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## Sentiments of Segregation

### The Emotional Politics of Apartheid in South Africa, c. 1948-1990

Kirkby, Jagger

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# Sentiments of Segregation

The Emotional Politics of Apartheid  
in South Africa, c. 1948-1990

JAGGER ANDERSEN KIRKBY

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY | LUND UNIVERSITY



WHITES ONLY

From the Government Gazette registration of reclassification, 1984:  
518 Coloured persons were reclassified as White persons  
1 White person was reclassified as Coloured person



'With non-Europeans on all sides of me, I become thoroughly irritable and a feeling of dislike for them is engendered ... friction is inevitable whenever there is mixing of the races, but when we are segregated life is smooth and harmonious'. Thus wrote a woman to the local provincial authorities in 1960 in a plea to enforce spatial segregation in Cape Town.

For 46 years, the South African state's apartheid policies governed the ways in which its subjects went about their daily lives. Notions of race, as well as of class and gender, impacted how they could and should feel about themselves, their surroundings, and about others.

This book examines the relation between emotions and everyday life in apartheid South Africa. Emotionally charged encounters were bound to arise from both the formal and informal measures that restricted interracial love and sex, segregated recreational space and, in some instances, encouraged people to 'pass' as belonging to a different racial category than the one the state had assigned them.

Drawing on cultural theories of the history of emotions, the book discusses how emotions worked to reflect, consolidate, and challenge the supposedly enduring discourses and practices that were characteristic of apartheid-era social formations.

**JAGGER ANDERSEN KIRKBY** is a historian based at Lund University, Sweden. *Sentiments of Segregation* is his doctoral dissertation.



## SENTIMENTS OF SEGREGATION



# Sentiments of Segregation

The Emotional Politics of Apartheid  
in South Africa, c. 1948-1990

Jagger Andersen Kirkby



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Department of History  
Joint Faculties of Humanities and Theology  
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*Cape Town, 4 December 2021*

## A Note on Racial Terminology

The use of apartheid-era classifications to denote a person's racial identity is still widespread among South Africans today, both at the informal level, in politics, in the media, as well as in academic literature. I am aware, for example, that the term 'coloured' is now considered an ethnic slur in many countries outside Southern Africa. In South Africa, however, the term is still regarded as appropriate to refer to people who consider themselves part of the historically multiracial ethnic group native to the region. I capitalise the letter 'c' in *Coloured* throughout this study in order not to conflate it with the term as it has been understood outside Southern Africa, except in quotations in which the term appears without the initial capitalisation in the original. While this choice might also be regarded by some as working to naturalise the use of a term that refers to a constructed racial category, I refer to Coloured historian Mohamed Adhikari, who, in turn refers to the growing grassroots sentiment among Coloured people, expressed through Coloured journalist Paul Stober, who has been quoted as saying: 'As a distinct ethnic group with over three million members, we deserve a capital letter'.<sup>1</sup>

The inclusive term 'black' without initial letter capitalisation is increasingly used in the literature to refer to the Coloured, Bantu language-speaking, and Indian peoples of South Africa as a whole. While I am acutely aware of the normative connotations of instead using the term 'non-white'. I do so throughout if only to avoid confusion with the term 'black', which is still predominantly used when referring to the Bantu language-speaking peoples who make up the vast majority of South Africans. When terms that are today considered disparaging are used to describe black South Africans, such as 'native' or 'Bantu', they are either taken directly from quotations, or used as a way of divulging the point of view of then contemporary South Africans who used such terms. I employ quotation marks in these instances.

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<sup>1</sup> Mohamed Adhikari, *Not White Enough, Not Black Enough: Racial Identity in the South African Coloured Community* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2005), 14.





# Introduction

My point is this that, if mixed development is to be the policy of the future in South Africa, it will lead to the most terrific clash of interests imaginable. The endeavours and desires of the Bantu and the endeavours and objectives of all Europeans will be antagonistic. Such a clash can only bring unhappiness and misery to both.<sup>2</sup>

H. F. Verwoerd, 1950

No one is born hating another person because of the colour of their skin, or his background, or his religion. People must learn to hate, and if they can learn to hate, they can be taught to love, for love comes more naturally to the human heart than its opposite.<sup>3</sup>

Nelson Mandela, *Long Walk to Freedom* (1994)

With the advent of social media in particular, the last decade has seen the issue of cultural racism rise to the forefront of public debate in South Africa on multiple occasions.

In 2018, a Johannesburg businessman was indicted in a South African court for racist remarks he had made on holiday in Europe. In a video uploaded to a social media platform, he expressed his delight

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<sup>2</sup> H. F. Verwoerd, 'Speech at the Native Representative Council' (1950), quoted in *Verwoerd Speaks: Speeches 1948-1966*, ed. N. Pelzer (Johannesburg: APB Publishers, 1966), 24-25.

<sup>3</sup> Nelson Mandela, *Long Walk to Freedom* (Boston, New York and London: Little, Brown and Company, 1994), 542.

that the Greek beach on which he found himself was ‘heaven on Earth’ because ‘there [was] ‘not one k\*\*\*\*\* in sight’.<sup>4</sup>

In a similar case the same year, the African National Congress of the Western Cape laid a complaint of racism with the South African Human Rights Commission after a local white resident had protested that ‘to [sic] many Africans [were] flocking to Hout Bay’, the Cape Town seaside suburb in which she resided. Fashioning her own solution to the issue, she suggested that ‘we should tie them to a rope’.<sup>5</sup>

In KwaZulu-Natal in 2016, a real estate agent took to her computer to disclose to her followers on Facebook her feelings about the recent New Year’s celebrations on Durban’s beaches. Here, she explained that to ‘let loose’ black beachgoers, whom she likened to ‘monkeys’, was ‘inviting huge dirt and discomfort to others’.<sup>6</sup>

When South African rugby player Siya Kolisi wed his then fiancée in 2016, some Facebook users took to publicly branding the couple’s interracial union as ‘disgusting’, accompanied by emoticons of faces throwing up, with one commenter declaring that it made him ‘so pissed’.<sup>7</sup>

Another 2016 incident saw an African student activist relaying on Facebook how he and his dining companions had refused to tip a white waitress at a Cape Town restaurant, writing on their bill that they would do so only ‘when [she returned] the land’. When the waitress realised what had been written on the slip, the activist accused the waitress of crying ‘white tears’. She informed her colleagues, who, the

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<sup>4</sup> ‘Man’s Racist Rant Sparks Social Media Outcry in South Africa’, *CNN*, 22 August 2018. In Southern Africa, ‘kaffir’ is considered a gross racial slur used to describe a black African.

<sup>5</sup> ‘Too Many Africans “Flocking” to Hout Bay, Says White Resident’, *The Citizen*, 4 December 2016.

<sup>6</sup> “‘It’s Just the Facts’ – Penny Sparrow Breaks Her Silence’, *News24*, 4 January 2016; ‘I Think Black People are Wonderful – Penny Sparrow’, *News24*, 14 June 2016; Sisonke Msimang, ‘South Africa Has No Patience for Penny Sparrow’s Apartheid Nostalgia’, *The Guardian*, 7 January 2016.

<sup>7</sup> ‘Facebookers Turn Tables on User’s Racist Post Targeting Springbok Player’, *News24*, 12 December 2016.

activist continued, were 'furious'. When one of these colleagues confronted the group with what they had written, they '[asked] him why [he was] catching feelings'.<sup>8</sup>

These examples constitute only a small part of a larger trend of 'race rows' flaring up across the 'Rainbow Nation' and laid bare to the public online in recent years. More than 25 years after apartheid was formally dismantled, it has proven difficult to disperse with its socioracial legacy.

This dissertation, however, is not about the rise of abuse on modern social media platforms, or in fact, the salience of racism in South Africa at large. Rather, the above examples make topical more than only those two issues. Reading them again, they might appear to the reader as they did to me, just as much as emotive evaluations of and responses to racial encounters as they are reflective of specific notions of race.

We might, for example, infer from the above that interracial marriage is revolting. Or, that Africans gathering on a beach is something that one should be frightened of or repulsed by. A beach without Africans, however, might instead be read as something that should make us happy, in fact, 'heaven on earth'. We could regard a white woman's distress when confronted with alleged racism as 'white tears', and her colleagues' response to the distress caused to her as anger. The group of black activists who affronted the woman likely evaluated her colleagues' outrage as disproportionate to the situation that had arisen and responded with their own resentment. The undoubtedly racially charged question that appears to have lingered under the surface in that situation was one of who was entitled to be angry or sad over what had transpired. Indeed, as the student activist proceeded in his Facebook post in which he boasted of the incident, 'we couldn't be bothered that they decided to catch feelings from the note'.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> 'Oxford Student Who Refused to Tip Waitress Claims His Comments "Weren't Personal"', *The Independent*, 19 May 2016; 'Rhodes Scholar Has No Regrets over "White Girl Tears"', *The Times*, 19 May 2016.

<sup>9</sup> 'Black Student Who Refused to Tip White Waitress Will Stay at Oxford Because of Free Speech', *Daily Express*, 5 May 2016.

These contemporary examples are illustrative of how feeling is inseparable from cultural and socio-political circumstances. As cultural theorist Sara Ahmed has argued, emotions ‘align some subjects with some others and against other others’.<sup>10</sup> Historians of emotions, who seek to scrutinise the lives of past rather than contemporary subjects, have also increasingly come to acknowledge this. Yet, historians of South Africa and, in particular, of apartheid, have yet to realise the potential of operating with emotions as a key variable in their historical inquiries.<sup>11</sup> If true, as Nelson Mandela suggests in the introductory quotation above, that feelings are learned and taught, what evidence for this might we gather by examining the emotional lives of the historical actors of South Africa’s recent past? Taking my point of departure in Saul Dubow’s recent monograph, in which he encourages historians to inquire into how apartheid survived for 47 years,<sup>12</sup> it is a central assumption in this dissertation that the cultural politics of emotions played a part in its relative endurance.

Apartheid in South Africa was articulated through various practices: territorial separation, social engineering, labour restrictions, influx control, Afrikaner nationalism, and spatial segregation, to name just a few. Socially informed notions, especially of race, governed how those who were subject to these practices received them. Each South African’s identity document would for almost half a century contain a racial

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<sup>10</sup> Sara Ahmed, ‘Collective Feelings: Or, the Impressions Left by Others’, *Theory Culture Society* 21, no. 2 (2004): 25.

<sup>11</sup> One recent journal article by historian Uma Dhupelia-Mesthrie is a notable exception. Here, she argues that the subjectivity, including the emotions, of an immigration officer in early twentieth century Cape Town, evidence of which she locates in his private diary, influenced how the officer went about his job at the seaport. See, Uma Dhupelia-Mesthrie, ‘The Desirable and Undesirable in the Life of the Chief Immigration Officer in Cape Town, Clarence Wilfred Cousins, 1905-1915’, *Itinerario* 42, no. 1 (2018): 50-66. Although Dhupelia-Mesthrie does not elaborate on theory and method as to how she defines or operates with emotions as a historical category, nor places the history of emotions aspect of her work within any broader research agenda, it is hoped that others might see value in building on her fledgling input.

<sup>12</sup> Saul Dubow, *Apartheid 1948-1994* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), ix.

classification that regulated every aspect of everyday life. It could determine whether one resided in a tin-roofed shack, or in a large house in a leafy suburb. It could mean the difference between working in a mine, as a domestic servant, or in an office. It restricted with whom one could fall in love, which type of alcohol one could legally drink,<sup>13</sup> and where and how one might enjoy a day off from work. For South Africans, then, apartheid was a lived experience.

For most, the ways in which apartheid was expressed also undergirded the social norms to which they adhered, the relationships they built, the material conditions under which they lived, and, as I shall argue, the emotional lives that such factors forged.

As indicated in the first quotation preceding this introduction, the policy of apartheid, according to the country's later prime minister,<sup>14</sup> was intended to safeguard all South Africans from the turbulence that, he ascertained, was certain to arise from racial fraternisation. In fact, the consequences of apartheid measures would lead to racially differentiated emotional experiences. Job reservation, for example, endowed a minority of the population with privileges that were sufficient to sustain a life of wellbeing, perhaps in happy white suburbia, where the sun appeared to shine less cruelly. For others, the state's social engineering efforts would lead to interpersonal turmoil and heartache in the face of forbidden or unrequited love. Further others lived their lives managing their emotions on a regular basis in their attempts to either emphasise or cover up tell-tale signs of the constructed biological and social standards that were associated with belonging to a specific racial category.

It appears evident, then, that the everyday application of apartheid bore imprint on emotional experience. Its practices would influence not only how people felt, but also how they could and should feel about

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<sup>13</sup> See, for example, Anne Mager, 'The First Decade of "European Beer" in Apartheid South Africa: The State, the Brewers and the Drinking Public, 1962-72', *Journal of African History* 40 (1999): 367-388.

<sup>14</sup> Hendrik Fransch Verwoerd (1901-1960), South African Minister of Native Affairs 1950-1958, Prime Minister of South Africa 1958-1960, assassinated 1960. Frequently referred to as the 'architect of apartheid'.

themselves, their surroundings, and about others. This dissertation addresses this relation, between the application of ‘everyday’ apartheid and the emotional lives of those to whom it was manifest throughout the apartheid era of 1948 until 1990.

More specifically, I probe the role of emotions in various racially informed encounters between individuals and between individuals and the state bureaucracy that were instigated by the application of commonplace apartheid. I seek to understand how emotions reflected, shaped, and potentially undermined, the racialised discourses and practices that were characteristic of apartheid-era social formations. Ultimately, I seek to scrutinise what the emotional politics of these encounters reveal about the character and relative longevity of apartheid, and the continued endurance of the racial order that was so inherent to its manifestation. The main question I endeavour to resolve is the following: How did emotions shape the lived experience of race and segregation during the apartheid era and support its endurance? Or, in short: How did apartheid feel to those who lived it?

Three supporting questions permeate my empirical analyses and assist in compiling an answer to the broader research question that I ask above, namely:

- Which logics regarding emotional practice did the application of ‘everyday’ apartheid legislation reflect and create?
- What role did emotions play in encounters between the racialised space and racialised bodies that ‘everyday’ apartheid measures governed?
- How did being confronted with ‘everyday’ apartheid provisions contribute to creating new emotional truths and naturalising or undermining existing ones?

## Previous Research: Histories of Segregation and Apartheid in South Africa

My aim to reach a richer understanding of the lived experience of apartheid through an examination of emotional encounters requires me to address the existing literature within two distinct areas of research: that of segregation and apartheid in South Africa and that of the ever-burgeoning field of the history of emotions. As I have already stated, South Africanists appear yet to embark on engaging in emotions history to cast new perspectives on the country's long history of race. Therefore, I integrate overviews of the historiographical and theoretical developments within the history of emotions in a later section of this dissertation, in which I present and discuss my theoretical and methodological reflections. In that part, I explain in detail how I bring the two fields together analytically. In the section to follow, however, I focus on the historiography of the matter of segregation and apartheid in South Africa – a subject which, perhaps unavoidably, has dominated South African history writing at large. The field has largely been characterised by being fundamentally politics driven.

I have little space here to present a detailed overview of the history of the historiography of the field. The many intricacies and nuances of the various 'schools', and their approaches, both theoretically, methodically and empirically, to the subject at hand, have been delicately dissected multiple times by others.<sup>15</sup>

What readers should take with them from the following is that historians of South Africa's past have long, both quite deliberately and less so, been engaged in different *Historikerstreiten*, the main disagreements of which can be summed up by employing endless,

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<sup>15</sup> See, for example, Christopher Saunders, *The Making of the South African Past: Major Historians on Race and Class* (Cape Town and Johannesburg: David Philip, 1988); Ken Smith, *The Changing Past: Trends in South African Historical Writing* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 1989); Paul Maylam, *South Africa's Racial Past: The History and Historiography of Racism, Segregation and Apartheid* (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2001); Wessel Visser, 'Trends in South African Historiography and the Present State of Historical Research', Paper Presented at the Nordic Africa Institute, Uppsala, Sweden, 23 September 2004.



supposedly antonymic pairs that derive from the concept of *apartheid*. These include race/class, rise/fall, structure/agency, state/'the people', past/future, discord/reconciliation and white/black. Many historians have tended to concentrate their writing around one or more of these concepts, although not exclusively, I concede, with the other 'half' of each conceptual pair appearing as either a secondary or non-existing aspect, often disregarded on the grounds that paying attention to one necessarily excludes the relevance of or proficiency in the other.

Throughout the 1970's and 1980's, for example, so-called 'liberal' scholars, with their primary interest in questions of race and racism, were accused of paying insufficient attention to the material workings of apartheid ideology. Such 'radical' historians were in turn accused of reducing race to 'class'. The status of history in a politically changing South Africa in the 1980's and after apartheid, later raised other discussions. 'Struggle' histories emerged and would counter state-centred analyses. These narratives were then in turn indicted on charges that they ignored the ways in which apartheid state ideology cleverly invited acquiescence. In the following, I address many of these issues through a discussion of some of the most notable contributions to the field while at the same time claiming that the subject matter of this dissertation might fruitfully bridge some of the binaries that persist in dictating how historians approach the theme of segregation and apartheid. The argument is that in attempting to capture the lived experience of apartheid, one must avoid foregoing either part of the supposed dichotomies outlined above. Rather, it is in the intersection between them that historical experience was made.

My discussion of existing research deals mostly with works produced in the latter three decades of the twentieth century and into contemporary times, yet I must find space to mention some contributions to South African historiography before then.

As countless scholars have noted before me, historians have predominantly been preoccupied with exploring the origins and structural driving forces of the system of segregation, which had

precursors in the colonial era, and which would later be refined as *apartheid* throughout the twentieth century.<sup>16</sup>

Within this strand of research, studies have been produced on subjects ranging from Afrikaner nationalism and British hegemony to the ways in which racial discrimination forged material benefits for the white minority and facilitated capitalist expansion, for example through the establishment of the migrant labour system that ensured and maintained a supply of cheap labour and created a permanent non-hegemonic class made up of black South Africans.

### *Early Histories of Race and the Liberal Breakthrough*

Earlier British imperialist, settler and Afrikaner nationalist histories are today widely regarded as outdated in their processing of segregation as a phenomenon. The works of the prominent settler historian George McCall Theal and later Afrikaner-centred studies carried out by F. A. van Jaarsveld, for instance, would leave scarce room for Coloured or black historical agency and subjectivities. Despite their prolific value as products of their time, their reproduction of colonial and nationalist values and interests means that the lived experience of segregation in these studies is wholly discounted or refashioned as the consequence of a 'necessary' and/or 'civilising' subjugation of blacks by whites, first by white colonialists, and later by Afrikaner nationalists as part of what historian Paul Maylam has termed their 'long struggle for survival'.<sup>17</sup>

It was in the wake of interpretations like these that a so-called 'liberal' school of historians emerged, led first by W. M. Macmillan and his

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<sup>16</sup> William Beinart and Saul Dubow, 'The Historiography of Segregation and Apartheid', in *Segregation and Apartheid in Twentieth-Century South Africa*, ed. William Beinart and Saul Dubow (London: Routledge, 1995), 1.

<sup>17</sup> Quotation from Maylam, *South Africa's Racial Past*, 210-211. See, for example, D. M. Schreuder, 'The Imperial Historian as "Colonial-Nationalist": George McCall Theal and the Making of South African History' in *Studies in British Imperial History: Essays in Honour of A. P. Thornton*, ed. Gordon Martel (London: Macmillan, 1986), 95-158; F. A. van Jaarsveld, *The Afrikaner's Interpretation of South African History* (Cape Town: Simondium, 1964).

understudy, C. W. de Kiewiet, throughout the first half of the twentieth century. As the process of African decolonisation took hold beginning in the 1960's, names like Leonard Thompson and Monica Wilson became prominent proponents of the school. Macmillan and de Kiewiet both viewed South African history as one of race relations and stressed the importance of bringing together 'Bantu, Boer and Briton' in a singular historical narrative, rather than emphasise only the actions of white men.<sup>18</sup> Despite their apparent sympathies with the plight of the native peoples of South Africa, only scarcely did they concern themselves with African societies on their own terms.<sup>19</sup>

From their analyses arose also the 'frontier thesis', largely inspired by the ideas conceptualised by historian Frederick Jackson Turner about the United States. In its South African variant, to describe it ineptly, firstly, the Dutch introduction of slavery and secondly, the Afrikaners' harsh encounters with Africans and British colonialists, would drive them to the frontiers of land, and seemingly also of their wits, is what de Kiewiet implied. According to the frontier thesis, the South African 'native problem' was consequently a product of the racial attitudes that Afrikaners had historically absorbed, and Afrikaner nationalism was increasingly interpreted as being an 'instrument of cultural defense' and 'racial defense against the natives',<sup>20</sup> which had been prompted by, and harshened as a result of, the Afrikaners' historical clashes with 'Bantu' and 'Briton'.

Earlier liberal interpretations that implied that Afrikaner zealotry was bound to lead to apartheid as racism in its 'purest' form were later contradicted, not only by radical interpretations, which I shall come to shortly, but also by other counter-narratives.

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<sup>18</sup> W. M. Macmillan, *Bantu, Boer and Briton: The Making of the South African Native Problem* (London: Oxford University Press, 1963 [1929]).

<sup>19</sup> Smith, *Changing Past*, 103-104. Macmillan's work on the urban poor, both black and white, was considered revolutionary for its time.

<sup>20</sup> C. W. de Kiewiet, *The Anatomy of South African Misery* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1956), 21.

The implications that British rule would have for the development of segregation in South Africa, for example, were claimed by some scholars to be grossly underestimated. In the early 1970's, historian Martin Legassick initially brought attention to this paradox in a paper that highlighted how British officials' obsession with articulating a 'native policy' in the aftermath of the South African War at the turn of the nineteenth century would keep hold well into the apartheid era.<sup>21</sup>

Historian Saul Dubow, similarly, has argued that British officials and others regarded as 'liberal-minded' South Africans conceived of the idea of segregation in the early twentieth century and that these ideas were influenced by notions of social Darwinism and cultural relativism.<sup>22</sup> Sociologist and historian Deborah Posel has recognised comparable developments during the early phases of the formal implementation of apartheid, especially with regard to policies that were launched to control the influx of black South Africans into urban areas. Rather than working according to a 'master plan', she argues, the National Party government sought pragmatic solutions to the 'race problem' in order to satisfy conflicting fractions within the Afrikaner nationalist movement. Here, lobbying by English-speaking whites was just as crucial as that carried out by their Afrikaner counterparts.<sup>23</sup> Additionally, historian Maynard Swanson's highly influential article on the 'sanitation syndrome' traced urban segregation in the supposedly more racially progressive Cape Colony back to the British colonial authorities' decision to forcibly remove thousands of Africans from

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<sup>21</sup> See, Martin Legassick, 'British Hegemony and the Origins of Segregation in South Africa, 1901-14', in *Segregation and Apartheid*, 43-59.

<sup>22</sup> Saul Dubow, *Racial Segregation and the Origins of Apartheid in South Africa* (Houndmills, UK: Macmillan, 1989).

<sup>23</sup> See, for example, Deborah Posel, 'The Meaning of Apartheid before 1948: Conflicting Interests and Forces within the Afrikaner Nationalist Alliance', *Journal of Southern African Studies* 14, no. 1 (1987): 123-139.

Cape Town in 1901, as racial notions would intersect with medical knowledge when the bubonic plague ravaged the city.<sup>24</sup>

The image of apartheid being the product of the inherent racism and neo-Calvinism of the Afrikaner has moreover been contested in studies of Afrikaner identity and nationalism as independent phenomena, with historian Hermann Giliomee having suggested that South Africa's institutionally racialised past was partly a result of Afrikaner nationalists' insistence on and obsession with maintaining their own ethnic rights and interests, rather than discrimination being an end in itself, as liberal scholars had appeared to suggest.<sup>25</sup>

Thompson and Wilson later refined the liberal tradition somewhat in their editorial work on the two-volume *Oxford History of South Africa*, which was published in 1969 and 1971.<sup>26</sup> Some articles in the volumes were ground-breaking in that they dealt with South African history pre-colonisation. Furthermore, African reactions to white conquest were included for the first time. What radical scholars would soon take issue with, however, was the presumed naivety of liberal accounts in failing to realise how capitalism was intrinsically bound up with what had then become apartheid. The liberal 'problem' that radicals took issue with can be summed up by looking to economist D. Hobart Houghton's contribution to the *Oxford History*, in which he suggested that prosperity could be reached simply through the creation of 'unrestricted employment opportunities for South Africans of all

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<sup>24</sup> Maynard W. Swanson, 'The Sanitation Syndrome: Bubonic Plague and Urban Native Policy in the Cape Colony, 1900-1909', *Journal of African History* 18, no. 3 (1977): 387-410.

<sup>25</sup> Hermann Giliomee, 'The Growth of Afrikaner Identity' [1979], in *Segregation and Apartheid*, 189-205. For another classic account of the social, cultural, religious and economic circumstances of the Afrikaners, somewhat free from nationalist preoccupations, see P. J. van der Merwe, *The Migrant Farmer in the History of the Cape Colony, 1657-1842*, trans. Roger B. Beck (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 1994 [1938]).

<sup>26</sup> Monica Wilson and Leonard Thompson (eds.), *The Oxford History of South Africa* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971).

racess'.<sup>27</sup> To explain the liberal position from the viewpoint of a growing radical base, its gullibility lay in the assumption that apartheid was economically unsustainable.<sup>28</sup>

### *The Radical Challenge*

In an influential article that in many ways marked the beginning of the radical critique, sociologist and political economist Harold Wolpe asserted that apartheid was not only different from earlier forms of segregation, but that it could also not be attributed simplistically to the racial ideology of Afrikaner nationalists and the governing National Party. Wolpe summed up the hitherto prevailing liberal consensus as follows:

Generally, [liberal] explanations advanced account for the increased racial oppression manifested by Apartheid on the basis of the contention that the governing National Party's ideology is more racist than that of its predecessors, and for the intensified political repression by reference to the Party's totalitarian ideology. According to this view, the Government, in pursuance of its racial ideology, and even at the cost of economic rationality, introduced a series of measures which extended racial discrimination to its limits. The effect of this was to produce widespread opposition which the Government met, acting in pursuance of its totalitarian ideology, by a drastic curtailment of political rights and an elaborate system of state security. This set in train a vicious cycle of resistance and repression which led, in due course, also to condemnation of, and pressure on, South Africa.<sup>29</sup>

Wolpe disagreed with this explanation wholeheartedly, instead putting forward the thesis that apartheid was not just a 'stricter' extension of

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<sup>27</sup> D. Hobart Houghton, 'Economic Development, 1865-1965', in *Oxford History of South Africa*, 48.

<sup>28</sup> Wilson and Thompson, *Oxford History of South Africa*, 21; Dubow, *Apartheid*, 285.

<sup>29</sup> Harold Wolpe, 'Capitalism and Cheap Labour-Power in South Africa: From Segregation to Apartheid', *Economy and Society* 1, no. 4 (1972): 426.

segregation, but, that it, with reference to changing capitalist relations, marked a modernisation of the migrant labour system.

Central to his theory was that capitalist foremen could get away with paying predominantly black workers low wages for their toils in the mines because the workers' families would remain at home in the African reserves and were responsible for supporting themselves, primarily through subsistence agriculture.<sup>30</sup> Africans, he argued, were thus exploited to meet industrial demands in order to keep capital in the hands of whites, and apartheid policies all but strengthened these structures.

As the agricultural subsistence in the reserves collapsed and African societies could no longer provide the means of reproduction of their migrant workers, Wolpe theorised that, in response to this, the apartheid government introduced acute political control over blacks' access to and movement within urban areas, because white capitalists' access to cheap labour became threatened by the change in the economic basis of the reserve system.<sup>31</sup> 'Racial ideology in South Africa', therefore, he wrote, 'must be seen as an ideology which sustains and reproduces capitalist relations of production'.<sup>32</sup>

Later, political scientist Mahmood Mamdani would take this argument to its extreme in his 1996 book on the legacy of colonialism in Africa, *Citizen and Subject*.<sup>33</sup> Rather than viewing apartheid as unique, Mamdani's central thesis was that the aspect that Wolpe pointed out with reference to capitalist structures, namely that apartheid functioned through a combination of indirect rule of the rural reserves and centralized rule of the urban cities, was true of the modes of governance that were employed in African colonialism writ large.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Wolpe, 'Capitalism and Cheap Labour-Power', 438-439.

<sup>31</sup> Wolpe, 'Capitalism and Cheap Labour-Power', 447.

<sup>32</sup> Wolpe, 'Capitalism and Cheap Labour-Power', 435.

<sup>33</sup> Mahmood Mamdani, *Citizen and Subject: Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996).

<sup>34</sup> Mamdani, *Citizen and Subject*, 27. Also argued by Dubow, see, *Apartheid*, 283-284.



The general disagreements between so-called 'liberals' and 'radicals', put in broad terms, thus centred around whether to explain apartheid in terms of a rationalisation of either solely racial or racial-economic imperatives. State-centred analyses were long the preferred tool with which scholars conducted these kinds of investigations, both those that focused on racial ideology and those that examined apartheid as a product of crude capitalism. Despite the liberal-radical divide on what was the driving rationale of apartheid, both schools primarily analysed the question from a structural point of view in that the state was regarded as functioning to serve the long-term interests of the hegemonic class, whether we regard it as mainly white or mainly capitalist.

Structural forces, be they cultural, for example in the form of Afrikaner nationalism, or material, in the form of capital, were regarded by proponents of both approaches as the key driver of the situation in which black and Coloured South Africans had come to find themselves. While both theories were highly aware of the fact that such forces inevitably restricted the personal freedoms of these individuals as well as the opportunities available to them to influence their situation, neither school appeared particularly interested initially in exploring how these forces were experienced or dealt with by the peoples that were so evidently limited by them. As Beinart and Dubow have explained: 'Africans were cast as passive objects of policy and victims of segregation; while it was taken for granted that they were opposed to their fate; they were hardly conceived of as historical actors and agents in their own right'.<sup>35</sup>

### *The Question of Agency and Resistance*

Following the growth of social history and history 'from below' throughout the 1970's and 1980's, attention therefore turned

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<sup>35</sup> Beinart and Dubow, 'Historiography of Segregation and Apartheid', 8.

increasingly towards recovering 'non-white' 'agency' from the structures that had impeded it.

Beinart, for example, looked to the traditionalist institution of the chieftancy, and illustrated how rural Africans' political responses to segregationist policies were at times separatist in nature in that local autonomy was sought in some regions by Africans who both negotiated with and resisted the state. Beinart's work in this way illustrated how the development of the migrant labour system was affected by the dynamics of African societies in the reserves just as much as it was imposed by the metropolitan policymakers of successive segregationist and apartheid governments.<sup>36</sup>

Historian Belinda Bozzoli, in one of the first articles to critique South African history-writing from a feminist perspective, also analysed life in the African reserves. The survival of rural society, she argued, was bolstered by the fact that a traditional patriarchal structure was inherent to the majority of black Africans that lived there and which dictated the division of labour between men and women. As African men in growing numbers became part of the migrant labour scheme, the system's longevity was conditioned on the fact that it allowed for them to leave women behind to sustain their societies at home.<sup>37</sup> Bozzoli thereby highlighted, in similar fashion to Beinart, how the question of hegemony with regard to the establishment of the migrant labour system could in fact be turned 'upside down' because it served African interests just as well as the concerns of the white minority.<sup>38</sup> As such, 'non-whites' were not necessarily pawns that could effortlessly be incorporated into the arrangements of colonial or segregationist societies.

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<sup>36</sup> William Beinart, 'Chieftancy and the Concept of Articulation: South Africa c. 1900-1950' [1985], in *Segregation and Apartheid*, 176-188.

<sup>37</sup> Belinda Bozzoli, 'Marxism, Feminism and Southern African Studies', *Journal of Southern African Studies* 9, no. 2 (1983): 139-171.

<sup>38</sup> See also, Shula Marks, *The Ambiguities of Dependence in South Africa: Class, Nationalism and the State in Twentieth Century Natal* (Baltimore, MD and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986).

Other historians searched for a more 'independent' agency that could be attributed to black South Africans seemingly acting outside of or actively choosing to forego the pervasive structures of capitalism and/or race through partaking in rebellion and protest throughout both the segregation and apartheid eras. Here, 'ordinary' Africans took centre stage in what would turn into a history of the process of 'the people's' struggle against and ultimate liberation from, an oppressive state.<sup>39</sup>

These contributions most certainly shed considerably more light than before on the activities and decision-making of 'non-whites' beyond the level of structural discourse and class formations. Still, as Dubow has reasoned, such politically engaged struggle histories appear to imply that the defeat of apartheid was a certain, inevitable outcome, despite these histories' acknowledgment of both victories and defeats along the way.<sup>40</sup> Some have been constructive in nuancing this narrative. Historian Hilary Sapire, for instance, has illustrated how political opposition to apartheid was often fragmented and heterogeneous in nature.<sup>41</sup>

The question of how apartheid was experienced, in most of these cases, however, becomes one only of how it was contested. We might therefore nuance the idea of a collective struggle even further by asserting that the effectiveness of apartheid ideology was also construed through inviting complicity in its logics, or, at least, through discouraging opposition to it. The state would ensure this through brute force and through its establishment over time of material circumstances that made it difficult for persons to act contrarily to it,

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<sup>39</sup> See, for example, William Beinart and Colin Bundy, *Hidden Struggles in Rural South Africa: Politics & Popular Movements in the Transkei & Eastern Cape, 1890-1930* (London, Berkeley, CA, Los Angeles and Johannesburg: James Currey, University of California Press and Ravan Press, 1987); William Cobbett and Robin Cohen, *Popular Struggles in South Africa* (London: James Currey, 1988).

<sup>40</sup> Dubow, *Apartheid*, 297.

<sup>41</sup> Hilary Sapire, 'African Political Organisation in Brakpan in the 1950s', *African Studies* 48, no. 2 (1989): 183-202; Hilary Sapire, 'Politics and Protest in Shack Settlements of the Pretoria-Witwatersrand-Vereeniging Region, South Africa, 1980-1990', *Journal of Southern African Studies* 18, no. 3 (1992): 670-697.

certainly. This is where struggle histories have played a revolutionary part in uncovering how popular resistance in different ways brought about a post-apartheid democracy.

Yet, as Dubow has pointed out, the reasons why some did not engage in opposition could just as well be grounded in personal motivations and experiences and are therefore difficult to locate. As he writes: 'it is generally more difficult to account for events that did not occur than for those that did'.<sup>42</sup>

When this dissertation asks how emotions contributed to the lived experience of apartheid and supported its endurance, it constitutes a fledgling endeavour to capture instances of historical experience *within* the hegemonic ideological structures that shaped it. While Dubow, in response to the accumulative emergence of studies that together have created a popular narrative of liberation and resistance, suggests that we must counterbalance them 'from above',<sup>43</sup> I propose a slightly different path forward.

Earlier tries at recovering historical agency, liberal, radical and revisionist alike, have been carried out from a viewpoint that appears to suggest that apartheid ideology and discourse were not all-pervasive phenomena.<sup>44</sup> Dubow's study of apartheid, in turn, presents a timely reminder to its readers that historical agency was at the very least mediated by ideology and discourse. His vantage point, however, remains at the state level, with scant evidence and indication of how apartheid ideology, however flexible and adaptive, was in fact mediated and received on the ground.

Maybe, then, a balancing of narratives might be better or differently obtained by looking to the experiences of apartheid-era historical actors

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<sup>42</sup> Dubow, *Apartheid*, 298.

<sup>43</sup> Dubow, *Apartheid*, 301.

<sup>44</sup> Indeed, historian Christopher Saunders was met with fierce criticism by some for alluding to the work of both liberals and radicals as potentially having decolonised South African history-writing. See, Christopher Saunders, 'Four Decades of South African Academic Historical Writing: A Personal Perspective', in *History Making and Present Day Politics: The Meaning of Collective Memory in South Africa*, ed. Hans Erik Stolten (Uppsala, SE: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, 2007), 46-47.

that did not form part of any political abutment of the liberation movement, though were facilitated, but not determined, by the practices through which apartheid ideology was applied.

Thinking of apartheid ideology as the primary intermediary of historical experience means also recognising that the knowledge on which historical subjects acted as they went about their lives was in some shape or form filtered by it. Racial imagery as well as class notions were without question crucial to how apartheid was lived *differently*, but *lived*, all the same. By integrating state history with social realities, we may then be able to piece together something resembling a history of the lived experience of apartheid without having to resort to neither a radical deconstruction of the historiography nor to search endlessly for ‘unfiltered’ voices.

As I shall further detail throughout my theoretical and methodical discussion, such experiences have progressively come to be analysed through the lens of human feeling, an entity that is the primary object of study within the field of the history of emotions. By asking how apartheid was experienced, whether thought of as an event, a phenomenon, or an era, I am in effect asking: ‘how did it feel’?

## Theoretical Reflections: Emotions in History

Feeling is a critical component of the way we as humans interact with our surroundings. Historians have increasingly over the last decade come to appreciate that emotions are not merely reflexive responses to the circumstances in which we find ourselves but are indicative of how historical subjects engage with the world. The ‘emotional turn’, as it has been commonly labelled,<sup>45</sup> shows no signs of reaching its apex, despite so

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<sup>45</sup> Rob Boddice, *The History of Emotions* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2018), 1.

many throughout the last two decades pointing to the masses of literature that have been produced under the heading of the 'history of emotions'.<sup>46</sup>

Despite this rise in scholarly interest, the field can appear frustratingly inaccessible, as approaches to studying the history of emotions are at the same time stagnant and disparate. Many of the numerous introductions and guidebooks to emotions history will dissect the exact same canon of names and clarify the differences between their ontological and epistemological premises. Yet, although a consensus appears to have been reached on whom to include in the historiographical overview of the history of emotions, theoretical and methodical angles remain widely incompatible.

The field remains haunted by the almost positivist insistence of historians to define exactly what emotions are before they dare look for them in sources or interpret how feelings interact with now seemingly unflappable historical categories such as class, gender, race, and space, as well as how they might be read as the cause and effect of historical circumstances. Even those historians who are primarily interested in how emotions are embedded in and shaped by sociocultural dispositions will find themselves caught up in setting strict epistemological limits to their studies due to the widespread belief that on an ontological level, emotions are to some degree innate, universal, and therefore only partly accessible to others than neuroscientists or cognitive psychologists.

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<sup>46</sup> See, for example, Boddice, *History of Emotions*; Jan Plamper, *The History of Emotions: An Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015); Karen Vallgård, 'Følelshistorie – Teoretiske brudflader og udfordringer', *Kulturstudier* 2 (2013): 87-113; Ute Frevert, *Emotions in History – Lost and Found* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2011); Hugo Nordland, 'Eviga emotioner och konstruerade känslor: Riktningar inom känslornas historia', *Scandia* 78, no. 2 (2012): 119-126; Barbara H. Rosenwein and Riccardo Cristiani, *What is the History of Emotions?* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2018); Katie Barclay, *The History of Emotions: A Student Guide to Methods and Sources* (London: Macmillan Education UK, 2020).

Social constructivists might very well be accused of collapsing all emotions into discursive representations,<sup>47</sup> while more essentialist approaches might assert, crudely put, that we can never access emotional experience, why tracking changes in it over time would be a hopeless venture. The countless dichotomies that arise from attempts to grasp human emotion make it difficult for us, however, to ever be able to please everyone at once.

All the while, our sources are permeated by affective assertions. Such statements must be subjected to semantic scrutiny and to other aspects of source criticism just like any other statement must be. Anachronism, for example, remains the deadliest of sins that a historian can commit.

Yet, disregarding certain clues simply on the basis that they indicate subjective feeling and therefore either have no historical value or that the historian is unable to untangle them, must be dissatisfactory to a profession that has always looked for answers to 'what it means to be human', as Rob Boddice has noted in a recent monograph on the fractured state of the field.<sup>48</sup>

Throughout the following pages, I outline the theoretical foundations for the dissertation at hand, which is largely sympathetic to Boddice's worldview. The premise that saturates my approach is quite simple: we must take seriously indications of emotion in our sources, for they are key to understanding how historical phenomena 'felt' to those who lived it.

Notwithstanding the above, we perhaps cannot fully escape the need to reflect on what exactly emotions 'are'. Next, therefore, I would like to highlight the increasing consensus among scholars within the humanities, as well as in the social and natural sciences, that suggest that the ontology of emotions is both composite and biocultural. This, I suggest, allows for the historian to largely take feelings at face value,

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<sup>47</sup> William M. Reddy, 'Against Constructionism: The Historical Ethnography of Emotions', *Current Anthropology* 38, no. 3 (1997): 327-351.

<sup>48</sup> Boddice, *History of Emotions*, 8. Similarly, historian Karen Vallgård, referring to psychohistorian Peter Gay, has asserted how we as historians often unknowingly employ psychological theories in attempts to understand the actions and emotional lives of past historical subjects. See, Vallgård, 'Følelsheshistorie', 87.



at least at the ontological level, without fear of potential accusations of scientific misconduct.

### *Emotions as Biocultural Entities*

Recent strides in emotions research show that a rapprochement is underway which claims that the expression and experience of emotion are constituted by at once natural, cultural, and social elements. While historians have had serious doubts as to whether they could fully ‘grasp’ a phenomenon that appears to originate and emerge from ‘within’ their subjects, natural and social scientists, especially those who study the brain, have shown increasing interest in what influence the cultural sphere might have and has had on the neural patterns they primarily study.

An example of this is found in cultural neuroscientist Joan Y. Chiao’s review of current emotion research from 2015.<sup>49</sup> Here, Chiao outlines various theories of emotions on a spectrum that reaches from theories that claim that we inhabit ‘basic’ emotions<sup>50</sup> to theories that maintain that emotions are exclusively socially constructed.<sup>51</sup>

The ‘basic emotions’ model argues that emotions such as fear or anger emerge from a universal activation of correlates in the brain, while the social constructionist view, which will be familiar to historians, argues that emotions should be viewed, essentially, as products of cultural and social norms. Between these extremes we find theories such as cognitive appraisal, which emphasises how our thoughts and

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<sup>49</sup> Joan Y. Chiao, ‘Current Emotion Research in Cultural Neuroscience’, *Emotion Review* 7, no. 3 (2015): 280-293.

<sup>50</sup> See, for example, the work of psychologist Paul Ekman in Paul Ekman, ‘An Argument for Basic Emotions’, *Cognition and Emotion* 6, no. 3 (1992): 169-200. Although variations exist, the amount of ‘basic’ emotions that proponents of such a view argue that humans share in common is most often set to six: disgust, anger, surprise, fear, sadness and happiness.

<sup>51</sup> Perhaps most notably put forward in Lila Abu-Lughod and Catherine Lutz, *Language and the Politics of Emotion* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), esp. 1-23.

subjective evaluations of the bodily manifestations that a feeling might cause, shape how emotions are both expressed and experienced.

Theories that view emotions as psychologically constructed are also found in this middle ground and have gained currency, albeit not without controversy, through the work of neuropsychologist Lisa Feldman Barrett in particular.

Barrett posits that emotions are the product of the interaction that takes place between various psychological and neural systems at the same time. An emotion, accordingly, is an attempt to give meaning to the affective circumstances that arise from these interactions. Once they have been recognised as something familiar, we *feel* that we feel.<sup>52</sup> Barrett has developed various analogies to simplify such a theory, including that of encountering a possible snake:

Suppose you're walking alone in the forest, and you hear a rustle in the leaves and see a vague movement on the ground. As always, your body-budgeting regions initiate predictions – say, that there's a snake nearby. These predictions prepare you to see and hear a snake. At the same time, these regions predict that your heart rate should increase and your blood vessels should dilate, for instance, in preparation to run. A pounding heart and surging blood would cause interoceptive sensations, so your brain must predict those sensations as well. As a result, your brain stimulates the snake, the bodily changes, and the bodily sensations. These predictions translate into feeling; in this case you begin to feel agitated ... perhaps no snake is present – the leaves

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<sup>52</sup> In the English language, a semantic differentiation is often made between 'emotion', 'feeling' and 'affect'. Roughly sketched, an 'emotion' refers to a feeling that we can label and recognise; a 'feeling' is a sensation of emotion that we recognise but remains to be labelled, while 'affect' is a pre-discursive sensation that is not named nor recognised. I use the three terms interchangeably. For 'affect' as other than 'emotion' and 'feeling', see, for example, Kathleen Stewart, *Ordinary Affects* (Durham, NC and London: Duke University Press, 2007); Brian Massumi, *Parables for the Virtual: Movement, Affect, Sensation* (Durham, NC and London: Duke University Press, 2002).

were just rustled by the wind – but you see a snake anyway. That’s affective realism.<sup>53</sup>

As such, our brain ‘makes’ emotions based on sensory inputs and an array of predictions that are culturally and socially informed. While Barrett’s theory nevertheless upholds a distinction between ‘affect’ and ‘emotion’ with affect located in the brain and emotions being constructed by neural networks working together, the important point here is that these networks process cultural and social scripts.

To use the example of the snake again, a basic emotions argument would require the person to see the actual snake in order to produce a ‘response’ of fear. Barrett’s work claims that the prediction the brain makes that a snake is present is no less *natural* in that it gives the person the time to move away from a potential danger. At the same time, however, the brain has ‘learned’ that snakes present a potential threat through cultural transmission. Human feeling is in this way a biocultural entity and is increasingly viewed as such across disciplinary divides.

Historians, then, are not merely looking for clues of how something ‘innate’ has been interpreted by their chosen subjects but are inquiring into how the world in fact ‘felt’ to them. At the same time, neuroscientists continue to perform MRI scans and place electrodes on their subjects’ heads, asking what – in the world – could have made the images they produce look the way they do.

Historians, and scholars in the humanities at large, can consequently safely go about their work without worrying too much about whether what they have found is an ‘actual’ feeling. As Boddice asserts: ‘physiological reactions are culturally bound by what stimulates them,

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<sup>53</sup> Lisa Feldman Barrett, *How Emotions Are Made: The Secret Life of the Brain* (Boston and New York: Thoughton Mifflin Harcourt, 2017), 77. See also, Lisa Feldman Barrett, ‘Solving the Emotion Paradox: Categorization and the Experience of Emotion’, *Personality and Social Psychology Review* 10, no. 1 (2006): 14; “I’m Extremely Controversial”: The Psychologist Rethinking Human Emotion’, *The Guardian*, 25 September 2020.

and culturally influenced by codes of expression that in turn modulate or modify them'.<sup>54</sup> Emotions are not only biocultural, then, but also change over time, the study of which remains a unique domain of the historian.

### *Towards a Holistic Ontology*

The above rapprochement in the nature/culture divide has been progressively reflected in the historiography of emotions history as well. The methods and theories applied by historians with an interest in the feelings of the past seem, in hindsight, to have undergone the same changes as many other areas of study within the humanities and social sciences. As social constructionism and constructivism heralded a new theoretical era throughout especially the 1980's, others would counter with fundamentally essentialist views. Eventually, compromises were sought, which have largely continued up until the present day.

One such compromise is found in historian and cultural anthropologist William M. Reddy's concept of the 'emotive'.<sup>55</sup> Reddy's idea of the emotive originally came about as a critique of what he saw as the inadequacy of social constructivist conceptualisations of emotion in realising that emotional utterances were neither strictly constative nor performative. That is, saying 'I am scared', for example, is not simply a description of the emotion of 'fear' to which it refers, nor does it mean that the person is, in fact, scared. The 'emotive', as he defined it, was instead a speech act that cannot fully capture an 'inner' emotion, but in constituting an attempt to do so, modifies the feeling to which it refers.

In this we find a dynamic that means emotions can change over time. Although his critique of social constructionism warned of the pitfalls of conceiving of emotions as mere discursive representations, his goal was not to promote an essential worldview instead. Rather, his point was

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<sup>54</sup> Boddice, *History of Emotions*, 158-159.

<sup>55</sup> Reddy, 'Against Constructionism'.

that natural and cultural notions of emotion do not exist independently from one another. Emotives are, in their essence, the attempts we make to express how we feel, and these attempts are shaped by social and cultural conventions. By 'naming' an emotion, we are trying to put words on something that is difficult to describe.

In this way, Reddy's theorisation bears similarities to Barrett's in that the emotive is 'made' through our recognising, or endeavouring to recognise, what and how we feel. While Barrett keeps apart the 'fuzzy', albeit inherent affect, as something that has the potential to become a felt emotion on its transcription by the conventions of culture and memory that function as a catalyst, Reddy on the other hand sees emotions as experienced 'within', with the emotive emerging as an expression that is only ever *symptomatic* of its experience.

The supposed dichotomies of inner/outer and experience/expression have long been crucial to how scholars have chosen to study emotions as a historical phenomenon. Peter and Carol Stearns, for instance, in an oft-cited 1985 article, upheld their insistence that a strict delineation was needed between emotional experience and what they termed 'emotionology', defined as 'the attitudes that a society, or a definable group within a society, maintains towards basic emotions and their appropriate expression'.<sup>56</sup>

Stearns and Stearns, while concerned only with 'basic' emotions,<sup>57</sup> did not, however, nor did Reddy, necessarily adhere to the belief that emotions are ahistorical or universal. Changes in basic emotional experience might or might not occur over time, they stated, but in any

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<sup>56</sup> Peter N. Stearns and Carol Z. Stearns, 'Emotionology: Clarifying the History of Emotions and Emotional Standards', *American Historical Review* 90, no. 4 (1985): 815.

<sup>57</sup> Stearns and Stearns would use the approach they developed in 'Emotionology' in a monograph on the history of anger, shortly after their initial article was published. Using advice literature as their primary source material, Stearns and Stearns traced changes in the emotional norms governing anger in the United States from the colonial era to the then-present day within the institutions of marriage, the workplace and child rearing. See, Carol Z. Stearns and Peter N. Stearns, *Anger: The Struggle for Emotional Control in America's History* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1987).

case, historians should be wary of making grand claims of ‘dramatic upheavals’ because the experience they claimed was mutable was, in fact, made up of biological components. Furthermore, they claimed, what recent works at the time had maintained to be proof of variations in emotional experience were actually changes in the standards that Stearns and Stearns had now conceptualised with ‘emotionology’.

While shifts in societal emotional prescription might have bearing on emotional experience, emotionologists like Stearns and Stearns asserted that they were bound to take place at a slower rate and more invisibly to the historian’s eye than historians would like to think.<sup>58</sup> Their important work would turn emotions historians to the crucial question of how and what we are ‘taught’ to feel and raised a discussion of where such ‘lessons’ might come from.

While using their insistence on there being a biological dimension to emotional experience to prevent humanities scholars from making assertions that were perhaps too overtly suspect and anachronistic, their own work, concentrated on norms, ironically suggested that some emotions were indeed, at least partly, socially constructed. Yet, their own method advised not to make assumptions about emotional experience, meaning that attempts to verify such a claim would be deemed invalid because of the ontological wall that had been raised between experience and expression.

It was this gap that Reddy sought to narrow with the concept of the ‘emotive’, which legitimised the epistemological benefits of searching for ‘authentic’ emotional experience, while at the same time preserving the ‘natural’ component of emotions that had led to ontological concerns.

The debates about inner/outer feeling and the matter of the potential changeability of emotions would be softened even further when historical anthropologist Monique Scheer introduced her Bourdieu-inspired practice-based approach to studying historical feelings in

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<sup>58</sup> Stearns and Stearns, ‘Emotionology’, 829.

2012.<sup>59</sup> Viewing emotions as a form of practice, Scheer refuted the notion that emotions are something we possess or have, and which emerge from the depths of the mind. Emotions are instead, she claimed, something we 'do'. This holistic approach has become very popular among historians, as it, rather helpfully, marked a shift from an ontological discussion which centred around defining exactly what emotions 'are', to the question of how emotions are 'done' and what they 'do', a breeding ground from which scholars, with less epistemological restraint, could inquire into the relation between emotions and the social and cultural realms in which historians profess their expertise.<sup>60</sup>

The premises of Scheer's theory would encompass most of the theoretical approaches to studying emotions history thus far by bringing them into a more compromising framework by locating the body as the main integral by which we both express and experience feeling. In short, we cannot feel if we take the body out of the equation.<sup>61</sup>

Crucial to this idea is Bourdieu's notion of the 'habitus', which dictates that socialisation does not only become manifest as an 'outer', discursive and conscious act, but that it is, at its core, embodied,<sup>62</sup> which renders pointless any distinction between the subjective experience of an emotion and a 'readable' expression of it.

The body is thus socially structured, and emotions are practised, both consciously and less so, according to the conventions that have, over time, come to be embedded in the habitus. Embodied sociability

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<sup>59</sup> Monique Scheer, 'Are Emotions a Kind of Practice (And Is That What Makes Them Have a History)? A Bourdieuan Approach to Understanding Emotion', *History and Theory* 51 (2012): 193-220.

<sup>60</sup> Vallgård, 'Følelshistorie', 104.

<sup>61</sup> Scheer, 'Are Emotions a Kind of Practice?', 200.

<sup>62</sup> See, for example, Pierre Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice*, trans. Richard Nice (Stanford, CA: California University Press, 1990), esp. 52-65.

will determine the range of emotions that can be practised in any given context but does not determine what is ultimately felt.<sup>63</sup>

On a practical level, Scheer outlines four overlapping types of emotional practices: *mobilising*, *naming*, *communicating*, and *regulating*:

*Mobilising* practices are subjective and intersubjective interactions that one carries out in order to achieve a desired feeling or modify an existing feeling through manipulating body and mind. We might seek to intensify some feelings or ‘dampen’ others. Concrete examples of this could be listening to music, reading a book on the beach, or even drinking alcohol or using narcotics.<sup>64</sup>

*Naming* practices are about putting words to feeling, similarly to Reddy’s ‘emotive’, which also stresses the performative nature of emotional expression. Shouting out one’s love for someone else, writing about one’s sadness in a diary or complaining about an angry boss could all be considered types of naming, which are always bound up with bodily practice and the specific situation in which we find ourselves. A whisper is different to a scream, while writing in a diary is different to performing one’s wedding vows.<sup>65</sup>

*Communicating* practices are intersubjective actions with the goal of successfully relaying how we feel to others, often through *naming*. The degree of success by which we subjectively measure such practices depends on how the recipient interprets them.<sup>66</sup> Their response in turn feeds back into the sender’s evaluation of whether the communication was successful, potentially with the effect that the sender experiences a modification of the emotion that they originally intended to communicate. In this way *communicating* practices can take on a *mobilising* or even *regulating* function.

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<sup>63</sup> Scheer, ‘Are Emotions a Kind of Practice?’, 205; Vallgård, ‘Følelshistorie’, 17.

<sup>64</sup> Scheer, ‘Are Emotions a Kind of Practice?’, 209-212.

<sup>65</sup> Scheer, ‘Are Emotions a Kind of Practice?’, 212-214.

<sup>66</sup> Scheer, ‘Are Emotions a Kind of Practice?’, 214-215.



*Regulating* practices capture the attempts we make to adjust our emotions to the ‘emotionology’ of society that governs social interaction and expectation.<sup>67</sup> Suppressing a laugh that one knows will be deemed inappropriate by bystanders or hiding one’s pride in doing well in an exam because one’s friend did badly, illustrate how regulating practices function. The degree to which norms define one’s regulating practices may in turn depend on how individually invested a person is in the many social communities through which we move on a regular basis.

Scheer’s typology’s perhaps most innovative consequence for historians lies in its usefulness as an applied theory that can be utilised methodically, because the categories above broaden the palette of identifiable emotions in sources.<sup>68</sup> I elaborate further on this aspect in the methodological discussion to come.

While Reddy would have us searching for naming practices in particular, Scheer, through her suggestion of employing a more holistic worldview, argues that we can look for actions beyond mere utterances as well. Signs of bodily acts: tears, trembling; of third-person practices: ‘she said she felt mortified’; of seemingly mundane features of everyday life: ‘she turned on the radio to drown out their voices’, thus become interesting and legitimate as clues that indicate emotion, yet always in context.

The idea of emotion as practice has not been left entirely unscathed, though. In a recent article on the potential value of an engagement by emotions historians with ‘new materialism’, historian Katie Barclay emphasises that practice theory, in its downplaying of dichotomies such as body/mind and nature/culture, allows us too easily to sidestep the

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<sup>67</sup> Scheer, ‘Are Emotions a Kind of Practice?’, 215-217

<sup>68</sup> Vallgård, ‘Følelseshistorie’, 103. For an article in which Scheer’s methodical consequences are put to the test, see, Kate Davison, et. al, ‘Emotions as a Kind of Practice: Six Cases Utilizing Monique Scheer’s Practice-Based Approach to Emotions in History’, *Cultural History* 7, no. 2 (2018): 226-238.

contingents of biology and neuroscience.<sup>69</sup> Her solution, however, is more sympathetic to these fundamental assumptions of practice theory than her critique of it might at first glance make it seem.

In a dialogue with the work of physicist and feminist theorist Karen Barad, Barclay suggests that the epistemological challenges we meet when dealing with any phenomenon, including emotions, is caused by our insistence on upholding ontological dualisms.

By adopting a new materialist view and erasing the nature/culture divide completely, or at the very least acknowledging that the divide is itself a result of what Barad terms an 'intra-action',<sup>70</sup> when things appear to exist only in relation to something else, emotions take on a 'life of their own'. Emotions are, thus, in the end 'discursive-material' rather than biocultural because 'biocultural' would suggest that nature and culture exist independently from each other, a view that new materialism nullifies.

I have here adhered more to the view that emotions should be viewed as biocultural entities, as it allows for a mutually reinforcing dialogue between scholars across disciplines rather than promotes a deconstruction of the disciplines themselves. New materialism does, however, constructively highlight the complexity of emotions, even when they are thought about both along and against biocultural lines.

As Barclay reminds us, and which I dare to say is true no matter which ontology we ascribe to them (if any), feelings remain 'entangled with matter, the body, society, culture, space, the historian and more'.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> Katie Barclay, 'New Materialism and the New History of Emotions', *Emotions: History, Culture, Society* 1, no. 1 (2017): 168.

<sup>70</sup> I confess that I find it difficult to penetrate the denseness of Barad's abstractions but at the same time find it unnecessary to go into more concrete detail on their ideas concerning 'new materialism'. As points of reference, see, for example, Karen Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007); Mathilde Juelskjær, 'Intra-Active Entanglements: An Interview with Karen Barad', *Kvinder, Køn & Forskning* 1-2 (2012): 10-21.

<sup>71</sup> Barclay, 'New Materialism and the New History of Emotions', 177.

### *Feelings and Their Politics*

If emotions are bound up with all these things, then emotional practices, as Scheer defines them, are not just ‘done’ in context, but also ‘do’ something to the context in which they are practised.<sup>72</sup> This was the central premise of cultural theorist Sara Ahmed’s influential *The Cultural Politics of Emotion* from 2004, in which she argues, as noted earlier, that emotions ‘align some subjects with some others and against other others’.<sup>73</sup>

Like Scheer, Ahmed views emotions as a form of cultural practice. By ascribing the sources of our feelings to objects and others, she contends, emotions shape the bodies of individuals and collectives, ‘which take shape through the repetition of actions over time’.<sup>74</sup>

Reading with Ahmed, feelings emerge through the contact we have with the objects and others that exist in the world. These objects of emotions circulate and leave impressions on us, so that what and how we feel about them either widens or narrows the gap between ‘us’ and ‘them’. In this way, communities are forged through emotions. A group, then, might share the same values and adhere to the same modes of feeling,<sup>75</sup> yet emotions might also “bunch” individuals in different ways’,<sup>76</sup> as historian Joanna Bourke has similarly described it.

So, while we can look to a given social community and ask what the people within them share in common, we might also ask what exactly in their shared emotional repertoire makes them appear as if they make up a definable group.<sup>77</sup> Consequently, Ahmed, in her analyses of texts

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<sup>72</sup> Boddice, *History of Emotions*, 121-122; Vallgård, ‘Følelshistorie’, 103.

<sup>73</sup> Ahmed, ‘Collective Feeling’, 25; Sara Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2004), 42.

<sup>74</sup> Ahmed, *Cultural Politics of Emotion*, 4.

<sup>75</sup> As is the key argument in medieval historian Barbara Rosenwein’s concept of ‘emotional communities’. See, Barbara H. Rosenwein, ‘Worrying about Emotions in History’, *American Historical Review* 107, no. 3 (2002): 821-845.

<sup>76</sup> Joanna Bourke, ‘Fear and Anxiety: Writing about Emotion in Modern History’, *History Workshop Journal* 55 (2003): 111-133.

<sup>77</sup> Boddice, *History of Emotions*, 82.

in the public domain, shows how emotions such as love, fear, hate and disgust, have subtly entered debates on contemporary political issues and function in particular as a means with which to create and structure largely imagined national identities.

Ahmed's notions will not be wholly unfamiliar to scholars within for example postcolonial studies, who have long drawn attention to how emotional 'education', of the European as well as the 'colonised', was crucial to upholding seemingly inherent differences between the two and thus legitimised the colonial project at large.<sup>78</sup>

The assumption that emerges from these types of studies regarding the relation between emotions and historically conditioned phenomena such as the colonial project or the 'nation', is that, for these institutions to survive, they would have to be installed in their subjects. In these processes, emotions are crucial to their ultimate success.

Like Ahmed shows, a right-wing fascist group might construe their hate for others as 'love' of their country. Or, as historian Karen Vallgård has shown in an analysis of missionary texts directed towards Danish children in the early twentieth century, they might be taught to internalise feelings of 'pity' for the Hindu child, which despite its seemingly positive connotations of being capable of empathising with others, worked to reproduce colonial categories.<sup>79</sup>

What has perhaps been lacking from these otherwise commendable analyses is the question of whether and *how* subjects come to internalise the contingencies of historical phenomena. This is not the same as asking whether a member of a right-wing fascist group 'actually' 'hates' foreign migrants or could be said to have felt 'authentic' love for their country, but rather of how we might see it reflected in the sources (or not), for example in an analysis of their emotional practices.

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<sup>78</sup> For example, Ann Laura Stoler, *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power: Race and the Intimate in Colonial Rule* (Berkeley, CA: California University Press, 2002)

<sup>79</sup> Karen Vallgård, *Imperial Childhoods and Christian Mission: Education and Emotions in South India and Denmark* (Houndmills, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 227-228.

In the relatively new and emerging field of the history of experience, such questions stand at the forefront of historical investigations.<sup>80</sup> How, for example, do and did we ‘live’ the welfare state, modernity, colonialism or a religion?

To attempt to answer such questions does not mean to shy away from investigating how discourses and ideology shape experience but rather to also ask how the experiences of historical subjects, along with their subjective identity and social and physical realities,<sup>81</sup> can be asserted as having embodied or even contradicted those same powerful currents.<sup>82</sup>

Or, to apply this concretely to the emotions that I have argued indicate historical experience and constitute the primary theoretical angle in this dissertation: we should continue investigating how discourse and ideologies moulded how and what we were supposed to feel about ourselves and others.

Yet, I am also interested in whether, and if so, how, this emotional prescription was embodied in the practices that historical subjects carried out when going about their daily lives.

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<sup>80</sup> In 2018, the Centre for Excellence in History of Experiences (HEX) was founded at Tampere University. It collaborates with the established research centres of Queen Mary Centre for the History of Emotions, University of London and Center for the History of Emotions at the Max-Planck Institut für Bildungsforschung in Berlin, as well as with research centres concentrating on welfare, children and the history of medicine at the University of Southern Denmark, Linköping University and the University of Warwick, respectively.

<sup>81</sup> Here, physical space and social constructions of the spaces through which we move have become an ever-more important reality of emotional experience, as I elaborate on in the first analytical chapter. See, for example, Gertrud Lehnert (ed.), *Raum und Gefühl: Der Spatial Turn und die Neue Emotionsforschung* (Bielefeld, DE: Transcript, 2011).

<sup>82</sup> Ville Kivimäki et al., ‘Lived Nation: Histories of Experience and Emotion in Understanding Nationalism’, in *Lived Nation as the History of Experiences and Emotions in Finland, 1800-2000*, ed. Ville Kivimäki et al. (Cham, CH: Palgrave Macmillan, 2021), 10, doi: 10.1007/978-3-030-69882-9.

### *Intersectionality and Emotional Formation*

It would seem diminishing of the complexities of historical experience to claim that the lived experience of apartheid was only a racialised one. Race, or rather perceptions of race, were unavoidably a vital factor in the moulding of individual and subjective identities and experience by a state that openly adhered to racial ideology and pandered to prejudicial instincts. Yet, as scholars have increasingly recognised, the questions of privilege and opportunity that present themselves to a person throughout their life are often more intricate since most people inhabit multiple identities at once.

Therein lies the basic premise of the concept of intersectionality, introduced by legal scholar and civil rights advocate Kimberlé Crenshaw in a 1989 paper, in which she theorised that being a black woman could not be understood in isolated terms of being either black or female, but that these two identities intersected in shaping lived experience.<sup>83</sup> Since its initial embrace by scholars of gender studies,<sup>84</sup> the analytical scope of intersectionality has throughout the last two decades been expanded to include an array of identity categories such as nationality, class, religion, sexuality and ability.

Despite the South African radical-liberal debate being framed as one of 'either race or class', these respective categories' intersection with one another, as well as with especially gender and sexuality, have not been ignored, as I discuss on occasion in the empirical chapters. Historians of South Africa's past have not hesitated in conducting analyses from an intersectional perspective but have to the extent of my knowledge mostly done so in implicit rather than explicit terms. Because race and/or class over time became given analytical categories to those studying apartheid, attempts at bringing into the fold additional identities such as gender

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<sup>83</sup> Kimberlé Crenshaw, 'Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics', *University of Chicago Legal Forum* 1 (1989): 139-167.

<sup>84</sup> See, for example, Avtar Brah and Ann Phoenix, 'Ain't I a Woman? Revisiting Intersectionality', *Journal of International Women's Studies* 5, no. 3 (2004): 75-86.

would have to address their intersection with already established identities as a matter of course.

In a newer and original example of this, sociologist and political scientist Daniel Conway, in his doctoral dissertation from 2006, studies objections to compulsory military service in South Africa in the 1980's. In it, Conway makes the point that marginalised masculine identities such as homosexuality were deviant in South African state discourse, although homosexual conscripts were not excluded from serving in the South African Defence Force.<sup>85</sup> Conway in this way illustrates how a white, male homosexual might suffer discrimination in a heteronormative society at large, but that in terms of the military service that was crucial to white Nationalist ideology, the intersection of the identity markers of white and male was deemed more important than the intersection which otherwise might also include sexual orientation. Therefore, while different identities are always interwoven, their intersections will carry a variable analytical weight depending on the situated context.

Bringing emotions into an intersectional analysis means recognising the differential ways in which emotional practice is shaped by the makeup of the individual habitus, as Scheer ascertains. Emotional prescription and experience, as I hypothesise, might then be viewed through the racialised operations of apartheid logic, yet, reading with Bourdieu, what is learned with the body is grounded in a habitus that is made up by much more than race.<sup>86</sup> As other historians and theorists of emotions have shown, some milieus cultivate or condemn, for example, gendered, and even 'queered', practices and norms.<sup>87</sup> The challenge for myself and

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<sup>85</sup> Daniel Conway, 'Masculinity, Citizenship and Political Objection to Compulsory Military Service in the South African Defence Force 1978-1990', unpublished PhD diss. (Rhodes University, 2006), 77-78.

<sup>86</sup> Bourdieu, *Logic of Practice*, esp. 59-60.

<sup>87</sup> See, for example, Karen Vallgård, 'Ugly Intimacies and State Power: Separation Processes in Late Nineteenth-century Copenhagen', *Gender & History* 32, no. 1 (2019): 1-18; Ahmed, 'Queer Feelings' in *Cultural Politics of Emotion*, 144-167; Sara Ahmed, *Queer Phenomenology: Orientations, Objects, Others* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2006).

for the historian at large in this regard lies in explaining individual emotional practices that stand out as inflected by the individual's habitus in relation to processes, social, economic or otherwise, that dominate at a given time and place. The object of study here, then, is not merely emotional practices in and of themselves, but their relationship with and to the many structures of which an individual's habitus is made up. Historians Stephanie Olsen, Karen Vallgård and Kristine Alexander have developed the concept of emotional formation to point to this relationship, originally devised as an operational tool to use in studies of the history of childhood.<sup>88</sup> Formation is to be understood as both a pattern of various structures and a process of 'doing, learning and articulating, in order to produce specific habits of feeling in the self or in others'<sup>89</sup>, which overlap and mutually enforce each other. The codes that the practices involved in the process reflect, challenge, and reproduce are, in turn, structured by multiple social classifications.<sup>90</sup> Even if race in my analyses remains the fundamental operative force of apartheid and so, unquestionably shaped both the patterns and the process of emotional formation, an understanding of its intersection with other categorisations is essential to get at what the experience of apartheid entailed beyond race.

In the following, I outline how the above affects my course of action concerning delimitation, scope, sources, and method in approaching this dissertation's main subject of the emotional politics of apartheid.

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<sup>88</sup> Karen Vallgård, Kristine Alexander and Stephanie Olsen, 'Emotions and the Global Politics of Childhood' in *Childhood, Youth and Emotions in Modern History: National, Colonial and Global Perspectives*, ed. Stephanie Olsen (Houndmills, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 12-34.

<sup>89</sup> Stephanie Olsen, 'The History of Childhood and the Emotional Turn', *History Compass* 15, no. 11 (2017): 6.

<sup>90</sup> Vallgård, 'Ugly Intimacies', 5.



## Scope and Delimitation, Sources and Method

Where and how to look for traces of the emotional experience of apartheid presents multiple dilemmas. In this section, I explain how I approach apartheid as lived experience by looking to the so-called ‘petty’ apartheid sphere, which, I argue, carves out an epistemological space in which South Africans potentially ‘met’ notions of race and difference on a consistent basis. Thereafter, I discuss why I have chosen to deselect the ‘traditional’ method of employing an oral history approach in favour of seeking out everyday experiences in the apartheid archives. I insist in my subsequent discussion of my source material, that despite its apparent shortcomings in terms of representation and production, it nonetheless offers an opportunity to integrate state and social histories and study how agency and discourse were mutually constituent. Finally, my analytical strategy also takes this last point into account. Here, I explain how I look for clues of how emotions were practised and how I proceed in interpreting how they ‘worked’ along as well as counter to the established notions that were characteristic of apartheid social formations and hierarchies.

### *Apartheid and Lived Experience*

The word *apartheid* is itself not handily defined. As Dubow has noted, apartheid no longer solely demarcates South Africa under National Party rule from 1948 until 1994, but has instead become a global metaphor, used to point out unequal distributions of wealth and power in countless contexts.

Israeli state and military interventions in occupied Palestine are commonly referred to as constituting apartheid. More recently, apartheid has become a common denominator used to describe the treatment of Rohingya people at the hands of Myanmar (Burma) security forces.<sup>91</sup> Although I in this dissertation re-ascribe historical,

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<sup>91</sup> See, for example, “‘Caged Without a Roof’: Apartheid in Myanmar’s Rakhine State” (London: Amnesty International, 2017).

spatial, and temporal specificity to the term, it can be understood in different ways, contemporary definitions notwithstanding.

As I touched upon in my discussion on existing research on segregation and apartheid, it can just as easily be conflated to mean institutionalised racism as it can to mean a specific, colonial form of governance, or even capitalist exploitation.<sup>92</sup> Consequently, my quest to understand how apartheid was lived, received and practised begs a myriad exceptions and delimitations when clarifying how such a study might look when, in fact, apartheid was arguably all of these things at the same time.

On the ground, however, it might prove difficult to claim that black South Africans would, on a consistent basis, be confronted with being disenfranchised, for example, or, that a well-to-do white South African would regularly be confronted with the size of their wealth. Instead, to put it roughly, for most, apartheid would not manifest itself as anything out of the ordinary when people went about their daily lives.

Segregationist and later, apartheid, policies would, undoubtedly indirectly affect individual life courses. In a recent article, historian Wayne Dooling has shown how the philosophy of segregation led to a shortage in housing provision for black and Coloured Capetonians in the first decades of the twentieth century. For the less privileged, overcrowding, poor health and poverty dominated their everyday lives because the task of procuring acceptable living arrangements for thousands of people could not keep nor measure up with the evolving policies of residential segregation.<sup>93</sup>

The Group Areas Act, introduced by the apartheid government in 1950, and which secured the formal designation of certain residential areas as reserved for a specific racial group, would likewise normalise mass housing for black South Africans, with thousands of people undergoing involuntary relocations to new homes to keep especially

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<sup>92</sup> Dubow, *Apartheid*, 284.

<sup>93</sup> Wayne Dooling, “Cape Town Knows, But She Forgets”: Segregation and the Making of a Housing Crisis during the First Half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century’, *Journal of Southern African Studies* 44, no. 6 (2018): 1057-1076.

urban areas white.<sup>94</sup> Such experiences make up only a few examples of the harsh and sometimes inhumane social realities that were outcomes of apartheid policies. Race was certainly not detached from material conditions, as radical scholars have convincingly proven. Consequently, the migrant labour system, for example, would have involved emotional experiences of all kinds: longing, rage, or bereavement when considering the many long-term separations of black families, perhaps, but happy moments, surely, as well. The lived experiences I seek out, however, arguably differ from the above in some crucial ways.

Firstly, I am interested in cases that emerged more because of the racial aspects of apartheid ideology being directly applied, as it is in these experiences that we find a narrower gap between the discourses that surfaced at the official level and the subjectivities of the people they informed and around and among whom they circulated. To put this in simple and perhaps overstated terms, it seems unlikely that it was a professed ideal of the apartheid state that ‘non-white’ South Africans should be poorer that led to materially inferior circumstances for these people, rather than the principle of racial separation itself. As Dubow has concluded: ‘Crude racial domination or *baaskap*<sup>95</sup> was always central to the lived experience of apartheid’.<sup>96</sup> I therefore seek out experiences in which the persons involved can be assumed to subjectively have been aware that racial discourses and policies to some degree shaped how they should and did feel about themselves and others. This means also that I factor in, insofar possible, the emotions and experiences of South Africans throughout the racial spectrum rather than only homing in on the experiences of the majority, for

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<sup>94</sup> For example, Laurine Platzky and Cheryl Walker, *The Surplus People: Forced Removals in South Africa* (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1985); Shamil Jeppie and Crain Soudien (eds.), *The Struggle for District Six: Past and Present* (Cape Town: Buchu, 1990); Uma Mesthrie, ‘The Tramway Road Removals, 1959-61’, *Kronos* 21: 61-78.

<sup>95</sup> From Afrikaans. Literally, ‘boss-ship’, understood as the dominance of other ethnic groups by white people.

<sup>96</sup> Dubow, *Apartheid*, 292. My underscoring. Italicisation in the original.

example on the extreme economic exploitation to which they were subjected by the white minority.

Secondly, and as Dubow additionally implies with the very same argument above, the cases I go on to analyse in detail are furthermore presumed to have been part and parcel of a *constant* lived experience more than 'one-time' events such as forced removals, although I do not suggest that having undergone other forms of immediate atrocities would not entail emotional experiences also.

### *Petty Is Just as Grand a Concept*

It is my suggestion here that examples of the application of so-called 'petty' apartheid measures will present us with a more direct link between discourse and practice and so, emotional experience.

In the surrounding world's collective consciousness and in the consciousness of South Africans themselves, the experiences that arose from the enforcement of such 'petty' apartheid laws were not by-products of theoretical forms of governance or peculiarities of a capitalist ideology. Many a schoolchild, for example, will in their history classes about apartheid have been presented with images of the 'whites only' signs that were put in place to segregate public spaces and amenities. These were the types of experiences that made people acutely aware of the fact that their society was lived along racial, and not merely individually distinct, lines. For many, these experiences *were* apartheid.

*Petty* or *klein* apartheid has most often been a term used to refer strictly to the segregation of public facilities.<sup>97</sup> The concept of *grand* or 'total' apartheid, in contrast, has been referred to by historians and political scientists as denoting the increasingly concrete and conscious political planning and associated bureaucratic practices throughout the

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<sup>97</sup> For example, Dubow, *Apartheid*, 151.

National Party period that were intended to shape racial separation on a larger scale.<sup>98</sup>

‘Grander’ apartheid measures would thus commonly signify, for example, the curbing of the political rights of black Africans and their access to land; the elaboration of a largely black African migrant labour scheme; residential segregation; job reservation for white (and Coloured) South Africans; and the ‘Bantustan’ policy of the 1960’s and 1970’s, which created quasi-independent ‘native homelands’.

‘Petty’ measures instead represented the ‘visible’ side of apartheid, manifest primarily through legislation that enforced racial segregation at the micro-level. Ironically, the word ‘petty’ implies that these measures were indeed trivial, superfluous or of secondary or lesser importance to or than other policies and legislation. This is perhaps also why the petty sphere has been largely overlooked in historical studies of apartheid or, at the very least, has been treated matter-of-factly compared to studies of governance and ideology.

I expand the ‘petty’ sphere slightly in this study to include arguably less physically ‘visible’ measures, but nevertheless provisions that can be expected to have caused regular interruptions to the mundanity of average life. Schoolchildren and others, as well as the readers of this dissertation, might also have heard of the laws that prohibited so-called miscegenation, or read about the infamous ‘pencil test’, where classifiers determined to which ‘race’ a person belonged based on the texture of their hair.<sup>99</sup>

The enforcement, both official and unofficial, of anti-miscegenation and race classification laws, just like the laws that dictated that public amenities be segregated, frequently generated windows of opportunity for the racial ‘truths’ inscribed in these laws to be received and thus made available to them as emotional experience. Although only a

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<sup>98</sup> See, for example, Dan O’Meara, *Forty Lost Years: The Apartheid State and the Politics of the National Party, 1948-1994* (Randburg, ZA and Athens, OH: Ravan Press and Ohio University Press, 1996), 64-74; Aletta J. Norval, *Deconstructing Apartheid Discourse* (London and New York: Verso, 1994), 103-104.

<sup>99</sup> Deborah Posel, ‘What’s in a Name? Racial Classifications and Their Afterlife’, *Transformation* 47 (2001): 59.

minority came into contact with the state and its institutions as a result of a direct execution of the Acts, their intended safeguarding of racialised space, bodies and ontology meant that most South Africans were vulnerable to their secondary effects. As political scientists Kimberley J. Morgan and Ann Shola Orloff have lucidly argued in a recent edited work, the state has ‘many hands’. According to them, a state is never static, and it furthermore operates through many and multifaceted governmental practices. Its power is often improvised and is both deliberately and unintentionally delegated to others who go on to act on the state’s behalf.<sup>100</sup> As I will uncover, the so-called ‘petty’ apartheid sphere to a high degree fostered situations in which the state’s power was exercised in an improvised manner between its various formal and informal representatives, that is, for example, civil servants, the police, judges etc., and its citizens, as well as between citizens themselves in the form of for example informal policing and personal testimonies to each other and to the authorities. Morgan and Orloff’s reconceptualization of the state portrays it as embodying the ability to not only coerce compliance but to induce agreement and to ‘manufacture categories ... that penetrate deep into individual consciousness’.<sup>101</sup> Examples of such forms of state power, by extension, as Vallgård has demonstrated, expose emotional formation because the state ‘operates on the mind as much of the body of its subjects’.<sup>102</sup> As such, I suggest that the ‘emotional encounters’ I study are of importance when inquiring into the durability of apartheid. Where, then, might one look to find these occurrences?

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<sup>100</sup> Kimberley J. Morgan and Ann Shola Orloff, ‘Introduction: The Many Hands of the State’, in *The Many Hands of the State: Theorizing Political Authority and Social Control*, ed. Kimberley J. Morgan and Ann Shola Orloff (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 1-32.

<sup>101</sup> Morgan and Orloff, ‘Introduction’, 13.

<sup>102</sup> Vallgård, ‘Ugly Intimacies’, 2.

### *The Dilemma of Oral Histories and Resistance Narratives*

A real dilemma presents itself when it comes to the question of which sources could potentially uncover how petty apartheid shaped emotional practice. South African historiography has from throughout the period of the politically turbulent 1980's and after 1994 been widely dominated by oral histories to recover oppressed voices with the perhaps unintended consequence of producing a national, popular 'struggle' history.

Besides the more obvious problems (which can, however, presumably be somewhat countered through stringent methodological reflections) of, for example, whether we are hearing the voice of the interviewer or interviewee, the fact that oral history has now increasingly also come to be regarded as part of a state sponsored project of nation-building, while perhaps not fully justifiable, made me apprehensive.

Indeed, the Oral History Association of South Africa, launched in 2003, was mandated by the South African government through the Department of Arts and Culture to fill in the 'gaps in the public records and public knowledge, which are caused by deliberate omission of African knowledge, technologies, stories and philosophies from the mainstream of South Africa's body of knowledge' that had been 'ravaged by colonialism and apartheid', in order to 'provide alternative narratives' and 'stimulate marginalised and distorted social practices which could enhance the well-being of the people'.<sup>103</sup>

While I concede that I am not in any way proficient in the methodologies that justify the use of oral history or the methods that are used to produce it, the character of my research questions prompted me to take a different route. As historians Leslie Witz, Gary Minkley and Ciraj Rassool have pointed out, 'apartheid did not always produce resistance and ... resistance was not always occasioned by apartheid'.<sup>104</sup>

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<sup>103</sup> Oral History Association of South Africa website, 'About Us', 4 July 2018, <https://www.ohasa.org.za/index.php/about-us>, accessed 14 January 2022.

<sup>104</sup> Leslie Witz, Gary Minkley and Ciraj Rassool, 'Oral History in South Africa: A Country Report', in *Unsettled History: Making South African Public Pasts* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2017), 38. Minkley and Rassool caused quite a stir with their original article in which this claim was initially put forward. For the original, see, Gary Minkley and Ciraj Rassool, 'Orality, Memory, and Social

I look to the lived experience of apartheid not as part of a longer resistance narrative, but as an interaction between discourse, subjectivities, and emotional practice, why I selected to scrutinise apartheid-era records, in which, I argue, traces of all these things are found. Such a choice will certainly make me susceptible to some of the same criticism that has been raised of social and especially oral histories, namely that in not only picking apart apartheid discourse, but also searching for glimpses of independent agency, I am at the same time making the claim that South African history has been sufficiently decolonised.<sup>105</sup> I elaborate on how I accommodate this potential danger in my ensuing discussion of method. Before that, I present my primary source material.

### *On the Sources*

What types of apartheid-era documents cast light on how petty apartheid was enacted in practice and felt by those who lived it? The encounters I study arose primarily from the practical application of three legislative Acts of Parliament: The Reservation of Separate Amenities Act (RSAA) (1953), the Immorality Act (1927, amended 1957) and the Population Registration Act (PRA) (1950). As with so many of the remarkable number of laws passed and amended by successive apartheid governments, their enactment required a sizeable civil service and bureaucracy at the national and local levels.

Criminal and civil cases were brought to the courts under all three measures, all the while both the Afrikaans and English-language press

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History in South Africa', in *Negotiating the Past: The Making of Memory in South Africa*, ed. Sarah Nuttall and Carli Coetzee (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 89-111. A powerful defence of the advantages to oral histories in approaching the apartheid past is found in Vivian Bickford-Smith, Sean Field and Clive Glaser, 'The Western Cape Oral History Project: The 1990s', *African Studies* 60, no. 1 (2001): 5-23.

<sup>105</sup> I return to this debate in my concluding discussion. See, for example, Witz, Minkley and Rassool, 'Oral History', 36; Premesh Lalu, 'When Was South African History Ever Postcolonial?', *Kronos* 34 (2008): 267-281.



reported on policy changes and the events that occurred because of their enforcement. It is largely from within these three institutions: the bureaucracy, the judicature, and the press, that I have pieced together the stories that make up the empirical chapters of this dissertation.

As I go on to explain in the first empirical chapter, the white minority Parliament passed the RSAA in 1953 after existing laws that had been used to facilitate the racial segregation of public facilities hitherto were declared invalid by the highest level of the judicature. Under the RSAA, however, it appears that instances of individuals contravening the Act were not treated harshly at a legal level. While I have found one newspaper report in which an individual told of being arrested, they were likely let off with a warning or a fine at the hands of the police, with cases seldom reaching even the lowest level of the judicature, if at all. I therefore turned to the field of urban planning instead.

The legislative authority concerning the application of the RSAA rested with the councils of South Africa's four apartheid-era provinces, who could direct the segregation of amenities after consultation with local authorities. Should the local authorities fail to implement any instructions emanating from the office of the Provincial Administrator, the province's executive; the Provincial Administration could directly ensure their implementation at the expense of local city and town councils.<sup>106</sup>

In some places, such as in the Cape Province, the implementation of the RSAA was a controversial issue. The City Council of Cape Town, for example, on occasion resisted provincial plans (as did the English-language Cape press) but was nonetheless urged by the electorate to enforce segregation, which it duly did.<sup>107</sup>

It is this intersection, between municipal and provincial authorities and members of the public, that I take advantage of in the first

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<sup>106</sup> Muriel Horrell, *Laws Affecting Race Relations in South Africa* (Johannesburg: South African Institute of Race Relations, 1978), 114.

<sup>107</sup> Crain Soudien, 'Social Conditions, Cultural and Political Life in Working-Class Cape Town, 1950 to 1990', in *More Than Brothers: Peter Clarke & James Matthews at Seventy* (Cape Town: Kwela, 2000), 23.

empirical chapter. As the Provincial Council of the Province of the Cape of Good Hope set about implementing the RSAA in the Cape Peninsula shortly after its formal introduction, it requested input by local ratepayers and other interest groups on how to proceed.

The responses they received would all express the principle of racial separation in public spaces as their main motivation for responding to the Provincial Council's invitation to make their voices heard. The source dossier shows that it included 47 letters written to it by ratepayers' organisations representing a suburb or a specific ward of a town or city, by civic associations, sometimes representing only a single street or apartment building, and by private individuals. Consequently, some views were claimed to represent a larger collective, whilst others remained personal. We cannot, therefore, give a definitive answer as to whether the memoranda and letters submitted collectively were necessarily representative of all stakeholders of the groups they purported to represent.

Some organisations submitted collections of signatures and results of interviews with its ratepayers in order to bolster specific proposals that they wanted the Committee to consider. Others simply claimed without explanation that the views expressed were those of its stakeholders. I do note, however, that the organisations did not automatically shy away from disclosing differing minority opinions. Some opinions might have been overlooked, for example those of individuals disengaged in, or aloof from, the work of the organisations with the mandate to represent them. On a general level, though, the opportunity was there to make one's voice heard, also individually, if one did not wish to associate with the majority.

Geographically speaking, all white areas of Cape Town and the surrounding peninsula appear to be represented, ensuring no geographical bias either. Because the implementation of formal measures to reserve separate amenities was largely a moot venture in 'non-white' areas, the Committee itself acknowledged that it 'dealt mainly with the White and Coloured groups',<sup>108</sup> as recreational facilities in group areas

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<sup>108</sup> 'Report of the Cape Provincial Committee of Enquiry on Public Amenities in the Cape Peninsula together with the Comments and Recommendations of the Amenities, General Purposes and Health Committees of the Cape Town City

allocated for blacks fell under the scope of other authorities. Presumably, ensuring the segregation of these spaces was deemed unnecessary. The remaining racial group of Indians was not dealt with either, as they had already been allocated their 'own' amenities and were otherwise advised to make use of Coloured facilities.<sup>109</sup> This means that the racial encounters I analyse in the first chapter are detailed from an overwhelmingly lopsided point of view, with only one letter written on behalf of the 'non-white' community received by the Committee.

Exploring how 'non-white' individuals made sense of their emotions in relation to the spaces that they made use of within the framework of the RSAA, can thus only be answered by looking to the hints given to us by white individuals in their correspondence with the authorities. Yet, as we shall see, these descriptions are in fact rich in detail on the at times trivial actions of 'non-whites', as well as whites' own perceptions of and views on these same actions. Furthermore, the mundane character of the subject of the use of recreational facilities means that the letters and memoranda in this file offer an unprecedented look into everyday segregated life during apartheid.

The substance of the correspondence consisted by and large of concrete recommendations to the Committee on which facilities to reserve for which racial group. Many of the letters do not necessarily reveal anything more but a collective support for an upholding of the principles of the RSAA. Yet, others uncover highly personal accounts of people's experiences with utilising specific facilities and their feelings regarding their encounters with the people within those spaces. It is these crossings, I claim, that constitute a microcosm of the lived experience of everyday apartheid to which the formal implementation of the RSAA gave a voice.

The civil service and bureaucracy, in embarking on practical urban plans, thus unearthed encounters that we would in most cases be forced

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Council, Concerning the Amenities under Their Control', KAB, PAA (AA) E/112 A20/67, batch IV, 6.

<sup>109</sup> 'Report of Committee', 6.

to look elsewhere to find, for example in oral histories, the potential pitfalls of which I touched upon in the previous section.

To complement my empirical evidence, I have included analogous encounters that were recorded in contemporary press reports as well as contemporary South African fiction and autobiography before, during and after the period in question.

In the second empirical study, which is concerned with debates on, and cases in which people were said to have been involved in, so-called miscegenation, I concern myself mostly with documents relating to court cases. Cases brought under the Immorality Act, which forbade interracial sex and later, also attempts to engage in intercourse, as I clarify in that chapter, were initially processed at the lowest level of the judiciary, namely at the local Magistrate's Courts.

The National Archives of South Africa hold only samples of each yearly session in which all sorts of criminal cases from murder to rape, petty theft and immorality, were presented at courts at the Magistrate level. This means that thousands of cases have been regularly weeded from the archives.

Immorality cases were often finalised at the Magistrate's Court. Occasionally, they would be appealed to the provincial appellate courts, the proceedings of which have likewise been weeded repeatedly. Despite this unfortunate but presumably necessary archival process, I nevertheless stumbled upon a selection of immorality cases while browsing through all the yearly sessions available from the apartheid era from most Magistrate's Courts at the archive repositories in Pietermaritzburg (the former Natal Province), Pretoria (Central Government records and the former Transvaal Province) and Cape Town (the former Cape Province). In Johannesburg (the former Transvaal Province) and Bloemfontein (the former Orange Free State Province), I located additional empirical help in the form of dossiers on more publicised immorality cases and press clippings at the historical archives at the University of the Witwatersrand and the University of the Free State, respectively.

Many of the court cases I reviewed contain very little detail other than a charge sheet and the ultimate verdict given by the court. Others,

however, were remarkably rich in detail. This applies to those cases in which I found included not only court proceedings, but also initial police reports, medical examinations of the accused, witness statements, and in some cases also appeal case proceedings.

From these cases, I have had success in piecing together the stories of and the circumstances surrounding couples who were apprehended under charges of immorality. As I detail further in that chapter, the fact that the police's and subsequent state prosecutors' job in these cases were to render it beyond reasonable doubt, or at the very least, highly probable, that defendants had engaged in sexual intercourse, circumstantial evidence became key, especially in those cases where the evidence (including witness statements) did not point directly to sexual acts.

Defendants were faced not just with having to describe what had transpired 'in the moment', but also to define their relationships with one another, how they felt about one another, and were in some cases subject to questioning resembling psychoanalysis at the hands of the courts. I have supplemented this material with press reports from the apartheid years that can most fittingly be described as 'human-interest' stories of couples affected by immorality laws.

The analysis in the third chapter revolves around persons who applied to have their official racial status changed under the Population Registration Act, which was introduced to catalogue and classify all inhabitants of South Africa in a central information register. Thousands of people appealed to the Race Classification Appeals Board in bids to have their formal racial classification changed.

The decisions of the Board could on appeal reach the provincial appellate courts. In this chapter, I study the records of such instances that I located in the National Archives repositories in Cape Town and Pretoria. Like the state of the archivalia of court proceedings I study in the chapter on immorality, some race classification cases simply contain information on the grounds on which the case was brought and the court's ultimate verdict.

Many, however, include both appeals court proceedings along with the original case as it played out when presented to the Race Classification Board. The characteristics of race classification cases can

be constructively equated with that of immorality cases. Questioning of appellants by the Board and in some cases, the courts, touched upon issues such as the appellant's ancestry, relationships with friends and family, social lives and place of residence, all with the goal of establishing which racial category a person should be ascribed.

These questions and the undoubtedly carefully considered answers given by the appellants, bring light to how everyday life was experienced with their explanations filtered by the peculiar situation in which they found themselves – wanting, in effect, to live as a different ‘race’ – a circumstance conditioned by apartheid as it was practised. As is the case with the other two chapters, I include press coverage of human-interest stories relating to the consequences of racial classification here as well.

The source material I have selected is thus composite. Each genre offers both strengths and weaknesses. Overall, engaging with sources that were in different ways bound up with how apartheid ideology was practised constitutes a problem in and of itself.

On the other hand, the source material with which I work in this dissertation is unique in certain aspects, considering the questions I expect it to assist in answering. Because apartheid histories are and were so inherently caught up in the politics of the day, how to match methodology and method with research questions and sources remains a delicate topic.

The many historians who have carried out studies with apartheid state ideology and politics as their central research interest will presumably have had no methodological qualms with handling documents that were produced by people in power, as it is their motivations, doubts, and rationales, of which they have sought reflections.

That these sources were fashioned within a minority-led and racialised operation of power means that their content will to a high degree be read as tendencies and biases that frame a reproduction of that operation.<sup>110</sup> Apartheid state practices can be said to have concealed

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<sup>110</sup> See, for example, Deborah Posel, ‘Whiteness and Power in the South African Civil Service: Paradoxes of the Apartheid State’, *Journal of Southern African Studies* 25, no. 1 (1999): 99-119.

‘oppressed’ voices, not just at the level of discourse, but also by the application of active political censorship.

Epistemological apprehensions like these are why historians of ‘from below’ insist we consider sources and/or themes from outside this framework. Moreover, these historians, as well as those interested in state and bureaucratic practice, have at times distrusted the apartheid archives due to the simple impracticalities of searching for sufficient representativity in incomplete sources, or because the records they assumed would be appropriate to answering their questions could not be located. Difficulties in reconstructing the lived experience of apartheid thus stems just as much from deficient or non-existent records as it does from the supposedly tendentious nature of the records that do exist. As archivist Verne Harris has noted on South African public memory and the archives that are intended to record it, they leave ‘only ... a sliver of a window into South African experience’.<sup>111</sup>

To the extent of my knowledge, for example, both Magistrate’s Court cases and Race Classification Appeal Board cases have been largely if not wholly neglected as sources, presumably due to the expectation that they were either impossible to find or that the scarce amount or incomplete content of many of them would not add sufficient value to historical inquiries.<sup>112</sup>

As such, my primary source material is exclusive in that it has not previously been studied, certainly, but also in that the questions I ask it

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<sup>111</sup> Verne Harris, ‘Claiming Less, Delivering More: A Critique of Positivist Formulations on Archives in South Africa’, *Archivaria* 44 (1997): 137.

<sup>112</sup> Historian Chet Fransch, for example, in his doctoral dissertation on Coloured rapists and rape cases in the twentieth century Cape Peninsula, states simply that records from the Magistrate’s Courts ‘no longer exist’. See, Chet J. P. Fransch, “... wood, carved by the knife of circumstance...? : Cape Rapists and Rape in South Africa, c. 1910-1980’, unpublished PhD diss. (Stellenbosch University and Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, 2016), 36. Sociologist and historian Deborah Posel touches upon concrete cases of race re-classification, but relies solely on anecdotal evidence given to the South African Institute of Race Relations, which was compiled in their annual reports, and does not directly consult primary Race Classification Appeal Board cases. See, Deborah Posel, ‘Race as Common Sense: Racial Classification in Twentieth-Century South Africa’, *African Studies Review* 44, no. 2 (2001): 87-113.

would most often be asked of other sources that were presumed to operate outside the racial system of governance.

My supplementary material consists mostly of commentary, opinion and human-interest stories from the supposedly more 'liberal' white, English-language press and, occasionally, from African English-language newspapers, such as the *Sowetan*. Earlier studies of the white, English-language press have shown how it, in comparison to its Afrikaans counterpart, employed a rather more moderate outlook when it came to apartheid policies. As Elaine Potter has put it: 'Without the English-language press, discord of any sort would simply have ceased in the minds of White South Africans, except perhaps at times of severe political and economic crisis'.<sup>113</sup>

Later critiques of the English-language press, however, have made a point of how it was complicit in racism on several accounts, for example in its failure to hire black journalists and to report sufficiently on human rights violations during apartheid, as the post-apartheid Truth and Reconciliation Commission's inquiries into the media, for example, held.<sup>114</sup> Historians Rodney Davenport and Christopher Saunders, in one of the latest articles on the white, South African English-language press agree with the first of these criticisms, yet highlight the many political exposés that nevertheless occurred at the hands of the press's journalists throughout the apartheid era, although they acknowledge that it never approved of the Black Consciousness movement or the armed struggle and disagreed with opposition tactics in the late apartheid era.<sup>115</sup>

As regards my use of the work of the English-language press, I should underscore that its human-interest stories worked to expose many of the absurdities by which 'petty' apartheid measures shaped the social realities of its subjects. The press's motivations for doing so, whether

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<sup>113</sup> Elaine Potter, *The Press as Opposition: The Political Role of South African Newspapers* (Totowa, NJ: Rowman and Littlefield, 1975).

<sup>114</sup> Rodney Davenport and Christopher Saunders, 'The English-Language Press under Apartheid', *South African Historical Journal* 43, no. 1 (2000): 274.

<sup>115</sup> Davenport and Saunders, 'English-Language Press', 276.



regarded as part of a capitalist venture, paternalist discourse or a genuine critique of apartheid policies, hardly change the facts that these reports uncovered.

Having now in broader strokes outlined my source material and its potential advantages and pitfalls, I move on to explaining in more detail how I approach it methodically.

### *Exploring Emotional Encounters*

The main aim of this study is to probe the ways in which emotions characterised the lived experience of apartheid. As I have discussed in the above reflections, my hypothesis is that such a characterisation can be reached by bringing together discourse and practice through an analysis of the emotional prescription and experience that the application of petty apartheid forged.

My readings of the source material thus hardly fit neatly into a methodical framework such as a discourse analysis, a comparative analysis, or a microhistorical or macrohistorical study. My readings are more the product of employing conventions from all these methods at once, with emotions as the main analytical variable that runs through them.

I consider Scheer's concept of emotional practices to be a theory that can be applied methodically to my readings. Whether looking at a court transcript, a newspaper article or a letter, I therefore search for traces of the actions of historical actors that can be read as constituting a mobilisation, naming, communicating or regulation of their own or of others' feelings and pay close attention to the context in which they find themselves, or in which persons are related by others to have found themselves.

In line with Scheer's holistic framework, I pay specific attention to not just emotion words, but also to metaphors, descriptions of facial expressions, bodily acts, and physical sensations. When doing this, I simultaneously attempt to grasp at the reasons and motivations the

persons in question had for practising a specific emotion in a certain way, and ask, along with Boddice, ‘how do they feel – really *how?*’.<sup>116</sup>

This is not the same as second-guessing as to ultimately revealing what exactly the ‘authentic’ emotional experience was of the person or persons involved in the historical encounter. Rather, I am scrutinising the parameters, whether subjective, social, cultural, or physical, that can fairly be viewed as having given shape to the various emotional experiences in question.

The three pieces of apartheid-era legislation under which these encounters take place inflict a racial dimension on the above parameters by virtue of the purposes for which they were introduced: the racial segregation of public space, the prohibition of ‘cross-racial’ sexual relations, and the process of determining racial classification.

It is possible, in fact, certain, that some of the encounters I probe could have played out without these laws in place. Yet, it is crucial to my readings and interpretations, that they were in fact instigated by them in different ways. When evaluating emotional encounters, I therefore also consider how historical actors’ emotional practices can be read as reflections of the emotional prescription of which they themselves expected or assumed ‘petty’ apartheid laws to be reflective.

To use two different examples from the first two empirical chapters, a white ratepayer experiencing ‘a feeling of dislike’ because they were forced to share the bus to town with Coloured passengers, was presumably not a unique event. However, it is only because the Cape Provincial Council requested suggestions from residents for improvements under the Reservation of Separate Amenities Act in the area of its jurisdiction, that this specific emotional encounter appears in the archive for me to interpret. Or why, if the Immorality Act only explicitly forbade ‘carnal intercourse’ between whites and ‘non-whites’, does it appear that any indication of affection was taken into consideration, when this did not prove beyond reasonable doubt that a defendant was guilty?

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<sup>116</sup> Rob Boddice, *A History of Feelings* (London: Reaktion Books, 2019), 22.

It is through exploring paradoxes such as these that I come to answers as to which logics regarding emotional practice petty apartheid measures reflected and created and which role emotions played between the racialised space and bodies that the provisions governed. In what could perhaps best be described as a Foucauldian or postcolonial understanding of discourse, I thus consider the legislation itself as reflective and constitutive of certain racial truths and customs. Yet, I read the appropriation and reception, and evaluate the limits of such truths, through the emotional practices of those who were subjected to them, that is in the margins of the sources produced within the dominant institution rather than outside of it. Like historian Neil Roos has proposed with reference to the South African context in particular: ‘Historiographies “of below” need not necessarily be “from below”’.<sup>117</sup>

As noted in the theoretical section of this introduction, it is argued that our embodied social dispositions to some extent determine what can or should be felt in a specific situation while the resulting emotional practices concurrently feed back into the same dispositions that over time may come to regulate future emotional practices.

Like Ahmed, I posit, that emotions ‘do’ things to the world. Such an assertion forces me, in the presentations that I conduct of the emotional encounters that I put forward, to think about how these encounters potentially chip away at or reproduce the established notions and the appertaining social practice which speak to their character to begin with. In the third empirical chapter, for example, contradictions in the emotional code become evident because of the socially constructed ontology of race.

In such instances and others throughout the dissertation, my readings of smaller, contextually situated emotional encounters thus reveal cracks in the racial order at large, assisting in answering the

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<sup>117</sup> Neil Roos, ‘South African History and Subaltern Historiography: Ideas for a Radical History of White Folk’, *International Review of Social History* 61 (2016): 117.

question of how being confronted with petty apartheid measures could naturalise, reproduce, or create new emotional truths.<sup>118</sup>

The emotional encounters I cover follow no stringent chronological order but range from the advent of apartheid in 1948 until its *de facto* abolishment, when the only remaining ‘petty’ apartheid measures were abolished (the RSAA in 1990 and the PRA in 1991 with the Immorality Act having been repealed in 1985), and negotiations between the white minority government and the African National Congress and other organisations commenced from 1990 onwards.

I pay some attention to internal South African policy developments and changes insofar as I trust that they reflected larger shifts in official discourse on the racial notions that governed social practice. This includes, for example, the many amendments that were made throughout to ‘petty’ apartheid laws.

### *Dissertation Outline and Course of Action*

Each of the three empirical chapters concentrates on a specific ‘petty’ apartheid law. I initiate each chapter with an introduction to the law’s practical function, along with a discussion of previous research on the social phenomena and realities that the law was intended to control.

Where my initial research discussion in the introduction to the dissertation clarified how scholars have approached apartheid as a broad historical singularity, the research discussions preceding each empirical chapter are intended as a homing in on the gaps in the literature that the general scholarly approach has caused.

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<sup>118</sup> As Ahmed highlights, some people might simply inhabit emotional norms in different ways. See, Ahmed, *Cultural Politics of Emotion*, 155. That feeling ‘differently’ can challenge prevalent social patterns and attitudes, whether based on gender, class, age, religion, race, and so forth, has long been a primary argument of scholars that study the relation between emotions and social movements. See, for example, Jeff Goodwin, James M. Jasper and Francesca Polletta (eds.), *Passionate Politics: Emotions and Social Movements* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2001). For a larger discussion of the politics of feeling differently, see, Benno Gammerl, Jan Simon Hutta and Monique Scheer, ‘Feeling Differently: Approaches and Their Politics’, *Emotion, Space and Society* 25 (2017): 87-94.

The amount of research conducted on the laws vary, but a preceding discussion of it is deemed vital to elucidate the prevailing racial discourses from which the laws originated. The initial research discussions to each chapter should consequently be considered part of the empirical analyses themselves.

Furthermore, every empirical chapter highlights a theme within emotions history and theory that strikes me as emerging from the emotional encounters as particularly pertinent to the social reality that was forged by the application of that specific legislation.

Consequently, in the first chapter on the RSAA, I focus in more detail on the relation between emotions and space and how feelings can be read as generative.

In the second chapter, on so-called miscegenation, specific emotional practices that can be interpreted as ‘regulating’, and the concept of ‘emotional labour’ become of particular concern.

In the third chapter, which scrutinises encounters under the PRA, I am interested in the relation between emotions and social groups and introduce the concept of ‘emotional communities’ and ‘emotional regimes’.

A single empirical chapter can, then, with a little goodwill, be read as a microhistorical study of the emotional politics of the law(s) in question, with the themes that emerge from them overlapping in specific ways. In the concluding discussion, I pick up on these themes in order to answer the main research question of how emotions characterised the lived experience of apartheid and supported its endurance.

# Chapter 1

## Happy Places, Unhappy Faces: Emotions and Segregated Space

In our country we have civilized people, we have semi-civilized people and we have uncivilized people. The Government of the country gives each section facilities according to the circumstances of each.<sup>119</sup>

C. R. Swart, South African Minister of Justice, 1953.

A well-dressed white lady walked down the platform. Would she sit on the bench? And the gnawing voice, 'You should stand up and let the woman sit. This bench is not for you'.<sup>120</sup>

Richard Rive, 'The Bench'.

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<sup>119</sup> Union of South Africa, *Debates of the House of Assembly*, vol. 82 (Cape Town, 1953), col. 1055.

<sup>120</sup> Richard Rive, 'The Bench', in Langston Hughes (ed.), *An African Treasury: Articles/Essays/Stories/Poems by Black Africans* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1961), 131.

## Introduction

In 1953, the South African Minister of Justice, C. R. Swart, introduced the Reservation of Separate Amenities Act (RSAA) for its second reading in the lower chamber of the Parliament of South Africa, the House of Assembly. Initiating the parliamentary debate on the bill before the house, the Minister of Justice reflected on the apartheid government's recent struggle with the courts over existing measures of racial segregation on public transport. Two cases had raised the issue of what the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court had termed the 'partial and unequal treatment to a substantial degree as between Europeans and non-Europeans'.

The predicament had arisen as a result of the application of the Railways and Harbours Regulation, Control and Management Act of 1916, which provided for reserving public premises for the exclusive use by a particular race, class, or even gender. Although the South African courts at the time did not have the power of judicial review concerning acts of Parliament, they could declare subordinate legislation null and void. In the cases of *R v. Abdurahman* (1950)<sup>121</sup> and *R v. Lusu* (1953),<sup>122</sup> the judges on the Appellate Division argued that the by-laws of the Railways and Harbours Act that governed the particulars of racial segregation on public transport were not intended by Parliament to result in disparate treatment between the races, why such provisions were invalid.<sup>123</sup>

The Minister of Justice found the court's decision 'curious' in light of what he regarded as the South African 'tradition' of enforcing segregation where 'necessary'.<sup>124</sup> The Government circumvented the court's rulings

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<sup>121</sup> *R. v. Abdurahman* 1950 (3) SA 136 (A).

<sup>122</sup> *R. v. Lusu* 1953 (2) SA 484 (A).

<sup>123</sup> For an analysis of various legal cases related to apartheid and public amenities, see, F. Michael Higginbotham, 'Sins from the Past and Lessons for the Future: Eliminating Apartheid in South African Public Accommodations and the Challenge to an Enlightened Judiciary', *Boston University International Law Journal* 12, no. 1 (1994): 1-56.

<sup>124</sup> *Debates*, vol. 82, cols. 1052; 2021.

by passing the RSAA. Here, it was simply made explicit that the legislature wished to enforce the racial segregation of public facilities without the pretence that this could be done without foregoing an equal treatment of South Africa's racial groups.<sup>125</sup> The new legislation asserted that facilities would be duly segregated with no harmonisation in neither the quantity nor the quality of the amenities that were allocated to each race. In the years after the RSAA was enacted, 'whites only' signs, which remain the arguably most infamous visual products of apartheid, would multiply in towns and cities across the country.

The ways in which spatial apartheid at the micro-level was applied and received have received only scarce attention, despite historians' and the general public's familiarity with their existence as a historical phenomenon in South Africa. Compared to the United States, for example, where similar 'Jim Crow' measures have been subject to increased historical scrutiny for many years,<sup>126</sup> analyses of their apartheid counterpart have lagged. The RSAA often features in apartheid histories only as an example to illustrate the over-officiousness involved in its application or in general recitals of the numerous racial laws that were introduced by the apartheid government.<sup>127</sup> While we can only speculate why the segregation of public amenities remains to a considerable degree unexplored by historians, it is not unlikely that the aspect has merely been considered less relevant when placed in the wider context of the grand-petty, 'rise and fall', and liberal-radical divides covered in the introduction to this dissertation. That is, however, not to say that scholars have not

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<sup>125</sup> See, David Dyzenhaus, *Hard Cases in Wicked Legal Systems: Pathologies of Legality* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 54-61.

<sup>126</sup> For just two examples in which spatial segregation features heavily, see, C. Vann Woodward, *The Strange Career of Jim Crow* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1955); Andrew W. Kahrl, *The Land Was Ours: American Beaches from Jim Crow to the Sunbelt South* (Durham, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2012).

<sup>127</sup> See, for example, Adrian Guelke, *Rethinking the Rise and Fall of Apartheid* (Houndmills, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 27; Hermann Giliomee, *The Afrikaners: Biography of a People* (London: Hurst, 2011), 505. The Act is altogether overlooked in Saul Dubow's otherwise comprehensive account of the apartheid era. See, Dubow, *Apartheid*.



acknowledged the potential value of others conducting investigations into segregated amenities. Importantly, geographer A. J. Christopher, for example, has pointed out that micro-segregation constituted the level of apartheid 'where separation affected the details of the daily life of the population',<sup>128</sup> while sociologist and historian Deborah Posel has placed the RSAA among the myriad laws that together 'laid the groundwork for a more rigid and thoroughgoing system of racial domination than had existed to date'.<sup>129</sup>

A handful of sociologists and geographers have nonetheless made critical inroads into the history and legacy of the RSAA, albeit mostly indirectly. Geographer Ronnie Donaldson, for example, has concerned himself with the imprint of the RSAA on the recreational patterns of urban black Africans in the immediate post-apartheid era. He found that these patterns mirrored the racially configured arrangements that applied during apartheid and therefore recommended affirmative planning as a course of action to combat the consequences of historically segregated recreational space.<sup>130</sup> Social psychologists Kevin Durrheim and John Dixon and, more recently, geographer Jayne Rogerson, have employed historical approaches, yet both focus solely on the segregation of beaches, either as part of an investigation into racial encounters during the roll-out of desegregation,<sup>131</sup> or as part of a

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<sup>128</sup> Anthony J. Christopher, *The Atlas of Apartheid* (London and New York: Routledge, 1994), 141.

<sup>129</sup> Deborah Posel, *The Making of Apartheid 1948-1961: Conflict and Compromise* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), 1.

<sup>130</sup> S. E. Donaldson, 'The Legacy of the Separate Amenities Act: Perceptions of Recreation and Future Planning in the Northern Province, South Africa', *Development Southern Africa* 13, no. 6 (1996): 871-879.

<sup>131</sup> Kevin Durrheim and John Dixon, *Racial Encounter: The Social Psychology of Contact and Desegregation* (London: Routledge, 2005); Kevin Durrheim and John Dixon, 'The Role of Place and Metaphor in Racial Exclusion: South Africa's Beaches as Sites of Shifting Racialization', *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 24, no. 3 (2001): 433-450. See also, Valerie Möller and Lawrence Schlemmer, *Attitudes towards Beach Integration: A Comparative Study of Black and White Reactions to Multiracial Beaches in Durban* (Durban: Centre for Applied Social Sciences, University of Natal, 1982).

call for historical analyses within tourism geography to nuance what she termed the ‘present-mindedness’ of that field.<sup>132</sup>

Durrheim and Dixon’s analysis of the rhetoric of racial exclusion applied to beaches during the dismantling of beach apartheid in the late apartheid era show how historically variable constructions of place functioned to justify segregation and racial exclusion. Locating the dominating rhetoric of the beach as a ‘family space’, they argue that, during the 1980’s, black people were viewed by white individuals as corrupting such space through conducting unfitting political action against apartheid, for example by staging demonstrations on the beachfront.<sup>133</sup> This argument would evolve gradually through the 1990’s into an image of blacks instead displaying poor manners, thus maintaining the beach as an inappropriate place for a (white) family outing. The formal desegregation of amenities and South Africa’s on-going transition into democracy had at this time rendered the older argument obsolete, as demonstrations and other political events calling for desegregation became moot.

Rogerson, similarly, has shown how beach apartheid was a contentious issue from the time of its increasing onset in the 1970’s until its formal demise in 1990. Yet, despite the mustering of a substantial political opposition to the segregation of beaches and its ultimate removal by law, South Africa’s beaches today persist demographically as a reflection of the beaches that were allocated formally for the use of specific racial groups during apartheid.<sup>134</sup> These studies thus still leave a void for a more in-depth historical analysis concerning the segregation of public amenities in a broader sense, to which this chapter constitutes a fledgling contribution.

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<sup>132</sup> Jayne M. Rogerson, “‘Kicking Sand in the Face of Apartheid’: Segregated Beaches in South Africa”, *Bulletin of Geography. Socio-Economic Series* 35 (2017): 93-109.

<sup>133</sup> Durrheim and Dixon, ‘South Africa’s Beaches’, esp. 441.

<sup>134</sup> Rogerson, ‘Kicking Sand’, 107. The beaches in Durban remain an exception from the rule, though. See, for example, R. J. Davies, ‘Durban’, in *Homes Apart: South Africa’s Segregated Cities*, ed. Anthony Lemon (London: Paul Chapman, 1991), 86-87.

## Creating Space for Feeling

Rogerson's and Durrheim and Dixon's analyses lay bare a path of inquiry not taken. Rogerson argues that the segregation of beaches was a contentious aspect of petty apartheid, due to it being surrounded by 'emotive debates which often were couched in terms of fear'.<sup>135</sup> The indeed emotionally laden content of these debates is exemplified in Durrheim and Dixon's sampling of extracts from newspapers between 1982 and 1995 which contains white beachgoers' reactions in response to South Africa's beaches being gradually desegregated. We learn how peaceful families' purpose of *enjoying* a day in the sun was spoiled by black beachgoers who *attacked* them; that Durban should hang its head in *shame*; that black intimidation stood in the way of *happy* families; and that a political protest created *unpleasantness* and a hostile atmosphere.<sup>136</sup> Like the contemporary passages presented in the introduction to this dissertation, these excerpts can be read as disclosing emotions as wide-ranging as happiness, shame, fear and disgust. Emotions permeate the racial discourse that Durrheim and Dixon have located and are constant in both the rhetoric they point out as constituting an image of black South Africans as engaging in inappropriate political action as well as the later rhetoric that emerged as a response to black visitors to the beach seemingly 'misbehaving'.

The examples above serve as prime illustrations of how spatial apartheid at the micro-level would trigger emotive reactions as well as emotion management in those people who were subject to it. Keeping in mind Sara Ahmed's crucial argument, which I must repeat, that emotions align bodies in collectives against other 'others', my contention in this chapter is that attitudes towards the segregation of public space both shaped and were themselves forged through racialised emotional practices. This hypothesis appropriates an investigation into the emotions involved in racial encounters that emerged by virtue of petty apartheid provisions being both applied and disregarded. As I

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<sup>135</sup> Rogerson, 'Kicking Sand', 107.

<sup>136</sup> Durrheim and Dixon, 'South Africa's Beaches', extracts pages 440 and 442.

shall go on to show, emotive debates, not unlike the small sample outlined above, also pertained to public spaces other than the beaches that have hitherto been the primary focus of scholars. I ask, therefore, which emotional practices did the enforced segregation of public amenities or lack thereof bring about in those governed by it? How did these individuals make sense of their emotions in relation to the spaces through which they passed or of which they wished to make use? What role did emotions play in the racial encounters that took place within such spaces?

In the following, I conduct a reading of correspondence between members of the public and provincial, municipal and state authorities concerning the application of the Reservation of Separate Amenities Act in the mid-twentieth-century Cape Peninsula. I identify emotional practices and interpret their meaning in relation to the spaces to which the correspondence referred and the persons who moved within them. I then consider the authorities' dealings with the views expressed in these communications and evaluate what emotions 'did' in and to the broader context of the apartheid-era order of the day.

## **Reserving Separate Amenities in Practice**

The Reservation of Separate Amenities Act provided for the reservation of any public amenity or vehicle by any person in control of such premises for the exclusive use of persons belonging to a particular racial group, which were defined in the Population Registration Act of 1950.<sup>137</sup> Public premises were specified as 'any land, enclosure, building, structure, hall, room, office or convenience to which the public [had] access, whether on the payment of an admission fee or not

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<sup>137</sup> The Population Registration Act of 1950 required that all South Africans be classified as one of three, later four races: white, black, Coloured (predominantly mixed-race individuals), and Indian. These classifications were noted in identity documents and were also the basis of racial zoning under the Group Areas Act. I disregard the formal sub-divisions of races that existed at various levels.

but [did] not include a public road or street'.<sup>138</sup> Facilities located on, within, or leading into, public premises, such as benches, counters, entrances, lifts, staircases, and even pedestrian bridges over railway tracks could equally be segregated.<sup>139</sup>

The doctrine of personal apartheid of minimising racial contact would also emanate naturally as penumbras from other, more structural segregation policies such as the Group Areas Act, which enforced residential segregation, and others that dealt specifically with segregation in the spheres of for example religion and education. An Afrikaans church, for example, would be closed to 'non-whites' as a matter of institutional principle and not by virtue of the building in which services were held being reserved for whites.<sup>140</sup> Some amenities would thus not require any adherence to the provisions of the RSAA in order to be segregated. In this chapter I therefore pay exclusive attention to instances that originated as a direct result of the enforcement or lack thereof, of the Reservation of Separate Amenities Act. In practice, ordinances for such reservations emerged from provincial administrations after consultation with local authorities. Whilst local authorities, especially in the Cape Province, at times grappled with provincial administrations over the details of such ordinances, for example the necessity of erecting signs on premises notifying for which racial groups the premises were reserved, provincial administrators could ultimately bypass such disagreements.<sup>141</sup> Micro-segregation thus became commonplace after the RSAA was adopted, despite so-called 'grey' residential areas, which thus contained integrated amenities,

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<sup>138</sup> Union of South Africa, *Reservation of Separate Amenities Act*, Act no. 49 of 1953, section 1.

<sup>139</sup> Horrell, *Laws Affecting Race Relations*, 114; Christopher, *Atlas of Apartheid*, 142.

<sup>140</sup> In fact, churches were not required to enforce segregation. The Anglican Church of Southern Africa, for example, remained integrated. Desmond Tutu, arguably its most famous 'son', who reached the church's most senior position as Archbishop of Cape Town in 1986, is of Xhosa descent and was classified as 'Bantu' under the Population Registration Act.

<sup>141</sup> Horrell, *Laws Affecting Race Relations*, 133; Rogerson, 'Kicking Sand', 102.

surviving up until at least the 1960's. District Six in Cape Town here constitutes a notable example.<sup>142</sup>

The Reservation of Separate Amenities Act would play a crucial, though often overlooked, role in the government's goal of 'total' apartheid. As suggested earlier, the fact that the RSAA, as part of this totalitarian vision, was used to enforce segregation down to minute details such as park benches, meant that the officiousness involved in its application was unfathomably large. Perhaps to be expected of such a labyrinthine piece of legislation, its application was frequently hindered or slowed down by unexpected, sometimes tragicomic obstacles. The Cape Times, for example, in a 1959 article, reported that the terms 'European' and 'non-European', which were used interchangeably with 'white' and 'non-whites' to designate specific facilities for the different race groups, were ambiguous. This had become apparent when Jan Smuts (Johannesburg) Airport sought to change the terms used on their signs to 'whites' and 'non-Whites', because arriving foreign visitors passing through the airport, especially those from the United States, had tended to use the doors marked 'non-European'.<sup>143</sup> The contradictions and practical inconveniences of enforcing the act were also particularly obvious when it came to the status of foreign diplomats. Although the RSAA noted an exemption to the act for 'representatives in the Union of a foreign government' and their families, and 'nationals of a foreign country travelling within or through the Union on official business',<sup>144</sup> confusion and embarrassment nevertheless loomed large in government circles and among the civil service. 'Ordinary' South Africans denied service to

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<sup>142</sup> Vivian Bickford-Smith, *The Emergence of the South African Metropolis: Cities and Identities in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 229.

<sup>143</sup> '20 Bizarre Apartheid Moments', *Mail & Guardian*, 26 April 2014.

<sup>144</sup> *Reservation of Separate Amenities Act*, section 4 (a)(b).

Japanese diplomats at restaurants;<sup>145</sup> it was discussed whether the RSAA should apply to Egyptian nationals due to the apparent ambiguousness of their 'race';<sup>146</sup> and whether domestic servants travelling with the diplomat families they served should be regarded as 'family' and thus also be exempted from having to use 'non-white' facilities.<sup>147</sup>

Inconsistencies and ambiguity were of course not only prevalent in cases that concerned foreigners, but the preceding illustrations should be read as some of the most extreme examples of how and why the law was, at its core, disingenuous, a fact of which the Department of External Affairs seemed to be at least partially aware. The process of instituting and upholding the rules and regulations of the RSAA was neither easy nor clear-cut.

The above also shows how apartheid laws were linked to and mutually reinforced each other, which was not always helpful, as we saw with the case of the status of Egyptians under the Population Registration Act and the RSAA. The RSAA was also closely connected with the racial zoning of residential areas under the Group Areas Act.<sup>148</sup> In practice this meant that a view was propagated that the different racial groups should preferably be allocated facilities within their 'own' residential areas. As we shall see later, this was far from feasible. Especially beaches proved difficult to reserve for the exclusive use by a single racial group. The original Act mentioned that 'land' could be reserved, but this only covered land above the high-water mark. Additional disruption arose, as one law declared the Queen, at this time the South African head of state, as the legal owner of the seashore. Finally, some local authorities opposed beach segregation. These issues

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<sup>145</sup> 'Note Verbale', Consulate-General of Japan to Department of External Affairs, 11 March 1954, National Archives of South Africa, Public Records of Central Government (SAB), BTS 6/17/1.

<sup>146</sup> Jooste to Best, Department of External Affairs, 21 May 1957, SAB, BTS 6/17/1; Best to Jooste, 28 May 1957, SAB, BTS 6/17/1; 'Persons Exempted from the Provisions of the Reservations of Separate Amenities Act', 14 June 1957, SAB, BTS 6/17/1.

<sup>147</sup> Untitled Memo, Department of External Affairs, 1956, SAB, BTS, 6/17/1.

<sup>148</sup> Christopher, *Atlas of Apartheid*, 143.

were solved by the passing of a string of amendments to the RSAA until 1972, when the road was ultimately paved for the virtually unhindered advancement of the segregation of beaches on par with the segregation of other facilities.<sup>149</sup>

The RSAA was most heavily enforced in South Africa's urban areas, to and in which the influx and movement of black Africans was regulated by the Natives (Urban Areas) Act of 1923. The infamous 'pass laws' would be strengthened in the early apartheid era with the Native Laws Amendment Act (1952) and the Natives (Abolition of Passes and Coordination of Documents) Act (1952), the latter creating the reviled 'reference book' that black South Africans carried and were required to be able to produce on any occasion for law enforcement to ensure they had the right to be in an area at any given time. Separate amenities became the regulatory device with which racial separation was guaranteed despite the necessary 'evil' of allowing 'non-whites' to roam within urban areas to 'minister to the needs of the white man'.<sup>150</sup> Because the RSAA applied only to spaces that were not institutionally segregated or segregated through other laws, its provisions took effect primarily in the spheres of recreation, transport, retail and the service sector. Racial separation was in this way injected into both the 'hustle and bustle' of everyday life as well as into spaces utilised as sites for leisure purposes and relaxation. Consequently, the emotional encounters that I will go on to analyse stem both from spaces in which racial proximity could hardly be avoided as well as from spaces that were expected to be racially exclusive.

## Happy Places and Affective Atmospheres

'Ordinary' South Africans encountered the provisions of the RSAA or, indeed, the apparent lack thereof, chiefly when simply going about their

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<sup>149</sup> Rogerson, 'Kicking Sand', 97-99.

<sup>150</sup> Dubow, *Apartheid*, 62.



daily lives: riding the bus to town, enjoying a picnic in the park, playing at a playground, resting on a bench, or dining at a restaurant. In the apartheid-era Cape Peninsula and the 'Mother City' of Cape Town with its 'European', middle-class vibe, life was indeed good for its white inhabitants. White economic prosperity in South Africa reached its zenith and culminated at the same time apartheid stood 'regnant', when internal oppositional activity to South Africa's policies was at its most dormant in the late 1950's and throughout the 1960's.<sup>151</sup>

The economic boom was reflected in lifestyle changes among most white South Africans, including Capetonians. Afrikaans-speaking whites saw a significant growth in terms of total personal income and along with their relatively better off English-speaking brethren nurtured a new consumer culture throughout the country. Owning a large house with a sizeable garden and a swimming pool in which to keep cool, or at least a comfortable flat, a decent car and engaging in new and at times extravagant leisure activities, became the norm for many white South Africans. Even lower middle-class whites possessed the means to employ at least one live-in maid.<sup>152</sup> This was no different in the 'little Europe' of the Cape Peninsula, where the white population of the supposedly more racially 'liberal' Cape Town<sup>153</sup> and its surrounding areas would live the 'South African dream' which was immortalised in a famous 1970's radio jingle: 'braaivleis, rugby, sunny skies and Chevrolet'.<sup>154</sup> Black South Africans, on the other hand, would

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<sup>151</sup> Dubow, *Apartheid*, 99-105. For the 'high apartheid' era as an ideology of modernisation, see Saul Dubow, 'New Approaches to High Apartheid and Anti-Apartheid', *South African Historical Journal* 69, no. 2 (2017): esp. 307-308.

<sup>152</sup> Albert Grundlingh, "'Are We Afrikaners Getting Too Rich?'" Cornucopia and Change in Afrikanerdom in the 1960s', *Journal of Historical Sociology*, 21, no. 2/3 (2008): esp. 149-151; Dubow, *Apartheid*, 99.

<sup>153</sup> The supposedly more liberal worldview of especially white, English-speaking Capetonians is contested and discussed in Vivian Bickford-Smith, 'South African Urban History, Racial Segregation and the Unique Case of Cape Town?', *Journal of Southern African Studies* 21, no. 1 (1995): 63-78.

<sup>154</sup> Commercial for Chevrolet, origin unknown, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x1wvQ7ERXhY>, accessed 11 May 2021.

throughout the same period experience a decline in their share of the total personal income generated in the country, which fell from 22 per cent in 1946 to 19.3 per cent by 1970, when white per capita incomes stood at 15:1 when compared to those of blacks.<sup>155</sup>

Recreational patterns followed these trends. White South Africans in the Cape Peninsula were privileged enough to have the surplus energy for and capital to spend on enjoying the peninsula and Cape Town's public spaces and attractions – in effect having 'fun in the sun'. 'Non-white' inhabitants, however, also had to be accommodated. It was within this context that the Provincial Council of the Cape of Good Hope set up a Committee of Enquiry on Public Amenities in the Cape Peninsula in 1957. The Committee requested information from city councils and ordinary ratepayers in the peninsula regarding the state of public amenities and in particular the provisions made for the separation of the races. Recreational spaces became the Committee's primary concern, although other amenities such as those in the transport sector appeared sporadically in letters and memoranda, serving as reference points for comment and comparison. It is in this correspondence that we find the emotional encounters that I study throughout this chapter.

Reflecting on the relationship between emotional practices and recreational space, it does not appear unfair to assume that most users of the peninsula's amenities did so with the aim of mobilising feelings of enjoyment, pleasure and happiness. This is precisely Scheer's point when she writes on emotional practices that they:

are very often distributed, that is, carried out together with other people, artefacts, aesthetic arrangements, and technologies. This will often mean that we implement such means on our own by seeking out certain spaces, music, photographs, or other personal memorabilia to manage our moods.<sup>156</sup>

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<sup>155</sup> Jeremy Seekings and Nicoli Nattrass, *Class, Race, and Inequality in South Africa* (New Haven, CT and London: Yale University Press, 2005), 137.

<sup>156</sup> Scheer, 'Are Emotions a Kind of Practice?', 209.

The above notion in fact permeates the many letters from locals that the Committee considered. The correspondence shows that ratepayers to a high degree highlighted their gratitude for and contentment with living in the peninsula and expected the peninsula's amenities to contribute to the mobilisation and maintenance of these feelings. Such a claim is encapsulated in one local woman's letter to the Administrator of the Cape Province. As a white resident of a bungalow in Glen Beach, one of the more affluent areas of Cape Town, she expressed a modest but telling wish regarding her area's facilities: 'let us remain paying our ground rent and taxes and living the happy contended lives of South Africans – part owners of our lovely land and especially this little part of it'.<sup>157</sup> Other ratepayers likewise marvelled at the peninsula's both natural and man-made surroundings, highlighting how they saw it fit to make use of them. A person signing their letter with the surname of van Niekerk remarked on the fact that his locale, the False Bay coast, was 'one of the most beautiful in the world',<sup>158</sup> while a Mrs. Hall, resident in the Kalk Bay area, told the Administrator of the joy she found in '[walking] along the shore to Clovelly and back'.<sup>159</sup> A woman living nearby, Mrs. Thomson, also summed up her pride of and delight in living in Kalk Bay, boasting of the 'more than a million pounds invested in the finest hotels in the Peninsula, businesses and lovely homes, schools and churches ... next to one of the finest sea side resorts in the world'.<sup>160</sup>

By its white inhabitants at least, the Cape Peninsula was clearly regarded as a 'happy' place. That the residents of the peninsula and Cape Town proper considered their home to have immense recreational

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<sup>157</sup> Letter to the Administrator, 27 December 1959, Western Cape Archives and Records Service (KAB), PAA (AA) E/112 A20/67, batch IV.

<sup>158</sup> van Niekerk to Administrator, 9 November 1959, KAB, PAA (AA) E/112 A20/67, batch IV.

<sup>159</sup> Mrs. Hall to Administrator, 4 November 1959, KAB, PAA (AA) E/112 A20/67, batch IV.

<sup>160</sup> Mrs. Thomson to Administrator, 2 December 1959, KAB, PAA (AA) E/112 A20/67, batch IV.

value was expressed also in their willingness to invite guests to come and experience the area for themselves. A Miss Wilson, for example, remarked of Cape Town, in her assessment of the condition of its existing amenities: 'This is the middle of our Cape Season and many of our up-country visitors (whom we go to such pains to attract) like to stroll in the Avenue and the Botanical Gardens on a Sunday afternoon'.<sup>161</sup> Excerpts like these paint a picture of both permanent residents of and visitors to the Cape moving through specific spaces with the hope and expectation that their features and the facilities within them would assist them in activating a specific emotional state – most often one of simple contentedness.

The same appears to have applied to local 'non-white' persons as well. Although the Committee acknowledged that it referred the issue of amenities in so-called 'native' areas to other authorities, it nevertheless was obliged to consider Coloured facilities, which members of the Indian group were also expected to utilise. Despite only a handful of persons writing to the Committee with requests made on behalf of the Coloured community in the Cape, they also stressed their wish that the facilities reserved for Coloureds should be ones in which to enjoy life, writing, for example:

Up to about fifteen years ago, Cape Town had enormous open spaces where our children enjoyed happy hours of play, even though without the many swings, seesaws, etc. provided for the European child. These open spaces because of industrial development, have been built upon and no provision made for this loss.<sup>162</sup>

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<sup>161</sup> Miss Wilson to Administrator, 27 December 1959, KAB, PAA (AA) E/112 A20/67, batch IV. Miss Wilson refers here to Government Avenue, a pedestrian thoroughfare that runs through Company's Garden (which she calls the Botanical Gardens), a colonial-era park and heritage site located in central Cape Town.

<sup>162</sup> R. Hoedemaker to Committee, 20 April 1959, KAB PAA (AA) E/112 A20/67, batch II.

Following the logic of emotional practices, the ‘playing’ mentioned above should be regarded as a way in which to mobilise happiness. If we recall Scheer’s categorisation of emotional practices, a desired state of feeling is mobilised through a subjective or intersubjective action,<sup>163</sup> the action of playing being just one example. In the preceding excerpt, then, the author suggests that the industrial development of, or in effect the destruction of, the open spaces in which Coloured children had previously freely frolicked, had reduced the number of places in which the community’s younger members could enjoy recreational activities and through those activities mobilise feelings of happiness. Because emotional practices emerge from a socially structured and ‘mindful’ body, the spaces and places that accompany their carrying out also partially define what and how one should and could feel in a particular context.<sup>164</sup> As such, I argue that ‘happiness’ emerges as an emotional attribute of the places that the individuals refer to in their correspondence with the authorities, which devolves to a degree from the historically variable embedment of social and cultural meaning into these same locations.

At the same time, the emotional practices that are carried out within these settings contribute further to the social and cultural structure that comes to be associated with certain spaces, indeed, ‘emotions do things in social contexts’.<sup>165</sup> The emotional practice of ‘happiness’ is assumed to work in a dialectic relationship with these spaces and thereby potentially limit future interpretations and practices, making the experience of ‘happiness’ more likely than the experience of other emotions. Within these spaces, as we have seen already, and which I shall further explain, people practise good feeling in a myriad of ways:

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<sup>163</sup> Scheer, ‘Are Emotions a Kind of Practice?’ 209-212.

<sup>164</sup> I operate with a simple definition of ‘place’ as a ‘space’ invested with meaning. See, Yi-Fu Tuan, *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1977), In this way, ‘place’ is similar to philosopher and sociologist Henri Lefebvre’s notion of ‘social space’. See, Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 1991), 26.

<sup>165</sup> Scheer, ‘Are Emotions a Kind of Practice?’ 214.

some soak up the sun on the beach; others play football in the park. In colder weather, some might go to the local indoor pool for a swim or read a book at the library. The result of mobilising happiness in this way is an investment in the space in which mobilisation takes place. As Sara Ahmed has pointed out: 'If you receive something delightful in a certain place, then the place itself is invested with happiness, as being "what" good feeling is directed toward'.<sup>166</sup>

Yet, assuming that 'spaces and practices co-produce each other',<sup>167</sup> as historian Margit Pernau has also argued, means that the dominantly 'happy' spaces and places that the sources uncover were vulnerable to change. Potential changes depend on which emotions are practised in them, how they are practised, and by whom, which in turn renders necessary an imagining of space and place as neither immobile nor static. Similarly, cultural geographer Doreen Massey has argued that we do not merely travel through or across space, but that our presence within it, what we do within it and how we feel about it – alters it – so that space emerges as a 'multiplicity of trajectories'.<sup>168</sup> As a consequence, the emotional practices that are carried out within certain spaces have socio-political implications; a theme that I, through a further reading of the source material, analyse and discuss in the following section.

I have illustrated above how recreational space in the Cape Peninsula was interpreted by members of the public as places that they attended in order to execute certain practices that in turn produced a desired state of 'happiness' in them. The chances are high that the repeated execution of these practices would, over time, confine 'happiness' as a

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<sup>166</sup> Sara Ahmed, 'Happy Objects', in *The Affect Theory Reader*, ed. Melissa Gregg and Gregory J. Seigworth (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010), 33.

<sup>167</sup> Margit Pernau, 'Space and Emotion: Building to Feel', *History Compass* 12, no. 7 (2014): 542. See also, Tim Cresswell, *In Place/Out of Place: Geography, Ideology and Transgression* (Minneapolis, MN and London: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), 12.

<sup>168</sup> Doreen Massey, *For Space* (London: Sage, 2005), 119.

given social meaning and material result of making use of recreational space. Through this process, recreational space can become a 'happy place', an example of a place that comes to embody a dominant quality, what we could handily term an 'affective atmosphere'. As Ahmed reasons:

We can take the example of an atmosphere. We might describe an "atmosphere" as a feeling of what is around, which might be affective in its murkiness or fuzziness, as a surrounding influence which does not quite generate its own form. At the same time, in describing an atmosphere, we give this influence some form. We might say the atmosphere was tense, which would mean that the body that arrives into the room will "pick up" tension and become tense, as a way of being influenced. When feelings become atmospheric, we can catch the feeling simply by walking into a room, from a crowd or the collective body, or from being proximate to one another.<sup>169</sup>

Here, Ahmed's claim can be both nuanced by the notion of emotional practices laid out in this dissertation as well as itself also extend my argument. Ahmed contends that describing an atmosphere produces in it a more palpable quality to be 'felt' by others. I build on this idea and expand it by contending that this quality might be shaped and upheld by an array of emotional practices other than simply that of 'naming' an emotion. At the same time, Ahmed's insistence on the power of discourse reminds us that affective atmospheres are not only fashioned by the practising of emotions within the spaces and places that come to inhabit an inherent atmosphere, but also by the way we talk about them when not in their vicinity. The letters praising the Cape Peninsula's

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<sup>169</sup> Sara Ahmed, *The Promise of Happiness* (Durham, NC and London: Duke University Press, 2010), 40. Ahmed's argument that describing an atmosphere works to give it form bears resemblance to Reddy's concept of the emotive, see, Reddy 'Against Constructionism'; William M. Reddy, *The Navigation of Feeling: A Framework for the History of Emotions* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2001). See also Scheer's emotional practice of 'naming', Scheer, 'Are Emotions a Kind of Practice?' 212-214.

‘happy places’ and their expectations from them thus reinforce and maintain the affective atmosphere that accompanies them. Yet, these atmospheres are at the same time just as vulnerable to change as to reinforcement if the discourse and practices that shape them ‘break the mould’. Making this assumption suggests that it is when emotions become ‘atmospheric’ that they have social implications. This will become clearer in the section to come.

### **‘Segregated Life is Smooth and Harmonious’**

The Green Point Common, located in Green Point, which borders the Cape Town city centre, was one of many places of which the Commission of Enquiry into Public Amenities received suggestions for improvement. Whilst Green Point had been declared a white residential area by the provisions of the Group Areas Act, part of the Common, namely the sports track (today Green Point Athletics Stadium), had traditionally been used predominantly by members of the ‘non-European’ racial groups for social and sporting events. Several other sporting fields adjoining the track had been leased out to sports clubs for members of the Coloured group by the Cape Town City Council.<sup>170</sup>

Seeing as the Committee had requested opinions from ratepayers, a local property owner seized this opportunity to express his dissatisfaction with the City Council’s decisions to the Committee, primarily with the fact that the Common had been ‘cut up’ and leased to sports clubs, as he believed the Common should have been maintained as an open space only for local (white) residents. This, however, he recognised, was not a matter for the Committee to consider, whose work was put into motion by the Provincial Council, but rather for the local city council.<sup>171</sup> His main reason for reaching

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<sup>170</sup> ‘Report of Committee’, 11-13.

<sup>171</sup> The Cape Province (officially The Province of the Cape of Good Hope) at this time covered around two thirds of South African territory and was by far the largest of the four provinces then in existence. Whilst Cape Town remained the provincial



out to the Committee, it appears, was instead to lodge a complaint, which he did in no unclear terms, against the leasing of sporting fields to 'non-European' clubs, writing: '... I wish to register an emphatic protest at the conditions which have arisen ... Hordes of non-Europeans are brought each week-end into this strictly European area and Bay Road is jammed solidly with them and their vehicles'.<sup>172</sup> Whilst this at first glance may seem to be an expression of frustration with the practical inconveniences that accompany traffic jams, we should note that the author found it important to stress that he resided in a 'strictly European area' into which 'non-Europeans' were brought. This statement clearly implies that the complainant did not appreciate members of other racial groups than his own occupying space within a part of town that had been declared as a residential area for whites only.

Reading his letter more closely, however, we learn that his main grievances lay not with the mere presence of 'non-whites' in a white area, but with their actions. The author continued his complaint describing how 'non-Europeans' arrived in Green Point in family units so that the male members could spend their free time playing sports on the part of the Common set aside for their activities. This appears only to have roused a sense of mild indignation in the writer. His ultimate outrage in fact lay with those members of the family who did not take part – namely the women and children. They, he wrote, 'seek for means to occupy their time more pleasantly than watching the sporting efforts of the males'. Instead of remaining on the Common, these individuals often took the opportunity of being on the Atlantic Seaboard for the day to complete the short walk down to the nearby beaches, which, according to the complainant, made the local white ratepayers 'seriously embarrassed' and bore the danger of turning the area into 'an aquatic

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capital and its cultural and financial hub, it comprised only a small part of the province.

<sup>172</sup> H. V. Whitwam to Committee, 23 February 1959, KAB, PAA (AA) E/112 A20/67, batch II.

playground for non-Europeans imported from remote areas of the Cape Peninsula'.<sup>173</sup>

That the author took considerable issue with the potentiality of an 'aquatic playground' emerging for those classified as not belonging to the white racial group, as well as with their presence at large in the area, I read as part of a larger trend of resentment towards black, Indian and Coloured people transgressing the affective atmospheres that accompanied the 'happy places' that I demarcated earlier, as well as their practising of emotions in ways that did not conform to the expectations of the affective atmospheres in those places. The above example does not suggest this explicitly, but is nevertheless telling because it, I believe, illustrates that it was not only the mere presence of non-Europeans in white areas that appears to have been received as a nuisance by the local white ratepayers. The protest above strikes the reader as being just as sharp on the grounds of non-Europeans' presence on the beaches as with the potential 'playground' in the making. Although the author does not explain in any detail what exact actions the women and children carried out that together constituted a 'playground', it is not difficult to imagine the scene: we would find children squealing with excitement, splashing water on each other, with their mothers taking part in the fun or looking on while talking to fellow parents. Just like the white ratepayers sought out certain spaces in order to mobilise pleasant feelings, so did 'non-European' families who lived in the Cape. Only they, however, appear to have done so in a manner that aroused such a strong feeling of distaste in the author of the complaint. This point, as we shall see next, is substantiated further in other sources that dealt with the presence of and emotional practices carried out by individuals belonging to the black, Coloured and Indian racial groups in relation to specific places.

Miss Wilson, whom we came across earlier praising Cape Town's status as an attraction to upcountry guests, for example, warned in her comments against letting the city become what she unsympathetically termed 'Cape Coloured Town'. Her letter to the Committee contains

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<sup>173</sup> Whitwam to Committee.

a lengthy account of a Sunday on which she travelled from the southern suburbs into Cape Town for the day. The letter is particularly rich in material to analyse, as it presents the reader with a first-hand account of a 'normal' day for a white woman in high apartheid-era Cape Town.<sup>174</sup>

Firstly, commuting on the bus into the city, she describes how she was 'sickened' by having to travel on a vehicle with no separate seating set apart for the different races, because having to sit among non-Europeans made her 'become thoroughly irritable and a feeling of dislike for them [was] engendered'. After reaching her stop at Adderley Street,<sup>175</sup> she visited a department store, remarking with astonishment that she came across a Coloured woman combing her hair in front of a mirror, and two other Coloured women trying on hats in the hat department. At Sea Point Pavilion, the public outdoor swimming pool in the prosperous seaside suburb of Sea Point, Miss Wilson noted with disapproval, a Coloured nursemaid had dared to find a seat on a bench between 'European' bathers, while her colleague 'was lolling on the lawns'. After visiting relatives in the inner-city area of Gardens, she continued down Government Avenue and into the Company Gardens. Here, she realised with 'horror' that 'Coloureds and Natives ... swarmed over the lawns in the parks at the side of the avenue and ... sprawled on the grass screaming and shouting'. In the avenue, groups of black men 'paraded ... five and six abreast in a swaggering and insolent manner' and there were 'loud shouts of [raucous?] laughter' each time this resulted in Miss Wilson being shouldered out of step. At the cathedral,<sup>176</sup> Coloured children were 'thronging the grounds',

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<sup>174</sup> Miss Wilson to Administrator, 24 December 1959, KAB, PAA (AA) E/112 A20/67, batch IV.

<sup>175</sup> Adderley Street was then and is today considered one of the more important and busier streets in Cape Town's central business district, holding the Cape Town Railway Station and numerous office towers.

<sup>176</sup> St. George's Cathedral, the Anglican cathedral of Cape Town, located in the central business district.

leaving only 'one or two unhappy white children' among them.<sup>177</sup> These experiences had led her to write to the Administrator of the Cape, with whom she pleaded to ensure that existing social apartheid measures were enforced and the RSAA was introduced into Government Avenue and the Company Gardens. 'In other words', she signed off, 'friction is inevitable between whites and non-whites wherever there is mixing of the races, but when we are segregated life is smooth and harmonious ... this is really a cry from the heart!'<sup>178</sup>

Miss Wilson's letter is but one sample of a wider inclination amongst complainants in the correspondence files towards protesting the 'mixing of the races' on the grounds of the emotions that it produced in them. Miss Wilson observed such mixing with 'horror', it 'sickened' her, it led to 'unhappy' white children, it engendered a 'feeling of dislike' of non-whites, life became 'unendurable for the European population',<sup>179</sup> whilst segregation instead made life 'harmonious'. What is more is that the actions and doings of the non-white individuals, with which she and others took issue, appear to be remarkably uncontroversial at an objective level. Combing one's hair, trying on hats, 'lolling' on a lawn, walking in a swaggering manner (though, I concede, not shouldering someone out of the way), laughing out loud, and shouting while playing, are actions that to the neutral eye appear to be mundane practices.

Miss Wilson was not the only white resident to be affronted by what others might consider completely harmless sayings or doings. Two letters to the editor of the local Cape Town-based daily newspaper *The Argus*, written in 1952, before the RSAA was formally introduced, show how this seems to have been a common refrain amongst the users of the Cape's many public amenities. In an almost 1:1 reproduction of what Miss Wilson relayed to the Committee regarding her weekend trip to

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<sup>177</sup> Above excerpts all from Miss Wilson to Administrator.

<sup>178</sup> Miss Wilson to Administrator.

<sup>179</sup> Miss Wilson to Administrator.

Cape Town, the author of one letter, signed 'Fair Play', wrote disparagingly of the Muizenberg beach promenade that it:

[had] been converted into a boulevard of chocolate-coloured Beau Brummels to stroll along while talking at the top of their voices with their womenfolk; the children's playground [had] been taken over by hordes of yelling Native and Coloured children so that European children have had no use whatsoever of the facilities provided.<sup>180</sup>

Again, we are met with a fierce disapproval of the actions of both black and Coloured persons wanting to enjoy a day out and whose behaviour arguably reflect mere 'habits, rituals and everyday pastimes that aid us in achieving a certain emotional state',<sup>181</sup> as Scheer defines emotional practices. Yet, the fact that these practices are mentioned in the context of causing such an array of negative emotions in the author of the complaint, means that she, and in turn, I, must confer on these practices a certain value, an aspect that I explore in the following.

## Feeling out of Place

Miss Wilson was as mentioned not the only complainant to remark on the emotions that the presence, actions, and emotional practices of non-whites in specific places conjured up in her. In Clovelly, a suburb in the Cape Peninsula, rumours that beaches in the area would be declared for

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<sup>180</sup> 'Muizenberg "Invaded" by Natives', *The Argus*, 2 January 1952.

<sup>181</sup> Scheer, 'Are Emotions a Kind of Practice?', 209. Historian Karen Vallgård rightly argues that this definition makes it difficult to decide which sayings and doings are then *not* in some way emotional practices, especially if they are both conscious and unconscious acts. See, Vallgård, 'Følelseshistorie', 103-104. I wonder whether it might not be exactly Scheer's point to show how emotions permeate all aspects of our daily lives. The challenge here then lies in identifying in the sources the practices that more or less clearly bear emotional imprints on either the originator of the practice, or, on others, as with the case above.

use by Coloureds only,<sup>182</sup> led to memorandums and letters reminding the Administrator of the Cape of the fact that ‘non-Europeans’ had in the past ‘overflown’ from the beaches into the surrounding bushes and mountainside, where they ‘drank wine, lit fires and used the bushes as lavatories’.<sup>183</sup> Agreeing with this, a Mrs. Hall wrote:

We all know when the coloured community invade an area they bring slum conditions – drinking – scattered refuse – bad behaviour and disruption of traffic because they never stay on a beach but spread all over the roads and surrounding areas.<sup>184</sup>

Similarly to in Miss Wilson’s letter, these protests were stated to have been provoked by emotions as wide-ranging as fear for the safety of white girls, worries about a potential depreciation of the value of properties in the surrounding area<sup>185</sup> and the potential resentment that would arise from forced physical proximity between whites and Coloureds, which, as one ratepayers association remarked, would certainly not ‘reduce or avoid the natural tensions between the races’.<sup>186</sup>

A potential argument arises here that the influx and accompanying emotional practices of non-whites into and within spaces and places commonly considered to be white, whether formally segregated or not, generated negative responses in and from whites. That is, the circumstances that they remarked upon were perceived as making them

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<sup>182</sup> These rumours do not seem to have held water. The Committee in its report noted that the responsible municipality might be forced by law to reserve part of a beach for members of the Coloured community. See, ‘Report of Committee’, 30-31.

<sup>183</sup> van Niekerk to Administrator, 9 November 1959, KAB, PAA (AA) E/112 A20/67, batch IV.

<sup>184</sup> Mrs. Hall to Administrator, 10 November 1959, KAB, PAA (AA) E/112 A20/67, batch IV. Underscoring in original.

<sup>185</sup> A view expressed in Miss Mills to Administrator, 4 January 1960, KAB, PAA (AA) E/112 A20/67, batch IV.

<sup>186</sup> ‘Resolution from Public Meeting of Ratepayers and Residents of the Kalk Bay-Clovelly Area’, 11 November 1959, KAB, PAA (AA) E/112 A20/67, batch IV.

feel ‘out of place’. As mentioned earlier, Scheer contends that we are prone to seeking out certain spaces in order to manage our moods. This, I would argue, must necessarily entail that a person seeks out certain places with expectations as to what affective atmosphere will meet them there. As Ahmed argues: ‘So we may walk into the room and “feel the atmosphere,” but what we may feel depends on the angle of our arrival. Or we might say that the atmosphere is already angled; it is always felt from a specific point’.<sup>187</sup> This harmonises well with Scheer’s idea as emotions emerging from the socially structured body in that the ‘point’ from which we ‘feel the atmosphere’ is to a degree predetermined by the body’s sociocultural dispositions. When our expectations are not met, or even contradicted, our vantage point is subject to change because we feel ‘out of place’. Scheer suggests as much when she writes: ‘... we are also sometimes simply confronted with an emotional setup. The presence of other people, a crowd expressing emotion loudly, or music not of our own choosing can cause us to do an emotion and can lead to other managing practices’.<sup>188</sup>

In the empirical instances that I have offered so far throughout this chapter, this process works in an interaction with race as a crucial element of the makeup of the socially structured body. The ‘emotional setups’, in Scheer’s words, with which the authors of the correspondence are confronted, and which ultimately provoke them to embark on writing complaints, are generated by the presence and actions of people of colour.

In her doctoral dissertation on the mobilisation of emotions on public transport in the Jim Crow-era United States, American Studies scholar Rosemary Pearce approaches a similar contention, showing how inappropriate expressions of emotions by African Americans, such as laughing out (too) loud, often provoked verbal abuse from fellow white commuters, which implies that the emotional experience of racial

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<sup>187</sup> Ahmed, *Promise of Happiness*, 41.

<sup>188</sup> Scheer, ‘Are Emotions a Kind of Practice?’ 209.

segregation in the microsphere might share at least some universalities across borders.<sup>189</sup>

Ironically, perhaps the most scathing and extreme example of this is found in a letter to the Administrator of the Cape in which the author in fact appears at first to wish to extend their gratitude to the Administrator for having recently taken constructive action towards reserving certain amenities for the exclusive use by members of the white racial group in the Cape Town suburb of Maitland. But, having heard that the local ratepayer's association was considering countering this action, (s)he wrote:

The local ratepayer's association is composed of Jews who wish to keep in with the niggers for business reasons, and of Indian shopkeepers ... White adults and children are refraining at present from using their own park and playground, because of the abundance of niggers coming there from Kensington, where they have more than enough open spaces for themselves. I have been revolted to see African and Coloured youths sitting in the Town Hall Playground, Maitland and looking up the dresses of White girls who are riding on the swings, and even openly saying "hullo darling" to young White girls.<sup>190</sup>

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<sup>189</sup> See, Rosemary Pearce, 'Mobilised Emotions: Public Transportation in the Jim Crow Era', unpublished PhD diss. (University of Nottingham, 2017), 191. Pearce, however, does not reflect upon how such racial abuse can be considered a response to an emotional practice in the form of a culturally informed emotional practice itself.

<sup>190</sup> P. Roux to Administrator, 28 October 1959, KAB, PAA (AA) E/112 A20/67, batch IV. A similar 'problem' is found in a memorandum from the Action Committee of Meulenhof and Upper Kloof Streets, in which it was described how the children of the committee's white ratepayers were 'forced' to play in car parks in front of their residences, much to the annoyance of the street's residents and potentially dangerous for the children. The committee ascribed this to the increase in Coloured children and youths playing on the local playground, which they wanted to be declared white. See 'Coloured Problem on the Playground, Upper Kloof Street, Corner Tuin Street', KAB, PAA (AA) E/112 A20/67, batch II. Playgrounds remain a contentious issue throughout my source dossier on separate amenities. See also correspondence regarding the children's playground in 'Mouquet Farm, Diep River', KAB PAA (AA) E/112 A20/67, batch II.



Many of the excerpts presented, and especially the one immediately above, might conveniently fit into Durrheim and Dixon's argument regarding white attitudes towards the desegregation of beaches in the 1990's, where the image of the beach as a 'family space' was appropriated through a discourse of manners, and in turn, used to justify neo-apartheid views in a South Africa in democratic transition.<sup>191</sup> The argument I have made thus far could, taking their argument into account, handily be viewed as both supporting and extending it. Some grievances in the correspondence appear to have arisen from 'non-whites' comporting themselves in ways that were deemed inappropriate at the level of 'manners', such as Mr(s). Roux's complaint above in which they expresses their outrage at young men looking up young girl's dresses. Such a case could have been plucked directly from Durrheim and Dixon's analysis. Because their historical interrogation shows how the discourse appropriating beach segregation shifted from being one of inappropriate political protesting in a private sphere in the 1980's to one of indecent manners in the 1990's, the extracts in this chapter might not immediately seem pertinent to their argument, at least not temporally. Yet, it does not take much of an effort to read and interpret them along the lines of their reasoning. The 1980's were, appropriately, a time of a mounting black resistance to apartheid whilst the first half of the 1990's (Durrheim and Dixon consider the period of 1982-1995), whilst no less turbulent, served as a backdrop for political negotiations on a post-apartheid democracy.<sup>192</sup>

The contention for Durrheim and Dixon is that white beachgoers took advantage of political unrest in the 1980's to justify their views on beach segregation and modified this view when the transition toward democracy became inevitable. How, then, would the excerpts in this chapter, produced within the time frame from 1952 until 1973, fit into such an interpretation? Recent historical work has seen a trend towards recapturing the period of 'high apartheid', a period of time conceived of

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<sup>191</sup> Durrheim and Dixon, 'South Africa's Beaches'.

<sup>192</sup> See, David Welsh, *The Rise and Fall of Apartheid* (Johannesburg: Jonathan Ball, 2009), especially chapters 7-12.

as 'an interval of stasis and quiescence sandwiched between the heroic era of defiance of the 1950s and the resurgence of popular mobilisation in the 1970s', that is, a period of time in which the apartheid regime saw little internal public opposition to it.<sup>193</sup> In the absence of such opposition, one could in line with Durrheim and Dixon's reasoning, soundly assume that a discourse of manners instead prevails throughout the 'high apartheid' era as a means with which to justify beach segregation, until the resumption of popular mobilisation in the 1970's brings with it the discourse of popular protests corrupting the 'family space', and before the discourse of manners again 'takes over' in the 1990's. This claim, adding to it the excerpts in this chapter, could conceivably even be extended to include not just views on the racial segregation of beaches but of other public amenities as well. Yet, such an argument would fall short at various hurdles. Durrheim and Dixon attribute the gradual shift in discourse as mirroring the political shift from the 'old' to the 'new' South Africa, meaning 'the transition from the explicitly racist context of apartheid to the non-racial democracy'.<sup>194</sup> If the discourse of manners, as they claim, becomes part of a spatial representation, in this case the beach as a 'family space', that justifies and defends racist practice in the less 'explicitly' racist context of the non-racial South Africa, this does not explain why such a discourse appears to be just as prevalent during the 'high apartheid' period, in which the racist context of apartheid should be at its most 'explicit'.<sup>195</sup>

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<sup>193</sup> Dubow, 'New Approaches to High Apartheid and Anti-Apartheid', 305. Geographer Gordon H. Pirie notes that apartheid on trains and at railway stations reached its peak in the 1960's and early 1970's. See Gordon H. Pirie, 'Rolling Segregation into Apartheid: South African Railways, 1948-53', *Journal of Contemporary History* 27 (1992): 671.

<sup>194</sup> Durrheim and Dixon, 'South Africa's Beaches', 434-435.

<sup>195</sup> See also, for example, correspondence from the Town Clerk's office in Port St. John's regarding the potential establishment of racial zoning on the area's main beach. The plans for implementing beach apartheid in Port St. John's, a small tourist hotspot located on the Wild Coast in the Eastern Cape, stayed unresolved for 16 years from 1957 until 1974, whereafter the town was included in the newly created Bantustan of the Transkei. The Town Clerk remained in dialogue with the town's white residents and visitors throughout, some of whom in a similar fashion to those residing in the Cape Peninsula, complained about black beachgoers not

It cannot be denied that Durrheim and Dixon's analysis focuses on a different time period and exclusively takes the beach as an example of a site of discursive contestation, and that their argument may consequently hold water within their temporal and geographical demarcation, only not as a general phenomenon. Yet, others investigating beach apartheid have also insisted that 'bad' manners and dissatisfaction with political protests were not necessarily the main factors in attitudes towards the segregation of beaches, or indeed towards the segregation of amenities at large, as this chapter also shows.

Sociologists Valerie Møller and Lawrence Schlemmer, for example, in a 1982 study of attitudes towards beach integration, show that overcrowding was the single most common thing their white respondents associated with blacks recreating on the beach, followed by waste pollution, bad behaviour, noise, thefts, assaults, and only then 'political' issues,<sup>196</sup> the factor that Durrheim and Dixon single out as the main constituting factor of their discourse argument during the 1980's. Importantly, Møller and Schlemmer ground many of these factors in a common white perception of difference between the lifestyles of whites and other races at large. As one of their respondents asserts: 'The customs of the Zulu are very different from white people'.<sup>197</sup> On a concrete level, white respondents' perception of blacks' recreational use of the beach also relates to this broader argument. One person claimed that 'blacks don't really suntan so it [the potential integration of a beach in Durban] might cause a problem – they'll be fishing, playing and generally getting in the way'.

Another painted a picture along the same lines: 'Blacks don't lie in the sun – they just come for the day and sit and play games'.<sup>198</sup> Such

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'being decently attired', behaving in 'an insolent and indecent manner' and 'upsetting visitors from all over the Republic'. See, among other letters, Town Clerk to Provincial Secretary, 22 October 1957 and Town Clerk to Minister of Community Development, 24 September 1962, KAB, PAA 80 AA94/67.

<sup>196</sup> Møller and Schlemmer, *Attitudes towards Beach Integration*, 131.

<sup>197</sup> Møller and Schlemmer, *Attitudes towards Beach Integration*, 138.

<sup>198</sup> Møller and Schlemmer, *Attitudes towards Beach Integration*, 138.

misgivings can hardly be read as constituting a general disapproval of blacks displaying poor 'manners' or of staging political action. Rather, the constant that runs through virtually all the excerpts in Møller and Lawrence's and Durrheim and Dixon's studies, as well as those analysed in this chapter, is one of white objections on the grounds that non-white individuals simply do not live up to the expectations and assumptions that whites have concerning the ways in which certain recreational facilities should be utilised.

Comportment in discordance with specific norms relating to manners or politics constitutes only part of these objections. What is elucidated when widening the scope to include all recreational facilities, including beaches, whether segregated or not, is an image of members of all non-white racial groups, by virtue of their 'different' emotional practices, transgressing the 'happy' affective atmospheres within which whites moved. This reading gives way to an interpretation that explains why whites took issue with the 'harmless' activities or even the mere presence of 'non-whites' within specific spaces and places. Feeling 'out of place' from an affective atmosphere can, to repeat Scheer's words, cause us to do an emotion. Or, as Ahmed contends: objects, whether in the form of 'who's' or 'what's', can turn good feeling into bad.<sup>199</sup>

The newspaper extracts that constitute the basis for Durrheim and Dixon's study and the respondents' answers in Møller and Schlemmer's study show this to be true within the framework of beach apartheid. I have illustrated so far how members of the public in the Cape Peninsula disclose emotions as variable as disgust, fear and anger in response to perceived transgressions of the affective atmospheres surrounding public amenities overall. This implies an interaction between emotional practices, notions of race and the vision of formalised micro-segregation laid out in the RSAA. I am, however, yet to show how these emotions 'worked', that is, how they constituted part of a dialectical relationship with the apartheid-era racial order.

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<sup>199</sup> Ahmed, *Promise of Happiness*, 45.

## Seeking Emotional Refuge

The fact that ‘ordinary’ people took the time to write memoranda and letters to the authorities at all, regardless of whether they had been encouraged to do so or not, I believe, shows a sense of urgency to resolve the question of separate amenities for the races. We have learned thus far that this urgency often arose based on ‘feeling out of place’. White individuals perceived non-whites as transgressing the ‘happy’ affective atmospheres of recreational space by practising their emotions in the ‘wrong’ ways. An illustrative and bittersweet description that favours this interpretation is found in lauded South African novelist Es’kia Mphahlele’s autobiographical *Down Second Avenue* from 1959, in which he writes of segregated amenities:

While we shouted and laughed in our packed and stuffy trains, in our long, long weary queues, in the buses, they boarded their clean buses and separate train coaches from their separate platforms, and travelled to their separate suburbs - clean, quiet but either dead or neurotic.<sup>200</sup>

One could also, however, decipher this depiction of his and his fellow black commuters’ emotional practices as a conscious challenge to the conventional social domination of whites of segregated space. Mphahlele’s juxtaposition of their shouting and laughing with ‘their’ cleanliness and silence strongly implies an awareness of the presumed prevailing differences in deportment between blacks and whites. In it also lies a subtle condemnation of whites’ supposedly ‘neurotic’ behaviour in contrast with that of ‘non-whites’. It is implied that white commuters must suffer from strong feelings of irrational fear and worry while, or even because, black people display their emotions in an evocative way. Mphahlele’s apparent pride in having done so despite the circumstances in which he and other black passengers found

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<sup>200</sup> Es’kia Mphahlele, *Down Second Avenue* (London: Faber and Faber, 1959).

themselves suggests, albeit hesitantly, that their emotional practices were at times employed as acts of defiance.

The initial interpretation above of feeling 'out of place' could also apply the other way around, if we look to the representations made to the Committee by 'non-white' persons. Here, one author, on behalf of the Cape Peninsula's substantial Coloured community, pointed out that the enforcements of the Group Areas Act and the RSAA had led to a disproportionate allocation of recreational space between the races, at the expense of Coloured people in particular.<sup>201</sup> This, in effect, meant that they, at the directives of the policies that favoured whites, had also come to feel 'out of place', in that they experienced a decreasing amount of recreational space in which to potentially produce 'happy' affective atmospheres through carrying out mobilising emotional practices. Feeling 'out of place' in this way can also lead to individuals seeking what William Reddy has termed 'emotional refuge', defined as:

a relationship, ritual, or organization (whether informal or formal) that provides safe release from prevailing emotional norms and allows relaxation of emotional effort, with or without ideological justification, which may shore up or threaten the existing emotional regime.<sup>202</sup>

The 'fight' over the right to occupy recreational space was thus also a quest to find sanctuary from the racialised politics of everyday life, which, paradoxically, can be said to be what enforced and reproduced the perceived need to be alleviated from them in the first place. Faced with evident hostility towards their presence and conduct within white spaces, 'non-white' South Africans might rightly crave places where they could entertain themselves without being subjected to the disdain

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<sup>201</sup> Hoedemaker to Committee.

<sup>202</sup> Reddy, *Navigation of Feeling*, 129; see also, Jan Plamper, 'The History of Emotions: An Interview with William Reddy, Barbara Rosenwein, and Peter Stearns', *History and Theory* 49 (2010): 243.

demonstrated towards them by their 'European' countrymen, and which the apparent emotional norms of the regime predicated.

But, while it appears that 'non-whites' were generally open to sharing outlets with whites in the area of leisure and recreation, at least in later years, as shown for example by Møller and Schlemmer in their analysis of the views of Zulus in Natal in 1981,<sup>203</sup> emotional refuge likely first and foremost applied to those spaces that white people would and did not frequent. Mphahlele's juxtaposition of the 'clean', yet 'neurotic' platforms and trains of white passengers with the 'stuffed', yet evidently happy ones of black commuters, in which they would carefreely laugh and shout, is thus an enigma. Indeed, it was onboard segregated rather than desegregated trains that this type of complacency was available for experience.

Comparably, the representative of the Coloured community who called for an increase in and improvement of existing amenities to provide respite for Coloureds in the Cape was required to do so under the conditions of the racial policies of the day, commenting that 'it is fully realised that social separation has come to stay, and there are many of our people, who are, perhaps reluctantly, reconciled to this fact'.<sup>204</sup> Emotional refuges, then, did not necessarily offer a full reprieve from the customs of state prescription. As Boddice has highlighted, the fact that refuges are by their very nature spaces in which things or people are contained, in this case in line with the racial order, exposes and reinforces 'the external framework against which this "free" space is opposed',<sup>205</sup> despite their allowing for a relaxation of emotional practice.

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<sup>203</sup> Møller and Schlemmer's study of the 1981 Buthelezi Commission's attitude surveys, which provided a profile of opinions of all race groups in Natal, showed that 78 per cent of Zulus were in favour of sharing recreational and leisure spots with whites. See, Møller and Schlemmer, *Attitudes towards Beach Integration*, 82-83. For the work of the Buthelezi Commission, on which the governing National Party declined to serve, see, David Welsh, 'Review of the Buthelezi Commission', *Reality* 14, no. 5 (1982): 6-7; Roger J. Southall, 'Consociationalism in South Africa: the Buthelezi Commission and Beyond', *Journal of Modern African Studies* 21, no. 1 (1983): 77-112.

<sup>204</sup> Hoedemaker to Committee.

<sup>205</sup> Boddice, *History of Emotions*, 76.

Many whites instead agreed fully with the principles that were ingrained into the provisions of the RSAA that their own confinement into particular spaces would provide them with relief from emotive exceptions at the hands of those who were barred from frequenting them. An analogous paradox to the one above appears here in two ways. Firstly, the reluctance of a large number of white ratepayers to 'forego' facilities or allow some to be integrated had the consequence that the 'issues' of emotions and race with which so many of them presumably grappled, would increase in tandem with the further deprivation of or decrease in 'non-white' amenities. Secondly, the conduct of especially black and Coloured men, women and children, with which so many vehemently disagreed, was nonetheless 'permitted' to continue in the areas that were designated for the use of people not classified as white. It is in such paradoxes that my general argument emerges that the everyday practices of apartheid, including collective feelings, acted in no small way to sustain the racial 'logics' on which apartheid rested.

'Non-whites' felt forced to seek respite in their 'own' spaces, thus bolstering the official principle of social separation according to race. White residents of the Cape remained aggrieved by the authorities' apparent failure to adhere to this principle. This, however, reinforced the belief that racial separation would lessen their being confronted by what they regarded to be deviant emotional practices, despite the principle of racial segregation being based on the fact that people are, as it were, different, and therefore allowing for breaches of 'normalcy' by acknowledging that separate facilities were necessary to combat them.

### **An Aggregation of Distress**

Whether white or 'non-white', the circumstances relating to the RSAA appear to have created the same sense of injustice on which to act by lodging objections and protests to the provincial authorities. I read these efforts collectively as an accumulation of anger. Here, I draw upon



Ahmed's discussion of the emotional politics of the feminist movement: 'the response to pain', she writes, 'as a call for action, also requires anger, an interpretation that this pain is wrong, that it is an outrage, and that something must be done about it'.<sup>206</sup>

In the case at hand, pain should be read as a form of racialised injustice.<sup>207</sup> 'Non-whites' cause pain to whites by transgressing their 'happy' affective atmospheres and react with anger in the form of calling for a stricter enforcement of the RSAA. Whites inflict pain on 'non-whites' by enforcing the RSAA on their own terms and thus take away their 'happy' affective atmospheres and so non-whites likewise respond with outrage.

Despite the Committee processing only very few inquiries made directly by 'non-white' representatives that illustrate the 'pain' of experiencing segregated amenities in the Cape, one can uncover a small sample of their stories elsewhere. As late as 1986, *The Argus* reported on the effects of the application of the RSAA on its readers' fellow countrymen in the region. A Coloured member of the Labour Party and of the local Elsie River Management Committee asserted that once humbled by the RSAA, 'the pain, anger and frustration is always present'.<sup>208</sup> His own most vivid experience with the law, he told the newspaper, was when his son was denied entry to the bathroom when he journeyed with his father to a local insurance company to pay his premiums. The child was then forced to urinate in the street, with white passers-by making snide remarks. Another interviewee, a Coloured woman from Athlone, described how she was arrested for walking on a 'whites only' beach, causing her to feel 'humiliated, angry and emotional'.<sup>209</sup> A Coloured teacher from Wupperthal reported that he was asked to sit his university exams in a kitchen, away from his fellow white candidates, a subject on which he refused to express his

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<sup>206</sup> Ahmed, *Cultural Politics of Emotion*, 174.

<sup>207</sup> Ahmed, *Cultural Politics of Emotion*, 175.

<sup>208</sup> 'Apartheid's Cornerstone', *The Argus*, 25 November 1986.

<sup>209</sup> 'Apartheid's Cornerstone'.

feelings.<sup>210</sup> The Coloured playwright Adam Small once had to deny his four-year-old daughter her wish of playing in a local playpark, an event which, he explained, contributed to him developing 'a deep-rooted resentment of places, people and even [himself]'.<sup>211</sup> Finally, a Coloured Member of Parliament in the House of Representatives<sup>212</sup> relayed that he was turned away from a hotel in Plettenberg Bay only the previous year and was 'filled with hatred and remorse'.<sup>213</sup>

I suggest that it is such aggregations of distress that ultimately result in both sides of the racial divide practicing their anger as an act of last resort by writing to the Amenities Committee, the limited case study of which I probe in this chapter.

Ahmed shows how anger most often 'works' with other emotions and objects in the form of things or people, to align subjects with one another and to alienate others. As we have noted, pain, but also disgust, is evident as a particularly common emotion in the racial encounters that lay the foundation for the correspondence analysed throughout this chapter. Discussing disgust, Ahmed highlights its ambivalent qualities and its relation to the question of physical proximity. Feeling disgusted with something or someone necessarily entails getting close enough to the object to know that it repels. This process, paradoxically, requires a certain fascination or familiarisation with the object.<sup>214</sup>

We can observe this in the accounts presented by white ratepayers, in which the actions of non-whites are described in meticulous detail if

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<sup>210</sup> 'Apartheid's Cornerstone'.

<sup>211</sup> 'Apartheid's Cornerstone'.

<sup>212</sup> South African Prime Minister and later State President, P. W. Botha, introduced the Tricameral Parliament of South Africa in 1984 with separate chambers for white (House of Assembly), Indian (House of Delegates) and Coloured (House of Representatives) Members of Parliament. Black Africans continued to be excluded from having direct political representation in Parliament.

<sup>213</sup> 'Apartheid's Cornerstone'.

<sup>214</sup> Ahmed, *Cultural Politics of Emotion*, 84-85. Pirie exemplifies this in his mentioning of white obsessions with having to share crockery and cutlery with non-white passengers on Cape Town trains before formal segregation ensued. See Pirie, 'Rolling Segregation', 675.

only in order to justify how these actions make them feel ‘sickened’ or ‘revolted’ and therefore necessitate spatial segregation. In order to expand this argument with more empirical evidence, we might look, for example, to a letter written to the Committee by a Miss Loubser, resident of the picturesque Kalk Bay, which, she wrote, had over the past years experienced a general deterioration. Like countless others, she pointed the finger at the increase in Coloured visitors to her immediate surroundings: ‘This, to my mind, has been caused by the unnatural, unhealthy and unpleasant influx of crowds of Coloured folk to this area’, but that ‘it would take too long to go into all the details of the “polluting” of our little village’.<sup>215</sup>

Miss Loubser implied not only that the presence of Coloured persons in Kalk Bay instigated in her a feeling of distaste, but also went so far as to suggest that it was ‘unhealthy’ and that it ‘polluted’ the area. Here, we can draw a parallel to social anthropologist Mary Douglas’ seminal work *Purity and Danger*, in which she analyses the concepts of purity and pollution across time, space and cultures. Her main argument, that what we consider ‘dirty’ (and consequently, disgusting), is a by-product of order and classification, is particularly pertinent to the context in which Miss Loubser found herself. Using the analogy of a pair of shoes, Douglas argues that shoes are not inherently ‘dirty’, but it is dirty to place them on a dining table.<sup>216</sup> Miss Loubser might not have believed that Coloured people were inherently ‘dirty’, but their taking up space in a ‘European’ area such as Kalk Bay constituted a transgression of its

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<sup>215</sup> Miss Loubser to Administrator, 27 January 1969, KAB, PAA (AA) E/112 A20/67, batch IV. These sentiments are also expressed in, among others, ‘Mouquet Farm, Diep River’; ‘Coloured Problem on the Playground’; R.J.A. Storm to Mrs. Harding, 5 March 1959, KAB, PAA (AA) E/112 A20/67, batch IV; Memorandum submitted by the Muizenberg Ward 15 Ratepayers & Civic Development Association, KAB, PAA (AA) E/112 A20/67, batch II; Memorandum from the Ward XV Ratepayers and Civic Development Association, KAB, PAA (AA) E/112 A20/67, batch II.

<sup>216</sup> Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo* (London and New York: Routledge, 2001 [1966]), 37.

racial 'purity' so that they came to be regarded as 'disgusting' in so far as we trust Douglas' definition of dirt as 'matter out of place'.<sup>217</sup>

Ahmed puts forward a similar argument to Douglas' in what can be interpreted as a postcolonial reading of the politics of disgust involved in an excerpt from Charles Darwin's *The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals* from 1904. Recounting how he shared a meal with a 'native' in Tierra del Fuego, Darwin admitted that he 'felt utter disgust at [his] food being touched by a naked savage, though his hands did not appear dirty'.<sup>218</sup> Disgust, therefore, Ahmed insists, is not a response to universal truths, but is rather prompted by the meaning we infer on the object that is read within a given situation. That racial imagery intersects with notions of hygiene, however, is not new in the context of segregation in South Africa. As Swanson proved in his study of the bubonic plague sweeping through the cities of Cape Town and Port Elizabeth in 1901, white, British policymakers and officials quickly concluded that black Africans constituted a threat to public health, why they were forcibly removed from urban areas, showing how 'a metaphor [can] shape perceptions and influence or justify behaviour'.<sup>219</sup>

The link between purity, as that unblemished, and danger, in the context of the RSAA, emerges as not just racialised but also remarkably gendered. Revisiting Miss Wilson's letter in which she took offence with groups of black men seemingly marching brazenly through the streets can be read as a powerful, albeit isolated sign of her own white, female respectability. Similarly, Mr(s.) Roux's vocal repulsion by the young Coloured and black men whom he had heard greeting white girls on the playground and accused of looking up their dresses, also stands out as a reaffirmation of white female purity. White women and girls

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<sup>217</sup> Douglas, *Purity and Danger*, 36; 41.

<sup>218</sup> Cited in Ahmed, *Cultural Politics of Emotion*, 82. This encounter is widely used in other works that discuss the ambivalence of disgust. See, for example, William Ian Miller, *The Anatomy of Disgust* (Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press, 1997), 3; Daniel Lord Smail, *On Deep History and the Brain* (Berkeley, CA, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 2008), 114-115.

<sup>219</sup> Swanson, 'Sanitation Syndrome', 388.

in these modest examples become objects of protection and innocence at the hands of themselves and their white brethren from the unruly and potentially sexually deviant black male displaying unwanted and inappropriate behaviour.<sup>220</sup> Consequently, the playground, where children frolic, and the pedestrian thoroughfare, where one expects to move freely from one place to another, become spaces of discord and danger rather than pleasant hustle and bustle.

Returning to the discussion on disgust, a perceived familiarity with that which abhors is apparent in the sources. A local Cape Town councillor reminded the Administrator of the Cape Province that 'we all know that when the Coloured community invade an area they bring slum conditions', while another writer wished to stir the Administrator's memory of 'the war years', when 'the non-Europeans' regularly '... left the place in a disgraceful state'. A third claimed that '[they had] always had this experience of any European amenity in a coloured surrounding ... [it] must sooner or later, lead to unpleasantness'.<sup>221</sup> Here, white places were deemed by their chief inhabitants as being in danger of surrendering its happy valence to one of disdain if local Coloureds were permitted to continue frequenting them. As Margrit Pernau has argued, 'even a single and contingent event can become linked to space through memory'.<sup>222</sup> In this way, disgust is also an ambiguous emotion because it can involve a degree of attraction towards as well as a perceived acquaintance with the object that is seen as repulsive. Disgust is not, then, a purely reflexive emotion but is 'about something'.<sup>223</sup>

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<sup>220</sup> This argument becomes especially pertinent in the context of miscegenation, as we shall see in chapter 2. As a starting point, see for example, Timothy Keegan, 'Gender, Degeneration and Sexual Danger: Imagining Race and Class in South Africa, ca. 1912', *Journal of Southern African Studies* 27, no. 3 (2001): 459-477.

<sup>221</sup> Mrs. Hall to Administrator; van Niekerk to Administrator; Storm to Mrs. Harding.

<sup>222</sup> Pernau, 'Space and Emotion', 542.

<sup>223</sup> Ahmed, *Cultural Politics of Emotion*, 86; Ditte Marie Munch-Juriscic, 'Perpetrator Disgust: A Morally Destructive Emotion', in *Emotions and Mass Atrocity: Philosophical and Theoretical Explorations*, ed. Thomas Brudholm and Johannes Lang (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 149.

Through the case of the RSAA, we see how this ‘something’, that which disgust was dependent on, was the physical proximity between the races, which activated the notions of ambiguity mentioned above. Indeed, even the Minister of Justice, in his reasoning for introducing the law, explained how non-Europeans had begun to ‘[penetrate] sporadically, in a provocative manner, and to cross the dividing line by means of pushing into premises and making use of the facilities reserved for Europeans’.<sup>224</sup> It is these premise and facilities I have designated as inhabiting certain affective atmospheres. We have seen that the transgressions by non-Europeans that the Minister mentioned, were experienced by the white ratepayers in the Cape Peninsula as often resulting in ‘disgust encounters’, in which whites and non-whites experienced proximity to one another.

The contact involved in such encounters, Ahmed asserts, means that ‘the proximity of the object to the body is felt as offensive. The object must have got close enough to make us feel disgusted’.<sup>225</sup> Hereafter, disgust works, she continues, ‘by [pulling the body] away from the object in the registering of the proximity as an offence’.<sup>226</sup> It is in this final stage of pulling away, Ahmed concludes, that disgust encounters work with anger and become generative, and, as a result, force socio-political imprints on those involved in them. Through being forced to ‘pull back’ from the object, the object, in this case, ‘non-whites’, are recognised and reproduced as ‘disgusting’: ‘Pulling back, bodies that are disgusted are also bodies that feel a certain rage, a rage that the object has got close enough to sicken, and to be taken over or taken in. To be disgusted is after *all to be affected by what one has rejected*’.<sup>227</sup>

In Richard Rive’s much loved short story *The Bench*, we find reason to believe that Ahmed’s analogy above should not purely be read metaphorically, but rather as how the emotional politics that the

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<sup>224</sup> *Debates*, vol. 82, col. 1053.

<sup>225</sup> Ahmed, *Cultural Politics of Emotion*, 86.

<sup>226</sup> Ahmed, *Cultural Politics of Emotion*, 86.

<sup>227</sup> Ahmed, *Cultural Politics of Emotion*, 86. Italics in original.

execution of the RSAA rendered possible, could have very real effects on the everyday lives of apartheid-era South Africans. Their racial identities, when studied within the context of space and place, historian Vivian Bickford-Smith has proposed, in fact become 'less imagined, more material'.<sup>228</sup>

Rive's story, inspired by events during the Defiance Campaign of the early 1950's, revolves around Karlie, a young Coloured man who, in the aftermath of listening to a selection of speeches by anti-apartheid campaigners, chooses to sit on a 'whites only' bench at a railway station. While choosing to sit on the bench initially makes Karlie nervous and indecisive, he becomes more comfortable in his own skin when no-one seems to notice him sitting on it, even lighting a cigarette in the process. When he is ultimately confronted by white passers-by (and egged on in his defiance by others), we learn how Ahmed's contemplations on the relation between disgust and anger ring true.

A white man orders Karlie to rise from the bench and go sit on the 'non-white' seats further down the platform. When Karlie proceeds to smoke his cigarette, looking his opponent in the eyes without saying anything, the affronted man asks: 'Must I dirty my hands on scum like you?' and warns Karlie 'I will call a policeman rather than soil my hands on a Hotnot<sup>229</sup> like you'.<sup>230</sup> The man is evidently referring here to the fact that his hands might end up unclean should he lay a hand on Karlie to forcibly remove him from the bench, yet one might also read his words as his implying that Karlie himself is 'dirty', 'soiled' or, as he also remarks degradingly, 'scum'. As Karlie persists in 'contaminating' the white bench with his body and it becomes clear that he refuses to budge, even after a policeman insists that he move, he is met with fury: 'he ... felt a dull pain as somebody rammed a fist into his face'.<sup>231</sup>

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<sup>228</sup> Bickford-Smith, *Emergence of the South African Metropolis*, 7.

<sup>229</sup> Derogatory term for a Coloured person.

<sup>230</sup> Rive, 'The Bench', 132.

<sup>231</sup> Rive, 'The Bench', 133.

This type of anger, as a response to disgust, we can identify, albeit in a milder, symbolic form, not only in the letters and memoranda discussed in this chapter, but also as an emotion of which the writing of the letters and memoranda itself is reflective. In these sources, it was assumed that the community that the recipients as well as the authors themselves represented, would share the same feelings because of a shared 'knowledge' of or familiarity with, non-whites and their actions, either through having encountered the same situations, or through sharing the same basic emotional values.<sup>232</sup>

In this way, the assumed sharing of disgust encounters among whites becomes a shared anger<sup>233</sup> towards non-whites, a generative effect. The collective effort becomes one of attempting to ensure that disgust encounters and others of a negative nature, provoked by proximity between the races, become eradicated from the 'happy' places that they look to the provincial and municipal authorities to help confining, through their power to apply the measures of the RSAA. This attempt also entails redirecting anger towards those authorities for failing to do so. As Ahmed states: 'Your rage might ... spill out towards those who promised you happiness by the elevation of some things as good'.<sup>234</sup> We could then appropriately ask how successful these efforts were, which I discuss in the following.

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<sup>232</sup> Indeed, historian Barbara Rosenwein's well-known concept of 'emotional communities' entails equating them with other social communities and uncovering 'what these communities (and the individuals within them) define and assess as valuable and harmful to them; the evaluations they make about others' emotions, the nature of the affective bond between people that they recognize; and the modes of emotional expression that they expect, encourage, tolerate, and deplore'. See, Rosenwein, 'Worrying about Emotions', 842; Barbara H. Rosenwein, 'Problems and Methods in the History of Emotions', *Passions in Context: Journal of the History and Philosophy of the Emotions* 1, no. 1 (2012): 11.

<sup>233</sup> Ahmed, *Cultural Politics of Emotion*, 96.

<sup>234</sup> Ahmed, *Cultural Politics of Emotion*, 221.



## A Measured Response

We find no direct responses to the memoranda and letters written to the Cape Provincial Committee of Enquiry on Public Amenities in the Cape Peninsula. According to the Committee's final report, the memoranda were discussed on a regular basis on twenty-six occasions throughout 1959 and served as a basis on which the Committee would make its final recommendations, along with inspections of facilities and '[interviews with] representatives of various organisations', the outcomes of which are not present in the source dossiers.<sup>235</sup> We therefore have no way of knowing unequivocally how the Committee was influenced by the contents of the letters and memoranda when drawing up their final report. We can, however, look to the report itself, in which the Committee's concrete recommendations materialise.

Apart from presenting us with an idea of which issues that appear in the inquiries from members of the public that were processed by the Committee and how it suggested to resolve them, they are also supplemented throughout by justifications by the Committee's members for their decisions. Moreover, after the Committee published its report, both the Cape Town City Council and the Divisional Council of the Cape<sup>236</sup> met to discuss its findings before reporting back to the Committee with their views. The Divisional Council considered, along with the report, letters from the chairmen of the Hout Bay and Melkbosch ratepayers' associations that had arrived after the Committee's report had been published and were therefore not included in its considerations.<sup>237</sup> This suggests that ratepayers' views were regarded as crucial. The Cape Town City Council reported back that it was satisfied that the Committee's work had been carried out fairly and

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<sup>235</sup> 'Report of Committee', 1.

<sup>236</sup> Divisional councils were local government bodies responsible for services in the provinces that lay outside municipal boundaries. Today, South Africa consists only of border-to-border municipalities.

<sup>237</sup> 'Report to the Chairman and Members of Council: The Report of the Committee of Enquiry on Public Amenities in the Cape Peninsula', 'q'-s', Cape Divisional Council, KAB, PAA (AA) E/112 A20/67, batch IV.

impartially. It returned a copy of the Committee's report in its response, fully annotated with comments on each paragraph laid out in the report. These comments highlighted where the Council's views aligned with or differed from those of the Committee, often on specific issues that we have seen were taken up by members of the public.<sup>238</sup>

In the Cape Peninsula, we find on the surface a more sympathetic view towards the plight of its substantial Coloured population, a sentiment that was also expressed by one white letter writer, who disagreed with separate amenities as a matter of principle, but nevertheless believed that the different race groups would 'naturally' keep to using specific facilities.<sup>239</sup> Indeed, the Committee accused the Divisional Council of having neglected its role in providing amenities for the Coloured community under its purview, an assessment that the Divisional Council agreed was correct. From the time the report was published onwards, however, it assured it would act to better the Coloured situation.<sup>240</sup> The Committee itself acknowledged that the Coloured community '[was] likely to remain ... an integral and major section of the Cape Peninsula residing there side by side with the White group'. It noted also the inadequate amount of and state of existing amenities that catered to Coloureds, which the Cape Town City

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<sup>238</sup> 'Comments and Recommendations Adopted by the Cape Town City Council on the 20<sup>th</sup> January, 1960, Relating to the Report of the Committee of Enquiry on Public Amenities in the Cape Peninsula', KAB, PAA (AA) E/112 A20/67, batch IV; 'Report of Committee'.

<sup>239</sup> O. D. Wollheim to Committee, 4 March 1959, KAB PAA (AA) E/112 A20/67, batch II. The 1970 South African Census showed 2,051.000 South Africans classified as Coloured compared to 3,773.000 classified as 'White'. In 1996, the census showed that out of the then 3,600.446 people who considered themselves Coloured, 2,146.109 of them were residents of the Province of the Western Cape, which includes the Cape Peninsula. I have not been able to facilitate access to the same statistics in the 1970 census. However, this should illustrate that the Western Cape is home to a sizeable number of persons that self-identify as Coloured. In 2011, the Coloured community constituted 48.8 per cent of the total population of the province and was by far the largest racial group. See *South African Statistics 2000* (Pretoria: Statistics South Africa, 2000), 1.4 and 1.5; *Census 2011: Census in Brief* (Pretoria: Statistics South Africa, 2012), 21.

<sup>240</sup> 'Report of Committee,' 14; 'Report to the Chairman', 'p'.

Council commended the Committee for recognising.<sup>241</sup> The Committee and the Divisional Council furthermore acknowledged that the tourist trade in the Peninsula was in effect confined to the white group, and that whites, due to their better socio-economic standing and 'being more articulate' in comparison with the other racial groups, could easier exert pressure on local authorities and ensure that certain demands were met.<sup>242</sup> These positions, however, should not be confused with any new stance on racial segregation. As the Committee felt compelled to ensure:

The traditional national policy has always been on social separation of the different racial groups. Subordinate bodies which deal with educational, welfare and similar matters must adapt their activities accordingly, whether or not they are in agreement with certain or all aspects of the implementation of the national policy at the time.<sup>243</sup>

In its concrete recommendations, the Committee seems to have lived up to its stated goals and responsibilities vis-à-vis its Coloured stakeholders, yet not at the expense of its white ratepayers. Conversely, on those recommendations where the Committee and the City Council differed in opinion, either one or the other appears to have played devil's advocate. When discussing playgrounds, the Committee recommended that 'overseers' should belong to the same race as that for which the playground was reserved. The Council saw no problem with the overseers being of a different race to those utilising it.<sup>244</sup> At Mouquet Farm, the Committee recommended that the local playground be declared for whites only, as the residential area in which the playground was located was to be declared white in the near future, in accordance with the

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<sup>241</sup> 'Report of Committee', 4, para. 11(b); 'Comments and Recommendations', 1.

<sup>242</sup> 'Report of Committee', 3, para. 8(c); 'Report to the Chairman', 'o'.

<sup>243</sup> 'Report of Committee', 3-4, para. 11(b).

<sup>244</sup> 'Report of Committee', para. 81.

provisions of the Group Areas Act. The Council, on the other hand, did not want to declare the playground white until a decision on the racial zoning of the residential area surrounding it had become official.<sup>245</sup> Glen Beach, located in the wealthy white suburb to Cape Town of Camps Bay, was caught between two different recommendations. The Council wished to see it be declared white and the Committee wanted to allocate it for use by Coloureds.<sup>246</sup> Regarding the Green Point Common, which we covered earlier in this chapter, the Committee advocated that 'non-whites' should use recreational facilities closer to their 'own' residential areas once they had been established. After this, the Common, including the track, should be declared for Europeans only. The Council, however, endorsed gifting the track and eight other fields already used by non-Europeans to them for permanent use.<sup>247</sup>

Parks were likewise a contentious issue, yet here, the Council and the Committee agreed. While parks within white residential areas should be kept for whites only, the two authorities nevertheless recognised that some parks might have an 'educational value' for 'non-whites'. The botanical gardens in the white suburb of Claremont, for example, was to remain open to all races, as would the Company Gardens in central Cape Town.<sup>248</sup> This would seem to be in defiance of white ratepayers like Miss Wilson, who we learned earlier found herself in a state of horror over the Company Gardens being 'overrun' by 'non-Europeans'. In Kalk Bay, the report stated that the increasing influx of Coloured people to their allocated area meant that they were forced to 'spill out' to other areas due to congestion. This, the Committee accepted, had '[resulted] in serious resentment by the White residents overlooking this section of the coastline'.<sup>249</sup> It therefore saw a benefit in reserving the whole of Kalk Bay beach for Coloureds in the hope that that would 'confine' them there.

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<sup>245</sup> 'Report of Committee', 20, para. 82.

<sup>246</sup> 'Report of Committee', 34, para. 156.

<sup>247</sup> 'Report of Committee', 11-12.

<sup>248</sup> 'Report of Committee', 42.

<sup>249</sup> 'Report of Committee', paras. 130-137.

The Council, however, was unable to accept this position. In the Clovelly-Fish Hoek area, the Committee was unsure as to whether local authorities would be forced to reserve sections on beaches for all races, whether virtually no 'non-white' ratepayers or servants frequented the beaches or not. The Committee would rather this whole coastline be declared white, if possible.<sup>250</sup>

The Committee's decisions and the Divisional and Cape City Councils' views on them thus present an ambiguous picture of the effect of the appeals of its ratepayers. One could sensibly assume that the local authorities' main stakeholders, the white group, would have its demands acceded to. As Pernau finds in her study of Delhi through the Mughal and British colonial eras: 'city planning aims at the creation of emotions, at least for those inhabitants deemed important'.<sup>251</sup> In the Cape Peninsula, however, we see how the plight of the Coloured community was in some cases deemed important enough to be prioritised over white misgivings. We can theorise over the reasons for this. In the case of keeping certain gardens open for Coloured recreation, we learn that this was for 'educational' purposes, thus giving way for a Saidian interpretation of the authorities maintaining an inferior Coloured 'other' to 'keep happy' in a paternalistic manner.<sup>252</sup> Similarly, in line with Ahmed's primary argument, it can be interpreted as emotions deftly aligning Coloureds with whites, potentially strengthening what historian Mohamed Adhikari has called the Coloured community's 'relative privilege vis-à-vis Africans within the racial hierarchy'.<sup>253</sup> Indeed, native African stakeholders were not even given a say in the matter. The

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<sup>250</sup> 'Report of Committee', para. 135.

<sup>251</sup> Pernau, 'Space and Emotion', 546.

<sup>252</sup> This now widely used theory central to postcolonial studies is found in Edward Said, *Orientalism* (London: Penguin, 1978) esp. 47-48.

<sup>253</sup> Mohamed Adhikari, *Not White Enough, Not Black Enough*, 72; Welsh, *Rise and Fall of Apartheid*, 96. The 'paradox' of the Coloured community during apartheid lay in their being culturally akin to Afrikaans-speaking section of the white community, at the very least linguistically, yet not deemed racially 'pure' enough. Coloureds were defined in the PRA as 'a person who is not a white person or a native'. See, *Population Registration Act*, section 1 (iii); Dubow, *Apartheid*, 25; 38.

authorities in the Cape Peninsula were thus on the most part inclined to apply the RSAA in accordance with the 'traditional' policy of segregation. Cases like these, however, tell us also, that appeasing the anger and disgust of whites at times had to be overridden in favour of the structural vision of 'total apartheid'.

## Summary and Sub-Conclusions

The 1953 Reservation of Separate Amenities Act was introduced as an attempt to legally enforce a longstanding 'custom' of South African society of racial segregation at the micro-level after a legal challenge at the higher courts brought into question its validity in the case of segregation in the transport sector.

Envisioned in the law was in effect a regulation of everyday life down to minute detail in accordance with one's racial identity so that minimal contact between racial groups would occur. Previous, sparse research on the effects of the RSAA, has shown how the regulation of racial proximity within the recreational sphere was particularly common and how such regulations influenced also contemporary recreational patterns of the different racial groups. Beach apartheid, for example brought with it a transmutable discourse of the beach as a 'family space', reflective of racialised attitudes towards how such recreational space should be used.

Re-reading empirical evidence from these studies along with other sources from a history of emotions perspective offers a different interpretation. In this chapter, I have conducted a reading of correspondence between members of the public, provincial, municipal, and state authorities regarding the application of the Reservation of Separate Amenities Act in the mid-twentieth century Cape Peninsula in which I broadened the contextual framework to include recreational amenities at large and changed the temporal scope to the period of 'high apartheid'.

Recreational space, it emerges, was considered by members of the public to be made up of multiple 'happy' places. This process, I argue, shows how space may come to contain a specific 'affective atmosphere', seemingly inherent to specific places, yet vulnerable to change depending on shifts in people's sociocultural readings of them. In the Cape of the mid-twentieth century, these readings were highly racialised, with not just the mere presence of racial 'others', but also the ways in which people practised their emotions within them, affecting the apparent affective atmospheres of places.

'Non-white' individuals articulated their apparent pain caused by the decreasing amount of recreational space being made available to them as well as being shunned, both informally and formally, from spaces that were considered white. White ratepayers instead expressed their pain through emotions such as disgust, the origin of which was attributed to non-whites transgressing the affective atmospheres of the 'happy places' that they regularly frequented. For whites, this meant that some places were in jeopardy of becoming 'disgusting', views on which also took on a gendered tone. Both sides of the racial divide would thus in a way feel 'out of place' from recreational space and their quests to find 'emotional refuge' would perpetuate the notions on which the idea of racially separated space rested.

Reflecting on how emotions such as disgust and pain 'work', it is contended that they often generate anger as a response to injustice or to what one has rejected. We might identify anger as the collective emotional practice that produces the abundance of letters and memoranda and second-hand complaints directed to local officials in the Cape Peninsula as well as the supporting empirical evidence I have offered here from autobiographical and fictional literature and newspaper reports. Secondary literature on the specific phenomenon of beach apartheid along with personal experiences from the late apartheid era suggest, albeit tentatively, that emotional practices worked with racialised conceptions of space over a longer time period than the one studied here.

Responses to this anger on the part of the authorities involved varied in their appeasement of the respective parties. In the Cape Peninsula, the vision of 'grand' apartheid at times loomed large in decisions

regarding the enforcement of micro-segregation. While the authorities appear to have empathised with the emotive pleas made by its white ratepayers, concessions to their 'non-white' subjects also had to be accommodated in the name of 'education' or of keeping 'in check' the racial order of the day.

While the Reservation of Separate Amenities Act by and large restricted the more impersonal physical proximity between the races that might occur throughout the 'hustle and bustle' of daily life, some would choose, quite consciously, to engage in racial proximity at its most intimate level, namely in both sexual and loving relationships between people of different 'colours'. I turn to the emotional politics of these relationships in the following chapter.





# Chapter 2

## The Emotional Labour of Loving Thy Neighbour: Miscegenation, Emotions and the Law

We are convinced that illicit intercourse is the main source of miscegenation, which is regarded on all sides as a social evil that ought to be combated.<sup>254</sup>

C. R. Swart, South African Minister of Justice, 1950.

And indeed, most tragic of all, liaisons of genuine love do arise between Europeans and Africans in the Union, predestined to calamity, as fated and ill-starred as Pinkerton's romance or the passions of an Othello.<sup>255</sup>

Jan Morris, *South African Winter*, 1958.

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<sup>254</sup> Union of South Africa, *Debates of the House of Assembly*, vol. 70 (Cape Town, 1950), col. 2164. The Minister here quoted an excerpt from the 1939 *Report of the Commission on Mixed Marriages in South Africa*.

<sup>255</sup> Jan Morris, *South African Winter* (London: Faber and Faber, 1958), 165.

## Introduction

After being installed in the corridors of power, the National Party government pushed apartheid legislation through Parliament at a breath-taking pace in its first years. Alongside implementing policies that undergirded the burgeoning vision of a future society of ‘grand’ or ‘total’ apartheid through the creation of elaborate and devastatingly effective structural mechanisms that regulated labour and housing opportunities and infringed on the voting rights of ‘non-whites’, the ‘petty’ pillar of apartheid was also advanced. Unlike the Reservation of Separate Amenities Act, which emerged as a solution to existing provisions for Jim Crow-like measures being challenged in and by the courts, the implementation of the Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act (1949) and the amendment of the Immorality Act (1950) were carried out very much deliberately. In an animated rally cry against so-called ‘miscegenation’, the government, almost immediately after triumphing at the polls in 1948, outlawed the solemnisation of marriages across the colour bar.<sup>256</sup> The following year, in 1950, the existing Union-era Immorality Act of 1927 was extended so that it now prohibited not only sexual relations between ‘European’ and ‘native’ but also criminalised ‘illicit carnal intercourse’ between ‘Europeans’ and ‘non-Europeans’ at large.<sup>257</sup> These measures are, among others, illustrative examples of the authoritative social engineering that made up but one of the countless practices that came to characterise apartheid as a system. When read as an attempt to cement the ‘traditional’ system of racial segregation that had characterised South African society up until then, anti-miscegenation laws stood also, quite literally, I would argue, at the heart of the racialised control to which South Africans were subjected throughout the apartheid years.

While rationales for implementing these laws have been examined by others, and discourses surrounding the ‘dangers’ of miscegenation have to a degree been deconstructed, how they were received by and installed

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<sup>256</sup> Union of South Africa, *Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act*, Act no. 55 of 1949.

<sup>257</sup> Union of South Africa, *Immorality Act*, Act no. 5 of 1927 and Union of South Africa, *Immorality Amendment Act*, Act no. 21 of 1950.

in the individual is less clear. As I have theorised in the introduction to this dissertation and as I showed in the previous chapter, the notions of race and difference that were integral to apartheid ideology and its application potentially informed not only what should be felt in any given social context, but also directed emotional comportment. The system's racialised social structures to a high degree indicated the appropriate objects of emotion – how one could and should feel about specific things, people, and places.

Taken at face value, the Prohibition of Mixed Marriages and Immorality Acts can perhaps more than any 'petty' laws be read as confirmation *par excellence* of such an idea. After both laws were abolished in 1985, the then Deputy Minister of Community Development acknowledged on behalf of the apartheid government that its anti-miscegenation legislation had in fact imposed 'a restriction on love'<sup>258</sup> between specific persons.

Not only, then, would normative emotional practices work in a dialectic with the politics of racial separateness on an informal basis, but when it came to interracial intimacy and love, the state would in fact formally sanction those whom it regarded to be deviant. While it was almost impossible in practice to circumvent the provisions of the Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act since hardly any legal official would knowingly and illicitly officiate an interracial union, the enforcement of the Immorality Act on the other hand resulted in thousands of individuals being brought to court.

Conviction carried punishments varying from hard labour and prison time to suspended sentences. These historical circumstances constitute an almost textbook definition of what William Reddy has termed an 'emotional regime', in which non-acquiescence to normative emotional practices is ceremoniously penalised.<sup>259</sup>

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<sup>258</sup> 'Mixed View on Govt Move', *Rand Daily Mail*, 16 April 1985.

<sup>259</sup> See, Reddy, especially his definitions of 'emotional regime' and 'induced goal conflict', *Navigation of Feeling*, 129.

While most South Africans during apartheid adhered to anti-miscegenation laws, the question is whether this was true due to or despite the discourses that framed the apparent necessity of the Immorality Act, as well as the fact that it was so strictly imposed. As Dubow has noted in a challenge to historians to rethink those aspects of apartheid that seem self-evident: 'Although minority rule in South Africa was ultimately sustained by force and fear, it was also naturalized through habit, caution, and compliance'.<sup>260</sup> It is exactly this process of naturalisation that I in this dissertation seek to probe through asking 'how did apartheid feel?' Within the context of apartheid-era anti-miscegenation laws, the effects of which I analyse in this chapter from a history of emotions standpoint, concluding simply that interracial love was preached against and ultimately banned by fervent Nationalists, why most South Africans did not practice it, would be unsatisfactory. Rather, the fact that at least 20.000 South Africans were prosecuted under the Act over a period of 28 years would indicate that 'racial common-sense'<sup>261</sup> ideas of emotional prescription were not blindly accepted by all. While acquiescence to these standards overall remained the norm, I suggest that it is by looking to the cases that challenged them that we may catch a glimpse of how the dominant racial common sense was both embedded in and negotiated by individuals. An uncovering of how this process worked can contribute to a richer characterisation of apartheid as lived experience, of which discourse is constitutive and emotions are indicative.<sup>262</sup>

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<sup>260</sup> Dubow, *Apartheid*, 156.

<sup>261</sup> I borrow this term from Deborah Posel, who introduced the concept 'race as common sense' in a 2001 article to refer to the socially constructed notions involved when bureaucrats would determine to which racial group under the Population Registration Act a person belonged. See, Deborah Posel, 'Race as Common Sense: Racial Classification in Twentieth-Century South Africa', *African Studies Review* 44, no. 2 (2001): 87-113. With 'racial common sense', I imply that notions of 'race' and 'common sense' worked in a mutual informative relationship that permeated aspects other than only the ontology of race itself. Posel herself has employed this version of the term in relation to petty apartheid measures. Private email correspondence with Deborah Posel, 27 February 2019.

<sup>262</sup> See, for example, Boddice, *History of Emotions*.

In this chapter, I analyse a selection of encounters, drawn from court cases and newspaper coverage, in which persons were confronted with both the legal and informal provisions embedded in the Immorality Act and the anti-miscegenation discourses surrounding it. As I shall demonstrate, individuals who wilfully engaged in or who were suspected of engaging in interracial intimacy and love, were forced to navigate in the frail intersection between established racial notions, emotional practices and the law. The ability to do so in a competent manner could be consequential for individual life courses at the interpersonal, legal and social levels.

Taken together, the cases I explore in this chapter move beyond analyses of the rhetoric of anti-miscegenation as a form of symbolic violence employed by the apartheid state by addressing not only the degree to which it was successful in its efforts but also the impact of those efforts on the people towards which they were targeted. Firstly, however, I address and discuss existing research on miscegenation and anti-miscegenation within the context of South Africa's long history of race.

## Managing Miscegenation

The prevalence of miscegenation in South Africa can, perhaps unsurprisingly, be traced back to Jan van Riebeeck's arrival at the Cape in 1652. Some colonial settlers would from the very beginning join hands in marriage with Khoikhoi women who converted to Christianity, while extramarital affairs between slave women and their masters took place in abundance. Interracial concubinage and informal sexual relations flourished even while institutionalised marriage between whites and Christianised 'non-whites' became increasingly less frequent as race attitudes harshened and colour prejudice became the norm from the late seventeenth century onwards. Sociologist Pierre van den Berghe has located this decline in tolerance towards miscegenation among Afrikaner *voortrekkers* as stemming from traditional Calvinist beliefs that held that sexual desires as well as inhabiting dark skin were

linked to sin and damnation. Condemning sexual relations across the colour line, however, was also viewed by white colonialists as a pragmatic solution to alleviating their fears that blacks and Coloureds could and would come to outnumber them if white 'bloodlines' were not kept intact.<sup>263</sup> Fears such as these manifested themselves throughout the colonial era in various ways. Worries about the *swart gevaar* ('black peril') and *oorstrooming* ('swamping') would persist as tropes that would later be employed repeatedly by Afrikaner nationalists in the wake of the growing black African urbanisation that preceded the advent of apartheid in the first half of the twentieth century.<sup>264</sup> Questions of sexual desire and miscegenation would thus from the very beginning of colonial rule in South Africa become ever more linked to notions of religious and civic morality, race, and gender, which were sustained through political discourse and evoked in the popular imagination time and time again.

Historian Norman Etherington, for example, in his analysis of the black rape scare that occurred in the South African province of Natal (today KwaZulu Natal) in the 1870's, shows how bouts of fear of both 'swamping' and rape of white women at the hands of especially Zulu men followed in their intensity the ebb and flow of economic and political developments within the white settler community, concluding that:

... the white male colonists of Natal could normally joke about the savage charms of Zulu girls and the polygamous sensuality of their rural husbands. But when there were alarms across the border, influxes of unfamiliar migrant workers, firearms secreted in the countryside, and competition from African rivals in the marketplace, the mask of effortless control slipped. The invaders feared invasion of the lands and

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<sup>263</sup> See, Pierre L. van den Berghe, 'Miscegenation in South Africa', *Cahiers d'Études africaines* 4 (1960): 68-70.

<sup>264</sup> Dubow, *Apartheid*, 5.

their women. Later, when something occurred to restore a sense of security, the rape scare would subside.<sup>265</sup>

Etherington suggests furthermore that colonial rape scares were different from rape scares in other contexts due to the patriarchal makeup of colonial society which dictated that white women were considered part and parcel of white men's property and therefore were to be 'defended' against sexual attacks by black men. The number of apparent attacks of this nature were indeed exceedingly low compared to the amount of hysteria generated.<sup>266</sup> That the phenomenon of colonial rape scares was characterized by predominantly white men concerning themselves with the welfare of white women is exemplified through Etherington's juxtaposition of such instances with the case of two white men who were caught in separate hotel beds engaging in intercourse with two black women at the height of the Natal rape scare. The two women, but not their male partners, were subsequently arrested by the police.<sup>267</sup>

Historian Jeremy Martens draws a set of similar conclusions in his analysis of another rape scare in Natal in 1886, characterising the scare as being this time the product simply of 'white male anxieties'.<sup>268</sup> Martens theorizes that this much shorter 'outbreak' of panic emerged as a result of an economic depression which unsettled the position of white men in the colonial hierarchy. As white women in growing numbers sought employment in the public sphere, black 'houseboys' and 'nurseboys' became common features of white settler homes. A narrative arose that the presence of younger black men in the homes of white women meant

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<sup>265</sup> Norman Etherington, 'Natal's Black Rape Scare of the 1870s', *Journal of Southern African Studies* 15, no. 1 (1988): 53.

<sup>266</sup> Etherington, 'Black Rape Scare', 38-39.

<sup>267</sup> Etherington, 'Black Rape Scare', 43.

<sup>268</sup> Jeremy Martens, 'Settler Homes, Manhood and "Houseboys": An Analysis of Natal's Rape Scare of 1886', *Journal of Southern African Studies* 28, no. 2 (2002): 379.



that the women would act inappropriately around them, potentially provoking sexual violence. The discombobulation of traditional gender roles, along with the economic depression that white Natalians experienced, would contribute to the emergence of a short-lived rape scare as a manifestation of white male colonists reasserting their sense of control. Strikingly, Martens locates this specific rape scare as a factor in the promulgation of novel legislation which severely punished any 'improper' contact between white women and black men and suggests that the scare prompted the beginning of the formal registration of black Africans working in urban areas.

Miscegenation could of course also take the form of voluntary sex and loving relationships between people with diverging skin colours rather than only being the product of sexual assault and attack. Just as ideas about and changes in gender roles provoked largely irrational rape scares in the colonial era, they also partly encouraged the emergence of formal anti-miscegenation measures in the twentieth century, as historian Jonathan Hyslop has shown. In his study of the 1938 South African General Election campaign, Hyslop contends, not unlike Martens in his assessment of the 1886 Natal rape scare, that fluctuating gender roles, this time those that accompanied the expansion of urbanisation in the first half of the twentieth century, would threaten Afrikaner men's sense of self. As Afrikaner farmers, especially those of lesser means, left the *veld* with hopes of benefiting from new opportunities within secondary industries; women, especially young, unmarried Afrikaners, took up employment in manufacturing in booming towns and cities across South Africa in order to support their families.<sup>269</sup> While women enjoyed their newfound social and economic independence, so male Afrikaners would struggle with the loss of their role as the head of household. Hyslop argues that Nationalists took advantage of this in the run up to the 1938 election by appealing to the overwhelmingly white, male electorate that they

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<sup>269</sup> Jonathan Hyslop, 'White Working-class Women and the Invention of Apartheid: "Purified" Afrikaner Nationalist Agitation for Legislation against "Mixed" Marriages, 1934-9', *Journal of African History* 36, no. 1 (1995): 61-62.

protect 'their' women against an apparent looming threat posed by 'non-white' men, including that of interracial marriage.

In another analysis of official attitudes towards miscegenation, Martens interrogates the rationales leading to the implementation of the original Immorality Act of 1927.<sup>270</sup> Martens ties the 'dangers' of miscegenation to inherent ideas of the 'survival' of whites, showing how personal misconduct, in particular sexual 'deviance' across the colour line, came to be regarded as a rejection of middle-class and in effect, white, moral standards. As such, he concludes, the Immorality Act not only constituted a ban on the miscegenation which segregationists believed could bastardise the white 'race', but also functioned as an education in 'living white'. Such education was primarily targeted towards poor whites for whom miscegenation was not a primary concern but who nevertheless were supposed to make up part of a 'superior' white race. Martens notes:

Those who rejected racial essentialism in principle found this logic difficult to counter, for even liberals agreed that white South Africans formed the vanguard of western civilisation in South Africa, that the vast majority of Africans were mired in 'barbarism' and that whites should rule South Africa for the foreseeable future.<sup>271</sup>

Consequently, the Immorality Act was just as much about securing racial cohesion in the social realm as it was about prohibiting specific actions of interracial sex.

These albeit few studies of the discourses that framed attitudes towards and opinions surrounding miscegenation will, I imagine, be familiar to postcolonial scholars. In her comprehensive study of race categories and intimacy across a wide range of colonial contexts, historical anthropologist Ann Laura Stoler universalises the phenomenon by noting

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<sup>270</sup> Jeremy Martens, 'Citizenship, "Civilization" and the Creation of South Africa's Immorality Act, 1927', *South African Historical Journal* 59, no. 1 (2007): 223-241.

<sup>271</sup> Martens, 'Citizenship', 232.

the similarities in countless cases that resemble the small South Africa-specific sample outlined above:

What do these cases have in common? First, the proliferation of discourse about sexual assault and the measures used to prevent it had virtually no correlation with actual incidences of rape of European women by men of color ... Sexual assaults may have occurred, but their incidence had little to do with the fluctuations in anxieties about them. Moreover, the rape laws were race-specific. Sexual abuse of black women was not classified as rape and therefore was not legally actionable, nor did rapes committed by white men lead to prosecution. If these accusations of sexual threat were not prompted by the fact of rape, what did they signal, and to what were they tied? Allusions to political and sexual subversion of the colonial system went hand in hand. The term “Black Peril” referred to sexual threats, but it also connoted the fear of insurgence, and of perceived nonacquiescence to colonial control more generally. Concern over protection of white women intensified during real and perceived crises of control—threats to the internal cohesion of the European communities or infringements on its borders.<sup>272</sup>

Evidently, these circumstances pertained also to the revision of the Immorality Act and the introduction of the Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act, although they outlawed the ‘problems’ of interracial sex and love that occurred on a *voluntary* basis rather than through force. Paradoxically, anti-miscegenation legislation was framed as necessary precisely because sex or marriage between people of different ‘colours’ was regarded as being so anathema to and unorthodox from the ‘traditional’ South African way of life, that is, its very existence had to imply that it could *only* be brought about either through force or by people who simply did not know better. As Hyslop remarks, Afrikaner nationalist agitators would for example accuse Indian shopkeepers of forcing Afrikaner women

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<sup>272</sup> Stoler, *Carnal Knowledge*, 58.

into marriage, despite inhabiting knowledge to the contrary,<sup>273</sup> while poor whites were perceived as engaging in intermarriage with the black populations against their better judgment.<sup>274</sup>

Several contradictions emerge from the dominant rhetoric on miscegenation, whether we look to that emanating from the National Party or the supposedly more 'liberal' opposition led by the United Party. Firstly, there was the question of why anti-miscegenation measures were necessary if white South Africans by and large trusted the conventional tropes that they were in fact superior to black South Africans and therefore agreed that miscegenation would lead to the 'defilement' of a supposedly more 'civilised' race. Indeed, this exact question arose in the public debate on mixed marriages. The United Party declared the proposed legislation offensive to white women based on what it considered to be a universal truth: that white women would never dream of marrying across the colour bar.<sup>275</sup> Secondly, not only was the sexual threat to white women, supposedly posed by Indian, Coloured and black South Africans, a mostly symbolic one, but the legislation that was introduced to counter it would be largely superfluous. Cases of sexual assault and rape, for example, were brought to the courts under already existing laws, regardless of the racial classifications of the persons involved. The Immorality Act would only prohibit *consensual* sex between black and white. What the Immorality and Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Acts in effect did, then, was purely and simply to lay down legal barriers to deter South Africans from investing emotionally in interracial contact. Margaret Ballinger, the Native Representative in Parliament for the Eastern Cape from 1937 until 1960 amplified this argument in her protest against the amendment to the Immorality Act when it was put forward in 1950: 'This is not an Immorality Bill; it is an immoral bill ... It shows only some dim feeling after a white

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<sup>273</sup> Hyslop, 'White Working-class Women', 61.

<sup>274</sup> Stoler, *Carnal Knowledge*, 82-83.

<sup>275</sup> Hyslop, 'White Working-class Women', 81.

exclusiveness, which is not in danger ... That is not a moral issue; it is an emotional issue'.<sup>276</sup>

Historian Will Jackson comes perhaps the closest to effectively moving away from the symbolic meanings of anti-miscegenation discourse towards an evaluation of the social realities of interracial sex and love in the South African context. In an interrogation of the history of miscegenation in early twentieth century Natal, he applies a microhistorical approach to cases involving Europeans who were thought to have had sexual relations with African men or women. Besides showing how these cases reproduced colonial categories and well-rehearsed tropes and stereotypes, Jackson also illustrates the 'haziness' of the colonial archive when it comes to accessing the stories 'behind' those of 'immorality' and deviance. While the nature of the colonial archive itself framed interracial sex as 'the operation of racial and patriarchal power',<sup>277</sup> Jackson reminds historians that this simultaneously 'hazes' the voices of those who engaged in it, insisting that 'to establish any kind of clear, coherent sense of the emotional and experiential dimensions to sex, then, may well be an impossible task'.<sup>278</sup> This applies, without question, to cases found in the apartheid archives as well. Yet, as Jackson also points out, colonists', or in the case at hand, apartheid bureaucrats', magistrates' or police officers' obsession with the detail and circumstance that had to be unravelled in order to prove that interracial sex took place, means that these cases accrue a certain historical value. Their value lies not only in what they such details tell us about apartheid anxieties, or because they confirm that interracial sex took place despite it being abhorred by the

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<sup>276</sup> Quoted in 'Sex Apartheid ... the Long Years of Hardship and Shame', *The Star*, 16 April 1985.

<sup>277</sup> Will Jackson, 'Not Seeking Certain Proof: Interracial Sex and Archival Haze in High-Imperial Natal', *Subverting Empire: Deviance and Disorder in the British Colonial World*, ed. Will Jackson and Emily Manktelow (Houndmills, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 187. For the colonial archive as a phenomenon in which racial ontologies indeed 'hazed' epistemologies and practice, see Ann Laura Stoler, *Along the Archival Grain: Epistemic Anxieties and Colonial Common Sense* (Princeton, NJ and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2009).

<sup>278</sup> Jackson, 'Not Seeking Certain Proof', 200.

system, but also because in the margins we find stories and experiences that indicate how the system was 'lived'. As we shall see, to be able to effectively prosecute the public for breaking the law, evidence naturally had to be collected by law enforcement and interpreted by legal representatives and judges. In some cases, the evidence that pointed to that which constituted the illegal act – sexual intercourse – was more clear-cut than in others, though the experience that the defendants underwent in the process of the collection of such evidence was, I dare to assert, universally degrading.

Both male and female defendants were subjected to medical examinations of their genitals. Police officers would feel beds for traces of secreted fluids. But even in those cases, and particularly in cases in which the collection of evidence proved less fruitful in pointing directly to the fact that sex had occurred, circumstantial evidence was required. Probing and evaluating the nature and history of the accused's relationships with each other and painting a picture of what might or might not have occurred through deciphering body language and sayings, before, during or after the act was said to have taken place, became just as important as the particulars of the act itself. It is in these evaluations and the defendants' responses to them, then, in which clues are located that characterise the apartheid-era emotional politics which stuck to interracial sex, love and intimacy.

## **A 'Declaration of Love'**

The 1949 introduction of the Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act and the 1950 amendment to the Immorality Act meant that white South Africans could now be punished not only for engaging in so-called miscegenation with black Africans but also with those individuals classified as Coloured, and vice versa. Persons classified in a group other than white, however, were not legally deterred from marrying or having sexual relations with each other. Crimes committed under the Immorality Act would remain the ultimate 'betrayal' of white racial

feeling with the mixed-race child being a forceful symbol of what such 'crimes' could produce.<sup>279</sup> The apartheid government sent just as powerful a message on the subjectively 'lesser' crime of interracial marriage, though. Speaking of the importance of the segregation of public spaces that was covered in the first chapter of this dissertation, the Minister of Justice went slightly off script when he in a parliamentary debate on this found time to also note that he had heard of a recent wedding taking place in London between an Englishwoman and a black African man, characterising it as 'disgusting'.<sup>280</sup> Fears of cross-racial intimacy, however, were not confined only to the legal measures that prohibited it in its most obvious forms, as an atypical yet telling case from the high apartheid-era illustrates.

In the former regional province of Natal which then and now is home to a substantial Indian community, the extension of official attitude would come to bear imprints as it did throughout those parts of the country where the demographic and racial makeup was different. Here, in 1964, in the small Afrikaner-dominated mining and farming town of Vryheid, two white women brought a case to court in which they accused a man of having committed the unique South African crime of *crimen injuria*.<sup>281</sup> Under South African common law, crimes of *crimen injuria* are defined as causing a deliberate injury to another's dignity or privacy, while the legal protection of a person's reputation is dealt with separately under defamation laws.<sup>282</sup> The accused, a 27-year-old man, was classified as Indian under the Population Registration Act,

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<sup>279</sup> Jackson, 'Not Seeking Certain Proof', 186.

<sup>280</sup> Union of South Africa, *Debates of the House of Assembly*, vols. 82; 83 (Cape Town, 1953), col. 2019.

<sup>281</sup> Pietermaritzburg Archives Repository (NAB), 1/VR1 1/1/1/5 1040/64.

<sup>282</sup> See, for example, 'South African Law Needs a Zero Tolerance Approach to Racist Utterances', *The Conversation*, 3 October 2018. In 2017, a high-profile case saw a South African woman be convicted of *crimen injuria* after racially abusing a police officer. The case raised a lively discussion about how the law should be understood. See Wits Justice Project, 'The Murky Case of Vicki Momberg and *Crimen Injuria*', <https://www.witsjusticeproject.co.za/news-and-insights-category/the-murky-case-of-vicki-momberg-and-crimen-injuria>, accessed 24 January 2022.

and worked, like so many others classified as ‘non-white’ during apartheid, as a server of white patrons. Both the female complainants often frequented the tearoom reserved for white customers in which the gentleman was employed as a waiter. Complainant no. 1, a married woman who had recently been separated from her husband, stated that she remembered that the accused had served her on five different occasions. Such a fact should not on its face be indicative of anything unusual or improper having happened. Why the two women had chosen to pursue a legal case against the man, however, was what had transpired throughout the course of their being tended to by the man on their visits to the café.

The first complainant took offence to the fact that the server had asked her several times where she lived and that he on one occasion had suggested that they go to the bioscope together. Her distress at being repeatedly put in this position had evidently been so great that she ultimately burst into tears in full view of the other patrons dining alongside her.<sup>283</sup> On relaying the story to her mother when she returned home, her mother advised her to get in touch with another woman, complainant no. 2, who had experienced a similar encounter with the waiter. Complainant no. 2, a 16-year-old girl, recalled how the server at the tearoom had asked her where she resided as well, and had further enquired whether he might visit her at her home. These were the simple facts around which the accusation of *crimen injuria* revolved. In a joint effort, the women reported the waiter to the police who charged him with *crimen injuria*. Upon being charged, he was then duly brought to court as a defendant with the women as plaintiffs. After hearing the case, the local Magistrate found him guilty, and he was sentenced to either pay a fine of £30 or accept a 30-day prison sentence.<sup>284</sup> An additional £50 was added to the fine for each count on which he was found guilty.

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<sup>283</sup> ‘In the Supreme Court of South Africa (Natal Provincial Division), *B. Abdool vs. the State*’, NAB, 1/VRV 1/1/1/5 1040/64, 2.

<sup>284</sup> Magistrate, Vryheid, ‘*The State vs Billy Abdool*, Magistrate’s Reasons for Judgment’, NAB, 1/VRV 1/1/1/5 1040/64, 24.



In his verdict, the Magistrate found it proven that the propositions that the man made were carried out with the intent of injuring and insulting the women who in turn, he found, did not in any way solicit, provoke or encourage the waiter's actions. The Magistrate also made a point of the fact that the complainants had rejected the defendant's proposals on the grounds that he was Indian. In the case of the first complainant, the Magistrate elaborated on this, reasoning that the woman might also have had grounds to object to the defendant's suggestions because she was still legally married to (although separated from) her husband. Therefore, he found it necessary to clarify that, in this case, she had objected to what he had said, *not* because of the impropriety of it when considering her marital status, but rather based on the racial classification held by the defendant.

The Magistrate hereafter put the onus of guilt on the waiter in terms of what we could call South Africa's 'racial common sense', explaining that the defendant had to have been aware that his actions would infer that the complainants be held in disrespect by a sizeable section of their community who did not approve of interracial socialisation, concluding that: 'these two complainants, had they succumbed to the accused's approaches, would have opened themselves to a social scorn and disdain'.<sup>285</sup>

This case illustrates one of the most delicate paradoxes of social apartheid. Unnecessary contact between the defined racial groups was deemed undesirable, a view that was practised through state-sanctioned spatial segregation, as we saw in chapter 1. Yet, the system's undergirding by black labour at the same time necessitated that the groups come into contact. Numerous Africans were for example employed as domestic workers in white homes,<sup>286</sup> and Indians served white customers in tearooms. These patterns were crucial to upholding the system, though they did so as 'disjunctive inclusions', as theorist Achille Mbembe has

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<sup>285</sup> 'The State vs Billy Abdool', 3.

<sup>286</sup> See, for example, Rebecca Ginsburg, *At Home with Apartheid: The Hidden Landscapes of Domestic Service in Johannesburg* (Charlottesville, VA and London: University of Virginia Press, 2011).

conceived of them.<sup>287</sup> While physical racial proximity hardly guaranteed that interracial socialisation or worse in the eyes of apartheid supporters, intimacy, would occur, places where contact was essential lay bare the possibility that it could. The irony of disjunctive inclusions lay in their potential to uncover fractures in the dominant racial common sense and its accompanying emotional code. As Deborah Posel has put it:

... the myriad everyday racial crossings – in the workplace, on the streets of the city, in white homes – were equally compatible with resolute interpersonal estrangement. The extent to which any degree of racial intimacy emerged was a contingent consequence, and an active accomplishment, predicated on particular investments – instrumental and/or emotional – by the people party to those relationships.<sup>288</sup>

The Magistrate's carefully worded judgment in the aforementioned case reflects this analysis. His argument revolved around the fact that the Indian man had actively sought a degree of racial intimacy, when the complainants wished there to be none. The man 'ought to' be aware of this predicament if he used his racial common sense. In fact, the Magistrate touched upon this 'self-evident' racial code in his examination of previous legal cases with which he substantiated his findings. Commenting on what he regarded to be a similar case from 1956, the Magistrate concluded that for the man's actions to constitute *crimen injuria* in the past, 'the conduct complained of must be accompanied by an element of sexuality'.<sup>289</sup> This, he reasoned, had now changed: 'if the dicta ... sets out a certain position in 1956, I submit that in our day [1964] it is an accepted fact that a certain section of the

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<sup>287</sup> Achille Mbembe, 'Aesthetics of Superfluity', *Public Culture* 16, no. 3 (2004): 387ff.

<sup>288</sup> Deborah Posel, 'Getting Inside the Skin of the Consumer: Race, Market Research and the Consumerist Project in South Africa', *Itinerario* 42, no. 1 (2018): 123.

<sup>289</sup> 'Magistrate's Reasons for Judgment', 5.

community does not practice interracial social intercourse'.<sup>290</sup> The Magistrate here implied that the country's racial common sense had over time evolved into an established fact by the time the case arrived on his docket and therefore had to be taken into consideration. Therefore, the accused, in knowing this, yet still approaching the two women, had to have made a deliberate attempt to infringe upon the women's personal rights.

In the case of one of the two complainants, however, the Magistrate found reason to substantiate his judgment even further. Although he regarded the reasoning outlined above sufficient to convict the accused on both counts, the Magistrate took time when it came to the second count, to reflect upon the apparent emotional investment that lay in the accused's desire to visit the complainant at her home. While the Magistrate found nothing in the evidence to support any charge under the Immorality Act or any suggestion of sexual impropriety, he nevertheless speculated that '[not] everything was above board'.<sup>291</sup> Because the defendant had suggested he meet the woman privately, he hypothesised that the defendant's goal could not have been mere 'ordinary' friendship with the woman. The Magistrate noted: 'I see no reason for his suggesting a meeting "somewhere" – he could have bestowed his friendliness then and there'.

In his considerations, this became a vital point, as he interpreted the suggestion to meet the woman privately rather than in public as constituting an invitation to cohabit with him socially. This exceeded plain kindness and verged on a declaration of romantic intentions. The judge interpreted the man's action as constituting an emotional practice that was intended to communicate a message of 'love' to the woman. Quoting from a previous Natal case, the judge used this to explain why this was indeed a case of the accused assailing and impairing the complainant's dignity:

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<sup>290</sup> 'Magistrate's Reasons for Judgment', 7.

<sup>291</sup> 'Magistrate's Reasons for Judgment', 4.

In view of the provisions of Act 55 of 1949, a 'declaration of love' by a non-European male to a European female, unaccompanied by any suggestion or proposal of sexual immorality or impropriety, might very well now be held to constitute a criminal injuria.<sup>292</sup>

This passage is crucial to our understanding of how emotions 'worked' in a dialectic relationship with apartheid-era racial common sense. The Act that the judge referred to above was the Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act. The Magistrate deduced from this previous ruling that interracial marriage would unavoidably entail some form of romantic feeling, but not necessarily sexual desire between the parties involved. Because the Act outlawed marriage across the colour bar, and in doing so reflected the views of 'a certain section of the community', whose views had to be respected, so then it became the 'duty of the Court, where there is a transgression of that primordial right, to protect the injured party'.<sup>293</sup> Because the peculiar charge of *crimen injuria* required the Magistrate to interpret whether someone had suffered an insult to their dignity, he saw it as his duty to consider the attitudes of society writ large when evaluating whether any 'reasonable' person in a similar situation would be insulted by what the man had asked of the woman. In effect, the practice of interracial love that he coaxed from the accused's actions was an affront to the racial common sense to which one could be expected to adhere, why it had to be reflected in the letter of the law, at least in cases where the charge was one of *crimen injuria*.

Additionally of importance was that the parties to the case of 'love' in question were an Indian *man* and a white *woman*. The quotation above from the earlier Natal case clearly shows that the question of whether a 'declaration of love' to a person constituted an impairment of that person's dignity depended on not just the racial status of the concerned parties, but their gender as well. Because the case at hand was not a common one, we find no cases with which we can conduct any type of

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<sup>292</sup> Original case *R v. Marimuthoo* 1956 (3) S.A. 231 (N).

<sup>293</sup> Magistrate's Reasons for Judgment', 7.

comparative analysis. Considering the patriarchal and gendered nature of apartheid policies,<sup>294</sup> and of discourses on 'miscegenation', as I discussed earlier in this chapter, however, it is difficult to imagine that a case brought with a white male as the injured party and a 'non-white' female as the accused, would contain judicial reasoning along the same lines. As regards concrete emotional practice then, a white woman might be expected to take offence with anything 'improper' suggested by a 'non-white' man as an act of reasserting her own respectability in terms of both her gender and her membership of the white community.

## Evaluating Emotional Labour

After being convicted of his crime, the defendant appealed his case to the Natal Provincial Division of the Supreme Court. The presiding appeals judge disagreed with the Magistrate's verdict and overturned the defendant's conviction. Again, the seemingly small detail that the defendant had asked one of the women whether he might visit her at home became the issue on which the legal reasoning was based.

The judge presiding found that the Magistrate had gone too far when concluding that because 'a certain section of the community does not practise inter-racial social intercourse, it is the duty of the Court to project the injured party'. Rather, the judge considered, the defendant's words had to be taken *ex facie*, and in none of those words could he find

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<sup>294</sup> See, for example, Natasha Erlank, 'Gender and Masculinity in South African Nationalist Discourse, 1912-1950', *Feminist Studies* 29, no. 3 (2003): 653-671. In an original study, sociologist Bridget Kenny has shown how an increase in black workers entering the service industry in the 1960's and 1970's led to a reaffirmation of well-known tropes of the undesirability of interracial personal contact. The Nationalist Party, however, also sought to protect white women as *workers* and their 'ability to provide gracious service to white consumers'. See, Bridget Kenny, 'Servicing Modernity: White Women Shop Workers on the Rand and Changing Gendered Respectabilities, 1940s-1970s', *African Studies* 67, no. 3 (2008): 365-396. Quotation at 387.

any suggestion of 'erotic love or, indeed, any proposition which ... constituted an impairment of the dignity of the complainants'.<sup>295</sup>

The judge furthermore took issue with the Magistrate's interpretation that the defendant's suggestion to the girl of meeting in private in fact should be read as a 'declaration of love' or something not 'above board'. While the Magistrate had insisted that the defendant's proposition was *not* in line with the racial common sense that discouraged romantic relations between the races, the judge instead pointed out that what the man had said and done was an embodiment of precisely that:

... it is quite obvious that for a number of reasons, whatever his intentions were or his reasons for seeking these two girls out, he could hardly disclose them in the place where he was working. He certainly could not have sat down at the side of either of the two complainants on either of the two occasions and said fully what he wished to say to them.

As I understand this excerpt, the judge argued that had the man intended to declare any romantic intentions, as the Magistrate postulated that he did, he would not have risked exposing himself to potential contempt by doing so in public. Indeed, in simply asking whether he might visit the complainant in *private*, he was successful in regulating his 'true' feelings appropriately, what sociologist Arlie Russell Hochschild regarding emotion would call 'emotional labour'.<sup>296</sup>

In her seminal 1983 work *The Managed Heart*, Hochschild introduces her now well-trodden concepts of 'emotional labour' and 'emotion work' to refer to both conscious and unconscious efforts to manage how we feel according to the unwritten 'feeling rules' that govern our social

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<sup>295</sup> 'B. Abdool vs. the State', 5

<sup>296</sup> Arlie Russell Hochschild, *The Managed Heart: Commercialization of Human Feeling* (Berkeley, CA, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 2012 [1983]), 33.

interactions with others.<sup>297</sup> Her primary focus is on the emotional labour that permeates the workplace, for example the customer relations person or flight attendant having to ‘put on’ a smile, or suppress their frustration when faced with a difficult client. Emotional labour thus has ‘exchange value’ and is sold for a wage. ‘Emotion work’, on the other hand, is the regulation of feeling that occurs in a private context and which has ‘use value’.<sup>298</sup> While Hochschild in this way differentiates between the two semantically depending on context, the process that one goes through when ‘doing’ emotional labour and its end result are, strictly speaking, the same, whether done at work, within the safe confines of the home, or out with friends: the creation of a ‘publicly observable facial and bodily display’ in line with what is expected by one’s immediate professional or social surroundings. Additionally, the setting in which one finds oneself can resist being put into either the ‘labour’ or ‘work’ category. Here, then, I operate solely with ‘emotional labour’ insofar as it to me, more than ‘work’, indicates that there exists a certain strenuousness in the interpersonal struggle that one might undergo when trying to achieve a specific outcome, regardless of whether it ends in success or defeat. That process, moreover, is not necessarily rendered visible to the onlooker’s eye. Emotional labour is exactly that: the experience of working hard in order to live up to one’s own, others’, or society’s expectations of how one should practise one’s emotions.<sup>299</sup>

In the eyes of the appeals judge, then, the accused was disguising how he felt, deceiving others to think his intentions were ‘above board’ while attempting to hold back his ‘true’ feelings, the use value of which was to not infringe upon the recognised racial code. Whether the accused was

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<sup>297</sup> Such ‘feeling rules’ were the primary focus of historian and psychiatrist Peter and Carol Stearns’ in the development of their concept of ‘emotionology’, see, Peter N. Stearns and Carol Z. Stearns, ‘Emotionology’, 813.

<sup>298</sup> Hochschild, *Managed Heart*, 7.

<sup>299</sup> Hochschild herself has expressed frustration with how ‘emotional labour’ has come to be misappropriated in various contexts, see, Julie Beck ‘The Concept Creep of Emotional Labour’, *The Atlantic*, 26 November 2018, <https://www.theatlantic.com/family/archive/2018/11/arlle-hochschild-housework-isnt-emotional-labor/576637/>, accessed 23 January 2022.

conscious of the need to regulate his own feeling, whatever he felt, in that concrete situation, we cannot ascertain. Yet, as Scheer points out, the habitual manner in which emotions are practised can be both conscious and unconscious, including the practice of regulating. Because the social habitus structures how we feel, the regulation of some feelings rather than others becomes more likely, as does the type of emotional practice one carries out, depending on the social context. But whether practised calculatingly or unknowingly, emotions are at the same time input into the social context that shapes them. A regulation of 'love', or indeed any other feeling we might label, that is prompted by dominant attitudes towards miscegenation, thus constitutes a reaffirmation and potential harshening of those attitudes, which, in turn, contribute to the social structuring of the body that determines *future* emotional practices.

From this case emerges the space that interracial interaction brought about, between emotional practices, racialised norms and the law, in which individuals would have to learn to navigate. The judges' interpretations of one man's emotional practice, a, taken at face value, seemingly insignificant proposal, became not just a fact with which to determine the legal outcome of the case, but also a question of who and what defined the racial common sense. The Magistrate insisted that the accused's action constituted an active emotional practice of communicating interracial love, which went against the racial code and was punishable by law considering the damage caused to the complainants' dignity.

The senior judge instead argued that the defendant's apparent restraint was an indication of an act of emotional labour, *compliant* with the dominant racial common sense. The appeal judge's intent was undoubtedly to rebuke the Magistrate's insistence on letting social norms inform the strict letter of the law. Yet, paradoxically, his own judgment revealed that he found the Magistrate's interpretation of appropriate conduct within a racialised society to be incorrect, even when such conduct, whether interpreted correctly or not, was in his eyes irrelevant to the case brought before him. We begin to learn from this case how differences in understandings of the racial common sense that everyday apartheid laws were designed to reflect were, to a considerable degree,



forged through emotion. The accused was ultimately acquitted, but might very well have been punished, had the appeals judge decided that he failed to manage his emotion appropriately and thus ‘feel’ along racial lines.<sup>300</sup>

## Feigning Not to Feel

Realistically, the man convicted and then acquitted for *crimen injuria* above would hardly expect to be reported to the police for his actions, even though he was most probably aware that an Indian socialising with white women was frowned upon by many. Other cases present examples of emotional labour that can perhaps more easily be deciphered as *conscious* efforts to influence the personal and legal outcomes of cases involving miscegenation.

Although the Immorality Act specifically forbade only sexual intercourse between whites and members of the other legally defined racial groups, emotional investment would not be left unscathed in cases where the charge was one termed quite crudely as having committed ‘illicit carnal intercourse’ either, as the next section shall elucidate.

Almost exactly halfway between Cape Town and Port Elizabeth in South Africa’s Western Cape lies the affluent holiday destination of George, which like the rest of the province then as of now houses a sizable Coloured community compared to the remaining South African provinces. With a more urban feel, yet predominantly a place of tranquil and relaxation for white South Africans, George in the 1960’s would proffer a multitude of possibilities for both formal and casual ‘racial crossings’, to repeat Posel’s designation.

On the third day of February in the first year of the new decade, British Prime Minister Harold Macmillan stood in Cape Town, reprimanding

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<sup>300</sup> One might call this encountering an ‘emotional frontier’, see, Karen Vallgård, ‘Divorce, Bureaucracy and Emotional Frontiers: Marital Dissolution in Late Nineteenth-century Copenhagen’, *Journal of Family History* 42, no. 1 (2017): 86–89.

South Africa for its racial policies in the face of ‘the wind of change’ of decolonisation that was taking the African continent by storm.<sup>301</sup> Two days after that, a white, Afrikaans-speaking man and a Coloured woman were both charged with and convicted of contravening the Immorality Act. Both guilty parties received a sentence of six months imprisonment of which four remained suspended provided they did not contravene the Act again within two years.<sup>302</sup>

Like numerous others throughout the apartheid period, the couple became victims of an unimaginable invasion of privacy at the hands of the police.<sup>303</sup> Officers would frequently raid homes to ensure that people sleeping in the same bed were of the same race. Cars with passengers that together made up ‘uncommon’ racial constellations were followed. If being ‘caught in the act’ did not seem invasive enough an act, forensic and medical examinations could also be carried out after arrests in the hope of finding traces of bodily fluids such as blood or semen, as mentioned earlier.<sup>304</sup>

In the George case, the details that surrounded the night on which the two accused were arrested were muddled, to say the least. The cast of characters that played a part in the story was multiple and their stories intriguing. Apart from the two who were said to have engaged

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<sup>301</sup> A later analysis conducted by Saul Dubow of Macmillan’s infamous speech suggests the tone of Macmillan’s speech might have been rather more conciliatory to the interests of white South Africans than previously assumed. See, Saul Dubow, ‘Macmillan, Verwoerd, and the 1960 “Wind of Change” Speech’, *The Historical Journal* 54, no. 4 (2011): 1087-1114.

<sup>302</sup> KAB, 1/GEO 1/61 1037/60,

<sup>303</sup> Immortalised for example in playwright Athol Fugard’s 1972 *Statements after an Arrest under the Immorality Act*.

<sup>304</sup> A 1960 case from Dundee in the then Natal Province shows, however, that such detailed investigations were not necessarily needed to be able to convict. Here, a white woman and an Indian man were charged on mere circumstantial evidence. When the police arrived at the scene, the two were found sitting in a dark room with their clothes ‘disturbed’. The case notes reveal that this was sufficient evidence for the woman to be charged and found guilty. The man’s fate remains unknown, see National Archives Repository, Public Records of Former Transvaal Province (TAB), 1/DUN 1/1/1/3 490/60.

in the sexual act, a suitor of the female accused also appeared at the forefront in the police report. It was this suitor who seemingly acted as both a witness to the 'crime' and as an informant to the police. He claimed that he had witnessed the accused man enter the woman's bedroom in the late hours of the evening. He then lingered outside the bedroom for a while before turning up at the local police station to report what he had seen. The police sent someone to investigate, and the witness independently followed suit. When the witness arrived back at the scene of the 'crime', he saw that the police had already laid the accused man in handcuffs and that the man's trousers were around his ankles. He explained further that the woman was wearing a dress, but that her underwear had been removed.

The female accused told a different version of the story. She explained that the suitor had visited her in her room, threatened her with a pocketknife he was carrying, whereafter he forced himself upon her. The suitor had then asked whether he could stay the night to which the woman replied by slapping him across the face. She escaped from his grasp, fled the room and found safety within the confines of a parked car outside in which the male accused was sitting. The male accused then left to go to the bathroom and came back with his trousers around his ankles. Being intoxicated, he had not mustered to pull them back up after doing his business. He sat back down in the car and that is when the police arrived at the scene to arrest them. The male accused corroborated his co-accused's story, adding that he had been on a drinking binge before the woman approached his car after she was allegedly assaulted by her suitor. The police asserted that this was not true. After the woman's suitor had alerted them to a potential crime taking place, they testified, they had on arrival clearly witnessed the two accused having intercourse in the front of the car.<sup>305</sup>

The ensuing medical examination of the pair concluded that the woman showed no sign of penetration and that her clothes and hands were 'clean'. The same was noted of the man. The doctor could

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<sup>305</sup> Handwritten witness statements, KAB, 1/GEO 1/61 1037/60.

confirm, however, that the man was *not* inebriated, but rather completely sober, and that his genitals were ‘moist’.<sup>306</sup> He could not conclude with any certainty that intercourse had taken place but could not rule it out either.

What might strike us as interesting here, is the discrepancy regarding the man’s sobriety. The police ascertained that they had caught them in the act, why the man’s state of sobriety should be of no relevance as to his potential guilt. We must assume that the doctor was a credible witness when testifying to the man’s sobriety considering his Hippocratic oath as well as the unlikeliness of him committing perjury when submitting his report to the court. That he refused to confirm that the two accused engaged in intercourse also speaks to him being a credible witness with no vested interests in bringing about a conviction of the pair.

Why both accused highlighted the male party’s drunkenness as important to their stories, even going so far as to describe the man as ‘very drunk’ and having been ‘on a drinking binge’, then, appears at first to be an oddity. For this case, apart from the police report and witness statements, we find no court proceedings other than the verdict stating that both parties were found guilty. Other ‘immorality’ cases, though, also consider the question of whether intoxication was at play.<sup>307</sup> While being under the influence when apprehended for contravening the Immorality Act does not seem to have affected neither questions of guilt nor sentencing for the accused, why then does it appear to be an issue in multiple cases?

One could tentatively make the case that by asserting drunkenness, defendants were explaining away their failure to live up to the emotional prescription that was integral to the racialised moral economy. For this to make sense, sexual intercourse must be read as a mobilising emotional practice. Emotions can be invested in the act (love, perhaps shame), or

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<sup>306</sup> ‘Report on Examination in a Case of Alleged Assault or Other Crime’, A.3 and A.4, KAB, 1/GEO 1/61 1037/60.

<sup>307</sup> See, for example, KAB, 1/GEO 1/61 3791/58 and NAB, 1/VRV 1/1/1/5 1368/54.

the act itself might constitute an attempt to achieve a certain feeling (happiness, ecstasy, satisfaction). Sex can be an important part of expressing one's feelings for someone else and of cultivating a romantic relationship. As explained earlier, if a case of 'immorality' in any shape or form indicated that one party did not consent to the act that had taken place, laws prohibiting sexual assault or rape would instead take precedence.<sup>308</sup> Persons apprehended on the grounds of having had interracial sexual intercourse were consequently charged with having done so deliberately and with intent.<sup>309</sup> In this deliberateness, we must assume, also lay a decision to 'act' on what was felt in that given moment, whether the context renders probable that the sexual act was an emotional practice of reflexive passion or an intense feeling of love for that person. Drunkenness, or the act of binge drinking, as in the case above, however, can alter that context, or even be conceived of as a mobilising (or, I might add, regulating) emotional practice itself. As Scheer points out, any 'consumption of mood-altering substances intervenes in the materiality of emotional processes'.<sup>310</sup> Alcohol can thus serve as a means of achieving, clouding one's perception of, intensifying, or even foregoing, a certain feeling. When probing immorality cases, it appears that by claiming or feigning intoxication, defendants were also attempting to convince police and the courts that they were 'out of their senses' and therefore were 'not

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<sup>308</sup> Excluding, though, sex with underage individuals, incest and sex with 'imbeciles' and 'idiots', as were the terms then used for persons with intellectual disabilities. These charges were prosecuted under the Immorality Act. See, *Immorality Act* and Fransch, 'Cape Rapists', 87.

<sup>309</sup> That intent could become a deciding factor in deciding the culpability of a defendant was crucial to the case of Katrina Mashifane, who admitted at trial to having had sexual relations with a white Member of Parliament in 1954. Mashifane was found guilty. In a bizarre turn of events, the MP was acquitted for the same deed at his own trial in which Mashifane acted as a witness and claimed that she did not willingly engage in sexual intercourse with him. Because she had admitted otherwise in her own case and the ensuing case against her alleged sexual partner was one brought under the Immorality Act and not under a rape charge, the court found the MP not guilty. See, 'Amendment of Immorality Act Being Considered', *The Star*, 24 September 1954, and the files collected in Historical Papers, University of the Witwatersrand, AD1947, 3.1.5.

<sup>310</sup> Scheer, 'Are Emotions a Kind of Practice?', 211.

really there' when they committed the deed that led to their arrest. We can locate this in two other telling cases, which I scrutinise next.

Returning to the town of George, this time in 1958, an evening ride to the beach at Wilderness on the picturesque Garden Route would prove fateful to a white man by the name of William and a Coloured woman, Dina.<sup>311</sup> As was increasingly the custom, the unusual racial constellation of a couple sojourning together caught the eye of the police who followed them until they parked on the beach. The two police officers who had tailed the car reported that they could see through the window that William 'had kissed [Dina] or tried to kiss her and had had his arms around her shoulders. His fly was completely open, and although he was wearing underwear, his private parts were hanging out'.<sup>312</sup> William was found guilty and sentenced to six months imprisonment with two of these suspended, provided he did not contravene the Immorality Act again within three years. What strikes me as interesting in this case, however, is not the verdict (the defendant was found guilty again on appeal), but that the Magistrate remarked in his judgment at the first trial that 'It was not proved that he was drunk and did not know what he was doing'.<sup>313</sup> While the man would most probably be found guilty in any case, it appears that the defence lawyer had nonetheless suggested that the man was under the influence in order to explain why he had kissed a Coloured woman and had his arm around her shoulders.

A more detailed case illustrates this argument more handily. Back to rural Vryheid, where in 1954, an African woman and a white man were apprehended on a charge of violating the provisions of the Immorality Act. The police report states that the parties were found in bed in a

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<sup>311</sup> KAB, 1/GEO 1/61 3791/58.

<sup>312</sup> Afrikaans: 'Hy het [Dina] gesoen of gepoog om haar te soen en het sy arm om haar skouers gehad. Sy gulp was heeltemal oop en, alhoewel hy onderbroek dra, het sy privaat uitgehang'. See, 'Die Kroon v William Bertus Muller', 1/GEO 1/61 3791/58, 11.

<sup>313</sup> Afrikaans: 'Dit word nie beweer dat hy dronk was en nie geweet het wat hy doen nie', 'Die Kroon v William Bertus Muller', 11.

compromising position. While they were partly dressed, the man's fly was not zipped, and the woman lay in only her underwear. From the nightstand the police collected a contraceptive as evidence. On hearing the case, the judge found both guilty. They were each sentenced to four months imprisonment with compulsory labour.<sup>314</sup> Again, the consumption of alcohol would turn out to be an important discussion point when the case was argued in court. An officer noted in his report that he had smelled alcohol on the male accused's breath but that he did not otherwise appear visibly drunk. Yet, as soon as the officers had apprehended him, the English-speaking officer Campbell relayed:

[he] then pretended that he was very drunk staggering against the car. As we brought him out he staggered against the car. Coetzee [Campbell's fellow police officer] then said to him "man ... jy is tog nie dronk nie" ... accused then came to his senses and acted normally'.<sup>315</sup>

Reading this slightly odd account, we can consider Hochschild's concept of 'surface acting', which she formulates as one of many ways of conducting emotional labour. Quite simply, surface acting is a conscious effort employed in order to '[disguise] what we feel ... [pretend] to feel what we do not',<sup>316</sup> or, we might constructively add, pretend to not feel at all, when really, we do.

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<sup>314</sup> NAB, 1/VRY 1/1/1/1/5 1368/54. Punishments under the Immorality Act could be notoriously strict. A later amendment to the Act in 1957 made it possible for the Courts to direct that males be whipped. An opposition MP commented on what he considered to be an absurd punishment in a parliamentary debate on the amendment, with the Minister of Justice replying that the opposition MP should be 'glad that [they were] not leaving it as it was, to 25 lashes', referring to the original suggestion. See, Union of South Africa, *Debates of the House of Assembly*, vol. 93 (Cape Town, 1957), col. 362.

<sup>315</sup> The Afrikaans-language part of the quotation reads something along the lines of 'man, you are not drunk after all'. Handwritten witness statement, 'William Ronald Campbell, Const. SAP', NAB, 1/VRY 1/1/1/1/5 1368/54, 10.

<sup>316</sup> Hochschild, *Managed Heart*, 33.

Hochschild contrasts surface acting with 'deep acting', where we manage to convince ourselves more than others, that we feel differently to what we do at the subjective level of experience.<sup>317</sup> The man pretending to be intoxicated in the case above was thus 'surface acting' with the, albeit only short-term, use value of convincing the officers that he was not 'in his right mind' when found in bed with an African woman. Indeed, performing emotional labour or the decision to employ regulating emotional practices often arises from situations in which we feel 'out of place', as we saw in chapter 1, or from a perceived need to narrow the gap between how we feel and how we should feel.<sup>318</sup>

The man involved in the Vryheid case appealed his conviction, claiming that the Crown had not proved beyond a reasonable doubt that intercourse had taken place between himself and his African co-defendant. He acknowledged that he had at first intended to go through with the deed - hence the contraceptive - but had changed his mind and instead only wanted to have 'external' intercourse with the woman. The judge found him untrustworthy and downgraded his 'surface acting' following the arrest, remarking that the defendant would not benefit from his attempt to raise drunkenness as a defence, as he had at least not been drunk enough to 'not remember all kinds of small details'.<sup>319</sup> As for his admitting that he wished to have 'external' intercourse with the woman, the Court found it 'extremely unlikely that such a thing would

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<sup>317</sup> Hochschild, *Managed Heart*, 35-36. Gay conversion therapy here strikes me as an illustrative example. Although scientifically disproved, gay conversion therapy, coarsely put, has the goal of a homosexual individual 'deep acting' their way into 'becoming' heterosexual. In effect, such efforts will ostensibly remain at the 'surface acting' stage with one's actual sexual orientation remaining immovable. 'Deep acting' need not only be a negative engagement with feeling, though, see, Hochschild, *Managed Heart*, 38-48.

<sup>318</sup> Ahmed, *Cultural Politics of Emotion*, 220.

<sup>319</sup> Afrikaans: '... allerhande klein besonderhede te onthou nie'. See, 'In die saak van Louis Jacob Fick en Regina', 'Feite as bewese bevind en redes vir uitspraak', 1/VRV 1/1/1/5 1368/54, 40.



take place, especially considering the accused's intent and urges'.<sup>320</sup> It furthermore held that:

In view of the surrounding circumstances, the accused's outspoken intent, and finally, human nature, the Court could not accept that the accused himself had ultimately refrained from the act [sexual intercourse] or at least an attempt to that end.<sup>321</sup>

These last two statements tell us that the Court convicted him on what it considered to be the man's decision to invest emotionally in the deed. Whilst it appears to have remained understanding of why the man did what he did ('human nature'), it declared that he was obliged at the very least to have tried to keep these feelings 'in check', seeing as his chosen partner was a black African woman. Hochschild hints at the laboriousness involved in this process: 'Sometimes we try to stir up a feeling that we wish we had, and at other times we try to block or weaken a feeling we wish we did not have'.<sup>322</sup> The man's failure to do so in this case constituted a crime, both literally and figuratively. Here we see, once again, how emotional practices and the judges' evaluations of them reveal how racial notions came to inform what should be regarded as 'common sense'.

Although the Court was obliged to prove intent in such cases, there is no reason why the man would not have been convicted even if it had been convinced that the man was as drunk as he acted. Yet, as we have seen, claiming to be inebriated when 'caught in the act' was not

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<sup>320</sup> Afrikaans: 'Wat betref die verweer van uitwendige gemeenskap het die Hof gevoel dat dit uiters onwaarskynlik was dat so-iets sou plaasvind veral met die oog op beskuldigde no. 1 se doel en drange', 'In die saak van Louis Jacob Fick en Regina', 39.

<sup>321</sup> Afrikaans: 'Met die oog op die omringende omstandighede, Beskuldigde no. 1 se uitgesproke oogmerk en laastens die menslike natuur kon die Hof nie aanvaar dat Beskuldigde no. 1 hom uiteindelik weerhou het van die daad of tenminste 'n poging daartoe nie', 'In die saak van Louis Jacob Fick en Regina', 39.

<sup>322</sup> Hochschild, *Managed Heart*, 43.

uncommon. The male accused's defence team at his appeal case even raised the defendant's being under the influence as a crucial factor in its objection to his original conviction. If this was indeed as common a tactic as the small sample of cases in the archive indicate, it might very well be considered to have been part of the racial common sense with which individuals charged under the Immorality Act were confronted. The Court's doggedness in lecturing the defendant on not giving in to his 'urges' and criticising his poor acting skills were, at the very least, indicative of the presence of an extra-legal assessment of the defendant's emotional labour at the hands of the court.

### **Dreading Discovery**

That many 'mixed-race' couples lived in well-founded fear of being 'caught out', not just by law enforcement, but also by disapproving strangers or even friends, is unquestionable. As we have seen, the potential punishment for engaging in an intimate relationship across the colour bar was certainly not for the faint-hearted. The looming threat of, at worst, imprisonment and forced labour, or at best, a suspended sentence which would nevertheless appear on one's criminal record, would in many cases act as a deterrent to would-be offenders. The potential social and familial ruin that could arise in the wake of being exposed of having 'dabbled' in interracial love, however, was no less severe.

Especially after the Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act and the section of the Immorality Act which forbade interracial sexual relations were abolished in 1985, numerous newspaper reports were published which acknowledged, and reminded their readers of, some of the most harrowing consequences for a number of those put before a judge for the crime of loving someone who was classified as belonging to a different racial group than their own. These included the forced removal of

‘mixed-race’ children from their parents<sup>323</sup>, in one case the children of a Zulu mother and a white, Italian father,<sup>324</sup> multiple suicides,<sup>325</sup> involuntary exile<sup>326</sup>, self-imposed social isolation, and social ostracization.<sup>327</sup> Consequently, mixed-race couples had more than enough reasons to perform emotional labour or obscure the ‘true’ nature of their interactions, at least in public. As one newspaper candidly put it:

For 28 years, policemen have been hiding in cupboards to spy on mixed race couples contravening Section 16 of the Immorality Act and during that period 20 000 people were prosecuted – many of them choosing suicide rather than face a sordid court case because of their moments of love with someone of another race group.<sup>328</sup>

Lilly, for example, one of the children of the Zulu and Italian couple mentioned in the preceding paragraph, noticed how her mother and father would forcibly re-arrange the dynamics of their otherwise loving and caring relationship with each other, when necessary, in fear of the fatal consequences which ultimately engulfed her family when her parents were ‘outed’ as interracial cohabitants who had produced biracial children. She noted of calls on their house by the police: ‘I often wondered why, during those visits, my mother behaved like the servant of the house’.<sup>329</sup> Although Lilly does not elaborate on how exactly her

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<sup>323</sup> See e.g., ‘Sex Apartheid ... the Long Years of Hardship and Shame’, *The Star*, 16 April 1985.

<sup>324</sup> ‘The Tragic Face of Apartheid: Lilly’s Story’, *Sunday Tribune*, 19 October 1986.

<sup>325</sup> ‘Morals Act: Long List of Heartbreaks’, *The Argus*, 27 September 1979; ‘The Cost of the “Immorality Act”: Love across the SA Colour Line’, *The Argus*, 11 July 1977.

<sup>326</sup> ‘The Cost of the Immorality Act’.

<sup>327</sup> ‘Enough! Durban’s “Illegal” Tenants Vow to Stay and Fight It Out’, *Sunday Tribune*, 20 March 1988.

<sup>328</sup> ‘Suffering over’, *The Friend*, 17 April 1985.

<sup>329</sup> ‘The Tragic Face of Apartheid’.

mother behaved like a servant, it does not appear presumptuous to theorise that her mother employed such surface acting to 'cover up' specific emotional practices that would be recognisable as 'natural' within the environment of the family unit and thus disclose that she was in fact the mother of Lilly and her siblings. Here, dreading what would happen to her family should the police learn of its racially untraditional and in fact illegal constellation, forced the mother to suppress or regulate those emotional practices that might be seen as complicit in its untimely and unwanted revelation. As Mary Douglas has argued: 'The contradiction between external behaviour and secret emotions is a frequent source of anxiety and expected misfortune'.<sup>330</sup>

Lilly's mother's acting abilities kept the police at bay only until they no longer did. On what would be their final visit to the family home, the police pressed on with their interrogation. Lilly described it thus: 'They asked many questions and for the first time I saw real fear trapped in my mother's face. It was raining – we were transfixed like still figures in a picture. Suddenly I wanted to scream'.<sup>331</sup> The police's questioning broke through the façade of Lilly's mother's emotional labour and her fear became tangible. In turn, the fact that her regulating practices faltered, only to be replaced by acute, visible fear, would no doubt confirm to the police that their line of questioning was effective and prove their hunch to be correct – that Lilly's mother and father were indeed her mother and father. In a cruel turn of events, this revelation would have the consequence that Lilly's father, being Italian, was deported back to Italy, and that the children were promptly removed. Lilly saw her mother only once more when she came to visit at the orphanage at which she and her siblings were placed in care. She adds that she imagines that her mother probably felt that they would be better off in the hands of the social services rather than undergo the rest of their childhoods with a now single mother struggling to make ends meet and provide adequately for the four children. The fear that Lilly's mother felt was, then, hardly unfounded

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<sup>330</sup> Douglas, *Purity and Danger*, 137.

<sup>331</sup> Douglas, *Purity and Danger*, 137.

or irrational, but rather a very real effect of the historical circumstances that surrounded her.

Other cases, the disclosure of which on their face would result in subjectively less drastic consequences, such as those where children were not part of the equation, although they were nonetheless difficult for the individual, also reveal very real worries about being exposed.

An example of this is found in a dossier of an Immorality Act case from around the advent of apartheid, which was brought to court in Simon's Town in 1951. Being a port town, housing a naval base and harbour for first the British Royal Navy and later the South African Navy, Simon's Town, like other important seaports like Durban and Cape Town, supposedly saw and still sees its share of frivolities between visiting sailors and mainland inhabitants, which often, although not exclusively, played and plays out in the form of commercial solicitation of prostitution.

Indeed, tales of seaport sexual and romantic escapades, and in South Africa's case, these locations' apparent proclivity towards flouting anti-miscegenation customs and laws, are as old as time itself, or can at least be traced back to Jan van Riebeeck's arrival at the Cape as well as being ever prevalent in our time.<sup>332</sup>

Returning to the case at hand, the two accused of breaking 'immorality' laws were noted, respectively, as an Able Seaman, described as 'England born', and who went by the name of Johnnie,<sup>333</sup> and a

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<sup>332</sup> See e.g., 'Illegal Sex's Long History', *The Argus*, 31 October 1979; Henry Trotter, 'Soliciting Sailors: The Temporal Dynamics of Dockside Prostitution in Durban and Cape Town', *Journal of Southern African Studies* 35, no. 3 (2009): 699-713.

<sup>333</sup> Whether the male accused was a citizen or resident of South Africa or the United Kingdom is unclear. Foreigners visiting South Africa were, however, not exempt from apartheid anti-miscegenation laws. In fact, a not insignificant number of visiting foreigners to the country, sailors included, would find themselves caught up in the Kafkaesque labyrinth that was apartheid race laws. One of the most well-known examples of this was Swedish author Sara Lidman's conviction and subsequent deportation for breaking the Immorality Act through her affair with prominent African National Congress member Peter Nthite. For the apartheid government's dealings with the 'scandal', see SAB, BTS 6/17/1. See also, Frederick Hale, 'The South African Immorality Act and Sara Lidman's *Jag och min son*', *Tijdschrift voor Skandinavistiek* 21, no. 1 (2000): 55-80; Raoul J. Granqvist, "Att

Coloured woman, Margaret, resident of Simon's Town and employed as a domestic worker.<sup>334</sup> Nothing in the witness statements or the police's or the accused's own testimonies indicates that prostitution played any part in the two striking up a relationship with one another. In line with all the examples of interracial relationships given so far in this chapter, the defendants were no doubt aware of the dangerous consequences that continuing their romantic association could have for them. Countless others would similarly walk on eggshells in constant fear of having their relationships laid out in detail in court. The same presumably applied even to strangers who had no intention of engaging with one another in any other way than simple courteousness. Emotional practices such as kind words, a 'knowing' glance or a smile could be misinterpreted by others and give them the 'wrong' impression.

Cases verify that more intimate mobilising or communicating emotional practices transacted between people that belonged to separate racial groups, such as a kiss, stroking someone's hair or telling someone that they loved them, could be reported by witnesses or noted by police, and be used as circumstantial evidence pointing to defendants potentially having broken or having attempted to break the law.<sup>335</sup>

As the Cape Times reported in 1959, a 1957 amendment to the Immorality Act broadened the provisions of the legislation to outlaw not only the act of interracial sex, but also *attempts* at having intercourse, along with acts of enticement, soliciting and importuning. *The Cape Times* explained that this had 'been a source of anxiety and bewilderment in the application of the Immorality Act', because the new provisions 'made it appear that even a greeting between Coloured

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leva ut slaven i mig": postkoloniala perspektiv på Sara Lidman i apartheids Sydafrika, 1960-1961', *Tidskrift för litteraturvetenskap* 2 (2009): 62-77.

<sup>334</sup> KAB, 1/SMT 1/43 979/51.

<sup>335</sup> In some cases, alas, these feelings do not appear to have been mutual between the respective parties. Nevertheless, for kissing, see, for example the witness statement by the female accused in KAB, 1/PRL 1/1/1/62 379/72. For 'I love you', see, 'J. Delport versus the State', TAB, 1/DUN 1/1/1/3, ref. no. missing, 1.

and White could be interpreted as enticement'.<sup>336</sup> The article went on to explain that a recent judgment in an immorality case alleviated such fears. The judge in that case clarified that there was a difference between preparation and an actual attempt, giving a hypothetical scenario as an example:

For a servant girl to put arsenic in the porridge as it cooks on the stove, is preparation and not punishable. If, however, she places a plate of the porridge before her master at the breakfast table, that will amount to an attempt to murder and is punishable as murder itself.<sup>337</sup>

Even if this definition would be reassuring to some that the state prosecution, in order to convict, would have to prove beyond a reasonable doubt that defendants intended to actually 'go through' with a sexual act with one another, this did not change the social reality that evidently more 'innocent' ways of fraternising could be deemed suspicious. A stolen glance would not put a person in prison but could even so catch the eye of ill-willing passers-by or a police officer. In the case of the seaman and his presumed to be girlfriend, the plain fact that they were walking together and talking to each other was sufficient for a police constable who happened to be in the vicinity of the couple, to report what he saw to a naval patrol and to begin a pursuit of them.<sup>338</sup>

On reading the constable's testimony, it appears that he had suspected for some time that the pair were romantically involved with each other. He testified that he saw the couple turn away from the railway station and continue towards private housing nearby. He lost them from his sight but asked a boy in the street if he knew where the female accused, whose name the constable seemingly knew, lived. The

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<sup>336</sup> 'Sharper Definition of Immorality', *Cape Times*, 13 November 1959.

<sup>337</sup> 'Sharper Definition of Immorality'.

<sup>338</sup> Handwritten witness statement, Johannes Jacobus Lubbe, KAB, 1/SMT 1/43 979/51.

boy replied in the negative. The constable then happened to come across the couple again and saw them entering the back part of a house together. He followed them and pushed open the door to the room in which the couple were standing, talking. He shouted the male accused's name and asked him to accompany him to the station. Johnnie fled but was accosted by the naval patrol who in the meantime had reached the address. Despite hardly being 'caught in the act', a charge of immorality was brought against the couple, and both were found guilty.

Because the immediate evidence at the scene did not point directly, if at all, to circumstances proving sexual intercourse, supporting proof was gathered in order to establish whether the couple could reasonably be said to be lovers. A young girl with whom Margaret shared a room and worked alongside tending to domestic chores in the home of a white family, relayed that the male accused would visit her colleague in their room once a week on average. During these visits, the girl explained, the couple would 'kiss and cuddle and behave like sweethearts'.<sup>339</sup> Furthermore, she had on at least one occasion awoken to the two sleeping alongside each other. She had also witnessed the female accused undress in front of the seaman but could confirm that the seaman had never exposed himself to her, although she had seen him in only his underwear. One night, sleeping, she had been disturbed during the night by the splashing of water only to wake to the sight of the sailor, in uniform, washing Margaret who sat naked in the bathtub. Lastly, she informed the police that the sailor had at one point stayed with the female accused in her room for a whole week, why the young girl instead moved into the room of a third domestic worker, so that the couple could enjoy some privacy in the other bedroom.

Either the prosecution or the police regarded these details as important to their case that the presumed-to-be lovers must have shared a sexual relationship. This we can deduce from the fact that in the handwritten witness report those exact statements are singled out and

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<sup>339</sup> Handwritten witness statement, Mary Adams, KAB, 1/SMT 1/43 979/51.

<sup>339</sup> Statement, Mary Adams.



underscored with red ink.<sup>340</sup> Both accused also realised the seriousness of the incriminations. On a cross-examination of the young witness by the male accused himself, she reiterated her points directly to him: 'I did see you undress, Johnnie ... You did bath Margaret. You were washing her back. I was peeping under the blanket. I am not lying. I am speaking the truth'.<sup>341</sup>

Within the four walls of Margaret's bedroom, the couple likely found it less necessary to do emotional labour, instead viewing the space as a refuge. Away from the prying eyes of ill-wishers, the couple could live out their blossoming relationship as they saw fit, including practicing their emotions like most lovers would. They were free to be intimate with each other, kiss and cuddle, and rub each other's backs. Even though both defendants were acutely aware that their sayings and doings were vulnerable to exposure at the hands of the female accused's roommate, it seems they considered such an outcome unlikely. Indeed, it was only when Margaret's employer, described as her 'mistress', became suspicious and asked the younger girl what was going on in the bedroom that she shared with the accused, that the couple fell prey to hybris. Perhaps in fear of losing her job or out of simple deference to the 'lady of the house', the girl 'told her everything'.<sup>342</sup> At their ensuing appearance in court, as we have seen, the couple were forced to deny that they ever engaged in any of the details that were relayed before the judge by the female accused's fellow domestic worker.

## Loving Thy Neighbour

As it turned out, the police constable who detained the male accused had already the day before the arrest been alerted by the lady of the household and her husband that their employee and her white

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<sup>340</sup> Statement, Mary Adams.

<sup>341</sup> 'Xxd by acc. no. 1', KAB, 1/SMT 1/43 979/51.

<sup>342</sup> 'Statement, Mary Adams'.

boyfriend might be contravening the Immorality Act. Their suspicions had been confirmed by Mary, their younger domestic worker. After Mary told her boss what she knew, the employer went straight to the female accused's room to confront her about her secret, asking her 'if she had been having sailors in her room', to which Margaret according to her mistress replied: 'Johnnie has done nothing! Johnnie has done nothing!'.<sup>343</sup> Despite the general nature of this question and the inferred suggestion that the maid was of easy virtue, Margaret's no doubt desperate reply uncovered in its specificity that her 'transgression' involved only one man. Her calling him by his nickname also speaks to the affection that she would have felt towards her lover. Despairing in the realisation that the couple had been found out, Margaret then ran away from the house, only to return later, admitting to her mistress that she had attempted to phone Johnnie and warn him. Margaret found that the door to her bedroom had been locked by her disapproving boss, who told her to resume her duties, whereafter Margaret ran away again.<sup>344</sup> Later in the evening, the employer's husband arrived home from work. His wife relayed the day's frantic events, whereafter the husband immediately conducted a search of the bedroom shared by Margaret and Mary. Here he found multiple possessions belonging to the sailor, which the married couple promptly handed over to the police.<sup>345</sup>

Among the objects that the police retrieved were a suitcase marked with the sailor's initials and which contained two leather wallets and a leather folder. From the wallets, a police officer recovered a photo of Margaret posing in a bathing suit. This photo had been placed by Johnnie in what the officer called the 'photographic folder of the

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<sup>343</sup> Handwritten witness statement, Helen Loffhagen, KAB, 1/SMT 1/43 979/51.

<sup>344</sup> Statement, Helen Loffhagen.

<sup>345</sup> Handwritten witness statement, Gerald William Loffhagen, KAB, 1/SMT 1/43 979/51.

wallet'.<sup>346</sup> Margaret's smiling face thus found itself in optimal view for the sailor to look at every time he opened it. In the folder, the officer furthermore found 'five rubber preservatives'<sup>347</sup> and a bundle of letters, which along with the photograph painted a picture of two people who were indeed, to use Mary's words in her witness statement, 'sweethearts'.

The two letters that have been preserved in the archive are addressed to Margaret and appear to have been written onboard the HMS Bermuda on which Johnnie served in various ports around the country. That they were found among his own belongings, though, suggests that he perhaps did not find opportunity to post them to her before he again arrived in Simon's Town and would see her in person. In this case, like in the other cases hitherto, we can grasp at the efforts that various persons made to carry out different forms of emotional labour to align themselves to racial standards. In this case more than the others, however, we are also privy to the feelings that emotional labour was otherwise intended to obscure. The first letter reads as follows in full:

Darling

Just a few lines hoping they find you in the pink as it leaves me also to answer your welcome letter received today. Glad to hear you are being a good girl. I have heard already that you went to the dance, if that is true, you know your self that we have finished I did warn you before I left didn't I let's hope they are just pulling my leg. Also they told me you have been up the lane a few times where did you go dear?? I thought I might have had more letters than I have. Maybe you got tired of waiting all ready. I hope it's the truth when you say you have kept a zip on it if I do find you know what to expect don't you. We shall be back on the 21<sup>st</sup> and I shall be ashore as soon as we get in. I hope to see you right away ... Yes dearest if we carry on seeing each other we shall have

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<sup>346</sup> Handwritten witness statement, Gert Johan Odendaal, and photograph in envelope marked 'Ex. 8', KAB, 1/SMT 1/43 979/51.

<sup>347</sup> 'Statement, Gert Johan Odendaal'.

to be more careful we both no [sic] they are out to catch us now. I hope  
to bring you back something nice what I haven't an idea but we'll have  
to see what there is in Durban when we get there. So darling this is all  
for now. Will write again soon. All my love + kisses Johnnie  
xxxxxxxxxx<sup>348</sup>

Like the refuge they found in Margaret's bedroom, the above letter should also be considered an outlet in which they could practice a palette of emotions that were restricted by the attitudes of their surroundings, and which were reflected in the law of the land. Johnnie's comment that they would 'have to be more careful' all but confirms that their relationship could for the time being, and presumably to his regret, only consist of clandestine meetings. Yet, we also see that despite the obvious constraints under which their relationship would have to play out, Johnnie suffered from the same doubts about his connection with his girlfriend that someone in a non-interracial relationship fathomably would. The obvious jealousy he felt, embodied in his worries about where Margaret had been and done and whom she had seen in his absence, and his remark that he trusted she had 'kept a zip on it' (likely a different version of 'keeping it in one's pants'), appears no different from the jealousy that any other romantic partner might feel, regardless of their own and their chosen partner's racial classification.

Jackson talks of the haziness of the colonial archive that in his case dilutes the historical subject's emotional experience when it comes to interracial sex. The case above is almost certainly unique in the traces that it left behind, but nevertheless transcends the emotional and experiential silence and confusion that Jackson argues that cases of immorality often present.<sup>349</sup> Jackson asks whether 'there is room', in immorality cases, to 'talk of love'.<sup>350</sup> While we cannot in any way

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<sup>348</sup> Undated letter marked 'ex. 10', KAB, 1/SMT 1/43 979/51.

<sup>349</sup> Jackson, 'Not Seeking Certain Proof', 200.

<sup>350</sup> Jackson, 'Not Seeking Certain Proof', 187.

generalise from the case of Margaret and Johnnie, the second letter that the police located among Johnnie's effects would suggest, perhaps even more than the first letter, that, at least in their case, room to talk of love did in fact exist:

Hello Darling,

Being a good girl I hope?? Yes I wonder well time will tell won't it dear. Today we got to East London and it has been raining all day. I was going to go to the pictures tonight ashore, but thought better of it. I know I will get filled in when I get back if I don't write a few times to you. Still love your Johnnie darling. I love you my sweetheart and miss you so very much. I shall be glad when the 21<sup>st</sup> get here then I shall know I can be with you all night and wont I make up for lost time. How are you feeling my darling. I hope our baby isnt giving you any trouble. And that you are not telling any one else to rub your back as that is my job and I don't want any one else to do it. Darling did you go to the dance you no [sic] if you did we will fall out for keeps dont you, I'm not being nasty sweetheart but thinking of you, you know what your like when you have finished a dance your [sic] all in so please dearest don't go against my wishes. Will you go in your shop darling and ask them to keep my shoes until I come back or if they have them get them for me. Well sweetheart this is all for now. Good night. All my love, your Johnnie xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx.<sup>351</sup>

Though most of the content of this letter might strike us as remarkably mundane, it is precisely in Johnnie's carefree musings about everything and nothing, interrupted by varying expressions of jealousy and affection towards Margaret, that work to impress on us a sense of normalcy in what on its face was an atypical union. Here, I dare say we can talk of love, even if the apartheid era is often regarded as constituting the very apex of the racial governance and social engineering in South Africa that Jackson also locates in high-imperial Natal.

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<sup>351</sup> Undated letter marked 'ex. 9', KAB, 1/SMT 1/43 979/51.

Whether other interracial couples succeeded in finding some refuge from the pressures of the state's emotional prescription is hard to tell. The Simon's Town case did not end happily for the sailor and his girlfriend. Margaret admitted in court that she was pregnant with Johnnie's child, to whom Johnnie referred in the above letter, noting that he hoped their baby was not causing her any difficulties. Paradoxically, while this highly revelatory fact was considered in court at their trial, it does not seem to have been the straw that broke the camel's back vis-à-vis their convictions.

Jackson writes of colonial-era stances on miscegenation that 'undressing before "natives" was never as devious as caring for them'.<sup>352</sup> Yet, 'undressing' was what the prosecution needed to point beyond a doubt to the act that would ensure that the couple were found guilty. The 'caring' parts of the second letter written by Johnnie were noted, yet the only sentence underscored in red ink was the part in which Johnnie insisted that only he could rub Margaret's back. Notions of love and sex in this way came together in evaluations of interracial intimacy. If the letter illustrates that the pair were afforded some degree of reprieve and room for love, emotional labour remained the rule. South African Labour Party MP Joy Pilcher encapsulated this when she introduced a bill in 1985 to strike down the Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act and the section of the Immorality Act that forbade interracial sex: 'This law ... the work of a minority group, renders emotions, which are also the most tender and sensitive ones, criminal'.<sup>353</sup>

Tragic as Johnnie and Margaret's story is when seen within the frame of reference of the prohibition on cross-racial affection, it nevertheless also evokes the ambiguous intersection of race and gender in unfortunate ways when viewed at the interpersonal level. Johnnie's letters to Margaret fall handily into the genre of the love letter, but simultaneously indicate that their relationship might not have been one

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<sup>352</sup> Jackson, 'Not Seeking Certain Proof', 198.

<sup>353</sup> 'Two Odious Laws Nearing Their End', *The Herald*, 16 April 1985.

based exclusively on mutual trust and freedom of expression. Multiple specifics suggest that this was the case. It appears, for example, that Johnnie kept himself informed about Margaret's doings and whereabouts while he was aboard the Bermuda. This, along with his scolding of her for not having written more letters to him, and his insistence that she 'be a good girl', are the actions of a controlling partner. Furthermore, while his hope that she 'keep a zip on it', can be read as him worrying that Margaret might be unfaithful to him, it can also be interpreted as an indictment of her as promiscuous, an accusation often levelled at 'non-white' women, considering his comments that 'you know what your [sic] like'. This was then followed by a direct intimidation of her, expressed through his threat that if she had not, indeed, kept a zip on it, then 'you know what to expect, don't you?'. From a feminist perspective, Margaret's identity as both Coloured and female, means that she was 'doubly', or even 'triple' oppressed', considering her employment as a servant.<sup>354</sup>

Immorality cases thus render us privy to expectations regarding emotional comportment and reveal that these were, perhaps unsurprisingly, in accord with dominant attitudes toward so-called miscegenation, but are also revealed to be extraordinarily gendered. An additional aspect showing this to be true is when cases resulted in white men being acquitted of immorality, whilst their alleged 'non-white' female partners were convicted of the crime that they supposedly committed together.<sup>355</sup> In 1954, for example, a black woman, Katrina Mashifane, admitted at trial to having had sexual relations with a white

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<sup>354</sup> For 'double' and 'triple oppression', see, Albie Sachs, 'Justice and Gender: The Constitutional Rights of Women in a Post-Apartheid South Africa', *Agenda* 7 (1990): 2; Shireen Hassim, 'Gender, Social Location and Feminist Politics in South Africa', *Transformation* 15 (1991): 65-82.

<sup>355</sup> I have no evidence that the reverse could not be true but note that the South African Institute of Race Relations regularly reported on cases in which especially black women were convicted. See, for example, Muriel Horrell, *A Survey of Race Relations in South Africa 1963* (Johannesburg: South African Institute of Race Relations, 1964), 77-78; also, Kopano Ratele, 'Sexuality as Constitutive of Whiteness in South Africa', *NORA – Nordic Journal of Feminist and Gender Research* 17, no. 3 (2009): 171-172.

Member of Parliament and was found guilty. In a bizarre turn of events, the MP was acquitted at his own trial for the same deed, in which Mashifane acted as a witness and claimed that she did not wilfully engage in sexual intercourse with him. Because she had admitted otherwise at her own trial and the ensuing case against her alleged sexual partner was one brought under the Immorality Act and not under a rape charge, the court found the MP not guilty.<sup>356</sup> In cases such as these, it seems that white men could be exonerated of any potential claims of sexually predatory behaviour, as opposed to the black men that were the subjects of the 'rape scares' covered earlier in this chapter, or those accused in chapter 1 of looking up the dresses of white girls. Likewise, discourses that produced the image of the respectable and virtuous white woman seemingly did not apply to Coloured or black women who found themselves under suspicion of committing immorality.

### Better in Time?

The majority of punishments that were handed out by the courts for convictions under the Immorality Act would increasingly move towards suspended sentences throughout the 1960's and 1970's, as the *Rand Daily Mail* reported in 1979. Harsher punishments, however, remained in place for 'second offences' and 'aggravating circumstances'. From 1974 onwards, furthermore, it was decided that the Attorneys General of the separate South African provinces would personally vet each case brought under the Act, why fewer cases ultimately came before the

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<sup>356</sup> See, 'Amendment of Immorality Act Being Considered', *The Star*, 24 September 1954; and the files collected in Historical Papers, University of the Witwatersrand, AD1947, 3.1.5. Another example where a black woman was convicted and sentenced to two months' imprisonment with hard labour while her white, male, partner was exonerated, is found in 'Potchefstroom Immorality Case', Historical Papers, University of the Witwatersrand, AD1947, 3.1.3.



courts.<sup>357</sup> This might explain the apparent lack of cases on record in the archives from the later apartheid period. The question lingers, though, whether the social reality of interracial intimacy became any different during this time. Did emotional labour become less prevalent – did it feel less necessary? Giving definite or even constructive answers to these questions may very well be an unachievable feat. For this period, however, we can turn to newspaper reports. A court magistrate in Johannesburg reportedly said in a 1979 case that ‘certain contraventions of the Immorality Act no longer offended South African society as much as they once did’,<sup>358</sup> implying that a relaxation of the laws might be a suitable way forward.

A 1978 article in the *Sunday Times* revealed that managers of international hotels across the country had reported an increase in mixed-race couples dining and wining in their restaurants and bars, cases they deemed to be ‘genuine cases of black and white mutual affection’, with some couples even daring to engage in the emotional practice of holding hands.<sup>359</sup> A hotel manager in Cape Town, although pleased to welcome these couples as guests, could however report that they ‘were very discreet’.<sup>360</sup> This suggests that at least some romantic relationships continued to suffer from an unwillingness on the part of those who engaged in them to give in to public displays of feeling for one another.

On the street, a member of the Durban Vice Squad reported that he treated the issue of interracial intimacy in a delicate way, despite the Immorality Act still being on the books. He could and did still at times have to charge couples with contravening it, but did so at his own discretion, adding that he felt it was ‘unfair automatically to couple

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<sup>357</sup> ‘Courts Ease Up on Immorality Act Cases’, *Rand Daily Mail*, 18 October 1979. See also, ‘A Welcome New Approach’, *Eastern Province Herald*, 17 October 1979 and ‘Steep Decline in Immorality Cases’, *Cape Times*, 12 July 1977.

<sup>358</sup> ‘Obnoxious Legislation’, *The Argus*, 16 October 1979.

<sup>359</sup> ‘Five-Star Love Beats the Colour Bar’, *Sunday Times*, 28 May 1978.

<sup>360</sup> ‘Five-Star Love’.

friendship with sex'.<sup>361</sup> Leniency, whether at the hands of the courts or everyday South Africans could not be blindly expected, however, with the *Cape Times* reminding its readers that there existed an ever-present risk of social stigma, individual blackmail, and the fact that the courts would have to keep on applying the law, however harsh the sentence, until the law was removed from the books.<sup>362</sup> The *Cape Herald* warned that 'a mixed unmarried couple in this country can [still] get themselves into trouble if a policemen finds them close to each other in a car, on the beach or in a bedroom'.<sup>363</sup>

Both the Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act and Section 16 of the Immorality Act were abolished in 1985. The National Party government itself had by that time, along with the media, apparently come to join in a shared recognition that the legislation's collective imprint on South Africans had been 'a restriction of love'<sup>364</sup> and a 'long list of heartbreaks',<sup>365</sup> and that it had unfairly harmed 'couples who loved each other across the colour line'.<sup>366</sup> The then Minister of Home Affairs, F. W. de Klerk, who subsequently turned out to become the last minority rule President of South Africa, would even concede after the laws had been scrapped, that 'it is preferable that the Government should not interfere with the intimate emotional lives of people'.<sup>367</sup>

Old habits die hard, though, as they say. As noted in the introduction to this chapter, Dubow's characterisation of the apartheid system entailed a series of practices, including internalised patterns of acquiescence. Apartheid, we should not forget, was built around the very idea of 'each to their own'. When viewing emotional labour as

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<sup>361</sup> 'Five-Star Love'.

<sup>362</sup> 'Scrap the Act', *Cape Times*, 11 July 1977.

<sup>363</sup> 'A "Facelift" for Act 23 of 1957', *Cape Herald*, 11 August 1984.

<sup>364</sup> 'Mixed View on Govt Move'.

<sup>365</sup> 'Morals Act: Long List of Heartbreaks', *The Argus*, 27 September 1979.

<sup>366</sup> 'Love Is Still a Crime', *Cape Times*, 16 September 1982.

<sup>367</sup> 'Suffering Over'.

Scheer would, as the habit of regulating emotional practices according to changing social contexts, it is difficult to imagine that the routine of concealing or deflecting one's behaviour away from clues of interracial intimacy could simply disappear. As *The Friend* opined in the wake of the laws being taken off the books in a gesture to those who believed they should have remained in place: '... time will show that the walls will not come crashing down in some spectacular Armageddon. Nor will the various races of this country start rushing into each other's arms'.<sup>368</sup>

While love across the colour line in South Africa is no longer a crime, ambivalent attitudes towards its existence are no doubt still in play even today. Sociologists Melissa Steyn, Haley McEwen and Jennie Tsekwa's study of interracial relationships in post-apartheid South Africa, conducted as recent as 2018, touches upon how such relationships are still policed on an informal basis.<sup>369</sup> Tellingly, considering the cases of emotional labour described throughout this chapter, Steyn and her colleagues argue that informal policing can lead to self-policing. With the foundations of the apartheid state no longer in existence in a country which can today boast of one of the perhaps most progressive constitutions in the world, interracial couples apparently still at times find themselves hiding from public view and applying social restraint in specific settings. One couple, for example, relayed that when on holiday together they made a point of not holding hands and decided to pretend they were colleagues.<sup>370</sup> Hochschild's very point that doing emotional labour entails exactly that – *labouring* – is verified indirectly by Steyn, McEwen and Tsekwa as a conclusive point:

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<sup>368</sup> 'Suffering Over'.

<sup>369</sup> Melissa Steyn, Haley McEwen and Jennie Tsekwa, 'Hyperracialized: Interracial Relationships in Post-Apartheid South Africa and the Informal Policing of Public Spaces', *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 42, no. 9 (2019): 1669-1685.

<sup>370</sup> Steyn, McEwen and Tsekwa, 'Hyperracialized', 1681.

Continually guarding and controlling emotional reactions and cutting oneself off from emotional connection stunts one's sense of relationship with other human beings. Our data suggests this is alienating and hard work to maintain the sense of detachment.<sup>371</sup>

If apartheid-era 'racial common sense' governed the standards that pertained to interracial intimacy, as my analysis in this chapter suggests, the above study proposes that this endures in shaping lived experience in today's outwardly post-racial 'Rainbow Nation' of South Africa. Although racially informed emotional prescription is no longer upheld by state sponsored discourse or governed through the application of 'petty' apartheid laws, certain regulating emotional practices still loom large. The phenomenon of feigning to not feel 'love' for a person who regards themselves to be member of a racial 'group' different from one's own thus protrudes from past and present cases as being a historically contingent emotional practice – what Dubow would call one of many 'internalized habits of deference'.<sup>372</sup>

## Summary and Sub-Conclusions

The anti-miscegenation laws that the apartheid government introduced in the immediate wake of the 1948 Nationalist election victory have rightly been viewed by scholars as reflective of the notions of gender, class and race that were inherent to Afrikaner nationalism and ideology, and as pervading the system's structural foundations. The formal prohibition on interracial intimacy, albeit born out of discourses on the 'dangers' of miscegenation, constructed and cultivated since the colonial era, would thus produce far greater orders of acquiescence than dissidence throughout the racial grid. While such a postcolonial interpretation is not at all invalid, the focus on the operation of state

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<sup>371</sup> Steyn, McEwen and Tsekwa, 'Hyperracialized', 1680.

<sup>372</sup> Dubow, *Apartheid*, 293.

and governance nevertheless obscures the emotional and experiential dimensions to interracial intimacy which point to the lived experience of apartheid.

In this chapter, I have looked more concretely to those ‘dissidents’ whose cases of ‘immorality’ were brought to court or reported in detail in the press. We find that the implicit assumption was that the emotional practices carried out by these ‘non-conformists’ were expected by their immediate surroundings, as well as by law enforcement and the courts, to reflect the prevailing both racial and gendered common sense that miscegenation challenged, legal arguments notwithstanding. For the defendants, this meant that they would be assessed on whether they had shown the ability to regulate emotion and perform emotional labour in accordance with racialised standards. Some met these standards unintentionally, while others who consciously attempted to regulate their emotions, either at the time they were caught in the act, or retrospectively, were deemed to have ‘tried too hard’ or not to have tried at all. For some accused, successful navigation could sway the balance in favour of an acquittal. For those who were deemed less successful, the consequences could be grave and lead to formal punishment, not to say personal and familial ruin.

Notions of sex and love would become intertwined in other people’s assessments of appropriate conduct. Because the Immorality Act required proof of a sexual act having taken place, emotional practices were scrutinised in detail to determine the ‘true’ nature of relationships that were made up by people of diverging racial classifications. The observation of body language, the interpretation of overheard conversations and objects found at the scene would all conspire to reveal whether it could be assumed that a couple had engaged in ‘illicit carnal intercourse’. In some cases, we therefore find ‘moments of love’ that the accused’s emotional labour was otherwise meant to conceal, showing that the lived experience of interracial intimacy could in fact be more than simply the operation of racially ordered knowledge, despite the mostly unhappy outcomes of most of the cases which the historian is lucky enough to be able to access.

From a legal point of view, 'immorality' appears to have become a lesser used charge and sentences mostly handed out as suspended ones throughout the 1970's and 1980's after the heydays of the 'high apartheid' era. Press reports indicate that these circumstances followed a lax in social attitudes towards so-called 'miscegenation'. Contemporary studies, however, reveal that emotional labour performed by participants in interracial relationships is ever prevalent despite anti-miscegenation legislation being abolished in South Africa nearly 40 years ago, demonstrating the historical dependency of emotional practices.

One could cautiously argue that the general acquiescence to anti-miscegenation laws proves the efficiency of successive apartheid governments' social engineering schemes. The cases covered in this article indeed indicate that emotional practices can be read as a type of what Saul Dubow has called the 'internalized rules of conduct' that characterised apartheid and contributed to its enduring longevity.<sup>373</sup> At the same time, the 'dissidents' that swam against the tide are proof of the fragile nature of emotional regimes. Their interpersonal struggles would challenge the limits of how one could and should 'feel' the racial order of the day.

In the final empirical chapter of this dissertation, I therefore move on to probe the relation between emotions and the racial order itself. What happens to racialised emotional prescription when the racial order itself is, at least to some degree, fluid?

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<sup>373</sup> Dubow, *Apartheid*, 276. Incidentally, Dubow first called for enquiries into why the apartheid system had endured for so long in a 1989 monograph based on his doctoral dissertation. See, Saul Dubow, *Racial Segregation and the Origins of Apartheid in South Africa*, 1919-36 (Houndmills, UK: Macmillan, 1989).



# Chapter 3

## Communal Feeling: Racial Classification and Re-Classification

Sometimes such pitiful affairs bind together a white man and a girl who, though Coloured, can pass as white. This is perhaps the most terrible of the racial predicaments of South Africa, for the girl is constantly haunted by the possibility of discovery.<sup>374</sup>

Jan Morris, *South African Winter*, 1958.

Why would it be a tragedy and humiliation for those who pass for coloureds to be classified as coloureds? Surely that is what they are.<sup>375</sup>

T. E. Dönges, South African Minister of the Interior, 1950.

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<sup>374</sup> Morris, *South African Winter*, 165.

<sup>375</sup> Theophilus Ebenhaezer ('Eben') Dönges (1898-1968), South African Minister of the Interior 1948-1958, quoted in Giliomee, *The Afrikaners*, 504.



## Introduction

It should by now be clear that nationalist winds blew a flurry of racial measures and laws in multiple directions in the aftermath of the 1948 apartheid election. Soon, the government would need a lynchpin to hold in place the racial categories to which apartheid legislation so decisively referred. The crux of the Population Registration Act (PRA) of 1950 was therefore to classify each inhabitant of South Africa as belonging to one of three and later four seemingly established communities: white, Coloured, 'native' or Indian, and through this process devise a rigid racial order. The laws that, based on race, governed everything from fraternisation, place of residence and educational opportunities to, as we have seen, recreational space and personal intimacy, would take as their primary marker of racial identity the category allocated to individuals under the Population Registration Act.

It is recognised that in determining a person's race, apartheid-era classifiers worked from 'common-sense' notions of racial difference, which were rooted in and had evolved over time throughout South Africa's colonial and segregationist eras.<sup>376</sup> By the time apartheid formalised existing methods and created novel ones to keep apart the 'races', there was not much discussion as to how one could or should differentiate between people in order to decide to which group they belonged. As indicated in the words preceding this chapter, spoken by the then Minister of the Interior; a Coloured person, for example, was simply a person who 'passed' for Coloured. The connotations that his statement might conjure up regarding the appearance, language, or way of life of such a person were assumed to be self-evident, indeed 'common

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<sup>376</sup> Posel, 'Race as Common Sense'; Suryakanthie Chetty 'Racialized Identity under Apartheid in South Africa' in *The Palgrave Handbook of Ethnicity*, ed. Steven Ratuva (Singapore: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019), 1-19; George T. H. Ellison and Thea de Wet, 'The Classification of South Africa's Mixed-Heritage Peoples 1910-2011: A Century of Conflation, Contradiction, Containment, and Content' in *The Palgrave International Handbook of Mixed Racial and Ethnic Classification*, ed. Zarine L. Rocha and Peter J. Aspinall (Cham, CH: Palgrave Macmillan, 2020), 425-455; Jeremy Martens, 'Conflicting Views of "Coloured" People in the South African Liquor Bill Debate of 1928', *Canadian Journal of African Studies* 35, no. 2 (2001): 313-338.

sense' to the Minister's audience and to the rest of the general population. Were these notions, when so ingrained in society that everyone recognised them, then really to be regarded as tragic and humiliating to those to whom they applied?

As argued throughout the previous two chapters, it was precisely through 'petty' apartheid measures like these that South Africans came to 'feel' the racial order of the day. It was through confrontations with the everyday situations that such ordinances brought about, that limits to the racial order were both affirmed and negotiated. The racial classification that one was given would then certainly command whether one might consider an influx of 'non-white' people to one's favourite beach a threat to some preordained perception of a right to be happy. If one's identity document was stamped with the word 'European', it could also mean having to practise emotion management daily in order to suppress potentially 'dangerous' emotions that suggested one might be inclined to support miscegenation. To answer the Minister's rhetorical question, then, yes, being classified as 'what one was', could certainly in many cases be both tragic and humiliating and in general bear influence on one's emotional life.

For the majority of South Africans, race group classification, although constructed, became an embedded marker of the community with which one identified.<sup>377</sup> However, the apartheid state left open the option for its subjects to seek reclassification, that is, to appeal the decision that was made regarding their racial status and seek 'membership' of a different race group. Throughout the Nationalist Party era, the Race Classification Appeal Board received thousands of applications.<sup>378</sup> Such reclassification cases are the main object of study in this chapter. Recasting the PRA's racial groupings as 'emotional communities', to use the concept devised by historian Barbara Rosenwein,<sup>379</sup> I argue that personal motivations to be reclassified were often rooted in the desire to achieve the affective

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<sup>377</sup> Ellison and de Wet, 'South Africa's Mixed-Heritage Peoples'.

<sup>378</sup> See, for example, Anthony J. Christopher, *The Atlas of Changing South Africa* (London and New York: Routledge, 2001), 101-102.

<sup>379</sup> Rosenwein, 'Worrying about Emotions'.

stability that was associated with belonging to a specific racial group, rather than only in the hope of ‘merely’ changing one’s material conditions in line with the racial order. Instances of ‘feeling out of place’, as we saw in chapter 1, or of having to strenuously perform emotional labour, as we saw in chapter 2, could ostensibly be diminished by moving up or indeed, down, the racialised pecking order that the PRA established and maintained. If race demarcated what and how one could and should feel about oneself, one’s surroundings and about others, succeeding in changing one’s race could potentially challenge these ideas.

## **Racial Classification during Apartheid**

As noted above, racial classification was not a novel invention at the advent of apartheid. To those in power, from the colonial era beginning with the Dutch landing at the Cape over the establishment of the Boer republics, the two South African Wars and to the creation of the Union of 1910, which marked the symbolic reconciliation of English-speaking white South Africans and Afrikaners, race was inseparable from governance. Yet, no fixed way of deciding a person’s race existed. While legislation and ordinances referred to racial categories, definitions were either absent or, at best, variable and imprecise. The expansion of segregationist legislation over time, surprisingly, did little to combat competing or contradictory characterisations or to set them in stone. In fact, the opposite appears to be true, as Posel notes:

With the advance of segregation, the number of laws based on racial differentiation grew rapidly. But paradoxically, the more prolific the legislation, the greater the ambiguities and inconsistencies surrounding the definition of race, as each new law took its own stand on the subject.<sup>380</sup>

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<sup>380</sup> Posel, ‘Race as Common Sense’, 90.

Over time, various categories were deemed suitable (for example, the disparaging ‘native’, ‘hottentot’ or ‘bushman’), and different criteria came to dominate to a varying degree on how to define to which ‘race’ a person belonged, such as general appearance, descent and way of life. In evaluating a person’s appearance, a magistrate or bureaucrat might draw on stereotypical tropes such as the texture of a person’s hair. South African governance of race would not, though, and perhaps contrary to popular belief, to any significant degree rely on practices related to eugenics, as seen in for example National Socialist Germany.<sup>381</sup> Rather, by the time the Population Registration Act was passed, it was generally accepted that South Africa consisted of three socially constructed racial groupings: white, black African, and Coloured; categories that were born out of the necessity of maintaining a three-‘tier’ racial order to meet the practical and legal intricacies of increasing segregation.<sup>382</sup> We have then come full circle to Eben Dönges’ comment that a Coloured person was, naturally, someone who ‘passed’ for Coloured, whatever that may mean.

This everlasting ambiguity remained in place with the introduction of the PRA, despite the government’s goal of creating a more rigid and less flexible system of racial classification. Consider, for example, the following excerpts from the PRA, which civil servant bureaucrats could work from when deciding on the classification of an individual:

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<sup>381</sup> That is not to say that the matter of eugenics was not at times widely discussed and considered. See Saul Dubow, *Illicit Union: Scientific Racism in Modern South Africa* (Johannesburg and Cambridge, UK: Witwatersrand University Press and Cambridge University Press, 1995); Geoffrey C. Bowker and Susan Leigh Starr, *Sorting Things Out: Classification and Its Consequences* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1999), 201-203; Posel, ‘Race as Common Sense’, 99-101. Dubow argues that apartheid ideologues operated by inferring biological theories of race rather than stating them openly, preferring to indicate that culture was in some sense a result of such constitutions. See, Saul Dubow, ‘Afrikaner Nationalism, Apartheid and the Conception of “Race”’, *Journal of African History* 33 (1992): 209-237.

<sup>382</sup> Posel, ‘Race as Common Sense’, 94-95.

“coloured person” means a person who is not a white person or a native ... “native” means a person who is in fact or is generally accepted as a member of any aboriginal race or tribe of Africa ... “white person” means a person who in appearance obviously is, or who is generally accepted as a white person, but does not include a person who, although in appearance obviously a white person, is generally accepted as a coloured person.<sup>383</sup>

The Act was amended in 1967 with annotations to the definitions of the various races, which would emphasise the importance of evaluating a person’s ‘habits, education and speech and deportment and demeanour in general’, as well as her or his social standing and employment status, when determining race.<sup>384</sup> These factors are perhaps the most damning evidence that apartheid racial groups were blatantly socially constructed. Judgments of a person’s physical features and analyses of any bureaucratic proof of lineage were regularly carried out, yet no one saw any reason to profess that any specific science or formal guidelines dictated how classifications were practised nor that any consistency was secured in the end results. Instead, individual race classifiers exerted an unthinkable amount of power in that they were entrusted with applying ‘obvious’ racial reasoning, which, paradoxically, could mean one thing in one case and something else in another. The apartheid-era ontology of race that was applied was a

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<sup>383</sup> *Population Registration Act*, section 1 (iii; xi; xv).

<sup>384</sup> Republic of South Africa, *Population Registration Amendment Act*, Act no. 64 of 1967, section 1(2) (a); (c). Posel laments the fact that legal commentators have tended to focus solely on the ambiguity of the definitions given in section 1, when section 1(2) of the law indicates that the definitions were actually less opaque and show how they were intertwined with the social fabric of South Africa at the time. Yet, she fails to mention that section 1(2) was not added until 1962 and amended in 1967. In the period from 1950 to 1962, race classifiers could in fact only look to the vague definitions given in section 1.

simple recognition of lived experience that took shape as ‘a mix of biology, class and culture’.<sup>385</sup>

Historian Keith Breckenridge proposes that this ontology became increasingly bureaucratised after the initial process of racially classifying South Africans according to the national census was completed in 1967. The apartheid state’s goal of collecting and compiling into a central register overwhelming amounts of information on all its subjects created a practical problem in how to classify the quantities of individuals born after those persons whose classifications were based on the answers they gave in the census. The determination of race during the 1950’s was thus, as Posel argues, one founded largely on community acceptance. After 1962, however, Breckenridge insists, the determination of race considered the question of descent and relied on already-existing data in the Register on oneself or on one’s parents. As Minister of Interior Dönges put it: ‘Every person is classified at birth, but they only become aware of their classification when they apply for an identity card after their 16<sup>th</sup> birthday’.<sup>386</sup>

Regardless of whether the process of racial classification was applied according to ‘common sense’ notions or became increasingly automatized, though, the fact remains that the result of both methods would have very real consequences for how apartheid was experienced, as I will go on to explain.

## The Consequences of Classification

Historians, social geographers and sociologists, to name but a few, have recognised that the ideas on which the practical administration of the Population Registration Act was constructed produced circumstances

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<sup>385</sup> Deborah Posel, ‘What’s in a Name? Racial Categorisations under Apartheid and Their Afterlife’, *Transformation* 47 (2001): 64.

<sup>386</sup> Dönges, quoted in Keith Breckenridge, ‘The Book of Life: The South African Population Register and the Invention of Racial Descent, 1950-1980’, *Kronos* 40 (2014): 232.

in which a person's classification was, had been, or could become, a potentially life-changing factor. Common in these scholarly accounts, and as resembles the 'state of the art' reviews in previous chapters, is that their vantage points when mentioning these facts lie elsewhere than with accessing the lived experience of the occurrences of everyday apartheid. Renowned historian Hermann Giliomee, for example, in his mammoth biography of the Afrikaners, dedicates only a couple of pages to the PRA and its consequences.<sup>387</sup> The same can be said of historian Saul Dubow's authoritative account of the apartheid era in full.<sup>388</sup> Neither of these studies denies the significance of the PRA in shaping racially differential experience. On the contrary, both identify the PRA as fundamental to the apartheid project. Giliomee asserts, just as this dissertation argues of 'petty' apartheid measures in general as well as of the PRA that is the focus of this chapter:

Classification had momentous implications. Assigned membership in a legally defined community would determine almost every important daily activity – the area where one lived, one's partner for marriage and for casual sex, the schools, colleges and universities one could attend, the people with and against whom one played any sport, the kind of job for which one qualified, and the place where one could be buried.<sup>389</sup>

Dubow likewise argues that classifications under the PRA had 'direct implications for citizenship, employment, residential, and social rights' and 'became internalized by the vast majority of South Africans'.<sup>390</sup> One could and should then perhaps read both these above passages as implicit calls for investigations into the relation between racial classification and everyday life that their own works' emphases; the

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<sup>387</sup> Giliomee, *The Afrikaners*, 503-504.

<sup>388</sup> Dubow, *Apartheid*, 37-38; 63; 117.

<sup>389</sup> Giliomee, *The Afrikaners*, 504.

<sup>390</sup> Dubow, *Apartheid*, 38.

former on the long existential history of the Afrikaner, and the latter on the diffuse nature of the apartheid system, could not justifiably cover in detail. At the same time, they are, in their mere briefness proportional to the studies in full, indicative, along with the arguments laid out in Posel's two articles on racial classification and racial categories, of the tendency to highlight the effects of petty apartheid measures as matter of fact, or as by-products of the more 'important' goal of 'total' apartheid that the state pursued. As such, while scholars are not ignorant of the fact that one's racial classification had personal consequences, the inclination has been to explore racial classification as a means of state practice rather than explore the concrete reception of said practice by those who were subject to it. As Posel readily and correctly concedes, a full exposé of how classifications worked in practice is difficult to approach due to a lack of records.<sup>391</sup> However, as she further clarifies, newspapers - the liberal press in particular - and the South African Institute of Race Relations (SAIRR) reported widely on the often poignant or just plain tragic absurdities of the system that classification cases uncovered. Personal anecdotes have equally functioned in laying bare tales of despair.<sup>392</sup> Consider, for example, the infamous story of Sandra Laing, told in the 2008 film *Skin*, a child of white parents with two white siblings, who came to be singled out and classified as Coloured, torn away from her family and shunned by the white community because she ostensibly did not 'pass' for white. These types of stories are not entirely lacking in scholarly accounts but have been treated anecdotally rather than as comprehensive illustrations of the historical experience of apartheid.

Concrete evidence of classifiers' rationale and how they had come to their conclusions regarding the race of the persons that were the subject

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<sup>391</sup> Posel, 'Race as Common Sense', 105.

<sup>392</sup> The high prevalence of such cases are evident when referring to virtually any of the SAIRR's annual reports on race relations in South Africa. See, for example, Muriel Horrell, *A Survey of Race Relations in South Africa 1961* (Johannesburg: South African Institute of Race Relations, 1962), 86-87; Carole Cooper et al., *Race Relations Survey 1984* (Johannesburg: South African Institute of Race Relations, 1985), 186.



of these stories is furthermore hard to come by, as are the ways in which individuals responded to and negotiated both their classification and the 'common-sense' notions that accompanied it. Yet, if true that the racial order of apartheid South Africa would be 'impossible' without the PRA,<sup>393</sup> and that one's classification, no matter the degree of compositeness that determined it, would become a highly, if not the most, entrenched marker of identity throughout South African history,<sup>394</sup> it is undoubtedly of importance that we look to answering such questions.

Race classifications during apartheid were fluid because the law was designed to invite classifications taking place based on the numerous traditional racial self-evident both biological and constructionist 'truths' that had accumulated throughout the colonial and segregationist eras. Crucially, however, this fluidity would simultaneously leave ajar the door for persons to potentially appeal the classification that they had been allocated by 'passing' for a different race. 'Passing' for membership of another racial group could now be done through appealing to established notions of various factors, not only physical appearance; for example, where one lived, which sport one engaged in, one's occupation, place of residence, and more. The countless tragic stories caused by one's classification of which only a few are outlined above could potentially be avoided by using the PRA to one's own benefit. Yet, as sociologist Gerhard Maré has pointed out, race classifications were in most cases accepted without question. Only a proportionally small number of people would seek upward mobility, maybe due to the humiliating and strenuous nature of the reclassification process itself.<sup>395</sup> Nevertheless, looking to the anomaly of people who *did* choose to challenge decisions made under the PRA can likely assist in approaching the limits of the 'common-sense' ideas that

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<sup>393</sup> Frederik van Zyl Slabbert, *The Last White Parliament* (Johannesburg: Jonathan Ball, 1985), 43.

<sup>394</sup> Ellison and de Wet, 'South Africa's Mixed-Heritage Peoples'.

<sup>395</sup> Gerhard Maré, 'Race Counts in Contemporary South Africa: "An Illusion of Ordinarity"', *Transformation* 47 (2001): 83-84.

governed racial classifications. What were these person's motivations for being reclassified? To which conventional wisdoms did they appeal to convince the classifiers to reconsider their fate? Specifically for those persons seeking to be reclassified who did not simply desire an upward change in their material circumstances: why then the urge to expose oneself to the reclassification process? Why did some subjects plead to be moved 'down' rather than 'up' the racial ladder? The argument that shall be laid out in the following is that the common denominator for the race reclassification case subjects was one of a personal quest for emotional stability by becoming a member of what they perceived to be their appropriate 'emotional community'.

### Emotional Communities and Communal Emotions

Barbara Rosenwein's model of 'emotional communities' can be read as a response to what she regarded as the insufficiency of historical anthropologist William Reddy's also well-known notion of 'emotional regimes'. With a specific interest in medieval life, Rosenwein reasons that any given social community, whether a group of fellow churchgoers, an entire neighbourhood, or a smaller unit like the family, is at the same time a community in which its members share ideas of what should be considered as valuable or detrimental to them as well as of emotional standards.<sup>396</sup> In Rosenwein's worldview, an individual is most likely a member of multiple emotional communities simultaneously and will therefore find themselves adjusting their emotional practices to the competing standards of each community of which they are a member, provided that these norms do not stray too far from each other in one group compared to another group. These adjustments take place on a frequent basis as one moves through the different layers of the social fabric of everyday life: from home to church, to the marketplace, to school, to the workplace, and so forth.

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<sup>396</sup> Rosenwein, 'Worrying about Emotions', 842.

Throughout the course of a lifetime, one's principal emotional communities change: we join new groups and leave others behind.

In what might initially appear to be in contrast to the above, William Reddy's concept of 'emotional regimes' mainly refers to the emotional standards that underpin a stable political regime.<sup>397</sup> While Reddy's framework is not explicitly limited to political regimes, that is, that those in power foster or suppress emotions in their populations with the state as an apparatus through which to do so, it is, however, how it has primarily come to be understood by, among others, Rosenwein and historian Jan Plamper.<sup>398</sup> Indeed, Reddy's own case study shone light on the absolutist regimes of revolutionary France. It was exactly this apparent focus on the nation state with which Rosenwein took issue when developing her own ideas about emotional communities. With her argument that emotional expression, which she reads as a component that was inseparable from Norbert Elias' *Zivilisationsprozeß*, was restrained even before the advent of modern state formations, then Reddy's emotional regimes seem to fail in explaining social adherence to emotional prescription when the state is absent. This rings particularly true considering her own area of interest, the Medieval Period, or in other historical contexts where larger sections of society are *not* dominated by the political regime.<sup>399</sup> For all Rosenwein's legitimate preoccupations with Reddy's ostensibly monolithic structures of power, however, one might dare to suggest that emotional 'communities' and 'regimes' are perhaps not too dissimilar. Rosenwein recognises that archetypes of authority exist even in smaller and marginal emotional communities, just as Reddy acknowledges that his 'regimes' need not be absolute or be shaped or enforced only by an all-controlling state. As is essential to the habitual nature of Scheer's

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<sup>397</sup> Reddy, *Navigation of Feeling*, 129.

<sup>398</sup> See, for example, Jan Plamper, 'The History of Emotions: An Interview with William Reddy, Barbara Rosenwein, and Peter Stearns', *History and Theory* 49 (2010): 242-243.

<sup>399</sup> Rosenwein, 'Worrying about Emotions', 834; Rosenwein, 'Problems and Methods', 22-23.

‘emotional practices’, emotional ‘communities’ or ‘regimes’ are likewise embodied and ingrained when we emote and in our judgments of how we feel. Meanwhile, as historian of emotions and the senses Rob Boddice has pointed out, the boundaries of any emotional community or regime are ‘porous, amorphous and might be conceived of differently from one individual to the next’.<sup>400</sup> All this is to say that as with individual membership of any group, formalised or perceived, the structure of the social habitus necessarily varies from person to person. At the same time, the habitus cannot simply be extinguished on demand either. It is this potential mismatch between expectation and expression that is of interest when we conceive of communal emotions and emotional communities.

To turn our attention back to the historical case study at hand, then, we can bring together and apply both notions to the application of the Population Registration Act that was so fundamental to the application of petty apartheid measures in South Africa. With the PRA, race was upheld as the supreme marker of identity. The function of the Reservation of Separate Amenities Act and the Immorality Act covered in the first two chapters was undoubtedly to maintain racial stratification in the social sphere. As we have seen, the emotional dimension of social interaction became a means with which the state as well as ordinary people could justify, negotiate or explain racial separateness. The PRA would work as a lynchpin to which laws governing social segregation based on race could refer. The racial groups defined in the PRA, consequently, became *de facto* social communities by virtue of the physical and social separation that laws such as the Separate Amenities, Immorality and Group Areas Acts demanded and cultivated.

Rosenwein’s mantra dictating that social communities and emotional communities are virtually the same would imply that the emotional standards of the white, Coloured, African and Indian communities, respectively, would equally be unique to each group. The system could also be characterised as an emotional regime, in Reddy’s

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<sup>400</sup> Boddice, *History of Emotions*, 174.

words, in which norms were enforced along racial lines, barring any emotional practices that might be regarded as threatening to the racial order, whether practised within the individual emotional-racial communities or across the colour bar. Indeed, Reddy describes that in strict regimes, individuals who fail to adhere to emotional norms are in danger of facing penalties, both formal, such as prison time, and informal, such as being the subject of gossip or being excluded.<sup>401</sup> The case examples laid out in chapters 1 and 2 of this dissertation certainly imply that this was a genuine reality of the apartheid experience.

If social and thus, emotional communities were drawn along racial lines, because the emotional regime dictated that it be so, and its subjects were expected to adhere to the regulations of the segregationist policies of the state – then what is at play when an individual seeks to alter their racial classification? That is the central question of the analysis to follow.

## The Necessity of Shunning

For many, one of the primary emotional communities in which they engage is the family unit. If emotions are part of our daily evaluations of happiness, success, sadness and difficulty, we require an outlet, a forum in which to share these evaluations with persons with whom we share the strongest bonds of trust and feelings of kinship. Some families are closer knit than others. Others might come to be defined more by mistrust and secrecy.<sup>402</sup> Differing norms will prevail in different families. Nevertheless, for the most part, the family represents an intimate constellation that allows for ‘genuine’ emotional expression on the part of the individual family member. A child might feel less inclined to hide their ‘true’ feelings when in conversation with a parent. Siblings will share the latest gossip or their thoughts on potential

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<sup>401</sup> Reddy, *Navigation of Feeling*, for example, 121; 125; 134.

<sup>402</sup> Deborah Cohen, *Family Secrets: Shame & Privacy in Modern Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017 [2013]).

romantic partners with one another. Within the four walls of the home, privacy reigns to a high degree, enabling us to emote without obvious restrictions.

The family as a phenomenon as regards emotion has changed over time. Yet, whether conceived of as a modern site of amplified sentimentality or a pre-modern unit in which love was ‘tamped down’<sup>403</sup> it remains one of our most cherished emotional communities. This was true just as much in the Middle Ages as it is today. In fact, the apparent change in the appropriate standards surrounding the family is itself proof of how emotional practices within that specific unit have throughout time been regarded as significant to social life. In South Africa, families, as with almost all social groupings, have been affected by the structural workings of segregationist and apartheid policies. Sociologist Ria Smit, for example, has underscored how the creation of the largely black African migrant labour scheme would affect African families, causing paternal absenteeism, which could propagate marital breakdowns and dissolutions within the affected households.<sup>404</sup> These facts are testaments to how ‘grand apartheid’ strategies came to dissolve natural emotional communities at the most intimate level by complicating family members’ abilities to nurture loving relationships with one another. The PRA, an instrument of social rather than economic or political engineering, would do the same in more subtle ways.

As various scholars have pointed out, for black/Coloured communities, a sense of communality as opposed to individualism is reflected in the cultural norms that adhere to the family. African and Coloured households are often larger in size than so-called ‘Western’ ones, at times including extended family.<sup>405</sup> Emotional bonds can be

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<sup>403</sup> Rosenwein, ‘Worrying about Emotions’, 829-830.

<sup>404</sup> Ria Smit, ‘The Impact of Labor Migration on African Families in South Africa: Yesterday and Today’, *Journal of Comparative Family Studies* 32, no. 4 (2001): 538-539.

<sup>405</sup> Radhamany Sooryamoorthy and Mzwandile Makhoba, ‘The Family in Modern South Africa: Insights from Recent Research’, *Journal of Comparative Family Studies* 47, no. 3 (2016): 313-314.

read as tighter, as reflected in Smit's understanding of why Xhosa people, for example, accentuate collectivity and help those in need, citing the proverb: "Umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu" – "I am because we are". Such cultural values, she argues further, have been used as survival strategies in the face of the material deterioration and poverty caused to them by apartheid policies.<sup>406</sup> It seems fair to conclude, then, that individual members of 'non-white' families had a significant amount of emotional capital to lose if choosing to apply for race re-classification. In order to increase their chances of being re-classified, most applicants would, in effect, be forced to shun those of their family members who were classified as belonging to the racial group that the applicant wished to depart.

Re-classification appeals show this to be particularly true for 'borderline' cases, where the applicant could apparently 'pass' for a different race. A case from 1970 puts one applicant's personal struggle into stark context and sheds light on the apartheid government's position on race re-classification at the time.<sup>407</sup> The Race Classification Board had notified a Cape Town woman, Miss Bell, of her official classification as Coloured. The woman objected to this decision and appealed to the Race Classification Appeals Board to reclassify her as white. The Board responded in the negative, reaffirming her classification as Coloured, why the woman then as an option of last resort appealed to the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court. The Court reversed the Board's decision and ordered it to reclassify the woman as white. In its decision, the Court in essence 'rewarded' the woman with a victory based on a technicality. Throughout the 1960's, the South African Parliament had amended provisions in the PRA, as it became increasingly aware that 'loopholes' in the law meant that a substantial number of especially Coloured persons had succeeded in being classified as white purely by virtue of their appearance and acceptance by the circles in which they chose to move. The PRA's

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<sup>406</sup> Smit, 'Impact of Labor Migration', 546.

<sup>407</sup> KAB, CSC 3/1/288 200.

definition of a 'white person' was therefore amended to the strikingly more abstruse 'a person ... who is generally accepted as a white person and is not in appearance obviously not a white person'.<sup>408</sup> Moreover, it was clarified that a person could not in any case be classified as white, if he or she in any shape or form admitted to the fact that either of their parents were classified as 'non-white', whether voluntarily or by submitting a form or return, where such a fact was stated. This indeed was the case with the female applicant above, who had applied for an identity card in which she had noted her parents' racial classification as 'mixed'. But, because her objection to the Board arrived before the law had been amended, the Court argued that the Board must instead apply the 'older' provisions, which gave the applicant the benefit of the doubt, insofar as she could argue her case effectively. The case therefore became one of Miss Bell having to prove to the Board that she could 'pass' as white in both appearance and community acceptance.<sup>409</sup>

At Miss Bell's hearing before her ultimate appeal to the courts,<sup>410</sup> the Board enquired in great detail about her upbringing, employment, friendships and family life, ostensibly to ensure that she fraternised socially only with white people. Miss Bell could confirm that she had attended a 'mixed' school, although with a substantial majority of Coloured pupils, had lived most of her childhood in a Coloured Group Area, although her childhood home was located directly opposite a white street, and that she had only associated with white friends and acquaintances throughout her lifetime. She furthermore ascertained that no one at her place of employment had ever questioned whether she was white and confirmed that she at that point in time was engaged

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<sup>408</sup> Republic of South Africa, *Population Registration Amendment Act*, Act no. 61 of 1962, section 1. See also 'Bill Gives New Definition of White Person', *Cape Argus*, 20 March 1962.

<sup>409</sup> Around the same time, the Supreme Court upheld a similar ruling in a case from the Transvaal. See National Archives Repository, Public Records of Former Transvaal Province (TAB), TPD 0 1840/1970. For an example of a case where the appellants were unsuccessful because they 'admitted' to being Coloured by 'descent', see KAB, CSC 3/1/270 54.

<sup>410</sup> 'Race Classification Appeal Board: Miss Enid Joyce Bell', KAB, CSC 3/1/288 200.



to a white man. Accumulatively, this, along with her apparent 'fair' appearance, was what the Appellate Division saw as sufficient grounds to classify Miss Bell as white. The Race Classification Board, with its intent of following the new provisions set out in the PRA that excluded any person from being classified as white if they admitted to having 'non-white' parents, was instead fixated on Miss Bell's familial circumstances. The case records clearly illustrate the impossible situation that this approach was meant to create for the appellant. Although the Board was in possession of what it regarded as sufficient evidence that both Miss Bell's parents and four sisters were classified Coloured, it nevertheless pressed her further on her personal relations with her family and her potential knowledge of their respective classifications. Her questioning by the board does not give any final truth as to how cordial Miss Bell was with her family, but her answers certainly give the impression that she felt that she had to at least portray herself as being estranged from it. When confronted with her father's racial lineage, she stated that she was aware that her paternal grandfather was a white man from Scotland, but when asked if she knew that her paternal grandmother's racial status had been confirmed as Coloured, she answered 'I don't know my father's people'.<sup>411</sup> When the Board inquired about her father's job, she at first professed not to recall, but later on conceded that he worked for the Council and only after being probed further admitted that he was most probably a manual labourer, because, as the Board led her to remember, he wore overalls. The Board also asked if any of her father's colleagues used to come and visit her family home and whether or not they also wore overalls as their primary work attire, implying that if so, they would then certainly be 'non-white'. When asked straightforwardly if these colleagues were Coloured, Miss Bell dodged the question and replied 'They never used to come to the house',<sup>412</sup> supposedly to assure the board that the family did not associate with 'non-whites'.

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<sup>411</sup> 'Race Classification Board: Enid Bell', 9.

<sup>412</sup> 'Race Classification Board: Enid Bell', 11.

When asked about her sisters, Miss Bell confirmed that they were 'living as' Coloureds, but insisted that she did not see any of them, adding 'We just don't agree with each other. I don't agree with my family at all'.<sup>413</sup> After being asked why she had once submitted an application for an identity card in which she noted her own race as 'Cape Coloured' and thereafter submitted two additional applications in which she noted her race as white, she explained that she had only given her race as white after having moved away from her family. Her lawyer went on to ascertain to the Board that at that moment, Miss Bell was living in a white area with a white fiancé with whom she had had a child, that she made use of white facilities such as the bus without incident, and that her employers and colleagues knew and accepted her as white. Indeed, the Chairman of the Board, although he in his decision ordered that she be classified as Coloured based on the official classifications of her parents as Coloured, also remarked crudely: '... as you stand here today you appear to be white. Your skin appears to be white. I wouldn't describe you as coloured without asking you'.<sup>414</sup>

Writing for *Pretoria News* as late as 1987, journalist Joe Latakgomo, in a critique of the PRA, presented a fictitious though not uncommon scenario for these types of 'borderline' cases that occurred frequently among Coloured residents of the Cape. 'Imagine', he wrote,

Miss Hettie Bontheuvel, classified as coloured, living somewhere in the Cape. She finds she can "pass for white" ... She never goes home, she is never visited by her relatives – including her mother – and knows that she has to even ignore those coloureds who know her and try to greet her in the streets of Cape Town.<sup>415</sup>

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<sup>413</sup> 'Race Classification Board: Enid Bell', 13.

<sup>414</sup> 'Race Classification Board: Enid Bell', 19.

<sup>415</sup> 'There's Plenty of Playing, But It's a Hard Act to Follow', *Pretoria News*, 19 June 1987.

This is the position in which individuals like Miss Bell could come to find themselves. In order to convincingly ‘pass’ for white, she would in fact be forced to shun her closest family. In order to be formally classified as white, she would, as we have seen, not only have to own up to that fact, but also to give the impression that she did so unperturbedly, as the attitude at the time was that any ‘average’ white person would hardly mingle with Coloured people on an informal basis or frequent Coloured areas. This could potentially result in not just interpersonal breakdowns but in family heartache and the breakup of friendships as well. As Latakomo notes, Coloured friends and family might very well consider her actions to be an abandonment of them, ‘because she “thinks the world of herself, she thinks she’s white”’.<sup>416</sup> While not everyone seeking formal race re-classifications would end up having to say goodbye to their families or friends, ‘passing’ for another race, whether formally or informally, would undoubtedly lead to a recasting of one’s personal relationships which make up the most cherished emotional communities through which we move.

Miss Bell appears to have proactively chosen to forego contact with her immediate family in her quest for inclusion in Cape Town’s white community. One can only speculate about her personal motivations for and priorities when doing so. We can be quite sure, however, that she was aware of what she would have to sacrifice in order to ‘pass’ successfully as white, with or without a white identity card. We know that she was involved in a romantic relationship with a white man, that she lived in the affluent, comparative to Coloured group areas, suburb of Sea Point, and that she held stable employment. These factors must then as a whole be regarded as having outweighed any desire to stay in touch with her family, at least officially. To tie this example back to Reddy’s and Rosenwein’s notions, we can read this example as Miss Bell aligning herself with the expectations of the emotional regime that dictated that in order to be included socially in the ‘European’ sphere, she would have to downplay her ties to Coloureds. Although

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<sup>416</sup> ‘There’s Plenty of Playing’. The original article reads in Afrikaans: ‘... “sy dink die wêreld van haarself, sy dink sy is wit”’.

Rosenwein might supposedly argue in response to this claim that Miss Bell still moved through various emotional communities, choosing perhaps to nurture her relationship with her white fiancé rather than with her Coloured family members and friends, the politics of such a choice cannot be ignored, though Rosenwein might prefer we do so. In the society of apartheid-era South Africa, it transpires, then, that the category of race would complicate Rosenwein's insistence on emotional communities being, almost reflexively, the same as social communities.

Others would more observably find themselves caught in a dilemma of wishing to benefit from the apparent advantages of being re-classified 'up' the racial ladder while at the same time not wanting to leave behind their family, which a case from 1966 illustrates.<sup>417</sup> The male appellant in this case learnt of his official classification as Coloured in 1961, when he received his first official identity card. The case states that he was at first not aware of his right to appeal, why a white female acquaintance instead protested on his behalf, as he himself had not met the deadline that ascertained that he must contest his classification within 30 days. This might be understood as an underlining of his being socially entrenched in the white community. Throughout the process of deciding race re-classifications, witnesses were frequently called to attest on behalf of the appellant to ensure that he or she was 'accepted' by the community. The fact that a white woman intervened on this appellant's behalf by herself lodging the protest against his classification as Coloured reveals a vested belief and interest in him remaining part of her own social circle.

The man's familial circumstances were laid out in the case as him being the son of a white father, whose parents were white, and of a Coloured mother, her mother or grandmother apparently stemming from the Philippines. He had spent his childhood and adolescence in Newlands, a Cape Town suburb, in an area in which both whites and Coloureds resided. He had graduated from a 'mixed' high school at the age of 17, subsequently worked at an electrical company and then was accepted to Cape Town Ballet School, who eventually took him on

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<sup>417</sup> KAB, CSC 3/1/156 26.

board in their ballet company as a full-time dancer. Since being hired by the company he had lived at two different flats shared with white friends in so-called white areas of Cape Town. A crucial point is made when he describes his decision to move out from his parents' home after joining the ballet school. The young man had become good friends with a group of fellow white dancers and wished to bring them along on visits to his house. His mother, however, did not allow this, why he finally chose to move out and share a flat with his friends instead. Although no reason why his friends were not allowed at his family home is given, one could speculate whether the mother was afraid that her appearance as it related to her racial heritage might become a subject of discussion.

The central point of argument, both in the initial appeal to the Race Classification Board and the subsequent appeals to a lower court and then to the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court, became one of to what degree the man should be considered 'accepted' as white by the community. In the lower court, the judge refused to re-classify the appellant as white, employing the facts of the case in a balance of probabilities. While he agreed that acceptance by whites need not be without exception, he viewed the fact that the man had regularly visited his family as damning evidence. The protestor also admitted to having Coloured friends, whom he knew through his father. These circumstances considered, the judge reasoned, must mean that the head of the household, the appellant's father, regarded his son as being 'a person other than a white person. Thus, the acceptance [of the appellant as white] cannot said to be "general"'.<sup>418</sup> That the appellant worked and lived with white people who considered him to be such was not proof of his 'general acceptance' as white. In fact, the judge appeared to imply that the man would have to reject his family completely in order to be regarded by the law and society in general as 'accepted' as white, adding that when the objector was notified of his classification as Coloured, he had lived apart from his family for 'only'

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<sup>418</sup> 'The Secretary of the Interior Versus T. Heads of Argument for the Appellant', KAB, CSC 3/1/156 26, 6.

six months. The judge in the lower court case summed up his conclusion bluntly: “Generally accepted” does not merely mean “passes as”<sup>419</sup>.

On appeal to the Appellate Division this apparent dispute again became an important discussion point. The lawyer of the man seeking re-classification conceded that his client could hardly have been generally accepted as white while living with his parents, but that his ‘break’ with them showed a meaningful proclivity on his part towards obtaining such acceptance.<sup>420</sup> The respondent’s legal team furthermore elected to focus on his employment as a dancer at the University Ballet Company as verification of his established inclusion in white society. Here, the argument was made that the company also employed Coloured dancers. When the company performed as part of larger tours around South Africa, however, only white dancers were allowed such an apparent privilege. Coloured dancers were customarily left behind. That the appellant had been a participant in many such outings and that he had exclusively made use of whites-only facilities on these tours, including a visit to a hospital reserved for whites - one of the most sacredly segregated amenities - the defence team saw this as indisputable confirmation that he was indeed white. Three women from the ballet school testified to this on the appellant’s behalf, with the man’s lawyer concluding that ‘the appellant’s work was and is very important, indeed the predominant, aspect of his life, and in that sphere the evidence [indicates] that he [is] generally accepted as a white person’.<sup>421</sup> The presiding judge over the case at the Appellate Division trusted this to be accurate and ordered that the man’s re-classification to white.

Although the latter appellant had to some degree stayed in contact with his Coloured family, the first appellant, Miss Bell, had, at least publicly, made a clean break with members of her immediate family. Though both were successful in their protests against their

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<sup>419</sup> ‘Secretary Versus T’.

<sup>420</sup> ‘T. Versus Secretary’, 12.

<sup>421</sup> ‘T. Versus Secretary’, 12.

classifications as Coloureds, their circumstances demonstrate how differing social and emotional communities materialise when we look closely at race re-classification cases during apartheid. Though Rosenwein in effect equates 'emotional' communities with social ones, such a definition appears perhaps too simplified when reconstructed within a racially segregated society. 'Borderline' cases such as those covered above did in fact allow certain individuals to move between different social communities depending on how successful they were at 'passing' for a different 'race'. Yet, 'passing' could only get one so far. As mentioned earlier, successful navigation between communities with different or differing standards requires that these standards do not appear too dissimilar from or conflict with each other. Rosenwein's clear method that accompanies her definition of emotional communities is that we:

[seek] to uncover systems of feeling; what these communities (and the individuals within them define and assess as valuable or harmful to them; the evaluations that they make about others' emotions; the nature of the affective bonds between people that they recognize; and the modes of expression that they expect, encourage, tolerate and deplore.<sup>422</sup>

When analysing re-classification cases with this in mind, one could palpably argue that it is exactly the results of the uncovering of these systems of feeling that are at play. 'Borderline' individuals might succeed in 'passing' as white and so enter white social circles with no apparent hindrance, yet whether they could become part of white emotional communities is a different question. The two cases outlined in detail above show how it was assessed to what degree the objectors were willing to give up their affective bonds to their families, the remaining members of which were classified 'non-white'. Keeping their

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<sup>422</sup> Rosenwein, 'Worrying about Emotions', 842.

ties to the Coloured community was regarded as 'harmful', to use Rosenwein's word, at least if they wished to be accepted as white.

This is exemplified at its perhaps most extreme in another 1970 case in which a woman 'passing' for white was castigated by the Race Classification Board and its representatives for both allowing one of her daughters to marry a Coloured man and, more crudely, for having given her infant son away for adoption to a Coloured family. Here, the Board's lawyer asked and answered his own question in no unclear terms: 'If you regard yourself and father [of her adopted son] as White, why did you let a Coloured person adopt him? .... A white person would not give a child to a Coloured person'.<sup>423</sup> A woman called to testify on the appellant's behalf was also questioned on these ostensibly 'shocking' details about her friend, to which she answered that she was surprised to learn this and that '[she] [the witness] would not do that'.<sup>424</sup>

As such, the types of occasions above involving individuals seeking re-classification reveal how emotional communities and the social communities that were drawn heavily along racial lines during apartheid were not necessarily compatible. Rather, the apparent friction between the two could result in some individuals being forced to shut the door to familiar emotional communities in order to be accepted in other social realms of their everyday lives that were likewise governed by notions of race. This predicament has been described by historian Mohamed Adhikari as 'desire for acceptance ... in its most acute form'.<sup>425</sup> Further others would instead seek race re-classification to keep their social and emotional communities aligned, as I go on to explain in the next section.

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<sup>423</sup> 'Mary [redacted] Versus Chairman, Race Classification Board, C. T.', KAB, CSC 3/1/354 314, 10-11.

<sup>424</sup> 'Mary Versus Chairman', 12. Adoption rights vis-à-vis the Population Registration Act remained a contentious issue with the apartheid government attempting to halt the artificial creation of racially mixed families by outlawing transracial adoption throughout the period of 1960-1990. See, Frederick Noel Zaal, 'The Ambivalence of Authority and Secret Lives of Tears: Transracial Child Placements and the Historical Development of South African Law', *Journal of Southern African Studies* 18, no. 2 (1992): 372-404.

<sup>425</sup> Adhikari, *Not White Enough, Not Black Enough*, 9-10.



## Regimental Exclusion

The application of the Population Registration Act as a lynchpin for South Africa's other race laws meant that it also interacted with the anti-miscegenation laws that were meant to prohibit and discontinue interracial relationships. Just as families could find themselves in precarious situations as a result of individual family members' official race classifications or their wishes to be classified contrarily to other family members, romantic relationships were not left unscathed by the PRA either. As mentioned in chapter 2, although South Africans would largely adhere to laws banning interracial intimacy and marriage, the government was not oblivious to deviating behaviour and struck down on instances of defiance. Deviations from the norm could in some instances be disguised by employing emotional labour, an arduous process for the individual. Success in being re-classified to the racial group to which one's romantic partner belonged could potentially alleviate the need to engage emotional labour on an everyday basis. Naturally, this was easier in cases where the 'affected' party already physically and socially 'passed' for membership of the racial group to which they wished to belong. In some cases, re-classification was sought with both parties to the romantic relationship knowing that they were incompatibly classified. In others, one or both parties could remain oblivious to the fact that they had differing official classifications. And in further other tragic cases, one party might cover up that he or she was 'passing' for a different 'race' and by extension also their own knowledge that they were in fact breaking the law by being romantically involved with their chosen companion.

An atypical case from the early 1980's received some media attention at the time due to the fact that it involved an interracial couple where the male party had applied to be re-classified from white to Coloured.<sup>426</sup>

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<sup>426</sup> Historical Papers, University of the Witwatersrand, AG 3006 LRC 1.2.2.3-5. To illustrate how atypical such cases were, records show that in 1987, the Department of Home Affairs received 1624 applications for race re-classification. Out of these, 197 were unsuccessful. Only 10 applications from white South Africans succeeded. The same year, 684 'non-white' applicants were successful. See, '1000 Swop Races at Stroke of Pen', *Cape Argus*, 25 February 1988.

William James Venter, classified white and his girlfriend, Georgina Mansfield, classified Coloured, were convicted of breaking the Immorality Act when the police entered the flat in central Johannesburg that the couple shared and found them sleeping in the same bed.<sup>427</sup> The couple had at the time been in a relationship and living with each other for three years. Both received suspended prison sentences for contravening the law. Venter now wanted to be re-classified as Coloured so that he and Mansfield could live together and marry each other without flouting what he called the 'man-made law that says we must not love each other'.<sup>428</sup>

Venter's personal story up until and including meeting Mansfield was an unusual one. Born in a suburb of Johannesburg to white parents, Venter's father died when Venter was six years old, whereafter his mother remarried.<sup>429</sup> His stepfather had various Coloured friends, why Venter began to associate with the Coloured community. In a testimony given to the Legal Resources Centre, which helped him with his re-classification case, he stated that as a young boy he became a frequent dagga<sup>430</sup> smoker and ended up in a reformatory.<sup>431</sup> He then attended a trade school near a black township from which he made multiple friends. During the school holidays, he stayed with a family with a unique constellation in that the husband was Chinese and the wife Coloured. The family lived in a primarily Coloured area of Johannesburg. Venter was then expelled from school for truancy, took up work at an abattoir, still boarding with the 'mixed-race' family mentioned above, and embarked on his compulsory military service, from which he ran away. Since then, he had again worked multiple jobs

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<sup>427</sup> 'I'll Change My Race for Georgina', *Sunday Express* (South Africa), date unknown; 'Immorality Pair: We Will Still Live Together', *Rand Daily Mail*, date unknown.

<sup>428</sup> 'I'll Change My Race'.

<sup>429</sup> Affidavit by Wilfred James Venter, unsigned. AG 3006 LRC 1.2.2.3-5, 1.

<sup>430</sup> Colloquial word for cannabis used throughout South Africa.

<sup>431</sup> Handwritten notes, presumably drawn up by an employee at the Legal Resources Centre, AG 3006 LRC 1.2.2.3-5.

before commencing a relationship with Mansfield and later became unemployed.<sup>432</sup>

Venter's situation can hardly be described as typical of a white South African during apartheid. Nevertheless, it sheds light on the ambivalence of racial categories within the context of communal and emotional life. A white South African would scarcely achieve any material gains if succeeding in being re-classified 'down' the ladder, in contrast to those attempting to climb 'up' the racial and social order. Nor, presumably, could or would white South Africans have to 'pass' physically for another 'race' for their application to be granted by the bureaucracy, should they wish to become members of the black, Indian or Coloured communities. Similarities can, however, be found when it comes to the predicaments that were inherent to race re-classification cases, both as motivational factors for 'passing' or being officially re-classified, and those that emerged as consequences of cases being resolved, whether in favour of or against the person in question. To return to Venter's case, affidavits indicating community acceptance on his potential re-classification to Coloured were drawn up by his legal team, just as white witnesses were called to testify on behalf of the appellants who wished to be re-classified to white in the preceding section. Affidavits were to be signed by the Deacon of the Catholic church, the Reverend of the Anglican church, and the Chairman of the tenant's association in the Coloured area in which Venter and Mansfield wished to reside.<sup>433</sup> The affidavits all stated that they would have no objection to Venter becoming a member of the Coloured community and thus suggested that he would be, at least formally, acknowledged within and welcomed into the social fabric of his local community, despite the fact that his physical appearance indicated that he should be better off in a community different to the one that housed his neighbours-to-be.

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<sup>432</sup> Handwritten notes.

<sup>433</sup> Affidavits by Rev. Fr. Louis Donald Islett, Dick Augustus and Freddie Smith, all unsigned. AG 3006 LRC 1.2.2.3-5.

Like the individuals protesting their classifications as Coloured, Venter, although white, also had to reckon with his relationship with his family. In his statement to the Legal Resources Centre caseworker, he explained how his relationship with Mansfield and the subsequent media attention had caused his mother to tell him that he had ‘brought the family down’.<sup>434</sup> His stepfather, furthermore, ‘[refused] to accept him & consider him to be a coloured’. Venter elaborated on this in his unsigned affidavit, professing that he felt more at home in the Coloured community, and that his rejection by his family and the white community in general meant that his classification as white was incorrect.<sup>435</sup> The legal team felt that he could use these on their face unfortunate circumstances to his advantage. As we have seen, the PRA’s definition of a white person had been amended multiple times so that it at this point in time in the early 1980’s verged on appearing nonsensical. Nonetheless, it included a clause on which someone working on Venter’s case felt he could perhaps rely, writing to a colleague: ‘You will need to find out in particular (1) The classification, if any, of his parents. See §5(5) or else rely on definition section “white person” (c)’.<sup>436</sup> Section 5 (5) ascertained that persons whose parents had both been classified white would also be classified white, or if one parent were classified white and the other ‘non-white’, they would be classified as Coloured.<sup>437</sup> This section was, however, to be applied only notwithstanding anything to the contrary contained in the Act, why the legal team, seemingly expecting to find that Venter’s parents were both classified white, pointed to section (c) of the definition of a white person, which read: ‘a person shall be deemed *not* to be generally accepted as a white person, unless he is so accepted ... in his association with the members of his family and any other persons with whom he

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<sup>434</sup> Handwritten notes.

<sup>435</sup> Affidavit by Wilfred James Venter, 3-4.

<sup>436</sup> Handwritten on brown paper, AG 3006 LRC 1.2.2.3-5.

<sup>437</sup> The section that was referred to in the newest version of the PRA at the time of Venter’s case was *Population Registration Amendment Act* 1980 (Republic of South Africa), section 5 (5) (a), (b).

lives'.<sup>438</sup> Because Venter would appear to be unequivocally white, both in regard to his physical appearance and to his line of racial descent, his argument for why he should be re-classified would have to depend on the Race Classification Appeal Board being sympathetic to a reading of that clause in the definition of a white person that was favourable to his claim.

What emerges as pertinent here is the fact that the straw that broke the camel's back vis-à-vis Venter's family's decision to eschew him was that he had taken up a romantic liaison with a Coloured woman. Venter suggested as much in his interview with the Legal Resources Centre, telling the interviewer that his sister and brother-in-law 'don't like my girlfriend' and that 'they [his mother and stepfather] don't speak to me' and 'nobody comes to visit me' as a result of his interracial relationship.<sup>439</sup> While not substantiated, his mother had even told him that it was his brother-in-law who had reported him and his girlfriend to the police and 'put [them] in jail' with Venter remarking further that since the couple's release from detention for contravening the Immorality Act, his brother-in-law and sister had in fact disappeared.<sup>440</sup> We cannot conclude with conviction that Venter's relationship with his closest family would have been any less hostile if he had remained a bachelor or taken up a relationship with a white woman. It is difficult to imagine, though, that he would not be able to hold his own within the social world of the white community in which his family moved. As far as we know, Venter had done just that up until his decision to attempt to change his racial classification. He had attended educational facilities for white people, held jobs as white and even embarked on his National Service for the South African armed forces, which as a matter of principle only allowed white males to serve (it appears, though, that he ran away and was recalled)<sup>441</sup>. While he throughout his life so far had

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<sup>438</sup> PRA 1980, section 2 (c). My italicisation.

<sup>439</sup> Handwritten notes.

<sup>440</sup> Handwritten notes.

<sup>441</sup> Handwritten notes.

perhaps fraternised socially with so-called 'non-whites' to a higher degree than an average white South African, it appears that the break with his family, and as he himself declared, the white community in general, only became irreparable upon his insistence on continuing his relationship with Mansfield.

If we return once again to Rosenwein's concept of emotional communities, it is evident that her primary concern is uncovering the standards that demarcate their boundaries. Rosenwein's critique of Reddy's emotional regimes was grounded in what she saw as his insistence on linking emotional expression with politics and thereby potentially ignoring those emotional communities that exist at the 'lower' levels of society. This should not be understood as a suggestion to ignore emotional politics altogether, but rather that the powers that govern emotional practices can be monolithic depending on the nature of the specific emotional community one chooses to study. Rosenwein's repeated argument that we commonly move between groups that are demarcated by competing or differing norms proves exactly the point she makes. What is interesting in Venter's case, however, is the question of when a 'simple' emotional community becomes a regime. Reddy himself explains how we can identify the emergence of an emotional regime as 'when the sum of the penalties and exclusions adds up to a coherent structure, and the issue of conformity becomes defining for the individual'.<sup>442</sup> We can constructively extend this argument to claim that an emotional regime emerges also when conformity becomes a defining issue for the 'rest'.

Venter's case illustrates this handsomely. There is no reason to doubt that he, like most people, operated within several communities with differing social norms and emotional standards. He even appears to have challenged these on multiple occasions, whether socially, by, for example, running away from military service or emotionally, for example by striking up friendships with black South Africans. While such transgressions would presumably not reflect conformity to general or emotional norms at any societal level, they do not appear to have been a

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<sup>442</sup> Plamper, 'An Interview', 243.

'defining issue'. For Venter, falling in love with a Coloured woman became the crucial point of no return at which the 'sum of the penalties and exclusions' added up. When his family and white society at large expected him to conform to the racialised emotional standards of those communities, he could and would not do so. To use Rosenwein's words, because Venter's own family members, here as embodiments of the white community, *deplored* the affective bond that had developed between their son and his chosen romantic prospect, the borders to that emotional community were hermetically sealed. The emotional practice of interracial love became the factor that both Venter and his family decided had irrevocably excluded him from it. At the same time, Venter's interpersonal battle can also be read as mirroring the standards of the racialised emotional regime at large that was apartheid-era South Africa. Indeed, he could be penalised for expression that was deviant from the norm, not only at the informal level through social exclusion and scorn, but also formally, as he and his partner in fact were on receiving their suspended prison sentences.

We can only hypothesise whether Venter and Mansfield would be accepted as a couple in a different social and emotional community. That Venter wished to be re-classified indicates that he at least believed that the Coloured community in which he and his partner intended to settle down would be more sympathetic to their plight. The PRA thus became a vehicle with which Venter could potentially align his primary social and emotional communities. Succeeding in being re-classified as Coloured might not remove all the penalties and exclusion to which he felt subject as white but struggling with conforming to the standards of the regime could, at least theoretically, become less defining for him and Mansfield in a different community. Venter himself expressed something akin to that in his affidavit: 'My relationship with Georgina Mansfield has been the only stabilising factor in my life and the continuation thereof is my only chance of leading a useful and fulfilling life'. Mansfield also expressed hope that Venter's potential re-classification could alleviate their despair in their interview with the *Sunday Express*, remarking: 'Why

can't they just leave us alone? ... We have always got along fine when no-one disturbed us'.<sup>443</sup>

'Grey areas', physical locations, especially in densely populated urban areas, where apartheid-era group area laws were flouted and cosmopolitanism reigned, did of course exist throughout South Africa, with District Six in Cape Town and Hillbrow in Johannesburg being the most prominent examples.<sup>444</sup> Mixed-race relationships could sometimes flourish here away from the prying eyes of the state. In fact, Mayfair, the area of Johannesburg in which Mansfield and Venter shared a home when the police arrested them, was known to be one such 'grey' zone.<sup>445</sup> Venter confirmed that they were left relatively unbothered by their neighbours.<sup>446</sup> Still, he believed that re-classification was the only way to achieve a more protective 'emotional refuge', to employ Reddy's term.

Thus far, then, we have seen how individuals proactively applying for re-classification under the PRA would have to make difficult decisions regarding their social lives and their standing within the emotional communities to which they adhered. Some would quite decisively forego contact with their families to be able to succeed in changing their 'race' while others were more hesitant to give up the emotional 'safe space' that the family unit can constitute. Some, like Venter, were instead excluded by their families and even persecuted by law enforcement, leaving them with re-classification as a last resort to attempt to bring together their social and emotional worlds and to

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<sup>443</sup> 'I'll Change My Race'.

<sup>444</sup> For District Six, see S. Jeppie and C. Soudien (eds.), *The Struggle for District Six: Past and Present* (Cape Town: Buchu, 1990), for Hillbrow, e.g. A. Morris, *Bleakness and Light: Inner-City Transition in Hillbrow, Johannesburg* (Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press, 1999), 10 and D. Conway, 'Queering Apartheid: The National Party's 1987 "Gay Rights" Election in Hillbrow', *Journal of Southern African Studies* 35, no. 4 (2009): 849-863.

<sup>445</sup> Brij Maharaj, 'The Apartheid City' in *Urban Geography in Southern Africa: Perspectives and Theory*, ed. Ruth Massey and Ashley Gunter (Cham, CH: Springer, 2020), 47.

<sup>446</sup> 'I'll Change My Race'.



provide respite from prevailing racialised customs. Mansfield's plea that the couple simply be left alone certainly touches upon the apparent hardship of living up to such customs, and from which they actively sought a haven.

Sadly, though, Venter's story ends here. The final legal case notes explain that he failed to provide the Legal Resources Centre with signatures on his supporting affidavits. When they contacted the Coloured community's leaders, they pointed to his 'violent behaviour', which in the meantime had apparently put him in prison.<sup>447</sup> We therefore do not know whether his appeal would be granted, nor whether, if it were granted, he would have achieved the respite he sought. We know that very few were successful in casting off white classifications, at least when interracial love was the deciding factor of their reason to appeal. Some of these pairs would even be forced into involuntary exile, as noted briefly in chapter 2. A white and Indian couple, Ian and Sherin Whiteley, for example, were married in and relocated to Botswana, whereafter Ian attempted to be re-classified as Coloured so that they could return to South Africa. His appeal was denied.<sup>448</sup> The same was the case with a Mr. Dirk Kotze, who married a Coloured woman in Mozambique. Upon his re-classification case being unsuccessful and because of their marriage not being recognised within South Africa's borders, the husband and wife instead chose to settle in Australia.<sup>449</sup> It appears that the state had no compelling interest in challenging the self-evident racialism upon which the apartheid ideology's whole existence and potential survival rested in the name of love.<sup>450</sup>

The people covered thus far actively pleaded with the state bureaucracy to *change* their 'race', either forcing themselves to conduct emotional labour in the process, or, contrarily, to avoid it. Others

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<sup>447</sup> Handwritten notes on ruled paper, AG 3006 LRC 1.2.2.3-5.

<sup>448</sup> 'When a 00 Loves a 05 and They Have Little 07s...', *Rand Daily Mail*, 30 September 1981.

<sup>449</sup> 'No Real Change, Says Man Who Broke Race Law', *The Star*, 26 December 1979.

<sup>450</sup> Some applications to be re-classified from white were simply ignored. See, for example, 'No, Dr, You Can't Be a Human Being', *Sunday Star*, 12 November 1989.

would instead find themselves struggling to ‘pass’ for the ‘race’ that they lived as or pleading with the state to keep their classification intact, having known no other racial and consequently, emotional, world than the one in which they found themselves and of which they merely wished to remain part. A selection of this type of cases is analysed in the following section.

## Emotional Suffering and the Predicament of Passing

Cases in which the applicant was surprised to learn of their official classification materialised in tandem with the shift in classification practices identified by Breckenridge mentioned earlier in this chapter. As the state bureaucracy accumulated more, and more detailed, information on the South African population, state officials would throughout the 1960’s and thereafter come to rely on the principle of descent as governing to which racial group a person should rightly belong. The bureaucratic process, through which the classification happened, however, was frequently invisible to the general public, as were the results.<sup>451</sup> This had the consequence that a person, on applying for or simply receiving an identity card, seeking a marriage license, or needing to contact the bureaucracy in any shape or form, could be confronted with their official race classification for the first time in their life hitherto. If the classification did not match a person’s own self-identification, such a surprising verdict could, quite without exaggeration, entail profound and life-changing consequences. As Posel notes:

... family and personal lives were utterly shattered by racial classifications ... Literally overnight, people ... found themselves disbarred from living in the houses and areas where they had lived up

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<sup>451</sup> Keith Breckenridge, *Biometric State: The Global Politics of Identification and Surveillance in South Africa, 1850 to the Present* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 170.

to that point, their children excluded from schools they had been attending, their positions of employment in question, with instant liability for a new set of taxes and levies, and generally subjected to the “deep sense of shame” attached to being pushed down the racial ladder.<sup>452</sup>

The situations that Posel describes here, along with all the cases described in this chapter, constitute what Reddy would term ‘emotional suffering’. This concept resists a simple explanation but is most often understood as the gap between an individual’s inner feeling and the prescriptions of the emotional regime that one is aware should govern it. The greater amount of emotional labour required by the individual in order to bridge this gap, the greater the emotional suffering that the regime can be said to have induced. Boddice adds to this that in cases where emotive failure is met with social or even physical punishment, emotional suffering is likely to follow suit.<sup>453</sup> Venter’s case is again exemplary in illustrating this paradox. The regime prescribed that interracial love was forbidden; yet Venter had fallen in love with a Coloured woman for which he was reprimanded through social ostracization and penalised by the law. Being torn between wanting to carry out emotional practices consistent with his feelings for his girlfriend, and at the same time risking punishment, is ‘emotional suffering’ in its essence as regards political regimes. Yet, Reddy appears to suggest that emotional suffering is not only produced by a mismatch between *emotional* practices and *emotional* norms, but indeed a variety of situations where one’s sense of self is brought into question, which in and of itself implies that a person will undergo a degree of emotional suffering, as strategies of emotion management that a person can adopt will be restricted accordingly.<sup>454</sup> As Ray Smuts described it with regards

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<sup>452</sup> Posel, ‘Race as Common Sense’, 106.

<sup>453</sup> Boddice, *History of Emotions*, 73.

<sup>454</sup> Boddice, *History of Emotions*, 73. Reddy illustrates various examples of ‘emotional suffering’: unrequited love, political torture and spousal abuse. See Reddy, *Navigation of Feeling*, esp. 123-124.

to apartheid in a 1981 interview with Vic Wilkinson, who was classified back and forth between white and Coloured a total of four times: 'Apartheid has confused, tormented and insulted ... Vic since childhood'.<sup>455</sup>

The consequences of emotional suffering induced by the regime will surely vary at a subjective level, yet their potential severity cannot be understated. For some, being reclassified in terms of the PRA would itself be a way to find refuge from emotional suffering, even though the suffering might intensify throughout the process of doing so. Reddy describes this as a 'working-through' course, in which the suffering might be displaced by a variety of feelings such as grief or guilt or shame, before a change in life goals is embraced.<sup>456</sup> Those who waived or experienced strained relationships with friends and family to achieve a change in race most certainly experienced these forms of suffering while 'working through' embracing their choice. Emotional suffering at its most acute, though, can forestall any possibility of averting or managing its consequences.

A 1970's case involving a Cape Town family illuminates how the emotional suffering caused by apartheid racial classification practices was multifaceted and how it could look at its most acute, at a time where the government insisted it was sympathetic to problems arising from race classifications.<sup>457</sup> The family of five was 'passing' for white, with only the father's classification matching the white area in which they lived and that of their friends and acquaintances with whom they had established relationships. The children, according to the report by journalist Stanley Uys in *The Guardian*, had not attended school, as being classified Coloured, they would not be admitted to a white school, meaning their secret would thus no longer be safe. The family

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<sup>455</sup> 'I Want to Be Coloured Again', *Sunday Times*, 12 July 1981.

<sup>456</sup> Reddy, *Navigation of Feeling*, 124.

<sup>457</sup> The family's story is told in 'Racial Love at the End of the Line', *Guardian Weekly*, 7 September 1974 and 'Racial Nightmare Family Fights on', *Sunday Tribune*, 4 December 1977. The government defended its policy in 'Classification of Race is "Humane"', *Rand Daily Mail*, 10 November 1979.

described the strain of living under constant fear of being 'found out'. This indicates that the regime's classification policy did impose a tangible amount of emotional suffering upon the family. Furthermore, the reference to being 'found out' shows how the family worried about and in fact expected social ostracisation to be a potential repercussion if their official racial status were to be revealed – a hallmark of any strict emotional regime. The parents themselves were also in effect committing a crime by living together and having fathered children – and evidently could not marry either, due to the Prohibition of Mixed Marriages and Immorality Acts. To make their predicament even more difficult, their eldest son was going out with a young white woman, who had become pregnant with his child. The family's situation is strikingly exemplary in the way it illustrates exactly what Reddy defines as emotional suffering: 'when high-priority goals are in conflict ... and when all available choices seem to counter one or more high-priority goals.'<sup>458</sup> Quite a few of these conflicting goals and choices can be drawn from the family's circumstances. The parents undoubtedly wished for their children to undertake formal education yet attempting to enrol them in a white school would potentially result in them having to leave the area in which they resided due to the Group Areas Act. Leaving for a Coloured area would perhaps mean that the children could attend school but would jeopardise their social mobility if they were no longer able to 'try' for white. The eldest son was undoubtedly torn also between his desire to provide for his yet to be born child but admitting to have fathered it would mean that he and his girlfriend too would be breaking the law, the consequences of which would place his own, his child's and his girlfriend's future in an uncertain limbo. The alternative of giving it up for adoption or providing for an illegal abortion would presumably likewise cause grief or shame to the parties involved.

In a tragic turn of events, the emotional suffering imposed upon this specific family who saw their emotion management restrained to an unfathomable degree under South Africa's race laws, would prove too much for the eldest son. His mother explained in Uys' report how she

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<sup>458</sup> Reddy, *Navigation of Feeling*, 123.

and her son had quarrelled and that she had threatened to tell his girlfriend's parents that he was classified Coloured. The 20-year-old left the home thereafter and took his own life by throwing himself in front of a train. He left 30 rand for the girlfriend to spend on his unborn child and asked in his suicide note that she name the baby after him if it turned out a boy.<sup>459</sup> In the wake of her son's untimely death, the mother would be thrown into further misery, aggrieved that she might have pushed him over the edge by threatening to reveal his official racial classification to his unknowing girlfriend. In a final, excruciating twist, the parents had to forego their wish of burying their son, instead choosing to cremate his body, because otherwise 'friends would have asked why he was buried in a Coloured cemetery'.<sup>460</sup>

Although we cannot define in detail whether it was shame, grief or perhaps fear, that drove the young man to nullify his existence in the world, we can identify those factors that make the experience of feelings that make up emotional suffering, more probable. This should not be understood as an attempt to ontologise suffering as a universal category or as moralising against apartheid as a historical injustice, but rather to show, as Boddice explains, that:

To be able to get at the emotional experience of past actors, to find their motivations and reactions according to *how they felt*, is a great new device for understanding cause and effect, drilling down to things done in the name of feelings. The analysis of emotives in emotional regimes should not be about reaching judgment, but about reaching new understandings of past societies, gaining new insights along the way about our own.<sup>461</sup>

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<sup>459</sup> 'Racial Love'.

<sup>460</sup> 'Racial Love'.

<sup>461</sup> Boddice, *History of Emotions*, 76.

A follow-up on the family's story a few years later showed that the remaining children had succeeded in being classified as white, with only the mother now classified Coloured.<sup>462</sup> Like other cases we have seen, the family ultimately looked to re-classification as a way to obtain refuge, again underscoring how the PRA functioned as a lynchpin for not only the racial laws that governed so many aspects of everyday life, but also, revealingly, the emotional experiences that were bound to materialise as a consequence of those aspects.

Emotional suffering caused by anxiety over being 'found out' in cases where persons were knowingly 'trying for' white was not altogether uncommon. We only have to look to the case above, or to Jan Morris' introductory quote to this chapter. Writing of the predicament of the Coloured girl who 'passes' for white, she continues:

When she sits with her lover in a European restaurant, she fancies that the eyes of the room are upon her, searching her skin and her hair and her bearing for the tell-tale signs that could send her in misery and ignominy before the courts: and when the policeman walks by, and looks her coolly up and down, from her curls to her high heels, she shares the momentary sickening self-doubt of all criminals or transgressors, when the cold eye of the law is upon them.<sup>463</sup>

Such fears would not apply to the majority of South Africans who lived their lives in line with the sanctioned racial classification that was noted in their identity documents. For those who were faced with the effects of their classification being brought into doubt, however willingly, emotional suffering was a tangible experience. Catherine Taylor, a Member of Parliament for the United Party confirmed this in an article in the *Cape Argus* from 1969, detailing a family's tribulations after a group of 'concerned' members of their local community had lodged a protest with the authorities, requesting a formal inquiry into the family's

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<sup>462</sup> 'Racial Nightmare'.

<sup>463</sup> Morris, *South African Winter*, 165-166.

‘antecedents’, suggesting that they might be ‘non-whites’ living in the white group area of the Western Cape coastal town of Knysna.<sup>464</sup> Because PRA cases were raised under the civil code, anyone could in fact make representations to the police or directly to the Secretary of the Interior against another person’s racial classification. In the case at hand, as soon as doubts began to fester as to the family’s status, the children in the family were subject to community vitriol as all other parents’ of pupils at the white school they attended removed their children from the school.<sup>465</sup> Such an action, whether grounded in fear or disgust of, or meant to ‘shame’ the family, or all of the above, would in any case be reflective of the community’s collective feelings towards it and the fact that it was now no longer white, despite having appeared to be up until the point the investigation was launched. As far as we know, nothing about the family had changed except the fact that a stroke of a pen could change the word ‘white’ to ‘Coloured’. Yet, that simple detail turned a whole community against them. This again illustrates how emotional practices, when thought of as biocultural entities, are, as Scheer would put it, habitual. Certain emotions, such as hate and disgust, as Sara Ahmed has pointed out, can ‘stick’ to certain categories of people, turning them into cultural symbols that shape others’ responses to them.<sup>466</sup> That is, if we have learned a ‘truth’ about something or someone, we will react according to that truth. In this way, collectives might share modes of feelings, as Rosenwein argues, but emotions can also ‘bunch’ people together and turn them against others.<sup>467</sup> The categories inscribed into the PRA then, would not only function as practical divisions of people according to race, but its workings could also shape how and what one should feel about the people that fell into those categories, about others and oneself. In fact, certain emotional truths became true not only to

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<sup>464</sup> ‘Prejudice and Witch Hunts’, *Cape Argus*, 10 July 1969.

<sup>465</sup> ‘Prejudice and Witch Hunts’.

<sup>466</sup> Ahmed, *Cultural Politics of Emotion*.

<sup>467</sup> Ahmed, *Cultural Politics of Emotion*; Bourke, ‘Fear and Anxiety’, 124.



‘others’, but also to those about whom they were forged, as I argue in the following by using the example of shame.

## Explaining Shame

We might then appropriately turn our attention to the ‘deep sense of shame’ that Posel argues that some South Africans were subjected to when racial classifications were seemingly arbitrarily imposed upon them. This is without question a recurring theme that runs throughout classification cases independently from the shifts in classification practices that we have identified throughout the Nationalist Party era. Examining two cases from as early as 1956, we see this to be true. In both instances, the persons seeking re-classification were men who considered themselves members of the Coloured community that had been notified of their official classifications as ‘natives’ on returning forms sent to them by the Director of Census. Both were asked to submit particulars concerning place of birth, residence and ancestry, and submit photographs of themselves. Neither was asked any questions before simply being notified of their classifications on the completion of processing the submitted forms.

Changing to or from the white race group was of course not the only option available to those lodging applications for re-classification. As historian David Welsh notes, problems with racial classification arose almost exclusively for the minority of in particular the Coloured group who ‘passed’ for white.<sup>468</sup> But, because of the strict demarcations of separate groups and sub-groups laid down in the PRA, borderline cases could occur at any level of the racial order, even within the many Coloured subgroupings, for example Cape Malays<sup>469</sup> being classified as

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<sup>468</sup> David Welsh, ‘Chapter 3: The Rise and Decline of Apartheid’, section 3 in *Rise and Fall of Apartheid*.

<sup>469</sup> Originally, Muslim slaves from the Dutch East Indies (e.g. Malaysia) and their descendants. The term has over time come to encompass all practicing Muslims in especially the Cape. See Elizabeth van Heyningen, Vivian Bickford-Smith and

Indians.<sup>470</sup> Black South Africans would seldom find themselves ‘passing’ for white, why most re-classifications involving blacks consisted of individuals seeking statutory membership of the Coloured group.<sup>471</sup> This was also the case with Henry Makue and Stephen Goliath, who in 1956 were both notified of their classification as ‘native’ despite their apparent Coloured upbringings, involvement in the Coloured community and Coloured places of residence. Makue was married to a Coloured woman, and both spoke Afrikaans as their first language as opposed to the Bantu languages typically spoken by black South Africans. Goliath’s standing in the Coloured community in Highlands can furthermore said to have been ‘enriched’ by the fact that he was a teacher at a Coloured school in Johannesburg to which no black South Africans were admitted. His father was also a member of the Highlands Vigilance Committee, a body which ‘[looked] after the interests of the Coloured community at Highlands [in Pretoria, ed.]’.<sup>472</sup> The men’s cases came before the Supreme Court at a time where community

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Nigel Worden, *Cape Town: The Making of a City: An Illustrated Social History* (Cape Town: David Philip, 1998), 126-127.

<sup>470</sup> Cape Malays were ‘fortunate’ enough to not be forcibly removed from the picturesque inner city Cape Town group area of Bo-Kaap (although ‘non-Malays’ were). The right of Cape Malays to live within city boundaries despite being ‘non-white’ does not seem to have been a motivating factor for those wishing to correct their racial classification to Cape Malay. While I have not studied these cases in any considerable depth, the emphasis appears to have been on community identity, particularly religion. Growing up in a Muslim community, those ‘wrongly’ classified as Indian felt that their religious identity should be a deciding factor in their final classifications. The Board, perhaps ironically, considering the government’s obsession with separate group identities and community acceptance, found one applicant’s predicament along the lines of this, ‘irrelevant’, see KAB, CSC 3/1/328 9. Two other similar cases are found in KAB, CSC 3/1/328 8 and KAB, CSC 3/1/328 10.

<sup>471</sup> As an example, the figures for 1987 show 182 successful changes from black to Cape Coloured and 12 changes from black to other groups. None of the total changes were from black to white. See ‘Changes in Racial Classification’, *Weekly Mail*, 19 May 1988.

<sup>472</sup> ‘In the Supreme Court of South Africa (Transvaal Provincial Division). In the Matter between Stephen Goliath and the Director of Census and the Chairman Race Classification Appeal Board’, TAB, TPD 0 728/1956, 5.

acceptance was still the deciding factor in race classification cases, as identified by both Posel and Breckenridge. However, the issue of descent was not without merit. In Makue's case, the Director of Census and Race Classification Board had decided that it was proved that his paternal grandfather was 'native', why they found sufficient grounds to classify Makue as 'native' also. The Court rejected this argument and decided that both by descent and according to the local community, Makue was in fact Coloured. In Goliath's case, the details are scarce. It appears that his father and sister had likewise been classified as black despite living as Coloureds and were successful in their attempts to be re-classified 'back' to Coloured, why the reasoning from those cases must apply in his as well. Both men were successful in overturning their classifications.

Returning to the question at hand, what stands out in particular, are excerpts from both men's affidavits and testimonies in court that one must read as their indignation towards the fact that the Board and Director of Census had suggested that they might indeed be accepted as 'natives'. The 'deep sense of shame' that accompanied being classified as belonging to a racial group that was incompatible with their sense of self as well as with what they regarded to be 'their' community, reads off their statements in their indirect denunciations of 'native' life. Goliath, for example, assured the Court in his affidavit not only of his predominantly Coloured racial lineage and his perhaps more prominent standing within his local community, but also wished to make it clear that he and his family maintained a 'standard of living consonant with that status in life'.<sup>473</sup> Here, Goliath appears to touch upon one of the most delicate truths of the apartheid regime's preoccupation with ethnic groups, namely that the racial hierarchy that was put in place forged also a differentiation between the races defined in the PRA with regards to both social and economic mobility and even educational opportunities,<sup>474</sup> which in turn could foster racial animosity between

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<sup>473</sup> 'Appellant's Affidavit', TAB, TPD 0 728/1956, 4.

<sup>474</sup> It was official apartheid policy that black South Africans ought not to supply 'white' South Africa with anything but certain types of labour. See Dubow, *Apartheid*, 55-

the different 'non-white' sections of society.<sup>475</sup> Goliath's words thus refer to the apparently self-evident truth that Coloured people at large were 'better off' than those further down the racial stratus.

Makue, in his testimony, also distanced himself from black South Africans in this way, pointing out that he earned more than his African colleagues at his place of employment, that he would not touch 'kaffir beer' with a barge pole, nor was he required to pay 'native tax'.<sup>476</sup> The men's insistence that these details were 'common sense' proof that they were not 'natives' also infer that the suggestion made by the Board and Director of census that they might be, was in itself shameful for them, with Makue adding: 'I will be seriously prejudiced and suffer irreparable

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57. For the imbalance between Coloureds and blacks in the apartheid labour market, see, for example, Richard Humphries, 'Administrative Policies and the Coloured Labour Preference Policy During the 1960s' in *Class, Caste and Color: A Social and Economic History of the South African Western Cape*, ed. Wilmot G. James and Mary Simons (New York: Routledge, 1992). The question of the education of black people in segregated societies is not new. For a perspective within the context of the post-slavery and Jim Crow-era United States, see for example the disagreements between African American intellectuals W. E. B. Du Bois and Booker T. Washington on the role of education in their strategies for black social and economic progress. See, Booker T. Washington, 'The Standard Version of the Atlanta Exposition Address', in W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk*, ed. Henry Louis Gates Jr. and Terri Hume Oliver (New York: W. W. Norton, 1999), 168-169 and W. E. B. Du Bois, 'The Talented Tenth', in *The Souls of Black Folk*, ed. Brent Hayes Edwards (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), Appendix II.

<sup>475</sup> An extreme example being the 1949 Durban 'riots', an anti-Indian pogrom instigated by black South Africans. See, Ravi K. Thiara, 'The African-Indian Antithesis? The 1949 Durban 'Riots' in South Africa' in *Thinking Identities: Ethnicity, Racism and Culture*, ed. Avtar Brah, Mary J. Hickman and Máirtín Mac an Ghaill (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1999), 161-184.

<sup>476</sup> Quotations in Afrikaans: 'Ek het meer salaris by Welgemoed gekry en die ander [naturelle] werknemers' and 'Ek drink nie sommer kafferbier nie', see 'Appeal: Henry Abel Makue', TAB, TPD 0 886/1956, 11; Affidavit signed by Henry Makue, TAB, TPD 0 886/1956, 2. The drink to which Makue referred is a beer made on grain, often produced at home by the native population of Southern Africa. The 'native tax' refers to a national tax introduced in 1925 which was levied exclusively on the indigenous male population at the time. A different case from 1956 includes a similar plead from an appellant, who reminded the Court that he had never suffered the indignity of having to carry a 'native pass', see 'John Lamech Lambert v The Director of Census and The Race Classification Appeal Board', TAB, TPD 0 1048/1956, 10.

harm if I were to be classified in a group other than that of Coloured'.<sup>477</sup> We can tentatively conclude here that while emotional suffering in the form of shame is subjectively experienced and will lead to different shifts in 'high-priority goals', and thus, differing eventualities in individual life courses, the possibility of undergoing the experience at all was rendered more probable should one's racial identity be questioned, a phenomenon which here comes to light by virtue of the classification practices carried out under the PRA. Sociologist Zimitri Erasmus has also highlighted the historical preoccupation of South Africans that identify as Coloured with maintaining their 'rightful' place in the racial order. Also she, albeit indirectly, implies that this dilemma could constitute emotional suffering, writing: 'I can see how respectability and shame are key defining terms of middle class coloured experience'.<sup>478</sup> Shame, however, also permeates cases involving persons further 'up' the ladder who were overwhelmed in the wake of 'surprise' classifications as Coloured despite living as white and not having considered themselves 'passing'. In one case, this was indisputably at the centre of a family's reaction to learning of their classifications, which we can conclude from the fact that a mother immediately burnt her own and her children's new identity documents, 'because she was afraid of the stigma'.<sup>479</sup> We saw a similar indication of shame in the case of the ballet dancer in a previous section of this chapter. He highlighted his own self-identification as white and described his formal registration as Coloured as having made him feel 'extremely embarrassed'.<sup>480</sup>

Shame, then, is but one of the central emotions that could come to define the lived experience of racial classifications during apartheid. Yet, for utilising emotions to access historical lived experience to be of value,

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<sup>477</sup> 'Affidavit', TAB, TPD 0 886/1956, 3.

<sup>478</sup> Zimitri Erasmus, *Coloured by History, Shaped by Place: New Perspectives on Coloured Identities in Cape Town* (Cape Town: Kwela, 2001), 13.

<sup>479</sup> See 'Webber Appeals to PM over Reclassification', *Natal Mercury*, 5 December, 1980. The same case is covered in: 'Woman is Reclassified: Appeal to PM', *The Citizen*, 6 December 1980.

<sup>480</sup> 'T. Versus Secretary', 1.

we must further ask how people come to feel what they feel. We can identify shame as crucial to the concrete lived experience of enforced segregation in South Africa, yet how does this come to be 'installed' in the individual? How does it become commonplace? Ahmed suggests that shame is ambivalent in that it 'requires a witness'. She explains further:

Even if a subject feels shame when she or he is alone, it is the imagined view of the other that is taken on by a subject in relation to herself or himself ... In shame, I am the object as well as the subject of the feeling. Such an argument crucially suggests that shame requires an identification with the other who, as witness, returns the subject to itself. The view of this other is the view that I have taken on in relation to myself; I see myself *as if I were* this other. My failure before this other hence is profoundly a failure of myself to myself. In shame, I expose to myself that I am a failure through the gaze of an ideal other.<sup>481</sup>

Reflecting on this excerpt in the context of classification practices under the PRA, this ideal 'other' appears when re-classifications were sought by, or imposed upon, individuals. The ideal 'other' was indeed manifest from the step on the racial ladder on which one found oneself living.<sup>482</sup> The embarrassment or shame that we have seen the historical subjects undergo throughout this chapter can only be grasped when we consider the social and racial order that the PRA was designed to keep in check. The lived experience of racialised shame is only one illustration of how the apartheid regime could handily be described also as an emotional regime. Returning to emotional communities, we also see that they are perhaps not so easily equated with social communities, as Rosenwein otherwise argues, in an apartheid context. Rather, cases concerning

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<sup>481</sup> Ahmed, *Cultural Politics of Emotion*, 105-106.

<sup>482</sup> As evident from this dissertation, emotional norms and practices within a racialised society are often produced by and even require an 'order' or 'other'. See, for example, Eduardo Bonilla-Silva, 'Feeling Race: Theorizing the Racial Economy of Emotions', *American Sociological Review* 84, no. 1 (2019): 1-24.

racial classifications and re-classifications show how the racial groups established under the PRA largely, and perhaps predictably, would reflect and shape an idea of homogeneous social communities. Race, then, also becomes a marker of what constitutes the *emotional* homogeneity of the group. A Coloured person who ‘passed’ for white might have been able to enter white social life, but only insofar he or she gave up their affective bonds to the Coloured community as to not transgress the racial-emotional code. A white person could be excluded from ‘his’ community for establishing a romantic relationship with a person of a different ‘colour’. Someone faced with the threat of racial re-classification could undergo emotional suffering, often in the form of shame, born out of fear of being excluded by, or straying from the image of, the idealised ‘other’ that dominated one’s own racial group or the racial group of which one aspired to become or remain a member. These notions are a reminder of how collectives might share emotional commitments, but also of how emotions can, as Boddice argues in his analysis of Ahmed’s theory, reveal how communities are *forged* on communal feeling.<sup>483</sup> I reflect further on this in the concluding chapter of the dissertation.

## Summary and Sub-Conclusions

The South African Population Registration Act of 1950 was conceived of to consolidate the racial groups to which apartheid legislation referred. Racial classification was not novel to South Africa by the time the law was passed but had hitherto been dominated by incoherence in practice. ‘Common-sense’, socially constructed notions would therefore also inform the ontology of race when all South Africans from 1950 onwards were required to be classified into one of four racial groups.

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<sup>483</sup> Boddice, *History of Emotions*, 82.

One's language, place of residence, social standing, physical appearance, descent and simple 'way of life' was factored into the decision that was made regarding one's ultimate racial classification. Crucially, however, policymakers left ajar the door for persons to seek re-classification if they did not agree with the race that had been allocated to them, blurring the otherwise 'obvious' divisions between the racial groups.

Because race informed the emotional and therefore, lived, experience of apartheid, as we have seen in the two preceding chapters, a change in racial status could potentially influence that experience. In this chapter I therefore recast the groups defined in the PRA as 'emotional communities', which Barbara Rosenwein has defined as essentially the same as ordinary social communities, in which members share emotional values and which are demarcated by emotional prescription, what William Reddy would term an 'emotional regime'. I study a selection of cases of both persons who actively sought to change their racial classification and persons who the bureaucracy had assigned a different race to that to which they professed to belong.

In 'borderline' cases, where the appellant could 'pass' physically and socially as another race, some were successful in changing their classification by assuring that they would proactively leave behind the emotional community that was demarcated by the racial status from which they wished to change. Others instead sought to change their race with the promise of foregoing superior material circumstances in favour of what they regarded to be their 'authentic' emotional community. These cases appear to have resulted in less successful outcomes.

The PRA, despite its apparent rigidity, would thus for some blur the racial order that it was devised to maintain and, in the process, give way to the disjunctions that could arise between an individual's emotional and social worlds. For these people, such disjunctions constituted 'emotional suffering' and could take the concrete form of for example embarrassment or shame. Race classification and re-classification might then for some have alleviated the material circumstances of their lived experience of apartheid while the emotional experience of it was rather



more difficult to negotiate. On a theoretical level, we can conclude that the salience of race to the lived experience of apartheid show that, in this case, social communities were not necessarily emotional communities. Rather, while the apartheid state tolerated some to cross the boundaries of racial groups in the name of social coherence, emotional communities would by and large remain drawn along racial lines.

# Endemic Emotion? A Conclusive Discussion

In this dissertation, I have examined a selection of ‘emotional encounters’ that took place by virtue of South Africans being confronted with the application of ‘petty’ apartheid provisions that emanated from three pieces of apartheid-era legislation: the Reservation of Separate Amenities Act, the Immorality Act and the Population Registration Act.

In the introduction to the dissertation, I argued that apartheid histories have long been politics-driven and might benefit from taking the ‘emotional turn’, applying a history of emotions approach as a means of understanding the lived experience of racial segregation in South Africa during the National Party era. My argument for doing so lay in the potential of such an approach for detaching apartheid policies and the everyday experience of them from the ‘rise and fall’ narratives that various South Africanists have questioned constructively in recent years. They have pointed out that neither the emergence nor ultimate fall of apartheid were a given. Rather, as historian Saul Dubow has noted, apartheid histories might instead benefit from historians asking the question of how it survived for so long.

Politics-driven narratives of segregation and apartheid in South Africa have throughout sought to explain how and why apartheid ideology and policies came into being, with both liberal and radical scholars highlighting important policy decisions, teasing out the rationale behind them and the ways in which they were grounded in established notions of race and governed by materialist forces. Later social histories have instead inquired into the forces that led to

apartheid's dismantling with an important emphasis on the actions of both well-known activists and 'ordinary' people on their long road to freedom. The first approach has resulted in comprehensive accounts of the foundations on which an extraordinary complex and at times incomprehensible political system rested, while it has arguably neglected the question of how the system was received by those who lived through it. The latter approach has presented great strides towards bringing to light the stories of an oppressed majority yet implicitly constitute part of a narrative that suggests an ever-present struggle to defeat the system, obscuring the realities of the ways in which apartheid practices also invited acquiescence. As an apparent consequence of these problematics, a call for a South African postcolonial 'push' has also arisen in recent years, alongside encouragements made by others to 'revisit' those parts of apartheid history that are taken for granted.

The decisions regarding the subject and theoretical approach I have applied in this dissertation were made with these debates at the very forefront of my reasoning. By 'revisiting' so-called 'petty' apartheid legislation, I aimed to shine a light on those aspects of segregation with which South Africans of all racial affiliations were consistently confronted on an everyday basis. All apartheid policies were in some way linked to the idea of 'grand' apartheid, that is the ultimate territorial separation of the country according to race, yet only a few of these would manifest themselves regularly. While the subjects of for example the migrant labour system, the disenfranchisement and forced removals of black South Africans, and anti-apartheid activism in opposition to these, undoubtedly affected individual life courses, I sought to analyse policies and legislation in the so-called 'petty' sphere, the experience of which have been treated matter-of-factly in the historical literature. The anti-miscegenation efforts, governing of recreational space, and notions of apparent racial coherence that were encapsulated in the Immorality Act, the Reservation of Separate Amenities Act and Population Registration Act, respectively, would more than 'grander' laws, it was my hypothesis, proffer a *constant* experience of racialised social control and engineering.

While a history of emotions approach to the subject matter will seem an arbitrary choice to some, recent developments in the field have highlighted how emotions stand at the centre of how history is experienced. For segregation to survive, the racial rationales and logics that shaped it would have to be *felt* by the individuals who lived it. My general theoretical standpoint therefore took its departure in the now established notion that emotions should be considered a biocultural unit that informs our understanding of other well-trodden categories of historical analyses such as race, class and gender. At the methodological and theoretical levels, I operated primarily with Monique Scheer's concept of 'emotional practices', which postulates that emotions emerge from the socially structured body, whose dispositions do not wholly determine what is felt but rather what we can feel in any given context. In this way, emotions have historicity, in that they are assumed to change over time. The potential struggle that arises between what we feel that we feel and what we should and can feel, is encapsulated in Arlie Russell Hochschild's concept of 'emotional labour', which refers to our efforts to regulate our emotions according to context. Finally, I explained how I am epistemologically inspired also by Sara Ahmed's theory on the politics of emotion, which bears similarities to postcolonial approaches to emotions in its focus on power dynamics. Ahmed encourages us to look at the ways in which emotions assist in forging collectives rather than merely assume that social groupings share communal feelings. In the context of this dissertation, her work urged me to reflect on what emotions 'did' to the 'racial order' inherent to apartheid-era South Africa.

Grounded in the reflections above, I centred my analyses around the following general research question: How did emotions shape the lived experience of race and segregation during the apartheid era and support its endurance?

To assist in understanding this broader issue, I asked three supporting questions:

- Which logics regarding emotional practice did 'petty' apartheid legislation reflect and create?
- What role did emotions play in encounters between the racialised space and racialised bodies that 'petty' apartheid measures governed?
- How did being confronted with 'petty' apartheid provisions contribute to creating new emotional truths and naturalising or undermining existing ones?

For answers to these supporting questions, I refer to the summaries and sub-conclusions to each chapter.

The same problematics that I outlined regarding the historiography of segregation and apartheid in general naturally apply also to source material, why my sources were selected with the goal of teasing out 'subaltern' South African voices through contemporary sources. The political nature of previous histories means that 'rise of apartheid' narratives have been told mostly through state history accounts and state discourse analyses. While crucial in their historical value, they have nevertheless meant that 'ordinary' voices of people across the racial spectrum have been less identifiable. Social histories and 'fall of apartheid' histories have to some degree 'corrected' this trend, particularly regarding those individuals classified as 'non-white'. Perhaps in response to the active censorship of the apartheid state, these narratives have apparently embraced a tradition of applying oral history methods with the potential danger of falling prey to subjective reflections after the fact. These accounts furthermore may also arguably be influenced by the 'long road to freedom' narratives that now permeate state sanctioned histories of apartheid. I instead intended to capture the lived experience of 'petty' apartheid *then and there* by seeking out instances in which the objects of study were met with the enforcement or lack of some of specific laws. While this approach certainly has its own pitfalls in form of not only a general lack of places to look for subaltern voices as well as issues of representativity; it was my view that combining state and social histories would counter the

need to radically deconstruct the apartheid archive. As it happens, the correspondence between members of the public and the authorities, legal cases, works of contemporary fiction and newspaper reports that I have analysed throughout this dissertation often refer to specific encounters that took place within the private realm in order to prove their case. It is from these cases that subaltern emotions emerge and the biocultural nature of which I ascribe to these emotions that render the voices to some degree independent from the simple operation of racial power and their contemporariness in their situated historical period that separate them from the narratives of the present day.

Over the next few pages, I will reflect on how the findings I have made constitute answers to the dissertation's main research question and how I read them as nuancing previous research on histories of race and apartheid in South Africa.

## Emotions as Internalized Habits

The complexity of the apartheid system will at first glance to many appear as laying in its many regulations and laws as well as its convoluted bureaucracy, which were designed to support its outward appearance of order and rigidity. Its intricacies lay just as much, though, if not more, in its internal contradictions and dynamism that meant that apartheid 'was never one thing',<sup>484</sup> as Dubow has formulated it. Many of the forms that apartheid took, and the changes made to it throughout its existence were based on calculated policy decisions of adaptation and reinvention, while sometimes choices were made seemingly arbitrarily. The foothold of randomness and incongruity posing as logic in formulating policy and its application appears to be particularly true also of the 'petty' legislation that I have covered in this dissertation. The multiple amendments made to the Immorality Act, the ever-evolving 'common sense' on which a person's racial

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<sup>484</sup> Dubow, *Apartheid*, 290.

classification rested under the Population Registration Act (and, indeed the fact that one could apply to change one's race), and the decisions to allocate, re-allocate and open and close certain spaces to certain racial groups under the Reservation of Separate Amenities Act make up but a few illustrations of how changes and contradictions in apartheid policies would interact with how segregation was practised.

Importantly, as Dubow has argued, 'internalized habits of deference, born of centuries of master-servant relations',<sup>485</sup> were created by this at the same time sophisticated and unrefined type of governance. As I have implied throughout this study, emotional practices should be read as one such breed of embodied habit, born of the racialised social structures that dominated South African society for so long. To the sophisticated eye of the historian, I recognise that this conclusion might seem self-evident. I would, however, go even further and argue that emotional practice will have contributed to the durability of apartheid in a different way than other deferential habits. Although I have consistently made the point that our social makeup determines what can be felt in context, it hardly feels that way to the person who feels. Despite my insistence that emotional practice is not compatible with a worldview that embraces biological reductionism or essentialism, to all of us, most experiences of emotion feel like they are exactly that – natural. Feelings, then, prove difficult to change, *not* because the experience of them is static or universal, but because any perceived adjustment to the habitual ways in which they are practised will feel *unnatural* to us. As Boddice has both rhetorically asked and asserted: 'what is a feeling of accord except a sense of appropriateness, or a feeling of rightness or wrongness?'<sup>486</sup> Although South Africa's racial policies were formally abandoned from the 1980s onwards, the feelings of rightness and wrongness that both fostered and emerged from them being applied will have had just as long a history as segregation itself. The case studies that I have considered throughout the dissertation do

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<sup>485</sup> Dubow, *Apartheid*, 293.

<sup>486</sup> Boddice, *History of Emotions*, 192.

in fact imply that most people 'felt' like they 'should' - in accord with the racial order. For some, though, *transgressing* the emotional code felt 'right', while for others, having to *conform* to it felt 'wrong'. While few, these deviations from emotional prescription seem to suggest that competing standards for emotional practice were subtly vying to emerge despite the salience of social structures along racial lines. At a general level, however, the widespread acquiescence to racialised emotional prescription suggests that specific modes of feeling were endemic in apartheid South Africa.

Previous research on the 'rise' of apartheid has highlighted the effectiveness of discourse emanating from the state and other official entities in shaping and reconfiguring notions of class, race and gender. This has been true since the advent of colonialism. The conclusion that would appear the most obvious to make regarding the role of emotions in shaping the lived experience of apartheid would in this case be that these notions were over time installed also in emotional practice, so that they felt 'natural' to the individual. In a traditional postcolonial sense, 'feeling' would thus create compliant subjects and compel them to maintain racial divisiveness. Any opposition to the racial ideal could be quashed by state sanctioned punishment and social exclusion while any feelings of moral qualms with the status quo would likely feel 'unnatural' or wrong, limiting the desire of any one individual to challenge it. Emotions can in this way be said to have sustained apartheid because we seldom question how we feel in terms of the broader society in which we live. The results of this dissertation certainly support this, but I would like to point out that the lessons we can draw from such a conclusion look rather different depending on the epistemological perspective from which we view it.

While discourse certainly shapes emotional practice and experience, emotions also feed into the future structures that discursive elements are expected to keep in place. As Ahmed has argued, 'emotions are not just about the "impressions" left by others, but that they involve



investments in social norms'.<sup>487</sup> My point is here that because these investments feel self-evident, they may withstand changes in the discourse that created them in the first place. While Dubow sees the creation of internalized habits as a practice that was characteristic to apartheid, these internalized habits worked to sustain racialised social configurations, even as apartheid moved toward being abolished and its racial discourses proved untenable.

## Emotions in Opposition

The argument I have presented above can also be applied constructively to histories and narratives that have as their primary focus rebellion and struggles against apartheid, both those that employ a 'top-down' approach, in which the actions of political organisations such as the African National Congress and its leaders are lauded, as well as those that highlight 'the people's' quest for liberation from racial and economic oppression.

In today's state-sanctioned histories of the long road to a non-racial democracy, the ultimate triumphalism of having conquered a racist, evil regime is evident. The results of my analyses here serve as a timely reminder, however, of how cultural and everyday practice, even in the most intimate sphere, was not free from the influence of the forces that so many spent their lives dedicated to squander. Racialised structures to a high degree shaped emotional practice, working at the intersection of class and, in particular, gender, to constrain individual agency. A few of the people in the stories I have told in this dissertation would find themselves in situations where the negative emotional experience of having been blindsided by 'petty' apartheid provisions would have them seek refuge in ways that provided individual relief but nevertheless propped up the provisions themselves. The man who saw himself free to laugh out loud and be content on a 'non-white' train, for example, would

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<sup>487</sup> Ahmed, *Cultural Politics of Emotion*, 196.

be protected from the disapproving glances made by his fellow white commuters. Yet, although his willing embrace of the space in which he could do so might appear as a standoffish reclamation of that space, it in fact also constituted an indirect, albeit probably reluctant, embrace of the principle of racial separation. The white man seeking to be re-classified as Coloured in order to live with the girl he loved indicates that he saw no reason to attempt to live up to the emotional norms that prescribed that interracial love was abhorrent. Yet, his only chance to engage with the feelings that to him seemed 'natural' in spite of racial reasoning, was by submitting a formal application to change his 'race', and by doing so also tacitly supporting the idea that his fellow white countrymen were, in fact, 'purer' than he.

Emotions can be read in these types of instances as having had worked in opposition to actions and decisions that would otherwise contest and question established notions. The point I wish to make here is that it is undoubtedly true that often people will not feel what we think they should. Yet, the agency to act on and realise the potential of these 'deviant' feelings depend on contingency and emotional structure. So, while apartheid racialised standards and its supporting practices of discourse, legislation and punishment could not fully prevent the emergence of 'wrong' feelings, they could nevertheless prevent these feelings from being practised in ways that would ever feel wholly 'right' to the individual.

These patterns of subtle acquiescence can perhaps not be ascribed completely to the calculated ingenuity of the apartheid state. Rather, they should be conceived of as being born of the biocultural nature of emotions themselves, which in interaction with cultural and social predispositions brings about circumstances in which an emotion can be experienced as 'natural' while at the same time being sensed as 'wrong'. While contemporary stories of past rebellion and struggle do not blatantly ignore the system that their chosen subjects fought against, the role of history in post-apartheid South Africa has, as has been suggested by various historians in recent years (although in different ways) become one of a deliberate bolstering of the anti-apartheid narrative as a means of nation building, with the modern South African state cultivating

‘heroic narratives that obscure the complex and opaque reality of the fall of apartheid from public memory’.<sup>488</sup> My minor contribution to the field of the everyday experience of segregation shows how the racialised practice of emotion might complicate narratives that are too quick to turn a blind eye to the cultural meanings and workings of apartheid that invited complicity in upholding it just as much as those that essentially weakened it. Many South Africans fought valiantly for political rights but to many, apartheid also ‘felt’ unshakable, even innate, and perhaps morally legitimate. New perspectives on statecraft would be welcome to nuance this trend, certainly.<sup>489</sup> But perhaps more importantly, it is further stories of everyday and cultural practice, both in times of acquiescence and struggle, that are needed.

## A Postcolonial Moment?

Scholarship on South Africa’s long history of segregation and apartheid as such continues to be embroiled in the political thicket. Questions of race and class and structure and agency have evolved into discussions of the value of studying the past when wishing to improve the future. The issue of race has become a delicate one, also among academics. But, as Dooling has recently pointed out, a ‘return’ to race as a primary analytical category when writing histories of segregation and apartheid in South Africa is not a ‘burdening’ of history. Race, rather, was central to how

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<sup>488</sup> Jamie Miller, ‘The Black Hole of Apartheid History’, *Blog of the Centre for Imperial and Global History at the University of Exeter*, 11 December 2014, <https://imperialglobalexeter.com/2013/12/12/-the-black-hole-of-apartheid-history/>, accessed 14 October 2021.

<sup>489</sup> As we have seen with Dubow’s *Apartheid* as well as David Welsh’s *The Rise and Fall of Apartheid*, which is especially strong on the intricacies of the transition from minority to majority rule. Jamie Miller’s *An African Volk* shows how the state would, supposedly counterintuitively, embrace a particular version of African nationalism throughout the 1970’s as a means to secure Afrikaner advancement and compel some black South Africans as well. See Jamie Miller, *An African Volk: The Apartheid Regime and Its Search for Survival* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016).

people experienced the past,<sup>490</sup> as I have illustrated throughout this doctoral monograph. But what role can the history of emotions play in illuminating such experiences? My conclusion in the two preceding sections was that emotional practice in apartheid South Africa was largely racialised and that the habitual nature of such practice meant that it felt subjectively ‘natural’, potentially having the effect that racialised emotional practice became endemic, even considering shifting discourses. Here, I instead wish to make a theoretical and historiographical intervention as to the potential contribution of emotions history to the current state of the field of histories of race in South Africa in general.

Historian Premesh Lalu has argued that South African history is still to undergo an analytical decolonisation, because even social histories reproduce the constraints of colonialism, segregation and apartheid on the subjectivity and individual agency of their subjects. He asks that South Africanists in particular produce ‘more histories, of concepts, discourses, representations, narratives and formations of subjectivities’ that collectively will constitute ‘an effort to step out of the shadows of the colonial archive’.<sup>491</sup> While some have aggressively faulted this call for constructive action as a call to upend history as a discipline because Lalu ‘collapses everything into structure after deciding that the power of language makes agency a nostalgic concept, something chased by naïve scholars like social historians’<sup>492</sup>, his sentiment is nevertheless not beyond reason. Reflecting on the meaning of the emotional encounters that I have studied in this work, the general heeding by apartheid subjects to racialised instructions of feeling can be read as precisely what Lalu would term a formation of subjectivity that hazes agency, as I pointed out in the section above. This assumption falls neatly in line with other postcolonial

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<sup>490</sup> Dooling, “Cape Town Knows, but She Forgets”, 1060.

<sup>491</sup> Lalu, ‘When Was South African History Ever Postcolonial?’, 281.

<sup>492</sup> Brian Rutledge, ‘Premesh Lalu’s Post-colonial Push: Is It Time to Dismantle the Discipline?’, *South African Historical Journal* 63, no. 1 (2011): 163.

analyses of feeling to which apartheid histories have conceivably not yet been sufficiently subjected in a comprehensive manner.

However, feeling is never endless. Lalu's desire for historians of South Africa to enter into a dialogue with the tradition of subaltern studies and deconstruct the archive, historiography at large, and ultimately, ourselves, in order to show how marginalised groups were effectively silenced, is evidently not without merit. I wonder, however, whether an engagement with the history of emotions would not prove a more fruitful middle-ground. While Lalu rightly points to the difficulties of retrieving the autonomous agency of those at the lower levels of the racial stratus, the results of my case analyses here have in fact *not* proved that racialised structures restricted subaltern subjects' ability to 'feel', nor to feel *differently*. While racialised bodies are 'mindful', in Scheer's words, of the codes that govern expectations of emotional practice, these codes do not determine the end result. The glimpses of 'deviant' emotions practised by many of the historical subjects in this study, both those crudely classified as white as well as 'non-white', may not have worked immediately to topple years of hegemony. But neither can we deny their agency by claiming that they did not feel what they said they felt. The biocultural nature of emotion ensures that. While the answer to Gayatri Spivak's now famous question 'can the subaltern speak?' might still linger under the surface,<sup>493</sup> the subaltern, I propose, can at the very least, feel.<sup>494</sup>

Cultural theorist Raymond Williams has coined the phrase 'structures of feeling' as a way of referring to the inner dynamics at play in any given historical period that indicate that dominant discourses and ways of thinking might not last eternally. In *The Long Revolution*, he writes: 'One generation may train its successor, with reasonable

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<sup>493</sup> Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, 'Can the Subaltern Speak?', in *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, ed. Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg, 271-313 (Houndmills, UK: Macmillan Education, 1988), 271-316.

<sup>494</sup> For a radiant article on the problematics of the concept of 'agency' as both question and answer in historical enquiries, see Lynn M. Thomas, 'Historicising Agency', *Gender & History* 28, no. 2 (2016): 324-339.

success, in the social character or the general cultural pattern, but the new generation will have its own structure of feeling, which will not appear to have come “from” anywhere’.<sup>495</sup> Whether such a theory holds water when applied by and to a future generation of South Africans remains to be seen. I, for one, would like to think so.

## Epilogue

This dissertation constitutes only a fledgling attempt to scrutinise the emotional politics of South Africa’s long historical engagement with race through the colonial, segregation and apartheid periods. I could suggest a myriad of directions that historians could take in order to build on the work completed here.

Petty apartheid measures were applied differently from region to region. The geographical scope I have applied here is not necessarily narrow, but could spur on similar studies of how petty apartheid provisions were received in other places across the urban and rural divides and with different demographic makeups. In rural areas, where the ‘need’ for *formal* segregation at the micro-level was likely less widespread or likely to have been upheld more by virtue of ‘tradition’ rather than by law, emotional prescription and experience may look different. The narratives that appear in this study, furthermore, emerged only by virtue of persons meeting the ‘official’ South Africa in some shape or form, whether through writing letters to the civil service, telling journalists their stories or being caught up in the legal system. Many other people’s emotional experiences of apartheid would of course take place in the margins outside of these ceremonial structures. For these stories to be told, a creative approach to compiling a source dossier will unquestionably be necessary.

Similarly, the question of to what degree racialised emotional practice was and continues to be endemic to South Africans in terms of

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<sup>495</sup> Raymond Williams, *The Long Revolution*, (London: Pelican Books, 1965 [1961]), 65.

phenomena such as racial identity, recreational patterns and interracial relationships, is rather an open one and one on which I hope future studies will take up the mantle in piecing together an answer to. The periodisation that I have subjected to scrutiny covers only a time frame within which petty apartheid measures were officially in place. I have indicated that the emotional experience and practices involved in these phenomena clearly interacted with racial notions in the high apartheid era in particular and suggested that this interaction lived on despite 'petty' apartheid becoming less an issue of state concern as the system found itself struggling to reinvent itself and survive, up until the abolishment of the 'petty' acts in 1985 and 1990. Contemporary examples of 'race debates' flaring up, especially with the advent of social media, regarding for example black South Africans' use of public space have appeared regularly in the media. Also, and as I commented on in chapter 2, current sociological research has shown that some partners in interracial relationships continue to 'disguise' their feelings for each other. Lastly, personal experience has made me acutely aware of how conversations with South Africans about others often naturally include a denotation of a third persons' 'race' as a point of reference. Whether these circumstances prove a continuation of the results of my observations or obscure the fact that most people no longer feel compelled to practise their emotions according to racialised prescription, I will leave to the sociologists, anthropologists, psychologists and future historians, who commit to scrutinising the feelings of race and racial feeling in the 'Rainbow Nation' of today, to answer.

Recent historical work appears nevertheless to have taken a fertile turn towards everyday life and cultural practice, at least as it looked in Union and apartheid-era South Africa.<sup>496</sup> This growing collection of

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<sup>496</sup> See, for example, Lynn M. Thomas, 'The Modern Girl and Racial Respectability in 1930s South Africa', *Journal of African History* 47, no. 3 (2006): 461-490; Wayne Dooling, 'Poverty and Respectability in Early Twentieth-Century Cape Town', *Journal of African History* 59, no. 3 (2018): 411-435; Deborah Posel, 'Changes in the Order of Things: Department Stores and the Making of Modern Cape Town', in *Conspicuous Consumption in Africa*, ed. Deborah Posel and Ilana van Wyk (Johannesburg: Wits University Press, 2019), 25-44.

stories show how concepts such as modernity, consumerism, and civility – always intersecting with race and class – bore influence on how subjects went around their daily lives. I have reflected only somewhat on such intersections and the meaning of those types of grander societal impulses in this dissertation. I hope, however, to have shown on a theoretical and methodical level how the reception of those projects can be read through the prism of how it made the ‘modern’ African girl, the white conspicuous consumer, or the impoverished African, ‘feel’, and not only through how these figures were represented discursively.

Indications of human feeling are, as Ahmed argues, ‘signs of the impression left’ by historical phenomena. As Boddice has ascertained, affective statements uttered by historical subjects, whether conceived of as part of a meaningful, holistic practice or mere discursive prescription, cannot simply be discarded as irrelevant, irrational, or left for others to discern.<sup>497</sup> Those who choose to do so, do so at their peril.

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<sup>497</sup> Boddice, *History of Emotions*, 163.





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