

# Informed in and through difference

The perspectives of Johannesburg's suburban reservists and  
their role in the SAPS

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# Abstract

Despite a fair amount of academic attention being afforded to the South African Police Service (SAPS), one actor within it has been constantly ignored. Considering reservists make in excess of 15% of the overall policing staff (albeit only as temporary staff) in Gauteng this gap is surprising. Reservists wear an identical uniform and carry out the same functions as permanent members but are not remunerated for their services and do it on a part time basis (minimum 16 hours per month).

Using McClintock's (1995) 'situated psychoanalysis'; Acker's (2006) 'inequality regime', and Foucault's (1977) concept of 'bio-power' this paper analyses the perceptions of reservists working in suburban Johannesburg. It maps how inequalities are historically reproduced and have, in turn, impacted on how reservists come to understand themselves as subjects in the SAPS.

Following 14 semi-structured individual interviews and two focus group discussions it was found, using critical discourse analysis, that the most common discourses among reservists, with regard to difference, circulate around who and why people become reservists (which is informed by geography and history), how people are prioritised for different work (based on essentialist constructions of who should do what), as well as anxiety over organisational changes which directly affect reservists' functioning.

*Key words:* police, reservist, inequalities, articulated categories, subjectivity

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# 1 Introduction

The South African Police (SAP)<sup>1</sup> and their historical role in both colonialism and apartheid has meant that they are often faced with and positioned in contradictory discourses. They are frequently viewed as ‘content to be used’ (Hills, 2000) both by politicians and civilians subject to incredible metaphors of protecting and guarding ‘the thin blue line’ (Altbeker, 2005: 23). However, they are simultaneously subject to ridicule by these same actors for not addressing crime and corruption. Several authors have, in passing, discussed this phenomenon calling the police ‘Chinese Jugglers’ (Altbeker, 2005: 264) and ‘Janus-faced beings’ (Steinberg, 2008: 76) but few have delved further into what this ambivalence means in terms of belonging and positioning. One exception is Julia Hornberger (2011) who discusses the tensions between the police discourses<sup>2</sup> of continuity and dedication versus, the often contradictory (at least in terms of everyday practice), discourses of human rights; another is Shear (2003) who debates race and the masculinity of officers, particularly black officers, during apartheid.

Books such as those by Altbeker (2005), Steinberg (2008) and Faull (2010) bring officers voices (and their nuances) to the fore by highlighting issues faced in their day-to-day functioning such as frustration over cases, ambivalence from public, and contentions around rank. In terms of information about police on the continent this is an achievement in itself, where most material has failed to capture the individual trials and tribulations of officers but rather focuses on how these officers should behave and contribute to reform processes, particularly human rights. Although accessible these works are done for popular media and lack academic theoretical, conceptual, and methodological rigour. Works by Marks (2005), Hornberger (2011), and Brogen and Shearing (1993) are more academic in their pursuits

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<sup>1</sup> The name was changed to the South African Police Service (SAPS) in 1994.

<sup>2</sup> Hornberger prefers to use the term ‘talk’ as opposed to discourse as it “signals something of a more flexible, even flippant, nature” (2011: 55)

and have attempted to bring the South African Police Service (SAPS) into the research realm, delving into issues of policing, human rights, democratisation processes, labour, violence, and change.

Despite the seemingly large amount of information relating to police in South Africa<sup>3</sup> one ‘type’ of officer that has not been explored, inside or outside academia, is that of ‘the reservist’; with the exception Brown (2008) who documents his experience as a reservist in Cape Town there is nothing that has South African police reservists as its main ‘subject matter’. Lack of academic research into the reserve is startling when one considers that in the Gauteng province alone there are 7 528 police reservists (Appendix 3). It is unclear whether reservists are included in the overall police staff figure for Gauteng (38 639) but they do, either way, present a large temporary work force in the province (between 16-19% depending on whether they are included in the overall figure) (SAPS, 2012: 18).

According to the SAPS (2013) a reservist is “a member of the community who performs policing duties or activities for the SAPS on a voluntary basis without being paid for those services.” It then goes on to identify four different types of reservists:

*Table 1: Types of reservists*

Type of reservist	Function and allowances
A	Carry out the same operational duties as regular members, May wear a uniform, Undergo training about functional policing.
B	Carry out support duties, May not do functional duties, May not wear a uniform, May undergo legal training that pertains to their tasks.
C	Have specific skill or expertise than can be utilised by the SAPS (such as divers, doctors, or pilots), May wear a uniform if their commander permits it.
D	May carry out operational duties in specific sectors, May wear a uniform depending on duties, Trained in aspects of sector or functional policing.

*(SAPS, 2013 - copied details on how to become a reservist)*

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<sup>3</sup> This is of course not exhaustive and much more research has been done on South African police. However, in terms of other police forces in Africa, the SAPS has substantially more information (both academic and otherwise) relating to it and its various functions. Other countries in Africa which are starting to grow a substantial amount of knowledge about police and policing include Uganda, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Kenya, Namibia, and Sudan.

Considering reservists are not visibly distinguishable (excluding category B) from other uniformed officers and are subject to identical rules and regulations (SAPS, 2002) they are frequently clumped into discussions on the police and, presumably, thought to share similar experiences. In an organisation such as the SAPS where the permanent staff often complain about inadequate pay and provisions (Altbeker, 2005: 243) it is interesting to consider the men and women who opt to work for the SAPS out of 'their own good will'. As discourses and ideologies increasingly gravitate toward more avenues for community policing, understanding the dynamics of reservists in a country that has a history of utilising reservists, at least since 1962, will be insightful. Additionally, considering the moratorium<sup>4</sup> on reservist recruitment and promotions (initiated in April 2009) as well as the anticipation of a new National Instruction, which will outline the way forward for reservists (including possible changes to uniform and rank structure), now is an exciting time to contemplate how reservists perceive their work and what these changes might mean.

Hence this is an explorative study. One that seeks to do something that has not been done before and to document voices that have not been considered in an academic manner. The police are a state-controlled mechanism and their power is expected to “bear over everything” as they make the state’s authority visible (Foucault, 1977: 213). Therefore, this research is important because police officers (including reservists) are symbols of the state, are used to achieve state pursuits, and connect the state to the public. Additionally reservists are an important component of community policing, provide a significant sized temporary workforce, and are anticipating changes to their role in the SAPS.

Using ‘situated psychoanalysis’ and ‘inequality regimes’ as my main theoretical backdrop I have conducted interviews with 23 police reservists in South Africa about their experiences and perspectives. By

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<sup>4</sup> As of the 1<sup>st</sup> of April 2009 there has been a suspension on the recruitment and promotion of reservists (Appendix 1). The reasons for this are unclear, nonetheless, since the start of the moratorium there has been a continued debate, within reservist and management circles, about changes the reserve should undergo. These discussions will all culminate in the next National Instruction which has, apparently, been approved but not yet launched (CAP: 2). The start of the moratorium, according to reservists interviewed is linked to issues with D-reservists who were demanding permanent employment and has remained in place for an extended period of time due to reservists striking. See for example reservists marching to the Union buildings in September 2011 (TimesLive, 2011).

doing this, and utilising critical discourse analysis, I provide a partial perspective into the world of policing in South Africa (suburban Johannesburg more specifically), a country that is often labelled one of the most violent in the world. With my background in the Social Studies of Gender and my theoretical choices, I will not 'merely' be reporting on reservists' view of their work but will also attempt to analyse the ways in which this work is gendered, racialised, and classed<sup>5</sup> as well as how these social inequalities maintain, conflict, reinforce, and come-into being and through one another. Therefore, my main research question is as follows:

*How do police reservists perceive their role in the SAPS? How are these perceptions normalised through and based on difference?*

As will be addressed in the method section, it is important to note that this research question is not neutral and tends to hide whose views are being privileged, namely white men who reside in suburban Johannesburg. That said, in order to fully answer these research questions who and why people become reservists will need to be considered as well as how they perceive their labour as being organised through difference, both practically and symbolically.

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<sup>5</sup> While I have, in my theoretical section, privileged race, class and gender as the lenses through which I have conducted my research this is not too say that I see them as being in isolation from other social divisions such as age and ethnicity as these too come into being and are involved in the messy politics of belonging and normalisation.

## 2 Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

Coined by Kimberly Crenshaw, ‘intersectionality’ is a theory and methodology which states that categories and constructions such as gender, race, and class do not exist in seclusion but that they actually intersect each other. This theory goes beyond isolated constructions and helps illustrate the complexity of social exclusion and inequality (Crenshaw, 1991). However, it has also been subject to criticism, particularly for its use of the term ‘intersection’ which gives the impression that these inequalities come into being apart from one another and then at certain moments, or intersections, crash into and inform one another, and then, presumably, move beyond each other again. Like theorists such as McClintock (1995) and Acker (2006), I believe that social inequalities do not come into being in a vacuum. Although each may have a distinct history, this history tends to be informed and shaped by other inequalities and power relations. That is, inequalities come into being in and through one another (as opposed to merely intersecting) in conflicting ways which are not easily determined.

### 2.1 Inequality regimes

For Acker (2006), the existence and convergence of these differences is most acute within the work place where access to resources is contested (these include payment, levels of the hierarchy, or pleasures of the job) but tend to be influenced by matters of difference which inform, reproduce, and resist inequalities. With this in mind, Acker (2006) suggests thinking of organisations as regimes of inequality or, more succinctly, ‘inequality regimes’ and cites that all organisations are such because class is both racialised and gendered. Although inequalities circulating gender and race may be deemed illegitimate (where as class inequalities are assumed to be unavoidable), the degree to which they are visible shifts from

organisation to organisation and is influenced both by organisational culture and wider societal processes. In essence, Acker (2006: 109) defines inequality regimes as “historically specific patterns of race, gender, and class relations within particular organisations”. In turn, inequality regimes consist of a series of components (Acker, 2006: 111-129):

- 1) Bases of inequality: These are the aspects on which different treatment and inequalities are based, such as race or gender.
- 2) Organising processes and practices that maintain and reproduce inequalities: These include working jobs into hierarchies, recruitment, hiring, wage setting practices, and supervisory relations.
- 3) Visibility of inequalities: This is the extent to which the inequality is visible and/or taken for granted within the organisation.
- 4) Legitimacy of inequalities: This is the extent to which the inequality and its reproduction are given legitimacy (often in tension with visibility).
- 5) Controls and compliance: How people comply with unequal process can be done through obvious, unobtrusive, direct, or indirect controls.
- 6) Competing interests and organising change: There are competing interests both within the organisation and beyond it and these can, at times, result in organisational change.

With this research located in the realm of labour where reservists are competing for access to organisational resources, the theory of inequality regimes is appealing. It helps to politicise the work place and illustrate that people and decisions within it also contribute to, maintain, and, at times, disrupt inequalities. However, before moving any further it is necessary to clarify what is meant by the terms ‘inequality’, ‘race’, ‘gender’, and ‘class’. Staying located within the organisation, Acker (2006: 110) defines inequality as:

Systematic disparities between groups of organi[s]ational participants in control over organi[s]ational goals and outcomes, work processes and decisions, in opportunities to enter and advance in particular job areas, in security of position, and levels of pay, in intrinsic pleasures of the work, and in respect and freedom from harassment (Acker, 2006: 110).

Due to this research being about the labour of reservists and their perceptions as to how that labour fits within the SAPS, this very organisational centric definition is useful in grounding this research.

Acker (2006: 5-6) views race, class, and gender as socially constructed categories which involve battles over access to material resources and social power; these inequalities are historically located and form basic means of social organisation. Furthermore, Acker (2006) does not view gender or race as static nouns but rather as dynamic processes. It is for this reason that she prefers to use the concepts in their adjectival and/or verbal forms. Hence her phrase: ‘gendered and racialised class.’ More specifically, Acker (2006: 6) defines gender as practices and representations which lead to the categories of men and women (Acker, 2006: 6); race as socially constructed around skin colour and characteristics associated to it through history (Acker, 2006: 6); and class, simply, as standing “for practices and relations that provide differential access to and control over the means of provisioning and survival” (Acker, 2006: 68)

Although Acker (2006) attempts to employ intersectionality, her definitions of race, class, and gender illustrate them in isolation and fail to account for how they influence one another. McClintock (1995) does not prioritise class the way Acker (2006) does, and also spends more time trying to theorise and demonstrate the ways in which inequalities interact with one another. Nonetheless McClintock (1995), like Acker (2006), views intersectionality as a good starting point but static in its construction; rather she sees race, class, and gender as being ‘articulated categories’ in that “they come into existence *in and through* relation to one another – if in contradictory and conflictual ways” (emphasis in original McClintock, 1995: 5). Subsequently, she states that psychoanalysis, Marxism, and philosophy emerged around racial fetishism which erupted in spectacular fashion during colonial pursuits where: “The invention of *racial* fetishism became central to the regime of sexual surveillance, while the policing of *sexual* fetishism became central to the policing of the ‘dangerous classes’ both in Europe and in colonies” (emphasis in original, McClintock, 1995: 182). Not wanting to let these categories be reducible to one another McClintock (1995) illustrates that these divisions and practices exist in intimate relationships. In this idea of triangulation McClintock (1995) resists essentialism and rather chooses to discuss the fluidity of inequalities and how they incorporate numerous historical, contextual, material, and psychological dimensions.

## 2.2 Situated psychoanalysis

Informed by thinkers such as Foucault, Marx, Lacan and Freud, McClintock (1995) finds Kristeva's (1941) theory of abjection a compelling starting point for her theoretical contribution. Abjection at its core is about ambiguity of self. The abject is something the subject wants to expel but cannot live without. It can be substance (such as blood), people (such as prostitutes), or places (such as the ghetto)<sup>6</sup>. However, the crux of Kristeva's (1941) theory is that through this attempt to expel what cannot be expelled, the subject becomes social. That is, the process of coming into being through that which the subject wishes to eradicate, and which disrupts the borders between body and psyche, is called abjection. McClintock (1995: 72) recognises the power of this theory and its ability to help bridge the gap between two seemingly different thinkers, Marx and Freud and their respective theories of material history and psychoanalysis.

In fact, McClintock (1995) sees the very barriers between these two theories as abjection. Psychoanalysis purges discussions based on economics, female sexuality, race, culture, and labour whereas historical materialism expunges 'irrational' components such as sexuality, emotions, and family. Consequently, according to McClintock (1995: 72), "Abjection shadows the no-go zone between psychoanalysis and material history, but in such a way as to throw their historical separation radically into question". Exploiting this liminal 'no-go zone' McClintock (1995) introduces a theory informed by psychoanalysis and material history, namely 'situated psychoanalysis'. Simply defined, situated psychoanalysis is "a culturally contextualised psychoanalysis that is simultaneously a psychoanalytically informed history" (McClintock, 1995: 72). This will form the theoretical backbone of this paper as its ability to go beyond, within, together, and in-between issues of the psyche and material is useful when contemplating perspectives. This is a contextually and historically specific theory able to highlight (when considered in relation to particular abject objects, zones of abjection, or abject people - amongst others) processes of social formation.

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<sup>6</sup> Examples as given by McClintock (1995).

Building on situated psychoanalysis and to illustrate the above McClintock (1995: 149) leans heavily on concepts such as ‘fetish’ which are able to “embody a crisis in social meaning” and which house contradictions where issues around inequality and identity overlap and clash with one another. McClintock (1995) is not using the term in the same way as Freud, who only saw fetish as related to the phallus, or Marx, who saw fetish as only related to commodities. Rather the fetish is an ‘impassioned object’ which represents ambiguity, illustrates the failure resolve a conflict and therefore “embod[ies] the traumatic coincidence not only of individual but also of historical memories held in contradiction” (McClintock, 1995: 184-5).

## 2.3 Bringing them together

By moving beyond the phallus and now armed with an arsenal of psychoanalytical terms McClintock’s (1995) situated psychoanalysis nicely complements Acker’s (2006) inequality regimes. Together these two theories extend across micro, meso, and macro levels of analysis to produce a complex way of understanding labour and perspectives, in this case the labour and perspectives of police reservists. Situated psychoanalysis considers historically created discourses and the ways in which subjects, as agents, operate in light of them, whereas Acker’s (2006) theory is not discursively orientated but rather focuses on internal processes of organisations. Nonetheless, inequality regimes strengthen my analysis by providing a conceptual and analytical means of understanding how inequalities are practiced within the work place. That said, inequality regimes is a rather impersonal theory and fails to adequately account for how emotions, history, and personal quests factor into the reproduction of inequalities and notions of belonging.

Both McClintock (1995: 15, 61) and Acker (2006: 111), being informed by historical materialism and wanting to side-step arguments of agency and structure, prioritise practice and see gender, race, and class as part of processes and practices rather than set structures. McClintock (1995: 15) is interested in how agency is articulated through people’s actions which are mediated and informed (and could later change) institutions of power. Similarly, Acker (2006:46) privileges practice in that it ensures the material is not lost in abstract

discussions on structure. Therefore, both recognise the constraints of structures but see material, everyday practice, and the agency of individuals against, with, for, and between these structures as a better starting point for analysis. Nonetheless, agents do not exist in isolation rather they are part of broader relations. For Acker (2006: 46) these social relations are best defined as “bundles of interrelated practices that organise social life and connect people with one another” and that organisations are the best place to start to understand them, whereas, for McClintock (1995: 15), the best way to grasp the ‘dense web of relations’ is to understand the ambivalent and contradictory nature in which they came about, that is, their history. Inequality regimes and situated psychoanalysis offer useful concepts which are able to bridge the gap between the psyche and the organisation and hence, together, provide a mosaic theory that locates the individual (and their perspectives) both within the organisation, but also wider societal processes, without losing their voices and perspectives.

Lastly, what is central to both of these theories and which needs to be made explicit now is the concept of power and for the purposes of this paper ‘bio-power’ more specifically. Bio-power, in one concept, encapsulates both how power becomes productive through the subjugation of bodies as needing to be disciplined (anatomy-politics) and the constructed ‘need’ to regulate population demographics (bio-politics). This enabling power is central to economic processes as it has a normalising effect on social behaviour and the ways in which it is organised (Foucault, 1978: 139-145). Neither McClintock (1995) nor Acker (2006) discuss bio-power but the addition of this concept will strengthen analysis as it is able to highlight how techniques of power are exercised through ‘anatomy- and bio- politics’. For instance the organising processes within organisations are often guided by the ability of bodies to conform to the task at hand (be disciplined) both practically and symbolically and central to this is a naturalisation as to which bodies are better suited for tasks. This is played out in a demographic realm which places certain bodies historically marked by race, gender, and class as better suited for different tasks. This racialised and gendered naturalisation is evident in police work which is characterised by an institution of power tasked with organising, controlling, and surveying society on behalf of the state. Bio-politics is of course, being a Foucauldian concept, played out in the realm discourse helping to form the methodological considerations of this paper.

To summarise, the theoretical framework is a combination of situated psychoanalysis and inequality regimes informed conceptually by Foucault's (1977) bio-power. Although at first glance, this combination appears ambitious the aim is not to highlight an entire historical or societal account of reservists in South Africa, rather the research is partial and located firmly in dominant discourses of interviewed reservists, which are, of course, historically located. The above theories and concepts, however, help to analyse the taken for granted assumptions reservists have about their work (and who does their work) and place them within wider historical and societal processes. Placing research at the very micro does not prevent it from passing comment on broader practices and trends. This technique is evident in the style Foucault (1977, 1978) uses when focusing on particular micro level examples (whether they be specific schools, prisons, or even people) to pass comment on naturalised, seemingly abstract, discourses. Situated psychoanalysis will aid in understanding reservists' (and police more generally) personal fixation on particular objects or discourses whereas inequality regimes will assist in understanding how these same inequalities manage to legitimise difference and inform organisational processes. In turn, bio-power illustrates how these are made productive – in the sense of helping to form the subject - through power relations.

With these theoretical premises in mind it becomes clear that quantitative, positivist research methodologies are not suitable for this research paper. Using the 'work place' as a contested site where difference is practiced, where fetishes are formed and maintained, and where inequalities are reproduced, means that a more flexible qualitative method, one that is receptive to notions of intersectionality and processes of power, is needed. Firstly, however, the way in which knowledge is connected to reality needs to be considered

## 3 Epistemology: Knowledge, experience and reality

Analysing a group of voices is never easy and can be subject to a range of debates relating to their validity and the ability to link what is said to be knowledge and reality. Standpoint theory has, almost since its inception, been subject to such criticisms. It has, according to Ramazanglu and Holland (2006: 61-63), been attempting to hold onto two sides of a 'slippery pole' not wanting to slide into relativism on the one side and 'absolute truth' on the other. To avoid this, Harraway (1988) suggests a different way of considering knowledge/s from groups of people: 'situated knowledges'. Harraway argues that we speak from a particular position which is both informed by history as well as where we are, what we are speaking about, and to whom. This is a profound statement as it presupposes that meaning does not exist in isolation – rather the meaning that an individual is both attributed and attributes to others is informed by wider society and the different communities to which the individual belongs. Furthermore it means that any perspective is only a part of 'a' constructed picture. "By grounding knowledge in people's experiences and emotions and, simultaneously connecting these with ideas about what is happening, a new sense of what is 'real' is constructed, with new political responses and effects" (Ramazanglu and Holland, 2006: 43). Therefore, reality is partially constructed through and in the ways we speak. The social world is flexible depending on who is speaking to whom about what when where and why. This forms the main epistemological assumption of this paper, that is, that you can only attempt to understand the social world through an understanding of a series of partial perspectives.

### 3.1 Critical discourse analysis

A methodology which is susceptible to recognising the partiality of knowledge and the construction of reality whilst still being critical

of the ways in which these are connected is critical discourse analysis. The usefulness of discourse analysis for understanding how reservists perceive their role in the SAPS is nicely summed up by Cameron (2011: 161) in her discussion about the connections between language, identity, and difference:

Language using is among the social practices through which people assert their identities – who they are or take themselves to be – and distinguish themselves from others who are ‘different’ It is also among the social practices through which people enact social relations of domination and subordination. Discourse (language in use) then, is a resource for understanding how identity and difference, or/and dominance are constructed (or in various other theoretical terminations, ‘done’, ‘accomplished’, ‘performed’) in verbal interaction – in the routine transactions of an institution, say, or the mundane exchanges of everyday life (Cameron, 2011: 161)

Therefore when people speak about who they are and what they do, they are reflecting, practicing, and creating their identity (or parts of it at least) at the same time (Cameron, 2011: 172). As such, analysing discourses provides a way of understanding people’s perceived reality. Through stories, oral histories, and memories ideas are created and recreated; these rarely exist in isolation and are frequently part of community talk and rhetoric. Hence, if reality is recreated and understood through the ways we speak then understanding the common discourses and ideas shared by reservists (and some of the contradictions between them) may give a glimpse into their lived experiences and also shed light on the ways in which their perceptions (which can only really become known through the ways they discuss their work) are informed by difference. As such this research tends to be aligned with postmodern sentiments which counter the argument that reality has substance beyond our perceptions of it, that identities are fixed, and that there is such a thing a human nature. Rather, social reality is constructed through discourse and practice as opposed to being natural or innate (Cameron, 2011: 50).

In line with this, critical discourse analysis focuses on how discourse and talking informs and shapes reality and how these are linked to ideology and power, both of the speakers, and the environments in which they are in (Cameron, 2011: 51). As such, the aim of this paper is understand how reservists’ knowledge claims are

informed by and normalised through difference, not to lay claim to what ‘the reality’ of reservists actually is. Again, this is similar to Foucault’s (1977) approach in that it does not seek to answer what is or is not true, but rather to be critical of what is said and why some discourses tend to be given more validity (or more normality) than others.

Despite not being mutually exclusive, it is vital to point out that this will be primarily an *analysis of discourses* as opposed *discourse analysis*. This distinction is useful when it comes to operationalizing analysis. The latter, *discourse analysis*, is “a social psychological focus on patterns of speech” whereas *analysis of discourses* is “a political theoretical focus on the ways in which issues are given particular meaning within a specific social setting” (Bacchi, 2005: 199). The distinction is important, as skilfully illustrated by Bacchi (2005), so as to better account for the relationship between structure and agency. Lending from post-structuralist discourse psychologists (namely Davies, Stapelton, and Wilson) Bacchi (2005: 205-206) discusses how one can use a dual approach when conducting an analysis of discourses. This dual approach considers the ways in which subjects are structured in discursive categories (such as gender and race) but how they are, within these, able to exert a certain level of agency through self-narratives which help to discursively re-position them:

The goal becomes finding ways to position oneself differently in relation to one’s existing discourses, which are multiple and contradictory. In this view there is no outside to discourse, but one can work to identify the discourses within which one is positioned (subject positions) and use them selectively. Thus understanding creates the possibility of theorizing a subject who is simultaneously made a speaking subject through discourse and who is subjected to those discourses (Bacchi, 2005: 205).

That is, this helps to identify both the ways in which “people use discourse” and how “discourse uses people” illustrating how meaning emerges not from language itself but from the ways in which language is understood both culturally and institutionally (Bacchi, 2005: 207). An analysis of discourses, then, complements Acker (2006) and McClintock’s (1995) focus on practice, as discussed above, and how agents/subjects are able to perform within situations/ history/structures not necessarily of their choosing, which they (subject/agent) also tend to shape and come into being in and through.

## 4 Method

Although quantitative research is valuable for its insights into trends and analysing large amounts of data, it fails to account for the nuances and contradictions in the ways in which people create their social reality. It presupposes that ‘a truth’ exists out there waiting to be found. I reject this sentiment, as discussed in the previous section, as what constitutes a person’s reality shifts and changes, it is not static and it is certainly not natural or innate. Rather, considering this is an explorative study, with limited resources, qualitative methods are more suitable for the complex analysis they allow.

In understanding the perceptions of an enclosed group, ethnographic research would have been a wonderful option. However, ethnographic work is resource intensive and requires extensive periods of time (O’Reilly, 2009: 208-2013). Although the method has potential for answering the research question, lack of resources made it impossible. Six weeks in South Africa is not enough time to submerge oneself within the reservist community and beyond not having the time to do so, I also did not have the desire to entirely immerse myself in the violent, risky (albeit exciting) environment of policing. Additionally, more practically, reservist training and recruitment is currently not open due to the moratorium (Appendix 1). With this in mind, the best approach in conducting a critical analysis of discourses, of the normalised perceptions of reservists, was to conduct in-depth interviews.

### 4.1 The interviews

Taken for granted assumptions require more prodding than ‘normal’ conversation, as they have become normalised assertions. Hence my interviews were semi-structured, whereby I had a series of

already formulated questions, but also left room for the interviews to take their own shape and for new ideas to emerge. Once themes<sup>7</sup> began to surface and equipped with my theoretical framework, I asked a series of semi-structured questions to assert how normalised these views were, and to identify how differences intersected, or rather informed and came into being in and through one another in the organisation.

Interviewees were found using a snowball method which is useful for identifying social networks, however this is also its downfall as it relies on people's social networks meaning that samples tend to not be representative (O'Reilly, 2009: 198-199). I was able to access my original interviewees through people I found on LinkedIn (Sergeant R and Constable B) and through my gatekeeper, a friend who is also a reservist.<sup>8</sup> I did not interview my gatekeeper for fear of bias but the fact that he is a white man working in suburban Johannesburg had implications for my research and who I could access, as will be seen below. Like my gatekeeper, Sergeant R and Constable B are also white and work in suburban Johannesburg; hence, the fact that all my interviewees work (and for the most part live) in white, suburban areas of the city. Having agreed to anonymity, interviewees participated in semi-structured interviews which spanned between one to four hours in length. After each interview, I asked to be put in touch with other reservists.<sup>9</sup> This method has meant that the reservists interviewed are geographically quite close to one another<sup>10</sup> and share similar characteristics in terms of race and class. The below table outlines the

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<sup>7</sup> Appendix 5 outlines the main themes and their frequency in both individual and group interviews.

<sup>8</sup> A note of reflection is needed here. Although I did not interview my gatekeeper he was essential to the success of this research as he aided in not only gaining access to my first interviews but also in understanding police jargon and processes. If there were details which I was uncertain about I asked him for advice. Being critical, I recognise that he too belongs in this community and is likely to subscribe to the discourses I encounter. Furthermore this had implications on the demographic of my interviewees. Nonetheless, there were also benefits to being close to my gatekeeper in that his views and ways of speaking about policing were often more candid than those of my interviewees. I did, however, take care not to discuss their identities (unless they were organised directly through him).

<sup>9</sup> However at some point I did need to slow down on the intake of interviews as I was starting to gather more information that I was able to transcribe or manage for the research at hand. I did, however, reach a point of saturation with the discourses that will be discussed in this paper.

<sup>10</sup> My second group discussion, a group of five, was with reservists who are not formally considered within Johannesburg but on its fringes. Including their thoughts, however, did not impact on the common discourses I had already encountered

basic demographic profiles of those who participated in individual interviews:

*Table 2: Individual interview – demographics*

Name <sup>11</sup>	Acronym	Type	Age	Gender	Race	Home Language	Date of joining	Current status
Constable A	CA	A	34	M	W	English	2001	Inactive since 2010
Constable B	CB	A/C	36	F	W	English	1999	Active
Constable I	CI	A	30	M	B	Setswana	2008	Active,
Constable M	CM	D	27	M	B	Sepedi	2008	Permanent from 2009
Constable P	CP	A	66	F	W	English	2001	Active
Constable Q	CQ	A	29	F	W	English	2006	Active
Constable T	CT	A	34	M	W	English	2006/7	Active
Constable W	CW	A	49	M	B	isiXhosa	2006/7	Inactive 6 months
Sergeant R	SR	A	59	M	W	English	1993	Active
Warrant Officer B	WOB	A	64	M	W	English	1996	Active
Captain D	CD	A	63	M	W	Afrikaans	1982	Active
Captain K	CK	A	40	M	W	English	1991	Active
Captain P	CAP	A	39	M	W	English	1994	Active
Colonel L	CL	A	73	M	W	English	1964	Retired 2010

*Ordered from lowest rank to highest, then alphabetically. See Appendix 2 for ranking structure.*

In addition to the 14 individual interviews, two focus group discussions were conducted. Similar questions were asked but reservists were afforded more room to talk amongst themselves. The demographics of these interviewees were similar to those of the individual interviewees with the notable absence of any black members:

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<sup>11</sup> I make use of the interviewee's rank and a letter chosen by them. This way of keeping interviewees identity secret is borrowed from Altbeker (2005) and Steinberg (2008). Some interviewees expressed openly that they had no problems with their names being mentioned but ethically, and for consistency, I chose to make all reservists anonymous. SAPS ranking structure is attached as an appendix 2 for your reference

*Table 3: Group interviews – demographics*

Name	Acronym	Type <sup>12</sup>	Age	Gender	Race	Home Language	Date of joining	Current status
<b>Group 1</b>	G1							
Constable R	CR	A	30	M	W	English	2009	Active
Sergeant B	SB	A	45	M	W	English	2001	Active
Sergeant C	SC	A	39	M	W	English	1996	Active
Sergeant Z	SZ	A	42	M	W	English	1996	Active
<b>Group 2</b>	G2							
Constable E	CE	A	50	F	W	English	2007	Active
Constable S	CS	D	48	M	W	Afrikaans	2007	Active
Constable Y	CY	A	32	M	W	English	2000	Active
Warrant Office G	WOG	A	38	M	W	English	1995	Active
Captain X	CX	A	65	M	W	English	1982	Active

*Ordered according to group, then from lowest to highest rank and alphabetically. See Appendix 2 for SAPS ranking structure.*

As can be seen from the above tables, my samples were overly represented by white men and I had difficulty in accessing females and/or non-white reservists. Although I did eventually manage to interview four white women and three black men, there are clearly certain demographic groups missing such as black women, Indians, and coloureds.<sup>13</sup> There are several reasons for this: one, many black reservists in the areas I was in have (at least from what I was told) now become permanent members; two, I was conducting interviews in predominantly white areas (reservists tend to work in the areas they live); and three, due to an inherent fault in the snowball method which

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<sup>12</sup> This paper will mostly be concerned with Category A reservists as they are the most common type of reservist, most accessible, and are the reservists who are permitted to fulfil the same function and duties as regular permanent members. Category B reservists are more difficult to find and tend to work in very niche departments, Category C appears to be a null and void category since the limiting of reservists (estimated to have begun 2010/2011) functionality in specialised units (this excludes the Mounted Unit in which reservists still operate), and many Category D reservists (from what I was told) have either been employed as permanent members (such as Constable M) or did an upgrade course which means that they are now classified as A reservists (this consists of reservists who joined after February 2007).

<sup>13</sup> ‘Coloured’ in South Africa is used differently to American or European contexts. Rather, coloured here is a homogenous, recognised ethnic group in South Africa. For more on this read Martin (2000)

means that people (both my interviewees and gatekeeper) will direct me toward friends who often tend to be racially, not necessarily gender, homogenous. Additionally, which cannot be seen from the above, 9 of the 16 white men interviewed own their own companies, are self-employed, or managers at companies which isn't the case for any of the white women or black men interviewed.

Although interviews form the backbone of material to be analysed, I also able spent time in two stations (as approved by the SAPS). This was an invaluable experience as I was able to see how work is done within the Client Service Centre (CSC) and ask permanent members their thoughts about reservists. These were more informal, ad-hoc interactions<sup>14</sup> than those I had had with reservists but were enlightening nonetheless:

*Table 4: Permanent members: Ad-hoc discussions and surveys*

Name <sup>15</sup>	Acronym	Race	Gender	Spoke to at/in	Filled in survey
Student Constable 1	SC1	Black	Female	CSC	Yes
Constable 1	C1	Black	Female	CSC	
Constable 2	C2	Black	Female	CSC	Yes
Constable 3	C3	Black	Female	CSC	
Constable 4	C4	Black	Male	CSC	
Constable 5	C5	Black	Male	CSC	Yes, incomplete
Constable 6	C6	Black	Female	CSC	
Warrant Officer 1	WO1	Black	Male	CSC	Yes
Warrant Officer 2	WO2	Black	Male	CSC	
Captain 1	CA1	Black	Male	Station	Yes
Colonel 1	CO1	White	Male	Ride along	
Brigadier 1	B1	White	Female	Station	Yes

*Ordered from lowest to highest rank then numerically. See Appendix 2 for SAPS ranking structure.*

<sup>14</sup> The ad-hoc, informal nature of these interactions is why I do not have the same level of information for permanent members as I do for reservists. Aspects such as age, length in the service, and home language are missing.

<sup>15</sup> I use numbers to differentiate between permanent force and reservists in the text.

I also attempted to hand out a series of brief surveys which asked permanent members their opinions about reservists, however, these were not systematic (only five completed) with Warrant Officer 2 ‘losing’ several (including his) close-to-complete surveys. In addition to spending time at the stations, I participated in three ‘ride alongs’, meaning I was with reservists whilst they patrolled permitting me to learn some of the technical aspects of their work. These experiences, coupled with the two additional questionnaires<sup>16</sup>, allow me to better understand the discourses encountered (Cameron, 2011: 172). That said, the sporadic, ad-hoc nature of conversations with permanent members, as well as the absence of any comment from provincial and government representatives, or reservist family and friends is a pitfall of this research in that the analysis of discourses is not as full as it could be. That said, considering we (both myself and my interviewees) are only capable of partial perspectives, this research continues to be fractional and not an overarching account of police or reservists.

## 4.2 Reflexivity: ‘reservist’ and its hidden inequalities

Based on the above lists of interviewees, it does not seem adequate to simply ask how police ‘reservists’ perceive their role as the word ‘reservist’ tends to hide who it is I am discussing or, at the very least, who had an opportunity to answer my questions. I was told, on numerous occasions, during the course of the interviews that the reason I was speaking to mainly white men was because of the areas I was in (and certainly the method I was using). Had I focused my discussion on police reservists operating in townships (such as Soweto or Alexandra) it is likely that my sample would have consisted of mainly black men: Black, because of their area and men because of the male orientated ‘nature’ of the organisation.

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<sup>16</sup> The first questionnaire, given at the start of the interview, was to gather basic details about the reservists including their employment, area they reside, education, training, race, gender, age, etc. The second questionnaire, given close to the end of each interview, was based on topics mostly covered in the interviews but acted as a safety net, these were ranking questions (strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, strongly disagree) which often evoked further discussion. It also included questions about gender, race, informal interactions and the desired characteristics of reservists.

Discussing reservists' location is important as it is a historical artefact. Following the forced removal and resettlement of races during apartheid several areas continue to be predominantly white, black, Indian, coloured, etc.<sup>17</sup> Apartheid government policies and legislation sought to divide and separate races; such as the Land Act of 1913, Mixed Marriages Act of 1945, the Immorality Amendment Act of 1950 and, most infamously, the Group Areas Act of 1950 which aided in forcibly relocating black people (Potgeiter, 2012: 54). White areas continue to be the most privileged in Johannesburg with black people still mostly living in townships. This certainly illustrates the ways in which class and race intersect and how they are historically informed.

Since reservists work in the areas they live or are employed (their day jobs) the location of reservists interviewed cannot be ignored. However, for fear of divulging too much, with regards to my interviewees' identity, the exact location of these reservists will be kept secret. This is due to, for instance, some stations only having one reservist who is a Warrant Officer, and by divulging both location and rank the identity of the officer could easily be deduced. Nonetheless, all interviewees worked at stations in suburban Johannesburg which are likely overrepresented by white reservists. For instance in table 5, taken from the South African Reserve Equity Plan, you can see how reservists' race and location are connected:

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<sup>17</sup> These are even further aggregated. Areas do not tend to 'only' be white or 'black' but will also tend to over-represent an ethnicity within them such as Afrikaans, English, Zulu, Xhosa, etc. Although areas may be referred to as black or white areas they are usually further divided.

*Table 5: February 2005 – Reservists in Johannesburg stations with above 30 members*

Station/Area	Black Male	Black female	White Male	White Female	Coloured Male	Coloured Female	Indian Male	Indian Female	Total
Alexandra	31	20			1				52
Booyens	16	1	17	5	1		1		51
Bramley	22	3	7	2					33
Jeppe	23	3	6	3	7	3	1	2	49
Linden	3		24	7			1		35
Mondeor	12	3	38	10	3		7		73
Parkview	10	2	14	5			1	1	33
Rosebank	19	8	6	1			1		35
Sandringam	17	4	37	14	1				73
Sandton	9	2	49	8	1				69
Sophiatown	4	5	14	3	20		1		47

*At the time Johannesburg had 22 police stations (South African Reserve Police Service, 2004 – Provided by interviewee).*

The highest represented demographic at each station has been highlighted to illustrate how stations (in particular areas) are over-represented by particular racial groups, such as Alexandra with 98% black (60% black male) reservists or Sandton with 83% white (71% white male) reservists. I have been unable to acquire recent statistics pertaining to the racial and gender make up of reservists in Johannesburg more broadly but do have the current details of reservists at five stations in Northern/Western Johannesburg:

*Table 6: April 2013 – Reservists at five stations in Northern/Western Johannesburg*

Station/Area	Black Male	Black female	White Male	White Female	Coloured Male	Coloured Female	Indian Male	Indian Female	Total
Randburg	2	0	14	3	1	0	1	0	21
Honeydew	7	9	21	7	3	9	0	0	56
Florida	3	3	5	3	10	2	3	0	29
Roodeport	3	11	9	2	1	0	0	0	26
Honeydew 2	0	0	21	0	1	0	0	0	30
Total	15	23	70	15	16	11	4	0	154

*Appendix 4: Honeydew cluster stats*

When we consider the statistics for the whole of Gauteng (table 7) we realise that reservists and the areas in which they live are still very racialised because despite the province having 73% black male reservists, the above stations in Northern/Western Johannesburg (which are considered wealthier areas of the city) only have 9.7% black men whereas they are over represented by white men (45%).

*Table 7: April 2013- Demographics of reservists in Gauteng province<sup>18</sup>*

Gender/Race	Black	White	Indian	Coloured	Total
Male	3 030	1 291	116	154	4 591
Female	2 470	394	18	55	2 937
Total	5 500	1 685	134	209	7 528

*See appendix 3*

Therefore, simply asking how reservists perceive their role is hiding who is actually answering the question and failing to take into consideration the historical way in which areas (and labour) have been divided in South Africa. Terms such as ‘officer’, ‘police’ and ‘reservist’ make many aspects of individuals’ characters invisible. These terms are also useful in hiding divisions and inequalities between those within the organisation (Acker, 1990: 149). Beyond hiding race and location the research question, as it currently stands, fails to account for the implicit masculine orientation of the word ‘reservist’ which became clear in the interviews in the ways in which people ‘naturally’ used male pronouns to describe the general work of police officers and reservists (Acker, 2006: 23). Therefore, for the sake of being transparent and ethical, the research question should be reformulated as:

*How do white, male police reservists living in suburban Johannesburg perceive their role in the SAPS? How are these perceptions normalised through and based on difference?*

That is not to assume that all white male reservists share the same experience of policing or that those who are not white or male don’t subscribe to the same discourses. Some questions resulted in a range of answers (although these too appeared to be limited) but answers to others became almost predictable – not only the answers but the

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<sup>18</sup> Further aggregated statistics were not made available in time. I am thankful, nonetheless to the SAPS for procuring these for me.

justification for them too. This points to a community or group dynamic which is informed and normalised by difference in a variety of ways but which does not necessarily mean that different people (in terms of race and gender) have differing views. These views come from within the community and are informed by the community's history and the relationship of members with one another therefore "...even when we talk in our own words', these words may not be 'ours' at all ...[because]...within any community there is a finite range of things it is conventional or intelligible to say about a given concern" (Cameron, 2011: 15). That is, language is inter-subjective (as opposed to being objective or subjective) and is awarded validity when groups agree on an aspect and it is reinforced over again in discourse. Furthermore these perceptions and discourses are not random and do not exist in isolation but are, rather, informed by history and ideologically patterned (Cameron, 2011: 15, 124). Hence the validity of the original research question.

Refining the question means providing a more particular partial perspective into the world of policing and analysis of discourses which appear to be dominant among this group. Although the perspectives of the white women and black men interviewed did not vary extensively from those of white men interviewed, it is safer, and more accurate, to consider the dominant discourses that emerged as those of white, male reservists living in suburban Johannesburg than of reservists more generally. Filtering the question, then, also makes the limitations of the research more explicit. Furthermore, it is exciting in that it illustrates possible questions that could be asked in future and juxtaposed against this research, such as: How do black male reservists working in township/urban areas perceive their roles? How are these comparable with white men found in suburban Johannesburg? What are the commonalities and differences with white and black women who work in these areas? Etc.

Bringing men and masculinities to the fore is important because men still tend, both numerically and socially, to dominate security institutions and are often 'invisible' in conversations pertaining to gender, rather, "they are implicitly cast as 'the norm' that is unspoken and needs no further explanation or justification" (Myrntinen, 2008:76); a point which will be discussed further later in the paper. However, beyond being overrepresented by white men this research is also partial and limited in that I too am located within it.

### 4.3 Reflexivity: Partial perspectives

“All researchers are politically engaged, have personal biases and limited experiences, and are situated in particular cultures, location, and languages” (Ramazanoglu & Holland, 2002: 54). I, therefore, recognise that my gender, race, and perceived class likely impacted on the responses reservists gave. The fact that I am South African and have an understanding of local politics means I can gain access as an insider. However, this idea of insider or outsider is too binary. My nationality and race (particularly with reservists interviewed who are overly represented as white males) may help to gain access as an insider but my gender and preconceived notions about women may leave me as an outsider. That said, resistance may be more to those who are construed as outsiders to the organisation than those who are different in terms of race, gender, and class. In fact, I frequently asked respondents if they felt like an outsider, someone who does not work in the SAPS, could ever understand the work they do. For the most part this was a resounding no. I do not belong to this community and many felt that there was no way an outsider could possibly understand what police go through. As Constable S so succinctly put it, “If my wife doesn’t understand I don’t think you’re going to” (G2: 19).<sup>19</sup>

Furthermore, conducting research on the SAPS when they are under increasing amounts of media attention for complaints of brutality and violence<sup>20</sup> many officers have been, understandably, hesitant to talk. As accommodating as the SAPS was in granting access to stations and supplying documentation, I also encountered some control<sup>21</sup> which demonstrates how anxious the SAPS is as it tries to reshape its battered image. Nonetheless, once I received formal approval to conduct research, reservists and permanent members were forthcoming. Before analysing the material gathered it’s important to consider the history of the SAPS and the ways in which the organisation’s functioning has been informed by difference.

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<sup>19</sup> This sentiment is obviously also loaded with gender assumptions as well as tensions between the public and private spheres, which, while interesting, are beyond the scope of this paper.

<sup>20</sup> Most notably the alleged shooting of 34 miners in Marikana in August 2012 at the Lomin Platinum mine (Mail and Guardian, 2013) and the death of Mido Macia in February 2013 after being dragged behind a police van in Daveyton (Times Live, 2013).

<sup>21</sup> Including Captain P monitoring who speaks to me and the SAPS provincial department asking to review anything prior to publication.

## 5 Articulated categories? Brief history, background and basis of inequality

The 'birth' of modern policing in South Africa, like many African countries, was tied to colonial (in this case British) economic and political interests. In this context the white police force was established to protect the regime in power and too quell dissent. However, white ownership of the SAP was contested. With the pronouncement of the Union of South Africa in 1910 the forces from the four British and Afrikaans colonies were centralised (Hornberger, 2011: 21). This was not a smooth, uncomplicated process with numerous ethnic disputes which fractured the operationalization of the force. Hence, the police was established as a masculine organisation which had paramilitary functions making officers pseudo soldiers which had a profound impact on the masculine orientation of the organisation (Potgeiter, 2012: 63-64).

After 1948, with the election of the National Party (the apartheid government), English power within the force diminished (Hornberger, 2011: 23). However, the domination of white politics in the police should not hide the presence of black labour. Recognising their (white, male) incapacity of ruling such a large mass of land, black labour was utilised from the start of the organisation - but the value of this labour was often contested. However, the anxiety (to borrow from Shear, 2003) of white reliance on black labour resulted in some peculiar trends.

White anxiety led to practices which tried to emasculate black male officers through symbolic practices such as making 'them' wear different coloured uniforms (khaki instead of blue), not allowing 'them' to arrest white persons, obligating 'them' to wear shorts (instead of long pants) as their official dress, separating 'them' from whites in training (which was of a lower quality), denying 'them' access to higher ranks, unequal firearm provisions, and recruiting predominantly from rural areas (Hornberger, 2011: 31 Shear, 2003:

117-118). Shorts, in this instance, are significant, as 'traditional' men viewed them as the attire of boys thereby stripping them of respect they had acquired as men in their communities (Shear, 2003: 117). However, not all black labour was viewed as having the same worth with Zulus being favoured over other ethnicities for their perceived strength, willingness to do 'what's needed', and lack of resistance to being subservient to white power. There is also a spatial dimension here as these men were regularly recruited from rural areas, another symptom of white anxiety, fearful of urban black people (often Xhosa) whose education frequently exceeded theirs (Afrikaans) (Shear, 2003: 114-116).

However, as much as these black (male) (often Zulu) 'officers' were emasculated by white (male) (often Afrikaans) enforcers and loathed by their own communities, there were perceived benefits to their becoming *policemen*. For instance many of these black officers were closer to achieving middle class status and policing, although loathed, was viewed as a respected job. They earned two-thirds that of white officers (in 1930 this was 48 and 84 pounds respectively), had access to regular income, and, possibly more importantly, had access to 'a pass' (Shear, 2003: 114). The 1913 Natives Land Act dictated that each 'native' had to have a pass which recorded where 'he' was allowed to move and at what times of day (Hornberger, 2011: 33). Labour was still very much the preserve of men with black women, generally, only being allowed into urban areas if they were married or domestic workers (Nolde, 1991). Policing was greatly affected by the implementation of legislation which sought to divide races by area and the tightening of police laws in the 1950s required intensive police presence. Later, the apartheid government allowed/encouraged for the establishment of police within the 'native reserves' leading to the creation of nine black stations (Potgieter, 2012: 64).

Though not referring particularly to the reserve this brief historical account helps to paint a picture of the organisation into which the reserve was formed and how difference was used as a basis of inequality in the internal and external functioning of the SAP. Additionally, it also illustrates that the dialectic between these different men was not as easily defined as submission and domination but that there was a mix of different, often conflicting, desires.

## 5.1 The 1960s and the launch of the reserve

The exact start of the reserve is unclear. Colonel L (a 73 year old, white, male), the longest serving reservist interviewed, mentioned that it began in 1962, two years prior to him joining. However, it may have begun a little earlier with the then Minister of Justice, J.P. Vorster, opening the reserve in February 1962 to non-whites - meaning coloured and Indians but not black people (SAHO, 2013a). Nonetheless the start of the reserve at this point in history is not coincidental.

A state of emergency was declared in 1960 following the death of 69 people in the Sharpeville Massacre, in the same year both the African National Congress (ANC) and Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) were disbanded, in 1961 the armed wing of the ANC (Umkhonto we Sizwe) was formed, and in 1962 Nelson Mandela was arrested (Timeline - in Faull, 2010: 285). Amidst these tensions and with police needing to cope with increasing numbers of riots there was a need for additional ‘manpower’. Colonel L recalls that the reserve was begun by one man, Sam Bloomberg<sup>22</sup>, who was “sick and tired” of the police not responding to complaints about burglaries. Bloomberg then initiated a community watch of sort before coming to the conclusion that they were “actually doing the police work” and started the process of establishing a reserve in the then SAP (CL: 2).

It is likely at the start of the reserve, which was as outlined above, in the height of apartheid, was an entirely white male pursuit. It is unclear when women started joining the reserve but considering the SAP began actively recruiting white women in 1972 and black women in the early 1980s, it is probable that women began working in the reserve around this time too (Brogen and Sheraing, 1993: 76). The scarcity of both women and black men was tied to external, national, practices of exclusion as well as the patriarchal political and social environment in South Africa (Acker, 2006: 111). Therefore the SAP (including the reserve) was racist and sexist in both its creation and its functioning.

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<sup>22</sup> I have not been able to verify this elsewhere but am taking it from Colonel L’s memory.

## 5.2 The 1970s and the introduction of women

From 1960 women were employed in clerical positions so as to allow for more men to be called up. The instability of the country meant more men were being recruited for military duties resulting in fewer men in the police, hence the incorporation of women (Potgeiter, 2012: 67). Women were employed with the purpose of fulfilling specific functions such as dealing with female suspects and complainants; furthermore, they were not trained to the same extent as men thereby only fulfilling gender essentialist roles. Women were only allowed to do patrols and investigations from the late 1970s (Potgeiter, 2012: 69).

The first female commanders, hired in January 1972 for the 'Women Police Force', were both English and white. By 1973 they had recruited 102 female officers all white with matric (Grade 12) certificates. Conversely this standard of education was not a requirement for male officers with only 24% possessing one at the time. When black female officers were recruited in the 1980s they were, conversely to their white counterparts, trained together with men (Potgeiter, 2012: 67-68). Illustrating the ranking of the gender with white men at the apex of the organisation.

## 5.3 The 1990s and reintegration

The early 1990s was a time for political negotiations and attempts to alter this image of the then SAP. A series of symbolic and operational changes occurred including changes to the uniform, changes in rank (from military to civilian categories), the amalgamation of the 'native' police forces into one serve (previously called a force), and a new focus on community policing so as to repair the damaged relationship between the public and police hence the change of the name to South African Police *Service* in 1994 (Potgeiter, 2012: 69-70). Additionally the SAPS, in line with the new Constitution, made provisions to ensure that its ranks diversified both in terms of race and gender, however, little was done in the way of questioning the masculine orientation of the organisation beyond numbers.

However, the SAPS' service image suffered a blow in 2010 when, then National Police Commissioner, launched his 'shoot-to-kill' campaign against high levels of crime and converted the SAPS back to a military ranking structure. These measures further institutionalised masculine practices through training camps aimed at 'toughening up' recruits (Potgeiter, 2012: 75-76). The high levels of crime and fear in the country are used as a continued justification for brute force.

Therefore, looking at the history of the SAPS and the way inequalities were institutionalised is not only about recognising what happens to men and women but "how the subjective and collective meanings of women and men as categories of identity have been constructed" (McClintock, 1995: 16). The police is a porous organisation which stretches beyond the confines of stations into government halls, streets, and people's living rooms. Therefore, the institution's assumptions pertaining to gender and race are symbolically reproduced both internally and in its surrounding communities because "what constitutes differences that matter are historically and culturally defined" and the gender, racial and class divisions of the past, to some extent, contribute to discourses in the present (Acker, 2006: 106, 111-113).

## 6 Analysis of discourses

Through the course of the interviews, ride alongs, and station visits (not to mention background reading) a large amount of information was gathered. What follows is a discussion around the most dominant discourses that emerged and an attempt to understand them using situated psychoanalysis, inequality regimes, and bio-power.<sup>23</sup>

### 6.1 Putting on the uniform

What makes someone decide to give up large portions (at least 16 hours a month) of free time policing, doing what Altbeker (2005) calls the dirty work of democracy? What is the desire to put on the blue uniform, black boots, and other state paraphernalia?

‘Wanting to help the community’, ‘making a difference’, and ‘for the greater good’ are sentiments frequently expressed by permanent members as reasons for joining (Faull, 2010: 1-22) so it not surprising that they too emerged as common motivators amongst reservists.<sup>24</sup> However, the next quote from Warrant Officer B (64 year old, white man) captures how motives are far more complex than ‘simply’ wanting to help:

... you’ve got us as people who want to serve the community. We want to have fun, we enjoy the camaraderie of being a group and we are a little bit

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<sup>23</sup> All interviews were transcribed and will be referenced according to the acronyms provided in Tables 2, 3, and 4 together with their transcribed pages. No dates were given as all interviews were conducted during March/April 2013. In terms of transcribed symbols: underlined words are used for when the speaker emphasised the word/s; --. Indicates a false start or interrupted sentence; [...] for inaudible speech; ... for skipped text; “” for when they were quoting or indicating that others are talking. In the processes of transcribing my ‘um’s and ah’s were’ left out but the rest of the interviews are verbatim.

<sup>24</sup> 11 out of the 23 respondents cited such motives (see Appendix 5)

elite from the general public and it's something about the uniform. When we put that uniform on there is a slightly elitist sort of feeling that we are doing something special and you've got the uniform, you've got the gun, albeit the gun is sort of a badge of rank in a matter of speaking, and you go out there to do your bit to protect the society but it's not without altruistic motives in terms of "Ok that is what I am here for" but there is the excitement and enjoyment of driving fast cars --. (WOB: 37).

In the above you can see the usual community orientated motivation ('serve the community'), but there are other hidden themes of wanting to be special ('elitist sort of feeling'), experiencing a sense of belonging ('us', 'we', 'camaraderie'), nationalism ('protect the society') and for one's own personal desire ('it's not without altruistic motives'). However, one of his motivations appears to be the preserve of mainly white reservists, 'excitement'.

### 6.1.1 White hobby, black opportunity

White reservists wanting to join for excitement and adrenaline starkly contrast with the perceptions of why black people become reservists. Namely, that black reservists see an opportunity to start a career or gain access to permanent employment, whereas, white people view policing as a leisure activity. As Constable 2 so succinctly puts it "Most white people do it as a hobby. Most black people are looking for jobs" (Station visit 1: 2). This distinction was clearly racialised and classed (and more implicitly gendered). Why would one group be so overwhelmingly aligned with the pursuit of a career and the other see policing as merely 'fun' work?<sup>25</sup> One overarching reason appeared to be that white people are assumed to have access to better paying jobs. Take for instance Constable T (34 year old, white man) noting the 'spectrum' of people who join, and how he aligns them with occupations and locations which are racialised and classed:

CT: ... Well, you know, if you look at the reservists, there's a huge spectrum, right from *guys* who are business owners, CEOs of quite big companies, corporates, right down to *guys* who live in rural areas who just

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<sup>25</sup> 16 out of the 20 white people interviewed cited such motivations (see Appendix 5)

want to use the reservists as a stepping stone to become a permanent force, and to get a job. I mean, it's a fact, it's a reality. Um--.

CFT: Is that also racially divided, 'cause you're speaking about, I mean, rural areas?

CT: Ya well, I mean, generally there's not that many whites living in rural areas. I mean, there are but I think those whites are just trying to survive, you know, the other *chaps* there are trying to survive, but they're trying to find jobs and things and it's so difficult for people to find jobs, so the police--. I think through friends and connections the, word of mouth has spread and the *guys* join the reservists, with the bigger picture of becoming a *policeman*, and some of them do go far, some of them do very, very well. Others, sort of fly by night. (CT: 3-4).

It is clear, then, that higher paying jobs and suburban areas are equated with white people whereas rural areas (and 'no jobs') are equated with black people. Furthermore, the extent to which they are successful as reservists is also racialised and classed ('*some* of them do very, very well') and is generally constructed through euphemisms about education and employment (related to one's class standing) which is nicely illustrated by Constable Q (29 year old, white woman) when asked if she thinks reservists are better educated than permanent force members:

I do. I definitely do because these are people who've, yes, I'm gonna say it, I find them to be much more well educated. They're directors of companies, they're doctors, um, not all of them. Ok, the people that I associate myself with. I always question people who are unemployed and wanting to be reservists. I can't understand--.... I sometimes wonder, you're living in a location, or, maybe I don't know, maybe it's a trust fund baby, I don't know. But something always just says to me why, if you don't have an income would you now want to volunteer to be a reservist. It's something that's always just stuck very hard in my head. You know, is it a shortcut to becoming a permanent force *policeman*. And maybe that comes in with --. (CQ: 24).

Again we see the collapse of professions ('directors', 'doctors') with white people as well as area ('locations', another word for township) and the pursuit of permanent employment with black people. These implicit sentiments were shared by most interviewees

including the three black officers.<sup>26</sup> Constable M (27 year old, black man) stated that “black reservists wanted to use reservists as a quick way to become permanent.... When it comes to white reservists most of them have their own businesses and everything” (CM: 10). Constable Q was, however, somewhat reflective of her racialised, classed assumptions offering alternative options (‘not all of them’, ‘maybe it’s a trust fund baby’). In most of these accounts there was little historical reflection as to why it might be that black people are looking for permanent employment whereas white people have relatively stable, well-paying jobs. In fact, Constable W (49 year old black male) was one of the only people (together with Constable Q) who reflected on history and the ways in which race has guided who is found in what jobs:

We come from a past where we have been stereotyped that there are certain jobs for men, certain jobs for women. It was legislated --.... Ya, I mean in terms of apartheid. There were jobs that were assigned for women and there were jobs that were not for men. There were jobs for blacks and jobs for whites. If you know how the apartheid regime is structured it’s the same (CW: 3).

In South Africa, white people have a racial dividend - Borrowing from Connell’s (2005: 70) concept of ‘patriarchal dividend’ – in that white people, in general, have gained, and continue to gain from the economic and social subordination of black people (both historically and institutionally). None of the white men interviewed reflected on how their patriarchal and racial dividend is a product of historical processes, which is not surprising considering the privileged often fail to see their privilege (Acker, 2006: 118). Constable A comments (albeit not in a historically sensitive way) on this racial (class) dividend and how it has afforded white men such as himself, with the ‘luxury’ of doing a ‘hobby’ such as policing:

CA: Also as a general rule from what I have seen the white men are generally a lot more affluent. You know so --. Not from wealthy areas but they are doing this as a hobby you know-- for whatever reason. To help the community. They’ve got a basic job which helps paying for it and it’s generally a much higher paying basic job than most of your black males.

CFT: Why do you think that’s important?

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<sup>26</sup> 13 out of the 14 individual interviewees shared these thoughts (see Appendix 5)

CA: I think that it's a --. Effectively it's a luxury item. Your white male is in a much better paying job -- can afford to spend the time or buy the time to go reserving as opposed to a black male whose let's call it painter or manages a small team at a plumbing place and suddenly making ends meet is so much more difficult. So they've got less luxury time to spend in the reserve (CA:19).

Luxury is reserved for those with the money to have it and here it becomes clear that the variation in white men's motives for joining can also be tied to their better social standing. Additionally, where most respondents were implicit about gender, Constable A is explicit that this is a story about men.

### 6.1.2 The normal men

Words such as 'chaps', 'policeman' and 'guys' in the responses above are used as general terms to incorporate a whole group but actually absorb women into masculine rhetoric making them invisible and the legitimising police work as men's work.<sup>27</sup> Frequently, interviewees (both men and women) told stories about *policemen* using male pronouns and masculine orientated words, such as in the two comments below. In the first, Captain D (63 year old, white man) explains why looming (making oneself appear 'bigger') is important:

....You have to have a warrior spirit and that's got to come across without being aggressive but the *guy's* just got to see *he* better --. *He's* just got to perceive, without even realising it, that *he* better not resist here, *he* better cooperate (CD: 2).

And the second, Constable P (66 year old, white woman) is complaining about white parents who, when they see the police tell their children, "If you're naughty this *man's* going to take you away":

So I say "Please stop saying that, please stop. Say, "If you've got a problem go to the *man* in blue" and black people don't do that to their children. You can guarantee you when I'm standing around, even if I'm standing at a scene "Hello Mr *policeman*" (CP: 6).

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<sup>27</sup> 17 out of the 23 respondents did this (see Appendix 5)

Clearly the story of policing a nation, much like the stories of apartheid and colonialism (McClintock, 1995: 354), are male stories with male characters and women who perform on the fringes. That is, “women serve as boundary markers and threshold figures; they facilitate the male plot and the male transformations, but they are not the agents of change, nor are they conceivable heirs to political power” (McClintock, 1995: 377). Despite Constable P herself being a woman, she used masculine words to tell her story (‘man’, ‘Mr’, ‘policeman’) and Captain D ‘naturally’ fell into using male pronouns despite the general topic at hand.

This prioritisation of men in policing is not surprising considering that “all nationalisms are gendered” (McClintock, 1995: 352). With the police being one of the main symbols (both through fetishes and processes) of the state it too is gendered. That said, “...the representations of male *national* power depends on the prior construction of *gender* difference” (emphasis in original, McClintock, 1995: 353). Having been in operation for 62 years prior to the introduction of women, the organisation had already standardised police jobs and hierarchies according to male needs and desires, although these have been fashioned as being gender-neutral (Acker, 1990: 142; Brogen and Sheraing, 1993: 76).

In addition to the organisation being historically male, it continues, today, to be over represented by men. As of March 2012 there were 132 129 male police officers (76% whom are black) and only 67 216 female officers (72% whom are black). Making the organisation 66% male (SAPS, 2012: iv). Although the numerical gap between men and women is closing the organisation remains dominated by masculine rhetoric and practices. Reservists in Gauteng more specifically are currently 61% male which is very close to the overall SAPS gender ratio (see table 7). Reservists work within the SAPS so noting the gender order (the way gender is practiced) of the organisation is vital to understanding how reservists perceive their work (Connell, 2005: 71). Take for instance Constable A’s reference to the type of women and men who are drawn to the reserve:

CA: The person who is-- . The woman who is a reservist is generally a much much harder character. Um --. Either they come in harder or they very quickly become hard. But-- . Otherwise you -- . If you don’t you just walked over completely by suspects.

CFT: In what way?

CA: [*brief chuckle*] In the way that they--. You know what --. You've got to be --. You've got to push and you've got to show authority. You can't go to a suspect and say "ah please won't you just do this" [*speaking slowly*] They're not interested! Alright. You come there "You! Hands on the bonnet! Now!" [*speaking louder with emphasis and authority*]. You come there with a lot more authoritative perspective and it changes

CFT: And you think the men generally have this when they come into the force?

CA: Yes I do also I think that the men who have this are much more drawn to -- to the reserve (CA:15-16).

Women are alien in the narrative of policing (note how he started with 'person' and then used the particular 'woman'), they are considered too soft and unable to show enough authority (typically masculine trait) and if they do change ('become hard')<sup>28</sup> it is a transformation they have to undergo, whereas men possess these traits already ('have this') and are, in turn, attracted to the reserve. Additionally, women who assume masculine qualities are considered anomalies who cannot adopt either of the binary constructions of masculinity and femininity because they are 'generally much much harder'. This sentiment is widely held by white male reservists. For example in discussing the benefits of being a man Sergeant B (45 year old, white man) explains how physicality was needed and that there was "only one woman" he knew who could stand her ground. To that, Constable R (30 year old, white man) passed an underhand comment "Touch and go if it was a woman, she was borderline" (G1: 7). Take another example, Constable Y (32 year old, white man) describes a woman he calls an alpha female as "rougher than most the men he knows" (G2: 10). Whenever these men discussed strength they would frequently refer to one or two 'rare' cases in which women could be 'one of the boys'<sup>29</sup>, however, for the most part women were associated with stereotypically feminine traits and as being more empathetic and better suited for victim support.

This naturalisation of gender shapes organisational processes which are, of course, tied to the labour of male and female reservists and what they are thought to be suited for, which in turn further legitimates the gendered division of labour (Acker, 2006: 50). The

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<sup>28</sup> It is difficult to ignore the sexual undertones and phallus-centricity of such a phrase

<sup>29</sup> 11 out of 23 respondents did this (see Appendix 5)

suspect in Constable A's explanation is likely male but let's look at another example, from Captain P (39 year old, white man), about the 'unfortunate' need for physical strength:

...I think unfortunately sometimes, practically wise, females are, physically, not as strong as males which means that sometimes males --. We tend to have a lot of drunk people, a lot of aggressive people, a lot of things like that it's a lot more easier for males on the physical side but who knows (CAP: 11).

If we are to take it that women are 'not as strong as males' and that his justification for this is that they will be unable to subdue intoxicated, aggressive 'people' then it is safe to assume that these suspects are in fact men. However, it is not only white men who distinguish between the roles of men and women in the police and identify suspects as being male, for example Constable I (30 year old, black man) discussing tactics help him subdue 'suspects':

CI: I don't like to handle heavy stuff, running is my number one priorities  
CFT: And if you have to get physical with the suspect?  
CI: Tactics, you use these thing  
CFT: So it doesn't make a difference between men and women with physical because if women also use their tactics it's OK.  
CI: Ya, but it can be like that but point of view women and women. You can be physical but men are stronger than women  
CFT: But if they use their tactics, you just said --.  
CI: They use but their hand won't be painful to the suspect. You know these people they're really brutal. Brutal, brutal, brutal. So when you think she won't make it --. They will struggle but at the end of the day of that one is a man, our police officer is a women, this guy 90% will defeat this one (CI: 15).

Constable I blatantly states that the suspect is a man and that the idea of a woman being able to subdue a male suspect seems entirely implausible. Hence, women are not included in the stories about policing unless they are particularly pointed out ('is a woman') and they are not, then, included in the imaginings of *policemen*. Men were, overall, deemed better suited for policing work because of physical strength which was implicit in the previous quotes but which Constable T makes explicit for us now:

Because a man can handle a man far better than a woman can handle a man. And that's not in a discriminatory way, it's just as far as strength is concerned. If something had to happen, and with the training that everybody's done, um, a man just would have that sort of equal strength rather than not being as strong as the other guy (CT:14).

Strength, and other gender-essentialist constructions have been used as ways in which the reservists, particularly male reservists, come to understand both their roles and the roles of others in the SAPS which legitimate and make invisible the gendered and racial divisions of labour.

## 6.2 Recruitment and suitability for the job

To become a reservist one needs to be between the ages of 18 and 70, have a matric certificate (Grade 12), have no visible physical defects, be able to speak and write in English, be free of a criminal offence and be willing to undergo training and psychometric tests (SAPS, 2013). The Colonel and Captains mentioned that in order to be a reservist you must also be employed and live or work in the area of the station.<sup>30</sup> Although subtle, these aspects in and of themselves are classed, racialised and gendered through a series of perceptions and essentialist constructions about who should/can become a reservist and what characteristics they should possess. Being required to have a certain level of education and English language proficiency influences who is legible for recruitment and excludes large portions of the population who were previously disadvantaged by apartheid's Bantu education (SAHO, 2013b). In view of employers basing recruitment and promotions are based on these requirements they in turn contribute to the continual recreation of inequalities (Acker, 2006: 82) making it important to understand the essential ways in which reservist type cast themselves and those they work with.

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<sup>30</sup> These details may be (I am speculating) missing off of the website at present because prior to the moratorium the SAPS was recruiting D-reservists using fewer application criteria

## 6.2.1 Essential constructions of femininity and masculinity

In addition to strength, other male attributes which women were thought to be lacking included alertness, tactical skills, and practicality. With the exceptions of Captain K (40 year old, white man) and Constable W (49 year old, black man), many interviewees referred to the need for physical strength and how it naturally benefited men as police officers and reservists.<sup>31</sup> Essential stereotyping of women and men in security institutions has been well documented, particularly with the launch of the ‘Gender and SSR Toolkit’ (Valasek, 2008). In any organisation there is a general gendered division of labour with men and women preferred for selected jobs (Acker, 2006: 24). Women are commonly incorporated into these male-orientated organisations of state security, for perceived utilitarian principles (Hendricks, 2012). This is true for reservists as they perceived women as needed for ‘women’s things’ (CI:8). Male reservists thought women were better suited for emotional support in domestic abuse and rape victims and needed for searching victims whereas women reservists tended to say they were better at paper work than men.<sup>32</sup> This is body politic where women (as well as men), and their bodies, have been institutionally invested in as objects of particular knowledge (Foucault, 1977: 28).

In fact some women get opportunities in units for these perceived capabilities. For instance Constable B (36 year old, white woman) has been recruited, in the past, into several different specialised units “because again they didn’t have females” (CB: 8). Therefore, she was called upon due to her supervisors’ assumptions of the appropriate bodies they needed for the task (Acker, 2006: 116). However, Constable B can’t help but assume the masculine traits of the organisation stating that she is not “a wall flower” but has “always been more one of the guys as opposed to one of the girls” (CB: 8-9). Illustrating that woman too subscribe to the masculine constructions of strength and authority. This is one of the reasons why essentialist arguments for incorporating women have been criticised as they tend to equate ‘merely’ adding women to these male dominated organisations as being able to bring about change instead of

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<sup>31</sup> 10 out of the 14 individual interviewees privileged male strength (see Appendix 5)

<sup>32</sup> These essentialist constructions of women were used in 10 of the 14 individual interviews (see Appendix 5).

considering that women may themselves be masculine or, in turn, adopt the male-centric attitudes of the organisation (Eriksson Baaz and Utas, 2012: 7):

-- and I think that the women who are involved unless they end up very quickly at the specialised units or office bound, they have to much harder, more masculine --. Your frilly, Barbie type girl isn't going to cut it (CA: 15).

The above starkly illustrates the dichotomous ways in which policing work is thought to be gendered and fails to account for the complex practices in which masculinity and femininity are constructed. Conversely to most responses, Captain K stated that there was no difference based on gender because "You get men and women that are strong mentally and strong physically and you get men and women that are weak mentally and physically" (CK: 3) and "...It doesn't mean you are more emotional because you are a female. A lot of men are emotional" (CK: 8). Despite rejecting essentialist constructions Captain K did not offer much in the way of reflection as to why there was a general preference for men and women in particular jobs. Constable W, on the other hand, gives an astute account of why these preconceived ideas persist:

CW: ... The tradition in the South African Police Service was that its women that are suited to do that work as you'll see in the ranks of SAPS. Most of those positions for the past 20 years have been held by women. It's an anomaly in the sense that I come from a school of thought that says gender issues are not women issues, gender issues are societal issues. So every member of society is affected one way or the other whether it's domestic violence, women empowerment, crimes against children and so on. And there has to be a collective effort to deal with gender issues because the moment you assign women to address gender issues you are strengthening the stereotype

...

CFT: And in terms of the work that you actually do? ...

CW: I've seen women in policing who are stronger in every respect than men whether it's crime prevention or administration. So there's no barrier, and there should be no barrier, in terms of how SAPS is structured in allocating certain tasks. I've seen women in crime prevention executing their task of duties par excellent than men so there's no, in my view, there's no limitation that women should be assigned these tasks and so on. Everyone is equal to the task of policing (CW: 2).

Constable W located the differences in organising processes to the history of South Africa and the ways in which, through regulation and practice, women became stereotypically aligned with certain jobs. He later goes on to synthesise his argument further recognising that apartheid had created jobs for not only men and women but for black people and white people as well (all of which had profound class implications in terms of access to resources and opportunities to join the reserve).

Captain P, although differently to Constable W, also problematized and reflected on why women and men are perceived as better suited for different work:

... I think you've got to be careful because it's more in terms of a personality thing. I think people make the mistake, both public and police, of thinking only females will deal with female issues. OK. Like often if it is a rape victim it must be a female that must speak to a female rape victim and I think that that is, unfortunately, a very sad perception. And I think it's the wrong perception OK (CAP:9).

Here Captain P taps into the perceptions not only of the police within the organisation, but of the public they serve as well. What the public want and expect from the police may be gender segregated and in the police's mandate to serve they will need to comply with such desires (not to say that the organisation is particularly resistant to them either). When it comes to female officers being preferred to male their male counterparts for handling rape victims it is important to recognise that the public's perceptions have also been constructed through experiences and media messages about male officers' poor conduct in this regard (Dispatch Online, 2013). However, their inefficiency is tied to rape being discursively constructed as women's work and more prominence being given to female recruits during rape prevention training, demonstrating how gendered perceptions permeate prior to officers even carrying out their duties (Rauch, 1994).

### 6.2.2 A dance of perceptions

The SAPS is an organisation that stretches beyond the confines of stations straight into communities. Reservists' perceptions of public

perceptions are also what are used, however, to maintain and sustain the existing gender order – particularly the privileging of male strength:

Yes, yes. The public don't have respect for a woman when it comes to anything physical. If she's just issuing orders, taking a scene and handling in then she's a *policemen* but whenever it gets to a point where you've got subdue a violent person. I've even seen as the scene builds up to where you're going to get physical then they disdain the woman, they just write her off as a factor (CD:10).

'Public's perception', as used in the interviews, seemed more to justify interviewees own fears of having women with them. For instance, Captain D later comments that if he was assigned to work with a woman he would "quietly wangle it" so that there was another male in the car with them because he didn't feel comfortable with 'only' a woman. This despite him admitting that each shift required less than 10-15% of physical strength which was even classed as "mild" (CD:10-11), a feeling shared by Sergeant R (SR:17). However, the common sentiment was that policing requires strength because as Warrant Officer B put it:

...you can't just pull out your pistol... You have to restrain *them* physically [which is] ... very difficult for one person to do that to *another man*, particularly if that *man* is bigger than you and *he* doesn't want to get arrested (WOB: 14).

Again there is a slip into assuming the suspect is male but this is also a racial construction. After saying men are "much more physically capable, stronger effectively" than women, Constable A goes on to say that the second way in which being a man on shift is beneficial is "the way the public relates to you" to which he continues:

CA: ...Especially in South Africa. A black male isn't going to be very subservient to white female of a black female

CFT: Why --. Why not?

CA: Tribalism the way they have been brought up. Um, Who knows--. It's just the basic culture in South Africa, it's a very male dominated culture. So as such if you've got a female officer, black or white, trying to order a black male around it gets difficult, especially if he is very large because he looks at this and thinks "what could she do?" I'm six foot I get my point across much better

CFT: Do you think that a white male suspect would respond the same way  
CA: [*pause*] They do, not to the same degree, but they do. They are much more willing to listen to a female officer but again --. Very very --. But if you have the traditional, soft, you know--. You are not going to get very far with that (CA: 16-17).

Again public's perception is being used as a smokescreen<sup>33</sup> for Constable A's own feelings. Furthermore, it becomes clear that not only is the suspect constructed as being a man, he is also black. However, it is not only race that is being used to tarnish his behaviour it is his 'culture' which in Constable A's mind is coupled with lower levels of respect and tribalism. This singular notion of culture is monolithic and fixed suggesting, implicitly, that white male culture is more civilised. In this way gender distinctions are projected as racial difference (McClintock, 1995: 154):

Um, I think --. Really what it is --. As a *man* you --. You're likely to get into situations where you've got to be physically stronger, ok, that's one thing and I think the other thing is that when you are dealing with the black culture, um, men have more respect than women, so men give off the aura of having more, you know, require more respect than women do because women are considered, in that culture, more second class citizens than men (WOB: 13).

This slippage between gender and race happened frequently during the course of interviews where questions regarding gender were answered and justified using race (as above) or vice versa. Black men are constructed as the biggest threat to female officers (irrespective of race), because the 'soft' (female) approach is not going subdue 'these' men. Here McClintock's (1995) triangulated mantra of class, gender, and race coming into being in and through one another is prominent:

...the rhetoric of race was used to invent distinctions between what we would now call *classes*.... At the same time, the rhetoric of *gender* was used to make increasingly refined distinctions among different *races*.... Similarly the rhetoric of class was used to inscribe minute and subtle distinctions between other *races* (McClintock, 1995: 54, emphasis in original).

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<sup>33</sup> This technique was used in 8 of the 14 individual interviews.

Therefore, these constructions of gender and race are also cross hatched with class. Take for instance, Warrant Officer B, still explaining why one would need physical strength:

...Often the person you need to arrest for being, you know, drunk in public, or having drugs on them or whatever might very well not be a weedy individual but *he* might be your manual worker, right, who is a darn side more powerful than me sitting behind a desk all the time. So, you know, if it comes to a woman than she has very little opportunity to um assist you or to actually handle the situation by herself ... (WOB: 15).

Having already established that the suspect is black and male we can now see how that construction is cross-hatched with class, 'manual worker' versus him who 'sits behind the desk'. Coming full circle to how different occupations are racialised, gendered and located. To sum policing is a story between men: the male officer (and reservist) and the male suspect. Here is the fastening together of "the body and the object it handles" (Foucault, 1977: 153): The male, physically strong reservist body and the male black (also physically strong) suspect. This logic Disavows the labour of women unless in specific circumstances.

As was established at the onset of this paper, you find black and white reservists in different areas, however, according to interviewees perceptions, white reservists were on par, or exceeded the number of black reservists. As discussed earlier white people were seen as doing it as a hobby where as black people 'want to make a career of it'. However, these explanations, in some instances were even more complex as they tried to tap into differences in psyche:

Yes. The reason being that, you see, a white community is more conscientious of security because um I think it's this transformation that made certain whites uncertain in terms of their future and their security so they would rather join your CPFs and reservists in ensuring that their areas are safe.... Yes, it's vulnerability of whites. It's a perception again and also taking responsibility of one's security. Um, there are less house breakings in townships than in white areas because the perpetrators are black (CW:4).

Constable W believes that white people are more conscientious of security due to the vulnerability they felt in the transition years (fear of civil war and reverse apartheid). That as a means of protection they organised themselves, which rings true with the story Colonel L told

of how the reserve began because of house breakings in the area and a white man's sense of security being threatened (CL: 2). But this view fails to account for the high levels of vulnerability poor, mostly black citizens, are currently grappling with which is evident in the plethora of service delivery and unemployment protests.

Whatever the reasoning for believing there are more white reservists, the latest stats from Gauteng illustrate a different picture. In actual fact there are 3 030 black male reservists (73%) against only 1 291 white male reservists (see table 7) which is not surprising given that 79% of the country is demographically black (CIA, 2013). However, when officers put on the uniform it is thought to make their differences vanish and to create one, unified force.

### 6.3 The uniform fetish

If “nationalism inhabits the realm of fetishism” then the uniform, like other state paraphernalia (such as flags, maps, and national flowers) is a fetish which embodies crises in social value including male hopes, aspirations and privilege (McClintock, 1995: 375, 385). When discussing fetish McClintock (1995: 75-180) analyses the diaries of Mundy and Cullwick, a British barrister and his slave wife, to illustrate a plethora of fetishes and the ways in which they embody crises. She considers boots, soap, dirt, and slave bands to illustrate how objects can be impassioned with racially, gendered and classed histories. The uniform, like Cullwick's slave band, “is overdetermined” (McClintock, 1995: 149) and embodies several crises, not least of which relate to the history of the country how inequalities have informed the functioning of the police as an institution. However, the uniform is also a place for individual desires and feelings:

One unit, one people doesn't differentiate [between] us, white or black, nah. I saw you in a uniform, I'm in a uniform. I see the police officer. I won't allow anything to happen to that uniform. That uniform is my uniform ... in South Africa, South African Police. Something happen[s] to you it reflect[s] on me (CI: 5).

It is ironic that Constable M chooses race to describe the uniform as a “binding piece of cloth” (CB: 38) because the uniform was also

historically used as a means of differentiating between black and white police officers, often emasculating black officers by making them wear shorts. It also shows how the uniform is trying to, but unsuccessfully, mask differences.

Hence the uniform, like the slave band, has “traces of both personal and historical memory” (McClintock, 1995: 154-155). Where the slave band indicates Cullwick’s subjugated labour and the establishment of industrial capitalism from slave labour (Ibid) the uniform symbolises the personal quests, desires, and subjugation of police as well as the fractured history of South Africa. There is, then, a negotiation in the uniform between the past and the present, between differences and organising processes, as well as between personal and institutional desires. Understanding the uniform as a fetish that is historically loaded and created but which is also deeply personal allows for the consideration of more complex understandings of police processes and identity than simple binaries of domination and suppression (McClintock, 1995: 159) which is captured in Constable Q’s thoughts below:

I think in terms of, like, normal policing. I think that, in fact with everything, even when it does come to police, let’s keep it to police, I think that, um, I think that racism is worse than it ever was. I think that if I put myself back into apartheid in my uniform, I think that there’d be more of a level of respect (CQ: 15).

The idea of more respect for police in apartheid is a longing for respect in the present, not necessarily for the reinstatement of apartheid’s racist regime. There is conflict here in that Constable Q holds onto nostalgia of the past where she perceived police as having been more unified and respected but this is also a time that she cannot assume, cannot have, and normatively should not desire. This attachment to the past was prevalent amongst reservists’ feelings circulating respect. For some it stretched into apartheid and others as late as 2006 before the recruitment of D-reservists and the moratorium. Either way the uniform embodies a time they cannot have as well as desires they should not want. It holds the conflict of being in a position of power but not being able to translate it into actual authority with the people (suspects) they deal with. Hornberger (2011: 104-106) documented similar feelings of nostalgia with the permanent members she interviewed, recognising that the connection between nostalgia and desires for affirmation using the notion of “split

performance” to account for how officers tried to cope with these paradoxes. Encapsulated in the pursuit for respect and authority is the “Painful...impossibility of fighting crime” (Hornberger, 2011: 110).

So the uniform is a fetish for all officers, not only reservists, as it captures conflicts officers themselves, in their individuality, are unlikely to resolve (McClintock, 1995: 184), such as: South Africa’s violent racist history and its current human rights pursuits; the desire to be an effective officer and the crippling levels of crime; the need to be diplomatic yet also forceful; and the conflicts between officers’ personal desires and that of the state. For reservists however, there is an additional conflict, that of whether they are *real* police:

... I hate the word reservist. When we give up our time, when I book on duty, I’m a *policeman*. I will go out there and I will do everything I need to do within the law and act as a *policeman*. I’m not acting as a reservist; I’m acting as a *policeman* (CT, 2013: 11).

Time and again this fear of not being considered a real *policeman* was raised when possible changes to the uniforms were mentioned, demonstrating reservists sense of selves as being wrapped up in the symbolism of the work.

### 6.3.1 Feared changes and the conflict of subjectivity

The uniform is now a sight on which reservists’ subjectivity is being challenged. Despite not yet being public, it appears, at least in the minds of reservists, that two changes are likely to happen in the next National Instruction: 1) their uniforms will be distinguishable from permanent force, and 2) there will no longer be promotions or ranks for reservists. Currently reservists look identical to permanent members, carry the same weapons, and are able to perform identical functions. However, they are not paid for their services *only* police when on shift (whereas permanent members are *always* considered police). The idea of possible changes to uniforms has resulted in highly charged opinions which cast light on how police reservists perceive themselves in the organisation. Furthermore, “studying the discourse in which people communicate during a period of major change is one way of studying change itself (Cameron, 2011: 129).

It is unclear why there is a move for change but some permanent members think it would be beneficial because reservists do not receive the same level of training or, as Colonel 1 put it: “Reservists haven’t had the experience and they put on a uniform and they have power” (Ride along 1: 4). This is indeed a contestation of power in that “clothes are the visible signs of social identity but are also permanently subject to disarrangement and symbolic theft” (McClintock, 1995: 67). However, other permanent members tended to sympathise with reservists recognising that they would not be able to access the same level of respect from the public (Constable 2 – Station visit 1: 2; Captain 1 Station visit 3: 2). This is a contestation over who can and cannot call themselves *policemen*.

Only two reservists expressed they were fine with the changes.<sup>34</sup> Captain K stated “we are just working for them [the government] and we are servants of the public” (CK: 4) and Captain P thought that reservists should be proud because if “you see yourself *only* as a reservist and you think people are going to look down on you because you’re a reservist you carry it across in your body language” (CAP: 11). Additionally Captain P felt that a change in uniform would make reservists more visible to those ‘higher up’ the hierarchy:

...Reservists should be proud to be reservists. You’ll see in the interviews the *guys* are very against the fact that they will be distinguished. Maybe if we were distinguished people would appreciate the value and members higher up would actually see. If you’re looking down [the hierarchy] all you know is that there were 10 arrests. They were all done by *policemen*, you don’t know which one was a reservist (CAP:17).

The above elucidates how reservists are absorbed into policing rhetoric and how this, in turn, means that those in management positions do not ‘see’ the work (specifically good work) reservists do. Most reservists felt that their level and quality of work far exceeded that of permanent members<sup>35</sup> but that they were undervalued by the SAPS as an organisation, although individual station commanders made a world of difference when it came to their feelings of

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<sup>34</sup> Constable A and Warrant Officer B did not comment on the changes directly as Constable A is no longer functional and I was unaware of the changes at the time of Warrant Officer B’s interview.

<sup>35</sup> 11 out of the 14 individual interviewees were under the impression that their service was of a better quality than permanent members (see Appendix 5).

appreciation. Despite reservists being invisible when they have made arrests or performed well, Captain P expressed frustration that they were “tarred with the same brush”<sup>36</sup> when a few had misconducted themselves: “People will always remember the bad before they remember the good. It’s human nature” (CAP: 17). Captain P, then, saw changes in the uniform as an opportunity for reservists’ work to be more visible and appreciated. That is, he embraced the notion of the reservist as a subject. However, for the most part, reservists were anxious about any possible changes to uniform and what that would mean for their productivity and sense of selves:

As a reservist it’s going to make our job a lot more difficult. If I’m not differentiated and I do my work then the public will say “Gee, well done, thank you very much”. If I don’t do my work they’ll still tar the police with the same brush but now as soon as you start to say “there’s a reservist” in the police mind it’s a part time policemen and anything that’s part time is not as good as what is full time. So what I think you’re going to find is that people push the boundaries more. So you’re going to get to someone who’s now had too much to drink and he’s going to go “Ah, no, you’re a bunch of reservists”. And you know people have a stereotype I think, perception of what reservists are, or could be, or should be. And you now have instead of just dealing with “I’m a police officer, you are contravening the law” and that’s it your dealing with “I’m a police officer but I’m a reservist but I know what I’m supposed to do” So you’ve got an extra step of justification to prove yourself. And in a situation where you have a fight that invariably changes to an escalation of violence because the guy thinks he can push the buttons “Oh, you’re only a reservist” (G1: 5).<sup>37</sup>

The reservist is a symbol (and threshold actor) of where the public meets the police and despite desperately trying to establish themselves as more one (police officers) than the other (civilians) they inhabit a space which is difficult to define and which was eased by having the same uniform as permanent members. Therefore, just like “Cullwick’s slave-band brings into visibility the triangulated, historic convergence of wife, servant, slave” (McClintock, 1995: 177) the uniform highlights the convergence of state, police, and public (and in this instance reservists as well). The uniform is what makes police immediately identifiable to the public; it is also what makes them

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<sup>36</sup> This is a common expression among reservists.

<sup>37</sup> 16 out of the 23 individual interviewees expressed similar anxiety (see Appendix 5).

obvious symbols of the state, as well as indicative of labour and employment in the security industry. It contributes to reservists work in that they do not need to explain themselves to the public ‘so you’ve got an extra step of justification’ which is likely to invoke violence (‘he can push the buttons’) from suspects because he is ‘only’ a reservist.

However, that is not to say that these reservists are megalomaniacs purely after the thrill of power. They are also deeply attached to their labour and to it not being cast aside, abjected as it were. They are resisting as Cullwick did “the social abjection of their labour” (McClintock, 1995: 151). The slave band helped to create Cullwick as a subject. She came into being through her subjugation but it was not a matter of domination and subordination. Rather she held on to aspects of her subordination and defended them relentlessly so as to hold on to her work and avoid it from being disavowed. Similarly, reservists hold onto the uniform, avoiding changes that could differentiate them from other police officers for fear of them not being considered real.

Therefore, control of the symbolic power of the uniform provides subjects (police officers and reservists) with a means by which they can manage “otherwise be terrifying ambiguities” (McClintock, 1995: 184). Like the phallus has no power in and of itself, the uniform is a ‘signifier of difference’ (McClintock, 1995: 199). So, like other fetishes the uniform is relational. Therefore, the uniform and ranks police social and institutional boundaries of inclusion and exclusion, however, they are also open to mimicry and theft which illustrates the social inventedness of such distinctions (McClintock, 1995: 174). Bio-power is useful in understanding reservists’ anxiety (Foucault, 1977). Reservists embrace their subjugation, the fact that they belong to the organisation, and must subscribe to its rules and regulations only in as far as it subjugates them, makes them real, through discipline.

### 6.3.2 Discipline: The art of rank (and hierarchies)

In addition to the crises of personal emotions and national symbolism, the uniform is also an institutional symbol which highlights the individual’s path through the SAPS. As Constable I put it:

They [rank] symbolise what stage I’m in right now. I’m a Sergeant. I’m a Constable. You’re a permanent one. You’re a Captain. One of the reservists

maybe is a Captain. When we talk they don't exclude us, we sit in the same row. How do you feel maybe white people sit on this side, black people sit on this side? It's going to be nice? It's the same (CI: 6).

Therefore, the work place has to be systematically represented and so too do the employees who work within it (McClintock, 1995: 115). Workers are classified along the hierarchy through titles and ranks and, in turn, "names reflect the obscure relations of power between self and society" (McClintock, 1995: 269) and, in this instance, the organisation as well. Foucault (1977: 146) sees discipline as an "art of rank [which]... individuali[s]es bodies by a location that does not give them a fixed position, but distributes them and circulates them in a network of relations". This distribution is done according to perceived aptitudes and usefulness which also, in turn, shape those being ranked into conforming to the desired performance of the organisation (it standardises and normalises operations) (Foucault, 1977: 182).

The police have a very steep hierarchy and reservists have, in the past been allowed to move their way up it. Every two or three years reservists would apply for promotion and based on their performance be offered a higher rank. This operation has been historically racialised, gendered and classed. It was only in 1940 that black recruits (men, as women had not yet been given permission to join), in the SAPS generally, were allowed to move beyond the rank of Sergeant and then new ranks, such as Senior Sergeant, were created to avoid black policemen from climbing too far up the hierarchy. Only in 1981 were black officers permitted to out rank white officers (Hornberger, 2011: 32). With the advent of democracy there have been numerous equity moves within the SAPS which have attempted to correct white privilege among ranks. However, as late as 2005 the upper ranks of reservists, in Johannesburg at least, were still dominated by white men:

*Table 8: February 2005 – Ranks and demographics of reservists in Johannesburg*

Rank and group	Black male	Black female	White male	White female	Coloured male	Coloured female	Indian male	Indian female	Total
Snr Superintendent			2						2
Superintendent			5						5
Captain			14	4	1				19
Inspector			34	3	4		1		42
Sergeant	11	1	80	13	7		3		115
Constable	220	70	225	78	34	5	22	4	658
Total	231	71	360	98	46	5	26	4	841

*(South African Reserve Police Service, 2004 – Provided by interviewee).*

The above nicely illustrates the layout of the hierarchy of the SAPS (even though names of ranks have since changed) and the ways in which it is racialised and gendered. Only white men and women and one coloured man are found in commissioned ranks (Captain and above). Even in the rank of Sergeant, the second lowest rank, black men are severely under represented (under 1%). This is likely tied to the history of the country and organisational procedures of the SAPS, in that, in order to be promoted to a higher rank (as a reservist) you have to do a minimum of two to three years of service. Therefore, people such as Colonel L (previously Senior Superintendent L) who have been with the reserve almost since its inception have had, simply, more time to move up the ranks. Considering the reserve was established in the height of apartheid few black reservists have had as much time to acquire higher ranks. However, that said, white women have been in the reserve, I suspect, since roughly 1972, but have not successfully reached higher up illustrating that this has more to do with social societal relations, which privilege the white male experience, than merely operational processes.

If we are to revisit Constable I's comments above, his slip into race is interesting. Why when I asked about ranks being important did he choose to explain it by asking "How do you feel maybe white people sit on this side, black people sit on this side? It's going to be nice?" (CI: 6). When inquired why this was, his response did not do much in explaining why he referred to race when thinking about changes to rank but did illustrate that rank is synonymous with one's authority and respect, "...we are in the same level in the organisation" (CI:7). I suspect, that he mentioned race because the majority of his reservist peers are white "in this side of the north most white people are reservists. Blacks in our station we are three or four" (CI: 4). In addition to this, Constable I does not work with other reservists (which most reservists do when on shift), he chooses to work, on rotation (4 days on, 4 days off) with permanent members who are mainly black men. He is struggling to find employment despite possessing builder skills and opts to work with the police hoping to be sent to college soon. Hence I think he saw the split of ranks as a split of races and he is uncertain on which side of the room he should sit. Although told from the onset that becoming a reservist is not a fast-track to becoming a permanent force member this is an unobtrusive form of control which, through the temptation of possible employment, is able to get Constable I (and many others in his

position) to comply with this kind of organisational exploitation where they work, almost full time, for free (Acker, 2006: 123-124).

Since the moratorium was initiated four years ago it is unlikely that the way in which the ranking structure is racialised and gendered has changed much. However, Colonel L did mention that prior to the moratorium measures were implemented to ensure that recruits from previously disadvantaged backgrounds were given better opportunities. This is a form of direct control which attempts to reshape the demographic of the hierarchy (Acker, 2006: 122), however, this was also something that ‘niggled’ at him:

... I’m apolitical which the police are but in spite of being apolitical there’s always something that niggles at you. And what niggles you is that the police today, and not only the police, in the country --. Automatically if you’re black you get pushed if you’re white you don’t get pushed and the trouble is that we have too many people who are there today not because of what their knowledge is or what they can do or the competency, just because they black and they’re absolutely useless (CL: 5).

This sense of injustice (black people being ‘pushed’) is probably felt more intensely by white permanent members than reservists (such as CO1 in Ride along1). As Altbeker (2005: 177) notes: “In this organisation, more so than any other, these changes have been experienced almost like betrayals of trust, rather than a simple, technical matter of adjusting promotion policies and prospects”. Because most white reservists do not rely on the financial compensation the intensity of feelings about changes with rank are not as starkly felt as those with the uniform. Nonetheless, the above sentiments clearly do tie into the rhetoric of ‘we want to be here’ versus ‘they are looking for a job’ which was discussed under *white hobby, black opportunity*. However, now it becomes clear that not only are black people thought to be becoming reservists for the need of employment but that they are, generally, thought to be (by white reservists) given preference when it comes to promotions.

Looking at Table 8 it would appear that that is not the case, especially considering reservist promotions ceased in April 2009. However, between the accumulation of these statistics and the moratorium there was a call for D-reservists to bulk up the police prior to the 2010 Soccer World Cup. The standards of recruitment were dropped so that category D reservists did not need to have a matric, be

employed full time, or do a psychometric test (CAP: 5). The removal of these measures meant that people who came from less fortunate class backgrounds than the normal white male reservist now had the opportunity to join the reserve. However, D-reservists have often been labelled as being inefficient and incompetent and this has category of reservist has frequently become synonymous with meaning 'black reservists' seeking employment. This stereotype persists despite several white reservists originally joining as D-reservists themselves (most recruited after February 2007).

Whilst black reservists may comply with organisational demands in the hope of gaining employment, there are other unobtrusive controls, which keep both black and white (male and female) reservists engaged in the work. That is, "compliance is also maintained by self-interest combined with positive feelings of accomplishment" (Acker, 2006: 124). Like the uniform changes, but to a lesser extent, possible removal of rank for reservists has also brought about a fair amount of anxiety and frustration. This has more to do with a sense of achievement and a source of motivation, "one of our little carrots that was there for us" (SB in G1: 13). Rank is proof, then, that they have 'done their bit' and are progressing in the organisation.

In absence of monetary rewards, rank is the only indicator reservists have to illustrate their achievements. However, operationally, it is also believed that scrapping the ranks will make their experience invalid, as Sergeant B (G1: 13) goes on to explain, if they are all Constables they will not be able to tell who has more experience and who they should seek advice from. So, rank is functional and provides reservists with the legitimacy to have power over others. Therefore, "the distribution according to ranks or grade has a double role: it marks the gaps, hierarchizes qualities, skills and aptitudes; but it also punishes and rewards" (Foucault, 1977: 181).

Rank, then, is a fetish item and process. It is a visible symbol that is able to demonstrate where one is in an organisation and what authority they are permitted to have. However, it also possesses a series of conflicts: between punishment and reward, authority and subjugation, historical baggage and organisational processes, as well as its ability to standardise in spite of difference.

## 7 Final remarks

Born out of a call for intersectionality Acker's (2006) inequality regime, McClintock's (2006) situated psychoanalysis and Foucault's (1977) concept of bio-power aided in analysing the dominant perspectives of 23 reservists in suburban Johannesburg.

Acker (2006) prioritises the work place as a site on which inequalities are reproduced and practiced. To problematize these processes Acker (2006) suggests thinking of organisations as inequality regimes in which inequalities are used as a basis for unequal treatment in organising processes. Furthermore, the extent to which these inequalities are visible is largely determined by whether they are deemed legitimate which can be done through a series of controls. However, inequality regimes fall shy of accounting for the ways in which the psyche and emotions inform these practices and also does not adequately account for how inequalities come into being in and through each other. Here McClintock's (1995) situated psychoanalysis is useful, as it provides a way of thinking about difference using psychoanalytical terms, such as abjection and fetish, without losing site of the material and historical ways in which they have come into being. Therefore, McClintock (1995) views class, race and gender as articulated categories which create and inform one another in often conflicting ways. These tensions are frequently embodied in fetishised items which highlight the rifts in personal and historical memory. The concept of bio-power, then, aids in further understanding reservists' work and subjectivity by highlighting how anatomo- and bio- politics inform processes which normalise behaviour to make power productive and are, simultaneously, articulated through discourse.

Critical discourse analysis provided the best means of understanding reservists' perceptions as it allowed a plain from which to consider how social reality is created and understood, because the ways in which people speak is informed by the contexts in which they live. Therefore, doing an analysis of the dominant discourses which emerged (during the 14 individual semi-structured interviews and two

focus group discussions) catered for a debate able to lay claim to why some discourses are more normalised and validated than others.

Hence, in order to answer the question of how reservists perceive their role in the SAPS and how those perspectives are informed by difference three overarching discussions took place: 1) Determining who and why people become reservists, 2) understanding how perceptions filter into the organisation of labour, and 3) considering how perceptions are informed and understood through symbols.

## 7.1 Who and why

It soon emerged that in suburban Johannesburg ‘reservist’ work is primarily the preserve of white men despite the province having over three times the number of black reservists (Appendix 3). Therefore, this paper came more to grips with the perceptions of white male reservists than of ‘reservists’ generally. Due to South Africa’s historically and racially divided landscape, white neighbourhoods are wealthier, suburban areas. Considering this research was located in these spaces it is not surprising that interviewees were overly represented as white and male. That said, the thoughts and feelings of the four white women and three black men interviewed were often synonymous with those of white men indicating the inter-subjective, community orientated way in which reservists come to understand themselves as subjects. Once the implicit differences in the word ‘reservist’ were made apparent a brief account of South Africa’s history was outlined.

It documented how race, gender, and class inequalities have come into being through South Africa’s history of intolerance and conservatism as well as the SAP’s historical tendency to privilege the recruitment of particular races, not least to mention its entrenched masculine processes. These historically located inequalities continue to inform the SAPS today, including that of reservists. For instance it is widely believed by interviewees that black reservists only join in the hope of becoming permanent members and to access full time employment. Centuries of class deprivation have resulted in a context in which black reservists are willing to work full time without remuneration in the hope of being made permanent whereas most white reservists would consider this beneath them. With their racial

and class dividend, white reservists (both male and female) view policing as a leisure activity and hobby. This mismatch in motivations is indicative of how entrenched class and race (and implicitly gender) inequalities are.

Furthermore, recruitment requirements (such as needing a Grade 12 and a full time job) have greatly limited the opportunities of previously disadvantaged people to join the reserve. That said, the fact that most reservists in suburban Johannesburg continue to be white pays testament to how South Africa's landscape continues to be fractured into racial and gender hierarchies (created through class divides) which have implications in the organisation of labour.

## 7.2 Organisation of labour

However, as much as the SAPS has exploited race and class as means of organising policing processes it has largely been a male exercise. Stories and practices of policing, both historically and at present, are told using masculine words and pronouns. Women are alien (or anomalies) in these stories and nowhere is this more pronounced than in discussions about strength, which is considered the natural preserve of men and further legitimated through discourses of needing force to combat crime (such as Bheki Cele's shoot-to-kill campaign). In this context physical strength is regarded as a source of power. Despite calls for better community service the prioritisation of strength is indicative of the culture of violence in the SAPS (arguably the country as a whole). This lends credibility to the notion that only men can be effective reservists because they have the physical strength needed to exercise *power over* others (read: other men).

However, as much as perceived lack of strength (and authority) hampered perspectives of the aptitude of female reservists they were also able to exert agency and capitalise on inequalities. Reservists and the SAPS more broadly, need women for the practical implementation of supposedly 'softer' tasks. Women exploit masculine organising processes to get opportunities elsewhere in the organisation such in specialised units (when they were still operational). Nonetheless, these practical 'needs' tend to legitimate the gender division of labour making inequalities between male and female reservists less visible; additionally allowing for women to continually be considered better

suited for administration and cases involving sexual or domestic violence.

The constructions of strong men (both suspects and reservists) and emotional/utilitarian women were internalised by most interviewees indicating they are entrenched community-shared notions which are constantly being practiced and legitimated (an unobtrusive form of control) not only by white men but the policing community as a whole. This 'need' to regulate who does what work (bio-politics) is further disciplined (anatomy-politics) through policing symbolism, such as the uniform and ranks.

### 7.3 Perceptions and symbols

For all intents and purposes the uniform is a symbol of the state and the state's power. It, together with ranks, is used not only to control labour internally but is a technique of power to aid wider societal discipline. A person in uniform is immediately identifiable as a police officer.

Reservists currently wear the same uniform as permanent members and fear that any changes to it will result in a lack of respect and productivity as it currently gives them power to exert control over others. They continually call themselves *real policemen* because it is something they desire and are passionate about but which they are not willing to fully commit to and can, therefore, never entirely be. Reservists are terrified that uniform changes will further disavow their work. Rather these changes starkly bring reservists subjectivity into question making them abject because abjection marks the borders of the subject. The uniform, then, embodies the danger reservists' subjectivity is in because as much as they attempt to expel the notion being *less* than police officers they will never entirely *be* police officers either. The uniform then, is a site of ambiguity and illustrates that reservists are threshold figures who are neither entirely inside in or outside the organisation and who find these paradoxes impossible to resolve.

## 7.4 Conclusion

Reservists' positioning has a long history of processes which are informed by difference. They have gone from a resource desperately needed by a white government in the 1960s to a sizeable temporary work force that is still predominantly male but being increasingly controlled and regulated (the moratorium, removal from specialised units, and possible changes in uniform and rank). This historical shift has happened in a context that is characterised by deep racial, class, and gender divides but has been felt at an extremely personal level by individual reservists. Reservists engage with policing for different reasons which are informed by class situations (which come into being through historical racial and gender subordination), but even once in the organisation these differences inform work processes through anatomo- and bio- politics seeking to make jobs for men and women normalised. Nonetheless, the increasing regulation of reservists has made them uncertain of their roles in the SAPS as they frequently fear the disavowal and abjection of their labour.

The lack of information on reservists, their composition, and the ways in which difference informs what they do can only be remedied through further research, some of which can build on the themes found in this paper. It would be interesting to examine how the perceptions unravelled here compare with those of reservists in other spaces, such as townships, as well as what the thoughts and feelings are of permanent members, families, and politicians towards reservists. As further research is conducted and more partial perspectives on the roles of reservists are unpacked policies can be created that not only utilise this temporary workforce but also care and respect it, because as it currently stands reservists perceive their role in the SAPS as tenuous, fragile and erratic.

Word count: 20 546 (excluding footnotes)  
21 954 (including footnotes)

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Appendix 1: Moratorium

SUID-AFRIKAANSE POLISIEDIENS



SOUTH AFRICAN POLICE SERVICE <sup>SAP 21</sup>

Private Bag X57, Braamfontein 2017

Reference:	: 3/1/5/1/191
Enquiries:	: Dir MCLACHLAN
Telephone:	: 011-2747903
Fax:	: 011-2747755

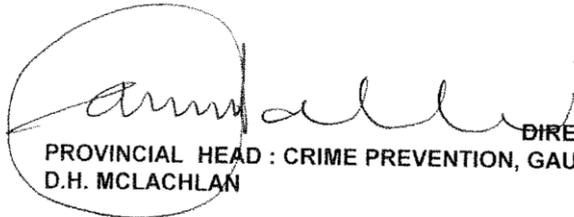
THE PROVINCIAL HEAD  
CRIME PREVENTION  
GAUTENG  
PRIVATE BAG X57  
BRAAMFONTEIN  
2017

2009-04-03

The Station Commissioners  
GAUTENG

**SOUTH AFRICAN RESERVE POLICE SERVICE : RECRUITMENT**

1. The National Commissioner's letter 3/3/8/191 dated 2009-03-31 is attached hereto for your information and necessary compliance.
2. Please inform all station head reservists accordingly.

  
DIRECTOR  
PROVINCIAL HEAD : CRIME PREVENTION, GAUTENG  
D.H. MCLACHLAN

*S. J. Botha*  
 South African Police Service  South African Police Service

Private Bag X94, Pretoria 0001

PROVINCIAL COMMISSIONER  
 009 414 02  
 (012) 393 2454  
 The National Commissioner  
 Die Nasionale Kommissaris

Your reference/ u verwysing:

My reference/ My verwysing:

Enquiries/ Navrae:

Tel:

*Please circulate to all SCs  
 Copy for Div Comm Phahlane*

3/3/8/191

\*(012) 393 1504

Head Office/ Hoofkantoor

PRETORIA

0001

2009-03-31

*Die Maclean*  
 P. RAMOO

- A. ALL PROVINCIAL COMMISSIONERS
- B. ALL DIVISIONAL COMMISSIONERS
- C. All Heads  
HEAD OFFICE
- D. All Commanders  
SAPS COLLEGES AND TRAINING CENTRES
- E. All Section Heads  
HEAD OFFICE
- F. ALL DEPUTY NATIONAL COMMISSIONERS
- G. The Chief of Staff  
MINISTRY FOR SAFETY AND SECURITY
- H. The Secretary  
NATIONAL SECRETARIAT FOR SAFETY AND SECURITY

RE: RECRUITMENT OF RESERVISTS: SOUTH AFRICAN POLICE SERVICE

- A-E 1. Kindly be informed that a decision was taken after consultation with the Divisional Commissioner: Visible Policing to place a moratorium on further recruitment, selection and enlistment of volunteers and members of the public as reservists in the South African Police Service.
- 1.1. Commanders / managers on all levels of the organization must effective from Wednesday the 01<sup>st</sup> of April 2009 not process any applications for the enlistment of reservists in the South African Police Service.

2. The placement of the moratorium on the recruitment of reservists will enable the South African Police Service to review the current policy prescripts regulating the recruitment, selection and enlistment of reservists dispensation.
  3. The outcome of the review process will be communicated to all levels for implementation.
  4. Please note that the contents hereof should not be confused with the contents of head office letter 3/3/8/191 dated 2009-03-25.
    - 4.1. The prioritization of serving reservists whose profile matches the criteria for recruitment, selection and enlistment on a permanent basis must proceed as per the directive of the Minister for Safety and Security.
  5. Please circulate this communique to all within your respective areas of responsibility.
- F-H. 1. For your information.

Kind regards



T.C. WILLIAMS  
ACT/NATIONAL COMMISSIONER

NATIONAL COMMISSIONER: SOUTH AFRICAN POLICE SERVICE

2009/04/01

Appendix 2: Old and current ranking structure

<b>Old rank</b>	<b>Current Rank</b>
<b>Senior management: Commissioned officers</b>	
National Commissioner	General
Deputy National Commissioner	Lieutenant General
Divisional Provincial Commissioner	Lieutenant General
Assistant Commissioner	Major General
Director	Brigadier
<b>Commissioned officers</b>	
Senior Superintendent	Colonel
Superintendent	Lieutenant Colonel
	Major
Captain	Captain
	Lieutenant
<b>Non-commissioned officers</b>	
Inspector	Warrant Officer
Sergeant	Sergeant
Constable	Constable

*Adapted from table on SAPS website (SAPS, 2013)*

## Appendix 3: Gauteng reservist statistics

SAP 21

SUID-AFRIKAANSE POLISIEDIENS



SOUTH AFRICAN POLICE SERVICE

Privaatsak/Private Bag X 57, BRAAMFONTEIN

Verwysing  
Reference 3/18/1191  
Navrae  
Enquiries Capt Mahlatsi  
Telefoon  
Telephone 079 892 9840  
Faksnommer  
Fax number (011) 497-7465

THE OFFICE OF THE  
SOUTH AFRICAN POLICE SERVICE  
GAUTENG

2013-06-07

Ms Claudia Forster-Towne

### FEEDBACK: STATISTICS ON GAUTENG RESERVE POLICE: MS CLAUDIA FORSTER-TOWNE

1. Reference is made to the correspondence received from Ms Forster Towne dated 16 April 2013 and the approval granted by DPC: Operational Services, Major General Gela.
2. Herewith the most recent statistics on the racial and gender composition of reservists for 2012/2013 financial year for the Gauteng Province.

RACE	AFRICAN	WHITE	INDIAN	COLORED	TOTAL
MALE	3 030	1 291	116	154	4 591
FEMALE	2 470	394	18	55	2 937
TOTAL	5 500	1 685	134	209	7 528

3. The statistics on the same criteria for the period 2008/2009 (five years ago).

RACE	AFRICAN	WHITE	INDIAN	COLORED	TOTAL
MALE	3 956	1 431	117	168	5 672
FEMALE	3 285	438	20	58	3 801
TOTAL	7 241	1 869	137	226	9 473

4. Trust that this will assist with your research.

Kind regard

: MAJOR GENERAL  
ACTING DEPUTY PROVINCIAL COMMISSIONER: OPERATIONAL SERVICES: GAUTENG  
T S MASWANGANYI

Appendix 4: Honeydew cluster statistics (April 2013)

Honeydew Cluster

Station	Captains	W/O	Sgt	A Cst	D Cst	Student	Total ex students	Total with	Hours Nov	Hours Dec	Hours Jan	Average / 3 mnths	Average hrs per member
Randburg	1	3	4	13	0	45	21	66	275	510	190	325	15.48
Douglasdale	2	3	3	30	3	28	41	69	360	402	76	279	6.81
Honeydew	0	6	0	32	9	64	47	111	511	368	166	348	7.41
Florida	1	6	1	27	0	30	35	65	658	545	380	528	15.08
Roodepoort	0	4	0	22	0	19	26	45	381	721	241	448	17.22
Honeydew 2	2	3	2	15	0	0	22	22	497	605	262	455	20.67

6	25	10	139	12	186	192	378	2682.00	2511.00	1315.00	2382.67	13.78
TOTAL											AVERAG	

Station	White Male	White Female	Black Male	Black	Coloured Male	Coloured Female	Indian Male	Indian Female
Randburg	14	3	2	0	1	0	1	0
Douglasdale								
Honeydew	21	7	7	9	3	9	0	0
Florida	5	3	3	3	10	2	3	0
Roodepoort	9	2	3	11	1	0	0	0
Honedew 2	21	0	0	0	1	0	0	0

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White Male	45.45%
White Female	9.74%
Black Male	9.74%
Black Female	14.94%
Coloured Male	10.39%
Coloured Female	7.14%
Indian Female	0.00%
	100.00%

## Appendix 5: Main themes – individual and group interviews

### *Individual interviews*

Name/Themes	Anxiety over only being a reservist	Anxiety over changes to uniform*	Community orientated motivation	Hobby, fun, excitement motivation	Perceived to be 'better' than permanent	Black reservists want jobs	Borderline woman	Male strength	Normalised men	Public perceptions	Rank as reward and control	Essential perceptions of women
White men	6/8	4/8	4/8	6/8	6/8	8/8	5/8	6/8	7/8	5/8	4/8	5/8
CA	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X
CT	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X
SR	X	X	X		X	X		X	X		X	
WOB	X		X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
CD	X	X		X	X	X		X	X	X		X
CK			X			X						
CAP				X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
CL	X	X		X	X	X	X		X		X	X
White women	2/3	3/3	1/3	3/3	2/4	2/4	1/4	2/3	2/3	2/3	2/3	3/3
CB		X		X	X		X	X		X	X	X
CP	X	X		X		X			X		X	X
CQ	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X		X
Black men	2/3	2/3	3/3	1/3	3/3	3/3	1/3	2/3	2/3	1/3	3/3	2/3
CI	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X
CM	X	X	X		X	X		X	X	X	X	X
CW			X		X	X					X	
SUB TOTAL	10/14	9/14	8/14	10/14	11/14	13/14	7/14	10/14	11/14	8/14	10/14	10/14

*Group interviews*

Name/Themes	Anxiety over only being a reservist	Anxiety over changes to uniform	Hobby, fun, excitement motivation	Community orientated motivation	Perceived to be 'better' than permanent	Black reservists want jobs	Borderline woman	Male strength	Normalised men	Public perceptions	Rank as reward and control	Essential perceptions of women
White men	6/8	7/8	7/8	2/8	4/8	2/8	3/8	3/8	6/8	2/8	5/8	4/8
CR		X	X				X					X
CS	X				X			X	X		X	X
CY	X	X	X		X		X		X		X	
SB	X	X	X	X		X	X		X	X	X	X
SC	X	X	X	X		X		X	X	X	X	X
SZ		X	X					X				
WOG	X	X	X		X				X			
CX	X	X	X		X			X	X		X	
White men	0/1	0/1	0/1	1/1	0/1	0/1	1/1	1/1	0/1	0/1	0/1	0/1
CE				X			X	X				
SUB TOTAL	6/9	7/9	7/9	3/9	4/9	2/9	4/9	4/9	6/9	2/9	5/9	4/9

*Group interviews were not as in-depth as individual interviews hence we did not have enough time to allow for every interviewee to express their views on every topic raised.*

*Combined totals*

Name/Themes	Anxiety over only being a reservist	Anxiety over changes to uniform	Hobby, fun, excitement motivation	Community orientated motivation	Perceived to be 'better' than permanent	Black reservists want jobs	Borderline woman	Male strength	Normalised men	Public perceptions	Rank as reward and control	Essential perceptions of women
Individual	10	9	8	10	11	13	7	10	11	8	10	10
Group	6	7	7	3	4	2	4	4	6	2	5	4
TOTAL	16/23	16/23	15/23	13/23	15/23	15/23	11/23	14/23	17/23	10/23	15/23	14/23

