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Amanda Castro
CSUSB

Angela Tate
CSUSB

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History in the Making

Rhodes Fallen: Student Activism in Post-Apartheid South Africa

By Amanda Castro and Angela Tate



The Cecil Rhodes statue as a contested space. Photo courtesy of BBC News.¹

In early March of 2015, the steely gaze of Cecil Rhodes—ardent imperialist, founder of Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe and Zambia), and former Prime Minister of the Cape Colony—surveyed the campus of the University of Cape Town (UCT) through a splatter of feces. It had been collected by student Chumani Maxwele from “one of the portable toilets that dot the often turbulent, crowded townships on the windswept plains outside Cape Town.”² Maxwele’s actions sparked a campus-wide conversation that spread to other campuses in South Africa. They also joined the global conversations about Black Lives Matter; the demands in the United States to remove Confederate flags and commemorations to Confederate heroes, and the names of racists (including President

¹ Andrew Harding, “Cecil Rhodes Monument: A Necessary Anger?,” *BBC News*, April 11, 2015, accessed March 3, 2016, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-32248605>.

² *Ibid.*

Woodrow Wilson) from buildings; UK students calling for Oxford University to remove its own statue of Rhodes; and other uprisings against symbols of colonialism, oppression, and racism. Because of Rhodes' exploitation of vulnerable population to create a ruling government, which was built on capitalistic tendencies and the commodification of people and labor, the history of Rhodes on the UCT campus has transformed in recent years; those who are now students on the land that was once Rhodes' personal estate ask how should South Africa's harmful past be remembered and envisioned?

Apartheid and Student Movements

The existing inequities in South Africa, which directly impact students and the youth, developed directly from Apartheid. At a time when most European powers were dismantling their colonial systems and African nations obtained their independence, South Africa—created from the merging of the Orange Free State, the Transvaal, Cape, and Natal in 1910—doubled down on its own form of colonialism. The Apartheid era of South Africa began in 1948, with the emergence of the Afrikaner-dominated National Party and its promotion of an ideology of racial and ethnic separatism.³ The 1950s and 1960s saw a hardening of Apartheid beneath the myriad of laws passed by the government to create hyper-inflated, artificial notions of “race” to justify the oppression. During this period, the state crushed black South African resistance, sending those dissidents not imprisoned or assassinated into exile.

The history of student movements in South Africa that challenged Apartheid rule plays a major role in the development of the Rhodes Must Fall (RMF) campaign and those that grew from it. Student rallies and protests had been an effective way in which South African youth called for change in the lives of all through the educational system, political systems, and social systems. Students used picket signs, sit-ins, and marching as a place to begin the redevelopment of South Africa during or after various points of colonization and Apartheid. One of the first contentions

³ John Pepper, *Art and the End of Apartheid* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2009), xvi.

that students rallied around was the demolishing of the Bantu Education Act in 1953. This act “enforced racial segregation of South Africa’s primary and secondary schools by law, and situated responsibility for the educational institutions for black students in the Native Affairs Department.”⁴ These 1953 protests were the example for many of the movements that followed.

The decade of peace and prosperity for white South Africans was shattered by the 1976 Soweto Student Uprising. More than 10,000 students from the Soweto township outside of Johannesburg gathered to protest, march, and demonstrate against a decree from the Bantu Education Department, which made Afrikaans the official language of instruction. A convergence of influences—Steve Biko’s South African Student’s Organization (SASO); the Black Consciousness Movement in the 1970s, which stressed “black pride, self-reliance, and psychological liberation;” and resistance and liberation in neighboring countries—sparked an “emergence of a new collective youth identity forged by common experiences and grievances.”⁵ Between the 1970s and 1990/94, resistance against Apartheid amongst South Africans of all “races” accelerated.

Throughout each movement, the use of ideals, imagery, and slogans were taken from those who have come before them. Influential movements, such as the protests against the Bantu Education Act of 1953 and the Equal Education (EE) movement that began in 2008, saw students working with their communities and families to force the administration and government to take responsibility for the inequalities within the education system. The EE high school movement called for education to be more accessible. As Former EE General Secretary Brad Brockman explains, the students who call themselves ‘Equalisers’ work in ‘Youth Group[s]’ which meet weekly to discuss the current needs of each communities’ students.⁶ As illustrated above, the statement that ‘every generation has its struggle’ is true; though changes have been made in the past two decades of South African history, there

⁴ Anne Heffernan and Noor Nieftagodien, *Students Must Rise: Youth Struggle in South Africa Before and Beyond Soweto* (Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press, 2016), 2.

⁵ “Soweto Student Uprising,” *South Africa: Overcoming Apartheid, Building Democracy*, accessed March 3, 2016, <http://overcomingapartheid.msu.edu/sidebar.php?id=65-258-3>.

⁶ Heffernan and Nieftagodien, *Students Must Rise*, 169-170.

are still struggles that the youth are working to change. It is not enough to see opportunities opening for the few able to afford the fees that come with a grade school education, but to open them for all school age children to have access to higher education.

The end of Apartheid was marked by Nelson Mandela's release from prison in February 1990. After this, the ban was lifted on the African National Congress and other political parties, and a new constitution was built, resulting in the first democratic elections in April 1994. Mandela's inauguration speech after being elected president of the Republic of South Africa offered hope of a "society in which all South Africans, both black and white, will be able to walk tall, without any fear in their hearts, assured of their inalienable right to human dignity – a rainbow nation at peace with itself and the world."⁷ Since the first democratic elections in 1994, there have been battles by many to combat the realities of overt racism and the unequal opportunities that are a byproduct of decades of colonization and Apartheid rule. The optimism inspired by Mandela's speech also marked the beginning of a struggle to acknowledge the systemic wrongs of the nation's past. As Daniel Herwitz argues in *Heritage, Culture, and Politics in the Postcolony* this democratic transition was a narrative which stressed redress, acknowledgement, social flexibility, and building a culture of human rights. The active opposition of colonial and Apartheid heritage, such as monuments to imperialists like Cecil Rhodes, is the public, which is as diverse in culture as it is in religion and thought, attempting to regain its voice within this new democratic society. Since monuments are a way in which heritage and identity are created within nations, it is clear that student demands to remove colonial monuments at UCT are helping to shape a new national narrative that stresses equality and redress.

Space and Power

The reaction of the state to the demonstrations and protests by students raises questions about the definition of violence in South Africa and how entrenched its Apartheid legacy is in society.

⁷ Nelson Mandela, "Statement of Nelson Mandela at His Inauguration as President," *African National Congress*, May 10, 1994, accessed March 3, 2016, <http://www.anc.org.za/content/statement-nelson-mandela-his-inauguration-president>.

Under Apartheid, “one of the key instruments used...to neutralise political dissent was the State of Emergency (SOE).”⁸ Once the country was placed beneath an SOE, resistance and protest were considered public violence, which “defined ‘the problem’ by making state violence invisible [and resulted in] a range of repressive policing tactics, such as aggressive riot control and mass detentions.”⁹ These tactics were no longer sanctioned after 1990, yet student demonstrations in Cape Town in the fall of 2016 led police to use stun grenades against them. Student demonstrations in Johannesburg were met with rubber bullets; twenty-nine people in Cape Town and sixteen students from Tshwane University of Technology (TUT) in Johannesburg were arrested and charged with “public violence.”

Art as Resistance

From the start, South Africans recognized the power of visual culture vis-à-vis resistance and its unification of peoples across color lines (hence why South Africa was one of the last countries in the world to have access to television). Art was a “contested but shared terrain”¹⁰ in South Africa, yet was also a “space for exploring modernity for those living in a more traditional manner in the rural areas.”¹¹ In pre-Apartheid South Africa, artist Gerard Sekoto’s richly luminous paintings of black Johannesburg life opened the door for his mingling with white South Africans and the European art world of the first half of the twentieth century. Surprisingly, his most celebrated painting, *Yellow Houses. A Street in Sophiatown*, was displayed at the annual showing at the South African Academy and was not hung in the separate ‘Native

⁸ “States of Emergency in South Africa: the 1960s and 1980s,” *South African History Online*, March 14, 2012, accessed March 1, 2016, <http://sahistory.org.za/topic/state-emergency-south-africa-1960-and-1980s>.

⁹ Padraig O’Malley, “The Police and the Violence in South Africa,” *Nelson Mandela Centre of Memory*, accessed March 3, 2016, <https://www.nelsonmandela.org/omalley/index.php/site/q/03lv02424/04lv03275/05lv03294/06lv03334.htm>.

¹⁰ John Peffer, *Art and the End of Apartheid* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2009), 4.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 10.

Exhibition' category that had been set aside for most previous work by black artists.¹²



Yellow Houses, District Six, Oil on Canvas, 50.5 x 58cm, by Gerard Sekoto, <https://www.bonhams.com/auctions/18788/lot/204/>.

The conflict between the Ndebele people—recent immigrants who intermarried with indigenous tribes and lived in various parts of the country—and the South African government over their space and place within “racial” classifications and the development of homelands, is cast in an ironic light by the traditional mural art and beadwork of Ndebele being considered “tribal” art of South Africa. Sekoto’s art tested the stereotypes about black South Africans in urban spaces and explored his own experiences with “urban life in the modern world.” The paintings were also a “means to share in the middle-class world and the worldliness of white South Africa” and the “the stirrings of a modernist art that would hold the kernel of a crucial alternative to the authoritarianism and the separateness of life under apartheid after 1948.”¹³ They also had the more mundane, yet equally important function of representing the black South African experience in a positive light to black and white South Africans.

Later generations of black South Africans, in conversation with the anti-colonialist and anti-oppression uprisings of the Global 1960s, expressed their discontent and heritage through the Black Consciousness Movement of the 1970s, which touched on all aspects of black South African lives. The use of art as a form of

¹² Peffer, *Art and the End of Apartheid*, xvi.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 5.

resistance was deeply embedded in Black Consciousness, and in 1971, the Mhloti Black Theatre was founded by Molefe Pheto and a dozen other young men to produce “music, poetry, and theater events and performed speeches by black activists at schools, churches, and political rallies.”¹⁴ A Mhloti member named Thami Mnyele later took art to urban spaces with the intention of taking art “directly to the people of the townships at a moment of political crisis.”¹⁵ During the most troubled times under Apartheid, when police and soldiers terrorized black townships, art became a response to the violence and occupation with the invention of “forms of children’s play, popular visual art, verbal humor, and songs.” The “Mello-Yellow,” the “Buffel,” and the “Hippo”—three notorious armored vehicles of the state—appeared time and time again in songs, in art, and games of the 1980s. Anne Schumann, a Postdoctoral Fellow in Media Studies at the University of the Witwatersrand, discusses the role of music and resistance in her 2008 article “The Beat that Beat Apartheid: The Role of Music in the Resistance against Apartheid in South Africa.” According to Schumann, South African music transformed from “reflecting common experiences and concerns in the early years of apartheid” to, in the 1980s and 1990s, functioning “as a force to confront the state and as a means to actively construct an alternative political and social reality.”¹⁶

In the immediate period after Apartheid, efforts to come to terms with the wounds created by colonialism and Apartheid focused not only on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (a restorative justice body formed in 1996 to help South Africans come to terms with Apartheid),¹⁷ but on the visual culture created under the regime—the monuments and their created myths, the public spaces devoted to oppression, the absence of black South African artistic production, etc. The debate over monuments harkened to similar struggles post-USSR Eastern Europe, where

¹⁴ Peffer, *Art and the End of Apartheid*, 16.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Anne Schumann, “The Beat that Beat Apartheid: The Role of Music in the Resistance against Apartheid in South Africa,” *Stichproben - Wiener Zeitschrift für kritische Afrikastudien* 14 (2008): 17, accessed March 3, 2016, http://stichproben.univie.ac.at/fileadmin/user_upload/p_stichproben/Artikel/Nummer14/Nr14_Schumann.pdf.

¹⁷ South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission, “Welcome to the Official Truth and Reconciliation Website,” *Truth and Reconciliation Commission*, accessed March 11, 2017, <http://www.justice.gov.za/trc/>.

leaders and the public grappled with a past that was realized through a grappling with monuments.¹⁸ According to Dr. Sabine Marschall of the University of KwaZulu-Natal, “monuments are public ‘institutions’ through which selected narratives and associated groups can gain visibility, authority and legitimacy, but they are also sites of contestation where perhaps previously invisible differences can become evident.”¹⁹ The conversation about resetting South Africa’s biased heritage landscape after Apartheid resulted in workshops, conferences, televised debates, newspaper articles, and academic texts, all of which reflected the optimism engendered by Mandela’s aforementioned speech.

Public Space, Public Memory

The Rhodes Must Fall’s request to remove the Rhodes statue is definitive of the transformation that public space undergoes in different time periods, under varying social conditions, and under different political overseers. This movement is a case study in how public space can define and be defined by those who encounter it. The use of public space on UCT’s campus throughout 2014-2016 was made possible by the numerous student movements that helped to create the structures in the social thought that students can make a difference on the highest levels of society. The RMF movement unfolded in public spaces with historical significance on many levels. The history of John Cecil Rhodes and the history of the campus were seen to reside upon the steps of Upper Campus. Not only is UCT the leading research university on the Continent, but its Upper Campus contains the Main Library and housing for UCT’s top ranking students. The Rhodes statue standing in such a prominent space on campus made it central to the student’s struggles for change and calls for transformation. Though UCT was built with the bequest of John Cecil Rhodes, much of the campus community argues that his actions should not be

¹⁸ Annie E. Coombes, *History after Apartheid: Visual Culture and Public Memory in a Democratic South Africa* (London: Duke University Press, 2003), 7.

¹⁹ Sabine Marschall, *Landscape of Memory: Commemorative Monuments, Memorials, and Public Statuary in Post-Apartheid South Africa* (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 2, accessed February 26, 2016, <http://openaccess.leidenuniv.nl/handle/1887/18536>.

memorialized but rather questioned on the grounds of social justice for the memory of those generations who have been negatively impacted by Rhodes's legacy.

The use of public space such as city squares, main streets, and memorial spaces as a stage for being heard is a method present in all student movements and protests. These spaces become centers where students can make a stand for their goals while making statements calling for change of many different forms. From time immemorial, leaders and regimes have used "built structures as a form of legacy... [they] asserted themselves in the built environment through monuments...statues, civic buildings, or technical infrastructure...often intertwining leaders' achievements with that of the nation."²⁰ They also "advertise a person as ever-present in the urban space and, by extension, in the lives of the citizenry."²¹ With this, public space is politicized, it is linked to identity, and it demands the absorption of certain messages and communication staged by the regime, whether or not it is intended to be benign. Since there is so much diversity within each community, it is clear that these spaces cannot be defined by just one group or one set of ideals. Public spaces – such as the Rhodes statue – may be made for a specific purpose like memorializing John Cecil Rhodes, but they can also become spaces of contention. Once various movements use these public spaces, they take on a new life and are at times reclaimed, as was the Rhodes statue at UCT.

For black South Africans, the removal of monuments and plaques, and the renaming of bridges, roads, and other structures dedicated to Apartheid leaders has been cathartic. In 1994, the statue of Hendrik Verwoerd, the Prime Minister who drew the map of segregation and imposed inferior education on blacks, was wrested from its place in front of the provincial offices of the Orange Free State during a Friday afternoon rush hour. It took several hours to pull the statue from its perch, but in the end, the 15-foot likeness of Verwoerd was no longer standing with his hands on his hips as if inspecting his subjects, but was flat on his back with black people dancing on his chest. "Now they will know

²⁰ Alexandra Staub, *Conflicted Identities: Housing and the Politics of Cultural Representation* (New York: Routledge, 2016), 26.

²¹ Ibid.

that black people are in charge here," said Daniel Malebo, a messenger.²²



The statue of H.F. Verwoerd that was removed from its place in Midvaal now stands in the town hall on the farm Kleinfontein, east of Pretoria. Photo courtesy of Madelene Cronjé, M&G.²³

This statement is echoed in the argument set forth by Leigh-Ann Naidoo, a PhD. Candidate at Wits University in response to South African students hijacking meetings, panels, and other platforms held by the University of Cape Town after the #RhodesMustFall protests began: "You are not in charge of us, you are not able to lead on these issues, your process is corrupt and vacuous, and therefore you do not tell us what to do and how to do it anymore."²⁴ The seemingly benign message propagated by the

²² Isabel Wilkerson, "Apartheid is Demolished. Must Its Monuments Be?," *The New York Times*, September 25, 1994, accessed March 3, 2016. <http://nytimes.com/1994/09/25/world/apartheid-is-demolished-must-its-monuments-be.html>.

²³ Sean O'Toole, "Where Apartheid Statues Go to Die," *Africa Mail & Globe*, June 17, 2011, <http://mg.co.za/article/2011-06-17-finding-verwoerd-lifting-the-lid-on-dustbin-of-history>.

²⁴ Leigh-Ann Naidoo, "Needing to Learn: #RhodesMustFall and the Decolonisation of the University," *Independent Thinking*, November 2015, accessed March 20, 2017, <http://www.dhetnews.co.za/needing-to-learn-rhodesmustfall-and-the-decolonisation-of-the-university/>.

statue of Rhodes is precisely what drove Maxwele to deface its surface—he found it “unbearably humiliating to walk every day past a statue glorifying an undeniable racist.”²⁵ Days later, the clash of the political and the public space of UCT resulted in the students occupying the Bremner building that housed the Vice-Chancellor’s administration office. The building was subsequently renamed the Azania House, referring to the classical name for the southeastern region of Africa, and to the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania, a black nationalist party in South Africa.



The occupied Bremner Building. Photo by The Johannesburg Salon: Volume 9.²⁶

The occupation of this space is significant. Khumo Sebambo, a Cape Town based writer, argues that “geographical space is reflected as historical—that is that the particularities of space are formed through and informed by long histories of ideologies... [and] if space was an organising tool for oppression in South Africa’s past, then it is more than fair to say that in the ‘new’ South Africa, space should be reorganised to ensure

²⁵ Harding, “Cecil Rhodes Monument.”

²⁶ Khumo Sebambo, “Azania House as a Symbol of the Black Imagination,” *The Johannesburg Salon* 9 (2015): 108, accessed March 3, 2016. http://jwtc.org.za/resources/docs/salon-volume-9/Khumo_Azania_House_Vol9_34.pdf.

equality.”²⁷ The secondary and post-secondary educational system further cemented this spatial oppression: the 1953 Bantu Education Act centralized schools for black South Africans under government control and was “designed to teach African learners to be ‘hewers of wood and drawers of water’ for a white-run economy and society.”²⁸ For the protesters, occupying Azania House offered a “spatial safety to black identities, which are otherwise formed on precarious grounds [of UCT]... [it] allowed for the imagination of blackness to flourish.”²⁹

The occupiers of the rechristened Azania House recognized the power of public art, orchestrating “protests and performance art demonstrations across the campus, interrogating the legacy of colonialism and how it is memorialised on campus.”³⁰ A collective of artists staged an art demonstration titled Saartjie Baartman—named for the Khoikhoi woman enslaved and displayed in European freak shows because of her shapely anatomy. They walked from Azania House and through the campus in chains, black paint and diapers, moving towards a sculpture on Baartman located in the University library.

²⁷ Sebambo, “Azania House as a Symbol of the Black Imagination.”

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Brian Kamanzi, “‘Rhodes Must Fall’ – Decolonisation Symbolism – What is happening at UCT, South Africa?” *The Postcolonialist*, March 29, 2015, accessed March 3, 2016, <http://postcolonialist.com/civil-discourse/rhodes-must-fall-decolonisation-symbolism-happening-uct-south-africa/>.



Protest of Saartjie Baartman, Man walking with Chains. Photo by UCT Rhodes Must Fall, The Postcolonialist.com.

Naidoo contextualizes this performance of public art in the performance artists' own words:

We reject her presentation in the library, we reject that her standing naked commemorates her and retains her dignity. Further, we see no difference in the racist, sexist methods used by the French and British in the freak show attraction, than her presentation in the UCT Oppenheimer library. Thus we aimed to illustrate that the violent objectification and sexualisation of the black body is a system, which feeds into the stereotype of racial superiority so subtly and insidiously that it is hard to detect even by those bodies it represents in real life. So our aim is to challenge a history that represents us as a fetish, as base sexual beings. There are particular ways in which Saartjie Baartman's spirit and legacy can be contextualised and respected. Thus in our climatic

end, we draped her and covered her, hoping to show that these violences inflicted on the black body and psychology still continue, and we will not stop until we decolonise the black body and mind!³¹

Taking the contesting of public space and public memory even further, black students at Stellenbosch University took to social media to chronicle the discrimination and racism experienced on campus in a video titled “Luister” (Listen in Afrikaans). An undoubtedly deliberately ironic title, as the students in the video criticize the use of Afrikaans in lectures and the mandatory lessons in the language. Open Stellenbosch, a group of faculty and students, decry the dominance of Afrikaans in the public sphere, arguing that “despite its stated intentions, [the language policy] safeguards Afrikaans and Afrikaner culture at the expense of black people.”³² In mid-February 2016, a group of Rhodes Must Fall (RMF) protesters “removed and burnt artworks from Fuller Hall and Smuts Hall residences as well as Jameson Hall”³³ in the name of ridding UCT of its images of oppressors. This bold, yet unsettling act raised concerns about the nature of this battle for public memory. Marlyn Faure, a self-identified coloured South African, offered a dissident opinion, wondering if “erasing of the material existence of these symbols could inadvertently whitewash how colonialism and apartheid continue to affect every aspect of reality for all South Africans...[denying] a diversity of cultural symbols to co-exist, in complex and contested ways, we also disallow those who have benefitted from colonial structures to deny this reality.”³⁴ South Africa’s troubled reconciliation with its Apartheid past will continue to focus on its monuments and memory as the new generation of black South Africans overtly position themselves within the Black Consciousness Movement and Pan-Africanist spaces of their forbearers, and interrogate

³¹ Naidoo, “Needing to Learn.”

³² Samiha Nettikara, “The Black Students Rallying against ‘Remnants of Apartheid’,” *BBC Trending*, September 2, 2015, <http://bbc.com/news/blogs-trending-34125297>.

³³ Ashleigh Furlong, “South Africa: Rhodes Must Fall Protesters Destroy UCT Art,” *All Africa*, February 16, 2016. <http://allafrica.com/stories/201602170966.html>.

³⁴ Marlyn Faure, “The Battle for Public Memory: Why #RhodesMust(Not)Fall,” *Thought Leader*, March 25, 2015. <http://thoughtleader.co.za/readerblog/2015/03/25/the-battle-for-public-memory-why-rhodesmustnotfall/>.

blackness in the context of post-Apartheid South Africa, thus forcing a dialogue on identity and imagining of themselves.

Evolution of Rhodes Must Fall

The Rhodes statue removal can be seen as a milestone development in the RMF campaign and a step toward more than just the changing of the UCT landscape. Following the RMF movement, the Fees Must Fall movement took on the task of calling for more availability for higher education by dropping student fees to zero. In order to reach this goal, the Fees Must Fall movement urged the students to resist, “the commodification of education by calling for free, quality, decolonized education and expressing dissatisfaction with the rate and depth of change two decades after South Africa’s democratization.”³⁵ This movement spread throughout the whole of the South African nation causing students in all major universities to order fees to fall just as Rhodes had.

Although President Jacob Zuma did freeze fees because of these campaigns, there are student who question if this movement aims to help the students who conform to the idea of patriarchal heterosexual dominance over those that do not identify themselves to be as such. For example, the Patriarchy Must Fall movement PMF was not inspired by the RMF movement but was created to question the student body which headed the movement. Leigh-Ann Naidoo illustrates this shift:

Black queer feminists in the movement resisted this approach and continued to draw attention to the oppressive systems of patriarchy and homophobia, compelling their heterosexual male comrades to recognize that while they are oppressed black men in a university system and world that continues to privilege whiteness, they are simultaneously privileged as men by patriarchy and by heteronormativity as heterosexual.³⁶

³⁵ Heffernan and Nieftagodien, *Students Must Rise*, 180.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 183.

With this development, the movement was questioned on the basis of who would be considered worthy of receiving this equal education of which was being fought. This shift in language from how to get education to who deserves this education brought to light the fact that conflict within this nationally recognized movement did exist. Though there was violence by police and security throughout the majority of the protest, there was the reality that violence on the campus of UCT *within* the RMF and the FMF movements did exist and was mostly towards the LGBTQ community.

The development of the Patriarchy Must Fall movement was similar to that of the RMF and FMF in that it took to public space in order to be heard. The Patriarchy Must Fall movement fought for recognition and also wanted the decolonization of the UCT campus. In reaching their goals they would be able to secure futures for their group and others around the nation who are part of the LGBTQ community. They also fought for the rights of women to gain better education. They felt that unlike the ANC government who only focused on surface-level changes, they “called instead for deeper structural change of the university as an institution, issuing from concerns with staff demographics, Euro-centric curricula, institutional racism and other forms of oppression such as patriarchy and homophobia.”³⁷ Their message was spread throughout the UCT campus and became a point of contention between the Patriarchy Must Fall and the Fees Must Fall groups. Although there were students within the RMF and FMF movements who understood the importance of equality there were also many that used violence to try and put down this new campaign.

The Patriarchy Must Fall questioned the RMF and FMF publicly at an exhibition titled “Echoing Voices from Within” on March 9, 2016, marking the anniversary of the RMF campaign.³⁸ The exhibit was described as telling the story of those who fought for the removal of the Rhodes statue while pressing the administration to help reach their new goals. The campus defined this exhibition as:

³⁷ Heffernan and Nieftagodien, *Students Must Rise*, 183-184.

³⁸ “Rhodes Must Fall Exhibition: ‘Echoing Voices from Within,’” *Facebook*, accessed March 20, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/events/1772531186314673/>.

A body of work that drew its content from photographs, videos, banners and artefacts from a climactic year of activism. Many of the photographs and videos were taken by the students themselves who also assembled a significant and important archive of this moment in history. It is in itself a record of the events that began on 9 March 2015.³⁹

³⁹ “Rhodes Must Fall Exhibition,” *Facebook*.

RHODES SO WHITE

ONE BULLET TOO MANY LIVES

ISONO GETHU BUBUMINYAMA

STOP CRIMINALISING STUDENTS

NOTHING HAS CHANGED

#Open Stellenbosch Expose RACISM

MINE ARE THE TEARS THAT FALL ON GAGGLES THAT ILLUSTRATE THE SILENCE OF OUR CONSCIENCE

DECOLONISE UCT

I WILL ALWAYS BE BLACK!

WE ARE NOT THE PROBLEM

WHO ARE YOU REALLY PROTECTING?

HANDS OFF MAXWEL!

#BaltimoreRising Please DON'T SHOOT!

ALL RHODES LEAD TO A COLONISED MIND



rhodes must fall exhibition

09.03.2016
CAS Gallery
UCT Upper Campus

“Echoing Voices from Within”

programme CAS

14h30 – 15h00	Gathering at Azania One (Brenner Building)
15h00 – 15h05	Official Welcome and brief introduction about the Rhodes Must Fall exhibition and the route that will be taken to CAS
15h05 – 15h10	Poetry Item(s)
15h10 – 15h40	Walk to the Second Site (Bridge)
15h30 – 15h40	Arriving at the Bridge and the lighting of candles and impepho activity resumes
15h40 – 16h00	MOMENT OF SILENCE Walk to the Third Site (Rugby Fields) (Planting of the 34 crosses on the side walk of Rugby Fields in remembrance of the massacred Marikana Miners)
16h00 – 16h15	IMBONGI – “PRAISE SINGER” Walk to the Fourth Site (Pitsh)
16h15 – 16h25	Performance at the “HAVE YOUR SAY” boards located at the foot of the statue
16h25 – 16h40	HOISTING OF THE GREEN FLAG Walk to the Fifth Site (Marikana Memorial)
16h40 – 16h50	SINGING OF ABANTWANA BEAFFRICA
16h50 – 17h00	Walk to the Sixth Site (Sarah Baartman Statue in the Library)
17h00 – 17h10	Performance at the Sarah Baartman statue
17h10 – 17h30	Walk to CAS
17h30 – 18h00	Live performance outside the CAS Gallery

evening programme (cas gallery)

18h00 – 18h05	Official Welcome
18h05 – 18h20	Reading out of Statement
18h20 – 18h25	Vote of Thanks

Show Solidarity #MarchWithUs

STOP POLICE BRUTES
Khayelitsha TO BALTIMORE

THERE ARE BURGANDY STAINS ON EVERY WHITE COLLAR

BLACK LIVES MATTER

YOU MAY NOT BE FIGHTING WHITE SUPREMACY BUT WHITE SUPREMACY IS FIGHTING YOU! #EDUCATIONISERACE #STOPBLACRIMINAL

SWITCH OFF YOUR TV! DO SOMETHING!
#decriminalizeblack #blacklivesmatter

STOP WHITE MALE VIOLENCE
#HUGHAMOOREMUSTFALL

Hugh AMOORE DON'T JUST WATCH, DO SOMETHING!!
#HUGHAMOOREMUSTFALL

#TRANSFORM UCT
#RHODESFALLS

“Echoing Voices from Within: Rhodes Must Fall Exhibition” Program posted to Facebook, <https://www.facebook.com/events/1772531186314673/>.

Since the exhibit was promoted as a narrative of the movement, it is clear that the PMF questioned how this narrative should be created and who should be remembered. They also questioned the way in which they fit into this narrative. The PMF believes that their role has morphed into speaking to the RMF and keeping it accountable of its commitment to “intersectionality precisely because it is positioned as a black decolonial space.”⁴⁰ In keeping the movement and its students accountable for their actions they staged a protest on the opening of the exhibition. They smeared red paint onto the images surrounding the space and also gave speeches at the entrance of the exhibit. A piece of pink paper was placed over one of the photographs with a message that read, “We will not have our bodies, faces, names, and voices used as bait for public applause” while another read, “RMF will not tokenise our presence as if they ever treasured us as part of their movement.”⁴¹ Public space was used by the two groups to define themselves and their movement. On the one hand the RMF and FMF were putting their narrative on display while those who are part of PMF were questioning how and why this narrative should be the only one presented by UCT staff and officials. This type of contention is the byproduct of a movement which sees its political goals as being far more important than recognizing the social impact their movement has on students who do not feel they were as welcomed as others.

⁴⁰ Ground Up, “Rhodes Must Fall Exhibition Vandalised in UCT Protest,” *The South African*, March 11, 2016, <http://www.thesouthafrican.com/rhodes-must-fall-exhibition-vandalised-in-uct-protest/>.

⁴¹ Ibid.



Members of the UCT Trans Collective blocked entrances to the exhibition of “Echoing Voices from Within.” The exhibition was eventually shut down. Photo courtesy of Ashraf Hendricks.⁴²

Conclusion

The question of how those who are now students on the land that was once Rhodes’ personal estate should remember South Africa’s harmful past is an ever-evolving dilemma with no definitive solution in sight. With developments still taking place at the site of the Rhodes statue on UCT’s upper campus this turbulent site is even now being transformed and discussed. During a trip to South Africa to study at the UCT campus Amanda Castro, a student from CSUSB and co-author of this article, was able to see the site of Rhodes statues dethroned pedestal. On her way to the UTC library she saw this new addition to the site that had taken place over night. Proof of an interruption was apparent because the new yellow paint marking the pedestal was rushed with the job half done and a paint can and paint roller still sitting where they dropped it. Although not sure of the reasoning behind the paint and

⁴² Ground Up, “Rhodes Must Fall Exhibition Vandalised in UCT Protest.”

its meaning, the act of change itself, even hidden by night, shows just how much of a center for transformation the site still is.



“University of Cape Town Upper Campus,” Photo by Amanda Castro, July 2016.



Paint brush left by unknown person on the pedestal of the Rhodes statue. Photo by Amanda Castro, July 2016.



'X' painted onto Rhodes pedestal with yellow paint, Photo by Amanda Castro, July 2016.

The Rhodes Must Fall campaign, and those that followed, have become a topic of discussion throughout South Africa since the beginning of 2015. It is now, like other student movements, in the memory of not only students but also the administration throughout the country. For example, on February 27, 2017 Thabo Mbeki, the chancellor of the university of Pretoria, urged students who are calling for free education not to take the Rhodes Must Fall Movement as a productive example. Although he appreciates and understands the actions of the movements he argues that the violence and destruction of university property was both completely unnecessary and counterproductive.⁴³ Mbeki's choice to call on the history of the Rhodes Must Fall movement, although recent but powerful helps to illustrate the cementing of the movement into the memories of those in South Africa. The development of Rhodes Must Fall is now another example of how student movements take hold and develop into powerful catalysts for change that can be used as a springboard for future movements like the ones before it.

⁴³ Ernest Mabuza, "Students, Society Should Reject Protests Which Cause Damage to Property: Mbeki," *Times Live*, February 27, 2017, accessed March 18, 2017, <http://www.timeslive.co.za/politics/2017/02/27/Students%E2%80%9A-society-should-reject-protests-which-cause-damage-to-property-Mbeki>.

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Author Bios

Amanda Castro (left) received her Bachelor's Degree from CSUSB in Public and Oral History in 2014. She is currently a graduate student at CSUSB in the Social Sciences and Globalization program with an emphasis in Public History. In Fall of 2015, she became the Project Manager at the Patton State Hospital Museum and Archive where she is helping to digitize the hospital's photograph collection. Amanda has an interest in community based projects and outreach where her knowledge in Public History helps her to organize and carry out projects with various county and state institutions.



Angela Tate (right) is a Sally Casanova Pre-Doctoral Scholar for 2016-17 and is completing her final year at CSU San Bernardino, where she is a dual Public/Oral History and American Studies major. She will be entering a doctoral program this fall to continue her studies in African Diaspora studies, Global U.S. history, digital humanities, feminist theory, and Afro-Asian cultural production during the over-lapping eras of Jim Crow, Imperialism, and the Cold War.