).The Invention of Africa: Gnosis, Philosophy and the Order of Knowledge. Oxford, James Curry.

31 Ibid.
p .7.

> the normative sameness; on the other hand, the excellence of an exotic picture that creates a cultural, distance thanks to an accumulation of accidental differences.[32]

Fanon argues convincingly that power resides in the flesh, the corporeal, which is then translated into words, labels, and binaries. His words are an eloquent illustration of these binaries and bear an unsettling kinship with photography: the photographic negative gives rise to the original, but never quite measures up to the positive and as such is hardly ever exhibited. The imprint on, and emergence of, a 'black' body, from unmarked, brilliant white photographic paper is a powerful visual dynamic that sums up Fanon's assertion that:

> Overnight, the Negro has been given two frames of reference within which to place himself … For not only must the black man be black; he must be black in relation to the white man.[33]

Fanon's concerns with the corporeal and the body as an intermediary, draws our attention to the work of Michel Foucault. Foucault famously and extensively comments on power relations, the relationships of subjects, domination and exploitation etc. This necessarily alerts me to the performance of violence *on* the 'black' body, and *beyond* its flesh; Foucault says:

> A relationship of violence acts upon a body or upon things; it forces, it bends, it breaks, it destroys, or it closes off all possibilities. Its opposite pole can only be passivity, and if it comes up against any resistance it has no option but to try and break it down. [34]

Crucial is the question of degree, of the absolute devastation of this racial violence, which in order to maintain its dominion, has to obliterate everything offering resistance, ceasing to stop even when nothing is seemingly left — not even the traces of bodies, of experiences, of lives

32 Ibid.
p .9.

33 Fanon, F. (1967). Black Skin White Masks. New York, Grove.
p. 110.

34 Foucault, M. (2000). "The Subject and Power" Power.: The Essential Works of Michel Foucault. New York, The New Press.
p. 340.

— resulting in a place of 'less that absence', of 'less than nothingness', a space that is devoid of what may have been. Foucault asks how this power is exercised? What are the practices of total control? How can we understand it in ways that allow us to make sense of the present? How can we enter these spaces that disrupt the perpetuation of the subject and disturb the status quo and move beyond that which may not even have been imagined? How can the 'black' subject reclaim her soul, her conscience and her secrets? Fanon asks, "How can we extricate ourselves?"[35] Bogues guides me to the heart of this question, by positing "the possibility that violence, particularly genocidal violence, is power".[36] Acknowledgement this then, we can imagine the album of the oppressed as one that speaks directly to colonial — and by extension apartheid — power, confronting it operations and its ghostly traces which undeniably continue to perform in post-South Africa.

District Six

Derrida's assertion of ghostly traces[37] is manifested by the vacant tracts of District Six, the land surface now revealing little, if anything, to attest to its fractured, traumatised and tortured history. It has been sanitised by street renaming, it is a massive graveyard without a headstone, it speaks to Maurice Blanchot's comment on absolute devastation; "The disaster ruins everything, all the while leaving everything intact".[38] This piece of land, now a corridor of grey and littered debris, is nestled on the slopes of Table Mountain, the iconic landmark of this Mother City of South Africa, apparently also abandoned as another of her difficult and tiresome offspring.

Struggles over District Six, renamed Zonnebloem (Sunflower) in 1970, continue. These are articulated through the unresolved, ugly, public and private arguments of the District Six land claims, which illuminate the battles of the past, laying bare the violence that continues to resonate, much like the lingering flash of a camera, stubbornly refusing to subside in a country

35 Fanon, F. (1967). Black Skin Whte Masks. New York, Grove Press.

36 Bogues, A. (2010). Empire of Liberty: Power, Desire and Freedom. Hanover, NH, University Press of New England.
pp. 72-3

37 Derrida, J. (1994). Specters of Marx: The State of the Debt, the Work of Mourning, and the New International. . New York, Routledge.

38 Blanchot, M. (1986). The Writing of the Disaster. Lincoln, Nebraska, University of Nebraska Press. p.1.

still coming to terms with what it means to be a "Rainbow Nation", the term coined by Nobel Laureate Archbishop Desmond Tutu in 1994. Bogues uses the notion of the "wound" in talking of lingering, repeated trauma, resulting in "an historical event of long duration".[39] Like the flash that burns a transient retinal blind spot, its act of illumination causes certain erasures, the story of District Six is one of erasure, manifesting in all its possible meanings. With the passing into law of The Land Rights Restitution Act (1994),[40] one of the first acts enacted by the first democratically elected government in South Africa, District Six ex-residents became eligible to participate in this avenue of restorative justice. Initially, half of land claimants opted for financial compensation of R17 500 ($2 400) each for tenants and R40 000 ($5 600) for owners.[41] To date, many of the claims have not been settled, with many opting not to participate or continue with what has become a protracted process. These struggles are mirrored in the other parts of Cape Town subject to the same debates, including the now exclusive and upper class Southern Suburbs areas of Constantia,Bishopscourt and Newlands.[42]

Lives Denied

Judith Butler, in her seminal book on her appraisal of post 9/11 America, *Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence* asserts that:

39 Bogues, A. (2010). Empire of Liberty: Power, Desire and Freedom. Hanover, NH, University Press of New England.
See ch.2.

40 See http://www.info.go v.za/acts/1994/a22-94.pdf. [Accessed 21 October 2010].

41 Calculated at a ROE of ZAR 7.1 to the USD.

42 The Cape Times article of 16 August 2010 makes for interesting comment: "Land claims: Neighbours not in position to dictate on Bishopscourt – court told. People living next door to state-owned land in Bishopscourt cannot interdict the government to prevent the land being restored to people dispossessed under apartheid – and if they did succeed it would amount to a perpetuation of apartheid's discriminatory spatial planning laws. A *Cape Times* report says this was argued in the Land Claims Court on behalf of claimants from the old Protea Village. Attorney and Bishopscourt resident William Booth and two commercial entities instituted a legal challenge to the Minister of Land Affairs and Agriculture's allegedly flawed decision to hand over a green public space in the suburb as part of a settlement. Michael Donen SC said the application had to fail on the basis of mootness, prematurity and applicants' lack of any standing to interdict or frustrate the award of Erf 212. Most of the erf is used as a green public space with a spring and is held in trust by the City of Cape Town, which has not opposed the application. Donen said a balance had to be struck 'in light of SA's history' between private property and ensuring that this property served the public interest. Being state-owned land, there was no alternative but to restore Erf 212. According to the report, Booth said he merely wanted the historic green public space preserved for future generations". See http://www.highbeam.com/doc/1G1-234560812.html . [Accessed 16 August 2010]

> Some lives are grievable, and others are not; the differential allocation of grievability that decides what kind of subject is and must be grieved, and which kind of subjects must not, operates to produce and maintain certain exclusionary conceptions of who is normatively human: what counts as a liveable life and a grievable death?[43]

Poet, writer and academic Gabeba Baderoon takes Butler's assertion into the South African frame when she writes that:

> The dominant ways of determining the boundaries of the human under apartheid, which were inherited from the colonial era, did not recognize Black people as human, and therefore did not recognize their deaths as deaths. Control over the meanings of death is an indication of who is regarded as human. [44]

It is in Butler and Baderoons's words where I find my question, for in my search through these family albums that contain traces of mothers, fathers, sons and daughters on picnics and fancy dress parades, of daughters dressed up for debutante balls, I am confronted by the precariousness of these lives, and the fragility of these moments. In *Specters of Marx* Derrida discusses the notion of ghosts as the returnees of that which history has repressed – ghosts are the traces of those who were not allowed to leave a trace[45] — and he suggests that:

> Ghosts must be exorcised not in order to chase them away but in order 'this time to grant them the right' … to … a hospitable memory … out of a concern for justice.[46]

I think ghosts as Derrida describes them can be read as the victims of a history who return in order to see that wrongs are rectified, that reparation is paid, that their names are engraved

43 Butler, J. (2004). Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence. London, New York, Verso. p. xiv.

44 Baderoon, G. (2004). "The Underside to the Picturesque: Meanings of Muslim Burials in Cape Town, South Africa." Arab World Geographer **7**(4): 261-275.

45 Derrida, J. (1994). Spectres of Marx: The State of the Debt, the Work of Mourning, and the New International. New York, Routledge.

46 Ibid. p. 175.

on their headstones. Derrida uses the term "hauntology" to describe another sphere of being to explain this phenomenon, this space, 'the past as that which is not and yet is there – or rather, here, this "virtual space of spectrality". These specters, which linger in photographs, bear testimony to the violence of District Six. For the violence that was enacted through the mechanisms of apartheid could only be exercised on those who were not considered human – therefore there was no destruction, no loss, and therefore *no mourning*. It is the very precise framing of the apartheid and the colonial subject which now paradoxically furnishes me with an avenue into another archive, looking for those spaces, spectres and ghosts that were previously denied and destroyed. In looking at these traces and listening to the muted cries we "begin to glimpse alternate possibilities in relation to the historically catastrophic event",[47] looking beyond exercises of restoration and freeing the 'black' and 'other' bodies into a humanity of equals. As Butler suggests:

> When versions of reality are excluded or jettisoned to [the] domain of unreality, then spectres are produced that haunt the ratified version of reality, animated and de-ratifying traces.[48]

Andre Brink's words in his powerful novel, *The Other Side of Silence,* that speak of the cycle of violence, death and hate are particularly resonant;

> Sounds do not disappear, not ever, not really. …What happens when they appear to fade away, like the sounds of the bell from the square, particularly at night, is that they grow very small in order to fit into a hiding place where they cannot readily be found by those who do not know how to listen.[49]

47 Bogues, A. (2010). Empire of Liberty: Power, Desire and Freedom. Hanover, NH, University Press of New England.

48 Butler, J. (2009). Frames of War: When is Life Grievable. London, New York, Verso. p. xiii.

49 Brink, A. (2003). The Other Side of Silence. London, Vintage. p. 37.

An ordinary lens

I offer that it is in looking at and 'listening' to the photograph that the process of mourning of the ungrievable may be imagined — as if it is a text that is tied up in memory, injury and loss. As Bogues comments, referring to Toni Morrison's *Beloved,*

> Memory work is the recounting of the initial traumatic event and its terrible consequences. The event is too horrible to remember but must be remembered. The politics of such memory work is a complicated matter, but it pushes power to acknowledge a historical wrong.[50]

Martha Langford's assertion is particularly helpful in that she considers that the speaking of the album is the album's ordering principle.[51] The parallels between photography and orality are illuminating as the photograph readily provides a canvas for memory in oral consciousness. My use of the word 'memory' needs to be cautious, employed (and read) only with the cognisant awareness that it is considered the "new critical conjunction of history and theory"[52] and likewise mindful that its scholarship is fairly new.[53] Perhaps my reflections of memory needs to encompass the relationship between re-imagining history and the tools and structures of memory, in this case, the photograph. The trajectory Roland Barthe's work displays a constant regard and appreciation of the photographic image, specifically the understanding of History as a "series of snapshots, of immobile yet unstable exposures".[54] Patrick Hutton's interpretation of memory is helpful where he considers that memory is made up of two moments, recollections

50 Bogues, A. (2010). Empire of Liberty: Power, Desire and Freedom. Hanover, NH, University Press of New England.
p. 52.

51 Langford, M. (2006). Speaking the Album: An Application of the Oral-Photgraphic Framework. Locating Memory: Photographic Acts. A. Kuhn, McAllister, Kirsten E. New York, Oxford, Berghahn Books**:** 223-246.

52 Klein, K. L. (2000). "On the Emergence of Memory in Historical Discourse." Representations 69 (Special Issue: Grounds for Remembering): 127-150. p. 128

53 It is interesting to see that in 1964 the *Dictionary of Social Sciences* claimed that the word 'memory' verged on extinction. The 1968 edition of *The International Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences* declined to define memory at all. Ibid.

54 Rabate, J.-M. (1997). Introduction. Writing the Image after Roland Barthes. J.-M. Rabate. Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press**:** 1-18.
p. 1.

(present representations of the past) and repetition (presence of the past).[55] I need to be not only frugal with the use of the word 'memory', but unambiguous, careful not to use simply because it is contemporary and sounds less jarring and distant than the oft more accurate — 'history'. As Kerwin Klein comments:

> scholarly fascination with things memorable is quite new […] "collective memory" emerged as an object of scholarly enquiry only in the early twentieth century, contemporaneous with the so-called crisis of historicism.[56]

Annette Kuhn has written

> Memory work is a method and practice of unearthing and making public untold stories, of lives lived out on the borderlands, lives for which the central interpretive devices of the culture don't quite work… Engaging as it does the psychic and the social, memory work bridges the divide between inner and outer worlds.[57]

Is the photograph locatable in relation to memory or does it retain its indubitable enigma? I contend that both the photograph and the memory are intrinsically connected; both are paradoxes, speaking at once of absence and presence, of forgetting and remembering, of life and of death. When once again referencing death and loss, Barthes records his attempts to recover memories through family photographs – he was looking for a photograph of his mother who had just died in an attempt to 'bring her back' – he can but state the obvious, reflecting that the photograph has the unique ability to capture in the present an event that happened in the past. Barthes, importantly, and in order not to fix a meaning in a manner that would close off his image of his mother and thereby actually facilitate his forgetting of her, found an image of her taken in an unfamiliar way, thus opening up another knowing of her.

55 Hutton, P. (1993). History as an Art of Memory. Hanover,NH, University of Vermont.

56 Klein, K. L. (2000). "On the Emergence of Memory in Historical Discourse." Representations **69**(Special Issue: Grounds for Remembering): 127-150. p. 127.

57 Kuhn, A. (2002). Family Secrets: Acts of Memory and Imagination. London, New York, Verso. p. 9.

It is difficult at first to think of a family photograph as violent, or indeed as objects that speak of violence. Barthes eases this difficulty in saying that although the subject matter may not be violent, it is the image's ability to fill the sight by force (which is violent) with something that cannot be transformed or refused. Nor can we forget the violence of the camera's flash which momentarily blinds those in front of the camera and not the photographer. As Barthes says further in his book, *Camera Lucida*, to look is:

> To shudder over a catastrophe which has already occurred – regardless of whether the subject in the photograph is really dead.[58]

Postmemory, a concept developed by Marianne Hirsch is characterised as

> The experience of those who grow up dominated by narratives that preceded their birth, whose own belated stories are evacuated by the stories of the previous generation shaped by traumatic events that can neither be understood nor recreated.[59]

Hirsch's astute assertion commands attention as we consider that the generation of those evicted from District Six are now well into their seventies and eighties. Their narratives, along with those of ex-residents already deceased, appear to be fading to sepia, being neither the highlights of an absolute black or a vivid white faithfully presented by a perfectly exposed photograph, but rather melting into a mixture of nostalgia, the recollections of an ageing grandparent, or the coffee table books bought by tourists. However, District Six forces itself into contemporary narratives, into those performed by the children and grandchildren and their extended families, however far removed they may be from the area both in time and space, they are ceded an entire *bildungsroman,* imprinted and outlined, much like the *Gradivas* relief, embossed, onto their

58 Barthes, R. (1993). Camera Lucida. London, Vintage Press.
p. 22.

59 Hirsch, M. (197). Family Frames: Photographs, Narratives and Postmemory. Cambridge,MA, London, Harvard University Press.
p. 22.

lives.[60] These are not just "flashbacks",[61] because for 'black' families, the social and economic realities generated by the colour of their skins — as Fanon calls it, "the epidermalisation of this inferiority" — continues to resonate,[62] Regardless. Within a Foucauldian understanding, where the past is continually being remolded in the present, the place of their birth, where they went to school, the conversations they have at Christmas, who they married, where they will die and be buried, all of these elements can in some way or another can be traced back to this place, District Six. I remember my bewilderment at seeing my grandfather, a tall, intelligent man with a thunderous voice and matching wit, reduced to a shadow in a colourless third floor flat in Hanover Park, a desolate 'project' on the Cape Flats. It seemed to me that once he was evicted from District Six, he never quite left his new bedroom; he always seemed to be stopped in exactly the same spot, standing just to the left of his bed, which looked enormous in its tiny room. In hindsight, I now think, that it was his ultimate emasculation.

I return to his wedding photograph, taken about seventy years ago at Holy Cross Catholic Church, showing a newly married couple and their party, a nostalgic composition that reveals little of the struggles, violence and lost opportunities that were soon to follow. It does not overtly speak of loss that was to come and which stubbornly resonates. This is captured by Ulrich Baer's assertion that:

> This possibility that photographs capture inexperienced events creates a striking parallel between the workings of the camera and the structure of traumatic memory.[63]

It is this image which binds me to my father and his father, it is no co-incidence, and is also perhaps fitting in fact, that I find that my endeavor for a metaphorical homecoming, a re-imagined repatriation, – a return to the father – is enacted through this, and other photographs taken before I was born in a land of other's memories and horizons.

60 In the photographic darkroom, the idea of *bas-relief* refers to the sandwiching (slightly out of register) of a high-contrast negative with its positive, resulting in an exceptionally high contrast image.

61 See Bogues, A. (2010). Empire of Liberty: Power, Desire and Freedom. Hanover, NH, University Press of New England.

62 Fanon, F. (1967). Black Skin White Masks. New York, Grove Press. p. 11.

63 Baer, U. (2002). Spectral Evidence: The Photography of Trauma. Cambridge, Mass, London, MIT Press. p. 8.

Figure 2

Untitled

Black and White Photograph

150 x 87 mm

These memories and histories are inscribed on 'black' bodies as visible and invisible shadows that perform in a million different ways, often illuminated unexpectedly in anger, hurt and regret, they are the intangibles that I yearn to make nascent and which Brink gestures towards when he writes:

> We are all in search for that what we have not had, are we not? The children, the dreams, everything that was never allowed to become what might have been. Everything what diminishes what we are capable of and now will never know.[64]

The photograph is furthermore able to speak of multiple and simultaneous deaths, it is a text of — and between — deaths. It is particularly well suited as an *aide-mémoire*, contributing to a different and constantly changing form of knowledge as it articulates what Barthes refers to as a "continuous message".[65] As those codes that govern readings and understandings of the photographic text are organic and constantly changing, equally will the photographic text be re-figured and re-interpreted.[66] As Macgregor Wise adds:

> An encountered photograph glows with memories (though not necessarily nostalgia) of experiences, of history, of family, friends. What creates that glow is the articulation of subject (homemaker) to object (home- marker), caught up in a mutual becoming-home. But that becoming opens up onto other milieus, other markers, other spaces (distant in space and/or time).[67]

Following on from Barthes and Wise, I would like to assert that the family photograph can be situated in the context of a recognition, a mnemonic device which refigures the past; making them then, in effect, tools of re-cognition.

The invention of the camera in Europe in the mid-nineteenth century resulted in a medium

64 Brink, A. (2003). The Other Side of Silence. London, Vintage. p. 269.
65 Barthes, R. (1993). Camera Lucida. London, Vintage Press.
66 Stubblefield, T. (2009). Between the Officer and the Artist. Photographs, Histories and Meanings. M. Kadar, Perreault,Jeanne, Warley, Linda. New York, Palgrave & MacMillan**:** 167-184.
67 Wise, M. (2000). "Home, Territory and Identity." Cultural Studies **14**: 295-310. p. 298.

that rivaled painting in the depiction of 'the real'. This device with its ability to capture the visual world using the disparate sciences of optics, mechanics and chemistry, gave birth to a genre that encapsulates the Age of Reason, one that 'fixes a moment in time' — as it were. The family, which has the dual statuses of legal structure and armature for relationships, has had connections to photography since the inception of the medium[68] with photography deftly stepping in to rival paintings in family portraiture. With the invention of the roll film in 1883, and the emergence of the well-known Kodak camera in 1888, family photography became far more accessible. The photographic documentation of families has a long legacy, perhaps most notably with the Farm Security Administration images taken during the Great Depression, through which photographers such as Dorothy Lange and Walker Evans rose to prominence. Edward Steichen's 1955 project, *The Family of Man*, wherein he assembled over 500 images of families from across the globe in another signal incident.[69]

Susan Sontag points out that family photography became popular in a period of mass industrialisation, urbanisation and migration, and that family photos have always been "a portable kit of images that bears witness to [a family's] connectedness" when they no longer live together.[70] Gillian Rose, in her work in South East England makes compelling arguments as to the materiality of the family photograph, specifically how these images function as objects which are *not* traded or sold.[71] Artist Dale Washkansky makes a similar point related to the pricelessness of the family photograph when he recounts his mother's material priorities:

> My mother, ironically, has always been terrified of fire and we used to live three houses down from the mountain. She always used to say that if there was a fire the first thing she would take with her were the albums and oddly she used to express this quite often.[72]

68 Klein, K. L. (2000). "On the Emergence of Memory in Historical Discourse." Representations **69**(Special Issue: Grounds for Remembering): 127-150.
, Peretz, H. (2005). Facing One's Own' in Family: Photographers photograph their families. London, New York, Phaidon Press Limited.

69 Ibid

70 Sontag, S. (1973). On Photography. New York, Farrar, Strauss and Giroux.
p. 8.

71 Rose, G. (2003). "Family photographs and domestic spacings: a case study." Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers **28**(1): 5-18.

72 It is ironic as Washkansky's mother returned to her home in Betty's Bay two years ago to find that it had burned down. Everything was incinerated, including her family images that were the only links she had remaining with her family (who incidentally were Holocaust survivors). Washkansky, D. (2010). Family Photographs. S. O'Connell. Cape Town**:** 1.

The notion 'family photograph' or 'family album' needs some clarification as often the photographs in these so-called collections are not entirely restricted to family. Often included within the ranks among these snapshots are extended family members, friends, school friends, teachers and priests. Authorship and ownership of these albums are collective – they are seldom referred to as 'Patrick's photos' or 'Elaine's album' and collections appear to be compiled with the collective agreement of those in the home.[73] The compilations of these albums (whether they are in album type books or simply jumbled *higgledy piggledy* into their cardboard boxes) differ significantly from the obsessively ordered, catalogued and categorised albums found in museums. These home collections calls to mind Maurice Halbwach's comment

> While the collective memory endures and draws strength from its base in a coherent body of people, it is individuals as group members who remember[74]

These often ordinary objects have a life of their own; they are exchanged and bequeathed, these trajectories making for a necessary focus, specifically if we are to heed Arjun Appadurai's assertion that as scholars and interpreters of the everyday, the ordinary, the life-ways that constitute lived experience, we need to carefully track the objects – the 'things' – within which we invest meaning and value:

> We have to follow things themselves, for their meanings are inscribed in these forms, their uses, their trajectory. It is only through the analysis of these trajectories that we can interpret the human transactions and calculations that enliven things.[75]

The family photograph whilst being an important conduit whereby meaning is made of family

73 See Langford, M. (2006). Speaking the Album: An Application of the Oral-Photgraphic Framework. Locating Memory: Photographic Acts. A. Kuhn, McAllister, Kirsten E. New York, Oxford, Berghahn Books**:** 223-246.

74 Halbwachs, M. (1980). The Collective Memory. New York, Harper and Row. p. 48.

75 Appadurai, A. (1986). The Social Life of Things. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press. p. 5.

in the house stretches "integration beyond the house".[76] Rose goes further and makes the point that "family photographs articulate absence, emptiness and loss as well as togetherness".[77]

How is the family photograph to be read when it is found outside its space of origination? What layers are added, removed, altered and filtered when photographs of this nature are donated to museums and collections? How does the exhibition space frame and silence these images, constructing and cementing a particular trope or train of thought, muting or highlighting? As meaning comes from outside the frame as much as within it, then it follows that the museum, however well intentioned it may be, conditions perceptions further when these images are accompanied by text and titles. Martha Langford contends that the separation of an album from its home and its removal to a collection unnaturally silences it, firmly believing that its originating contents, structure and presentation provide an armature for the album to be "spoken" — *in situ.*[78] She continues to argue for the orality of the album, valuing its syncretic nature that she sees as echoing the repetitive devices found in oral compositions — both of which serve memory.[79] I am therefore in search of these contradictions, tensions and ambiguities that linger in the spaces between written, visual and verbal texts in the archive of District Six. I am undertaking to position the oral/photographic relationship as the nucleus of this body of work, shifting it from one of identification to one of a process, to one of looking, listening and talking. Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson comment on images in life narratives saying that:

> Each photo tells a separate story and, taken together, they form a separate system of meaning. And the stories in photographs may support, or be in tension with, or contradict the claim of the verbal text".[80]

Why were these photographs taken? Why have they been kept? Do they tell a different story

76 Rose, G. (2003). "Family photographs and domestic spacings: a case study." Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers **28**(1): 5-18.
p. 11.

77 Ibid.

78 Langford, M. (2006). Speaking the Album: An Application of the Oral-Photgraphic Framework. Locating Memory: Photographic Acts. A. Kuhn, McAllister, Kirsten E. New York, Oxford, Berghahn Books**:** 223-246.

79 Ibid.

80 Smith, S., Watson, Julia. (2001). Reading Autobiography: A Guide for Interpreting Life Narratives. Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press.
p. 96.

to the family photographs of people who were not subjected to forced removals? Is the album of the oppressed different from those albums of those who are or were not oppressed? As a medium of representation, how do these particular albums represent, repress and recover memories and histories of the 'ungrievable'?

How can I, in my quest to find my place in this memory which I can never fully describe, engage with grainy images that show my mother as a beautiful young woman, my father as a gangly teacher, knowing that they are part of a much larger picture — to coin a phrase? I am drawn to a contact sheet that articulates my journey.[81] Taken by my father about forty-eight years ago, these five 35mm images include those of my mother as a young woman, my father's class of young students from the local school, his brothers standing in the doorway of their District Six home — as well as a landscape image of District Six. The nature and production of these particular photographs deserves comment. Using an Ailes box camera that he bought in a pawnshop, the images are small, direct prints of the negative film. On enquiring as to the reason for the diminutive sizes – as contact sheets are usually indexical prints produced by the darkroom processer for his own reference — my father replied that this was all that he could afford at the time. South African photographer and researcher Paul Weinberg confirmed this, and commented further that this type of camera was seen as the "poor man's camera".[82]

On this curling strip of paper, barely 8″ long, I see my father's home, the woman he was to marry and the career that he had to choose.[83] Nestled between the image of my mother and his pupils I find the landscape image of District Six, seemingly out of place, as it is the only image that does not overtly contain a figure. These images were taken at least three years before the introduction of the Group Areas Act that was to split District Six apart. How can this handful of photographs, remembered in a forgettable box, disinter this archive?

> It is all so ordinary. It is too unreal …too preposterous in its ordinariness, belonging to a

81 A contact sheet is a print made from several negatives at the same time. The negative film comes into close 'contact' (sometimes direct contact if a negative holder is not used) with the photographic paper, rendering a positive image that is the same size as the negative.

82 Weinberg, P. (2010). Personal Communication on Photography. S. O'Connell. Providence.

83 It was only as a consequence of discussing this photograph that I learnt that my father had wanted to study medicine. Due to university admission restrictions imposed on him as a non-'white', coupled with the fact that he had to support siblings, he entered the teaching profession, none the less considered a 'good' career for a 'coloured' man at the time.

Figure 3

Untitled

Black and White Photograph

100 x 66 mm

> world that must have gone its own way while their lives have been unwinding in another dimension altogether.[84]

There *is* a marked difference between the albums of the oppressed and those spoken of by Rose in North East England and Langford in Canada.[85] The collections of photographs of families that I have found from Roger Street, indeed the photographs belonging to my parents, are not displayed in albums of the conventional and often picturesque sort. They are not on the walls of their homes, or stuck into the corners of mirrors, or onto the doors of the fridge, nor are they the screen-savers on their computers. In fact I struggle to find these images — they do not readily come to hand. They are almost always buried in a cardboard box and wrapped in a plastic shopping bag —mummified. Perhaps poignantly though, they are not discarded, rather they are interred in a spot which at first glance appears forgotten — they never are. It is almost as if by concealing their existence an attempt is being made to attend to the trauma of not-being, an attempt to make the memory less vivid and thus less visceral and powerful.

Rising from the dust of the cardboard box then, I find a small back-and-white photograph of two five year old girls, leaning against a car, pretending to be grown-ups sharing a secret. It is finally this image that gives me hope, for however unremarkable it seems at first glance, it is within this image that I see a glimpse of a future that may have been — and of a future that may yet be. It is in this photograph of my mother Elaine, and her best friend Joy, taken some sixty years ago, that I am able to imagine a bridge between the spaces left by the unfulfilled dreams and the lost opportunities. It is in touching their five-year old faces, ruffling their curls and eavesdropping on their childhood imaginings that I find I am able to join in their game of make-believe. And in so doing, I can connect many of the countless ephemeral dots that dance within this frame and hereby picture a resolution.

84 Brink, A. (2003). The Other Side of Silence. London, Vintage. p 294.

85 Langford, M. (2001). Suspended Conversations: The Afterlife Memory in Photographic Albums. Montreal, McGillQueen's University Press.
,Rose, G. (2003). "Family photographs and domestic spacings: a case study." Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers **28**(1): 5-18.

CHAPTER 2

Apertures, Snapshots and Injury: Representations of Trauma

History is the subject of a construction whose site is not homogenous, empty time, but time filled with now time.[1]

Given my preoccupations, the headlines of *The Cape Times* on 8 September 2011 quickly caught my attention: "New Plan for District 6*",* which went on to describe the proposed redevelopment of this piece of land. Accompanied by a detailed design, the journalist Zara Nicholson said:

> The redevelopment is expected to cost between R6 and R7 billion and construction is expected to start next year. If the development gets the green light, it will heal a wound that has blighted the face of the City Bowl since the houses were demolished more than 40 years ago.[2]

I was taken aback by the suggestion that a multi-billion rand development (already at odds with the wishes of stakeholders judging from subsequent articles) could 'heal this wound' — which to my understanding was the trauma caused by the forced removals from the area which started in 1901 when 'black' South Africans were removed, continuing until the ultimate removal of some 60 000 residents by 1982, all as a result of the area being declared 'white" in terms of the Group Areas Act of 1950. I failed to reconcile this suggestion with my ongoing sense of displacement and unease, which is surprising, one might add, as neither I nor my immediate family was forcibly removed, or detained and in fact had a stable upbringing in the area *adjoining* District Six, Walmer Estate. Apart from being denied access to certain beaches, having to live in an area zoned for 'coloureds', and only being allowed to ice-skate on particular days, it could be argued, as indeed it often is, that my immediate family and I survived apartheid relatively

1 Benjamin, W. Selected Writings Volume 4 1938 - 1940. (2005) Cambridge, Mass and London., The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.
p. 395.

2 Nicholson, Z. (2011). New Plan for District 6. Cape Times. Cape Times, Independent Newspapers: 1.

unscathed. After all, it happened over forty years ago, democratic South Africa is seventeen years old and I have been able to cast my vote. How then can I make sense of my grief, pain and outrage, given that it was my grandparents' home and not mine that was bulldozed? How can I reconcile that past with my present, a past that never seems to end, finding its way from my grandfather to my son? How do I get over a lingering sense of 'being left behind' in this new country? How does this story end? What do I make of a different narrative which pushes up through a landscape now literally stripped of its signposts, yet lingering in some kind of memory, a faint and opaque memory of, paradoxically, itself? What do I do with a story, in many ways, a different story from the narratives of apartheid and of the *Rainbow Nation*?

This then is my story, found in a cardboard box full of dusty and yellowing photographs. But unlike the photographs found in many other homes, beautifully framed and proudly displayed on mantelpieces and bedside pedestals, these hidden images speak of a past that never was; they represent at once something that was profoundly lived but also of lives denied. They are almost surreal, these exposed moments of ways of life, of lives deemed inhuman. What is it about these images, *re*-membered now in a forgotten box, that can offer resolution? How can the camera, as an instrument of memory, attend to my injury? The photograph, particularly the celluloid image, is intrinsically connected to memory on several levels.

The photograph has the ability to 'fix the past' — it freezes a moment in time and space, but also, it has the chance to remedy it, to put together that which has been broken. It has the ability to resist a particular discourse of oppression, justice and freedom and in so doing, compels us to renegotiate, re-translate and *re*-member the past and the present. As Pierre Bourdieu comments, this kind of photography is used by families to define membership and to mark important or solemn occasions.[3] The family photograph offers proof of existence, powerfully illustrated by the *Mothers of the Disappeared* (*Asociación Madres de Plaza de Mayo*) through their circuitous marches around Buenos Aires' symbolically central Plaza de Mayo on Thursday afternoons. In addition to their white scarves, the often-faded images that they carried spoke of rituals of grief, mourning and resistance. These family photographs spoke too of lives, of dreams and deaths; of a refusal to forget. Much like on a film negative where traces of a moment lie subdued

3 See Gonzales, J. A. (1992). "A contemporary Look at Pierre Bourdieu's Photography: A Middle-Brow Art." Visual Anthropology Review **8**(1).

until they can be retrieved in the darkroom through the exposure of light, memory too, can be imagined, as Alan Trachtenberg says:

> As a storage area where images or past sensations lie in wait of retrieval on call or involuntarily… When reproduced in a chemical-mechanical process that reverses the making of the negative, the image gives a 'positive' picture that is the memory proper.[4]

The camera and the photograph

The invention of the camera in the mid nineteenth century laid the groundwork for the device and its role in memory. It apparently captured a moment in time, seemed to reproduce with accuracy what appeared before the lens during a specific moment of exposure. It recorded the world as it saw it, relegating the image to the past as soon as the shutter had closed. Not long after the debut of photography, physician and inventor Oliver Wendell Holmes described the new technology as a 'mirror with a memory', referring to the form of daguerreotype in which images were exposed directly onto chemically treated and highly polished metal plates which capture viewer's reflections and that of their husband, child and family pet.[5]

From its inception and particularly after the arrival of the Kodak camera in the 1880s,[6] all around the globe the camera changed the way that the world was seen and understood. Nor was the domestic scene immune to its gaze for it changed the way that the family imagined itself. Not only were affluent families now able to record themselves now, and the photograph went far beyond the limits of the painted family portrait too. The Kodak camera was notably cheaper and easier to operate than its predecessor, which accounts for the proliferation of domestic images and that was also aided by the establishment of photographic studios set up for this new market. The landmark *Van Kalker Photographic Studio* set up in 1937 in Woodstock, an area adjoining District Six was an example of this, and it allowed residents to document their

4 Trachtenberg, A. (2008). "Through a Glass, Darkly: Photography and Cultural Memory." Social Research **Vol 75**(1): 22.
p .1-2.

5 Raiford, L. (2009). "Photography and The Practices of Critical Black Memory." History and Theory(Theme Issue 48): 17.

6 Matthews, S. (2011). "Not Forgotten: The Day is Past and Gone: Family Photographs from Eastern North Carolina." Southern Cultures: Photography **1**(Summer 2011): 20.

significant moments and celebrations, as many did not own their own cameras.[7] Stuart Hall in commenting on post-war images in Britain suggests that from the beginning, photography as a medium of self-representation was found within both 'black' and 'non-white' working-class families.[8] In South Africa, in the midst of removals, poverty, violence and shame, families made a point of being photographed. Despite long working hours and tight household budgets, they made deep sacrifices to create their photographs. I remember being part of a *Van Kalker Photographic Studio* experience, this time undertaken to capture a particular anniversary of my parents. We were all instructed to put on our finest and we dutifully made our way down to the studio immediately after Sunday Mass. In viewing this image now, I can see the strain on my mother's face as she tried in vain to keep the inevitable dramas at bay. Images such as these defined the notion of the family and its milestones. The posed ballet class portrait, my first day at school, my brother as a newborn and my sister with her roller-skates, — all speak of a desire to establish a certain way of life; a sense of belonging to something other than a group deemed as second-class.

I find a picture of myself in a peach satin ballet tutu, posing with a fellow dancer whose name I remember as Melanie. I believe that I am about twelve years old, which means the image was taken around 1979. This image is small and square with rounded corners with some stains on the surface. We are pictured towards the bottom left of the image – I think that the photographer is crouching to get this particular angle as our legs are cropped out of the image. I can just about discern a younger dancer edging in from the right – perhaps the tutus that only the older dancers were allowed to wear intrigued her. There is nothing remarkable about this badly composed image, until I consider that its significance extends beyond the frame. My mother was a determined ballet mother as every week, without fail, she would march us down to Holy Cross Catholic Church to have lessons with Mrs Debbie Maart, a strict ballet mistress who screamed the odds at all her charges, but who too took great delight in their unanticipated achievements. Her twice-weekly ballet classes were held in the basement of Holy Cross Catholic Church that at the time was deeply mired in the public struggle for District Six. Mrs Maart's determination to perfect our *pirouettes* was matched only by her dogged determination to give us classes in District

7 See Geraldine Frieslaar's Masters thesis. [Forthcoming].

8 See Hall, S. (1991). Reconstruction work: images of post-war black settlement. Family Snaps: the meanings of domestic photography. J. H. Spence, P. London, Virago.

Figure 4

Untitled

Colour Photograph

75 x 75 mm

Six, no easy feat at the time, for not only were her charges clearly untalented, she was considered to be 'white', and therefore had no compelling reason to venture out to District Six.

These are not illusionary images; rather they assert identities at odds with what apartheid dictated they should be. These images sketch an independence, a confidence, serving as protection against not only the dictates of apartheid, but the also, as Roland Barthes noted, the erosion of a memory through the effects of time. These images can be seen as "carriers of true evidence of what was there when they where taken. Truer even that the human witnesses to those scenes".[9]

Family, domestic, personal photographs — however they are named — appear unremarkable at first. They are often well thumbed, have haphazard compositions, and are considered at best to be nostalgic, or on the other hand, as tiresome relics by those forced to view them. Indeed, as Slater so damningly remarks, they are "generally regarded as a great wasteland of trite and banal self-representation".[10] Susan Stewart similarly asserts that all family albums look alike,[11] while Richard Chalfen contends that these generic repositories "have an overwhelming sense of similarity and redundancy".[12] Unsurprisingly then they are seldom regarded as art and are hardly ever exhibited in fine art galleries. Pierre Bourdieu's gives his view that

> "ordinary practice seems determined … to strip photography of its power to disconcert", because family photography is nothing more than — but certainly nothing less than — "both an instrument and index of integration".[13]

9 Rose, G. (2003). "Family photographs and domestic spacings: a case study." Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers **28**(1): 5-18.
p. 11.

10 Slater, D. (1995). Domestic photography and Digital Culture. The photographic image in digital culture. M. Lister. London, Routledge**:** 129-146.
p. 134.

11 Stewart, S. (1984). On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection. Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press.

12 Chalfen, R. (1987). Snapshot versions of life. Bowling Green, OH, Bowling Green State University Popular Press.
p. 142.

13 Bourdieu as cited by Rose, G. (2003). "Family photographs and domestic spacings: a case study." Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers **28**(1): 5-18.
p .6.

Photo albums are perhaps viewed as pedestrian and unimaginative.[14] The photographer is often nameless, there may be a few fading scribbles on the backs of individual prints, but largely, this little, nondescript and fading piece of paper relies on something else to make sense of the story it both shares and conceals. Julia Hirsch, in her book, *Family Photographs, Content, Meaning and Effect,*[15] claims that the family photograph has its roots in the world of the Renaissance family portrait where freed from the confines of the church and state, the family was shown to be a self contained unit, held together both materially and spiritually.

Why were these images taken? Why have they been kept? Who took them and how have they been stored? Elizabeth Edwards argues that photographs are not merely images but social objects, the power of which is intimately entangled with the nature of the genre itself.[16] Edwards suggests, in commenting on Australian photographic imagery, that the materiality of the photograph is central, as it is "the fusion and performative interaction of image and materiality that gives a sensory and embodied access to photographs".[17] As a system of representation, what can these images that speak of a catastrophic time tell me of how I *now* can live? What happens to the understanding of the image when what it records disrupts the world that the lens sees? Given that the story within the photographic fame is always a mirage, what happens when despite the mechanical accuracy, the device tells a story that simultaneously shades and illuminates the void between shutter release and closure?

How can we *really* hear these silences that speak of a past and a future beyond the idealised, sentimental and mythical one? What will the print tell us when a different narrative is evoked from beneath the musty smells in which it sleeps? How can I, in running my fingers across these rippled surfaces and curling edges, feel a story that struggles to be born? What does the ordinary photograph of the oppressed conceal — in the spaces between the blacks, the greys and whites — about a way of life — and a manner of living — which was in sharp contrast to

14 Matthews, S. (2011). "Not Forgotten: The Day is Past and Gone: Family Photographs from Eastern North Carolina." Southern Cultures: Photography **1**(Summer 2011): 20.

15 Hirsch, J. (1981). Family Photographs. Content, Meaning and Effect. New York and Oxford, Oxford University Press.

16 Edwards, E. (1999). Photographs of Objects of Memory. Material Memories: Design and Evocation. M. A. Kwint, J. Breward, C. Oxford, Berg**:** 221-236.
p .27.

17 Edwards, E. (2005). "Photographs and The Sound of History." Visual Anthropology Review **21**(1 and 2): 19.
p. 27.

that which its oppression dictated it, should be? How does one swim and then pose — in the wake of catastrophe? As Sontag stated:

> Photographs lay down routes of reference, and serve as totems of causes: sentiment is more likely to crystallize around a photograph than around a verbal slogan. And photographs help construct- and revise – our sense of a more distant past, with the posthumous shocks engineered by the circulation of hitherto unknown photographs. […] What is called collective memory is not a re-membering but a stipulating that *this* is important, and this is the story about what it happened, with the pictures that lock the story in our minds.[18]

The photograph of the oppressed welcomes a series of questions, including those of ideologies of race, meanings of history, and public and private familial representation. By using family albums and embedding them in comparative and theoretical discourse, while trying most importantly to view them with a 'new' lens, we are offered the chance to interrogate meanings of the oppressed family and how this particular representation disrupts or disturbs conventional tropes of knowing and being. This looking will therefore depend on a re-reading of the album of the oppressed, which may necessitate a re-imagination of specific historical and cultural contexts. It demands a journey into disavowed archives and lives that will offer a way of living after 'historical catastrophe'[19]. This is an archive of the living where silenced memories become histories of lives that continue to be lived. What these images offer is a glimpse into those 'other' ordinary archives that have not been recognised, and which have not been acknowledged by history. These ordinary archives then point to silences and omissions on the part of history, and serve to remind us that by conjuring up memories that have been denied, that there are other archives that deserve to be afforded their space. What can we learn from the family photograph of the oppressed, the memories and the histories, given that it is — as all photographs are — the site at which numerous gazes intersect? What silenced stories do they whisper and what do they

18 Sontag, S. (2003). Regarding the pain of others. New York, Farrar, Straus and Giroux. p. 76-77.

19 Bogues, A. (2010). Empire of Liberty: Power, Desire and Freedom. Hanover, NH, Dartmouth College Press.

themselves in turn silence? What do these images represent and how does this representation contradict or re-enforce notions of subjectivity?

Why have these lives and these particular archives been ignored and at what cost? I find two images that am I told are of the Holy Cross Youth Group, out on their many outings. I recognise some faces, it is my father's cousin, Jerome Jasson, who is the figure in the front, poncho-clad and seen strumming his guitar. This particular event is silently snapped by the camera, which offers its colour photograph, complete with looming and encroaching shadows, as proof of existence. If I listen closely enough, I can imagine the tune, I think. How can I reconcile these faded photographs that show smiling, brightly garbed teenagers in 70s styled flared jeans on a church picnic, with the lives of the adults who now appear so reluctant to display these snapshots?

Images of Contusion

Are these images of pain in that they only serve to represent and re-construct that which is irretrievably lost, or is there a collective 'more'? Do these images entrench conventions of family life or are they able to move beyond these narrow confines to emerge in a space that will interrupt banal understandings of public, collective and private, personal memories? The photograph, as Marita Sturken argues:

> Plays an important function in the relationship of personal memory, cultural memory, and history precisely because of the ways in which images can move from one realm to the next… As technologies of memory, photographs play a primary role in the traffic between personal memory, cultural memory and history.[20]

Crucially, when photographs and the conversations that they generate are shared, they are able to intervene and disrupt official history[21] and archives, and in so doing, acknowledge and imagine

20 Sturken, M. (1999). The Image as Memorial: Personal Photographs in Cultural Memory. The Familial Gaze. M. Hirsch. Hanover and London, University Press of New England**:** 178-195. p. 178.

21 Sturken, M. (1999). "Imaging Postmemory/Renegotiating History." Afterimage **56**(6): 3.

the disavowed. These are admittedly only family portraits of the conventional kind, and yet they force us to reconsider conventional modes of representation of the oppressed and in so doing, provoke us to reconsider oppression itself. These images compel us to imagine another kind of suffering, one which implicates the present — as much as the past — and in so doing we are able to enact an unscripted past, in the present. The lives of these faded and photogenic teenagers in their flared jeans no longer exists, their images now speak of an absence, rather than a presence. Importantly, what the photograph of the oppressed cruelly offers and simultaneously denies, is an elusive future.

These photographs are complex objects, talismans that are able to conjure up multiple meanings and evoke memories. Importantly, as Marita Sturken suggests, the personal photograph:

> May be perceived as container for memory, it is not inhabited by memory as it produces it; it is a mechanism through which the past can be constructed and situated within the present.[22]

Sturken's assertion on memory is illustrated well through a series of conversations that I held with ex-residents of District Six.[23] These three men and two women were previous inhabitants of Roger Street and they met on a Sunday afternoon in my parents' home in nearby Walmer Estate. They had all been evicted from their homes and had all been adjoining neighbours to my father's family home. Having not seen one other for about forty years, the initial moments were taken up with multiple sadnesses at the news of siblings, parents, friends and partners who had since died. This was not a structured forum[24] and I found it difficult at times to keep abreast of the conversations which were a euphony of mixed languages (English and Afrikaans), laughter, the clinking of tea cups, and the sharing of a meal to which everyone had instinctively contributed. These six people had last seen each other as young adults, they were raised in District Six and as they eloquently commented, their four homes were 'shared homes' — in spite of religious differences (some are Muslim and others Christian) — they were raised in each other's houses.

22 Sturken, M. (1999). The Image as Memorial: Personal Photographs in Cultural Memory. The Familial Gaze. M. Hirsch. Hanover and London, University Press of New England: 178-195. p. 178.

23 Discussed further in Chapter 5.

24 Sessions were recorded.

Their immediate common memories were of childhood pranks, celebrations and challenges. As residents of a low-income area they instinctively shared a fluency in the same highly localised language of survival.

After the reconnections had been made, I asked them all to present the photographs that I had asked them to bring along. The silence that followed my request punctuated a rhythmical shift in the conversations as one by one, and without exception, they opened the plastic carrier bags that contained their few hoarded snapshots. None of the images were framed nor were they in photographic albums of any sort — they were all loosely gathered. Sixty-nine year old Archie Hussein, an ex-resident, moved away from the dining table and taking out his collection, passed each photograph around, one at a time, in an almost ritualistic fashion, explaining, "If he put them all out at once, everyone would be overwhelmed". He impressed upon us all that we should take great care when handling these photographs.

Hussein's photographs were faded; they depicted children playing with discarded car tires and posed groups of the neighbourhood's informal cricket teams. They were all small, grainy and unsaturated, speaking in subdued tones of a way of life in sharp contrast to the vivid and colourful recollections recounted. Hussein then laid out another series of photographs, this one of Roger Street. With great care, and in panoramic spread on the carpet, it grew to resemble a poignantly metaphoric landscape, sliced apart by the edges of the prints themselves. It appeared likewise as almost a parody of a jigsaw puzzle, one in which the edges struggled to connect to form a coherent and cohesive image. Those so brief moments of exposure over forty years ago seemed to be at odds with the reality of the present; they seemed to contradict and disrupt the viewing of the image. Indeed, all the participants appeared to be struggling to reconcile these images with the reality of their present lives, they appeared to view them almost as if they had been taken in an — and of — an altogether different life, which of course they were.

It was as if for this group the act of looking at these photographs marked a shift in their recollections of their lives in District Six. Where moments earlier we had been speaking about the progress of their District Six land-claims process, viewing these images spoke of denied possibilities, unimaginable and unmitigated loss. Paradoxically, these family images that conventionally should have been a celebration of a life of highlights, were now looked at instead as an affirmation of an unending trauma.

6 Roger Street District Six

And then it is my turn, though I am less bold, rather looking at the images on my own. On opening the a cardboard box that is held together by a well-stretched elastic band, my eyes fall on two images both curiously close to each other. These are two of about a hundred and fifty images, many out of focus, and all are small, considerably smaller than postcard size. My initial glance focused on two indistinct images, the first one being that of the wedding of my paternal grandparents, the second of my first communion. Standing outside Holy Cross Catholic Church in Nile Street, District Six, the first image, a 4″ by 6″ black-and-white snapshot, shows a posed family party just emerging from a church after a marriage ceremony. There are no dates or details on the back of the print and the photographer is unknown. Two small children, looking somewhat lost and uneasy, struggle to find their place in the composition, their small frames jostling to be including he the photographer's lens which features a tall and uncomfortable looking groom, his beautiful wife, and their wedding party. The children are my father and his sister and they are at the wedding of their father to their new mother — their evident discomfort perhaps the trepidation they were feeling at their soon to be new family arrangements.

In this composition I see a grainy collection of figures, notably is the resemblance of my son to my father. I recognize my grandfather, who always appeared larger-than-life with his imposing bulk, acute wit and commanding voice, now posing somewhat awkwardly in a dark suit. Seeing this image, I am overwhelmed by the memory of *Faros and Co.,* a District Six cold-supply store at which my grandfather and most of his children had worked. It was with an uncanny ease that I found I could conjure up the smell of the cold-room and of the diesel stink of the trucks that always seemed to be idling outside. "Pa" delivered supplies — fruit, vegetables and salt — to ships alongside Cape Town wharves in the early hours of the morning — a poignant reminder perhaps, that Cape Town was used as a refreshment station by colonial trade ships on the spice route to and from the east.

This gentle tableau speaks little or nothing of the trauma that was soon to come. It does not reveal the curt eviction notice or give wind of the chaos of a home and a family torn apart by bulldozers. It certainly doesn't hint at the inevitable travails wrought by alcohol, nor the attendant violence that found safe harbour in a home under siege. It does not speak of the

emasculation of a man unable to protect his family, who despite having no tertiary education to speak of, was an autodidact who read McCauley's essays, studied Robert Clive, regarded Boccaccio, Petrarch, Socrates and Homer as his fellows and who spoke passing Greek. It is mute in regard to the question and answer sessions my grandfather would have with his children wherein he introduced them to such writers as Omar Khayyam, the Persian of whom he was fond of calling "the most erudite drunkard one could read".[25] And most pivotally it does not speak of the move itself, the trek to the Cape Flats and the small, grey and drafty third floor apartment in Hanover Park, an unbelievable twenty-five kilometres from the city centre. This flat and dusty locale, apparently — and ironically — named after German settlers who farmed there in 1884, bore little resemblance to its picturesque German twin.[26] Svea Josephy, in her photographic work, *Twin Town* [27] suggests that there is evidence that this name was derived from the iconic Hanover Street in District Six.

Unarticulated is the violence and the fears that plagued a son, brother and uncle who resolutely refused to leave the home, the last one on the block he eventually became surrounded by bulldozers, forced to camp in his house *sans* electricity, water or sanitation. It cannot and does not speak of his early death or of a life filled with too many similarly eloquent silences and least of all, of his crippling rage.

Holy Cross Catholic Church

This photograph is about seventy-three years old and a few decades later, I too am photographed in almost the same spot outside the Holy Cross Catholic Church, a place that featured so prominently in my childhood. This, the second of the images that catches my eye, reminded me of the compulsory weekly church attendances, my ominous first confession and my parent's pride at my first communion, where complete with tiara and veil, I followed in the footsteps of those countless other supplicants who had trudged up the same aisle before me.

As I squinted, struggling to recognize myself in the short white dress and conscious that I sported a brutally fashionable fringe, courtesy of my father. I remembered that we had in fact

25 O'Connell, P. (2011). Stories of My Father. S. O'Connell. Cape Town, Unpublished.
26 Josephy, S. (2007). Twin Town. Cape Town, Bell Roberts Publishers.
27 Ibid.

Figure 5

Untitled

Colour Photograph

121 x 85 mm

Figure 6

Untitled

Colour Photograph

121 x 85 mm

Figure 7

Untitled

Colour Photograph

82 x 121 mm

possessed our own pew. It had been on the right hand side of the church, and it was from where my mother, sister and I could comfortably keep our eye on our father as he thundered out the hymns on the church's organ. The pew was right to my grandmother's, she who already had her own designated space — for she was very involved in the Ladies Guild — on the left, to keep an eye on my brother as he carried out his duties alongside his friends as an altar boy. Holy Cross was a busy church, the axis of life for many District Six residents; its adjoining school was there to ensure that the future of the church was secured, invested as it was so heavily in the futures of its young charges. There were a total of four church services held throughout the weekends, all filled to capacity, and despite some spirited struggling against the austere rule of the nuns and the imposing figure of the parish priest, the church was a place of congregation, rendered all the more legendary through its bazaars and debutante dances.

Returning to the image of my first communion, I struggled to recognise the faces of my fellow celebrants, obscured as they were by deep shadow, the image having been brightly backlit. I returned the image to the safety of its shoebox and found that I had been transported back to my old niche in the church. I realized too that this particular image of grinning seven year olds who recited prayers with me in catechism classes for months, had shaken me deeply, for not only can I not remember any names, I cannot remember when any of my old friends left the area and nor can I remember any farewells. All that I can remember was the systematic shrinking of the weekend masses, – until they eventually dwindled to just the single one on Sunday. There were simply not enough families left to warrant several services, there was barely enough for the one. What I did remember was the empty pews and that I never saw my fellow celebrants again.

From my pew, lulled by the incense and the incantations, my eyes could wander over the iconic images marking the stations of the cross which were dotted about the church until I was yanked back to reality by my mother — as often happened too when I lingered too long on the confessional, that mysterious place of repentance and contrition, of forgiveness and the supposed clean slate. And it is at this moment now that I find that I am at a loss to reconcile this space with my present, as I am unable to connect these images with any meaningful sense of belonging. I cannot reconcile them with the sanitised landscape, the emptied church and the detritus left in the aftermath of the evictions. I cannot mouth the A*ct of Contrition*, the Catholic prayer that I recited in the dark and quiet confessional and which absolved me of my sins —

Figure 8

Untitled

Black-and-White Photograph

155 x 118 mm

Figure 9

Untitled

Colur Image

155 x 225 mm

and that can clear the slate of District Six. I cannot articulate the words that can attend to this wound that resolutely refuses to subside. And like the lingering camera flash that blinds, I am unable to register this composition in which I am unwillingly implicated. It is to these family images now, no longer images of celebration, rather an album of oppression that I must turn.

Apartheid Spaces

Layered between the snapshots are other scraps of paper, keepsakes, recipes, prayer books, school certificates and identity documents. I find a sepia toned image of a young girl, perhaps about five years old in a dance costume — smiling awkwardly and holding a tambourine. This is a black-and-white image that too has several stains, featuring ten young girls. It has a few creases across the surface, and its edges show evidence of wear-and-tear.

I recognize my mother only because I see within it the face of my niece to whom she bears a very strong resemblance. There is nothing remarkable about this image, there must be countless others in family albums all around with world, of daughters doing ballet and tap dancing - until I see the Bronze Eisteddfod Certificate awarded to my mom — it is in the name of Elaine Singer. Thinking that this was a clerical error — I checked with my mom, whose quiet answer spoke volumes. She was entered as "Singer" as opposed to "Singh", as this was the only way she could participate in the dance competition held in the Civic Centre in Sea Point, an area and competition deemed as 'white'. Singer was understood to be a Jewish, 'white' name while Singh unquestionably was deemed Indian, and therefore 'non-white'. This issue of naming was to surface again as I find an image of my parents on their honeymoon, aboard a trip to Durban on the vessel *RMS Cape Town Castle*. I asked whether living arrangements on board too were segregated, which my father confirmed. They were unwittingly put into the 'white' section — due to some clerk at the booking office assuming that O'Connell could only be a surname belonging to 'white' newlyweds.

I find several images of visits to the beach, of children and grandparents on the rocks, or of a toddler being supported by a mother and an elderly aunt. All pretty mundane images, until one realizes that beaches were vehemently segregated. Sea Point for 'white's, Kalk Bay and Woodstock for others.

I find three 2.5″ x 3.5″ black-and-white photos taken on almost the same spot in the city centre. One of them is of my grandmother and me on a shopping trip to town. She is immaculately dressed, her hair coiffed and wearing an impeccable two-piece suit, complete with gloves. Striding confidently, she is holding me in the crook of her left arm, her handbag swinging freely from her right. I think that I must be about ten months old, which means that this image was taken at the height of apartheid when areas were segregated and where bodies and spaces were clearly demarcated. Despite this, this image was taken by a street photographer in Darling Street, just a stone's throw from the Cape Town mayoral office, The Cape Town City Hall as well as the Houses of Parliament, and just in front of the General Post Office. It shows a woman clearly in command of her space. In mid-step, she is looking straight ahead; her granddaughter also seemingly dressed for an occasion such as this. I am drawn to this image for not only do I find that it is the earliest image of my grandmother and me, but it clearly places me in the apartheid city in 1967. More importantly, the photograph shows that I am held firmly by my grandmother, as she resolutely commands us to take our place in the city.

I found three more images of this nature, all of which were taken on almost the same spot, but at different times. One was taken of my mother as a fourteen year old in her school uniform, one of my maternal grandfather, Bareyam Singh, as a business man in his suit and hat, which I calculate was taken in about 1941, and the last of my father and his cousin, Melvin Gassen, as two dapper young men.[28] The ink on the reverse of the images indicates that they were all taken by *Movie Snaps* photographic studio in Cape Town.[29] I contacted several family members and friends of my parents and enquired as to whether they too had images of this sort — all of them had at least one. As my god-mother, Margaret Dowling, née Moses, commented, "they did not have a camera in the house and this was the only way to get snapped".[30] All described a similar experience and made the same comments regarding these photographers — they were to be found patrolling outside the General Post Office and Cape Town Station and were either 'coloured' or Indian. You were photographed in passing and then approached by the

28 Gaskin, nicknamed 'Mallow' went on to become a bishop in the Apostolic church.

29 Whilst the "Movie Snaps" building still remains and is often still referred to as such by Capetonians, there is little, if anything, that has been written on this genre as it was in Cape Town. It is my intention to research it further.

30 The Moses family lived in Searle Street that was the dividing line between Walmer Estate and District Six. As the cottage in which they lived belonged to Holy Cross Catholic Church, they were not evicted as part of forced removals of District Six.

photographer, given a numbered card and invited to collect the image a week later at a cost of *2/6d*. Images were all black-and-white and measured 4″ by 2″.

Amongst the one hundred and fifty or so of my family images I struggled to find any that are sequential — my training in Fine Art photography nudging me to find a pattern of sorts, and to deduce at least some evidence of linearity. I know that most of the film would have been twenty four exposures for the point-and-shoot cameras that would have been used, but not only am I unable to find the negatives, the collection of images do not reflect more than one image of a particular event. I am drawn to imagine that perhaps the photographer was frugal, taking only one snapshot of a particular occasion, or that on developing the images, found that only one or two were up to his standards and discarded, or perhaps they could not afford to print all the exposures. This explains the haphazard collection in part, however it does not account for the fact that these images vary in size, some are no larger than passport size, others anywhere between that and a postcard. I struggle to find a pattern, something that will answer to the demands of my training that in order to present a story, a representation — the work should have a starting point, a body, and an ending. These images are all of them at the same time.

I am also fascinated by these *Movie Snaps* images in part because I can vaguely remember the photographers plying their trade up and down Darling and Plein Streets, but also because it spoke of a certain time in the city's history. In my attempts to locate more of these images, I contacted my godmother Margaret Dowling, who although she was an aunt-by-birth, has always played a significant part in our lives, including in those of my siblings. Not only do I remember my sister and I spending most of my afternoons in her home, but also I was to be her flower girl at her wedding when I was about five years old, which took place at Holy Cross Catholic Church. Our lives have been intertwined for as long as I can remember, and 'Aunty Margaret' came to play the role of confidante, hairdresser, surrogate mother and ally. Despite all of the years of conversations, lunches, dinners and parties, I cannot recall ever having a conversation bearing any resemblance to the one I had when I asked her whether she, or her husband, 'Uncle Walter", had any *Movie Snaps* images in their collections.

This time it was I who took the chocolate cake in preparation for a visit to look at her eight images at her home in North Pine, in Cape Town's northern suburbs, about forty kilometres from the city centre. Over tea and seated at their dining room table, I watched her take out her

images from the ubiquitous cardboard box, while her husband Walter sat resolutely glued to the television screen. I had never seen these images before, which showed her, and her sisters Hazel and Veronica, as children photographed outside the Cape Town Post Office, almost on the same spot where I was snapped, some twenty years later. Her collection too included images of her mother, Mary "Queenie" Moses. All these images bore the trademark *Movie Snaps* stamp on the reverse and were of the same size, except one that appeared to have been torn in half. This image, showing a young girl about four years old clutching the hand of an adult man whose identity is unknown as he is not included in the frame. As the image is torn neatly in half, I think that the photographer inadvertently focused on this young child, and in so doing, includes a random passer-by in the frame. The reverse of the image tells me that it is no accident that the image is torn, as the *Movie Snaps* stamp and image number is clearly stamped to fit this unusual narrow format. As my aunt explained, from what she could remember, is that when they went to collect the image, it included someone unconnected to the family, and they therefore were entitled to only pay for that part of the image that they found relevant and meaningful. More importantly though, as she emphasized several times, her mother was a single parent who did laundry and clothes mending for "white' people in Sea Point" and could ill afford to pay for a photograph of someone she did not know.

I was drawn to the attention paid by Mary Moses to her daughter's clothes, particularly their hand-knitted cable cardigans, 'Mary Jane' shoes and once again, those beautiful hand-sewn dresses. In all the images, the girls are wearing bows in their hair, and as Margaret Dowling explained, the bow had to be 'just so" on the side of the head, in exactly the same spot. The girls are immaculate without a hair out of place. I can just discern their Chinese heritage, confirmed later when I see an image of their mother, also taken at the same spot. On enquiring of my aunt, I was told that her grandfather, Martin Wan, came out to Africa as a stowaway on a ship from Hong Kong, ending up as a successful businessman in Cradock in the Eastern Cape Province. He had an unconventional living arrangement, having had children with both an "official Chinese wife" and a South African woman — apparently all living together under the same roof. My aunt's mother Mary, one of the children of this unconventional family, later came to Cape Town where she met her husband Daniel George Moses, who happened to be a close friend of my paternal grandfather, Herbert O'Connell.

The Moses family lived in one of the cottages in Searle Street that belonged to the Catholic Church. The backs of these cottages looked onto Nile Street, District Six, whilst from their front porches a view of the children's park in Walmer Estate was proffered. The 'inbetweenity' of this street added to the ambiguous position of these residents — they were both part of Walmer Estate and District Six and this was echoed by Margaret Dowling's comment that while the eviction notices were being handed out, they were never sure if they too would find an eviction letter or not. From their back yard they saw and no doubt heard the distress of their neighbours who were forced to leave.

I find the story of 'Queenie and Dan" hiding among the images as I spot a green identity card showing a well-set man staring directly at the camera. Looking closely, I see an identity number of sorts, a name and the date of issue — 1 April 1956. I see also the letter "W" in the right hand corner of the card, denoting his race. This was to haunt him in so many ways as my aunt explained, for not only did he marry a 'non-white' woman, but his body was later disinterred from the 'non-white' section of the cemetery and reburied in the 'white' section, on the other side of a path which separated the two areas. On visiting the grave of their newly buried husband and father, Mary Moses and her three immaculately dressed daughters found a dug-up grave, with a note from the Cemetery Board stating that as Daniel George Moses was "'white'" he could not remain in the grave site where his widow had buried him a week earlier.

At this point in the conversation, I asked Walter Dowling to elaborate on two images in the collection; they both were of him, one as a child with his mother, and another as a young man in a restaurant. Completely out of character, for he was quite curt in his response, he confirmed that one was taken by *Movie Snaps* of Voortrekker Road, Parow and the other by their Cape Town branch, at *La Fiesta*, noting that it was the "only restaurant that "coloureds' could visit in Cape Town". He also added that he did not want to "talk about the past", and left the room, only to return when I was about to say goodbye.

"We were given three weeks to leave" were the words that pulled me up as I looked around to see Walter Dowling, "Uncle Walter" as my siblings and I had come to know and love. I could not fathom the expression on his face and I was startled as he had been quite resolute in not playing any part in the conversation that his wife and I had undertaken for the previous two hours. As I put down my camera equipment and notepad, I recognized that what his usually jovial face

was portraying was grief. The anger came later, albeit for only a very brief moment, and finally I made sense of his dogged determination to be a provider for his family.

I struggled to absorb this sombre man's demeanour as it jarred so thoroughly with the 'Uncle Walter that I had known my entire life, the one who always seemed to be the life and soul of the party, he who dominated the dominoes table for decades with his partner, my father and who was well known for his bellowing laughter and signature dishes. As I took my place opposite him, he continued to recount a story that echoed that of my grandfather, except his family home had not been in District Six but in Parow, a suburb to the north of Cape Town. He then drew my attention to *his* two *Movie Snaps* images, one of him at about seven years of age and another as a young man of perhaps nineteen years. Both black-and-white images were numbered and had the *Movie Snaps* stamp printed on their reverse sides. As with so many of the images, this picture was small and there was no mistaking the attention paid by his mother to her young son as he accompanied her on a shopping trip. Mrs. Dowling, impeccably dressed, complete with hat, is smiling broadly, holding the hand of her neatly turned out eldest son.

The second image is taken in a restaurant, *La Fiesta*, which as Dowling explained, was "the only restaurant in the city where 'coloureds' could eat". It was located above the *Wellington Fruit Growers* dried goods store in Darling Street, close to the *Movie Snaps* studio in central Cape Town. This image shows a scowling Walter Dowling — he mentioned that he did not want to go — his mother and two other adults. This print provoked the comment that *La Fiesta*, as well as a well-known department store *Woolworths,* only employed 'white' assistants.

These images led to a barrage of questions about the Dowling eviction from their home in Parow and Walter responded that he remembered a knock on the door and a government official informing the family that as the area was now 'white', that they had to move, notwithstanding the fact that his father, who worked as a printer, owned the house and two adjoining plots. He was given the sum of R3600 for all three properties, and told to relocate elsewhere. Despite being advised by their 'white' neighbours to apply to change their racial status, the Dowlings and their four children, a mere three weeks later, were compelled to take out an additional mortgage to cover the cost of their new home in Hazendal, a 'coloured' area. For two months, fourteen people had to share this house as the previous owners were only emigrating to England at the later date. Walter and his siblings had to find new schools, a new place of worship and

new friends. They had to walk six kilometres each day to their new school, quietly adding that his father suffered a heart attack a month after they moved out of their home. Ultimately they were paid R52 000 by the Land Claims Court as compensation for the three properties in Parow after a long and drawn out process. When asked whether this alleviated any of the anger, loss and injury, he was resolute in his answer:

> No. That would be impossible. The absurdity of it all. Having to sit upstairs in a bus. Friends who chose to "play 'white'" so that they could hold down a shop assistant's position at *Woolworths*. Having two movie theatres close by each other — the *Orient* for 'non-white's', the *Victoria* for 'white's. No, it is unforgivable.

These street images were beginning to haunt me, I was drawn to the fact that mothers and grandmothers would take their offspring to a city that was clearly restricted. They quickly dispelled any notion that I may have had of the oppressed as victims or of the oppressed themselves as thinking of themselves as victims.

Street Photography

As Marianne Hirsch and Leo Spitzer have written, street photographers were found in many European and American cities in the decades between the First and Second world wars.[31] Eastern European Jews were photographed as passers-by in the Romanian streets of Czernowitz/Cernauti — the Vienna of the East[32] — by photographers using 2.5″ x 3.5″ direct-positive paper that was processed and produced a print on the spot. Hirsch comments that this process, a precursor of instant Polaroid technology, allowed photographers to instantly offer and convince a passer-by to purchase an image or order enlargements. The images that Hirsch and Spitzer found show Jews, in the years preceding the Holocaust in Romania, displaying a "sense of confidence and comfort"[33] in these candid and un-posed images. These photographs presented how those who

31 Hirsch, M. S., L (2009). "Incongruous Images: Before, During and After the Holocaust." History and Theory(48).

32 Ibid.
p. 17.

33 Ibid.

Figure 10

Untitled

Black-and-White Photograph

70 x 100 mm

Figure 11

Untitled

Black-and-White Photograph

95 x 125 mm

Figure 12

Untitled

Black-and-White Photograph

87 x 125 mm

Figure 13

Untitled

Black-and-White Photograph

90 x 125 mm

Figure 14

Untitled

Black-and-White Photograph

90 x 125 mm

Figure 15

Untitled

Black-and-White Photograph

78 x 124 mm

were photographed performed in spaces that were becoming hostile as well as how they situated themselves in terms of class, cultural and gender norms.[34] Hirsch and Spitzer in writing about the street photographs of Lotte Hirsch in the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, asserts that they bear testimony to the public assertion of their membership of a certain class and affluence. This is evident in that these subjects were willing to be photographed — they did not shield their faces — and of course they also purchased the images. These photographs show how Jewish subjects publically asserted their 'freedom' by claiming spaces and to moving "through them, *flaneur* like, glancing about but also ready to be looked at and to be seen".[35] As Hirsch and Spitzer comment, these pre-war images do not however:

> Even hint at the existence and rapid and virulent growth of Romanian anti-Semitism and Fascism in the 1920s and 1930s — the increasing restrictions, quotas, discriminatory exclusions, harassment and violence that Jews faced.'[36]

Most interesting are two street images that Hirsch and Spitzer found dated 1943 and showing Jews wearing the yellow star that look very similar to the ones worn pre-war. Despite the fact that in about 1941 (two years before these images were taken), about 40 000 Jews were deported to the ghettoes and labour camps. These street images are therefore of the remaining Jewish population, who now, obliged to wear the yellow star faced surveillance and restrictions. Despite all of this, these Jewish subjects are photographed strolling in the city; moreover, they purchase the photographs as a further reminder that they were walking through the city. Hirsch and Spitzer are poignant in their remarks, saying

> Their stroll seems "normal," as though the temporal and political moment in which their photos were snapped, and the mark of "otherness" that they were publically forced to display with the yellow start, were hardly relevant.[37]

34 Ibid.
35 Ibid.
36 Ibid.
p. 17.
37 Ibid.
p. 19.

These vernacular images reveal the place and space that the subjects in the *Movie Snaps* photos claim, in opposition to the dictates of a segregated city. They speak about life in the city both before and after the implementation of the Group Areas Act in 1950, my grandfather's 1941 image on one end and the image of my grandmother and me on the other. The photographs, which leave their traces, reflect a very particular space in the city with the trademark General Post Office, street vendors, other shoppers, street and commercial signs being the background, the '*studium*' of Barthes. (As Barthes says: It is by *studium* that I am interested in so many photographs, whether I receive it as political testimony or enjoy them as good historical scene'.)[38]

Purposely walking in the city, the subjects in these photographs bear testimony to Patricia Holland's comment on domestic images, where she argues, "personal photographs are made specifically to portray the individual …*as they would wish to be seen* and as they have chosen to show themselves".[39] They speak "of the will to normalcy in times of extremity".[40]

What these images indicate, both the ones spoken of by Hirsch and Spitzer as well those that I have found, is of a refusal of victimhood by oppressed subjects. There is a performance of resistance - visibly seen in the confident movement of their strides; their firm gaze, and the meticulous attention paid to the business of getting dressed for a day out in the city. These images escape the subjugating and dominant images that pervade the image of the oppressed — that of victim and of 'other'. They also, as Hirsch and Spitzer put it, challenge "the post-memorial viewer by resisting and defying the affiliative look that characterises family photos".[41] That while these images may appear to resemble anyone of millions found around the world, they are inherently different. They fit the brief on one hand, as testimony to the everyday practice of going to town, the fact that they were taken in space and time where movements and bodies were restricted, is that which contradicts. What we see are ordinary moments in extraordinary times and I am surprised, taken aback even when looking closely at the image of

38 Barthes, R. (1981). Camera Lucida: Reflections of Photography. London, Vintage.

39 Patricia Holland in Bliss, A. (2008). ""Share Moments, Share Life": The Domestic Photograph as a Symbol of Disruption and Trauma in *The Lovely Bones*." Women's Studies(37): 23.

40 Hirsch, M. S., L (2009). "Incongruous Images: Before, During and After the Holocaust." History and Theory(48).
p. 23.

41 Ibid.
p. 20.

my grandmother and me. This image resisted a picture that I had of this time, of a way of life that I had largely seen in documentary images of the period. The historical representation of life in District Six and Walmer Estate appeared incapable to match up these incongruous images. Hirch and Spitzer articulate my surprise succinctly:

> While testimony and diaries record subjective reflections and private experience, photos taken in urban spaces bear witness to public acts and encounters. The incongruity we find thus is not in the images themselves, but in the events these images record and prompt in those who look at them – the events of their production, their purchase, and the retrospective act of looking to which they give rise. Perhaps, ultimately, they tell us more about what we want and need from the past than about the past itself.[42]

These three images spoke of living some forty years ago, and they spoke of me today. They critique a certain narrative of lives of oppression and intervene in the classification and subjugation of bodies and lives legislated as non-human.

The power of Apartheid

I found it difficult to find an image in the box that did hint at those oppressive times or even its traces and roots. In my seemingly futile search I stumble across another image of my mother, this time taken in Durban with family friends, the Gandhi's. My maternal grandfather Bareyam Singh came across to South Africa from India, unusually for the time paying his way on one of the ships that brought indentured workers to toil on the sugar plantations in Natal.[43] Despite establishing a forage store in District Six and leaving a legacy as one of the wealthiest landowners in Cape Town, apartheid made sure that he and his family were cut down to size. His children lost this and other property to the Group Areas Act. My mother had to change her status from 'Indian' to 'coloured". Her brother found that he was unable to register at the University of the Western Cape due to erroneously being classified as Indian, despite having a 'coloured' mother.

42 Ibid.
p. 23.

43 Uma Mesthrie has written on the history of the indentured Indian in South Africa.

In image after image in this quiet box, I find the onslaught of oppression relentless. On the notion of history and oppression, Walter Benjamin writes:

> The tradition of the oppressed teaches us that the "state of emergency" in which we live in not the exception but the rule. We must attain to a conception of history that accord with this insight. [44]

It is to Benjamin's words that I look with a hope of some illumination. I need to look to the traditions, the practices, and the albums of the everyday, of those who were violently oppressed, to make sense of my world today and the notion of "historical catastrophe" as:

> A traumatic event of long duration — that the event is consistently repeated and it is through repetition that it produces and establishes a series of practices.[45]

Bogues makes the point that an historical catastrophic event is not a singular linear event with a beginning and a conclusion, but rather a constantly repeated event that results in practices of rule, which crucially, is about 'power in the flesh', power that operates through violence on the body.[46] He makes an important distinction between the ideas on violence and power as posited by Michel Foucault and Hannah Arendt when he says that "violence itself becomes power", as opposed to Arendt and Foucault's idea of violence operating outside the complex of power. Bogues convincingly asserts that "ongoing processes of historical catastrophe produces power and that violence becomes both its technology of rule and its methodology of implementation",[47] which is spectacular in its operation, in sharp contrast, tellingly, to the images in this cardboard box. They are not large format, beautifully framed art prints. Their colours are not saturated,

44 Benjamin, W. Selected Writings Volume 4 1938 - 1940. Cambridge, Mass and London., The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.
p. 392.

45 Bogues, A. (2011). Trauma, Memory and Democracy: The Politics of Historical Castastrophe. Producing Africa. Cape Town, Centre for African Studies, UCT.
[Recording]

46 Bogues, A. (2010). Empire of Liberty: Power, Desire and Freedom. Hanover, NH, University Press of New England.
See ch.3.

47 Ibid.

their compositions often erratic. The photographers of these images struggle with light — many of the images are either under, or over exposed. They seem to cower, appearing tenuously fragile when viewed against the spectacular backdrop — as Njabulo Ndebele writes of apartheid itself.[48] These include detailed proclamations of racial categories, the well-orchestrated raids on hotel rooms to round up couples who are traversing the colour lines, the majesty of the military parades of young men doing their compulsory military service. The might of this spectacle, and its consequences eloquently depicted in an 1973 black-and-white image of District Six by photojournalist, Stan Winer,[49] showing a few small children playing on huge mounds of building rubble. They are dwarfed by a bulldozer, seemingly oblivious of the fact that their new playground is built out of, and on, their annihilated homes — and lives.

Photographs are looked at — and as Gillian Rose asks: "What does the photograph contribute to this looking?"[50] In answer, she refers to Barthes who contends, "Photographs show both what is culturally coded and what exceeds that coding".[51] So while these photographs speak of a particular mode of image making, which is embedded in the history of the genre, so too do these images exceed this frame. Barthes assists my noting that that it is the ability of the photograph to carry a trace of its referent that is photography's distinguishing feature. So while it may speak of inane family outings to the beach and debutante balls, they also speak of an existence of a certain way of life. In looking at these images, by turning our gaze to these objects, we are able to attest to Barthes' claim that "Photography never lies: or rather, it can lie as to the meaning of the thing, being by nature tendentious, never as to its existence".[52] While these images may lie about something, they cannot lie about the certain lives being lived at the moment of exposure.

48 See the essays collected in Njabulo Ndebele. (1994). South African Literature and Culture: Rediscovery of the Ordinary. Manchester.

49 Stan Winer's photographic collection of District Six residing with the University of Cape Town's Library was produced during the late 1960s and early 1970s. It forms part of a larger assignment commissioned by the London-based International Defence and Aid Fund for Southern Africa (in association with the United Nations Economic and Social Council), for the photographic documentation of conditions under apartheid in the country as a whole. Winer was eventually arrested as a 'security threat', detained for three months, and was then placed under a five-year restriction order. Winer, S. (2011). District Six Images. S. O'Connell. Cape Town.

50 Rose, G. (2003). "Family photographs and domestic spacings: a case study." Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers **28**(1): 5-18.

51 Ibid.
p.10.

52 Barthes, R. (1981). Camera Lucida: Reflections of Photography. London, Vintage.
p. 87.

Do these collections speak simultaneously of both a presence and absence of lives? Do they have a punctal moment in that they produce more than just regret and nostalgia? Do they speak of something irrevocable, and unbridgeable absences?

Re-photographing photographs

As part of my research I decided to re-photograph these images rather than scan them. By re-photographing film images with my own digital camera, I incorporated the old with the new. I changed apertures on temporality; no longer was it episodic, as I re-photographed my mother as a bride, then as a teenager. Roland Barthes argues that the particularity of a photograph in terms of space and time was central to the effects of its referentiality saying:

> The type of consciousness the photograph involves is truly unprecedented, since it established not a consciousness of the being-there of the thing (which any copy could provide) but an awareness of its having-being-there. What we have is a new space-time category: spatial immediacy and temporal anteriority; the photograph being an illogical conjunction between the here-ne and the there-then.[53]

It was a strange experience – the act of photographing my mother as a four year old, seeing (and echoing Roland Barthes' experience) of knowing her in a different way. My *re*-photographing was a reconstruction of their past, which I, now as a willing photographer-participant, could direct, and in which I could engage, a tangible engagement with the idea of post-memory of Marianne Hirsch. This too was playing with temporality, for not only were the shutter speeds different between the original moment and mine, but I found that in every sense, I was transforming the past. Time proceeded, slowed down and was re-arranged with different times, memories and experiences together, in an 'illogical' way. These images were not arranged in any order, they were not chronological and I found myself photographing across months, moments and years. This was an altogether new experience; I was visibly performing and disrupting a

53 Barthes in Rose, G. (2003). "Family photographs and domestic spacings: a case study." Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers **28**(1): 5-18.
p. 13.

narrative that started with the earliest image (1937). I touched these images and disturbed their dust, inhaling the musty smells that spoke to me of Sunday lunches and home movies on Friday nights. Christopher Pinner, in thinking through performative embodiment within the every day use of images has developed the term "corpothetics" as "the sensory embrace of imaged, the bodily engagement that most people …have with artworks".[54] Edwards considers the primacy of the visual in Western notions of occularcentrism, saying that this focus has failed to consider "sensory and emotional impact of photographs as things that *matter*". [55] I was a part of a certain kind of life, a life forgotten, a life, that that despite the domination of the law of racial oppression, clearly lived humanness. My camera disrupted time, simultaneously fast-forwarding and slowing down decades, spaces and moments. As Bogues says:

> There is no moment that is not narratised; there is no moment in which there is not a symbolic order. There is no blank moment[56].

In re-photographing these images, I began to think in new ways about the nature of photographs, the ways that they do not provide the answers as the historical documentation of the past. Through this process, the story of my history leapt out of academic chapters, danced its way past the archives of the academy and the museum, and confronted, unapologetically, a narrative shaped by others. The act spoke of the ' trace of bodily connection"[57] – the connection that I had with all these bodies and entanglements in the original images. Photographing these family images that held these moments of time and space, extend these through multiple and dynamic relationships, actions and processes. As Susan Sontag writes:

54 Pinney, C. (2001). Piercing the Skin on the Idol. Beyond Asthestics. C. T. Pinney, N. Oxford, Berg**:** 157-179.
p. 158.

55 Edwards, E. (2005). "Photographs and The Sound of History." Visual Anthropology Review **21**(1 and 2): 19.
p. 28.

56 Bogues, A. (2011). Trauma, Memory and Democracy: The Politics of Historical Castastrophe. Producing Africa. Cape Town, Centre for African Studies, UCT.

57 Wright (2004) in Edwards, E. (2005). "Photographs and The Sound of History." Visual Anthropology Review **21**(1 and 2): 19.

> What photographs supplies is not only a record of the past but a way of dealing with the present… While old photographs fill out our mental image of the past, he photographs being taken now transmit what is present into a mental image, like the past. Cameras establish an inferential relation to the present (really known by its traces); provide an instantly retroactive view of experience.[58]

"They [photographs] are a form of extended personhood in that they depict various sets of continuing relationships through time".[59] They are thus relationships and lives made visible.

In this vein, I saw the differences between the images of Winer and other documentary images on the forced removals process in District Six and those found in family albums and dusty shoeboxes. The former are usually strongly composed with an inherently heightened sense of drama; they show an enormous appreciation of light, and usually form part of a linear series, and are, in documentary fashion, black-and-white. There are the inevitable scenes at Hanover Street Fish Market, a grandmother peering out of her window or of a group of children playing on the 'Seven Steps' (an iconic landmark of seven steps in the heart of District Six and which was the conduit for those on way to work, school, church or mosque) or compelling panoramic cityscapes. Many of these have found their way into museum archives and university libraries. They are immediately recognizable in South African and feature in coffee table books and on postcards peddled at tourist centres.

In contrast to these images, the photographs that I have found, indeed those belonging to my own parents, are curiously different. They depict the little moments of life, moments of celebration deemed important to a first time mother with her son, a proud grandparent taking her granddaughter to town, or three arrestingly beautiful young women, resplendent in their crisp hand-sewn, tulle dresses. They are of church picnics, family outings, weddings, first cars, anniversaries and identity-type photographs. They appear mundane, the kind of photographs taken countless times before and of little interest to those beyond the extended family. They are fuzzy and out of focus and many conventions of image taking are flouted. These are the

58 Sontag, S. (1971). On Photography. London, Penguin. p.166-7.

59 Edwards, E. (2001). Raw Histories. Photographs, Anthropology and Museums. Oxford, Berg. p. 31.

images of the ordinary and of ordinary moments. It is the minutiae of daily life captured by the camera that carry a particular poignancy, as these lives, and the snapshots of moments, posed and unguarded, speak about the tragedy of oppression. These apparently unsuspecting and largely reticent photographs have the capacity to capture an irretrievable moment in time, and the irrevocability of trauma.

Looking at albums such as this one requires a renunciation of familiar narratives and contexts. As Ulrich Baer comments on photographs such as these "These photographs can visually stage experiences that would otherwise remain forgotten because they were never fully lived".[60]

They do not appear to be extraordinary and do not overtly depict oppression. Yet, paradoxically they do — for to be able to live these ordinary moments in a racially oppressive time, these fragments of exposure are nothing but illuminating. They are not merely random moments of imaginary lives. Rather, they speak of living and of moments of humanity. The images show us simultaneously, lives of suffering as well as lives of celebration. These moments of humanity are captured in the practice of religion and in the sway to a song in the dance hall. It is found in the attention given by the seamstress to the hems of those extraordinary day frocks. And then I realize, as I close this box, that there is nothing ordinary about these images. They are indeed, spectacular.

60 Baer, U. (2002). Spectral Evidence: The Photography of Trauma. Cambridge, Mass, London, MIT Press. p. 11.

Figure 16

Untitled

Colour Photograph

70 x 100 mm

Chapter 3

Ordinary Archives: Re-membering an Archive of Oppression

And I think that if the Truth and Reconciliation Commission is so interesting today – not only crucial- for this country, whatever follows from it, and to me it is unpredictable, unpredictable, it's crucial for this country not because of what is at stake — obviously at stake — but because it forces one to ask questions such as – and the lesson has to be drawn not only by South Africans but by everyone in the world who observes what is going on here — to ask questions such as 'what is an archive today, the archive of the [hero?], the archive of traumatisms and so on and so forth, and the archive of the repression of the archive?[1]

The Archive

On entering an archive, such as the National Archives in Roeland Street, Cape Town or the University of Cape Town's Manuscripts and Archives department, I am immediately struck by the overwhelming silence. I find that this not a space in which I am able to have a chuckle. It certainly is not a space where I will engage many of my other senses besides the visual. Besides the smell of dust, I find it difficult to conjure up anything else, and — the aroma of Sunday roasts, the sounds of the belting out of hymns and songs being played on the piano by my father and the texture of my grandmother's well-worn and stained apron — they all evade me. I find it such a 'white' space, a sanitised space, and I instinctively respond to it as I would to a church, lowering my voice and my gaze, I even note that my stride is less confident. I instinctively know my place in the archive, even though there are no lists of rules stuck up on the walls to remind me of how to behave. I am perplexed as to the origin of my unease as surely my university identity card signals that I am allowed to be here? My cardboard box of images seems to be

1 Derrida, J. Van Zyl, S. (2002). Psychoanalysis and the Archive: Derrida's Archive Fever. Refiguring the Archive. C. Hamilton, Harris, V., Pickover, M., Reid, G., Saleh,R., Taylor, J, Saleh, R. Boston, Claremont, Dordrecht, David Phillip Publishers.
p. 52.

completely disconnected from the images I find there. For they are not numbered, labelled or ordered in any particular way. They tumble promiscuously around each other as I lift the box, each one having a different space depending how gently, or not, I pick it up and move it to where I need it to be. They are not ordered, are not re-touched, nor are have they yet been digitally scanned for a modern digital archive. In this archive, unlike any one of the homes that I have visited, I have to fill out requisition forms, state the nature and purpose of my visit and, show an identity card of sorts. I am reminded to wear white gloves, not to eat, or use my cellular phone and to return any material exactly as I found it.

Upon opening one of several manila folders, my feelings of intrusion and voyeurism are re-enforced as I slip on the white gloves and start rummaging through the photographs. I am uncomfortable in this space and so too I feel is my cardboard box that I have brought along with me, for it is too messy, too jumbled, to find a home here. I note with sadness that many of the 'black' subjects in the photographic collections I ask for are not named. I catch my breath as I see an album of sorts, a beautifully cloth-bound square book, complete with pink satin ribbon, and labelled 'scraps'. This book holds several portrait images of 'black' bodies. I find that many of those photographs are anonymous, devoid too of any information regarding their subject's families or indeed their lives. How, can I come to terms with this archive? How can this photograph be re-imagined so that it may begin the journey of reparation, how can it speak clearly from the traces of the bodies it contains? I don't see any images of anyone that I know, but nonetheless, I struggle to shake off my discomfort, restricting my time in the archive to a minimum. I find that my breaths become less shallow the moment that I firmly shut the security gate and leave this archive behind me as I leave.

In 1994, Algerian born theorist Jacques Derrida presented a paper in the North London's Freud House, which was later to be published as *Mal d'archive: Une impression freudienn,* the English version becoming the seminal work, *Archive Fever*. In the first paragraph of a text that Derrida describes as "three plus n essays"[2], he lays the groundwork for his argument about the nature and construction of archives. Derrida is not only thinking about what an archive is, how it works, what its roots are and how it may be reconfigured, he is also looking at the archive of

2 Ibid.
p. 39.

psychoanalysis, its trajectories and history, and how it is constituted through a particular set of writings, histories and moments.

For Derrida, the archive is a location, emphasizing that the political power of the *archones* is essential to its definition. The archive needs exteriority to consign these traces that is selects, censors and marginalises, and which also can be erased and destroyed. This paradox then, is central to the archive; that it destroys that which it supposedly safeguards. This destruction, this "burning into ashes the very trace of the past"[3] sums up the archive for Derrida. This place is not about remembering then, rather an archive is about forgetting. It is this "fever", this "passion" to destruct, Derrida says, that "we know that something in us, so to speak, something in the psychic apparatus, is driven to destroy the trace without any reminder".[4] What then has been destroyed denied or filtered out, in the archive of apartheid and its aftermath? More crucial though, is the question of power, as for Derrida, the *arkhe*-the archive:

> Is a place where things begin, where power originates, its workings inextricably bound up with the authority of beginnings. … There, the *archon* himself, the magistrate, exercises the power of procedure and precedent, in his right to interpret them for the operation of a system of law...]In Derrida's description, the *arkhe* – the archive – appears to represent the *now* of whatever kind of power is being exercised.[5]

For Derrida, the *mal* (the fever) of the archive is in the order and structure of its establishment, its beginning, as well as the feverish desire, to own the archive. It is about power, a "sickness unto death" – a desire not just to enter the archive, but also to have and own it. As a Western obsession with finding beginnings, the drive of the archive seeks the beginning of things. 'Archive' encompasses all the ways and means of state power. Michel Foucault contends that archives are

3 Derrida, J. (1994). Specters of Marx: The State of the Debt, the Work of Mourning, and the New International. . New York, Routledge.
p. 44.

4 Ibid.

5 Steedman, C. (2001). "Something She Called a Fever: Michelet, Derrida and Dust." American Historical Review: 21.
p. 1159.

'often both documents of exclusion and monuments to particular configurations of power".[6] "It is substantially more than, and distinct from, a place which merely stores documents".[7] For as Derrida says, "there is no political power without power of the archive".[8] Derrida challenges us to consider what gets written out of archives, more so than what is included, and asks to think about that which is left behind saying:

> But this subtraction leaves a mark of erasure, a reminder which is added to the subsequent text and which cannot be completely summed up within in it.[9]

The author of these texts, "the archivist", as Jules Michelet wrote of his first days in the *Archives Nationales* in Paris in the 1820s, is the one who gives life to texts and who restores its "papers and parchments to the light …As I breathed in their dust, I saw them rise up".[10] Whether Michelet was referring to the dust of manuscripts and parchments, or whether he was speaking metaphorically, is uncertain, though we are forced to consider the notions of authorship, power and death within the archive, for as Benedict Anderson says, "the silence of the dead was no obstacle to their exhumation of their deepest desires".[11] Historians and archivists, therefore find "themselves able to speak on behalf of the dead and to interpret the words and the acts they had not understood".[12] In so doing, then, what does the archive deny and conceal? What are its secrets?The practice of collecting, by missionaries, travel writers and ethnologists, conspired to produce a vast network of knowledge that today forms the basis of the State and other archives, with colonial collections playing a very specific role as to how Africa was represented.

6 Hamilton, C., Harris, V., Pickover, M., Reid, G., Saleh,R., Taylor, J. (2002). Refiguring the archive. Dordrecht, Boston, Claremont, David Philip Publishers.
p. 9.

7 Referring to Derrida, Steedman, C. (2001). "Something She Called a Fever: Michelet, Derrida and Dust." American Historical Review: 21.
p.1159.

8 Hamilton, C., Harris, V., Pickover, M., Reid, G., Saleh,R., Taylor, J. (2002). Refiguring the archive. Dordrecht, Boston, Claremont, David Philip Publishers.
p. 15.

9 Ibid.
p.9.

10 Steedman, C. (2001). "Something She Called a Fever: Michelet, Derrida and Dust." American Historical Review: 21.
p. 1171.

11 Ibid.

12 Ibid.

Knowledge was a precondition for colonial governmentality; suggested in part by Valentin Mudimbe in *The invention of Africa* and Edward Said's signal work, *Orientalism.*[13] I concur with Premesh Lalu in his assertion that:

> Archives function very directly to define and sustain the relative **intensities of power …** It is important to bear this in mind when we proceed about the deliberations about the politics of digitising African archival resources, especially given the competing configurations of power in discussions of archives. [14]

A critical point that Lalu makes is that:

> In Southern Africa, the constitutive relations of power and the further exercise of that power was founded and enabled by a vast disciplinary apparatus. Since the nineteenth century, and in some instances much earlier, vast archives of discipline and punishment paint a harrowing picture of the complicity of knowledge in achieving social subjection. The archive was never far from the needs of colonialism. …Whereas in Europe, knowledge of these distant places of empire functioned to normalise power, in the distant places themselves it served to intensify its grip on the subject.[15]

Is it possible then, for the post-apartheid archive to redeem itself, or will it inevitably return to its its roots and to the archivist? The character of the archive in post-apartheid South Africa is part of an ongoing and expanding debate - in which this thesis intervenes - evident in several well-funded archival platforms and institutes, many of them located at academic institutions. They are attempting to understand how knowledge is, and has been, produced, and the gaps, biases and untruths in the accounts. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), discussed later in this thesis, was in part a response to the archive of apartheid, and has come to be the cornerstone of post-apartheid efforts to address the past. Paradoxically, the

13 Lalu, P. (2007). "The Virtual Stampede for Africa: Digitisation, Postcoloniality and Archives of the Liberation Struggles on Southern Africa. Cape Town: ." Innovation **34**: 17. p. 36.
14 Ibid.
15 Ibid.

TRC itself is now under scrutiny for adhering to the script, in that in its quest to uncover certain truths about the past, questions about access, sanitization and the role of government therein continue to be raised. [16] The archive in South Africa continues to be deeply political, but while it attempts to unravel the past, it is still, in many ways, forced to do this with the same tools, texts and languages that constituted the apartheid archive in the first place. In continuing in this vein, any new knowledges that this archive will generate always be infused and layered with the script, traces and restrictions of its forebears.

The archive in re-configuration should not only be about the past, rather, as Derrida says in speaking about the archives of Judaism and Jewishness, it will "also be something which is shaped by a certain power, a selective power, and shaped by the future, by the future anterior". In disrupting ideas of linearity, progress and temporality, Derrida gives us some insight as to how the post-apartheid archive must not only record the past, it needs to configure itself it in terms of the present and the future, so it may render "a view of a future which retrospectively, or retroactively, gives it its so-called final truth".[17]

How can the archive come to terms with its archivist, given that, it is always considered as a site of retrieval, representation, power and history?[18] The archive in apartheid was not only the place for meticulous record keeping, but was pivotal to the practice of racial subjugation, as any cursory visit to several archives in South Africa will attest. There are hundreds of images of 'black' bodies, countless pages of accounts by missionaries, notes of local languages by anthropologists and travellers attesting to the inferiority and difference of the 'black' body, these efforts all being fundamentally tied up with notions of power and inequality. Any re-figuration of archives that does not take this into account is doomed to exist only as an academic exercise in maintaining the status quo. As Lalu says:

> The colonial archive reflects a particular mode of evidence that is a consequence of the rise of new disciplines in the nineteenth century and the requirements of Empire. …

16 Hamilton, C., Harris, V., Pickover, M., Reid, G., Saleh,R., Taylor, J. (2002). Refiguring the archive. Dordrecht, Boston, Claremont, David Philip Publishers.

17 Derrida, J. (1998). Archive Fever. Refiguring the Archive, University of the Witwatersrand, David Philip Publishers.

18 Lalu, P. (2007). "The Virtual Stampede for Africa: Digitisation, Postcoloniality and Archives of the Liberation Struggles on Southern Africa. Cape Town." Innovation **34**: 17. p. 28-9.

> The emergence of the archive in Southern Africa did not only emerge with the rise of new disciplines, but also power. In Southern Africa, the conditions of conquest were propelled by the will to know and the will to power.[19]

Is the archive able to relinquish its definitions and notions of knowledge when focused on one singular event? Can the archive disrupt its idea of temporality and in so doing, challenge notions of its own power? Perhaps not, for as Derrida demonstrates, we cannot escape the root of the archive, no amount of:

> Refiguring can sever the rootedness of archival concepts in the `Greek words *arkhe* and *arkheion.* Equally, no refiguring can discard the necessity of an agreement between archivists and society.[20]

Disavowed Archives

How exactly are archives constructed? According to what questions and suppositions are they assembled? Who selects which images, which are then accepted and which are discarded? What role do private, family images play in the constitution of the archive of apartheid? When families are asked to donate images to museums and collections, what are the terms and conditions that they self-impose – do they only select images that show them in a particular light?. Do they discard poor quality snapshots? Did they prefer to submit images of their children? What did they do with the returned images? Did they think of them differently, perhaps as not up to scratch? Do these images show a 'normalcy' of lives in a divided city? Do they articulate the fullness of lives lived and of lives still to come? How is this archive trans-generational and does it speak across time? Do curators and archivists place themselves within the conventions and trends of collection and display, using images that conform to ionisation, nostalgia and repetition? Crucially, why has little attention been paid to images of this sort? Why have theorists

19 Ibid.
p. 37.

20 Derrida as discussed in Hamilton *et al* (2002).
p.16.

and archivists largely neglected them given that they are able to trouble the representation of the past?

My questions are echoed in the examination of nineteenth-century photographs of servants and slaves in the United States of America by Laura Wexler. In particular, she focuses on the ability of the 'black' woman to escape the subjugating white familial gaze and to claim her space in the frame, foregrounding herself and disrupting a particular narrative of the female servant as being unable and unwilling to resist. Wexler makes a further crucial point in her study by looking at the unwillingness of cultural critics to read and acknowledge the capacity of photographs to embody resistance.[21]

In thinking about just how the archive may be re-figured, we have to ask whether the archivist is able to re-negotiate his position? Furthermore, are we even able to comprehend an archive as manifest beyond our understanding it as merely a storeroom, by rather imagining it as multiple - with an infinite number of archivists? Does the word 'archive' deny its own re-figuring? I tentatively suggest that it is in looking at the body itself as archive that we may begin to make some inroads into how a postapartheid archive (as problematic as the word may be), a markedly different kind of archive, may emerge. In doing so, we may leap beyond archives as mere repositories of information. Moreover, I suggest (although it is not the focus of this thesis) that it is in looking to the body of the oppressed that the archive will be able to redeem itself and become rather a constantly shifting text, at times admittedly elusive and ambiguous, its uncertainties however a constant reminder that there are multiple pasts, presences, and points of view.[22] As Carolyn Hamilton, Verne Harris and Graeme Reid astutely comment, "the archive – all archive – is figured".[23] Crucially, I believe that these 'new archives' of disavowed bodies will challenge our long held ideas of the meanings of life and death, of pasts and futures. To do so, the archive needs to look beyond itself, escape its gatekeeper and find those texts, experiences and sounds belonging to those bodies so recently deemed inferior, and in so doing, it may just

21 Wexler, L. (1999). Seeing Sentiment: Photographs, Race and the Innocent Eye. The Familial Gaze. M. HIrsch. Hanover, London, University Press of New England**:** 248-275.

22 See Sekula, A. (1992). The body and the archive. The contest of meaning: critical histories of photography. R. Bolton. Cambridge, MIT Press.
Also see Foucault, M. (1984). Nietzsche, Genealogy, History,. The Foucault Reader. P. Rabinow. New York, Pantheon Books**:** 76-100.

23 Hamilton *et al.* (2002).
p. 7.

be able to seek absolution. As Derrida suggests:

> A science of the archive, in attempting to refigure itself, must concern 'itself not only with the way in which the archive becomes an institution and the laws that govern this institutionalisation, but also with those who authorize (in both senses) this process.[24]

This is crucial, for the archive is not only the concern and domain of the academy and the State. The challenge is to acknowledge the everyday practices of the oppressed that have traditionally been marginalised and excluded from mainstream archives. These attempts matter, for not only do they have to do with thinking through ideas of democracy, equality and freedom, but they force the hand of the supposed will to include.

Collecting Photographs

Photographs are to be found in many archives, even in those collections not labelled as 'archive'. The commercial galleries as well as the South African National Gallery all house impressive collections, most of them from acclaimed photographers who capture their subjects in spectacular, large format professional prints. These are usually to be found in impressive frames, accompanied by detailed texts about the photographer and her subject matter and accompanied by equally impressive price tags. I cannot recall seeing family images in a commercial gallery, but I am encouraged when I learn, for example, of an exhibition held at the South African National Gallery in 1999 called Lives *of Colour: Images from Cape photo albums*'. Curated by Capetonian Emile Maurice, the exhibition consisted of photographs from the family photo albums of various friends and acquaintances, all of whom were classified 'coloured' during the apartheid era. The images were accompanied by texts based on the stories told by their subjects and labelled accordingly, for example *Unknown photographer, Ballerina, District Six, 1967. Collection: Anonymous.* As encouraged as I am to find this exhibition, I find that these images are strangely silent as the exhibition space of the SANG struggles to fully articulate the colour of these

24 Derrida as cited by Van Zyl, S. Psychoanalysis and the Archive: Derrida's Archive Fever. Refiguring the Archive. C. Hamilton *et al* Boston, Claremont, Dordrecht, David Phillip Publishers. p. 39.

lives.[25] I don't hear them speak, as hard as I may try, I cannot hear the tune as the ballet dancer strikes her pose. I cannot imagine my unassuming box of images finding a home here either or in any other 'official' space and I am left to think about just what it is about these images that marks them, much like the subjects they portray, as inferior or mundane. I return to my box and simultaneously begin to sift through the layers of my thoughts, trying to hold onto elusive moments and the memories of my father saying "Hold still, smile, say: 'cheese' ".

I cannot recall my mother taking photographs of us, despite Pierre Bourdieu's observation that mothers have played the central role as family genealogist.[26] Indeed, I can only remember this task being the responsibility of my father or my uncle, who was an avid photography enthusiast. It was, and still is, my father, who stores our photos and who is responsible for the cardboard box. I had no idea it even really existed until recently, as at the most, and only from time to time, would we be shown a few isolated snapshots, with the most popular ones being those of my parent's wedding. These he would take out often, mostly to show new visitors who had the excruciating misfortune of having to sit through his descriptions of his wedding day and his beautiful bride. We have naturally never before referred to these photographs as 'archive', 'collection' or even 'images'. To my parents, and particularly my father, the photographs seem to defy summation, overwhelmed as they are by intention, being specifically "Wait, I have a photo I must show you!"

Familial images

In her work on the family album in South-east England, Gillian Rose looks at the particularities of photo taking and collection in the home. From her study, she asserts that the display of family photographs was curated almost exclusively by women, and that while "both mums and dads take photographs, it is rare for a man to frame one and unheard of for him to sort, display or send them".[27] She comments too that these images were sometimes kept in the envelopes from the developers, stored in cupboards or boxes, or arranged in albums. Some were "selected

25 See http://www.archivalplatform.org/blog/entry/lives_of_colour.

26 As cited by Gonzalez, J. A. (1992). "A contemporary Look at Pierre Bourdieu's Photography: A Middle-Brow Art." Visual Anthropology Review **8**(1).

27 Rose, G. (2003). "Family photographs and domestic spacings: a case study." Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers **28**(1): 5-18.

to go into special albums …some made into collages …some were taken to workspaces".[28] Rose is interested in the produced space of domestic integration and argues that this is manifested in large part by what is done with the physical photographs themselves. Whilst she acknowledges that what the photographs show – their content – is undoubtedly important, so too is what happens to these images as material objects in the home. If, as it is asserted, these images resemble countless others, is there something different about the compilation of the album of the oppressed? Is there something to be said about why these images were taken, who took them, and who is responsible for its archiving. If, as Rose asserts, photographs are significant objects in the house, and that special attention is paid to them, what does it say when these objects are concealed or destroyed? What does its paradoxical present/absent status reveal? Do these collections speak simultaneously of both a presence and absence of lives?

Family photography has found itself on the lower end of the genre's hierarchy. Pierre Bourdieu, in his well known 1965 text, *Photography, a middle brow art*, asserts that photography, as a mass social practice, conforms to rigid social schemas.[29] Bourdieu claims that the bulk of these images show little skill or conscious effort and contends that the main reason for these images is to display a family's integration and to this effect they circulate them among family and friends. They do not conform to any of photographic conventions and all they need to achieve is the recognisable reproduction of the figures depicted in the image.[30]

Bourdieu is uninterested in what these images show; rather he is concerned with photography as distinctly produced by different groups, how they practice it, and the relation of these groups with each other.[31] This makes for interesting commentary for while photography is viewed as a universal, social practice, Bourdieu contends that rigid social systems come into play in the taking and the reception of these images. This can account in part for the notion that these photographs are not considered 'high art', and their acknowledgement therefore as legitimate knowledge is questionable in the formal sense. Julian Stallabras, in thinking about Bourdieu, tells us that "senior executives are very likely to grant photography the status of an art when

28 Ibid.
29 Stallabrass, J. (1996). "Cold Eye':[Review of Pierre Bourdieu, Photography: A Middle Brow Art]." New Left Review(220): 5.
p. 5.
30 Ibid
31 Ibid.

asked about it abstractly, but are very unlikely to actually indulge in such a vulgar pursuit".[32] Photographers and viewers exist in clearly defined groups - structurally opposed against one another, and are "determined by the overweening forces of family, class and — to a lesser extent, for Bourdieu — gender'.[33]

Bourdieu's book was written in 1965 in France, a country and time when "peasants", to coin Bourdieu, were a strong and distinct social force, and in which less than a third of the population owned a television. [34] The book was also written in the shadow of Edward Steichen's 1955 New York photographic exhibition, *Family of Man*. Comprising 503 photographs grouped thematically and with subjects such as "children", "love" and "death", the exhibition toured the world for eight years and arguably became one of the most important and defining collections of the twentieth century . Laura Wexler offers an important insight into this exhibition of images, particularly the section the subject of 'family", by saying:

> Serge Guilbaut and Christopher Phillips have both demonstrated that through its co-operation with the government and its curatorship of the photography of the time, MoMa [Museum of Modern Art – New York] turned itself into one of the country's most productive bastions of cold war ideological politics. …"The Family of Man" … was an anthology of images edited to show the universality of daily human life all over the world, which purportedly revolves around utterly dehistoricised, utterly naturalized experiential categories such as "birth," "death", "work", "knowledge" …Supported by quotations from "primitive" proverbs or verses from the Bible, the message of this spectacle sent by the American government all over the world was that we are all one family.[35]

It was also written into conversations fostered with the kinds of images of families depicted in

32 Ibid.
33 Ibid.
34 Ibid.
35 Wexler, L. (1999). Seeing Sentiment: Photographs, Race and the Innocent Eye. The Familial Gaze. M. Hirsch. Hanover, London, University Press of New England**:** 248-275.
p. 250-1

publications such as *Time* and *Life*.[36] Bourdieu uses his text and the family image to comment on the shifting patterns of these social structures, noting the emergence of children in these images as they start to feature and in doing so, he betrays his interest in class identifications – using terms like 'peasants' and 'bourgeois' throughout his text. His title too — *Middle-brow,* gestures towards this and implies that those who practice photography as an art, are engaging in a "middle-brow, and middle class, practice".[37] Bourdieu pays little, if any attention to the role of women photographers, and although it was written in 1965, the text makes for interesting reading on issues of gender and class, much of which still resonate today. His chapter title, *Professional men or men of quality: Professional photographers* elucidates quite clearly the position that Bourdieu takes on women photographers and of the value of the family album, views which continue still. Men still heavily dominate photography, particularly in South Africa; galleries frequently showcase only photography considered as Fine Art. What Bourdieu shows is that photography has been, and continues to be an important part of Western, post-industrial systems of social identification, consumption and expression".[38]

Contemporary Fine Art photographers such as Sally Mann, Nan Goldin and Roger Billingham have each turned to families as subject matter, yet while these images may speak of the family and its representation, they are profoundly different from images of family found in the home. Perhaps due to the advent of digital photography and the idea of the family being in crisis, artists such as Mann and Billingham are integrating the family image into their arena, this acknowledgement seen in the official sanction at the MoMa with the exhibition, *Pleasures and terrors of domestic comfort*.[39] Britain has also seen a large exhibition of mainly domestic photographs at the Barbican Art Gallery, *Who's looking at the family?* by Val Williams in 1994.

British born Billingham, in his six years of transformation from student painter to Fine Art photographer, turned his lens on his family, photographing his constantly inebriated father resulting in the financially and critically acclaimed body of work, *Ray's a laugh*. His images would

36 Stallabrass, J. (1996). "Cold Eye':[Review of Pierre Bourdieu, Photography: A Middle Brow Art]." New Left Review(220): 5.
p. 5.

37 Gonzalez, J. A. (1992). "A contemporary Look at Pierre Bourdieu's Photography: A Middle-Brow Art." Visual Anthropology Review 8(1).

38 Ibid.

39 Galassi, P. (1991). Pleasures and terrors of domestic comfort. New York, Museum of Modern Art. [Exhibition]

go on to feature in the *Sensations* show at the Royal Academy in London in 1997, a show that has come to be accepted as one of the highlights in modern art.

American Sally Mann uses her lens to photograph her children in the Virginia landscape. Often depicting her children nude, the detailed images combine both the serendipitous and the orchestrated moment. Like Billingham, Mann's work has been widely exhibited and is found in collections around the world.

South African photographer Tracey Derrick takes the viewer further into the intimacy of her family's space with the photographs of her two daughters, one biological, and the other adopted. The innocence associated with childhood has been given expression by the children's nudity and often natural environment in which they are situated. Her images are gentle and sensual due to the richness of the monochromatic silver gelatine prints, as well as somewhat unsettling on account of the viewer being allowed access to these intensely private moments.

What is crucial now, in thinking through the Bourdieu text, is the question of knowledge production, for while these domestic images - distinct from images of the family by 'legitimate' photographers – and not donated to museums and archives, continue to be understood only an exercise in familial integration, they therefore will continue to be discounted as legitimate archives of knowledge. Elizabeth Edwards intentionally refers to the study of those images as "things that matter" rather than notions of "importance" and "significance".[40] Daniel Miller argues that these terms are "distancing, analytical" words, whereas "matter is more likely to lead is to the concerns of those being studies rather than those doing the studying".[41] This is crucial, Edward continues, when she refers to the study of family photographs in Australia, where they have been pivotal in "articulating suppressed, submerged, contested or fractured histories".[42] Gaynor MacDonald in speaking of family photographs of the Wiradjuri in Australia says:

> The fact that valued Wiradjuri photos are usually 'simple snapshots,' of the family

40 Edwards, E. (2005). "Photographs and The Sound of History." Visual Anthropology Review 21(1 and 2): 19.
p. 29.

41 Miller, D. (1998). Material Culture: Why Some Things Matter. London, UCL Press.
p. 11.

42 Edwards, E. (2005). "Photographs and The Sound of History." Visual Anthropology Review 21(1 and 2): 19.
p. 28.

album type, is most probably what has contributed to their underestimation in cultural terms.[43]

Other Archives

As curator of the Centre for African Studies' gallery at the University of Cape Town, I curated a visual art exhibition in September 2010, *Juggling with the familiar ll*. I was particularly keen to find women artists, particularly photographers, whose works spoke, on one hand, to the theme of performance and on the other to the general way in which they used the camera to record their everyday perspectives, specifically by breaching notions of gendered spaces and gendered art forms. I wanted the participating artists to be as diverse in terms of background, age and location as possible. It was by co-incidence that I heard of a remarkable collection of images by Sophia Klaaste, found in the unlikely location of the Botany Department at the University of Cape Town.

Klaaste first used a camera as a participant as part of a photography project that was instigated by Rick Rohde in 1999, as part of a long-term study into the socio-economic and environmental history of the area. She took about one hundred film images a year over a decade using a point-and-shoot 35mm camera in her remote home village of Paulshoek,[44] a hamlet consisting of only about a hundred households in the area of Leliefontein, Namaqualand. Because of its legacy as a marginalised 'coloured' reserve, this area is well versed to speak of the lived and residual realities of apartheid. Paulshoek battles with 75% unemployment, is not a tourist attraction and those who do work receive very low wages; alcohol and drug abuse are rife. As with other areas that share the same history, the same legacy of neglect and otherisation, this landscape and its inhabitants present a particular oppressive past. Klaaste's images therefore speak of bodies and their mapping. According to Rick Rohde, Klaaste's images:

43 Macdonald, G. (2003). "Photos in Wiradjuri Biscuit Tins: Negotiating Relatedness and Validating Colonial Histories." Oceania 73(4): 17.
p. 226.

44 Rohde, R. H., T. (2008). One hundred years of separation: the historical ecology of a South African 'Coloured' Reserve. 78(2): 33.
p. 33.

> Are often constructed [as a] tableau, posed and acted out as if the camera provided a stage for impromptu fantasies and playful inventions. They refer indirectly to the moderating influence of the church at one extreme, and to the sporadic eruption of violence fuelled by alcohol, at the other.[45]

Projects of this nature are not new or novel. Klaaste's though is different, as it is difficult to imagine that there are many projects of this nature that span a photographic record, of the same small social space, of over ten years by the same photographer. In an intensely personal manner, this body of work facilitates an engagement with the South African past, through a lens of a young woman who witnesses and whose body bears the scars of this history.

Klaaste was first given a 35mm instant film camera in 1999 as a sixteen year old and to date has amassed an archive of over a thousand images. She uses the camera to show scenes from the everyday, often displaying an acute appreciation of light and composition. Despite having no formal training or access to other photographers or photographic literature, Klaaste's work however still manages to convey much of the concerns of space and gender that the work of award winning South African contemporary artists such as Zanele Muholi and Tracey Rose does. Her images though are not beautifully mounted, professionally printed large format glossy images. Instead, they are mainly small colour images from 35mm film, though there are a few black and white images, many printed at low-cost one-hour photographic development outlets. Klaaste says that she "uses the camera to make sense of her world", photographing her "ordinary" [46]moments. These include dances, bread baking, rituals of courtship and a series of self-portraits. She overtly acknowledges her role as photographer in her practice, as in addition to numerous self-portraits, she reveals her presence as she often includes her shadow in the frame. In one image she has turned her camera towards the ground so that her subject's face has been cropped out of the image. She has however included her own shadow, one that shows her holding the camera. Klaaste hereby clearly locates herself within the image. She is simultaneously within and without the frame - and is both looking, and is being looked at.

Klaaste's archive aspires to a position in the in larger photographic archive of South Africa,

45 Rohde, R. (2010). "Vytjie". A ten-year photographic diary from a Namaqualand village.S. O'Connell. CapeTown. [Personal Communication]

46 Klaaste, S. (2010). Personal Communication: Juggling with the Familiar O. C. Siona. Cape Town.

and indeed Africa, where the camera has played a not insignificant role in imaging bodies and spaces.[47] As Eric Haney comments, the:

> First travelling photographers had arrived in southern Africa; elsewhere they rode the waves of commercial prospects, selling views of distant places and bringing new views for sale, and taking portraits of European settlers.[48]

The Camera in Africa

Sir John Herschel, who first coined the term 'photography' in 1838, is credited with Cape Town's first photographic effort, beginning the imaging of the port city which was at the time the strategic connecting point between Europe, the Americas and the African coasts, and India, Australia and the Far East.[49] Haney makes the point that many of the first photographers who visited Cape Town had established studios in other colonies. These include Charles Shepherd and Samuel Bourne of Calcutta, whose studio is considered to have been one of the world's first.[50] Photographs of the encounters that these photographers experienced on their travels are troubling, as those of French travelling photographer, E. Thiesson, illustrate. These photographs were often staged, having titles such as "Native woman of Sofalo, Moçambique". Despite the fact that the woman, photographed bare-breasted and seated on a chair, is understood to be Queen Xai Xai of Sofala, Moçambique, Thiesson photographed her in profile, with eyes downcast, the photographer refusing — indeed scorning — her gaze.[51] Systematic recording was deemed to be a pivotal component of the colonial project, given, as Alfred Duggan Cronin commented, that the "pure" races were vanishing or being tainted and diluted by inter-marriage.[52]

Cape Town had studios offering sophisticated techniques imported from Britain; Londoner,

47 See Hayes, P. S., J. Hartmann, W.(1998). Photography, history and memory. The Colonising Camera Cape Town, University of Cape Town Press.

48 Haney, E. (2010). Photography and Africa. London, Reaktion Books. p. 34.

49 Ibid.

50 Ibid.

51 Ibid. p. 35.

52 Ibid. p.39.

S.B. Barnard's studio was filled with exotic props and objects and F.A.Y. York offered refined portraiture to the new settlers. York's studio played a role in imaging new lives, photographing subjects in their new own homes. Travellers brought their photographic equipment with them, which although cumbersome, imaged these expeditions, which might typically have included setting up "religious missions, finding navigable rivers and accessing natural resources".[53] Colonial expansion was closely tied to anthropological inquiry. As anthropometric images from this period attest, "they were part of distinct projects attempting to define and classify the physical nature and origin of human races, and by implication, their culture".[54]

Surveillance and the photographing of bodies continued from this period right through to the end of the colonial era and to ultimately transfix apartheid South Africa, the camera witnessing and lending credence to legal notions of difference. The camera, in an attempt to indicate difference and inferiority in terms of race, gender and culture, captured the photographed 'black' subjects. Evidence of this is seen in various photographic collection in museums and archives around the world, one of them being the Alfred Duggan Cronin collection, housed at the McGregor Museum in Kimberley, the University of Cape Town having several of these images from this collection in their own archive.[55]

Duggan Cronin's images, taken in the early twentieth century in Southern Africa, construct a certain image of Africa that had significant political connotations, with the 'primitivising' image playing a role in the question of 'black' 'native' bodies and spaces[56] which came to its ultimate fruition in the practices of apartheid. Paulshoek, where Sophia Klaaste lives, is an example of this legacy, a dusty, dry and forgotten by-product of decades of social engineering and it is serendipitously in the same locale where Duggan Cronin took many of his images.

53 Ibid.
p. 37.

54 Edwards, E. (1990). "Photographic Types: Pursuit of Method." Visual Anthropology lll(2-3).
p. 235.

55 Godby, M. (2010). "Alfred Martin Duggan-Cronin's photographs for the Bantu tribes of South Africa (1928-1954): the construction of an ambiguous idyll." Kronos (Bellville) 36(1): 30.
p. 30.

56 Ibid.

Images of the interiority of apartheid

Klaaste displays an acute appreciation for colour that makes for interesting study, specifically when considering the grey landscape that Paulshoek seems almost exclusively to be made up of. She often photographs her subjects against backdrops that are vivid and detailed, their bright colours sitting uncomfortably at times with the unsaturated landscape. By doing so, the viewer is provoked to see a different narrative as emerging from the grey tones, a narrative that speaks of lives of celebration and regret, and of promise and failure. This is perhaps most eloquently summed up in my favourite image of a young girl, perhaps twelve or thirteen years old, pictured in a summery white and pink outfit and set against a light blue background. She is centered in the image, her gaze confident, her hair animated by the slightest hint of breeze. The girl's eyes — the *punctum* ("this sibling of madness")[57] according to Barthes, is the heart-breaking detail of this image. (Barthes articulates two terms — the *punctum,* which is unique to the viewer, and its supplement, the *studium,* which is not). While the *studium* is present in all photographs and is all those aspects that are culturally legible, *punctum* is "that accident which pricks me (but also bruises me, is poignant to me)".[58] Klaaste's young girl in her summer dress displays the denial of a future; in her gaze we see a refutation of dreams. We are shocked by this brutal acknowledgement of an absence, but, as Barthes may continue, this *punctum* indicates a tear, a rupture in the cultural fabric. This image and this girl, then, are profoundly important to our thinking of this archive as specifically unsettling; it exposes a break in our understanding of just what it means to be oppressed. It challenges the 'before, during, and after' moment of the historiography of apartheid.

For although it looks like the kind of photograph that could find its place in a fashion catalogue, it clearly isn't. The colour, the movement and the perfect composition, all seem at odds in the dry and inhospitable space that I now know Paulshoek to be. Looking through these images I find that Klaaste approaches many of her subjects in this vein – often provoking them to confront the camera head on. Klaaste has infused her subjects with humanity; she has coloured the ordinariness of their lives with the carefully sought out and attentively displayed

57 Barthes, R. (1981). Camera Lucida: Reflections of Photography. London, Vintage. p.115.

58 Ibid. p. 27.

details that alchemically saturate and transform them into the extraordinary. She gives us a glimpse of a decade of living in particular ways. These photographs are more than a testimony to a fixed moment in time or of the ability of ordinary people to indulge in a pastime once the exclusive domain of those better off. This archive is crucial in its attempt to understand the post-lives of oppression, of life and death in times still fraught with anxiety. They are a reminder of losses - of the past and the present. The shadows of Klasste self foreshadow repeated and ongoing and losses and sorrows.

Although Sofia Klaaste may be unaware of the connections that this photograph and the archive itself has to death and violence, this none the less does not escape her lens. I have struggled to find images of funerals in the images of my family – I found only one, that of my family gathered at my maternal great-grandmother's funeral. As early as the 1840s British and French provincials used photographs as *memento mori,* with some images gaining the status of religious icons in the home, as these images became a part of the process of mourning, remembering and worshipping the dead.[59] These themes weave their way through Klaaste's entire collection, overtly and covertly, speaking perhaps of her own very real apprehension of death within an environment of barely submerged and endemic violence. There are several images of funerals, presenting both mourners and the deceased; perhaps Klaaste is blurring the cycles of life and death. In one image, she performs her own death, depicting herself lying on the arid ground clutching a bunch of flowers. In a community where death, metaphorical and otherwise, is constant, Klaaste makes visible these markers. Her images become the obituaries of the living, ones that manage the constant personal and collective losses of Paulshoek.

She is clearly at ease in the space in which she works, which is evidenced by her subjects allowing her to photograph very private and poignant moments. I was first exposed to these images in digital format after Rohde and Hoffman had digitally scanned them. To a degree, there was some sense of chronology, aided in no small part by Klaaste's own visible aging over the decade that the photographing took place. It is evident that although little has changed in Paulshoek in terms of landscape and living conditions, lives have continued, babies have been born, teenagers have married, and aunts have died. These photographs are extensions of

59 Hudgins, N. (2010). "A Historical Approach to Family Photography: Class and Individuality in Manchester and Lille, 1850 - 1914." Journal of Social History (Spring): 26.
p .572.

relationships, articulating the comment by Alfred Gell:

> We suffer …from forms of agency mediated via images of ourselves, because as social persons, we are present, not just in our singular bodies, but in everything in our surroundings which bears witness to our existence, our attributes, and our agency.[60]

This collection is invaluable as a text that speaks in overt and covert ways of just what it means to have lives as 'black' women. It complicates the dichotomy between public and private. She lets us into an archive of traces and presents to us lives of defiant agency. Her work speaks of death and of ways of living. Fundamentally it speaks of an inability to come to terms with a past that continues to mark bodies and spaces in violent and catastrophic ways. Klaaste does not present explicit images of violence, which could have been all too possible considering that all these images were taken soon after the first democratic elections in South Africa, the images speak instead of the residues of oppression, that which continues to haunt spaces and bodies. The images ask us to consider whether she, Klaaste, is, or is not, truly free. By inscribing her shadow on her subjects, Klaaste graphically unites their shared oppressions. Her presence in the dusty and unforgiving landscape tells the viewer of her own experience of dislocation. She confronts the viewers of her images, unapologetically provoking them to acknowledge her existence and to regard the validity and legitimacy of her own story – to take in the contours of her arrival within the frame. In a strongly visual way, she foregrounds the subject of her life and her ordinary moments. By confronting us with her own gaze she rebuffs and returns any idea that her story is unimportant, trivial or mundane.

What Klaaste does with the camera is to foreground the everyday. Her archive entices the ordinary, it grapples with the familiar perhaps in an attempt to re-imagine or challenge the script of who Sophia Klaaste was *supposed* to be. Through the camera, Klaaste's archive confronts the colonial and apartheid photographic archive. She challenges the archives of photographers such as Jules Leger, Alfred Duggan Cronin, James Chapman, F. Hodgson E.Thiesson and John Kirk as she asks the camera to make sense of their legacies, the social realities that she and Paulshoek

60 Gell, A. Art and Agency. London, Clarendon Press. p. 103.

are forced to bear. Her images ask us to consider the possibility that this burden of oppression cannot be vindicated. She speaks to the after-lives of oppression, and details for us, in vividly arresting images, just what kinds of lives emerge after oppression.

The images are uncaptioned, so meaning is constantly in flux and ideologies, sources and times all shift. As Walter Benjamin, Susan Sontag and John Taylor have pointed out, the meanings of photographs depend on the caption given by the person using the image. [61] Klaaste's subjects can therefore be anyone or anything that they choose to be. This collection asks us to think about the archive of apartheid. It raises questions as to how particular images shape a narrative, the choices made before the selection for any archive, and it asks us finally to think about those questions that are asked, and those that are not. If we are to understand how these and other family photographs are significant to a history and a theory of oppression, then it becomes imperative to destabilise the dominant and established narratives. We will need to re-think, particularly in regard to the photograph, ideas of realism, subjectivities and Western modes of 'truth', history and identity. We need to think about the archive, for inasmuch as these images speak about the local, the mundane and the particular; they are also about loss and death, power and empowerment, contestation and affirmation. They command a space in the imaging of South Africa, from the early ethnographic images of the colonists to the socio-documentary images of apartheid South Africa that revealed to the world just what the day-to-day atrocities of the system entailed. Many of the collections of South African photographers such as Ernest Cole, Peter Magubane, Alf Khumalo, David Goldblatt and Omar Badsha are in collections and archives around the world. Perhaps the most recognisable of these images belong to the *Drum* magazine archive, now housed in the Baileys African History Archive. These iconic images of 'black' South Africans first appeared in Cape Town 1951 as *African Drum,* with Bob Crisp as publisher, and a year later the enterprise moved to Johannesburg under the guidance of Jim Bailey. Photographers of the *Drum* stable included Ernest Cole, Alf Kumalo, Victor Xashimba, Gopal Naransamy, Chester Maharaj, GR Naidoo and Jurgen Schaderburg.[62]

61 Hudgins, N. (2010). "A Historical Approach to Family Photography: Class and Individuality in Manchester and Lille, 1850 - 1914." Journal of Social History (Spring): 26. p. 582.

62 See Duggan, J. (2011). "Drum Magazine turns 60", in In the Headlines: http://www.archivalplatform.org/news/entry/drum_magazine_turns_60/. [Accessed 23 September 2011].

The image that drew me to photography was photojournalist Sam Njima's iconic black-and-white photograph of Hector Pieterson, published around the globe it came to represent apartheid South Africa. It was taken in 1976 when I was a disorientated nine year old schoolgirl running from the tear gas and mayhem of protest at my school, Zonnebloem Girls Preparatory, located on the border of Walmer Estate and District Six. Njima's iconic image shows a dying teenager, Hector Pieterson, being carried by a distraught and running fellow student on June 16 1976, the day when police opened fire on schoolchildren protesting being taught in Afrikaans, a language few of them understood, let alone spoke. I have always been haunted by this image and it resonates with me on many levels. It reminds me of my own fear as I ran in the street, eyes burning, alongside scores of other young children. I think about the photographer perhaps caught between wanting to take an image, and wanting to help. It was from this day I now believe, that I became aware of just what it meant to be a child apparently cursed by inheriting a darker skin. This image however also brings a measure of solace, for as I begin to come to terms with the camera in Africa and trace its steps, my camera, the cardboard box and I continue the quest to obscure the multiple voids of life in postapartheid South Africa

Violated Archives

As a photographer trained in darkroom processes, I am used to paying attention to the safekeeping of negatives, photographic paper and chemistry. One needs to not only take a perfectly exposed image, juggling apertures, shutter speeds and film, but one has to dedicate many hours to toiling in a confined, dark and pungent space to produce a piece of paper with absolute blacks, brilliant whites, and a range of greys. I have always become quite attached to my hand-printed images, finding it difficult to give them away. The trays containing the chemicals for developing, stopping and fixing the images have to be precisely measured and monitored and many photographers who still work in the darkroom, seem to need to be pedantic, as well as relentless, in their pursuit of the perfect print. I was therefore horrified to hear that my maternal uncle, Barry Singh, destroyed his entire collection of images, most of them hand-printed, when he emigrated to Canada with his family in the late 1980s. For as Elizabeth Edwards comments:

> Preciousness of photographs in most communities is premised on the aura of the perceived direct link with the past and the presence of the extended distributed person, the force of this can be understood in relation to the social act of destroying photographs. Not only is there the symbolic and actual violence of tearing or burning the indexical trace, but the destruction of photographs points to a breakdown or secession of social relations.[63]

My uncle was first given a camera as a teenager, an Ilford Box Camera that held 120 film and produced twelve frames. He was a prolific image taker who was given a black-and-white photographic enlarger by a family friend from Kimberley and he used the pantry as his dark-room. By all accounts he amassed a quite a sizeable body of work, and as my mother would later attest, "he was always in the darkroom". Despite this investment of time and effort and regardless of his apparently high opinion for his art, he none the less chose to destroy all traces of this period of his life when he emigrated to Toronto in 1988 - only returning some seventeen years later for his mother's funeral. It seems impossible to me to even consider doing the same, and in speaking to him when on a recent trip to Canada, he appeared reluctant to speak about District Six, his life as a 'coloured' man in South Africa, after his severing of ties with family and friends. I could not bring myself to labour the point, as it was evident that he just could not talk about it. His son, my cousin, Robin Singh, remembered his father taking many photographs of "flowers, countless images of Ma's prize roses". It seemed that perhaps amidst the horror of the landscape, my uncle made a point of focussing on beauty instead. Possibly by constructing a collage of lives filled with colour and vibrancy, he could keep the monsters at bay, if only for a while and in the isolation of his dark-room.

What the album of the oppressed compels us to do is to consider modes of survival by those who were dominated and how they constructed a world for themselves in which they were human. I believe that these albums hint at and provide apertures through which to peer at habits, gestures, movements, moments and sounds, that whilst at times elusive, transform the idea of archive into something that is no longer just a place to store a dead past, but

63 Edwards, E. (2001). Raw Histories. Photographs, Anthropology and Museums. Oxford, Berg. p. 36.

instead, into something that is living. This is particularly evident in those images conventionally considered to be poor in composition, showing perhaps a random hand moving across the frame - photographs depicting natural motion and unguarded moments. It is seen in the sense of composure, confidence and pride of a young woman with her head thrown back while dancing, her partner's hand supporting her back, as they dance to a tune in someone's lounge. It is in the unmistakable love and affection that a husband exhibits for his new bride as he is photographed leaning across her, protecting her body and whispering something in her ear; It is seen in the firm hand-hold and resolute posture of a proud mother who is walking her young son through a divided city. Images such as these invite us to imagine the stories that these bodies will tell about violence, if asked… These albums are archives of the present that describe the shapes of lives that are still being lived. It is in the smells of familiar dishes that were first cooked by newlyweds in District Six and Parow, and which still pervade dining rooms some forty years later. These snapshots are not about a single event; they are about questions of life in systems of death that continue. Photographs found, and 'spoken' in the home, ask us to work outside of conventional archives and to think about what is missing from the narrative. They are the traces of moments that refuse to dissipate, and they invite us to think though questions of oppression as well as the after-lives of oppression. It may be that endeavours such these will not fit into the idea of archives, for as Achille Mbembe writes:

> The term 'archive' first refers to a building, a symbol of a public institution, which is one of the organs of a constituted state. However, by "archives" is also understood a collection of documents – normally written documents – kept in this building. There cannot therefore be a definition of 'archives' that does not encompass both the building itself and the documents stored there." [64]

Perhaps, what is required then, is to look to practices of the oppressed as a response to Bogues' notion of historical catastrophe. Looking at, and speaking to, images of the oppressed's religious and social events challenge the way in which knowledges of the past are produced, and as

64 Mbembe, A. (2002). The Power of the Archive and its Limits. Re-Figuring the Archive. C. Hamilton, Harris, V., Pickover, M., Reid, G., Saleh,R., Taylor, J. Cape Town, David Phillip Publishers: 19-26. p. 19.

experiences of the 'now', they argue for different narratives to be told, for as Hamilton *et al* tells us: 'Alternate visions require alternate archives.'[65]

Were these images taken with the idea that somehow they might end up not only *in* the archive, but *as* an archive? Were the meant to be coded, classified, categorised and exhibited according to criteria of collectors and archivists? I respond that it is up to these images and the stories they tell to resist the lure of Derrida's *archon*. I realise that in order for them to 'escape the boundaries' of the archive, from its "status and power that is derived from this entanglement of buildings and documents",[66] I have to restore these images to the sanctuary of their box and relinquish them to the archival stewardship of my father.

65 Hamilton, C., Harris, V., Reid, G., (2002). Introduction. Re-figuring the Archive. C. Hamilton, Harris, V., Pickover, M., Reid, G., Saleh,R., Taylor, J. Cape Town, David Philip Publishers: 6-17. p.16.

66 Ibid.

Figure 17

Untitled

Black-and-White Photograph

55 x 55 mm

CHAPTER 4

Silence in the Museum: Logic and legacies of an oppressive space

> *As a forum of memory management, the new Board is committed to building on the Museum's strong legacies of critical independence and championing democracy in the public sphere. The Digging Deeper exhibition continues to be the pivotal resource for public education about District Six, Cape Town and the politics of race and forced removals. The Museum is committed to working with its partners on the Prestwich Place Project Committee to explore memory methodologies that restore dignity and counteract paternalism. The Sacks Futeran building, which is undergoing major renovation, continues to hold the potential to emerge as a powerful heritage and memory centre in District Six.*[1]

It is difficult to write a thesis on District Six without an engagement with the District Six Museum, for although I have had little to do with the institution, it holds a particular place in the narrative of forced removals and restitutive efforts. I have long since been ambivalent about museums, unsure of what I was precisely meant to do, and feel, during and after a visit and although I have spent some time in the District Six Museum, I always leave with a set of lingering questions. Am I looking *at something*, or I am I looking *for* something in this museum? In the exhibits I find an elusive glimpse of my story, identifying with it in very small measures, and this is fleeting, *and* it blurs into the generic experience of a 'museum visit'. Am I transformed by my visit — and I am left wondering if I should be? I find that there is concern and effort to render the District Six museum similar; and indeed there do not seem to be many instances that show separations or deviations from the similar. Does the museum not also inadvertently locate District Six irrevocably in the past? Doesn't the museum define polarities – those of the oppressed in the past, and those of spectators in the present? If so, how does this positioning assimilate larger questions of trauma, memory and citizenship, seeing as the institution is largely

1 Crain Soudien (2008) in Bennett, B. (2007 / 8). District Six Museum: Annual Report 2007/ 8. Cape Town, District Six Museum.
p .3.

understood to play a crucial role in constituting the public memory of District Six? Do these installations aid or destroy memories by reifying photographs and other objects? In its efforts to represent the past, has the museum become a metaphor for one neatly defined notion of suffering, and only the one? How then can the museum close the gap between the present and the past and still free all the other numerous and varied histories and narratives? In the haste to move on from the past, has what attention has been paid by postpartheid South Africa to the form and logic of museums?

The District Six Museum

On entering the District Six Museum for an appointment with its Collections Manager, Christine Julius, I am again confronted by a flood of recollections, the strongest being that of my family attending the funeral of Mrs. Goodhard in 1978, whose daughters Gwen (Gwennie) and Winifred (Winnie) have been friends of my mother since birth. The Goodhard family lived opposite our home in Princess Street, Walmer Estate, two doors down from the Dowlings, and much like the latter; we considered their home an extension of ours. All three of their children were born in Princess Street where they continued to live for the next thirty-nine years.

I realise as I enter the District Six Museum that much has changed but it is apparent to me that this was once a church, the layout is recognizable as such. Added to which, above what used to be the altar, are emblems of Hinduism, Christianity, Islam and Judaism. I ask about admission fees, and am I am told that tourists pay a fee but that ex-residents are exempt. I am not sure where that places me. I see that there are two groups of German tourists listening intently to their guide. Pews no longer take up the floor area; rather there is a large floor map of District Six, covered in plastic, with numerous comments written in felt-tip pen. I am not sure whether I am free to walk on it, so I cautiously navigate around its edges, going through to the coffee area where I am to meet Julius. I discover that the floor covering which I am trying to avoid is part of the permanent collection. Perhaps because I studied Fine Art I respond to it as an artwork and am reluctant to walk on the installation, my trepidation allayed only when I ask Julius if I may in fact step on it. This piece is a map of District Six that is protected by heavy plastic, and decorated around the edges with poems and linocut prints from Lionel Davis, an artist, political

activist and ex-resident of District Six.

I still can't shake the feeling that I am in a church, and as I look around for familiar markers by which to orientate myself, I find that I am momentarily overwhelmed by a need to genuflect. I look around the various exhibits in an attempt to find someone that I know, but I do not succeed. I admire the curation of the exhibits; they are well set out, information boards are beautifully printed; however, besides the street names, I find it difficult to find the story of me, let alone that of my son. Why is it that the museum, regardless of its shape and form, conjures up the notion of the sacrosanct?

The museum opened in the Central Methodist Mission Church in December 1994, eight months after the country's historic elections and the inaugural ceremony of its first democratic president, Nelson Mandela. Conceptualised as a project that worked with the histories of the area, it was the culmination of more than five years of planning by the District Six Museum Foundation that was formed by the Hands Off District Six Committee.[2] The Foundation was one of several projects and organisations that had emerged out of the period between the 1970's to the 1990s which worked to 'preserve the memory of District Six". [3]

The District Six Museum was born out of the 'Hands Off District Six' campaign which was formed in the late 1980s to defend the development of the area by British Petroleum,[4] at a time when the only families living in the area were "predominantly lower middle class Afrikaans speakers and overwhelmingly state employees".[5] District Six, overwhelmingly iconic in terms of forced removals in South Africa, did not stand as a "blot on the conscience of the entire nation"[6] but could be defended from further onslaught by the 'Hands off District Six' Campaign. Crain Soudien comments that from the very inception of this campaign, the idea of a museum was mooted,[7] which was realized in 1994, the year of South Africa's first democratic

2 Rassool, C. (2006). "Making the District Six Museum in Cape Town." Museum International 58(1-2). p. 9.

3 Cratz, C. A., Rassool, C (2006). Remapping the Museum. Museum Frictions. I. Karp, Kratz,C, Szwaja,L,Ybarra-Frausto,T. Durham, London, Duke University Press: 347-356.

4 McEachern, C. (1998). "Working with Memory: The District Six Museum in the New South Africa." Social Analysis(42 (2)): 24. p. 51.

5 Ibid. p. 51.

6 Ibid. p. 51.

7 Soudien, C. (1990). District Six: From Protest to Protest. The Struggle for District Six: Past and Present. S. a. S. Jeppie, C. Cape Town, Buchu.

elections, when the mood of the country was politically exuberant.

The establishment of this museum at a particular time and space therefore bears relevance. The first and only District Six Museum was born at the same time as democracy itself and is housed in a church that was considered a site of grass-roots struggle against the apartheid system, the building defiantly squared up against its opposite neighbour, a police station. On many levels then, this museum, whether intentionally or not, comes to be seen as *the* place of District Six, as the guardian of its memories, speaking for its past, and securing its future.

In 1992, the Foundation held a two-week photographic exhibition aptly named *Streets: Retracing District Six* in its current home, after which it moved to the Buitenkant Methodist Church,[8] a short walk from the actual terrain that remains of District Six proper and directly opposite the Caledon Square Police Station, an infamous place of detention and torture during the apartheid years. At the initial gatherings at the exhibition, ex-residents sat together and in the church pews and reminisced while they looked at photographs, film footage and projected slides. As Ciraj Rassool, historian and trustee of the museum comments:

> It was this desire to reassemble and restore the corporeal integrity of District Six through memory that led to the creation of the District Six Museum two years later.[9]

The images used in this exhibition went on to form the core of the collection at the Museum, through which streets and landmarks of the razed area were identified. Through this process of identification and recognition, a collective memory of District Six emerged, located at a very particular place – the museum. The exhibition was created out of remnants, memorabilia, photographs and artefacts, with the original street names displayed in hanging columns. These overlooked the painted street map, which still remains, though it is now covered by industrial strength plastic. These photographs and other artefacts continue to be used, according to curator Tina Smith, as "tools of mediation and for the validation of lives".[10]

8 McEachern, C. (1998). "Working with Memory: The District Six Museum in the New South Africa." Social Analysis(42 (2)): 24.
p. 52.

9 Rassool, C. (2006). "Making the District Six Museum in Cape Town." Museum International 58(1-2).
p. 10.

10 Smith, T. (2011). Interview. S. O'Connell. Cape Town, Unpublished.
[Recording]

Streets became a powerful evocation of District Six and the street signs are still displayed at the front end of the church, greeting visitors as an imposing tower that holds these rusted and stained blue-and-white street signs. I was very keen to find "Roger Street", but couldn't, though I recognized the more iconic names, such as Hanover, Tyne and Chapel Streets. It is no co-incidence that this particular exhibit finds itself illuminating the fault lines that emerge in the opaque landscape of memory, community, belonging and land claims.

The District Six Museum was conceptualised with strong relation to the establishment of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), sharing common threads of "unearthing; pasts and recording memory of traumatic experience".[11] As with the TRC (discussed later in this thesis), the idea that the business of repenting, forgiveness and healing is much more entangled, blurred and loaded than the terms initially suggest. Being situated as a 'community' museum has its own challenges and it now finds that this particular location disrupts and tears apart that very idea of community that it tried to inculcate, and which is cruelly exposed in the fraught issue of District Six land claims.

District Six Land Claims

Rassool makes the crucial point that from its beginnings in the District Six Foundation, the museum's work supported the issue of land claims of the area. Taking a position that it supported restitution and return, the land claim, which was headed by groups of ex-residents and the District Six Civic Association, was a basis through which questions of redevelopment and restitution. When mooted during these initial processes, the museum, according to Rassool:

> Consistently asked questions about how a restitution and redevelopment process, with its primary focus on housing and integrated urban development, could focus attention on issues of history and memorialisation.[12]

11 See Ingrid de Kok's work in Rassool, C. (2006). "Making the District Six Museum in Cape Town." Museum International 58(1-2). p. 10.

12 Ibid. p .10

Claimants registered all land claims by 1998 and by 2000 the area was earmarked for re-development. In 2004, former president Nelson Mandela hands over symbolic keys to the first two returnees, Ebrahim Murat (87) and Dan Ndzabela (82), with the promise by the ANC Government that 4000 houses would be built in the following three years. Ntsebeza insists that while symbolic returns play a particular role, they have to be grounded as otherwise they will leave communities divided. South Africa, he says, has to look for permanent solutions, as "reality comes back after the initial celebrations have subsided". It seems that in the haste to get on with the present, the ongoing matter of lingering trauma has been sidelined.

In the case of the land claims process in District Six, there were several delays, false starts and by February 2006, only 24 houses had been built. It is important to note that by this time, five of the claimants [had] already died.[13]

In an effort to finalise a plan for the area a series of workshops were organised by the government in 2006; its plan to include District Six as part of the larger N2 Gateway Project was met with outrage. In 2008, the 'battle' for District Six became more heated, with the District Six Beneficiary and Re- Development Trust taken to court by the District Six Advocacy Committee, mainly in a bid to secure ownership of the land that had a very ugly history of dispossession. Cheryl Walker says:

> The master narrative that underpins the project of restitution in South Africa has two central themes – the trauma of deep, dislocating loss of land and the promise of restorative justice through the return of the land in the future. The loss was constituted by a racist state and its supporters by means of a deliberate programmed of moving black communities out of areas designated for whites.[14].

This process of dispossession was experienced in several ways, including the social, the economic and the political. It was crucially too about the personal and the psychological, and as Walker

13 Peters, M. (2011). District Six couple face new eviction: Trust says their claim is vaild, but they must wait. Weekend Argus. Cape Town, Media 24: 1.
p. 1.

14 Walker, C. (2008). Land-Marked: Land Claims & Land Restitution in South Africa. Johannesburg, Athens, Jacana, Ohio Unviversity Press.
p. 34.

comments further: "It is, however, [that] the physical land was taken away that endures as the tangible embodiment of all that was lost: within but also outside memory'.[15] The issue of land, apparently central to the ruling ANC government, "takes on not only the material but also the subjective and symbolic dimensions of that loss for both individuals and larger communities".[16]

As Lungisele Ntsebeza[17] and Cheryl Walker[18] further comment, the narrative of land and restoration was negotiated (and conceded) in the constitutional negotiations of 1993-94, out of which the official land restitution policy and programme emerged. Despite this, the ANC, both prior to and during the constitutional negotiations, stressed the primacy of land claims issues. Ntsebeza and Walker however believe that too many concessions were made. The idea of the personal, individual claim gave way to the interests of a larger 'community' as was evident in the proposed Bill of Rights for a new South Africa of May 1992, which, according to Walker:

> Gave prominence in the first instance not to individual property rights but to the idea of 'the public interest' land ownership by asserting that 'Property rights impose obligations and their exercise should not be in conflict with the public interest.[19]

Crucial is the issue of time – for as the Land Claims Commission (established in 1995 to facilitate the land restitution process in post-apartheid South Africa) and The Restitution of Land Rights Act of 1994 state, no recognition is made of the issue of land seized by colonialists for hundreds of years prior to 1913, which according to Lungisele Ntsebeza, is hugely problematic and unfair as "most of the damage had been done by then".[20] Regarding the point of traumas and redress as result of forced removals, the land reform project starts in 1913 and ends in 1990 with all land claims to be registered by 31 December 1998. The years preceding and following these dates do not qualify for restitution. These concessions were part of the years of transition of

15 Ibid.
16 Ibid.
17 Ntsebeza, L. (2011). Land Claims and District Six. S. O'Connell. Cape Town. [Recording]
18 Walker, C. (2008). Land-Marked: Land Claims & Land Restitution in South Africa. Johannesburg, Athens, Jacana, Ohio Unviversity Press. p. 35.
19 Ibid. p. 54.
20 Ntsebeza, L. (2011). Land Claims and District Six. S. O'Connell. Cape Town. [Recording]

the ANC from a political party of liberation to a party that could win political endorsement.[21] Ntsebeza asserts that this process is flawed and that it needs to be re-thought, going back to the negotiation process in an effort to understand how the process was structured. Ex-residents articulate frustrations as a result of the apparent inability of the government to deal with this legacy of the past, commenting that "the only time the land claims issue is raised, is as part of electioneering campaigns by a new government who do not want us here at all".[22] Those who have chosen to be part of this area of restitution also believe that the compensations are ludicrously low at least and at best inadequate, bearing no relationship to the current values of land. For Ntsebeza, the issue is land, not cash, and citizenship, home and belonging are tied to land, not financial compensation. He stresses further that these restitution struggles are part of the post 1994 South African landscape where it seems that people are the losers who continue to struggle in their attempts to reconcile the past and address the distance between then and now. [23]

Citizenship

Ex-resident Achmat Hussein articulated May Joseph's thoughts on citizenship, place of birth and power and disaffected spaces of 'inauthentic citizenship'. Hussein contended that democratic South Africa was failing him and his family, and although he could vote and live where he chose, he did not believe that the country in which he was born and has lived, fully recognised him as a South African citizen. What does this say, what are the implications of this, when such a profound sense of dislocation is rooted in the psyche of a nation? He commented further that although he thought of himself as an ex-resident, he distanced himself as far as possible from the 'community' as defined by the District Six Museum, the trusts and the committees involved in the land claims process. As May Josephs speaking of the staging of citizenship in Tanzania says:

21 Walker, C. (2008). Land-Marked: Land Claims & Land Restitution in South Africa. Johannesburg, Athens, Jacana, Ohio Unviversity Press.
p. 53.

22 Hussein, A. (2010). Interview S. O'Connell. Cape Town, Unpublished.

23 Ntsebeza, L. (2011). Land Claims and District Six. S. O'Connell. Cape Town.
[Recording]

> I recall my own effort at expressively staging citizenship in the those early years of independence, my enthusiastic attempts to demonstrate that I was, indeed a good Tanzanian socialist: marching along with my peers, emulating the best *ngoma* dancers by shaking my hips just so, beefing up my Swahili so that I would be among the handful of Asians accepted into the local Swahili medium secondary schools, singing Swahili songs with the right accent. …Clearly, more was needed than speaking perfect Swahili – more important, a sense of historicity in relation to this transitioning place of Tanzanian socialist citizenship.[24]

There is no easy consensus as to what it means to be a citizen, or for that matter a community, or even a member of a community — the terms are complicated and loaded. There appears to be little consensus on what it precisely means, how it is inculcated and what it entails.[25] The notion of 'citizen' is strongly linked to the idea of 'rights' (such as the right to vote) in a place, but we use it loosely without thinking thoroughly of the implications. Who is the benchmark citizen in post-apartheid South Africa? Joseph contends further that:

> Citizenship is not organic, but must be acquired though public and psychic participation. Citizenship is an ambiguous process vulnerable to changes in government and policy. The citizen and its vehicle, citizenship, are unstable sites that mutually interact to forge local, often changing (even transitory) notions of who the citizen is, and the kinds of citizenship possible at a given historical moment.[26]

How do notions of citizenship and community fit into the larger framework of the history of dispossession and displacement? How does it engage with the fraught issues of representing the un-representable in a way that speaks of the 'now'?

How does the District Six museum play out these notions of belonging for all ex-residents

24 Josephs, M. (1999). Nomadic Identities: The Performance of Citzenship. Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press.
p. 2.

25 Ibid.
p. 4.

26 Ibid.
p. 3.

and for the larger South African public? As the museum's founding platform, how does the issue of return fit into the structure of a system, inherently linked to power, and that negates or bestows notions of belonging? For as Lauren Berlant argues:

> The practices of citizenship, involve both public-sphere narratives and concrete experiences of quotidian life that do not cohere or harmonise. Yet the rhetoric of citizenship does provide important definitional frames for the ways people see themselves as public, when they do.[27]

Return

Although the area saw the removal of some 66 000 residents, only a small portion of these ex-residents has articulated a wish to return.[28] Where does that leave the notion of return, restoration and justice for those thousands who also have to validate themselves but who have not chosen this route, which by all accounts appears to be bureaucratic, cumbersome and humiliating? Many residents comment that "this is the present and that was the past", "I would rather just move on and not open this can of worms". This route of validation is a reflective, intensely personal one, and one that the present day South Africa seems unable to navigate. The process of return, land reform and restitution is orchestrated as an official, administrative one, leaving little space for an engagement with what those moments of denial actually meant.

What is clear from these public and private encounters is the disruption of the idea of a "District Six Community". For not only are ex-residents divided into those who have instituted a claim and those who have not, but also between those who are trying to navigate the bureaucratic and political via different committees and trusts. To date the land claims process has been marred by poorly built houses, budget shortfalls and public arguments that have dragged on for over a decade. These are published in the media and have pitted ex-residents against each other as well as the District Six Museum, which is seen as siding with the District Six Beneficiary and

27 Berlant cited by Ibid. p. 11.

28 Smith, T. (2011). Interview. S. O'Connell. Cape Town, Unpublished. [Recording]

Redevelopment Trust. Claimants feel they are being sidelined, others comment that the process is not transparent, with personal interests being the motivation for becoming involved. As a former trustee of the trust, Asa Salie — facing eviction from her Bo-Kaap home — comments:

> Not only are we victims of gentrification in the loss of our home in the Bo-Kaap, but we are being short-changed in the restoration process too. …We worked hard, put out two daughters through school and we have put money aside for the contribution that every claimant has to make for their home in District Six. All we want is our home. But this was rejected. There are houses standing empty because some of the claimants have not raised the necessary financial contribution. I motivated that our case be brought forward on a special needs basis, but the Trust rejected it. …I resigned, because how can I serve with people who are not sympathetic to the plight of others?[29]

For the claimants, the process is one that speaks about:

> 'recasting their past for official validation'. Land restitution for them is not an abstraction. …Rather it is a very specific endeavour, embedded in local histories and dynamics and directed, in the first instance, towards localized rather than national needs and construction of the public good.[30]

For those not claiming, their conduit to some process of restitution and return is cast adrift, apparently silenced in the arduous arguments of the process. The District Six Museum sits squarely in the middle of this battle, appearing fragile in the face of dealing with these remnants of the past. As Chrishene Julius powerfully comments on the question of return and restitution "How can they re-build anything on a site of absence?"[31]

29 Peters, M. (2011). District Six couple face new eviction: Trust says their claim is vaild, but they must wait. Weekend Argus. Cape Town, Media 24: 1.
p. 1.

30 Walker, C. (2008). Land-Marked: Land Claims & Land Restitution in South Africa. Johannesburg, Athens, Jacana, Ohio Unviversity Press.
p .44.

31 Julius, C. (2011). The District Six Museum. S. O'Connell. Cape Town, Unpublished.
[Recording]

Objects in the Museum

These questions meander through the impressive collection at the District Six Museum, at times emerging as fragile reminders of what the place means. On the walls and in the exhibits, I find artefacts, photographs and printed boards, recipes, press clippings and poster-sized images. I am drawn by the care taken in assembling this idea of a 'neighbourhood' and a 'community'. I am taken aback when I see a few 'Movie Snaps' images, snapped on the same spot in the city centre and which strongly resemble the images in my own collection.

As I explained to the Collections Manager, I was less interested in the individual images in the museum than in the collections process and policies. I was keen to find out exactly how many images there are in total, how they were solicited, what exactly is the growing focus of the institution's collections, the time spanned by images and information regarding issues of ownership and access. To do this I had to complete a 'District Six ethics form', submit my research proposal as well as my university's own ethics clearance of my project. It occurred to me how strange it was that I had to perform none of these obeisances in order to view the images in my parent's cardboard box.

Interestingly I find that there are no images of families forcibly removed in the early 1900s, these were 'black' families that were evicted and moved to Langa and other townships. The District Six narrative appears to be centered on the forced removals process initiated after the Group Areas Act of 1950 was implemented, and to some extent, the narratives of other areas seem to be opaque or even totally invisible, lingering ghostlike on the edges of the museum. I could not find any hint of the Dowling removal from Parow, and only a cursory hint of my grandmother's eviction from Palmboom Road, in Newlands. The museum therefore plays a role in foregrounding only a section of all the areas of forced removals and overshadows the rest.

I entered the museum with the preconception that a large number of the ex-residents, "District Sixers" as they have come to be known, either participated in its establishment, or were at least on its membership lists. I was astounded therefore to hear Julius say that there were only about five hundred members. She also added that beyond school groups there were few young people and descendents of ex-residents, visiting the museum anymore. She pointed out that the focus of the museum was on collecting per say, and not soliciting, but despite this, they

did have a significant collection, the bulk of which was comprised of photographs. Other items donated included, among other things — a brick, tablecloths and a lot of kitchenware. Julius stressed that the relationship that the museum had with its donors was significantly more than that, as through various activities, relationships were established which circulated the issue of return and restoration on various levels within the institution.

I asked her about the nature of the photographs, I was intrigued to find what residents thought important, and particularly enquired as to whether there were images that may have been seen as offensive, such as those showing inebriated residents or violence. She commented that largely donated images were those showing families in a good light, whilst the images of drunken residents and gangs were the domain of professional photographers who were commissioned to document the area. There are about 3 700 collections, such as *The Bloemhof Collection*, each specific to an area or group. I do not ask what happens to an image, note or scrap paper that does not fit into any one of these groups, but inexplicably find myself thinking that it would be rude to ask this. It is strange this, for I find that there are moments in the museum were I react almost exactly as I have in the Government Archives in Roeland Street, and by no coincidence, in a church. I lower my voice and adjust my stride, looking at the exhibits that needless to say do not return my gaze.

Whilst ownership of the photographs resided with the owners, Julius could not think of anyone who had asked for them to be returned. Not all of the photographs were displayed, many of them being stored. Photographs in the museum date from the early 1900s to the 1980's, the terms of reference are clearly defined: this space is about a specific event at a certain time in the nation's history. As I wander around the space, I see various exhibits, all of them silent. The only sounds that I hear are the guides and their tour groups. I don't hear music or toddlers crying, in fact I struggle to see any of the messiness of District Six, for as my aunt, Wendy O'Connell remarked: "It was the rats! I hated the rats". In the museum I certainly do not see any rats and I wonder what else has been concealed, destroyed or silenced — exterminated.

Challenges of the District Six Museum

Julius conceded that the museum faces several difficulties – their position in terms of the land claims battle, the fact that they are not in District Six itself, and that ex-residents are dying or getting older and the younger generations do not visit frequently, if at all. As her colleague, Tina Smith commented, it is an urgent challenge that the museum faces, for as ex-residents are dying, they are hampered by shrinking funding and embattled staffing requirements which would enable them to follow up with their children and grandchildren, a situation that as it stands will only deteriorate. Smith articulates her urgency by saying:

> That for me is a challenge for the museum and it is becoming urgent, because people are dying …we have lost ground …there are no resources to follow up. That for me is problematic as there is great urgency for working with both the young and the old – as the connectivity to the space becomes obscured, …the trauma diffused in a ways that you don't understand, and neither do you know where it is coming from. How do you pass on this banner …how do you talk to them about lost generations, identity, belonging and citizenship?[32]

The museum resides between other narratives that have had also been silenced in Cape Town, notably its slave history, and as a political space it is now grabbing headlines as part of the city's re-development plan as envisioned as the Cape Town Design and Innovation District which skirts District Six. As Smith commented, there appears to be much haste to re-design this area without equal attention being paid to the histories and legacies.

Smith also admitted that the museum is a source of division among ex-residents. This tallied well with the conversations that I had with family members, friends and ex-residents who I had tracked down. Comments included "District Six [museum] is being run by people who had never stayed there"; "They [the museum] are taking sides in the land claims and support the Beneficiary Trust", and "They don't' speak for me, that is not my District Six".

32 Smith, T. (2011). Interview. S. O'Connell. Cape Town, Unpublished. [Recording]

I find it impossible not to become nostalgic here, but my experience is overwhelmingly that of spectator – I am here to look. This is magnified as I exit this building to go to the District Six annex, formerly the Sacks Futeran Building, which used to be a general merchant store, and close by to my mother's first place of work, "Ellermans" further up the road. The ground floor is hosting an impressive football exhibition, complete with glass cabinets, memorabilia and printed glass panels. This place is also silent, the quiet being disrupted occasionally by the rumblings of it ancient elevator. Even the security guard is more or less mute.

On my next visit to the District Six Museum, I met with Tina Smith, Head of Exhibitions, and again I struggled to open the door as the foyer was packed with jostling tourists — all of them foreign. I was directed to the annex in the old Sacks Futeran Building, where the security guard informed me that I would have to wait a while, as Smith was in a workshop. This gave me time to look again at the soccer exhibition. This time, however, the museum was not silent, instead, I was able to eavesdrop on a workshop where the forceful comments by participants emphasised the urgency of the matters at hand. I realized that they were negotiating possible partnerships between the museum, ex-residents and refugees from Palestine.

I was struck by the achingly familiar stories – both groups of people talked about displacement and the difficulties in understanding the meanings of home. More tellingly, the shared history and a particular date — 1948 — that witnessed the partition of Palestine and the birth of the Israeli state. The date is crucial in terms of South Africa's history for it was in this year that a state of racial segregation was cemented into law by means of the apartheid legislation of the Nationalist Party, then headed by its Prime Minister, Dr. D. F. Malan. I heard, but could not see, men and women speak of their struggles to look back and return, and witnessed their inability to find words to describe exactly what their histories meant to them. As the conversation filtered through, past and around the soccer memorabilia exhibition, I realized the enormity of the task that the District Six Museum faces, for as an institution of a very particular kind, its efforts are tinged, if not hamstrung, by its legacy and armature as a museum — another archive of sorts, and one seemingly being forced very much against its will into evolving into another of the 'old sort'.

The Museum and 'black' bodies

I struggle to come to terms with the very idea of a 'museum' in South Africa, for as a dutifully pigtailed and pinafore wearing school girl my first introduction to an institution of this nature was a school visit to the South African Museum[33] in the city Centre, situated near the Houses of Parliament. That visit is indelibly etched onto my mind, for not only was I nauseated by the particularly musty smell of the place, but I also endured my first ever encounter with "Bushmen", as they were displayed, illuminated behind thick glass. I was simultaneously enthralled and unnerved, for in front of me were naked men and women, their polished plaster bodies inert and their marble eyes staring into mine, following me around the exhibits. I of course could speak, I could gaze as much as I wanted with no one to chide or admonish me. My classmates and I were herded around the museum, from the Bushman diorama all the way through to the whale-well, peering at lots of clay beads, stuffed animals and skeletons. Little did I know that we were in fact visiting a grave site and that bodies and death were elemental to this space, not least of all by the fact that the museum had (and continues to have) an impressive collection of human remains.[34] I remember our teacher informing us that this was the history of our country, and that we were there to learn. I do know that at no time during that and other subsequent trips, did I think that this experience was about the way my family and I lived now, for although our house, christened "Vryheid" (Freedom) by my maternal grandfather, was a mere ten-minute's drive from this museum, the exhibit space was foreign to me in every possible sense. I cannot get rid of that image, and to date, the word 'museum' still conjures up the same associations: looking, silence, untold numbers of labels, and a dark musty smell. I cannot shake this. Can I

33 The South African Museum (SAM) was established by Lord Charles Somerset in 1825 and reconstituted under a Board of Trustees in 1855. It is the country's second oldest scientific institute, the Royal Observatory having been established five years earlier, in 1820. See Iziko ([n.d]). "History of The Museum." Retrieved 22 February 2010, from http://www.iziko.org.za/sam/muse/history.html. [Accessed 22 February 2010].

34 See Iziko (2005). Policy on the Management of Human Remains in IZIKO Collections. Cape Town, Iziko South African Museum.
In South Africa, the issue of repatriation of human remains currently falls into the ambit of various departments, government agencies and legislation. Martin Legassick and Ciraj Rassool ee h discussesnd Ciraj Rassool'rdless of its shape and form, conjures up the notion of the sacrosant?to the form and logic of m discuss the trade between grave robbers and South African and European museums in the early twentieth century, called upon South African museums (and I add, academic institutions) to take stock of their collections of bones. See Legassick, M., Rassool, Ciraj (2000). Skeletons in the cupboard : South African museums and the trade in human remains, 1907-1917. Cape Town, Kimberley, South African Museum,McGregor Museum.

come to terms with a re-contextualised 'museum'? Can the District Six Museum confront my deep misgivings about institutions of this nature, particularly in postapartheid South Africa?

Public displays such as tableaux, dioramas and world's fairs served, from about the nineteenth century, as 'manifestations of the Victorian compulsion to organise and categorise knowledge'.[35] The public museum, as an "enlistment of culture for the purposes of governing" according to Tony Bennett, acquired its modern form during the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.[36] The legacies of these earliest showcases, ethnographic and anthropological museums are therefore, by definition, based on issues of cultural difference, representation and the poetics and politics of these differences.[37] As public institutions, museums have always been, according to Daniel Sherman, "sites for the negotiation of difference"; a space where the self cannot exist without the other, a relationship that sits at the heart of the institution.[38] Susan Sleeper-Smith articulates the biography of the public museum as:

> a meeting ground for official and formal versions of the past. …Objects that were placed in museums were initially decontextualised and made to tell an evolutionary narrative about the process of Western societies and the primitiveness of Indigenous communities. Museums functioned as powerful rhetorical devices that created dominant and often pathological allegiances to a cultural ideal.[39]

Tony Bennett elaborates the aforementioned view considerably when he looks at museums, determining how, when governing the populace:

> particular forms of power are constituted *there*, within those mechanisms, rather than

35 Brundage, W. H. (2008). Meta Warrick's 1907 "Negro Tableaux" and (Re)Presenting African American Historical Memory. Museums and Difference. D. J. Sherman. Bloomington, Indianapolis, Indiana University Press. 1: 205-249.
p. 207.

36 Bennett, T. (1995). The birth of the museum : history, theory, politics. London ; New York, Routledge.
p .19.

37 Jacknis, I. (2008). The Last Wild Indian in North America: Changing Museum Representations of Ishi. Museums and Difference. D. J. Sherman. Bloomington, Indianapolis, Indiana University Press. 1: 60-96.

38 Sherman, D. J. Ibid.Introduction, Indiana Unversity Press: 1-21.

39 Sleeper-Smith, S. (2009). Contesting knowledge : museums and indigenous perspectives. Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press.
p. 2.

> outside or behind them …not only power but difference is constituted *there*.[40]

Museums as cultural symbols of governance and citizenship ensured that the role afforded to their principal spectators was precisely that – excluded and external. This was a place where, according to Bennett, behaviours could be aspired to and learnt; it was significantly more than a place of "wonder and surprise for the idly curious".[41]

Existing literature continues to tease apart the dilemmas of contemporary museums around the world. They sketch the contested world of morphing social relations, and have resulted in no small part in many institutions considering new avenues and new knowledges, a "remapping of the museum", if you will.[42] These shifts, conflicts and tensions, the frictions between the global and the local, the admission of new audiences, pose particular challenges for some South African museums, which appear to be struggling to make meaningful headway in articulating a new, ethical order. The colonial legacy of racial ethnography, and importantly, the palpable, painful reality of the violence of ethnographic practice are etched into the fabric of many South African museums, whose managers and curators are noticeably fumbling as they attempt to forge ahead into a fast becoming unfamiliar landscape, all the while resorting to and being constrained by the tools, languages and maps of the past. It may quite possibly be that the very institution of the museum is beyond ethical redemption, certainly in Africa. At the very least, it faces the enormous, and again perhaps even the impossible task of addressing its inherited system of violences and denials. Judith Butler, in speaking about bodies, violence and mourning in *Precarious Life* is particularly powerful when she states:

> Violence against those who are already not quite living, that is, living in a state of suspension between life and death, leaves a mark that is no mark. There will be no public act of grieving (said Creon in *Antigone).* If there is a "discourse", it is a silent and

40 Bennett, T. (2004). Pasts beyond memory : evolution museums colonialism. London ; New York, Routledge.
p.. 5.

41 Bennett, T. (1995). The birth of the museum : history, theory, politics. London ; New York, Routledge.
p. 24.

42 Kratz, C. A., Rassool, C. (2006). Remapping the Museum. Museum Frictions: Public Cultures / Global Transformations. I. Karp, Kratz, C.A., Szwaja,L., Ybarra-Frausto, T. Durham, London, Duke University Press: 347 - 356.

melancholic one in which there have been no lives, and no losses, there has been no common bodily condition, no vulnerability that serves as the basis for an apprehension of our commonality. None of this takes place on the order of the event.[43]

Evictions and the District Six Museum

Tina Smith of the District Six Museum articulated many of my concerns, and as someone involved with the museum since 2005, she was well placed to discuss the photographic collections, the challenges and the celebrations of the museum. As a second generation former resident of the area, Smith spoke extensively of her mother's home in Bloemhof Flats, and how the story of District Six, in particular the evictions, was never discussed by her grandparents, who chose to move out of the area before it was declared an area for 'whites' only. District Six, according to Smith, had a long history of siege. If it had not been the Group Areas Act of 1950 that declared it an area for 'whites', there would have been some or other reason for clearing this prime bay-view area in the heart of the city. As mentioned earlier, forced removals of 'black' families had begun already as early as the 1900s, an outbreak of bubonic plague in 1901 also offered the city fathers a priceless opportunity to 'cleanse', and the area was further threatened by the implementation of the fore runner of the Group Area's Act, The Slums Act of 1934, which essentially allowed municipalities to demolish any area considered unworthy. [44]

Smith believes that to a large degree, her grandparents and parents tried very hard to shelter her and her siblings from the violence of the forced removals. All the while the eviction notices and their followers the bulldozers systematically worked their way through District Six, there seemed to be a universal effort to shield the children from the process and its commensurate violences. This was echoed to in the insistence by founding museum member Irwin Combrinck (7 December 1926 – 16 May 2005) that no bulldozers were to be included in the *Streets* exhibition. Smith stressed that she has learnt immeasurably more from her work in the museum about the trauma and violence experienced by the area's community than from recollections and

43 Butler, J. (2004). Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence. London, Verso. p. 36.

44 Smith, T. (2011). Interview. S. O'Connell. Cape Town, Unpublished. [Recording]

conversations with her family. Time and again, the point is made that residents simply did not realise that the evictions would have the consequences that they did, nor could they ultimately comprehend and accept that fellow human beings could do this to their fellows. Many of the resident's recollections reflect on their having left their homes at the very last possible minute. Smith noted that through many conversations with ex-residents, "an overwhelming, amazing sense of community" emerges, saying that:

> It is almost unreal, it is more than nostalgia the way that people knew each other, and how they lived their lives. It gives me goose bumps …it is like having a family, some speak to each other, others do not …there are feuds …but the similarity in how people describe their practices, such as what they eat, when they went to dance at the Drill Hall in the city, soccer teams, who they dated, who was having affairs, it's startling. These recollections though, are as if they are in a time warp – almost as if time has stopped in a way.[45]

Smith has spent many years at the museum engaging with ex-residents, through various programmes and initiatives, and comments that almost always, the issue of return, on all possible levels, haunts these conversations. She raised the point that there appeared to be a complete disconnection between the place of birth of District Six and the notion of home, to which one may return and find refuge. She struck a note when she spoke of this same disconnection with generational trauma, which did not begin and end with our parents and grandparents, but which continues, "revealing itself as consequences which we live out within the current space of post-apartheid South Africa". Smith was clear in stating that there does not seem to be a space that is reflective of any kind of return, metaphorical or otherwise.[46] As Andrew Bank and Gary Minkley comment:

> Lefebvre suggests three different ways of conceptualising space, which he refers to as "spatial practices", "representations of space" and "spaces of representation" …"spaces

45 Ibid.
46 Ibid.

> of representation" is seen as distinct but also in some sense incorporating the other two "moments of space". This is also known as lived space, which includes the sense of how people occupy space and the various meanings, symbolic or otherwise, that they associate with space.[47]

The District Six Museum undertaking is further complicated by the work of city planners as the area that used to be District Six been re-mapped, a process I vividly remember as I used to walk through the area on my way home from school. Even at a relatively young age, I was taken aback by the impunity with which the remaining and familiar names, like Hanover and Roger Streets, were summarily changed to Constitution Street and *Keisergracht*. This 'new' area, renamed Zonnebloem in 1970, with its new street grid complicates the issues, as markers of the past are not only metaphorically erased, but physically, along with all tangible associations. It seems as if *Zonnebloem* has been completely superimposed onto District Six, sharing as it does exactly the same navigational points.

I concur with Smith that there is a need to think about the moment of eviction, the legacy of which is illustrated by the inability of the museum to find an eviction notice of this era. What did it mean to receive *that* notification, or *that* knock on the door? Was the note quickly shoved into a pocket or thrown away as an act of defiance? Did the recipients discuss *their* notice with neighbours, friends or family? Was there a measure of shame and impotence manifested on the part of men, unable as they were to protect their wives and children? As Father Gerard Masters, who was the parish priest at Holy Cross during the 1970s commented:

> It was all very quiet; a mixture of disbelief, horror, a sense of hopelessness and yes, now that I think of it, there was shame. I had mothers who could only talk about this in the confessional, for they knew that this was a sacred space, and whatever was spoken, would remain in that place.[48]

47 Bank, A., Minkley, Gary (1998 / 1999). "Editorial." Genealogies of Space and Identity in Cape Town 25(Pre-millennium Issue 1998/1999).
p. 5.

48 Masters, G. (2010). Interview. S. O'Connell. Providence, RI.
[Recording]

What were their thoughts on the mornings that families were moved? Did they have their as breakfasts as usual and what did they decide to take along with them, and what did they leave behind? Who moved them – given that most did not own their own vehicles – what was spoken, and what was not? Did neighbours help, returning to their homes once the truck had turned the corner? What were the practicalities of being evicted? How did those left behind carry on their lives — which to them were more and more beginning to feel like they were hanging by a thread, waiting for their turn, living in a place and time that was neither here, nor there — pending.

The space of District Six

Tina Smith was clear about the dangers of romantisicing District Six, pointing out the existence of a very seedy underbelly to the area, added to which its residents also displayed marked divisions, articulating much of the new enforced segregation, seen in places such as schools, that was taking hold in the country. There was overcrowding, living conditions were difficult and the area had already experienced a steady stream of exoduses, through marriages, and economic progressions. Despite this, and through her own work with ex-residents who were both forcibly evicted and those who left of their own accord, there was still the District Six that represented the idea of "home" and "roots". Moreover, despite very challenging economic conditions, there were widely held aspirations to 'do better', and the exercise of these aspirations were reflected their place in the newly global, post-war world. Men and women worked in post war industries, whilst at the same time mourning those brothers and sons who lost their lives in the war. The music of *The Beatles* and Elvis Presley was to be found in many of these homes and the narrow trousers of the young men and the starched dresses of their girlfriends attest to District Six being a part of a world that extended well beyond the Cape Town. I also remember wanting a pair of black, 'wet-look' trousers after my father took us in 1978 to see the movie, Grease at the Avalon Bioscope, a landmark movie theatre in Hanover Street. As Smith said:

> Can you imagine walking down the main roads in the city, dressed in your finest dance wear, hair coifed into a bee-hive style to go to a dance at the Drill Hall, next to the City Hall? There was a sense of civility in this place, a sense of how to raise your children -

> who removed their uniforms when they came home from school. There was a sense of order; adults other than their parents admonished children, as a general consensus to raise children in a particular way.[49]

The image sketched by Smith contrasts starkly with many documentary images of the time, which she hilariously describes as mainly as being of "drunks with dogs, or [of] women hanging their washing". Smith is astute in this assertion as I find that it tallies with my findings of photographic collections in mainstream collections. These collections contribute to a certain stereotyping of the area, which the museum attempts to confront in its activities, looking as it does beyond those conventional frames, in an effort to provoke broader thoughts of the past and it meanings. The donated family images highlight 'other' moments, and as Smith comments, she has yet to see a "picture of drunks" in a family's cardboard box collection and details further that these donated images are usually those that showcase moments of celebration – weddings, baptisms and Christmas images taken with Father Christmas at the OK Bazaars in the city centre. Ex-residents express a need to share their albums, described by Smith as "treasures of a particular kind", saying further that the relationship between the museum and donors are "different" as they embark on a journey of "giving evidence in an attempt to have a sense of control of history".[50] However, as many of the families did now own cameras, there are gaps in these narratives as photographs were only taken at particular times. The systematic recording of their lives therefore takes place in a particular way, marked by specific moments and occasions and which includes identity type photographs, school photographs and newspaper clippings of social events, all of which find a place in the District Six Museum, circulating among and creating new relationships with visual fields that include the academy, tourism, memory and heritage.

Ownership and access of family photographs in official archives such as museums is an important material consideration as visual records not only track notions of narratives but

49 Smith, T. (2011). Interview. S. O'Connell. Cape Town, Unpublished. [Recording]

50 Ibid.

also are implicated in a system of ongoing social rights, obligations and values.[51] As Daniel MacDonald says, "The value of an object is relative in terms of its potential to influence and determine the nature of various social outcomes".[52]

As not every resident in District Six was part of a public anti-apartheid campaign, the photographic donations by ex-residents, showing lives being lived ordinarily, seems to serve the function of witnessing the fact that they too were defiant — in their own particular ways. The images attest to the effort to lives in carefully navigated spaces, displaying an understanding of where they could walk, dance, swim — and be. Unlike the 'image of the drunk', Smith contests that the images in the museum speak of a dignity, at odds with the stereotype that the area was depicted as being.

Smith however concedes that although the museum was born out of a struggle to protect the rights of the disenfranchised and that although it is "less and less of a museum", they can't avoid or negate the fact that they are involved in processes that collects the tangible — as well as the intangible. As she says:

> Whether we like it or not, we are tasked with the custodianship of this past, but maybe [we] deal with it in a different way from conventional museums such as the Iziko South African Museum. However, rules and conventions apply, both local and international best practice. [53]

Bonita Bennet, director of the District Six Museum comments that:

> The work of collecting and archiving occurs in all areas of the Museum's work, but is given coherence within the Collections, Research and Documentation department. This includes ensuring that material is well organized and accessible; sourcing material for

51 Edwards, E. (2005). "Photographs and The Sound of History." Visual Anthropology Review 21(1 and 2): 19.
p. 36.

52 Macdonald, G. (2003). "Photos in Wiradjuri Biscuit Tins: Negotiating Relatedness and Validating Colonial Histories." Oceania 73(4): 17.
p .231.

53 Smith, T. (2011). Interview. S. O'Connell. Cape Town, Unpublished.
[Recording]

presentations, programmes and reports; undertaking conservation work; growing the collection and maintaining donor relations.[54]

Silences

On entering the District Six annex one views the exhibition entitled *Fields of play: Football memories and forced removals in Cape Town,* which opened in 2008 and which documents the impact that removals had on football associations and clubs in Cape Town. The exhibition comprises printed panels; sports club memorabilia, items of clothing and texts and trace the history of the game in the city. There is a one installation with headphones, but inexplicably, I am not drawn to listen to the recordings, choosing rather to walk through the space to gather my thoughts. I see that the texts are written in past tense and in the third person thus positioning me as a spectator outside this time and space. Although I recognize some of the names of the soccer clubs, and even though the aura of objectivity, accuracy and impartiality is evident throughout, I find that these photographs, these exhibits, are all in glass cases, strange and silent, and I recognize only my own reflection in the glass. These objects, as remnants of a violent past reminded me reminded me of a line from Michael Tournier's novel *La Goutte d'or* (*The Golden Droplet*), in which he writes of Idris, a Berber shepherd, who leaves his Saharan oasis in search of a snapshot taken by a Parisian tourist. On his travels, he finds himself in a museum; and discovers utensils and objects being employed as part of an exhibit that describes his life:

> All these objects, of unreal cleanliness, frozen in their eternal essences, intangible, mummified, had surrounded his childhood and adolescence. Less than forty-eight hours before, he had eater from that dish, watched his mother use that grinder.[55]

I am however fascinated by the care taken in putting this exhibit together, and although there is none of the impressive boutique lighting that Stephen Greenblatt refers to when he is talking

54 Bennett, B. (2007 / 8). District Six Museum: Annual Report 2007/ 8. Cape Town, District Six Museum. p. 19.

55 Tournier, M. (1987). The Golden Droplet. New York, Doubleday. p .67.

about museum "resonance and wonder",[56] I still cannot shake the impression that these items are frozen in their containers. I struggle, yet again, to associate with this exhibit any noises, smells or textures that spring to mind when the idea of football occurs to me. I am not sure what the relationship is that I have with these exhibits, at times I am confused as to the role I am playing, and whose story is actually here on display. At particular moments, the museum appears to be a hegemonic institution, and yet at others, there is some real sense of belonging and accessibility. I am loathe to fault the museum curators, who as simultaneously heterodiegetic and homodiagetic narrators, attempt to find ways of telling these stories, and yet cannot avoid the "museological process of othering" as described by Annie Coombes.[57] As I close the door of the museum behind me and am instantly blinded by the blazing midday son of Buitenkant Street, I consider that the museum is placed in a precarious position, navigating as it does the tensions between contested histories, exclusionary practices of heritage[58] and the private and public memories of District Six, meeting the demand placed on it that it take this baggage and project it faithfully from a divided present into a unanimous future.

56 See Greenblatt, S. (1991). Resonance and Wonder. Exhibiting Cultures: The Poetics and Politics of Museum Display. I. Karp, Lavine, Steven. D

57 Coombes, A. (1994). Re-Inventing Africa: Museums, Material Culture and Popular Imagination. New Haven, Unversity of California Press.

58 See Lowenthal, D. (1998). The Heritage Crusade and the Spoils of History. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

CHAPTER 5

Objects of Orality: Touching, Speaking and Hearing the Photograph

> *The narratives of the world are numberless. Narrative is first and foremost a prodigious variety of genres, themselves distributed amongst different substances – as though any material were fit to receive man's stories. Able to be carried by articulated language, spoken or written, fixed or moving images, gestures, and the ordered mixture of all these substances; narrative is present in myth, legend, fable, tale, novella, epic, history, tragedy, drama, comedy, mime, painting (think of Carpaccio's Saint Ursula), stained glass windows, cinema, comics, news item, conversation. Moreover, under this almost infinite diversity of forms, narrative is present in every age, in every place, in every society; it begins with the very history of mankind and there nowhere is nor has been a people without narrative. All classes, all human groups, have their narratives, enjoyment of which is very often shared by men with different, even opposing, cultural backgrounds. Caring nothing for the division between good and bad literature, narrative is international, transhistorical, and transcultural: it is simply there, like life itself.* [1]

Throughout this process, my use of photographs has been collaborative and has involved the participation of family members and ex-residents who I asked to engage with particular images. I conducted a series of interviews with ex-residents from mid 2009, but the bulk of the conversations were with family members, and it was these that I found the most difficult to talk, and write about. The conversations with my father, in particular, stirred up many questions, and the process has revealed that this project can largely be thought of a study of 'unfinished business". Delicate questions regarding my grandparent's sexual relations and those of my great-grandparents, children born out of wedlock and domestic violence, all hovered in the background. Even celebratory images such as weddings and baptisms and birthdays highlighted absences, as my father and his elder sister Eugene pointed out to me when I asked them about

1 Barthes, R. (1977). Image-Music-Text. London, Fontana. p. 79.

Figure 18

Untitled

Black-and-White Photograph

155 x 108 mm

one particular image.

This photograph is sepia-toned, showing a seated woman with a young child on her lap. She is sitting in front of five young adults, while five young children are dotted around, either sitting cross-legged on the ground or leaning against her chair. The group is composed quite centrally, framed by the external pillars of a house, and is evident that the photographer was careful to include the full length of the young man on the right of the image. This is my paternal grandfather, Herbert O'Connell, together will all his siblings from different fathers.

This particular photograph generated many hours of conversation, as I was told of my great-grandmother, Lulu Malusi, who is at the centre of this image. I hear that the little boy, Desmond, seated second from the right, is thought to be my grandfather's illegitimate child. Curiously absent from this composition are the fathers of Lulu's children, including my paternal great-grandfather, Valentine Desmond O'Connell. It was through the conversations elicited in the background, that my parents and I began to approach the images as an entry point into our lives.

In foregrounding the visual in attempts to translate family images, we lose the opportunity to understand other modes of understanding. Photographs have the ability to focus, disrupt, extend and articulate histories and narratives through the verbal, the haptic and the tactile. Allowing the photograph to 'speak' therefore becomes crucial if we are to think about sets of relations through which other pasts may become visible. Elizabeth Edwards argues that 'sensory engagement – handling, touching, talking, and singing – is integral to the "idea of personhood being spread around in time and space …component of innumerable cultural and institutional practices".[2] By shifting towards oral, embodied and tactile avenues of thinking through family photographs, ways of thinking about oppression and marginalised bodies and spaces begin to emerge.

2 Edwards, E. (2005). "Photographs and The Sound of History." Visual Anthropology Review 21(1 and 2): 19.
p. 19.

Orality and Visuality

The relationship between orality and visuality (when thinking about photographs) is central – photographs are spoken about and are spoken to, and they are able to span the space between oral and textual forms of history and memory. Martha Langford contends that the storage in a family archive and the perfomativity of its reception oscillate between the paradigm of scripture and the regime of narration.[3] Photographs can therefore be imagined forms of both oral and visual history as the oral and the visual cease to be separate entities; family photographs are able to contest the idea that photographs are only literal depictions through conversations that transform these 'ordinary' objects.

Elizabeth Edwards argues that photographs are not only images but are rather social objects, she contends that the materiality of the photograph is central as it is the "fusion and performative interaction of image and materiality that gives a sensory and embodied access to photographs".[4] She suggests further that it is only in engaging with the mundane and ordinary that we can see what photographs actually do in social terms. Edwards then asserts a shift towards an evocative and experiential anthropology which acknowledges "the plurality of modes of experience and cognition by which we may visualise theory and theorise visuality".[5] Christopher Pinney developed the term "corpothetics" as "the sensory embrace of image, the bodily engagement that most people …have with artworks".[6] Adjunctive to this Edwards makes the argument that when it comes to questions of history, photographs embodied with content are tactile and sensory objects that exist in time and space, saying further that the Western propensity to privilege the visual has ignored the sensory and emotional impact of the photographic medium.[7]

Launched in 1984, the Western Cape Oral History Project (WCOHP) was conceptualised to

3 Langford, M. (2006). Speaking the Album. An Application of the Oral-Photographic Framework. Locating Memory. Photographic Acts. Remapping Cultural History. M. a. K. Langford, A. Oxford and New York, Berghahn Books: 223-246.
p. 227.

4 Edwards, E. (2005). "Photographs and The Sound of History." Visual Anthropology Review 21(1 and 2): 19.
p. 27.

5 Taylor, L. (1994). Visualizing Theory: Selected Essays from V.A.R. New York, Routledge.
p xiii.

6 Pinney, C., in Edwards, E. (2005). "Photographs and The Sound of History." Visual Anthropology Review 21(1 and 2): 19.
p. 28.

7 Ibid.

work though areas of oral histories, and testimonies and other memory projects. Later renamed as The Centre for Popular Memory (CPM) at the University of Cape Town, the work of the project saw the recording of testimonies of those forcibly removed from areas such as District Six, Tramway Road in formerly largely 'white' suburban Sea Point and the 'black' township of Langa. As Sean Fields, of the centre writes:

> Recording oral history is usually not about famous people or leaders. Rather, popular and pubic forms of oral history aim to include everyone's past, especially the pasts of those who have been oppressed, marginalised or forgotten. The unnoticed makes of history also want to be acknowledged and remembered… Oral and popular historians (and others involved in communities) have a role to play in convincing people that they have meaningful pasts and valuable lives.[8]

The term *orality* does not mean speech, dialect or oral tradition, rather it is a conceptual theory of language referred to by scholars to describe, characterise and analyse the significance of "orally based thought and expression".[9] Though a series of conversations that initially hinged on the photograph, a group of ex-residents and I struggled to find the words that could name what exactly it was that apartheid did to them, it seemed that connected to this particular violence was a pain that paradoxically could not be shared or named, even though they all lived in the space of District Six at a particular time. As Holocaust survivor Jean Améry says: "The pain was as it was. There is no more to be said".

Interviews with ex-residents of Roger Street

I was to witness this pain first hand through conversations that I had with a particular group of people. I explained my research to Riefie Isaacs (68), Moreldia Davids (68), Achmat Hoosain (66),

8 Field, S. Oral Histories of Forced Removals. Lost Communities, Living Memories: Remembering Forced Removals in Cape Town. S. Fields. Cape Town, Centre for Popular Memory, UCT.
p. 12.

9 Middleton, J. I. (1995). "Confronting The Master Narrative: The Privilege of Orality in Toni Morrison's The Bluest Eye." Cultural Studies 9(2): 16.
p. 302.

Fatima Solomons (65), Ismail Bassler (68) and Patrick O'Connell (75) on a Sunday afternoon in Walmer Estate in 2010. All of them were ex-residents of Roger Street, District Six. I asked my father to track down his neigbours, invite them to afternoon tea and encourage them to bring any photographs that they may have of their time in District Six. Despite the fact that these people figured prominently for years in some or other way in many conversations over heard at family gatherings, I had never met any of them before, and certainly could not recall ever visiting their homes as a child. The faintest recollection that I have of my grandparent's home in Roger Street is of a few outside steps and of a fridge that stood in the cramped lounge. There are particular smells that I associate with that home, and it is strange, I now think that the person, who appears backlit[10] in my mental image, is my paternal grandmother, "Drina" O'Connell, who although she was not my father's biological mother, came to be our known and universally loved as "Ma".

It was evident when speaking to the group about their photographs that viewing these images collectively affected them deeply. I was moved by the traces that they evoked as they each contextualised, and perhaps embellished, in great detail, the story of how a particular photograph came to be taken. It seemed incongruous at times, that a tiny scrap of paper, perhaps no more than 2″ x 3″, could command a conversation that stretched for hours. When I picked up an image of a group of young adults on an outing, the conversation became richly furnished with details: they were on a Sunday afternoon picnic, they all crammed into a car that was borrowed, my uncle Brian O'Connell is on the right, his head thrown back, I can almost hear his characteristic laugh reverberating through my parent's home. I am told about the plastic cooler bags for food; of the antics that they got up to as children, and I detect their pride when I hear them say that "one of us is now a Professor".

My father takes out an image of his father taken when I am about twelve years old, on the occasion of my sister's first communion. This colour photograph is muted, it seems as if its 2.5″ x 2.5″ surface as been deliberately stained with reddish-overtones. The edges are rounded, and on the right, just squeezing in from the border, I can just about make out my mother wearing her red peep-toed shoes, and my maternal grandmother and me – I recognise immediately my now-

10 Backlighting refers to lighting that comes from behind a subject in a photograph, resulting in the fore grounded subject losing detail and appearing as a silhouette.

Figure 19

Untitled

Colour Photograph

90 x 90 mm

familiar peach-coloured dress. Unmistakable though is my grandfather, Herbert O'Connell. standing against the wall uneasily in a beige pants, dark brown jacket, orange shirt and brown tie. His hands are hanging by his side, his wooden crutch leaning against a pillar. He seems old and frail, despite the jaunty cap perched on his head. I am lucky to find this image, as not only does the reverse indicate that it was a Kodak print, but that the developer has dated it – October 1979. This image was taken about four years after he was evicted from District Six, and in this image he seems to have aged considerably. The grandfather that I had known, the one with the 6' 1" frame, appeared to have vanished; in his place was a man whom I didn't know. His humiliation and shame were manifest – as was his banishment. On that Sunday afternoon, I was struck by the babble. It is a mixture of languages – Afrikaans and English – and although I asked my questions in English, I realise only as I read the transcripts that much of the conversation that followed was largely in colloquial Afrikaans. I heard particular utterances that were hauntingly familiar. I now find that I did not realise that I too lapsed into a space where how what was spoken seemed to be exactly right for the occasion. I smile to myself as I read the transcripts – there seem to be particular words that speak of a certain way of life. Whilst I know that "sika" really should be "seker" (probably), I cannot imagine hearing it any other way. I struggle though to put this in a scholarly form; what seemed fluid and fitting in Walmer Estate, seems halted and punctuated as I struggle to write about what was said. All these particular sounds created a story that seemed to transcend the narrative of District Six that I found in the District Six museum and numerous books and texts on the area.

Orality and visuality in this instance disrupted a linear script of how we had come to be at that place, and at that time. Unlike a book, with its beginning, middle and end, the haphazard arrangement of these photographs, combined with their verbal narrations, ensured that linear-historical time was disrupted, added to which the narrators were constantly changed. The relationship between the oral and the visual changed throughout the process, and at times the images seemed silenced by the euphony of chatter, utterances were also suddenly silenced by particular private glances exchanged between narrators, as they recognised a particular event for example. Non-verbal gestures, such as the clasping of hands at a poignant moment, the lowering of heads, or a silent turning away from an image, all underscored the point that not only were these images being spoken, they were also being performed in various ways. The

images were handled with inordinate care – tea cups were pushed aside and hands were wiped as the narrators sat upright and peered closely at the grain. This process understandably drew me in ways other than that of the lure of the academic exercise – I was bonded to this process not only as a result of my genealogy, but in that I too was a narrator and a witness to these pasts, despite having not being a direct part of it. They emphasised their appeal that I tell their story 'because of my son' as they urged me to tell pasts that had been forgotten. As they said, my son was a part of this story, not least of all because he strongly resembled my father whom they knew as a young man, but that 'he had to know where he came from".

Walter J. Ong[11] says about the spoken word:

> The oral word is essentially a call, a cry. It is not a thing or a reification, but an event, an action. The oral word is a call from someone to someone, an interpersonal transaction. No interactive persons, no words. The oral word is a unique kind of event and it may have to do with all sorts of things, including information and even "facts", but if there is no hint of another person, real or imaginary, to whom the word is addressed, called out, cried out, the sound is simply not functioning as a word. Because it is a call, a cry, addressed to another person or, the equivalent, an imagined person or persons, the oral word is essentially explanation or interpretation or hermeneutics, a clarification by one person of something that to his or her interlocutor or interlocutors is otherwise not evident.[12]

Although the family photograph is wordless, it is not without speech and it does manage to echo many of the patterns found in the oral, including practices of repetition and redundancy, exaggeration and understatement. These images, in many ways, and by various channels, are overwhelmingly dialogical, enabling imaginary conversations between and through, the living and the dead. It is very seldom, if ever, that the taking of a photograph is a silent affair: Besides the verbal instruction of "Say cheese" there are particular sounds and sights when an image is

11 Ong, W., J (1982). Orality and Literacy. New York, Methuen. p.56.Ong has been criticised for generalising about cognition and for creating false dichotomies between literacy and orality.

12 Ong, W., J (1988). "Before Textuality: Orality and Interpretation." Oral Tradition, 3/3: 10. p. 267.

taken. These include the shutter movement and the camera flash, alerting us to the moment of exposure. The photograph therefore is not a silent medium, neither at its inception, nor in its afterlife.

Notions of home

Of the few questions that I managed to ask, are those related to the issue of restitution. I asked whether they were involved with the land claims processes, and while there were various responses, the point was fairly universal that "they were going for houses". Achmat Hoosain was the most succinct when saying, "I didn't want to take the money, I wanted the house".

All the women commented emphatically that their Roger Street memories were "their only memories". The women in particular stressed how close they were, not only as they were only months apart in age, but as they were friends, who "also used to fight a lot", and apart from my father, all of their spouses originated from District Six. When I asked the two women how many siblings they had, they were unanimous in their answer: "Duisende!" (Thousands!) They were articulate and precise in describing their old homes, which I understood to be as a row of two bed-roomed houses — all sharing an unrestricted lane at the rear. I remember that my family's home only had an outside toilet, the ablution requisites being taken care of either at the local washhouse or with a series of buckets and basins. In spite of this, the comment was made: "Yes, there was no bathroom …you washed in the toilet …but it was still nice!"

I soon realized that any attempt to direct the conversation was going to be fruitless. To a large degree, and even though I too sat at the table, I occupied a strange space. I was both part of, and separate from, this group. I had brought my son along and as I looked around the table, listening to forty year old stories, I looked up to see my son drawn into this scene, not sure of where he fitted into the narratives unfolding around the table. I was not sure at times of my role either, it hovered between collaborative, inter-subjective and auto-ethnographic inquiry.

I didn't understand the points of reference to begin with, for at times I seemed to be outside this group which completed each others' sentences as they rapidly spoke. I quickly came to terms with the fact that despite decades of separation, this was a very intimate gathering. I started, and stopped, my introductions and questions often, until I recognized that they could be

experienced as further disruptions to this group of people who shared a particularly 'disrupted' past. The conversation sounded jumbled, at one moment they spoke about where they each stayed, remembering the numbers of their houses and getting quite irate when I struggled to visualise the street layout. At other moments, that seemed random, they jumped to unrelated details of their grandchildren, and their children and their achievements. In discussing the meanings attached to these images, the group enabled me to see and hear how they narrated their lives, the camera turning a lens onto the struggles and celebrations of their former lives in District Six.

I found an image of my grandfather on his wedding day, which provoked my father to speak about his home. This is a black-and white image, about postcard size, very grainy, the details on the dresses are obscured. This wedding party is standing in front of the entrance to the Holy Cross Church, the bride's smile is tentative as she clutches her bouquet. I cannot recognise my father as he is only two years old, but I have little difficulty in recognising my grandfather Herbert, the groom. The image contains several adults and small children, though it's focal point is clearly my grandfather who is perfectly centred and flanked by his new bride and her cousin. It doesn't appear that any of the groom's family were represented, as my father cannot see his aunts. This Church was about a twenty minute walk from their home in Roger Street, which according to my father, consisted of several blocks, one of which was a block of tenement buildings with upstairs landings, the communal toilets of which were in a common yard.

As my father explained, "their" neighbourhood of District Six was not the whole area, instead he believed it to be just a few blocks of attached two-bed roomed houses bordered by four streets, Tyne (pronounced by District Six residents as "Tiny"), Parkin, Tennant and Chapel. Within this grid was 6 Roger Street where my family lived, and off it branched Godfrey Street, connecting it to the iconic Hanover Street with its Rose and Crown Hotel. The four streets served as the borders of the "blocks" that containing the twelve houses. In addition, an intricate system of lanes was accessed from back-yard doors and as all the men and women confirmed, they knew this system of conduits intimately. Water pipes ran overhead from lane to lane.

My father had left Roger Street in 1965 when he married, leaving my grandparents, two uncles, an aunt and their three children in their very cramped home. My grandfather was born in

the Transkei and came to Cape Town in the 1930s to find work, which he did, first as a flensor at the whaling Station located up Cape Town's West Coast, and later as a truck driver for two local Greek merchants. What began as a temporary arrangement ended up being a life-long job. I realised that my grandfather must have been about fifty years old when he moved out of District Six, to his home in Hanover Park – one that always seemed to be damp. Although my father had spent most of his life in the Roger Street home, his recollections of the actual move to Hanover Park were scant, remembering rather that his father seemed to decline physically in Hanover Park and that it was distressing for him to see him struggle to negotiate the flights of stairs to his third floor apartment. He also added that as he could no longer park the work vehicle at his home, he was forced to face the difficult task of trying to get to work at four o'clock in the morning. At this point, my father looked away, saying that all his life, he believed that his father was indestructible, and that like all children, he believed he would live forever.

I asked the rest of the men and women about their particular homes but recollections were vague regarding the early details – they couldn't remember who had stayed in their homes before they arrived, saying they were very small when their parents moved into District Six. Furthermore, they did not have any images that showed the details of each of their homes. Unlike the others, Achmat "Archie" Hussein was not evicted as he moved out of the area when he got married, leaving the rest of his family behind. He commented that he did want to be 'pushed out' and made the further point, that thanks to District Six, he was determined to own his home. Of the six, Hussein was clearly the most agitated about the land-claims process, saying that:

> You see now, I am coming to the point now, they are stealing our land. Finish and klaar …and what they do, they consolidate pockets of land, signing them off, offering them R40 000. Because it goes so deep rooted …where she was the owner, now we are all the children. Now his dead, his mother's dead… That's what's happening. And that guy of the Trust …he appeared on T.V, and he said I would fight for every inch of this land. And that bastard he is ...sorry for my language, I speak Afrikaans. He is a big shot crook.[13]

13 Hussein, A. (2010). Interview S. O'Connell. Cape Town, Unpublished. [Recording]

He did not elaborate who "they" were, but judging by the nodding of heads around the table, I understood that this group clearly felt excluded from the restitutive process. The point was made time and again: they felt short-changed; they wanted their homes back; the paltry amount offered by this process was, as they put it, "an insult added to injury". I asked whether anyone had taken photographs of their own eviction — perhaps unsurprisingly, none had. Perhaps it was their refusal to be viewed as anything other than the family they imaged and believed themselves to have been – perhaps it was the shame. These images are stubbornly absent, a story that at first glance appears to be outside the frame of these ordinary family snapshots.

Of all the interviews conducted, the one I conducted with my aunt Wendy O'Connell, was clearly the most difficult. When I initially phoned her to ask her to be part of my study, I asked her what her overarching memory of District Six was. She responded quite clearly: "The rats. I remember the rats". It took several months to get a further response to my requests to meet, which was quite out of character — she seemed to avoid my requests. We could talk about anything else it seemed, but she steadfastly refused to talk about her place in District Six as a young bride and mother, in a home where all three of her children were born. She did not comment on the eviction process, and what it meant for her husband, but her struggles were articulated in other ways, such as saying that my uncle's long silences were matched in intensity only by his rage; that their children lost out on a father to which they were entitled, and that, in some way or another, the unresolved anger and anguish would never abate due to their divorce and his early death.

I was caught up in the descriptions that surrounded particular images, none of which appeared anything but ordinary. As each photograph was passed around the table, conversations were elicited that exceeded the frames of even the most blurred of images. They could remember moments before, and after the snapshot. A photograph of a mother holding her child at the beach turned into an inventory of minute details: where the baby's dress was bought; the wafer ice creams that were bought from the vendor; the plastic plates that held sandwiches (without crusts!) and the inevitable domino games where my father and his partner, Walter Dowling ruled. I heard of parents and elder siblings who worked for low wages in factories like *African Clothing* and *Ensign*; of others who were shop assistants downtown; and I learnt of the names

and peculiarities of hawking green grocers who would ply their trade from door to door. These nature of these photographs highlighted particular absences – there were no snapshots of moments spent eating breakfast, of a mother tying a ribbon in a daughter's hair before she went to school, feeding the family pet or a grandmother washing the backs of her grandchildren during their evening baths. These gaps and revisions were filled in by the conversations, these less-than-perfect moments deemed unimportant by the lens, but crucial in terms of the inscription of these families in very particular ways.

In these images, I find evidence of the physical home; I see worn and weather-beaten steps, doors and gates. I see the floral patterns on well-used upholstery and regency-striped faded curtains. As Julia Hirsch says: "Porches, doorways, flights of stairs, appear again and again in family photographs: the are discrete fragments of an address".[14]

In the accidental reflections of polished floors and newly cleaned windows, I imagine that if I hold the image still and look closely enough, I may even see myself.

Seeing the interiority of apartheid

Family photography is inscribed in socio-cultural and historical contexts. The title of Marianne Hirsch's book, *The familial gaze*, may be borrowed to think about how oppressed families *see* themselves, and how their gaze may disrupt notions of how they are looked at. Hirsch's *familial gaze'* places the human subject in "the ideology, the mythology, of the family as institution and projects a screen of familial myths between the camera and the subject".[15] Hirsch proposed the term in 1997 to suggest a closer look at the conventions of the family photograph. According to Hirsch, albums of this nature are of a particular kind, eliciting particular and relational forms of reading saying:

14 Hirsch, J. (1981). Family Photographs. Content, Meaning and Effect. New York and Oxford, Oxford University Press.
p. 51.

15 Hirsch, M. (1997). Family Frames. Photography, Narrative and Postmemory. Cambridge, Massachusetts and London, Harvard University Press.
p. 10.

> Recognising an image as *familial* elicits a specific kind of readerly or spectorial look, an *affiliative look* through which we are sutured onto the image and through which we can adopt the image into our own familial narrative.[16]

She suggests that this gaze regulates the pictorial representations of a family according to an ideology of behaviors, manifested though events at specific events.

In many ways, these collections from District Six reflect the same conventions inherent in other albums from around the world. The conversations around them, however, clearly define them as different. That whilst these images show extraordinary family events such as weddings, 21st birthday parties and debutante balls, the absence of unobtrusive moments articulated by orality, lead us to re-think these images. The quiet moments, the ones which at first glance seem nondescript, pry open understandings of intimacy.

I find an image of my parents which was taken at my mother's 21st birthday party in 1964, just a few weeks after their wedding and a few years before the mass of evictions began. It is difficult to look at this picture; I believe that I am eavesdropping on a moment intended only for the new bride and groom. It is apparent that this is an un-posed photograph for the subjects are not confronting the photographer. My father is in profile, his arm cradling the shoulders of his wife, he is whispering something in her ear. It is unmistakably a gesture of protection; my mother looks apprehensive, perhaps she is about to deliver her birthday speech. It is a profoundly intimate moment, showing a new husband protecting his domestic world. I find that I cannot ask my parents about that moment or enquire about the details of what he was saying. I realise though that I do not need to ask, for this photograph speaks to me in a different way. If I listen closely enough to this small black-and-white photograph, I find that I can hear my father saying to his beautiful young bride: "You are the most beautiful woman in the world. It will be okay. I will be here with you".

I find yet another image – that of my mother holding my newborn sister, Lesley in her bedroom – and I can just about discern an out-of-focus radio on the chest-of drawers from which I heard the sounds of apartheid. I remember hearing the opening of parliament on the radio,

16 Ibid.
p .93.

the pomp and ceremony of the naval band and I can now also remember seeing the newspaper headlines from the following day. These images and sounds are vivid and overpowering, until the insignificant image of the radio makes me remember something else: the introductory music of a Friday evening radio programme: *Squad Cars*. Whilst apartheid South Africa was running rough shod over thousands of lives, my dad was building up those of his nearest and dearest: every Friday night, without fail, my father would gather my brother, sister and me in his room and we would listen to the radio show *Squad Cars* which began without fail with the same words every week, "They prowl the empty streets at night, waiting, in parked cars, on duty twenty-four hours out of twenty-four. These are the men of Squad Cars!"

Photographic Objects

While what these photographs show is important to their effects, what is done *to* them is equally so. Although these images, like those in many their homes, show families at leisure, they are not displayed openly at all. In contrast, Gillian Rose in her work on family images in South-east England, says that several of her interviewees told her that:

> Photos were one of the first objects they unpacked after moving house. Jane W. said "Yeah I moved in just sort of, just sort of put pictures up. Just to make it feel like home you know.[17]

Furthermore, many of the images were still in the developer's packs, showing that while they were significant enough to be developed and printed at not inconsiderable cost, there was still some unease, an ambiguity as to what should happen to them later. Unlike Rose's interviewees in England who had a strong desire to date them, store them in fireproof containers, select some for special albums, put others into purses and wallets, pin one or two to a notice board at work, the photographs of my family as well as those belonging to the evictees seated around the table, were not. None of the images belonging to any of the people that I had just met had

17 Rose, G. (2003). "Family photographs and domestic spacings: a case study." Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers 28(1): 5-18.
p. 6.

Figure 20

Untitled

Black-and-White Photograph

113 x 80 mm

placed any of these images into photo frames or albums. I find that this secretive practice was echoed in 1970s China where family photography was likewise far from the everyday occurrence it was already in the West. Annette Kuhn writes that Maoism discouraged any activity, including photography, that might be seen to promote family ties. Kuhn finds that photographs were, and still are, rarely displayed in the home, and neither did families put their images in albums.[18] Like these images, all of the photographs belonging to the evictees that I spoke to had been placed in shoeboxes of various sizes, none of the images were dated and little attempt, if any, was made to inscribe information on their reverse.

In looking at these images in their boxes and plastic bags, I thought that little was *done* to them, until I realized that I was on the wrong track in thinking about them this way. The significance of their storage and display was profound and more complicated than I had originally surmised. They echo Roland Barthes' refusal to reproduce a photograph of his dead mother since he says the effect of seeing this photo of 'the truth of the face I had loved" and that was unique to him.[19] In saying this, Barthes understands that a photograph as an object has a profound relationship between space, time, persons and things. By referring to his deceased mother, Barthes confirms the notion of haunting, as well as *absences* in the photograph. Artist Christian Boltanski puts it eloquently:

> What they [clothing and photographs] have in common is that they are simultaneously presence and absence. They are both an object and a souvenir of a subject, exactly as a cadaver is both an object and souvenir of a subject.[20]

What happens when these domestic images are not made visible within the domestic space? When they are there, but at the same time, are not? For as Allan and Crow contend, the home is understood to be a space that allows privacy, security and creativity.[21] The family photographs

18 Kuhn, A. (2007). "Photography and cultural memory: a methodological exploration." Visual Studies 22(3): 9.

19 Barthes in Rose, G. (2003). "Family photographs and domestic spacings: a case study." Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers 28(1): 5-18.
p. 9.

20 Gumpert, L. (1994). Christian Boltanski. Paris, Flammarion.
p. 110.

21 Allan, G., Crow, G (1989). Introduction. Home and Family: Creating the domestic sphere. G. C. Allan, G. London, MacMillan: 1-13.

of a home of the oppressed disturb this notion, as forced removals destroyed the idea of a space of safety and sanctuary, leaving the family fractured in all possible senses. Could it be that the tear that apartheid caused in the fabric of these homes is irreparable and that on some level, the refusal of families to display these images in their homes speaks to an inability to attend to this injury? It appears that it is too traumatic to display these images of their past, as they may be a reminder that the past has not retreated to the safety of history or nostalgia. These family photographs hint of the possibility that the impossible may happen again. Perhaps it is that these images are too successful in that they are too vivid a reminder of a particular time and of a particular loss. These images offer proof that families, consisting of mothers, fathers, cousins, aunts, grandparents, children and friends, were incomprehensibility bulldozed out of their homes only because of the colour of their skin. As one woman said: "They didn't wait long. They didn't wait long. You could still be in that house and they would bulldoze it".

Barthes reminds us that "Photography never lies: or rather it can lie to the meaning of the thing, being by nature tendentious, never as to its existence".[22] The inability of these evictees to display and circulate these images speaks of an obliterated way of life, and it is at odds with the idea of a citizen now apparently fully recognized by the post-apartheid state. I asked one of the women whether she ever went back to District Six after she moved and her reply was emphatic:

> Once we moved out, we never went back. There we lost contact, you see. Because everybody was moved. One stayed in Retreat, one stayed in Steenberg. One stay here, One stay there.

"There-then", it appears, cannot come to terms with the "here-now". These images and those other lives prefer the safety of their flimsy cardboard boxes.

The occasion therefore of looking at these images in a *particular* way was significant for these evictees. As earlier stated, it was a noisy affair, but also of note was the unusual performance dynamic by which the photographs were not only spoken *about* but were spoken *to*. I was fascinated to see comments being made about particular people in an image as if they were really

22 Barthes, R. (1981). Camera Lucida: Reflections of Photography. London, Vintage. p. 87.

there and not merely depicted in the photograph, saying for example "This is Brian and Tyrone", and not "This a photograph of Brian and Tyrone". The referrentiality of the photographs was thus asserted and they ceased to be two-dimensional pieces of paper, the mere representations of nondescript subjects, they became the subjects.

"Speaking the photograph" intertwines the visual and the oral. Questions of pitch, inflection, volume and rhythm are echoed in composition, exposure and movement. The movements of what I was hearing appeared to follow a pattern, there were moments of emphasis, and longer moments of absence, and soon, what it became impossible to separate out what I heard from what I saw. In this way, orality became an overarching aesthetic, shaping the visual narrative, now no longer bound by temporal frames. The oral-visual nexus urged me to reconsider many of the assumptions that I may have had about family photographs of this particular nature: that they were inane, similar to albums found in Western, 'white' homes and that they had little relevance beyond the hearth. How do we think about an oral-visual practice of oppression? What does it sound like – and how does it look? How can the oppressed see, and hear their trauma if they do not even know its name? What these images do therefore is speak and show the interiority of lives during apartheid. They pick up on seemingly insignificant and banal moments that are powerful in their evocation of worth. The power of these images far exceeds their materiality, for they depict just how people lived, loved, cried and danced. They show us in all their humility that those lives existed in all their subdued and saturated moments.Walter Benjamin ascribes curative powers to the telling of fairy tales, specifically their ability to remove the blockages caused by trauma:

> If not every illness might be cured, if it could only flow far enough out of the stream of storytelling – all the way back to the delta? If one considers how pain is a dam resisting the stream of storytelling, then one sees clearly that it is broken wherever the grade is steep enough to wash whatever is in its path into an ocean of happy forgetfulness.[23]

23 Benjamin in Kramer, S. (2004). "Talking around trauma: on the relationship between trauma, narration and catharsis in literature." TRN-Newsletter 2: Hamburg Institute for Social Research. p. 1.

Silencing Oppression

The question then becomes crucial: What happens if we are unable to speak? Is post-apartheid South Africa trying to 'close the book', not only further silencing those who were oppressed, but thereby inflicting further damage?

When considering these collections, it is apparent that these families went to great lengths to hold onto these images, particularly in keeping them safe through the period of evictions. In the midst of what now sounds like mayhem, mothers and fathers in the face of disaster strove to protect their particular cardboard box. Clearly, the need to safeguard these images was paramount, for as these images demonstrate, they embody complex values and means, many of which are not easy accessible in simple representations. It may be that these multiple meanings and values were not even apparent to the compiler of the collection at the time, for as many of them commented, "we didn't think much of why we took a camera along, these were just photographs of a day at a beach". They went to great lengths it now seems to protect these images and there was some sense of loss as they noticed that some images were torn or stained. These photographs appeared to represent a world that asked for re-construction and a lens through which these treasured moments could be recalled and situated in the present in an attempt to know. In looking at the practice of viewing family albums, Martha Langford equates it in terms of honouring a "faithfully revisited gravestone", except in the case of District Six, there are no gravestones to mark the names of the dead, metaphorical or indeed otherwise.

Held, caressed, lowered onto laps and passed around, looking at images in this way disrupts the physical and other axis by which we orientate ourselves and to wich we are accustomed, and of no less import is the fact that the verticality of images as displayed in museums and galleries is also hereby on the one hand utterly subverted, and on the other, supremely enriched. Clearly by looking at images of this weight in that particular place and in that manner disrupted many of the conventions to which I, as a photographer, had become accustomed.

Martha Langford, who works with family photographic albums in museum archives, argues in her book *Suspended conversations* that people's uses of these albums are governed by the same structures as those of the oral tradition – of oral memories and life stories: "Our photographic

memories are used in a performative oral tradition".[24] Not only do photographs generate conversations that seem to follow a particular pattern, Langford goes further and contends that that the photographs themselves follow an "oral structure" saying that "an album is a classic example of a horizontal narrative shot through with lines of both epic and anecdotal dimensions".[25] These then inform the performance of taking, viewing and storing photographs.

Langford's work complements that of visual anthropologist Richard Chalfen who is interested in "how ordinary people do ordinary photography".[26] Although Langford's assertions are based largely on Western and 'white' subjects in Canada, her interest relevancies relevant when thinking about albums of racially oppressed families as she is also interested in the family photograph album as it survives as an artifact, beyond its original production. Both Chalfen and Langford agree that images of this genre facilitate communication, continuity and exchange. For Langford, "speaking the photograph" can unlock blockages to understanding and memory by considering the nexus of orality and visuality as storytelling. By focusing on the family, Langford contends that their practice of photographic production provides a platform to engage with broader cultural, social and historical issues. Engaging with the family album of the oppressed can activate a range of methodological phenomena, including the nexus of orality, visuality, story-telling, content, production and the practices of memory work.

"Speaking" the Photograph

It seems impossible to separate the oral, the visual and the other senses, added to which the relationships between the oral and the visual are constantly changing: there are moments of silence when an image looms large, and then there are other moments when what is being said dwarfs the image, it is never one or the other. At times these men and women scrutinise the images intently, peering intently in an attempt to pick out details which are frustratingly obscure,

24 Langford, M. (2001). Suspended Conversations: The Afterlife of Memory in Photographic Albums. Montreal, McGill-Queen's University Press.
p. viii.

25 Ibid.
p. 175

26 Chalfen, R. (1987). Snapshot versions of life. Bowling Green, OH, Bowling Green State University Popular Press.
p .12.

at others, they speak to the image, asking: "where did you get that haircut, Pat", and, "now why did you have to stand like that?" The Greek word *ekphrasis,*[27] refers to the virtuoso skill of pitting words to images, but interestingly English does not have an equivalent, but what this group was doing, was precisely that – they spoke the photographic image. The family photographic collection is strongly linked to with the notion of the oral narrative, where "rites of repetition"[28] are performed in oral and visual ways. Although they do not comment on formal aspects of the photographs in terms of lighting, composition, framing and movement, the photographs are subject to a scrutiny of a different kind. They are looked at closely, held up to the light and held between both hands in the unlikely event that they will be dropped. Looking at these images in this way was a performance in itself, this performative viewing and talking, two-way talk between the image and the viewer, offered a new lens for understanding and interpretation. These images were a constitutive force, determining the spaces of lives in the present, and helped to shape the narrative of the ongoing trauma of oppression. They started the conversation on how these "wounds", as spoken of by Bogues, can be named, and in so doing, began the process of generating new ways of looking, seeing and listening.

The voices of the women as they spoke of their wedding days overlapped with those of the men as they spoke about their visits to the local barber and their 'dam' [a board game that is similar to draughts] championships. What was spoken about often did not correspond with the image at hand – time and space again were distorted and disrupted – and just as the images were not organized in any particular order, neither were their verbal recollections. I was however acutely aware of sound – whether they were speaking or not, I could hear the rustling of plastic bags, the creaking of chairs and the gas escaping from the *Bashews* soft drinks. As I hear this this sound, yet another memory-trace comes floating back into my mind, and I remember the crates of *Bashews* that were delivered to my aunt's house on the Cape Flats and I can taste the flavour of the cream soda before I pour the preternaturally green liquid into my glass.

These images were immersed in sounds, smells and textures, none of which I found in any

27 Wexler, L. (1999). Seeing Sentiment: Photographs, Race and the Innocent Eye. The Familial Gaze. M. HIrsch. Hanover, London, University Press of New England: 248-275.
p. 250.

28 Langford, M. (2001). Suspended Conversations: The Afterlife Memory in Photographic Albums. Montreal, McGill-Queen's University Press.
p. 36.

of my visits to mainstream archives or museums. This cluttered table of photographs, teacups, plates and cakes was also haptic, as I find that my fingers are drawn to pick up a curly edged image of a young child that I do not know. These objects seems exquisite to me, a treasure trove of bric-a-brac that details for the world of my grandparents, my parents and me. The details of which the crochet doilies, the starched shirts, the tulle dresses — overwhelmed the spaces and gaps that lingered in my unaccounted memory for far too long. For inasmuch as my parents' Walmer Estate home was only just one remove, both in time and space, from Roger Street, there was something poignant about having a series of conversations about these images over a dining room table amidst the noise of a home. Martha Langford articulates in perfectly saying:

> The removal of an album from a private situation to the public sphere does not deprive it of a context, but substitutes one set of viewing conditions for another. An institutional setting, however impersonal, is never neutral.[29]

Photographic sounds and textures

The albums thus jostled for space amidst the sounds, a fitting argument given that my visual memories are almost always overlaid by sound. Ours was a noisy house, considering that there were three children, my parents and grandmother, together with some or other aunt who came to visit but who always seemed to stay for months. Prior to the arrival of our television set we were raised on music, with the well-played piano being the axis around which our weekly hymn renditions were performed and on which my father prepared for his Sunday role as Church pianist. It is no accident that I find resonance in Barbara Christian's words when she says that:

> People of colour have always theorised — but in forms quite different from the Western form of abstract logic. And I am inclined to say that our theorising (and I intentionally use the verb rather than the noun) is often in narrative forms, in the stories we create, in riddles and proverbs, in the play with language, because dynamic rather than fixed ideas

29 Ibid.
p. 18. Langford's study is largely culture bound and cannot look at the oral-visual relationship in 'black' families as her assumptions are aprehended through a particular lens of 'white' Canada.

> seem more *to* our liking. How else have we managed to survive with such spiritedness the assault on our bodies, social institutions, countries, our very humanity?[30]

They were narrating multiple stories outlined in jokes, snippets of songs, individually and in tandem with the others. They echoed stories told in conversations in dance halls, in movies and in sermons. These photographs facilitated a kind of story-telling and in so doing, fulfilled important functions: how it happened and how it was significant. In so doing, I realised that there was no end to the stories, oral and visual, that these photographs were able to reveal. These images complicated the distance between the moment of exposure and their re-examination in the present. These restless albums provided an oral-visual framework to a never-ending compilation of narratives. By 'speaking' these images, the group was performing a re-activation of their images as images of meaning,[31] rather than as only representation. Their re-enactment of their, and my past offered not only a representation, but also an effect, as it *did* something in addition to showing it. Through looking at and listening to their stories, the incomprehensibility of oppression began to emerge. In putting names to ordinary faces long dead, and having ordinary conversations, something else began to emerge. What happened to the ubiquitous visual representation of these ordinary families when the dynamics of the family were violently interrupted by apartheid? These photographs stood in for 'a living dead', becoming a metaphor, in many ways, for the evictees' 'other dead selves'. They proved Barthes' notion that the photograph "is death in the future".[32] The absences that they revealed, of a continuation of a particular way of life also indicated the impossibility of ever coming to terms with what it meant to have on the one hand only half a life and on the other, a whole life — but denied. This moment of looking and listening condemned the irrational act of oppression as they asked: How could apartheid demand and extract this price?

30 Christian, B. (1988). "The race for theory." Feminist Studies, 14(1): 12.
. 68.

31 Langford, M. (2001). Suspended Conversations: The Afterlife Memory in Photographic Albums. Montreal, McGill-Queen's University Press.

32 Barthes, R. (1981). Camera Lucida: Reflections of Photography. London, Vintage.
p .92.

The photograph and Trauma

Through the photograph, Barthes looks at the ways things were, as a linguist, a translator, he "translates the meaning of the image from knowing of its past".[33] For Benjamin though, all knowledge is in the present, and about the present.[34] Speaking and listening to these family albums answered both Barthes and Benjamin: They asked for and demanded a close analysis and responded to an emergency cry for help in the *present*. These images were not simply a record of the past and "an inert collage of the way things were"[35], they also demonstrated the impossibility of the total preservation of the past, affirming Roland Barthes' theory that photographs counter, rather than preserve memory. What these historical images speak of, paradoxically, is of the present, which is bound by the legacies and predicaments of a particular oppression. They attest to the inability of the subject of a photograph, the photographer or the viewer to fully grasp the extent of the trauma even as it was happening. As a witness to trauma, these images changed after the moment of exposure, and it this which distinguishes them from the countless other family images around the globe: they witnessed a tragedy and a trauma which could never be fully assimilated into a narrative simply because it is ongoing, reflecting Cathy Caruth's notion of the unassailable nature of trauma. These images are different because the nondescript moment during an outing to a beach is forever altered by the trauma and the violence that followed it. The moments of exposure that created these images, on beaches, in a church hall, on the city streets and at a corner café, they represent then an "impossible history", as Ulrich Baer calls it, they articulate lives that are yet to come. Baer reads the photograph:

> Not as the parceling-out and preservation of time, but as an access to another kind of experience that is explosive, instantaneous, distinct – a chance to see in a photograph not narrative, not history, but possibly trauma.[36]

33 Wexler, L. (1999). Seeing Sentiment: Photographs, Race and the Innocent Eye. The Familial Gaze. M. HIrsch. Hanover, London, University Press of New England: 248-275.
p. 270.
34 Ibid.
35 Ibid.
36 Baer, U. (2002). Spectral Evidence: The Photography of Trauma. Cambridge, Mass, London, MIT Press.
p. 6.

Trauma theorist Jenny Edkins argues that for an event to be traumatic, to produce symptoms that are seen and heard, an event has to be more than just a situation of utter powerlessness, it has to be a betrayal of trust.[37] This is what ultimately the family album of the oppressed reveals. They speak of, and to, irretrievable moments where these lives were betrayed by fellow humans who not only do it in spectacular fashion, but who have walked away to leave them with the detritus of their lives, irretrievably trashed and jumbled. These are images then that reveal a normalcy and a social integration which was then violently disrupted and destroyed. These images are thus sites of absent bodies and dismembered lives. These family photographs and how they are performed point to the inability of achieving a resolution to this oppression and therefore highlight the ongoing inability to mourn it. And now that I think of it, they call out to the myriad rolls of exposed and undeveloped photographic film that have been flung into dusty drawers and secreted away, slowly spoiling, their chemicals forgetting the light that could have made them eloquent witnesses.

There are other shots, many of them candid. I find many blurred and faded images of yet other ordinary moments. I start to see familiar ornaments on Christmas trees, I am startled when I recognise a particular dress that my sister is wearing The group, my parents and I begin the hard work of speaking through these photographs and I catch my breath as I realise that these images are overwhelming. There are many moments when I find that I cannot continue, that I have to walk away as I am overcome with anger, grief and regret. I yearn for some safety in all the nostalgia — it is obstinately elusive, and in an effort to grasp onto the happy ending I so desperately want this story to have, I ponder what these images ask of me: is it perhaps that in being given the freedom to dream, that I, and these other families, now dream to be free of this 'past' — but it tastes like bitter blasphemy in my mouth, acrid like dormant dark-room chemicals, futile.

37 Edkins, J. (2003). Trauma and the Memory of Politics. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press. p.4.

Figure 21

Untitled

Colour Photograph

80 x 115 mm

CHAPTER 6

Remembering and Forgetting: Albums of Injury

Auguste Comte remarked that mental equilibrium was, first and foremost, due to the fact that the physical objects with which we have daily contact change little or not at all, providing us with an image of permanence and stability. These objects give us a feeling of order and tranquility, like a silent and immobile society unconcerned with our own restlessness and changes of mood. In truth, much mental illness is accompanied by a breakdown of contact between thought and things, as it were, an inability to recognise familiar objects, so that the victim finds himself in a fluid and strange environment totally lacking familiar reference points. So true is it that our habitual images of the external world are inseparable from our self that this breakdown is not limited to the mentally ill. We ourselves may experience a similar period of uncertainty, as if we had left behind our whole personality when we are obliged to move to novel surroundings and have not yet adapted to them. […] Thus we understand why special images play so important a role in the collective memory. The place a group occupies is not like a blackboard, where one may write and erase figures at will. No image of a blackboard can recall what was once written there… But place and group have each received the imprint of the other... Each aspect, each detail, of this place has a meaning intelligent only to members of the group, for each portion of its space corresponds to various and different aspects of the structure and life of their society, at least of what is most stable in it. [1]

This cardboard box never seems to fail me, for each time that it allows me to eavesdrop on its secrets, I am astounded by the multiplicity of stories it reveals. At times I quickly remember and recognise events, people and places, but at other moments I struggle to find those fragments and events that steadfastly cling to the dark corners, reluctant to be exposed. These shadowy images, placed between remembering and forgetting, between here and there, speak to me about individual and private moments, most often when I am confronted by a gaze, a look that follows

1 Halbwachs, M. (1950). The Collective Memory. New York, Harper and Row. p. 2.

me long after I have returned the image to its container. What is it about the photograph that can speak to us of the unconscious moment, for if we accept that the unconscious edges itself slyly into photographs, revealed at some moments and obscured at others, then where is the unconscious placed in the apparent haphazard and forgotten collections of family photographs found in cardboard boxes? Is it even notable that these images are not placed in protected plastic sleeves, that captions and text are not inserted, and that these collections are almost always hidden from view?

I have yet to find a single image in the homes of ex-residents that shows the actual process of forced removals, the cruel logistics. Apart from the fact that the evictees do not have any documentation of the eviction process, they likewise do not have any images that show or commemorate their last visits to their local church or mosque; the process of packing trucks and cars on the day of the move, nor have any letters or envelopes that show evidence of their postal and residential address in District Six been saved. It appears that the spaces between the photographs in the cardboard box, the gaps now filled with particles of dust, is all that is left to reveal just what is so apparently absent. I wonder whether these images may pry open those crevices of absence and speak to me of just what it meant to be hated, as Fanon says — time and again. What is the significance of these images, the spaces, and the box; that whilst they appear silent, they still speak in ways that allow me to re-member the past? Every component of these images, their subjects with their elaborate hairstyles, the polished shoes and the starched dresses, speaks of a framework of particular bodies and place, as Maurice Halbwachs comments on the role that objects such as these play in a study, saying:

> The picture a Balzac provides of a family lodging or the home of a miser, a Dickens gives of the study of a notary public, already suggests the social type or category of the humans who live in that framework. What is involved is no mere harmony and physical congruence between place and person. Rather, each object appropriately placed in the whole recalls a way of life … they do stand about us a mute and motionless society. While they do not speak, we nevertheless understand them because they have a meaning easily interpreted.[2]

2 Ibid.
ch. 4. p. 1.

The Photograph and Memory

What do these images say of memory? How do they blur the lines and the moments between remembering and forgetting? Walter Benjamin, writing in 1931, comments that the "optical unconscious" could be discovered through photography, and that previously moments that were invisible could be "arrested by the camera action".[3] Not long after the invention of the device in the early nineteenth century, physician, poet and inventor Oliver Wendell Homes described this new device as a "mirror with a memory".[4] Mary Bergstein comments that:

> Photographic images are themselves structured in such a way that the manifest informational content of documentation overlies deep latent meanings, as in the visual material of dreams.[5]

The photograph has been used as an instrument of memory in the private and public life of the family,[6] and as such offers mechanisms by which to consider contexts of production, ways of life, memory retrieval and what it means to remember. The magic of the camera lies in its ability to offer an index, a sign of a "truly existing thing".[7] Photographs speak too of memories beyond the family, being placed in the traffic and as a conduit between private and public memory. The phrase, "mirror with a memory" is particularly evocative when thinking about the family photograph, for it speaks to the camera's ability to reflect, through a series of mirrors and lenses, what is placed before it. It does not merely depict, it also records. For Oliver Wendel Holmes, a Harvard trained physician and published poet, the camera could perform memory, the work of human recall.

3 Benjamin, W. in Bergstein, M. (2010). Mirrors of Memory: Freud, Photography and the History of Art. Ithaca, London, Cornell University Press.
p. 17-18.

4 Raiford, L. (2009). "Photography and The Practices of Critical Black Memory." History and Theory(Theme Issue 48): 17.
p. 112.

5 Bergstein, M. (2010). Mirrors of Memory: Freud, Photography and the History of Art. Ithaca, London, Cornell University Press.
p. 17.

6 Willis, D. (1999). A search for self: the photograph and black family life. The Familial Gaze. M. Hirsch. Hanover, Unversity Press of New England: 107-123.

7 Raiford, L. (2009). "Photography and The Practices of Critical Black Memory." History and Theory(Theme Issue 48): 17.

As Marita Sturken says, images of this nature are shared and discussed in various contexts; they contribute to a "kind of collective memory, either as interventions or resistance to official history".[8] Much like the homes that they represent, these images are architecture, an armature and visual index that reveal hints of lives and how those lives are remembered. Maurice Halbwachs, in his seminal work *La mémoire collective* wherein he made the connection between memories of the collective, comments on the relationship of homes, streets and groups saying:

> That even if stones are movable, relationships established between stones and men neither are nor so easily altered. When a group has lived a long time in a space adapted to its habits, its thoughts as well as its movements are in turn ordered by the succession of images from these external objects.[9]

As Bergstein comments further on the photographic medium, photographs add depth and are configured as "phantasm and as evocations of dream-spectatorship and memory".[10] Sturken adds that the:

> Personal photograph is an object of complex emotional and cultural meaning, an artifact used to conjure memory, nostalgia and contemplation. The photograph of personal value is a talisman, in which the past is often perceived to reside so that it can be re-experienced. It evokes both memory and loss, both a trace of life and the prospect of death.[11]

8 Sturken, M. (1999). The Image as Memorial: Personal Photographs in Cultural Memory. The Familial Gaze. M. Hirsch. Hanover, London, University Press of New England.
p. 178.

9 Halbwachs, M. (1950). The Collective Memory. New York, Harper and Row.
ch. 4. p. 1.

10 Bergstein, M. (2010). Mirrors of Memory: Freud, Photography and the History of Art. Ithaca, London, Cornell University Press.
p. 3.

11 Sturken, M. (1999). The Image as Memorial: Personal Photographs in Cultural Memory. The Familial Gaze. M. Hirsch. Hanover, London, University Press of New England.
p. 178.

Photography, memory and dreams

How do photographs resemble memory and dreams, and how are dreams, memories and lives constructed by photographs and images? Goethe, writing in 1789 and before the arrival of the camera commented that the dreams of his youth were realized on a visit to Rome and that he "saw in reality what he had seen for so long in the engravings in his childhood home. Everything was just as he imagined it, yet everything was different".[12]

As was evident through all my interactions with ex-residents and family members, there was significant attachment to these photographs, which although many appeared crumpled, torn or coffee stained, still commanded their place in their particular cardboard box. Why would people be attached to these fragile pieces of paper? These images do not only speak about fragile moments, they seem to speak about a particular purpose of life. There seems to be a relationship of intimacy, yet these images straddle notions of both private and collective memories, which speak less about the past and forgetting, and more about living in the present.

As objects of intimacy, along with keepsakes from baptisms, menu cards, invitations, birthday parties and weddings, how can they provide an insight into ways of living in the present? If these images attest to a particular past, that which is embedded in particular landscapes, how does the recalling of these pasts, spaces and times, cohere to landscapes that have been broken, divided and destroyed? How do these images speak, and of *what* do they speak, as they come to their unsettled terms with their new locations? How do they remember that which they would rather forget? For as Hannah Arendt so succinctly observes:

> What has been lost is the continuity of the past… What you are then left with is still the past, but a *fragmented past,* which has lost its certainty of evaluation.[13]

12 Goethe in Bergstein, M. (2010). Mirrors of Memory: Freud, Photography and the History of Art. Ithaca, London, Cornell University Press.
p. 9 - 10.

13 Arendt, H. in Eyerman, R. (2001). Cultural Trauma: Slavery and the formation of African American Identity. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.
ch. 1 p. 1

Freud and the photograph

It is no co-incidence that one finds that the development of Sigmund Freud's (1865-1939) thoughts on memory bear testimony to a particular *visual* imagination and that the medium itself seems to occupy a particular place in thinking about Freud. As a scientist in Vienna, Freud lived in a visual world of x-rays, slides and telescopic photography, illustrated in *The interpretation of dreams* wherein he refers to the psyche as "visual tool resembling a compound microscope or a photographic apparatus".[14] Photographs of art and architecture at the turn of the twentieth century often served as "the real thing" and "served as memory-prompters before and after the fact of an actual encounter".[15] In 1939, the year that Freud died, Paul Valery gave his now famous "Discours du centenaire de la photographie" at the Sorbonne in Paris, where he spoke of the "authenticity of a photographic image as visual evidence as opposed to mere human testimony".[16] Freud, as the inventor of psychoanalysis, was of course concerned with the analysis of human memory. As he comments on the relationship of recollections, image and memory in A disturbance of memory on the Acropolis (1936), an essay written as an open letter to Romain Rolland, in which he analyses some of his own memories:

> When finally, on the afternoon after our arrival, I stood upon the Acropolis and cast my eyes upon the landscape, a remarkable thought suddenly entered my mind: "So all of this really *does* exist, just as we learnt at school!"[17]

Photographs are also comparable to images in memory and dreams, and 'seeing in the mind's eye' is a useful metaphor for thinking about memory, which for Freud was an actual place within the mind. Mary Bergstein suggests that these mental images for Freud worked like an image

14 Freud, S. in Bergstein, M. (2010). Mirrors of Memory: Freud, Photography and the History of Art. Ithaca, London, Cornell University Press.
p. 19.

15 Ibid.
p. 32.

16 Ibid.
p. 15.

17 Freud as cited by Bergstein. Ibid.
p. 8.

slide show, "with the projection of images from outside enlarged on a psycho-spatial screen".[18] Photographic images as a cultural system, made and consumed in great numbers during the lifetime of Freud, found their way into his library, through postcards, stereoscopic view cards and art books. Bergstein, with regard to the burgeoning ubiquity of the photographic image makes the point that:

> Frequent replication and apparently seamless visual construction …of photographic prints made their mental absorption far faster and less conscious than that of a traditional work of art". [19]

Although they were to be found everywhere, Bergstein also notes that photographic images at this time were still considered in the documentary style, with less attention and concern paid to the struggles of representation and authorship. Portraiture, scenes of the city and other images of this time were:

> Apprehended, like dream images, as an exquisite visual residue, as traces 'taken' from the continuum of lived experience. In a metaphoric sense, photographic images could be received as involuntary mirror images, or memories.[20]

As representations with their own particular conventions, Bergstein comments further than they "did their cultural work in the society of fin-de-siècle Europe as vehicles of affective memory", [21] as men and women used these objects in libraries and in private homes, scrutinising them in conjunction with the familiar and intimate exercises of reading and daydreaming. Freud's library held an impressive archive of photographs, captions and texts, and as they were frequently associated with memory, these had a special role in his imaginative vision, prompting him to

18 Ibid.
p. 18 – 19.
19 Ibid.
p. 10 – 11.

20 Ibid.
p. 15
21 Ibid.
p.17.

say that "everything that can become the object of our inner perception is *virtual,* like the image in the telescope made by the passage of light-rays".[22] Important too, when thinking about the cardboard box of photographs, indeed regarding all photographs and temporality, is that as with the photographic image, Freud regarded the unconscious mind as being outside the continuum of time.[23] Roland Barthes, conversely, coined the now famous metaphor that cameras could be considered "clocks for seeing".[24] Thierry de Duve asserts that the photographs may be either "natural evidence and live witness (or picture) of a vanished past, or as an abrupt artefact".[25]

Crucially with film images, the processing of negatives and their exposure and printing can take place after any interval of time and negatives may also render very different results, depending on particular photographic processes which may highlight certain areas or likewise obscure others. Moments and experiences are therefore held latent, potential; Freud, obviously aware of this mechanism, uses the metaphor of the photographic process to speak about the unconscious, describing the relationship between unconscious and conscious activity in terms of the latent photographic negative.[26]

Works of memory

How can we think of these casual images of homes and lives that were as yet to be destroyed? Just how are they tragic reminders and iconic evocations of loss? When pondering photographs as objects within the homes of the 'removed', I find a clue as to how images of those forcibly evicted sit *within* conversations of home, for as Halbwachs says, "the permanence and interior appearance of a home impose[s] on the group a comforting image of its own continuity".[27] This is illuminating, for the act of looking at these images for ex-residents must now be in

22 Ibid.
p. 23.
23 Ibid.
24 Barthes, R. (1981). Camera Lucida: Reflections of Photography. London, Vintage.
p.47.
25 Du Duve, T. (1978). "Time Exposure and Snapshot: The Photograph as Paradox." October 5: 113-125.
p. 113.
26 Bergstein, M. (2010). Mirrors of Memory: Freud, Photography and the History of Art. Ithaca, London, Cornell University Press.
25.
27 Halbwachs, M. (1950). The Collective Memory. New York, Harper and Row.
p. 1.

and of itself violent, for while these tableaux speak eloquently enough of family and home, they cannot provide the slightest measure of comfort for there is simply no continuity. The question remains, where are these images situated in the conversations of memory, trauma and remembering?

As Piers Nora says, "the recent passion for memory",[28] manifested by an ever increasing number of academic studies concerned with memory narratives and political practices, has established memory as one of the main discourses in social science. What work does memory do and for whom? Leading scholars have identified two sides of the phenomenon of memory, identifying it as personal and collective, as Paul Ricoeur, in Memory, history, and forgetting argued that memory is an individual phenomenon, that individuals possess their memory although peers can assist in the matter of remembering.[29] The conviction of this particular school of thought, "the tradition of inwardness", is informed by Aristotle who thought that the individual expressed his past in the recesses of his soul. This long-established conviction considers memory to be the subjective experiences and memories of the individual, separate from others, and contributing to individual identity. St. Augustine points out further that the idea of reflexivity is at the root of memory, that memory is private and that one remembers oneself, making the processes of memory reflexive.[30] For Ricoeur, memory, although it is individual, bears the mark of "the other", thus situating memory in an opaque space that is not neatly defined. Ricoeur suggests that there are spaces, intermediate zones on the continuum of individual and collective memory, which are more fluid.

Maurice Halbwachs however, argues that memory depends on the group to which an individual belongs, as well as ones status within the group. His classic work on memory focuses on the individual and the social collective and posits that memories and memorialisation are socialising entities. Halbwachs maintains that it is only through negotiating with, and with the

28 Nora, P. (1996). "General Introduction: Between Memory and History. Realms of Memory. P. Nora. New York, Columbia University Press. 1: 1-20.

29 Ricoeur, P. (2004). Memory, History, Forgetting. Chicago and London, University of Chicago Press. p. 124-132.

30 François-Xavier Lavenne, V. R., François Tollet (2005). "Fiction, Between Inner Life and Collective Memory. A Methodological Reflection.." The New Arcadia Review 3. p. 1 - 2.

assistance of others, that individual memories may be realised.[31] The individual for Halbwachs is central to his theory of collective memory as he examines forgetting, dreams, mourning and melancholia, thinking through the nuts and bolts of memory. For Halbwachs, collective memory is not merely the assessment or sum of individual recollections among people in the same society, rather, he contends that a group's memories are realised and reconstructed in terms of the present, he conceives of the past in terms of the present, a process which results in an idea of self that is always in flux.

For Halbwachs, there are no purely individual memories.[32] He asserts further that it is unnecessary to 'fix' memory by writing it down as long as people can remember, believing much like Plato, that writing down the past turns the event into History. And in regard to this very matter of memory writing, Ricoeur likewise contends that writing memories freezes and changes them.[33] Other scholars, such as Joël Candau, argue that humans look to what he calls "memory extensions" when recollecting.[34] More conservatively, but arguably less realistically, Marcel Proust, argued for the existence of "pure memory", memory that is utterly faithful to the past and can thus be re-constructed in its entirety.[35]

What is the situation of memory within larger discussions of citizenship and freedom; is there not a politics of remembering and forgetting that tied up with questions of power and citizenship? Paul Connerton in his seminal work, *How Societies Remember*, [36] reminds us that what we remember and forget is of pivotal importance when constructing political, national and other identities.[37] Identities are developed, constructed and diminished through a series of myths, selection of memories, and personalities, as Jan-Werner Mueller argues, "whenever 'national identity' seems to be in question, memory comes to be a key to national recovery through reconfiguring the past".[38] The relationship therefore between those in power and what

31 Halbwachs in Wood, C. (2006). Memory at Work: Maurice Halbwachs, Sigmund Freud, and the Sociology of Knowledge in Contemporary Studies of Cultural Memory. American Sociological Association; 2006 Annual Meeting. Montreal.

32 Halbwachs, M. (1950). The Collective Memory.

33 Ricoeur, P. (2004). Memory, History, Forgetting. Chicago and London, University of Chicago Press. p. 141 - 145.

34 Lavenne, F.-X., Virginie Renard, Virginia.,Tollet, François (2005). "Fiction, Between Inner Life and Collective Memory. A Methodological Reflection." The New Arcadia Review 3.

35 bid.

36 Connerton, P. (1999). How Societies Remember. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

37 Ibid.

38 Mueller, J.-W. (2002). Memory and Power in Post-War Europe. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press. p. 18.

they choose to remember is crucial.

Memory for Emmanuel Levinas is the "rectitude of responsibility", crucially related to bearing responsibility, and the ways in which we assume the burdens of the past.[39] Mueller's assertion suggests that it is necessary to examine the politics of remembering and forgetting not only in the authoritarian regime, but also in its aftermath. Post 1994 South Africa has experienced a period of transition and consolidation. It has also been a time that has witnessed the country struggling to think about, critically, what exactly a memory of oppressionencompasses. South Africa seems to be caught up in the aesthetics of memorialisation and heritage practices, articulating the inability of this nation to imagine its memory outside mainstream frameworks. It appears that in the haste to move on from the 'Past', the 'Present' and the 'Future' are understood to be unrelated to each other. In this haste, South Africa has failed to heed Karl Marx's caution that the burden of the past weighs heavily on the present. The business of decades of legalised injury and suffering cannot be sealed up neatly in a box, cast in bronze, chiseled out of marble or engraved on a plaque.

Freud, similarly to Halbwachs, or perhaps conversely, asserts that that we reconstruct our memories of the past in terms of the present. Freud was interested in the childhood memories of adults, this obsessive delving served as a millstone to sharpen his tools of analytic practice. His theories, as is well known, pertained to the unconscious and the mechanisms of repression and how this revealed human subjectivity.[40] For Freud, analytic memory processes are attempts to work through the present reality in order to achieve healing and self-determination.[41] Freud contended that the struggles between the "desire to remember and the 'intention' to impede the act of remembrance manifests as slips, trips, falls, memories, fantasies, and dreams".[42]

39 Levinas, E. (2002). Paul Celan de l'etre a l'autre. Paris, Fata Morgana.
p. 26.

40 Wood, C. (2006). Memory at Work: Maurice Halbwachs, Sigmund Freud, and the Sociology of Knowledge in Contemporary Studies of Cultural Memory. American Sociological Association; 2006 Annual Meeting. Montreal.

41 Ibid.

42 Ibid.
p. 7.

Memory and History

Pierre Nora, in speaking about memory and history says:

> Memory and history, far from being synonymous, appear now to be in fundamental opposition, Memory is life, borne by living societies in its name. It remains in permanent evolution, open to the dialectic of remembering and forgetting, unconscious of its successive deformations, vulnerable to manipulation and appropriation, susceptible to being long dormant and periodically revived. History on the other hand, is the reconstruction, always problematic and incomplete, of what is no longer. Memory is a perpetually actual phenomenon, a bond tying us to the eternal present; history is a representation of the past. Memory, insofar as it is affective and magical, only accommodates those facts that suit it, it nourishes recollections that may be out of focus or telescopic, global or detached, particular or symbolic — responsive to each avenue of conveyance or phenomenal screen, to every censorship or projection.[43]

Nora's choice of language resonates with the photographic image, and in speaking about memory, asks us to consider it as being beyond the conventional understanding of it as a mere tool of the past. Memory, after all, is beyond the past, it plays between spaces and times, dancing in-and-out-of dreams and nightmares, and much like a photograph, it is illusive and opaque at times, and at others, not.

Photographic Dreams

Many of the comments I heard during conversations with ex-residents included phrases such as "we felt it must have been a dream; it seemed unreal, preposterous; it was indeed a nightmare". This directs me to Halbwachs' idea that the dream-state approximates a total isolation from society and from the social frameworks of memory.[44] In a dream, fragments, traces and parts

43 Nora, P. (1989). "Between Memory and History: Les Lieus de Mémoire." Representations 26(Spring): 18. p. 8.

44 Halbwachs. (1950).

of images and sounds appear, often distorted, and sometimes destroyed. Dreams also disregard temporality and space, at one moment we can be in a particular space, in the next frame, in a completely different one. In this kaleidoscope of temporalities and spacialities, people, sounds, places and emotions can be placed into any number of computations, much like I now think of the photographs that tumble around loosely in their cardboard box. In this instance, through the loss of a memory framework to which we can orientate ourselves, we cannot come to know and integrate these assemblages of photographs, sounds, textures and smells that would otherwise become multiple and varied, and free to be imagined, and would be useful tools for dreaming further about the present. Of what do the oppressed dream? How do they remember, for as writer Maya Angelou puts it, in discussing the collective memory of slavery, when these memories define them as members of a race[45] How can we *speak* about oppression?

Silences and Pauses

The photographs on the dining room table pointed to the inability of these ex-residents to speak the past, their aspasia indicating an inability to attach words and meanings to events that happened to them. While those forcibly removed may display and perform their new found citizenship through casting their vote, choosing where to live and where to be buried, the inability to speak this trauma hints of a disconnect between thought processes, memory and the faculty of language. This point is crucial for Halbwachs who maintains that "that language is the most basic of the social frames that bind the individual consciousness to the collective memory".[46] It may perhaps be that there are no words to make sense of the moments and fragments that surface in dreams and nightmares which we experiences not only in the dark recesses of the night, but also in the flashes of light in the day. These conversations hinted at the differences between narrated memory and documented history and drew attention to the inadequacies of history. What these individual images articulated was their position as translators and alternate

45 Angelou as cited by Eyerman, R. (2001). Cultural Trauma: Slavery and the formation of African American Identity. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

46 Wood, C. (2006). Memory at Work: Maurice Halbwachs, Sigmund Freud, and the Sociology of Knowledge in Contemporary Studies of Cultural Memory. American Sociological Association; 2006 Annual Meeting. Montreal.
p. 3.

voices mediating between different activities, situations, individuals and groups.

On the particular Sunday when I spoke with the ex-residents, I was struck at the ease with which they remembered particular places, neighbors, corner café's and the owners and the names of courting couples. At times, they completed each other's sentences, particularly in the recalling of nicknames, as I was told about "Popeye, "Boontjie", "Touba" and "Ou Pang". In looking at their photographs and hearing about the colour of their lives, I was taken aback at the attention paid to the detail: they could, apparently, and without much effort, describe what a particular coat looked like that was borrowed from a neighbor for a Friday night dance; the names of family pets, the names of milkshakes or particular songs to which they would dance. Childhood pranks were recounted in minute detail and considering that many of these occurred over forty years ago, I was astounded as to how precise their recollections were.

There were however particular moments that were not that clear, evidently lying dormant and opaque, I now think. These were articulated by heavy silences, particularly when I asked about their own evictions, the details of the process and the moments before and after the move. All of them, my father included, became quite vague, offering halted and sporadic explanations to my answers. They couldn't remember dates. They struggled to think of who received the eviction notice, who packed up the house, what happened to their children on the day of the move, who filled out the change of address, the transportation of their furniture and other household goods, and how, if at all, they kept in touch with the area. I felt that it was difficult and invasive to probe, believing my questions to be intrusive, and realized that, much like a latent photographic negative, these particular recollections displayed caution and appeared reluctant to be revealed, preferring the dark safety of the negative than the flash of exposing light. It may have been that the re-encounter with these moments disturbed and shattered the idea of who they were at that moment, and proved all too painfully that they were clearly out of place, even when happily buoyed with the expectations of an afternoon meeting old friends and neighbours.

I was taken aback when a few minutes later, whilst passing around a coconut tart someone remembered a neighbour who brought a container with food for them as they were leaving, this small gesture it seemed *was* capable of resisting the might of the bulldozers. It was this trace, a vague memory of someone pushing a plastic box that contained sandwiches, fruit and nuts

Figure 22

Untitled

Black-and-White Photograph

110 x 100 mm

Figure 23

Untitled

Black-and-White Photograph

85 x 80 mm

into her hands that resonated some forty years later, providing the impetus for the conversation that followed. I heard how despite knowing where they could sit on the bus, which beaches they could visit, and which schools would accept their children, they did not imagine — could not imagine — that in an instant, a piece of paper with a few typed lines, could erase their lives as they had known them. They obviously knew that their lives were segregated, they just did not believe that a place like Mitchells Plain, Hanover Park and Manenberg would *happen* to them — it was unimaginable, an unforgettable moment, the details of which they now, paradoxically, could not remember. "Over my dead body" became a phrase much used and heard, a strange omen, I now think. My father tells me of a friend, Mr Mitchell who was a leader of the Tramway Road Community[47] in Sea Point, an area too subject to forced removals. When the area was proclaimed 'white', Mitchell was part of the numerous meetings protesting the evictions, and according to my father, 'swore that the "Group" would get his property 'over his dead body.'" The removal trucks arrived and it became clear that Mitchell was nowhere to be found. His hanging body was discovered on Clifton Beach, a beach that was declared 'white'.

The photographs that were passed around the table that Sunday afternoon asked not only to be looked at, but suggested that they should really be *seen* by those sharing that meal, in both simple and complex ways. What that particular, ordinary Sunday afternoon asked for, was that the story of District Six, in addition to being remembered as a series of forced removals, should also be recalled as countless different moments that mattered in ways that disrupted the notion of the past as 'having gone before'. These moments, which flashed by, could be retrieved, slowed down, halted, looked at, and seen in tiny frames, much like Eadward Muybridge's 1887 photographic masterpiece *Man Throwing a Discus*, a black-and-white photograph that tracked the movement of an athlete throwing a discus in a series of sequential moments apparently undetectable to the eye.

The study of these photographs demanded the practice of both the imagination and skills of connection, a free associative exercise if you will. Although particular memories were clearly too painful to be rescucitated, it was in listening to the silences and observing the gestures of their bodies that the submerged moments and memories began to emerge. Although photographs

47 See Mesthrie, US. (1994). The Tramway Road Removals, 1959-61. In Kronos: Journal of Cape History. No 21.
pp. 61-78.

are purely visual, it was the other senses — the smell of the coconut tart, the dust and the feel of the jagged edged images themselves that forged the links between that Sunday afternoon and those other buried Sundays from some forty years ago. These minutes that they shared with me revealed intensely both their private memories as well as the collective one. The wrenching silences and the halting gestures illustrated eloquently that the legacy to which they were all bound was an oppression that had been violently practiced, personally experienced and collectively shaming.

The group often lapsed into the present tense when speaking of the past, particularly when recalling their youths, obscuring the passing of time as they spoke of events as if they were still happening at the particular moment. They were still young and at home, still intact, still with their old futures ahead of them. This to-ing and fro-ing of events, of times and of spaces attests to Joël Candau's assertion that memory is more of an updated reconstruction of the past that its faithful reconstitution. The photograph has the uncanny power to reveal memories so vivid that their subjects no longer dwell in the past perfect but are inspired to reinvigorate and replenish.

The lines between 'I', 'you', 'us' 'them', 'then' and 'now' become blurred, as the group, and the individuals speak of a shared past, but also of pasts that were intensely singular, for the spectacular irony of this great separating out and lumping together oppression was that more than anything else, it divided. That were together in those photographs in ways that they would never be again was felt keenly by all, but not shared. Any togetherness thereafter was always bereft, post and imbued with an element of solitude. The photographs, as memory for these six people flouted any ideas that I had of the family album as one firmly located within the threshold of the home, as through looking at wedding images, picnics and outings to the beach, it spoke of common and shared experiences. These images spoke of the unarticulated violence found on all possible levels in homes, between parents and siblings. These prompted recollections embody a space where time has no hold; moments are simultaneously halted and fast-forwarded in no apparent order. The memories speak of only hinted at angers, frustrations, guilt and shame which have continued to linger for decades, and which now surface and manifest in the inexplicable and debilitating bouts of depression suffered by their children and grandchildren. Memory, and its representations appear inadequate, falling short in the wake of catatastrophe, it cannot replace the violence it at once testifies to, and aims to redress. For as Elizabeth Bronfen says:

> The aporia of representation seems to be that part of putting the real under erasure means articulating it, enacting that is not only how representations fall and stumble before the real but how the real must also fail before representation.[48]

Bequeathing memory

How do the children and grandchildren and subsequent generations make sense of a past of which they were not the authors? The family and the family home have long been written about, they are familiar tropes of memory. As Bachelard argues, the family spaces and the rooms of a house are the original and principal locales of memory.[49] The family album too, embodies the oldest characteristics of books, according to Pascal Quignard who writes that books, as a site of the past, are the:

> Lodging of the ancients, the persistent offering of the dead to the view of the living, of the incessant actualisation of what is not present… the gift of absence… the gift of that which is not.[50]

The family album in its various guises can be seen as a memory for the family and the extended family, as not only is it the guardian of their memories, but as a commentary it affirms its unity across time. These memory vestibules capture in detail those places, spaces and times that would otherwise remain absent. Yet the silence of these images command a speaking body that will not only be able to turn the pages of the book, so to speak, but will be able to speak its stories. In this way, the album becomes a novel, with multiple authors, plots and characters, with stories that may, or may not, subscribe to the conventions of tale weaving. In keeping these images safe, there is an inherent performance of witnessing. The perpetuation of these images speaks

48 Bronfen, E. (1996). Over Her Dead Body: Death, Femininity and the Aesthetic. Manchester, Manchester UP.
p. 53.

49 Bachelard, G. (1969). The Poetics of Space: The Classic Look at How we Experience Intimate Space. Boston,
Beacon Press.

50 Quignard. (1990). p. 87 – 88, in Booth, W. J. (2008). "The Work of Memory: Time, Identity and Justice." Social Research 75(1): 23.
p. 240.

of a particular need to guard that which was once vulnerable, to be reminded of past debts, by those who acknowledge this vulnerability of a lost home and its inhabitants. This intimation of a debt, of an obligation in some way, echoes a thirst for justice. The vulnerability and attendant injuries that still resonate echo the words of James Baldwin when he says:

> The man does not remember the hand that struck him, the darkness that frightened him, as a child, …nevertheless, the hand and the darkness remain with him indivisible from himself forever.[51]

Home evictions

There is no mistaking the point, for as Halbwachs asserts, that the demolition of a home:

> Inevitably affects the habits of …people, perplexing and troubling them. Any inhabitant for whom these old walls, rundown homes, and obscure passageways create a little universe, who has many remembrances fastened to these images now obliterated forever, feels a whole part of himself dying with these things and regrets they could not last for his lifetime.[52]

The role of these images is therefore to guard the past, to give it a presence in the 'here' and the 'now' and to emphasise the obligation that we have to remember. A duty such as this then can be seen in two ways: as an expression of justice and as a duty to recognise those *other* lives that were human *too*.

The conversation that swirled around the photographs of the ex-residents revealed the constructedness and reciprocity that linked them on so many levels, including moments of crisis, trauma, time and space. This was embodied trauma, marked initially by the flush on their cheeks, and which surfaced again in the folding of arms, the hunching of shoulders,

51 Baldwin 1998 b in Ibid. p. 244.

52 Halbwachs, M. (1950). The Collective Memory. New York, Harper and Row p 4.

the lowering of heads; as they spoke of the shame of being evicted, and the annihilation of their former lives. My aunt, Wendy O'Connell, says that only now, some forty years after their evictions, is the full tragedy coming to light. Her children bear the emotional and physical scars of having had a father who was deeply disturbed at his inability to protect his family, as he saw them cut off from the only extended family that they had known. It seems that the story of District Six marks a site of untold violence, where lingering ghosts signal atrocities. In this way then, District Six is a particular kind of blockage, it stands in for an ongoing wounding that has not as yet been honoured by a memorialising narrative through which it has can come to be known. District Six cannot be mourned, its coffin cannot be sealed, and its multiple deaths are suspended in the dust that hovers both above, and below, the littered landscape. The ghosts of District Six resists the closing of their coffins, refusing to allow a safe passage for the bodies to the sanctuary and safety of the past. These traces answer to Derrida's assertion that:

> this trace is interiorised *in* mourning *as* that which can no longer be interiorised …in and beyond mournful memory — constituting it, traversing it, exceeding it, defying all reappropriation.[53]

District Six, the wasteland, along with the shattered families and their annihilated homes, speaks of the impossibility of ever mourning that which cannot ever end. There is no end to this shame, foisted onto to reluctant fathers who unwillingly bequeath their secrets to their offspring.

Halbwachs may help me bring some weight to bear when he says:

> A child nine or ten years old possesses many recollections, both recent and fairly old. What will this child be able to retain if he is abruptly separated from his family, transported to a country were his language is not spoken, where neither the appearance of people and places, nor their customs, resemble in any way that which was familiar to him up to this moment? The child has left one society to pass into another.[54]

53 Derrida in Luckhurst, R. (1996). ""Impossible Mourning" in Toni Morrison's Beloved and Michele Robert's Daughters of the House." Critique XXXVll(4): 17.
p. 250

54 Halbwachs, M. (1950). The Collective Memory. New York, Harper and Row
p. 38.

Remembering

How does one remember non-being? What does it mean to remember that the colour of your skin and the texture of your hair resulted in being violated on many levels? How do subsequent generations mourn that which they do not know, which paradoxically possesses them it the same time? Is it possible to mourn 'not-being', or is it rather an 'impossible mourning'? Tony Morrison speaks of "dis-remember", suggesting that for memories to "be disremembered", it requires a paradoxical act of "simultaneous …recall and erasure".[55]

Seeing

It is crucial that we ask how this legacy affects the ongoing questions of the 'gaze', for as has been so recently illustrated, visual culture, in terms of photographs of the 'other', was fundamental to racial classification and racial re-inscriptions. How then do we now 'see'? Is the transformation of the 'gaze' even possible? Can those lingering assumptions about race and about racialised sites that exist within our highly visual culture and which are fundamental, can they even *be* challenged successfully? These persistent visual markers of difference, these coded cues, give relevance to photography as a system of representation, as on another level, perhaps when the locked gaze becomes misty with memory, unfocussed, the photographic surface is then read and understood as a composition of grains — of blacks, whites and other colours. How do these viewers, these evictees, now see themselves? How do they respond to W.E.B. Du Bois's question of 1897, "What, after all, am I?"

In the 1900 Paris Exposition, renowned theorist, scholar and activist, W.E.B. Du Bois compiled an award-winning exhibit comprising 364 black-and-white photographs of middle-class African Americans from Atlanta and other parts of Georgia. Born in Massachusetts in 1868, Du Bois came to be known as a scholar dedicated to fighting racial power and world injustice. He was fundamentally concerned with questions of the liberation of the 'black' people. Developing what he would describe as a "double consciousness", Shawn Smith argues the du Bois was an

55 Luckhurst, R. (1996). ""Impossible Mourning" in Toni Morrison's Beloved and Michele Robert's Daughters of the House." Critique XXXVll(4): 17.
p. 250.

early *visual* theorist of race and racism, contending that the 1900 exhibition called attention to the:

> Visual nexus of understanding and imagery that underpins all of Du Bois's most influential written work on race at the turn of the century, underscoring the visual paradigms that inform "double-consciousness", "the Veil", and "second-sight.[56]

The construction of the 'other' body

In his earlier twentieth century work, Du Bois considers double consciousness as social construct and describes it as "two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled stirrings, two warring ideals in one dark body".[57] His understanding of the "colour line" is important as he places the visual as the site of racist classification and racial inscription. Shawn Smith argues that "Du Bois not only used visual images to describe racial constructs but understood that the "experiences of racialisation and racial identification are focused through a gaze and founded in visual misrecognition".[58] Du Bois' exhibition demonstrated how codifications of the colour line instruct how bodies are seen in particular ways. The colour line for Du Bois urges the understanding that it is not only about racial representation. What the colour line makes clear is the re-enforcement of racialised prerogatives of the gaze,[59] and authorises who is able to look, and what and who, is being seen. Du Bois racialises the process of identity formation, and thinks through lives of the African American denied the "white" world held secure by a "vast veil".[60] Du Bois describes, "Double consciousness" as the sense of always "looking at one's self through the eyes of others".[61] As

56 Smith, S. M. (2004). Photography on the Colour Line: W.E.B. Du Bois, Race, and Visual Culture. Durham & London, Duke University Press.
p. 2 – 3.

57 Du Bois, W. E. B. (1903). The Souls of Black Folk. New York, Library of America.
p. 9

58 Smith, S. M. (2004). Photography on the Colour Line: W.E.B. Du Bois, Race, and Visual Culture. Durham & London, Duke University Press.
p. 25

59 Ibid.
p. 11.

60 Du Bois, W. E. B. (1903). The Souls of Black Folk. New York, Library of America.
p. 8.

61 Ibid.
p. 8.

Frantz Fanon says, speaking of the violence of the colonialist gaze:

> I am being dissected under white eyes, the only real eyes. I am *fixed*… It was no longer a question of being aware of my body in the third person but in a triple person… I moved toward the other… and the evanescent other, hostile but not opaque, transparent, not there, disappeared.[62]

Fanon then experiences a visceral reaction to this "look", his body revolts and he is nauseated as he tries in vain to recognise himself from the standpoint of the "white" other. As Diana Fuss argues, the "'black'" man is disenfranchised of his very subjectivity.[63] Through the "white" gaze, Fanon;

> Subjected myself to an objective examination, I discovered my blackness, my ethic characteristics, and I was battered down by tom-toms, cannibalism, intellectual deficiency, fetishism, racial defects, slave-ships, and above all else, above all: 'Sho' good eatin'.[64]

Fanon articulates the struggles that oppressed bodies have in seeing themselves. How do they remember? How do they deal with ghosts of this violent past, who signals these atrocities? What Fanon urges us to think about is not so much the initiation of a story of oppression, but rather, the blockage of one. In this instance, the silenced stories of bodies forced to see themselves in particular whitewashed ways are attested to only through a particular haunting by ghosts that linger, silenced, in the stillness of dusty cardboard boxes. They hint at unamed stories that will remain untold, and which are suspended between multiple deaths. As Tony Morrison writes in *Beloved*:

62 Fanon, F. (1967). Black Skin White Masks. New York, Grove.
p. 116.

63 Fuss as referred to by Smith, S. M. (2004). Photography on the Colour Line: W.E.B. Du Bois, Race, and Visual
Culture. Durham & London, Duke University Press.
p. 34.

64 Fanon, F. (1967). Black Skin White Masks. New York, Grove.
p. 112

> Disremembered and unaccounted for, she cannot be lost because no one is looking for her, and even if they were, how can they call her if they don't know her name?"[65]

Eviction Notices

It was only about six months later, and after many hours of questioning, that my father spoke of his parents' home in Roger Street, recalling that his father had phoned him one Sunday morning and quietly told him that "a man from the 'Group'[66] wearing grey pants, and driving a white, government vehicle, had knocked on their door and gave them the eviction notice". And then, as my father said, the agony began.

> We saw old people carted off on couches to be dumped on some 'infill'[67] scheme in someone else's backyard in Bonteheuwel on the Cape Flats. My parents were banished to a court in Hanover Park. The social engineers of the government boasted that "coloured" folk were better off as they were re-housed in better accommodation, away from the slum that was District Six. My parents left first whilst, my younger brother, Tyrone, remained, resolute to stay in the home with his wife, Wendy, and three children, Sharon, Calhoun and Brendan".[68]

Tyrone O'Connell was the last resident to leave the block in Roger Street. Upon his first refusal, the 'Group' first cut his electricity supply and then his water supply, leaving his wife and three small children battling to live in an inhospitable structure. His sidewalk was dug up, making entry to his home very difficult, until finally he was forced to accept a replacement home in Mount View, an ironically named flat, grey and dusty Cape Flats township. The irony being that there are neither mountains, views or ocean vistas from these areas.The apartheid government impeccably orchestrated and administered their dictum of division, for they ensured that families

65 Morrison, T. (1987). Beloved. London, Chatto and Windus. p. 274.

66 Group Areas officials who would deliver eviction notices.

67 The 'infill' scheme referred to the re-housing of evictees in the backyards of existing residents. This happened frequently in Bonteheuwel, leading to overcrowding and a further sense of alienation.

68 O'Connell, P. (2011) [Interview] S. O'Connell.

were not relocated with their familiar, well-known neighbours but forced to join completely unknown people from a different area.[69] Families who had previously occupied the same block in the district, now lived scattered, in any one of several council areas, including, Heideveld, Manenberg, Lavender Hill and Mitchells Plain. Later, a bizarrely named "Atlantis", a Coloured township on the west coast, to the north of Cape Town, became the buzzword as it was sold to evictees as an exciting brand-new lifestyle. What was not spelt out was that Atlantis bore much resemblance to its fabled lost city – it was situated sixty kilometres from the city centre and was built on a dusty and grey strip of land that had no public bus or rail routes. The methods of forced removals and relocations employed ensured that any notion of a community was obliterated and the possibility of these communities reforming after their evictions was rendered impossible; altogether these policies instead contributed to creating brand new neighbourhoods and communities, so utterly fragile in their compositions as to render the monikers *neighbourhood* and *community* all but laughable. As Halbwachs says:

> The bonds of kinship encompass more than merely living under the same roof, and urban society is more than a mass of individuals living alongside one another.[70]

What was particularly bewildering at this time was that a portion of the District was left unscathed — part of Upper Ashley Street and Constitution Street which housed rows of cottages that commanded the best view of Table Mountain and Table Bay — and which were promptly sold at ridiculously low process to 'white' families. Ironically and insultingly, part of the new street grid — a part of Constitution Street — was renamed Justice Walk by the apartheid authorities.

The many hours of conversation confirmed the difficulties of integrating these traumatic experiences into individual and collective memories, as the processes impacted on various levels and in different ways. The catastrophic nature of apartheid demands that it is re-seen as an ongoing trauma, unable to be attended to only by land restitution or being able to cast a vote. The implication of being deemed as not human are far-reaching, and while the impact of traumatic memories may be at first difficult to locate, this should not preclude measures that address

69 Smith, T. (2011). Interview. S. O'Connell. Cape Town, Unpublished.

70 Halbwachs, M. (1950). The Collective Memory. New York, Harper and Row. p. 4.

the past. What these photographs and the conversations that they generate illustrate is the understanding of historical trauma as being located in the present. It highlights the difficulties as well as the urgency to develop tools to navigate this landscape that is both new and old, for as my father commented, "the trauma of the District Six just never seems to go away completely".

Violence, Injury and Trauma

The notion that violence and catastrophes injure the soul in a particular way may be, a Kopf comments, "as old as human consciousness itself". The concept of psychic trauma dates back to Freud and the birth of psychoanalysis, with another three larger complexes forming the basis of trauma discourse. These include its earliest appearance in the so-called "railway trauma" wherein studies investigated victims of rail accidents and their delayed symptoms of shock, numbness and repetition. The second complex study was "hysteria", wherein scientists such as Sigmund Freud and Joseph Breuer proposed the link between neurosis and traumatic experience. The third avenue for trauma discourse was the study of war neuroses manifested after the First World War.[71] Frantz Fanon too, in The wretched of the Earth raised the urgency of recognising suffering, neurosis and the oppressive situation of colonialism. Werner Bohleber, on psychoanalytic thinking, comments that traumatic experience constitutes "too much" and in addition, mutes the self, destroying the ability to narrate the trauma.[72] Charles Figley, in discussing Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), defines psychological trauma as:

> An emotional state of discomfort and stress resulting from memories of an extraordinary catastrophic experience which shattered the survivor's sense of invulnerability to harm.[73]

Cathy Caruth suggests a psychoanalytic theory of trauma that considers that it is not the

71 Kopf, M. (2008). Trauma, Narrative, and the Art of Witnessing. Slavery in Contemporary Art. Trauma, Memory and Visuality. M. U. Birgit Hähnel. Berlin, LIT Verlag: 41-58.

72 Bohleber as cited by Kopf.
p. 49

73 Figley, C. (1985). Trauma and its wake: The study and treatment of post traumatic stress disorder. New York, Brunner / Mazel.

traumatic experience itself, rather the remembrance of it that is traumatic.[74] Caruth contends that there is always a time lapse, a period of "latency" between the event and the experience of trauma. Caruth makes the point that there is a:

> Breach in the mind's experience of time, self and the world — it is not like the wound on the body, a simple healable event, but rather is an event in which the structure of the experience… is not assimilated or experienced fully at the time, but rather is done so, belatedly in its repeated possession.[75]

This lapse interestingly echoes the time between the moment of photographic capture and the development of the film. What these particular family photographs speak of, is a form of remembrance that grounds both the personal and collective, for not only was there great personal loss and trauma, but there was collectively as well. These images highlight the representation and mediation of these particular traumas.

Dominic La Capra, on thinking about trauma and the Holocaust suggests further that perhaps one should not speak of traumatic events, but rather of traumatic affects.[76] Ron Eyerman postulates that in opposition to psychological or physical trauma, which involves a wound and the experience of great emotional aguish:

> Cultural trauma refers to a dramatic loss if identity and meaning, a tear in the social fabric, affecting a group of people that has achieved some degree of cohesion.[77]

Neil Smelser in turn argues that cultural trauma is defined as:

74 Eyerman, R. (2001). Cultural Trauma: Slavery and the formation of African American Identity. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.
Caruth as cited by Eyerman. R (2001: 3

75 Caruth in Bogues, A. (2010). Empire of Liberty: Power, Desire and Freedom. Hanover, NH, Dartmouth College Press.
p. 41.

76 La Capra in Eyerman, R. (2001). Cultural Trauma: Slavery and the formation of African American Identity. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

77 Ibid.
p. 2.

> A memory accepted… and evoking an event or situation which is (a) laden with negative affect (b) represented as indelible and (c) regarded as threatening a society's existence or violating one or more of its fundamental cultural presuppositions.[78]

The event of trauma and its ramifications, being traumatised, is further compromised by the apparent necessity to put words, text, categories and labels to these injuries, this in an attempt to understand and silence that which can never really be comprehended, let alone spoken. Perhaps we need to look to trauma as a series of repeated actions, located in the present, and consider it not as a scar that will fade, but rather as a wound that lingers. For as Bogues considers, this means that trauma is considered not as a series of 'flashbacks', but as an ongoing, repeated violation. As he says:

> How can you think about this business of suffering, and not just the tradition about the oppressed? How can you think about what suffering produces, and how can you develop a conception of history that allows you to think about what suffering actually produces over a long dure of what I like to call deep time. It is thinking about this conception with a both a forward and backward glance to describe trauma, to think about the repetition of trauma that I began to remove beyond trauma as a flashback event to develop a conception of historical catastrophe which describes a traumatic event over the long dure . What this means is that the traumatic event is consistently repeated and it is through repetition that it produces and establishes a set of practices.[79]

Catastrophic reverberations

For Bogues, the repetition of the event is paramount, for no longer can violence be seen as having a beginning and an end. Slavery, the Holocaust and colonialism were not only violent in and of themselves, but are repeated through bodies that are marked with its residues and traces.

78 Smelser, N. in Ibid. p.2.

79 Bogues, A. (2010). Trauma, Memory and Democracy: The Politics of Historical Catastrophe. A. Bogues. Centre for African Studies, Unpublished.

Slavery, apartheid and colonialism therefore need to be understood as events of a duration in excess of their chronologies and historical time stamps. The experience therefore of historic trauma is deeply inter-generational, and at best, the residues of grief, melancholia and mourning are only passed from parents to their children, and then on to their children's children. These residues therefore of unresolved, unheard and unarticulated injuries are not only passed on as traces and memories, they are acted out and recreated in the day-to-day lives of people who are bewildered as they struggle to understand their inability to settle, metaphorically and otherwise. Carlos Blanco developed a five-generation account of the effects of violence on generations in South America, where he comments that the legacies are far-reaching in subsequent generations — from the enslavement, killing and males in the first generation, misuse of alcohol, drugs and diminished self-worth in the second, increased forms of spousal and family violence in the third, re-enactment of trauma in the fourth through to the constant repetition of compounded violence in the fifth.[80] There is a suggestion of a resultant dysfunction of individuals, groups and society at large as a result of the transmission of trauma. The point is made quite clearly: violence begets violence.

Looking as historical trauma in this vein necessarily engages with the long-term effects of oppression and the lives of those human beings involved, this as it speaks to the psyche of a relatively new democratic nation. It necessitates dealing with suffering that perpetrators — fellow human beings — have willfully caused and what it precisely means to be forced out of one's home solely because of the colour of one's skin.

Meeting with these ex-residents and in speaking to my father, I realise the impossibility of speaking of much of what it meant to be legally declared less than fully human, for as my father, a usually eloquent and erudite man illustrated far too often, he simply could not find the words to say just what it meant to him personally. It seemed to be not only be unspeakable, but unthinkable, and now that I think of it, 'unlistenable'. It may seem that the memory of this past is unreachable, and in order to make sense of it, the 'unreal' nature of imagination, as Ricouer puts it, may be essential to navigate the pitfalls of forgetting, and remembering. It seems as if

80 Blanco in Judy Atkinson, J. N. a. C. A. Trauma, Transgenerational Transfer and Effects on Community Wellbeing. Working together: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mental health and wellbeing principles and practice. D. P. Purdie N, Walker R. Canberra, Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing: 135-145.

language fails the demands of the journey through the memories of apartheid and its range of traumatic and catastrophic resonances. Experiencing apartheid, and living as the traumatised, seems to escape conventional modes of representation and redress.

Like memory, the notion of trauma — an emotional response to some occurrence of injury — has both collective and individual connotations.[81] Cultural trauma, according to Ron Eyerman refers to a:

> Dramatic loss of identity and meaning, a tear in the social fabric, affecting a group of people who have achieved some degree of cohesion. A cultural trauma must be understood, explained and made coherent though public reflection and discourse.[82]

Dori Laub in speaking of trauma and the Holocaust says:

> The very process of bearing witness to massive trauma — does indeed begin with someone who testifies to an absence, to an event that has not yet come into existence, in spite of the overwhelming and compelling nature of the reality of its occurrence.[83]

According to Laub, an act of trauma remains beyond the full comprehension of those involved and affects the subject as a yet to be comprehended presence. For him, the subject "has no prior knowledge, no comprehension, no memory of what happened".[84] Laub further maintains that trauma is thus an event that has no beginning, no ending, no before, no during and no after. This absence of categories, a disruption of time, echoes the other-worldliness of the photograph.

As Martina Kopf comments, "One of the main characteristics of trauma is its resistance to

81 Eyerman (2004). "The Past in the Present: Culture and the Transmission of Memory." ACTA Sociologica 47(2).
82 Ibid.
p. 160.
83 Laub, D. F., S. (1992). Testimony: Crisis of Witnessing in Literature, Psychoanalysis and History. New York, Routledge.
p. 57.
84 Ibid.
p. 58.

narrative representation".[85] The photograph seems to sidestep this dilemma, as it encourages an empathetic witnessing, looking and speaking, that facilitates the "coming into being" of trauma, as Kopf says, as the desire "to tell is opposed by the absence of language and meaning the traumatic incident originally provokes". Eric van Alphen illustrates that the term "traumatic experience" in itself is inadequate.[86] How does one 'know' trauma? What are the limitations of the representation of trauma? I concur with Kopf, finding the process of listening to, and speaking with this particular group particularly unsettling, with Kopf saying that:

> Narrating a trauma therefore constitutes a highly complex process marked by the paradoxical relationship between language, memory and trauma. In this communicative process active listening and witnessing are [of] as much importance as the act of narrating itself.

Attending to Injury

It may be helpful in thinking *through* trauma as less of an event, and more as a wound as Bogues suggests. In this way, trauma, much like a photographic image, can be used to describe a double locus: that of witnessing, as well as pervasive emptiness. Bogues is concerned with the *politics of the wound* and the *politics of historical catastrophe* and how we may think through questions of democracy and freedom. Through his questions, we are compelled to think about how we may be beyond notions of race. The crucial point that Bogues makes is that catastrophes of this nature are not relinquished to the safety of memories and history; they are single-mindedly resolute in their persistence to relentlessly injure again. Racial domination through apartheid has ensured 'a series of traumatic events', as is evident in the story of District Six and other restorative attempts, and in so doing, has ensured that the legacy of the legalised racial power of 1948 continues to affirm its presence in post-apartheid South Africa. For ex-residents of District Six therefore, the moment of eviction is not bound by temporality. That specific moment of

85 Kopf, M. (2008). Trauma, Narrative, and the Art of Witnessing. Slavery in Contemporary Art. Trauma, Memory and Visuality. M. U. Birgit Hähnel. Berlin, LIT Verlag: 41-58. p.43.

86 Van Alphen, E. (1999). Symptoms of Discursivity: Experience, Memory and Trauma. Acts of Memory. Hanover, London, Unvervisity Press of New England: 24-38.

anger, shame, injury and torment is re-lived time and again. It seems impossible to escape the branding as a racialised subject regardless of temporal or spatial distancing, for the "black" body in post-apartheid South Africa remains the frame through which citizenship is negotiated. How does this country look at the "black" body, how has the gaze of the 'other' changed? How does the "black" body now see itself? Frantz Fanon speaks of the invisibility of the "black" saying.

> I cannot go to a film without seeing myself. I wait for me. In the interval, just before the film starts, I wait for me. The people in the theatre are watching me, examining me, waiting for me. A Negro groom is going to appear. My heart makes my head spin.[87]

Fanon elucidates the double consciousness of W.E.B. Du Bois — the sense of always looking at oneself through the eyes of others[88] — as he is at once divided by the image that others have of him and the image that he sees of himself on the screen. These negative visual images are projected through the eyes of the 'white', and Fanon feels the weight of being looked at, and seen as 'other'. Larry Griffin *et al* comments:

> Race is one of the more important issues for which the presence of the past is both potent and sorrowful. How memories of racial oppression, conflict, and reconstruction mould race relations would thus seem a critical area of scrutiny.[89]

Looking at the family album in the home of the oppressed and engaging in conversations ensures that there are countless utterances, moments and traces that challenge a hegemonic view of oppression as being grounded in a single event or environment. The photographs and their conversations then speak of the nexus between memory, trauma and lives being lived, providing temporal and spatial points of navigation available for re-orientation. By straddling both the past and the present, these dialogic interactions disturb parameters of time and space and blur

87 Fanon, F. (1967). Black Skin White Masks. New York, Grove. p. 140.

88 Du Bois, W. E. B. (1903). The Souls of Black Folk. New York, Library of America. p. 8.

89 Griffin, L., J. Bollen, Kenneth, A. (2009). "What Do These Memories Do: Civil Righst Rememberance and Racial Attitudes." American Sociological Review 74: 20. p.594.

the lines between where we have come from and where we are going. As evocative objects of a particular kind these photographs depicted an ability to *see*, rather than just to look. What these photographs did therefore, was to render visible, a previously invisible and disavowed world. As a particular system of representations of oppressions, they argue for a different understanding of looking and seeing. Remembering my family photographs entailed a putting together of common lives, a *re*-membering, making the obscured, visible. This particular archive was for a decendant concerned with *memory-in-the-present*, in part a recovery of the past, but at the same time, an exercise in arguing with it, re-describing it, challenging assumptions about oppression that were considered concrete, if only in the recent past.

In his well known book, *The Archeology of Knowledge",* Michel Foucault presents the challenge to consider the archive more that:

> The sum of all the texts that a culture has kept upon its person as documents attesting to its own past, or as evidence of a particular continuing identity.[90]

As a manifestation of the absent, these images illuminate a particular power, and thus have the power to unsettle ideas about how we think about a history of oppression. They compel us to re-think memories and the grounding of oppressed traces into larger conversations of historical capital. Pierre Nora in Between memory and history: Les lieus de mémoire, says:

> The acceleration of history: let us try to gauge the significance, beyond a metaphor of this phrase. An increasingly rapid slippage of the present into the historical past that is gone for good, a general perception that anything and everything may disappear — these indicate a rupture of equilibrium… Self–consciousness emerges under the sign of that which has already happened as the fulfilment of something always already begun.[91]

90 Foucault, M. (1972). The Archeology of Knowledge. New York, Pantheon. pp. 128-129

91 Nora, P. (1989). "Between Memory and History: Les Lieus de Mémoire." Representations 26(Spring): 18. p. 7

Seeing Differently

What does a family photograph mean, not only in the vicissitudes of photography, but for memories of the oppressed? What is the significance of the family album for people who for centuries were not supposed to 'know'? How can they speak of seeing?

Questions of what it means to look at, and *see* a "black" body are clearly articulated through lynching imagery from the United States of America. From the early uses of the camera, the photograph bore witness to the epidemic of lynching that swept through the United States between 1882 and 1930 resulting in the deaths of at least 3220 African American men, women and children. This continued until 1968, totalling close to a further 5000 people of all races.[92] As Leigh Raifford says, "lynching spectacles placed their "black" victims at the centre for all to look [at] and see".[93] Even for those spectators not close enough to the murder to see, or to obtain 'souvenirs' such as body parts and items of clothing, photographs, postcards and stereographs made sure that the spectacle of lynching was made widely available. Professional photographers led this cottage industry, constructing as they did portable darkrooms, and conspiring with local police and mobsters to get the best vantage point and thereafter pedalling their goulish products "through newspapers, in drugstores, on the street — even… door to door".[94] These photographs were consumed both privately and publically. They were bought and collected in a successful effort to preserve the "spectacular secret" of lynching, as cultural historian Jacqueline Goldsby argues.[95] Lynching photographs drew clearly defined spatial and ideological lines: 'whites' were meant to identity with the power 'white' of participants; 'blacks' were meant to identify with the nameless body hanging from a tree. Paradoxically, these photographs, which circulated through newspapers and the postal system in very public ways, 'willed a nation to collective silence' as they imaged just what citizenship meant for 'black' bodies. Lynching photographs witnessed

92 Raiford, L. (2009). "Photography and The Practices of Critical Black Memory." History and Theory(Theme Issue 48): 17.
p. 115

93 Ibid.

94 Text from the Without Sanctuary exhibition at the New York Historical Society, May 12,2000. Cited by Raiford, L. (2009). "Photography and the Practices of Critical Black Memory." History and Theory 48(Theme Issue): 17.
p. 115.

95 Goldsby, A Spectacular Secret, 281. As cited by Raiford, L. (2009). "Photography and The Practices of Critical Black Memory." History and Theory(Theme Issue 48): 17.
p. 117.

the spectacular erasures of the "black" body, in all possible senses.[96] As Raifford comments, postcards, such as the "Dogwood Tree"(1908) often had accompanying text or poems which further emphasised their purpose.

This is only the branch of the Dogwood tree;
An emblem of white supremacy
A lesson once taught in the Pioneer's school;
That this is a land of white man's rule.
The Red Man once in an early day
Was told by the Whites to mend his way.
The Negro, now by eternal grace,
Must learn to stay in the Negro's place.
In the Sunny South, the Land of the Free,
Let the White supreme forever be.
Let this a warning to all Negroes be,
Or they'll suffer the fate of the Dogwood tree.[97]

The black-and-white image to which the afore-mentioned poem refers, resembles thousands of others, and shows five "black" men hanging silently from a tree. Their murderers are quietly absent, as the picture's frame does not show anyone else against the picturesque woody background. It is evident that these men are dead, they are motionless, and there is no movement at all in the photograph. Their faces are unidentifiable in part because of the grain of the image, but largely due to the fact that the photographer intended for them not only to be nameless, but faceless. They are meant to be *seen* as inconsequential objects of a "white" gaze and spectacle. The message is clear: an affirmation of "white" power in the freedom to look, see and know, "black" bodies.

Walter Benjamin therefore is astute in his suggestion that photographs are dialectical, for

96 Ibid
97 Raiford, L. (2009). "Photography and the Practices of Critical Black Memory." History and Theory 48(Theme Issue): 17.
pp. 115-116

while these images may seem of a distant past, they are profoundly not. As the nexus of memory, history, trauma and freedom, these images are indexical and reflexive, asking constantly to be reviewed, re-imagined and re-considered as an engagement with the present. They renew and re-tie, unsettling, as Pierre Nora says, "our bond to the eternal present".[98]

How do these lynching images relate to my family photographs, for at first glance they appear to be poles apart? What they both speak of however is an indication of visuality, and the questions that should be asked how we now, post-apartheid, post-lynching, and postcolonial, look and see "black" bodies. They command us to ask not only *how* we now see these bodies, but also the lives of those bodies, and to recognise that images of this nature, regardless of when they were first taken, are inextricable from those lives that were, and are being lived. They challenge us to consider the taken-for-granted notion of *sight* and the right to look and to think about the practices and historicity of looking. They articulate a call for action, to remember and mourn in the present, for as Pierre Nora suggests: "Memory is life… it remains in permanent evolution".[99] What these lynching images as well as these family photographs ask is for a different kind of seeing.

In claiming a space for themselves, these family photographs, which are ordinary archives, make a claim on history and demand a space in the present as well as the past. As a *counter-archive*, they resist invisibility and erasure and compel us to really *see* them in all their quotidian complexities.

98 Nora, P. (1989). "Between Memory and History: Les Lieus de Mémoire." Representations 26(Spring): 18. p.8.

99 Nora in Raiford, L. (2009). "Photography and The Practices of Critical Black Memory." History and Theory(Theme Issue 48): 17.
p. 118.

CHAPTER 7

Repair, Restoration and Transformation South Africa after Apartheid

APARTHEID: by itself the word occupies the terrain like a concentration camp. System of partition, barbed wire, crowds of mapped out solitudes. Within the limits of this untranslatable idiom, a violent arrest of the mark, the glaring harshness of abstract essence (heid) seems to speculate in another regime of abstraction, that of confined separation. The word concentrates separation, raises it to another power and sets separation itself apart: "apartitionality," something like that… The point is not that acts of racial violence are only words but rather that they have to have a word. Even though it offers the excuse of blood, color, birth — or, rather, because it uses this naturalist and sometimes creationist dis-course-racism always betrays the perversion of a man, the "talking animal". It institutes, declares, writes, inscribes, prescribes. A system of marks, it outlines space in order to assign forced residence or to close off borders. It does not discern, it discriminates… May it thus remain, but may a day come when it will only be for the memory of man. A memory in advance… very close to silence, and for the rear-view vision of future for which apartheid will be the name of something abolished. Confined and abandoned to this silence of memory, the name will resonate all by itself… The thing it names today will no longer be.[1]

South Africa, 1994

My journey with the box of photographs began in 2009, some fifteen years after the first democratic elections were held in South Africa. That day, 27 April 1994, is indelibly marked on my mind. It was a series of euphoric moments that started a few years earlier with me as part of the crowd that flocked to the Grand Parade in the Cape Town city centre, a stone's throw

1 Derrida, J. (1985). "Racism's Last Word." Critical Enquiry 12: 9. p. 291. Derrida's paper "Le Dernier Mot du racisme" was written for the catalogue of the travelling exhibition *Art contre/against Apartheid* which opened in Paris in 1983 and which was meant to be a gift to the first democratically elected South Africa government. Derrida points out that it is fitting that this exhibition was in effect, "homeless", as a signifier for the ongoing search for what it means to be a South African citizen.

from District Six,[2] on the day that Nelson Mandela was released and which reached its pinnacle when I, together with countless others around the globe, watched him take the presidential oath of office at the Union Buildings in Pretoria. That moment seemed impossible, as the country had only just sidestepped a looming and probably vicious civil war, had endured decades of solidarity and rebellion, and which had too gone through the fraught process of negotiation and transition. That moment though of 27 April 1994 seemed to shield the violence of the past as South Africa watched Nelson Mandela being saluted by the old guard of the country's armed forces. This day, and the heady years that followed, saw South Africa, as the world's newest democracy being figured in a very particular way: the miracle of the "Rainbow Nation". As a country buoyed after winning the Rugby World Cup in 1995, it seemed impossible to think that a scant fifteen years later – when I first opened my box of photographs – that the country seems almost bereft of hope and has become entangled in ongoing questions of land dispossession, out-of-control corruption sagas, endemic violence against women and children, a fumbling education system and a ruling party intent on muzzling media freedom. Just what kind of country is it precisely that is being built, and on what foundations, importantly, does it stand? How has South Africa accounted for its past, or has the past been negated in order to get on with the new? What exactly does restitution and freedom mean for South Africa? For as the newspaper headlines of ongoing battles that are rooted in the past clearly show, these questions of violence, freedom and justice continue to tarnish the fading patina of "Rainbow" South Africa, despite, as Heidi Grunebaum puts it:

> The domesticating accommodations of nation-building ideology and neoliberal forms of political democratization which characterise South Africa's post apartheid political landscape.[3]

These questions and resonances of the past must be accounted for and answered to. How can

2 Originally known as "Wapen Plein" (Square of Arms) and the site of Jan van Riebeck's original fort in the 1650's, the Parade has always been closely associated with its immediate neighbour, the Castle. For centuries, the Parade has been a place where people gathered to celebrate, protest or seek refuge.

3 Grunebaum, H. P. (2011). Memorializing the Past: Everyday Life in South Africa after the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. New Jersey, Transaction Publishers. p. 2.

we think of questions of freedom in the face of, as Derrida calls apartheid, "the first product of European exportation?"[4] Is it possible to restore a memory of what has never been? The question therefore remains: How does one live in the wake of catastrophe?

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission

It was surprising, given that many of my questions and conversations with ex-residents pivoted on restitution, forgiveness and restoration that the subject of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) did not come up. The question of 'damages' did unsurprisingly come up however, and what was clearly apparent was that the insignificant amount offered by the Land Restitution process was woefully out of proportion to the injury that apartheid had in this instance caused. It has become impossible to speak about this violence of apartheid, that of District Six, without acknowledging what for the evictees has become, the shadow of the TRC — it has come to be understood as the cornerstone of the then brand new South Africa and had been bundled together with the winding crowds of the newly enfranchised at that first epoch-marking election.

As Grunebaum contends, truth commissions, particularly in the global South, have become standard tools of transitional justice for countries that emerge from protracted periods of oppression and atrocity.[5] The TRC was established by an act of the South African parliament and was tasked with the investigation and exposure of gross violations of human rights under the apartheid regime from 1 March 1960 until 10 May 1994. South Africa decided that the way forward after apartheid was through the work of a commission, rather than through Nuremberg-style trials.[6] The Commission, which has gone on to be a reproducible truth commission model,[7] was constituted out of The Promotion of National Unity and Reconciliation Bill of 1995 and was modeled on the Chilean model of truth commissions. Sixteen years ago, at the introduction

4 Derrida, J. (1985). "Racism's Last Word." Critical Enquiry 12: 9. p. 295.

5 Grunebaum, H. P. (2011). Memorializing the Past: Everyday Life in South Africa after the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. New Jersey, Transaction Publishers. p. 3.

6 See Omar, D. (1995). Building a New Future. The Healing of a Nation? A. Boraine, Levy, Janet., . Cape Town, Justice in Transition.

7 See Robins, S. (2008). Rights. New South African Keywords. N. Shepherd, Robins, Steven. Johannesburg, Athens, Jacana, Ohio: 182-194.

of the Bill, the then Minister of Justice, Dullah Omar stated that:

> I have the privilege and responsibility to introduce today a Bill which provides a pathway, a stepping stone, towards the historic bridge of which the Constitution speaks whereby our society can leave behind the past of a deeply divided society characterised by strife, conflict, untold suffering and injustice, and commence the journey towards a future founded on the recognition of human rights, democracy and peaceful co-existence, and development opportunities for all South Africans regardless of color, race, class, beliefs or sex. Its substance is the very essence of the constitutional commitment to reconciliation and the reconstruction of society. Its purpose is to provide that secure foundation which the Constitution enjoins: " …for the people of South Africa to transcend the divisions and strife of the past, which generated gross human rights violations …and a legacy of hatred, fear, guilt and revenge".[8]

Omar's contention was clear: to recognise that the future of the country depended on dealing with the past, but also that the Bill, which lead the way for the TRC, was a "bridge" over from the injustices of the past as well as a "stepping stone" to the other restitutive programs such as the Redevelopment and Development Programme (RDP), the Land Claims Court and a host of other human rights institutions including the Human Rights, Gender, Youth and Electoral Commissions.[9] The Bill was promulgated with the intention of reconciliation, bringing together a divided and fractured nation, and providing therapeutic intervention for survivors of human rights abuses.[10] It established a 17-member commission that included the following objectives:

8 Hansard (1995). Debates of the National Assembly. F. P. Second Session. Cape Town, The Government Printer.
p .48.

9 See the Reconstruction and Development Program (1994) and Chapter 9 of the 1996 Constitution of the Republic of South Africa. Also Verwoerd, W. (1999). "Individual and/or social justice after Apartheid? The South African truth and reconciliation commission." The European Journal of Development Research 11(2): 115-140.
p. 117.

10 Raju, R. (2010). The road to unity and social justice: gathering, accessing and preserving Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) records. World Library and Information Congress: 76th IFLA General Conference and Assembly. Gothenburg, Sweden.
1.

> To establish a complete a picture as possible of the causes, nature and extent of gross violations of human rights that occurred between 01 March 1960 and 10 May 1994; …To assist in restoring …dignity …by affording them an opportunity to testify about their violation of their rights or thee death of their loved ones.[11]

This act did not allow for a wider understanding of "violation of gross human rights", as Section 1(1)(ix) of the TRC Act defined violations of this nature as "the violation of human rights through (a) the killing, abduction, torture or severe ill-treatment of any person".[12] This narrow definition therefore rendered a further disavowal of apartheid's abuses through violations which included forced removals, pass laws, racialised wealth and poverty.

Added to which, there was no clarity and unanimity as to what precisely "reconciliation" meant, as it is an endeavor fraught with contradictions. How was it exactly that the TRC provided the "unity and healing" that the country so desperately needed? Perhaps the TRC's greatest challenge was that the reconciliation that it sought to uncover was only achievable through the granting of an amnesty that undermined the restoration it aimed to achieve. Alex Boraine, the Vice Chairperson of the Commission, articulated the task of the TRC and the healing of South Africa as such:

> An honest assessment and diagnosis of the sickness within our society in an attempt to give people, both perpetrators and victims, an opportunity to face the past and its consequences and start afresh. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission is an opportunity to make a contribution in order to deal finally with the past without dwelling in it and to help to create the conditions for a truly new South Africa.[13]

The TRC is therefore inadvertently linked to the perceived realm of peace building, either

11 The Promotion of National Unity and Reconciliation Act, No 34 of 1995 [hereafter TRC Act] [South Africa]. See also http://www.justice.gov.za/legislation/acts/1995-034.pdf . [downloadable: accessed 1.1.2012].
[Online Article]

12 Ibid.

13 Boraine, "Justice in cataclysm" in Norval, A., J. (1998). "Memory, Identity and the (Im)possibility of Reconcillation: The Work of the Truth and Reconcillition Commission in South Africa." Constellation 5(2): 15.
p. 252.

through the lens of social or transitional justice. Kisiangani Emmanuel contends that the TRC is credited with the promotional of national unity and for the creation of 'peace'.[14] Raju contends that the TRC was mandated:

> in the spirit of healing, unity and reconciliation, to investigate and establish as complete a picture as possible of the nature, causes and extent of gross human rights. […] The mandate also included the authority to grant amnesty to persons who made full disclosure of all the relevant facts relating to human rights violations that had a political objective, to establish and make known the fate or whereabouts of victims, to restore the human and civil dignity of such victims by granting them an opportunity to relate their own accounts of the violence, and lastly, to recommend reparation measures in respect of those violations.[15]

The relationship between the TRC, truth and justice was drawn up at the beginning, as it was agreed that the TRC should attempt to provide answers for those who had lost family and friends as well grant perpetrators amnesty in exchange for disclosure. The TRC thus came under criticism for sacrificing justice for reconciliation, by those who believe that justice is best served by criminal prosecution.[16] The scope of the commission meant that a kind of amnesia resulted. Perhaps in the quest to 'reconcile' as a matter of urgency, the work of the TRC meant that certain abuses and violations had to be foregone in the spirit of "healing" the new nation. What the failures of the TRC may teach us though, is that reconciliation and justice may be illusive, perhaps impossible, given the enormity of apartheid: the unspeakable, the unthinkable, and the unlistenable cannot be repaired. The TRC relied on a countrywide process of 'revealing' and 'truth-telling', in an attempt to 'heal the nation'. Though its desire to facilitate a common and shared memory and identity, the commission aimed to create a *nation* of

14 Emmanuel (2007) in Raju, R. (2010). The road to unity and social justice: gathering, accessing and preserving Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) records. World Library and Information Congress: 76th IFLA General Conference and Assembly. Gothenburg, Sweden.
p. 2.

15 Ibid.
p .2.

16 Norval, A., J. (1998). "Memory, Identity and the (Im)possibility of Reconcillation: The Work of the Truth and Reconcillition Commission in South Africa." Constellation 5(2): 15.
p. 253.

unity and reconciliation. In spite of thousands of individual testimonies, The TRC purposefully ascribed a collective identity to the nation and simultaneously silenced the right to demand justice for the traumatic experiences of thousands whose injuries did not fall within the ambit of the commission. Michael Ignatieff makes the important point when he challenges the notion of a national psyche by saying:

> We tend to vest our nations with conscience, identities and memories as if they were individuals. It is problematic enough to vest an individual with a single identity: our inner lives are like battlegrounds over which uneasy truces reign.[17]

Ignatieff argues that truth commissions can only provide a framework for public discourse and memory and says that beyond this, they do little. The idea of amnesty sits uncomfortably with impunity for criminals, let alone those involved in gross abuses of human rights. The question that is] asked of the TRC is whether amnesty was the price that had to be paid for the apparent common good of South Africa,[18] and which is now coming back to haunt its citizens. As Minister Kader Asmal, one of the key architects of the TRC and apartheid struggle veteran argued in 1995 quite clearly saying:

> I would therefore say to those who wear legalistic blinkers, who argue that immunity would be an affront to justice, that they simply do not understand the nature of the negotiated revolution that we've lived through …we must deliberately sacrifice the formal trappings of justice, the courts and the trails for an even higher good: Truth. We sacrifice justice, because the pains of justice might traumatise our country or affect the transition. We sacrifice justice for truth so as to consolidate democracy, to close the chapter of the past and to avoid confrontation.[19]

17 Ignatieff, M. (1998). The Warrior's Honour: Ethnic War and the Modern Conscience. London, Chatto and Windus.
p. 169.

18 Verwoerd, W. (1999). "Individual and/or social justice after Apartheid? The South African truth and reconciliation commission." The European Journal of Development Research 11(2): 115-140.
p. 120.

19 Hansard (1995). Debates of the National Assembly. F. P. Second Session. Cape Town, The Government Printer.
p. 1382, 1383

The TRC and Justice

The relationships therefore between the TRC, justice, stability and restoration are therefore fraught with ambiguities and tensions, and whilst it may be argued that amnesty is the price that has to be paid for stability, it has turned out that ordinary families have been asked to pay this price. The country is plagued by conflicts that pivot on racial inequalities by a nation of people who have not been given the tools with which to navigate their 'stable' country. The TRC therefore, has to be imagined in another way and in this regard, I concur with Ignateiff's suggestion that the usefulness of commissions of this nature be grounded in the present and which the presents the past as an 'irresolvable argument that needs to be continually debated.'[20] To do justice therefore to the thousands of hours of wrenching testimonies delivered before the TRC, post-apartheid South Africa has to acknowledge that its memory is not a fixed object and that it needs to seek out those practices that will constitute silenced narratives of the past. The legacy of the commission needs to legitimate the multiplicity of those other voices. In so doing, post-apartheid South Africa may also need to ask the question: In trying to steer the country away from violence, what has the TRC itself violated?

Described as the largest survey of human rights violations undertaken anywhere in the world, the TRC held the greater part of its hearings in public venues, as well as a number *in camera*. Over 22 000 victims of human rights violations made statements and more than 7000 perpetrators applied for amnesty.[21] Under the chairpersonship of Archbishop Desmond Tutu, most of the tasks of the three-year commission were completed by the end of June 1998, in an astoundingly short space of time considering apartheid tenure — for want of a better word. During this time, there were findings on more than 36 000 alleged gross violations of human rights and on 30 June 1998, 2 684 out of a total of 7 127 amnesty applications still had to be

20 Hamber, B., Wilson, Richard (2002). "Symbolic closure through memory, reparation and revenge in post-conflict societies." Journal of Human Rights 1(1).
p. 3.

21 Raju, R. (2010). The road to unity and social justice: gathering, accessing and preserving Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) records. World Library and Information Congress: 76th IFLA General Conference and Assembly. Gothenburg, Sweden.
p. 3.

finalized by the TRC which by this conclusion, had cost approximately USD 30 million.[22] A substantial collection was generated by the TRC and about the TRC, constituting:

> A vast accumulation of records in a range of media, documenting all TRC processes, from public hearings to a vehicle requisitions, from investigations to the purchase of the office furniture.[23]

Tellingly, the Department of Justice is the statutory 'owner' of the records of the TRC, as opposed to the Department of Arts and Culture that has legislative control of the National Archive. The tangible remnants of the TRC therefore are seen as different from other records and material culture. It is pertinent to note that the records of the TRC are not however widely accessible, which is anachronistic given that the point of the TRC was to heal the whole nation and thereby foster unity. There are between 34 and 38 boxes of records that have been withdrawn from the public domain, and as Archie Dick, comments, "The right of access to a body of information that has been effectively hijacked by government officials and politicians for their own purposes and reasons".[24]

Being in the care of the judicial entity, places the TRC firmly within the larger conversation of justice of South Africa — *as the wheels of justice have apparently turned adequately enough in post-apartheid South Africa.* In a nutshell, the demons are believed to have been purged, the ghosts all laid neatly to rest, and while we may never know where all the bodies have been buried, South Africa *has* successfully dealt with its past through the TRC. The point made is crucial for the South African government, for, as Perelli has noted:

22 Verwoerd, W. (1999). "Individual and/or social justice after Apartheid? The South African truth and reconciliation commission." The European Journal of Development Research 11(2): 115-140.
p. 117 – 118.

23 Harris, V. (2002). "Contesting, remembering and forgetting: the archive of South Africa's TRC and Peace building." Innovation 24: 1-8.
p. 3. The report of the TRC is captured in a total of seven volumes which is published in both hard and digital copy. Each volume has a particular focus, including the role of the state, gross violations of human rights from the perspective of the victim, conclusions and recommendations.

24 Dick, A. (2006). "Power is information:myths and fables about acccess." IKMD Newsletter: Umyezo 1(3): 7-9.
p. 8.

> When the past is resignified so as to explain (and thus legitimate) the present, what is at stake is more than the here and now. To the extent that the resignification bears on the projects and possibilities of the actors in question, a dispute over the past is a struggle for control over the future.[25]

Kai Horsthemke makes the point that one of the key contributions of the TRC, in addition to healing the divisions of the past, was to turn *knowledge* into public *acknowledgement*. Through thousands of hours of oral testimony, the lives of both ordinary and extraordinary people and their tragedies came to light. Paradoxically though, it is their very narration of their testimony (and not their 'story') that now silences their lives, for what their participation in the commission did, was to freeze their lives in a particular narrative of the past. Their, and the testimonies of others, have been transcribed, recorded and excised into a package of the 'Past', seemingly blotted out of the ongoing, contested landscape that postapartheid South Africa has turned out to be.

Legacies of the TRC

The TRC as a national institution was intended to socially manage political change by "dealing with the past",[26] and as such it played a very particular role in the temporal landscape of South Africa. It was charged with human rights abuses, but importantly, was expected to contribute to a broader understanding of 'reconciliation' in the country. It was assigned to nurture a culture of human rights that would serve as a barrier to further abuses.[27] Grunebaum astutely sums up the part played of the TRC in ongoing questions of memory in South Africa, saying that:

> The TRC has come and long gone. Yet in its wake a collective language of "memory" has been inscribed on the horizon of time, called the "past... 'Time', as an object, has

25 Perelli, C. (1993). The power of memory and the memory of power. Repression, Exile and Democracy: Uruguayan Culture. S. Sosnowski, Popkin,L. Durham, NC, Duke Universoty PRess. p. 154.

26 See Boraine, A., Levy, Janet., Scheffer, Ronel (1994). Dealing with the Past: Truth and Reconciliation in South Africa. Cape Town, ISASA.

27 Gibson, J., L (2004). "Truth, Reconciliation, and the Creation of a Human Rights Culture in South Africa." Law & Society Review 38(1): 5-30.

been made into a commodity called the 'past' ".[28]

Grunebaum contends that a legacy of the TRC, as a powerful institutional process, has rendered those other pasts invisible; in the haste to stitch together this new nation, the TRC has, in its wake, left a fragile patchwork, tenuously unable to hold all the ghosts at bay. As Christopher Colvin comments, for many in South Africa, the first time they had come into regular contact with the word 'trauma' was through the vocabulary of the TRC[29], along with other key words of perpetrators, victims and survivors. What did the TRC teach ordinary South Africans about human rights, and democracy? What narrative was woven about the notion of loss and suffering? Was suffering sacrificed or made meaningful through associating it with the teleology of the liberation struggle and for grander, universal redemptions of reconciliation? What 'past' has the TRC produced and what meanings of freedom and citizenship has it silenced and what has it proclaimed? If the lesson that the TRC taught was that human rights must be inviolable, and that those rights are entrenched in democracy, then what does it say to those citizens who not only live with the ramifications of the past, but who are not able, and indeed are not indulged when they try to articulate its horror?

The TRC edged its way into South African homes, as for months on end, the televised sessions, detailing untold atrocities, found their way onto local television screens.[30] Day after day, the South African viewing public could watch the commission unfolding before them, as scores of distraught parents and siblings came face to face with the perpetrators of murders and other violations. The vivid portrayal by the mass media of these haunting and harrowing accounts was combined with court challenges by victims (such as the Biko family) against the removal of their right to seek civil damages as a result of the amnesty process.[31] Grunebaum argues that technologies of mass media have:

28 Grunebaum, H. P. (2011). Memorializing the Past: Everyday Life in South Africa after the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. New Jersey, Transaction Publishers. p. 2.

29 Colvin, C., J (2008). Trauma. New South African Keywords. N. Shepherd, . Robins, Steven. Johannesburg, Athens, Jacana, Ohio: 223-224.

30 For more on the media coverage on the TRC see Grunebaum, H. P. (2011). Memorializing the Past: Everyday Life in South Africa after the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. New Jersey, Transaction Publishers.

31 Verwoerd, W. (1999). "Individual and/or social justice after Apartheid? The South African truth and reconciliation commission." The European Journal of Development Research 11(2): 115-140. p. 118.

> Insinuated TRC testimonies into the cognitive operations of the public as testimonies have been rendered into a poetics of pain for "public" consumption and how this has diluted the interpretative, historical and political substance of testimony and of the act of testifying itself.[32]

The image of Archbishop Desmond Tutu holding his head, in tears, has come to mark the image of the TRC. In terms of memory, forgiveness and restitution, the commission has been "one of the most powerful institutional processes to shape and manage historical and national "consciousness" since South Africa's political change to constitutional democracy".[33] Aletta Norval argues that reconstructions of collective memory do more that simply 'deal with the past'; they legitimate and characterise new regimes.[34] De Brito argues that a policy that seeks to provide 'total' truth and justice is impossible considering the intensely political nature of the pursuit of justice.[35] It is therefore crucial to keep in mind that the nature and 'success' of truth commissions are scripted by particular national conditions as well as institutional and constitutional limitations during the transitional period.[36] The TRC was, as most truth commissions of this nature are, active for only a few years, and it was also perhaps unintentionally restrictive, as it sought a closure that has proved to be unsurprisingly only partial. Grunebaum makes the point that:

> The troping of the TRC as a temporal bridge suggests a hierarchical distinction of time. It inscribes an evolutionary, linear and developmentalist notion of historical progress as the temporal referent of the "future" and of the "new" state's broader project of nation building. …Over against such a past, the crossing of the bridge implies delivery into a *different* time, a better time, a time "founded on the recognition of human rights,

32 Grunebaum, H. P. (2011). Memorializing the Past: Everyday Life in South Africa after the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. New Jersey, Transaction Publishers.
p. 10.

33 Ibid.
p. 3.

34 Norval, A., J. (1998). "Memory, Identity and the (Im)possibility of Reconcillation: The Work of the Truth and Reconcillition Commission in South Africa." Constellation 5(2): 15.
p. 251.

35 De Brito in Ibid.

36 Norval, A., J. (1998). "Memory, Identity and the (Im)possibility of Reconcillation: The Work of the Truth and Reconcillition Commission in South Africa." Constellation 5(2): 15.

> democracy and peaceful co-existence and development opportunities for all South Africans". The "future" looms on the opposite bank of time as a promise of collective redemption into a chronologically successive and morally ameliorative order of progress, inclusivity, human rights and human development.[37]

The TRC therefore clearly delineates the horrors of the past from a glorious future of a new nation, powerfully headed by the party of liberation.

Challenges of the TRC

Among the criticisms of the TRC was the tension between the commission being understood as a victim-driven process on the one hand, and perpetrators who could go unpunished through amnesty. Wilhelm Verwoerd suggests, "Where perpetrators of gross human rights violations are pardoned rather than punished, that can be experienced as a form of re-victimization, as insult added to injury".[38] Amnesty therefore disrupts the notion of justice, which usually means prosecuting and punishing the perpetrators. Although the TRC granted conditional amnesties, South Africans, violated South Africans bear testimony to Verwoerd's further comment that:

> This disruption of the conventional trial and punishment of crimes creates a vacuum which can easily be filled by explosive emotions with detrimental effects for both victims and society at large.[39]

Perhaps what the TRC most powerfully sketched was that when accounting for past abuses one does not necessarily consolidate democracy, or importantly, freedom. I suggest that the

37 Grunebaum, H. P. (2011). Memorializing the Past: Everyday Life in South Africa after the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. New Jersey, Transaction Publishers. p.27.
Norval, A., J. (1998). "Memory, Identity and the (Im)possibility of Reconcillation: The Work of the Truth and Reconcillition Commission in South Africa." Constellation 5(2): 15.
p. 26 – 27.

38 Verwoerd, W. (1999). "Individual and/or social justice after Apartheid? The South African truth and reconciliation commission." The European Journal of Development Research 11(2): 115-140.
p. 119 – 120.

39 Ibid.
p. 120.

TRC should be seen rather as a moment in South Africa's ongoing struggle for freedom; as a beginning of a process of thinking through key ethical, and political problems as the country repays its debt to its people in the quest for real freedom. The work of the TRC, as a transient platform has to serve as a reminder that there is no singular past, that as a complicated platform, the commission has highlighted the impossibility of leaving the past behind, and paradoxically also the incompleteness of a present without a past. What the legacy of the TRC should ask for is to move away from traditional monuments of memory, for rather than asking people to remember; these monuments ask them to forget, providing a safe and sanitised space of convenience. In spite of its many challenges, the TRC embodied a moment in the restorative landscape of South Africa, for as Howard Zehr says:

> The TRC process is flawed, opportunities have been missed, but the importance of this [restorative justice] understanding – not only in South Africa, but for the world – must not be underestimated. It is a bold step on an uncharted path.[40]

The TRC is a reminder that there is not a single process of dealing with the past that can free a nation. As Njabulo Ndabele writes

> The conundrum at stake might be illustrated by some contradictions placed in front of South Africans by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, its historic hearings and its reparations recommendations. The issue turns on the definition of 'victims of gross violations of human rights' who, according to the definition, qualify for 'reparations'. The unresolved issue pertains to the tension between the pervasive social impact of apartheid on the oppressed, on the one hand, and on the other, the specific experiences of suffering that were exposed, acknowledged and documented within the relatively restricted legal framework that governed the work of the TRC. Thus, the specificity of the TRC's mandate can be seen, in retrospect, to rest uncomfortably with the general

40 Zehr, H. (1997). "Restorative Justice: When Justice and Healing Go Together." Track Two 6(3/4): 20. p. 20.

social consequences of apartheid's oppression, a suffering that defies simple ranking.[41]

The commission therefore has to serve as a reminder that the past must continue to be a site of struggle, not a fixed object to which all members of the nation must identify, and in so doing, will argue for a different kind of power – not domination – in post-apartheid South Africa. This is crucial in our ongoing quest for freedom, for as Derrida reminds us; "This silence calls out unconditionally; it keeps watch on that which is not, on that which is not yet, and on the chance of still remembering some faithful day".[42]

Freedom and Democracy

The integral connection between freedom and democracy was already well understood in ancient Athens, where in Pericles's *Funeral Oration* (*circa 430 B.C.E)*, the Athenian leader celebrated the values of freedom and openness as that which distinguished Athenian democracy from the militaristic Spartan regime. Most notably, Aristotle considered freedom to be the *telos* (or goal) of democracy, and Plato thought that democracy was founded on freedom.[43] For the Athenians, there had to be the freedom to speak – to hold and express different opinions and importantly, to discuss this openly with others. Furthermore, scientific and philosophical achievements depended on this freedom to speak.[44] Democracy, therefore without the freedom to speak, is a contradiction in terms, and it is no surprise that freedom has driven the development of democratic politics in the last few centuries.

For Jean-Paul Sartre, freedom is the being of humans, as it determines consciousness. The thesis of freedom is central to Sartre's understanding of being. As he says of freedom:

> For man to put a particular existent out of circuit [that is, to put it out of reach, to separate himself from it] is to put himself out of circuit in relation to that existent. In

41 Ndebele, N. (2010). Arriving home? South Africa beyond transition And reconciliation. In the Balance: South Africans debate reconciliation. F. du Toit, Doxtader, Eric. Johannesburg, Jacana Media. p. 67.

42 Derrida, J. (1985). "Racism's Last Word." Critical Enquiry 12: 9. p. 295.

43 Beetham, D. (2004). "Freedom as the Foundation." Journal of Democracy 15(4): 61-75.

44 Ibid

> this case he is not subject to it; he is out of reach; it can not act on him, for he has retired *beyond a nothingness*. Descartes following the Stoics has given a name to this possibility that human reality has to secrete a nothingness that isolates it — it is *freedom*.[45]

Crucially for Sartre, to fail to be free is to cease to be.[46] For Sartre, freedom does not mean "to obtain what one has wished" but rather "by oneself to determine oneself to wish". Despite the common understanding of post-apartheid South Africa as being free, my conversations around the boxes of photographs illustrated that there is much that has yet to be spoken. Furthermore, we fumble around the issue of race, still largely defining ourselves by racial terms. 'Them' and 'us' still remain, though the question of who 'they' are seems to change, as it is no longer the old guard of apartheid who appears to be the 'enemy'. As my father commented, "I always seem to be looking over my shoulder, but I am not exactly sure what it is of which I am afraid". It seems as if there has been no acknowledgement of the demons whose names we do no not know. The question seems to be one of trying to understand how we have come to be what we are today.

Albie Sachs,[47] an anti apartheid activist as well as a Constitutional Court judge, comments that:

> There was in reality an enormous amount of knowledge about repression in South Africa, but hardly any acknowledgement of what the cost was in human terms. Acknowledgement involves an acceptance not only of the existence of a phenomenon, but of its emotional and social significance. It presupposes a sense of responsibility for the occurrence, an understanding of the meaning that it has for the persons involved and for society as a whole.[48]

45 Sartre, J.-P. (1984). Being and Nothingness. Washington, Washington Square Press. p. 60.

46 Ibid.

47 Sachs played a prominent role in the anti-apartheid struggle. He was detained, exiled and lost an arm and his sight in one eye in a car bomb but he returned to play a pivotal role in the drafting of new Constitution.

48 Sachs, A. (2009). The Strange Alchemy of Life and Law. Oxford, Oxford University Press. p. 79.

The Subject

What kinds of subjects has apartheid produced? What has South African society become through this process? Michele Foucault, in his book *Power/Knowledge* [49]looks to the way human beings are transformed into subjects including how the human being himself or herself turns into a subject. For Foucault, the creation of the subject is question of power and he is clear as to what power looks like and how it is exercised, saying:

> As far as this power is concerned, it is first necessary to distinguish that which is exerted over things and then [its] ability to modify, use, consume or destroy them. …On the other hand, what characterises the power we are analyzing is that it brings onto play relations between individuals (or between groups). For let us not deceive ourselves: if we speak of the power of laws, institutions and ideologies, if we speak of structures or mechanisms of power, it is only insofar as we suppose that certain persons exercise power over others. The term "power" designates a relationship between "partners".[50]

Bogues makes the point that the objective of racial slavery "was not to turn human beings into subjects but into objects and things. In this context, violence was used to break and destroy, to remove possibilities and to act upon the person through the body".[51] The power exerted by apartheid – itself one of the indirect offspring of slavery in Africa – shaped a subject who not only was considered to be not-human, but it sought to shape their future thoughts, dreams and nightmares. The "looking over the shoulder" speaks of an absolute terror, an ever present dread of something awful about to happen, but more importantly, it speaks of a further injury: the oppressed, who now are considered to be 'free', do not, even now, know what it is exactly that can harm them. Racial subjugation was not marked on the body under apartheid, it was, and continues to be, marked on the mind. It is the unassailable terror of a 'black' person who

49 Foucault, M. (1980). Power / Knowledge. Brighton, Harvester.
50 Ibid.
p. 337
51 Bogues, A. (2010). Empire of Liberty: Power, Desire and Freedom. Hanover, NH, Dartmouth College Press.
p. 82.

considers their hair not 'good' enough; it is in the purchase of skin lightening creams by teenage girls; it is in new mother keeping her newborn out of the sun so that he may stay fair; it is of domestic workers who are abused by their 'black' madams who themselves learnt their craft from their mothers who had worked for 'white' bosses. It is a verbal violence that plagues six year old boys who shamefully cast down their eyes shamefully when they are called 'black' by their fairer skinned mixed-race classmates.

This suffering is to be found in the two schools in the 'coloured' town of Pniel. There are two adjacent primary schools: one for 'black' learners, the other for 'coloureds'. Pniel, meaning "the Face of God", was a place of freed slaves, who most likely would have worked on the wine farms in the picturesque valley below the Drakenstein mountains, as their descendants do today, by and large.[52] It is found still, in the violence of a gaze that continues to see a darker skin, ascribing it a value on the lower end of a scale. It is in the relationship that 'whiteness' has to 'blackness', and which forces the 'black' to remain in the Fanon's zone of non-being. The ultimate achievement of apartheid then, was the mental subjugation[53] of people who legally might have been considered to be equal, but could not, in any real sense, be considered as being free. The 'black' subject in post-apartheid South Africa continues to be bereft. Despite the best efforts of the TRC, no amount of testimony has been able to eradicate the denial of being considered human. Real freedom – *free-dom* — needs to be imagined in such a way that suggests a radical understanding of just what it means live as a human, for as Bogues says: "To be human is to live, to engage in a set of practices of inventions that create freedom".[54] We need to think about the kind of ongoing suffering that racial subjugation produced and we need to think about, as Bogues asks us, the catastrophic reverberations of a racialised past. As he suggests, thinking through these questions will not only aid in recovery, but it will suggest how we may

52 Pniel is a small Cape Town located in-between the Stellenbosch and Franschoek wine lands. It was established in the mid-nineteenth century as a mission for homeless and landless slaves. Its establishment most probably had more to do with a need for labour on the surrounding farms than on philanthropic endeavor. In 2010, the governing body of a Xhosa-medium primary school had agreed to have the school temporarily moved onto a portion of the Pniel Primary School's land on condition that it have its own signboard and was fenced off - separating the black Xhosa-speaking pupils from the 'coloured' Afrikaans-speaking pupils. See Pietersen, M. (2010). "Suspended principal still faces censure." Retrieved 24 December 2011, 2011, from http://www.iol.co.za/news/south-africa/suspended-principal-still-faces-censure-1.673200?ot=inmsa.ArticlePrintPageLayout.ot.

53 Augusto, G. (2011). Personal communication. S. O'Connell. Cape Town, Unpublished.

54 Bogues, A. (2010). Empire of Liberty: Power, Desire and Freedom. Hanover, NH, Dartmouth College Press.
p. 118.

live and how we may be. The struggle to imagine what it means to be human must be relentless for, as the past continues to walk in the present, we cannot pay, yet again, for domination to triumph. South Africa must ask those difficult questions of what we are and how we live.

Return, transformation And repair

Several of the ex-residents expressed a desire to return to their homes in District Six, believing that somehow, if they were given back their houses, the trauma and terror of their evictions would abate. A few, my father among them, could not consider returning, their uncharacteristic uncertainty suggesting, quite understandably, that they had no idea of to what kind of District Six they would be returning. What their uncertainty articulated further was an acknowledgement that a return to District Six *as it was* would be a return to their inscription as racial subjects, as it was apparent that they had little confidence that a return would or could mean much else. The impossibility of their return to this place spoke of a profound and fundamental break with District Six – inasmuch as it was home, it was the home where ultimately apartheid first defined them as 'other', most affectingly in its traumatic separation of them from it.

Furthermore, any idea of reparations and restitutive acts are not without darker connotations as Marcel Mauss, in his 1923 essay *The Gift* has recognised, saying "The gift is something that must be recognised and that is, at the same time, dangerous to accept".[55] In the case of District Six the protracted land claims process and the low settlement offers eroded this "gift" even further. The *Madres* of the *Plaza de Mayo in Argentina* opposed monetary compensation since to accept reparation is to acknowledge death.[56] Perhaps what can be learnt from the debacle of the land claims process of District Six is that it should not be a place of closure and death: on the contrary, by acknowledging it as a place of absence, a recognition that there is simply nothing that can be done to attend to this injustice. The *Madres* teach us that ironically the refusal of restitutive measures is in some way a ritual of death and mourning.

55 Mauss, M. (1990). The Gift: Forms and Functions of Exchange in Archaic Societies. London, Routledge. p. 58.

56 Hamber, B., Wilson, Richard (2002). "Symbolic closure through memory, reparation and revenge in post-conflict societies." Journal of Human Rights 1(1).

Many evictees avoided the District Six reunions organised by various organisations and committees. They seemed to continue to live the lives of separation that apartheid had enforced. It appears as if this dusty and littered space of the Mother City is unable to settle, regardless of any newspaper headlines proclaiming development plans. The real value of District Six is not in its value as an area of prime value; rather its value lies in that it is a focal point of grief; it opens up a space of bereavement, akin to a graveyard. If post-apartheid South Africa recognises that the names of the dead – metaphorical and otherwise – need to be inscribed on the headstone of District Six, then the space will open up for the country to recognise its suffering and place it within the larger narrative of trauma and nation-building. It will mean that South Africa will be taking responsibility for its past recognising that exercises of restitution can never exhume and rebury the dead, or ameliorate all the pain and suffering of those who have been subject to apartheid. These ex-residents have become hostages to the memory of their past, they are imprisoned by it. They are considered to be obstructions to the process of selective forgetting as emphasised by the post-apartheid government, museums, and mainstream archives that are in the business of advocating a nationally defined prerogative of remembering, forgetting and the attendant notions of reconciliation. The point bears repeating: The injustices of apartheid, the embodied and mental injuries, angers and hurts are all immeasurable and ineffable.

Throughout the conversations, ex-residents used words such as "bewildered" and "baffled" to describe their inability to fully embrace or make sense of the "rainbow nation" that is brought out, polished and presented on national holidays such as Heritage Day.[57] They commented that they struggle to see *their* past in the celebrations that almost always include Zulu dancers and politicians singing freedom songs, which then go on to make upbeat pronouncements about the bright future of the nation. As Nick Shepherd comments:

> The double nature of the notion of heritage, its potential to bring about a kind of benign social magic and the perception of danger, its dual valencies of inclusivity and exclusivity, the tension, which lies at its heart, between the forces of memory and

57 Heritage Day is celebrated on 24 September.

forgetting.[58]

In thinking through the evictee's inability to find their place in the new nation, it dawns on me that what apartheid did was to shatter their cognitive assumptions about their lives and their world. Ronnie Janof-Bulman comments that severe forms of trauma shatter the assumption that the world is a meaningful and comprehensible place.[59] Their sense of bewilderment, and their inexplicable anticipation of further trauma speak of their inability to comprehend the suffering that they continue to endure. This suffering is a result of their encounter with apartheid and which has further fragmented who they are supposed to be in the new South Africa.

A further denial of lives and moments exacerbates the original trauma, as the legacies, ghosts and questions of the past are rendered yet again, invisible. The absence of headstones, and the absence of names on those headstones in District Six, has created an ontological uncertainty among ex-residents, who are now forced to come to terms with their dead — on their own. Together with their dead, they occupy a liminal space of uncertainty, part of the new South Africa, but also removed from it. They are perplexed and disorientated in an unfamiliar landscape now stripped of the markers of their past. Their basic questions remain: how and why did we get here and can it happen again?

Imaginings after Apartheid

I stumble across the lyrics of jazz musician Sun Ra. Born in Birmingham, Alabama, Herman Sonny Poole Blunt, better known as Sun Ra, was a prolific jazz musician, composer, poet and philosopher who became well known as a proponent of space travel.[60] Penning many songs and poems, I am however drawn to Sun Ra's *Imagination*

58 Shepherd, N. (2008). Heritage. New South African Keywords. N. Shepherd, Robins, Steven. Johannesburg, Athens, Jacana, Ohio: 116-128.
p. 118.

59 Janoff-Bulman, R. (1985). The Aftermath of Victimisation: Rebuilding Shattered Assumptions. Trauma and its Wake. C. R. Figley. New York, Brunner Mazel.

60 Kelley, R., G. (2002). Freedom Dreams. Boston, Beacon Press Books.

Imagination is a Magic carpet

Upon which we may soar

To distant lands and climes

And even go beyond the moon

To any planet in the sky

If we came from

Nowhere here

Why can't we go somewhere there?[61]

To think about freedom therefore compels us to think about ways in which the gaze must shift with regard to the subject. It demands an absolute recognition of the impossibility of return; that what happened is unreachable and unredeemable. As we are now, there is no past to which these ex-residents, and I, can return. A return to District Six, metaphorical or otherwise, is impossible without a re-constitution of what we consider a human to be.

What these previously silenced and ordinary photographs speak of is a particular kind of knowledge, a subjugated knowledge of subjects who despite being dominated, spoke of a desire to break out of a struggle of violence. These images speak of disqualified lives, but lives nonetheless, and in so doing, compel us to argue for the reclamation of the subject and his/her power, reclamation of those disavowed margins and spaces in history. Looking at these images found in the home disrupts the notion of subjugated knowledges as that which operates outside the mainstream and dominant frameworks, and through the acknowledgement of struggles and celebrations of day-to-day ordinary lives, frees up the subject to be anything he or she imagines themselves to be. In so doing, the question can finally be posed: What *can* freedom look like?

Sylvia Wynter tells us that we are in a crisis from which we are able to escape by re-writing and un-writing knowledge.[62] She suggests that we need to think about and understand how subjects come into being, and in so doing; we need to shift our rational worldview of what it means to be a human. This worldview, this system of binaries of order/chaos, sameness/difference and black/white has lead us to the crisis in which we now find ourselves. We need to

61 Ibid.
p. 31.

62 Wynter, S. (1984). "The Ceremony Must Be Found: After Humanism." Boundary 2(12).

respond to Wynter's call to move away from a system of categories and instead move towards the human, rather than any of its variations, as subject. In this way, we can begin the business of how we may all be human, and how we all may yet be free. What these ordinary photographs speak of is those liminal spaces that can give a different account of the historical process, in that being placed both inside and outside, they occupy a space that is able to re-member their past. Survivors of apartheid, together with those already dead, both inhabit a liminal space, they are at once both part of, but also, removed from, the place that is post-apartheid South Africa. They constitute 'a living dead', a reluctant group that is characterised by uncertainty and doubt, illustrating Freud's comments of survivor's experience and the uncanny. This space, of here and there, in and out, of absence and presence, echoes the liminal spaces of the photograph and therefore work in different ways from truth commissions. They do not only reveal that which was hidden, they serve to acknowledge past wrongs in the immediacy of the present. The spaces of ghosts, specters and photographs remind us that remembering is not a guarantee of redemption, liberation or freedom. The photograph of the ordinary reminds us that trauma is an unfinished business, and that grief and the mourning of irreparable loss is illusive. As Grahame Hayes writes: "Just revealing, is not just healing… It depends on how we reveal, the context of the revealing, and what it is that we are revealing".[63] These ordinary black-and-white photographs respond to the cries of the wounds of Fanon, who, in his final page of *Black skin White masks* writes:

> The self takes its place by opposing itself; Yes and No. I said in my introduction that man is a yes, I will never stop reiterating that. *Yes* to life. *Yes* to love. *Yes* to generosity. But man is also a *no. No* to the scorn of man. *No* to the degradation of man. *No* to the exploitation of man. *No* to the butchery of what is most human in man: freedom.[64]

Fanon's challenge then is crucial when thinking about how South Africa may think of how freedom may look, and sound. He asks us to imagine freedom, without the crutches and

63 Hayes, G. (1998). "We Suffer our Memories: Thinking about the Past, Healing and Reconciliation." American Imago 55(1). p. 43.

64 Fanon, F. (1967). Black Skin White Masks. New York, Grove. p. 225.

confines of binaries and asks us to bring invention into existence. For Fanon, it is in thinking about the meanings of being human, that we must imagine, and create, lives of freedom. It is in the imagination that I can be anything I want to be. And above all, as I close the lid on my cardboard box of photographs, I finally realise what its contents have been whispering me to all along. It tells me quietly, but firmly, to imagine how I may yet be free.

The exodus from District Six therefore stands as a space of an impossible return, something with which I struggle greatly, for as I now concede the impossibility of a metaphorical repatriation, I realize just what this means. These ex-residents speak of a return, but no one mouths the details as to what exactly do they wish to return to. I begin to think that it is not a return to the place of District Six as they knew it, but it is a return to the futures of which they once dreamed, but were, and still are undeniably denied. It is a constant yearning for transformation, which will then lead to repair.

I am afraid to acknowledge that a state of homelessness is my future — and that of my son. It seems that the only place of return, and where I may grab and have my freedom then, is in the safety of my imagination, which silences the demons, calms my fears and allows me to soar. In this space I can dream out loud, I can describe to my son the possibilities of life that exist beyond the confines of his skin. In this space I am together with my long gone grandparents who are once again able to dance, now for the first time with their great-grandson who they have just met. I find us talking about a two-roomed house in a cobbled street that overlooks the bay, nestled quietly in the lap of its momentous mountain. In that house we plan a day on the beach where we will warm our skins; we take delight in my nephew's tightly curled black hair; we relish the softness of his skin and marvel at its sheen. We talk about a present and a future where we can be anything we want to be, in a world that values us just because we are. And in this tiny space, with its un-shuttered windows, we realise and take great joy in the fact that our neighbours are doing the same. It is in the imagination that I dream of a world not yet born where we are free to see and know, differently.

Conclusion

Return

As I begin to write the last chapter of this thesis, I rummage through the box of photographs to find two particular images. The first is of my maternal grandfather, Bareyam Singh, the second of my paternal great-grandfather, Valentine "Major" O'Connell. As I lay them side-by-side, I realise that I am the product of their travels, as the former left India for South Africa, whilst the other came from Ireland. These are the men, who although they never meet, have lives that are entwined on so many levels, for not only is it Valentine's grandson, Patrick Valentine who marries Elaine Jennifer, daughter of Bareyam, they both find their way to this country, in some way or another, as part of the colonial project. They are both deeply implicated in the space of District Six, and I find that I return to the beginning of my story, to the wedding of my parents, to find the ghosts of Bareyam and Valentine.

Bareyam Singh

Bareyam Singh's records at the National Archives in Roeland Street give me a starting point, for he died when my mother, Elaine, was twelve years old. His file tells me that in 1901 he come to South Africa from northern Punjab at the age of twenty-seven.[1] The records indicate that he had no siblings, but my mother corrects this, and says they were told of a sister in India. A Sikh, whose language was Gurmukhi, he found work as a groom and stable hand with AR Mackenzie & Company, who were customs and delivery agents for the ships that passed through Cape Town's harbor, was an important port in the Indian Ocean interregional route to the East. These archives draw attention to the kinds of work that the poor 'passenger Indians' found in Cape Town, as well as the restrictive immigration laws passed by the Cape Colonial Government.

As my mother tells me, her father was a produce merchant in Reform Street in District Six.

1 (IRC 1/1/139 3374 a)

He was involved in politics, and he quite remarkably represented the Cape National Indian Conference in Durban in 1928.[2] I know that he married my grandmother, Aletta (Lettie) Van Schalkwyk in 1941, this being his second marriage after the death of his first wife, Kitty. Interestingly, neither of my grandfather's wives was Indian, rather, he chose wives who were local and who were ultimately classified as 'coloured'.

South African literature defines my grandfather as a 'passenger Indian', a migrant who paid his way to the colonies of South Africa, as opposed to the indentured, who arrived under contract to work on the sugar plantations in Natal.[3] Uma Duphelia-Mesthrie contends that the social world that my grandfather, and other 'passenger Indians' is still barely understood or documented, but I find a small inlet on the coast of the vast inhospitable land which is my grandfather's life — it is a black-and-white photograph in my cardboard box.

The photograph reminds me of a large, framed oval image that used to hang in our dining room in Walmer Estate. It shows a handsome man with a carefully tended moustache. This small black-and-white photograph is undated, but there is the faint outline of an official stamp that edges in from the lower end. I believe therefore that this must be some form of an identity photograph, which shows a man, in his early seventies perhaps, with immaculate hair and perfectly coiffed moustache that curled upwards at its ends. My mother tells me that the passport photograph was taken at the *Van Kalker Studio* in Woodstock in anticipation of a return trip to India with my uncle, Bareyam (Barry) Singh.

I rummage further in my cardboard box to find an image of a man in a turban and an ill-fitting jacket. He is staring somewhat uncomfortably at the camera, and although he has a moustache, this one is not as carefully trimmed. This is not an identity photograph as it is larger, besides which the background isn't the obligatory white sheet. Instead, it is evidently taken outdoors as he is standing in front of a wall of foliage. Like many of the other images, this is undated and there are no notes on the reverse.

My mother tells me that this image also is of her father, the photograph having been taken shortly after his arrival in South Africa. Notwithstanding the fact that these two images show

2 Duphelia-Mesthrie, *U. (2009).* "The Passenger Indian as Worker: Indian Immigrants in Cape Town in the Early Twentieth Century." African Studies 68*(1): 111-134*. p. 126.

3 Ibid.

my grandfather at different stages of his life, they show evidence of his metamorphosis from a private in the Indian army to the successful businessman he turned out to be. I comment on the immediate difference between the two images, as the second image reflects the absence of his turban. My mother tells me he "stopped wearing it soon after he came to South Africa despite that it was against his custom and religion to do so".

The refinement of his moustache is another clue to the extent of the effort he expended in order to manifest what was a radical reinvention; it bears little resemblance to the moustache that he sported when we was younger, it is narrower and perfectly trimmed, fastidiously so. It has not a single hair out of place and one cannot but notice that the curling points are mirror images of each other. His hair is slicked back tightly and there is a carefully crafted curl sitting resolutely high up on his forehead. This image, despite it being an identity photograph, doesn't resemble anything that I have come to know identity photographs as being. The lighting is soft and flattering and the image is perfectly composed, perhaps evidence of the many practice shots before he and the photographer settled on this one. Perhaps also evidence of a man who was faultlessly primed for business at all times, no matter the occasion, his ambition as finely studied as his performance, the two precisely intertwined. His head is tilted to his right, the patterned Windsor knot perfectly centered in its crisp white collar. His gaze is challenging, to the camera and to anyone else no doubt, who might dare to question the right he knew he had to take this place in this new world.

Many hours of conversation with my mother and her siblings confirm that theirs was not a 'conventional' Indian household. Although their surname was Singh, little else reminded them of their ties to India. Their father was "always in a suit and tie", they ate "traditional [British] roasts and vegetables" and they did not observe any of Sikhism's religious feast days. It seems as if not only was my grandfather determined to make his life the apparent success that it was, he was equally determined to remove any traces of the life that he had left behind in India.

My mother tells me of a bell that was used to summon the butler to their dining table, and I hear of his upward mobility that was astonishing by any account. I also hear of his understandable reluctance to return to India, making only brief trips on his own in 1930 and then twenty-four years later. By the time my grandfather died in 1954, he had an annual income

of over £2 400 and owned property over £48 000.[4] What the photographs tell me is a something else. It tells me of an impoverished man who scraped together the fare to leave the jewel of the colonial crown, India, only to come to another colonial project. In these images, I see the success of this project, as he changes his appearance and works incredibly hard to attain the benchmark of 'gentleman' - as he had come to know it. This is evident in the last image that I have of him, it shows a man who does not at all resemble the labourer that he was in 1902. This image is of a polished, well-groomed and attended man, his suit, shirt and tie are clearly expensive, and I can see that they are perfectly chosen and tailored to fit his large frame. This photograph clearly tells me of a lifetime of denial and eradication, for my grandfather, through the symbolic rejection of his turban, spent the rest of his life determined to remove any trace of the olive-skinned 'coolie' he was understood to be. It hints at, in the negative, a young, poor Indian boy who dreamt of going to Africa to escape the life he had.

I learn of their home in Princess Street, Walmer Estate, — in which I was raised — of a life that included my grandparents "meeting the Queen" at the City Hall. I had put this down as yet another family legend, until my cardboard box told me something else entirely.

Among the images, I find several invitations and dinner menus. These are all yellowing with age, not surprising, as the earliest is dated 1933. I find an invitation from the Natal Indian Congress, inviting my grandparents to a banquet in honour of Prince George on his trip to Cape Town in 1934. This was followed by an equally grand invitation from the Mayor of Cape Town, (Mayor Bloomberg) to attend a "reception and ball" in honor of 'Their Majesties, the King and Queen". Both these events were held at the City Hall in Cape Town.

It appears that my grandfather took his duties as a British subject very seriously, for I find yet more embossed invitations, also yellowed with age but still bound with red satin ribbon. These belonged to my grandparents, who invited guests to dinners at their home, "Vryheid" in honor of various dignitaries. These included the High Commissioner for India at the time, various delegates from India and Pakistan, and Agent Generals to the Indian Government. I am taken aback when I see the printed menu cards detailing the dinner, for my grandfather names various dishes after his wife and children. I therefore see 'Crème de Tomato de Aletta', 'Crumbed Kabeljou au Percy' and 'Petis Pois a la Myrna' on the menu for dinner in honour of

4 Western Cape Archives Depot, Interior, Regional Director Series (IRC)\IRC 1/1/139 3374a

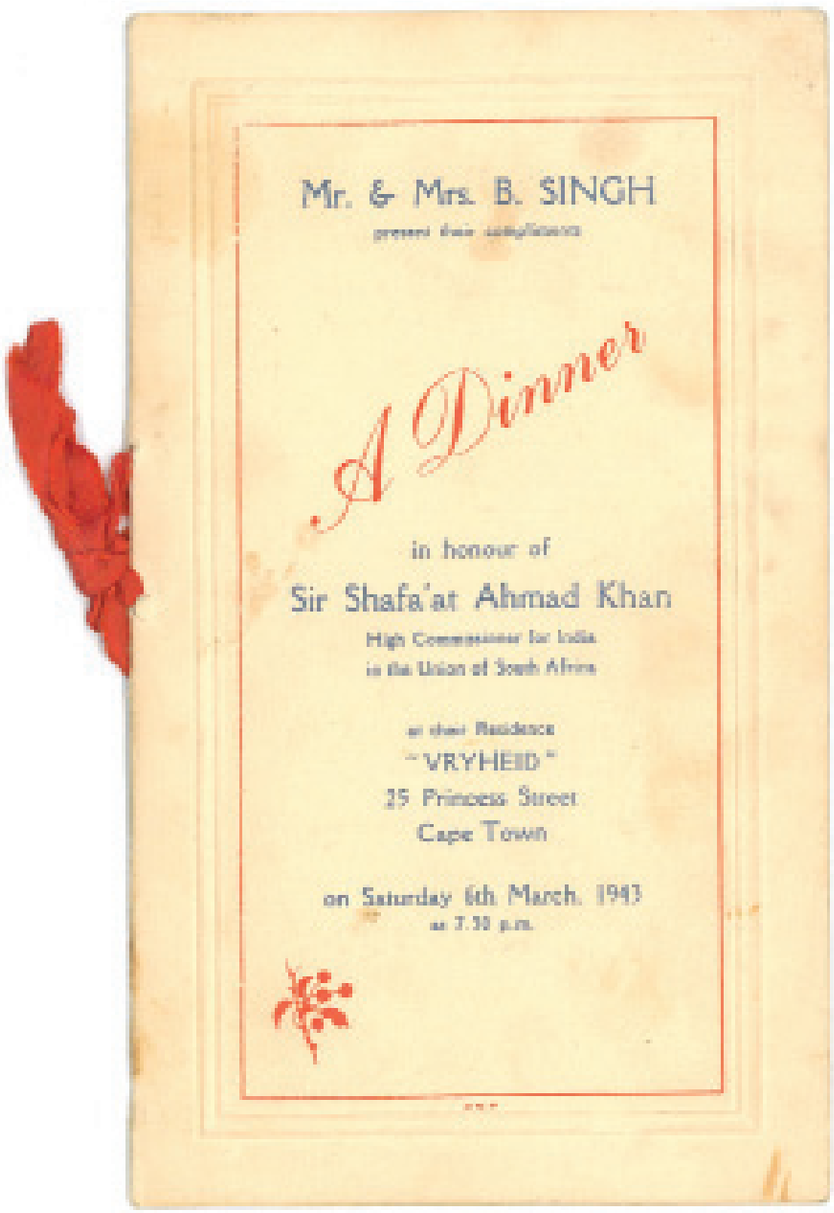

Figure 24

Untitled

Colour Image

120 x 168 mm

Sir Shafa'at Amad Khan, the High Commissioner for India on 6 March 1943. When I find an even earlier banquet card — 1933 — I see something else, a series of toasts made and headed by my grandfather, who is responsible for the highest honour, that of "toasting the King". The stained menu card is completed by the single signal line: "GOD SAVE THE KING."

It is this date of this dinner – Wednesday, 19th February 1947 - that intrigues me. At this dinner, my grandfather epitomizes the classic rags-to-riches story. He has amassed a considerable fortune, is a landowner with properties across Cape Town, and he has been invited to dine with royalty. He owns a home complete with a grand piano, photographic darkroom and billiard table. It is this date, where he and my grandmother meet the Queen as a couple who had apparently reached the echelons of Capetonian society.

The date is also only eight months before the country of his birth, India gains its independence from Britain (15th August 1947). It must have appeared to my grandfather that he had achieved everything that he had set out to do, starting from a poor Indian labourer in Punjab to a commanding businessman of Cape Town. If only he had known then, on that night when he met the Queen that a few months later, apartheid would be legalized, and the horizons that he had known, would be obliterated forever. Everything that he had worked so hard to achieve would forever be negated, for on the 28th May 1948, apartheid, headed by the prime minster DF Malan,[5] made sure that for someone with a darker skin, any future possibilities, dreams and imaginings, were rendered impossible.

My mother speaks of an iron-willed father who made sure that his children were raised with the best of British etiquette. She quietly reveals the moments of a man who not only left his religion, his customs and family behind, but who worked single-mindedly to replace all that with the identity of what he believed a gentleman should be. In every regard then, he was a colonial subject who did not, by the standards that were only at that point only just on the wane, 'know his place'. Instead he transforms his life into something else — a subject modeled on the colonial master who he had left behind. She tells me of the forage store in District Six, and how my grandfather would take his eleven year old son along with him on his rent-collecting

5 SAHO (2011). "Apartheid is 'officially' institutionalised when the Herenigde Nasionale Party wins the general elections." Retrieved 9 January 2012, from http://www.sahistory.org.za/dated-event/apartheid-ã¢â%C2%82¬ë%C2%9Cofficiallyã¢â%C2%82¬â%C2%84¢-institutionalised-when-herenigde-nasionale-party-win.

missions, schooling the young boy in the business which he had built up from scratch. She also quietly speaks of the lines firmly drawn between Walmer Estate and District Six; District Six was the "wrong side of the tracks" in relation to the upwardly mobile 'coloured' families who owned their properties up the hill, as it were. However successful her husband undoubtedly was as a teacher, it did not detract from the prevailing comments that she had "married beneath herself". Notwithstanding the petty bigotries of the city, for Bareyam Singh, and for many other families in Walmer Estate, to befriend those living in District Six would have been to commune with a world that would bring one face to face with whom one had been, and in his case, with one he had so desperately and successfully escaped.

Valentine O'Connell

I turn then to the other photograph of another man, a sepia-toned studio portrait showing a seated, silver-haired man with his daughter, who I believe to be about twelve years old. This is an image of my paternal great-grandfather, Valentine O'Connell and his eldest daughter, Olive. He is perfectly attired in a suit, his silver hair is parted down the middle, and its colour reminds me of my father's. His buttoned suit is complete with pocket-handkerchief and on his wedding finger he is wearing a ring. My great-aunt Olive is wearing a dark pinafore and a white shirt, so similar to what my sister and I wore as schoolgirls. Her hair is also parted down the middle and flows onto her shoulders in carefully defined waves. Like her father, she is smiling, and she leans towards him while he circles her waist. They are backlit against a studio backdrop and as my father tells me, this is the only photograph that he has of his grandfather who came from Cork in Ireland.

To the un-initiated this image is ordinary, as it shows a father and a daughter who resemble each other. The only person perhaps curiously absent from this tableau, is the child's mother. This time it is my father who fills in the missing details. This is Valentine, his grandfather, after whom he, Patrick Valentine, is named, and whom he used to visit in their Roger Street home from time to time.

This photograph intrigues me, particularly because of what it doesn't show. The other siblings – Herbert (my grandfather) and his sister, Irene, are not present. There is no hint of

Figure 25

Untitled

Black-and-White Photograph

100 x 141 mm

their mother, Lulu Malusi, though judging by how perfectly turned out her daughter is in the photograph, I see the behind the scenes workings of a mother who made sure her daughter looked perfect for this occasion.

I hear that my father refer to his grandfather as 'Major', and on enquiring I am told that he was in fact a major in the British Army, one who had at one stage been posted to India. I am fascinated to know how a British army officer, en route to India, ends up having three children with a 'black' South African woman, whom he then does not marry, but with whom he clearly establishes a domestic arrangement of some kind. It is at this point, that I am told of Lulu Malusi, my paternal great-grandmother, and of her trip to Switzerland in the early years of the twentieth century.

We had always believed that it was a figment of my father's fertile imagination when he referred to his grandmother, Lulu Malusi, as a Xhosa princess, the granddaughter of an important chief. The story, seemingly implausible at first, however became more believable when we were told that missionaries in her birthplace of the Transkei identified her as suitable material to be sent to a 'finishing school' in Switzerland in 1911. It was most probably considered feasible that as a granddaughter of an influential leader in the area, Lulu should be molded into a suitable colonial subject, her edges smoothed out, after which she would return to the Eastern Cape as a potential ally of British colonial administrators.

It was on the return sea voyage to South Africa from Europe that Lulu and Major were to meet, she as a newly polished sixteen year old, and he as a thirty-year-old British officer. It is on this voyage that my grandfather was conceived, and although Major carries on to India, he returns to South Africa a short while thereafter and proceeds to sire two more children with Lulu. Tellingly, although he never marries her (he goes on to marry someone else and lives, and dies, in the mostly 'white' area of Sea Point), Lulu makes sure that the children are registered as O'Connell's - he is clearly named as their father on their birth certificates. I am left to imagine what controls she exercised over her un-committing lover to ensure that he complied with this, in those days not insignificant, request.As I sort these images, I lay them out on a dining table and they come to resemble actors — players in some grand theatrical production. I put Bareyam Singh next to Valentine O'Connell; two unlikely partners who are both intrinsically enmeshed with colonial India, Britain, the Cape and South Africa. As I study this diptych, I imagine what

they would say to each other should they realise that their offspring are about to get married in District Six. I wonder what they would think about the role that they had unwittingly played as errant pieces on a black-and-white game-board and I cannot help but ask whether, if at that point, they would have chosen to live their lives in any other way — and if they knew what I know of what was to come, would they have chosen differently?

I am able to choreograph these images any way I choose, and as I construct, de-construct and re-construct this tableau, over and over again. I realise that I am able to see their pasts alongside my present, one in which I am not the product of a racial project. In this place of my imagination, I introduce Bareyam Singh of Punjab, India, to Valentine O'Connell of County Cork, Ireland, and watch as they celebrate the marriage of their children. I see Bareyam adjusting his turban, I see Lulu with all her feistiness, and I see next to her, my maternal grandmother Lettie admiring her own prominent cheekbones — as high and fine and proud as Saartjie Baartman's. And as I slip these images back into the safety of their box, surely to be opened again as I continue my never-ending game of make-believe, I imagine a South Africa as my country that can, at long last, celebrate being really free.

Figure 26

Untitled

Colour Photograph

80 x 110 mm

Figure 27

Untitled

Black-and-White Photograph

90 x 140 mm

Bibliography

Allan, G., Crow, G (1989). Introduction. Home and Family: Creating the domestic sphere. G. C. Allan, G. London, MacMillan**:** 1-13.

Appadurai, A. (1986). The Social Life of Things. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Augusto, G. (2011). [Personal communication]. S. O'Connell. Cape Town, Unpublished.

Bachelard, G. (1969). The Poetics of Space: The Classic Look at How we Experience Intimate Space. Boston, Beacon Press.

Baderoon, G. (2004). "The Underside to the Picturesque: Meanings of Muslim Burials in Cape Town, South Africa." Arab World Geographer **7**(4): 261-275.

Baer, U. (2002). Spectral Evidence: The Photography of Trauma. Cambridge, Mass, London, MIT Press.

Baetens, J. (2007). Conceptual Limitations of our Reflections on Photography: The Question of Interdisciplinarity. Photographic Theory. J. Elkins. New York, Routledge**:** 53-73.

Bank, A., Minkley, Gary (1998 / 1999). "Editorial." Genealogies of Space and Identity in Cape Town **25**(Pre-millennium Issue 1998/1999).

Barthes, R. (1977). Image-Music-Text. London, Fontana.

Barthes, R. (1981). Camera Lucida: Reflections of Photography. London, Vintage.

Beetham, D. (2004). "Freedom as the Foundation." Journal of Democracy **15**(4): 61-75.

Bell, D. F. (2004). " Infinite Archives." Substance **33**(105: Special Issue): 148-161.

Benjamin, W. Selected Writings Volume 4 1938 - 1940. Cambridge, Mass and London., The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.

Bennett, B. (2007 / 8). District Six Museum: Annual Report 2007/ 8. Cape Town, District Six Museum.

Bennett, T. (1995). The birth of the museum : history, theory, politics. London ; New York, Routledge.

Bennett, T. (2004). Pasts beyond memory : evolution museums colonialism. London ; New York, Routledge.

Bergstein, M. (2010). Mirrors of Memory: Freud, Photography and the History of Art. Ithaca, London, Cornell University Press.

Blanchot, M. (1986). The Writing of the Disaster. Lincoln, Nebraska, University of Nebraska Press.

Bliss, A. (2008). ""Share Moments, Share Life": The Domestic Photograph as a Symbol of Disruption and Trauma in *The Lovely Bones*." Women's Studies(37): 23.

Bogues, A. (2010). Empire of Liberty: Power, Desire and Freedom. Hanover, NH, Dartmouth College Press.

Bogues, A. (2010). Empire of Liberty: Power, Desire and Freedom. Hanover, NH, University Press of New England.

Bogues, A. (2010). Trauma, Memory and Democracy: The Politics of Historical Catastrophe. B. Bogues. Centre for African Studies, Unpublished.

Bogues, A. (2011). Trauma, Memory and Democracy: The Politics of Historical Castastrophe. Producing Africa. Cape Town, Centre for African Studies, UCT.

Booth, W. J. (2008). "The Work of Memory: Time, Identity and Justice." Social Research **75**(1): 23.

Boraine, A., Levy, Janet., Scheffer, Ronel (1994). Dealing with the Past: Truth and Reconciliation in South Africa. Cape Town, ISASA.

Brink, A. (2003). The Other Side of Silence. London, Vintage.

Bronfen, E. (1996). Over Her Dead Body: Death, Femininity and the Aesthetic. Manchester, Manchester UP.

Brundage, W. H. (2008). Meta Warrick's 1907 "Negro Tableaux" and (Re)Presenting African American Historical Memory. Museums and Difference. D. J. Sherman. Bloomington, Indianapolis, Indiana University Press. **1:** 205-249.

Butler, J. (2004). Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence. London, Verso.

Butler, J. (2004). Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence. London, New York, Verso.

Butler, J. (2009). Frames of War: When is Life Grievable. London, New York, Verso.

Chalfen, R. (1987). Snapshot versions of life. Bowling Green, OH, Bowling Green State University Popular Press.

Christian, B. (1988). "The race for theory." Feminist Studies, **14**(1): 12.

Colvin, C., J (2008). Trauma. New South African Keywords. N. Shepherd, . Robins, Steven. Johannesburg, Athens, Jacana, Ohio**:** 223-224.

Connerton, P. (1999). How Societies Remember. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Coombes, A. (1994). Re-Inventing Africa: Museums, Material CUlture and Popular Imagination. New Haven, Unversity of California Press.

Cratz, C. A., Rassool, C (2006). Remapping the Museum. Museum Frictions. I. Karp, Kratz,C, Szwaja,L,Ybarra-Frausto,T. Durham, London, Duke University Press**:** 347-356.

Derrida, J. (1985). "Racism's Last Word." Critical Enquiry **12**: 9.

Derrida, J. (1994). Specters of Marx: The State of the Debt, the Work of Mourning, and the New International. . New York, Routledge.

Derrida, J. (1994). Spectres of Marx: The State of the Debt, the Work of Mourning, and the New International. New York, Routledge.

Derrida, J. (1995). Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression. Chicago, The University of Chicago Press.

Derrida, J. (1998). Archive Fever. Refiguring the Archive, University of the Witwatersrand, David Philip Publishers.

Dick, A. (2006). "Power is information:myths and fables about acccess." IKMD Newsletter: Umyezo **1**(3): 7-9.

Du Bois, W. E. B. (1903). The Souls of Black Folk. New York, Library of America.

Du Duve, T. (1978). "Time Exposure and Snapshot: The Photograph as Paradox." October **5**: 113-125.

Duphelia-Mesthrie, U. (2009). "The Passenger Indian as Worker: Indian Immigrants in Cape Town in the Early Twentieth Century." African Studies **68**(1): 111-134.

Edkins, J. (2003). Trauma and the Memory of Politics. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Edwards, E. (1990). "Photographic Types: Pursuit of Method." Visual Anthropology **lll**(2-3).

Edwards, E. (1999). Photographs of Objects of Memory. Material Memories: Design and Evocation. M. A. Kwint, J. Breward, C. Oxford, Berg**:** 221-236.

Edwards, E. (2001). *Raw Histories. Photographs, Anthropology and Museums*. Oxford, Berg.

Edwards, E. (2005). "Photographs and The Sound of History." Visual Anthropology Review **21**(1 and 2): 19.

Eyerman (2004). "The Past in the Present: Culture and the Transmission of Memory." ACTA Sociologica **47**(2).

Eyerman, R. (2001). Cultural Trauma: Slavery and the formation of African American Identity. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Fanon, F. (1967). Black Skin Whte Masks. New York, Grove Press.

Field, S. Oral Histories of Forced Removals. Lost Communities, Living Memories: Remembering Forced Removals in Cape Town. S. Fields. Cape Town, Centre for Popular Memory, UCT.

Figley, C. (1985). Trauma and its wake: The study and treatment of post traumatic stress disorder. New York, Brunner / Mazel.

Foucault, M. (1972). The Archeology of Knowledge. New York, Pantheon.

Foucault, M. (1980). Power / Knowledge. Brighton, Harvester.

Foucault, M. (1984). Nietzsche, Genealogy, History,. The Foucault Reader. P. Rabinow. New York, Pantheon Books**:** 76-100.

Foucault, M. (2000). "The Subject and Power". Power: The Essential Works of Michel Foucault. (ed) J. Faubion. New York, New York Press.

François-Xavier Lavenne, V. R., François Tollet (2005). "Fiction, Between Inner Life and Collective Memory. A Methodological Reflection." The New Arcadia Review **3**.

Galassi, P. (1991). Pleasures and terrors of domestic comfort. New York, Museum of Modern Art.

Gell, A. Art and Agency. London, Clarendon Press.

Gibson, J., L (2004). "Truth, Reconciliation, and the Creation of a Human Rights Culture in South Africa." Law & Society Review **38**(1): 5-30.

Godby, M. (2010). "Alfred Martin Duggan-Cronin's photographs for the Bantu tribes of South Africa (1928-1954): the construction of an ambiguous idyll." Kronos (Bellville) **36**(1): 30.

Gonzales, J. A. (1992). "A contemporary Look at Pierre Bourdieu's Photography: A Middle-Brow Art." Visual Anthropology Review **8**(1).

Gonzalez, J. A. (1992). "A contemporary Look at Pierre Bourdieu's Photography: A Middle-Brow Art." Visual Anthropology Review **8**(1).

Greenblatt, S. (1991). Resonance and Wonder. Exhibiting Cultures: The Poetics and Politics of Museum Display. I. Karp, Lavine, Steven. D. Washington, Smithsonian Institution Press**:** 42-56.

Griffin, L., J. Bollen, Kenneth, A. (2009). "What Do These Memories Do: Civil Righst Rememberance and Racial Attitudes." American Sociological Review **74**: 20.

Grunebaum, H. P. (2011). Memorializing the Past: Everyday Life in South Africa after the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. New Jersey, Transaction Publishers.

Gumpert, L. (1994). Christian Boltanski. Paris, Flammarion.

Halbwachs, M. (1980). The Collective Memory. New York, Harper and Row.

Hall, S. (1991). Reconstruction work: images of post-war black settlement. Family Snaps: the meanings of domestic photography. J. H. Spence, P. London, Virago.

Hall, S. (1996). The Afterlife of Frantz Fanon: Why Fanon? Why now? Why Black Skin White Masks. The Fact of Blackness: Frantz Fanon and Visual Representation. A. Read. Seattle, Bay Press**:** 12-37.

Hamber, B., Wilson, Richard (2002). "Symbolic closure through memory, reparation and revenge in post-conflict societies." Journal of Human Rights **1**(1).

Hamilton, C., Harris, V., Reid, G., (2002). Introduction. Re-figuring the Archive. C. Hamilton, Harris, V., Pickover, M., Reid, G., Saleh,R., Taylor, J. Cape Town, David Philip Publishers**:** 6-17.

Hamilton, C., Harris, V., Pickover, M., Reid, G., Saleh,R., Taylor, J. (2002). Refiguring the archive. Dordrecht, Boston, Claremont, David Philip Publishers.

Haney, E. (2010). Photography and Africa. London, Reaktion Books.

Hansard (1995). Debates of the National Assembly. F. P. Second Session. Cape Town, The Government Printer.

Harris, V. (2002). "Contesting, remembering and forgetting: the archive of South Africa's TRC and Peace building." Innovation **24**: 1-8.

Hayes, G. (1998). "We Suffer out Memores: Thinking about the Past, HEaling and Reconciliation." Ameriican Imago **55**(1).

Hayes, P. S., J. Hartmann, W.1998 (1998). Photography, history and memory. The Colonising Camera P. S. Hayes, J. Hartmann, W.1998. Cape Town, University of Cape Town Press.

Hirsch, J. (1981). Family Photographs. Content, Meaning and Effect. New York and Oxford, Oxford University Press.

Hirsch, M. (1997). Family Frames. Photography, Narrative and Postmemory. Cambridge, Massachusetts and London, Harvard University Press.

Hirsch, M. S., L (2009). "Incongruous Images: Before, During and After the Holocaust." History and Theory(48).

Hudgins, N. (2010). "A Historical Approach to Family Photography: Class and Individuality in Manchester and Lille, 1850 - 1914." Journal of Social History(Spring): 26.

Hussein, A. (2010). Interview S. O'Connell. Cape Town, Unpublished.

Hutton, P. (1993). History as an Art of Memory. Hanover,NH, University of Vermont.

Ignatieff, M. (1998). The Warrior's Honour: Ethnic War and the Modern Conscience. London, Chatto and Windus.

Iziko (2005). Policy on the Management of Human Remains in IZIKO Collections. Cape Town, Iziko South African Museum.

Iziko ([n.d]). "History of The Museum." Retrieved 22 February 2010, from http://www.iziko.org.za/sam/muse/history.html.

Jacknis, I. (2008). The Last Wild Indian in North America: Changing Museum Representations of Ishi. Museums and Difference. D. J. Sherman. Bloomington, Indianapolis, Indiana University Press. **1:** 60-96.

Janoff-Bulman, R. (1985). The Aftermath of Victimisation: Rebuilding Shattered Assumptions. Trauma and its Wake. C. R. Figley. New York, Brunner Mazel.

Josephs, M. (1999). Nomadic Identities: The Performance of Citzenship. Minneapolois, University of Minnesota Press.

Josephy, S. (2007). Twin Town. Cape Town, Bell Roberts Publishers.

Judy Atkinson, J. N. a. C. A. Trauma, Transgenerational Transfer and Effects on Community Wellbeing. Working together: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mental health and wellbeing principles and practice. D. P. Purdie N, Walker R. Canberra, Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing**:** 135-145.

Julius, C. (2011). The District Six Museum. S. O'Connell. Cape Town, Unpublished.

Kadar, M., Perreault, Jeanne., Warley, Linda (2009). Introduction: Ambiguities, Distortions, Shifts. Photograhs, Histories and Meanings. M. Kadar, Perreault,Jeanne, Warley, Linda. New York, Palgrave MacMillan**:** 1-8.

Kelley, R., G. (2002). Freedom Dreams. Boston, Beacon Press Books.

Klaaste, S. (2010). Personal Communication: Juggling with the Familiar O. C. Siona. Cape Town.

Klein, K. L. (2000). "On the Emergence of Memory in Historical Discourse." Representations **69**(Special Issue: Grounds for Remembering): 127-150.

Kopf, M. (2008). Trauma, Narrative, and the Art of Witnessing. Slavery in Contemporary Art. Trauma, Memory and Visuality. M. U. Birgit Hähnel. Berlin, LIT Verlag**:** 41-58.

Kramer, S. (2004). "Talking around trauma: on the relationship between trauma, narration and catharsis in literature." TRN-Newsletter 2: Hamburg Institute for Social Research.

Kratz, C. A., Rassool, C. (2006). Remapping the Museum. Museum Frictions: Public Cultures / Global Transformations. I. Karp, Kratz, C.A., Szwaja,L., Ybarra-Frausto, T. Durham, London, Duke University Press**:** 347 - 356.

Kuhn, A. (2002). Family Secrets: Acts of Memory and Imagination. London, New York, Verso.

Kuhn, A. (2007). "Photography and cultural memory: a methodological exploration." Visual Studies **22**(3): 9.

Lalu, P. (2007). "The Virtual Stampede for Africa: Digitisation, Postcoloniality and Archives of the Liberation Struggles on Southern Africa. Cape Town: ." Innovation **34**: 17.

Langford, M. (2001). Suspended Conversations: The Afterlife Memory in Photographic Albums. Montreal, McGill-Queen's University Press.

Langford, M. (2006). Speaking the Album: An Application of the Oral-Photgraphic Framework. Locating Memory: Photographic Acts. A. Kuhn, McAllister, Kirsten E. New York, Oxford, Berghahn Books**:** 223-246.

Langford, M. (2006). Speaking the Album. An Application of the Oral-Photographic Framework. Locating Memory. Photographic Acts. Remapping Cultural History. M. a. K. Langford, A. Oxford and New York, Berghahn Books**:** 223-246.

Laub, D. F., S. (1992). Testimony: Crisis of Witnessing in Literature, Psychoanalysis and History. New York, Routledge.

Lavenne, F.-X., Virginie Renard, Virginia.,Tollet, François (2005). "Fiction, Between Inner Life and Collective Memory. A Methodological Reflection." The New Arcadia Review **3**.

Legassick, M., Rassool, Ciraj (2000). Skeletons in the cupboard : South African museums and the trade in human remains, 1907-1917. Cape Town, Kimberley, South African Museum,McGregor Museum.

Levinas, E. (2002). Paul Celan de l'etre a l'autre. Paris, Fata Morgana.

Levinas, E., Kearney, Richard (1986). Dialogue with Emmanuel Levinas. Face to Face with Levinas. E. Levinas, Kearney, Richard. Albany, SUNY Press.

Liss, A. (1998). Trespassing through shadows: memory, photography, and the Holocaust. Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press.

Liss, A. (1998). Trespassing through shadows: memory, photography, and the Holocaust. Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press.

Lowenthal, D. (1998). The Heritage Crusade and the Spoils of History. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Luckhurst, R. (1996). ""Impossible Mourning" in Toni Morrison's *Beloved* and Michele Robert's *Daughters of the House*." Critique **XXXVll**(4): 17.

Macdonald, G. (2003). "Photos in Wiradjuri Biscuit Tins: Negotiating Relatedness and Validating Colonial Histories." Oceania **73**(4): 17.

Masters, G. (2010). Interview. S. O'Connell. Providence, RI.

Matthews, S. (2011). "Not Forgotten: The Day is Past and Gone: Family Photographs from Eastern North Carolina." Southern Cultures: Photography **1**(Summer 2011): 20.

Mauss, M. (1990). The Gift: Forms and Functions of Exchange in Archaic Societies. London, Routledge.

Mbembe, A. (2002). The Power of the Archive and its Limits. Re-Figuring the Archive. C. Hamilton, Harris, V., Pickover, M., Reid, G., Saleh,R., Taylor, J. Cape Town, David Phillip Publishers**:** 19-26.

McEachern, C. (1998). "Working with Memory: The District Six Museum in the New South Africa." Social Analysis(42 (2)): 24.

Middleton, J. I. (1995). "Confronting The Master Narrative: The Privilege of Orality in Toni Morrison's The Bluest Eye." Cultural Studies **9**(2): 16.

Miller, D. (1998). Material Culture: Why Some Things Matter. London, UCL Press.

Morrison, T. (1987). Beloved. London, Chatto and Windus.

Mudimbe, V. (1988). The Invention of Africa: Gnosis, Philosophy and the Order of Knowledge. Oxford, James Curry.

Mueller, J.-W. (2002). Memory and Power in Post-War Europe. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Ndebele, N. (2010). Arriving home? South Africa beyond transition And reconciliation. In the Balance: South Africans debate reconciliation. F. du Toit, Doxtader, Eric. Johannesburg, Jacana Media.

Nicholson, Z. (2011). New Plan for District 6. Cape Times. Cape Times, Independent Newspapers**:** 1.

Nora, P. (1989). "Between Memory and History: Les Lieus de Mémoire." Representations **26**(Spring): 18.

Nora, P. (1996). "General Introduction: Between Memory and History. Realms of Memory. P. Nora. New York, Columbia University Press. **1:** 1-20.

Norval, A., J. (1998). "Memory, Identity and the (Im)possibility of Reconcillation: The Work of the Truth and Reconcillition Commission in South Africa." Constellation **5**(2): 15.

Ntsebeza, L. (2011). Land Claims and District Six. S. O'Connell. Cape Town.

O'Connell, P. (2011). Stories of My Father. S. O'Connell. Cape Town, Unpublished.

Omar, D. (1995). Building a New Future. The Healing of a Nation? A. Boraine, Levy, Janet., . Cape Town, Justice in Transition.

Ong, W., J (1982). Orality and Literacy. New York, Methuen.

Ong, W., J (1988). "Before Textuality: Orality and Interpretation." Oral Tradition, **3/3**: 10.

Perelli, C. (1993). The power of memory and the memory of power. Repression, Exile and Democracy: Uruguayan Culture. S. Sosnowski, Popkin,L. Durham, NC, Duke Universoty PRess.

Peretz, H. (2005). Facing One's Own' in Family: Photographers photograph their families. London, New York, Phaidon Press Limited.

Peters, M. (2011). District Six couple face new eviction: Trust says their claim is vaild, but they must wait. Weekend Argus. Cape Town, Media 24**:** 1.

Pietersen, M. (2010). "Suspended principal still faces censure." Retrieved 24 December 2011, 2011, from http://www.iol.co.za/news/south-africa/suspended-principal-still-faces-censure-1.673200?ot=inmsa.ArticlePrintPageLayout.ot.

Pinney, C. (2001). Piercing the Skin on the Idol. Beyond Asthestics. C. T. Pinney, N. Oxford, Berg**:** 157-179.

Rabate, J.-M. (1997). Introduction. Writing the Image after Roland Barthes. J.-M. Rabate. Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press**:** 1-18.

Raiford, L. (2009). "Photography and the Practices of Critical Black Memory." History and Theory **48**(Theme Issue): 17.

Raju, R. (2010). The road to unity and social justice: gathering, accessing and preserving Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) records. World Library and Information Congress: 76th IFLA General Conference and Assembly. Gothenburg, Sweden.

Rassool, C. (2006). "Making the District Six Museum in Cape Town." Museum International **58**(1-2).

Ricoeur, P. (2004). Memory, History, Forgetting. Chicago and London, University of Chicago Press.

Robins, S. (2008). Rights. New South African Keywords. N. Shepherd, Robins, Steven. Johannesburg, Athens, Jacana, Ohio**:** 182-194.

Rohde, R. (2010). "Vytjie". A ten-year photographic diary from a Namaqualand village. S. O'Connell. CapeTown. [Personal Correspondence].

Rohde, R. H., T. (2008). "One hundred years of separation: the historical ecology of a South African 'Coloured' Reserve. ." One hundred years of separation: the historical ecology of a South African 'Coloured' Reserve. **78**(2): 33.

Rose, G. (2003). "Family photographs and domestic spacings: a case study." Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers **28**(1): 5-18.

Sachs, A. (2009). The Strange Alchemy of Life and Law. Oxford, Oxford University Press.

SAHO (2011). "Apartheid is 'officially' institutionalised when the Herenigde Nasionale Party wins the general elections." Retrieved 9 January 2012, from http://www.sahistory.org.za/dated-event/apartheid-ã¢â%C2%82¬ë%C2%9Cofficiallyã¢â%C2%82¬â%C2%84¢-institutionalised-when-herenigde-nasionale-party-win.

Sartre, J.-P. (1984). Being and Nothingness. Washington, Washington Square Press.

Sekula, A. (1992). The body and the archive. The contest of meaning: critical histories of photography. R. Bolton. Cambridge, MIT Press.

Shepherd, N. (2008). Heritage. New South African Keywords. N. Shepherd, Robins, Steven. Johannesburg, Athens, Jacana, Ohio**:** 116-128.

Sherman, D. J. (2008). Introduction. Museums and Difference. D. J. Sherman. Bloomington, Indianapolis, Indiana Unversity Press. **1:** 1-21.

Slater, D. (1995). Domestic photography and Digital Culture. The photographic image in digital culture. M. Lister. London, Routledge**:** 129-146.

Sleeper-Smith, S. (2009). Contesting knowledge : museums and indigenous perspectives. Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press.

Smith, S., Watson, Julia. (2001). Reading Autobiography: A Guide for Interpreting Life Narratives. Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press.

Smith, S. M. (2004). Photography on the Colour Line: W.E.B. Du Bois, Race, and Visual Culture. Durham & London, Duke University Press.

Smith, T. (2011). Interview. S. O'Connell. Cape Town, Unpublished.

Sontag, S. (1973). On Photography. New York, Farrar, Strauss and Giroux.

Sontag, S. (2003). Regarding the pain of others. New York, Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

Soudien, C. (1990). District Six: From Protest to Protest. The Struggle for District Six: Past and Present. S. a. S. Jeppie, C. Cape Town, Buchu.

Stallabrass, J. (1996). "Cold Eye':[Review of Pierre Bourdieu, Photography: A Middle Brow Art]." New Left Review(220): 5.

Steedman, C. (2001). "Something She Called a Fever: Michelet, Derrida and Dust." American Historical Review: 21.

Stewart, S. (1984). On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection. Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press.

Stubblefield, T. (2009). Between the Officer and the Artist. Photographs, Histories and Meanings. M. Kadar, Perreault,Jeanne, Warley, Linda. New York, Palgrave & MacMillan**:** 167-184.

Sturken, M. (1999). The Image as Memorial: Personal Photographs in Cultural Memory. The Familial Gaze. M. Hirsch. Hanover and London, University Press of New England**:** 178-195.

Sturken, M. (1999). "Imaging Postmemory/Renegotiating History." Afterimage **56**(6): 3.

Taylor, L. (1994). Visualizing Theory: Selected Essays from V.A.R. New York, Routledge.

Tournier, M. (1987). The Golden Droplet. New York, Doubleday.

Trachtenberg, A. (2008). "Through a Glass, Darkly: Photography and Cultural Memory." Social Research **Vol 75**(1): 22.

Van Alphen, E. (1999). Symptoms of Discursivity: Experience, Memory and Trauma. Acts of Memory. M. e. a. Bal. Hanover, London, Unvervisity Press of New England**:** 24-38.

Van Zyl, S. (2002). Psychoanalysis and the Archive: Derrida's *Archive Fever*. Refiguring the Archive. C. Hamilton, Harris, V., Pickover, M., Reid, G., Saleh,R., Taylor, J, Saleh, R. Boston, Claremont, Dordrecht, David Phillip Publishers.

Verwoerd, W. (1999). "Individual and/or social justice after Apartheid? The South African truth and reconciliation commission." The European Journal of Development Research **11**(2): 115-140.

Walker, C. (2008). Land-Marked: Land Claims & Land Restitution in South Africa. Johannesburg, Athens, Jacana, Ohio Unviversity Press.

Washkansky, D. (2010). Family Photographs. S. O'Connell. Cape Town**:** 1.

Weinberg, P. (2010). Personal Communication on Photography. S. O'Connell. Providence.

Wexler, L. (1999). Seeing Sentiment: Photographs, Race and the Innocent Eye. The Familial Gaze. M. HIrsch. Hanover, London, University Press of New England**:** 248-275.

Willis, D. (1999). A search for self: the phtograph and black family life. The Familial Gaze. M. Hirsch. Hanover, Unversity Press of New England**:** 107-123.

Winer, S. (2011). District Six Images. S. O'Connell. Cape Town.

Wise, M. (2000). "Home, Territory and Identity." Cultural Studies **14**: 295-310.

Wood, C. (2006). Memory at Work: Maurice Halbwachs, Sigmund Freud, and the Sociology of Knowledge in Contemporary Studies of Cultural Memory. American Sociological Association; 2006 Annual Meeting. Montreal.

Wynter, S. (1984). "The Ceremony Must Be Found: After Humanism." Boundary **2**(12).

Zaslove, J., Lowry, Glen (2006). Talking Through: The Space Around Four Pictures. Locating Memory: Photographic Acts. A. Kuhn, McAllister, Kirsten E. New York, Oxford, Berghahn Books**:** 247-268.

Zehr, H. (1997). "Restorative Justice: When Justice and Healing Go Together." Truck Two **6**(3/4): 20.