

# MEDIA AND CITIZENSHIP

BETWEEN MARGINALISATION  
AND PARTICIPATION



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[\[CN\]Chapter 8](#)

**[CT]The tale of two publics: Media, political representation & citizenship in Hout Bay, Cape Town**

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**Abstract**

This chapter makes the case that access to the spaces of public debate in post-apartheid South Africa is about the challenge of political representation as much as it is about the challenge of access to communication technologies. These representational issues centre on the racialised and partisan nature of state-society relations framed, in part, through identity discourses and, for many poor citizens, patronage politics linked to local governance. In the urban setting this often also takes a spatial form linked to the neighbourhood or community, and involves local leaders who invoke the exclusive right to mediate for poor and marginalised groups in the name of liberation nationalism and service delivery – elsewhere termed the politics of the ‘party-society’. This representational politics creates two distinct publics: one that limits democratic citizenship by affirming racial hierarchies over equal rights, and for poorer, black communities, by constricting citizen voice independent of party sanction. It produces a form of ‘mediated’ citizenship in which third-party representatives and the ways in which they ‘speak for’ citizens come to define (and often limit) possibilities for inclusive, democratic citizenship (von Lieres and Piper 2014).

Illustrated through the case of two newspapers in Hout Bay, the chapter shows how the main community newspaper, *The Sentinel*, gives voice overwhelmingly to white and wealthy residents of Hout Bay; views that at least some black residents perceive as racist. Further, attempts by ANC-aligned local leaders to counter the perceived bias of *The Sentinel* through their own paper, *Hout Bay Speak*, does not necessarily give voice to all poor, black residents. This is most evident in its deliberately ignoring the existence of community leaders not aligned with the party hierarchy in Hout Bay. This racialised and partisan character of state-society relations is a significant constraint on constructing a more inclusive public sphere in Hout Bay, and indeed we suggest, in much of urban South Africa.

**[A]Introduction**

It is widely accepted that the formation of public opinion that genuinely reflects the views of citizens, even if not necessarily a consensus, and even if only indirectly impactful on formal state institutions, is critical to contemporary democratic governance. South Africa is no exception in this regard, with many formal commitments to democratic practice beyond the authorisation of representatives at periodic elections, such as a free press, and other civil and political rights foundational to a plural and largely unrestricted public realm.

Notably, these democratic commitments are twinned with a commitment to economic and social development, including the notion that the state should be a developmental one committed to addressing poverty, inequality and its racial forms inherited from the past. This conception of the developmental state is nowhere better illustrated than in the burdensome design of post-apartheid local government. Made responsible for much of service delivery including water, electricity, most roads, sanitation, but also to some extent in housing, education and health (through control of land), local government is also required to work more democratically than other spheres of the state. This is manifest not just through regular elections, but through requirements for democratic practice between elections summed up as 'participatory governance' (see Barichievy et al. 2005). This set of legal obligations includes institutions like ward committees and ward forums, requirements for public consultation on budget, development planning and the like. In addition, development projects not administered by local government also have a requirement for some form of public consultation.

It is now widely recognised that this model of participatory local governance in South Africa is not a success (Atkinson 2007; Bénit-Gbaffou 2008, & 2015). This is mostly evident through the substantial scale of protest by poor communities justified in terms of frustration at poor service delivery and the broken promises of local leaders. In addition, there is lots of research to show that participatory governance is generally not effective at giving citizens voice, and tends to be captured for other politics, usually partisan, or local factions within the party, contending for office and its spoils. While incompetence is a large factor in this politics, so is a burgeoning politics of patronage and corruption, perhaps best symbolised by controversial R350 million security upgrades to the President's personal residence at Nkandla in KwaZulu-Natal.

One of the issues raised by the vexed attempt at democratic development through local governance in South Africa, is the viability of democratic institutions without democratic citizens – a problem categorised as one of ‘political culture’ in mainstream political science. More specifically, can we expect institutions of plural or liberal democracy, fashioned through elite bargaining, to work in a country where many people are not fully committed to equality or individual rights but still think in terms of contending race groups with differential entitlements? A key claim of this chapter is that these ideas of race, rooted in the contending Afrikaner/white and African/liberation nationalisms of the apartheid era, linger on into the present, albeit often inchoately and in hybridised ways, and serve to constrain who is regarded as entitled to speak, in what terms, and on what authority.

In what follows, we trace how public debate around developmental local governance in one site, Hout Bay, expresses these enduring anti-egalitarian ideas, and how, when entwined with patronage politics linked to accessing state resources, shapes not only who can get what and when, but who gets to speak in public too. In effect we show how the convergence of apartheid-era ideas with the logics of developmental local governance undermine democratic citizenship. Democratising the public realm in Hout Bay is thus a story not just about access to technologies of communication, although this is clearly important, but about recognising the silencing (and at times unconscious) legacy of racism, and the constricting effects of party sanction on popular voice. It is thus about the ‘right to have rights’ in two different ways: the right to be recognised as fully human, and the right to speak without authorisation from above.

In making this case, we begin by outlining the theoretical assumptions and framing of the argument in respect of democracy and the public realm, especially as regards to nationalism, race and citizenship, and then by relating these to an account of state-society relations in post-apartheid South Africa, especially the ‘party-society’ politics of poor, black urban communities (Piper 2015). This framework is then applied to the case of Hout Bay, with a focus on the public debate around a number of development projects, most recently a new clinic proposed for a central location in a wealthy part of the settlement. The chapter explores media representations on these questions through comparing and contrasting two newspapers, *The Sentinel* and *Hout Bay Speak*, pointing to the important racial and partisan exclusions manifest in both.

## **[A] Democratic citizenship, racial nationalism and partisan state–society relations**

It is widely accepted that democracy under modern conditions is more than elections, and involves a variety of means of translating the idea of the rule of the people into governance. A key element here is the idea that the development of public opinion through a public sphere, or a range of spheres, is central to democratic governance, even if it only impacts indirectly on actual decision-making. ~~For As~~ Habermas (1991), ~~described it in~~ *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* (1991), the public sphere is an area in social life where individuals can come together to discuss freely and to identify societal problems, and through that discussion influence political action. While writing overtly about rise and decline of a bourgeois public sphere in the 18th century, the idea that contemporary democracy requires a sphere or realm for inclusive and deliberative opinion formation is echoed in his later work, and has a central relationship to the media, which is inevitably involved in many interactions between the millions of people who comprise modern states.

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This idea that modern democratic society requires a space or spaces where citizens can deliberate on issues of common concern in an uncoerced and unrestricted way, as facilitated by various forms of media, has been taken up widely. – A variety of debates ensue, including whether this is best conceived as one sphere that is all-inclusive and deliberative, or a multitude of spheres or various characters, that may be linked in various ways. Hence, in a famous response to Habermas, Fraser (1992) points out what she sees as the exclusive nature of the bourgeois public sphere for women and others, and how deliberation can be used as a mask for domination, effectively shifting political power from ‘a repressive mode of domination to a hegemonic one’. The exclusions of the public sphere that Habermas does not identify lead Fraser to make the case for counter-publics – spaces, venues and processes where marginalized groups formed their own views of the social order. Indeed, as outlined below, the emergence of *Hout Bay Speak* and its self-conception as giving voice to those not represented in *The Sentinel* can be read in this light.

The implication for contemporary democracy is that it may be important, especially in deeply divided societies, to acknowledge the inevitability of forms of exclusion and the value of a variety of publics, some explicitly counter the dominant one. The implication for democratic citizenship is that a formally open society with a free media is not necessarily enough for marginalised groups to feel empowered or

recognised as legitimate to participate in just one space through one medium. Writing about media in South Africa, Berger (2002: 31) notes that the status and influence of a public sphere (even if heterogeneous) may fluctuate in relation to the balance of dominant voices within it. If, for example, government media predominates and propaganda about leaders' speeches is primarily what is heard in the public sphere, then this realm is likely to reinforce state power. Furthermore, counter-publics and alternative media may well produce their own exclusions, as we shall also demonstrate below.

Indeed, as argued in [Van Lieres and Piper \(2014: 1–2\)](#) one reason for these exclusions is that relations between states and citizens are often mediated by third party intermediaries who often have their own agendas. Third-party intermediaries who speak for citizens can sometimes facilitate democratic representation through teaching people about rights, self-representation and agency. At times third-party representatives can contribute to a democratic politics, capable of addressing some of the weaknesses of both liberal representative democracy and participatory governance- ([Huq & Mahmud 2014](#); [Robins and Fleisch 2014](#); [Huq and Mahmud 2014](#); [Van Lieres 2014](#)). A recent process of engagement by an environmental group, trying to bring all voices together in Hout Bay to formulate a plan to address water and waste issues in the area, demonstrates this potential.

However, in many cases mediators produce anti-democratic outcomes for citizenship (Wheeler 2014). In particular, we draw attention to intermediaries not formally authorised to speak for poor and marginalised groups, but who claim the legitimacy to do so on a variety of grounds and with various implications for democracy. In this chapter we showcase a form of political representation that is informal in that it is not authorised by law, but claims exclusive legitimacy in terms of liberation nationalism. This is a form of representative 'capture' (Wheeler 2014:8) that has yielded mixed democratic outcomes, asserting an important view from poor, black communities but at the expense of at least some rivals.

In addition to requiring reflection on questions of democracy and publics, our case in Hout Bay also requires we say something more about citizenship and its relationship with nationalism, in particular the egalitarian and individual rights-bearing conception of citizenship entailed in the South African constitution of 1996, and the group hierarchies of race that endure from the contending nationalisms of the apartheid era. Here we use the idea of citizenship as more than one of legal status in

respect of state membership, identifying substantive and normative conceptions too. Substantively, we take citizenship to reflect the agency people actually have in respect of the state, and as thus treat it as an open empirical question; whereas normatively we take democratic citizenship to mean something like free and equal membership of a state with associated civil, political and social-economic rights à la T.H. Marshall (1950).

Nationalism, in contrast, is the claim that a group, more specifically a self-sustaining group or 'a people' form the legitimate basis of the state. Although historically a critical idea through which inclusion of 'the masses' in the institutions of modernity was justified, nationalism and nations offer a conception of state-society relations that is potentially in conflict with the normative conception of democratic citizenship. Hence, the classical ethnic nationalisms of 19th-century Europe located popular sovereignty within group that was ethnically defined (Hobsbawm 1990). This conception of the nation limits citizenship to only certain residents who belong to the right group. In South Africa's recent past this would include the ethnic and racial exclusions of Afrikaner and white nationalisms (Moodie 1975), or the racial ambivalences of African nationalism (Walsh 1987).

As Hobsbawm (1990: 169) notes, 19th-century European ethnic nationalism was followed by waves of different kinds, specifically the anti-colonial nationalisms of the post-World War II period, and then the self-consciously multi-cultural nationalisms of largely immigrant societies like Canada. Imagined more on common political grounds than cultural or ethnic, these nationalisms exist more easily with egalitarian and individual conceptions of democratic citizenship as legitimacy is not connected to group identities. Further, as illustrated by Kymlicka (1995), it is possible to reconcile collective or special groups rights with individual rights under certain formulations – principally in terms of enhancing equal access to rights to all and thus deconstructing rather than reconstructing group-based social hierarchies.

As illustrated below, the ideas of racial hierarchy that endure from apartheid-era nationalisms, and are to some extent reproduced into the present, serve to undermine notions of egalitarian and individual citizenship, albeit in different ways for different groups. For example, enduring ideas of white supremacy, whether consciously framed or not, can dovetail with the bio-political logic of governance that, as Chatterjee (2004) notes, tends to treat poor people as populations to be managed rather than citizens bearing rights. More mundanely it can serve to

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delegitimise 'black' voices by ignoring, silencing or disabling deliberation before it even starts. In this regard, the discourse of land invasion, whether by 'foreigners', 'refugees', or 'bussing from the ~~eastern~~-Eastern eape-Cape', takes on greater significance.

Conversely, while the idea of 'the racist' can be invoked to silence voice, and is well commented upon in the public domain in South Africa, more important is the ambivalence in the liberation nationalism of the ANC and others towards non-racialism (Anciano 2014). This manifests in a privileged role for the historically oppressed, who are racially defined, and poses a challenge for egalitarian and individual conceptions of citizenship, although more so in terms of first access to state office and state resources, rather than exclusion. More important in the Hout Bay case are the implications of the idea of 'ANC entitlement to rule' for popular representation for poor, black communities in Hout Bay.

Heller (2009) makes the case that, as in India, political society tends to dominate civil society in South Africa. In line with this general claim, the case has been made for how this works at the local or community level in South Africa through a combination of liberation nationalist ideology and patronage politics mediated through the ANC and its allies (Piper 2015; Piper & Anciano 2015). Termed the politics of the 'party-state', it centres on the attempt to monopolise the representation of poor, black communities to the state and others by leaders aligned with the ANC. Legitimated through the idea of the ANC's entitlement to rule, and reinforced through the capacity to deliver state resources to the community, this politics is informal but important. It is also often hotly contested, but almost always within 'party-society' logic. Thus protest may lead to new leaders, but almost always ones aligned to the same party, in the same patronage relations with local government. In short, the space for voices unsanctioned by the ANC is relatively constrained.—As we shall see this is certainly the case in Imizamo Yethu in Hout Bay, although 'party-state' plays a lesser role in the predominantly white valley.

Of course, the dominance of civil society by political society is not absolute, as evidenced by the emergence of social movements rooted in poor, black communities, independent, and for some, even overtly critical, of the ANC and its allies. However, they are relatively few in number and often struggle to sustain themselves independently of state or donor support. More sustainable are professionalised ~~non-governmental organisation~~ (NGO)-type social movements such



as the Treatment Action Campaign and Sonke Gender Justice that look to combine branches in poor, black areas, with middle-class and professionalised leadership from the suburbs (Robins 2014). However, these movements tend to focus on policy at national or city levels. Politics at the most local level is likely to be more about informal leaders who monopolise voice in partisan terms and produce, at best, a form of mediated and exclusionary citizenship.

In what follows, we explore how public debate around developmental local governance in one site, Hout Bay, manifests these forms of exclusion in a formally open and inclusive governance process, as exemplified in *The Sentinel* and *Hout Bay Speak* newspapers. We begin by introducing the case-study site, and tracing these exclusionary dynamics through development projects around housing, water, and most recently health.

#### **[A] Hout Bay: Microcosm of post-apartheid Cape Town**

Famous for its beautiful and striking setting, Hout Bay is also regarded as a microcosm of Cape Town, and indeed South Africa, as it contains three distinct communities living side by side. Hence, the overwhelming majority of Imizamo Yethu, Hangberg and the Valley (see Figure 8.1) are black African, coloured and white respectively. As summarized in Table 1 these three communities, the Valley, Hangberg and Imizamo Yethu encapsulate much of the racial, socio-economic and cultural diversity of Cape Town more broadly. Further, many of the challenges that confront Hout Bay reflect those of the wider country.

#### **Figure 8.1: Map of Hout Bay**



Source: City of Cape Town (2013)

In looking at the social profile of Hout Bay, it is striking how race, class and place coincide to a significant degree. This, of course, was the project of apartheid, and its enduring form in Hout Bay reflects the degree to which it is yet to be undone. Hence, the smallest settlement in spatial terms, Imizamo Yethu, is home to the most people, with 47% of the population squeezed into about 40 hectares of land. Not surprisingly the vast majority of residents, 77% are living in informal housing, and many are recent immigrants over the last decade with Imizamo Yethu founded only in 1992 (City of Cape Town 2013).

This recent and rapid settlement helps explain the relative lack of formal housing as indicated by similar unemployment rates, income levels and education levels between black African and coloured residents (City of Cape Town 2013). Given the links between formal housing and piped water, sanitation and refuse collection much of the difference between Imizamo Yethu and Hangberg can be explained in terms of significant in-migration into Imizamo Yethu in a short period, compared to a long established and relatively stable population in Hangberg.

Lastly, it is noteworthy that a significant proportion of the population of Imizamo Yethu are from elsewhere in Africa. Some are migrants, like the Ovambo from Namibia and Angola, whose presence stretches back to the early 1990s, and are mostly men working in the fishing industry. More recent immigrants include families from Zimbabwe, Malawi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and beyond. It is also common cause that the population of Imizamo Yethu is under-estimated in the formal census count of 2011, not least due to the high proportion of foreign residents many of whom would avoid state officials due to their illegal status and fear of repression.

Given this, it is not surprising to hear that Imizamo Yethu has also experienced waves of xenophobic violence, principally in 2008, although also since then. More dangerous aspects of life, however, emerge due to the consequences of a dense, poor and informal settlement – high levels of insecurity, regular fires every couple of years that destroy shacks and take lives, and poor health conditions from lack of adequate sanitation, poor diet and a large population of rats and other vermin.

**Table 8.1: Demographics of Hout Bay**

	<b>Black African</b>	<b>Coloured</b>	<b>Asian</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>Total</b>
Population	15391	6345	162	9797	1173	32868
	47%	19%	0.5%	30%	3.5%	100%
Unemployment	31.7%	32%	8.8%	3.3%	17%	23%
Formal Housing	28%	73%	80%	99%	38%	57.5%
Water	29%	85%	71%	99%	48,5%	60%
Flush Toilets	62,5%	88%	92%	99%	94,5%	79%
Refuse	63%	96%	96%	99%	80%	80%
Electricity (light)	80%	98%	100%	99%	96%	89%

Source: City of Cape Town (2013) [2011 Census Suburb Hout Bay. Compiled by Strategic Development Information and GIS Department, City of Cape Town](#)

If the black African population who constitute 96% per cent of the residents of Imizamo Yethu are the worst off in Hout Bay in terms of socio-economic rights, the overwhelmingly coloured community of Hangberg is only slightly better off in terms

of income, and actually a little worse off in terms of education. The most substantial difference is in terms of formal housing, and its associated benefits, as reflected in Table 1. However, not reflected in these socio-economic indicators are widely referred to social ills of alcohol and drug abuse, gangsterism and perlemoen smuggling. Historically a community of fisher folk, Hangberg has been on the decline with the demise of the small fishing industry in the last, ~~approximately,~~ 15 years or so. In this depressed context, substance abuse and various illegal activities have become common.

The third and most well off section of the community are the residents of what is collectively termed 'the Valley' that constitutes most of Hout Bay, where 99% ~~per cent~~ of white people reside. White residents are substantially better off than coloured or black African residents. Indeed, Hout Bay is part of the Atlantic seaboard, the wealthiest part of Cape Town, known for many residents from Europe, sometimes called 'European swallows' for the seasonal nature of their presence. Notably then, the extreme differences of wealth in Hout Bay are exacerbated by migrants at both ends of the socio-economic spectrum: wealthier European 'swallows' who live in ~~The the~~ Valley', and poorer African 'foreigners' who live in Imizamo Yethu.

The 'Valley' is a collection of a number of suburbs located between Imizamo Yethu and Hangberg on the mountains to the East and West respectively. Notably, the location of these two settlements on the slopes of the surrounding mountains marks Hout Bay as distinct from apartheid design in one important respect: wealthy, white residents can see poor black settlements. Further, the black African settlement is not mediated from the historically whites-only area by a coloured one in between. This fact has made a difference to the local development of Hout Bay in that the vision of poverty has reportedly informed some foreign white philanthropists to initiate development projects in Imizamo Yethu.<sup>1</sup>

Fundamentally then, Hout Bay reflects the diversity of South Africa in identity, socio-economic and spatial terms that illustrate quite well the enduring racial character of post-apartheid South Africa, albeit with two key differences that typify the post-apartheid city. The first is rapid urbanisation and informalisation of urban settlements. Hence the City of Cape Town has 356 informal settlements the vast majority of which are post-apartheid creations.<sup>2</sup> The second is greater migration from outside South Africa's borders, mostly but not exclusively from the rest of Africa. Hence it is apparent how in these ways Hout Bay can be seen as a microcosm of the

wider society, especially when one considers the full range of social issues that confront the area.

### **[A] A double-edged sword: Development politics and party influence in Hout Bay**

Central to the post-apartheid history of Hout Bay has been the growth of Imizamo Yethu, and thus a key feature of local governance has been meeting the development needs of this area in particular, but also to a significant extent those of Hangberg. The politics of development has been significantly overlain with party politics, such that the leadership of Imizamo Yethu is widely recognised as the overtly ANC aligned SANCO and, until 2010, the same was true of Hangberg, with the ANC aligned Hout Bay Civic Association. Notably, the implementation of development projects in Hout Bay has served to undermine both SANCO and the Hout Bay civic, especially in the last ten years. Further, that the two issues are connected is revealed by the fact that the conflict that has hurt ANC leadership has been around development projects.

In the case of the Hout Bay civic, the organisation was the largest of a variety of not very popular formations in a politically divided settlement until about 2010. Like most so-called ‘coloured’ settlements in Cape Town, Hangberg has increasingly voted for the Democratic Alliance (DA) over the ANC. In 2010 issues in Hangberg came to a head when the city tried to forcibly remove shacks that had been built on the firebreak above the formal housing of Hangberg. In what came to be known as the ‘battle of Hangberg’, residents refused to move and battled police for two days, with significant number of injuries to both sides, before a truce was called (IOL 2010).

In the aftermath of the conflict the government initiated a mediation process that led to the formation of the Hangberg Peace and Mediation Forum (PMF) in 2011. The PMF is an area-based structure with representatives elected from different areas of the Hangberg settlement. Through the court process the PMF was legally sanctioned as the sole representative of the Hangberg community. Not surprisingly, the Hout Bay civic, which along with other existing formations, was effectively marginalised from representing the community to the city, was deeply unhappy with the advent of the PMF. Formally required to be non-partisan, some have described the structure as DA aligned; ‘there was a feeling that the forum was a vehicle for the DA’.<sup>3</sup> Notably, though, by 2015 this attitude has mollified a little, although tensions clearly remain, as some of the ANC-aligned leaders in Hangberg now appear to be

working with the PMF to access the state around various development initiatives including a skills-training centre and an aquaculture project. Simultaneously, several leaders of the forum were critical of government's progress with the various commitments of the Accord.<sup>4</sup>

A similar story is evident in Imizamo Yethu, although ANC leaders remain more central to politics in that settlement. As noted above, the logic of 'party-society' entails a monopoly of representation of poor, black communities by leaders aligned with the ANC, legitimated through the idea of the ANC's entitlement to rule based in its liberation nationalism, and reinforced through the capacity to deliver state resources. As noted in [Piper and Benit-Gbaffou \(2014\)](#), a partial exception to this pattern is opened up by the enmity of the DA government to the ANC and its allies in Cape Town, creating a potential legitimacy crisis for local leaders from ANC aligned communities who are willing to engage the DA developmental governance on its non-partisan terms. Thus whereas in most of the rest of South Africa, proximity to the ANC is important for accessing the resources of local government, and hence dispensing resources critical for poor communities, in Cape Town it is a disadvantage. At the same time, embracing the City of Cape Town requirement that community representation is 'non-partisan' places local leaders at risk of betraying the ANC's entitlement to rule, and being portrayed as sell-outs who are 'too friendly with the whites'.

This dilemma has been played out in leadership conflicts in SANCO in Imizamo Yethu between an 'old' SANCO leadership which chose to embrace the city's model of non-partisan representation and invested heavily in participating in all the state and governance forums in Hout Bay, and a 'new' SANCO which accused the 'old' of being too friendly with the white DA and taking their side in disputes over development projects (see [Piper & Benit-Gbaffou 2014: 31](#)). The key issue over which this conflict manifest was a dispute over whether the city should endorse the building of a new primary school paid for mostly by foreign benefactors who live in Hout Bay, or use the land for more housing. ANC leaders mobilised against the old SANCO leader on this basis and even held a protest march to his house. They then organised an election that instituted the 'new' SANCO leadership. The legitimacy of the election was contested by the 'old' SANCO on procedural grounds. The divisions within SANCO regionally and nationally have meant that the dispute between these contending leadership groups could not be resolved, and remains until this day.

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That the legitimacy dilemma of ANC loyalty versus accessing the DA state is a real one is also reflected in the fact that new SANCO leadership have all failed to engage in the various governance forums of Hout Bay. Indeed, there have now been several iterations of new SANCO leadership in the last three years, none of which have even really tried to access the forums of local governance in Hout Bay, allowing the 'old' SANCO leadership to continue to represent in these spaces. Several ANC aligned leaders have bemoaned the decline of SANCO in Imizamo Yethu from a point in the 1990s when it could mobilise thousands to a mass meetings, to today where around fifty residents attend.

Notably, the organisational decline of SANCO should not be read as the decline of the legitimacy of the ANC in Imizamo Yethu. The ANC took Imizamo Yethu overwhelmingly in the 2014 national election, and ANC networks remain strong enough to mobilise people to stop initiatives they do not sanction – most recently a Bus Rapid Transport (BRT) Turnaround station at an entrance to the settlement. Further, most leaders from Hangberg and the Valley know that there is a legitimacy crisis in SANCO but have decided to back off and wait for SANCO to resolve its own issues in recognition of the enduring importance and power of the ANC in that settlement.

Paradoxically, then, the history of development politics in Hout Bay over the last ten to fifteen years has been a double-edged sword for these communities, as it has weakened their most important leadership structures at the same time as bringing new houses, new schools, new sports grounds and, currently underway, a new clinic.

### **Representation in media: *The Sentinel and Hout Bay Speak***

A central complaint of ANC leadership in Hangberg and especially Imizamo Yethu, is that residents of the Valley in Hout Bay do not have their best interests at heart, and they perceive many as racist. As one leader noted, 'I know for a fact that they don't like black people.'<sup>5</sup> Further, they feel many government officials are suspicious of ANC leaders as they are seen as pursuing only an ANC agenda in a DA controlled city. Consequently, they complain of being ignored by government, seldom consulted by authorities, and when there are public meetings, they complain of being made to feel unwelcome and seldom accommodated in deliberations.

A recent example of this is the current public consultation by provincial government for a new 'polyclinic' proposed for Hout Bay that will replace the

existing clinics in Hangberg and Imizamo Yethu (<http://www.hbrra.co.za/node/76>). Speaking to us of his experiences in this process, the chair of the ANC for Ward 74 complained about the lack of communication around the meeting, noting that he ‘was not invited, and they (the Valley-dominated Hout Bay Ratepayers association) were not happy to see me there’.<sup>6</sup> He noted that advertising in the local paper, *The Sentinel*, will not reach many residents of Imizamo Yethu. The ANC chair also reported that he had to inform the meeting that consulting with the leader of ‘old’ Sanco could not be considered as consultation as he now longer represented Imizamo Yethu.<sup>7</sup>

Substantively, the ANC chair perceives the representatives from the Hout Bay Ratepayers and Residents Association to be racist and he remains unconvinced by their objections to the new clinic too: ‘the Ratepayers are saying they say they want that place to be green because it is the only piece of land in Hout Bay that is left’. However, he takes objection mostly because ‘this issue does not really affect them, they all go to private doctors and dentists. The clinic will not affect them, but it will make a big difference for us.’<sup>8</sup> The support for the Ratepayers by the DA ward councillor, confirms his suspicions of racial and political marginalisation.

Interestingly it is not only the ANC leadership who has a low opinion of the Ratepayers Association. Interviews with various officials from the City of Cape Town confirmed a general impression of a network of retired, conservative, white men who had, until recently, dominated the Ratepayers and associated formations like the Heritage Trust, and who city officials experienced as demanding and difficult.<sup>9</sup> According to one official in charge of a department that covers the entire city, the most confrontational and rude engagement she experiences from ‘clients’ (the public), comes wealthy, white residents on the Atlantic seaboard. ‘I learned some new swear words from the emails,’ she said, adding, ‘I had to ask my children what they meant.’<sup>10</sup> While this claim was not made specifically in relation to the Ratepayers, it speaks to the character of a substantial and influential constituency resident~~ey~~ in the area. Notably, this constituency, is however, not reflective of the whole of the Valley as there are a number of residents actively working to address socio-economic concerns in Imizamo Yethu and Hangberg. Indeed, generational and ideological divisions like this run through all the settlements of Hout Bay.<sup>11</sup>

The reference to *The Sentinel* is instructive, as similar to other community newspapers in the City of Cape Town, *The Sentinel* covers only very local news to Hout Bay, but is largely dominated by views and concerns of residents of the Valley.



In this regard it is important to note that community newspapers are important, and unique, vehicles for advertisers to access local markets (both national and local advertise in a ratio of about 40:60), and form part of the Independent Media group advertising suite, including *The Sentinel* (Sharim 2011). This means that they are inevitably targeted at consumers rather than the community as a whole.

Given this, it is no surprise that a cursory glance at the names of the contributors and the issues in *The Sentinel* reflect a view of Hout Bay that is mostly 'from the suburbs'. We recall clearly the anger of one SANCO leader at a letter in the paper from a resident of the Valley expressing disbelief that nearly 95% of Imizamo Yethu had voted for the ANC in the 2014 national election. Somewhat patronisingly, the resident stated something to the effect that if a toaster or a kettle broke, people would replace them, but why will they not replace a broken political party like the ANC. 'You see how racist they are', the SANCO leader exclaimed, 'they compare us to broken kettles.'<sup>12</sup>

Further, it is not so easy to access *The Sentinel* in Imizamo Yethu or Hangberg, although it is available. A free newspaper distributed at the major public shopping centres and points of public interest, it is usually available at the Hout Bay police station, which is situated at one entrance to Imizamo Yethu. However, short of going into the police station residents are unlikely to gain access to it. It is not available online for instance. Notably, while there is a community library more centrally situated in Imizamo Yethu, it seems to stock *The Sentinel* irregularly. Nevertheless, when asked at a workshop discussing environmental concerns in Hout Bay who reads *The Sentinel* nearly half the participants from Imizamo Yethu, including several school children, indicated they do.<sup>13</sup>

**Figure 8.2: *The Sentinel***



free newspaper committed to local news, but unlike *The Sentinel* it is not part of the Independent Media advertising stable, and it is focused exclusively on the issues that confront Imizamo Yethu and Hangberg. Hence, on page 3 it states:

Welcome to the first edition of Hout Bay Speak, community members and organisations believe it is long over-due that a newspaper that can voice the concerns, aspirations, anxieties and struggles of the communities of Hangberg and Imizamo Yethu should see the light of day. Following is *(sic)* messages from some of the community organisations showing their public support for the publication of a newspaper that aims to reflect the lives of the whole community of Hout Bay.

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Notable in this regard is a heading on the front page that exclaims, 'Let's be heard'. What follows are photos and endorsements from ANC aligned leadership, although no political party leaders are explicitly included. Notably by their absence are the PMF and the leaders of 'old' SANCO in Imizamo Yethu who are not currently endorsed by ANC leadership. Further the substance of the newspaper reflects the issues and language of the liberation movement tradition. Hence the main heading on the edition is 'Give back our land!', and the edition includes articles on unemployed youth and building a united sports movement.

**Figure 8.3: *Hout Bay Speak***

# HOUT BAY SPEAK

Voice of the community

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## Give back our land!

**ACCESS to land for housing in Hout Bay is one of the biggest challenges working class people from the local community faces, with some residents of Hangberg and Imizamo Yethu, resorting to living in informal housing.**

It seems like the right to houses and security are passing the people of Hout Bay.

This lack of land for proper housing has led to many marches and protest action in the past, which boiled over to the 'Battle of Hangberg', leaving many people injured and much damage to the community.

The Hout Bay Civic Association (HBCA) in Hangberg is demanding land to be bought or expropriated in Hout Bay for integrated human settlements, according to Roscoe Jacobs, secretary of the HBCA.

Residents of Imizamo Yethu are now up in arms over the intentions of the City of Cape Town to sell 5200m<sup>2</sup> of land that was earmarked for housing to Disa Primary, a German private school. 2 400 housing units was earmarked for this land.

Samkelo Krweqe, chairperson of the South African National Civics Organisation (Sanco), says that, "...as a community, we are having discussions around this issue, SANCO, the ANC, SACP, the Church Forum, the taxi association, and many other local organisations."

Krweqe says that the school has little benefit to the community as its fees are very high, and that as a community, they have nothing against the school, but that land that was allocated for housing, could not be taken away from the community without consultation or consent.

Krweqe says that the land given to the school is part of the 16 acres that was allocated to the community when Imizamo Yethu was established. "Land has already been set aside for a private school, the International School which is in Valley Road, and which will move to Main Road."

Krweqe says that the local sub-council made a decision to sell the land to the school, which was endorsed by a full sitting of the General Council of the City of Cape Town. "In all these forums, it was only the ANC councillors who voted against the proposal to sell the land to the school."

It seems that that the poor and working class families of Hangberg and Imizamo Yethu have a hard and long struggle ahead to find decent housing and security to live in this beautiful valley.



Hout Bay children looking for stories about themselves in an edition of 'Hout Bay Speak' in 2006. Some of them will be grown up by now, and will once again see themselves in 'Hout Bay Speak'

### Lets be heard

THE HOUT BAY community needs to be heard through a medium that is in touch with the community dynamics, its needs and its aspirations.

The Hangberg and Imizamo Yethu communities voices are not given proper exposure in the media, and therefore a need for a newspaper that can carry their voices.

The working class communities of Hout Bay face many challenges from land and bad service delivery to unemployment and substance abuse.

Similarly there are many examples of success stories in the community such as sport achievers, entrepreneurs and academic achievers.

Services offered by volunteer organisations and individuals also don't get the exposure necessary to operate to maximum capacity.

The community needs a community newspaper that can make an impact in developing, growing access to information and sharing news of community events.

HOUT BAY SPEAK will be the continuation of Hout Bay Speaks, a newsletter once published by the Hout Bay Civic Association (HBCA), which was popular within the community in 2006.

The HBCA could not sustain the publishing of the newsletter and it was discontinued. We felt that we can but only build on such a success story, and therefore will once again bring to life the Hout Bay Speak, an independent newsletter.

We hope to engage all sections of the Hout Bay community, prioritising Hangberg and Imizamo Yethu communities. With your support, HOUT BAY SPEAK can become a community, bulge and a platform for the diverse voices of Hout Bay.

Hangberg and Imizamo Yethu residents have waged a long and hard struggle for housing and security to the right to live in Hout Bay, is there a solution to this problem in sight?



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In many ways this brief contrast between *The Sentinel* and *Hout Bay Speaks* provides a vignette of the larger dynamic of community representation in the public spheres of Hout Bay. *The Sentinel* largely represents the views of the organised forms of the white and wealthy Valley. Dominated by the view from the suburbs, other voices struggle to emerge. Conversely, *Hout Bay Speak* is self-consciously framed as an intervention in the public domain intended to add the views of poor, black

communities to the larger conversation about Hout Bay. Notably however, it does so in a somewhat partisan way, obviously ignoring important other leaders and thus perspectives from the poorer, black communities.

### **[A] Conclusion**

The relationship between *The Sentinel* and *Hout Bay Speak* is a metaphorical, if partial, image of the larger public sphere in Hout Bay, one that is dominated by historically white and wealthy people from the suburbs, and where more marginal voices from poorer, black communities tend to be monopolised by party leaders. Our explanation of this politics points to the enduring significance of notions of race for political identity in South Africa, conceptions rooted in contending nationalisms of the apartheid era, now evolving in new ways, but largely maintained by class, as well as the dependence of poor residents on the state for access to key services, and the largely partisan nature of access to the state.

For some in the organisations representing wealthier, white residents this legacy dovetails with forms of governance that treats the urban poor as populations to be managed, rather than citizens bearing rights. Thus while overtly racist language is rare in the public realm, its legacy can be seen in the ease with which some embrace governance categories that deny a common humanity. This noted, there are also other, newer, strains in the public realm that eschew racism, but these voices are taking time to become cohesive. Conversely, organisations aligned to the ANC tend to portray an exclusive right to represent poor, black communities, sometimes in ways that ignore or marginalise other voices. Hence, both the dominant ‘white’ voice in the public sphere and the ANC aligned ‘counter-public’ manifest forms of representation that limit access to public debate in ways other than through access to institutional forums or communication technology.

Notably, these two discourses are connected. The perceived and real racism of some in the white community justifies the racialised liberation nationalism of some in the ANC. Conversely, the distrust and scepticism of ANC leaders towards the white community and the state can reinforce distrust in a negative dialectic that is enabled rather than disabled by processes of consultation between state and society in Hout Bay. Any attempt to build democratic citizenship will have to find ways to transform this negative dialectic in public spaces into one that affirms a common humanity and includes a greater diversity of voices.

There is an important asymmetry in this relationship however, that is linked to the dependence of poor communities on the state for service delivery. So long as the DA city remains reluctant to engage with what it perceives as partisan community representatives, and the ANC refuses to enable non-partisan representation, local leaders will find themselves on the horns of a legitimacy dilemma that affirms the party at the expense of development, or affirms development at the expense of the party. The historical demise of the Hout Bay civic in Hangberg and the enduring leadership crisis of SANCO in Imizamo Yethu, both prompted by the politics around development projects, suggests that sooner or later, new and non-partisan ways of expressing subaltern voice need to be found, or they may find their own way through more confrontational and disruptive channels.

The Hout Bay case speaks to the enduring complexities of 'mediated' citizenship and the limits of liberal democracy in post-apartheid South Africa. The relative absence of inclusive formal institutions of political representation for marginalised groups has led to the rise of informal third-party mediation as the dominant form of political representation. While third-party mediators sometimes act in ways that produce and deepen democratic citizenship, they mostly reinforce exclusionary forms of political representation and with it, weaken democratic inclusion. Paying attention to the detailed and often contradictory logics (and expressions) of mediated citizenship becomes crucial for our understanding of the possibilities and limitations of democratic inclusion, and with it, democratic citizenship.

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<sup>1</sup> Hence, 'rich developer and businessman Niall Mellon' was on holiday in Cape Town in 2002, when he 'was moved to establish the Niall Mellon Township Trust after he witnessed at first hand some of the impoverished living conditions in the Cape Town township of Imizamo Yethu', <https://www.melloneducate.com/about/our-story/>.

<sup>2</sup> City official, Solid Waste Management, City of Cape Town, interviewed by Laurence Piper, 07 April 2015, Cape Town.

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