Exploring social identities in the South African landscape: A study of young, White, South African student teachers

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DECLARATION

This thesis is my own work. It has not been submitted for degree purposes at any other university.

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ABSTRACT

The social, political and economic landscape of South Africa, since 1994 has been one of rapid change, where identities and what it means to be a South African have formed critical points of debate. This study used a qualitative methodology to investigate two broad goals: firstly to explore the identities, and influencing factors, of a group of nine young, White, South African student teachers (21-25); and secondly to examine the intersection of social identities and teaching. As a result, this study also investigated how conceptions of identity, including "Whiteness" can have an impact on or influence the professional identities of the participants as young teachers in a multi-cultural and diverse classroom. Selection of participants was based on self-identification as "White", however, by focusing on racial identity in particular this study must acknowledge, as Gunaratnam (2003) does, that it is working both "with and against" race.

Two in-depth interviews took place with each participant and two props were used in order to avoid foregrounding race and imposing a definition on the individual respondents. Firstly an "I am" worksheet was used which asked for descriptors; and, secondly, each participant was asked to draw a timeline of their life in response to the question "What has made you who you are today?"

Because of the subjective nature of narrative data, the participants' stories were framed in a broader "landscape" or context. Their narratives were complex and often contradictory, pointing to the fact that researching identities, especially within such a shifting landscape, is always tricky. However, some common themes emerged: social identities as descriptors were avoided, being White in South Africa emerged as different from other contexts such as Europe, race was highlighted in relation to "others" in terms of economic, political and social changes to their worlds and as teachers there was a limited understanding of diversity and broader issues outside of their own experience.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter One

INTRODUCTION

In October 2006 eleven White students painted their faces black and gathered at the Union Buildings in Pretoria. They wished to be classified as "African" and aimed to highlight what they saw as the ANC government's increasing obsession with race. One of the students said, "We want to demonstrate by means of this action that we are neither prepared to allow racial ideology to deprive us of our African identity, nor reduce us to second-class citizens in the country of our birth" (Mail and Guardian Online, 5 October 2006).

I read the short article with interest as it raised questions around how young, White South Africans deal with their racial identity. For me, the simple act of painting one's face a different colour stirred up the fascinating debate concerning identity and its importance in South Africa today. It provoked issues around the topics of who was African and who was not; about the role of race in post-Apartheid South Africa; about questions of redress and privilege.

Another question that came to mind was, why were there only eleven? Was this a topic that was of little interest to most young, White South Africans? Or did they simply not care how they interacted on the South African landscape through their social identities? How would they define themselves now?

The social landscape of South Africa since Apartheid has been one of rapid change, where identities and what it means to be a South African have formed critical points of debate. The Apartheid structures, policies and institutions of our past were all built on the idea of difference between race and ethnic groups, there were clear boundaries of inclusion and exclusion. Still today this has influenced intergroup relations and the way identities now lie on the face of this social landscape. Melissa Steyn, in her book '*Whiteness just isn't what it used to be': White Identity in a*

changing South Africa writes,

> The social revisions brought about by the political realignment of the different population groups in relation to each other are far-reaching, complex and multiple. Not least among these is the renegotiation of identities. South Africans, willingly or unwillingly, successfully or unsuccessfully, are engaged in one of the most profound collective psychological adjustments happening in the contemporary world. Situated in an existential moment that combines unique intersections of throwness and agency, they are selecting, editing, and borrowing from the cultural resources available to reinterpret old selves in the light of new knowledge and possibilities, while yet retaining a sense of personal congruence (2001:xxi).

This process of re-negotiation, of both personal and national change, has held a fascination for me for a long time and prompted me to investigate further. This thesis is an extension of that curiosity.

Outline of the topic

This study used a qualitative methodology to explore the identity of a group of nine young, White, South African student teachers at the Edgewood Campus of the University of KwaZulu-Natal. The focus was on fourth-year students who would have finished their studies in 2006 and would be on the first step towards their teaching careers. Part of my interest lies in the intersection of social identities and teaching. As a result, this study also investigated how their conceptions of identity, including "Whiteness" in South Africa today can have an impact on, or influence their professional identities as teachers in a multi-cultural and diverse classroom.

Within the context of teacher education, Moletsane et al state that the nature of student biographies (as reflected in terms of the social identities they hold) which are shaped by various life and educational experiences, contribute to their commitment and ability to deal with diversity in the classroom (2004:69). Therefore, the aims of my study have been two-fold: firstly, to explore the social identities that the nine participants hold, how they have been constructed and shaped; and secondly, to look more closely at "Whiteness" in a South African teaching context.

Reasons for choosing the topic

Although more studies have recently been undertaken in South Africa (Steyn 2001, Erasmus & De Wet, 2003; Kelly 2006), White people as a racialised social group

remain an under-researched area and in order to gain a clearer understanding of South Africa as a society in transition, it is necessary to take stock of what "Whiteness" means.

Fenner-Barbour, in her study on White, middle-class, lesbian mothers in South Africa, points out that, "Whiteness has been simultaneously ignored and universalized: research conducted on members of the dominant race (unless focused on the issue of racism) ignore race, thereby implying the racial neutrality of the subjects of study" (1998:68). While Frankenberg looks at the experiences of White women in America, she similarly states, "in a social context where White people have too often viewed themselves as non-racial or racially neutral, it is crucial to look at 'racialness' of White experience" (1993:1). Clearly then, studying White identity is something that will help, as Dyer puts it, in dislodging it from the powerful position of "just" being human (2000:539). Part of the aims of my study were to name, to make known, to talk about, "Whiteness", and was something I viewed as a journey for myself as well, both academically and personally.

In addition, identity is something that is carried into the work place and in a classroom context can affect the learning environment. Pohan and Aguilar point out that attitudes, beliefs, and expectations (elements of identity formation brought about through life experiences) have been found to guide and direct teachers' responses toward various students (2001:160). Further, the Revised National Curriculum Statement states, "Educators at all levels are key contributors to the transformation of education in South Africa. Teachers have a particularly important role to play" (Department of Education, 2001). Their role includes, as set out in the Manifesto on Values, Education and Democracy (Department of Education, 2001), the promotion of a number of values, such as democracy, social justice and equity and non-racialism and non-sexism. While promoting these values in terms of policy may be easy, in practice they provide a subjective challenge. Researching White identity in this context is therefore necessary. As Moletsane et al argue, "it is important that teaching and research interventions seek to acknowledge and understand their [young, White student teachers] personal, social and political fears and insecurities. These may include fears about affirmative action, as well as perceptions of reverse racism, which tend to legitimate, at least in their own minds, prejudice against the 'other', and to perpetuate discrimination" (2004:69).

A catchphrase in education, especially since the introduction of the Curriculum 2005, has been "diversity" and its celebration. What this actually means for teachers in practice has a personal interest for me, through my contact with teaching first year students at the Faculty of Education, University of KwaZulu-Natal. King, looking at her student teachers (albeit in the United States), asks what diversity really means, especially to students who have limited personal experience of diversity and a limited understanding of inequality (2001:296). While her experience is of an American context and the South African situation is dissimilar, there are a number of valuable points she raises. She argues, "With respect to this society's changing demographics and the inevitable 'browning' of America, many of my students foresee a diminution of their own identity, status, and security. Moreover, regardless of their conscious intentions, certain culturally sanctioned beliefs my students hold about inequity and why it persists especially for African Americans, take White norms and privileges as givens" (2001:296).

Structure and organisation of the thesis

This thesis has been organised into six chapters and I will briefly provide an overview of each one. Chapter Two reviews the literature, which has both shaped my thinking on this topic and provided me with challenges in designing the research. It consists of three sections: the first one looks at identity and social identity theory (SIT), which forms the broad theoretical framework for my thesis. The second section deals with general theories on race, as well as race and the role it plays in South Africa. The third section looks specifically at Whiteness and has tried to determine how being White in South Africa might be different from Whiteness in an American or European context.

Chapter Three explains the methodology I have used and goes into more detail about the research process and how it was structured. Chapter Four deals with the interview data and has been built into nine separate stories, one for each participant. Chapter Five forms the discussion of the data, and has also been divided into two parts. Part 1 sketches the South African "landscape" that my participants share, while part 2 then delves into the individual responses to this landscape. Chapter Six forms the conclusion.

Undertaking this research has also meant much self-reflection for me, which is why I chose to write parts of it from a first person perspective. Steyn points out that knowledge is constructed and produced by people in positions of power, such as researchers. This means that self-reflexivity should be part of a researcher's skills in order to be able to critically look at one's own role in maintaining power structures (2001:xxxiv). Therefore, being young, White and South African, I cannot separate myself completely from the topic of my thesis; however, I can acknowledge this from the outset.

Chapter Two

LITERATURE SURVEY PART 1: IDENTITY AND SOCIAL IDENTITY

Introduction

As the focus of this study is on a small group of student teachers and their efforts to negotiate their identities in a society of political and social change, it is necessary to acquire an understanding of the issues relating to both the "self", as well as social identity and intergroup relations. This section will deal with the literature on identity, both individual and social. This will hopefully lead to a better understanding of identity construction, group membership, categorization and theories of intergroup relations, which form part of the underlying theoretical framework of this study.

This section comprises a number of parts: firstly, a general one on identity; secondly, a closer look at categories and groups; and, thirdly, one which looks at the usefulness of Social Identity Theory as a tool for a study such as this.

Identity: personal and social

As Gleason points out, identity is a word that is commonly used in everyday speech, yet, for social scientists, it only became a used term in the 1950s. He says, "The original *Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, published in the early 1930s, carries no entry at all for *identity*, and the entry headed 'Identification' deals with fingerprinting and other techniques of criminal investigation"(1983:910). While the term was used in the vernacular, it was not yet an important analytical concept within the social sciences at this point, as the term was generally accepted as unproblematic (Gleason, 1983:912). However, identity, as a concept, is quite difficult to define because its meaning seems so obvious.

Today, identity has become useful for investigations within the framework of social psychology. As Jenkins points out though, "identity" is multi-disciplinary, in use in various fields (1996:7). He also states that, "At every turn we encounter discourses about identity. And not only identity. The talk is also about change: the emergence of new identities, the resurgence of old ones, and the transformation of existing ones" (Jenkins 1996:7). This is certainly the case in South Africa, the context for the present study. It is a society that has undergone the "miracle" of the 1994 elections that brought about a regime change, and which is still undergoing the ripple-effects of that social change. Identity, then, is a central issue, a site at which this change is being played out. Francis, drawing on Singh, points out that "since the abandonment of Apartheid, South Africans have the historic opportunity of transcending and reshaping new identities and fashioning a new set of understanding about who they are and what they consider to be of fundamental value to themselves" (2005:12).

This has prompted a number of questions and academic investigations of identities in South Africa, for example Horwitz's (1994) investigation of White kinship and identity. In this study she looks at how identities are socially and culturally constructed within the family and household, as well as how this overlaps with a more public identity, namely that of being White and English-speaking. She asks, "Do White South Africans experience changes in their ethnic identity because of the disintegration of the physical and symbolic boundaries of Apartheid? Does this have an impact on family, kinship and household values and structures? How does the family respond to the political and social context in which families and households are constituted?" (1994:1).

It therefore becomes necessary to understand what is meant by both personal and social identity and to recognise, as Fenner-Barbour does, that "who" the individual is will depend on the environment (1998:49). This is built on the idea of "situated identities", which doesn't necessarily have to mean change, but more that some aspects are neglected, while others are emphasised in different situations. This is a foundational assumption of the current investigation of young, White South Africans.

Taking White identity as an example, it is often seen as simply being "who we are", but on closer examination it consists of two parts. Firstly, as Newman points out, it is a personal characteristic, made up of one's personality traits, one's individual

psychological world. However, to say that this is all that identity is, would be short-sighted, which has been recognised within the field of social psychology. This brings us to the second point that Newman makes, namely that identity also "consists of our membership in social groups (race, ethnicity, religion, gender and so on), the traits we show, and the traits others ascribe to us. Our identity locates us in the social world, thoroughly affecting everything we do, feel, say and think in our lives" (2000:20).

What becomes clear, then, is that an individual's sense of "who they are" is mediated by social group or category memberships, such as race, gender, ethnicity, religion, sexuality, class, age, and language, amongst others. Fenner-Barbour understands social identity to be "that part of an individual's self-concept which derives from his [sic] knowledge of his membership of a social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership" (1998:255). Her study also illustrates how individuals have social identities that can cross and intersect with a number of different categories or groups, which means that they have multiple social identities, as is the case with her participants.

Francis states that thinking of oneself as a unique individual as well as a group member, are both parts of the self, the former referring to personal identity and the latter referring to one's social identity (2005:13). Identity construction cannot only happen on a personal-individual level, but also, perhaps more strongly, in relation to others and to the surrounding culture of a particular community or society. As Abrams and Hogg note, "while a society is made up of individuals, it is patterned into relatively distinct groups and categories, and people's views, opinions, and practices are acquired from those groups to which they belong" (1988:10). This study hopes to explore the social identities of these student teacher, as well as, as Abrams and Hogg mention, how they acquire this sense of identity and their opinions and views from the groups to which they belong.

At this point it may be useful to explore the concepts of categories and groups more closely.

Groups and categories

A part of social identities is the awareness that society is organised into groups or categories. When we speak of a group, then it is generally accepted to mean that the members acknowledge and accept their membership, while a category is something that is imposed from outside where a category has been created according to some similar characteristic (Abrams and Hogg, 1988; Jenkins, 1996). Fenner-Barbour states, "People derive facets of their self-identity from the various categories and groups to which they belong: their subjective mediation of this membership is what makes each individual unique" (1998:41). These groups or categories are very significant in determining the kind of life experiences that the individual will have. It is because of this, that Jenkins (1996) argues that social groups and categories are "socially real" and individuals will conduct their lives in terms of those identities.

It is in this light that the current study raises a number of questions: what is the primary group membership of this group of young, White, student teachers? What are the experiences that are attached to this membership? How does it influence opinions and views? Furthermore, as Abrams and Hogg have stated (1988:14), society is made up of many categories which stand in power, status and prestige relations to one another, so how does this group of young South Africans see the situation today? It is hoped that this study, using social identity theory (as explained in the following section), will create some insight into these questions about group membership and identity.

When speaking of groups and categories, it is also useful to remember, as Jenkins does, that neither came first or can exist on its own. Although a group is created by self-definition, this does not mean that categorisation comes only thereafter (1996:87). Francis points out that categorisation can sometimes form the basis for group identification and gives the example of the racial category, Coloured, in South Africa (2005:15).

Social Identity Theory

This section will deal with both Erikson's notions of identity and Social Identity Theory, as expounded by Tajfel and Turner. The former will allow for some insight into earlier theories around identity and the latter will deal with Social Identity Theory's crucial link between the individual and society that forms the theoretical framework for this study. Gleason, in his examination of identity, notes that by the 1970s the term had passed into widespread use. Erikson was a key figure in putting the word into wide circulation. While for him, working within the psychology tradition, identity was part of the development of the individual as they matured, he does acknowledge the part that is played by interacting with the "social milieu" in which individuals find themselves. This is in turn shaped by the historical situation of the culture that influences the social world in which the individual exists (Gleason, 1983:914).

Gleason notes that "reference-group theory" was, at this point, still fairly young. He states, "It was, however, quite compatible with [Erikson's] analysis since it dealt with the way in which a person's attitudes, values, and sense of identity were shaped by alignment with, or rejection of, 'reference groups' that has significance for the individual, either positively or negatively" (1983:917). However, Erikson's meaning of identity was still well within the boundaries of psychology, which viewed it as located "deep" within the individual. This was, however, also when identity began to take on a sociological meaning, which viewed identity as the result of the interaction of society and the individual (1983:917).

Francis explains that Erikson's notion of identity involves an interaction connecting the interior development of the individual personality, and the growth of a sense of selfhood that occurs from participating in society (2005:18). While Erikson helped popularise the concept "identity", and his notion of identity does take into consideration the context or "social milieu" in which the individual exists, there are still a number of problems with this view. Francis points out a number of these. Firstly, Erikson saw identity formation as ending after adolescence, after the "identity crisis" had been resolved. Francis sees this as problematic, as it does not consider the possibility of adults rediscovering or developing a different understanding of themselves due to new life experiences for example (2005:19). It might be more

realistic to see identity formation as an on-going process that is continuously being renegotiated. Francis states, "Not only do identities shift over time, in a long-term sense, but people often make choices among various identities as they move from one circumstance to another" (2005:19).

Secondly, Erikson also suggests that identity formation takes place in linear stages, which, as Francis points out, disregards the fact that the individual exists in an historical space. Francis also notes that Erikson viewed society more as unchanging and constant than as a constantly shifting historical space and argues that "to understand society as fixed is to deny its dynamism, and changing effect on the individual... it is the social contexts that can either enable or hinder the degree of agency that individuals have to construct identities" (2005:20). Miller (1992) also notes that changes in the organisation of society will have a big impact on identity formation and that it is this context that will inform whether an individual will be marginalized, or unaffiliated, included or have a unique role in several social groups. It is at this point that Erikson's notion of identity cannot be taken further and becomes problematic for use in social identity research.

Therefore, as Francis noted in his study on bi-racial young adults, "exploring how individuals make sense of 'who they are' requires an understanding of the society-individual relationship, more specifically with regard to social identity" (2005:20). It is here that Social Identity Theory (SIT) outlined by Tajfel (1978; 1981; 1982) and Tajfel and Turner (1979), can provide a clearer understanding of how individuals categorise, identify and compare themselves in relation to other groups and categories. Social Identity Theory rests on three pillars: firstly, social categorisation; secondly, social identification; and, thirdly, social comparison (Francis, 2005:21). These three interconnected concepts will appear as recurring themes in the discussion below.

Social Identity Theory was developed within the field of social psychology. Fenner-Barbour states that it represents a move away from the reductionist focus on the individual that characterised much identity work in psychology (1998:39). She explains: "People derive facets of their self-identity from the various categories and groups to which they belong: their subjective mediation of this membership is what

makes each individual unique" (1998:41). As such, SIT offers both a perspective (a position) and an approach (a method), which is utilised in this study. As has been discussed in the above section, identification involves thinking of the self as consisting of two aspects, namely personal and social identity. To recap briefly, Francis states: "Social identity refers to the self-descriptions deriving from membership of social categories while personal identity denotes self-descriptions, which are more personal in nature and that usually, indicate specific attributes of the individual" (2005:23).

Human behaviour can be looked at through a number of perspectives that are laid out on a continuum ranging from biological, through psychological, to socio-psychological, to sociological. Often the boundaries between them are not clearly defined (Tajfel, 1981:24). Tajfel also argues that the major theories in social psychology are quite "individualistic" in nature and that social psychology needs to take into account a wider perspective than simply inter-individual relationships. This movement, which focused more on contextualising the individual, was driven by Tajfel's work and brought social psychology more to the sociological end of the continuum (Tajfel, 1981:41).

A noticeable part of social reality is the fact that it is made up of vastly different individuals, made obvious to the outside observer by markers such as sex, age, dress, language, race, etc. The observer would use certain tools to construct their own particular social reality and to make sense of it. Such a tool would be social categorisation (Tajfel, 1981:46). Tajfel argues that social categorisation forms a fundamental cognitive process known as categorical differentiation, which orders the world in a way that we understand. This helps simplify perceptions. As Campbell argues, people are unable to process the infinite barrage of information in the environment and as a result they develop shortcuts, categorising objects and people into groups (1992: 17). Usually things like nationality, race, ethnicity, language, religion, skin colour or other social or physical characteristics that become meaningful in particular social contexts form the basis of social categorisation and, as Francis states, therefore the foundation for the creation of social identities (2005:22). Social categorisation does more than just divide the social world into categories, within which we can locate others, it also defines the individual's place in society, a

place of self-reference and orientation (Tajfel referred to in Miller, 1999:12). It is for these reasons, that this concept needs expanding on in relation to the current study.

For Abrams and Hogg, social categorisation and social comparison work together to form group behaviour. This involves intergroup differentiation and discrimination, ingroup favouritism, perceptions of superiority over outgroups and the accentuation of intergroup differences (1988:23). These are some of the terms used within the field of SIT and will be discussed below.

Billig states that, "The social category is first and foremost a division of people by people, rather than an expression of individual psyches. Group categories, and the social identities which they create, do not arise spontaneously by themselves; they are products of social activity in specific historical contexts" (1976:325). This means that this categorisation and the social identities ascribed to those groups, are situated in a specific social and historical context and are a part of a wider ideology. For Billig inter-group perceptions generally tend to minimise differences between the members of any one social group and exaggerate intergroup differences. He looks at a study of intergroup differences exaggeration by Secord, Bevan and Katz (1956), who looked at highly prejudiced individuals. The study found that these individuals tended to see Black people's skin colour as being darker than it was. By exaggerating the Blackness of the skin colour, they exaggerated the difference between Blacks and Whites (Billig, 1976:340).

How do all these concepts of social categorisation and comparison affect identity then? Billig and Jenson state that "in this sense, the categorized individual is exposed to the terms by which another defines him/her and assimilates that categorization, in whole or in part, into self-identity, where categorizing 'them' is part of defining 'us', as our identification of 'us' is entailed in and by a history of relationships with significant others" (in Miller, 1999:13). Social comparison between groups is an important part of identification. This is also a point at which social psychology differed from other psychological theories regarding identity. Many earlier theories of social comparison were primarily concerned with comparison between individuals, for example comparing oneself to someone else. Tajfel developed a critique of this perspective, stating that "this inter-individual emphasis neglects an

important contributing aspect of an individual's self-definition: the fact that he is a member of numerous social groups and that this membership contributes, positively or negatively, to the image that he has of himself" (1981:254). It is as a result of this social comparison that differences are organised into a status hierarchy. Often this will have an influence on low or high self-esteem; for example, "if a group is perceived to be superior to another on some attribute, it has a high status. If a social group is viewed as inferior it has low status" (Francis, 2005:24). Social comparison affects how identities are perceived and lived by individuals, either positively or negatively.

Group identification is part of the formation of a sense of one's social identity within a wider society. For Billig identification with the group is a complex and dialectical process, as it is not simply a matter of the individual passively receiving the object of their identification into their own subjective consciousness. It is also a case of the group, as an active social agent, ensuring that identification takes place and transforms the individual (Billig, 1976:323). Furthermore Billig also reminds us that "the process of identification does not take place in some sort of a social vacuum; it occurs in a definite social historical context at a definite time" (1976:323). This is something that forms the basis of the current study, namely situating an investigation of the social identities of young, White student teachers in a specific historical landscape of political and social change.

A critique of Social Identity Theory

Campbell, in her study, "Identity and Gender in a Changing Society: The Social Identity of South African Township Youth" (1992) evaluates and extends SIT in the interest of understanding the social identity of working class South African township youth. Her study is central to understanding some of the limitations of SIT. She identifies four main problems. Firstly, that it relies too heavily on artificially constituted groups and experimental laboratory traditions in terms of its methodology. Secondly, it reduces "society" to the "group", which doesn't acknowledge societal power relations on a wider scale. Thirdly, it doesn't take account of the interaction between cognitive and social factors in identity formation. And, finally, what Campbell calls the "dynamic" nature of identity formation is not dealt with in classic SIT, especially within

the context of identity formation in a changing society, which is what this study dealt with (Campbell, 1992:50). These problems will be discussed briefly below.

The first problem is that in order to develop an adequate notion of society, a theory is needed that is socially functional. This means that researchers need to move away from laboratory experiments and study the social experience of people beyond it. This over reliance on experimental designs and quantitative techniques has led to, what Campbell calls, "a static and ahistorical conceptualisation of identity" (1992:32). This study took this criticism into account and was designed qualitatively, with the hope of focusing on a small number of participants in order to understand better how they live their social identities in a real (societal) context.

The second problem with SIT is that it reduces "society" to the "group" which doesn't acknowledge societal power relations. Francis states that "by reducing society to the level of the group, the theory fails to attend to the societal level of analysis and to recognise the fact that group membership is located against the backdrop of a social hierarchy of unequal power relations" (2005:28). In order to overcome this obstacle, Campbell expands SIT to include Leonard's materialist framework for understanding human consciousness. Leonard views society as divided into a hierarchy of social relationships based on categories such as race, gender, class, etc. The categories which are part of the dominant groups have privileged access to political and economic power (1984:11). Francis explains that the dominant groups exercise control over social institutions, thereby promoting ideological beliefs that are most likely to legitimate and maintain the unequal power relations (2005:28). Leonard's view offers a materialist framework for understanding the relationship between individual and society (and between competing social groups) and is therefore useful for expanding SIT.

The third problem is that the theory fails to develop a theoretical or methodological conceptualisation of the interaction between the individual and society, especially regarding the interaction between the cognitive processes such as self-categorisation and the concrete social world in which the individual exists (Francis, 2005:26). It was therefore also important for this study to take into account the specific historical context in which individuals are categorised, as this is not always a matter of

individual perception, but part of a larger, social and ideological process.

The final problem with SIT is that it does not take into account what Campbell calls the "dynamic" nature of identity formation. Francis explains this problem: "She argues that although Tajfel made elusive comments about the concept of social change and often referred to the importance of taking account of social change in a theory of social identity, the concept of social change has never been developed in any significant way" (2005:29). This is clearly also a problem for the current study, as it is situated in post-Apartheid South Africa, which is a society characterised by social changes. These need to be acknowledged and incorporated in the participants' identity formation.

Having examined SIT in more detail and having looked at some of the problems with it through Campbell's critique (1992), it must be noted that SIT has been placed under question as still holding relevance and writers like Stets and Burke (2000) have suggested it be teamed up with other theories such as identity theory in order to more fully understand the self. However, other writers view SIT as best suited to the study of group behaviour. For example, Huddy's (2002) more recent research applies SIT to the study of political behaviour and political phenomena and views it as a valuable theory for understanding group behaviour.

Hopefully this section has provided some insight into the theoretical foundations that underlie this study. The following section will deal with the literature regarding race.

LITERATURE SURVEY PART 2: RACE

Introduction

Initially when I decided to investigate "Whiteness", this appeared to be a fairly clear objective. I often heard mention of race in the conversations of people around me and in discussions in the media. Race seemed, through its popular use, to be a straightforward, clear-cut concept. However, closer application to defining race raised a number of issues that problematised this taken-for-granted, common sense understanding of the term. These need to be discussed here to the extent that it is relevant to the current study.

It is at this point that I would like to move onto a survey of the literature around the concept of race, which forms the groundwork for my research. The immediate challenge lay in the identification of "White" people whom I could interview. This appeared to be fairly simple, again based on commonly held understandings of "Whiteness" which are usually dependent on physically recognizable features. However, much of the shift in the literature has come to question what is meant by race, a concept which was once considered to be a biologically determined fact. As a result, it would be contradictory for me to base my selection of participants on this problematic conception of race as a biologically, clear-cut reality, thereby reaching a different conclusion from the literature survey.

This section, however, does not deal with the methods and methodology used in the study (discussed in the next chapter) and will instead focus on the theoretical shift around the concept of race, as well as look at a variety of writers' understandings of "race". Firstly, the section will begin with an overview of the debates that have characterized understandings of race as either a biological reality or as a social construction. Secondly, a pathway somewhere in between the two is explored by looking at Omi and Winant's arguments. And thirdly, the section will review how race is viewed and lived in the South African context.

Between biological reality and social construction: Searching for a definition

Frankenberg, in her research on the racial identity of White women (1993) takes the position that race is a socially constructed concept and not in itself an inherently meaningful category. Rather, she views it as one that is linked to power and status relations, the meaning of which can change over time. Banton (2000) looks at how shifts in the meaning of the word "race" have occurred over time, often driven by political circumstances which have helped mold these changes, pointing to the time-specific nature of many definitions of race. This type of definition is supported by organisations such as Amnesty International, which state, "The concept of race has no biological basis. It is a socio-political construction usually based on physical characteristics. Racial categories are arbitrary and often used for political ends" (2001:1). The rest of the report illustrates how race and the emphasis on physical differences have been used to different political ends, from police harassment to genocide.

These views reflect a challenge within both the natural and human sciences to view race as socially constructed, even as illusionary, rather than as a biologically determined fact. Francis, in his investigation of biracial identities, looks at how race theoreticians have historically tried to classify humanity into races, with varying degrees of success. For example, the early scientist Linnaeus (the most important originator of classification, born in 1707) identified four, Blumenbach identified five, Haeckel found 36, while others have come up with different numbers. These problems with definition, he suggests, indicate that race is not a fixed and unchanging biological fact. It also suggests that there are no morphologically homogeneous or pure races (Francis, 2005:6).

In order to explore how my participants' senses of "race" and "Whiteness" have an impact on their professional identity, I will make use of "racialisation" as a concept. Miller explains: "Miles [1989] believes 'race' as a biological or social entity does not exist. Rather, it takes the form of a social reality through the ideological process of racialisation, where 'races' are socially imagined phenomenon" (1999:42).

However, as Hirschman states: "Although racial differences may be only skin deep, it is widely assumed that races have been a primordial source of identity and

intergroup antagonism from the earliest societies to the present, with ancient hatreds, exploitation, and discrimination among the most common patterns" (2004:385). His view of race is that it is not something tribal or ancient that has been there for centuries, but that it is something that has been developed and grown apace with modernity. While social science did not originate the idea of difference between races, many social scientists in the Social Darwinist tradition, were part of the construction and justification of racial theories (2004:386). Then, in the 20th century, social scientists, often after significant social events such as the rise and fall of Nazi Germany, tried to challenge these earlier assumptions and reveal their empirical lack of evidence. Hirschman states, "Although biological theories of race have been largely discredited by these political events and scientific progress, racial identities, classifications, and prejudices remain part of the fabric of many modern societies" (2004:386). This could account for the often, quite entrenched, "common-sense" definitions of race, usually based on race as fact, which still shape both public and private debates (this will be discussed in relation to South Africa later in this section).

Hirschman further argues that definitions of race are central to exploitative relations and racism. He defines racism as "the belief that all humankind can be divided into a finite number of races with differing characteristics and capacities because of their genes or other inherited biological features" (2004:389). The origins of ideological racism had their roots in the emergence of the modern era, which brought about three significant transformations that created sharp divides between Europeans and other people: firstly, the enslavement of millions of Africans for work on plantations in America; secondly, the spread of colonialism and European rule throughout the world in the 19th century; and, thirdly, the development of Social Darwinism, the pseudo-scientific theory of European superiority that became dominant in the 19th century (Hirschman, 2004:392). While there was a general decline in scientific racism and racial practices in official policies, race still mattered (Hirschman, 2004:399). Discrimination still lingered, and there was little challenge to the accepted categories of races.

While clearly, in some ways, the acceptance of race as concrete categories into which humans can be placed, was being challenged (especially in academic research), what has remained is a popular dependence on these categories, which still shape both popular thinking and public policy around the world. Race is still

regarded as a real entity by most people; as Hirschman states, "Although the historical assumption that populations consist of a finite number of mutually exclusive racial groups is no longer tenable, awareness of this fact is relatively new" (2004:400). For example there is still much confusion over race boundaries when it comes to census classifications and other administrative records. People get socialised regarding these random boundaries of race within the society in which they live. Here Hirschman draws on the examples of the "one-drop" rule in America, which states that people of mixed race or anyone with a Black heritage cannot be purely White and therefore cannot be classified as such, thus falling into the category "Black". This perpetuates the myth of a "pure" White race. Other societies view racial classification differently, for example in Latin America or South Africa, where mixed populations don't follow the same "one-drop" rule, but rather exist on a kind of colour continuum that accommodates other groupings, for example "Coloured" (Hirschman, 2004:408; See also Wright, 1997:165). These examples serve to illustrate that the categories of racial classification a person could be placed into, depends more on the society in which they live than on any scientifically accurate measure.

While there is much debate and many different views emerge, what does become clear is the arbitrary nature of racial classification (countless examples of which can be found throughout history). These throw even the everyday, common sense idea of "race" into ultimate confusion, increasing the need for social scientists to understand better its persistence. Hirschman proposes the use of ethnicity as an alternative concept to more effectively mark the diversity present in society (2004:410). While race relies on either/or distinctions, ethnicity emphasises ambiguity.

Acknowledging the importance of race: a pathway in between

Winant (2000) agrees that race was seen as an essence, something of a natural phenomenon with a fixed meaning, before such events as World War II, decolonisation, urbanisation and the civil rights movement in the United States. Later writers like W.E.B. Du Bois (1935) and Franz Boas (1906) conceived of it in more social and historical terms (In Winant, 2000:181). As a result of these political and social changes, as well as a shift in the thinking around race, it is today widely accepted as socially constructed.

However, Winant questions this recent discovery of the illusionary nature of race and its replacement by other, supposedly more objective categories, such as class, nationality or ethnicity. He instead argues for an acknowledgment of both: "the concept of race is not an ideological construct, nor does it reflect an objective condition" (2000:182). This reflects much of the thinking that underlines Omi and Winant's work regarding race and racial formation in the United States. They state: "There is a continuous temptation to think of race as an essence, as something fixed, concrete, and objective. And there is also an opposite temptation: to imagine race as a mere illusion, a purely ideological construct which some ideal non-racist social order would eliminate" (1994:54). Based on the latter understanding of race as an illusionary concept, it would be possible to eliminate race with the establishment of an ideal, non-racist social order. They see it as necessary to disrupt and reframe this rigid and bipolar manner of looking at race (1994:54). Instead, they see race as something that is constantly changing in relation to its historical and socio-political world. Therefore, the selection of which features are relevant for racial signification is always a social and historical process, as these categories that are used to classify human groups along racial lines, on more critical examination are revealed to be imprecise and arbitrary. However, to do away with the concept entirely, would be difficult. While on some level it would be a logical step to take, realistically, race has become part of widely held beliefs that are central to people's identity and understanding of the social world. This would make it very difficult simply to banish the concept (1994:55).

Omi and Winant attempt to strike a pathway between the conceptions of race as illusion and race as fact. They state that: "A more effective starting point is the recognition that despite its uncertainties and contradictions, the concept of race continues to play a fundamental role in structuring and representing the social world. The task of theory is to explain this situation. It is to both avoid the utopian framework which sees race as an illusion we can somehow 'get beyond', and also the essentialist formulation which sees race as something objective and fixed, a biological datum" (1994:55). This is the foundation of their racial formation theory, which is based on two steps: firstly, it is a process of historically situated projects which organise and represent human bodies and social structures. Secondly, it is linked to hegemony, the way in which society is organised and ruled. Further, they define racial formation as "the socio-historical process by which racial categories are

created, inhabited, transformed, and destroyed" (1994:55). This is a useful framework for looking at race in South Africa. Racial formation is a social process that is played out at both the macro-level through policies, politics and the media; and at the micro-level, through everyday experiences. My study hopes to explore this more closely. Identity construction takes place in a specific historical context, in this case the political transition of South Africa, where identity is deliberately and constantly being renegotiated. Foster and Louw-Potgieter (in Miller, 1999:15) argue that social identity construction is when "the individual becomes part of a social group and the group becomes part of the individual's self-concept." Through this process, this study will explore whether race is a social reality in the lives of the young White people interviewed here and if so, how this is experienced.

In summary, Omi and Winant's theory of racial formation "emphasises the social nature of race, the absence of any essential racial characteristics, the historical flexibility of racial meanings and categories, the conflictual character of race at both the 'micro-' and 'macro-social' levels, and the irreducible political aspect of racial dynamics" (1994:2).

South Africa: race and the rainbow nation

One of the paradoxes of the South African transition to democracy is the commitment to non-racialism and the simultaneous reiteration of racial difference and separation. Posel bases this observation on a survey done by the Institute for Justice and Reconciliation, which indicated a strong lingering of racial reasoning in the everyday lives of South Africans. It showed how respondents made lifestyle choices and judgments about others based on race (Posel, 2001:50). A similar finding of race being the source of mistrust between race groups was found by Burns' study on South African high school learners (2004). Posel states, "After decades of Apartheid's racial reasoning, the idea that South African society comprises four distinct races - 'Whites', 'Coloureds', 'Indians' and 'Africans' - has become a habit of thought and experience, a facet of popular 'common sense' still widely in evidence" (2001:51). It becomes clear that for many South Africans race is not an illusion, but rather a reality, a fact, that is used to negotiate daily life.

South Africa's recent racial history is rooted in the legislation of the past, which

attempted to classify every citizen according to race. This was put into effect by the Population Registration Act of 1950. While the legislation proved to be clumsy and ineffective in being able to draw clear boundaries around the four races, it was successful in confirming and shaping people's thinking around race, which largely persists today. As argued above, much research and thinking around race has disproved it as something that can be used to classify people and their abilities. For example, Maré states clearly: "I do not accept that there are biologically differentiated social groups called races to which we can attach generalisable attributes of culture or intelligence" (2000:5).

Maré questions this "common sense" notion of race, and raises some further questions, for example, how do notions of race inform the structuring of identity? What are the social contexts that construct, confirm and maintain them? (2001:76). The research project reported on here has attempted to answer some of these questions. It examines the intersections of social identity, stories of everyday life, and ideology. As explained in Part 1 of the literature survey, social identity means identifying with a group or category of people, which arises out of the process of social categorisation (simplifying social reality) and social comparison (creating a status hierarchy). How race thinking (or racialism) affects social identity is therefore a necessary question to ask (Maré, 2001:77).

These questions will be dealt with more closely in later chapters. Before moving on, race as a concept that applies both in the "old" and the "new" South Africa needs to be examined. As Posel has argued, these racial categories (however invalid they may be on closer inspection) are still widely in use in both the public and private spheres. She states: "Nor is this simply an Apartheid residue; there are ethical and political arguments - as in the Employment Equity Act, for example - for the renewed salience of racial identification in the project of 'transformation'" (2001:51). In order to understand this paradox (which was spoken about at the start of this section), it might be useful to look at how the "old" South African government viewed race.

Apartheid did not only depend on biological racism, as there were strong international feelings against it in the aftermath of Nazism, but also depended on culturalist thinking. Race was defined within this "bioculturalist" mix, as Gilroy puts it, "which aligned readings of bodily difference closely with differences of class, lifestyle and

general repute (loosely subsumed under the rubric of 'culture')" (2001:53). Race was constructed for political purposes that served the minority White population and could justify Apartheid.

While much of the thinking that underpinned the Population Registration Act was influenced by biological racism, which saw race as exclusively a biological category determined by "blood", there were other versions of race as well. The Act itself did not take such a rigid view of racial categorisation and, instead, opted for "a deliberately more flexible, elastic approach to the definition of racial categories... one that gave official standing to long-established social readings of racial difference, which tied these judgements closely to hierarchies of social class" (2001:55). This often meant that race came down to "common sense" understandings of the different categories and the boundaries between them, and drew on "way of life" as determinant of race (Posel, 2001:56). This vagueness and lack of clarity on racial categories was seen as a weakness by many, but from the perspective of the Apartheid government, this reading of the law missed the point. The looseness with which the racial categories were defined made them more effective as instruments of racialisation and much of the racial reasoning persists today in the "new" South Africa (2001:57).

In order to understand how race as a concept worked, and is still lived in South Africa, it is necessary to look more closely at Posel's explanations of Apartheid's racial reasoning. Firstly, she identifies race and racial difference as self-evident "facts" of experience (2001:63). Race was seen as a self-evident, common sense and therefore uncontroversial fact of South African life. Its existence was never questioned and there was no carefully reasoned evidence to support or oppose the mass classifications into Black, White, Indian and Coloured.

Secondly, Posel identified the South African ontology of race as being a mix of biology, class and culture (2001:64). It was largely based on the "bioculturalist" view of race, which drew on socio-cultural and bodily differences, "Bodies became signifiers of status, power and worth in a hierarchy that privileged Whiteness (as both a biological and social condition) at its apex" (Posel, 2001:64). This reasoning was related to the first point, as it was also not supported by any type of science of race, but rather depended on a notion of race that was based on everyday experience and

the way it was lived, unquestioningly. The racial classification system was a judgement of a way of life, rather than just a narrow issue concerned with bodily features.

Thirdly, for Posel, part of the reasoning around race during Apartheid South Africa was that race was ubiquitous (2001:64). Because the definition of the races had been found to be more than just morphological features and to include culture and "way of life", then this also meant that race was regarded as an attribute of all experience, where "anything and everything could be read as a sign of race, from a person's preferred hairdresser and her children's choice of friends, through to the texture of her ear lobe and the definition of her cheek bones" (Posel, 2001:64). In this way, race was entrenched as an overriding feature of all facets of life in South Africa. As Posel explains, seeing race in everything "had powerful consequences: if anything and everything could be read as a sign of race, then race was *in* everything - a ubiquitous dimension of everyday life, the inevitable adverb and adjective of all experience" (2001:65).

Fourthly, race was seen as essential rather than as accidental or contingent (Posel, 2001:65). Another unquestioned assumption about race was the idea that race was "an essential combination of elements, rather than one which was contingent, mutable and individually mobile" (Posel, 2001:65). This meant that every aspect of a person could be put down or explained in terms of race; for example, a Coloured person would have certain definable characteristics in common with all others who fell under the broad category of "Coloured". Posel states, "The ideological logic of Apartheid depended upon thinking about all Blacks as essentially different from all Whites and Coloureds, and, correlatively, all Blacks as sharing essential features that united them into one race" (2001:65).

Fifthly, Posel identifies race as being the primary determinant of all experience (2001:65). Another way of reasoning was that race was seen as an adequate description of a shared essence that made people what they were. Within this mode of reasoning, race was "in" everything essentially rather than accidentally.

Sixthly, race can also be identified as the site of White fear (Posel, 2001:66). The need to form such strict racial boundaries was born out of fear for "the other" and of

racial mixing. Posel explains this "psychology of fear": "Rigid, inflexible racial definitions, which promised to eradicate the prospect of racial mixing, allegedly kept White women safe from the threat of Black male sexuality, and protected the racial purity of innocent White children (recurring themes in Apartheid propaganda)" (2001:66).

Understanding the racial reasoning of Apartheid is important for any study that focuses attention on racial identities in South Africa today, as these points would have formed part of the participants' socialisations around race. The study will hopefully also show whether these young, White South Africans have changed and adopted a different way of reasoning around race from what was the dominant race thinking during Apartheid.

Post-Apartheid South Africa has followed an ideology of non-racialism. However, race is still one of the primary ways of identification, for example, where countless official forms and records require the ticking of one of the boxes next to "Black", "White", "Indian" or "Coloured". Maré refers to this as the "banality of race confirmation", which takes place every day through seemingly insignificant ways (2001:76). It seems South Africa is faced with a paradox in trying to move away from an old, racialised past, the new non-racial ideology is dependent on those old categories for its foundation. Maré states, "here lies the central argument for the continuation of race-based policies of redress, as a (necessary) mirror of the race-based discrimination of the past" (2001:81). It appears necessary, then, to continue to construct our social realities in these old, racial terms. The racial reasoning has shifted and it follows that if the past has created inequality in terms of "race" categories, then redress has to employ these same categories.

This is one of the problems my study has run into as well; how does one reject or at least remain critical of, racial categorisation, while at the same time depending on and continuing to use them still? Nobles warns: "Race is at once an empty category and a powerful instrument. Yet theoretical formulations that stress the radical plasticity of race, mostly correctly, risk obscuring its concrete manifestations and the institutional sites of its construction and maintenance... race is not something that language simply describes, it is something that is created through language and institutional practice" (2000:12). Race is still very real, and lived almost

unquestioningly in South Africa.

In its submission to the World Conference against Racism NGO forum, the ANC stated that after the demise of Apartheid, the ANC did not attempt to establish Black racial domination, "instead they reached resolutely and optimistically for the antithesis of Apartheid – the ideal of non-racialism: unity in action against racism among diverse peoples. Throughout its history the African National Congress has played a decisive role in nurturing and building this humanist response to a system that sought to deny our humanity" (2001). Here "non-racialism" and acknowledgement of "diverse people", which cannot but refer to races, sit side by side in the same statement. While this encapsulates the spirit of the new democracy, it also highlights the problem of "race" in a supposedly non-racial society and any study dealing with race needs to explore further what the consequences for race thinking in South Africa are with regard to this paradox. In order to do this, it would be useful to return to Posel's article "What's in a name? Racial categorisations under Apartheid and their afterlife". Clearly, the problem arises with having to be classified and still make use of old racial categories in the name of transformation. As Posel states, "If, therefore, the process of 'transformation' is seen to restate the need for a consistent, stable catalogue of racial difference, then it seems impossible – at least in this respect – to avoid the pitfalls of essentialist reasoning about race" (2001:70).

The idea of race, racial identities and of racial reasoning have continued since the demise of Apartheid and have become important sites of interrogation and contestation. New significance has been afforded to the idea of racial differentiation by the need for transformation, as mentioned above. Race has become the site of redress as opposed to past privilege which also means that not only are there social and political pressures to reinstate these racial categories, but legal requirements as well. This raises questions about what criteria are used to be used to determine who is White, Coloured, Indian and Black, who has the authority to classify the races, and finally, of course, it raises questions regarding the goal of non-racialism (Posel, 2001:68). For me this indicates a need to explore racial identities in the new South Africa, not as a site that has become irrelevant, but one that is still contested and being reshaped and renamed.

As Posel and many others have pointed out, Apartheid still has a strong hold on

everyday thought and experience and will affect South Africa and South Africans for a long time to come. But changes have been taking place due to the lifting of racial barriers, for example in growing mixed race residential areas, which are challenging race as a concept and as a boundary in ways that need to be understood (2001:69). At this point it would be useful to look briefly at non-racialism and racial identity.

Non-racialism and racial identity

While ideologically the "new" South Africa follows a path of non-racialism, it has also put in place policies of redress which depend on racial classifications. Posel, Hyslop and Nieftagodien have commented that this commitment to non-racialism has meant the tendency to steer clear of race (2001:viii). However, new discussions opened up around race with the Mbeki presidency. The Mandela years saw a muting of overt discussion around race, partly because of a commitment to non-racialism and attempts to generate cohesion in a chronically fragmented society (2001:xi). The Mbeki presidency brought forward a more Africanist approach. Two further developments also brought about a heated discussion on race, namely, the discontent with the outcomes of the Truth and Reconcilliation Commission (TRC) hearings; and, secondly, the Human Rights Commission's hearings into racism in the media (Posel, Hyslop and Nieftagodien, 2001:xi). Both developments highlighted that race could not be ignored, that racism was still rife, and that debates about how race was to be defined in post-Apartheid South Africa needed to take place in both the public and private spheres.

A further point that needs to be discussed is the issue of non-racialism and its consequences for identity. Mangcu, in his article "Liberating race from Apartheid", begins by first grappling with a definition of race. He refers to Cornel West, who defined Blackness as more than just a matter of skin colour and who maintains that "Blackness is a political and ethical construct" (Mangcu, 2001:18). A similar political definition was proposed by Steve Biko and the Black Consciousness movement in the 1970s, which "defined Black people as all those who were by law or tradition discriminated against, and identified themselves as a unit towards the realisation of their freedom" (Mangcu, 2001:18). If this is one way of identifying oneself racially, then what does this mean for a White racial identity? For many, Whiteness has meant or been synonymous with oppression. While, non-racialism saw race as a

burden to be transcended in the search for freedom and justice, Black Consciousness saw race as a cultural concept that gave people their identity especially as a psychological measure in the struggle for political and social liberation.

Mangcu argues that non-racialism leaves no room for cultural identities (2001:24). While he writes more about the Black identity, he says he does not know much about White identity mostly because "White people describe themselves as identity-less, and many of them have become latter-day converts to the notion of non-racialism" (2001:24). He argues that this is because "the role of White people has been too much of an embarrassment for anyone to embrace it as a positive identity... I believe, however, that contrary to the desire to run away from race, White people should try to define a new identity for themselves" (Mangcu, 2001:24-25). In conclusion, are young White South Africans "running away" from race? How are they choosing to define themselves in the present context? It is these questions that I have gone back to through out the research process.

Conclusion

While this section has touched on exploring White identity, this will be dealt with more fully in the following section. What these debates serve to do is highlight the tensions surrounding the many ways of race thinking, more generally and specifically in South Africa.

Race cannot be viewed as something fixed or concrete, as identity is continuously shifting. Much thinking around race has taken the approach that race is harder to pin down than is often thought in the daily use of the word. Yet in spite of commitments to non-racialism in South Africa, post 1994, race identity is still firmly entrenched in our society as a central reference point of identity (Maré, 2000:6). Posel (2001) and Maré (2001) have examined how this "common sense" definition of race permeates not only everyday life, but social research as well. This needs to be acknowledged in a study such as mine, which cannot be entirely detached from racial thinking. It would, therefore, be useful to share the approach of Omi and Winant (1994) when looking at racial identity, and approach that lies somewhere between the utopian framework that looks at race as an illusion and the essentialist formulation that race

is something fixed. The following section will deal further with the literature that has been produced specifically on "White identity", a relatively new area of academic interest.

LITERATURE SURVEY PART 3: "WHITENESS"

Introduction

Part two dealt with race in more general terms and unpacked the paradox of how race, especially in South Africa (both during Apartheid and today) is lived out and "real", yet at the same time a social construct. This chapter turns the lens on Whiteness and asks the question, what does being "White" mean? What does one do with this category? At this point, self-reflexivity is called for and I attempt to explore my own experience of Whiteness, as well as what other writers and researchers have said about it.

To begin with, the concept of "Whiteness" is as much a social construct as it is a way of living out one's racial identity in the world. Its meaning is not fixed and can change according to the different political, economic and social landscapes the individual occupies. Erasmus states: "Racial meanings have real effects on people's lives. Hence, when I use the terms Black(ness) and White(ness)... I do not refer to skin colour. Instead, I refer to the ways in which hierarchical structures of meaning attached to skin colour have shaped people's material lives as well as their perceptions of themselves, of others, and of the world around them" (2005:10). As I argued earlier, race is always relational, and those relations have to be examined within a specific historical context. This serves as a useful starting point for my exploration of "White" identity.

Not only is it important to examine Whiteness for the sake of understanding this study's focus - namely, young, White, South African student teachers - better, but also in order to explore some methodological issues that are raised by Whiteness. Fenner-Barbour (1998) observes that social scientists have largely been unfamiliar with examining how White people live racially structured lives, although that has changed somewhat over the past two decades. As a result, there is a need to problematise Whiteness during research just as much as any other social category. Part of doing this is the process of self-identification as White for myself, as researcher. Otherwise, if not deliberately confronted, "White" remains located as the dominant, hegemonic identity and continues to promote the illusion that Whiteness is

normative (Fenner-Barbour,1998:64). Therefore, this section, as well as the following chapters, hope to help in this deconstruction of "Whiteness" as an ideology, a discourse and a series of practices.

This part of the literature review will deal with the broad topic of Whiteness by grouping together some common themes that stood out for me on a personal and an academic level through my own reading: firstly it will look at Whiteness, as an area of study that is in transition; secondly, it will look at Whiteness as "invisible"; thirdly, it will examine the idea of "becoming White"; fourthly, it will look specifically at "South African Whiteness"; and, lastly, this section will discuss Whiteness in an education context.

"Where are we?" Whiteness in transition

Hardiman (2001) explains how "Whiteness studies" have emerged in a number of disciplines ranging from cultural studies, history, sociology, to literary and film studies and many more. In both the United States and the United Kingdom, there has been a considerable increase in the literature on Whiteness (see for example, Nayak, 2002; Harper, 2002). Hardiman also deals with the various responses that have emerged to the question of "what is Whiteness?" and "What are Whites to do with it?" (2001:118). One type of response would be the "race traitor" approach used by Roediger (1991) and Ignatiev (1995) who want Whites to become "race traitors" in order to reject White hegemony and a White dominated society. Ignatiev does not see Whiteness beyond White privilege and does not acknowledge that there is a White culture, and by this I mean that he views Whiteness as nothing more than a social position of privilege, which exists only to defend this position (Ignatiev, Conference Paper, April 1997).

Omi and Winant see another response emerging as a kind of "racial reaction", to the civil rights movement in the United States, first appearing in the late 1960s and reaching maturity in the 1980s. This understanding of Whiteness sees it as being under threat, a kind of "new victim" of equal rights (1994:117). (See also Delgado and Stefancic, 1997, for a discussion on how Whites see "the other" as a threat and something to be feared.) This response will be discussed a little further on in relation to South Africa.

Gallagher, in his study on White college students and their sense of Whiteness, argues, "Whiteness is a state of change... The meaning of Whiteness is not to be found in any single description(s)... Whites can be defined as naive because they attach little meaning to their race, humane in their desire to reach out to Non-Whites, defensive as self-defined victims, and reactionary in their calls for a return to White solidarity" (1997:6).

Before moving on to the next section, this growth in the literature, conferences and studies of Whiteness, does raise some criticism, which I feel is worth mentioning at this point. Levine-Rasky asks: "Is the study of Whiteness a bandwagon? Like a new gospel in race relations, is its appeal based on alleviating White guilt just as it may legitimise psychic distancing between Whites and racialised others? Does it adequately engage ethical issues and commit itself to the kind of social change that necessitates relinquishment of White entitlement and conferred dominance (McIntosh 1992)? Does it encourage the disturbance of its own foundations?" (2002:11). I have tried to bear these questions in mind throughout this study, as they are not only relevant to the literature itself, but also, on a more personal level, to the establishment of a positive, White identity.

Looking at the literature, there appear to be a number of responses (with only a few mentioned here). Hardiman states that challenges to Whiteness have caused it to lose some of its invisibility and have made it a contentious area of change. Also, there has been a different responses from the right, liberal, centre and left of the political spectrum in coming to terms with "where Whiteness is today" (2001:121). What the brief look at the literature does do, is show how wide-ranging the responses to this topic are. There is no one unified approach and the only commonality is the need to explore the topic further, and then to add a South African voice to the international debate.

Next I will examine one of the main themes that emerged from the literature.

The "invisibility" of Whiteness

This idea of Whiteness being "invisible" seemed to me at first an obvious statement. Growing up in a White family, going to a White school, playing with White friends (an

accurate description of my childhood experience in Switzerland) meant that I had never questioned race. I wasn't aware of my Whiteness because I had nothing to compare it to and difference manifested more strongly in other ways, for example language. I was born in Switzerland and lived there until I was eight years old, when my parents decided to move back to South Africa in the late 1980s. Up until this point, I had been to South Africa to visit family, but I was, at the time, under the impression that South Africa was very much the same as Europe, except perhaps warmer. I imagine this to be much like any child growing up around people who looked the same. Of course there was a distant notion of "the other" that pressed softly at the edges of my world, but it never came close enough to challenge my own identity or confirm it in its "racialised difference".

However, what I was never aware of was the systemic nature of this type of thinking. Frankenberg, in her book, *White Women, Race Matters: The social construction of Whiteness,* argues that in most contexts, White people tend to see themselves as "racially neutral" and that this needs to be challenged (1993:1). Dyer takes this further to say that Whiteness has always allowed for the position of "just" being human and not being marked out as racialised (2000:539). Tatum (1997) further discusses how many White people have rarely considered their racial identity. Similarly, other writers, for example Helms (1990) and Hardiman (2001), look at the same issue. However, it could also be argued that the notion of race only works if there is more than one "race" and therefore, as in the case of my "White" childhood context in Switzerland, you only belong to a group if you are aware that there are other groups that you do not belong to. Clearly, this is related to the context of the individual, which will be discussed further on.

Flagg states: "In this [American] society, the White person has an everyday option not to think of herself in racial terms at all. In fact, Whites seem to pursue that option so habitually that it may be a defining characteristic of Whiteness: to be White is not to think about it" (1997:220). Flagg calls this the transparency phenomenon and argues that as a result of this, we have to be sceptical of ostensibly race-neutral decision making by White decision makers. It appears then, that Whiteness, cloaked in this "invisibility" becomes the norm and, as Flagg explains, moves from discourse to unquestioned practice. Other writers such as Gallagher, challenge the invisibility of Whiteness even within an American context. He states that Whiteness is in the midst

of a fundamental transition, where most now see and think of themselves as White, a group with its own set of interests. Gallagher points to the following reasons for this shift or transition in Whiteness: "The factors shaping White racialisation include the decline of ethnicity, the rise of identity politics, the perception that Whiteness is a social and economic liability, and the precepts of neo-conservative racial politics"(1997:7).

Levine-Rasky points out that Whiteness is also not a homogeneous grouping, but rather that it is further undercut by other forms of identity, which could be more salient, for example, social class, gender, sexuality, politics, ethnicity, religion. Whiteness is fragmented along these lines and Levine-Rasky states that "not all Whites are White in the same way" (2002:4). She argues that in a context where race is not challenged, racial identity would remain "invisible". In the case of South Africa, where it was never possible to ignore, with perpetual reminders both internally and externally, the form of "invisibility" would be different, for example a conscious awareness of a racial hierarchy.

At this point some questions are raised for me. Firstly, most of the above writers were reflecting on a society that has a majority White population. Would the same apply for South Africa, a society where Whites form a minority (being White in South Africa and being White in Switzerland would be two different things)? Secondly, would it be possible for my participants to be able to grow up in South Africa and not be aware of themselves as Whites at least on some level?

Becoming "White"

A key to these questions could be to look at race as something one "becomes" through others, an interaction, or a specific, lived context. In the preceding section I argued that racial identity is established in relation to an "other", rather than being a fixed essence. In the following two sections I will investigate this more carefully by focusing on a southern African context and drawing on the writings of Pattman, Steyn, and others.

Pattman states that looking at identities is a reflective task and this is a guideline I will follow throughout this project. Pattman writes about his experiences of being one of

the few White teachers left at a teacher training college in Zimbabwe after being recruited from England by a development agency. His Whiteness is made obvious through the conspicuous absence of Whites interacting with Black people in everyday life. He becomes White through his experience of Zimbabwe and through some Zimbabweans' experience of him (1998:52). While he tried to resist being an "expert" and an "outsider", he felt caught up in a complex web of identities specific to that context. On the one hand, as a White man from Europe, he was seen as expert and knowledgeable; on the other "this idealised view of England went hand in hand with suspicions of expatriates as being arrogant and concerned with rubbishing 'Black' culture and 'Black' attempts to develop" (1998:51).

Further, Pattman points out that being White in Zimbabwe and in England were different things. In England it was much easier to take this privileged identity for granted, in fact to not be aware of it at all. Being aware of race was seen as racist and something linked to "White power", in Zimbabwe it was unavoidable (1998:57). What Pattman's experiences highlight is the relevance of context to a discussion on identity. One of my main research questions is to explore the context or landscape of my participants in order to establish how it has shaped their identities, racial and other.

Pattman raises another point that is relevant to this study, namely how identity is tied up with being a teacher; for example, in the way it enters into the stories one tells students and in the way one constructs oneself for them. If a White teacher is not aware of this and does not confront this with their students, then they could become complicit in the maintenance of Whiteness in this invisible form.

South African "Whiteness"

This section will briefly attempt to define some of the characteristics of "South African Whiteness". While some of these points may intersect with the general introductory section above, I will focus more on a South African landscape. Once again, race cannot be seen as an overarching identity, but rather as one that is also subdivided by a number of other identities and, additionally, as Steyn puts it, it might be more accurate to look at "Whitenesses" (2001:xxx).

Steyn argues that a study of South African Whiteness is of particular interest because of a number of external factors such as the recent political transition and the fact that White people are a minority group. This makes South African Whiteness different from Whiteness in other contexts such as Europe and America. As a result "in such a situation of ambivalence and personal confusion, it is reasonable to expect that the meaning of Whiteness will be highly contested ideologically, and will undergo notable changes" (2001:xxii). She explains how South Africa is a "deep-settler" country like America, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. However, in contrast, South African Whites remain a minority group and unlike the rest of Africa, the Whites in South Africa are a permanent group, not aboriginal but "sociologically indigenous" (2001:24). It is due to this and the fact that the indigenous people retained their culture and language, that Whites in South Africa have always been aware of the tenuousness of their situation. Steyn explains how Blackness was therefore always seen as a great danger and a threat. This knowledge was etched into the collective psyche of Whites in South Africa and was a fear that was played on by the Nationalist government (2001:25).

In their research, Salusbury and Foster (2004) look specifically at White, English speaking South Africans (or what they refer to as WESSAs) and state that there has been a general lack of theory on this group. They suggest that one of the reasons for this could be the tendency of WESSAs to adhere to a philosophy of individualism and therefore avoid defining themselves as a group. Another could be a lack of collective persecution, which has resulted in weak social bonding (2004:94). Another common feature for this particular group is that they, as writer J.M. Coetzee puts it, are "no longer European, not yet African" (1988). They maintain ties with Europe, while at the same time see South Africa as their home. Salusbury and Foster point out that the group tends to know what they are not (Black or Afrikaans) yet have very little sense of what they are (2004:95).

Salusbury and Foster argue that unlike their American and British counterparts, WESSAs have not developed an awareness of cultural distinctiveness. Salusbury and Foster interpret this as a way through which English speaking White people marginalise an "other" and normalise their own Whiteness. They resist a cultural distinctiveness through emphasising individuality over group belonging (2004:97). This is investigated in the current study as well and will be reported on in Chapter

Five.

Ballard (2003) looks at the reality of the new South Africa and how narratives of racism have changed. He does this by examining the issue of racial mixing in neighbourhoods and how Whites talk about people of another race moving in next door. He suggests "that while many people may attempt to convince themselves and others that they are not racist by avoiding certain words, they still appear to be concerned about racial hierarchies. Racism, then, is bigger than abusive or discriminatory language" (2003:2). He argues that White South Africans tend to gravitate towards what Frankenberg (1993) called colour and power evasiveness, where race is not mentioned and avoided altogether, but where other categories and frameworks of exclusion such as class, standards, behaviour, economic income and ethics are used. By avoiding overt references to race, racism becomes covert and becomes more difficult to address. However, while this a useful way of interpreting the interactions of White people in a post Apartheid South Africa, it would be taken too far if all distinctions on class, standards or culture were seen as hidden racism. A further problem with this argument is that it excludes other race groups from having a legitimate concern with standards, class and so on, by implying that this is only something that pertains to White people.

Many White South Africans make the statement "I don't see colour" and reject racism, and race as a socially relevant category. For them, seeing race is being racist and therefore they avoid any colour consciousness (Ballard, 2003:4; see also Ballard, 2004, for a discussion of South African suburbs and the claiming of the right to define neighbourhood identity and character). The mixing of neighbourhoods after the political change can be seen as a site where personal space and political space intersect, and is often interpreted as threatening by Whites. Neighbourhood identities then, are a complex articulation of social and personal identities, often informed by race, according to Ballard.

In his article on re-thinking White identity, which he explores through a study of popular music in post-Apartheid South Africa, Ballantine (2001) reveals the dialectical nature of White identity and their sense of place in the "new" South Africa. I feel it would be useful to examine some of the issues that emerged from his research, as it reveals some of the varied responses to being White in South Africa today and,

further, because of the emphasis on popular music, it links with the landscape my participants, as young South Africans, occupy.

Ballantine speaks of the political landscape as increasingly more polarised between White and Black and that a re-racialisation is taking place. He states further that opposition to the ANC government is seen as racist by Whites and as traitorous by Blacks: "As Black unemployment and poverty have worsened, the Mbeki government has diverted attention by racialising the immense problems it faces – certainly a powerful strategy, given the racial character of South Africa's past" (2001:5). He argues that this continued stereotyping and re-racialising is seen by some Whites as a way of effectively silencing their right to democratic citizenship. Race is also something that remains as important a determinant of one's identity and therefore job prospects and life chances, as under Apartheid (2001:9). This would indicate that a strong sense of group identity should exist among White people who feel threatened by the political transition. Again, this will be explored in more detail in Chapter Five where the interview data is discussed.

His paper peels off the layers of the new South Africa and the ideals of the "rainbow nation" to reveal a deeply dissatisfied and threatened White minority. But is this really the case? Ballantine states, "Recent White South African popular music deepens and extends our understanding of such responses. It gives subjective substance to what we might think of as 'fugitive' identities" (2001:10). Many songs speak of a restlessness, a sense of "homelessness", while others reveal a search for a new way to be White in South Africa (2001:10). Above all, Whiteness in South Africa cannot be ignored; it has starkly been made visible. Within this changing context, identities are in flux, fluid and always changing and adapting and if not doing this, then this rigidity has to be examined.

Steyn's research also reveals themes of displacement and loss. I will briefly outline some of these, as similar issues were raised in the interviews. Firstly, Steyn describes a certain "loss of home". "Home" here meaning a place away from Europe, that functions not only as a physical space, but a cultural and psychological one too, especially for English speaking Whites (2001:156). Emigration has become an issue in the post Apartheid South Africa, with many Whites choosing to leave the country. The International Immigration Alliance in Johannesburg, helped on average of 35 to

40 families emigrate every month in 2001. The reasons for leaving are also echoed by a University of Cape Town study of emigration, which states that "the numbers of those wanting to leave has risen since 1996-98, a relatively steady period following 'the great White fear' of 1994 when a Black majority government came to power for the first time amid (unfulfilled) White expectations of a racial bloodbath" (Mail & Guardian, 5 February 2001). Other, more recent, reasons for leaving include the fear of violent crime in South Africa, worries about the cost and quality of health services and schooling and uncertainty about job prospects in the face of affirmative action (Mail & Guardian, 5 February 2001). With regards to the increase in emigration amongst Whites, Steyn argues, "Most of the White people leaving the country now are doing so not only to find a different location that they perceive to be physically safe and economically predictable, but also to settle in a region more likely to remain culturally congruent and supportive of White identity" (2001: 156).

Secondly, she describes another theme, namely one of a loss of autonomy and control. This is closely linked to the above, where previously White dependence on Blacks was repressed and kept out of sight by the Nationalist government. Today, the shift in political power and the move to a multi-racial democracy has dislodged the idea of White autonomy in South Africa (2001:158).

Thirdly, Steyn picks up the loss of a sense of relevance, which is reflected in the wide spread tendency for White people to interpret their loss of political power as marginalisation, even though they still hold key positions in the country. She takes this further and explains that for some White people "the term reflects the experience of loss of a dominant position, subjectively translated as oppression" (2001:159).

Fourthly, there is the loss of guaranteed legitimacy for many Whites, who made sense of the world in terms of the "master narrative" which Steyn describes in her book 'Whiteness just isn't what it used to be': White Identity in a changing South Africa. The master narrative was a legitimating device; now, for many Whites, this is no longer self-evident (2001:159).

Lastly, Steyn mentions a loss of honour, or a loss of face, which Whites now have to deal with. Previously, there was no awareness, or confrontation with White guilt; however, now Whites have to deal with having shared a position that wronged others

or, at the least, benefited at other's expense. The willingness to deal with this collective guilt varies a great deal (2001:160).

While most of the above discussion has focused on a sense of loss, this cannot be seen as the only descriptor of "South African Whiteness". There are also many positive feelings contradicting this sense of loss, making the process of transition and the search for a new identity a lot more complex. These reflect a better understanding of the balance of loss and gain, that White people have a place within the new dispensation, and have a positive opportunity to participate in renegotiating their identities. She further comments: "Feelings of anomie, disorientation, grief, nostalgia, excitement, freedom, vertigo – the range of feelings that accompany the failure of a belief system, the demise of 'certain certainties' – these are feelings that are likely to be part of the experience of being White in South Africa for some time" (2001:161).

Whiteness and education

This final section will briefly look at the literature in terms of Whiteness and racial identity in an education context and moves towards the focus of my study, namely student teachers. Social identities, as has been discussed above, are intertwined with beliefs and opinions that are used to make sense of social reality. Pohan and Aguilar (2001) view this as an important point to research when this intersects with professional identities such as that of teacher. They sought to develop measures to assess teachers' beliefs regarding diversity which could inform intervention strategies as well as teacher education. While their concern centred on education in the United States, similar challenges are being faced by teachers in South Africa. They state, "Clearly, if schools are to better serve the needs and interests of all students, particularly students from groups that have not fared well in the U.S. educational system, then low expectations, negative stereotypes, biases/prejudices, and cultural misconceptions held by teachers must be identified, challenged, and reconstructed" (2001:160). This provides the motivation for the present study, which in particular looks at White student teachers and their constructions of identities, beliefs and opinions.

Harper (2002) looks at the experiences of two young White women teaching their first

year in First Nation communities (Innuit and Native American) in Canada. It reveals their struggle with their acute awareness of their race, of being White, and their sense of identity. Harper points out the relevance of such a study: "It is hoped that this project will produce a larger, clearer, and more dynamic picture of the history and process by which gendered and racialised teacher identities are assumed and negotiated. This may in turn indicate how to intervene more effectively in the preparation of teachers from dominant culture(s) for work in antiracist education in minority school contexts, and more generally, how all teachers can work effectively in any school context to support antiracist education" (2002:270).

Harper's study once again reveals the process of "becoming White" through a context of interaction with learners and the community around them. For example one of her participants, Robin, became acutely uncomfortable with the identity of White, and in particular, of oppressor, that the community saw in her. Harper explains: "Having defined herself against a construct of White dominant society, to be viewed within this construct left her questioning her own identity – 'How White am I?' At least momentarily she questioned her own complicity within practices that have supported White imperialism and racism. Comparing herself against other Whites in the community, Robin believed she offered something different and was dismayed by her inability to be differentiated from this construct of Whiteness. She desperately wished to be quickly recognised by the community as different from other Whites" (2002:281). For me, this study reveals the need for research on teacher identities generally, and more specifically on Whiteness, as well as the need to develop teacher training that encourages and helps develop progressive teacher identities, an understanding of diversity and critical engagement with notions of "the other". Within such a framework, various social identities, such as gender, language, race, could be explored.

Harper suggests the following: firstly, that teacher education include critical anti-racist education; secondly, that the history and discursive construction of racial identities including the White identity is looked at; thirdly, that it takes into account a postmodern notion of identity, displacement and home; fourthly, that it allows for the rethinking of the two White, feminine teacher identities she discussed in her study - namely Lady Bountiful (mother of empire, spreading civilisation) and the White lady traveler off on her adventures, in both the texts of the lives of teachers and students

(2002:286).

Nayak (2002) and Ringrose (2002) both look at the effectiveness of anti-racist education in the classroom, especially for Whites. Nayak looks at the White backlash against anti-racism teaching in United Kingdom schools, something which I feel is relevant to the South African context as well, where the curriculum has shifted to anti-racism teaching. Both Ringrose and Nayak felt that there was not enough engagement with White identity in these situations. Ringrose points out that there is a need for pedagogies to enable White students to reflect critically on their own identities and move beyond positions of guilt and resentment. Another aspect that needs to be considered is that in a lot of anti-racist teaching, Blacks are positioned as experts on racism and Whites are positioned as "non-knowers". This bypasses opportunities for critical self-reflection and engagement with racism and results in a reductive knowledge of racialisation (2002:303). Clearly, Whiteness in education is an important area to look at in order better to understand and manage diversity in classrooms.

Identity is carried into the work place and in a classroom context can affect the learning environment. The Revised National Curriculum Statement states: "Educators at all levels are key contributors to the transformation of education in South Africa. Teachers have a particularly important role to play" (DoE, 2001). Their role includes promoting values such as democracy, social justice and equity, as well as non-racism and non-sexism (DoE, 2001). These values are clearly important in a new democracy such as South Africa. However, for teachers with little training on diversity issues, it may prove to be a subjective challenge, particularly in the absence of dealing with Whiteness.

The need for student teachers to be prepared for diversity in the classroom, is also something that has become central to the restructuring of the education system in South Africa, as Hemson indicates in his study, "Teacher Education and the Challenge of Diversity in South Africa" (2006). He examines the restructuring of teacher training in South Africa in the post 1994 period (where teacher training colleges were incorporated into universities, as a move from being a provincial responsibility to being a national one). He also examines how effectively tertiary institutions are preparing teachers for this role and notes that this is an under-

researched area in South Africa (2006:3).

Often a coherent approach towards diversity education is lacking and diversity is more likely to be viewed through a cultural lens rather than one that critically investigates power relations. There are also few modules for teachers in South African institutions which deal directly with diversity in the classroom, and if they are, they tend to be separated from the rest of the curriculum (Hemson, 2006:42-43). Modules that do deal with diversity start from an autobiographical approach where students are required to become critically aware of their own identities first and then engage with other's social identities. It therefore becomes essential for more research to look critically at student identities and the impact of their awareness of these identities on the classroom context and on the changing meanings attributed to "diversity".

Conclusion

Whiteness is the site of much change and renegotiation in the new South Africa. It is being reshaped by the forces of this new landscape into a number of different responses. Some of these have been discussed above through looking at a range drawn from a growing literature. Establishing the issues around race and, specifically, Whiteness, has been an important step towards dealing with my own data. The next chapter will explain in more detail the methodology and research process used in this study.

Chapter Three

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

In order better to understand student teachers' biographies (identities), a qualitative methodology has been selected for this study as it offers measures "that not only describe the experiences of people in depth but [...] also explore what people's lives, experiences and interactions mean to them in their own terms and in their natural settings" (Miller, 1999:84). An interpretive paradigm will be used (as did Fenner-Barbour, 1998) in order to achieve this better understanding of the participants, as it is important to see a social situation from the point of view of the actors themselves. This describes the general approach of the study and this chapter will explain in more detail the methodology used as well as problems which emerged. Furthermore, it is this chapter where the theoretical and practical intersect and I have therefore made it as relevant to the practice of conducting research as possible. It is for this reason that a detailed research journal was kept.

The first section will deal with the theory behind the methodology employed in this study, while the second section will deal with the practice and some of the methodological challenges I faced while trying to research race. The third section will look at the issue of self-reflexivity in relation to the researcher. The fourth section will look at my use of "landscape" as a way of organising data and some further problems with this methodology.

The study: methodology and theory

The study makes use of personal, in-depth interviews with nine White, student teachers at the Edgewood campus of the University of KwaZulu-Natal. The objective was to answer the following research questions:

- How do young, White South Africans student teachers define themselves?

- Looking at their social context, what kind of "landscape" do they occupy?
- What experiences and events have shaped their sense of identity?
- In what way are their professional identities shaped by their own sense of their place in South Africa?
- As teachers, how do they feel they can contribute to South African education, how are they being prepared, and what does this say about their own social identities?

It was felt that in order to answer these questions, it would be best to employ qualitative research methods. As Babbie and Mouton point out, in the research process the "main concern is to understand social action in terms of its specific context (idiographic motive) rather than attempting to generalise to some theoretical population" (2001:270). Therefore, the intention was not to produce data that could be generalised to all young, White, South African student teachers. As with most qualitative studies, the aim will be to elicit, what Geertz (1973) referred to as "thick descriptions" of actions and events in an individual's life. These will allow for "understanding individuals in terms of their own interpretations of reality and understanding of society" (in Babbie and Mouton, 2001:33), an approach used in other South African studies on race, such as in Francis (2005) and Fenner-Barbour (1998) to name just two.

This study will require an examination of a variety of creative interviewing techniques in order to overcome the problem of prompting "race" as a salient part of the participants' social identities. In-depth interviewing was chosen as a method as this type of methodology, firstly, allows the interviewees the space to explore the open-ended question of "who am I"; and, secondly, to then name their own sense of "Whiteness" and how they feel their identity has been affected by popular consciousness and attitudes prevalent today. What emerged is the students' own senses of their place within their chosen profession, namely teaching, and in this way case studies have been built up which describe the participants' own sense of who they are and where they belong.

McMillan's suggestion that narrative analysis provided a useful tool for understanding an "insider account" of an individual's experience of her/his social reality proved to be very applicable to this study (2003:132). Narratives signal what people believe about

themselves and about others, it reflects their identity, and they are crafted at the point where agency is engaged in interpretation of the social landscape, a process which is mediated through the cultural and discursive contexts to which they have access (McMillan, 2003:112).   One of Campbell's problems with social identity theory was that it reduced "society" to the "group" which did not acknowledge the power relations existent within society between groups and individuals. Narrative analysis can offer a significant contribution to the understanding of social identity and of the power relations as part of a social situation. McMillan states that a closer look at the "insider account" allows for an explanation of the ways in which relations of power shape an individual's understanding of experiences (2003:132). This became evident when she looked at how a group of final year pre-primary teacher college students constructed narratives about their academic performance. She then looked at how these were shaped by social class, race and gender (2002:114).

Steyn also uses narrative analysis to organise personal accounts into five "meta-stories", which created her own interpretation of how the respondents organised their memories and made sense of recent political and social events. Each narrative is regarded as a unit of analysis (2001:xxvii). In terms of my own research, I view narratives as a way in which we make sense of the world and our place in it. I would also like to acknowledge, as does Steyn, that it is not possible to attempt to tell "the truth" about White identity, but rather to see this study as based on my own construction and interpretation of the participants' responses (Steyn, 2001:xxxviii). As qualitative researchers this becomes critical to acknowledge in order to avoid denying the research subject agency to define and construct themselves. This fine balance is discussed further in my analysis in Chapter Five.

Neuman states that a qualitative approach serves to construct social reality and cultural meaning, as well as focus on interactive processes and events (1991:14). This allows the exploration of an identity that is constantly shifting and shaped by social and political forces. As Fenner-Barbour points out, in order to study research findings, a theory of knowledge is used. However, "the interrogation is not a one-way process in which theory then judges experience, but that experience, presented in participants' own words, enables us to question theoretical assumptions" (1998:162). Furthermore, the qualitative approach is one which accepts the researcher's own involvement in the research. It is therefore important as a researcher to acknowledge

and identify oneself and the position one occupies within the social landscape of the study; for example, as being White. Otherwise, White is located as the dominant, hegemonic identity and continues to promote the illusion that Whiteness is normative (Fenner-Barbour, 1998:64). The following section will deal with the practical set up of the interviews themselves, after which this point about self-reflexivity and the researcher will be looked at in more detail.

The study: practice

Problems dealing with race

A number of problems arise with a study that focuses specifically on White student teachers as a research group (as with any socially defined racial group). I will mention them first and the rest of this section will hopefully illustrate how I've tried to address these issues. Firstly, while the term "race" is used often in everyday life as if it were an easily definable biological fact, much research has rejected it as a scientifically meaningful category, as was discussed in Chapter Two. It is therefore contradictory to use it, unquestioningly, as a way of defining the participants. Gunaratnam (2003) refers to this as the "treacherous bind" of working with race and raises the question of how one works with race without using and relying on pre-determined categories? As researchers of race, we run the risk of reproducing "race" as an essentialist category that cannot be escaped. I have attempted to be aware of enforcing categories on the individual which leaves little room for alternative definitions of themselves through out the discussion of my data.

Secondly, in order to select "White" participants, it would make it necessary to decide on certain criteria to determine who would fit into the study. While often based on purely morphological features, this is not an accurate "measure" of socially constructed "races". As a social construct it would depend, in the first instance, on self-definition; and, secondly, on societal categorization. Thirdly, while the study is an exploration of "Whiteness", there needs to be an awareness about making assumptions about participants' sense of identity and not allowing this deliberate aim to foreground "race".

Fourthly, talking about race in South Africa can be a sensitive topic, which raises the

following question: how does one get people to talk about race, or any social identity, without prompting a "correct" response? I noted this in my research journal: "The other problem, of course, is the fact that in South Africa 'race' has become a bit of a four-letter word and one that lots of people don't want to talk about. It is of course much more comfortable to ignore. How then do I get participants who are willing to call themselves 'White' and want to talk about their identity?" (Research Journal, 17 May 2005).

The sample and setting up contact

I decided to interview final year students at the Faculty of Education of the University of KwaZulu-Natal, between the ages of 21 and 25. This group was of particular interest to me for two main reasons: firstly, this age group would have been able to remember the shift in political power in 1994 and would have been aware of what their parents were telling them about this event. This would have been less likely had I interviewed first year students for example. Secondly, this group, being in their final year of study, were preparing to go out into the professional world and apply their skills in a classroom context. Many were already looking for employment when I interviewed them and I felt that this was important in a study that wanted to link social identity to a profession such as teaching.

In order to avoid the issue of using random and artificial classifications for defining other people's race, I needed to find a way to reach as many potential participants as possible which would also allow them to self-identify as White. My first attempt started off with the writing of an email, in which I identified myself and asked for participants for my study. I got the email addresses of all fourth year student teachers and sent it out to everyone, as a sort of general dip to test the waters.

Getting willing participants proved to be very difficult. Only two confirmed responses came from the general email. While it was definitely the easiest way of reaching all Edgewood fourth year students, it might not have been the most effective – for example because not everyone checked their university email. I decided to take two further steps and explore other ways such as snow-ball sampling. Firstly, I gave out a letter to students I knew, asking them to circulate it amongst their friends, as well as

asking the participants I had confirmed to try to find others. Secondly, I approached a lecturer, who was in contact with fourth year students, to ask if anyone was interested, using a more purposive sampling technique. It is through these channels that I ended up with the nine participants for this study. The interviews were carried out between September and November 2005.

The sample included seven women and two men (I felt this was appropriate and expected, as more women than men study teaching). All were in their fourth year and between the ages of 21-23 years at the time of the interviews. They were completing a four-year BEd degree and were specializing in different phases (or age groups) from Foundation and Intermediate to FET or high school.

Ethical Issues

An informed consent agreement was signed by each of the participants before starting the interviews explaining what I was doing, guaranteeing confidentiality and setting out their rights to terminate the interview process and withhold information or keep information "off the record". As the interviews would be asking participants to speak frankly about personal views and life details, I felt it was very important to emphasise confidentiality. Raw data was therefore not distributed and kept in a safe place and names and places changed during the writing up of the study to protect participants from being identified.

Designing the interview schedule

As I had decided to use a qualitative approach, I felt a loosely structured interview schedule was more appropriate than the more rigid questionnaire format. I drew on Atkinson (1998) and Riessman (1993) for question structure and in-depth interviewing techniques. (See Appendix 1 for Interview Schedule). I also felt that the schedule could be left open and changed slightly if needed, from one interview to the next.

Two interviews were conducted with each participant. Both were recorded and then transcribed. The first one was short, lasting between 15 and 30 minutes. Its function was to establish rapport and trust with the participant and to begin to probe their

ways of thinking about their identity. This was done through the "I am ___" worksheet, which was based on Tatum's ideas (1999) and required that they write down five descriptors for themselves and then rate them in order of importance. (See Appendix 2.) This way I felt race did not get foregrounded unnecessarily by the interviewer and any social identity that was important to them would emerge. Of course, the participants had been told that the study was on "White" student teachers, so this may have influenced their choice of descriptors and may have meant that such an identity would be taken for granted in subsequent responses and therefore did not need to be named directly.

I also decided that another way of not prompting race, and allowing the participants more freedom to create their own narratives of who they were, was by using a timeline. Therefore in the first interview I also asked them to draw a timeline of their life in answer to the question "What has made you who you are today?" I stressed that they could be as creative as they wished and could represent it in any way that made sense to them. This was given as a sort of "homework task" and I asked them to bring the result to the next interview.

The second interview, although I had an interview schedule which provided the structure, was based on the timeline they had drawn. This was where I collected the bulk of the data, which I recorded on tape. The interviews lasted between 60 and 90 minutes. I felt using the timeline would be a good starting point for the interview to go into detail about the participants' socialisation, their family contexts and upbringing, etc. It also offered the advantages of being a more natural and comfortable way for the participants to talk about themselves, as opposed to answering direct questions. The emphasis was on telling rather than answering.

There were a number of problems with this method. Firstly, it was easy to go into too much detail about their life histories, which could not be adequately dealt with within the interview time frame. It meant that I needed questions that could bring their stories back to living in a South African context and that dealt with the key questions of the study. Secondly, two participants did not bring their timelines to the interview, which meant that I had to base the interview more on a question and answer format. This affected the type of information I got from the participant. It is interesting to note that up until this happened, I hadn't realised the impact of using a timeline as a "prop"

for the interview. I found that without it, it was more difficult to elicit specific points or memories. Doing the timeline allowed the participants to think about their lives before the interview, as well as aspects of their lives they might not have thought about for a while. This created space for a more conscious selection of what to put on the timeline, as opposed to an on the spot, "first thing in your head" kind of approach. I felt that this approach was more reflective of the way they constructed their lives and identities.

Self-reflexivity and personal involvement as a researcher

Steyn states that if we are to see knowledge as constructed and produced by people in positions of power, such as researchers who produce knowledge, for example, we have to see research as a self-reflexive process (2001:xxxiv). This is something I have tried to bear in mind throughout the process of this study. From what I have laid out in the previous chapter on Whiteness, to view this study completely as one done on my "own" group would be incorrect. Individuals have a number of social identities which are at times more or less salient according to the context or landscape. Race is one of those identities, one which, while not necessarily overriding the others, is highlighted in this study.

However, having said that, race is a common feature by which South Africans group themselves, and as Steyn points out: "As a White South African I am greatly implicated in racism and structural privilege; I am part of what I study. In the research I had to name my Whiteness, inasmuch the respondents were confronted by theirs the instant they knew the topic of the research" (2001:xxxv). Researching young, White South Africans has also been a personal learning process for me, one from which I could not hold the position of a neutral, outsider-researcher. Young (2004) discusses this insider/outsider debate in research. He cautions researchers to be aware of their status as insider or outsider and how each can work as an advantage as well as a disadvantage. For example, in my case, my status as an "insider" could be used to build rapport and trust more easily when dealing with the sensitive topic of race, however, this does not exclude other commonalities from being found, such as sharing an interest in teaching and education. Young points out that being seen as an "insider" could also be a disadvantage in that the participants might assume a common knowledge or a kind of "You know..." approach, and therefore not feel the

need to explain in detail (2004:194).

Looking at "landscape" and some further problems

As memory is a subjective thing, and people tend to render or paint pictures of their lives differently in retrospect, it is important to employ some techniques to help create an awareness of this. This is a problem that confronts most kinds of qualitative research. Steyn also directs attention to this problem: "Our narratives are largely rhetorical devices through which we attempt to persuade that we are good people, and as such, they are certainly exercises in impression management. Identifying how Whites are wanting to see themselves, and how they want to be known, was one of the most important themes of my analysis" (2001:48). It is therefore important to examine the interview data, not only in terms of what has been said, but how the participants have said it or chosen to remember it.

Another way of dealing with this challenge is to place the narratives that the participants tell against a backdrop or landscape of the wider societal and historical context. In this way the study also hopes to look at how history is experienced personally, or what C. Wright Mills refers to as "the Sociological Imagination" namely "the interplay of man and society, of biography and history, of self and world" (1959:10). In order to do this, further data was gathered from a variety of sources such as letters to the editor during the 1994 elections, secondary data from spatial studies, a history of Durban and survey data on race relations. These were then used do "paint" the landscape that featured in the narratives of my participants and provide a triangulation point for analysis.

At this point, the term "landscape" as I use it needs to be defined more closely. It is not one I used with the participants directly. Instead it functioned more for my own reference and framed my own thinking about social space in order to be able to look at the participants' stories against some kind of background. It served to place them in a context or a common landscape.

I also felt that drawing on the idea of a "landscape" as a way of looking at how individuals experience their identities worked well with the methodology I chose to use. Firstly, a landscape can be rendered in a subjective way, which is what my

participants have done by bringing to life memories of past experiences, episodes and events. Secondly, using the idea of a landscape evokes things inherently visual, like a picture or painting. I hoped that using the timeline for the in-depth interviews would allow my participants to communicate images and descriptions of their life more visually, even if just in the recollection of memories. This provided little "windows" through which I could look, in order to understand their perspective better. The term deliberately also draws on the term in painting, regarding layout for example, and indicates how a scene (in this case narrative) has been represented and set out.

It is important as a researcher to examine the way in which the individual's story is embedded in a broader, societal context. This also means an analysis of the unintended messages that the respondents give regarding their understanding of race relations in the country (Steyn, 2001:48). Part of this landscape I am looking at will include things such as neighbourhoods and spaces (the Group Areas Act), schooling, change and the 1994 elections, to name just a few and will be discussed in Chapter Five. These themes or topics were either drawn out of the transcribed interview data and represented common themes across all narratives, or were specific questions that were discussed during the interviews based on the interview schedule. Once these themes had been established, the ones that responded to the research questions were selected and additional, secondary data was gathered to create a richer picture of the wider social landscape.

The following chapter will "sketch" out my nine participants' narratives.

Chapter Four

THE INTERVIEWS

Introduction

This chapter outlines brief portraits of each of my nine participants and presented further challenges to organising data. While I acknowledge other options possible, due to the large amount of material, presenting it as case studies or "pictures" of my participants makes it easier to read and analyse. However, for publication this chapter would be integrated into the analysis. Further, I also feel it necessary to present the data in this way as it allows a better understanding of the narratives that they built about themselves. It reveals their reasoning and sense-making in terms of describing who they are. For this reason I have tried to include as many direct quotations as possible in order to be "true" to their own ways of expressing themselves.

My own voice cannot be separated from this narrative as I was the interviewer and they chose to tell me these things based on their understanding of this relationship. They agreed to be interviewed by me for various different reasons, which need to be acknowledged at the start. While I have tried to allow as much space for their voices to come through, my interpretations of the data is also evident, as much of the interview was a type of dialogue or conversation based around their timelines. I have tried to make this distinction clear in the presentation of their narratives.

I have indicated which words are theirs by using quotation marks. Other parts I have presented as a summary of the conversation in order to give an idea of the general flow of the interview. On a more technical note, pauses have been indicated using [...] and I have used ... to show that their voices were trailing off, or they slowed down considerably with what they were saying. These are attempts at recreating a sense of the conversation and in some cases can be quite telling in terms of their responses to a question. If I have left something out of a quotation, I have indicated it with (...).

This group of young student teachers were interviewed in the last semester of their studies. Two needed to repeat a semester, while the others were looking for jobs or planning to travel overseas. While focusing on different phases and age groups (from FET to Foundation), they were all united by their commitment to their profession, which they viewed more as a vocation than just a job.

Chapter 3 (Methodolgoy) explained my use of "landscape" as a tool with which to situate and understand these individual narratives in a broader context. It is therefore important to point out that the "pictures" presented in this chapter have been shaped by this wider landscape which is explored in detail in the next chapter and forms part of the analysis. I feel that structuring my thesis in this way followed the research process more closely whereby the themes of the wider landscape were drawn out of and responded to the interview data and then were researched in greater detail to provide a clearer picture of "landscape".

While this study focuses on race, the discussion which follows has been structured so that the information from each participant is free to reflect the themes and identities that were most important to them. For this reason, I have included other information they gave me rather than just focusing on where they did talk about race or other social identities, as this would have distorted the importance they placed on these topics.

The next chapter will deal with some of the general themes that emerged from the participants' stories below and will attempt to place them into a wider landscape.

Kelly

Kelly was born in Durban and was 22 at the time of the interview. She was adopted and her adoptive parents ran a church in a town in the Midlands. She was engaged and was going overseas to live with her fiancé, who is European. In terms of her teaching career, she focused on FET Maths and English (high school).

She was very aware of her social identities, which she said had been a result of university, which "opened [her] eyes" and resulted in her making a conscious effort to be aware of these identities. In particular she mentioned her gender identity because

of her taking on of the role of wife. She also mentioned her racial identity and expressed the desire to voice an "alternative White perspective", as she felt that she did not fit into the general perceptions of Whiteness. This was clearly a motivating point for her to participate in the research, as "a lot of White people don't think the way I do. I think it's a lot to do with my upbringing… I've had quite a liberal upbringing. So… if I can give some kind of alternative perspective, then I want that."

Her sense of her career seemed to be a big part of her and she often spoke of soon being a teacher. Although she didn't mention this on the "I am" worksheet, I feel this was also a big part of her identity as she organised her timeline according to phases where a teacher or lecturer had influenced her. She always knew that she wanted to be a teacher.

She felt she has a good relationship with her adoptive parents, who had instilled values in her that she still held as important: "Um, my parents, they have instilled a lot of positive values, um caring for people, being interested in people, um… being aware of the diversity of our country and working with that, not against that. Um… like I say, because they run a church, they have to be open to all kinds … of people." She identified with these values of openness and acceptance of others, which she said were part of the way she was raised. Much of what she described about herself and as being important to her, such as caring and being concerned, came from her experiences with her parents' work in their church and their outreach programmes within the community as well. She explained: "My mother works… endlessly with unemployed women. She does… she runs courses and she sews with them and then they sell that and get the profits. And then also, she works with AIDS children. We've often had young children who've been raped and abused and are orphans or whatever in our house. Not for extended periods of time, but my mom has actually brought them in and taken them into the church – which is actually a cottage, it's not like huge, kind of church building, and bathed them, given them clothes." Her family had a close relationship with their domestic worker and their gardener, who were also their link to the community the church served, an informal settlement just outside the town.

She mentioned that she was aware that her family's relationship with their employees was different to that of other families: "I mean, I never noticed it before, but if I think

about it, then ja, I mean, for example… we do have a maid and a man who works in the garden, but they have always come in and drunk tea in the house or… If my parents go away, then Boy - that was his name, we don't call him 'boy', he'd house-sit and stay in the house and that. Whereas I know that that doesn't happen in other people's houses." Based on these experiences, which were different from those of her friends, she felt that she needed to give an "alternative White perspective". Her narrative was constructed around being aware of her privileged position and being a "helper" to those in need. This was also one of the motivations she had for becoming a teacher. From the kinds of stories she told me, there seemed to be a much closer tie to the realities of South African life and how it is lived by others in Kelly's story than in those of the other participants. It might also have influenced her construction of herself as "concerned", a quality she wrote down on the "I am" worksheet.

While she saw herself as different to other White people, she spoke openly about prejudices she owned although she didn't go into much detail: "Obviously there are issues in my life where I do have prejudice… or I've come to believe […] um, generalisations, which aren't fair. I mean, things like taxis really just irritate me and I try not to be irritated, but I just am."

For her it was a natural choice to go to university and study teaching. She spent three years in the university residence and articulated this as a problematic time in terms of living with different cultures, although she wasn't as direct as for example, Melissa and Ingrid, who openly discussed this in terms of race. Kelly was more vague and preferred to talk about it in general, abstract terms. For example, "I really enjoyed it [living in residence], but there again, um… I think you find […] I don't know how to articulate this. Because it's so concentrated, there's always a lot of emotion, especially when you've got a lot of different kinds of cultures living together. People have different ways of living, like not cleaning out the bath… and I like to get into a clean bath and I clean my bath afterwards, so why should I get into a dirty one? Things like that, so petty, but for three years it can really be an issue."

The issue of the open/closed residences came up automatically in the interviews (with those who stayed in residence) and usually prompted a discussion about race on campus and how people defined "us" and "them". Open women's residences allowed male visitors in and closed residences did not. The open residences were

mostly Black, while the closed were mostly White. Kelly's response to the open/closed situation was: "Now, I mean… there's a *huge* controversy, because next year, they want to open all the reses [residences]. And daddy is not going to pay however much for his darling little girl to be in an environment that is not safe. And I know that my father wouldn't and I know that all my friends' fathers wouldn't."

When asked more closely about what made the open residence less safe, she resorted to a discourse of colour-blindness to explain it: "Black, White, green… whatever colour, I'm not comfortable with men walking in and out of my res at their leisure. I don't care if it's my own boyfriend, I… I wouldn't be comfortable walking from my room to the shower in a towel, knowing that there's guys around. And I maintain that I do not care what colour they are, walking in and out of my res – no! […] And they have turned it… they, I mean the meetings or whatever, that have been held, the um… I don't know what he is exactly, top-dog in terms of res has said that it is a race thing and… at that stage, the most interesting thing was everyone of the Black and Indian girls stood up and said, '*I* don't want to be in an open res. And let me tell you, I'm Black and its not a race thing!' And we were like, '*Yes!* We love you!' […] Because it's a choice, I think."

Kelly also struggled at first with the question on culture and how she would describe herself culturally. She mentioned religion as a possible source of culture in her family. However, she was quite observant about how cultures might look different from an insider or outsider perspective: "Possibly to somebody else from a different culture, looking at me, could say 'this and this and this', but because I'm in it, it just seems so natural and I can't say, 'oh we do this and this is our specific way.' […] Do you know what I mean? So, like I think, every family sits in front of the TV and eats their dinner, we also do that, so if that's a culture – Yes, we're in it! I don't know, I can't really name it."

She remembered the 1994 elections with a nostalgic excitement and only when probed a little on the details did she bring up any of the worries shared by the other participants. She told the story of her family driving through the town on election day, and said "well, my mom stopped and there were these three big ladies with *huge* grins on their faces, just standing there. My mom said, 'have you voted?' And they showed their fingers and they were so excited and I was excited too, but I didn't know

why. And then she asked, 'What did it feel like?' And they said, 'Ja, it was so exciting and it felt wonderful. And freedom and whatever' And I... well, *now* I know what those feeling meant. I mean, I was excited for them."

I followed up this story by asking her what her feelings on South Africa today were. She responded, "I think... I try and have a lot of hope. I try and be very, very optimistic, but then every now and then, I just... I suppose I get run down like everyone else." She mentioned corruption as one of her main concerns. Then she went on to express concern with not only the government, but also people who did not want to change. I found it interesting that she linked this point to her experience teaching in a multi-cultural classroom, which for me showed the importance of the classroom in the socialisation process: "I adore this country and more so, I'm even more patriotic when I leave. I have my big South African flag and ... and I love it. It's home and it will always be home. But um, I think... I think that the problem is that a lot of people don't want to change... and it's hard to change, so everything is just perpetuated. Um... in Whites, in Blacks, in Indians, in... Coloureds, whatever... um, and I'm very encouraged to see, during prac and whatever, the unity in the classroom. I just think, nurture that, like, you know... whatever...grow it, encourage it, because that's where it starts."

I then moved on to a more direct question of what it was like to be White in South Africa today, and I felt there weren't as many complexities raised in this direct question, as came up through out the interview. She replied, "For me, more me personally, I don't have a problem with it... it's great... it's me. But if I look at what I'm supposed to believe and what everyone is saying or whatever... I'd think 'poor me, now there's affirmative action'. You know 'I'm the victim now.' But I honestly don't feel that." She commented on how this was what she heard from her peers, "I'm not going to get a job, because someone else is just because they're Black.' And I just say, 'well, how do you know? Show me proof. I'll believe you as soon as you show me proof.' I'm sure it does happen... and I think, if I was to give my view on affirmative action.... ja, it's great, but it's a pendulum and it's got to come back. I do have a bit of resistance towards it, because I personally did... had no role in the whole Apartheid government. I didn't personally go and do whatever, so why am I being punished in a sense? Although I can't say I've really felt disadvantaged, myself... I haven't experienced it." While she acknowledged the feelings of negativity that many Whites

around her felt, she saw herself situated in a different place.

She talked briefly about the challenges facing South African teachers, such as not having enough resources in the classroom. She said she was fortunate to have done her practice teaching at "good" or well-resourced schools. She criticised co-operative learning policies in classes where there were a high number of pupils. She also named patience as an important quality as well as having an understanding of different cultures: "Um, we did a course that was so fantastic (...) about different religions and I just found that it was completely fact based: Hinduism, they believe in this, these are their gods, their principles. Um Christianity... and she's a staunch Christian... this is what they believe in dah dah dah... No, personal perspective, like this is wrong and that's right, nothing like that. Just facts." She saw this area as a problem one which many teachers had not learned to deal with.

She loved a course called "Diversity and Learning", a first year course that dealt with race and gender issues in the classroom and made use of a participatory and experiential learning methodology. She felt it presented students with a unique opportunity and was frustrated by her (White) peers' lack of commitment to it, "And you know, it irritated me... again, the potential was there. It was like a gift in a bottle... in a lecture! Go and find it, you've got a safe environment, go and talk to someone you don't know – which people didn't want to do. Talk to someone of a different race! You're not getting germs, you're not losing friends, it's not going to hurt you in any way. You're just talking to someone! How does your family eat? This is what my family eats…. you know."

Bruce

Bruce was 22 at the time of the interview and was born in Durban. He described himself as a sportsman and in his teaching degree focused on English and Sports Science (FET). Sport was something central in his life, which is why he wanted to get into teaching. It was also something which consolidated his relationships with his friends and his father. He did not bring a timeline to the interview, which made the interview different from the others (discussed in the Chapter Three).

While he did not mention any social identities on the "I am" worksheet, what did

emerge fairly early in the interview was an awareness of class and the different financial status of people. This started to come through when he talked about how his father supported his teaching career: "He's come from a corporate background and he knows the pressures associated with that... a career that's driven by money and profit and that. And he, sort of just supported me and said, that you shouldn't worry about a career that is more financially driven, more what... as long as you enjoy what you're doing." When questioned further about this he explained: "I think it could also stem from the fact that money has never been really... an issue. So that I don't put a lot of emphasis on it, like a lot of people say 'don't become a teacher because you don't get paid well' but for me, money has never really been a driving force in my life. I wouldn't say that my parents are wealthy, but my parents are well-off and we've got wealthy extended family, so money has never really been... I think, if I'd come from a family that was financially unstable, I would have put more emphasis on making money. Ja, because, I'd know what it was like to not have money. Um... I don't know if that's an accurate way of describing it, but ja." He remembered his father's business deals as stressful at times particularly when his father was moving between businesses. He mentioned these as examples of memories of money problems.

Class was further highlighted by Bruce's awareness that his family was different from their neighbours. They lived in a working class area, but he described his family as more middle class. His father played golf and his parents liked to go away to game reserves, something he said their neighbours did not do.

Although he described himself as "social" on the "I am" worksheet, he did not appear to get involved much with on-campus activities and preferred to stick to his old school friends. However, he has some regrets about not meeting more people: "I think it would be nice if there was... more happening here, because I look back at my four years of being here and there's so many people I don't know, I've never spoken to. So I'd say it'd be nice if there were more things happening... more events... for people to actually get to know each other. I mean if you sit in lectures, you don't really talk to anyone and then most people go after the lecture, home or to the library or... do work or whatever."

When answering the question about culture, he first identified his mother's side of the family as Dutch in terms of food and customs, "But other than that, we're pretty

much... I don't know how to classify like South African... we don't really have any cultural... um... customs that are related to origin." He raised the issue of religion in relation to the culture question, stating that his family was not very religious and that his parents never went to church, although they used to drop him off at Sunday school when he was little. He stated that Christian values still formed the basis of his home though.

I asked him what he remembered about the 1994 elections and he responded, "That it was a public holiday!" When questioned a little more closely, "I was in about Std 3... I do remember, there was a lot of people who were uncertain about the future and I think, as a White person, there was a lot of anxiety because it was like an unknown... everyone knew that the new government would be... a Black government, but no one knew what to expect or how we would be treated. Obviously, after the Apartheid regime and stuff, coming out of that, no one knew what to expect, so.... From what I can remember, people were anxious and no one knew what to expect, but I think I was too young to really... for myself.... to feel that. I can only remember having a public holiday." He described his parents as not being "doom and gloom" people, "I think it was around that time that people were going to the supermarkets and stocking up on supplies... and really worrying that society would collapse. But my parents aren't like that. They were basically just saying, they were unsure of what was going to happen in the future, but not to the extent that... like society was going to collapse, or whatever. It was more really them commenting on other people's actions, stocking their cupboards full of groceries." The main thing he remembered about it was the fact that he could go to his friends' house and play, "It wasn't really a big thing to me at the time."

He described himself as a fairly optimistic person when it came to looking at South Africa today. He elaborated on his views: "Personally, I'm quite an optimistic person... I know a lot of people say, 'ja, I need to go overseas and...' I hate that... I really hate that people say its really dangerous here, because I myself, personally don't feel threatened. Often I've walked, in the middle of the night, home from a place and never really felt threatened. Maybe touch wood, because I've never personally been attacked or our house hasn't actually been broken into... so... Things have happened... we have seen crime. But, I don't know, I'm quite optimistic about ... South Africa's prospects. I think the country has too much to offer for it to become

another Zimbabwe. I think also, the country in world terms... in like natural resources... like being Africa's power basically. I think if South Africa were to go down, then Africa would... it wouldn't... it'd lose a lot of hope."

When I asked whether he felt things had improved since 1994, he brought up race, stating that he was coming from a "White" perspective: "I don't know if... if I can say that things have improved... because, I think from a White perspective, things before those times, obviously things were... um [...] biased in our favour. We had the best of the country. So from my perspective, a White perspective, I don't think things have improved since then, but as a country as a whole, I'd say things have improved. Obviously it's hard because... well, to balance the scales... You've got like a majority population group coming into the economic sector and that transition is going to be hard to balance out. A lot of people get disillusioned because Black people are now favoured and stuff like that... but I think, after a while, [...] once the scales have been levelled more, it won't be a factor any more. Well, it shouldn't be a factor any more, it should be like the best person for the job."

When asked how he felt about affirmative action, he revealed a pragmatic view of it as a policy to even out past inequalities. He saw it as "basically (...)a necessary evil to try and like try to balance things out... from Apartheid times when things were balanced in our favour." However, there was also a sense of detachment from it, perhaps because of his family's financially secure position, where he felt that it didn't affect him: "To me personally, it's not a big thing, but that's probably because I've never been directly affected by it. Like my dad has never lost his job because of affirmative action or... I've never not got a job because of affirmative action. So I can see the side of someone whose father has lost a job because of affirmative action, being very against it."

Being White was only mentioned in response to my questions about South African society and did not otherwise enter his account of his timeline on a daily, personal level. Perhaps because we were not talking about his timeline, the interview conversation tended more towards a detached discussion on current issues rather than personal experiences of them: "I think that we live a good life here. I think our standard of living... is reasonably high and I think that could possibly be a spin off from the Apartheid era... where, well, we were given everything. The fact that many

White people still have a lot, could be an effect of that." He felt positive about living in South Africa generally and didn't feel that crime was a problem that was endemic to the country.

To him, the reason why so many White people felt negatively about South Africa was this: "Maybe it's changed from how it was before. Before… Whites had their own little island and inside that island, you were basically living a first world… like a first world life and now that the reality that we don't live in a country that is completely first world, has set in… and like, the different cultures have started mixing, people feel insecure. I mean it's like human nature to be scared of something you don't know… fear of the unknown. So, it could be that or that we've had it so good before and now that now it's not as good as it was, people say, 'Ah, its terrible!'" He goes on, "And in a way, it could be intolerance, a lot of people move overseas because there's… almost like a mono-cultural society, where you can be a White person and you can go to Australia and you can live in a society where everyone is White, where everyone lives like you. Basically, you can fit into an entire class of people and feel the same. Whereas here you have people living next door to you who are Black… Indian, Coloured… and maybe people don't like that."

Bruce seemed to be influenced by his father with regards to how he viewed and chose to understand difference in South Africa. He placed this in relation to his grandparents, "Um. […] Um, I can always remember my grandparents saying, 'Ah, the Black people, they… they act in this way and that way.' And basically, saying that that's the way Black people are, and not taking into account… the education might be the reason for them doing what they're doing. Or, like the fact that they're stealing, might be because they don't have food at home, that type of thing. So… I don't know maybe… whether to like call my grandparents racists for saying that… but my dad, well his attitude has always been, 'Well, we're living in Africa', so um… I can often remember him saying, 'Um, you're gonna have to learn to live with… like everyone around you' and like, people are different and are going to act in different ways.[…] And my dad's always like, when… Black people do a certain thing, it could have been because they're doing it because of their education or…He's always said, well, that's why they're doing it, it's not that the person is stupid, but that he was not educated at the same level that we were. So, I think my dad's sort of… my dad's lived through Apartheid, like to acclimatise into the new South Africa and doing things and

rationalise it." Difference is seen as something you have to "learn to live with", a reality that has to be accepted whether one likes it or not.

He decided to teach at high school level, because it would allow him to explore his two subjects, English and Sports, at a more serious level. When speaking about the qualities a good teacher needed, he mentioned patience and tolerance: "Obviously, in the new South Africa you get people from a variety of backgrounds and you have to be accepting of everyone's culture and beliefs and... um I think you have to be to an extent a people person, as you're always interacting with people. If you... if someone doesn't like interacting with people, I'd think you'd really struggle. Um, and also the subject that you're teaching... you have to be passionate about the subject that you're teaching." He also named cultural understanding and tolerance as amongst the main challenges facing teachers in South Africa. I found it observant that he mentioned that "you get people with different religious beliefs, needs... obviously you have to watch how you're teaching. You could... it's very easy, for someone like myself, who's been educated in a Christian, a mainly Christian way, to come across as giving a Christian perspective."

It was when Bruce started talking about his teaching experiences at the schools that difference became more real and directly affected him; for example, he remembered an experience he had during his practice teaching, "Um in my last teaching prac [practice], there was this group of Indian students leaving the school in the middle of the day and I said to them, 'where are you going?' Obviously thinking that they were bunking, but meanwhile they were Muslim students going to pray, because on Fridays they have to go to mosque. So, in that way, it's easy to come across... or only look at it from a Christian perspective and take them to the headmaster's office and say these people were sneaking out, meanwhile there were religious requirements or needs. And also, they had, like beards and my... sort of education has always been you have to shave... cut your hair and that. So, I'd probably tell them to shave, but it's part of their religion, so it's hard to enforce it."

Other schools he has taught at were mainly former Model C schools (see Chapter Five Part One for an explanation of Model C schools). In particular he mentioned one boys' school in Durban and the way sports was treated. This school had a sports academy and placed a lot of emphasis on excelling at sports. He picked up on a

difference between his two subjects: "It's quite strange, like to be teaching English and you get guys in your class... you can see their whole attitude is basically that they're there to play rugby and they're not worried about school at all." He felt that this approach from the school was wrong and that the emphasis should be on academics. He felt that other boys' schools had a better balance between academics and sports; one of which he described as more of a multicultural school in terms of race, although he said it was very much an "upper class" school.

His plans for the next year centred around finding a job at a well-resourced school (like the former Model C boys' schools in Durban), as less well resourced schools did not offer physical education as a subject. He also might have to return to Edgewood and finish up a course he failed. He had no plans of leaving South Africa.

Ingrid

Ingrid was 22 at the time of the interview and was born, not in Durban, but still in KwaZulu-Natal. Her father was a farmer and they lived on a farm in the Natal Midlands. Her mother was a teacher.

On the "I am" worksheet she described herself, as many of my participants did, in terms of personal qualities such as "friendly" and "sociable". Social identities other than religion were not directly mentioned. However, during the interview it became apparent that social identities, such as gender and race, did play an important role in who she was and how she saw herself. When I asked her why she hadn't mentioned being White on the "I am" worksheet when it was something she thought about quite often, she explained that while she felt you couldn't escape categorising people, she didn't feel it necessary to say White. She preferred to think of herself as "just part of humanity".

Growing up on the farm provided her with many exciting childhood memories of playing with her cousins (they also lived on the farm). It is in these recollections that her gender identity emerges as a funny anecdote about her preferring to play with her male cousins because her female cousins "irritated" her. She remembered, "Ja, well, my sisters and girl cousins would like play dolls, and stuff and I really wasn't interested. I was more into climbing trees, making mud baths, making all sorts of

things when I was small. [...] I was like the rebel in the family." She said it was only later that she actually realised that she was a girl, "I think I started to realise that I was actually a girl when I was in pre-school, or maybe even later, when I actually started school, I think I realised. Ja... and then the Barbie dolls came out, but only when I realised I was a girl." This was actually quite a sad realisation for her, but something she ended up accepting completely. While she didn't talk about her gender identity directly, at the time it was something she resisted and did not want, "I was... I was really sad. I didn't want to be a girl, I wanted to be a boy like my cousins, because when I realised I was a girl I couldn't do what I had always done, like just run around and not care about other people, and then when I became a girl, my parents wouldn't let me go outside on my own. I couldn't just walk down my driveway on my own, or go into the bush. I had to take a guy with me or my sisters. I couldn't go by myself and that really upset me. I was... I felt so like, as if I wasn't wanted almost because I couldn't be me, because I now had to be a girl."

She described the small farming community they were a part of as close, but she says her family used to keep mostly to themselves. This was because there were nine cousins to play with. She also mentioned the farm labourers' children: "And we didn't [...] which is such a pity, we didn't really mingle with the workers and their children because there were so many of us, we had our company. We didn't need to bond with the labourer children. So we never got to learn Zulu, which is so disappointing... because now I regret it... Ja, so we grew up with my cousins and we did things with them, like climbing trees, um, all those sort of things you do on a farm when you grow up there."

Growing up with all her cousins around her, her schooling was also linked to that of her cousins. She spoke about her depression during school and not being able to achieve as well academically as her sisters. While she didn't want to go to university as soon as she finished school, her parents were not happy with her taking a gap year, so she came to Edgewood. This she described as a happy move to a more independent life for her. Religion was a point of friction between her and her parents, as they no longer had control over her and she did not wish to attend church. When I asked her more about it, it also revealed some of the feelings she had regarding her father who she described as strict: "he's not really [...] he's, because he's on the farm all the time he's not at home in a sense. Like he is at home, but his mind is

elsewhere all the time, so you tell him something and then he forgets and then you have to tell him again later... So that's... My father and I, we just kind of, our relationship sort of died when I left school, because... Well, we still talk, but it's just not the same as it was when I was at school. He knows he doesn't have all that much influence on me and at the end of the day, he's just my dad."

She thought of herself more as her mother's child, who she had a closer relationship with, while her sisters, both blond and blue-eyed, were more her father's children. From this a story emerged that had been a joke in her family, but which she had taken quite seriously at the time and which placed her race under question: "I think it was because my sisters were blond and blue-eyed and they were sort of my dad's children and they used to, from when I was small – I didn't add it in [to the timeline]. But they used to tell me, because I was always darker, more tanned, dark hair, dark eyebrows and eyes, whatever, so they told me that I was found in a trash can and that I was Coloured." Thinking of herself as a Coloured child made her upset: "So I really believed that I was not wanted, that I was just adopted."

The next point she had on her timeline was moving into the university residence and being on the house committee: "Um, well, first year, I loved it! I loved res to bits. Then second year when I became house com, my friend and I had to move into a res by ourselves with all the first years, because we were the first year's house com. And we did it as a... in the beginning we did it, because we just offered – no one else wanted to do it. We just said, 'we're not doing anything, so why don't we just do it?' So we became house coms and we got a lot of slack from a lot of people and it wasn't so great, but we just stuck it out. Eventually, my friend and I were the only White girls in the res. All the Whites had moved out of that res." It was at this point that racial tensions emerged directly in her narrative. She describes the task of being in charge of all the first year Black girls as hard on her, as everything was turned into a racist issue.

She felt it was unfair that the open/closed residence debate was interpreted in a racial way. She explained that "Um, well, at the moment there's closed and open reses, which has always been an issue. They see closed res as being for Whites and not for Blacks, meanwhile there was a whole res of Black girls that we were in charge of and everyone kept shoving that out. And then they argued that the open reses,

that there are not Whites in there. So I said, 'well, I'm in closed res, and [a friend] and I are the only Whites in the res.' So it's not like there is this whole cultural/racist issue, because there isn't, because we're there… So, we've always had these kinds of arguments and then in the beginning, when there were Whites there, there was this one incident, where there were a bunch of girls downstairs, making one hell of a noise. So, I went down and fined them, but then I didn't realize that there were girls on the other side, White girls, who were talking. I didn't hear them. So, they called me a racist because I didn't fine them."

She spoke very openly about the tensions between White and Black students in the university residences and a lot of frustration came out about being stuck in what she called a "racist" identity, where everything done was therefore seen as "racist". I asked her to explain more how she felt inter-race relationships were: "Ja, it is quite bad. Well, there's a group of us, … a fair amount of people who cross cultures, but when they look at closed res, they only see Whites and they get so racist. Everything is racist about it. We'll bring up anything and they'll turn it to race. And it's just so annoying. Like another incident, there was a Black girl sitting, tanning and a White girl was spraying her friend and by accident the water went onto this girl who was tanning and she just went off about it, 'You White girls are always this and that and…' I mean, she was just spraying her friend and by accident the water got on her! So, I think things like that are just so irritating. We couldn't […] You can't really speak your mind in res when it comes to race, because it just turns into a racist thing."

It was only in relation to an "other" that she was White otherwise she did not describe herself this way (for example, her racial identity was not mentioned on the "I am" worksheet). For her Whiteness was highlighted by a "threatening other" close by, "as a White person, you're so dominated by […] well, by the Blacks, because they just in res, well, here it's not so bad, but in res, they're… there's less of us. So if there's anything that we get done for us, they see it as a racist issue."

She didn't remember the racial tensions being there in first year where she felt there was more mixing between the races and the numbers were more even. She said, "There was a lot of Indians, Whites, Blacks all colours in first year and we all mixed and we all did things together, but then slowly, but surely, more and more Black girls moved in and it was nice that they were wanting to be teachers, but then when they

brought it down to race, it was unfair. We weren't against them coming in the first place, and we wanted them to be there and then they just, like…" While she couldn't (or wouldn't) articulate this, it was clear that a tension emerged between being welcoming of Black students coming to Edgewood, but then feeling threatened by it as well. She would sometimes contradict herself by swinging between saying that racism was a real problem and then returning to the idea that it was a "big misunderstanding."

Being on the house committee highlighted many of the problems regarding racial mixing. It was also told to me with an element of blame, rather than an attempt to understand that the lack of mixing was a shared responsibility. Her stories were told using "us/them" very often: "If you're not house com you don't realise it as much as when you are, because… when I became house com, there were five of us Whites that were running house com and then there were four Blacks and we would fight for a function and they would see it as ridiculous and they wouldn't want it. So, slowly but surely we could see what was becoming a racist issue. For instance they would want a bash and we would want a braai. If you have a braai, everyone comes and you do your meat and you talk to everyone and then you go. If it's a bash, only the Blacks go. If it's a walk on the beach only the Blacks will go."

Her narrative was also punctuated by a fear of being dominated and outnumbered by the Black students. This resulted in her not wanting to participate in residence activities. For example she talked about why she would not go on a beach outing: "But all the Whites, for some odd reason, go home over weekends and there'll be like five of us left and we're not going to go with like 40 other Black people to the beach because we'll just get dominated, and we'll just sit there and it won't be as exciting. It's the same with the bash, they won't play our sort of music so we won't go. So, it's so irritating that they've classified it as White and Black. I wish we could just have something where we could just mix with others and just… go to a bash, where they'll play White and Black and whatever music and everyone will dance."

While her way of structuring the world was very much along the lines of "us/them" based on race, she expressed feeling very trapped in this role. She felt that everyone had just been brought up into it. She also felt that the White people tried very hard to participate which, however, contradicted some of the stories she talked about.

Considering how much she spoke about race, I was surprised that she never mentioned her racial identity earlier on in the interview.

When I asked Ingrid about her early memories of race and difference, she responded that she did not receive any specific messages. However, there were many indirect messages all around her: "Well, I can't really remember anything about when I grew up, about race. I don't remember the exact day that I realized that there were people of different colours. I think maybe the only time I was aware was when my sisters told me that I was Coloured. That was the only thing I can remember about race from when I grew up. But because I was on the farm, I always saw Black labourers. There were no White labourers, so it was always Black labourers and my parents were the farmers. And then, we've always had problems with them. So for me, that's sort of what figured it out that there's Whites and there's Blacks and there's no, like, mixing."

Her narrative was punctuated with inconsistencies between seeing hierarchies and prejudices and then ignoring them or not seeing them as well. She spoke about the differences she noticed regarding the labourers on their farm: "My parents tried really hard and got involved in whatever and tried to get the Blacks involved. But they've always like, separated themselves and they have come to some kind of understanding, especially the older labourers, not so much the younger ones... the older ones always did something to show that they were Blacks, almost. Like if we went somewhere in a car, the older ones wouldn't get in the front seat. I would climb out and get in the back. They would just get in the back, they wouldn't get in the front seat, if it's an old Black guy. Whereas, if it's a young Black guy, would just, he'd just climb in. So it was always like they knew their position, although we didn't tell them, like 'you have to get in the back seat' sort of thing, and that was sort of for me, that sort of stuck out because they sort of made themselves who they were."

She did feel a certain unease with "the way things were" which she picked up on even as a young child: "It was weird, because I didn't see why an old man should climb onto the back seat, while I was young and could just jump over and do whatever, but he would still do it, even though he needed a walking stick to do it, he would still do it. And I felt that was really weird, I mean, why wouldn't he want to sit in the front seat? He's old."

Race was not something Ingrid's family spoke about in their home. She said it went unnoticed until things started to change and they started to have some problems with the labourers on the farm who, she described as not being like the "olden day version of them, that knew what to do and weren't so slack and lazy and would just sort of do their work." She moved on from this statement to one about how she wished "we could all just be humans", and not worry about race.

When I asked her about the 1994 elections she said she didn't remember anything and that when it came to politics she didn't want to get involved. Nothing further was said about the topic.

In terms of culture, she described her family as being British in the way they led their lives, took meals etc. She was uncertain of how exactly to interpret what culture meant in terms of her family's life.

While class did not enter on the "I am" worksheet, she did talk about the fact that farming was sometimes an unreliable source of income for the family and she had many memories of hard times where they had to borrow food and clothing from their extended family. Not being wealthy didn't affect her happiness. As they were religious, they would also pray that times would get better. She explains her family's attitude towards money: "Although, it was hard to struggle along without money, we didn't mind. It was fine. (...) In fact, sometimes, I was actually glad because we didn't have money, because it showed... it made me realise what we did have. If you've got all the money in the world, you won't be happy, there's nothing that will make you happy, and we were just happy that we had us, as a family."

Her views on current South Africa were generally negative, "Well, it's quite, [...] it's sad to think, but it's coming down to... South Africa, it's a beautiful country and I really love it and I mean I'd want to live here, but there's just so much politics." She felt South Africa had become very dominated by racial politics. This she saw as having changed since 1994 and "Madiba's presidency" where there was "a rainbow nation" and everyone could just be themselves. She feels this was not the case since Thabo Mbeki has come to power. She felt that it was these political pressures from Black people that were forcing Whites to leave South Africa. She stated that she understood why people wanted to emigrate. She said it was the same with residence

where all the Whites were leaving instead of staying and "fighting".

I asked if a fight was necessary. Her response was that people should stand up and have their say, regardless of their race. She felt that Whites were being dominated, which restricted their abilities to express themselves freely, as for example in residence, where White students were in the minority. She felt it was difficult to be White in South Africa now and that everything had become racialised. She drew on her family's experiences on the farm with the Black workforce to support this.

She also felt a lot of things had changed for the worse, one of them being security on the farm and constant trouble from the workers who lived there. She explained how her father was trying to get the farm labourers off the farm in order to make it safe for them to live there, but said that they didn't want to move and were causing trouble about it. She said the older workers had left as requested and that it was the younger ones who caused problems. When I asked her what kind of problems, she mentioned workers getting very drunk, beating their wives and even one incident where one of the workers had killed his wife. She said she didn't feel safe on the farm anymore in terms of being able to wander freely around, especially as a woman.

Ingrid's family had also experienced a number of break-ins at the farmhouse which usually happened on a Sunday, when the whole family was at church. She spoke briefly about a number of domestic workers who her family employed before a bad season where they had to dismiss them. However, the one domestic worker was at home on the Sunday when there was a break-in and was raped. She feels very strongly about this incident, great pity for the woman who was raped, and admiration for how she braved her way through the situation (going to call for help and then returning to the house with Ingrid's uncles). The incident had a big impact on the family in terms of security and feelings of safety. Her sisters refused to sleep in the house for two weeks, and she described herself as the "brave one" who did as she didn't want to let her parents sleep there alone.

Her sense of politics was heightened by these negative experiences, also by a land claim against her family's farm, which she said has been in her family since her grandparents. She said that the claim was being put in by the family of a man who has been dead for 40 years. She felt the claim was "ridiculous" and made her very

angry and frustrated. She emphasised that her family had lived on the farm all their lives and that it was all they knew. Ingrid also mentioned during the interview that she was aware that what she said was her own and her family's view and that she wasn't seeing another side.

Her answer to why she wanted to be a teacher was very forcefully given and was "to make a difference". She felt that teachers occupied an important position of influence. A problem she identified was that a lot of teachers displayed favouritism towards students who were academically inclined and ignored the rest. She had always felt part of this "rest" and wanted that to change for others. She identified diversity in the classroom and being able to listen to different points of view as a challenge to teachers.

For her, diversity in the classroom was a big issue that she didn't feel prepared for, even though she had thought about it quite a bit. She felt that her classmates and friends didn't do this and would rather pretend that there was no diversity in the class and carry on giving, what she described as a "White, Christian" point of view. There seemed to be a contradiction between her views here and the way she was talking about other racial issues, for example in the residence. She also took the first year module, "Diversity and Learning", and did not like the course at all and felt that it was racist towards White students who were made to feel very uncomfortable. She recalled parts of the class where people had to tell each other what they didn't like about other races (prejudices) and she was shocked at hearing what other people had to say about Whites. She felt that differences were heightened and pointed out and that the lecturer was racist because he didn't want to listen to the White students' point of view and only seemed interested in the Black perspective.

While she wanted to travel, she had no intention of leaving South Africa for good and wanted to find a teaching post here.

Graham

Graham was 23 at the time of the interview and was born in Durban. His mother was a nurse and his father a site agent in the building industry. He chose to specialise in Maths, Technology, and Arts and Culture, at High School level. Teaching was not his

first career choice and he spent one year at a Technikon studying engineering.

Graham defined himself in terms of individual qualities. This became apparent from the "I am" worksheet where he put down "enjoy relaxing" as his number one descriptor. When I asked him why it defined him, he said he needed time for reflection and thought. While he filled out all five spaces on the worksheet, the focus was more on his interests and way of life.

His first point on the timeline was his time at primary school, which was characterised by his dyslexia and which he described as a "disorientating" time. He did not remember much about it. It was during high school that he really "came out of his shell" and joined sports teams. It was a happy time for him. He explained: "I made the shooting team within a year. That is a skill I've had all my life. I've been in a... the rest of my family is Afrikaans, so fishing and hunting and shooting is sort of in our blood, it comes naturally to us." He told me that his father was Afrikaans; however, he stated that, "I was spoken to in Afrikaans, but I turned out English." So by not speaking Afrikaans he is not Afrikaans. He also described his father as Afrikaans in that he was quiet and distant, "guiding the family from the sidelines".

His family lived in a Durban suburb, which he described as a predominantly White area, but with many Indians moving in. He explained that it was not really like a community, as most people didn't know each other, "It's more isolated and you're just... nuclear groups... nuclear family groups...and that's about it."

After a year at a Technikon doing Engineering he changed his career to teaching. Teachers, both good and bad, from his high school influenced this decision. He spoke of this as not only a career move, but also a personal change in direction and aspirations: "I think I've changed a hell of a lot in the last... four or five years. That's really where the change has been happening. Um... I'm not so much into making money, um... at the beginning I was chasing money the whole time. That's instilled in most generations now...you have to earn a lot of money... and that puts a lot of pressure on a lot of people to perform. And I just thought, 'do I want to die early and be rich or do I actually want to enjoy my life?' And that's when I chose to go into teaching. I mean, it's a quieter lifestyle and you're interacting with people. Um... ok, you're under a lot of pressure to perform as well, but you also have the holidays with

your kids. Um... I've tended to become more family orientated now than just chasing the money... and I knew that if I was going into that kind of job, I'd be on call 24 hrs a day, 365 days a year."

He saw himself as a lot more liberal than his parents and stated this quite strongly during the interview: "I think for me, just, they weren't too liberal, I can say that much. Um, I think I've become a hell of a lot more liberal and open-minded. I still have friends who're Black and Indian and... I used to bring them over for lunches or visits and it was fine. This was during high school, although it was a little more difficult for us at high school, because we all came from all over the place... so maybe that's why the friends that I had at school, who were not White actually stayed [in an Indian area] and... just way out, way out. So we couldn't really mix after school, we couldn't because I mean, we didn't have our own car to drive around in. You had to fit into your parents' schedule." He assigned the difference in outlook on current South Africa as being due to his parents' and their friends' experiences of the political change: "I'd say basically, they're bitter about seeing their friends get retrenched. Things like that... having to deal with a new system. All of them are quite upset about that. But I mean it's understandable." He gets on better with his fiancé's parents, who he describes as more liberal. This physical and psychological distance that he placed between himself and his parents, was something he brought up in the interview without prompting, and was clearly a distinction he wanted to make to me.

He struggled to answer the question on his family's culture: "There's no real.... like Afrikaner culture coming through... or being British or Irish... that's my mother's sort of side. There's no real culture coming through... it's just like South African. I don't know, I don't know how to describe it." While he named a "South African" culture he battled to describe it: "I don't know... like *braais* on weekends, go out to a pub... that sort of thing...go out to dinner. Sometimes family dinners... the food is just, I don't know how to say it...just normal [laughing] I don't know how to describe it actually, there's no real thing that comes through. Um... there's no rituals, there's no... you know."

He did not remember the 1994 elections. He explained that for him it hadn't meant much of a change, having gone to school already with Indian and Black learners. It also came across as if he didn't really speak much to his parents about the political

change. He talked about his parents in more abstract terms: "They were probably part of that... group who wanted to leave the country. I think they were really sceptical about what would happen to the country. Um... but then decided... I mean, we got the passports ready to leave if something should happen... but then we ended up staying. If something went wrong we were leaving, if something... they really just watched it from the sideline."

His views on current South Africa were measured and concise, almost cautious. He described it as "having potential, but a little mismanaged in some areas". He went on to explain: "I mean, all this corruption and that. Although there was a hell of a lot when it was the old Nationalist Party. I mean, there's politics and theft and that everywhere, but um... on some the policies I feel strongly against... because they've been proven not to work, yet the government still insists on it." A particular policy he felt didn't work, was Black Economic Empowerment (BEE). When asked why he felt it should be changed, he simply said because "of the impact on society", meaning the White sector of the population.

His views regarding the pace of change in the country revealed more of his own concerns: "The problem is with White people now... I feel there is a lot of tension created around this issue, because a lot of their parents are getting retrenched or did – I should say did because it's all sort of subsided now... everyone has got used to it. But a lot of anger generated. For me... I don't care... what the hell... it's a good thing, but then there are some things that I don't agree with. Um... if a person is not qualified for a job I don't feel that they should be shoved into that position. They could be put in maybe, as a person who... sort of like an appie [apprentice] and learn with the people... instead of cutting out everything and building from scratch again. Within education it's the same thing. When dealing with certain educational problems, like um... let's take special needs for example... there are things in place, structures in place that... they had um... psychologists going into the schools, going into the schools and sorting them out and instead of cutting all that out, they could have built on that... onto the system that was there. But ja... I just feel a little frustrated because I see it from this angle... I don't know if it is a good angle, but I see it from one angle where I see how they remove systems instead of... learning from... I mean these systems have been created over the past centuries, it's not something new, it's been tried and tested and now they think they need to reform everything." He

seemed to find the pace of political change overwhelming and threatening, preferring to see it happen at a more steady pace, based on reform of old institutions.

Unlike those participants who lived in the university residences, he felt there were few problems between race groups on campus and amongst young people generally: "There's no real cultural divide... although there are still... we love learning about different cultures. I mean as teachers we need to, so that we can interact with our learners. But I think most of us, students, interact with an understanding of where people come from." He was, however, concerned with the older generations' feelings of resentment, which he felt should be addressed because otherwise it will "permeate through... to their children... it will keep going." When I asked him if this was the case with his family, he replied that with his 17 year old brother it was the case, "I think because of... I think actually my brothers have picked up some of that. For myself, I've always been open-minded, so... I don't really have a problem. I think that the anger is really gone through with my brothers. Um... I can see it in the younger one especially... getting quite aggressive about... there's a lot of opportunities that he's missing out on as well." Few participants discussed resentment as a topic in relation to their own identities. Although, he mentioned it, Graham did not talk about resentment as something he felt.

It was through talking about his brother that we discussed some of the fears facing young, White, South Africans: "I mean, he's got to think about where he's going for the rest of his life and he's already contemplating disappearing overseas... which is very unfortunate. A lot of [...] a lot of my friends also want to leave the country... not for the same reason that I am – I'm going for two years to go and make capital, but they want to go and leave permanently because they feel that South Africa is going backwards. I don't see it like that, there's a lot of potential and I want to give it a chance. I mean, after 10 years you can't expect... what's going to happen in 10 years? Please! There's a lifetime of oppression and things like that that need to be sorted out and I think that it's going to take decades before it does. It's going to take decades."

When I asked him what it was like to be White in South Africa today, I was met with silence, so I asked whether race was something he felt was important to him as he had not put it on his timeline. He replied that it was not: "I'm very easy going... I just

take life as it comes and make the best of it. I'm not going to try and be angry or… that just creates stress… and I don't feel like stress in my life. So for me, I don't try and get too stressed over things, if something happens I make a plan to get around it." The answer seemed quite detached and served to distance himself from race. He also couldn't remember noticing racial differences when he was younger.

He spoke of his career as something of a vocation, a need to guide people: "Um, I think it's also because I enjoy… teaching people and making them understand things… I mean trying to guide them in life. I'm big into trying to… to get people's mindsets right and trying to motivate them to… to become good citizens. […] I feel that… I don't know where it comes from… but I feel I have a lot of compassion… if a person is disabled, my heart aches for those people! I think that's also part of the teaching, trying to help people… you want to motivate them… help them out in life… get them going and help them enjoy life."

For him being compassionate, understanding, patient, and enthusiastic were important qualities for a teacher to have. He saw the biggest problem in South African schools as being discipline. He saw this linked to globalisation or what he called "coca-colarisation" of the world, where cultures came together in big cities and mixed and formed a new trend. He felt these cultures were marked by disrespect, which he saw as one of the biggest problems in schools. He explained, "I love naughty kids, because I was one myself and I feel they have a lot of spirit in them, but I cannot handle disrespect… that's the one thing that I cannot handle. You need respect and structure in order to keep society going." When asked whether this was a problem that was specific to South Africa, he linked this to the "democratisation" of schools. He felt that too many freedoms and not enough responsibility were given to learners, which meant that schools couldn't provide as much structure and discipline as they should.

His practice teaching experiences highlighted these issues of discipline for him. He went to a generally poorer, working class high school. The classrooms were racially mixed and, he said, "I thought a lot of these Black kids, their parents went through a lot, they really battled and they're probably still battling to send their kids to school and these guys are…buggering around. It really bugged me… I actually wanted to say to them, 'Why are you here?' They were clearly… the reason they were going to

school, was to smoke and to socialise… there was no active learning taking place."

When I asked about how he handled the diversity in the classroom, he explained, "I treated every single kid the same. I don't… I like to think that I don't see colour. I mean, some of the Black kids nowadays speak better English than some of the White kids and I think they're all on a par and they all sort of think alike. That's why I think there's this hot pot culture… they all listen to the same sort of music and the same trends and clothing and that sort of thing."

He planned to go overseas to the United Kingdom with his fiancé, something which they saw as part of their long term plan. He explained this decision in very rational, logical terms: "Well, I think that [his fiancé] and I planned on settling down, having kids and that later… so we thought before we do all that, we need to make preparation for that. So, going overseas making capital. We're looking at… if we save the one salary… we're looking at bringing back half a million rand over two years… and that's a head start that you cannot get here. If you're going to save that kind of money you're going to spend ten years in this country… unfortunately that's the way it is. So… and also we'd like to see the rest of the world… get experiences in other places, get experience teaching those children as well."

When I ended off the interview by asking how he'd felt about it, he responded that he thought it was good that I was doing this research: "You're touching on sort of controversial aspects, which sort of need to be brought out."

Melanie

Melanie was 21 at the time of the interview and was born in Durban. She had two sisters, her father was a printer and her mother a secretary. She described her family as sports orientated. She always liked children and had specialised in the Foundation and Intermediate age group.

On the "I am" worksheet she mentioned gender, race and religion, which indicated that she was aware of and foregrounded her social identities. For her, being aware of race was important in a South African context, as "it is who you are and it affects you negatively or positively and you can't change that. […] It's how people see you or…

who you are and sometimes it's a negative thing and sometimes it's a positive thing." In a sense she felt trapped by race, yet spoke about being "fine with it". Melanie explained, "It's not very important to me, but it is important in South Africa at the moment, like who you are. But it's not something that affects me… I'm fine with it. I try to get on with everybody and try not to class myself just with White people." It also indicated a sense of wanting to forge ahead with a new identity, one that was not only White, but perhaps more "African". She put being "African" on the "I am" worksheet as well: "Well, I'm proudly South African and I guess some people… well there is an opinion that White people can't be African or they're called Anglo-whatever. I just think that that determines a lot of who I am, where I come from. I wouldn't call anywhere else home." This seemed to hold more importance to her than her race.

She lived in a wealthy, predominantly White suburb of Durban with her family and was aware of the privileged space around her. I asked her to talk more about what it was like growing up in this area: "I think I've been privileged to grow up in such a nice place, but […] it does close you off a little bit, like in a bit of a bubble, I think, which I don't really enjoy. Recently, I've just discovered that… visiting other people and just seeing what's actually going on [laughs] … around. But otherwise it's been great growing up where I did." However, she noticed at an early age that her family didn't have as much money as other families in the area, as their house belonged to her grandparents. She explained that "we wouldn't have lived [here] unless my grandparents hadn't given their house to my parents. So we probably would have been brought up on the Bluff [a working class area] or something, you know, we didn't have as much money. So ja, you feel a bit like different in that way."

She felt her parents didn't really stress diversity or difference much in her life. She told me, "They [her parents] are very inclusive, but it's hard because, like mostly [the suburb] is White. Everyone is like the same background, the same religion, stuff like that. So… um there wasn't a lot to handle for them really." She was quite open about her critique of her parents' way of dealing with diversity: "Um, and they've never really said anything to us, like, 'that person is different, or they're like that.' But I do see that they're uncomfortable with, um, like, different people. Like, they wouldn't be friends with a Black couple or… because, well, not because they're Black, but because they just a totally different culture. My parents stick to the same thing, what

they're used to. [...] I guess I'm different in that it's [...] ja, a new generation and things like that. You've mixed with different people at school". Although she said this, she also observed that not many meaningful friendships had formed across racial lines amongst the people she knew at school, even though she described her school as being quite racially mixed. When she spoke, Melanie revealed a sensitivity to how she was perceived by others and a certain anxiety to not be seen as racist: "I never had a problem with making um, conversation... I never felt uncomfortable or I didn't judge... Ja, I'm not really like that. I'm kind of aware of it and kept saying, 'Am I doing that because I...' you know. I just kind of kept myself in check, because I'm really like... um, concerned that I won't be like that. I won't be racist." She described her parents as not being the kind of people to do anything unfair towards others, but at the same time as pre-judging people. She saw this as being "the older generation" that didn't mix with other races.

Her first memory of racial difference occurred during her early schooling. She described the time when the first Black children came to her class, "And we had two Black girls that came to our class. They didn't start the year with us, but came later and um, I think that was the first I realised, 'hey, these people are different from me' and we're all the same...everyone else was the same like me. I was very interested in them. [...] I was a very friendly child so they became my friends and... purely because I was intrigued by everything, like why were they here. I remember them coming to my birthday party and like their moms had to stay like the whole time because they had come in a taxi. And my mom and my gran would like have tea and chat with them while we played. I remember that. I think it was the first time my... I realised... well, I realised, like 'why is the class all the same and these people are different?'"

She remembered the 1994 elections as a "big thing" and that there were worries about what was going to happen to White people. She had a keen awareness of the fears and concerns around her, "they [adults around her] were worried, because like all the Black parties were, um, previously into like terrorism and things like that. So they were worried about that and what that could bring in. And also, White people especially... like not [...] like people who were against Apartheid, but did nothing, they were worried that Black people were very angry. So... they thought they'd like have a vendetta. Ja, so I do remember my parents being worried about what the

outcome would be." However, it was not all a negative memory, she also remembered going to at the polling station with her parents and feeling very excited about it although she didn't understand all that was going on. Her parents' position was a concern for the future, but also not to allow racist talk at home: "A lot of people around that time didn't like Nelson Mandela because he'd been in jail and had done all those bad things... But ja, I didn't realise it at the time, but I'd hear a lot of criticism, not from my parents, but from friends' parents who were racist and I was around that. But I definitely wasn't brought up with that and if I ever brought that home, my parents would say, that's unacceptable. So they weren't against it at all."

She found it difficult to describe herself culturally, "I don't know, but White people are said to not have much culture or whatever. I guess you're brought up with a sort of British background and like, my grandpa was Scottish too, so my dad has that in him. I don't really know what you mean by culture? [laughing]"

She had a very positive outlook on present-day South Africa and felt that a lot of people were impatient about the change. She felt she had an understanding of the problems and that therefore it was unrealistic to expect South Africa to have no problems at all: "A lot of people are impatient about the way things are and that it's not getting better. I think, especially this generation, because we hear a lot of what other people say and they hate talking about Apartheid, especially here at this college, because we've done so much on it. I'm not like that at all, I totally accept that its going to be a long time, like it was in power for like 40 years, and it's going to take like twice that to get it right. But I think like in view of what other countries think about South Africa, it's really great, that we've come so far. I really think that people don't realise what could of actually happened and how much better off we are now. [...] I think it's an amazing country, I love it."

Being White was something that she constructed as being complicated. For her being White involved a degree of guilt, which the other participants did not mention. She described it as, "I think it's hard sometimes, because I think there's still a lot of anger...maybe not with this sort of, um, generation, just a few people who might have a chip on their shoulder, but they weren't really brought up under it because you know... but I think maybe the older generation has a lot of anger towards White people. [jumps in] And sometimes I feel, like ashamed of that, even though I wasn't a

part of it, or didn't have anything to do with it. But I do feel, like, 'gee, that's so hectic'. And then sometimes it's easier to say, I wish I wasn't actually White, because that's what people think you are, that you're racist."

Her response to the "Diversity and Learning" course was not one of defensiveness, as with some of the other participants. She said, "It was people my age, or just a little bit older that had like hectic stories and it was amazing, because I just thought, jeez, like that didn't happen any more... even though I do know, but I didn't think like in KwaZulu-Natal. It was quite hectic. Ja... I actually thought, I thought, 'jeez, I'm sorry'. I was sorry. I don't know why I felt sorry, but I did because you feel like somehow you're responsible or that people think that is the group you come from and you should say sorry for that... I don't know." It seemed to be an experience she could take with her into the classroom and use in order to understand difference and people's emotional responses to it.

She felt that patience, showing no favouritism, treating everyone as equal, someone who realised that children learnt in different ways and being motivated were aspects that made a good teacher. Her choice of school to go to for her practice teaching was also intended to explore her experience with diversity better. She chose to go to a predominantly poor, Black school. She named discipline as a problem in all schools, especially in poorer schools where the class numbers were large. She explained the situation from her experience at this school: "I mean, that's a good government school, mostly for all Black children, but there's over 40 kids in a class, which is just impossible. It's just like... you just try really hard, but you just can't give the kids the extra help they need. You just can't do it, because you're having to do so much. I think that is, probably, from what I've heard, a small number... in Black schools... which can sometimes go up to 90 kids in one class. At that point, they're not learning, so... I think that's like the biggest challenge, to bring the numbers down."

She admitted that due to resources and class numbers, it was much easier to teach at a wealthy school: "Resources in different schools is so bad, like the gap between the rich and the poor... it's just such a huge gap. I know it's in life as well, but in schools it's just so evident, like it's just huge." As a result, at well-resourced schools teachers also had more time to prepare lessons, as there were more staff members.

While working at this school was a challenge in diversity for her, she noted that for the children it often wasn't as they came from the same areas and as a result there was not much diversity in the school. She drew on examples from her practice teaching, where one school was a wealthy girls' school and the other was the above mentioned poorer school: "So, it's all the same… it's not very interesting at all actually… it can get really irritating [laughing] They're all the same, a bunch of girls, all rich and the same and ja… But then if you go to a different school, then it's usually the same, because all the kids come from the same areas, with a similar background and that."

It was primarily when she spoke about going to the predominantly Black school, that she became more aware of her racial identity as a White person. I didn't need to ask about it, it was something she brought up, again with a sense of confusion about how she was perceived by others and her concerns of trying not to offend anyone: "[the school] that was huge for me, because it's like, you don't want to be racist at all, just trying to, you know, show that you love – I really love Black children actually, because they're so amazing, and… they come from such hectic backgrounds, a lot of those kids… but they're so happy. They never down, they never complain about anything. So… I really enjoyed that, but it was very different for me. Even like stuff like the food they eat. I remember being so grossed out, because they like had chicken bones everywhere. [laughing] I was like, 'that's so hectic.' And they bring like chops to school, like last night's supper and I was like, 'oh!' So hectic… and then the girls at that school use Vaseline in their hair and it's just everywhere. By the end of the day you've got it on your shirt. [laughing] It's like, you're working at a child's desk and after that your arms are like black from dirt. So… that's some of the stuff I remember and just trying not to be a snob about it because it's just like different from you." Also, incidents with teachers were ones which brought out her racial identity and an awareness of differences: "You do things and you don't realise that it's bad or good towards them. You sometimes just don't know, so… I think it's nice to be told, so you can learn."

Her future plans were to start working for one of the better schools, in order to get more teaching experience and then go and teach at a school that was less advantaged – "I would like to work, in the future, at an underprivileged school, but I think I can't go straight into that. I need to first get some skills. […] Like I want to go in

and change things, but ja, just by working at that school, I see so much stuff you could change and you could do and you could help. But you can't do that unless you have experience, so… I'd like to work at a better school first, with good teachers to help me. That's like my first option, but that's not always possible, I know. It's quite difficult to get a job at one of those schools."

While she does want to travel, she said she would want to come back after a year or so. Her sense of being African came into this: "I don't think it's better over there. I know it's not, because both my sisters have been overseas and they like definitely say, it's not like… ja, you just hear so much about that. I think it's just people who can't accept what's going on here in South Africa, who want to go to other places and then they're like moan about it. It's like, 'why? Why not just come home and accept what's going on here?' But like, because I'm totally comfortable with what's going on in South Africa I really think it's the best country in the world."

Jenny

Jenny was 22 at the time of the interview and was born in Durban. Her parents were both teachers and this was her inspiration for following the same career path. She wanted to teach high school Maths. Her fiancé lived with her family.

While it became evident later that she was quite aware of race and her own Whiteness, she didn't name it on the "I am" worksheet. She didn't mention any social identities and instead wrote down personal qualities, her number one being "caring". Another identity she did not mention directly, but did speak about, was gender. One of the first people she spoke about in the interview was her grandmother, who she admired for her strength to leave an abusive relationship during a time when divorce was unusual and not many single women raised children on their own. She had a very close relationship with her grandmother. When I asked what her grandmother represented for her, Jenny answered: "Someone I want to aspire to be like… her strength of character…. It's just, you hope that, faced with the same sort of situation, you'd also have the strength to deal with it… not sort of crumble under the pressure. Um… she was also very caring."

Her parents were both teachers, as were other members of her extended family. She

really enjoyed her primary school where her father was the headmaster. She had reading difficulties in primary school and failed a year because of it. This was resolved though, and she became more confident. She did not enjoy her high school, a large girls' school in a working class suburb which she described as big and impersonal. Another reason for this was that she suffered from migraines, which her teachers did not understand.

I asked about her neighbourhood: "I suppose we fit in. It's sort of a working class area. It's the 'borough' and usually people will have some kind of comments about that, like it's 'low'. [...] But I have to say, I wouldn't want to move, or be somewhere else." While it was a predominantly White area, she explained that it was getting more and more mixed: "I suppose it's getting more mixed now as we go. I mean, we have [an Indian area], so as we're going now, you find more and more Indian people moving into the area. I've got one, I've got two neighbours, the one White, the other Indian. Although it's more the Indians who are moving in and you find they're making really big renovations in the area as far as their houses are going. That's quite frightening, you get these huge mansions with huge pillars... different from what we're sort of used to. But, it's very... as far as the school goes, it was always very mixed. Um... primary school, high school, always very mixed as far as that is concerned. In primary school I was really close with one of the Indian girls, so I went to [Indian suburb] a couple of times, which was interesting... being the only White person in [the shopping centre there]. It's been interesting with her... she used to bring us... I'm a big fan of chilly bites, she used to bring me chilly bites whenever her mom made. That used to be so nice! For me that was like a special treat, for her it was... just, you know...she actually loved *koeksusters*, so we'd make a swap for it. Ja, it's funny."

Another aspect of the neighbourhood she commented on was the class issue. She explained that her parents both had come from very poor backgrounds, but that they had always been careful with their money and that this was why they could live well now. Her parents could afford to buy her and her sister a car: "I wouldn't say my sister and I are spoiled and I think a lot of people in the area think... because we live in a very nice house... they automatically assume that we are spoilt, but my parents have always been very good that way... I think because they came from very poor backgrounds."

When she spoke of Edgewood she was very enthusiastic and said she "loved it" and liked the fact that it was more personal, where people were connected by the career they had chosen. She found her first practice teaching experience very daunting and stressful, which made her doubt her choice of career and her ability to be a good teacher. However, she felt much more confident afterwards, especially when she could teach "her" subject, which was maths.

When I asked Jenny to describe her family in terms of culture, she began talking in terms of English and Afrikaans (her mother was Afrikaans), although she stressed that her mother spoke English without an accent. She identified "conservative Afrikaners" in her family as being a source of conflict, indicating that she sat on the other axis (liberal and English). This seemed to be a careful distinction within her own identity. She also talked of her fights with her grandfather over things like sexism. Her father's side was English, with Irish and Scottish origins: "Um, we're always joking about the Irish being merry and drinking [laughing]" Other parts of their culture included things like celebrating St Patrick's Day, her sister's Irish Dancing and she also described her house as Tudor and very English in terms of its feel and furnishing. She commented, "It's really nice to have something that's... not common... that's unique. It's quite special."

When she spoke about her family, specifically her Afrikaans side, she brought up the issue of sexism, which she associated with the conservativeness of her grandfather. She mentioned that her Afrikaans grandfather did not recognise her as his oldest grandchild because she was female. She told me, "Also, my *ouma* had a halfway house for girls who'd fallen pregnant, to help them get back on their feet. It was much to my grandfather's dismay... but they were already divorced by then... he absolutely hated it, because it was not just one colour, it was a mixed group."

During the period leading up to the 1994 elections, her godmother left the country to live in New Zealand, "although she was very liberal, I think still the fear about what would happen afterwards... um, not that she didn't want it to happen, just... I think there was also a problem with her husband not finding work and they thought that after the elections that wouldn't get better. Um... no... um... as far as the change... my parents were very excited about it. I think they were quite upset about... I

remember there was this old lady next door and she wouldn't let her gardener go. She said that if he went she'd fire him, but we only found out afterwards and my parents were very upset about it, you know, it was something that they believed in. Um, I remember they took our maid (...), and they all went together and it was exciting, especially because it was something my dad had fought for at university... one of those things he did... handing out forms or whatever... that's what he'd believed in."

Jenny stressed that she was raised in a household that believed in racial equality (the rainbow nation maybe) and where politics were discussed. She remembered, for example her father sitting her down when Nelson Mandela was released from prison and explaining it to her. She spoke proudly about her father for what he did in the past against the injustices of Apartheid, and also mentioned that "he... my dad... was very good when it came to being informed and not just being scared."

Jenny felt her family had taught her that diversity was something that should be learned about. She saw her family's approach to it as different from that of other families, "I suppose also because my dad was very progressive, along with my mom, it was never something they tried to hold back. That was nice, I suppose also in our area, there are still a lot people, especially the older generations, who're very still, um not, politically correct in their views. Whereas in my house, it was never like that. We were never taught... we never heard racism (...) but then going to other friends' houses, where there is still a problem, and there's still those feelings... it's kind of weird for me because hearing it... I suppose because my parents never said those things. I get shocked when I hear those kinds of racist comments... I'm not used to it. It's not something or not values we've been taught at home. I think my dad's whole side has always been very liberal and there's never really been any racist comments in the family."

When I asked her how she felt about South Africa today, Jenny had a very positive attitude. She was clear that it would always be home and that she and her fiancé were only going overseas to make money and travel a bit. Then she added, "Um...I suppose I have to tell you about our issues [laughing] there's still things we have our problems with." When I questioned her more about what she meant, some of her concerns came up, like crime in or out of parliament. As she put it: "It's quite

frightening to think of where we're going from here... the first ten years have been ok, but what about the next ten?"

These were some of the positive aspects of South Africa she stressed: "Um, [...] but there's still wonderful things, like the blend and mix of people... they're very different and special. It's... there's problems and stuff, but I definitely wouldn't want to live anywhere else."

The interview moved on to what it was like to be White in South Africa today and proved to be a sensitive topic for Jenny. It also presented an area of conflict where her home life and understanding of race and racism didn't match up with the issues that were raised at university, especially in the course "Diversity and Learning". She explained: "It's quite different, when we came to varsity... we had a [...] a foundational course called "Diversity and Learning"... and that was very, you know... looking at racism and sexism and being straight out of high school, and especially for me coming from a mixed area and such a liberal house, it's never really been something I've been faced with. So to be faced with it here... a lot of comments from the other students, the Black students and Indian students about what they thought because you're White... you know, Afrikaans sort of, traditional.... and especially in my house where it's not... we've strived not to be. I think it's sometimes difficult... you feel like you're being judged... just for being White in this country. Um, I mean, my father did liberal things and no one really thinks that...everyone automatically thought otherwise."

It was during this discussion that her narrative began to be punctuated with talk of "us/them". Her frustration and anger became evident: "It's kind of bad, but... [the lecturers] said you could agree or disagree, but when it came to the marking of the essays, the marks weren't there. It was very much you had to fall in line with the lecturers' views and the same for gender inequality. In my house that's also not an issue... I mean, my dad washes dishes and you know, did everything, so it wasn't an imbalance. I was never faced with it and it hasn't been much of an issue, so when you get there and they ask you about it... it's like they didn't believe you came from such a family environment. It kind of made you [...] angry, because you were just automatically... you know, White Afrikaans and you know, especially in my house we're so proud of the fact that... we're Irish and you know always, fought the English

and just liberal tendencies and for them to not acknowledge that or know about that other avenues about who you are or your ancestry. It was kind of like irritating, because they wanted you to acknowledge all theirs, but they weren't willing to consider anything about you." For her, almost by not being Afrikaans, she felt she would not be seen as "White" by the other students. To be part of one general group of "Whites" was something that hurt and upset her. It was here that her home ideal of her Whiteness couldn't be lived out in a wider context. Her narrative revealed her anger at being labelled and stuck with the identity of "White". What it also reveals is a wider trend of seeing social identities through stereotypes and serves to illustrate the way in which race becomes a lived reality in South Africa or at least an inescapable social category.

Jenny's response to the diversity classes brought out defensiveness and little self-reflexivity. The fact that her ideals of race were complicated by interactions outside of her home, and that her way of sense-making of race was not the only one came as a shock to her. Through her defensiveness she blamed this on the outside. Another story she told me also illustrated this; she explained that her group of friends was mostly White, but that this was not something she went out and picked on purpose, but was the result of other groups being what she called "cliquey" and not being open to integration.

She felt that she was not listened to and recognised that she became defensive immediately when confronted with racial issues in the classroom at Edgewood. She describes such a situation: "A lot of it was very, at that time, being angry at those learners because they weren't willing to listen to you. You'd try and explain something, like, 'but you know what, at that time, my dad, just like your dad, was also fighting for liberation, but just because my dad has a White skin, now you're going to blame him for all those injustices.' That was a lot of anger, for me. I suppose, being confronted with it like that… it made me automatically defensive… about things when I wasn't before. I have to say, maybe being at university and being faced with those things, has made me more defensive and more aware of it and also… automatically on the back-foot, like 'ok, here we go again.' Whereas in primary school or high school, that was just never a problem. Also I was always in mixed classes and my area was mixed. I think, a lot of people have political issues and then… put them on us. Now to be suddenly faced with that… it was horrible."

It was clear she felt very angry at being judged when she felt that she did no judging in turn. Throughout the conversation she stressed her liberal upbringing and the fact that her parents had friends of colour. However, she admitted that she felt that something had changed in her family. When I asked her to explain this, she said, "I suppose because a lot of the stuff… the corruption and everything, my dad, he's got more defensive. Also, I wouldn't, say racist, but, you know, there is stuff that… he's now not as… open as he used to be because he sees the corruption and everything and it bothers him, because they fought for something that wasn't corruptive in any way."

The interview then moved on to teaching as her career. One of the reasons why she wanted to go into teaching was because it offered a career that had space for a family in it, in terms of working hours and holidays.

She also saw lack of discipline in the classroom as one of the biggest problems in South Africa. Another challenge she talked about was "47 in a class! That was definitely a challenge, especially because I only had 40 desks in the class!" She also worried about some of the Education Department's changes in policy which would affect her subject, maths: "Um, I think one of the scariest things for me now, is that maths is changing, so it being my major, it's now being split into two different subjects, mathematical science and mathematical literacy. So it's a change in… there's new topics coming in… two different subjects, so that's also, the change is kind of intimidating. We're all supposed to go out and teach it next year and no one really knows what's happening!" Other things she felt very strongly about were the difference between policies on paper and their implementation, as well as the corruption in schools and government.

Speaking on how she handled diversity in her practice teaching: " Um, going to [a large girls' school in a working class area], again, it was very mixed classes (…) Although, I do find, that going to school where the language that is taught in is English. So sometimes it's a problem with the Black students, because they'll cheek you in another language that you don't understand… and it's disrespectful. They know you don't understand it and they'll do it on purpose or whatever. It's actually funny though, although you've got naughty kids in any race, it's strange… because

when I was growing up the Black kids I was friends with, that I knew… were so respectful to their elders…. *so* respectful. And now, looking at the new generation, where they're not and are so disrespectful… it's frightening, because, it's something we thought was really great about their culture…. they had this respect for their elders and it was really something we thought, 'wow, that was really cool, you know.' It was nice… nice to see that respect, regardless of colour, just respect for elders and how they treated their parents and grandparents. Now… it's just utter disrespect. Unfortunately it's also other colours that are disrespectful, but to see them going from such a good place to such a bad place… that's also frightening."

She made another observation based on her experience in teaching young South Africans that related to race. She felt one of the reasons for what she saw as an increasing racism amongst younger South Africans, was the fact that "they've had it [racism] shoved down their throats so much, that this is what happened during Apartheid and this is who was wrong…and, made to see those difference so much and what happened, that people are all, like, defensive." I asked her how she dealt with this and she said that she decided to teach a class on different cultures by dividing the class into different race groups and getting the learners to do a presentation on aspects of their cultures, such as food and dance. She felt this resulted in a positive understanding of difference, rather than confrontation.

Her future plans were to go overseas to make money. Her main reasons were the strength of the pound and the travel opportunities it would afford her. However, she stressed that it was a temporary move.

She said she enjoyed the interview and did it to help. She commented that it was probably a difficult topic to find people for participation.

Melissa

Melissa was 23 at the time of the interview and was born in a small town in the Midlands that serves much of the farming community around it. Her mother was a teacher and her father a small business owner.

Her gender identity was mentioned as number one on the "I am" worksheet. Her

reason for this was because it was something that others would immediately see: "Ja, they can't tell like, if I'm a sister or whatever, like my personality, but they can see what I look like, like my gender." However, other obvious identities, like race, were not mentioned.

She also put down "student teacher" on the worksheet, which was important to her: "Well, first of all I'm a student because for the last four years that's who I've been and it's been a huge part of my life… being a student for four years. So, ja, I put student teacher because that's like what I'm going to be doing from now on too, that's who I'm going to be who I am, a teacher." Being a teacher was strongly linked to her identity. While she didn't know immediately that she wanted to be a teacher, she attended a child-care college in Johannesburg after school for six months.

Her first point on her timeline was the start of "big school", but when I asked her to speak about it in more detail, she couldn't remember much. Her high school was one she attended with most others from her junior school and she described herself as "fitting in fine".

The issue of safety came up when I asked about the town where she lived and how it was growing up there. She responded, "It was nice, it was really nice. I loved growing up in [her home town]. I would never live there now, I don't even go home for weekends if I can possibly help it, but it was ja… it was small, and in those days it was safe. It was very safe, so even after school even when we were small, you could walk to your friends' houses, ride to your friends' houses. They were all close by, because it was a small town and there was all this bush. We used to run around in the bush too, go and swing. But you can't anymore (…) like I would never let my kids walk around like that. It's not safe."

She had put various things down on her timeline but then didn't seem to hold them as very important. For example, deciding to be confirmed. She explained: "I don't know. I think you just go through phases when you are religious and then you go through other phases where you're not religious. And then at that time, I was quite religious, I used to… our family has never really been that religious. I mean, I have been brought up within a Christian home and I got baptised when I was small and like… we went to church, but not like every week. My parents never forced me, they were never like,

'you have to come to church'. It was always my choice, if I wanted to go with them I could and if I didn't that was ok too. Ja, then… I also used to go to youth with some friends and then… at that time it did mean something, like I did want to be confirmed, but now I'm not religious anymore. So… I don't know." While she described herself as still going to church sometimes, she felt religion didn't define who she was: "I still do go to church, like sometimes. So that religious part is still there, but it doesn't like rule my life, like it does with other people. Like, like…they don't go to [a night club] because of their religion or whatever, or things like that. I just do whatever I want and if that does go across the line, then it just does."

When I asked about what values defined her life, she didn't know what to answer, perhaps one of the drawbacks of not stating clearer what I wanted from her timeline. Maybe it was a question that caught her off guard.

She really liked Edgewood and moved into the university residence in her first year. It was during this discussion that race came up for the first time in the interview. It was obviously a point of conflict: "Ja, and I think like now, there is like a lot of like racism. Well, there is definitely a thing between Blacks and Whites that live in res and it's always been like that." It is this conflict that highlighted race and brought it to the surface. She also pointed out that this racial tension was getting worse and that now she was "getting to seriously notice it". For example: "I think basically the noise and like, like there's a big difference between the Whites and the Blacks and that's just the way it is. And like, I don't know, there's also big issues with the TV lounge at the moment. It's like basically them vs us. We can't do anything, we… like we're always the ones who end up leaving if there's an argument over the TV, we'll just get up and leave. […] I don't know." These incidents she described to me, really highlighted her racial identity as well, something she hadn't spoken about before. In this context she talked about it as mostly "us/them". She stated a number of times that there were certain basic differences between Whites and Blacks and that this was "just the way it is" and that it wasn't going to change. While acknowledging the tensions, she still pointed out that people are "friends and greet each other". She said, "Ja, I think…[laughing] I think people would be happy if it were separated, like it used to be! Ja, I know that sounds terrible, but they would be happier and so would we." She clearly felt uncomfortable talking about that and it bothered her, yet she saw it as inevitable.

She was faced with a lot of tensions being on the house committee, which she explained meant she had to deal with noise levels and other complaints. The discussion of house committees brought up the issue of open/closed residences, which she, like other participants in residence, saw as a security issue that had been turned into a racial one.

When I asked about how she would describe herself culturally, she was unsure of how to answer and simply said "nothing specific". I then asked her to reflect on the cultural differences she'd mentioned in the residence. These she could identify as problem areas. She drew on a number of examples: "Like when they wash their clothes, they wash their clothes in the bath, not in the washing machine, even though there is a washing machine. Obviously, that's not like all of them, but like a lot of them do. Just a thing like that you notice. Ja, why, I don't know. I think some of the tensions are from a cultural basis."

She remembered the 1994 elections as being a time of worry and fear, a message she picked up on from her parents. There was also a lot of political violence around their area at the time, which added to their fears: "I remember from school, like the whole thing with the flag changing. I was in Standard four then, in 1994, and I just remember there was this whole big thing at school about the flag changing and they had to put up the new flag and we all didn't like the new flag. I remember there was this huge thing with Mandela and all our parents were all like, 'ah, our country is going to go down'. Ja, I remember all that and there was a lot of violence [IFP and ANC], at the time, and it was very bad and people were like stocking up their houses!" Her memories of that time also contained some confusion regarding what could happen – for example she described the fears over a sit-in at her school and her feelings about it: "I remember being quite scared, because I didn't know like what, I didn't know what a sit-in was. [laughing] And what could happen. And ja… then they just sent us to school and nothing ever happened. There was never a sit-in or anything."

When I asked for her feelings regarding current South Africa, Melissa's first response was negative. She used the term that South Africa "was just going to go down". Then she seemed to change her mind: "Ja, I don't know. […] Actually maybe not, I really

like South Africa. I want to go and travel and do that whole thing, but I'm not into the whole thing about wanting to leave South Africa. Like I think it's fine. I don't know, but it just seems that there're so many more opportunities somewhere else." She mentioned the opportunities her brother had being overseas, which she didn't see for herself here.

I then asked her what it was like to be White in South Africa today and she responded again in a somewhat contradictory way by pointing to some general problems, but which she didn't believe affected her: "I think there's more like, if you're Black you'll do better. That's what I think. Well, like for teaching, like I don't think... I'm not worried about it. Those schools that I'm applying to, like I would have a chance. They won't like say, 'Oh, she's White.'" She has applied to mainly former Model C schools and some private schools which she thought wouldn't mind that she was White. She never explained why she felt this.

When I asked what else had changed for her, she stated, "Ja, because there is so much emphasis on helping them, because we... we disadvantaged them during Apartheid which is true, but now, ja... everything is racially like done or whatever. People bring race into everything, like even where I think it shouldn't be." She then talked more about the open/closed residence problems.

When she talked about why she wanted to become a teacher, she brought up her interest in special needs: "Ja, my mom is a teacher and other family are teachers as well, but I don't know, because I always wanted to do something with children and what I've always wanted to do, is not really teaching, because I've always been interested in special needs kids. I've always been interested in it, even during high school. So what I wanted to go into, was the whole dolphin therapy thing, because of like my whole scuba diving thing and my interests in special needs. That's what I wanted to go into and I still want to go into that. So then I found out all about that. And then, I thought like to go into teaching is one step further to getting there. So, ja, I'm still interested in special needs and I did my teaching prac at [a Durban school for children with special needs] last year and ja... I want to go into remedial teaching. I hopefully want to go one day and do the whole thing and work with special needs kids."

Qualities she felt a good teacher needed were patience and caring. Problems she felt teachers in South Africa faced were the bad pay and the changing curriculum, which meant teachers didn't know what they had to teach. She also felt that teachers didn't receive the recognition in South Africa that they deserved. She also stated that she didn't feel properly prepared to deal with the diversity of South African classrooms: "Not really, but I suppose, you just have to […] accept everyone that's going to be there. Ja… I suppose, as a teacher, you will have to make the effort about all the diversity in the class, all the different things and you're going to have to make the effort to promote… like, non-stereotypical behaviour in the classroom." She felt that none of the courses she took helped in preparing her for this aspect of teaching. She talked about one course, "Diversity and Learning", which she didn't like at all "because, the whole thing was just… I really didn't like it at all. I just felt the whole thing was… when we did racism, it was all like, 'oh we did this to you, the Blacks and like shame and what we did was wrong, and all the times we were racist'. And I just felt like an attack on the White race. And then with sexism it was all like, how you've been disadvantaged as a female and I like […] for me it wasn't relevant and it didn't prepare you for the classroom. It was all like about how *you* like had been racist or how you had been disadvantaged as a woman. (...) If anything, that course made me more, like […] racist [laughing] than ever before."

She felt that during her practice teaching she hadn't really come across any problems with diversity. This was mostly because "in the schools that I've been to, it's all been, like, not much diversity. I mean, there's been like all colours but like the schools I've been to have all been like the normal, Christian based schools, so… everyone just has to follow that. For example in assembly, they pray and sing like Christian songs and that and it doesn't matter what colour the child is, or whatever, if they came to that school, they have to follow that. And then, that was basically all the schools I've been to have been like that. But then the only diversity there was, was obviously at [the special needs school], but then obviously all those kids were different and they knew that. It was a different situation." The only incident that stood out for her was when she observed a lesson where the teacher didn't know how to deal with a learner who was a Jehovah's Witness.

She was very aware of the disparities between wealthy and poor schools and stated very strongly that she would never teach at a poor, rural school. I asked her why:

"You just hear about all kinds of violence in the townships is more than it is in town and just because of what the schools are going to be like. The lack of resources, and like, I don't think I'd be able to handle it. I don't think it would be that great. And then also, like the kids...there'd be a hectic, language communication problem." After some reflection, however, she changed her mind about her ability to cope under such circumstances: "I think I could manage. I think I could use my initiative and... you can do things without these beautiful bought resources. You definitely can, but I just don't think I would like it." While she changed her mind about her ability to cope, what did not change is her willingness to experience something unfamiliar and outside of her comfort zone. Rural and township schools are collapsed into one category, which to her represents "the other" and the only reality she chooses to deal with is her one - suburban, middle-class and mainly White.

At many points in her narrative, a sense of detachment from South Africa as a whole and larger, political events emerged. She often felt that these didn't affect her personally. This came out particularly strongly in a last question I posed about reading newspapers. Here is her response: "Ja, I do read the paper. Ja, sometimes I follow the news. Ja, things like that do interest me, like what's going on around, but like it doesn't... it doesn't, like if it's not here, it doesn't, it can't really change your life." At the end of the interview she wanted to explain why she didn't analyse her life so much: "[laughing] ja, because, ja... I did go through a time when I like analysed everything in my life and then I came to a point and said, 'why am I doing this to myself?' So then, I just, stopped, it was driving me up the wall. I don't try to think about things [...] I suppose in a way I should, some things, but I don't try to analyse everything. My attitude is more like, just get on with it. Now I just take each day as it comes, although I do, like obviously I'm thinking about next year. Things like that, but other things, whatever has happened, has happened and I just carry on."

Her future plans were to find a job (in a school that was as close to her experience, i.e. White/Christian, as possible) and then to go overseas to work and travel.

Fiona

Fiona was born in Durban and was 22 at the time of the interview. She lived in the highway area of Durban with her father and stepmother. Teaching was not her first

choice of career, but she decided to become a teacher because she felt that it was a more family-orientated career.

She mentioned her gender identity as being her second most important identity on the "I am" worksheet. However, she couldn't really articulate why she had mentioned it. The only thing she mentioned was her shyness when guys were around. She was aware of her racial identity and put it down to living in South Africa: "I think you're very aware of your race, which group you belong to, in South Africa, because it is so diverse. It's very rare that you're just a South African... you're a White South African or a Black South African...you know. There's nothing positive or negative about it, it's just like which group you fit into, basically... classification." Her Christianity also came up as part of her identity on the "I am" worksheet.

Her timeline started with her family and the first point was the birth of her brother. Her mother was diagnosed with cancer when Fiona was five. Her mother's illness formed much of her memories of when she was younger. She spoke about not really understanding her mother's illness when she was small: "I think my mom was really good with us... everyday she'd spend a lot of time with us and she was very... very centered in the Lord. She used to read us stories and stuff and [...] I just think the way she explained it... [laughing] I don't remember being traumatised by it. I remember her being away a lot... obviously she was having chemotherapy. Then um... then the cancer regressed. It went away and then it came back again."

The second time the cancer came back, it was worse and her mother passed away. Fiona was older and found it very difficult to cope with, "And it was hard, like at school. I remember like so vividly, just one little boy who came up to me and said, 'Listen, I'm sorry about your mom'. Everyone else didn't know what to say and they just ignored it, you know I just remember I appreciated it so much... because like in the hall, obviously they said something about it and they prayed for us and stuff [laughing]. And then obviously the whole school knew, but nobody said anything." Her mother's death served as a catalyst in her life to achieve everything she could and she has done extremely well at school and academically in general.

Her father consequently remarried and Fiona had a good relationship with her stepmother. Their property was subdivided into many flats which were rented out to

different people. She attended an Afrikaans school and spoke very fondly of it.

Teaching was not Fiona's first choice, which caused conflict with her father. She wanted to become a chartered accountant, but also talked of the tensions she faced because she wanted to have time for her future family, something she said was probably due to her mother dying so early. She explained this pull between a career and a family: "I really want to have a family. It's more important to me that, even when I was at school, when I was choosing a career, thinking about a career, I would always think of that. It's always in my mind. I want to be a mom and be there and have the family. I don't want to just work and like, you know, there's no choice for me, I want to have a family, I won't just work until I'm 40 or something like that. No way. And... um then he [her father] said to me he's not wasting his money sending me to do CA, to study for seven years and then when I'm 25 already and would... I'd work for like three years and then have kids. You see, he's like that, you know. I regret that." She expressed frustration with the teaching environment and the people who she was studying with. She felt regret about not having studied what she wanted to do although she said she was good at teaching. She found Edgewood quite easy academically and as a result her father put pressure on her to complete a BCom through correspondence.

Her identity as a Christian grew stronger as she grew older and met other Christian people. A friend she met at university had a strong influence on the way she saw herself as a Christian: "I grew up in a Christian home, where it was like, 'Oh, it's Sunday, we have to go to church.' Just having her... she was just such a living Christian. (...) And she'd like go and help out with children's homes and stuff, drag me along and we'd be like looking after Aids babies and stuff and like doing all kinds of stuff. Just being around her all the time, I think made me realize it's not enough to just say you're a Christian, you must... do something about it [laughing]." She expressed a concern with trying to live her life in a "living Christian" way.

For her culture meant being either English or Afrikaans. She identified herself as English. She stated that although her father was Afrikaans, they were more an English family, even though she had attended an Afrikaans school.

When asked whether she remembered the 1994 elections she said: "Nothing, not

really… maybe sitting in front of the TV when the results were coming out." She did not know whether her parents voted or not. It was after talking about this that a lot of anger towards her father came up: "My dad's always been… he likes to think he's pro-you know, minority whatever… they weren't the minority, but he always chooses like, the […] the previously oppressed side. [laughing] Um, but he likes to think he's not racist, but I don't think he realises how deeply embedded it really is." She explained: "He's like so… like you cannot convince him of *anything.* If he's decided that he's not racist, you will not convince him that there's even an element of racism that exists inside of him. You know, he is like a black and white person, it's either like this or like that and nothing in between. And my step-mom… shame, 'cause I speak to her sometimes and I say how does she stand it? Like she cannot have a fight with him… you know she's just always wrong and he's just always right."

It became evident from her narrative that race was a way of looking at the world that she used fairly often. For example, Fiona talked about how she saw her parents interact with their garden and house help and tried to imagine how the situation might have been different had their employees been White. She was also quite adamant about how these situations revealed her father's racism. She recalled one incident where the gardener had been given old food, something which she said they would never have done to a White person. She said "because like, if that was a White person, you wouldn't like give them your left-overs, even if it's like a charitable thing, a generous thing to do. […] You know, or like he has his own like, mug and his own plate. Why must he use different ones? [laughing] I mean, if it was a White person would you do that? Or if it was a White person, say, if they wanted to use the loo quickly, they could go and use my parents' loo, but now he has to use the downstairs one. Or say, if he's washing up afterwards, he's got a little room there in the garden, you know, why can't he come and shower in the house?"

Her definition of racism was: "It's not like… it won't like affect that person's life tremendously or anything, but it is racist. That's what racism is, any distinction you make, based on the colour of your skin, is racist. If you treat a Black person in any way differently from how you'd treat a White person, then you're being racist."

Another note on her timeline was an early memory of the tension between her father and their domestic worker. She remembered this quite vividly and it seemed to have

made a big impression on her: "Like I remember, I was so upset. When we were still living on our own, just after my mom had passed away, me and my brother and my dad, and [their maid], who'd been with us since I'd been a baby. I think I was quite attached to her… just that sense of security that she was still there. And I remember, um… some canned food being missing and he shouted at her! And he said, 'Ja, why are you stealing from us? If you're going to steal, you must just leave.' And he was just going on and on and I remember saying to him, 'Leave her! I'm sure she didn't take it.' I was like choosing her side and everything and then it came out… we found all the stuff and it was there! And I'm pretty sure he didn't say sorry! He might have actually… but I don't know. But I've never been so upset… he was going to chase her away and I was like, 'I'm going with her. If she's going I'm going too!'"

When I asked her about her feelings regarding current South Africa, she wasn't very optimistic. Her attitude seemed to be one of caution. She immediately mentioned that the education system was "in a mess" and that there was corruption. Her fears regarding South Africa were mainly based on things she heard from the people around her and not from information she'd gathered herself.

The first thing she said when I asked what it was like to be White in South Africa today, was that it was still a privilege. She was very aware of the different worlds occupied by White and Black people: "And yes, not all White people are privileged, but most of us are and whereas with the Black people, yes, a lot of them are privileged now, and it's in our face, we forget there's so many of them, that those that we do see… it seems like a lot to us, but it's probably only 5% of the Black population. Most of them are still living in such poverty and it's just such a destructive cycle with Aids and everything else." This awareness of rich/poor being divided also along a Black/White axis as well, was also linked to space and the way space was divided in South African cities: "Ja, the different worlds we live in… it's actually so wrong like, we live like what…10kms from each other, if they live in the township here, and ja… they will never ever experience what we experience."

This critical awareness of the different worlds that White and Black people occupy is something she said she became aware of at university. When talking about learning about Apartheid and diversity she used the expression "it was hammered into us". I then asked her to talk a little more about her racial identity, which she said was

something she was continuously aware of. Her answers were very honest and direct and revealed a lot of self reflection about her racial identity and questions of racism, as well as recognition of what was racist within herself: "Ja, and the sort of friends that you have, you know like […] I don't think I'm racist, like, like, badly… I'm sure I do things that are similar to what my dad does, but, you know, those aren't serious things to me. You know, like, I'd think twice about sharing my water bottle with someone who was Black, say. Like in that way, but otherwise I'm not. But I don't have like one friend who's Black, or Indian, or Coloured… my whole world… I just mix with White people. And it's not that I just want to be around *only* White people, that's just how it is. I don't really come into contact with others, you know, the rest of them. Even at varsity… we're quite a mixed group, but we're so separate… like there're very few cases where there're Black and White groups and stuff like that. Like mixed groups, I don't even know of any!"

She spoke very critically of the situation of races not really mixing on campus, but unlike many of the other participants, she didn't exclude herself from this criticism – "I mean, there's people I've studied with for four years and I don't even know their names… people of different races!" When I asked whether this was something she mentioned to her peers and tried to change, she said: "No, not really, it's sort of accepted it, sort of, like it's just the way it is… unless I really want to change it, that's the way it's going to stay. And ja, […] I'm not into being a change agent at the moment [laughing]."

We then moved on to talking about teaching. She felt the following qualities were important for a teacher to have: being able to relate to the learners, knowing what was going on in their lives, and being enthusiastic about their subject. She also felt that you couldn't teach your subject unless you were confident within it and knew it well.

She felt that one of the biggest challenges facing teachers in South Africa was "not getting a negative attitude towards the education department". She was critical of a number of the new policies which had come out. She explained: "It's a portfolio policy and um… where your mark for the year will be totally based on this portfolio […] and um, while it's like a set standard for everyone, some schools could push marks up, whereas some don't and then… ja, it's very much like in the teachers' hands.

Teachers... must be... must have integrity [laughing]." She also mentioned racism, but stated that this wasn't really a problem for teachers which contradicted some of her earlier statements: "I think we all... I think most people in the new South Africa are very accepting of each other and embrace the diversity and all that."

Her teaching practice was done at mostly former Model C schools and also at the school she had attended herself. She said that there were no incidents that stood out for her regarding diversity issues, most likely as there was little challenge to her perspective and understanding of diversity.

Her plans were to go overseas "with the intention to teach" and also to allow her to travel. This she wanted to do for two years and then come back to South Africa, as she had been offered a position at a Durban school.

Skye

Skye was 22 at the time of the interview and was born in the Eastern Cape, but moved to Durban when she was quite young. She always knew she wanted to work with children and has specialised in the Foundation and Intermediate Phase.

Skye chose to mention only two things on the "I am" worksheet. One referred to her religious identity and the other to a more personal characteristic, her uniqueness as an individual. She didn't see herself very strongly in terms of group identities, hence her emphasis on uniqueness. Later in the interview, she did speak of not "fitting in" which might explain this.

She distinguished between calling herself "saved" and calling herself "Christian". This seemed to have to do with the fact that she saw all White South Africans as calling themselves Christian, which in her eyes didn't describe herself. She explained: "I think a lot of people always say that they're Christian, but I don't think that they really know the Lord and I feel like I do, like I have a relationship."

Her timeline started out with her first memory, namely of choosing not to go outside and play in the snow with her mother and sister. It is one of regret. Later, her family moved to Durban and into her grandfather's house in one of the wealthier suburbs.

He lived with them and she had many childhood memories of living in that house.

She said they fitted into their neighbourhood, but also noted that "I didn't see any difference between us and everyone else... [their suburb] is rather like a bubble though, you know...like a suburbia sort of thing.[...] Although later I did feel a bit different, I guess we didn't own that house and everyone else is quite wealthy. I guess sometimes I did feel that the other kids were more wealthy. I had a best friend when I was young, her dad was like a pilot so they always had loads of money." This awareness of class differences seemed to have come at a later stage; at first she didn't notice it. It was also through later reflection that she came to regard their suburb as a "bubble". The class differences she talked about openly were the ones within it, while the differences she only hinted at were the wider ones that set the "bubble" apart from the living conditions of the rest of the city.

I sensed a hesitancy to talk openly about some childhood memories and I think this was understandable, as I was not close to her and a lot of the memories she had were lived against the backdrop of her mother's cancer diagnosis. This was also something which formed her sense of herself in relation to other people. She explained her mother's illness: "That was sort of, well, from then on, it's always something that has been in the background. I guess it made me feel different as well. I didn't know any other kids... you know, like when you're aware that your parent is ill. It's different." She moved on from talking about that to a more comical incident where someone threw up on her in primary school.

Her mother's cancer was devastating for the family, but it also lead Skye to become Christian and be "saved". Her religious identity was very strong and often came up in both her timeline and her answers to my questions. She explains this part of herself: "And then, also then, it was like when I started not wanting to be like the [...] How can I put it? [...] I didn't want to be... um, like the ruler of my own life, like I wanted the Lord to be it. Even though, I was saved by then, I only really started living like, passionately... well, I started sharing what I believed in."

She attended a former Model C girls' school, which she described as less sheltered than her primary school and more interesting because there was a greater mix of people. It was during high school that she started baby-sitting for money and

teaching Sunday school classes, which made her realise that she was good with children.

She described her father as always being "quite racist" and said: "And I always knew that that was wrong. I've always had a feeling of like… being bitter towards him because of that. Like… I do understand that it's the way he grew up, but I mean my mom also grew up in that era and she wasn't. I think she always believed everyone was equal, which is something she learned. Um… my mom was very accepting and my dad wasn't." She recalled feeling very frustrated by her father's attitude towards the Black workers in their house, specifically, the way he'd refer to the gardener as the "garden-boy".

Race wasn't really discussed in their home and the only time she recalled a conversation with her father about race was about her wish to adopt Black children. She remembered the conversation as follows: "Well, like the one time I really freaked him out because I was talking about really wanting to, at some point, to adopt kids… when I'm older. And there seems to be a need… well to me, there seems to be more a need to adopt Black children. He like freaked out. He couldn't… He got so upset."

She placed herself more in line with her memory of her mother's views on race: "With my mom it was much more open. I knew she felt the same way about it, as me. I remember when like, different races and that joined our school… because like, you know, when I started in Class one it was all White, completely. But then we had this nativity play, and I love plays and stuff and for the first time there were other races in it and my mom was like… I remember, she was crying, because she thought it was so beautiful. For the first time there were like little Indian angels as well, all different races. […] I remember she really loved that. I guess that was also when I realised about differences. Like, 'oh, we're all different'"

She recalled that it was during high school that she really became aware of diversity. She reflected on this as something that might be seen as clichéd: "Then I had all these strange phases, but then, I really started… it sounds clichéd, like I'm doing it just for your study, but I really started… like loving South Africa and like culture and that… diversity." While she had an awareness of race, she never named herself as White. She was also acutely aware of the "right" way and a "wrong" way of talking

about it. This was evident in her reference to "house helper ladies" rather than the more common "maid" or "domestic worker". She noticed that people still grouped themselves by race at university lectures. This was mentioned with almost a resignation that nothing could be done about it. When asked if this surprised her at all about campus life, she said, "No... like, not... theoretically it should, but it doesn't. They all have something in common and they know each other more. It's just harder to sometimes try and bridge the gap. It's easier to just stay and work with people you know and are comfortable with." This she gave as a reason for the lack of actual integration amongst the Edgewood students.

Her mother's death, was very difficult for her and she wondered "how she'd survived" it. She saw herself as having grown through that though.

When I asked her how she would describe herself culturally she answered: "Gosh, that's tough. [...] Um, it's funny, I think, because a lot of like, White, young people don't have a culture. Especially English, because if you're Afrikaans you do, but um, you do have a culture, but it's just not very... well it's very specific to your own nuclear family, it's not like a broader thing. Um, but, in terms of myself, I guess I try adopt a lot of like African culture, but not in any like big way, but just sort of in things like, who my... well, like role models are. It sounds really clichéd, but I really love Nelson Mandela, and I love reading about him and Steve Biko and stuff like that, just like... even sometimes the way I dress." For her it was important to attempt to hybridise culture and adopt elements of "African culture" into her identity. She drew on South Africa's rich diversity as a source of pride.

She recalled the 1994 elections clearly: "I remember there was just this hushed anxiousness. I know it sounds bad, but I thought it was quite exciting, it was like a... you didn't know what was going to happen... it wasn't like just run-of-the-mill. [...] Sort of like an unsure buzz in the air..." She received a lot of negative messages from the people around her, such as from her friend's family, who left the country because they thought it was safer. She heard snatches of conversation, such as: "Um, I just remember hearing things people were saying, like 'Ja, things are going to go the other way and we'd all be totally marginalised'." One of her clearest memories is of actually going to the polling station with her parents: "I also remember all the posters they had up at the time, um, there was one... with Nelson Mandela, which had fallen down, like outside the voting station and people were walking over it and I

was thinking, 'Oh my gosh, this is terrible' and I tried to pick it up."

Her own Whiteness didn't feature much and wasn't named directly. This might have been an attempt to distance herself from the more negative and conventional conceptions of Whiteness. When I asked more specifically about being White in South Africa today, she said, "Well [...] I think it's great. I don't think it's like... I don't have any fears which sort of like... the anxiousness, like I know a lot of my friends say it's so hard to live and work here, just in terms of jobs. And then it's like so expensive and it wouldn't be like that like in Australia and that. I just disagree, I think it's workable, you know. It's not as bad as they think it is. I mean, it's exciting because everything is still changing and things are like just growing, like our music and our fashion, stuff like that. It's all just starting out now, so it's an exciting place to live... Being White is what you make of it."

Skye felt herself drawn to teaching from a young age. Some of the qualities she saw as important for a teacher to have were creativity, being passionate about what you did, and having empathy for your students. The challenges that teachers faced were AIDS, as well as diversity issues, on which she placed a lot of emphasis: "I think it is like the cultural diversity thing, that you've got to... Kids now... it's so exciting, they don't see colour really and stuff like that and you've got to maintain that, because it's going to come from old people that will teach them difference. That would be like negative, although it's good that everyone should keep like their own culture, but... not like the racism kind of thing."

Her practice teaching experience highlighted how diversity affected South African classrooms and how important it was for teachers to be aware of and be prepared for it. She went to two very different schools, one very privileged and White, the other much poorer and all Black. She talked about some of her experiences: "Um, I found like [...] I guess I was, different, like a different type of person at both places, because at [the poorer, Black school], just like to survive, I just had to be like so... just... it was so different. It was just much more controlled at the White school and... um [...] there were so many... well, I had 41 kids in the class. It was quite horrendous and many of them weren't the actual age of the grade. It was challenging. And it was bad, because both schools need to be more mixed. Like the African kids didn't know... like once this Chinese lady came in... I don't know what she was doing, she

was just going to the front office… and the kids were all just pouring out to see her, because they were curious. And they didn't know… like what to call her. It was interesting. And then at [the wealthier school] there's…the Black kids, there's not enough of them, to like talk Zulu, to each other and I think that's bad for them. They shouldn't lose their language."

Her future plans included going overseas for a working holiday simply because she said she probably wouldn't get the opportunity later in life. However, she also wanted to work in South Africa: "I'd really love to work at [the wealthier school she did her practice teaching at] just for the experience. It's a lovely, lovely school, there's just something really special about it. I just found that I learned so much, but long term, I'd really like to work somewhere like [the poorer school] …I guess, kind of like, because I'd like to make a difference… at a situation like that. I've also been thinking of Pietermaritzburg, because I think it would be nice to get out of Durban."

Chapter Five

THE LANDSCAPE

Introduction

While the previous chapter gave an overview of the interviews and the participants' stories, this chapter forms an analysis of those stories and has been divided into two parts. Part one will discuss in more detail the participants' context, or what I have called "landscape". The image of a landscape, as has been discussed in the methodology chapter, functions here as a discursive tool with which to frame the subjective stories the participants have told me about themselves. Using the image of a landscape I hope, firstly, to create a more detailed context for their stories, allowing me to view them from different angles; and, secondly, to broaden the picture somewhat in order to explore some of the common features of the post-Apartheid South African landscape. The aim of this chapter is also to act as a check to the subjective interview data I have collected, and supplement it with other voices from a variety of sources, which may give part one, in particular a "collage" feel. By providing a more general picture, part one will also help in exploring the identities of young, White, South African student teachers.

Part two will discuss the common themes that emerged from the interviews presented in chapter four. Through this, the social identities of my participants are explored and it will become clearer how this group of student teachers see themselves and how they will attempt to grapple with issues of social identity in their future classrooms. At times these themes contradict and conflict with each other, offering up differing pictures. I will argue that while they occupy the same "macro" landscape (briefly sketched out in part one), these are individual responses to that landscape and their own experiences at a more "micro" level with friends, family, schools, etc. In other words, their common experience of the South African landscape, which is by no means still, is further shaped by their individual contexts and other social identities, for example their religious identity or whether they occupy or have occupied a rural or an urban space.

Part One

Apartheid and Spaces

This section will deal with some background information, particularly the Group Areas Act, as this act, more than most, affected the spatial allocations within the Apartheid landscape for these young people (see also Christopher, 1994). The Group Areas Act, No.41 of 1950, epitomised the Apartheid vision of separate development and social separation, and revealed a more radical shift from the old policies of segregation in which racial separation "in every sphere" was not an aim in itself (Fagan, 1960:44). It embodied the theory propounded by the Nationalist government that "contact breeds friction. The customs of people of different races are not compatible, and harmonious relations can be secured only by reducing points of contact to the minimum" (Kuper, Watts and Davies, 1956:1). This would not have been possible to do if it hadn't been for the Population Registration Act's attempts at race classification, fundamental to shaping the social, economic and physical landscape, which formed the basis of all other separatist legislation.

More than any other Act after the 1913 Land Act, the Group Areas Act, was instrumental in shaping the physical landscape of South African cities and its surrounding areas, and lives on even after Apartheid has officially ended. While residential segregation had existed before the birth of Apartheid in 1948, starting with the Glen Grey Act of 1894, the Group Areas Act served as a culmination of these earlier attempts at racial segregation (Festenstein and Pickard-Cambridge, 1987:2). It not only shaped South African development into the dialectical relationship between township and suburb, wealthy White urban centres and impoverished African rural spaces, but also shaped the relationships between races by controlling their interaction. Often described as the "essence of Apartheid", the Act was presented as the solution to racial friction and White economic and ideological fears. In terms of racial interaction, it steered the course firmly into near-complete racial separation (outside of the workplace) and made into law what had been generally accepted as voluntary before. Fagan, who headed a commission in 1948 which recommended the abolition of the pass laws, describes the justification and fear that gave rise to this piece of legislation:

The absence of social fraternization between Whites and non-Whites is indeed simply an instance of the natural tendency which is indicated by the proverb 'like seeks like'. The feeling in respect of differences of colour is particularly strong in South Africa, for intelligible reasons. In the Union the Whites are in a minority of two to seven, and there is a great Black Africa pressing on our borders. (1960:22)

While the Act was theoretically meant to enhance harmony, as stated above, in reality it was probably the most devastating of all, breeding bitterness, mistrust and hostility (Festenstein & Pickard-Cambridge, 1987:22). The Act set aside areas for specific racial groupings, where the White areas were notably always the ones with the most development and infrastructure. This resulted in forced removals of whole urban communities to newly constructed townships at the periphery of the cities (Maylam, 2001:182; also Platzky and Walker, 1985). It also ensured that 85% of land could not be owned by Africans (Robertson, 1990:124), which would ensure that wealth, privilege and power would remain in White hands. Festenstein and Pickard-Cambridge point out that many families lived with a general sense of "rooflessness" because of the constant threat of removal. This also resulted in the breakdown of community ties and relations, increased crime, as well as reinforcing racial stereotypes as no natural social interaction was possible (1987:21). Similar experiences are detailed in Platzky and Walker's *The Surplus People* (1985).

I have chosen to focus on Durban as an illustration of the effects of the Group Areas Act on city space, as most of my participants grew up here. The plans for the total residential segregation of the city were based on the recommendations of a Technical Sub-Committee of the City Council, appointed on the 20 November 1950 (Kuper, Watts and Davies, 1956:2). This meant that the Central Berea Ridge zone and the Sea Front zones (including the ocean ridge of the Bluff, the central city tract, the esplanade along the beach front and Durban North) were to be mainly occupied by Whites (Kuper, Watts and Davies, 1956:92-93). Figure 1, below, gives an indication of the spatial organisation of Durban according to race. In it, it should be noted that little of the urban space was occupied or set aside for Black people. This was mostly due to the formation of the homelands, which aimed to keep Black people in rural areas in locations already fixed through the Land Act of 1913.
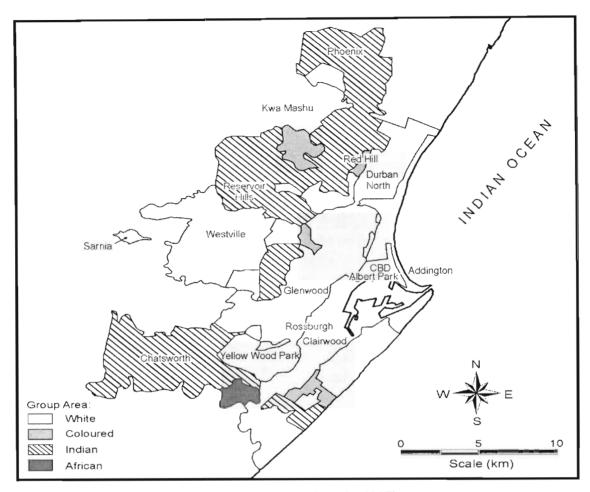
Figure 1: Racial residential zones pre-1994 (from Francis, 2005)

While these areas have in recent years opened up to other races, they do remain predominantly White. Schools in these areas were also former Model C schools (for Whites, which will be discussed under the heading "Schools" below) serving the communities around them. Again, while these schools today have become increasingly mixed, the overall culture is still very much embedded in the White community around them. This will be discussed in more detail below.

During the years of the formation and implementation of the Group Areas Act, the National Party government referred to the many dangers of mixing races. Kuper, Watts and Davies comment that "He [the prime minister, J.G. Strijdom] was, in fact, asserting that the perception of racial difference would weaken with intimate contact, and that in this way the White group would lose its identity by a process of fusion" (1956:193). This brought the issue of identity into the legislative sphere and defined White identity as something that needed defending on all fronts.

As has been argued above, Apartheid legislation has left its imprint on the current context. This was also strongly the case within the education sector, which has resulted in deep-rooted inequalities between schools. The following section will examine schooling in a post-Apartheid context.

Schools

Education in post-Apartheid South Africa has been the site of much transformation, in terms of school integration and curriculum development, as well as teacher education. Under Apartheid, the curriculum played a very powerful role in reinforcing separation and inequality, and in maintaining a strict racial hierarchy that would span across the political, social and economic spheres of life. The curriculum is an important tool in which a country's values and representations of society are embodied. It is also the base from which political values can be either projected or contradicted (Jansen, 2001:47). This sentiment was echoed by the then Minister of Education, Kader Asmal, in the Preface to the *Revised National Curriculum Statement for Grades R-9*,

> At its broadest level, our education system and its curriculum expresses our idea of ourselves as a society and our vision as to how we see the new form of society being realized through our children and learners. Through its selection of what is to be the curriculum it represents our priorities and assumptions of what constitutes a 'good education' at its deepest level. (DoE, 2001)

Undoubtedly, the curriculum needed to be changed and this was put into effect by the Curriculum Committee, who erased racist and sexist content from books and syllabi (Tikly and Motala, 2003:114). This was an interim measure until new syllabi and textbooks could be established.

It is important to note that within the educational context, much is changing, and it is therefore a "moving" landscape. For example, one of the biggest changes has been the introduction of Curriculum 2005 or Outcomes Based Education (OBE). For teachers and student teachers alike, this has been a time of change, which some have resisted and viewed with scepticism, while others have embraced it. This tension was also present in some of my participants' views on what it was like to be a teacher in South Africa today. Many felt there was too much change to cope with for teachers and that it was happening at the expense of the learners.

Another aspect of change that needs to be explored in this Chapter is the racial integration of schools and how this is influenced by the patterns of spatial division left behind by Apartheid. This had a direct impact on my participants, either in terms of their own experiences of schooling, or in terms of their practice teaching while students.

Most of my participants attended the former Model C schools, which during Apartheid were largely for Whites, although some of my participants remember having classmates of another race before 1994. This would have been either because, firstly, in 1990 formerly White schools were legally allowed to begin enrolling pupils of other races. However this could only happen if parents voted in favour of such change. This was also when parents could opt for their school becoming semi-private/semi-state, which was referred to as Model C. Secondly, some private schools and Catholic schools were also able to have more say over who they enrolled, making it possible for a small number of Indian, Black and Coloured pupils to gain access to these schools before 1994 (Dawson, 2003:71).

After 1994, schools were officially desegregated and a process of integration began that aimed to change the landscape of South Africa's divided schooling system. It was through the South African Schools Act of 1996 that saw the Model C school system dissolved in an attempt to finalise school integration (Francis, 2005:282). However, while today the former Model C schools are a mix of cultures and languages with a diverse learner population, culturally they often have not changed much and the level of actual integration between learners is limited (see, for example, Dawson and her study on learner identities and friendship groups in a de-segregated Johannesburg school (2003)). Many of my participants also noted that while their schools were mixed, learners tended to stick with their race groups and none of them reported forming deeper friendships across races.

This can partly be explained by the way Apartheid affected space, deciding where people lived according to race and which schools they attended. For example, Melanie talks about her friends in school: "I had a few close friends. I didn't like have like, lots of... like a big group... just had two or three close friends. They all came from the area, same upbringing." Graham explained that his high school was very racially mixed, but because of the areas in which the different race groups lived, it

wasn't easy to maintain out-of-school friendships. He mentioned this about the friends he had at school: "because we all came from all over the place... so maybe that's why the friends that I had at school, who were not White actually stayed in [an Indian residential area] and... just way out, way out. So we couldn't really mix after school, we couldn't because I mean, we didn't have our own car to drive around in." (Also see Figure 1 above). A similar pattern can be applied to schools in townships, farms and informal settlements, which cater to the majority of learners in South Africa and which remain mostly uniracial (Chisholm, 2005:216).

However, while Apartheid and space can to some extent explain the limitations of school integration, there is also often a lack of active engagement with issues of diversity. Soudien (2004) argues that there are in fact few genuinely anti-racist classrooms or teachers who are sensitive to the differences amongst learners at school and that often an assimilationist agenda is followed. This lack of wanting to engage with issues of diversity outside of the "comfort zone" of many student teachers, can be seen in the choice of schools for practice teaching. Hemson, in his study on the challenge of diversity in teacher education points to this problem: "Much concern was expressed over the limitations of teaching practice in terms of the exposure of more privileged students to different conditions" (2006:30). Apart from Melanie and Skye, who wanted to experience teaching practice at a school that was mainly poor, with predominantly Black learners, the other participants chose to go to schools which were closer to their own schooling experiences (former Model C schools). Melissa mentioned in her interview, "I suppose, in the schools that I've been to, it's all been, like, not much diversity. I mean, there's been like all colours but like the schools I've been to have all been like the normal, Christian based schools, so... everyone just has to follow that."

1994 elections

The 1994 elections are a prominent part of the South African landscape in terms of the country's transition to democracy and in the economic and social transformation that followed. In the interviews, the 1994 elections were remembered by most of the participants, and were always described by those in terms of emotions, for example "excited", "scared", "worried", "uncertain". Usually these feelings were a reflection of what they saw in the significant adults around them. While they may not remember

the specific political issues and events, the elections made an impact on most of them. This section will give a little background and then try to provide a general sense of the feelings surrounding the historic elections in order to place those memories in context.

Mattes states that when looking at the 1994 elections, one needs to start with de Klerk's historic speech in February of 1990 in which the ANC and other liberation movements were unbanned and Nelson Mandela was released. It signalled the change that was to come to South Africa and set in motion, at least in the public's eye, the process of a negotiated settlement. After this came the famous "Yes or No" referendum for Whites, CODESA and the government of National Unity (1994:1-5).

For Whites, this signalled a huge shift in power and an era characterised by uncertainty. It was a time of mixed emotions, as will be illustrated below, using letters written to newspapers in the run-up to the elections. I have chosen to use letters as they offer a means to 'listen in' on the different voices and view points of Whites at the time. Often they are characterised by strong emotions, which ties in with the memories my participants recalled. Common themes addressed are who to vote for, political violence, the election date, and South Africa's readiness to hold free and fair elections.

For example, there was a sense that the role of Whites in the transition was not acknowledged:

> It makes me sick to the gut to see how the ANC is constantly lying about the National Party. The fact of the matter is that if it wasn't for F W de Klerk and the National Party, South Africa wouldn't be facing its first ever democratic elections in April (J. Geenen, Jacobs, *The Mercury*, 11 April 1994).

Often the letters reveal a sense of confusion and desperation over the political transition and specifically over the role of the National Party (NP) in the future. Some Whites saw the party as a viable alternative, others didn't.

Some letters were characterised by denial that Whites had done anything wrong in the past and deflected the issue of blame onto the ANC, which painted a very bleak picture of things to come:

> [the power and function of government must be reduced to the minimum] only thus   can South Africa recover from the crippling effects of decades of ANC

sanctions, terrorism, intimidation and strikes, which caused millions to become unemployed. The appalling record of the ANC includes the murder of hundreds of policemen and hundreds of IFP leaders, as these were the only two obstacles to a complete forceful take-over by the ANC (L. Riggall, Kloof, *Sunday Tribune*, 11 April 1994).

Many Whites saw the transition as consisting of two polar opposites, namely order (Whiteness) and chaos (Africanness) and that they were helplessly moving towards South Africa's demise:

> Your headline, 'This year SA is history', is very true. From April we start our downward slide to obscurity, to join all the other failed African countries, from Liberia to Zimbabwe. (K. Roberts, Kokstad, *Sunday Tribune*, 16 January 1994)

Others revealed their fear for the future and their concern over the elections themselves, which many Whites expected to be bloody and violent:

> I am so afraid. Afraid for myself, my children and my friends, from all walks of life... We are entering troubled times. The election process continues like a fully laden truck down a steep hill. The brakes and steering are faulty, but the truck speeds down the slope. (K.L.R. Poulter, Sherwood, *Sunday Tribune*, 30 March 1994)

For this reason there were many reports about Whites stockpiling food at home, for example: "Supermarket groups say families needn't stockpile foodstuffs before the elections because supplies are expected to be plentiful" (*Mercury* Reporter, 3 March 1994). Other letters were not negative about the fact that change was happening, but wanted the elections to be postponed:

> We are currently caught between a rock and a hard place, but I still think we are better off by postponing the elections and getting the constitution right, than bulldozing ahead... Unless and until we have a constitution that is acceptable to the vast majority of people, there will be no peace. The ANC/SACP/NP alliance cannot ride roughshod over the will of the Afrikaner and Zulu nations and get away with it. (P.L.A. Bestel, Durban, *The Mercury*, 31 March)

There is also a sense of identities being threatened by the political change, such as name changes to places, as one reader points out:

> And to round off this horrible meal, we in Natal are being asked to abandon Natal for KwaZulu/Natal! (How about Venda/Transvaal or Ciskei/Eastern Cape?) It's all very indigestible! (P.J. Knock, Pinetown, *The Mercury*, 11 March 1994)

While some letters reveal a resistance to change others held a more positive outlook and appealed for reconciliation and trust:

> The time has come for all political parties jointly to shoulder the responsibilities engendered by their offers of 'freedom'... Until this is done and everybody comes to realise that we all have to trust each other, there will never be peace in our land. (R. Ellis, Westville, *Natal on Saturday*, 23 April 1994)

White people by no means represented a homogeneous group with uniform views. There were splits along English/Afrikaans speaking lines and between liberals and conservatives. For example as shown in the two articles: "Liberals beset by dilemma: Whom do we vote for?" (*Daily News*, 23 February 1994) and "Fear and loathing in the Free State" (*Sunday Tribune*, 13 February 1994). The first one focuses on whether White liberals should vote ANC or not, as they did not identify with the NP:

> Confused? But then that is the familiar condition of liberals. As a species, we do not make up our minds easily. We are not great participants or activists, because we lack that certainty of belief that distinguishes the real politician (*Daily News*, 23 February 1994).

While this paints a picture of apathy for White liberals who often had the opportunity to leave the country, the other extreme is explored in the article about the mainly Afrikaans speaking farming communities of the Free State, where the tenuous situation of Whites was explored:

> "Most people are afraid – for the future of the town, the land, the whole country," said Engela Bornman, the town clerk of Excelsior. "They don't have a vision of what's going to happen, will they still have their jobs, their farms, what do they stand to lose, what will they do," she said. (*Sunday Tribune*, 13 February 1994)

Most of my participants placed their families somewhere between these two points and along a similar line of emotion. This axis of liberal-conservative was also reflected in their ordering of ideas in a post-Apartheid context. The general feeling of uncertainty and change did, with some of the participants, translate itself into narratives of threat and frustration. This will be discussed in more detail in Part 2 in the section on "Anger, loss of power and the new victim".

Talking race today

This landscape is also filled with a number of voices regarding race, its relevance in the new South Africa and whether trust and social interaction have increased. The aim of this section is to place the participants' views into a landscape of racial relations in post-Apartheid South Africa. This has a relevance for identity-making (for example, the way in which some participants referred to "us" and "them") and

provides a bigger picture of how "Whiteness" is to be defined. Using SIT is one way of making sense of these group definitions. Maré states that social identity means identifying with a group or category of people, which arises out of the process of social categorisation (simplifying social reality) and social comparison (creating a status hierarchy) (Maré, 2001:77). Through this process, group boundaries are created and others as well as self are ordered in this fashion. It is therefore valuable to see how this takes place on a broader scale before examining participant responses.

Steyn also points out that researchers need to examine the way in which the individual's story is embedded in a broader, societal landscape. This also means an analysis of the unintended messages that the respondents give regarding their understanding of race relations in the country (2001:48). This section proved to be difficult to piece together as it required race relations to be measured in some way.

I have attempted this in two ways: firstly, by looking at survey research of race relations; and, secondly, taking a sample of opinions and views which are mediated through newspapers. Both these two section are an indication of the changing nature of this landscape as South Africans travel further into their democracy and new unified identity. It is also a reflection of the responses to the changes occurring in the landscape.

- **"Measuring" race relations**

Much time and space could be devoted to a discussion on the accuracy and reliability of surveys as a tool for measuring race relations in South Africa. However, I cannot do justice to such a task here. What surveys can do, is to give an indication of what kinds of questions are being asked, by whom, and what the general findings of these tools are. Therefore, what is presented here should be viewed as only a rough sketch of some of these surveys.

Race and Ethnic Relations Barometer is a study by the Centre for Policy Studies that asks the following question: "To what extent after a decade under a post-Apartheid government, have South Africans overcome the socio-racial polarisation that had been entrenched through the system of apartheid?" (2005:1) and seeks to answer them through public attitude questionnaires. This, in light of my intentions here, could

provide some insight into race relations.

Some of the findings in 2005 were, that all four racial groupings questioned (Indian, White, Black, and Coloured) were equally committed to a common South African identity, although Whites were least likely to identify themselves as "African" (2005:5). The findings also noted that compared to the other groups, Whites showed the most social conservatism towards racial interaction when it came to residential integration. However, this was not high, with only 21.5% of Whites stating that residential integration would create tension between the races. A higher group (31.4%) said that racial integration in neighbourhoods had not made much difference to race relations (Kornegay, 2005:9-10).

In general, problem perception of racism amongst all groups was high, although other issues, such as crime, violence, poverty and unemployment, were of greater concern (2005:12). There were limitations to exploring the different groups' perceptions of racism in more detail, as Kornegay acknowledges. Specifically problems exist in terms of how exactly racism was perceived – for example when looking at the issues of Affirmative Action and Black Economic Empowerment (BEE), which some Whites might see as reverse racism (2005:12).

The research report states: "Even though the survey may have revealed a picture that is not polarised from an empirical standpoint, the tendency for high-visibility incidents with strong racial overtones to generate potentially polarising public controversies remains a reality in the public life of post-Apartheid South Africa" (Kornegay, 2005:1).

Earlier measures include a study by Gibson and Gouws (2000) which empirically links Social Identity Theory (SIT) with political intolerance in post-Apartheid South Africa. While Gibson and Gouws state that "simple social identities do not directly and automatically turn into intolerance," (2000:291) they did find a strong connection between group solidarity and political intolerance, especially amongst Whites and Indians. What Campbell calls the "dynamic" nature of identity formation is not dealt within traditional SIT, especially within the context of a changing society, which is what this study will be dealing with (Campbell, 1992:50). (See also further information in Chapter Two in the section on SIT.)

An HSRC survey in 2000 reports that race relations are gradually improving and that 82% of respondents did not experience any form of discrimination in the six months prior to the survey (2000, Media release). With regards to Whites, the survey states that "although 41% of the White respondents believed that they [race relations] had improved, another 29% believed that they had deteriorated – approximately double the proportion of the other population groups who believe this" (2000, Media release).

When looking specifically at an educational context, it appears that not that much has changed. Many of my participants talked of the self-imposed separation between races on the Edgewood campus and during lectures. This was seen as "natural" and as reflecting comfort zones. Erasmus, citing two studies, namely Erasmus and de Wet (2003) and Steyn and van Zyl (2001), states that in the higher education sector "learners (Black and White) tend to group around race and often around Apartheid race categories, making interaction across race among learners limited" (2005:14). She sees this as an unfortunate, yet natural response to Apartheid's legacy, which has left, as Erasmus puts it, South Africans of different racialised experiences "estranged from and antagonistic towards one another" (2005:14). This was, to a greater or lesser degree, the case with each of my participants, who viewed race as something solid, which was very "real" in daily interactions.

The Policy Co-ordination and Advisory Services from the office of the Presidency produced "A Nation in the Making: A discussion document on macro-social trends in South Africa" (2003). Two things are noted that apply to this section. Firstly, that the level of pride and collective national identity is much stronger among young Whites than in the older population (2003:45); and, secondly, that while there is a general sense that race relations have improved, complaints of racism by Whites and Coloured, "seem to reflect a sense of insecurity arising from the formal elimination of exclusive privileges" (2003:98).

These surveys as a whole, present a mixed picture of race relations in post-Apartheid South Africa. No definitive answer can be given, and certainly not at the local level, except maybe that Whites seem to feel torn between seeing an improvement and seeing a deterioration, more so than other groups. The landscape is shared, but the individual responses to it are vastly different depending on smaller, more "micro"

circumstances. These two ways of seeing the common South African landscape can also be found in the sometimes contradictory responses my participants gave.

However, while unanimous answers are hard to find, it does indicate at least to some extent that race relations is a concern that South Africans are grappling with and that the four groupings used by the Apartheid government's Population Registration Act still remain firmly entrenched as a reference point of identity in daily life. Race certainly still counts.

- **Voices in the news: reflections on broader public debates**

The views and opinions of politicians, analysts and public figures are mediated through news reports and often spark public debates around race issues. Often news reports contradict one another and/or offer different angles, depending on the reporter and the newspaper. This means that the selection of news reports gathered here cannot be seen as objective sources of information. However, for the purposes of this Chapter, I feel it is important to include a small selection, as similar public discussions would have been likely to influence my participants' views and opinions, and therefore form part of their narrative-making of themselves as young, White South Africans. My intention is not to present a media analysis, but rather give a brief impression of the "voices" that might influence the narratives and structuring of my participants' identities.

This section focuses on topics which were raised by the participants during the interviews and which are likely to be issues that they will not only face in their private lives, but also in the classroom.

A discourse of "colour blindness" emerges in many media reports, which was also knitted tightly into the narratives some of my participants told. For example, Graham stated "I don't see colour". This was also picked up in Steyn's study *Whiteness just isn't what it used to be: White identity in a changing South Africa* (2001), where Whites often equated it with open-mindedness and a positive way forward into the new South Africa. The *Cape Argus* reports, "In recent days, a number of commentators and media institutions have weighed in with the suggestion that the ANC is threatening the achievement of a 'colour blind' society by 'bringing back the language of racial division'" (31 July 2006, *Cape Argus online*). It however does go

on to question the effectiveness of such a strategy – "We cannot achieve real non-racialism without being forthright about the racial inequalities that still exist. We cannot hope to be 'colour blind' when colour remains such a persistent determinant of social and economic status" (31 July 2006, *Cape Argus online*). Jenny felt very strongly that colour-blindness should be the way forward and built her narrative around this ideal. Acknowledging race was, for her, a step backwards. This would also be a way of sense-making that she would take forward into the classroom. A more detailed discussion of this will follow in Part two.

An article which appeared in *The Star* reports on calls from AfriForum, a civil rights group linked to the Solidarity trade union, to scrap racial classification altogether: "Kallie Kriel suggested an alternative to 'new racial fixation in attempts to eradicate inequalities in society' was to use socio-economic classifications" (29 June 2006, *The Star*). For a similar argument see Adam (2000). What emerged both from the interviews and in the news were reports of race being over emphasised. Ingrid mentioned that she felt South Africa was dominated by racial politics and that this was forcing some Whites to emigrate. This debate, which to a greater or lesser extent exposes some of the discomfort at being White in South Africa, has often been raised in the media: for example, through opposition leader, Tony Leon, who said, "There was a disturbing message from government – minorities, tolerated at best, actively resented at worst, should either put up or shut up. 'Is it any wonder that many South Africans, feeling excluded from our common future, have voted with their feet and departed for destinations where they feel wanted?" (6 October 2006, *Independent Online*). For Melissa, the racialisation of issues in the media and an emphasis on what Whites did wrong during Apartheid also felt like, "an attack on the White race."

This leads on to another theme which emerged, both from the interview data and also from media, namely the issue of "pulling the race card" or, what I have called "crying wolf/crying race". Often accusations of racism towards Whites in the media is linked to criticism or opposition to government and its policies (See also Steyn, 2001). For example: "Makhenkesi Stofile, the sports minister, says racism is the reason some countries and individuals have cast doubt on South Africa to host a successful 2010 World Cup... He blamed South Africans living in Australia and their negative sentiments towards South Africa. Stofile says they do not like the fact that

South Africa is run by a Black government" (27 November 2006, *SABC online*).

A similar pattern emerged with the open/closed university residence debate among those participants in this study who lived on campus. The issue, according to these participants hinged not on race, but security. Kelly expressed her frustration at the way it was being interpreted by other groups: "And they have turned it… they, I mean the meetings or whatever, that have been held, the um,… I don't know what he is exactly, top-dog in terms of res has said that it is a race thing". The interview data revealed much frustration around the issue of racism and disagreement with government or university policies. This is also explored further in part two.

Another story which was featured quite prominently in the news and sparked debate about criticism of the government by Whites being underlined by racism, was the case of rape survivor and HIV/Aids activist, Charlene Smith. She spoke out strongly against government policy regarding the high rape statistics and access to anti-retroviral treatment for survivors. The headline read, "Activist slams Mbeki over 'race card tactic'" (4 October 2004, *The Star*). Another headline: "SA is obsessed with race" reinforces the prominence of race in post-Apartheid South Africa (28 June 2006, i*africa News online*).

The issue of "guilt and redress" was also written into the narratives of my participants, as well as in public debate, as this excerpt from a letter illustrates: "Simply put, it is just undeniable to me that many Whites have treated many Blacks appallingly throughout the history of this land, and because of this, I would like to say that I fully support Magagula's suggestion that a register be set up to acknowledge the pain and suffering caused by the actions and inactions of so many Whites both before and during Apartheid" (S. Chiaberta, Johannesburg, 2 June 2006, *The Star*). During the interviews and the telling of their stories, my participants often came to the delicate line between feeling guilt for being White, and also feeling like they did not have any direct involvement in Apartheid and racism and therefore felt it was unfair to have this sense of guilt hanging over them. For example, Melanie responded to personal stories of racism told during a university class: "I don't know why I felt sorry, but I did because you feel like somehow you're responsible or that people think that is the group you come from and you should say sorry for that." On the other hand there was a sense of acknowledging wrongs, yet a personal distance from it; as Kelly

puts it, "I do have a bit of resistance towards it [affirmative action], because I personally did... had no role in the whole Apartheid government. I didn't personally go and do whatever, so why am I being punished in a sense?" Jenny also expressed a similar sentiment, "you feel like you're being judged... just for being White in this country."

"Pretending race does not exist is no way to heal the division in SA" is the headline for the *Business Day* (3 May, 2006). The article states, "Figures on living standards, access to business ownership and the professions show that Whites remain largely privileged, Blacks largely disadvantaged. White leadership will not bring us closer together unless it recognises that we still have much to do to fight racial inequality, and tells this to its constituency." This is not to say that the participants I interviewed were not aware of this "gap", although it often was raised in contradictory ways in their narratives with a kind of personal detachment. Perhaps it has more to do with a matter of approach; as the *Business Day* points out, "Research shows that appeals to equity based on a common sense of fairness work better than those presented as a punishment for group sins. But measures to deal with our past are often presented as the latter, heightening resistance" (*Business Day online*, 3 May 2006). This resistance is reflected in some of the participants' attitudes towards change and their feelings of being marginalised; for example with Ingrid's view of the shift in power dynamics in the residences, "as a White person, you're so dominated by [...] well, by the Blacks."

Of course this was not the only way of "being White". Some participants were very aware of this economic and social "gap" that existed in South Africa and actively wanted to work towards closing it. For example, Skye expressed a desire to work at a disadvantaged school "because I'd like to make a difference." Others embraced the diversity of the country; for example Kelly explains how she was brought up "being aware of the diversity of our country and working with that, not against that."

Security was another issue that came up in the interviews and which often makes the news headlines as well. Many of my participants felt that since 1994, security had become "an issue" (Ingrid was particularly aware of this after a number of incidents on the farm where her family lived). An Institute for Justice and Reconciliation report states that, "Indian and White South Africans experienced far greater levels of fear of

crime than Black or Coloured South Africans" (Leggett, 4 July 2004, *IJR online*). This was in spite of the fact that Blacks and Coloureds were much more likely to fall victim to violent crime. Indians and Whites were, on the other hand, much more likely to be the victims of property crime. This report was based on two surveys: firstly the 2003 South African Reconciliation Barometer; and the 2003 Institute for Security Studies National Victims of Crime Survey.

While crime in South Africa is particularly high, affecting all race groups negatively, the debate in the media has often centred on racialised perceptions of crime. Criticism of the government's failure to curb crime has been called racist and unpatriotic. For example, Defence Minister Lekota's statement that "South Africans who emigrated post-1994 were more motivated by racist fears of Black rule than concerns about crime" made headlines around the country (15 February 2007, *The Cape Times*). In turn wealthy (mostly White) suburbs have responded to the increase in crime by closing roads with private security. This, Dirsuweit and Wafer argue, is not just a community empowerment initiative to take control of their neighbourhoods, but also a, "part of a politics of defending wealth and privilege" (2006:340). While much public debate has focused this issue around race, it would be wrong to racialise security only when it is used by Whites without careful research exploring additional issues such as class. Viewed in this light only leaves no room for alternatives, such as when Black people express a need or act on a similar fear by living in security villages (wealth and privilege are no longer near-exclusively a White attribute). Therefore, the debate around security and crime should not be racialised automatically.

While this brief discussion has attempted to set some of the issues raised by the participants into the landscape of broader public debate around race in South Africa, it cannot be regarded as a comprehensive analysis of media coverage. This hopefully, will give an idea of the type of thinking that they might have been drawing on when telling their own stories.

Conclusion

The issues discussed in this section were elements to do with identity and my participants' lives in South Africa that were talked about or at least touched on in their narratives. Before the next section it is necessary to briefly examine what was left

unsaid or not brought up:

- HIV/AIDS: considering the devastating impact that the disease is having, and will continue to have, on education, the absence of HIV/AIDS as a concern was noticeable. One participant mentioned it when asked what the challenges were that South African teachers faced.

- Unemployment and poverty: These were issues touched on by some of my participants (for example Kelly, Melanie and Skye) to a greater or lesser degree. This was usually dependent on personal experiences. Mostly my participants were confident about employment and did not feel that the economy or affirmative action would hinder their chances. As teachers are in short supply in South Africa, this is understandable. Their concerns were for their chances of finding employment at a "good" (wealthier) school.

- Changing class configurations were noted by some of my participants, particularly in relation to teaching racially diverse learners who behaved similarly or adhered to a similar youth culture. However, class on the whole did not form much of their sense making or as a way of categorising people.

It can be argued that my participants, through their positions of economic and social privilege, had a degree of insulation from these aspects of post-Apartheid South Africa. For this reason, these were topics that did not occur in many of the narratives and consequently were not explored in detail in this discussion. Making sense of these omissions was theoretically also more difficult due to shortcomings in the SIT approach that Campbell points out: firstly that it is a theory that does not take account of social change and therefore the changing issues that affect identity-making. Secondly, it reduces society to the level of the group only and leaves out the context of hierarchical power relations between groups within society (Campbell, 1992). Campbell refers to Leonard's materialist framework for understanding human consciousness as a way of getting around this problem. Leonard viewed society as divided into a hierarchy of social relationships based on categories such as race, gender, class, etc. The categories which are part of the dominant groups have privileged access to political and economic power (1984:11). I would also add here that it allows more privileged groups to omit, or at least be less conscious of, certain realities faced by other groups who do not have this social insulation or power, such as the rural poor. For the reasons stated above, using narratives would be a way of

addressing some of the problems with traditional SIT. However, due to limited time this potential could not be explored fully in my thesis.

Part two will present a more detailed analysis of the common themes and patterns that emerged from the interviews.

Part Two

Introduction

The data which the interviews elicited, has revealed a dense picture full of contradictions, complexities and startling detail, all presenting a number of different responses to this landscape. While the interviews were very detailed and rich, this could not be adequately represented here. Many interesting points came up which had to be left for possible future investigation. I have selected only a few themes which address my key research questions, namely to find out which group memberships are important to these student teachers and how this has shaped their senses of themselves within a broader societal landscape. We know that groups or categories are probably very significant in determining the kind of life experiences that the individual will have, especially if such categorisation forms part of state policy. It is because of this that Jenkins (1996) argues that social groups and categories are "socially real" and individuals will conduct their lives in terms of those identities. Therefore, this section will look more closely at some of the features of how their lives are conducted and understood inside these categories and exceptions.

In this part of the chapter, I have attempted to examine the data by highlighting common themes relevant to my research. Often the individual responses from my participants change dramatically from one theme to the next, presenting a "stumbling block" to establishing clean and clear-cut conclusions. However, this is the nature of qualitative data derived from narratives, and I have tried to acknowledge these contradictions and explore their roots in order to explain the different "versions" presented of themselves. Sometimes these contradictions indicate that different social identities become more or less salient according to the context and situation. Often "who" the individual is will depend on the environment. This is built on the idea of "situated identities", which doesn't necessarily have to mean change, but more that

some aspects are neglected, while others are emphasised in different situations (Fenner-Barbour, 1998:49). As such, it is the individual's interaction with or location in their context that will be looked at here. These points add complexity to the SIT approach.

Part one, above, has provided a general sketch of the "landscape" that my participants occupy. Part two is a look at the individual's response to this landscape. In other words, while the landscape is, broadly, shared, the richness of the interviews reveals a range of individual responses to this landscape, a number of different narratives to make sense of their context and, in turn, the construction of their identities. Figure 2 below attempts to illustrate this approach visually.
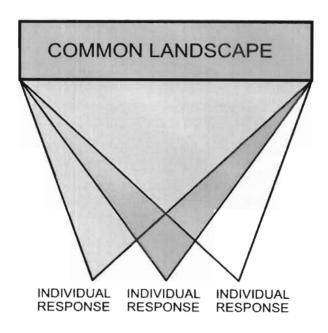

Figure 2: Common landscape and individual responses

"I am"

In the first interview with each participant, I used the "I am" worksheet as a tool to see which social identities were most important to this group of young people. I expected them to name *social* identities such as gender, race or age. However, while I had anticipated that they might not mention race in particular, I hadn't anticipated that *social* identities would not feature strongly at all and that the focus would, instead, be on *individual* qualities like "friendly", "loyal", "out-going" or "caring". Social identities, as I had been expecting them, were only mentioned by the following people: Skye, Melanie, Kelly, Fiona and Ingrid for "Christian", while gender was mentioned by Fiona, Melissa, Melanie and Kelly. Race was only mentioned on Fiona and Melanie's

lists. Being young or being a student were also listed by three of my participants. By far though, personal qualities were seen as much more important and tended to come first in terms of the order of importance to them.

When a social identity was mentioned, some contradictions emerged when I asked further questions about why they had selected to write them down. For example, Melissa mentioned her gender identity because "when people look at you, that's what they see, because they can't see like, beyond that, just by looking at you." Gender to her was an "obvious" identity marker, but she did not mention race, which is also an "obvious" ascribed identity.

With regards to individual qualities Kelly, besides listing gender, chose to describe herself as "concerned and organised". While these do not constitute social identities, they did seem to touch on elements of this. For example being "organised" was linked to leadership and her role as teacher in the classroom and "concerned" was influenced by her sense of being in a privileged position in relation to less well-off people. Graham, Bruce and Jenny did not name any social identities at all.

While this is a qualitative study of a very small group of people and cannot be seen as a representative sample, a similar trend was revealed in a class exercise carried out between 1989 and 2002 by Maré (a Sociology lecturer in the, then, University of Natal, Durban), who asked his class of second and first year Sociology students to fill in an "I am" worksheet. Before 1992 the social identities of age, gender, being a student, and race featured prominently as top four responses; however, a dramatic shift occurred in 1992 where the top four identities where made up overwhelmingly of personal qualities and reference to appearance (Maré, unpublished research findings, 2003). It would appear that there is some correlation between the political transition in progress from 1990 and the shift away from focussing on identities such as race, at least with Maré's exercise. For such an extensive change to occur within such a short time it would seem that it must be attributed to extreme/extensive social change in a shared landscape rather than in their personal lives.

This could also be the case with my participants, who are perhaps uncomfortable with a racial identity. Acknowledging being "White" may be seen as racist and they would rather follow a "colour-blind" approach to race in post-Apartheid South Africa.

The other possibility, in which 'Whiteness' is seen as the obvious, the given, seems less likely within a society as racialised as South Africa. While this is in a way understandable, it avoids engaging with social identities that lie in power relations with others. They would rather be seen as an individual without the burden of race, which means again that little "race work", as described by Levine-Rasky (2002), is being done by Whites, although what Levine-Rasky describes takes place within a White-dominated society. However, Salusbury and Foster found a similar retreat into individualism in their research into White English Speaking South Africans (WESSAs), where this group of Whites had very little sense of themselves collectively (2004). Foster and Salusbury, drawing on Foley's arguments, point out, "Although WESSAs may be in the political minority, while masquerading as a-cultural and/or a-collective they position themselves in a way that enables them to consolidate their social and economic status" (2004:99). It must be noted that Maré's sample never reflected a clear majority of White students, issuing a warning not to racialise findings without comparative research.

This unexpected avoidance of social identities also required me to reflect on the way in which I approached my data regarding race. It is important to hear people's own description of themselves and not, as a researcher, impose or attribute an identity or blanket view of them (Babbie and Mouton, 2001:33). Care must be taken so as not to deny participants' agency.

This creates a problem, namely how to interpret silence on race. For example, it could be interpreted as an avoidance of race and, therefore, by implication of active engagement with racism and inequality; or it could be interpreted as an attempt to move away from using race as a pre-determined category through which the social world is understood. This "treacherous bind" as mentioned by Gunaratnam (2003) often hinders the possibility of moving beyond race or recognising a move beyond race in research participants and is often created by the researcher. Researching race and analysing narrative data on race is therefore a tricky business, where stumbling blocks are created in the same process that attempts to unpack and clarify the term "race". As a result, not "being aware" of race can mean a number of different things and it would be near impossible as a researcher to really know the subject well enough in order to be able to determine the "truth". I would therefore suggest that as teachers, sensitivity towards issues around diversity, privilege, and inequality could

be more accurately measured by looking at not only race, but awareness of issues surrounding HIV/AIDS, poverty, unemployment, rural/urban contexts, gendered violence and crime, all of which are harsh realities in most South African schools.

Having said that, I still found it very contradictory that race was mentioned by so few of my participants on the "I am" worksheet when in fact a very strong sense of collective awareness emerged in a great number of the narratives. Ingrid's narrative was shaped into an "us/them" pattern when race was talked about. However, she explained, when I asked her at the end of the second interview why she did not mention race on the "I am" worksheet, that race did not define her completely and that other points were more important. She also mentioned that while you couldn't escape categorisation, she didn't feel it necessary to mention being White, as she preferred to think of herself as "just part of humanity."

Melissa spoke of "obvious identities" on the "I am" worksheet, meaning gender. She explained that this was something about her that people saw immediately, yet she did not mention race, although her narrative also revealed a strong sense of "us" and "them" when it came to talking about race. These contradictions are mixed up in the colourful and different interpretations my participants hold regarding the South African socio-political landscape today. These interpretations in turn reflect their construction of themselves within this changing social and historical landscape and therefore shape their interaction with it as well. In the sections below, which will explore some of the issues mentioned here in greater detail, I have tried to concentrate on examining social identity within an educational framework.

Friendship and Space

Significantly, all my participants remembered attending schools that weren't exclusively White, although they did recall more integration after 1994. In spite of this, none reported long-term, close friendships with members of other race groups during their own schooling or while at Edgewood. While my sample is by no means representative of the norms of all young, White South Africans, it does highlight the importance of issues of schooling, space and Apartheid.

As discussed in Part one, residential and educational space is still shaped by

Apartheid, which can be seen as one of the reasons why few meaningful, long-term cross-racial relationships have been established. For example, Graham recalls having Black and Indian friends during high school, but because they lived far away, he didn't spend much time out of school with them. This would also be linked to the fact that the former Model C schools still largely draw their learners from the surrounding neighbouring areas, and when scholars from these feeder areas are admitted this would often be into school residences. Therefore, demographic change in the schools is mostly linked to the breakdown of the Group Areas, something which is happening as a Black middle class emerges, but takes time.

Other participants remembered the change of having more people of colour move into their neighbourhoods, but mostly the areas they called home were still "White". For example, Melanie stated about her friendships growing up in Durban North: "I didn't have like, lots of... like a big group... just had two or three close friends. They all came from the area, same upbringing." This seemed to be a determining factor in the formation of friendships for my participants. There was a sense of space, both physical and perhaps psychological, which can be seen as a mental response to the social organisation of space by Apartheid. Melanie was by no means the only participant who acknowledged this. She observed that her parents were "very inclusive, but it's hard because, like mostly [their wealthy suburb] is White. Everyone is like the same background, the same religion, stuff like that. So... um there wasn't a lot to handle for them really."

While schools were mixed from an early age, many participants pointed out that racial groups stuck together and that this was also the case at Edgewood. For example, Fiona spoke candidly: "But I don't have like... one... friend who's Black, or Indian, or Coloured... my whole world... I just mix with White people. And it's not that I just want to be around *only* White people, that's just how it is." While, to a certain extent, opportunities have opened up for inter-racial friendship groups to develop, in both the secondary and tertiary education, it is still striking how few friendship groups are mixed. As Fiona put it: "We're quite a mixed group, but we're so separate!" Clearly, other factors, such as not wanting to step outside of one's comfort zone which is shaped by the familiar, come into play as well. Ballard states, "Our sense of space and sense of self are mutually constitutive. As much as we try to shape our worlds to fit in with our identities, our environments also shape us, challenge us, and

constrain us. We attempt to find comfort zones within which it is possible for us to 'be ourselves'" (2004:51). This becomes evident in the lack of effort to change this situation. While none of them wanted it to be like this, phrases such as "it's just easier" occurred often in their narratives and indicate to some extent that there is little drive to change the situation which was thoroughly accepted as being normal and comfortable. Fiona stated, "I'm not into being a change agent at the moment", and Skye acknowledged that the fact that at Edgewood the lack of meaningful interaction between the race groups should surprise her, but didn't, as it was so normal. She observed that people were friends, but that "I haven't seen someone like really good friends".

While I cannot discuss all the reasons for this situation here, and need to limit my discussion to the interplay of identity and the post-Apartheid landscape, others have looked at this in an educational context in more detail. Dawson, whose thesis focuses on integration between races in "mixed" schools, investigates the case study of a co-educational former Model C school in Johannesburg (2003). She found that race was not the only identity that learners preferred to group themselves by. Other important factors were gender and religion. However, the categories prescribed under Apartheid's Population Registration Act were overwhelmingly still in use amongst learners and while none of the learners stated explicitly that race was a criterion for friendship, it appeared that the majority of friendship groups comprised learners of the same race (Dawson, 2003: 89).

There were varying opinions about whether this was improving amongst the younger generations. Some noted that during their practice teaching this had improved, while others said there was a heightened awareness of race and that race was one of the main criteria for groupings in schools.

The idea of "the old generation"

This is an important theme to look at, as part of my selection criteria for my participants was that they were "young". It is also important as a measuring board of sameness and difference for my participants against a generation raised with a different sense of identity and in a completely different landscape. Relationships with parents or grandparents, or those often simply referred to as "the older generation",

was a theme that came up often, especially in terms of outlook on South Africa today, discussions on race and in a sense in the shaping of notions of "Whiteness". Their parents formed a kind of mirror to their own identities as young, White South Africans and they either modelled themselves like them or against them. What emerged in a number of the participants' stories was a pattern of looking at their parents critically in terms of the way they had adapted to the "new South Africa".

Bruce distinguished between his parents' and his grandparents' generations in their attitudes towards South Africa. He saw his father as being much more open to the interaction between races. He said: "I think my dad's sort of... my dad's lived through Apartheid, like to acclimatise into the new South Africa..." He does, however, describe his grandparents' views in a different light: "So, I don't know maybe... whether to like call my grandparents racist." He described himself as being more in line with his father's outlook on the social world.

Fiona was very critical of her father. Although she explained that he saw himself as liberal and open to the new government, she pointed out what she saw as hypocritical behaviour regarding their gardener: "He [the gardener] has his own like, mug and his own plate. Why must he use different ones? [laughing] I mean, if it was a White person, would you do that?" On the other hand, when I asked her directly what her parents had taught her about diversity and dealing with difference, she answered, "it was never specifically said to me, but just from the way they always treat everyone with respect, no matter who it is [...] but my dad not so much sometimes." In terms of the "measuring board" she placed herself further away from her father, but admitted that she still held onto some of his prejudices.

Ingrid seemed to be more in line with her parents' views regarding race, which were often shaped by external circumstances such as security on the farm, the land claim and so on. She did not use the term "the older generation". On the other hand, Melanie used this term to describe her parents and signify the differences between her and them. Although she said they weren't racist and were against Apartheid, she saw them as not really knowing how to mix with people who were from a different background, in terms of race or religion for example.

Jenny described her parents as open-minded and progressive when it came to race

and pointed out times when she remembered her friends not being allowed to have Black friends over at their houses because their parents did not want them to. She distinguished between this view and her own family's: "I suppose in our area, there are still a lot of people, especially the older generations, who're still, um not, politically correct in their views. Whereas in my house it was never like that."

The notion of generations and racial identity provide an interesting intersection for analysis, especially in such a changing landscape as the South African one. In many of my participants' narratives this "generation gap" carried the unspoken message "I'm different, I'm not like that." It was used as a marker for a positive place in post-Apartheid, multiracial South Africa. As a result of this what also emerged is that it, again, shrugs off the burden of race and the responsibility and guilt that go with it. It's a way of saying, "It didn't belong to us, we didn't make it, it's not our problem". On another level it also leads back to how one defines racism in this new landscape. Many narratives, for example Melanie's expressed shock at the stories of experiences of racism told by Black students in a university class: "I just thought, jeez... that didn't happen anymore." Racism was linked to a past, usually associated with conservatism and being Afrikaans-speaking (a recurring theme in Jenny's narrative as well). Omi and Winant point out that the concept of racism needs to change according to historical context, something which few of my participants engaged with (1994:71). Throughout my participants' narratives, racism was used in different ways. Racism is a very fluid term and many definitions can be found. One definition was given in Chapter two in the literature survey on race, however many understanding(s) of what racism means emerged from the data and other literature as well. For this reason, I will avoid attempting to create only one definition.

Whiteness: the veneer of invisibility

Much of the literature regarding "Whiteness" has looked at it as something invisible, that White people can shrug off and ignore. When looking at the "I am" section, it would appear to confirm this reading of the "invisibility" of Whiteness. It seems that it can be ignored, that most of my participants don't feel defined by the colour of their skin. Steyn refers to a "taken-for-granted" Whiteness, the result of racial socialisation being experienced as all-pervasive and diffused, so as to become barely noticeable (2001:51). While "Whiteness" was often not named at all, in most cases it was an

identity that they were aware of, but was layered under a complex set of tensions surrounding their own conceptions of this identity.

These tensions emerged in the following, sometimes contradictory, themes in most of the narratives and will be discussed in more detail below:

- a certain level of discomfort at discussing race, specifically being White, a sense of wanting to ignore race in favour of "colour blindness", a sense of having to defend Whiteness if it was brought up;
- an acknowledgement of privilege (both past and present);
- the feeling of disadvantage in post-Apartheid South Africa, of not being validated as a group and of being treated as a homogeneously racist group;
- A strong sense of detachment from politics, and in their narratives, seeing politics as an extension of race. This sense of isolation from the "macro-landscape" is also described by Steyn as "strategic abdication" (2001:166).

When looking at the interviews, mention of race usually first emerged in relation to an "other" or some area of conflict, either on a personal level, or on a broader socio-economic level. For example, Melissa and Ingrid brought up race in relation to the tensions in the university residences.

While the participants were aware of how South Africa functioned as a racialised space (race being something that is continuously being named either in the media, in lectures or in conversations, in relation to jobs, politics, and redress, for example), it didn't seem to be something that they had internalised. "For me personally, I don't have a problem with it", was a common response to what it was like to be White in South Africa today, and while most named at least a few problems, they didn't feel personally affected by the wider racial politics in the country. This was somewhat contradictory in some of the participants' narratives. For example, Melissa, reveals this disassociation with race when she talked about affirmative action: "If you're Black you'll do better. That's what I think. Well, like for teaching, like I don't think... I'm not worried about it. Those schools [former Model C] that I'm applying to, like, I would have a chance. They won't like say, 'oh, she's White'." Much of this type of sense-making revealed a strong sense of isolation from broader politics, as Melissa stated: "It doesn't really influence my life in anyway, because it's somewhere out there, it doesn't affect me."

In his essay, "Assimilation, emigration, semigration, and integration: 'White' people's strategies for finding a comfort zone in post-apartheid South Africa" Ballard looks at the psychological distancing of Whites from politics. The idea of "semigration" is used to describe the action of Whites trying to withdraw and opt out of political life and of being citizens. Ballard also uses it to describe walling oneself off from the street, gated communities and enclosed neighbourhoods, where an identity-affirming space can be created (2004:60). While the high rate of violent crime in South Africa is the main reason for this, Bruce touches on the implications for identity when he talks about emigration: "A lot of people move overseas because there's... almost like a mono-cultural society, where you can be a White person and you can go to Australia and you can live in a society where everyone is White, where everyone lives like you. Basically, you can fit into an entire class of people and feel the same. Whereas here you have people living next door to you who are Black... Indian, Coloured... and maybe people don't like that."

Race was often constructed as something that didn't belong to Whites and therefore wasn't discussed in the interviews. Frankenberg argues that, in most contexts, Whites tend to see themselves as "racially neutral" and that this needs to be challenged (1993:1). However, forcing categories on an individual leaves little room for alternatives, as I mentioned at the beginning of part two. As a researcher, it is difficult to tell whether the absence of White as a defining category means that White people see themselves as "racially neutral" as Frankenberg does, or whether it really is not a defining category for that individual or at least one that they are trying to move beyond. This is a problem I have not solved in my own research and I can only offer conclusions about the data by acknowledging that this would be my interpretation, leaving the further exploration to future research.

It is important to note as Fenner-Barbour (1998) does, that how Whites lead racially structured lives is not often examined, adding to the perceived emptiness, or neutrality, of the landscape Whites occupy. While my participants often didn't want to acknowledge their own "racialness" of being, this is contradictory, as all of them were acutely aware of race and how it shaped life in South Africa today. So a contradictory narrative around the issue of racial identity emerged in some case, where acknowledgement and denial of its impact and influence sat side by side. For others,

like Melanie, race was something she felt "is who you are and it affects you negatively or positively and you can't change that [...] it's how people see you." Race is a prominent feature of South Africa's socio-political landscape and instead of trying to avoid the label, she accepts it as part of herself.

Another aspect of "Whiteness" that emerged from the data was a kind of psychological distancing from race awareness, which often led to colour-blindness as a tool for avoiding race. For example, Ingrid, for whom politics was very real (in the land claim against her family farm), said she did not remember the 1994 elections. All she said was, "When it came to politics, I didn't want to get involved". There is a sense of wanting to hold "politics" and "race" at bay and while she may have been wanting to move beyond race into a kind of "colour-blind" post-Apartheid world, in her context, where race formed a relational identity alongside the farm labourers, this was unrealistic and perhaps more a way of avoiding conflict. In Ingrid's case, race was something that "became a problem" and in her narrative it emerged almost as something new. She explained: "I think slowly, when we became aware of it [race], we sort of spoke about it... well, there is sort of an issue because we just get so fed up with the labourers on the farm when they're doing something wrong... So ja, nowadays there is a conversation around race and the race issue. It's quite depressing to know that there is, in a way."

When "Whiteness" was brought up or discussed (usually as an identity or category in relation to others), my sense was that it was not spoken about as a good thing, but rather as something that has to be carried as a burden and could not be avoided. There were no mentions of "Whiteness" as a positive identity. This could be one of the reasons why so few of my participants put it down as an identity on the "I am" worksheet. Instead, Whiteness was often sidestepped and other labels were applied, for example Jenny's division into English/Afrikaner, liberal/conservative and her emphasis on her Irish heritage. For her, "White" could be avoided by referring to culture. Steyn's study found a similar trend, where especially English-speaking Whites, reasoned that they did not institute or support Apartheid and therefore felt they were not implicated in racism. Further, they tended to associate racism with Apartheid and saw Englishness as unmarked by it. In Steyn's words, their Whiteness has become "White enough to have become quite translucent" (2001:103).

Another interpretation of the avoidance of the claiming of "Whiteness" as an identity emerged from the narratives. Labels like "friendly", "out-going" and so on could also be seen as a kind of "ducking and diving" exercise to avoid the label "White" and its negative connotations. Perhaps this could also be seen as a sign of the avoidance of the racism Whites carry, which would explain why most of my participants wanted to avoid it. Kelly, at the end of the interview, mentioned to me that she wanted to give an "alternative" White perspective and was one of the motivations for participating in my study. The unspoken implication was that there was something negative about the "mainstream" White perspective that needed improving. There was also a sense of tension between acknowledging Whiteness as a source of privilege and also of not feeling responsible for it. Bruce talked about giving a "White" perspective on the political transition, saying: "(...) obviously things were... um[...] biased in our favour. We had the best of the country. So from my perspective, a White perspective, I don't think things have improved since then, but as a country as a whole, I'd say things have improved." This honest response reveals the tensions around acknowledging guilt for benefiting from an unequal system. At other times, my participants talked about the past as a burden that they had nothing directly to do with.

I would argue that being White in South Africa has a veneer of invisibility to it, but that the stark underneath of it shows through very quickly. The landscape in which White South Africans are situated doesn't allow for much cover, as a British or American context might. Steyn points out that even before 1994, White South Africans were acutely aware of their Whiteness, being highly visible, unlike other contexts, due to the fact that Whites make up such a minority of the population (2001:163). Difference is highlighted in the daily interaction of class and race, in the workplace, at home, at street corners, or even flashing past on the outside of car windows. As Pattman (1998) argues, one becomes White through an "other". In the South African context, this manifests in a number of often contradictory responses from Whites, as has been discussed in this section.

"Whites don't have a culture"

Most participants were unsure of how to describe themselves culturally. Often the question was met with silence or with a comment about it being a difficult question. They were unable to name their culture in any concrete terms and answers varied

from "just normal" to "British" to "Irish" to "South African" to not having a culture. For example, Skye responded: "Gosh, that's tough [...] Um it's funny, I think, because a lot of like, Whites, young people don't have a culture... especially if you're English, because if you're Afrikaans you do." The English/Afrikaans divide was raised by others as well and even those from an Afrikaans background, described themselves as "more English", for example, Fiona and Graham.

Many writers (see also earlier chapter on Whiteness) have pointed out the inability of Whites to see their own cultural perspective (Salusbury and Foster, 2004:96). This can happen for a number of reasons, one of them being the avoidance of all group classifications, thereby placing emphasis on individualism and individual qualities. Foster and Salusbury state that the effect of this is avoidance with dealing with unequal power relations and that "to claim culturelessness is to claim normalcy" (2004:98). This places Whiteness in a central position which isn't questioned.

While Salusbury and Foster (2004) name one way of interpreting the issue of WESSAs not being able to name their own culture, other avenues need to be explored in this analysis as well. Placing something as fluid and unfixed as culture within clear boundaries is often very difficult. While the culture of others is known to be different, my participants would probably still struggle to name aspects of other's cultures as well. What this points to is little understanding or lived experience of difference. For my participants, culture surfaced only as vague stereotypes and little critical dialogue is entered into about it. This also has implications for education, as discussed below.

Within a schooling context, the idea of "culture" as belonging to others serves only to marginalise these groups further from the unacknowledged, dominant school culture. As Houston, in her study "Designing social identities: A case study of a primary school theatrical performance by Zulu children in an English, ex-model C school" notes, cultural awareness, especially awareness of a dominant culture, is important. She gives an example of this: "the staff do not have fluency in African languages nor do they have insight into the backgrounds of many of their learners. These are significant disadvantages but ones that remain unrecognised by the school" (2005:4).

A contradiction emerged between the use of the word "culture" (for example see the

sections on "teaching to make a difference" and "teaching race, teaching culture" in this chapter) and any concrete understanding behind it. It would seem to be difficult to teach a lesson on culture that encourages sharing, when they are unable to define their own culture. Yet, culture was mentioned by all of my participants as an important area of understanding for teachers. Kelly was the only one who placed her lack of a cultural definition within a wider context. She said, "Possibly to somebody else from a different culture, looking at me, could say 'this and this and this', but because I'm in it, it just seems so natural and I can't say, 'oh we do this and this is our specific way.' [...] Do you know what I mean? So, like I think, every family sits in front of the TV and eats their dinner, we also do that, so if that's a culture –Yes, we're in it! I don't know, I can't really name it."

It could also be, based on the impact of Apartheid and space (as discussed above) that none of my participants have had close enough contact, beyond a stereotyped version, with other cultures. It is only through this interaction and what in SIT is called social categorisation and social comparison, that their own cultural outlines would become more obvious (Abrams and Hogg,1988).

Anger, loss of power and the new victims

One of the responses to the changing socio-political context was anger, sometimes less obvious and at other times shaped into the discursive repertoire, as Frankenberg (1993) calls it, of new victim. Feelings that characterised this response were fear, a sense of betrayal, a sense of being judged or accused, anger, and feelings of marginalisation and of not being wanted. This impacted directly on my participants' sense of identity, specifically their sense of themselves as White within this landscape. Social Identity Theory sees identity as being derived from two sources, namely personal and group or social identity. Social categorisation is a tool used to divide up the complex social world into a simpler pattern of "us" and "them". This provides a sense of location within broader society, therefore which category is seen as salient, also defines the individual's place in society, a place of self-reference and orientation (Tajfel in Miller, 1999:12). Miller goes on to note that this context will inform whether an individual will be marginalised, or unaffiliated, included or have a unique role in several social groups (1992).

Those of my participants (Melissa, Ingrid, Jenny) who expressed strong feelings of anger were not ones who mentioned their race on the "I am" worksheet, although one would think from their narratives that it was a central and defining identity. In a sense they felt race was "thrust upon them" by a hostile outside world, which might explain this contradiction considering that they also used the words "us/them" the most. While they had a strong sense of "the other", the "us" was much less clearly articulated.

A sense of anger at being judged for being White emerged, for example, in Jenny's narrative. She felt that her family had never been racist, yet she was still seen as part of a group that was racist. Similar feelings of "betrayal" and anger came up strongly in Ingrid and Melissa's stories, where Whites were constructed as the victims in relation to a dominating "other". Steyn's research also finds a similar interpretation of the changing social world in the narrative she calls "this shouldn't happen to a White". This narrative is characterised by drawing on the idea of reverse racism where Whites have been moved from being privileged to being in an endangered position. Further, their Whiteness has become a problem in this new, hostile landscape (Steyn, 2001:69-76). Gestures towards liberalism are still made within this discursive framework, along with talk about colour-blindness (Steyn, 2001:75). For example, Ingrid wishes that as "we're all humans at the end of the day, it should come down to just being humans instead of having colours or age or whatever." Also, while many of them agreed that affirmative action was necessary to make post-Apartheid society equal, there was definitely a sense of "why should we be punished" which was mentioned by Kelly and by Bruce.

Woven throughout Melissa's narrative was the term "us/them". There was a sense of being victimised: "We're always the ones who end up leaving if there's an argument over the TV." For her race was constructed as a huge barrier which could not change, or at least not very easily and even went as far as to say, "I think people would be happy if it were separated, like it used to be." She also felt that race was brought into everything unnecessarily; for example when it came to the open/closed residence conflict. She had many fears relating to South Africa, embodied in the statement: "I think South Africa is just going to go down." Feelings of fear of change and of violence, were common threads in her story. The 1994 election was a turbulent time when she remembered feeling "scared".

Melissa wanted to work at former Model C schools or private schools. While much of her us/them construction of the social world placed the "us" in a victimised position, she didn't feel that she would be disadvantaged regarding her race: "So I don't think they'll look at my CV and say, 'oh, she's White or whatever', but in terms of other things, maybe then, ja, if you're Black you'll get further." Her narrative was punctuated by a sense of withdrawal into "White" spaces, which seemed to have less to do with exclusion and more to do with trying to hold on to the familiar and the comfortable or what Ballard calls "comfort zones within which it is possible for us to 'be ourselves'"(2004:51).

She was not comfortable with discussing race and racism in a classroom context, especially when a number of different perspectives were involved. This became apparent when she talked about the "Diversity and Learning" module, much of which she described as feeling like "an attack on the White race". Jenny had the same feelings about this module and expressed a concern about not being heard. Her frustration came out of a sense of not being listened to.

Jenny's story had two flavours to it, one of "before" and one of "after". The social and political transition sat somewhere in between. The "before" was characterised by colour-blindness, being able to get on with different people and not having problems with confrontations around race. The "after" was characterised by a lot of anger around her conceptions of her identity as a "liberal, English-speaking" person. She felt judged when issues of race were brought up in a specific way in the "Diversity and Learning" course. She recalls, "It made you [...] angry, because you were just automatically... you know, White Afrikaans and you know, especially in my house we're proud of the fact that... we're Irish." She felt her circumstances were not acknowledged, a feeling that carried over to the way she related to other groups. There was little sense or understanding of the "volume" of history behind her and that the contemporary landscape was intimately linked to the past. She looked only at her situation and context and seemed positioned into a defensive mode that did not allow her to see any other perspective.

Ingrid also saw race as a big barrier and one which was erected by others. This she also linked to the fact that South Africa was a beautiful country, but that one of the

biggest problems was that there was "just too much politics". She referred to the open/closed residence conflict as an example of how "we'll bring up anything and they'll turn it into race." Her and Melissa, unlike the other participants, were the most involved in this situation, as they lived in residence and were part of the house committee. She was also defensive and felt threatened easily - "as a White person, you're so dominated by [...] well, by the Blacks, because they just in res, well, here it's not so bad, but in res, there're less of us." For her this situation came down to the numbers of "us versus them" and can be linked directly to the way she interpreted the loss of political power for Whites on the level of the common landscape. She felt that political pressures from Blacks were forcing Whites to leave South Africa. She said it was the same with residence where all the Whites were leaving instead of staying and "fighting". Her world had become more threatening (for example, also in terms of security on the farm).

Graham's feelings were measured, with no direct anger expressed. However, some of the issues brought up, such as affirmative action and the pace of change in educational policies, were issues of importance to him. This point revealed a contradiction. On the one hand he said, "On some of the policies, I feel strongly against... because they've been proven not to work, yet the government still insists on it." Then when I asked him to give me such an example, he mentioned Black Economic Empowerment and affirmative action. However, on the other hand, while he felt these policies were causing a lot of tension with White people and mentioned the anger some Whites felt, he then stated, "For me... I don't care... what the hell... it's a good thing." He then went on to talk about unqualified people getting jobs they are not ready for. Perhaps what this contradiction really indicates, is that he felt uncomfortable expressing criticism which may be interpreted as racist (criticism of affirmative action policies and Black Economic Empowerment is often labelled 'racist' in the media. See Part 1). This tension, between wanting to express "unpolitically correct" points of view, and feeling that he did not have the space to do so, is not a constructive way of talking about race issues. It does not allow for more than a scratch on the surface, leaving a more detailed analysis of the fears and concerns behind these statements untouched.

While racism has undoubtedly become more subtle and taken the forms of criticism of government policies and a new language of "culture", "ethical values", "standards",

"class" and "behaviour" (see Ballard's essay "'The elephant in the living room': The denial of the importance of race by Whites in the new South Africa", 2003) it could also help construct the above situation. However, to only interpret White use of these terms under the banner of racism creates the lack of space for constructive discussions. Graham's contradictory response can be seen as a kind of throwing of a "psychological cover", which ends up covering all the issues surrounding the comment, racist or other.

Graham was very pragmatic in his outlook on South Africa's problems being sorted out in a short space of time and stated that people expected too much too soon. While he personally did not engage with issues of anger and fear himself, it was a theme he brought up in relation to other people (his brother and parents' friends). This was an area of concern to him and I would see it as another way of cautiously expressing his own sentiments, again under another kind of "psychological cover".

Bruce also stated that "A lot of people are disillusioned because Black people are now favoured and stuff like that... but I think, after a while, once the scales have been levelled more, it won't be a factor anymore. Well, it shouldn't be a factor anymore, it should be like the best person for the job." He, however, did not feel personally affected by affirmative action policies: "To me personally, it's not a big thing." He also acknowledged the vast differences in living standards between Whites and Blacks, which he said "could possibly be a spin off from the Apartheid era... where, well, we were given everything." Fiona also acknowledged the privileges Whites still enjoy today.

Melanie's narrative was perhaps more sensitive to the issue of privilege and guilt than others. She recalls this sentiment during the 1994 elections: "White people especially... like not [...] like people who were against Apartheid, but did nothing, they were worried that Black people were very angry. So... they thought they'd like have a vendetta. Ja, so I remember my parents being worried about what the outcome would be." The past was something she connected with guilt – "I feel, like ashamed of that, even though I wasn't a part of it, or didn't have anything to do with it." This tied into her awareness of her race and the way people might perceive her, saying "And then sometimes it's easier to say, I wish I wasn't actually White, because that's what people think you are, that you're racist."

Kelly also spoke of the tensions between the races in residence. Although in a more distant, less personally involved way. She also felt it had, unnecessarily, been turned into a race issue, when in fact it was a security issue. She had a positive outlook on South Africa generally and remembered the elections as an exciting time.

One of the aims of this study was to link identity and the classroom, so for me, the tensions, the contradictions, the logical or illogical sense-making tools discussed here are probably carried into the classroom and will be examined in the section below.

Teaching about race, teaching about culture

As already discussed, race was something that most of my participants wanted to avoid mentioning (both in the classroom and in their personal lives) and if they had to, for example in the classroom, then it was brought up in relation to culture. Often this was linked to the idea that understanding race meant understanding culture. As a result, most of my participants saw the understanding of culture, in terms of knowing about food, religion, ritual and so on, as something important for teachers. This was seen as something that they would have to teach in schools.

Jenny liked the idea of a "culture swop" and fondly recalled visiting her Indian friend in Chatsworth while she was still in school. Later on, she spoke of doing her practice teaching in classes in which she observed that racism had become worse than when she had been at school. For her, this would best be dealt with by teaching a class on culture. She explained to me: "I remember it being nice and interesting to learn about different people when I was at school... you know, the food, the dancing... all those things which weren't 'who's right, who's wrong', just rather to learn about each other." For her, "understanding culture" was a solution for racial problems in the classroom. Possibly, teaching about culture was a way of avoiding an approach in education focusing on social justice, which meant not having to deal with the thorny issues of discrimination and privilege.

Other participants talked about how they did not feel they were prepared adequately to deal with diversity issues in the classroom. Perhaps for this reason, many chose to

teach at schools more similar to their own experiences and which didn't challenge them as much in terms of dealing with a complex combination of social identities in the classroom. Ingrid mentioned the example of having to be sensitive to different religions in the classroom, and to be careful of not simply giving a one-sided Christian approach. She said that listening to different points of view such as a racist one, or something else you didn't agree with, was a challenge for teachers. Having then to change that opinion presented a further challenge, but she wasn't sure how this could be achieved. Melissa did not feel prepared to deal with diversity in the classroom either. Responding to a question on what diversity meant for her, she said "I don't know, everything that's different I suppose. Ja, as a teacher you're going to have to deal with that and I think it's a very difficult thing to deal with."

Bruce also mentioned cultural understanding as important for teachers. He said, "I think cultural understanding and tolerance, because if you get people with different religious beliefs, needs... obviously you have to watch how you're teaching. You could... it's very easy, for someone like myself, who's been educated in a Christian way, to come across as giving a Christian perspective." He gave an example from his practice teaching when he mistakenly thought a group of Muslim boys were trying to bunk school when in fact they were leaving to attend Mosque. On the other hand, Fiona did not see diversity as being much of an issue and didn't remember any experiences in her practice teaching that highlighted diversity as a problem. She stated, "I think we all... I think most people in the new South Africa are very accepting of each other and embrace the diversity and all that." However, this did contradict her accounts of interracial interaction on campus.

These approaches (or lack thereof) of dealing with diversity, are also mentioned by Moletsane et al, who state that teachers commonly have four distinctive ways of dealing with diversity in their classrooms. Firstly, they identified the *contributionist* approach, as seen in Jenny, where learners are asked to acknowledge and know about the contributions (mostly food and dress) of other racial and cultural groups. Secondly, the *assimilationist* approach, expects learners to fit into the existing ethos and dominant culture of the school. While most participants expressed some awareness of this problem, there was little practical engagement with the issue, especially beyond a religious level. The third approach Moletsane et al mention is the *denialist* one, which is often found in uni-racial schools where learners come from the

same background and teachers often claim diversity is not of concern. This was also pointed out by Skye and Melanie, who did their practice teaching at a predominantly poor, Black school. The fourth approach is the *colour-blind* one, where the teacher claims to not see colour/race and refuses to engage with issues around this (2004:62). This approach cross-cut quite a few of my participants, who, with the best intentions, preferred using a discourse of colour-blindness. For example, Graham, who stated, "I treated every single kid the same. I don't... I like to think that I don't see colour." However, this interpretation must also take cognisance of the researcher's own perspective which may be foregrounding race above other categories such as gender, religion and class for example, all of which play out equally importantly in the classroom.

While this study has focussed primarily on social identities and the interplay of it in various contexts, it would have been interesting to link it more directly with classroom practice. For example, it would have been interesting to see a lesson plan on the topic "race". This could have further developed the study, by linking the social identity part of it with how it is carried over into the work place.

Making a difference: teaching

Teaching was seen by all as a vocation that required the qualities of caring, tolerance and patience. Many of my participants mentioned the issue of diversity of their own accord and saw it as a challenge teachers faced. Much of what they spoke about revealed a desire to make a difference and help meet the educational needs of South Africa. While diversity seemed to be a central issue, other concerns were mentioned as well, such as HIV/AIDS the lack of resources, corruption, overcrowded schools, and the continuously changing educational policies. Lack of discipline and respect in the classroom were also mentioned as challenges. Few participants demonstrated awareness of issues such as HIV/AIDS, unemployment and poverty (central for education in South Africa), which could indicate a lack of experience outside of their own schooling experience. Skye and Melanie had, however, undertaken to expand their experience through their choice of practice teaching schools.

Melissa's goal was to go into special needs education, an area she saw as one where she could make a difference. It was therefore essential to her that as a teacher

one was caring and patient. She stated, "You have to accept everyone that's going to be there [in the classroom]. Ja... I suppose, as a teacher, you will have to make the effort about all the diversity in the class, all the different things and you're going to have to make the effort to promote... like non-stereotypical behaviour in the classroom." Ingrid's answer to why she wanted to be a teacher strongly indicated that she wanted to make a difference. She felt that teachers could positively influence young people and help make a difference in their lives. She was aware of being balanced in giving opinions in the classroom and allowing the space for other voices to be heard.

The need to "make a difference" was more pronounced in Skye and Melanie's narratives. It was also tied to their own practical experiences during teaching at a predominantly Black, poorer school. These experiences highlighted their own "Whiteness" in a way that it was not when they were teaching at a school closer to their own experiences of schooling. They were the only participants who actively wanted to gain this experience as a way of extending their practice teaching beyond their own "comfort zone". Most other participants saw being placed in good (i.e. the wealthier, former Model C) schools as "fortunate" and as providing the best experience.

During her practice teaching, Kelly was very encouraged to see all races interacting, something which she called "unity in the classroom". She said, "I just think, nurture that... grow it, because that's where it starts." Her practice teaching experiences were at mostly wealthy schools, where she saw class becoming a factor for identity and friendship forming: "Because everyone was in the same social level or economic level, rather... Everyone wears trendy clothes, everyone flashes the money and has big cars and so, it creates almost like an equality there."

For most of the participants, teaching was not seen as a career to go into for the money. It was seen more as a vocation they associated with caring and helping. From my interaction with them, it soon became clear that they looked forward to their careers with enthusiasm, especially at being able to work with young people and helping provide good role models for them. While the intentions were good, there was little real grappling with the issue of social identities and how these manifest in classrooms and shape both the transparent and hidden curriculum. Few connections

were made between their own identities and their functioning as a teacher. While certain courses dealing directly with identities and the classroom, such as the "Diversity and Learning" module which they often brought up in the interviews, do exist at Edgewood, the students' responses differed a lot regarding their usefulness. Melissa, Jenny and Ingrid saw the module as irrelevant to the classroom and still felt unprepared on how to deal with diversity, while others, like Melanie and Kelly who also took the module, felt it had been very helpful and had raised their awareness of different points of view and life experiences.

Melanie, Skye and Kelly revealed the most self-reflection regarding race, probably due to this course. Otherwise, there was a prevailing sense of wanting to be hidden behind a race-less curtain, although in some cases, religion was recognised as a dominant framework within which teaching took place and was something that required awareness.

"I am an African"

While some of the responses to the changing nature of the landscape from the familiar to the uncertain and unfamiliar, were negative and largely bounded by fear, there were also more positive responses. A striving for a new kind of White identity emerged, a more African one, almost a reclaiming of that label from the older generations who did not want it. This featured more prominently in Melanie and Skye's narratives, who actively tried to adopt elements of African culture into their identities, such as dress and music styles. Melanie also named "African" as a descriptor on the "I am" worksheet and said, "I'm proudly South African and I guess some people... well there is this opinion that White people can't be African or they're called Anglo-whatever. I just think that that determines a lot of who I am, where I come from".

While no one else mentioned specifically being "African" there was a strong sense of being "South African". Almost all the participants expressed a love for South Africa - for example, Kelly was very vocal about being "proudly South African" when she went overseas. She specifically mentioned taking her flag with her. In terms of their future plans, none except Kelly, whose fiancé lived in Belfast, mentioned emigrating permanently.

Conclusion

The landscape I have described in part 1 is not a fixed or unchanging one. It is literally, a picture, framed by historical and political conditions, that starts before and continues to move well beyond the end of my analysis. In the same way, my participants' responses and interactions with and within this landscape continues and will also change. This discussion represents a moment in time that has been framed, allowing me to examine broader trends and issues highlighted in the worlds of my participants.

What has emerged are a number of very different responses and conceptions of identity. Francis explains Tajfel's notion of social identity: "Social identity refers to the individual's knowledge of belonging to a certain social group and to the emotional and evaluative signification that results from that group membership" (2005:289). Francis' study on bi-racial young adults found that in some cases his participants did fit Tajfel's definition of social identity (see chapter two) in that their use of race held strongly emotional connotations and political meaning. However, Francis found that at other times this definition did not apply completely, as many aspects of their identities and their self-definition were not racialised and did not demonstrate an essentialist notion of race (Francis, 2005:289). This was echoed by the narratives of my participants, where in some cases *social* identities were actively avoided in favour of *personal* qualities. While being "White" was highly emotive at times, it was also an identity that they did not see as all pervasive or defining of themselves as individuals.

Their responses to the shared landscape I have described briefly were sometimes very positive, filled with hope regarding their ability to make a difference in South Africa. There was a sense of a new "Africanness" that set them apart from their parents' generation. Sometimes the responses were at best highly naïve, at worst downright insensitive or racist, but what it did present, was a fundamental lack of "tools" for dealing with changes in power relations, and a lack of understanding of "the other". What also emerged is that a number of external factors influenced the way they responded. These include things such as an increase in crime and a lack of security, affirmative action and BEE and the mention of racism as a label for dissent or disagreement. Some conclusions can be drawn from the different approaches to

the South African landscape that have been discussed above:

- The avoidance of social identities as descriptors and the avoidance of politics on a broader level could be seen as having three causes. Firstly, there is a lack of a positive, or even clearly defined, White identity. Being "White" has many negative connotations in the post-Apartheid context, which they might be attempting to avoid by referring rather to their individual qualities. Steyn speaks of Whites as experiencing a "loss of guaranteed legitimacy" (2001), which justified the social order and Whites' place within it. This loss has implications for a sense of belonging and identity. While they might not necessarily want this back, their narratives reveal uncertainty about their role in the new South Africa. Tajfel and Turner (1979) also point out that individuals name themselves as part of a group as long as it contributes positively towards their social identity. If they feel that the negative outweighs the positive then it is likely that the individual would want to avoid that particular social identity and attempt to define themselves in other ways instead. Secondly, Whites do have a sense of guilt, whether it is unacknowledged, as mentioned by Steyn (2001), or openly acknowledged. This is sometimes problematic for younger Whites who do not have very clear memories of Apartheid, something that is often more vividly mediated through school and university. A sense of detachment from it, and a sense of "why are we being punished for this" is possibly a result. Thirdly, a lack of mentioning race could also simply mean that this is not a salient social identity in the lives of these young people and that they are attempting to define themselves in other ways or through other categories, which may be overlooked in research such as this which concerns itself predominantly with race.

- If marginalisation and loss of power can take the form of a continuum, then Whites have moved further down from the position of power and privilege they held in the past, towards marginalisation. In comparison to other groups, this is not a significant move. However, for Whites (in many of my participants' narratives mediated through parents) this is a big readjustment. This "loss of a sense of relevance" is reflected in the wide-spread tendency to describe Whites as marginalised. While Whites have lost political power, they still hold key positions in the country and "the term reflects the experience of loss of a

dominant position, subjectively translated as oppression" (Steyn, 2001:159). This is a situation unique to South Africa. As Steyn points out: "The disruption of power in South Africa, where Whites are continuing to seek their livelihood in a situation where they have neither numerical nor political power, is unusual in the history of Whiteness" (2001:164). Bruce embodies this point when he says: "Before, Whites had their own little island and inside that island, you were basically living a first world, like a first world life and now that the reality that we don't live in a country that is completely first world... has set in and, like the different cultures have started mixing, people feel insecure. I mean, it's like human nature to be scared of something you don't know... fear of the unknown. So, it could be that or that we've had it so good before and now that it's not so good as it was, people say, 'Ah, it's terrible.'"

- The psychology of Apartheid has not been erased from the collective consciousness of White people, even younger generations. This manifests itself in seeing Black people as threatening. In this scenario, "race" as a social category does become highlighted in relation to change in the South African landscape in economic, political and social terms. Within SIT, groups or categories are very significant in determining the kind of life experiences that the individual will have and Jenkins (1996) argues that they become "socially real". While not all my participants perceived change and "the other" as a threat in terms of safety, economic and life opportunities, often elements of this were mediated through parents and in some cases were "real" enough for fear to become a central point of understanding racial dynamics. Further, crime and fear of crime in post Apartheid South Africa perpetuate stereotypes, negatively affecting their ability to get beyond them. The idea of this "threat" needs to be unpacked through further research.

- For the most part Whites tend still to live in a "White" world. This position allows little or no understanding of a different perspective and their way of sense-making becomes the only one. It also perpetuates the belief that Whites, specifically English-speaking White people, represent a "cultureless" norm, as found by Salusbury and Foster (2004). As teachers, my participants need to be aware of this and recognise the value of gaining a more multi-faceted perspective on education in South Africa.

- Kival states that if named as White when racism is being addressed, Whites often become paralysed with fear, guilt, anger, defensiveness or confusion - touches of which were also woven into the stories my participants told me (1996:11). This disables their abilities to address racism at a personal, institutional, and societal level. This was particularly evident in the narratives of anger and guilt expressed by some of my participants. Steyn calls this "Loss of Honour, Loss of Face" where previously, there was no awareness, or confrontation with White guilt. White South Africans have to deal with having shared a position that wronged others or at the least, having benefited at other's expense. The willingness to deal with this collective guilt varies a great deal (2001:160). Young White South Africans may be particularly defensive about this, as Apartheid is something they remember only as small children and feel disconnected from.

Each of these factors can and will probably have an impact on their interaction with the learners they will be teaching. Pattman (1998:57) argues that identity is intertwined with teaching through the way it enters into the stories teachers tell their learners and in the way they construct themselves for learners. If a teacher is not aware of this and does not confront this with their students, then they could become complicit in the maintenance of Whiteness in this invisible form. The apparent lack of a real definition of themselves in racial, gender and class terms for some of my participants is cause for concern, especially for a group of future teachers, who need to have a clearer sense of themselves to take with into the classroom.

Moletsane et al (2004) raise a very important point in relation to this debate and teacher education. They state: "It is important that teaching and research interventions seek to acknowledge and understand their [young, White student teachers] personal, social and political fears and insecurities. These may include fears about affirmative action, as well as perceptions of reverse racism, which tend to legitimate, at least in their own minds, prejudice against the 'other', and to perpetuate discrimination" (2004:69). I hope that this discussion has allowed for some insight not only into the landscape that young, White student teachers occupy, but also into the differing responses it has yielded.

Chapter Six

CONCLUSION

The aim of this study was to explore the identities held by young, White, South African student teachers. My investigation of this topic centred on the following research questions:

- How do young, white South Africans student teachers define themselves?
- Looking at their context, what kind of "landscape" do they occupy?
- What experiences and events have shaped their sense of identity?
- In what way are their professional identities shaped by their own sense of their place in South Africa?
- As teachers, how do they feel they can contribute to South African education, how are they being prepared and what does this say about their own social identities?

The theme underlying this thesis has been race and racial identity. This was the starting point for selecting my participants and was closely examined during the interview process. By doing this, I have been working both "with and against" race. I have tried to not foreground race directly with my participants, as this might have affected their choice of what to tell me, but to a certain extent this was unavoidable and must be acknowledged in conclusion.

"Race" is a term that has presented problems in designing this research project. By using a timeline drawn by the participants before the second, longer interview as a prop, I hoped to address some of these problems and be able to explore their sense of identities without foregrounding race as a stated research problem. It provided a skeleton around which the landscape of their lives could be coloured in. It proved very effective as a tool in this way and provided rich data that perhaps could not have been elicited otherwise. When tackling a subjective topic such as social identities, I felt it best to design the research within a qualitative framework. Identity and meaning are constructed in such a way that they make sense to the individual on a level that is

difficult to quantify. Narratives and story-telling are ways through which the researcher can deepen her understanding of the subject from the point of view of the participants themselves (Riessman, 1993:5). For this reason, I have attempted to be sensitive to not imposing defining categories on my participants.

The aim was more to achieve an understanding or, as Babbie and Mouton put it, "the emphasis is on interpretative understanding (Verstehen) rather than causal and nomothetic explanation in terms of universally valid laws" (2001:33). In order to understand individuals' narratives of identity-making, it is necessary to place these into a socio-historic landscape or context. This has formed an important part of my thesis. The theoretical chapters dealt with the debates around the problematic concept of "race" and how it functions as a lived reality in South Africa. The literature review also examined "Whiteness" and tried to identify ways in which it might be lived differently in South Africa than in another context.

Then in Chapter 5 Part One, the landscape occupied by my participants was examined more closely by picking out common themes or issues that would have affected the narratives they told me. I drew these directly from the interviews where similar themes were confronted. This "bigger picture" is essential in understanding the nine responses to a shared landscape that have been discussed in this study.

In Part Two I chose to group the data under common themes or ways of sense-making that responded to my research questions. I discussed Apartheid and space and how this still exerted influence on a number of factors, from friendships to neighbourhood character that faced my participants. I looked at reasons why race, as well as other social identities, were avoided on the "I am" worksheet. I discussed the generational gap, which underlies the identities of young, White South Africans in relation to the country's past. I looked at the concept of invisibility and Whiteness in the context of post-Apartheid South Africa where it is more exposed. Culture was discussed and a gap within Whites' understanding of themselves was identified. The narratives that were constructed around defensiveness, anger and "new victim" were examined more closely, in order to try to understand this reaction in a more in-depth way. Then, the impact of identity on teaching was examined by picking out two main themes. Firstly, the exchange of the terms race and culture in the classroom as a means of avoiding race were examined; and secondly "teaching to make a

difference" gave a sense of my participants' understanding of themselves in the teaching profession and highlighted how they felt they could contribute to education in South Africa. Finally, I ended my discussion with an example of a positive White identity, the claiming of "Africanness" as also belonging to Whites as well.

Limitations of the study

As with any qualitative study, the data I have collected is a small slice of the sample group. While each participant's narrative revealed themes or instances common to other Whites in South Africa today, the data cannot necessarily be generalised in the same way. The study is limited by its scope and has rather attempted to present nine detailed pictures of what it is like to be White in South Africa today.

During the research, I identified two areas that should be examined further in order to extend this study. Firstly, linking teaching and identity more directly would have been useful in analysing how each participant's construction of her- or himself came through in how each chose to teach. This could have taken the form of lesson observations or an analysis of lesson plans, but under the time constraints of this study was not possible. Secondly, it would be interesting to have compared my findings to research done on young, Black student teachers in order to see whether race was a salient identity for them or whether it had lost its relevance and if so, what categories replaced it.

Concluding statements

White identity is certainly a contested topic and has proven to be an exciting area of research. Certainly, this thesis has shown that there are many ways of being White and like any other category, is crosscut by other identities as well. Situated in a changing landscape also meant that this study on race needed to be opened to new alternatives for dealing with the avoidance of race as a label, which may be arising out of this context and the fact that I was researching young people. While it may not have been an identity that was held as important to every one of my participants, to a certain extent its significance in the larger landscape filtered through into their lives. What has become clear is that 13 years after the end of Apartheid, race is still very much a lived reality in South Africa. This thesis has only explored one facet of this,

namely "Whiteness". While an ideology of non-racialism drives the transformation process, it still hangs onto the four categories of "White", "Black", "Indian" and "Coloured". This is an inherent contradiction woven into the South African landscape and also manifested in some of the stories my participants told.

Whiteness has many shadows and I sometimes feel as if I'm constantly looking over my shoulder, checking if there is something there. Ballard states that attempts to prove racism "are largely unhelpful. The question should not be 'is that person/institution racist?' But rather 'why are my thoughts influenced by racial frameworks?' The first formulation or question is accusatory, whereas the second is introspective" (2003:17). It is for this reason, and a desire for an honest, open dialogue on race, that my thesis has attempted to be self-reflective. Frankenberg (1993) sees her Whiteness not as an object, but rather a practice that is situated in a particular historical setting. It is not something isolated or static, but changing and adapting. South Africa today is offering this opportunity for discussion and re-definition of collective identities.

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Appendix

1.   The interview schedule:

Session 1

This session will be short (approximately 30 mins) and will do two things, firstly, it will serve as an introduction and a way of establishing rapport and trust with the participants, as well as to allow them to sign the informed consent form, and secondly, it will start to probe their ways of thinking about identity (through question 1 and explaining the 'take home task' for question 2).
*   Explain broadly what the research is about again, might be useful to begin with a personal story (why I am interested in this topic).
*   Explain that the interviews will be loosely structured, relaxed and more conversational and that they are free to interrupt and add in information they feel is important at any time.
*   Explain the informed consent form, things like confidentiality and any questions they may have. Get the form signed.

1.   How do young, white South Africans student teachers define themselves?

*   Describe yourself: who are you?

Use Tatum's idea of "I am _____". This would be to get things going, a very brief description to start the interview process. It would also let me know if race was something they used to describe themselves from an early point onwards in the interview. It could also be used as preparation for the next session.

Also, ask them to name at least five descriptors (nouns) and then to rate them in order of importance (if they can) ask why they chose to rate them in this particular way.

*   Explain the 'take home task', the timeline of their lives.
Draw a timeline of your life in answer to the question: "What has made you who you are today?". Be as creative as you wish, you may represent it in any way that makes sense to you. Include experiences, people, events, specific moments, feelings (sad, happy, secure, for example). Basically, include what you want to in terms of what has been your life experience and things going on at a wider level if they have affected you.

Ask them to bring this with to the next session, as it will form the basis of the interview.

*   Make a date for the next session.

Session 2

Session 2 will form the bulk of the data collection and will be much longer (approx 1 hour).

2.   What experiences and events have shaped their sense of identity?

The participant would have drawn a timeline of their lives before coming to the interview.

I feel this would be a good starting point for the interview to go into detail about the participants' socialisation, their family context and upbringing etc. It would perhaps be a more natural and comfortable way of talking about themselves rather than answering direct questions. The emphasis would be on telling rather than answering. However, to help draw out some themes, questions could be posed if the respondent is unsure of what to talk about. (based on Atkinson, 1998). As memory is a subjective thing, and people tend to render or paint 'pictures' of their lives differently in retrospect, the following sections on memory should be approached not only to find out what the participants say, but also how they say it or how they have chosen to remember:

- What was growing up in your house or neighbourhood like?
- Was your family different from other families in your neighbourhood?
- How would you describe your parents? Your family?
- What school did you go to? Was school a happy time for you? Did you fit in easily? Were there people who didn't fit in?
- What are some of your main stresses, concerns in your life?
- Describe some of the values that define who you are.

3. Looking at their context, what kind of 'landscape' do they occupy?

This question would also be answered through the discussion of the timeline. I would probably take this further though, in order to understand who they are in a South African context, by asking more direct questions. The questions in the following sections, are deliberately open-ended in order to allow the respondents as much space to answer as possible:

- Was money ever a problem in your family? How would you describe your family's financial situation? Did it change over time? Why?
- How would you describe yourself culturally? What does culture mean to you? Was there a noticeable cultural flavour to the home you grew up in?
- Tell me about your experiences in 1994 when South Africa became a democracy. (Feelings, things picked up from parents, peers, media etc)
- How do you feel about South Africa today? Describe some of your fears or hopes.
- What is it like being White in South Africa today?

4. In what way are their professional identities shaped by their own sense of their place in South Africa?

These last two questions (see below), will focus the interview onto their chosen profession of teaching, trying to place it within their personal lives and the broader context of South Africa. It will hopefully explore whether race shapes young, White South Africans' sense of their professional lives.

- Why did you want to become a teacher?
- What do you think makes a good teacher?
- What do you think are some of the challenges that you will face in South African classrooms?

5. As teachers, how do they feel they can contribute to South African education, how are they being prepared and what does this say about their own social identities?

- South Africa is a very diverse country in terms of religion, languages, race, cultures etc). What is your understanding of diversity? What does this word mean to you as a teacher? Do you feel prepared for diversity in the classroom? Tell me about some experiences you've had during your practice teaching.
- What are your future plans when you finish your qualification? (Or more specifically) How do you feel about your future in South Africa as a teacher?

6. **These key questions will possibly be expanded during the research process and new points could be added to allow other angles regarding participants' identities to be investigated.**

Also, there will be a need for some questions to bring the interview to a close, for example:
- Is there anything else you would like to add about who you are and how you want others to see you?
- What do you think have been some of the biggest external things that have shaped and influenced you?
- How do you feel about this interview process? Did you feel at all restricted by the questions and tasks? Did they feel limiting?

2. The "I am" worksheet:

How do you describe yourself?

Exploring your different identities ...
Please fill in the spaces below with descriptors of who you are. Only mention things that come to mind immediately and are important to you (for example, a Buddhist if this is part of who you are) You do not need to fill in all the spaces if you can't think of enough descriptors :

I am... 1._____

2._____

3._____

4._____

5._____

Interview number: _____

Date: _____