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'Skinner Stories':

A community's perspective on the representation of coloured people today.

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COMPULSORY DECLARATION

This work has not been previously submitted in whole, or in part, for the award of any degree. It is my own work. Each significant contribution to, and quotation in, this dissertation from the work, or works, of other people has been attributed, and has been cited and referenced.

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Abstract:

This work investigates the meanings coloured people derive from media representations of 'colouredness'. To position coloured identity in post apartheid South Africa, it pays close attention to the ways apartheid stereotypes play themselves out in particularly television media today. It looks at representations of working class coloured identities and asks for a shift in representations which undervalue that identity. Since this research focuses on both an analysis of television content and reception analysis amongst the women of the Cape Flats community of Hanover Park, a working class coloured community, it cannot be removed from questions about the existence of coloured identity. It argues that despite the apartheid imposition of the label it exists in as much as there are those who identify with the label, and therefore give it meaning. This meaning is complicated by working class identities. In looking at the meanings these women derive, negotiate and construct from these narratives, it highlights the impact of gender roles and class not only on the act of reception but the creative processes of meaning generation. This work does not limit itself to a television analysis but also looks at print media in the tabloid, the Daily Voice, since it speaks to a specific working class, coloured market, and highlights its representation of coloured identities. Lastly, there has always existed a cultural link between coloured and African American identities. While recent scholars highlight the importance of this link based on identification with black Diasporas occurring within the coloured community, this work argues that this identification could have negative repercussions. It problematizes the representation of African American masculinities, but more importantly, draws similarities between the representations of coloured women in the soap opera narratives and oppressive caricatures of African American women. It shows that these caricatures have been commercialized through the hip hop genre, questioning the potential for similar images of coloured identity to be normalized and therefore problematizes coloured identification with this American product.

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Chapter One: Introduction

Standing paces away from each other in the kitchen, we still seem to be shouting. Juwaiya prepares supper and tells me about her son, who thinks he's orange. All Juwaiya's mother, Waida, wanted was to hear if Neville would ask Charmaine to marry him on their favourite soap *Sewende Laan*. She watched for weeks and it would finally happen. I watch as Juwaiya's eyes turn to the screen. Magically, her hands peel potatoes while her eyes are now fixed on the screen images. There's no shouting now. Hanover Park seems quiet.

Growing up in Hanover Park on the Cape Flats¹ I never questioned my 'colouredness'. I was surrounded by coloured² people, at home and at school. What was of utmost importance to my ten year old self was that I was a coloured from Hanover Park and the meaning that that carried. One day, a group of my 'friends' made fun of the way I pronounced the word 'salt'. Apparently I had said, 'solt' ignoring the ways I was supposed to curl my tongue in pronouncing the word. This made me 'gam', common, except that my neighbours in Hanover Park pronounced the word the same way. The effect of their mocking endured however, and through the years it became worse, perhaps influencing my decision to work harder at my studies, and before I knew it I had lost my

¹ See map (Addendum A)

² The term coloured is a contested one in the South African context, and is usually accompanied by the prefix 'so-called'. I have decided against this since the label is naturalized by local media, and used specifically as a tool to create notions of national unity explored later. Since this paper largely consists of a media analysis of representations of this group, the identity will be interrogated, but the term/label and its use in SA media accepted.

'gam' accent. Upon finishing school I was accepted to the University of Cape Town, and I moved from my parent's home in Hanover Park to the middle class neighbourhood of Kenilworth. I had made new friends, some of them white friends, and my neighbours were the picture of diversity. Yet, in my journeys home to visit my parents I was filled with feelings of sadness, not happiness. My old neighbours were happy that I was studying further and that I would make 'something of myself', but in doing so, in wishing me well, I realized just how much they didn't value their own existence. They didn't think they were making anything of themselves. To me, Hanover Park was rich with stories that needed to be told, little anecdotes, fights over washing lines, buying koeksisters on a Sunday morning. My job as a writer at the Cape Town tabloid, the Daily Voice came as a blessing. A paper which promised to tell the stories of these people, focused on the areas of Heideveld, Hanover Park and Mitchell's Plain, instead of the upper-class Claremont, or Wynberg. Yet, after weeks at the Daily Voice I saw endless stories simply reinforcing the already well established view of Hanover Park and other areas as ghettos, with tales of drugs, crime, and alcoholism. I left the Voice deciding to research coloured identity and representation.

Initially I set out to investigate notions of coloured identity because of the many misconceptions surrounding this community. More than anything I wanted to talk about coloured identity, mention it, circulate the phrase and examine responses. To me it seemed all too easy to sum up coloured identity as *bruinmense*, while others were so easy to simply equate the identity with Coon Culture. Below, a writer comments on contemporary attitudes about coloured identity:

“Publicly many, possibly even most of them deny they are a definable ethnic group. They occupy an uncomfortable space between those who have political power now and those who gave up their political dominance 11 years ago... They only receive attention from powerful political parties when their roles are sought during election times. In our strange society we call them coloureds. If we want to be extra sensitive, we call them ‘coloureds’, ‘so-called coloureds’ or ‘bruinmense’ (brown people). Outside the big cities they mostly call themselves Kleurlinge. The vast majority of them have the ‘language of the former oppressor’ as their mother tongue... During the recent local elections the official opposition used a slogan often heard from these people after 1994: Before liberation we were not white enough, after liberation we are not black enough”
(www.bruin-ou.com: 1 July 2007)

There was that much-used sound-bite yet again, this time in an article written by journalist Max Du Preez. Here he claims that it seemed most coloured people don’t identify with this label, but this certainly wasn’t true in Hanover Park or the cosmopolitan spaces of the UCT, which I explore in this study.

“It is not politically correct to talk about this group of South Africans. It makes everybody uncomfortable. It is very un-pc of me, as a white Afrikaner male to write about them in this way... Many of the coloured middle class and elite also do not like talking about themselves as a group. In the process we avoid addressing some serious problems in our society”
(www.bruin-ou.com: 1 July 2007)

I wanted to investigate whether this label was still alive, and the meanings attached to it. In turning my attention to reception analysis, here specifically the female sphere of the soap opera genre, but also more broadly media commentary, it was my aim to identify whether my participants felt their coloured identities were being accurately portrayed. In doing so I intend to uncover how they frame and experience those identities. This study has moments of (for lack of a better word) subjective bleakness. These emotions come not only from my position as a South African and the way my national identity makes me hopeful for a truly diverse South Africa, but also because I grew up in the very area examined. My sadness at the alienation and skewed portrayals of the people of Hanover Park were balanced with the knowledge that my engagement with the discourse wasn’t new, nor did it originate in academic debate, but that much of the theories, the

negotiation, the acceptance and rejection of portrayals came from the communities themselves, whether it be the men and women of Hanover Park or the students at UCT.

This study initially aimed to perform an analysis of the representation of women in soap operas but due to the comments of my participants with regard to an array of media depictions I started to ask questions around what 'coloured' meant in South African media? I look not only at the soap operas *Isidingo* and *Sewende Laan* to find and analyse representations of coloured identities, but also at the tabloid the Daily Voice and websites like capeflats.org and bruin-ou.com to illustrate the ways coloured people were creating and recreating their own identities.

I start this qualitative study by looking at the history of a coloured identity and highlight the cultural traditions like the Coon Carnival which accompany this label. I show that since its origin, coloured identity has been intricately linked with a working class identity. I continue by outlining the stereotypes around this identity. Stereotypes used by the apartheid propaganda machine to further distance the non white or black masses (and here I rather use black in its collective meaning as those oppressed by the apartheid system on the basis of race). Due to the negative connotations of a coloured identity and the widespread disassociation by coloured people of a black African identity, I show that researchers applauded coloured identification with a "global blackness" through hip hop music (Yarwood: 2006). I argue that this identification isn't necessarily positive based on the stereotypes which surrounded African American identities and link it further to coloured identities.

What follows is what one may call a journey home to my community of Hanover Park. Here I find men and women with a profound sense of community, based on a collective identity that is not so much linked by race and ethnicity, but rather through class. I am also faced with profound resentment in some instances, illustrated by feelings of political alienation. But I also encounter a sense of assertion in the ways this community has actively identified the problems of self-representation. They have challenged the toothless gangster, and the asexual Mammy. This disapproval and these challenges are echoed by the coloured students at UCT, who despite their class differences to the people of Hanover Park question the media's representation of coloured people in this 'Rainbow Nation'. It is these views that this paper highlights, and argues for caution, in doing so issuing a warning. Using the American example, and the early stereotypes of African American identities, I show that today, through hip hop and rap music, these representations are commonplace. This is my fear for the stereotypes which surround coloured identity - that the day will come when they go unnoticed, and that these images will have dollar, or here, rand value.

In short, my study will question current South African media representations of coloured people, specifically coloured women. I will pay close attention to the ways apartheid stereotypes play themselves out in post-apartheid media. Using this I will theorise the possible future of coloured identity given the ways in which meaning and collective identities are constructed in coloured communities, I will also explore whether these identities are mirrored in media representations. A second part of

this study connects the caricatures of coloured female identities to those established myths around African American femininity. I choose this group since the identification between SA coloured identities and African American identities are often commented upon, but I would add that when looking at the class fissures amongst the African American population, and the ideology used to undervalue their identity, there are similarities not only in ways of expression but also in the myths used to oppress, myths which, to some extent, are alive and well today.

It isn't the attempt of this research to provide a complete profile of the coloured community, however it can be considered in three broad sections; coloured histories, contemporary views on coloured identity by those who carry its label, and the future of coloured identities, considering both challenges and possibilities for reinvention. In discussing coloured histories, Chapter 2 of this dissertation asks us to rethink coloured identity and the markers thereof. It argues that coloured identity is one which is firmly rooted in working class identities. It highlights and explains apartheid stereotypes of coloured identities and shows also, its connections with working class identities. It also takes issue with previous research on coloured identity. Using the works of Elaine Salo (2003) it questions the media's possibility to allow coloured girls to traverse social spaces. In Chapter 3 it shows the benefits of reception analysis since through it, one discovers the meanings audiences derive from texts through various contextual lenses. It highlights the choice of research site and the important historical developments that have led to this choice. Chapter 4 illustrates how understandings of coloured culture are rooted in ideas of coloured masculinity, and calls for female perspectives on coloured identity.

Chapter 5 investigates the women of Hanover Park and their interpretations of the Afrikaans soap opera *Sewende Laan* and discovers and challenges portrayals of coloured affluence and their position alongside images of the Cape Coon. Chapter 6 discusses the ways in which the female participants of Hanover Park identify strongly with the characters in these soaps, using a gender analysis of a woman's time and the nature of the soap form. Chapter 7 searches for a younger, and perhaps more privileged perspective on coloured identity as it asks UCT female students to analyse the representation of 'colouredness' in the soap *Isidingo*. Chapter 8 draws on themes from the field to show that coloured advancement in the soap *Isidingo* depends on the disavowal of the markers of coloured identity. Chapter 9 shows that *Sewende Laan* strongly stereotypes black femininity and that this correlates with coloured racism towards the black community. Chapter Ten uses the tabloid, the Daily Voice as a text which speaks solely to coloured people and highlights its representations of coloured female as spectacle. Chapter 11 looks at stereotypes of African American femininity and links it to the stereotypes of coloured women, it then shows how these US stereotypes have become acceptable through its presence in mass circulated hip hop and rap music. In doing so, it questions whether coloured stereotypes, based on their existence in post-apartheid and democratic South Africa are to have similar results. Lastly, this paper highlights new avenues which exist for coloured expression, and shows that, while some comment on the assertion of a coloured identity, there is also evidence of its reinvention.

Chapter Two: Coloured Histories; Past to Present

Literature Review

This chapter examines academic theorizing around the notion of coloured identity, and uses existing literature as a framework for an introductory analysis of media images expressing and influencing this identity. I use the term ‘notion’ since by and large there is no agreement on the existence of such an identity outside of its apartheid construction. This chapter considers these debates in light of the markers of a coloured identity that many academics and politicized³ coloureds (Adhikari: 2006) would deny. The review also considers comments around the status of a coloured identity in a post apartheid, democratic era, in which perhaps the claim of a coloured identity has political roots, much in opposition to the 1970s ‘denial’ of coloured identity. Lastly this chapter considers particularly coloured youth and the position they hold in terms of the influx of media images of successful people of colour (not coloureds) and the realities of their existence. This chapter acts as a background to a larger discussion around issues of media representation of a coloured group whose legitimate existence is often denied, defined as intermediate, or co opted into broader racial definitions. This ignores the realities of identity construction based on appearance, language, and geographical location. I start to situate coloured identity with scholarship by Mohammed Adhikari since his account traverses colouredness from its inception to its post-apartheid condition.

³ By politicized here I refer to those coloureds who accepted black consciousness theories. The popularity of this view led to a limited denial of coloured identity, since the denial never spread through the coloured community at large.

Coloured Origins

Mohammed Adhikari (2006) writes extensively on coloured identity and his work is useful to explore an historical perspective on this group. He states that much of what has been written around issues of coloured identity either reproduces, “simplistic formulations of popular racist conceptions of coloured identity, or, focuses narrowly on coloured protest politics and the social injustices suffered by the community” (467). This approach typically sees ‘coloured’ as being a mix of black and white, ignoring the complex processes that gave rise to this group. Many writers consider the term coloured, only as a label oppressively imposed upon people by the apartheid system. However it tends to ignore the ways in which, after the imposition of this label, coloured people made sense of their own identities, as it rather victimizes them. It tends to ignore aspects of human agency (Adhikari: 2006).

Adhikari talks of an early start to the notion of a coloured identity, despite the label only receiving its name later through the Population Registration Act⁴, an apartheid law which classified an individual’s race group based on their physical appearance. But even in its early form, it was an identity based on its members’ deliberate exclusion from a larger black, South African majority:

“Not only did significant numbers of Africans, especially Xhosa speakers, start coming to the Western Cape from the 1870’s onwards but assimilated colonial blacks and a wide variety of

⁴ The Population Registration Act of 1950 enforced rigid racial classification of the bases of appearance or racial phenotype. Not only did this result in the humiliation of those classified but resulted in the disintegration of families and self hatred in those who attempted to ‘pass’ for white (Venter: 1974)

coloured people who had recently been incorporated into the Capitalist economy were thrust together in a highly competitive environment of the newly established mining towns. These developments drove acculturated colonial blacks to assert a separate identity in order to claim a position of privilege relative to Africans on the closer assimilation to Western culture and being partly descended from European colonists” (Adhikari: 2006: 470).

It would seem then that well before the arrival of a formalized apartheid system coloured people foregrounded their sense of resemblance, both physically and culturally to their Western colonizers.

This idea of merit through symbolic or physical resemblance is evidenced in the hopes of assimilation shared by coloured people during the late 19th century. These political aims were brought together in the APO (the African Political Organization), formed in 1912. It acted as the main political front of coloured political representation and, “[it] became the main vehicle for expressing this community’s assimilationist aspirations” (Adhikari: 2006: 471). The need for assimilation for coloured people came from the belief that mastering the symbols and behavioral practices of Western society would gain them access into the privileged world of their colonizer, and that mastery thereof would be rewarded despite markers of their African heritage or mixed ancestry. This would aid their inclusion into dominant society. Being welcomed into dominant society would also compensate for the racist belief that coloured people would be worthy of admission into privileged society only if they were to negate, and deny a black, or slave heritage, while honoring a real, or imagined European heritage. Put simply, they weren’t quite white enough. This idea of access into a dominant society via acquiring the markers of that society is useful when we later consider Salo’s (2003) arguments of how Cape Flats girls obtain their means of access into Cape Town’s cosmopolitan spaces.

The need for assimilation continues with many coloured people even 'passing' for white during Population Registration, thereby gaining access to dominant society by being able to not only master the symbolic signifiers and markers of this society through, perhaps speech and dress, but also having the physical appearance which hides a mixed ancestry. These ideas of fitting into the dominant white society and of a separate coloured identity were challenged in the 1970s by black Consciousness ideology. This view stressed the idea of black unity, and, that the term 'coloured' was an apartheid construction designed merely to further segregate the black majority. According to this belief system being part of a larger black group was based on whether power was being directly (via laws) or indirectly (via ideology) being taken from you. In this view, being black was based on whether one was oppressed by a system. However, Adhikari (2006) argues that this view of coloured identity as an apartheid construction did not prove popular with coloured people at large, but proved particularly popular with the educated, middle class members of the coloured population (477). Steffen Jensen (2004) looks at the concept of community in the coloured townships of Cape Town, but makes a useful point that apartheid policy carried ideas of institutionalized paternalism facilitating assimilation based on drawing a distinction between coloured working classes and coloured elite, the latter marked by their closer resemblance to white, high culture. "The racialized knowledge of a troubled coloured community was institutionalized in what became the Department of Coloured Affairs (DCA), the institution of separate development charged with looking after and caring for the coloured population" (Jensen: 2004: 186). The mission of the DCA was to uplift the lower coloured classes with the help of co-opted coloured elite. The DCA was terminated with the start of the new political dispensation

but the institutionalized social categories which it created through class and racial divisions proved long-lasting.

If one ignores academic debates, coloured identity as a construction failed, since during elections, “political parties across the ideological spectrum made ever more strident appeals to coloured identity for support. Not only did it once again become politically acceptable to espouse a coloured identity, but post apartheid South Africa has also witnessed a rapid retreat of coloured rejectionism and a concomitant coloured assertiveness” (Adhikari: 2006: 472). One would be inclined to accept this view considering that tabloids like the Daily Voice, launched by the Independent Group in 2005 are being called ‘coloured papers’, speaking to a daily readership of 230 000, with 80% of these readers being coloured (www.saarf.co.za: 30 February 2007), media images of the Coon Carnival presented as representative of coloured people, even on African language shows like Zola 7, presented by popular kwaito star Zola on SABC1, and websites like bruin-ou.com claiming to, “educate the South African and world population at large on what it means to be a coloured...and promote coloured culture in all its facets” (www.bruin-ou.com: 1 July 2007). What is interesting is that most of these examples seem to forward a working class view of coloured identity, one which not only speaks of the existence of coloured identity, but also guarantees the existence of a coloured culture. The following paragraphs will examine the markers of coloured culture, both in festival and linguistically, which also adds to a view of coloured identity being marked by class identities.

On Coloured Culture

Denis Constant-Martin provides an interesting framework for a discussion of coloured culture which many would disagree with, but which ties in with a popular view of coloured people. “[C]ulture is largely a symbolic structure of signification and comprehension...[which] ties in with the philosophical view of culture as a web of connections, an idea which has its origins in the philosophy of aesthetics, and which allows us clearly and unambiguously to situate the coloureds of South Africa. Like a continuum, coloured culture can traverse all strata of society. It ranges from the more specific, for instance the popular festivals of Cape Town, to the general which embodies elements of structure, meaning and understanding shared by all South Africans, and which is part of a human universal creativity” (Constant-Martin: 1998: 532). The apartheid system through its process of naming undoubtedly had an impact on the shared South African understanding of race, and an understanding of culture which receives critique from many spheres, but it is in the specific expressions of a coloured culture that there is also disagreement.

Lisa Baxter (2001) gives an neat description of the Coon Carnival when she states, “The Coon Carnival, as it is known, takes place on 1 and 2 January (though the second is the bigger celebration), and consists, in its present form, of a street procession through Cape Town’s City Centre to a variety of out-of-town competition venues. Here, carnival troupes vie for prestige and trophies awarded for a variety of solo and choral numbers. The stage competition is the culmination of months of practice in halls and backyards across the Cape Flats and in the City Centre beginning around the preceding September”

(57). It is interesting that here Baxter highlights the idea that these practices take place in backyards throughout the Cape Flats, predominantly a working class coloured area. Perhaps, this gives fuel to a later discussion around the 'ownership' of the Coon Carnival as a symbolic marker of coloured cultural identity. Baxter uses historian Vivian Bickford-Smith to show that we can find traces of the Coon Carnival as far back as 1823 when coloured bands marched through Cape Town. These marches welcomed the New Year and the day on which slavery was abolished in Cape, Emancipation Day, on 1 December 1834, was similarly celebrated (1994: 298). Members who participate in the Carnival, are almost wholly from the working class members of the coloured community (Baxter: 2001: 88). It would seem then that in this instance, celebrations which are commonly highlighted as expressions of coloured identity are accepted and celebrated predominantly by working class members of that community and not shared by the coloured group as a whole.

Could we then assume that it is the working classes who embraced the apartheid construction of coloured identity? That the class position and resources of coloureds that are 'better-off' allow them to see through it? Could it be that bourgeois coloureds play observer to these expressions of culture because of its attachment to the lower classes, and they are merely distancing themselves from the class association rather than the cultural association? Many politicized coloured people distance themselves from the Carnival as a representation of coloured culture even if they define themselves as coloureds. They deny the Coon Carnival as being part of a coloured culture since for the ideological continuation of apartheid the view of coloured as the Coon, seemed useful. The Coon is offered as a stereotypical representation of coloured masculinity much like

the Sambo character, and the Coon caricature of the Jim Crow era in the US which stereotyped African American (and importantly **masculinity**). Here, the coloured man is seen as entertaining and amusing, and no real threat to white rule. Poet James Matthews highlights this view of the coloured man in his rejection of the label of coloured man as Coon:

I am no minstrel
who sings of joy
but the words I write
are of pain and of rage
my heart drowned in bitterness
with the agony of what white mans law has done
(Adhikari: 2003: 175)

Then Matthews takes full aim at the Coon Carnival when he writes:

Coloured folks garish in Coon grab
Sing and dance in the hot sun
Their faces smeared a fool's mask
Happy New Year, my baas, a drunken shout
To whites who applaud and approve
Their annual act of debasement
(Adhikari: 2003: 178)

The acknowledgement of these uses would serve to disconnect the celebration from its positive origins. Many would argue that this sense of confusion around coloured culture led coloured people to look elsewhere for identification, since the US experience resonated with a working class coloured one.

In examining scholarship around coloured identity, theorists discuss links via identification with media images, and possibly political identification, with African Americans through the influx of American media (Haupt: 2001; Yarwood: 2006). Traces of this can also be found in the start of the Coon Carnival. It is interesting that in this public display of coloured cultural identity, whether we believe its working class label or

not, there are markers of African American identities. The image of the African American minstrel is one which also receives much critique because of its stereotypical portrayal of black Americans as entertainers.

“The Carnival’s strong American overtones, however, manifested in the blackened face Coon disguise and the frequent use of popular transatlantic songs, emerged only in 1888 after the visit of the Orpheus H. McAdoo’s Jubilee singers a year previously...and the appearance of revelers in American minstrel costume in 1888 marked the start of a significant black American link that was to characterize the Carnival well into the next century”
(Baxter: 2001: 88).

Across the seas criticisms of these representations of the ‘minstrel’ connect African American and coloured people. Where positive markers of African American identity reach even South African shores in the form of music, spoken word, stage, in the form of TV shows and film, some aspects connecting the African American experience to a larger black diaspora, where does this leave the coloured experience? Here I look to interactive media such as the Internet, where it seems coloured identity is being commented upon and negotiated by those who carry its label.

Recently much attention through television shows and academic writing has been given to the website bruin-ou.com (Bosch: 2007). It acts as not only a forum for coloured people but seeks to offer insight into the coloured experience to a South African and a world audience. During the initial stages of this research in 2005, however, Vincent Williams, a programme manager at The South African Institute for Democracy wrote for a website called capeflats.org. Here he sought to define the coloured experience, but more

explicitly the Cape Flats coloured experience, through his own experiences of the Flats⁵. I find this useful since it gives a personalized approach to a study that has remained fairly academic. He defines a coloured experience largely in class terms that is difficult to reconcile with the current social and economic changes in South Africa. “In essence, the people of the Cape Flats defy any concise description – it is precisely this inability to pin down, to put into a neat box that I find so exciting and challenging. My neighbour and I may live next to each other: yet at the same time, we are worlds apart. What we have in common though, is that we are from the Cape Flats, or as we would say *vannie Town*”⁶ (www.capeflats.org: 30 June 2005).

Williams also claims that the Cape Flats has its own vernacular, known as *gamtaal*. “However, most people on the Cape Flats, while regarded as Afrikaans speakers, in fact speak what is commonly called ‘Kapie-taal’ It is predominantly Afrikaans, but includes English and a few Xhosa words as well. Amongst older people it is also not uncommon to find a few Dutch words” (www.capeflats.org: 30 June 2005). It is generally assumed that *gamtaal* or ‘Kapie-taal’ finds its roots amongst the working class members of the coloured group and is kept alive by this group and media which cater to them, evidenced in the language of the daily tabloid the Daily Voice, which, as mentioned earlier speaks to a large Cape Flats, coloured audience. In a Daily Voice article (March 7, 2007) the headline reads: ‘*Ons het jou nommer*’, which directly translated from Afrikaans means, ‘We have your number’, but in its Cape Flats context would indicate that the Daily Voice

⁵ In line with the segregationist policies of apartheid, many people of colour were forcefully removed from their homes under the Group Areas Act (1957). Coloured people were predominantly moved to the Cape Flats, a sandy flat land in Cape Town.

⁶ This literally translates as ‘from Town’, but here conveys a sense of being down to earth, ‘we know where we come from’

has exposed, or uncovered something, in this case a drug den. The lead and first sentence reads: “A Cape Flats tik house is operating right across the road from a playground. The Daily Voice exposed the smokkie’s house yesterday with the help of an addict who wants to kick the habit.” The word ‘smokkie’ commonly refers to a shebeen, or a house that illegally sells liquor, but here it is used to describe a drug dealer. Also, the name tik was given to the drug commonly known as crystal meth because of the sound made when using the drug. To the Daily Voice and to Williams the vernacular would seem to be a symbolic expression of Cape Flats identity or working class coloured identity. In a recent debate on coloured identity at the University of Cape Town on March 22nd, speaker and oral historian Vincent Kolbe mentions how today many middle class coloured children mockingly use *gamaal*, and switch back to formal English, possibly as a means to show what they are not. He also mentions how coloured youths today make a distinction between themselves and other coloureds based on these markers, cementing these divisions with labels like ‘Better Coloureds’ or BC and ‘Even-Better-Coloureds’ or EBC. They seem to take ownership of their coloured identity but make a point of distancing themselves from the very people who are assumed to be the carriers of this identity (Kolbe: 22 March 2007).

Through an examination of the history of coloured people Mohammed Adhikari (2006) gives an indication that *gamaal* is typically viewed as a representation of the coloured community on the whole when he writes, “...those cultural features commonly accepted as distinctively coloured have generally been denigrated and accorded low status in South African society. The Afrikaans vernacular distinctive of the coloured community and

variously referred to as ...*Gamtaal* (language of Ham) or *Kombuis* (kitchen) Afrikaans has, for example, customarily been stigmatized as a mark of social inferiority...As early as 1910 the APO thus urged coloured people to 'endeavor to perfect themselves in English [and] drop the habit of expressing themselves in the barbarous Cape Dutch', which is described as being fit only for the kitchen" (483). Today, expressing oneself in *gamtaal* is seen to be a marker of social inferiority. This is interesting since Hip Hop groups like 'Brasse Vannie Kaap' use *gamtaal* as a means of political critique in their music. They do this by using the language of those in power and showing how they have changed it to suit their local context. In this way it becomes a political statement (Haupt: 2001). This is perhaps further articulated by Victor 'J', a popular deejay at the community radio station Bush Radio. Here, he uses the 'coloured vernacular' of *gamtaal* giving him an instant rapport with his listenership by highlighting him as a genuine character, unashamed of his roots. Since *gamtaal* has been viewed as a marker of social inferiority, it is useful to examine the ways in which coloured identity has been stereotyped for political aims.

Stereotyped Coloured Identities

What has been highlighted as assumed markers of coloured cultural identity are in fact markers of working class identity, and in many instances are a stereotyped representation thereof. In some instances however, this stereotypical representation is used to affirm identities by being accepted and meanings negotiated. Vincent Williams highlights representations of coloured people. Even though his gaze ignores stereotypical representations of the coloured female it is a useful base for discussion, since once again

he highlights that these representations are commonly attributed to the people of the Cape Flats. Yet, we should not ignore that the analysis of these stereotypes is from a masculine perspective. We should question whether these stereotypes have a class and racial grounding today, or whether it ignores coloureds who have achieved higher class status. “When thinking about the people of the Cape Flats, there are two archetypal images which come to mind. The first is that of a man dressed up in a colourful costume with his face painted (I have yet to see a woman portrayed like this). The second is the smiling face of a somewhat scruffy-looking fellow, minus his four front teeth. A third image which is less common is that of a fisherman at the harbour hauling *snoek*...out of a fishing boat. These are the typical images portrayed by the mass media when they make references to the people of the Cape Flats (www.capeflats.org: 30 June 2005). Williams posits these stereotypes as present day representations by the mass media of coloured people, but he fails to highlight specific examples of when and how these occur. Also, as mentioned earlier, Williams ignores the place held by coloured women in these stereotypes. What of the flower seller in Adderley Street? While Williams foregrounds the stereotypical representations of coloured people in mass media, John Western (1996) does a similar analysis but pays specific attention to apartheid print media.

Within the stereotypes that surround coloured people the first that Western highlights is the idea of white ownership. Western states, “The use of the Afrikaans phrase ‘*ons bruinmense*’ or ‘our brown people,’ a usage that I would call ‘the imperial possessive’-is widespread amongst Whites in South Africa” (Western: 1996: 15). Western then proceeds to quote a piece which appeared in the Cape Times, 21 May 1976. This would

be useful to illustrate what informed Western's argument and gives an indication of apartheid print media:

"As one devotee of the wash-house put it: "They've been part of my life for the past 25 years and are really part of the Africana of the city. I'll certainly never give up my washer-woman, unless she gives me up. It is not only a question of getting the washing done, but there is this relationship that enriches my life, and I'd like to think does so for her. I know my Fatima, her family, her children, her problems. And over our long association she knows everything about my household"

(Western: 1996: 15)

This woman/man's love for his/her washerwoman may seem innocent enough, but inherent in their statement is the idea of ownership. The idea of ownership finds its root in slavery in the Western Cape. From the very start slave masters would name their slaves. But an example of this psychological branding that is encompassed in the power to name exists today. There are many coloured people who share surnames like Pieterse, or Abrahamse. Western argues that the suffix 'se' denotes ownership and that there is a good chance that the master in this case would have been Abraham, or Pieter. The slave therefore would have been owned by Pieter, or Abraham. This idea of ownership clearly translated into the apartheid era of Capitalist racial oppression where the labour force were typically people of colour and therefore 'owned'

Western states that, "a second feature of the Coloured stereotype is the groups 'bastard'" nature (Western: 1996: 16). By this myth it is assumed that people of mixed ancestry came into the world as a result of the basest of human desires, that of lust. This is extended to assume that because they are simply a mixture, not a people in their own right. Oliver Schreiner writes:

"The Half-caste came into the world as the result of the most undifferentiated sex instinct... To his father he was the broken wineglass left from last night's feast or as the remembrance of last year's sin-a thing one would rather forget"

(Schreiner as in Western: 1923: 126-127)

The idea of being ‘mixed’, neither black nor white, but an abhorrent mixture of the two was later embraced by a Cape Flats gang called the “Mongrels” (Western: 1996: 17). The idea of not being a ‘pure breed’ or of ‘pure blood’ is then later appropriated.

The third stereotype that Western mentions in the whites mythic view of coloureds is that of the drunken coloured (Western: 1996: 17). To expand on this Western argues that this view possibly found its route when the Dutch traded brandy with the Khoi people of the Western Cape for livestock (Western: 1996:17). But this translates later into what Western calls the “tot system” (also known as the ‘dop system’), where “Coloured farm labourers are part paid in wine” (Western: 1996: 17).

The fourth part of the stereotype is that coloured people are “musical” (Western: 1996: 18). One of the greatest tasks for coloured slaves and servants was to provide music for their masters. “The musical image received a boost from the visit to the Cape of an American ‘darky minstrel’ troupe during Queen Victoria’s jubilee in 1887. The troupe’s style, apparently, was copied and parodied by Coloureds” (Western: 1996:17). The image of the musical coloured can be interpreted as a derogatory one, but it can be reversed whereby, the image of the musical, “happy jester” (Western: 1996: 19), uses music and humour to critique those in power without them even knowing it through humour and music. South Africa itself has a history of the Arts being used as a form of protest and a tool for liberation. One only has to look at the the music of jazz legend Abdullah Ibrahim to realise that coloured people were not entirely on the periphery of this movement.

“A fifth theme of the stereotype revolves around the hopelessness and powerlessness of the Coloured people, who have been discounted as a serious threat to white hegemony for at least the last 100 years” (Western: 1996: 19). As I discussed earlier, usually the characteristic leaders of a rebellion are those who are oppressed but are relatively empowered. In the case of South Africa these are coloured people. Western argues that coloured people are present in, especially post war politics, but their positions have been “overlooked or understated” by “White hegemony” (Western: 1996: 19). After the 1976 riots the Natal Daily News reported:

“There has been an unreal tendency to see the mixed-race people of the Cape as rather carefree, colourful and amusing appendages of the White establishment. A kind of quaint Gamat (*diminutive of the forename Mogamat*) version of those faithful Amos ‘n Andy retainers beloved of the American South”
(Western: 1996: 19)

The idea of a coloured being relatively powerless is shown in this picture (Addendum A) of a coloured gardener who had just raked a pile of leaves shown here in the Argus, May 1976. It is interesting to compare this image of the powerless and neutered coloured with that of stereotypes of black men especially. Constantly quoted through apartheid media was the idea of ‘*Die Swart Gevaar*’, referring to the threat of the black majority in South Africa.

Western (1996) states that a “seventh part of the stereotype is Coloured involvement in crime and violence” (24). Western argues that this is the predominant view held by “Whites” in Cape Town, of the Cape Flats. It then states that there are even coloured people, usually of a higher class, who have the same view of the Cape Flats and the people who live there.

The last stereotype that Western highlights is based on their supposed “sexual profligacy” (25). Here Western describes the view that coloured people are somehow exotic, that they are closer to the earth, and removed from upper class refinement. There is a sexual element to this exoticism in that coloured women are often eroticised. Oliver Schreiner in 1923 writes:

“It is always asserted that he [the Half-caste] possesses the vice of both parent races and the virtues of neither; that he is born especially with a tendency to be a liar, cowardly, licentious, and without self respect... Three fourths of the prostitutes who fill our brothels and lock-hospitals are ‘coloured’...”
(Western: 1996: 26).

The stereotypes that Western highlights here are useful later in this study when we consider in particular the representations of coloured women on SA TV. We can look at the ways in which television affirms certain elements of these stereotypes and in other ways adds to them in their representations of coloured femininity.

These stereotypes highlighted by Western are useful for outlining existing apartheid stereotypes of coloured people. But film analysis gives a framework with recognizing problems with representation that are possibly not this obvious. The issues of representation are entwined in relations of power and typically deal with representations of the colonized peoples in filmic history. The broader, and yet more insidious framework that Louise Spence and Robert Stam (1983) create for filmic representations of the oppressed or disadvantaged and in this case the colonized, provide suitable links to present day representations of the formerly oppressed in a South African context. This link exists since many of the points deal with problems that arise when diversity and inclusion is forced.

With regards to issues of representation there has always been an insistence on ‘positive images’. The inclusion of these images, and overall positive images of representation (which are too often reduced to sugary portrayals), Stam and Spence (1983) argue, are sometimes just as insulting as “overtly degrading ones, providing a bourgeois façade for paternalism” (121). They argue that in this sense those in power often patronize the oppressed by providing images they think this groups wants which don’t mirror reality.

Often a distortion of the oppressed isn’t the problem at all, at times there is a total lack or absence of representation of the group, or the complex histories that gave rise to the group. An example of this is when coloured people are merely portrayed as a mixture of black and white and the complex ancestries aren’t even alluded to in South African media.

Thirdly, “the exclusion of whites from a film can also be the result of white racism” (Stam and Spence: 1983: 125). Evidence of this can be found in many South African films of the 1980’s, often made by white filmmakers for black audiences. This can also be an example of paternalism, in that the inclusion of white characters distorts a myth of black empowerment and a fantasy of separate existence, in line with the apartheid ideals of separate development.

A fourth aspect of representation is the total exclusion of the language of the colonized. “The languages spoken by Third World peoples are often reduced to an incomprehensible

jumble of background murmurs, while major ‘native’ characters are consistently obliged to meet the colonizer on the colonizer’s linguistic turf” (Stam and Spence: 1983: 125).

What does this mean with specific reference to coloured people? If continuous representations of coloured people portray them as social agents in Salo’s cosmopolitan spaces, with the linguistic markers of this space, it marks local vernaculars as ‘less than’ and entry into white spaces of privilege characterized by a loss of these linguistic markers. Later, a rapper from Cape Town highlights the importance he places on performing his music in the local vernaculars since it creates powerful identification.

Perhaps in line with Berger’s (2000) arguments of the SABC and its democratic mandate of national unity, comes a view that we should be careful of “naïve intergrationism which simply inserts new heroes and heroines, this time drawn from the ranks of the oppressed, into old functional roles that were themselves oppressive, much as colonialism invited a few, assimilated ‘natives’ to join the club of the elite” (Stam and Spence: 1983: 127). To elaborate, when coloured characters on South African television are simply placed into roles which show them as suddenly being part of a world characterized by apartheid media as a white one, does this give the impression to the coloured group that access to this world is possible? This could also simply make the coloured character easier to deal, and identify with, by audiences used to old methods of identification and styles of representation circulated by apartheid media, by removing traces of ethnic background? I continue this discussion of assimilation in Chapter 3.

Lastly, in the analysis of media depictions of the oppressed we should be careful not to ignore more technical elements of the medium. Factors, such as the time afforded to each character, which lead to questions of the “respect afforded the character” (Stam and Spence: 1983: 135). This impacts on whether viewers are inclined to identify with the character or not.

A gendered Identity

I use the scholarship of Elaine Salo extensively in the following section since her scholarship links thematically with a focus on working class identities through her research area, the Cape Flats community of Manenberg, but also in the ways she highlights media images as having positive effects on the girls she speaks to. This, she argues enables them to cross social spaces. This is of importance to my study since Salo highlights the importance of women in these working class communities and social mobility, while I argue that in many cases working class coloured women feel alienated by media images that portray affluence.

Salo discusses the subject of media and cultural flows from the north and their impact on Manenberg. It is interesting that Salo chose this area for a study that in part, considers media messages, since SA media representations of this community confine it to images of a gang ridden coloured township. Salo argues against the view that “cultural flows from the north” lead to “cultural homogenization and hegemonisation” (www.ruc.dk: 10 April 2005). She argues that her subjects, mainly a group of teenage girls, have a degree of agency in that they shape and negotiate the meanings of Western media. It is

interesting that Salo posits this view since a fair amount of her analysis considers watching local media with the girls and in her study she rarely makes mention of these imported cultural productions. Despite this, her argument is useful to this study since she claims that media images give the girls in Manenberg the social codes necessary to traverse social spaces, thereby going from the community of Manenberg, and entering spaces which more accurately represent a diverse and non racial South Africa. We shall keep this point in mind when we consider the symbolic or cultural sacrifices and acquisitions necessary for entry into these cosmopolitan social spaces. While these cultural flows via media messages do have an impact on coloured identity, let us consider the administrative ways in which the coloured group, were, and are, gendered, since it gives an indication of the respected place of women in Cape Flats townships.

Salo argued that both the way in which the apartheid system gendered coloured identity occurred through methods of finance, by almost awarding coloured women a position crucial for the flow of income into coloured homes. This occurred in two ways, "...the apartheid state assumed that all households conformed to the westernized two parent family norm where fathers and mothers fulfilled stereotypical gendered roles.

Consequently, welfare grants were only payable to women as mothers and public housing was only provided to families with women and children" (www.ruc.dk: 10 April 2005). A second way in which this took place was through the "feminization of the labour force in the textile industry" (www.ruc.dk: 10 April 2005). This together with the "impact of the coloured Labour Preference Policy in the Western Cape [which favoured coloured

employment over black Africans] resulted in coloured women being preferred workers” (www.ruc.dk: 10 April 2005).

Within the communities of the Cape Flats Salo also highlights the specific roles fulfilled by the women in Manenberg. These women typically act as conduits between members of the community and government through their dealings with government administrative institutions through the collection of welfare grants, disability, trips to rent offices, and their knowledge of these procedures aid the community (www.ruc.dk: 10 April 2005). A second role these women play is a policing one. Their stereotypical, but cemented roles as mothers extend to other members of the community, simply through social interaction with other women, they air their approval or disapproval of behaviour, dress, and romantic liaisons of both male and younger female members of the community (www.ruc.dk: 10 April 2005). In highlighting the invaluable roles that women play in these communities she does suggest how they have lost power in the post-apartheid era due to economic circumstances. Grants, which afforded these women so much power before have been decreased and many factories have closed down, seriously affecting the coloured, female labour force, leaving many unemployed.

But what of their roles as symbolic mothers of the community, do they still hold this power? Salo would suggest that these roles remain intact, but I would suggest that if one of Salo’s sub arguments is that the media, give particularly the young female members of this community access to the social codes and highlight the symbolic markers which allow them to traverse different social settings, then it is perhaps the media that also chips away at the parenting function that these women used to hold.

The role of women as mothers in Manenberg is useful in understanding the role of coloured women in Cape Flats townships, in that this is to be the future for many girls from these townships. Roles based on archaic notions of womanhood being equal to motherhood, symbolic or otherwise. Salo argues that the media allows girls from Manenberg to escape these archaic notions of gender but that it also gives them the tools necessary to cast off the apartheid markers of their race. To illustrate this I will quote Salo extensively:

“The old, exclusively white spaces and institutions, having been better resourced in the past, have become sought after places to occupy, work, reside among South Africans of all races... For those who continue to live in the poorer, racially homogenous townships like Manenberg, the media such as television or radio and public transportation become the alternative means to access these cosmopolitan spaces albeit through vicarious consumption of soap operas and popular music, or brief visits to popular city nightspots... Through these transgressive and transformative practices, they are acquiring the cultural capital that facilitates their ability to occupy, or imagine themselves as part of, the new national cosmopolitan spaces of cultural, racial and ethnic diversity... In doing so they actively destabilize their own identities, prizing them apart from the Apartheid imposed socioeconomic, spatial, moral or linguistic markers of gender, class and race. Their increased ability to transcend the racial, linguistic and spatial limits imposed by the old Apartheid policies, and their growing familiarity with the wide range of cosmopolitan South African styles, languages, spaces and social customs become the defining characteristics of a newly emerging personhood in the local context”
(www.ruc.dk: 10 April 2005)

While Salo’s analyses are useful to this study, there are disconnections in her work that this study comments on. What isn’t clear in Salo’s analysis is specifically which media images portray these cosmopolitan social spaces. Are there characters that resemble these girls in Manenberg, or is this of lesser importance since racial or ethnic similarity has no bearing on identification to these girls? One of Salo’s participants, Tessa comments, “One doesn’t see coloured people on TV. It’s only ever Black or White.” (www.ruc.dk: 10 April 2005). Salo corrects Tessa, but perhaps what she meant was coloured people who resemble, in dress and language, the girls of Manenberg.

Secondly, while the media does provide the access needed for these social spaces, (later Salo mentions how the girls discard their usual clothes for name brands) I question whether this is really that closely linked to race and entering a space of racial diversity, or is this physical change of appearance rather attached to class, and simply wearing these clothes everyday would spoil them, therefore they're kept for when the girls travel outside of their communities.

Thirdly, are the markers which Salo says that the girls discard necessarily negative, or is it the connotations that the apartheid system, through vehicles of ideology like the media, has attached to these markers inhibiting. The fact that these girls have to traverse and negotiate two identities (one which has the markers, linguistic and otherwise, of Manenberg) and another which offers them entry into a supposedly diverse social space based on democratic media messages is disturbing in the sense that for years the very same media, in its apartheid form, forwarded the view that these markers wouldn't allow them entry into a white dominated social space. If these are the markers which are being discarded, which markers of diversity are they then acquiring?

I would argue that before we can move to a harmonious existence where race doesn't matter, and identification not based on markers of race, and here I argue with specific reference to the media, media representations first need to show that **your** race does matter. Once diverse representations, and in this sense honest representations of a variety

of ethnic and class backgrounds are reached, since these two are inextricably linked in South Africa, we can move from a point of media equality to the utopian non racialism.

Salo ignores the effect of how Manenberg is typically portrayed in the media on the girls she speaks to. Instead the media is highlighted as a vehicle which makes these girls socially mobile. She mentions briefly by contrasting 1980's representations and present day portrayals of Manenberg as "an impoverished, dangerous, and socially undesirable area" (www.ruc.dk: 10 April 2005). Neither does Salo look at what happens once these girls gain entry into these social spaces, do they feel that entry based on codes indirectly acquired via the media positions them as less than in comparison to those who have a direct claim via economic capital, rather than cultural capital on those spaces.

A study of coloured youth's identifications with media images would need to consider attitudes towards race in a post-apartheid South Africa. Researchers at the University of Cape Town, Andre Dawes and Gillian Finchelescu look at the effects of political changes in South Africa on groups of South African adolescents in Kwazulu Natal and the Western Cape. Their studies are interesting since it looks at attitudes towards race before the first democratic election, in 1992, with a group of 14 year old high school students across South Africa's racial categories, and examines the same group again in 1996, after the first democratic election. Dawes and Finchelescu argue that, "the position of privilege and power occupied by the different population groups prior to the installation of a black majority government in 1994 would influence their intergroup orientations in the post-apartheid period, and that acceptance of the new dispensation would be associated with

levels of racism” (Dawes and Finchelescu: 2002: 160). Work by these researchers, especially with regards to coloured vs. black African racism is interesting when viewed in relation to some of the comments by participants in this study.

For the purposes of studies related to this work and to provide an interesting framework for the work conducted by Dawes and Finchelescu it is useful to examine their research methodology. I return to this research when I highlight the resentment felt by coloured participants towards black South Africans, and the way these feelings are exemplified in the representation of black feminities in soap operas. The first method used was the Duckitt Subtle Racism Scale. This method was more suited to adult subjects and therefore wasn't applied to the 14 year old participants in the study. The scale has ten points and participants could rate each point with a scale from 1 (strongly agree) to 7 (strongly disagree). The points in this method are interesting.⁷

This method gives a useful indication of anti-black racism among white, coloured and Indian participants, given that the political environment would give black South Africans, who have been the most disadvantaged by the apartheid system, equal access to resources and an equitable stake in political power in South Africa.

⁷ The points on this scale are as follows: Given the same education and opportunities, Blacks should be able to perform as well as whites in any field. It would be unfair if greater expenditure on Black education were to be funded by White taxpayers. Given favourable conditions it is quite possible that Black majority rule could result in a stable, prosperous and democratic South Africa. Only greater equality between all races can in the long run guarantee social peace in this country. (Dawes and Finchelescu: 2002: 154)

A second method employed by Dawes and Finchelescu was The Repertory Grid. The Grid offers the participant eight constructs and four elements i.e. white children, black children, coloured children, and Indian children⁸

Each of the elements was ranked 1 to 4 depending on how well they applied to each of the constructs. Unlike the Racism Scale, this method is useful for not only looking at anti-black racism, but when applied to the coloured group, gives an interesting idea of attitudes towards the other disadvantaged groups as well.

In 1992 the research showed that the black sample was behind black political power, while coloured and Indian participants seemed “ambivalent” (Dawes and Finchelescu: 2002: 152). There were however largely negative views of the new political dispensation among the coloured group because of their views of black Africans as evidenced by research provided by the Repertory Grid. In 1995 a qualitative study conducted amongst working class coloured people showed that coloured people felt that the interests of their community (notice the hailing of a coloured community) were not being served by the new political dispensation which “was perceived to be dominated by black Africans” (Dawes and Finchelescu: 2002: 152). Dawes and Finchelescu’s (2002) research also found that there was an increase in racial prejudice amongst white youths, and that views by coloured, Indian and white youths were linked to their negative perceptions of black people (160-161). Another disturbing trend uncovered by the research showed that among disadvantaged groups i.e. coloured, black and Indian groups, “[n]one of these groups displayed positive orientations to one another” (Dawes and Finchelescu: 2002:

⁸ The constructs are as follows: The person I would like to live next door to; The person I might like to go out with; The person I would invite to my party; The person I would choose to be my friend; Lazy people; Clever people. (Dawes and Finchelescu: 2002: 155)

161) This would suggest then that previously oppressed groups have not integrated and that the divisions created by the apartheid system still remained true. Would these divisions then not affect media identification based on race?

With respect to the coloured group, the feelings of distrust and resentment were particularly linked to their view of black Africans (a fear created in part by apartheid media) but also the fear that their voices weren't being heard and following from this, their interests weren't being catered for. They felt removed from a national conversation that was taking place. Dawes and Finchelescu highlight the importance of media representations during the apartheid era in fuelling many of the racist assumptions exposed by their research, but perhaps, in the post apartheid era, the media can be used in similar ways. This time used to deconstruct damaging ideologies created by apartheid media. The research becomes relevant to the black ingroup (and this includes coloureds) resentment which becomes apparent in the study of Hanover Park. Also, this research also highlights why simply placing any character of colour in a position of power or success in the media portrayals doesn't court identification from specifically coloured youths, perhaps highlighting the flaws in Salo's analysis of her participants' identification with the good looking black presenters on television.

Media Flows: An interconnected blackness

“[B]lackness can be understood, not simply as a racial entity, but also as a common experience of racialisation and discrimination throughout the diaspora that unites people of African descent who are identified as ‘black’” (Yarwood: 2006: 48). A subsection of this research aims to highlight Yarwood’s arguments around the ways coloured hip hop artists particularly have become members of this global blackness. I would argue however, that this ‘blackness’ is clearly marked as a representation of African American identity which has become synonymous with rap and hip hop through global media flows.

Yarwood highlights the disintegration of social ties and community networks as a direct result of the forced removals of the Group Areas Act as giving rise to coloured youths, particularly on the Cape Flats, identifying with African Americans. Coloured youths soon began to identify similarities between their own existence, not being sure of their ‘rootedness’ to their social spaces, and the experiences of African Americans in their “urban ghettos”. I question whether part of this identification isn’t due to a deeper sense of ancestry. The apartheid system cast the coloured group, as ‘other’, neither here nor there and often in-between other races, ignoring the complex and heterogeneous heritage of coloured people. This could have given rise to alienation with the country of ones birth, especially since such a label is institutionalized through government forms and applications. In the same way, many African Americans see Africa as their cultural home and experience the same sort of alienation to the land that they occupy. But more

importantly identification took place because, “[d]uring apartheid, coloured youth from the Cape Flats used hip hop to work through the tensions of being racially marginalized. It was also a way for these young people to identify with black people around the globe based on a common oppression and struggle against racism” (Yarwood: 2006: 51).

Yarwood argues that many people reject the term coloured, “while others, particularly of the working classes, continue to adhere to a racialised conception of colouredness as a means of identification” (52). She argues further that young coloured people use hip hop to negotiate their own identities and redefine what it means to be a coloured by identifying with “the situation of black people globally” (53). While the identification by coloured people, and in this context particularly hip hop artists (although I would argue identification stretches beyond this, and a blackness appropriated from African American hip hop is used as a political voice predominantly in its local context), with the idea of global blackness, or rather an African American blackness isn’t necessarily negative, Yarwood should be careful to investigate how South African blackness as defined by the apartheid political system with far reaching effects, is viewed by coloured youths, and whether this negative view of a local, albeit racialised, South African blackness, perhaps affects why images and portrayals of an American blackness becomes so appealing.

Yarwood quotes extensively from a paper by Nadine Dolby (2000) who conducted an ethnographic study at a Durban high school. Dolby argues that, “because of the effects of globalization and the expanding influence of global popular culture, youth identities no longer belong to one place or location; instead they are influenced by a plurality of languages and cultures. She concludes that global popular culture is a key site for identity

formation as students spent a great amount of energy both in and out of school consuming the global popular” (Yarwood: 2006: 54) Much like Salo, Dolby also argues that youths aren’t passive in their reception of global media, but negotiate and mould meanings based on their local contexts. But Dolby is careful to highlight the issue of race in the construction of meaning and the process of identification. She argues that global commodities and consumable goods have meanings which are used to “create identities that are both racialised and contextualized within particular circumstances” (Yarwood: 2006: 54). Earlier, Salo argued that contemporary South African media images give coloured girls from Manenberg the social codes necessary to navigate through more cosmopolitan social spaces, but spends little time discussing the nature of racial identification.

If, we view these trends of global consumption with reference to Salo’s study then trends among South African youths to consume and identify with global media products, in this instance specifically African American, based on a culture of hip hop, then it is these codes that are preferable in the navigation of social spaces not local SA media. This would be plausible if Yarwood’s arguments of the coloured-African American similarities and their impact on media consumption are to be believed. The danger is then that media messages do not give rise to an understanding of South African diversity at all, but is a coloured identity made legitimate based on its similarities to an African American idea of ‘blackness’ and one which doesn’t give rise to a South African diversity since it still places local understandings of blackness at the bottom of a hierarchy where

'colouredness' is made acceptable based on physical or symbolic ties to an African 'Americanness' popularized by the sheer influx of global media product.

Yarwood ends her paper by quoting Teresa, a young woman from Hanover Park, "If you look around Cape Town today, you'll notice that it's now in for coloured women to wear their hair natural or in dreads so that they can show they're black too" (56). But viewing this quote in relation to the rest of Yarwood's paper, then simply, it's a hairstyle popularized by images of African American women, and the concept of blackness attached to this is then an African American one and not necessarily identification with a local blackness.

By no means am I denying an African American claim on blackness, but I'm highlighting that global media flows allow particularly coloured people, who because of years of government approved marginalization, complicated by a middle ground alienation struggle with ideas of place, identity and rootedness in South Africa, more comfortable images of blackness to identify with. This is blackness untouched by South African political connotations, yet with its own histories of American racial oppression, striking a cord with coloured oppression locally. The reach of this process of identification and the understandings of blackness, and its impact on colouredness, is useful to explore. This research should also be complicated by gender since so many of these images, particularly within the genres of commercial hip hop are based on ideas of male ownership and power.

Mentioned earlier has been South African musician's use of hip-hop as a political voice. Here, gantaal becomes a means of showing the reaffirming a subaltern identity. Adam Haupt (2001) states that hip-hop groups like Brasse vannie Kaap and Prophets of da City employ gantaal which has generally been seen as the language of the Cape Flats "as a counter discursive voice" (179). The groups use the Afrikaans vernacular to challenge stereotypical assumptions about coloured people, but largely, to react against the politics of the dominant system at the time and perhaps I would argue, are very applicable in the present day. What is interesting in Haupt's research is that with regards to media flows, a tension is created between the appropriation of hip hop by these groups, and the use of the symbols of many American rappers by Cape Flats gangsters which glorify a 'thug lifestyle'. The group challenges this grouping of hip hop with representations of a gangster lifestyle. "Murals of Tupac Shakur in gang strongholds such as Manenberg for example, are not an uncommon sight. This appropriation is hardly surprising, since local gangsters have long been fascinated with American gang subcultures as South Africa has always been bombarded with Hollywood's sentimentalized representation of gangs" (Haupt: 2001: 177). It is interesting that here; these groups use an American genre, to critique the representation of a local group, and in this way acknowledge local identities in ways not highlighted before. In Salo's research she mentioned the casting off of linguistic signifiers, aligning these with the racist conceptions of the apartheid system. Whereas, Haupt quotes POC's Shaheen:

We want to be street, you know? When we do interviews and shit like that and we speak gantaal, or whatever, that shit's on purpose so the kid at home can say, 'Fuck, they're speaking my language', you know? They're representing, you know, what comes out of the township and shit.

So if the middle class motherfucker comes, 'Oe God, skollietaal.'⁹ The shit's not for them, you know what I mean? I don't care if some white ass dude at home thinks, 'Oh shit, look at this...uncultured,' you know? I want some kid from the ghetto to think, 'Naa, we can relate to that.'
(Haupt:2001:177)

The dangers of identification with an African American idea of blackness because of the attractive representation thereof in many instances gives one the chance to escape understanding and links, political and in some cases ancestral, with a South African blackness or the representations thereof. This engagement might require an investigation into the ways in which apartheid ideologies of a South African blackness affected coloured people, but for groups like POC and many others, hip hop via media flow, provides an effective genre and avenue for critical thought and political voice, and in many ways access to diversity that is not dependent on casting off those markers of 'colouredness' which have been accorded low status by the South African political system. Haupt's paper is useful for looking at criticisms of dominant media's representations of coloured people. Below, Brasse vannie Kaap offers their critique,

Hulle wys altyd lelike prente van onse mense.
Hoekom moet ek altyd 'n gangster of n klops
soos al wat ons sien in 'n koerant of TVs
Hulle trek hulle neus sê, Sies, jy's n low class coloured
Jou voorvaders was whites' en slawe. So it must be a bastard.'
But, wait a minute, if you trust my story and not his story sal jy sien
My voorvaders was a king a queen and never knew drugs, guns of 'n kantien
Hulle was altyd daar om God te bedien¹⁰

(Haupt: 2001: 181)

⁹ Referring to them sounding like gangsters

¹⁰ They always show pictures of our people
Why must I always be a gangster, or a Coon
Like all we see in the paper, or on the news
They pull up their noses in disgust at low class coloureds
Your ancestors were whites and slaves so you must be a bastard
My ancestors were kings and queens and never knew about drugs and bars
They existed as God's children

It would seem that these local hip hop groups use this genre of music as a political voice, and negotiate the meanings of cultural texts from the US. We should possibly question whether, proven the popularity of these commodities, the same process of negotiating takes place by those who aren't critical of products, and without the same political ideals.

Mathew Henry (2002) would find identification with, especially American media's notion of blackness problematic in the ways it commonly depicts black masculinity. In his view we can draw links between the portrayal of black masculinity, and the macho posturing commonly associated with gangs on the Cape Flats. While, his study ignores the representations of black femininity in American cultural product, this in its own is also telling, especially in the ways black masculine power is achieved in relation to women. Henry pays particular attention to the representations of black masculinity in the 1970's blaxploitation film Shaft and its new millennium equivalent, but more importantly he highlights the flow of dangerous representations of black masculinity via hip-hop culture.

"A particular type of black masculinity –one defined mainly by an urban aesthetic, a nihilistic attitude and an aggressive posturing–has made its way into the cultural mainstream in the last two decades" (Henry: 2002: 114). Henry highlights reasons for the development of this image when he discusses the popularity of hip hop culture and the flow of this culture from its American roots across the globe through commodities. He specifically looks at the popularity of the "urban gangsta", represented in American rap artists like Dr. Dre, Tupac and Snoop Doggy Dog (114). Interestingly, Cornel West

(1993) states that just as the styles of the young black men of the urban ghettos are popularized in gangsta rap and hip hop, they are being “murdered, maimed and imprisoned in record numbers” while they shape popular culture (88).

Henry argues that the black male straddles two worlds, being black in the States constructs him as a minority, and enables him relatively less power than those with economic and political power, but as a man in a patriarchal society, his manhood enables him to possess an element of power which perhaps allows him to escape the disadvantages as a result of his race. This brings up interesting questions around the social world that black women experience. Are they then perhaps doubly marginalized? It is useful to pause and highlight the depiction of black women in the cultural flow of hip-hop images via music videos. They are typically, in these videos, marked by their sexual appeal, and as mere entertainment to the male rappers. If the type of masculinity portrayed in these texts impacts as far a field as the townships of the Cape Flats with Tupac and Dr. Dre on the walls in Manenberg, then does the portrayal of black women, valued for their sexual appeal, have as far a reach? If we have highlighted the value in looking at American cultural imports and the impact they have on coloured identity, it would then also be useful to consider local products which indirectly markets its status as a voice for a working class coloured market.

Summary

It has become clear is that an analysis of media representation of coloured identity cannot be removed from arguments around the existence of such an identity, and how markers of this identity have typically been tainted as socially inferior because of its link to working

class coloured culture. Issues of media representation also cannot be removed from ethnographic studies to investigate the ways in which local people construct meaning based on the specific social spaces they occupy. Also, the very same ethnographic lens has to be applied to the producers of media messages since this highlights an agenda of national unity, specifically in its South African context that could also thwart the veracity of representations. A complete study cannot be offered without ethnographic research which considers the specific receivers of media messages. This chapter has used previous studies to highlight methods used to investigate adolescent views of race and transformation in South Africa, since these impacts on the meanings constructed through the flow of media messages. It further aimed to highlight the stereotypes around the notion of coloured identity constructed by the apartheid system, but also explores issues of media representations of the colonized since this provides a useful framework for later studies. Issues of identification with coloured characters in South African television cannot be explored without fieldwork, but this paper has attempted to problematise the notion of coloured identification with a global blackness (yet only African American identification is proved), by highlighting the stereotypical portrayals of black masculinity and femininity in American hip-hop, and showing that the politicized notion of blackness, while positioned as a growing trend among coloured youth, is only proven with reference to politically aware hip-hop groups who negotiate the meanings of blackness in the cultural import.

This chapter has also problematised Salo's notion that SA media allows young, coloured women access into cosmopolitan social spaces by arguing the cost of this entry, since it

typically involves casting off the markers of a coloured identity, made inferior by an apartheid system and its reliance on providing an image of a white ideal. In the community of Hanover Park and the classes of the University of Cape Town views of coloured identity highlight and extend points raised in this discussion. In short, this chapter examined the origins of coloured identity, showing a clear link between the markers of a coloured identity and working class identities. This chapter has outlined the stereotypes around working class coloured identity, and has also commented on how the alienation felt by coloured people has led to identification with a glamorous black American identity. Chapter Four will problematise the representation of African American femininities. A study of the representation of coloured people in South African soap opera narratives led to an investigation of the meaning viewers created from the characters in these narratives. The following chapter looks at the benefits of ethnographic analysis in relation to media studies, and highlights the ways different communities make sense of, and use media texts.

Chapter Three: Ethnographic Research

Methodology

This chapter looks at the ways qualitative methodology allows the researcher to investigate how different audiences interpret and negotiate the meanings of media texts. Here, I look at the ways gender, class and community become filters through which audiences analyse texts. I highlight the reasons the specific site used during fieldwork becomes important and the value of considering the history of the site. In short, this chapter highlights the value of an insider's perspective.

To investigate the ways in which audiences make sense of media texts, the researcher must observe and record, not only the meanings they derive from texts, but what they do, and where they are when those meanings are reached. Of equal importance is also where they come from. In short contextual information is as important as, and affects, meaning. "If the central aim of reception ethnography is to understand the lived experiences of media consumers then it has to engage with the situational contexts in which the media are used and interpreted" (Strelitz, L: 2005: 59), others too, have argued for an ethnographic approach to media studies, "The ethnographer should study culture not just from a bottom up perspective, but from an insiders perspective" (Dotner et al: 2003: 65). Here, in studying the audience we find how meaning is created, but in looking at the text itself we find how meaning is transmitted. But also argued for is a holistic view of culture, and this would involve contextualizing the audience, not only in its position in a

South African history or histories, but also the way meaning affects identity formation and continued existence of collective identities.

Reception Analysis

This study examines the meanings coloured women of predominantly the Cape Flats derive from the characters and narratives in soap operas, and the extent to which, specifically in young women, media messages impact on identity formation and the meanings attached to coloured identity. Media texts, in this regard, are viewed not only in terms of the context of production and methods of communication via the television medium, but also and perhaps more important to this study, how in the process of reception, meaning is constructed through the interpretive lenses of the participants own social realities. “Among feminist television critics there are two distinct notions of what constitutes good television in terms of women, one notion is that television should represent women in a positive light” (Ellen Brown: 1990: 201). A simple example of this is that many feminist television critiques call for positive role models for young girls. While I would advocate this, this study rather considers itself with whether there is recognition of a true representation in the process of reception by the women of the study. This truth, however isn't dependent on a positive representation, since, there is no objective truthful experience (one size does not fit all), but also, positive representations often fall into categories of patronizing those who are being represented. A second notion, and better suited to this study is to understand how representations are used by women and this involves an investigation into the meaning constructed. This is therefore a study in audience reception.

The features of reception analysis are as follows:

It requires an investigation into the meanings generated by the audience – these meanings and “pleasures” aren’t concrete and can therefore shift.

The contexts in which media messages are received are important. This becomes considerably fruitful considering that TV is a domestic medium.

It looks at the particular “situation” in which the texts are used; here the communities become important, these communities, because of shared symbols, often have similar ways of reading texts.

(McQuail: 1997: 19)

Because this type of audience research takes account not only of context, the moment/s of viewing, context and meaning generation, methodology which examines the creative production of meaning is employed.

As oppose to general findings about research subjects, qualitative methodology therefore considers their subjective reality. In view of the participants in this study’s specific contexts of reception, that intersect with issues of gender, class, and age, these therefore become important since this paper concerns itself primarily with the specific meanings attached to media messages based on the assumptions audiences attach to these texts. The ways in which gender, class and age create these assumptions and beliefs therefore become important. In this study I looked at the soaps *Isidingo* and *Sewnde Laan* in particular, since one is English and other Afrikaans, but more importantly since both have a large number of coloured characters. While the older women of Hanover Park are quick to identify the stereotypical representation of the young women in the soap *Sewende Laan*, they were less acute in identifying the skewed representation of the coloured mother of these girls, and the ways in which she was represented as asexual.

Strelitz (2005) writes that if we consider all the possible meanings and filters which impact upon reception, the researcher could find him/herself in an endless

“multicontextuality” (64). He aims to solve this methodological conundrum by stating the following:

Portraying a ‘culture’ implies the discursive knocking-up of a unitary picture out of bits and pieces of carefully selected and combined observations, a picture that makes sense within the framework of a set of preconceived problematics and sensitizing concepts which the researcher employs as cognitive and linguistic tools to make his or her descriptions in the first place
(Ang in Strelitz.L: 2005: 64)

It would seem then that just as the participant derives meaning through a specific lens so too does the researcher. In avoiding endless contextual plurality certain facets of the research are highlighted in order to construct a narrative if you will. In this study broadly these facets would include the notion of coloured identity and the meanings participants attach to this. This identity by its very nature is fluid and hybrid, but rather specifically, yet of equal importance, are the ways in which class and gender impact upon these understandings given the receivers exposure to media messages. The word ‘test’ seems unsuitable in its relationship to qualitative research, as if meaning is measurable. But, considering how, and once meaning is derived, this study aims to establish whether identification based on media representation takes place. It also considers the extent to which class and gender impact upon identification but also the construction of meaning.

The specific qualitative methods chosen for this study are focus groups, in depth interviews and preliminary questionnaires. The strengths of these methods with specific relevance to the research topic will now be examined:

“Focus groups have become closely associated with reception analysis, which highlights the social context of media consumption and the creative role that audience members

play in decoding media texts” (Strelitz: 2005: 71). In the case of the focus groups in this study, the discussion would center on South African television, considering the SABC, and specifically the soap operas across these channels. The focus group will also elaborate upon preliminary questions which aim to identify whether participants identify with the label ‘coloured’ and reasons for the identification. This issue itself is both an ambiguous and contentious one, since participants are approached because of their residence in ‘coloured’ areas, and attending ‘coloured’ schools. The groups are as follows:

1. two days of interviews with a group of coloured media students and a focus group on day three (June 2007)
2. a week spent with young to middle aged women from the Cape Flats community of Hanover Park (June 2007)
3. A weekend spent with a male group of residents of Hanover Park (June 2005)

“Media ethnography should proceed until you have reached a point of empirical saturation – that is, until a time when you are no longer surprised at what you encounter in the field” (Drotner et al : 2003: 79). I was unsure of the amount of time to spend in the field. But it was my goal to give equal attention to a content analysis and historical analysis of coloured identity, and my duration in the field. Given my history in Hanover Park, it became important for me to fully grasp and represent the workings of the area, and previous time spent there proved useful in this regard. Many of the members of the community knew me, and therefore felt comfortable inviting me into their homes. But media scholars themselves claim that duration is difficult to judge, Lull (2000) spent two to seven days conducting research while Berkaak and Ruud (1994) spent three years in participant observation with their studies on music production. I found that in this

example it is helpful to conclude studies when the responses by participants were similar and further research therefore didn't add anything to the study.

It is apparent that this sample was not a random one. Media studies students, by a second year level, have a primary understanding of the tools to deconstruct media messages based on filmic techniques but also narrative structure, they are also schooled in early techniques of representation, and colonialism which is particularly relevant to this study.

An earlier discussion of the importance older women in Cape Flats communities gives indication not only of their roles as the financial breadwinners of the community, but also their important roles in constructing, continuing and embodying the values of the community. Also, since this study concerns itself primarily with soap operas it is useful to examine a group which this genre of programming is generally aimed at, given it's timeslot, (early evening and repeated in the morning or early afternoon) and a gendered narrative (which has an overwhelming female cast). It is further useful to contrast the views of these older, working class, coloured women and the younger participants. In line with this I chose to examine texts which my audience has made reference to and which seem to embody, some of the many notions of coloured identity. For this reason a subsection of the research makes use of a content analysis of the Daily Voice. Here I look at three editions of this tabloid and through a semiotic analysis deconstruct the connotative meanings of the text, both in its visuals and in the text itself.

Mary Ellen Brown (1990) states that, "Television's languages and texts are seen as polysemic sites for potential ideological meaning generation. Television texts are not, however, isolated in their generation of meanings. They gain meaning in interacting with other media and cultural forms, and, in addition, audiences composed of differing social and cultural groups can use television texts for their own purposes and in different ways from each other" (15). Brown highlights the usefulness of having research subjects from differing age groups and class backgrounds since they make use of the media product in very different ways. Also, these meanings are created from the interpretations of other media texts. During my interviews in Hanover Park what becomes apparent are the ways in which local cases of teenage pregnancy perhaps impact the meanings derived from soap opera narratives.

What is of importance in the ways the information is gathered during my fieldwork is that there are no strict boundaries between observation and participation. In some instances I watched the soap operas with my participants, and engage with them and the text at the same time. In other instances however, my work is purely observational, watching women talk to one another and their children. The same could be said of the men in Hanover Park and the interviews done in 2005, "No media ethnographer entertains any ideas about being an objective, fly-on-the-wall observer. To perform interpretive research is by necessity to be positioned as part of one's study, to adopt and acknowledge a perspective of analysis. Most ethnographies demonstrate a mixture of immersion and distance, a mixture that shows up in phases of more or less involvement" (Drotner et al: 2003: 77)

A secondary part of my fieldwork comprised previous research around the notion of coloured identity conducted in 2005. This research questions the existence of coloured identity but does not limit itself to questions of media representation. It proves particularly interesting since the topic of media often arises naturally from instances not specifically constructed for these ends. The research site remains the same in both cases, a mixed group of coloured residents of Hanover Park, most of them residing in Ryewoodwalk at the time. Interviews are gathered in Hanover Park since a focus group proved impractical in this regard. I wanted to capture the views of these women while they were watching the soap opera, but also while they were going about their normal activities. During this evening timeslot many of the women were preparing supper or bathing their children and highlights the divided nature of a women's day which I discuss in chapter four. Many of the interviews conducted with the residents of Hanover Park in 2005 took place not in the domestic setting but often in shebeens¹¹. While not as relaxed as the participants in the domestic settings, these participants displayed overwhelming eagerness to let their views be heard.

Lastly, the interviews in 2005 were filmed as part of a documentary screened to American students, whereas interviews in 2007 were recorded using a dictophone. Many found the camera intrusive and were reluctant to be filmed. Many, perhaps, reacted to the presence of the camera and slightly censored their truths. Cinema Verite posits the view that there is truth in this reaction since it is the participant's honest reaction at being filmed, but I would argue that through questioning, and perhaps superficially being

¹¹ Informal, and sometimes illegal bar

viewed as coloured myself, I gained the trust of my participants, even perhaps through my knowledge of the language and the vernacular of the area. The reaction of my participants to the camera in 2005 influenced my choices in 2007; I wanted the women of the community to be at ease. However, the reactions of my male participants are discussed early in chapter three.

Why the Cape Flats?

“By any standards the Cape Flats is an unpleasant area in which to make a home...windswept for much of the year and often partly flooded during the winter months” (Venter: 1974: 86). This is early scholarship on the Cape Flats, highlighted here are its undesirable living conditions. The Cape Flats has always been portrayed as undesirable in some way, in the past, because of the lack of resources, and today because of its crime. Much of the stigma of the Cape Flats arose from coloured people themselves campaigning against the forced removals of the Group Areas Act, even though some were initially interested in the new housing the government had provided, the author recounts tales of disappointment:

“Take the case of Mrs. Annie Swartz, an elderly widow who once lived with her seven children in a neat house in Mount Street, District Six. She is one of the thousands of people moved out in terms of the Group Areas Act and now lives in a sub economic flat in the heart of Hanover Park, which, until late 1972, had only one shop and some prefabricated schools. There were no other amenities, no post office and no police station...Even the telephone for use in the case of an emergency was invariably broken. The bus service was desultory, making it difficult for her to reach the nearest railway station at Lansdowne about four km away”
(Venter: 1974: 87)

Services in Hanover Park have certainly improved since then and it is adequately equipped with both schools, transport networks and other services, but the representation of Hanover Park here has been exchanged for the tales of this 'ghetto' highlighted later.

Vincent Williams, describes the Cape Flats as the following:

"The Cape Flats consists of a vast number of townships where the majority of coloured and African people live. As is consistent with the composition of the population, most of the townships are coloured townships and only four are home to Africans....An interesting phenomenon, which clearly reflects Apartheid planning, is that african and coloured townships, in some cases very close to each other, are separated by open strips of land, a highway or a railway line. It is amazing how effective these strips of 'no mans land' were, in keeping African and coloured communities separated"
(www.capeflats.org: 25 March 2005)

While geographically these communities are quite close together, as a result of the sense of community, a sense of 'us' and 'them' and the ways these relationships of difference and similarities exist, I was interested in the ways the coloured people of the Cape Flats community would articulate their sense of coloured identity impacted upon by their Cape Flats existence. I was also interested in the Cape Flats as a research site because of the recorded political allegiances of the area, the justification for these allegiances often being rooted in fear:

"The Western Cape has the somewhat stigmatized status as being the only one of South Africa's nine provinces in which the National Party (NP) was able to achieve a majority rule; both in the elections of 1994, and in the local elections of 1996"
(www.capeflats.org: 25 March 2005)

In recent local elections former PAC politician Patricia De Lille campaigned heavily for the 'coloured vote' and many local newspapers reported that her supporters felt let down by the party's decision to align with the DA, the leading opposition political party in South Africa. It is therefore useful to examine the attitudes of the coloured people in this sense since many commentators (Dawes and Finchelescu: 2002; Dolby: 2000) have

mentioned that even since the arrival of democracy in South Africa race consciousness and perhaps racism is on the increase. How does this then play itself out amongst people of the Cape Flats who feel politically alienated, and geographically located in Williams' "no mans land".

Hanover Park as a research site:

Hanover Park as a research site for reception analysis resulted from the ways this community was represented in the media. Highlighted before has been the stereotypes revolving around a Cape Flats identity. But I aim to highlight something of the specific representation of Hanover Park. I aim to investigate these women's truths played out in soap opera narratives but it is a study that quickly extended itself beyond this, and beyond merely a television analysis, in conversations I found that their view of themselves played out in other media narratives. A typical example of this would be in the Daily Voice (which will be examined later), a paper which speaks to a large coloured market, but in glancing at ways Hanover Park in particular is portrayed to the outside world, I discovered the following in the Mail and Guardian:

"He may have been the boss of a powerful street gang, but Gavin Atkins was buried like a community hero. Scores of residents stood in hymn-singing tribute outside the council flat where his family wept on Monday morning. 'Dis moo!'¹², said more than one onlooker as the long white hearse cruised by, carrying a cream and maroon coffin with gleaming gold handles. The mourners in Hanover Park – an impoverished neighborhood on the Cape Flats – were commemorating not the thug and drug dealer, but the patron they went to for help.... The gang underworld gives the official reason for the Hanover Park shootings as revenge. The talk is now of war. 'Fuck the cops,' reads an American grafitto, 'Only God will judge us'"
(www.mg.co.za: 13 April 2006)

¹² That's beautiful

I had lived in Hanover Park until I was eighteen years old and in searching for media coverage of this community this is one of the few pieces I found. It was written as a series of articles, printed in a number of broadsheets about the state of gang violence in Hanover Park, culminating in the murder of Atkins at a local shopping center in Kenilworth, a middle class suburb I had moved to. What I choose to highlight about this piece is that it chose to portray much of the community as looking up to this gangster, and this certainly didn't resonate with the interviews I conducted. The article only quotes one member of this community and fails to contextualize Atkins' death by looking at it from all points of view and accounting for the history of gang violence in this "impoverished neighbourhood". It is in these snapshots of Hanover Park, and the Cape Flats in general that fill contemporary consciousness.

The women of Hanover Park live in Rywoodwalk and Sherwoodwalk respectively. This area is known for its gang violence since the area is the base for the Ghettoes Gang, who were often at war with the Americans Gang, arguably the largest gang network on the Cape Flats. My interviews started with an old neighbour, and key informant, Mrs. Barnes, and she subsequently advised me as to whom I should speak to. My intention was to mainly speak to some of the mothers of Hanover Park and their children. Stories of Hanover Park, of its gangs and its violence, were often implicated in masculine identities. I was interested in not only a feminine point of view, but since media is often highlighted as a socializing agent, and therefore serving a parenting function, I was interested in what these women thought of the ways their sons and daughters were being represented, and what they were being fed.

TV Analysis

Anthropologist Lila Abu-Lughod (1999) conducts ethnographic research in Egypt around women's interpretations of soap operas. Her analysis is useful since she claims that much of media studies is theoretically sophisticated, yet "ethnographically thin" (112). By ethnography Abu-Lughod means paying, "attention to the contingent way in which all social categories emerge, become naturalised and intersect in peoples conception of themselves and their world, and further, an emphasis on how these categories are produced through everyday practice" (112). When media messages and images are deconstructed and analysed, media theorists need to pay attention to the complex ways meanings are created on the part of the receiver, and the ways in which these meanings are negotiated through a lens of local circumstance and histories.

Abu-Lughod however, doesn't prioritize ethnographic research in this view of media studies. She obviously highlights the importance of content analyses, but argues that ethnographic research should not end with the receivers of the message but also look at the "ethnographies of production". She states, "[t]elevision programs are produced not just by specialists of a different social status than viewers...but by professionals of a different class-often urban rather than rural, with national and sometimes transnational identities and social ties-who are working within structures of power and organisations that are tied to and doing the work of national or commercial interests" (114). When viewing, specifically television messages as a cultural product what she argues for is that we follow the product from the climate of production to the atmosphere of reception and question its meaning then, in the local context. If meaning is created through local social

spaces, yet influenced by national discourse, one then needs to question issues of representation with reference to its inclusion in national discourse for the purposes of unity, particularly in emerging democracies and the meanings which are attached to this seemingly diverse picture in its local context. Abu-Lughod (1999) states, “Taking television seriously forces us to think about ‘culture’ not so much as a system of meaning or even a way of life, but as something whose elements are produced, censored, paid for, and broadcast across a nation, even across national boundaries. The hegemonic, or ideological-and thus power related nature of mass mediated cultural texts in the service of national, class, or commercial projects is undeniable” (122).

Abu-Lughod looks at factors beyond mere reception that may affect representation. It is useful to consider these messages as commodities since this impacts on their mass appeal, since the more audiences the messages reaches and appeals to, the more profitable the commodity is. We should then, also question who the chief buyer or ideal viewer of the media message is, since the producers would cater to this market, and the perspectives of this market then, would also affect representation.

Bourdieu (1998) echoes Abu-Lughod’s view of television and perhaps the power that television holds in influencing what people think and believe. But we should not ignore the commercial imperatives of television since it often makes producers slaves to Audience ratings, or Nielsen ratings as they are known in the States. Bourdieu (1998) highlights that since the inception of television, sociologists commented on how the medium was going to be “the great leveller and turn all viewers into one, big,

undifferentiated mass” (36). Perhaps, ignored here is television’s power to further segment the audience, since by its very nature the medium calls for representations that are clearly segmented and identifiable to an audience at a glance. What needs to be investigated is the impact of this on cultural production.

With specific reference to South Africa, Guy Berger (2000) looks at transformation in the media from 1994 to 2000. He states that when looking at the state broadcaster, the SABC, we cannot ignore the chief mandate of nation building that the broadcaster employed after 1994. “Whereas the corporation had previously stressed the separateness of South Africans, producing ethnic/racial content for ethnic/racial audiences, it now tried to bring people together. It is debatable whether a manufactured nationalism serves to strengthen or weaken democracy or development” (13). Berger questions whether this forced ‘togetherness’ actually aided democracy, and I would add that perhaps in filling previously white spaces with previously disadvantaged ones, ignores the realities of these varying ethnic groups, and in such a way does them a disservice. Berger (2000) quotes Balserio who states, the “SABC presents a new South Africa a la United Colours of Benetton, suspiciously amicable and homogenous in its picture of perfect diversity” (13). The problem faced here is that a homogenous picture is directly at odds with a picture of diversity, and to what extent are stereotypes created in this picture perfect diversity.

Part of my research therefore also consists of a genre analysis specific to the soap opera. Here this study highlights the specific ways the multiple plot lines suit a women’s time. Mentioned before has been the impracticality of focus groups in Hanover Park since I

wanted the women to do what they normally do, I wanted to capture a natural experience. This choice also alerted me to the schizophrenic nature of a housewife, mother, or wife's day since her attentions are usually divided between work, and/or housework, children and her husband. She therefore prioritises not only which moments she will view, thereby becoming an active viewer, but also makes a concerted effort to identify with certain characters. The escapism that these narratives offer therefore makes this identification even stronger.

Part of this investigation into the representation of coloured identity looks at the Cape Town tabloid the Daily Voice. This media speaks specifically to areas like Hanover Park in the ways they represent, and arguably 'empower' working class coloured identities. This is done through the use of gamtaal, but also since most of the stories are sourced from members of Cape Flats communities. Given that the Voice makes use of the semi nude page three girls I became interested in its representation of coloured femininity. For this reason I perform a discourse analysis, analysing both the visual and textual elements of this publication and the ways it speaks to its coloured readership.

Summary

In this chapter I have argued that qualitative analysis best suits this study in the ways it investigates the meanings audiences create around media texts. Ethnographic research uses qualitative methodology to explore the ways in which external factors like age, gender and class impact on the meanings participants generate. For this reason I highlight my choice of community/site showing its representation in the media and perhaps why

identification which is positive, yet not patronising, is important in this regard. I also highlight the importance of a genre analysis since soap operas, through its content and timeslot, require the split attentions of the female viewer, yet this split elicits an even stronger identification on the part of the viewer. The nature of a women's time will be highlighted in Chapter Four, first we will outline reasons why a feminine perspective on coloured identity is important since it has, in its characteristics, been marked as masculine.

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Chapter Four: The importance of female voices on coloured identity

In this chapter I show the importance of investigating feminine understandings of coloured identity, since it has been firmly marked as masculine through definitions of its culture. I turn to the women of Hanover Park and analyze the meaning they construct around the soap opera *Sewende Laan*. Here I show that while the older characters in the soap gave particularly the older women a sense of escapism, these women were quick to identify the stereotypical portrayal of the young coloured women as promiscuous. Lastly, I am confronted by the resentment in this community. It therefore becomes interesting that my participants make a connection between a lack of representation in the media, and political alienation.

Coloured Expression: A masculine space

In this chapter I draw on interviews¹³ with the men of Hanover Park conducted in 2005 to highlight the ways in which the markers of coloured identity are masculine. If viewed in relation to Salo's (2003) comments about the important role women play in coloured communities, this chapter calls for an acknowledgement of this importance in the articulation of the meanings and ideas surrounding 'colouredness'. It merely questions the men of Hanover around the existence of a coloured identity. What's interesting here are the ways these men articulate and express scholarship around the imposition of the

¹³ All participants have consented to their names being used in this study. Consent forms available on request.

label and its meaning. What's of further interest are the ways many of the participants seem sure that such an identity exists, yet define it firmly within masculine practice.

Andre Standing (2005) has written about ganging practices on the Cape Flats, mentioning that gangsterism gives the young coloured men of the Cape Flats a sense of belonging and family in an era of alienation. Elaine Salo (2003) also makes reference to gangs and mentions that many American hip hop and rap stars with tales of rising out of the American urban ghettos, and who have blatant and spectacular evidence of wealth (in bling) resonated with the relative powerlessness of the Cape Flats youths. My interviews conducted in 2005 were not necessarily to investigate masculine understanding of the phenomenon but rather to provide a surface understanding as to whether there was a concrete description of coloured identity in the minds of these men. But in the articulation of their feelings a sense of alienation became apparent. I also found an understanding of the complex natures of coloured identity, and perhaps the overriding value of a sense of community in Hanover Park. My intention was not to uncover educated answers around the issues of coloured identity but to show that in a rich community such as Hanover Park, a close inspection of these answers around identity would expose ways in which the men of Hanover Park understood their own identities and existence. This afternoon spent in the shebeens of Hanover Park was filmed and is perhaps best understood in its visual form, but hopefully it brings light to this study.

My interviews in this section of the study were filmed and I will admit that this most certainly affected the responses of my participants since they seemed extremely

considerate of the audience who they felt would later view the material, and in this regard making a good impression. While this may be, I found that the most interesting commentary was delivered by a man called Uncle Clarence, who really did not say much at all. During these interviews I became aware of the challenges that affect research, "...asking and answering questions is rarely, if ever, a straightforward matter. No question is asked in a social vacuum. Sometimes people give answers they think the interrogator(s) would like to hear, that they believe are socially acceptable or that they wish were the case" (Deacon et al: 1999). I set up the camera in a council flat in Hanover Park, before he tells me how he feels proud that he's a coloured man, and that coloured people are often ignored by the government. I ask, "What does it mean to be a coloured person in Hanover Park? What have your experiences here been like?" Silence, and after a long pause he responds in a different accent altogether, "To be a coloured person....." He repeats the phrase over and over again, almost willing his mouth to produce further sound. Uncle Clarence, despite his sparse expression, seemed to deeply contemplate the matter. His contemplation to me, even though the existence of a coloured identity, and coloured people seemed obvious to him before, signified that there was no easy or uniform answer to this question and those who wear the label of a coloured identity proudly are just as confused as those doing the inquiry. It also indicated an awareness of his class, evidenced by his change of accent once the camera was switched on, while confused about the nature of coloured identity, he is however sure that his 'normal' accent isn't 'acceptable', 'appropriate', or rather 'worthy' of the assumed audience.

Shorty analyses why he wears the label coloured when he says: “*Because hulle het gese, djy’s n swart man, djy’s a bruin man en djy’s a wit man*”¹⁴. I speak to both Shorty and Lovell in a local shebeen and despite the hustle and bustle around them and the movement of the beer bottles in the background, both Shorty and Lovell seem adamant in their positions. Lovell states: “*n Kleurling man is om n man te wees, n kleurling man, wat is djy wat agter die camera staan, wat is ons?*”¹⁵ This is how Lovell starts his commentary, perhaps as a result of the beers he’s consumed; he turns the question around on the interviewer. First, he considers himself as a man, then as a coloured man, and then the recognition of similarity with the man behind the camera. A recognition of mutual colouredness, a tangible knowingness and recognition based on shared experience. But to Lovell, the name, and the coloured experience, is also one which is enforced, “*Since 1958 was ek gese ek is n kleurling – nou wie is ek dan, wie is djy wat agter die camera staan?*” There seems to be a certain amount of confusion in Lovell’s commentary, and an anxiety in the way he says it, ‘they came and told us we were coloured – if we aren’t coloured, then who are we?’ This is the question Lovell poses my way, as if to say, while the name, the definition of a racial identity here comes from elsewhere, so ingrained it is, that there are no alternatives, there aren’t any Lovell knows, and perhaps it’s the man behind the camera who knows the answer.

Interviewer: Do you think there are any coloured traditions?

Uncle Clarence: Yes

Interviewer: What are they?

Uncle Clarence: (Silence)

¹⁴ Because they said, you’re a black man, you’re a coloured, and you’re a white man

¹⁵ A coloured man? To be a man is to be a coloured man, who are you behind the camera?

While in the shebeen the exchange between Uncle Clarence and me above comes to mind as I talk to Marcelino, a young coloured man. When asked about coloured culture, the young man had the following to say:

Marcelino: Daar is niks, net dronknes hou, is maar net die liefde vir mekaar wat huur tel.¹⁶

By 'Liefde vir mekaar' I assume that what Marcelino highlights here is the sense of community in Hanover Park, but what was of interest here is that while Uncle Clarence and some of the older coloured men were convinced of the existence of a coloured culture, and along with it coloured traditions, here Marcelino denies the existence outright – he claims (and perhaps adds truth to Western's stereotypes) that coloured tradition lies in alcoholism. Is Marcelino right then? After all, these Saturday afternoon interviews with the men of Hanover Park were taking place in a shebeen. The crowd sparsely populated by one or two women, but mostly men, young and old, were present, drinking beers and playing cards.

While these men highlighted the normality of this activity, the fact that they were men first and then coloured men and the context of their activities being in a shebeen when questioned about black culture and whether drinking or 'dronknes hou' was part of this culture the following was stated:

Interviewer: Dink julle swart mans sit so in n shebeen en drink?

Shorty: Hulle is nogal nie so nie – hulle respect hulle oudse – okay ons ravel nou nie uit nie, but by die darkies werk dit net so."¹⁷

¹⁶ There's nothing, just drinking alcohol. Its just love for each other that's important.

¹⁷ Interviewer: Do you think black people sit in shebeens (informal bars) and drink?

Shorty: No, they're not like us, they respect their elders, okay we're not getting wild, but with black people it just works that way.

By 'respect vir die elders' Shorty perhaps refers to the fact that the shebeen features both young and old men sitting together and drinking, as if this was unique to the coloured community – the mixing of age groups and the blurring of roles between the male leaders of the community and the juniors. Older men then deserve the right to a couple of beers on a Saturday afternoon because of their roles as breadwinners. But, on closer inspection of the statements Shorty makes here, perhaps by elders, Shorty also refers to the indigenous black African cultural traditions of respect for the ancestors. This then is an example of culture to Shorty, and black culture then an example of respect, something coloured people are bereft of.

Shamiel sits in his frontyard playing cards with his friends. As he plays he engages with me around issues of coloured culture, and the ways in which it plays itself out.

Shamiel: "Coloured culture is mainly religion, and the Coons, and playing cards amongst ourselves"

Here, for the first time he highlights the importance of religion in coloured tradition – the importance of mosque on a Friday afternoon and church on a Sunday. Christmas and Eid are religious holidays of great importance in Hanover Park, but more importantly it grants the community the opportunity to wear the new clothes they bought and saved up for, have big lunches with family and friends, and it is in celebrations such as these, accompanied by their religious significance, but not always of primary importance, that community bonds are strengthened.

Also highlighted here is the importance of the Coon Carnival. Baxter (2001) argues that this is an expression of working class coloured identity, but also, that this expression of

identity is a masculine one. From the members of the troupes who practice for weeks preceding the January celebrations to the managers of these teams, the central roles are occupied by men, while women are found in supporting roles, that of seamstresses. Interestingly, many of these women are factory seamstresses by profession, were it not that this task is also their daily source of employment and work, it might, be considered their leisure time and also add to an expression of identity, but here, in many instances, the line between work and celebration is not clearly drawn and the Carnival remains within the realms of masculine expression.

Lastly, Shamiel also highlights playing cards on a Saturday afternoon being part of coloured culture, the men sit on upside down milk crates in the yard and in between their legs run small children. Hands lift beers while still keeping their eyes on the game, in this testosterone filled competition to see who can beat whom. The crowd here is different to the shebeen down the street, the yard is filled mainly with older men and there are no females present. They are less rowdy than the shebeen, yet they are equally sure that this is 'their' 'thing', a man's 'thing'. These leisure activities being equated with coloured culture, while glaring in their absence of women made me curious in the ways women spent their time, and also the ways in which perhaps television viewing impacted on this.

This chapter served as an introduction to the community of Hanover Park. What I hope to have illustrated was the importance of feminine understandings of coloured identity since these men so firmly linked it within the masculine sphere. Also, even in early research the question of media representation arose. Worrying, were the views of the young man

in my research Marcelino, who seemed to have internalized negative views of coloured culture. What's interesting however is the way he took the practices of his local community, and seemed to generalize them as indicative of the coloured community as a whole. The role community plays in identity formation therefore becomes important.

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Chapter Five: the women of Hanover Park and 7De Laan

Sewende Laan is a thirty minute soap opera aired on SABC2 at 6.30pm. The soap proved most popular with the women of Hanover Park since it was an Afrikaans language soap and this was these women's first language. I begin by outlining the central characters in this soap and then showing the ways young and older women interpret the narrative. I also highlight the ways in which language becomes a marker of class in the coloured community, and how precisely because of their class, these women feel left out not only by a genre, but SA TV in its totality.

My choice of soap operas for this analysis were as a result of the presence of prominent, coloured, female characters, and it was a definite intention to include one English language and one Afrikaans language soap. I kept abreast of both of these soap operas since their inception, but since February 2007 began following the narratives of the soap operas closely and examined the histories of some of the characters, particularly, Kelvin, Lolly and Frank in *Isidingo*. In *Sewende Laan* I highlighted Charmaine, Felicity and Vanessa. I acknowledge the technical elements of production, but more importantly I looked at the directions the plot lines were taking the characters of interest to me. The first soap opera I decided to analyse at was *Sewende Laan*.

Sewende Laan reaches an audience rating (AR) of as high as 12.2. In researching how AR's are calculated I found that a sample of the viewing population is taken, this total is multiplied by the number of times a programme is viewed within a specific time period

and divided by the potential number of viewers a programme could have and the length of the programme (www.saarf.co.za/adulttv.asp: 7 June 2007). This AR is quite high when one considers that the highest rated programme on South African television, *Generations* has an average AR of 20.

The soap itself originated from Danie Odendaal nearly fifteen years ago while he was sitting in a coffee shop in Melville watching people go about their daily business. He watched the different characters, a crazy old man who likes to talk to himself, another who liked to gossip and the pretty young waitresses at the shop. In this way many of the characters were born (www.sabc2.co.za : 7 June 2007).

To this mix Odendaal soon added the proud matriarch, a superbitch, her arch rival, a wealthy family and a family from the wrong side of the tracks to fit the codes of the soap opera laid down by its American predecessors. Let me continue by highlighting the characters from Odendaal's creation that are of specific importance to this study. While elements of these character descriptions are mirrored in *Sewende Laan* publicity material they largely arise from my own viewing of the narrative.

Charmaine: Charmaine is a middle aged woman who manages the local coffee shop Oppiekoffie. She runs the shop now that the owner, Oom Francois has left, whereas before she was involved mostly in supervising the staff. Charmaine was married to Ivan, and bore him a daughter Vanessa. Later, Ivan was jailed for fraud, he disappeared after his release and turned up dead. Charmaine was devastated, even more so when her

daughter Vanessa fell pregnant. Later, Vanessa's baby gets very ill. While in hospital the baby passes away and it is later uncovered that the baby boy was killed. All fingers point to Charmaine. Charmaine's name is eventually cleared and the baby's biological grandfather is found guilty of the crime. The new editor of the Hillside Times, Neville Meintjies is enamoured with Charmaine and starts courting her. He moves to Gauteng from Cape Town with his two sons, Xander and Vince. Uncomfortable with the attention at first, the romantic prospects soon seem favourable for Charmaine. Neville and Charmaine eventually get married.

Vanessa: Vanessa was a quiet and unassuming young girl who spent most of her time working at the local sports shop as a front desk attendant. She fell pregnant by her first serious boyfriend. He later died and left Vanessa as a single mother. People told her she should give the child up for adoption but she refused, and with the help of her mother Vanessa decides to raise the child. Later, when her son gets sick Vanessa is devastated, when her son is killed she's filled with anger as all evidence points to her own mother. She can't help believing that her mother did this, since they had often talked about all the pain her little boy was in. She is filled with intense feelings of guilt when her mother is proved innocent. It takes a while but Vanessa puts her baby's death behind her and realizes that he has gone to a better place. She gives love another chance and starts a relationship with a ballroom dancer, but he, like her father, leaves her. When her surrogate sister, Felicity, is away in Europe, Vanessa's feelings for her boyfriend Xander, become stronger and stronger.

Felicity: Felicity came to stay with Vanessa and Charmaine because she had no where else to go. She wanted to keep her baby, but realized she had no other choice but to give it up for adoption. Felicity gets a job at the local boutique owned by the scheming Sandra. Sandra sees Felicity's potential as a designer and immediately decides to put Felicity Fashions, Felicity's own fashion label, into production. When Sandra disappears, Felicity and Dezi (part of the rich Terreblanche family) become partners. Things are going well for Felicity now. She starts dating one of Neville's sons Vince. Vince hurts her, she finds out from his brother Xander that he is cheating on her. Xander comforts her, and soon declares his own affections for her. They start a wonderful love affair which is interrupted when Felicity has to go to Europe for work. When she returns she finds Vanessa in Xander's arms. Vanessa and Xander plan to get married. Here Felicity was being let down by another man, but, what hurt most of all was that the other woman was someone she considered her sister (www.7deLaan.co.za : 30 March 2007).

These descriptions may seem slightly theatrical, this has been a deliberate attempt to try and capture some of the climactic and sensational aspects of the soap genre, and to give the reader a literary example of the engagement a viewer might feel during reception.

Recent developments in *Sewende Laan* are not without commentary from the viewing public. Here, pay special attention to the use of *kapie-taal*, marking the speaker on this website forum by 'House of Coloureds':

"Sewende Laan is the best soapie oppie box...ok...ok, then there's Isidingo. I reckon these two soapies are SA's best. And can definitely beat the kakkerasies sabel/etv puts on like Days of Our Lives and Bold and the Beautiful and of course Pessions...But een ding wat vir my nou lekke

krap. I mean, the writers must sieka have run out of lekke goetes, is the Vanessa and Xander stuk (in 7de Laan)...Vanessa is now soma married to Xander. Naai man!! In my opinion (and my motchies) Xander should have rather stayed with Felicity! I mean Felicity is mos better looking, more successful and doesn't run away from home when kak happens. And al this because this Vanessa kin started to look Xander innie oe! Starry eyed en what what.....
Ferril"
(www.kakduidelik.com: 1 June 2007)

Here, Ferril, a coloured, male viewer of the storyline airs his views on recent developments in the narrative surrounding the love triangle between Vanessa, Felicity and Xander. Here, Vanessa is demonized as temptress, and he later questions Xander's complete turnaround from soap opera hero to what Ferril views as spineless. This sample, and the way in which it is written (the informal mixture of English and Afrikaans, the use of *kapie-taal*), as if the characters really exist to Ferril and his *motchie* (wife) best illustrate viewers commitment to their soap operas, but also coloured interest in characters from their racial group.

My interviews for ethnographic reception analysis started with the women of the Cape Flats community of Hanover Park. This area, often highlighted by the media as a haven for gang violence and a site plagued by the latest drug to ravage South Africa, and particularly the Western Cape, *tik*¹⁸ proved rich for research since it in many ways mirrored Elaine Salo's Manenberg in many media and perhaps social narratives. It is, superficially, Cape Town's wrong side of the tracks. I travel there by taxi on a Friday afternoon. The taxi's filled with women carrying bags of groceries home to families like those of my research site, Rywoodwalk.

Hanover Park was originally developed as a result of the apartheid policy, the Group Areas Act. It houses many of the former residents of areas like District Six, Claremont,

¹⁸ Known as crystal meth

Newlands and Bishop's Court. The area was named after the main road in District Six, Hanover Street, to give residents a sense of community in an area that they were strangers to. "Residents were forced into an area that was foreign and deprived. The area was economically deprived and people could not make ends meet. It was an unstable and unsettled community. People had to travel further to their places of work and this therefore became an added financial burden. Educational and cultural facilities were very poor. This resulted in the people becoming, on the one hand, very apathetic and on the other very angry towards the government" (Williams.C:2004:2).

According to Adhikari (2006) this apathy still exists, but the anger has perhaps resulted in action with the reassertion of coloured identity, which this research also comments on.

During these interviews, however, what I did find was a sense of community, particularly amongst the older women of Hanover Park. Despite the crime and the disapproval of certain actions, these women, perhaps as a result of forced cohesion, had developed a sense of community and with that a sense of belonging. What these women hungered for was a sense of unity amongst the women of Hanover Park and offered this as a solution to many of the community's problems. Irene however had a different view which gave me an indication of the complexities of the area:

Irene: "Die vroumense in onse community is baie swak because of gangsterism-my kind is n gangster ma nou is daai vrou se kind nie n gangster nie-dan sal die ma se 'nie my kind issie n gangster nie, is daai vrou se kind'- daarom dink ek die vroumense in onse community is baie swak..."¹⁹

Irene also interestingly attributed many of the problems in the community to arguments between women. This became interesting since again, Salo (2003) argues the important

¹⁹ The women in our community are very weak because of gangsterism. If my child is a gangster, but my neighbour's child isn't, she won't care about solving the problem

role women played in the Cape Flats community of Manenberg as watchdogs, not only mothers to their own children but taking care of the community:

Irene: “Is altyd moeligheid tussen die vroumense in Hanover Park, die lelike skellery en almal daai dan se eke Hanover Park se vroumense is baie swak”²⁰

A study of the adult women in Hanover park proved particularly interesting, especially their views of themselves since out of an estimated population of 33 753, 17 964 are female and 15 789 are male, of this number 5128 are between the ages of 18-34, and 4038 are 35-54 (Williams.C:2004:4).

Irene and Ouma Sophie

My interviews started with Irene Crochum, a 39 year old mother of three. Irene’s first husband died many years ago and it is her second husband ‘Chippie’ who greets me as I enter their front yard. I step into her neat two bedroom council flat as she prepares supper. Irene doesn’t stop while talking to me. I learn that she shares the flat with her husband, her mother and two children. She sent her first child, Marcelino, to live with her sister in Saldanha Bay since things were getting too ‘dangerous’ for him in Hanover Park. Hesitant at first Irene relaxes when her neighbour steps in and spurs her on to chat to me. Irene’s mother, Ouma Sophie sits in the lounge patiently waiting for the Afrikaans soap opera *Sewende Laan* to start. I suggest to Irene that we sit in the lounge and chat until the soap opera begins.

²⁰ There are always problems among the women of Hanover Park, they’re always arguing, that’s why the women are very weak.

It was interesting that for Irene and so many of the other women I spoke to that being coloured was a given, there was no negotiation and ambiguity surrounding its label and no anger at the apartheid regime for its imposition:

Irene: “Ons bruinmense het vir al die jare swaar gekry en ek is proud om n bruin persoon te wees.”²¹

For Irene, she wasn't a coloured, which had connotations of being in-between, she was a 'bruinmens', definite in its colour, yet sure in its link to an Afrikaans identity. What is also interesting about Irene's statement is that for her-her racial identity gains strength from years of oppression, this is a time of pride in being a bruinmens.

As we wait for *Sewende Laan* to start Irene mentions that she rarely sees people like herself on television. I question her choice of soap opera then since *Sewende Laan* features many prominent, if not positive, coloured characters.

Irene: “Ek is proud dat daar nog bruinmense op TV is.... (yet less enthusiastically)...mens sien net bruinmense met geld op TV”²²

Class therefore also becomes an important marker for whether Irene identifies with the coloured people on TV. She was proud of the coloured people on TV, but voices her concern that they're all coloureds with money; this class divide therefore inhibits her identification with them. According to Irene, there is little that she identifies with on TV, and of the little she recognizes as being another 'bruinmens' she is alienated because of her working class background, or rather their narratives of wealth and relative comfort.

²¹ We coloureds struggled for many years and I'm proud to be a coloured.

²² I'm happy to see coloured people on TV, but I only see coloureds with money

Irene advises me to talk to her mother Ouma²³ Sophie, or Ouma Pontas as she is affectionately known. Apparently, she has lots of time for soap operas since she lost her legs to gangrene years ago and spends most of her time in the lounge, in front of the television. Ouma Sophie defines herself racially, not in terms of oppression, or 'swaarkry' but rather through familial relationships and geneology, yet for her this is an identity firmly rooted in the Afrikaans language:

Ouma Sophie: "...my ma en a was kleurling gewees en my hele familie was kleurling-en ek het nooit Engels geleer nie-daar was daai tyd nie baie Engelse mense nie, Engelse mense was maar noue eerste. Ek is meeste Afrikaans...Ek het vir n paar jaar die ander mense gaan help, toe hoor ek die vrou se vir die klimeidjie (young girl), 'moenie moet haar praat nie, sy kannie Engels praat nie', toe geer ek vir haar n antwoord, 'ja ek kan Engels praat'...Die was kleurling mense gewees, maar dit was slamse mense. Toe se ek vir haar ek kan Engels praat, maar ek kan nou nie hoe Engels praat nie'"²⁴

As Ouma Sophie recounts her interaction with an English speaking, coloured daughter of the family she 'helped-out' as a *char*²⁵ lady, what is highlighted is the idea of Afrikaans being marker of lower class, exemplified by her referral to formal English as 'hoë Engels'. Ouma Sophie rebuts this assumption by 'showing them' so to speak. Her Afrikaans upbringing and lack of English makes her a kleurling, while 'their' English and here she immediately Others, is a signifier of their class and difference. These differences along class lines have early roots in Cape Flats communities. "Higher income groups living on the Cape Flats tend to congregate in Grassy Park central..., Heathfield, Fairways... Witteboome, near Wynberg, as well as Crawford and Belgravia East... The result of these artificially imposed subdivisions... is that if you visit Bonteheuwel at about

²³ Grandmother

²⁴ My mother was a coloured, and my entire family is coloured. We were never taught English. While we were growing up there weren't many English speaking people. I speak Afrikaans. I worked for English speaking people a couple of years ago, and a mother told her child not to speak to me because I can't speak English, so I answered her, 'Yes, I can speak English'. They were coloured people, muslim.

²⁵ cleaning lady

five in the afternoon it is possible to see working class people entering their poorer areas...while their better off, professionally orientated coloured associates are leaving...” (Venter:1974:93). This remains the same, except for Ouma Sophie and other working class women; she travelled to these ‘better-off’ areas to work. This stratification along class lines causes in-group resentment as well as cultural disassociation amongst many coloured people. This is perhaps similar to the situation amongst African Americans and their upwardly mobile middle class with their disavowal, or romanticization of their black roots (West: 1993). Often, this plays itself out in the disavowal of language and in many cases the decision not to speak Afrikaans and disapproval of others entering these working class areas, like Ryan Basson, interviewed later.

On this level of language, Ouma Sophie identifies with *Sewende Laan*, but then again feels alienated as class groups these characters with the English speakers she has highlighted above.

“Mens sien net mense wat geld het, ons is maar net arm. Ek kyk maar net *Sewende Laan*.”²⁶

If we are to acknowledge the issues around class, racial and linguistic representivity apparent in this soap opera, what of the values represented according to Ouma Sophie. In conversation with Ouma Sophie it becomes easier to highlight these values in relation to American imports like the soap operas which are perhaps euphemistically referred to as daytime dramas in the States i.e. *The Bold and the Beautiful* and *Days of Our Lives*. Like all soap operas these too typically center on the domestic setting and deal with inter-familial and extra familial relationships.

²⁶ We only see people with money. I only watch *Sewende Laan*

Ouma Sophie: “In onse soapies is hulle nou nie so dinges op die TV nie. Ek het nou gesit toe dink ek daai Ridge is nou getroud met Taylor, en nou trou Ridge se pa met Ridge se een vrou, en nou is hy moet n ander een ook getroud – daais nou al die dinge wat mens op TV sien.”²⁷

While entertaining, the tales of bed hopping held no appeal for Ouma Sophie, as local soaps met her approval since they proved fairly conservative in this regard. However, these international soaps proved entertaining and nothing else, Ouma Sophie and her daughter didn’t look to these soaps for veracity and accuracy, only entertainment. But her final words gave me an impression of the overall lack of representivity and sadness she felt since she didn’t see herself as part of the larger imagined black community based on a shared past of political inequality-she was separate, and what she sees doesn’t speak to that. If SA TV was selling a discourse of national unity based on colour blind representation, she wasn’t buying:

“Daar is baie swart mense op TV vir hulle-min bruinmense, min wit mense, meeste maar swart mense, hier en daar sien mens nog n wit eene”²⁸

Erasmus (2001) discusses this notion of diversity in South Africa when she argues, that the discourse of “rainbow nationalism” sees coloured identities as “merely different”, and this reduces coloured identity to “minstrelsy” (20). In this terrain of diversity, we see a media that asks us to be blind to race, where in our daily lives the consequences of a racialised past are lived and relived. Here, by simply inserting ‘colouredness’, and specific representations thereof, we remove the opportunities to work through “conflict” and in this case alienation.

²⁷ Our soap operas aren’t like there’s. Ridge married Taylor, and now Ridge’s father is married to his son’s ex wife, and now he’s married to someone else. Those are the type of things you see on TV.

²⁸ There are a lot of black people on TV, a few coloureds and a few whites, here and there you see a white or coloured person

Ruwaida and Antie Miena

I visit the home of Ruwaida (or Waida as her friends call her), a mother of three young girls, two of whom became teenage mothers and now raise their children in her home. Waida is married for the second time to a younger man. Her eldest daughter, Juwaiya peels potatoes in the kitchen while her son plays at her feet. Again, *Sewende Laan* is about to start. Waida and a neighbour, Amiena (Antie²⁹ Miena), are sitting in the lounge. Juwaiya starts by telling me how proud she is to see coloured people on TV:

Juwaiya (25): “Ek dink dis goed dat hulle so er in die lewe gekom het – ek sal myself graag dar eendag wil sien”³⁰

It seemed that the coloured women on television offered Juwaiya both inspiration and aspiration. She wanted to be on television some day and started telling me about all the ‘stars’ who came from areas like Hanover Park. She throws out names like Ezra Lingeveldt from Hanover Park, Pam Andrews, Lorcía Cooper, and even mentions a friend who’ll soon be releasing a gospel album. Juwaiya, perhaps influenced by her youth, didn’t look at the characters to illustrate her reality, but found them useful in contemplating her future, escaping the negative connotations teenage pregnancy could have in a community like Hanover Park, or rather, any community. Juwaiya sees the actresses on television outside of the soap opera narrative and recognizes their achievements. This sentiment isn’t shared by neighbour Antie Miena while talking about the soap opera *Sewende Laan*:

²⁹ Antie here refers to Aunt

³⁰ I think it’s good that they’ve made a success of their lives, I’d like to do the same some day.

Antie Miena: "...hulle is vroeg swanger, is daai n role model vir onse kinders...op *Sewende Laan* het elke jong coloured n kind – daais mosse goed vir onse kinders nie."³¹

By 'hulle' Antie Miena refers to the two young coloured girls on the soap, Vanessa and Felicity. Both had children out of wedlock and at a young age. Antie Miena doesn't compare their conduct to the other girls in the soap, (the majority of whom are white) but rather measures the impact of the conduct of these coloured characters on coloured girls. She therefore measures them by the values of the community, as they impact that community and fails to consider what this portrayal means in relation to representivity in the soap and what statement the show itself, then makes about coloured people. Juwaiya, however, isn't strongly influenced by this narrative, because she herself was a teenage mother, she sees the possibilities these characters have despite falling pregnant at a young age, and finds solace in that. Even within the soap, Vanessa makes a living working at a local deli and has recently married a young lawyer, albeit with her family's disapproval, while Felicity is an up and coming fashion designer. They occupy these seemingly successful positions, but both characters have also lost their children, and their 'success' only achieved once these children were removed from the plot.

It is interesting that both Antie Miena and Waida identify with the character Charmaine. Charmaine is characterized as Vanessa's mother and manages the local coffee shop. She also took-in Felicity and became a surrogate mother to her. Charmaine's first husband was arrested and is serving his time in jail. She divorced him and started a middle age love affair with the coloured editor of the local paper Neville Meintjies. According to

³¹ They were both mothers at a young age. Are they good role models for our children? On *Sewende Laan*, every young coloured girl has a child.

these women the characters are much loved in Hanover Park, and there's even a local couple named after them because they've fallen in love in their twilight years.

Antie Miena: "...ons voel saam met haar"³²

Waida: "Ja, sy's soos ons want sy voel saam met haar kinders"³³

Here both Waida and Miena identify with Charmaine on the basis of motherhood, the fact that she cares for her family the way they care for their's. They seem to occupy the same roles in society. Perhaps, they also identify with the struggles Charmaine goes through because of her 'deadbeat' husband and daughter who fell pregnant as a teen? What goes unmentioned by Miena and Waida is also that there is a romantic identification between them and Charmaine. Just as Juwaiya perhaps sees the actors that have gone far outside of the narrative, or notices Felicity as a fashion designer within the narrative, perhaps these women see a women who has thrown off the burden of her ex husband and trials and tribulations with her children, and in her 50's heads off to Paris with a friend because of a competition she's won, or goes on honeymoon with her new husband. It seems this aspiration and inspiration extends beyond the limits of age and the character Charmaine spoke to the reality of their existence and gave them the possibility through escapism of bridging the confines of their community. Referring to the actor who plays Neville Meintjies, Zane Meas the two women added the following:

Antie Miena: "Ek dink hy is een van Suid Akrika se beste akteurs, en die mammies hou van hom"³⁴

Waida: "Nee, ma Charmaine is regtig n wonderlikke vrou Miena, sy's soos ons"³⁵

³² We empathise with her

³³ Yes, she's like us because she feels with her children

³⁴ I think he's one of South Africa's best actors

Here Charmaine is heralded as being like them, it is this recognition of likeness that is important to these women, Zane Meas is applauded for marching with the Coons, showing that he is an ordinary and more importantly ‘genuine’ coloured.

Antie Miena and Waida both highlighted the lack of role models for young coloured people in the media. They often spoke of sportsmen and politicians who young coloured men could look up to:

Antie Miena: “Kyk nou vir Chester Williams, maar hy het nou moet n wit vrou getrou. As daar kleurling mans is, na wie mens kan opkyk, dan kyk hulle nie vir kleurling vroumense nie – hulle kyk net vir die wit vrouens.”³⁶

Waida: “Ja, hulle kykie vir ons nie”³⁷

Here, the romantic association with whiteness robbed men like Chester Williams of being a true coloured role model, he forfeited his belonging to this community, and for these women his success was dependent on his migration to white culture. He wasn’t...so to speak, like Neville Meintjies who left his gallery owner wife for the dowdy Charmaine.

Waida’s youngest daughter, Lamees, recently gave birth to a baby girl with her boyfriend, Ryan, from the middle class neighbourhood of Ottery. They sat in Waida’s bedroom with Ryan helping Lamees bathe the baby. Lamees was reluctant to me, and instead elected her boyfriend, saying that he could speak better. Like Juwaiya, Ryan

³⁵ But Charmaine is really a wonderful woman. She’s just like us.

³⁶ Look at Chester Williams (former SA rugby player), he’s married to a white woman. If there’s a good coloured man, he’s married to a white woman.

³⁷ They don’t look at us

tended to see the coloured people on television outside of the roles that they played, outside of the soap opera genre:

Ryan: “I look up to the coloured people in soap operas – seeing how far they can go in life”

Ryan also approved of the diversity in soap operas, particularly those commonly viewed as black soap operas like *Generations*. The soap in question initially had a number of coloured characters yet today it features none. This did not perturb Ryan since he saw it as a sign that South Africa as a whole was changing, and again viewing it outside of the soap opera genre, didn't see it as a deliberate or indirect attempt at the exclusion of coloured people. It was a sign of the times or, “the black people are also coming up.”

Ryan was particularly interesting however, because he commented on how coloured people were regularly portrayed in the media. In doing so, he also drew important class distinctions between coloured people. The markers of class often being language:

He starts by saying: “I think its important (seeing coloured people in the media) because people tend to put coloureds down as gangsters... (this is) proving that they can do something with their lives, proving that there is hope”

For Ryan it proved enough that ‘they’ were ‘there’ how ‘they’ were portrayed once ‘there’ proved trivial to him, as long as it wasn't the stereotypical views of coloured people as gangsters perhaps better outlined by Western earlier in this analysis.

Commenting on the class distinctions between coloured people Ryan used his own background and discussed how others in Ottery question him about coming to Hanover Park. He also speaks of the reverse, when people from Hanover Park visit Ottery:

“...take for instance the people in Ottery – if they see people on the road speaking Afrikaans they somma run away and get scared”

Natasha Isaacs

Twenty seven year old Natasha stays with Antie Veena, the owner of a local shebeen located in her backyard. Sitting in Veena’s lounge as men and women pass to get to the backyard Natasha and I talk. Natasha seemed to exemplify coloured resentment on a personal level, in terms of access to resources and employment, as well as on the level of media representation. Here I start by problematising both Natasha, Irene, and even Waida’s notion of coloured identity that is based on a lack, while in many ways these women ‘own’ a coloured identity that is rich with experience and seem to characterize this identity with both language and festival, they have also internalized apartheid’s rhetoric of being in-between, not primarily in terms of race but in the post apartheid era in terms of access and representation. While this might give many coloured people and political parties the chance for an assertion of coloured identity based on access to political resources it binds coloured identity in spaces of victimhood. This victimhood is not however a mythic construction since it is experienced, particularly in terms of representation, by the women spoken to, but as a signifier of the coloured experience in its totality and voiced before any other symbol by these women it becomes problematic and worrying:

Natasha: “Ons bruinmense word nie eintlik gesien nie – op die TV is dit meeste swart mense en wit mense, is baie min dat mens bruinmense sien. Soos *Sewende Laan* se bruinmese is oraait maar sekere van hulle is ook nie n voorbeeld nie – kyk nou in die stuk vir Vanessa en Felicity – hulle is suppose om susters te wees, hulle het saam gebly, maar

Vanessa het nou haar outjie gevat – hulle wys onse kinders verkeerd. Die majority van die stukke wat hulle maak is nou nie n voorbeeld vir onse kinders nie”³⁸

Natasha was the first young woman I spoke to who viewed the actors as characters and not outside of the soap opera. She strongly disapproves of the values represented in the soap, critiquing the idea of sisterhood the characters Vanessa and Felicity represented if this led to Vanessa ‘stealing’ Felicity boyfriend. Natasha didn’t identify with these coloured women even though to her they were a sample of the very few coloured people on television. Not only did she not identify but she worried that younger coloured people might.

Natasha’s call for coloured unity isn’t a stranger to the post apartheid political arena, but this assertion disappointingly is one that is clouded in resentment of the black majority. There’s an overwhelming sense of anger that Natasha has that seems almost unsettling in her referral to ‘darkies’ that shakes my cocoon of academia to the realities of Hanover Park. This was one sign that the multiculturalism of the SABC wasn’t working for Natasha. This was how she saw the black people of South Africa, despite that advertising executives of *Generations*, or the mine managers of *Isidingo*, they were ‘darkies’, and Natasha’s people were highlighted by an absence:

“As ons bruinmense eendag saamstaan sal ons ook erens kan kom – kyk nou is darkies wat werk kry en wittes wat werk kry. Kyk nou – ek kan miskien die werk doen maar dan sal hulle die darkie of die foreigner vat”³⁹

³⁸ Coloureds aren’t really seen. I only see black people and white people on TV. There are very few coloureds. Look at the coloureds on *Sewende Laan*. I guess they’re okay, but they aren’t really good examples for our children. Look at Vanessa and Felicity, they’re supposed to be sisters, but Vanessa stole her boyfriend. That doesn’t set a good example for our children.

³⁹ If coloured people unite some day we’ll be successful. Today, only black people and white people get jobs. Even if I can do the job, a black person or a foreigner will get it.

Natasha seems to travel from issues of representation to her own employment opportunities based on the prevalence of black representation in both the media and the work force.

“Op die nuus sal hulle miskien wys van die gangsters wat dood skiet maar ons nou praat van mense wat swaarkry – hulle kommie uit om die bruinmense te help nie. Daar is at all times n helping hand vir hulle, waneer gaan daar wies vir onse mense”⁴⁰

Natasha’s words here seem hopeless to me, and resonate with scholarship around the plight of black America, “...the major enemy of black survival in America has been and is neither oppression nor exploitation but rather the nihilistic threat – that is, loss of hope and absence of meaning. For as long as hope remains and meaning is preserved, the possibility of overcoming oppression is preserved” (West: 1993: 15). A loss of hope would be fatal in this regard since it would equal an end effect of losing the desire for struggle and freedom. “The genius of our black foremothers and forefathers was to create powerful buffers to ward off the nihilistic threat” (West: 1993: 15). The buffers, and traditions that once seemed so prevalent in the coloured communities, and are evidenced by current mentions of the Coon Carnival and community celebrations, are devastated in this regard by an alienation and distancing from the black majority, coupled with the social problems that threaten the community of Hanover Park, where young men highlight ‘dronknes hou’ as part of coloured culture.

⁴⁰ You’ll possibly see that someone got shot when they mention Hanover Park in the news, but they never talk about the way our people are struggling. Everyone always helps ‘them’, they never come out to help ‘us’

Summary

Media representation, or rather a lack there of seems to symptomatic of a larger problem for the people of Hanover Park. Media representations in soaps like *Sewende Laan* at times feel alien to them because of the class barriers even though there is a recognition of language. To this limited representation they feel little or no connection, but at the same time they fear the values it promotes. This lack of representation or skewed view seems part of a larger national, political and structural failure to represent and cater for the people of Hanover Park. It would seem that this is not merely a case of the clichéd, ‘Before we were too black to be white, now we’re too white to be black’, because it is a problem not merely defined within categories of race but complicated by class. During apartheid the media was used as a tool to create fear of a black majority rule, best summed up with the phrase, ‘Die Swart Gevaar’, it would seem that current media narratives in the news, where this community is displayed as gang ridden and in the narratives of soap operas, where relationships of identification are few and far between also pose serious problems.

Studies done in Canada about the effect mainstream Canadian television had on the Inuit people left broadcaster Rosemarie Kuptana comparing it to a neutron bomb. Here a media which ignores diversity can have devastating effects:

“This is a bomb that kills people but leaves the buildings standing. Neutron bomb television is the kind of television which the traditions, the skills, the culture, the language count for nothing. The pressure, especially on our children, to join the invading culture and language and leave behind a language and culture that count for nothing is explosively powerful”
(Brisebois: 1983: 107)

The bomb in this case is a mainstream television that seems to promote diversity. On each channel you can find broadcasting in all eleven official South African languages, yet it ignores working class coloured identities or features it in news media to account for rising crime statistics. In this rainbow nation we find an angry community. Angry since its daughters watch girls who look like them; fall pregnant in their teens, while the purity of their white counterparts in these narratives remain intact. In this way being a coloured is undervalued, and the image of a coloured woman is skewed. This chapter aims to highlight this community's interpretation of these depictions. To show that while race matters, here class and community matters too.

University of Cape Town

Chapter Six: A woman's time...a housewife's leisure:

In discussions with the women of Hanover Park I found that their identification with these characters was quite strong despite their disapproval of some of their actions and their depiction. In conducting my interviews I also became aware of their roles in the home, and an analysis of a women's time is a useful way of exploring the ways gender roles also act as a lens through which these women interpret these narratives, and make an active decision to identify with the characters, which, make their identification all the more powerful. Identification therefore based on recognition of ethnicity, and the devotion shown by these women to their characters, removes SA soaps from the frivolous attention and commentary as a women's genre, along with paperback romance novels. They become very important in their democratic functions in figuring these women as part of a national South African identity. This chapter therefore looks at the nature of a women's work in relation to a female genre.

Feminist television critics state that viewers are encouraged to identify more closely with the characters in daytime dramas than those at night, and highlight the technical elements of the genre as reasons for this (Modleski: 1996). Certainly, South African soaps like *Generations*, *Sewende Laan* and *Isidingo* follow the codes of the soap opera set by their American counterparts. The most blatant of which is the close up shot. While this shot emphasizes the face of the character, literally bringing the viewer closer to the face, this certainly has links with a large female audience, most of whom are mothers. "A face in close up is what before the age of film, only a lover or a mother ever saw...Close-ups

provide the spectator with training in reading other people, in being sensitive to their (unspoken) feelings at any given moment” (Modleski: 1996: 106). Certainly, the close up of Charmaine’s face in *Sewende De Laan*, when finding out that her daughter has been avoiding her – the camera moves closer to Charmaine’s face, and not through dialogue, but through the strain in her forehead, the pursed lips of the actress, emphasized by the camera distance, also then emphasizes a mother’s anguish, it is these emotions, enhanced, amplified, magnified perhaps that speaks to mothers everywhere.

“More than in any human relationship, overwhelmingly more, motherhood means being instantly interruptible, responsive, responsible...It is a distraction, not mediation, that becomes habitual, interruption, not continuity, spasmodic, not constant toil” (Modleski: 1996:107). Certainly then the nature of the soap opera genre, with its multiple plot lines, and with that a series of possible sites of identification, or rather the means to follow a number of narratives at any given point that speak to a mothers time. This coupled with the repetitive nature of the soap, the constant reference to the past via flashbacks, makes the genre easy to follow for a woman whose attentions are constantly divided. Women’s work, or rather, a mothers work isn’t set between the boundaries of nine to five, but requires a constant vigilance and with children, attention to the fact that time is interruptible, by children who need baths and a husband who ‘needs’ supper. This is certainly true of the women of Hanover Park, the mothers whom I spoke to. Juwaiya, Irene and Ruwaida prepared supper while watching the soap. The kitchen formed the hub of work activity, while in the lounge, the television was turned up to hear, rather than view the narrative. While the soap opera narrative did not have a structured beginning,

middle, and end, as with other narratives, taking this form from myth and folklore, or have strict binary oppositions since any character can function as hero or villain depending on the direction of the narrative, it does have points of climax (Abercrombie: 1996) . When Charmaine finally kisses Neville Meintjies, when Felicity confronts Vanessa about stealing her boyfriend, these moments of climax call these women from their work to the screen. This time of work then, is interrupted by slight moments of leisure, the escapist enjoyment of the narrative, and whichever parts of the soap that are missed in this 18:30 timeslot are watched the next morning if there's time. I would argue then that while the episodic narrative of a soap opera is divided into slots of thirty minutes, the actual 'viewing' time is much shorter, and is divided into moments of climax, in which the viewer actually decides what is of importance. While being at a distance, and not following every part of the show, this type of viewing would actually require active viewing on the part of this female audience as oppose to a viewer who witnesses the entire narrative but who is a passive recipient, since there isn't a hierarchy of important segments. Because the ordering of time, in particular a mothers life, via her work involves, not only ordering the start and end of her viewing time, and also the ways in which the thirty minute episode is ordered, it means that her active viewing and choice involves a stronger and committed decision as to which character to identify with. This character and 'their' own narrative becomes of great importance.

In being perfectly suited to a mothers work and her split attentions the soap opera genre offers enjoyment not only since it allows a limited period of disappearance into the lives of others (although the time period for this escapism may be longer in the consciousness

of these women), and in this sense is very similar to reality TV. Viewers follow the personal stories of many characters on the show on a day to day basis and the two television genres therefore have a fly-on-the-wall element in common. But because of women's work and the schizophrenic elements thereof, the soap opera encourages identification based on moments of viewing. The genre lends itself to these moments because it switches from one narrative to another. While Vanessa and Felicity argue over Xander, Hilda and Matilda argue over their culinary abilities, Charmaine and Neville are missing on their honeymoon, and the new editor of the Hillside Times is uncovering a hijacking syndicate. These various plotlines are followed by the viewer at any given moment and ordered in a hierarchy of importance, identification and climaxes, since each plotline at any given moment has its highs and lows. "The multiple plot lines of soap operas, for example, keep women interested in a number of characters and their various fates simultaneously. When one plot threatens to become too absorbing, it is interrupted and another storyline is resumed, or a commercial is aired. Interruptions in the soap opera diegesis are both annoying and pleasurable: If we are torn away from one absorbing story, we at least have the relief of picking up the thread of an unfinished one" (Modleski: 1996: 108). I disagree with this only in the sense that missing the moments of climax and closure that deal specifically with the character who elicits audience identification cannot simply be solved by picking up another plot line, because of the nature of soap opera identification and why here, adequate representation is perhaps so important. Because of the "multiplicity of equivalent characters" in the soap opera genre, viewing requires active and participatory involvement on the part of the viewer rather than simple passive identification since it requires choice. The fragmented nature of a

housewives day requires the ordering of these multiple plots and in this the choice of which characters to identify with. This then involves favorites, identification upon likeness, and in a narrative where closure is typically avoided, this choice is cemented (Modleski: 1996).

In positioning women as active viewers we begin to see the strength in soap opera identification and viewing. This becomes clear when we acknowledge the nature of the soap and the ways viewing is based on ordering a hierarchy of moments. This requires choice, an active decision of what to view, and whom to identify with. In this regard the representation of women becomes very important. Female representation in media texts becomes further complicated in the following section on the Daily Voice. Here, we begin to see precisely why adequate representation of the coloured female is important since a text which positions itself as being the voice of coloured people adds to existing stereotypes and seems to propogate them.

Chapter Seven: The young women of UCT and *Isidingo*

In this section I highlight the views of the young coloured women of UCT. These women mainly watched *Isidingo*, but our discussion is not limited to this soap. The women voiced their concern at the caricatures of coloured identity featured in this soap. Here, characters marked as “very coloured” undergo a transformation as they join upper class society. In doing so, they lose the characteristics which make them coloured. This loss it seems is their ticket to success, payment for entry into this world. The discussion also centers on a documentary by SKY-ONE journalist Ross Kemp. He ventures into Cape Town’s gangland, the Americans gang stronghold, ‘The White House’ and Pollsmoor Prison. These images become synonymous with the Cape Flats. These women question the representation of the coloured community as people without hope.

With an AR not quite as high as that of *Sewende Laan*’s, but averaging at around 8, *Isidingo* is a long running English language soap on SABC3. The show started in the mining town of Horizon Deep by focusing on the lives of people touched by the capital generated by the mining activities. From the lives of local gangsters and shebeen owners, to the local mine manager. The show was therefore heralded in its ability to realistically portray South African characters and dealt with diverse issues ranging from HIV/Aids to homosexuality.

Isidingo has however been investigated in the ways it issues representations of subaltern groups. The script editor of *Isidingo* has mentioned that scriptwriters of colour simply

didn't apply for positions there and this has meant that cultural representations aren't as realistic as they could be. He is however, careful to state that every effort is made to include "representatives" from various race groups at brainstorming sessions where present and future story ideas are discussed (Lockyear: 2004: 38). In this regard I felt that an analysis of the characters in *Isidingo* would prove interesting in the way coloured culture was portrayed. Here the coloured characters under analysis are as follows:

Frank Xavier: Frank Xavier comes into the narrative as the news editor at On TV; he initially helps the *Isidingo* superbitch Cherele De Villiers Haines in her attempts to 'bring-down' her ex husband and the megalomaniac of the show Barker Haines. Soon Frank becomes involved in an interracial relationship with On TV anchorwoman, Natasha, a white woman who has a daughter from a previous relationship. Frank has an interesting history. He studied journalism at Rhodes University. In the 80's he started a newspaper which was very critical of the government. The government attempted to "crush him financially" (www.isidingo.co.za: 30 March 2007). To rescue his paper he enters into a partnership with the dubious Barker. In looking at the history of the character not much is mentioned of his son Kelvin.

Kelvin: Kelvin is in his final year of high school in the Cape Flats community of Belhar. He gets involved with the wrong crowd, and to escape the gangsters he has been mixing with, his mother sends him to Gauteng to live with his father. Kelvin hasn't seen his father in years, and as can be imagined, their relationship, at first, is strained. Kelvin enters the world of *Isidingo* as a troubled teen who is closely watched by his father

because of his troubled past. Kelvin needs money and tried out for the On TV reality show 'Fight Club'. He lies to the show's producer about his age, and famously mentions, 'I came from Belhar, and in Belhar we learn to fight before we learn to walk.' Kelvin gets badly beaten up on Fight Club, which makes his father terribly angry and erupts in a macho display on Frank's part. While hesitant about his father's relationship with Natasha at first, the two form a close bond and Kelvin even befriends Natasha's daughter Nikki.

Lolly: Lolly comes into the Isidingo narrative as a victim of rape. Because of the dangers in her community her mother sends her to live with her uncle in Horizon Deep. Her Uncle Jack's wife, Mariaan is worried about the influence Lolly will have on her own daughter since she seems uncontrollable. Eventually her rapists track her down and hold her, her uncle and his family hostage. The family's rescued by the police and the rapists are put behind bars, but Lolly struggles to put the ordeal of the rape behind her. After matriculating Lolly does an internship at On TV, eventually becoming a researcher and then a full time journalist at On TV, under the tutelage of Frank Xavier. Lolly becomes quite the career woman, and her roommates and friends at the Bullers B&B, where she stays, joke that she'll do anything to get the story. Recently her friend and housemate Len was accused of rape. This was painful for Lolly because of her own experiences, and when fingers point to Len she immediately assumes he's guilty – later though the story of the accuser does not ring true with Lolly's own experience, and she uncovers the truth – Len is innocent. Lolly hasn't been very successful in her love life. While in Ireland, she

meets her deceased grandfather's lawyer and her travels back to South Africa to be with her, but things don't work out and poor Lolly pours herself into her work.

Hopefully an illustration of the current soap opera narrative through outlining the histories of the characters involved in the soap opera diegesis, the views and comments that arise during reception analysis become clearer. This helps to shed light on the ways the personal narratives of coloured characters are interpreted and create meaning around the understanding of coloured identity.

After working as a features writer at a relatively new Cape Town tabloid, the Daily Voice – I was approached by my department to run a second year seminar in tabloid journalism. In retrospect I believe that the fact that the paper in itself was aimed at a working class, coloured community, despite this not being its sole readership, drew predominantly coloured students to my class, and all but one of these students were female. The place that these young women occupied at an internationally recognized institution like the University of Cape Town gave them opportunities and enabled them to traverse social spaces different to the women of Hanover Park and I would argue placed them in positions of privilege with regards to employment, and varying degrees of cultural capital. Their views on coloured identity and their insights into media representation as media students interested me. One student in particular, Candice Jacks, who was adopted by middle class, coloured parents, but had working class coloured relations particularly interested me because of the sense of estrangement she felt when interacting with this part of her family. These young women's views cover a range of issues. From the media

coverage of the first South African baby contract killing and the subsequent media attention given to the accused, Dinah Rodriguez; to their insider knowledge of an 'underground' documentary made by a BBC journalist about the culture of gangsterism on the Cape Flats. Finally, and perhaps with direct reference to this study, the girls spoke of the characters Lolly and Kelvin in the English, SABC3 soap opera, *Isidingo*.

The girls had been talking about the Dinah Rodriguez trial for weeks now. Both as part of the seminar with regards to the coverage the Daily Voice had given the trial, and outside, since the trial filled popular conscience. Two years ago Rodriguez was arrested for orchestrating the murder of her former boyfriend's baby by Natasha Norton. The story became particularly interesting to the class since while Dinah and her ex boyfriend were white, Natasha Norton was coloured:

Lamees Albertus: "Stuff like this happens a lot but you don't expect it to come from a pretty white girl – its not suppose to happen to decent white people"

What's interesting about Lamees's comment is that she has highlighted her first-year media studies lessons dealing with news values. The event is an oddity. As if the contract killing of a baby wasn't deviant behaviour in its extreme Lamees's oddity also exposes interesting assumptions about white femininity. So if white females are pure and dainty.

What then of the depiction of coloured men and women:

Candice Jacks: "I think that now it's positive because of shows like *Isidingo*, *7De Laan*, *Backstage* and all that...before I would only see coloured people represented in the news..."

Here, Candice makes the same critical observations as the women in Hanover Park about the nature of coloured representation being played out predominantly in news media, a genre which typically sunshine journalism, or positive journalism and highlights the bad. Candice continues that in this genre coloured people are typically highlighted for:

Candice: "...gang related crimes, drugs or stuff like that...the lesser beings in society, that the only thing I used to see. But now look at *Isidingo* with Lolly and now we have another coloured person in, Kelvin"

The soap opera *Isidingo* features three coloured characters. There's Lolly who has seemingly overcome her rape years ago and has since become a successful journalist at the fictional television station, On TV; her producer Frank Xavier; and Frank's son, Kelvin, the latest member of the *Isidingo* family who hails from the Cape Flats community of Belhar. Recently Kelvin has auditioned for a reality TV show at On TV called *Fight Club*. He equates his youth in Belhar with preparation for the fights on the show, naturalizing this community as a national gangland through its mention on the soap.

Candice then highlights the transformation that many of these coloured characters go through, through their journey to more cosmopolitan, racially and economically diverse, or rather economically uniform based on middle to upper class representivity. Candice mentions a change from being 'very coloured' to becoming 'prim and proper'. Initially Candice's statement seems wrought with stereotypical notions of colouredness, one which is somehow closer to nature, the baser human desires, and the antithesis to class. But for Candice, as she later explains being coloured is rather characterized by its individuality:

Candice: “[Kelvin is] very coloured – like to me, Lolly’s all upstanding now, she wasn’t like that, she used to be the chick with the frizzy hair and all the jewelry – now she’s all prim and proper – a journalist, and Kelvin came into the show like a gangster, but now he’s also becoming all prim and proper”

For Candice, Lolly maintained a certain degree of fresh individuality when she first appeared on the show as a victim of rape, but this ‘freshness’ which Candice equated with colouredness, was removed as soon as Lolly seemed to have dealt with her rape and faced her perpetrators. While Kelvin showed all the markers of stereotypical representations of coloured masculinity – the exaggerated use of gamtaal, the attraction to, and glorification of violence, eventually both characters have been co-opted into the homogeneity of ‘polite society’

The character Kelvin has moved in with his father, Frank Xavier, his white girlfriend Natasha and her daughter. While Kelvin uses gamtaal or Kapie taal this has always been contrasted with his father’s use of formal English in their heated exchanges with Kelvin’s hostile arrival. Since Frank’s English isn’t intermixed with the African languages as with many of the black characters on the show, who exercise code switching (Lockyear: 2004), through linguistics he becomes aligned with the white characters. It is in fact later apparent that only in some of his exchanges with Kelvin that Frank drops his formal English to communicate with Kelvin on ‘his’ level and show that as a father he isn’t removed from Kelvin’s reality since, at some point, it was his reality as well. It is through their time spent in the cosmopolitan world of Jozi, the symbolic and historical white world of economics and high society that these characters have dropped the markers of a very fresh, individual and what can best be described as a ‘*coloured*’ past.

Lamees a drama student who has worked on a number of film sets states:

Lamees Albertus: “Everything that they’re making now – they want a typical coloured – we want the coloured people to be swearing and stuff like that”

Through Lamees’s lens she sees representations of coloured people very different to the ones viewed by the women of Hanover Park. The coloureds these women are exposed to are few and far between and if viewed they are alienated by class, money that seems far removed from their own existence. The coloured identity that Lamees is highlighting is the stereotypical representation of working class coloured identity that in itself is problematic. These are the images of coloured people that middle to upper class girls are exposed to. It is no surprise then that as Vincent Kolbe (2007) has highlighted it is this very class of coloured that have come to call themselves ‘better coloureds’ and those of even higher class superficially self referential in being ‘even better coloureds’, since this is the view of working class coloured identity they are exposed to. Like Antie Waida’s middle class son in law’s illustration of the how he questioned when he visits the mother of his child in Hanover Park. It is this view of the gangster that the minds of privileged coloured have been exposed to, while the underprivileged, or more aptly the Cape Flats coloured sees their reality neither represented nor attempted.

The discussion in class soon shifts to a documentary some of the girls have seen about gang culture in Cape Town, by journalist Ross Kemp. Nuraan entertains the class with a tale of the journalist’s travels:

Nuraan Davids: “He went inside ‘The White House’ in Manenberg and inside they were doing drugs and smoking whatever – I’m not joking, they filmed the whole thing – The

leader, when he spoke you could actually hear that he was an educated man, it wasn't what he spoke but what he spoke about – and then all his followers spoke about how they had all these dreams growing up”

Here Nuraan is exposed to the working class community of Manenberg. She however criticizes this view of coloured people, but it is Lamees who voices it best:

Lamees Albertus: “The way they present it, its showing that there is no hope for coloured society – they interviewed this six year old, and he said stuff like, ‘Nee, ek wil n Yakkie wees’, and they asked him why and he didn't know. It presented it as if he was gonna become a gangster”

These girls were offended at this depiction of the coloured community, they didn't want to see their community, and here it wasn't an issue of class alienation but identification based on a shared social identity based on markers of race, represented as being without hope. Western discusses this stereotype of coloured people as people without hope when he states: ““A fifth theme of the stereotype revolves around the hopelessness and powerlessness of the Coloured people, who have been discounted as a serious threat to white hegemony for at least the last 100 years” (Western: 1996: 19). Candice, Lamees and Nuraan weren't advocating that coloured people suddenly undergo transformations based on their entry into 'white' society, and thereby lose aspects of their character that made them unique, but they were also against the samples which the media too often raises as general truth.

Perhaps these young women's disapproval of working class coloured identity had something to do with their own class position. The residents of Hanover Park certainly highlighted their own discrimination at the hands of 'better off' coloured people. But these girls also disapproved of the transformation the coloured characters in *Isidingo* had undergone. Salo mentioned that television in the post-apartheid era, and here specifically

SABC1 had given the girls of Manenberg the means to navigate multicultural South African society, and the spheres of the upper class through upmarket shopping malls. But as I have argued this navigation was dependent on dropping the markers of coloured identity as these young women have highlighted in the *Isidingo* soap opera, especially since in characterization these markers were exaggerated in the first place.

Here it is my aim to highlight the ways the coloured characters in *Isidingo* lose the markers of their coloured history for the purposes of social mobility. Not only does this undervalue coloured identity, but from the onset their neighborhoods are marked as criminal and dangerous, their macho posturing tools needed to survive in these wastelands. These young women at UCT, despite occupying the privileged spaces of a university education, highlighted the need for a honest working class identities, and welcomed the initial refreshing portrayal of a confident coloured woman in the character Lolly, but Lolly has straightened her hair and changed her accent, and in exchange achieved 'success'.

Chapter Eight: *Isidingo* and Assimilation

In this chapter I illustrate the ways the coloured characters in *Isidingo* undergo their transformations as fare for entry into white society, but at what cost? In doing so I also make reference to the representation on coloured masculinity in the soap and argue that coloured masculinity is also equated with violence, in line with early stereotypes by Western (1996). With this, I pay close attention to the depiction of coloured femininity in *Isidingo* and the ways in which colouredness becomes ‘wild’ and ‘fiery’ in this stereotypical representation.

The narrative of *Isidingo* as mentioned polarized the character Kelvin in two ways. These relations of opposites have taken place with respect to the other coloured characters in *Isidingo*. The primary polarization takes place between Kelvin and his father. When Kelvin first entered the soap as a troubled teen from Belhar the narrative marked this Cape Flats area as a site for gangsters and thugs since through his dialogue the character Kelvin marked it as such. This was an area, the viewer is to believe, Kelvin’s father, Xavier had escaped. Kelvin, however, was ‘fresh’ in his removal from this area and perhaps because of this, still bears its marks best expressed in Candice’s notion of being ‘very coloured’. His character makes continuous reference to the violence back home and how he had to defend himself. He soon comes head to head with his father since the narrative highlights an estranged father/son relationship, but also because his father Frank could not communicate with him, literally illustrated in their linguistic differences. But it is not only Kelvin that Frank is estranged from because his son bears evidence of the

community he had put behind him with the move to the cosmopolitan world of media and Johannesburg

Frank also has a certain amount of fears and warns his white girlfriend about how Kelvin may come across (interestingly she later befriends Kelvin). Kelvin and his father also interestingly express different notions of masculinity. For Kelvin his masculinity is clearly based on his ability to defend himself and his ability to overpower his enemy based on the advice he later gives Frank's girlfriend Natasha. His lack of respect for his father is based on his feelings of alienation in his father's world, where his masculine success is based on achievements in the field of work and he subsequently puts pressure on Kelvin to find a job. Kelvin does this, but on the reality fighting show, X-treme Fight Club. Frank disapproves of his son's violent displays but is driven to violence himself when Kelvin is injured on the show, given in to his baser, perhaps more human, violent and stereotypically coloured instincts.

Through this Frank too, becomes the gangster again. These stereotypes are present in Western's analysis when he discusses the sexual mix of black and white giving rise not only to stereotypes of sexual indecency perhaps in women, but in men perhaps the lack of restraint and a leaning towards more animalistic instincts such as violence. Western's seventh stereotype also speaks to this, "[a] seventh part of the stereotype is Coloured's involvement in crime and violence" (Western: 1996:24). Kelvin speaks directly to this but with when stimulated, when his role as father is prompted Frank expresses his masculinity, perhaps closely linked to his role as father, in violence as well. Interestingly,

while Frank complains to Natasha about his son's behaviour it is through her eyes that Kelvin eventually becomes less brash, softer and less uncivilised. She sees a side of Kelvin that Xavier does not see and takes a sympathetic view of him based on his background and feelings of alienation towards his father. During a work obstacle when Natasha's interviewing style is criticised for being tame, Kelvin gives her the following advice:

Kelvin: "You defeat your opponent when they don't know you're coming. They won't expect it from you"

It is with this advice that Natasha and Kelvin become allies. I problematise this for two reasons. Firstly the more sanitary Kelvin is still expressed, based on a fascination with violence coded as normal because of his background. Secondly the paternalistic view which Natasha, a white woman, takes of Kelvin is as a direct result of his working class, coloured background. It is through Natasha's eyes that Kelvin becomes softer and she becomes the agent of his change like missionaries of old.

When viewing the comments of these women, perhaps young and old, privileged by tertiary education and not, what becomes clear is that they have subtly highlighted the stereotypes outlined by Western in the 1990's. It is the stereotypical view of the simple mixture between apartheid's concept of races, and with that a simple logic of culture that causes the imaginative expression of baser human qualities in the illustration of colouredness. An illustration tainted by sexual promiscuity and a violent brashness contrasted with the class and subtlety of other characters, interestingly highlighted in both groups of interviews is the existence of these stereotypes outside of the specific narrative.

Adhikari (2006) and Jensens (2004) both discuss the apartheid policies of assimilation, methods whereby members of the coloured elite, were seen as being worthy of entry into a white world, still in ideological positions less than their white counterparts, but in positions of privilege to their working class peers and black Africans. Entry into this world was dependent on a mastery of the markers of class, and a trivial physical resemblance to the white race based on hair texture and facial structure. This policy of assimilation is interesting since there is no clear way of its identification in solely a textual analysis since the existence of a definite coloured culture is denied by academics or oversimplified. Ways in which this can be bypassed however, and while sounding simplistic makes for rich analysis, is to use the words of the participants themselves.

The women of Hanover Park frown upon men of their race dating women of another, but here it is particularly white women they disapprove of and not black. I would argue that since this is seen through a lens of class and the climb to success it is because to them reaching success often means 'passing', or bearing the markers of whiteness, like the assimilation of old. Here, this 'passing' is greatly achieved by bearing the markers of whiteness, and the white woman becomes merely an accessory in this regard, a way of showing, 'I have arrived'. If a white woman is typified as being a marker of success or a ticket of entry, then the space entered into is a white one. As mentioned before the soap opera *Isidingo* has moved from the mining town, Horizon Deep to the boardrooms of Johannesburg based on the introduction of the character Barker Haines. Into this world enters the character Frank Xavier, a talented producer who enters the soap receiving the attentions of 'villain' Cherele De Villiers Haines, for romantic and dubious gains. From

the start Frank is marked as attractive to this woman but nothing seems to come of it. Interestingly in this world of high rollers, Frank is perhaps differentiated from the characters Rajesh (an executive at On TV) and Barker (a CEO) because of his attire. He wears loose shirts and has an earring as oppose to their business suits yet he matches them in his no nonsense machismo attitude. Frank then attracts the attention of an anchor at On TV, the beautiful and white Natasha. At this time Natasha is being pursued by a much younger white man, yet she only has eyes for Frank. A love affair develops, and soon Frank is protecting her from a jealous ex husband, after which their relationship intensifies, and Frank moves in with her. From the beginning, Frank is coded as different, successful yet exotic, and with this marked as an object of desire by the white women in the narrative, despite him eventually ending up with a different white woman. Frank's difference then extends to his romantic inclinations. This difference becomes intensified when viewed in relation to his son, Kelvin.

Kelvin enters the soap as "very coloured" according to Candice. He uses Kapie-taal and hand gestures to express himself, but he becomes even more important to this analysis when one considers that he interrupts the 'family' Frank has now built with Natasha. Frank worries about how Natasha will handle this. She seems sympathetic and views Kelvin with a sort of paternalism not rooted in him being the son of her lover but based in his background, in this way, his attitude as someone from Belhar, the Cape Flats, is naturalized. Candice mentions that Kelvin has also become "prim and proper now". One could argue that this happens once Kelvin becomes part of a nuclear family structure with his father, Frank and new white mother, Natasha, and that this removes the brashness that

the character has come to be associated with. I would also add that during this time, Natasha's daughter Nikki also moved back home. From the onset we see Kelvin clearly drawn to her, joking and laughing with her, being sweet and innocent due to...what hasn't become clear as romantic attraction or brotherly love as yet. What does become clear though is that his transformation, his slow dropping of Kapie-taal, is perhaps largely a result of his relationship with these white women. His father on the other hand, enters the show using formal English, having achieved success, but marked as attractive by the white female characters, marked as worthy, Kelvin however seems to have needed some tweaking.

The character Lolly comes into the soap as a victim of gang rape staying with her uncle and his wife. The relationship between this uncle and wife is interesting since as Ian Barnard writes in The Language of Multiculturalism in SA soaps and sitcoms:

"Perhaps the most heart rending subplot in *Isidingo* treats the interracial relationship between Mariaan and Jack, characters who have been respectively classified as 'white' and 'coloured' in apartheid South Africa... In *Isidingo*, Mariaan and Jack are haunted by the past – their personal pasts, their racial pasts, and, by analogy, past South African history. Their different cultures are seen as impediments to their relationship"
(Barnard: 2006:45)

Before I comment on Barnard's analysis, which he uses to draw parallels by the work done by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, I will start by again mentioning that here, this Managing Director of a mine, enters the world of success with a white wife. Barnard later mentions that Jack cheats on Mariaan, with the owner of a café in Horizon Deep, Vanessa, who Jack later marries. To Mariaan, Jack's cheating is entrenched in the fact that Vanessa is a coloured woman and that he was going back to his 'roots' so to speak (Barnard: 2006). For Barnard the narrative has metaphorical connections to the

work being done by the TRC since it is imbued with notions of remembrance, atonement, and forgiveness, complicated by race. I would argue however, that it is not Mariaan's imagination that Jack cheats with Vanessa because of her colouredness. To some extent this subplot of the *Isidingo* narrative sets Mariaan and Vanessa up as opposites, not simply physically but through their activities. Mariaan spends her days painting while Jack's at the office, while Vanessa runs her café. Mariaan is soft spoken, almost timid in her exchanges with Jack, while Vanessa is direct, and speaks with authority. Vanessa seems stronger, and perhaps with her thick black hair and jewelry much like Candice's description of another coloured, *Isidingo* female, Lolly.

This subplot delivers commentary on the nature of a coloured man's success since in the history of *Isidingo* there have only been three main coloured male characters, the first of whom, Chico, (Vanessa's husband) disappeared early in the narrative, and the latter, Frank and Jack both having white partners. Secondly then, the narrative also delivers commentary about the earthy, wild, untamable and perhaps exotic coloured female since both Vanessa and Lolly are characterized in this way. Again here I refer to Western (1996) when he mentions the depiction of coloured people as more carefree and exotic somehow, exemplified in the representations of these two women.

Lolly enters the *Isidingo* as a victim of a brutal gang rape, she has a similar attitude to Kelvin's, but doesn't display a use of *gamtaal* since this is limited to an expression of Cape coloured identity and Lolly is said to be from Johannesburg. However, Lolly too, is brash and carefree and often displays violent outbursts. Outbursts which we later find are

due to her gang rape. Eventually Lolly's attackers find her, and in a vicious exchange enter Jack's home. The family is rescued and Lolly ends up testifying against her attackers. Yet Lolly's brashness and wild forms of expression with her "frizzy hair and jewelry" doesn't end here, neither does the characters linguistic expression, while not gamtaal, it is still informal. With the arrival of On TV Lolly gets a job as a researcher and studies journalism part-time, she develops a relationship with one of her white roommates once she leaves her uncle Jack's home.

But it when she becomes a full time journalist at On TV that Lolly's most drastic transformation occurs, perhaps superficially, evidenced by the changes in her hair. While always straight it now more closely resembles that of her white costars, her language, more formal, more refined English, and her interaction with men. Lolly's dating pool is solely occupied by white men. Talk of Lolly's background, even during the subplot of the gang rape was excluded from the narrative, present only on the Isindingo website, but, her coloured mother made an appearance recently when there was talk of Lolly's Irish grandfather having left her money. Lolly never found the inheritance; she did however find an Irish boyfriend.

Summary

The common thread with these 'transformations' is that they are either prompted or facilitated by entry into a white world whether this world is painted diverse by a sprinkling of black characters or not, it is a world owned by white capital. There is paternalism inherent in this that I have problematized by also a notion of not being

worthy and standards of class and refinement being linked to the markers of race. These characters then have to drop their colourness in order to enter this world. What is interesting is the age of both the main characters in this transformation. Kuptana (Brisebois: 1983) in discussing the effect of mainstream television on the Inuits mentions the effect it has on the children of the ethnic minority. Here coloured children are told that to be young and successful, they have to trade their heritage.

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Chapter Nine: Sewende Laan and black resentment

In *Sewende Laan* I show that with the prevalence of black resentment articulated by coloured participants in this study and shown by Dawes and Finchelescu (2002), there exists a correlation with the representation of black female characters in this Afrikaans soap. In this representation we find strong themes of black subservience. This chapter attempts to link the views of coloured people, in both my own research and other scholars, of black African resentment to the representation of black people in the Afrikaans soap *Sewende Laan*. It argues that the soap provides, stock, and stereotypical depictions of black femininities which seem to cater for (in this case at least) coloured audience frustrated with assumptions of black advancement. These images then, are easier to deal with than the successful ad executives or black businessman in *Generations* or *Isidingo*. I also highlight the depiction of the coloured women in this soap as promiscuous and their possibilities for romance being restricted to members of their own race.

When viewing the comments of these women, perhaps young and old, privileged by tertiary education and not, what becomes clear is that they have subtly highlighted the stereotypes outlined by Western in the 1990's. It is the stereotypical view of the simple mixture between apartheid's concept of races, and with that a simple logic of culture that causes the imaginative expression of baser human qualities in the illustration of colouredness. An illustration tainted by sexual promiscuity and a violent brashness contrasted with the class and subtlety of other characters, interestingly highlighted in both groups of interviews is the existence of these stereotypes outside of the specific narrative.

Both Vanessa and Felicity, the young and varyingly successful women of *Sewende Laan* have had children outside of marriage at a young age. While Juwaiya sees this as positive – the fact that they work despite their young pregnancies – she perhaps forgets that the *Sewende Laan* narrative has removed their children either through death (in Vanessa’s case) or through adoption (in Felicity’s case) for this success to be achieved. I mention that their success is varying since while Felicity is an up and coming fashion designer her love life seems less than successful in the soap opera narrative. Her lover has just married her best friend Vanessa (which perhaps gives an indication of the sexual indecency of the coloured male in the soap). Secondly, Vanessa has for a number of years worked as a clerk at a local sports shop owned by the patriarch of the central, white family in the soap. She has since moved to working as a waitress/clerk at the local deli owned by her brother in law, a coloured male. Her character, perhaps in the world of work and romance seems to journey through the world of the soap opera with her own personal narrative being pushed forward through her interaction with men. Felicity on the other hand has achieved success based on the capital provided by a white friend who doubles as her partner. The partnership is interesting since it is clearly the financier who holds the power and business connections in this regard, while Felicity seems to be the creative talent. In both cases the measure of success achieved by both women is initially placed in a subservient relationship with whiteness and subsequently in Vanessa’s case with males.

I would secondly problematize the ways in which the soap presents the romantic aspirations of these women. Both have had relationships before but have perhaps had the

longest relationships, in terms of the attention given to it in the narrative of the soap, with the coloured brothers in the soap, the sons of Vanessa's stepfather, Neville Meintjies. Both women have never dated or expressed romantic attraction towards any of the black or white characters in the soap. Their romantic relationships and perhaps, their greatest repeated sorrow (pointing to the repetitious narrative structure of the soap genre) have been strictly associated with coloured men who have always disappointed them due to abandonment or sexual indiscretions. It would come as no surprise then, that Vanessa and Felicity, just as many of the black women in the soap opera have to compete for the attention of the same men, since they are limited to their racial pool, and informally speaking, 'a good coloured man is very hard to find'. While obviously physically different these women are made same by their early pregnancies, their subsequent loss of their children and their interest in the same men. Their potential for development is blocked by the repetitious nature of the soap opera. In her analysis of soap operas Mary Ellen Brown states:

"One of the most striking features of soap operas in this regard is the openness of their narrative form. In other television narratives, even when characters and some plot elements are carried on from one episode to another, the episode tends to be defined by the presentation of one major story. Whereas traditional literary narratives have a beginning, middle and end; soap operas consist of an ever expanding middle. The lack of conventional introduction is compensated for by a greater redundancy in soap operas, i.e. the presentation of same or similar situations in numbers of different scenes and the characters' frequent retelling of their own and others histories" (Brown: 1990: 183-201).

Here at best perhaps they will achieve momentary happiness, since they have already been coded by the narrative as women whose success is based on the kindness, assistance, or recognition of white others, and a larger statement made by the show is perhaps that they will forever be marred by their early pregnancies, connected by it and romantically unsuccessful because of it. One may say Vanessa has achieved a certain

level of romantic success since she has just been married. But because of the nature of this marriage and since Felicity was treated as Vanessa's sister she has been ostracized by some, and anticipated it from others. Vanessa it seems then is look at through Western's lens of sexual indecency, she may even now look at herself that way.

It is always asserted that he [the Half-caste] possesses the vice of both parent races and the virtues of neither; that he is born especially with a tendency to be a liar, cowardly, licentious, and without self respect... Three fourths of the prostitutes who fill our brothels and lock-hospitals are 'coloured'...

(Western: 1996: 26)

Dawes and Finchelescu (2002) use two interesting scales to 'measure' attitudes between races. These methods are useful for drawing concrete conclusions and quantifying racism. While my thesis makes use of qualitative methodology to examine attitudes towards and informed by media representation in discussions with mainly the female residents of Hanover Park, the resentment and fear exposed by Dawes and Finchelescu's Repetory Grid became apparent. It is not that I approached the study with black (and here I mean non-white) in group resentment, as a result of the shift in political power with the post Apartheid era, as a given, but rather I am interested in the ways this resentment manifests, and is illustrated. If there is perhaps magnetism by these women of Hanover Park to the soap opera *Sewende Laan*, then possibly this attraction is not solely based upon language. I would argue that the representation of the black African impacts upon this attraction.

It has been mentioned earlier that in Hanover Park the self ownership of the coloured label was often followed with justifications around the oppression of coloured people, which adds weight and reason for coloured assertion in the post-apartheid era. As Irene states: "Ons bruinmense het vir jare swaar gekry – en ek is proud om n bruinmens te

wees”⁴¹. Irene’s statement doesn’t directly link coloured people to a larger black African identity, even though symbolically her reasons for choosing to be called coloured links it to black African identity that makes use of similar discourses of struggle and liberation. Perhaps through Irene’s now naming of herself she also makes an important political statement about coloured struggle and development. But in questioning the other women of Hanover Park I wonder then where this struggle has led.

Mrs. Barnes is possibly a matriarch of the community of Hanover Park. She is Ruwaida’s mother and because of illness, like Ouma Sophie spends most of her time watching television. Mrs. Barnes watches both *Isidingo* and *Sewende Laan* often having to choose between the two, depending on whether the storylines are exciting, since they are aired at the same time, but she also often watches the repeats. She also, interestingly, enjoys the SABC2 Sotho soap opera *Muvhango*. After watching *Sewende Laan* with Mrs. Barnes we the news at seven starts, predominantly black African residents are protesting in one of the inserts because of a lack of service delivery, on seeing this Mrs. Barnes grimaces and says: “Hulle doen nou altyd so, maar wat kan n mens nou maak”, roughly translated this means, ‘They’re always doing stuff like that, but what can you do’. Mrs. Barnes statements could be read fairly ambiguously but I’m inclined to believe that in the mind of this resident and others, the black African people of South Africa are the toyi toying masses of the country. Always demanding and complaining, and again, not very different to apartheid media’s depiction of ‘Die Swaart Gevaar’, and vilification of the black majority to strike fear in the white minority and possibly in this case, these coloured people.

⁴¹We coloureds struggled for years and I’m proud to be coloured.

“My plek brand af – wie gaan vir my help? Hulle kom nie uit om ons bruinmense te help nie – vir wie kom hulle uit, hulle kom vir die darkies uit te help. Byvoorbeeld, daar slaan nou n klom hokkies aan die brand, dan is daar at all times n helping hand vir hulle, is altyd wat mens nou op TV sien – hulle makeer die, hulle makeer daai – wanneer gaan dit onse mense wies wat n hearing kry? Wanneer gaan daar wies vir onse kinders? Hulle kannie net daar wies vir onse kinders nie.”⁴²
(Natasha Isaacs)

Here Natasha uses the example of the many shack fires in Cape Town, greatly covered by news media to illustrate the disproportionate attention given to the black African. It’s interesting that she uses this example because this isn’t something that she’s seen firsthand or bore witness to, but something that she has access through the medium of television and specifically news media. She laments that coloured people are being ignored. This is much like the comments by Mrs. Barnes, who through her TV screen sees the same picture...black masses demanding, and for Natasha they are getting too. The view of black people living in shacks and the realities of this poverty stricken existence illustrated in news media must be incredibly different to the depictions black advertising executives in *Generations* or business men and women in *Muvhango*, but in Natasha’s eyes it is marked by similarity since both are getting, both are receiving, some just faster than others. Natasha perhaps personalizes this view and gives direct evidence for her feelings, claiming indirectly that this ‘helping hand’ caused her unemployment:

“Ek kan myself nie eers aan n werk kom nie – daars so baie dinge wat ek kan doen, maar is so...is nie swaar nie...hulle reject jou...hulle kyk jou by jou gesig aan”⁴³

⁴² My house burns down, who’s going to help me? No one comes to help the coloured people. For instance, a squatter camp starts burning; they always come out to help the black people. That’s all you see on TV. They need this – they need that. When are they going to help our children? They can’t always help their children.

⁴³ I can’t even find a job. Its not that the job is difficult, but they look at my face (the colour of her skin) and they don’t choose me

Here she's rejected for a job, in her view, on the basis of race. It's the black man getting once again and she's left behind. If the South African media does speak to Natasha this is the message that it's giving her. Women like Amiena Fredericks from Hanover Park still feel as if nothing has changed:

“Maar kyk, ons was in die middel en nou is ons weer in die middel!”⁴⁴

All of these women however, thoroughly enjoyed the soap opera *Sewende Laan*, and while an examination of the coloured characters and the ways identification is or isn't fostered is necessary on the basis of these views of a larger black majority perhaps an analysis of the black characters is also necessary. *Sewende Laan* has six black characters, three of whom play a central role in the soap since I exclude the others because of a lack of screen time and since they aren't implicated as necessary to the narrative. Of the characters I exclude, the first is a black male waiter at the local coffee shop, the second is a Namibian student, and third is a female waitress. All three of the characters I have included are female.

The first is the character Maria. Maria's personal narrative, if we can refer to it as such is so deeply implicated in the narrative of two other characters that some background on them would be vital. One of the oldest members of the *Sewende Laan* family is Hilda, a humorous character whose weird antics and exotic treats add amusement to the narrative. Hilda is an older white woman who at one time was the center of a geriatric love triangle. Two men, Oubaas and Francois were competing for her affections. This romantic narrative ended with Hilda marrying Oubaas. Even in his sixties Oubaas remains a

⁴⁴ We were in-between and now we're in-between again

mommy's boy. When he moved into the flat in Hillside which Hilda owns his mother sent their cook/maid/nurse Maria to move in with them, quickly though Maria became Hilda's ally and they banded together to take care of Oubaas. Maria has then become part of their family. But her existence in the soap is dependent on these two characters. Maria also earns some extra money by cleaning the flats of the other residents of Hillside and through this she meets Aggie.

Aggie comes into the soap later in the ongoing *Sewende Laan* narrative as a maid, but soon with the help of a white male character starts a cleaning company called Aggie's Cleaning Services which is how she meets Maria. This however does not bring in enough income and Aggie still has to work as an assistant/cleaning lady at the local newspaper.

Aggie however bears all the markers of success. She dresses well, in attire much like the white characters of *Sewende Laan*, deeply contrasted with Maria's cleaning lady garb. This however, does not disguise the fact that both these black women owe both their livelihood in the soap, and the development of the characters to their white counterparts. While they do receive more screen time than perhaps the cleaning ladies depicted in old South African soaps like *Glaskasteel* or *Sonkring*, they are still marked by their subservience.

The third black female character I highlight, Alyce, is perhaps more progressive in her characterization than Maria or Aggie since she isn't directly subservient to any white character. She works as a clerk at the local boutique and at one time pursued an unsuccessful singing career. Alyce, however, is differentiated from both Aggie and Maria

in that her interactions are mostly with the other white and coloured females on the show and shares little screen time with the other two characters. She also shows signs of looking down on these two characters, since when she and Aggie competed for the attentions of an eligible black bachelor, new to the show (and just like Vanessa and Felicity, a man of colour was a sort after commodity) Alyce dismissed Aggie's attempt because she couldn't believe this successful man would be interested in the advances of a (glorified) cleaning lady. I problematise the character Alyce for other reasons in her presence as a representation as a stronger female character in this Afrikaans language soap opera. Alyce, simply put is a gold digger. Early in the narrative she dumped her black boyfriend because he couldn't 'afford her' and the reasons for her attraction to the man she and Aggie were competing for were represented as deeply entwined in his status. On returning from her failed journey to reach success Alyce lied about her financial struggles to her friends in the soap. The character Alyce therefore is deeply entrenched in, and marked by, narratives of superficiality and futile searches for wealth, and seems to have no qualms about using her looks to achieve these ends.

Summary

This analysis of the three main black characters in *Sewende Laan* doesn't simply expose characterisation which can be termed negative, even with the stereotypical representations of the black maid. What can be said however, is that two of the major characters owe their black existence to a white existence. They occupy positions of subservience both in their financial gains and the possibility of future gain. Secondly, the character Alyce is perhaps removed from this due to her limited interaction with these

black women based on her longing for status, evidenced in her taste in men. I am not attempting to draw clear links between this characterisation and the attitudes of the women above to black Africans, what I am trying to do however, is expose, and problematise these representations in light of their views, since when considered in this way they become even more problematic. The existence of strong and successful black or coloured characters would not only speak to black or coloured viewers but the effect of recognition and awareness felt across colour lines. As seen earlier this becomes problematic when opportunities for success and present success is limited to one and denied to another.

University of Cape Town

Chapter Ten: Women's space in the Daily Voice

The Daily Voice is often highlighted as the voice of the coloured people because they form the majority of its readership. Also, tabloids in general speak to a working class audience, the man in the blue overall, giving them a sense of power they ordinarily do not feel in broadsheets which cater for a middle to upper class audience (Knaggs and Glenn: 2006). Furthermore, the Daily Voice is staffed by a predominantly coloured workforce, they get most of their stories from the community through phone lines which are manned constantly, and they employ the vernacular of the Cape Flats. Since they speak to an audience previously not spoken to, in their own 'language', and are staffed by journalists from these very communities they therefore have a great democratic potential to educate and uplift, while simultaneously employing the sensationalist characteristics of a tabloid and being commercially viable. But through an analysis of the Daily Voice it becomes apparent that in constructing a sense of a collective Cape Flats community, the coloured female is depicted as spectacle.

The Daily Voice is a tabloid newspaper under the banner of the Independent News Group which came to Cape Town in 2005. Given the popularity of the Daily Sun in Johannesburg, selling around 4 million copies daily (www.saarf.co.za: 30 February 2007) the Independent Group decided to launch the Daily Voice in Cape Town. By their very nature, tabloids speak to, marginalized, working class members of society:

Some scholars who study the tabloids concluded that they continued the tradition begun in the 1920's of giving readers a way to deal with the complexities of life by simplifying it, ordering it, and making sense of it with dramatic stories. *Tabloid readers are often people with little real power who are made to feel empowered, in control, by knowing the "untold story" about a*

celebrities romance or a government official's indiscretion, about the tales of sin and woe that have befallen famous people and...*common people who have been more unfortunate than the readers*. The tabloids were designed to quicken the pulse of people locked in humdrum lives, at the same time reassuring them that the world remained fairly constant from day to day or week to week (Emphasis added)
(Flocke: 2000: 13)

But the Daily Voice also speaks to a predominantly coloured market which further problematises the above notion of those who are powerless since coloured people, particularly this working class market, felt alienated by an apartheid system and then by the present political system. Mohammed Adhikari writes that the post-apartheid era is characterised by a "coloured assertiveness" (Adhikari: 2006: 176). Adhikari elaborates on his argument about coloured identity in the New South Africa when he says, "Fear of African majority rule, perceptions that coloureds were being marginalized, a desire to counter pervasive negative stereotyping of coloured people, and attempts on capitalizing on the newly democratic environment in pursuit of political agendas have played a role in fuelling coloured assertiveness in the new South Africa," (Adhikari: 2006:176). This possibly has given rise to the popularity of the Daily Voice amongst coloured people. The Daily Voice sells 230 000 copies per day and has an 80% coloured readership. It could, however, be argued that it works on basic assumptions around coloured identity, whether proof of these assumptions are present because of the nature of tabloid journalism or not.

Ian Glenn in his paper titled, the Daily Voice and the return of the Coloured Repressed speaks of how journalists from the Daily Voice are treated like heroes in local nightclubs. That they act as the 'voice of the voiceless' so to speak (Knaggs and Glen: 2006: 5). In the same way, former editor of the Daily Voice, Karl Brophy, in a lecture to senior media studies students in 2005 stated that his paper goes into the areas of Hanover Park and

Heideveld, areas which, the Cape Times and the Cape Argus wouldn't, and, it would seem that Brophy has the community's support. So much so, in fact, that much of the editorial content is generated by that community. Former news editor of the Daily Voice Raymond Josephs speaks of phone lines which are constantly manned to field calls from the community, and in this way one could assume that the Daily Voice is a democratic medium (www.mg.co.za: 1 July 2005). Accusations of tabloid sensationalism aside, since this paper tends to agree with some of Karl Brophy's views that many of the stories that come from the community are sensational by their very nature, the majority of the staff at The Daily Voice are coloured people, the majority of the buyers of the Daily Voice are coloured people, and yet the very accusations lobbied against the dominant media of the 80's by groups like POC and BVK are evidenced in endless tales of gangs, tik, prostitution, abuse, rape, murder, porn, representative of the Cape Flats, and purchased by the people of the Cape Flats.

Let us take the example of the Daily Voice, March 2007. As usual page three offers a semi nude, usually white woman, not from the Cape Flats. Page 2 carries stories of a gangland shooting, page 4 large pictures of a driver with his head smashed, page four a story about a drug addicted tik addict, and so on. Is it then, that years of being represented in a derogatory way has led to a hunger for it, or is it merely that the Daily Voice, caters to basest desires for media products in all of us? This paper would argue that if the Daily Voice is the voice of the people, a representation of the Cape Flats, and more generally, working class coloured communities, it is necessary that there be other forms of representation, and the popularity of this content is perhaps a result of a 'lack'. In essence this paper is in agreement with Brophy, the Daily Voice does go into areas other

publications would not, many peoples are not being represented, and that needs to change.

In looking at a womens role in the home and her enjoyment of the soap opera genre through identification, it was highlighted during fieldwork that ‘coloured’ papers like the Daily Voice serve as a male media text. It is therefore useful to look at the ways this artifact represents coloured women. This does not attempt to be a full analysis of this daily tabloid, but does question its representation of femininity. Given the page 3 girl, much could be said of its objectification of women, I will comment on this highlighting that this women is often eroticized and ‘exoticised’ as Eastern European, but, more worryingly I will argue that behind the mask of community upliftment and being a hero for especially the mothers of the Cape Flats, in issues ranging from February to October 2007, this tabloid has a gross depiction of coloured women as ‘common’ or ‘spectacle’.

Prof. Anton Harber, from Wits University writes on the class appeal of tabloids when he states:

“In these papers we see and hear ordinary people-working stiffs, as they would say in some parts-much more than we do in most of our media, which focuses relentlessly on those with spending power. The tabloids are filled with ordinary people leading ordinary lives battling on a daily basis with violence, bureaucracy, witchcraft, and usually a toxic combination of them all”
(www.journalism.co.za: 12 April 2005).

Tabloids in general appeal to a large working class readership by giving those denied a sense of power, control in knowing the untold story, and through filling the pages with exposès and tales of working class neighbours not only do they give these readers a sense of access to privileged information, but in this regard, also a sense of importance in that they (their communities) are making the pages of these publications. This focus; attention

on the lives of ordinary, working class people takes on a specific racial mark in the example of the Daily Voice, since it speaks to a predominantly coloured market. When examining the readership figures for the Daily Voice it becomes clear that 82% of their readership are coloured, but interestingly, these figures are also split along gender lines with male and female readers being spread quite equally. Ruwaida and Miena displayed quite a distaste for the paper, it therefore became interesting to examine its representation of not only femininity, but a coloured femininity, and with that, look at the ways the Daily Voice speaks to the ‘powerless’ working class, and the ‘alienated’ coloured group, and how trust is garnered in this regard.

When questioned about the Daily Voice Antie Miena and Waida had the following to say:

Antie Miena: “Dis net die mans wat daarvan hou, ons hou nie van die page 3 girl nie.”⁴⁵

Waida: “Kyk nou wat hulle gedoen het met die page 3 girl. Die wat hulle in sit van die tik, vannie kindes, hulle maak die kindes dit doen”

Antie Miena: “Hulle gebruik ons kleurling mense se swaarkry”⁴⁶.

Reading the Daily Voice, because of the semi nude or nude girl on page 3 has therefore become a gendered experience. It’s a men’s paper, but also the men of that community. However, despite most of the stories in the Daily Voice coming from the Cape Flats, the page 3 girl is always American, she’s not from here, and in many ways what could be labeled as disgusting by the community which would result in a more vocal disapproval, is instead regarded as entertainment or mild titillation because again the sexual experience is othered, the boundaries of the community intact and unbroken and its

⁴⁵ Only the men like it, we don’t like the girl on page three

⁴⁶ They use the fact that us coloured people are struggling

values left cemented, because being affronted by the page 3 girl becomes a case of ‘those women’ not from here.

The semi nude woman featured on page three, while there for the purposes of male pleasure, the idea of *skinner* (gossip) inherent in the tabloid’s character would align the publications content, at least connotatively, with a female market. I would however, argue, that the page three girl doesn’t exist merely for male sexual pleasure but also serves as a talking point, generating continued hype around the paper, in this way possibly making it illicit and all the more desirable.

The ‘Otherness’ of the page three girl is often highlighted, and therefore exists at odds with the content in the rest of the publication which is local. She exists as a representation of the world outside the community. Her ‘Otherness’ as well as her exotic appeal is highlighted, not only in the race of the page three girl, which more often than not is White, but the copy which accompanies her photograph, clearly shows that she is of European or American origins. In the analysis of the issues between February and March 2007, these women are often of Eastern European descent:

“Voluptuous vixen Veronic Zemanova is more than just a hot babe. This sexy model started out as a photographer in the Czech republic”
(Daily Voice: Monday March 5 2007)

“Marketa Brymova is a woman to be savoured. Like a fine red wine, this raven-haired, doe-eyed beauty is meant to be enjoyed slowly and handled delicately. And like her name – Brymova – the 23 year old Czech porn star is simply brimming over with handy assets”
(Daily Voice: Tuesday Feb 27, 2007)

Here the fact that Brymova is exotic and a porn star by profession is highlighted, but more importantly, in picture she is meant to seem both sexually appealing as a woman, and child like and submissive with her finger in her mouth (a common stereotype of both Eastern European and Asian woman). Also, her comparison to a fine bottle of wine, that which has to be “savoured” serves as an example of literary objectification. If this is how the woman outside is represented, the ‘them’, then let us turn our attention to the ‘us’ and one of the ways in which a sense of community is constructed in the Voice.

The way the Daily Voice maps its readership is clear in the ever present, generic and geographically vague lead. The article typically fails to identify the scene of the narrative, perhaps, the repetition of ‘A Cape Flats man’, or ‘A Cape Flats teen’ also helps to strengthen this idea of a general Cape Flats community,

“A Cape Flats ouma (grandmother) says her toddler grandson has been raped by his grandmother”
(Daily Voice: Tuesday 10 April 2007)

This is also done through grouping the stories thematically under the banner of the Cape Flats:

“It was indeed a weekend of blood and death on the Cape Flats, with a person being murdered every two hours”
(Daily Voice: Monday 2 October 2007)

I am not claiming that creating these metanarratives of horror on the generalized area of the Cape Flats isn’t the only way in which creates a sense of community. Other ways also include the use of *gamtaal* or *kapie-taal* (although ‘gam’ has connotations of commonness).

“*Heppie Nuwe Jaar*. Your favourite daily newspaper will not be publishing on Monday. Daily Voice staff will be too busy *jolling* with the *klopse* and getting a *lekke tan* on *Tweede Nuwe Jaar*.”
(Daily Voice: Friday 30 December 2005)

While the use of *kapie-taal* was strong at the Daily Voice's inception it has since toned it down, but still mixes English and Afrikaans language to give a local appeal, a sense of ordinariness but also to clearly mark the Daily Voice as unashamedly coloured.

The Daily Voice seems to take up the cause of two Cape Flats women who were refused jobs because of their gold teeth. Gold teeth are taken to be a stereotypical marker of low class, or *gam* identity in the coloured community and by highlighting their cause the Daily Voice seems to be a champion of the Cape Flats coloured community. The accompanying pics of the smiling women flashing their gold teeth, proud of their working class, coloured identity:

“Two Cape Flats women say they were refused jobs because of their FALSE TEETH...Best friends... say as soon as they smiled at their would-be boss he gave them a *vuil kyk*”
(Daily Voice: Tuesday 1 March 2007)

The article continues by stating that the two women were refused the jobs because of their “*valse tanne*”. This mixture of English and Afrikaans is typical of *kapie-taal* and here the Daily Voice clearly marks the readership as a working class coloured woman. The shop owner here is characterized as a snob, by refusing these local girls. In this way the Daily Voice also creates a class binary, cementing their readership.

“A Cape Flats woman says she gave birth to a stillborn baby on a toilet after doctors turned her away. She said she had to sit on the toilet with the baby still attached to her by the umbilical cord”
(The Daily Voice: Friday January 26 2007)

This is the Daily Voice's point of departure in a story that involves a mother's miscarriage. The piece foregrounds that the miscarriage took place while she was using the toilet, and is perhaps insensitively titled, ‘Flush a Bye Baby’. The accompanying photo features Mina (the mother) standing next to her toilet seat rubbing her stomach

longingly with a lighter in her left hand. While the significance of the lighter is unknown, the photograph makes Mina look more like a victim of constipation than a miscarriage. One may argue that the nature of the piece warrants the characteristically sensational coverage the Voice gives it, but what is interesting is that the Voice creates a binary opposition between the woman and the hospital, a symbol of structure, as it has done with the police and government, supposedly siding with the community it speaks for. It does this without seeking adequate comment from the hospital officials. Her waiting for 13 hours, being told she was fine, is quoted in detail, while the piece ends with a single comment from the hospital saying that the case will be investigated. I would add then, that all comment in this regard isn't fair. What I question is, in constructing this woman as the generic Cape Flats female, with the Daily Voice acting on her behalf and exposing the tragedy, and in this way being the hero of the Cape Flats community, hides the sensationalist elements which mock that very community, and reduce what might have been viewed as an injustice to a mere toilet birth. Here, coloured woman is displayed as hapless victim, a vacant looking woman standing next to a toilet seat.

The most prominent feature writer at the Daily Voice is possibly journalist Genevieve Serra, who, since February was drafted as the Voice's tik (methamphetamine) writer:

“The tik scourge is out of control and is ripping the Cape Flats apart...Our leaders and the cops do little and sit back, talk big and hand out pamphlets. Now one of our top writers Genevieve Serra has been appointed to cover the horrors of tik”
(Daily Voice: Wednesday February 28 2007).

Here Serra is figured as the heroine of the Cape Flats community – shedding light on the issues those in positions fail to tackle, those the community has placed their trust in, the

cops and government seem to ignore. The purpose of the female writer becomes particularly useful when copy involves the writer empathizes with mothers and families having 'lost' their sons and daughters to tik. This emotional connection between writer and family is marked as a particularly feminine domain, and Serra marked as covering the issue because of her genuine emotional connection to the subject matter. My second year media class later mentioned rumours that Serra had succumbed to the emotional stress of this media narrative and had to take time off, this empathic writing is different to the stereotypical masculine drive of 'getting the story' and perhaps mask the ways in which this coverage and the "scourge of tik" also benefits the Voice in generating continued copy of interest to the community. Also, by simply affirming feelings of resentment already felt by members of the community towards the police and government, the Voice gives the community the news they want, and not necessarily what they need.

Lastly there are two further articles in the Daily Voice I would like to highlight in their representations of coloured females. In 'Born of Dead' writer Olivia Snell tells the tale of Elsabé Geswindt, a pregnant woman accused of stabbing her lover to death. While the facts of the event aren't warped, what becomes interesting is the extent to which the murder isn't contextualized at all. We are given the following information about the events which lead up to the fatal stabbing:

"...and Elsabe's family claim Alray, 27, had hit his pregnant girlfriend in the face during a heated argument on the day he was murdered"
(Daily Voice: Wednesday February 28 2007)

As readers this is the only historical information we are given, we are to assume that Elsabe has experienced a history of physical violence, or we are inclined to believe that this is a woman gone mad, crazed as the only person quoted in the piece portrays her. The narrative of crazed woman is repeated in this issue with a piece about Estelle Williams, severely burnt in a fight over a man. While in this piece, Estelle is quoted at length and tells her own narrative; here it is Elsabe's sister who claims that she had been worried about her sister for a while now since she had witnessed terrible mood swings. The reader is then inclined to believe that this woman, driven crazy by the mood swings caused by her pregnancy, illustrated in the headline, 'Born of the Dead' had stabbed her lover to death without any real provocation, especially since her very own sister corroborates this.

I have not attempt to provide a complete analysis of the ways the Daily Voice represents coloured identity, but in highlighting the ways it does portray its female subjects I illustrate the extent to which local female, and male readers, are inclined to believe the Voice as fighters for their cause, on their side, but in representing the coloured female too often these women are portrayed as dim-witted, and naïve as readers in their belief that the Voice uncovers these truths solely for the sake of the community. I also problematise the representations of 'Other' femininities wholly as sexual objects, since this too serves to mask a concerted effort to benefit from a sense of community strengthened by the binary oppositions which it creates.

Chapter Eleven: The Mammy and Jezebel: A hip hop critique

In Chapter Two I discussed coloured links via hip hop with African American identities. I argue that the experiences in the ghettos of the US resonated with Cape Flats youths who felt left out by a new political dispensation. I also showed that this identification with a glamorous African American masculinity wasn't entirely positive since it is rooted in violent machismo and materialism. In this chapter however, I highlight the caricatures of African American femininity which finds its origins during the years of legalized slavery. I draw links between these caricatures and the portrayal of coloured women in soaps. Using the works of Stephens and Few (2007) I show that these early caricatures have translated into mass circulated and accepted images through the hip hop and rap genres. It is my intention to do two things with these connections. Firstly, I show the dangers, for an already stereotyped coloured female identity, in identifying with commercial hip hop through pervasive American imports. Secondly, through highlighting the similarities between present depictions of coloured femininity and early African American caricatures, and showing how these caricatures have now become normalized, I paint a worrying picture for the portrayals of coloured femininity, and the dangers of these images being circulated unnoticed.

I predominantly focus on the work of Dr. David Pilgrim, Professor of Sociology at Ferris State University to highlight the asexual Mammy, the overtly sexual Jezebel and the long suffering Tragic Mulatto.

Cornel West (1993) also discusses stereotypes around black female sexuality and argues that American culture is one which is obsessed with sex. It is surprising then that there is an apprehension and hesitation towards black sexuality. “The dominant myths draw black women and men either as threatening creatures who have the potential for sexual power over whites, or as harmless, desexed underlings of white white culture. There is Jezebel (the seductive temptress), sapphire (the evil manipulative bitch), or Aunt Jemima (the sexless, long suffering nurturer)...” (83)

The Mammy

Dr. Pilgrim starts by outlining the Mammy caricature:

“ [The] Mammy is the most well known and enduring racial caricature of African American women...From slavery through the Jim Crow era, the Mammy image served the political, social, and economic interests of mainstream White America. During slavery the Mammy caricature was posited as proof that blacks – in this case black women – were contented, even happy as slaves. Her wide grin, hearty laughter, an loyal servitude were offered as evidence of the supposed humanity of the institution of slavery” (www.ferris.edu/jimcrow/mammies: 7 June 2007).

The Mammy caricature was probably best illustrated in the media by screen actress

Hattie McDaniel, best known for playing Scarlett ‘O Hara’s Mammy in Gone with the

Wind.

“Hattie McDaniel was a gifted actress who added depth to the character of the Mammy; unfortunately, she, like all blacks from the 1920’s through to the 1950’s, were typecast as servants. She was often criticized by blacks for perpetuating the Mammy caricature” (www.ferris.edu/jimcrow/mammy: 7 June 2007)

While McDaniel was a talented actress she was relegated to portraying a maid whose

only duties were to her white masters. But during the Jim Crow era portraying the

Mammy caricature was given weight due to the socio economic conditions of African

Americans at the time. McDaniel responded to the many critiques she received from playing the Mammy caricature with the following:

“Why should I complain about making seven thousand dollars a week playing a maid? If I didn’t, I’d be making seven dollars a week actually being one.”
(www.ferris.edu/jimcrow/mammy: 7 June 2007)

While Pilgrim highlights that this caricature was created as a means of legitimating slavery and perhaps a testimony to the hegemonic practices of the white-owned media, what becomes apparent are that the central themes and aims highlighted by this caricature are themes of power, channelled perhaps through actual and imaginary ownership. Themes of power are perhaps channelled through modern day ownership in terms of employment. In these terms the happy slave becomes the happy worker implicated by subservience. Pilgrim goes forwards his analysis of the Mammy figure and describes the physical attributes of the mythic female. When looking at these physical attributes we can draw links of physical resemblance between the Mammy caricature of the Jim Crow era and modern day representations of South African black and coloured women in *Sewende Laan*. But this resemblance coupled with themes of power and subservience in these media narratives makes the representations all the more problematic:

“This was the Mammy caricature, and, like all caricatures, it contained a little truth surrounded by a larger lie. The character portrayed an obese, course maternal figure. She had great love for her white ‘family’, but often treated her family with disdain. Although she had children, sometimes many, she was completely desexualized. She belonged to the white family, though it was rarely stated”
(www.ferris.edu/jimcrow/mammies: 7 June 2007).

I would turn my attention to the soap opera narrative *Sewende Laan* and look at the characteristics of the Mammy figure Pilgrim highlights, in relation to two characters in the soap, i.e. Charmaine and Maria. While the characters are of different ‘races’

Charmaine phenotypically being coloured and Maria black, and different social classes, with Charmaine being a manager at the local coffee shop and Maria being a maid, we see that in characterization there are similarities between these two seemingly different women in their adherence to the Mammy caricature.

In Pilgrim's analysis he highlights the following as elements of the Mammy caricature:

- an obese maternal figure, marked however by subservience
- who has great love for her white family
- she is completely desexualized, even though she sometimes has children

Maria with her shapeless maid's uniform and her large build certainly come close to the physical attributes described by Pilgrim. While cooking for Oubaas, her employer, helping her 'madam' (and Oubaas's wife) Hilda, and cleaning the rest of the flats in the Hillside Heights (the soap apartment block), the viewer is inclined to believe that this is not so much a source of employment for Maria, but rather something she wants to do, out of her own accord. Also, we are to believe that she is part of the family, given the amusing schemes she and Hilda get involved in to trick Oubaas. Maria seems to treat both Oubaas and Hilda less as employers and more like members of her extended family, in fact, her only family, since the character has received no background information, only that she used to be a maid for Oubaas's mother Mookie, and was thus passed on to her son. Maria also never mentions her own family; she is mother only to her white family.

The character Charmaine is less blatant in her similarities to the Mammy figure than Maria. She bears less of a physical resemblance to the Mammy caricature. She isn't necessarily obese but her character's figure seems to be hidden underneath modest costuming. Charmaine's family, daughter Vanessa, and 'adopted' daughter Felicity, take

up much of the *Sewende Laan* narrative and there therefore isn't a sense that she is disconnected from them and contextual information for the character is available for the viewer. Yet, a lot of the character's screen time is taken up by her maternal connections to the younger white characters in the soap opera, the waitrons of the coffee shop Oppikoffie and the tenants at Hillside Heights, she becomes more than the barman who listens to their problems and administers advices but also engages directly with their own narratives. It is Charmaine that they come to for help and they fear her disapproval and chastising, but it is with disdain that Charmaine looks at her own daughter Vanessa, due to Vanessa's supposed infidelity with Felicity's boyfriend Xander.

With regards to the desexualisation of the character Charmaine, the women of Hanover Park showed great enthusiasm for the prospects which Charmaine's relationship with Neville Meintjies held, certainly Charmaine's love life has been fraught with more downs than ups, since her relationship with her previous husband, Vanessa's father Ivan, ended with him being imprisoned for fraud and eventually dying. What's interesting in Charmaine's relationship with Neville is that initially she competed for Neville's affections with his first wife. She was characterized as more sophisticated and worldly than Charmaine. Her make up, subtle yet visible, her clothing fitted, contrasted with Charmaine's dowdy costumes made for strong polar opposites. While Charmaine is coded as a maternal figure, Neville's first wife, even though she's a mother was characterized as a career woman, but eventually her dishonesty contrasted with Charmaine's purity and earthiness pushed Neville, and the *Sewende Laan* viewers in favour of Charmaine, and particularly the women of Hanover Park. Despite this comparison Charmaine seemed fairly passive in articulating her passion for Neville, even

when her relationship was threatened by the arrival of his scheming first wife. When her relationship with Neville is eventually cemented, they exchange sweet kisses as oppose to passionate exchanges. Charmaine's sexuality and sensuality, even to the object of her affection is kept hidden. More subtly than Maria, but still apparent, Charmaine's place in the narrative is always as mother and as caregiver, rather than passionate lover, wife, and independent character in her own right. It is perhaps her subservience to white, or rather her relegation in the narrative to being part of larger white storylines, and her lack of individual power as a sexualized female that are implicit in the power afforded to her character.

The Jezebel

The second stereotype of African American women is the Jezebel stereotype. This is the portrayal of black women purely as sexual objects or as overtly sexual and that this leads to their demise.

“White women, as a category, were portrayed as models of self respect, self control and modesty – even sexual purity, but Black women were often portrayed as innately promiscuous, even predatory. This depiction of Black women is signified by the name Jezebel”
(www.ferris.edu/~jimerow/jezebel/: 7 June 2007)

This portrayal of overtly sexual and promiscuous black women is in line with Western's (1996) analysis of coloured femininity. Here coloured women, highlighted by their 'mix' are pigeon holed into representations of promiscuous and tempting. Pilgrim states that this Jezebel stereotype like the Mammy caricature was used as justification for slavery, but here particularly for sexual relations between slave masters and their slaves:

“The Jezebel stereotype was used during slavery as rationalization for sexual relations between white men and black women, especially sexual unions involving slavers and slaves. The Jezebel was depicted as a black woman with an insatiable appetite for sex...The Jezebel has replaced the Mammy as the dominant image of Black women in American popular culture. The Black Woman as prostitute, for example, is a staple in mainstream movies, especially those with urban settings. The Black prostitute and the Black pimp give these movies cutting edge realism”
(www.ferris.edu/jimerow/jezebel: 7 June 2007)

Pilgrim goes on to discuss the appearance of the Jezebel stereotype of black femininity in modern day movies much of which is popularized in the blaxpoitation films of the 1960's made popular by the character Foxy Brown (actress Pam Grier). While Pilgrim offers a direct example of the Jezebel stereotype what I am interested in is the ways in which the Jezebel stereotype plays itself out in more nuanced forms. If we are to believe that through the Jezebel stereotype the black female is marked as having no future happiness due to her overtly sexual nature and that this sexual nature is contrasted with the restraint employed by white characters. If we consider the stereotype in this regard then surely Felicity, Vanessa and Lolly from *Isidingo* fit its description.

It is worth noting that only young South African coloured women in the soap opera *Sewende Laan* have had teenage pregnancies. I would argue that this connection and the evidence of early sexual activity forever taints the characters futures and limits their success with men.

The baby as evidence of Vanessa's early sexual activity belies the character's early markings as innocent teen since this introduced male courtship of Vanessa into the narrative. At one point, and possibly the beginnings of Vanessa's strained relationship with her mother Chramaine, she, along with other residents of *Sewende Laan* accused Charmaine of murdering her baby. Charmaine was found innocent, but since that point,

and since the introduction of sex and a sexual male presence into the character's life, her characterization in the soap has changed from innocent and unassuming to her recent characterization as Jezebel, made ever so poignant by the relationship and consequent matrimony entered into with Felicity's boyfriend Xander. It is this then that marks Vanessa as temptress made ever so more devious since the victim of her sexual indecency is her own 'adoptive' sister Felicity.

Felicity's marking as Jezebel is ever more complex than Vanessa's since her teen pregnancy came before Vanessa's and resulted in her moving in with Charmaine and in the way being 'adopted' by the family. Felicity, however, seemed to have escaped her early sexual activities and achieved happiness in her relationship with Xander, and a successful fashion label called Felicity Fashions. Felicity's success in this regard, as mentioned, has been as a result of white capital, yet her failure with Xander as a result of her temptress sister Vanessa.

Lolly, on the other hand has sexual activity introduced at a young age through being violated. The producers of *Isidingo* describe the young Lolly in the following way:

"At eleven she started developing, and the boys started changing on her. At first disconcerted she learnt to play with her burgeoning sexuality. But the fact she was a girl, a sexually provocative one comes to dominate her life"
(www.isidingo.co.za: 1 June 2007)

Here, even at a young age Lolly is marked by her sexuality and the effect she had on boys. While not describing action on Lolly's part, what becomes apparent are her markings as a pre teen temptress, a sexual power over men that she comes to use to her

advantage. The description of Lolly takes on an even more emotive tone and illustrates how this early Jezebel used her sexual power over the opposite sex:

“She dresses provocatively, and is ‘common’, loud and laughs boisterously, confrontational, talk rife with sexual innuendo. She likes shocking people, but it is also her defense – if she’s un-likeable, then there’s a reason for people not to like her. They don’t dislike her, they dislike the mask she puts on”

(www.isidingo.co.za: 1 June 2007)

Highlighted here are the ways in which Lolly starts to play with her sexual power – but that it’s used as a mask for her true feelings. What is further highlighted is that like other stereotypes of coloured women, Lolly is marked as both ‘loud’ and ‘common’. But it is this sexual power that plays a part in Lolly’s violation. I am not arguing that Lolly’s overt sexuality serves as justification for her rape, but that the narrative highlights this as a contributory factor:

“Lolly was raped in the veldt, during the day. She screamed, people must have heard, but no one came to help. She was gang raped by three youths...She knows the youths, one having been her mate growing up”

(www.isidingo.co.za: 1 June 2007)

Here Lolly’s sexuality doesn’t impact on her rape alone, but adds to the community’s dislike and alienation of her. The early Jezebel in this way is taught her lesson. She knows one of the three youths. Perhaps one of the boys who ‘changed’ on her early on.

This passage shows Lolly’s status as the Jezebel, at first marked by her sexuality, but in recent narratives marked by her rape. The Isidingo of today has transformed Lolly into a girl-about-town but since then Lolly remains distrustful of men and sees things through the eyes of a rape victim. When a longterm friend, Len, is accused of rape, Lolly immediately assumes he is guilty despite the years of friendship. For these reasons as

well as the redundant and repetitive nature of the soap opera I would argue that these three women are also trapped in the stereotype of the Tragic Mulatto. It is perhaps the larger stereotype of coloured identity, that of being a simple mix, that ties coloured people to the stereotype of the Tragic Mulatto – the notion of being between two worlds, yet the hopelessness of being a successful part of neither, the notion of alienation, of being able to ‘fit’ into the world of the powerful, yet never being empowered enough to take ownership of this world. Dr. Pilgrim illustrates the myth of the tragic mulatto by highlighting its literary origins:

“Lydia Maria Child introduced the literary character that we call the tragic mulatto in two short stories: ‘The Quadroon’ (1842) and ‘Slavery’s Pleasant Homes’ (1843). She portrayed this light-skinned woman as the offspring of a white slave holder and his Black female slave. The mulatto’s life was indeed tragic. She was ignorant of her mothers race and her own. She believed herself to be white and free. Her heart was pure, her manners impeccable, her language polished, and her face beautiful. Her father died; her negro blood discovered. She was remanded to slavery, deserted by her white lover and died a victim of slavery and white male violence”
(www.ferris.edu/~jimerow/tragiemulatto: 7 June 2007)

Here the feature of the Tragic Mulatto is a woman who moves in a white world, but who is ultimately a victim to her blackness. It is her ‘mix’, the simplistic yet fatal mixture of black and white blood that ultimately leads to her devastation. While this view of coloured identity would be stereotypical and reductive in many ways, the coloured characters of the soap world are allowed to move in the cosmopolitan, white-owned spaces, based on their knowledge of language (as in *Sewende Laan*) or the changes they undergo (as with Lolly) – being allowed to move in polished society.

“A century later literary and cinematic portrayals of the tragic mulatto emphasized her physical pathologies: self-hatred, depression, alcoholism, sexual perversion and suicide attempts being the most common. If light enough to ‘pass’ as white, she did, but passing led to self loathing. She

pitied, or despised Blacks and the 'blackness' in herself; she hated or feared whites yet desperately sought their approval. In a race based society the tragic mulatto found peace only in death"
(www.ferris.edu/jimcrow/tragicmulatto: 7 June 2007)

It is perhaps this aspect of the Tragic Mulatto myth that so strongly resonated with the views of the women of Hanover Park. The notion, however true or clichéd it may be, of not being white enough – not being black enough, dependent in the contemporary era on a switching of political power remained true to these women, as well as notions of alienation, and possibly a hatred of blackness, and the 'perks' someone like Natasha Isaacs assumed this blackness brought. However, it isn't a political arena that is marked by a black majority rule that is brought into question, since in media spaces, like the world of the soap opera, which are perhaps loved in their ability to be both realist and wonderfully escapist texts; it is a white world that these coloured characters have gained access to. For these coloured women in soaps their narratives are marked by a cyclical stereotype of sexuality and subservience, and in some cases a particular transformation that is marked as the evolution necessary to pass into a white world. In Hanover Park, certainly hatred or even a misconception of black people was apparent. 'The darkies took our jobs, the darkies get help when we don't, they're always toyi toying'. It is this polarization of black and coloured, even evidence by job competition dating back to Job Preference policies of the apartheid government, and a certain valuing of white spaces and identities in the lavishness of the world of the soap, that the apartheid regime has possibly been most successful.

"The tragic mulatto stereotype claims the mulattos occupy the margins of two worlds, fitting into neither, accepted by neither"
(www.ferris.edu/jimcrow/tragicmulatto: 1 June 2007)

What is interesting in these stereotypes is that while coloured women and African American women may be portrayed as overtly sexual here, they are however not predominantly portrayed as sexually desirable; rather, they are 'easy'.

"The dominant myth of black female sexual prowess constitutes black women as desirable sexual partners – yet the central role of the ideology of white female beauty attenuates the expected conclusion. Instead of black woman being the most sought after 'objects of sexual pleasure' – as is the case of black men – white women tend to occupy this 'upgraded', that is, degraded, position mainly because white beauty plays a weightier role in sexual desirability for women in racist patriarchal America"
(West: 1993: 90)

This is surely evidenced in *Sewende Laan* where the women of colour are strictly allocated to men of colour in the narrative. In *Isidingo*, Lolly's reformed position allows her to date across the colour bar even though this is without success. It would seem then that coloured female sexuality, while existing in the narrative, is still uncomfortable in its relationship to white male sexuality.

It is interesting that these stereotypes of African American women find their way into contemporary society via hip hop culture since the genre is often highlighted as providing a space for the redefinition and negotiation of coloured identity (Yarwood, 2006; Haupt, 2001). Also, coloured youths in particular, as highlighted by Elaine Salo (2003), use the American rap artists as role models since their experiences in the US urban ghettos, or projects, resonates with the coloured experience on the Cape Flats. But highlighted in this research is that this identification is often a connection between male coloured actors and African American male artists. Mentioned before has been the dangers of such a identification given the representations of black masculinity (Henry, 2002) but in looking at scholarship surrounding the representation of African American women in hip hop music, not only does this identification become dangerous, given that it could warp a

coloured male understanding of femininity given 'his' imaginary connection with the male hip hop artist and this artists 'power' over women. It becomes dangerous for the coloured female given the way this might influence gender interaction and self perception. Secondly, when highlighting the images which represent the African American female in hip hop we find traces of the Mammy as well as the Jezebel, in ways the female is presented as sexualized (coded as positive) and desexualized (coded as negative).

Traces of the Mammy, the Jezebel can be found in the heterosexual and masculine world of hip hop. They play themselves out in eight sexualized images of African American women (Stephens and Few, 2007). Here, African American women aren't merely objects of sexual desire since this merely foregrounds their sexuality as women, but it is specifically how their 'blackness' their use of sex as currency and self identification that is so problematic. These eight images can be assumed as variations of the Jezebel stereotype since it is deeply rooted in the black woman's position as sexual object, objectified primarily because of her blackness.

Stephens and Few (2003) differentiate between representations of white femininity and black femininity in American culture. Their analysis is specifically of the hip hop genre and the ways women are represented specifically in the narrative of the songs through an inspection of its lyrics. They argue that while white femininity is portrayed as good and virginal, these idealized images of femininity aren't available to African American women within the context of hip hop music but within a larger context of American and

even African American culture. Too often African American women are portrayed as wild and sexually promiscuous (Stephens and Few: 2003: 4).

“If you are a woman in hip hop you are either a hard bitch who will kill for her man, or you’re fly bitch who can sex up her man, or you’re a fucked up lesbian”
(Roberts and Ulen: 2000: 69)

The first of the stereotypes identified is that of the Diva. She is a black woman from a middle or upper class background but uses sex as social currency to enhance her social standing. Musicians like Beyonce are typically marked as diva’s, not necessarily by their use of sex, or even in their music abilities since the word diva is also commonly used to describe a female musician who is of great talent and respected. But here, the Diva, is marked by her class position, and the fact that she doesn’t seem ‘street’, or marked by a working class identity. Examples of the Diva are found in lyrics from a song Beyonce did when she was with her group Destiny’s Child in their song Independent Women Part I (2001): “The shoes on my feet, I bought it; The clothes I’m wearing, I bought it...I depend on me.” Here these young African American women highlight their independence from men, yet on a previous track, Bills, the women sing: “Can you pay my bills, can you pay my telephone bills...” negating their calls for female independence before (Stephens and Few: 2003: 15)

Second, the Gold Digger image is a woman who is typically coded as poor, and has sex for material gain. Third, a woman who has sex with multiple partners for physical pleasure is known as a Freak. Here female rap artist, Lil Kim best exemplifies the Freak in the lyrics of her song, ‘How Many Licks’ (2000): “Dan, my nigga from Down South; Used to like me to spank him and cum in his mouth; And Tony he was Italian, he didn’t give a fuck; That’s what I liked about him; He ate my pussy from dark til the morning”

(Stephens and Few: 2003: 20). Many would argue that here by appropriating the ways in which male rappers refer to women as bitches, sluts, ho's, and pigeon heads, Kim reworks and reverses the sexist rap genre and in this way empowers female fans, but in highlighting her multiple sexual partners she calls upon, and perhaps cements portrayals of the black woman as sexually promiscuous, as the Jezebel.

Fourth is the Dyke. She isn't necessarily a homosexual woman as the derogatory term usually implies, but names an independent black woman who is self made and self sufficient and who has no interest in sex with a man. Queen Latifah was an early hip hop artist who made the transition to the screen, but her music typically focused on sexism in mainstream America (Haupt: 2001). Today, Latifah, along with Missy Elliot, another female rapper who rejects notions of a sexualized black women, are subject to rumours of lesbianism since their independence and rejection of men, or rather to be categorized as sexual objects is difficult to deal with in mainstream America. This is similar to the desexualized image of the Mammy caricature, but here, these artists refusal to be pigeon holed into objectified images of black femininity as overtly sexual, results in their labeling as homosexual since they are found threatening.

The image of the Gangsta Bitch is a black woman who may be involved in gang culture herself but typically has sex with her gangster boyfriend to show her commitment to him (Stephens and Few: 2003). Rapper Redman in his song, 'Dat B***ch' explains (2001): "When I'm on the run, she'll give me a gun, hide me out in her mama's house" (Stephens and Few: 2003). The last three images are that of the Sister Savior who rejects sex for all

but procreation or within the confines of marriage. Artists like Erykah Badu and Lauryn Hill, in the decisions to wear their hair in a 'natural' manner and other symbols of their Afrocentric perspectives are defined as Earth Mothers, while the Baby Mama has a child by a black man although she is no longer with him.

What is most problematic about these images is when they were taken to African American children, and the researchers found that they were immediately recognizable and understandable to the adolescents (Stephens and Few: 2007). These participants often created a binary between the Diva and the Earth Mother. Both boys and girls found the Diva to be the most attractive of the eight myths and in a display of the effect of Eurocentric beauty ideals on adolescent boys mentioned that the Diva would have lighter skin. While the Diva had long hair and a slim body, some boys also mentioned she was "clean", here referring to her negative HIV status (Stephens and Few: 2007: 256). The Earth Mother was darker and has her 'own' hair.

In looking at these studies of the representation of African American women in hip hop it is not only my aim to highlight how looking to hip hop as a representation of blackness, coloured identification, and along with it an example of their engagement with blackness as problematic. Nor, do I simply argue the dangers of coloured boys and girls accepting hip hop's portrayals of femininity, but what I highlight are that these eight images share with representations of coloured femininity, images of the Mammy and the Jezebel. Considering that these caricatures, that have roots in slavery, have now reached mainstream popularity through the hip hop genre, I question the end results of the

existing portrayals of coloured women, and their potential for being normalized, commercialized and in this way accepted.

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Chapter Twelve: Communities at Risk

Because of the many disagreements around the existence of a coloured identity and a coloured culture, even from the supposed working class carriers of this culture, I am inclined to delve into much circulated material, like the documentary the girls in the media class saw, about the hopelessness of coloured people. Here, particularly the community's inability to coexist with black majorities, and the perceived reality of the often quoted statement, 'before we were too black to be white'. I head towards the end of this study then by examining issues of coloured identity, and how these feelings of alienation could run their course by looking at ideas of communal identities. Then, during my research what became apparent are the fissures in the coloured group along class lines. These were articulated by both Ryan in Hanover Park, and by Candice Jacks in the UCT class. I will use interviews from both Candice and Nuraan and comments from bruin-ou.com to question and interrogate the future of coloured identity, since their resentment and alienation hinders their participation in a democratic South Africa. This requires not only a change in media representation of coloured people, but also, negotiation, questioning, and renegotiation by the coloured people of South Africa as to their place in the new South Africa. This section claims that the anger and resentment felt by the coloured community is characteristic of resistance identities (Castells: 1997) but also claims that this is slowly giving way to a sort of procreation, platforms devoted to the questioning, discussion and debates around colouredness prove popular, and their existence give clues to ways coloured people are "redefining their positions in society" (Castells: 1997: 7)

With my experiences in Hanover Park I found that many of its residents in both 2005 and 2007 called on a sense of community, some, like Natasha Isaacs saw black identities as threatening that community and her advancement in that community:

Natasha: As ons bruinmense eendag kan saamstaan sal ons ook erens kan kom – kyk nou is die darkies wat werk kry en die wittes wat werk kry

Others like Irene saw a community unified only when the women of Hanover Park stood together. But residents like Natasha perhaps idealize the Hanover Park of the past, where communities stood in tact, and being coloured was a position of relative privilege with regards to employment and resources. Both have romanticized notions of communities, removed from social ills.

“Discourses of community belong to the romantic intellectual tradition in European thought, responses to the uncertainties and conflicts of modernization and industrialization which imagine a past when the meaning of life was relatively secure and consensual, in which cooperation rather than conflict prevailed, in which people ‘knew their place’.
(Jenkins: 1996: 105).

Here knowing your place applies to Natasha in the sense that black people or ‘darkies’ impact on her very advancement, they affect the place previously reserved for the people of Hanover Park. In this sense, her sense of community no longer exists; this sense of ‘community spirit’ also seems ill equipped to fight the scourges of gang violence and drug abuse which extend beyond the borders of that community. But community is also a powerful way in which the people of Hanover Park still organize their lives, and in this sense being part of the Hanover Park community takes importance over being part of the larger coloured community. These are ‘bruinmense’, but more importantly ‘bruinmense’ from Hanover Park and this is of primary importance in their sense of belonging. Here,

being part of the Hanover Park community is important in their sense of collective identity, but I would argue, also being part of the larger Cape Flats community, since the fissures along these lines were highlighted by both Ouma Sophie and Ryan Basson during the fieldwork. (Jenkins:1996:105). I would argue that this collective identity based on community informs 'colouredness' to a large extent to those who live/illustrate its existence, the perpetrators of this identity or residents of this community highlight and negate what it means to be coloured based on life within that community. When questioning people around the issues of media identification, many participants told me, 'I like her, and she's from here,' or 'She's from Belhar.' This sense of community extends to affecting and informing notions of class, education levels and the ways it plays itself out in language, and in these extended applications of notions of community perhaps highlight similarities, and more importantly are prominent in delineating differences to make clear a coloured identity that is truthful to the community in question.

Jenkins shows how communities are symbolically constructed. Firstly, he states that, "symbols generate a shared sense of belonging" (Jenkins: 1996: 106). Here, he particularly highlights shared rituals, or activities. These can be connected to the activities of the men of Hanover Park. Whether it be a ritual shared by the larger Cape Flats community like the Coon Carnival, or specifically what the men of Hanover Park claimed to be part of Hanover Park, coloured culture which played itself out in its leisure time in the yards and shebeens of Hanover Park.

A second point which he highlights is that the notion of community is symbolically constructed when people claim to be doing something for the 'sake of the community' or, "in its best interests" (Jenkins: 1996: 107). Politicians are known to call upon a sense of community by those who share a similar geographical location in this way. This is exemplified in both the national elections in 1994 and the local elections. In 1994 the ANC appealed to the sense of a Hanover Park community, and here the Afrikaans language becomes implicated in this identity evidenced when they sang, 'Stamp daai boude lam'. When questioned as to the problems in Hanover Park, women like Irene mentioned that if all the women of Hanover Park could stand together, it would be 'a better place to live'. In wishing for this, Irene perhaps envisions a Hanover Park of the future, and means by which this community, at least here in discourse, can be achieved.

"Community membership means sharing with other community members a similar sense of things, participation in a similar symbolic domain" (Jenkins: 1996: 107). Jenkins is careful to point out that these common symbols do not necessarily involve agreement as to what those symbols mean. To the residents of Donegal Court in Hanover Park, the symbol of the eagle, which was recently painted over, may have been a nuisance, but some residents became so used to this image that it became a symbol of home, and certainly to the young graffiti artists, it was a symbol of their home and accompanied by American iconography a symbol of their identification. Even if crime in Hanover Park is viewed as a negative, knowledge of these local crime narratives, 'Het dji gehoor wat die ander dag saam met Miena gebeur het?' (Did you hear about what happened to Miena the other day), areas in Hanover Park where these crimes take place, and therefore which

areas to avoid when one comes home from work late at night, inform a sense of community. To a lesser extent since it has already been discussed language also gives a sense of community through common means of expression. In a general sense this is Afrikaans, but more specifically *kapie taal*, or *gamtaal* (although *gam* generally has connotations of being common).

I would argue that these symbols, these calls for unity and a community spirit are becoming stronger in Hanover Park, since “symbolic boundaries – of hearts and minds – become more important as geo-social boundaries become less important, with centralization and political integration. This is a response to the cultural and social homogenization of nation building and the incorporation by metropolitan centers of their peripheries. Furthermore, the more pressure there is on communities to change as part of this process, the more vigorously boundaries will be symbolized” (Jenkins: 1996: 109). While SA media and national discourse concerns itself with diversity (in a superficial sense to fulfil pictures of a Rainbow Nation) it is perhaps for these reasons Adhikari (2006) states that the post apartheid era is characterized by a coloured assertion. In Vanessa’s words: “Hulle kommie uit om vir ons te help nie” (They don’t come out to help us). The creation of this ‘us’ and ‘them’ relationship is endemic to the symbolic creation of a community and the more threatening and pervasive ‘they’ become, the more the ‘us’ strengthens and worryingly, this isn’t always characterized by public assertion of coloured identity but perhaps plays itself out in the alienation of communities.

Manuel Castell (1997) provides interesting scholarship which can be applied to research around areas of coloured identity. Important in terms of the construction of coloured identity is the idea of naming. The notion of a separate coloured race has its roots in the latter 19th century with competition for employment and resources at the Cape (Adhikari: 2006) but frequently articulated is that it was a name which was imposed on coloured people, which belies the relative benefits the name afforded. Castells states the following concerning the imposition of identities:

“...identity can also be originated from dominant institutions; they become identities only when and if social actors internalize them, and construct meaning around this internalization”
(Castells: 1997: 7)

Therefore merely arguing that the label coloured is one which is enforced ignores the ways in which people who embrace the label attach and negotiate its meaning. He further claims that the processes of identity formation cannot be removed from relationships of power with regards to the origins of those identities. Castells here differentiates between three ways of identity formation. When read in relation to the alienation and threat experienced by the members of a coloured community what became interesting are the possibilities for the end result of coloured identity:

“Legitimizing Identity: introduced by the dominant institutions of society to extend and rationalize their domination...”

“Resistance Identity: generated by those actors that are in positions/conditions devalued and/or stigmatized by the logic of domination, thus building trenches of resistance and survival on the basis of principles...opposed to, those permeating the institutions of society...”

“Project Identity: when social actors, on the basis of whichever cultural materials are available to them, build a new identity that redefines their position in society...”

(Castells: 1997: 7)

While the notion of coloured identity has its roots in the latter part of the 19th century due to competitive work environments, coloured, as a label becomes institutionalized with the Population Registration Act. Here coloured is defined as that which doesn't fall under the dominant labels, as 'other', with relative privileges being afforded to those defined as coloured in comparison with the black African, in terms of employment, but also through apartheid ideology and hegemonic practices – the mixed nature of the coloured people afforded apartheid ideology the ability to imbue the imagined or real white heritage with value while cursing and undervaluing black or slave heritage. This also aided assimilationist policies, ideas that one day this white heritage would aid the movement of coloured people into a white world.

These positions were perhaps threatened when black political power became a reality, and while the post apartheid era is characterized by an “assertion” of coloured identity (Adhikari: 2006), I would argue that this, as a result of a black threat would place this assertion under themes of resistance identity, since it in many ways is accompanied by a resistance to change and a lamentation of oppression. Here, particularly played out in this working class, Hanover Park example, there isn't simply a fear of African majority rule (Adhikari: 2006) since it is too late, but rather a reactionary anger at the 'evidence' of privilege given to black Africans. I would argue that coloured identity in this post democracy isn't solely limited to these resistance identities, but finds its voice in young people like Ryan Basson, who while being proud of a coloured identity, also identifies with a black identity. He sees this identification as an example of change in South Africa Through this identification and a pride in coloured identity, while acknowledging its

diverse origins, the very notions of a coloured identity is being redefined. This is perhaps best articulated in the forums of the website bruin-ou.com, acting as a voice for coloured people all over the country. Bosch (2006) has produced scholarship around this. It is in the new medium of the internet that coloured identity has its voice. One may argue that this expression is limited to privileged coloured people, but this ignores the ways that many coloured people have access to this technology in their places of work and schooling no matter their socio economic backgrounds. Using this platform many coloured people redefine notions of coloured identity. Here, I quote one user 'Film_Ou' in verbatim to illustrate the ways in which this 'mixture' is being embraced and being used as a source of empowerment, and commentary on how old representations need to be redefined:

“YES I AM PROUD of my heritage...As a South African I am not Zulu and I am not Xhosa, Sotho or Tswana or any other black ethnic group...my tribe is coloured!!! Placed in the context of the Apartheid regime, I can empathise with the revolt against such racial classification...especially the divisions and rifts this caused in the oppressors' 'divide and rule' policy. However, its not the name Cape Coloured, Cape Malay or Other Coloured that I attach my pride to, but rather the ethnic group that harnesses the culture I hold so close to my heart. I am passionate about who we are and where we come from...be that our Khoi and San or European and Malay mixed cauldron of genetic make-up. YES I AM PROUD OF OUR TRIBE...OUR PEOPLE, GAM, HOTNOTS, BRUIN-OU's, COLOUREDS, YES I AM PROUD”
(www.bruin-ou.com: 23 June 2007)

The ways in which the reinvention and negotiation of coloured identity takes place on the forums of bruin-ou.com are articulated in scholarship by Bosch. “Coloured identity continues to be vigorously contested in post-apartheid SA, and this paper suggests that bruin-ou.com has emerged as one vehicle to critically engage with and reinvent a coloured identity and is one key site for identity formation” (Bosch: 2006: 19). There is a constant struggle to define coloured identity, but the users of this site, and I would add, outside of its reality engage with coloured identity by exchanging, negating, sharing and

appropriating symbols of culture in an attempt to redefine a collective identity and in this way make sense of their own existence. We cannot however, remove this search from the geographic and economic sites from which they originate since this impacts upon the symbols and meanings chosen. In displaying a multicultural SA, and portraying a coloured identity, SA media needs an awareness and acknowledgement of these processes taking place if true diversity is to be achieved, and to avoid pigeon-holing coloured identity. While some communities live in both anger and resentment, the cause of these feelings, whether it be stock representation or political alienation have had the effect of awakening processes of recognition, acceptance, and denial of identities and representation, now, we have to listen. In many ways then resistance is giving way to redefinition. SA media needs to pay attention.

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Chapter Thirteen: Conclusions:

As I identified with this label coloured (though, I also see myself as part of a black identity), I felt a personal connection to the ways in which coloured identity is portrayed and meanings generated by those social actors who represent the group. Through speaking with the men and women of Hanover Park, and the young women at the University of Cape Town, too often I found that they articulated understandings of a coloured identity, which to me, meant that the propaganda arm of the apartheid system was still alive and well. From Marcelino who mentions that coloured culture was “dronkes nou” (getting drunk) to Nuraan who mentions, “...to label someone as coloured may sometimes instill the notion of middle and lower income groups as well as excessive drinking, loud music, missing teeth (or gold replacements), and also the label of being ‘gam’”. In Nuraan’s description of the negative connotations of coloured identity and why she avoids this label, I have identified similarities in the Daily Voice in its expression of coloured identity. The Daily Voice sells 230 000 issues daily, its representation of the Cape Flats certainly proves popular, but I would argue that this is since many of the residents of areas like Hanover Park have internalized the view of coloured identity being ‘dronknes hou’ and the missing gold teeth. It also proves popular with those coloured people who have internalized the binary oppositions set up by the Daily Voice and furthered by the skewed representations of coloured people in the media. An anger and resentment of perceived black African favouritism and the sole portrayal of coloureds with money in dramatic narratives and coloured gangsters in news narratives.”

Juanita ‘O Ryan: “If coloured people are represented in the media it is through gangsterism, drugs and teenage pregnancy”

Much of this study focused on soap opera narrative with particular relevance to women's stories and their interpretation of these narratives, but in making reference to media portrayals outside of this, I show that these narratives are typical of problems with representation. South Africa exists now in a climate of media multiculturalism, where effort is made by producers to portray a sense of the rainbow nation. In this rainbow however, we have the powerful black ad executives of *Generations* on SABC1, the business men and women of *Muvhango* on SABC2, the high-flyers at ON TV in *Isidingo*, the pretty white girls of *Sewende Laan*, and in the portrayal of the success reached by these groups, specifically the black groups, the characters retain a sense of culture, and community, coloured characters in their success on these shows seem alienated from their communities. Since these products are primarily geared towards a female audience I investigated the ways these women make sense of these stories. But viewing does not exist in a vacuum, in investigating the meaning, and how the meaning created impacted on the ways these women understood themselves and their sense of community I had to understand how they constructed their daily lives and their leisure time. Here, I began to understand these women's status as active viewers and just how important these moments of narrative immersion were, and the way these 'stolen' moments strengthened identification with especially 'their' characters, which made their portrayal all the more important.

Furthermore, while establishing a concrete sense of coloured culture and meaning, different to its construction by the dominant institutions of Apartheid, academics like

Adhikari (2006) discuss a concrete core of culture, but many are hesitant in specifically tackling what this exactly is. I have found that attention here needs to be paid to the ways ideas of culture and community connect and crossover, since ideas of a coloured experience, often marked by a geographical location and class background impact understandings of coloured culture.

This study has highlighted the ways coloured identity is defined in relation to class identities, and shows that particular working class coloured representations are ignored by SA media. In looking at the soap operas of the SABC we have found that success in the new SA depends on casting off the markers of a coloured identity. This picture proves particularly bleak for depictions of coloured femininity, too often portrayed as either promiscuous or asexual. Here we find links between this representation of coloured femininity and caricatures of African American women. The dangers of this connection lie in the possibilities for the stereotypes to be normalized in a South African context.

This study is limited however in its potential to provide a broader analysis of SA television media and the representation of coloured identity across television genres. This might provide more of a holistic view of SA media's relationship with, and portrayal of coloured identity. The possibility also exists for research on the impact new social movements like the feminist movement and the gay and lesbian movements have had on coloured identity and the role the media has played in the ways these movements have been incorporated into these communities.

Throughout this paper we have seen the power of the media in validating, affirming, and sometimes influencing the way coloured participants position themselves in a national context. The media therefore has a strong democratic function, and this isn't a simple task of diversity, but most certainly requires an investigation into the realities of differing ethnicities. Coloured identity is changing, and avenues exist for coloured discourse. These conversations carry on, while pigeon-holed, and stagnant representations circulate, when they in fact have the potential to invite coloured discourse to a national conversation.

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Appendix A





Figure 1. "Knowing One's Place." "Shannon Greenway, 19, of Mowbray, finds the colourful fallen autumn leaves in Wynberg Park hard to resist as she runs through piles raked up by a municipal worker, Mr. Henry Phillips, of Retreat" (*Argus*, 7 May 1976).

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