

**NEGOTIATING COLOURED
IDENTITY THROUGH
ENCOUNTERS WITH
PERFORMANCE**

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A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements
for the degree of MA in the Faculty of Arts



University of the Western Cape
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CAPE

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ABSTRACT:

In this study theatre, as staged performance and as text, will be used as an exploratory and discursive tool to examine the negotiation of Coloured identity in the 'New South Africa'. I investigate debates on Coloured identity while also drawing on theories of the performativity of identity. The role of performance in negotiating this identity is foregrounded; this provides a context for a case study which evaluates responses by Coloured and Black students at the University of the Western Cape to popular Coloured identity-related performances. These include Marc Lottering's 'Crash' and 'From the Cape Flats With Love', and Petersen, Isaacs and Reisenhoffer's 'Joe Barber' and 'Suip'. These works, both as texts and as performance, will be used to analyse the way stereotypical representations of Coloured identities are played with, subverted or negotiated in performance. I attempt to establish how group stereotypes are constructed within the performance arena, and question whether attitudes can be negotiated through encounters with performance.

DECLARATION:

I declare that **Negotiating Coloured Identity Through Encounters with Performance** is my own work, that it has not been submitted for any degree or examination in any other university, and that all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by complete references.

Gino Fransman

November 2005

Signed _____



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KEY WORDS

- Coloured
- Identity
- Culture
- Performance
- New South Africa
- Ethnic
- Theatre
- Youth
- Liminal
- Performativity



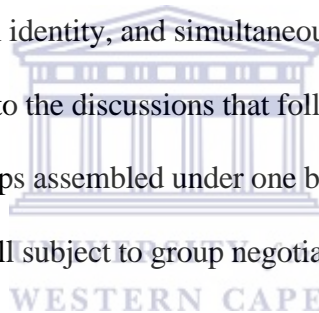
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Introduction

Culture is not communicated solely via static artefacts such as books and paintings, it is also enacted, given a concrete, 'readable' form in rites and ceremonies, sporting contests, festivals, and so on... 'Cultural performances', to distinguish them from the 'artistic performances' of dance, theatre, and so on [are where] the former constitute a kind of cultural 'memory', a means of recording, transmitting and, when necessary, forgetting, by which communities reproduce and recreate themselves.

(Counsell & Wolf, 2001)

Where is the theatre now located in the 'New South Africa'¹? To what extent has the focus shifted to "the representation of present struggle" (Orkin, 1996:61), rather than the struggle for a democracy enshrined within a constitution? How does this contribute to establishing an emergent national identity, and simultaneously affect specific group identities? These questions are key to the discussions that follow, as the national identity encompasses different groups assembled under one banner: the 'New South Africa'. These groups, in turn, are all subject to group negotiations of identity.



In the study that follows, theatre as staged performance and as text will be used as exploratory and discursive tools to investigate the negotiation of identities. The aim is to explore this theme by examining the responses to four popular Coloured² identity-related staged performances; Marc Lottering's 'Crash' (2004) and 'From the Cape Flats with Love' (2001), as well as Petersen, Isaacs and Reisenhoffer's 'Joe Barber' (1999) and 'Suip' (1996)³. These works, both as performance and as text, will be used to

¹ My use and capitalising of the term 'New South Africa' is intentional. It is used as a term which ascribes an identity upon those it refers to.

² I capitalise 'Coloured' each time it is used to refer to a person or group. I also do so with all other descriptives (Black/ White/ Indian) used in this thesis, except for specific quotations which state otherwise.

³ 'Suip' and 'Crash' are both used without the exclamation marks they originally carry. I use the amended forms throughout the thesis.

investigate the way stereotypical representations of Coloured identities are played with, subverted or negotiated in performance. In this work I attempt to establish how meanings are constructed within the performance arena. I also examine how they have been negotiated by using the responses of a selected group of students at the University of the Western Cape (UWC), as a case study, in order to explore current student attitudes.

The primary focus of the thesis examines Coloured identity as a construction still represented as a stereotype at times, but also as fluidly reflecting the changing South African society. The readings of the performances, as well as the performances as texts, illustrate occasions where this fluidity, or lack of fluidity in stereotypical instances, is represented on the stage. On the other hand the case study provides a student audience response to representations of Coloured people on the stage in South Africa. The slippages between being a cultural insider and investigating that very culture often manifest themselves, within the scope of this work and beyond its constraints. It is the difficulty of maintaining the theoretical trend that Coloured identity is fluid, which makes identifying these manifestations in the performances and case study so fascinating. The thesis explores this tension as far as possible within a limited scope for detail.

The two performances that facilitate the discussion as scripts are Oscar Petersen and Heinrich Reisenhoffer's 'Suip', as well as the two writers/performers' collaborative effort with David Isaacs, 'Joe Barber'. The investigation includes readings of these plays as both scripted and staged pieces⁴. These are only a few of the works produced

⁴ These works were chosen as they have become almost iconic in the time since they were first performed, with large audiences proving that issues around identity remained at the forefront of not only the audience mindsets, but of those of the playwrights as well.

recently dealing with Coloured identity, which reflect a shift from a focus on enacting and recalling specific communities of the past to plays no less entertaining, but significantly more thought-provoking and self-reflexive such as Lueen Conning's (now Malika Ndlovu) 'A Coloured Place' (2004). Other works increasingly focus on identities, and challenge long-standing notions in society. These include Ashraf Johardien's 'Coloured Son X' (1998) and 'Salaam Stories' (2002), Nadia Davids' 'At Her Feet' (2003), Rehane Abrahams' 'What the Water Gave Me' (2001), Rajesh Gopie's 'Out of Bounds' (1999), and Nazli George's 'Daai's mos Reality' (2001).

The seemingly iconic status the performances selected for discussion have received since their initial stagings are demonstrated by consistently sold-out runs, as well as the re-stagings they have enjoyed. The 'Joe Barber' phenomenon started a trend at various social gatherings in the Western Cape, where the two lead characters were mimicked and further caricatured, while Marc Lottering appeared on national television in three productions, one of which was staged at the Baxter theatre in Cape Town. The spin-offs, or continuations of the first pieces that have emerged in all of the shows and are still in production during 2005, show that a demand is being met. The performances were subsequently developed to keep engaging with current aspects of the South African experience while employing static characters. I will show how the characters construct and deconstruct stereotypes, in that they play with representation and presentation. I attempt to situate stereotype as that which is familiar to the viewer, as each rendition of the same performance becomes imbued with familiarity. Lottering's Merle Abrahams (in 'From The Cape Flats With Love') becomes almost representative of the stereotypical Coloured neighbour, who dares to be open about her perceptions on race, life, love, class and everyone else's business. This occurs because of the

stereotypes he performs through Merle, which audience members relate to their own environments. The prejudice she sometimes reveals is left open to the individual audience member to interpret. It is hard not to recognise the universality of this character, but the characterisation seems to be marked as belonging to the Coloured group through affecting or taking on certain traits and mannerisms attributed stereotypically to the group.

Lottering, Petersen, Isaacs and Reisenhoffer (who is the only non-Coloured writer of the four) all enjoy attention in the South African media due to their popularity both on the stage, as well as television. In their popularity in this sphere, their group designation also seems to attach meaning to how they are seen as representatives of the group. This emerges not only in discussion with them, but in their interaction with the media about these issues. Lottering's two plays, as well as 'Joe Barber', are comic performances situated in contemporary South Africa. 'Crash' is Lottering's recounting an infamous drunk-driving arrest, and the consequences which followed⁵. Lottering offers varied views about how people from different groups reacted to his sudden fame, as well as the sudden negative publicity surrounding the accident. He uses certain stereotypes to situate himself as a new Coloured celebrity, and then deconstructs them by applying conflicting stereotypes. In 'From the Cape Flats With Love', Lottering portrays six Coloured characters as he recounts a story of a hair-dryer gone missing on the Cape Flats. Offering himself firstly as Marc Lottering the comedian, he then fluidly portrays extracts of his characters' lives, interspersed with costume changes. 'Joe Barber' however, is based on the actual barbershop and barber visited by David Isaacs, one of the three writers. During performance, the set becomes a functioning barber shop with

⁵ Based on true events that happened to the performer, the play was also staged during the same period Lottering appeared in court for drunk driving.

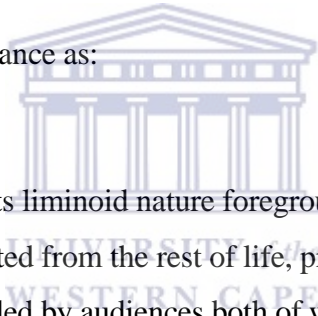
the two barbers (Isaacs and Petersen) interacting with audience members who are placed onto the barber seats while receiving a 'trim', or sweeping the shop floors. The two performers portray other characters, and they significantly also appear as David Isaacs and Oscar Petersen the actors and playwrights. 'Suip', as the only non-comic performance, distinguishes itself through its dramatic use of time as a continuum, where race and class issues are foregrounded as being part of a cycle. Portraying the homeless on the streets of Cape Town, 'Suip' refers to the way history and the present constructs people and also challenges 'given' identities.

In order to frame the investigation, I attempt to explore the complex debate around the liminal and liminoid phenomena identified in contemporary performance and cultural studies. This examination is related to self-reflexivity, and will be informed by a discussion on stereotype. The performances selected for discussion are the subject of a case-study of what being Coloured is, as described by student participants. I look at the liminal as the threshold where participants or audience members encounter self-reflexivity. This reflexivity is amplified with the liminoid phenomenon I also explore, as it is less constrained with its approach to the audience and encourages a reaction from the viewer. The liminoid reaction stemming from the liminal or threshold performance space facilitates the case study, where the reactions are the attitudes participants express.

Victor Turner (1982) distinguishes the subtle differences between liminal and liminoid phenomena, as a means to show that two effects emerge from the forms of performance. The liminal performance 'can never be much more than a subversive flicker' (1982:206). He sees it as the beginning of a process of 'social development',

where small murmurs of problems tend to gain an audience if done correctly, along with an increase in popularity, and finally a sort of social status as an idea or concept of belonging. These ‘germs of future social developments of societal change’ are contained in the liminoid phenomena as well, but in these events are encouraged to react to conflicting notions. The two forms often co-exist within societies, and are thus represented together. While the liminoid phenomena can be characterised strongly as ‘parts of social critiques’ (1982:209), the liminal phenomena can likewise, while in the process of ‘representing its necessary negativity and subjectivity’, still be ‘centrally integrated into the total social process’ (1982:208). The liminal can still ‘find ways of making it work without too much friction’ being caused within society.

Marvin Carlson regards the performance as:



[A] specific event with its liminoid nature foregrounded, almost invariably separated from the rest of life, presented by performers and attended by audiences both of whom regard the experience as made up of material to be interpreted, to be reflected upon, to be engaged in - emotionally, mentally, and perhaps even physically.
(Carlson cited in McKenzie, 1996:27)

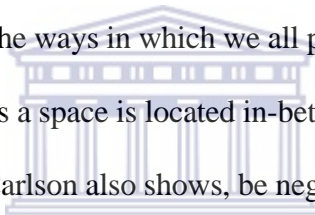
Carlson and Turner’s definitions suggest a liminal co-existence with mainstream society in these types of performances. Carlson also expands on this theory as he refers to:

[The] sense of occasion and focus, as well as the overarching social envelope [which] combine with the physicality of theatrical performance to make it one of the most powerful and efficacious procedures that human society has developed for the endlessly fascinating process of cultural and personal self-reflection and experimentation.

(Carlson cited in McKenzie, 2004:27)

This acceptance of the liminal as a norm is to be seen as “a mode of activity whose spatial, temporal, and symbolic ‘in-betweenness’ allows for social norms to be suspended, challenged, played with, and even transformed” (McKenzie, 2004:27).

These definitions foreground the impact that the liminal and liminoid performance have on the audience. Particularly highlighted by Carlson is the way that the participants can be reflected upon within the performance space. Also emphasised here are the ways that the participants are engaged within what Lewis and McKenzie call ‘in-betweenness’, which is how the phrase is used in this study. I also focus on Austin and Butler’s theories of performativity and the performative, examining how roles change according to circumstances, which highlights the ways in which we all perform different aspects of ourselves. This ‘in-betweenness’ as a space is located in-between other groups, and it is here where social norms can, as Carlson also shows, be negotiated.

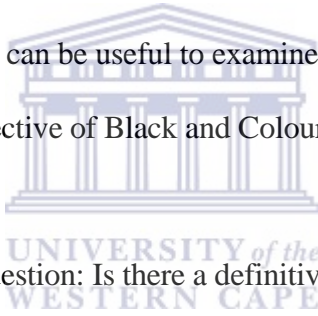


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The three comedies used in this study are liminal events if we look at their framing as ‘for entertainment and laughter’. This is less applicable to ‘Suip’, given its dark and more sombre tone. Lottering’s ‘Crash’ and ‘From the Cape Flats With Love’, and Petersen, Reisenhoffer and Isaacs’ ‘Joe Barber’ all display what Victor Turner calls ‘germs of future social developments’ (1982:206). They do not attempt to bludgeon the audience with an overwhelming negativity nor do the comedies represent a people particularly disenfranchised. They show people going about their lives. They perform what can be considered ‘norms’. They use conventional settings, sometimes mundane situations where it is the insight provided into the characters which drive the plays. On the other hand, ‘Suip’ uses its darkness to underpin disenfranchisement, showing the homeless as products of a system of social engineering. The characters on stage,

however, emerge as reacting strongly to this system, and this underscores the heated debate raging in society at present, whether classist or racist, about how groups are currently perceived.

While the audience attempts to place these characterisations within their own experiences, it is the performance space that enables the identity negotiation being examined. Within this liminal space afforded by the theatre and its forms, the investigation of Coloured group identity is foregrounded, as demonstrated in the responses to questionnaires by student participants. In preparation for this, I first analyse 'Suip' and 'Joe Barber' as scripts, followed by a discussion of 'From the Cape Flats With Love' and 'Crash' as staged performances. The discussion of student responses will show how the theatre can be useful to examine negotiated perceptions of the Coloured group, from the perspective of Black and Coloured participants.



In the first chapter, I focus on the question: Is there a definitive Coloured identity? This chapter approaches the highly topical issue of Coloured identity by focussing on the media, and current representations and corresponding debates centred on 'being' Coloured. The emphasis is primarily on the ascribed use, as a given name, of the term. I examine the negotiation of this fluid identity, and introduce the case study. Using the theories of the liminal already investigated, I look at the way the theatre can be used as a tool or space for questioning self-reflexivity.

In the second chapter, I employ an interdisciplinary approach in order to frame my investigation of what the term Coloured means in South Africa today (2005). Through an examination of the negative perceptions and receptions of the term Coloured, I move

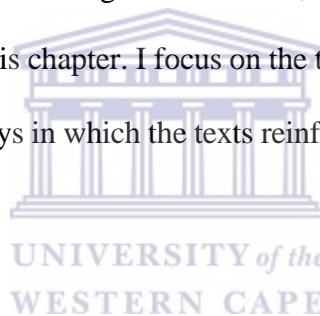
to an introduction of Barthes' structural narrative analysis theory, or narratology. I employ analogies from the Social Sciences in order to illustrate a theoretical framework (Goffman) for analysis of the responses in Chapter Seven. The introduction of Imagology as a new(er) discipline informing the study leads to a brief discussion on stereotypes, as a pre-cursor to Chapter Three's in-depth analysis. As three of the performances fall within a comedy descriptive, I look at comedy and its functions within the case study. Here, I investigate transgressing boundaries, using the theatre and comedy specifically as tools to allow these rule-breaking spaces to occur, which is where the audience members acknowledge infringements and crossing invisible social lines.

In the third chapter, 'De-staging the Coloured', I first examine definitions of stereotype in order to locate the current group conflict discussed in Chapter One, as based on representation. Stereotypes are then investigated as carrying signifiers of groups, and not only of the individual. In examining whether or not Coloureds occupy a 'middle' position between other groups in South African society, I look at debates stemming from pre-apartheid to current views, leading to formulations on my own use of terminology in this work.

I also investigate how the theatre can be used to examine stereotype in this section, by applying Judith Butler's theories of performativity and stereotyping in order to give an insight into how stereotypes could also be received as a form of 'hate-speech'. In this study, it is the typification of a group, and the subsequent ascriptions it projects, which is seen as problematic. 'District Six: The Musical' is analysed briefly alongside the selected performances according to these theories. I look at performance theory, and at

ways in which the theatre both constructs and deconstructs identity. I focus on 'Suip' in order to facilitate a discussion of how the theatre also allows us to see the process where we ascribe stereotypes upon others. Stereotype being regarded as (mis)representation is thus examined, with a particular emphasis on the advantage of engaging with contemporary issues and events.

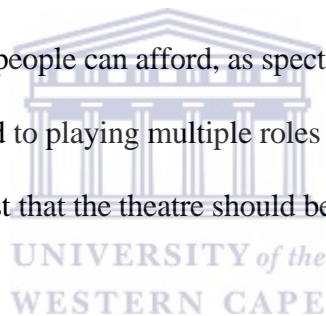
I introduce the concept of 'frame-breaking' in Chapter Four, examining Erving Goffman's theory which details the analysis of situations and contexts in everyday life. This leads to an investigation of how primary frameworks can refer back to themselves as stereotype, where it is through re-staging the normal that stereotypes are represented. The structure of this framing is overviewed, as pre-cursor to a discussion of the plays as texts in this chapter. I focus on the texts of 'Joe Barber' and 'Suip', offering examples of the ways in which the texts reinforce or deviate from the staged performances.



My discussion of the staged performances take place in Chapter Five, where I firstly focus on the ways that the theatre allows performers to establish, negotiate, and deconstruct barriers between themselves and the audience. This approach builds on the previous chapter, using 'frame-analysis'. After focussing on each piece individually, I analyse the collective similarities and differences. I look closely at the types of framing proposed by Goffman, and draw on them to examine how construction and deconstruction of the Coloured group identity occurs in these particular performances.

In Chapter Six, I first introduce the case study before moving on to discussing participant responses. I look at specific aspects of the sample, and examine how the

participants reacted to the study, as well as highlighting special features about the performances which were useful to the investigation. In the discussion of the case study, I attempt an analysis of perspectives gained through research, both discursive and theoretical. This analysis is focussed primarily on participant responses to questionnaires. I try to establish trends in the investigation of negotiated identities, looking specifically at responses from Coloured and Black participants. The students confront, examine and deconstruct what they see as stereotypes, while in the same process sometimes affirming other stereotypes which they hold themselves. I look at a specific case where a respondent distances herself from what she sees as a representation ascribed under the name 'Coloured', and how this relates to the perceptions of the theatre in certain Coloured communities. In this case theatrical pursuits are activities 'only White' people can afford, as spectators or participants. I also investigate the fluidity assigned to playing multiple roles in society, and include participant reflections which suggest that the theatre should be 'tasked' with affirming these roles.

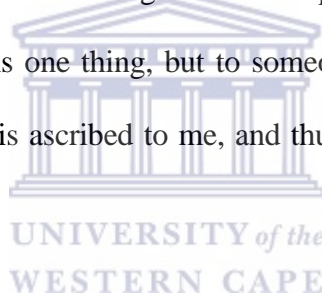


In concluding the thesis, Chapter Seven draws on the preceding chapters, and attempts to illustrate negotiated attitudes shown by participants. These attitudes are often contradictory, but perhaps significantly contain growing awareness that stereotypes continually damage the image attached to being Coloured. The chapter also points out that static or stereotypical representations distance the participants from identifying with or belonging to the groups represented on the stage, as they do not contain enough current acknowledgements to what being a Coloured in the 'New South Africa' means.

Chapter One Setting the Scene

‘Coloureds don’t feel included in mainstream South African society’ ... this sense of exclusion could in some ways explain why they had ‘no real stake in obeying the rules of this society’.
(Ted Leggett, Institute of Security Studies- South Africa: 2004)

I am a Coloured. At least that is what I call myself. In South Africa today, ten years after democracy, it is surprising that this statement requires qualification. No qualification, in our democratic country, is required for someone stating, “I am Black,” or “I am White.” Yet, Coloured identity is mired in questions of, amongst others, belonging, status, and power. The contradictions implicit in claiming a Coloured identity are explored here, as my own claiming of the term places me in opposition to ‘being named’. To myself, it means one thing, but to someone else, it could carry an entirely different meaning when it is ascribed to me, and thus imposes a *way of being* onto the term Coloured.

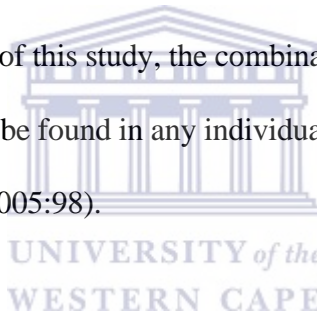


Richard van der Ross, one of the former rectors of UWC (which was established in 1960 as a Coloured or ‘Bush’ College), states that at first, those now called Coloured were simply referred to as “from the Cape”. He says:

In time, however, through education and general development, the group has become aware of its situation and oppression, and has sought to shake off its feelings and position of inferiority... They base their claims on the long line of descent taking them back, in some cases, to the original inhabitants of the land of their birth... the new group which has emerged has been known by many names. (2005:94)

In the 1600s, slaves of mixed parentage had already been afforded more privilege than Black slaves. Following this rationale, boys born of mixed slave parents were preferred over the descendants of Black slaves, as “the masters thought they learned rapidly” (2005:35). Following a progression of ascribed names, Robert Shell (quoted in Van der Ross) says the identification of the group occurred “after the abolition of the slave trade (1808) [when] the convenient name coloured was introduced into the South African vocabulary, where it stubbornly persists” (2005:98).

Van der Ross outlines an intricate web of inter-group mixing, from slaves, colonists, locals, exiles and freed slaves. That these groups are all represented in his framework does not indicate that inter-mixing necessarily occurred amongst all of these groups in a single family line. For the purposes of this study, the combinations of these do “not mean that all the components are to be found in any individual [C]oloured person. There may be no more than two” (2005:98).



While this work focuses on the ways in which performances can enhance or facilitate an inter-cultural debate and/or understanding, it is important to see the contexts and debates these performances so often acknowledge, highlight, and challenge. They also offer scope to read these works in relation to other pieces, both on and off the stage, where the audience is encouraged also to draw inferences of their own to the performances. On the 25th July 2005, the *Cape Times* published the full text of an article titled “Why Africans and Coloureds are on the throat (sic) of each other”. The article, which contained the text of a webpage, was published in full due to public demand because of its controversial nature regarding race relations, especially in the Western Cape. It included a number of explicit statements about an identity that the author,

Blackman Roderick Ngoro, saw contained in the word ‘coloured’ (his lower-case). The media frenzy after publication of the article was astonishing, but the conversation suddenly turned its focus to another issue. No longer was it a discussion centred on ‘what is a Coloured?’ It had now become a discussion about how the group was seen by Black people, because it was clear that Ngoro’s comments would have repercussions. In the *Cape Argus* ‘Street Talk’, Joseph Aranes comments that the web-article does far more than confuse ideas about Africanism. Ngoro had asserted that Coloured beggars on the streets insulted ‘hard working African men fighting hard to restore their dignity stolen by the apartheid system’. Aranes suggests that the far-reaching consequences of this statement would be that Coloured people in the Western Cape, already feeling that their situation was tenuous in the new South Africa, would now move further away from the ANC. At the same time, the ANC’s Black majority constituency would be undermined by the stigma of a Black man of Ngoro’s stature revealing his prejudices about Coloured people. This in turn, would also have the effect of making the response appear representative of Black people’s perceptions, as the controversy became the subject of considerable media attention, which quickly escalated into television and radio debate.

Most significant here though, are the types of reactions to the article. The *Daily Voice*, a tabloid-styled daily newspaper operating under the banner ‘Sex, Scandal, Skinner [Gossip], Sport’ is an example. On Thursday, 21st July 2005, the day after Ngoro’s article was highlighted; their headline was divided into two parts. The first was highlighted against a red background and said that the “Mayor’s toyboy calls Coloureds DRONKS (DRUNKS) and says his ‘African’ culture is SUPERIOR. We Say...”

The second part of the headline, written in larger type, and set against a black background surrounded with pictures of Coloured celebrities or stereotyped characterisers of the group, said “Jou ma se... [Your mother’s...]”. A picture of Cape Town born comedian Marc Lottering featured as one of the celebrities splashed alongside a minstrel missing his two front teeth. It is telling that Lottering is seen as a representative acceptable to a collective ‘Coloured We’. The general consensus about the reaction levelled at Ngoro was one of similar indignation. The accompanying article referred to a collective ‘We’ when speaking about the human ‘artefacts’ being presented through pictures as representing Coloured people. Given this collective claiming of an identity, even if by default, is it not then possible to challenge those who say that there is no such thing as a Coloured culture? I refer to this article again in Chapter Seven, in a discussion of a student response gained a year prior to Ngoro’s article being published. Here, one stereotype of the Coloured as drunkard is echoed across generations, but I also show how the student’s perspective has shifted markedly after attending a performance where stereotypes are confronted through being performed.

The contradiction inherent to ascribing an identity to an individual is that it also attributes an identity upon those not of the same descriptive. Is the term Coloured merely describing a marginalised grouping situated in the middle of white and black? Is being Coloured, as an identity, also thus being marginalised? According to Neville Alexander “[t]he problem with the identity of the ‘so-called [C]oloured people; like the related ‘Afrikaner’ identity, [is that] it is largely defined by anthropological notions of ‘race’, rather than mainly by other markers such as language and religion” (1996:107). The fact that Alexander, a leading cultural theorist, proposes to move away from structuralized race awareness signals to me that a perception (yet) exists in some

quarters that the group identified as Coloured should move beyond an issue they have yet fully to come to terms with. This is perhaps an inevitable requirement of a new democracy, but could be at the expense of identifying and exploring the contradictions underlying prevailing perceptions concerning Coloured identity. Alexander would also strenuously object to being called a ‘Coloured’ person, signalling the problems of naming and being named as a group.

As mentioned previously, Coloured identity has also come under scrutiny in the New South Africa as group dissatisfaction about being perceived to occupy the ‘middle’ position of a racially marked society continues:

From the perspective of nineteenth century racial discourse, the term ‘Coloured’ has been linked to a fixation with maintaining racial boundaries... the coloured as debased in-betweener or ‘racial mixture’, perceived product of the transgression of a sacrosanct boundary, has connoted lack, deficiency, moral and cultural degeneration.

(Lewis, 2001:133)

Desiree Lewis is referring to the in-betweenness experienced by Coloured people.

On the one hand they were/are not White enough; on the other hand, they were/are not Black enough. This could be seen as then ascribing a shame to this aspect of being Coloured and I will expand on this in my discussion of student responses⁶.

The Coloured thus occupies the ‘middle’ still, although this is highly contested since it is claimed that the focus is taken away from Coloured people again, while reparations are made to those who had even less than they did. This is a contentious

⁶ It is also made clearer when we understand that, according to students in the previous (CLIDE Project) study, that in claiming an identity, one could quite possibly relieve this shame.

area of discussion, but it does inform the debate about who is eligible for what in the new social pecking order, at least according to some perspectives. What it also highlights is that group dissatisfaction exists, in whichever form, about where Coloured people are located within the country.

This is not a new debate, however. For instance, the Minister of Coloured Affairs during the early apartheid era, I.D. du Plessis,

[Took] an interest in the culture of the coloured and Malay peoples in the Cape, [and] played a major role in reinforcing the idea that white culture epitomised the principles of civilisation... [He] worked relentlessly to prove that coloureds were different from the Africans.
(in Constant-Martin, 2001:253)

In a recent issue of the *Journal of Literary Studies* focussing on national identity, Gugu Hlongwane (2002) says that it “has not been uncommon in the ‘new’ South Africa to use racial markers in the identification of individuals”. She cites Zoë Wicomb as arguing that “not everyone wishes to abandon racial naming: black groups jealously guard their blackness, [and] coloured groups cling to their colouredness” (2002:115). This signals another dividing contradiction in the on-going process of being named and the lasting effects thereof.

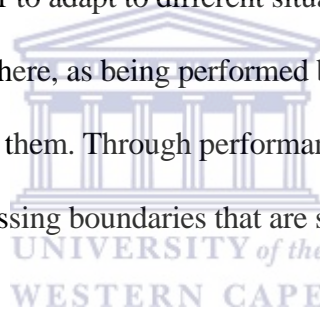
In discussions of a South African national identity, the existence of an identifiable Coloured culture is often questioned, which shows that sectors of the group have far more to contend with than fighting for recognition as a distinct group. The fluid uncertainty about what being Coloured *is* keeps them from seeing themselves as located in a changed (and still changing) environment, since, while apartheid has been

banished, many in poorer communities do not see the change affecting them. Although some argue that the culture has never really existed, this view is negated by a number of considerations:

Individuals experience their lives within a particular society at a particular time... We are defined and define ourselves in terms of how others see us, how we see others, how we act with other people and how other people respond to us, not only on an individual level, but also within the social institutions.

(Giles & Middleton, 1999:37)

Giles and Middleton argue that culture can be seen as a social act, as part of a performance which changes in order to adapt to different situations. The fluidity of the Coloured identity is thus examined here, as being performed by characters that participants identified as familiar to them. Through performance, the actors challenge stereotypes on the stage by transgressing boundaries that are socially established.



Recently also, in May 2004, the *Cape Argus* published an article by Zenzile Khoisan, titled “Crime hits Coloureds hardest- Study”, where he quoted extensively from Phil Leggett’s (2003/4) research into social issues for the Institute for Security Studies in South Africa. Leggett’s study is used as the statistical groundwork for Zenzile Khoisan’s piece, which claimed that Coloured people were twice as likely to be involved in, or be the victims of, violent crime as compared to other South Africans. However, many people formerly classified as Coloured choose not to be recognised in this manner any longer, and the article was received negatively, as indicated by the flurry of reactions by readers.

In the *Cape Argus* (3 June 2004) Letters column, my response to Leggett's implied assertion of Coloured societal discord was simple: Who are these people being spoken about? While my objection was not aimed at the use of the term Coloured, it was challenging the negativity being attributed to the group, through the article and its statistical bias. My public embrace of the term Coloured in my response, as it applies to myself, was then chastised by (Chief) Joseph D. Little (*Cape Argus*, 7 June 2004), who attached this moniker 'Proudly First Nation Khoi-San South African'⁷. Little writes:

If you truly want to take this matter of your identity seriously, as some of us have, then you will stop calling yourself a coloured. You will call yourself what our first nation indigenous ancestors called themselves: Khoi-Khoi (or Khoi-San). It simply means people or humankind. In order to be a true Zulu or Xhosa, you must have a language and a land... I have not found a coloured who speaks coloured and lives in colouredland.

Any remarks on the social disaffectedness this comment implies aside, it would be informative to know whether the cultural hybridity that is integrally entrenched in Coloured society should be subsumed by a 'First-Nation' or indigenous status? The idea that this identity is based on one particular aspect of miscegenation is akin to one acknowledging maternal family and ignoring the paternal relatives. The notion of Coloured people being ancestrally limited to being the product of one group ignores the naming and segregatory practices that are still inflicted on the community. It further insults those who fought the status ascribed to them under apartheid. If we are the sum of our origins, then why are we to discard that which is shameful to some and a source

⁷ First- Nation here expresses the United Nations' acknowledgement as referring to South Africa's original inhabitants.

of pride to others? The frightening parallel to what are now considered outdated modes of thinking could be drawn quite easily.

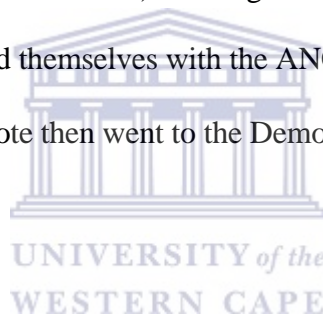
These tensions have not, however, appeared so suddenly that this should cause alarm. They have been addressed in various discourses, or at least placed into public domain. I argue that it is because of the sensitivity implicit in being located in the New South Africa that we sidestep these issues regarding inter-group relations, because it is easier to say we are all South African. Nelson Mandela was honest when, in his autobiography Long Walk to Freedom he stated that:

The Coloureds too, were oppressed, but unlike the Indians had no mother country except Africa. I was prepared to accept Indians and Coloureds, provided they accepted our [African National Congress Youth League] policies; but their interests were not identical with ours, and I doubted whether they could truly embrace our cause. (1995:129)

Mandela was here reflecting upon his shock that the National Party had won the 1948 election, signalling the beginning of an Afrikaner state, and the end of the (English) ruling United Party. While it is essential to stress the ANC, and Mandela's, commitment to a non-racial South Africa, the quote does go some way to showing that, even within the struggle for equality and freedom in the country, tensions were evident. That these frictions went unattended even when race was the central issue in South African society and politics, shows the collective South African unwillingness to tackle yet another issue threatening to divide the country.

A common apprehension was that the Coloured community was fragmented and self-serving, and they were viewed as such both by members of the group and non-members

from other ethnic⁸ groups. It can be no surprise then that perceived current attitudes held by many South Africans are split concerning the motives and motivations of Coloured people. This is sometimes starkly reflected in the case study, where student participant responses range from extremes of intolerance, to candour about racial stereotypes and prejudice. This was also perhaps reflected during the 2004 pre-election media blitz, where when driving down predominantly Coloured-populated Mitchell's Plain, a suburb of Cape Town, one was hard-pressed to find ANC campaign posters amongst a plethora of New National Party and Democratic Party materials. A common perception of both these parties was that they were seen as more sympathetic to Coloured voters than the ANC, in sectors of the Coloured communities afraid of being subsumed by a 'Black' led and (thus viewed as) biased government. The New National Party, shortly after elections, aligned themselves with the ANC, which meant that a larger percentage of the Coloured vote then went to the Democratic Alliance, in place of the ANC.



The views expressed thus far describe a Coloured group unmotivated to play a role in South African society (Little), as well as previous scepticism of the group's commitment (Mandela). James Clifford (1998) questions the role of the creative arts in the process of looking at identity. This also highlights the point that these theatrical or performed roles, if they are to be accepted in society, need to have an approved history-both socially and politically:

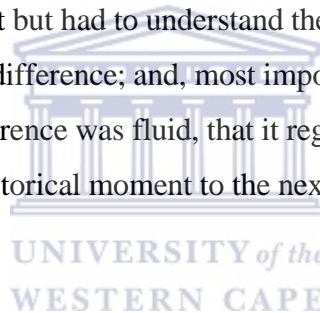
It may be generally true that groups long excluded from positions of institutional power, like women or people of colour, have less concrete freedom to indulge in textual

⁸ The use of the term 'ethnic' is explained in Chapter Three, where I look at the problems associated with terminology in investigating identity.

experimentation... To write in an unorthodox way... one must first have tenure. (Clifford, 1988:129)

Grant Farred (2000), referring to the poet Jennifer Davids' "reticence" about her (Coloured) racial identity and explicitly naming it in her writing, says that:

[T]his is a metaphor for the experience of the Coloured community in itself: Colouredness has to be, and has always been constructed - every experience of this community is an artefact, produced from and in the face of racist hostility, indifference, and ignorance; Colouredness is an act of intellectual, cultural, and political labour. Coloureds are autodidactics with a difference, a community that had to learn not only how it was racially different but had to understand the various implications of that difference; and, most important, that Coloured racial difference was fluid, that it registered directly from one historical moment to the next. (2000:18)



Farred's recognition of the fluid notion of Coloured identity forms part of the basis for researching a continually negotiated group identity in South Africa today. It raises questions about how the youth see themselves, as official forms such as identity document applications, university admission forms, and various other official and unofficial documents still require identifying racial categories. These requests are often justified with a sub-text 'For Equity Purposes'. Rarely is the option afforded to choose more than one category. Imagine if I, who describes myself as Coloured, decided to tick both Black and White as a complement to Coloured. Apart from the computerised systems used to monitor these responses for demographic purposes, which do not recognise such choices, does this mechanism not perpetuate a society where race is still

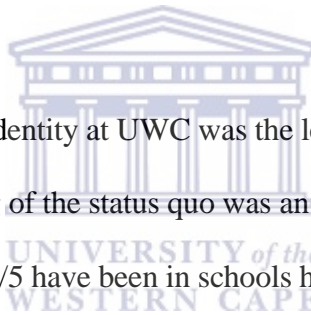
a common denominator, now designed not to designate lower status, but to conversely designate a status of entitlement? These questions show the significance of investigating what terms such as Coloured mean today within what is labelled ‘The Rainbow Nation’, and touted as a fully functional democracy.

The problems of tracking identity changes in the case study used to illustrate negotiations of identity include my own researcher-based assumptions that stem from being grounded within the same social grouping primarily being investigated. It also includes the research subjects’ unwillingness to appear politically incorrect; as well as the call from print media sectors such as *Business Day* and *The Star* that cultural and racial naming be set aside in favour of what is portrayed as a ‘New (and Unitary) South African’ identity. Researchers on South African identity relations echo this point; in a recently published study of social identity, McEachern claims that “the label ‘the new South Africa’ is the dominant form of the overall identity assigned by a variety of people to both the obvious and massive political changes undergone in post-apartheid South Africa, and the hopes for cultural and social change accompanying those changes” (in Zegeye, 2001:184).

Given these ongoing disparities and, it is clear that identities are increasingly being redefined, reconstructed and negotiated. This is evident at UWC, which has a demographic profile of predominantly Coloured and Black students. The ‘Student Profile Summary’⁹ shows a decrease in the number of Black students registered, while Coloured and White student enrolments have increased.

⁹ Student Profile Summary, 13 April 2004. University of the Western Cape. The number of Black (4106) and Coloured (6741) students at the university, with a total of 13 653 students. This number (10847) counts as just below 80% of the total number of students. 714 White students were registered in 2004.

UWC is an example of a tertiary institution undergoing transformation in the 'New South Africa', but demographically it approximates more specifically to the Western Cape with its larger Coloured majority. Whilst a historically Black university (HBU) and originally established as a Coloured university, UWC now records a significant increase in White and international student enrolment. Coloured student enrolment only slightly surpasses Black enrolment, making this a valuable site for exploring trends in negotiating identities. The Group Areas Act, which denied many people from interacting with other racial groups, still, however, leaves its mark today. Many students come to university never having had any sustained contact with people from other groups¹⁰.



An obstacle to investigating youth identity at UWC was the legacy of an education system where questioning of the status quo was an unacceptable practice. Students entering university in 2004/5 have been in schools hailed as 'more democratic' for up to ten years. The teaching practices, books and resources, as well as the attitudes of sectors of the teaching fraternity have still, however, in some cases not adequately been adapted to allow this questioning to be a free expression of curiosity and a need to know more. Most importantly for this study, the exploration of attitudes and perceptions through engagement in performance activities also entails working with persons from different groups, especially at a multi-cultural campus such as UWC. In this study the performances use language to show community membership and class distinctions.

They also allow non-members of the Coloured group the opportunity to see what could

¹⁰ This is reflected in preliminary studies (2003) at UWC, where the focus was upon identity and theatre, using 50 third year students at the university as participants for the CLIDE (Culture Language and Identity) Project. The CLIDE Project is a Belgian-governmental funded project at the University of the Western Cape. One of 5 sub-projects, it is part of the 'Dynamics of Building a Better Society' (DBBS) initiative to stimulate research co-operation between South African and Belgian universities.

be read as stereotype purporting to reflect ‘reality’. The performances could be seen as acknowledging, disavowing, distorting, and negotiating identities in much the same way as the student participants have to negotiate their own ideas about their feelings of belonging, and how this belonging is represented through the performances.

The use of the Coloured vernacular, ‘Gamtaal’¹¹, occurs frequently in all four of the selected performances. I will discuss the three comedies ‘From the Cape Flats With Love’ and ‘Crash’ (Marc Lottering, 2001 & 2004), and ‘Joe Barber’ (Oscar Petersen, David Isaacs, and Heinrich Reisehnoffer, 1999) in Chapters Three and Four. However, I focus briefly on the dramatic form encountered in ‘Suip’ (Petersen and Reisenhoffer, 1996), as a precursor to looking at how comedy facilitates identity investigation.

Oscar Petersen and Heinrich Reisenhoffer authored ‘Suip’ while they were students at the University of Cape Town. As the recounting, and re-presenting of history from a Coloured perspective, the play uses a dark tone which juxtaposes homelessness in contemporary society with disenfranchisement under previous rule. As all the plays use a mixture of English, Afrikaans and slang words (‘Gamtaal’), I will attempt to show how this language can be seen as creating a liminal space when it is used in the theatre. The exploration incorporates the foundation of identity ascription, language and the way that a specific performing accent marks a group.

Marc Lottering, Oscar Petersen, Heinrich Reisenhoffer and David Isaacs use the idiom of the working class to great effect. What could be seen alternatively as stereotyping of

¹¹ ‘Gamtaal’ – a mixture of English, Afrikaans, and slang forming a system of communication widely used by Coloured people in South Africa. Trends in contemporary advertising show that use of certain words and phrases are increasing, perhaps revealing a more target-driven market aimed at the Coloured group.

the Coloured people can also be seen perhaps, in their hands, as the use of the familiar to accentuate, destabilise, and question cultural practice. A general stereotype exists that the more enunciated the 'r' is, the lower the class and level of inhibition of the speaker who utters it. The refinement of the rolling 'r' into a soft purring 'rh' is still seen as an often pretentious 'selling-out' to some of those who claim to be 'real' Coloureds. In dealing with student responses, I look at Lottering's notions of 'those Coloureds', and investigate the ways that being named as such is part of a process of finger-pointing. This reference to others within the group also marks those who are cultural insiders, perhaps showing that identity ascription problems do not simply stem from outside of the group.

Awam Amkpa writes that "(a)ctions of becoming and belonging are performable through cultural practices that self-consciously pidginize and creolize the content and structure of European languages" (2000:19). In 'Joe Barber' (Petersen, Reisenhoffer & Isaacs), the audience responds heartily to the characters' repeated incorrect use of the English language. They also mis-correct each other, in an attempt to improve their grasp of the language. Since writers David Isaacs and Oscar Petersen are also the only actors, their comments contain frequent references to current (at the time of performance) events. One of the characters played by Isaacs, Boeta Gamat, reiterates an incorrect grammatical form as a 'proper' way of speaking. This occurs as Boeta Gamat rebukes his son, and then educates him on appropriate English grammar. When the son uses the incorrect form "Derrie, Derrie, come quick here"¹², Joe (played by Petersen) tries to tell him what the correct form would be. Boeta Gamat quickly pre-empts this response, and gives him the correct form, "Derrie, Derrie, come quick here, please!"

¹² These quotations are taken directly from production scripts used for the performances, and thus do not contain any page references.

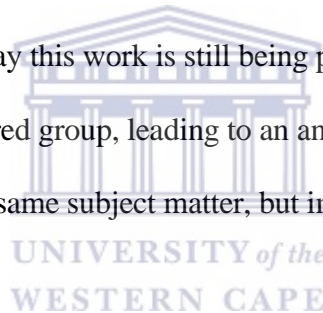
The audience responds by laughing and applauding this assertion that to this character, in this story, there is no incorrect form as it is *his* mode of speech. However, some might simply see this as conveying the message that the working class Coloured has a limited grasp of the English language. This is examined in more detail in Chapter Three, where I look at language as a signifier of group belonging, as well as at how transgressing socially established norms marks the performance event for the spectator.

Amkpa also states that certain theatre practitioners evolve “the notion of theatre as a forum of engagement within which external and internal dimensions of culture and society are articulated” (2000:118). Lottering’s comedy routines, while portraying ordinary Coloured people within everyday situations such as catching a taxi or telling a story about last night, also reflect the neighbourhood-familiar scenarios such as the barbershop sets employed in ‘Joe Barber’, while the familiar lounge setting in ‘From the Cape Flats With Love’ allows certain audience members to see their current way of life as staged. On the other hand, outsiders, or those simply unfamiliar with the conventional settings used by writers like Lottering, Isaacs, Reisenhoffer and Petersen are thus given an insight into what can be described as culturally marking the group. The conventional settings become synonymous with cultural practices, and are seen predominantly in representations of ‘the Coloured’ on television and in advertising. Cultural markers become normalised through these enactments of the ordinary and everyday, but with added humour.

After having seen Lottering’s performance, one student responded to a question as to whether or not any of her notions of the Coloured community had changed. “I always thought that Coloured people were content to work in factories, earn their cents, and

then drink their money away.” She reflected that having seen such a performance, where ordinary people were being represented, meant that she could discard what she, only then, recognised as a problematic and flawed view of the Coloured group as a whole.

This aspect is discussed in more detail in Chapter Six, but I move on now to the ways in which Coloured identity has been framed in society, and on the South African stage. I look at Coloured identity as a problematic term in more detail, where some members located within (and others located outside of) the Coloured group question its existence. The discussion then focuses on the four selected performances, and I briefly examine a fifth theatrical piece ‘District Six: The Musical’ in order to illustrate a different trend in current theatre. I will explore the way this work is still being performed as a representative version of the Coloured group, leading to an analysis of the more current selected plays, which deal with the same subject matter, but in very different ways.

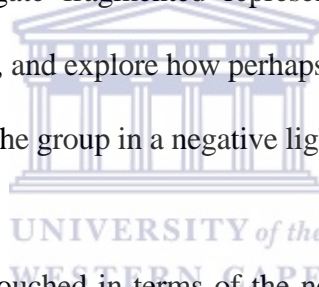


Staging, de-staging, and re-staging the Coloured.

Chapter Two

Staging the Coloured- An Inter-disciplinary approach

In this section, I focus on how the Coloured was socially ‘created’, and how this affects audience responses. I use sociological theory and performance study interdiscursively in order to link the (performed) identity in society to the staged performances, where a representation of identity also occurs. I look at problems currently encountered with the term ‘Coloured’, and at how naming practices have served to further divide the Coloured community. I also investigate ‘fragmented’ representations of the Coloured group in the media and on the stage, and explore how perhaps this could contribute to Coloured people and others seeing the group in a negative light.



Coloured identity has often been couched in terms of the negative. Julian Sonn states that historically the Khoi, as ancestors of the existing Coloured community, are portrayed in a “negative light: as lazy, dirty thieves... We often internalised these negative messages and felt insulted to acknowledge these aspects of our ancestry” (1996:65). That this is a prevailing view is evident, writing in the 1930s, a Mrs. Roberson gives a similar account:

“Too often,” said Mrs. Roberson, “we have that inferiority complex, and although gifted in many ways, a *Coloured* man *never* feels quite certain of himself”. (*Cape Standard*, 1936:4. My emphasis)

Ebrahim Rasool, prominent ANC politician and current premier of the Western Cape, speaks of an ‘unwholesome practice’ within the community:

If anything, it is an aggregation around the perceived self-awareness of ‘the other’ (blacks, Africans, ‘darkies’), even the perceived self-actualisation of the other. It is a fear that the other is reaching a level of consciousness and has the power to express that consciousness. Coloured consciousness and identity, rather than being self-aware, empowering and confident are constructed fearfully, out of threat and opposition, and defined in negative relation to the other, not through a positive perception of the self. (1996:56)

Rasool further postulates that “any self-awareness and consciousness that is developing in the (C)oloured community takes place by way of actions that split that community” (1996:56). Nine years later in 2005, Rasool is still grappling with the pitfalls of identity in a province lately noted as ‘racially intolerant’. In the Western Cape Provincial Government State of the Province Address 2005, Premier Ebrahim Rasool says that “the social fabric of the Western Cape is fragile. The identities of its people are fragile.”

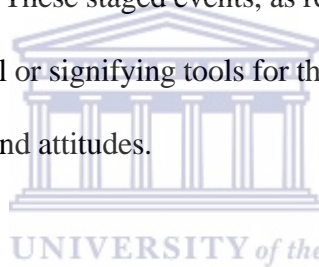
I argue that Barthes’ concept of narratology is useful for analysing such negative constructions located squarely within the Coloured group (1975:237). For the purposes of this study, the narratives being performed are the actual scripts the performers use, as they are based on stereotypical (to some) images drawn to show the familiar within the Coloured group.

On describing narrative, Barthes states that:

[I]t is present at all times, in all places, in all societies;
indeed narrative starts with the very history of mankind,...

all classes, all human groups, have their stories, and very often these stories are enjoyed by men of very different and even opposite cultural backgrounds. (1975:237)

This will also be demonstrated when I look at specific student participant responses in Chapter Seven, where the focus is on linking these perceptions and attitudes to the theoretical framework. Finnegan (1992:27) states that “in more recent ex-colonial nations, the search for national... identity has fostered the collection and creation of texts expressing the national culture or providing a focus for nation-building and local education”. The theatrical performances selected for this study are chosen for the way they engage with notions of “expressing national culture”, or at the very least, a specific and thus significant section thereof. These staged events, as representations of Coloured identity, primarily act as educational or signifying tools for those located outside of the group, a marker to its conventions and attitudes.



Zoë Wicomb, in an article titled “The Case of the Coloured in South Africa” writes about the popular ‘District Six: The Musical’ (David Kramer & Taliep Petersen, 1987) and says that this “popular attempt at inventing an authentic colouredness illustrates how representation does not simply express, but rather plays a formative role in social and political life” (1998:95). The play, which represents stereotypical images of the Coloured in his/her community, is useful as a tool to illustrate re-presentations of the Coloured on the stage.

‘District Six: The Musical’ makes frequent references to the process where residents of the area were forcibly removed and moved to different locations on the Cape Flats.

Zakes Mda appears to be fairly dismissive of “removals theatre” (1996:214). He adds that these performances:

[Are] of varying merit that look nostalgically at life in the townships where people were forcibly removed. These include *Sophiatown* by the Junction Avenue Theatre Company, *Kofifi* by Sol Rachib, *Buckingham Palace District Six* by Richard Rive, and *District Six: The Musical* by David Kramer and Taliep Petersen. (1996:214)

It is interesting to note that shows like ‘District Six: The Musical’, which while extremely popular with South African audiences, still reflect the past. The musical is still extremely popular because it presents a version of the past still accessible to many viewers, but it is not the preferred genre that the selected playwrights in the case study employ. This period is also not as accessible to the youth today as it was in the 80’s for an older generation, who experienced having lived in the area themselves, as well as being removed physically from that space in the 1970s, under the 1950s Group Areas Act. It can be argued to be more suited to engaging in a discussion of the past perhaps, and not the present or the future.

Temple Hauptfleisch (1997:67) says that due to the “intense years of the cultural struggle” a new performance style was gaining an audience in South African theatres. Noting the varied formats the productions appeared in, he points out that they “all tapped into the immensely rich resources of creativity and dramatic potential the country holds by virtue of its large ethnic and cultural mix”. It seemed the number of these performances:

[P]roliferate as we moved into the 1990s and the new post-Apartheid era, [resulting in what appears to be] the

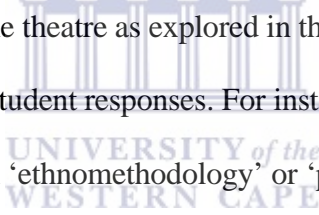
emergence of a new kind of play, even a new kind of performing arts system – with its own, novel set of conventions and rules. (1997:67)

Hauptfleisch attributes the “use of images, forms and techniques from the mass media and popular entertainment in the formal arts... and hence, also in stage performances” (1997:78) as highly influential to theatre groups in South Africa. He says that the “tradition of the cinema crooners in the works of David Kramer and Taliep Petersen (‘District Six The Musical’, ‘Fairyland’, ‘Crooners’ and ‘Klop-Klop’) are fine examples of supremely successful shows deriving from this source” (1997:78). I look at ‘District Six: The Musical’ from this perspective, as evoking a different period to the plays selected for the case study. The plays I will be focussing on explicitly challenge the notion that the Coloured group can be encapsulated into fragmented or derivative representations typical of Kramer and Petersen’s works. The playwrights I focus on challenge the apparent niche-market Kramer and Petersen enjoy with works such as ‘Kat and the Kings’, ‘Fairyland’, and their latest offering, ‘Ghoema’ (2005).

Irvine (1994:99) describes Edward Sapir’s “cultural traits” as different to “cultural areas”, which contains “an amassing of traits by areas”. He argues that although open to criticism:

[C]ultural area[s]... are assemblages of people who understand each other’s culture and feel themselves as a unity... this is the true psychological meaning of culture: a nascent nationality. Under the dominating idea in one area there is a nascent feeling of unity; it is a potential nationality, in the sense that a nation represents a community of understanding. (1994:100)

The selected performances are also able, due to their semi-scripted improvisational formats, to confront issues currently (at the time of the performances) at the forefront of the social dynamic arena. They challenge the pre-conceived notions of the audience members by presenting existing or culturally entrenched views, as well as their own (as performer/s) reactions as members of the Coloured group. The value of these performances as described by Bauman (1977:11) is that “performance is a mode of language use, a way of speaking”. This reinforces the importance of narratology as a concept useful in this investigation, and further suggests that *responses to staged performance* could in fact be used as a discursive tool with which to analyse identity and the attitudes to identity as negotiated and re-presented. It is also relevant to the theories of ‘frame-breaking’, as investigated next.



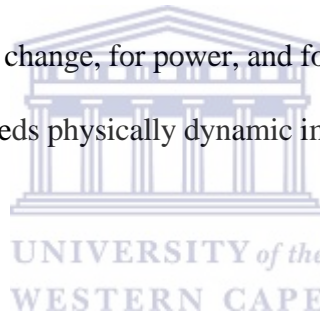
Analogies between social life and the theatre as explored in the Social Sciences provide a useful context for my analysis of student responses. For instance, sociologist Harold Garfinkel (1967:47) coined the term ‘ethnomethodology’ or ‘people rules’ for the “unspoken, often unconscious rules people use to maintain order and predictability in everyday social interaction” (Gelles & Levine, 1999:200). Within the rubric of symbolic interactionism, Adler and Adler (1980) and Goffman (1959, 1967) state that aside from the relevance of this theory as the “most important and revealing studies of everyday social behaviour” (Adler and Adler, 1980) it also emphasises the role of language and other symbols in the social construction of identity, as well as in the structure of relationships (Goffman, 1959, 1967). Garfinkel’s theory thus suggests that the ‘order’ being maintained could be a perpetuation or enactment of the status quo, with the ‘predictability’ as causal due to the learnt social behaviours through cultural belonging.

The place of ethnomethodology within the frameworks provided by symbolic interactionism and theories of performance are, as further described by Goffman (1967), advanced through two behavioural arenas: the public or theatrically related “front stage”, and the private sphere or “backstage”. This is indicative of a varied approach where what is being represented by a group to a multi-cultural society, and alternatively in ‘private’, actually do contradict one another, and this illustrates a divide. One view is performed to certain people not from that same grouping, and another to those who form part of that group. The challenges inherent in choosing an ‘authentic’ representation are thus obvious. Gelles and Levine’s (1999:201) analogy of an internal rift developing between a couple faced with the in-laws overstaying their welcome, and thus forcing the couple to exhaustively put on a new face “front stage” is applicable to portraying identity interaction on a community base as well. They state that “often our patterns of interaction become so engrained that they are unconscious, especially in a long-term, multi-faceted relationship such as that of husband and wife” (1999:201). Social conventions are broken or transgressed, and can thus be regarded as normalised through the performance. With the transgressions occurring in certain plays, and with certain stock characters enacting them, the performance can be marked as an act that can be attributed to certain actors, and thus to a certain group by association.

This study investigates the divide between what is represented as the ‘familiar’ and is possibly read as a portrayal of a given identity, as opposed to an identity that is fluid and changing, and is therefore in the *process* of negotiation. It is within this divide that that we can perhaps illustrate the efficacy of the way theatre and performance can be used to illustrate cultural debates currently occupying the minds of the youth in South

Africa. The theatre's ability to adapt itself to, and portray, different perspectives reflects society's ability to change as well, and trends in current theatre suggest that new identities are still emerging. Not just an overall national identity, but identities located within different groups as well.

Mark Fleishman draws on Richard Schechner's description of theatre which is "produced within a particular society", and says that it "mirrors the social drama of that society" (1996:107). For the purposes of this study, I look at specific performances which, while they do not 'mirror' society, still contain enough references to a particular group (the Coloured group) to allow spectators and student participants to experience familiarity with what is represented. Fleishman says that "life in South Africa, filled as it is with the desperate struggles for change, for power, and for simple survival, has a physically dynamic nature which feeds physically dynamic images on the stage" (1996:107).



Sennett (1978, 1980) draws an analogy between social life and the theatre illustrating that every member of society (or actor!) has a role to play that is constructed in relation to others (father and mother, student and teacher). The acceptable codes for behaviour are analogous to the theatrical script. A level of improvisation exists as with all roles. These are based on the script (in society these are the rules or norms we follow), subjective reading or interpretation, the other actors, and how the audience responds whether these roles are real or imagined (Turner, 1978). This has a strong correlation to the performativity of identity as it applies to 'Colouredness', as Denis Constant-Martin (2001:251) states, "activities showing the reality of this [Coloured] culture are essential: it is not so much talked about, elaborated upon, as enacted." Awareness that these roles

are being re-performed in different situations is central to acknowledging their usefulness in the 'New South Africa', and forms the basis for participants who investigate their own performances accordingly.

Conflict studies, however, proposes that the 'collective-action theory' as set forth by Oberschall (1973) and Tilly (1978) illuminates deep-rooted and hidden conflicts within a group in society that have existed for a long time. These conflicts manifest when, instead of a complete break in the existing social structure, it is simply perpetuated or reinvented. This is evident when we look at the stereotypical Coloured being portrayed onstage and in the media. Moreover, an awareness of the performativity of identity emphasises identity as ever changing, and as constantly adapting to societal changes. These points are examined in detail in Chapter Five where I use student responses to questions examining whether the representations of identity onstage are perceived as 'real'. I turn to a discussion of stereotype as well in the next section, as it is in the emergence of stereotype as seen by the student participants where negotiated identities can be discussed either as in process, or as not occurring. Stereotype is viewed as both a positive and a negative reflection of identity within the responses, and leads to a discussion of how it should be read when it is located within the 'New South Africa'. I look next to the recent discipline of Imagology in order to set up this framework for discussing stereotype.

William Chew (2001) coins the term Imagology as an emergent (since 1950) discipline. He establishes a general functionality that the discipline aims for:

(Imagology) is a relatively new and highly interdisciplinary field of study combining the traditional qualitative and

diachronical methods of the humanities, with the newer and often more quantitative and synchronical methods of the social sciences. Its object is the study of the origins, nature, and impact of national stereotypes, i.e. the clichéd images ‘we’ – of a particular regional or national group - tend to have of ‘the other’ ... Image studies often aim at creating greater inter-cultural awareness. (2001:1)

He further states that “Imagologists often conclude that their research reveals more about the ‘culture regardante’ than the ‘culture regardée’ (2001:12). For the purposes of this study, this is an important distinction between the ‘culture regardante’/ ‘spector’, and the ‘culture regardée’/ ‘spected’. The spectator/ viewer (regardante) has, as focus of the gaze, the spected (regardée). The typical effect of this gaze, or “*effect d’ typique*”, in which spectators recognise (and ascribe) characteristics as ‘typical’ of the spected countrymen, is key to this study. This effect comes into play when ascribed characteristics fulfil two crucial criteria, i.e. they are perceived as representative (of the group in question), and they are “salient and distinctive” (2001:10). The student quoted previously found that these were salient points of reference to her assumptions about Coloured people as a group. This is also easily applicable to Blackman Ngoro’s views discussed in the previous chapter, while Marco Cinnirella’s definition of social distinctiveness is also useful here in order to locate this response. According to Cinnirella, this occurs when “individuals identified strongly with the group(s) to which they belonged (the ‘in-group’), which they defined positively in comparison with the ‘out-group’ in a process called ‘social distinctiveness’” (1997:13). Within the processes described here, participants are further encouraged to examine their own experiences while in the self-reflexive space offered by the theatre.

Zakes Mda (1996:199) says that various older acting styles have influenced current categories of theatre. While referring to Township Theatre as one of these older influences, similarities to the performances chosen here and Mda's discussion include their being "formulaic", and containing "stock characters" which appear "in every play the audience would expect to see" (1996:100). Interestingly, he notes these as the "dim-witted policeman, often brutal, a priest, a comic school teacher, a diviner, a streetwise fast-talking hoodlum, and a beautiful 'sexy' girl" (1996:199). Mda says that Township Theatre has been dominating theatre discourse for three decades, and should be noted for its impact on emerging trends in the South African theatre.

An important distinction for this examination is the difference between 'Township' and 'Town' theatres, where a 'Town' theatre "kept itself in the purpose-built city venues" (Mda, 1996:202). He says, however, that a Theatre of Resistance took precedence in the 1980's, as many who had been involved in Township Theatre moved to initiate a newer theatrical discourse. As the theatre moved towards this new formulation, it also moved away from being accessible to the people of poorer communities. The resistance had to be seen outside of the townships if it was to be recognised, marking a move from rural theatre spaces to urban, settled theatres. Mda notes:

[B]y 1990 almost all relevant theatre of the Theatre of Resistance category was performed only in city venues, and the audiences were white liberals and sprinklings of members of the black middle class who could afford to drive to these expensive venues. (1996:203)

Implicit in this move was also the need to commercialise the productions, to prepare them for an export market. This is also evident in the selected performances, where a certain level of 'slickness' is portrayed by the framing, which I will investigate further

in Chapter Five. Goffman's 'frame analysis' looks at three types of framing, namely performance, generic and dramaturgical framing. Jerry Mofokeng says that "the imposition of a foreign form on black material also serves to facilitate international consumption and digestion" (1996:86).

However, Mofokeng also refers to the universality of the theatre:

Theatre is about more than just apartheid. It is about prejudice and racism; about the suspicion and fear of those unfamiliar and different from us. Theatre is about human identity, about human conflict. It is about human existence with oneself and in the interaction with the outside world. It is knowledge of this wide canon of the theatre that will liberate us from the restriction of formulae. (1996:86)

Part of the focus of the study was to see how students regarded themselves, as racially/ethnically/group classified¹³. While students used the terms Black, Coloured, White, Asian, Indian and African, there was a stark lack of response to changing the naming practices. Many of the students felt that certain names, and this was particularly relevant amongst the Coloured participants, represented them, and that there should be a claim made to own the names. This was in response to what they felt was, in effect, being claimed by a name that had been ascribed to them. It was also contradictory to being named by someone else, as here it was a unique identity being affirmed which marked it and themselves as different from other groups.

¹³ CLIDE Project referred to in Chapter One.

In the preliminary study conducted at the University of the Western Cape (2003)¹⁴, a question was posed in a questionnaire, asking whether plays dealing with identity offer new perspectives on what it meant to be South African. One respondent had selected ‘Coloured’ and ‘South African’ from a range of descriptive ethnic and racial options. “I think for the person not so familiar with cultures other than (their own), it makes it all clear and open.” Another student, responding to the same question, and who had also chosen the same self-descriptives, said that:

I see it as interesting and beneficial to young South Africans and Africans, as we have the opportunity to see inside the mind and thought processes of other cultures, and (we) have the chance to observe various viewpoints.

This student qualifies this response by stating why his reaction had been affected positively by the performance they had attended (Brett Bailey’s ‘iMumbo Jumbo’, 2003): “my mind has been opened up to various opinions and stimulated through different surroundings.” This reference to the space to think ‘differently’ created by attending the performance event is invaluable. It illustrates how the removal, or the distance, from the structural and systemic academic setting allowed for an exploration of not just the participants’ own cultures. It contains a recognition that people from other groups were also able to gain insights into what they could possibly not have experienced before.

¹⁴ In order to situate this paper into an identity and performance examination, I use previous (2003) CLIDE Project research, gained prior to this investigation to illustrate some of the points underscored by many participants in this (present) study. A performance and Identity Questionnaire was compiled by myself, under supervision by Dr. Miki Flockemann, for CLIDE Project research into Performance and Identity. Using third-year students, the study involved students attending culture-dynamic performances like Brett Bailey’s ‘iMumbo Jumbo’, and responding to set questions about their views as spectators.

Comedy and Reflexivity

In the same way that the performance as a whole encourages the opening of these investigative liminal and liminoid spaces, these spaces could also be accessible through a specific device, or type of performance. In three of the selected pieces, comedy-styled performances could be seen as perpetuating another stereotype, as laughter is the most frequent accompaniment to the Coloured caricature. Susan Purdie (1993) explains comedy as an inversive practice, as well as subversive in that it can transgress boundaries at will, while maintaining an acknowledgement that the boundary is still there. She cites Marc Eaton's (1981) definition of it as "tautology, 'it's a comedy because it makes us laugh'" (1993:73). All the student participants within the case-study also describe the performances as comedy, with most of them stating that they were aware of how their laughter would be interpreted by other audience members. This awareness points to self-reflexive behaviour while in the process of watching the performances. This, in turn, made the student audience aware that they too were being watched, and that their reactions could also reveal their own attitudes to those watching.

Purdie says:

Joking is valued most obviously because laughter feels pleasurable and is associated with release... funniness involves at once breaking rules and 'marking' that break, so that correct behaviour is implicitly stated, yet in transgressing and recognising the rules, jokers take power over, rather than merely submitting to them. (1993:3)

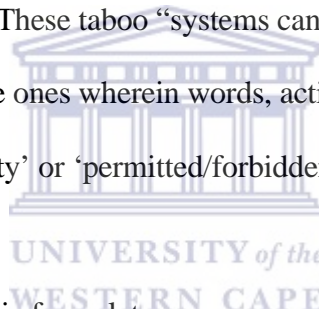
As the forms of comedy centre around Coloured viewpoints in this study, the selected performances also demonstrate a trend to confront issues around transformation in South Africa. Social transgressions appear as acts the audience are complicit in, but in

laughing they are also removed from the responsibility of having uttered the statements.

Purdie, reflecting on the jokers (or actors), says:

[J]okers form an excluding relationship with their object...
 [involving] other persons as the Butts who are *de-graded*
 from a perceived position of power, but [rule breaking]
 objectifies the Law which is degraded in being successfully
 defied, but also reinstated when its transgression is marked
 as such. (1993:5)

Purdie's awareness that in telling the joke, the actor is conscious of crossing the line, is also in keeping with the way the audience has knowledge that it is a boundary crossing. Comedy allows the boundary to be crossed, marked by laughter, while still maintaining that the taboo has been recognised. These taboo "systems can themselves be identified as linguistic structures, albeit simple ones wherein words, actions and objects function to carry the significations 'clean/dirty' or 'permitted/forbidden'" (1993:82).



As this investigation proposes, Purdie formulates an argument that joking is a response to a human psychic need, expressing our desire to see the self in others' responses to ourselves. Within the responses received from someone else is their acknowledgment of who they see and how they interpret the actions which affirm our behaviours. Purdie uses Freudian and Lacanian psychoanalytic theory to show how comedy occurs (when a mastery of the discourse is present) in the process of telling a joke. She further states that comedy can "potently instate norms that are unexamined and may be harmful to other people or to the jokers themselves" (1993:169). These norms, which may be viewed as representing the Coloured people in this study, are investigated as stereotypical renderings of the Coloured on the stage and in society. Whether or not

they are 'harmful' to the audience is investigated in the student responses discussed in Chapter Six.

In the following chapter, I attempt to locate stereotype first by defining it, and then through looking at specific representations of Coloured people which can be viewed as stereotypical. I focus on the ways in which terms like 'Coloured' have been represented in various discourses. This investigation, and the subsequent incorporation of these observations and performance-based analysis, leads to discussion of the ways that stereotype and being named could be viewed in relation to performance.

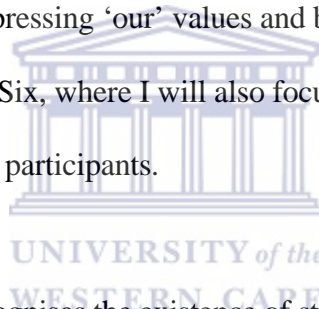


Chapter Three

De-staging the Coloured

Coloured Identity in Question

As Coloured-focussed performances gain momentum, and some of these become iconic to their growing audiences, it is relevant to explore Dyer's (1993) references to the iconographic construction of stereotype. He points out that these stagnant and fixed constructions are the result of a few verbal and visual traits, located in an actor/character or a group. Dyer says that according to function, stereotypes could be examined in four ways, as "stereotypes are (i) an ordering process, (ii) a 'short-cut', (iii) referring to 'the world', and (iv) expressing 'our' values and beliefs" (1993:11). I apply these investigative tools in Chapter Six, where I will also focus on ways in which stereotype is received by case study participants.



Imagology, according to Chew, recognises the existence of stereotypes and "focus[ses] on their description and analysis, origin and impact" (2001:10). He sees stereotype from this perspective, namely, stereotypes are "the clichéd images 'we' – of a particular regional or national group – tend to have of 'the other'... Typically the negative of the pair is usually associated to the other, and the positive to the self, in a self-serving dynamic designed to enhance one's own identity" (2001:1).

Stereotype is a collection of terms, phrases, and ultimately cultural idiosyncratic behaviours that become reified as belonging to a group (as in this investigation), and located in the collective and individual consciousness. These stereotypes do not normally have a positive effect upon the population they typify, as Purdie (1993)

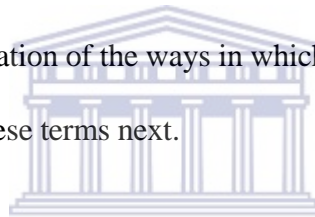
pointed out that they often turned out to be 'harmful'. The Irish object to being called drunks. The Americans do not all support Bush or ascribe to brashness, Muslims are not all zealots, and similarly in South Africa, our Portuguese community is not made up of fish and chips shop owners.

More harmful to a collective version of unity are the stereotypes that still endure in our local society. Being black does not make you stink, but this is not a prejudice restricted to Black people. Being white does not mean you are rich, especially today, in a country where many White people complain about a lack of opportunity due to affirmative action. Not all Coloured people drink, and of those who do, not all are drunks. Not all Coloured people are musical, some of us cannot dance to a rhythm. Some of us simply cannot take a joke, let alone crack one to please and be the comic entertainer. Many Coloured people are highly educated, in leading positions in the country. The representation of the Coloured on the stage, which acknowledges this change, is useful when investigating theatre in South Africa today, as opposed to a representation where the Coloured is still seen as a broken figure searching aimlessly for a place to fit in. It is helpful to investigate the way the Coloured is represented on stage in order to explore whether the stereotype of the Coloured as a degraded figure still persists, and how audiences relate to this today.

A (mis)appropriation of this 'broken' figure can be seen in the ubiquitous figure of the gangster lurking in the shadows of ever-popular plays like 'District Six: The Musical'. The smooth-talking, rough-and-ready, amoral 'skollie' (gangster) waiting for a chance to pounce upon anyone for a profit is a damaging portrayal of a subject so sensitive. Gangsterism is a huge problem that results directly from the social engineering of the

apartheid government. That this is now an epidemic spreading across the country, and particularly the Western Cape with devastating consequences, should be shown up as a damaging effect of apartheid, instead of being used as a prop for a storyline where the focus is still upon that broken figure. The audience is being directed to laugh at the portrayal of the ongoing consequences of apartheid, through the use of stereotypical images. These stereotypes, or ‘derivatives’ as Judith Butler calls them, have reduced a group to a few distinguishing characteristics. I refer more to Butler’s discussion on stereotype and derivatives after looking at other problematic terms I use in this study.

The names ascribed by the previous governments aside, other terms also carry a certain degree of attached meaning. These have been at the centre of too many discussions to be listed here, but a cursory examination of the ways in which they are used in this study is useful. I look at a few of these terms next.



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While problematic, the terms ‘*ethnic*’ and ‘*ethnicity*’ are considered less loaded than ‘*race*’. According to Richard Jenkins (1997:23), “it is important to distinguish in principle between two analytically distinct processes of ascription: group identification and social categorisation. The first occurs inside the ethnic boundary, the second outside and across it.” One aspect of the study involves tracing changes in group identity as experientially located, and these changes occur within the boundaries of specific culturally named and ascribed groups. The use of the term ‘ethnic’ is not intended to define groups by skin colour, but to differentiate their cultural practices without the constraining or essentialised categories of race. Alan Morris (1997:107) says that ethnicity “is the cultural identification of a group and is not determined by genetic origins”.

The term “*community*” has also become an encumbered term, and has commonly been used instead of “*race*” as a more acceptable naming strategy in post-election South Africa. This is possibly a reaction to calls for a move away from the term ‘race’ as a social marker. This has had the effect of loading the terms used instead of *race* with the same meaning. The word Coloured then becomes synonymous with a place, like Ocean View or District Six, whereas both of these areas have (or had) people of all cultural groups living there.

The consequences of this practice is that communities from areas like Ocean View and District Six are then all assumed to be Coloured, and are also assumed to be representative of the Coloured group as a whole. In an episode of a documentary series ‘Special Assignment’ on national television (SABC3), the scourge of the drug ‘Tik’ or crystal methamphetamine, was shown to be highly prevalent amongst the communities of Ocean View and Mitchell’s Plain. That it is a problem is not being contested, but when a culturally diverse group of thirty first-year UWC students (in response to the programme which was quite a talking point) were asked who amongst them knew of someone in their immediate families, including themselves, who had taken the drug, they all raised their hands. This showed how pervasive the problem really is, and that it is not a group phenomenon.

Commenting on some of the differences between television and theatre, David Greig, Cheryl Martin and Andy de la Tour, in State of Play: Playwrights on Playwriting claim:

Television is very good at raising things and has other jobs it can do, but a play has to carry along the people in the room,

because ultimately they can shout out, ‘This is fucking rubbish,’ if they want to. You can shout at the television, and many people do, but it makes no difference to the art continuing. The communality of the theatre, and its foundation in a kind of spiritual ritual of transformation, is to me what makes it the most important place in which these questions of change, these questions of belief, can be discussed by society. (1999: 68/9)

Greig *et al.* illustrate here the urgency afforded the performance in the theatre, where if anyone from Ocean View or Mitchell’s Plain was present who was going to object to a staged depiction of drug-taking as a specific group phenomenon, then that objection could be immediate. The objection could also be one which would alert others that the area needed more investigation, raising its profile as more than a stereotype.

Alternately, like in this case, they could object to the Coloured group being typified as the only users of the drug.



The Theatre in Action: Using Stereotype

In this section, I move toward Butler’s analysis of the derivative as being a simple way of reducing groups to a few qualifying characteristics, approximating closely to Dyer’s (1993) definition of stereotype. These derivatives are explored through an investigation of Kruger’s (1999) expansion of Victor Turner’s liminal and liminoid acts (as discussed in the Introduction), Austin’s (1962) performative acts, and Butler’s (1993) theories of performativity.

Loren Kruger also synthesises Bauman, Turner, and Scehner’s works on performativity, stating that

[P]erformances were seen to ‘actualise’ a ‘potential’ action, completing that action in the world as well as on stage, and thus constituting an efficacious enactment of social transformation rather than just an entertaining representation of fictional action. (1999:5)

Kruger (1999:5) says that these presentations “contain rites of passage or liminal performances”, in that they marked transgressed boundaries “in the life of a community, as well as the resolution of that breach” in nation building. Kruger also asserts that Turner’s liminoid performances are of exploratory value. They are:

[P]erformances of a liminoid character... not only because [they] were idiosyncratic and playful, [but] also because they introduced a self-reflexive, ostentatious *theatrical* pause into the visual and narrative representation of collectivity, as well as a reminder of the ways in which this immediate experience is mediated by local and global commodity circulation. (1995:5)

J. L. Austin’s (1962) works on the performative have laid the theoretical framework for many explorations of performance study. He claims that the performative utterance is when an action is being done, or performed. I draw on Austin’s distinction between locutionary and perlocutionary acts, where locutionary acts are “roughly equivalent to ‘meaning’” (1962:108). Austin says they are the “utterances of certain noises, the utterances of certain words in a certain construction, and the utterances of them with a certain ‘meaning’ in their favourite philosophical sense of that word, i.e. with a certain sense and with a certain reference” (1962:94).

Illocutionary acts are expressions which are considered usual or conventional, where they perform functions of informing, instructing, acknowledging duty, and caution. These require what Austin termed the “securing of uptake” (1962:116). In this regard, they seek to gain acknowledgement of their effect from the person/s addressed. They are “what we bring about or achieve by saying something, such as convincing, persuading, deterring, and even, say, surprising or misleading” (1962:108).

Austin says that the perlocutionary act, however, aims to produce an actual effect (or response) from the person addressed. In trying to establish my use of the terminology, my statement in Chapter One, ‘I am a Coloured’, serves as an example of the distinct ways of receiving information. ‘I am a Coloured’ is a locutionary act. This statement could carry the illocutionary function of instruction, amongst many other possible functions. Austin’s ‘uptake’ occurs if the receiver recognises the statement as an instruction. If the statement has been accepted by the receiver as an instruction to regard me as a Coloured person, a perlocutionary act has occurred¹⁵.

Judith Butler’s works on the performative expand Austin’s explorations, and illustrate that matter is an entity with a history and specific character. Matter “is clearly defined by a certain power of creation and rationality, [where the] significance of something is to know how and why it matters, where ‘to matter’ means at once to ‘materialize’ and ‘to mean’ (1993:32). She says that when bodies composed of matter perform, they use reiteration as a normalising process. Constant repetition of acts or the re-presentation of specific types of performances, therefore, reveals trends for investigation.

¹⁵ This paradigm is adapted from Timothy Gould’s (1995) ‘The Unhappy Performative’ in Parker, A, & Kosofsky Sedgwick, E. (eds.) Performativity and Performance. Routledge: New York.

Butler (1995:203) further says that the “subject who utters the socially injurious words is mobilised by that long string of injurious interpellations... that subject-effect... [It] is the consequence of that very citation, it is derivative.” All four of the performances arguably enact what, at different times and on different levels, can be seen as the utterances of derivatives.

In the plays under discussion, situational derivatives from the Coloured communities are performed, while a certain un-nuanced cultural insensitivity is also displayed at times. The characters often poke fun at members of different groups, but this subversion and inversion of roles is also inwardly focussed, making the points that communal attitudes- like the mistrust of the police today due to past police brutality, for example- could just as easily be a trait specific to another group as well. The ways in which these issues are portrayed, and much more explicitly re-enacted, suggests a more keenly astute gaze onto the real as performed, and not only performing the real. Within this context of naming ‘the other’, the characters are linked more tangibly as a ‘version’ of the Coloured. This can also be explained by McKinnon’s expansion of Butler’s comments on hate speech. She claims:

[It] makes the world a pornographic place through its making and use, establishing what women are said to exist as, are seen as, are treated as, constructing the social reality of what a woman is and can be in terms of what can be done to her, and what a man is in terms of doing it. (1993 :220)

I argue that an alternate reading of this applies to the debate around Coloured identity. My analogy looks at this ‘hate speech’ as the production of plays in which Coloureds are both the perpetrators, and the victims. These plays represent the group as an

unquestioning, problematic and dysfunctional entity, and yet still manage to convey the notions that the group identity is a construction reminiscent of a time gone by, rather than a construction grounded *within* current society. When a homogenous identity is portrayed it is problematic because of stereotype, as it becomes representative without acknowledging diversity within the group. If it is not challenged on the basis of this stereotype, it becomes an ascription of a stereotype. It becomes calling people Coloured, and only assuming one way in which they are, could, or should 'be' Coloured.

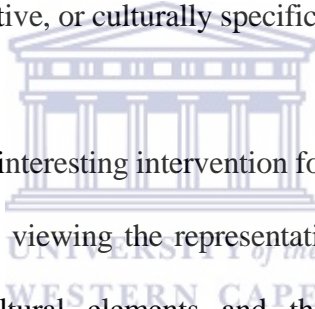
This injuriously ascribed identity to the Coloured on stage, as depicted so frequently in the past, is not idly problematic. It is a depiction which also maintains a perspective skewed and outdated, yet it still persists. It contains so much negative focus, and also focuses negatively on the ways in which the characters live their lives. The main problem with this representation is that it is presented as factual and thus truth, where what becomes 'familiar' to the viewer is only, however, a partial representation of the group. It achieves this 'familiarity' through repetition. It is perhaps guilty of establishing how many people look at Coloureds, and how many Coloured people thus look at themselves when they see themselves as popularised caricatures, bastardised by performance of a commercial value, rather than valuing their own diversity through performance.

This trend is further illustrated by another theorist who looks at stereotype as the typification of a group. Erika Fischer-Lichte (1996) regards "fragmented" theatre as one where performance is portraying a non-culture. This is the absence of the work being "offered as signs that should represent something, should mean anything", and where

performances are objects “which refer only to themselves and which delight in their very objectness” (1996:32).

The single sounds and images- meaningless in themselves, denying any references to their origin and background - all fully point dumbly back to themselves. There is no longer a sign process, meaning or orientation. (1996:32)

While it would be easily applicable to previous representations of the Coloured group on the stage, this reference to stereotype annulling culture can also be read in another way. Fischer-Lichte points out that due to the fluid nature of what is being represented for, and received by the audience, the spectator contextualises stereotype either as the familiar, new, offensive, deconstructive, or culturally specific.



Fischer-Lichte’s research makes an interesting intervention for those willing to read into stereotype too quickly. Rather than viewing the representations as simply *versions* of the culture, a look at other cultural elements and theatrical conventions also complements an analysis of this “kind of transitional phase by which the imposed foreign traditions will be gradually eliminated” (1996:35). If we look at the period the performances in this study fall within (1996 to 2004), we can thus assume that when ‘District Six: The Musical’ was first staged (1987), the theatrical convention employed then merited the combination of a ‘uniquely Coloured’ story with the protractions of Western staging.

During the 70’s and 80’s, vast theatre complexes in modern and post-modern versions of the Nuremberg style were erected in most urban centres, endowed with the most up-to-date equipment available in the world. But because these state-subsidised mausoleums were

so expensive to run, they inevitably resorted to productions of which box-office success was a foregone conclusion: huge musical extravaganzas, tried and trusted classics, practically all of them imported from abroad. (Brink, 1997)

Looking at the plays used in this study in more detail, we could also hypothesize that certain negotiations could occur. As a precursor to a discussion in Chapter Four about the plays as texts, I look at an example of how one of the plays does in fact confront social stereotypes, offering a view of alcohol and its relationship to the Coloured group.

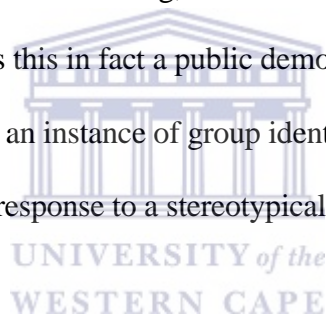
‘Suip’, without the use of many props, emphasises how, through performance, characters simultaneously construct and deconstruct identity. Breaking what is regarded as the fourth wall of the theatre, the characters deconstruct stereotype by an engagement between themselves onstage, and with the audience. The dialogue is sometimes profane, and sometimes subverts the message being portrayed, which is partly that transformation is not just a racial process being negotiated, but a class negotiation too. Conventional theatre attendance does not necessarily entail a barrage of insults directed at the audience, interspersed with a first-hand and focussed account of what colonisation could have been like for the indigenous people of South Africa (I discuss this aspect further in Chapter Five, where I look at the staged performances onstage in more detail.) That anger is manifest throughout the show also amplifies an acknowledgement of the more confrontational theatre in 1980s South Africa, but the performance is situated in the ‘New South Africa’, after democratic elections. I use the term transitiono-confrontational theatre as applicable to such performances that challenge what is regarded as the status quo or norm in society.

This challenge is visible in the Second Act of ‘Suip’, where the actors start a discussion about why drinking alcohol is such a prevalent phenomenon in the Coloured community. Shaun, a young man on the streets, is given tutelage by his father in a flashback scene. The other actors participate by assuming alternative roles in a fluidity of identity change. Shaun’s father tells him that it is a rite of passage into manhood, the first time they will get drunk together. He tells him it is “a time when men can talk and share their feelings”. He (Shaun’s father) also recounts how he sees other Coloured youngsters sitting around and drinking. Here it is seen as a class observation, as he says to Shaun:

Ek sien hoe kyk jy vir daai laaities wat so lekker sit en spirits suip, nogal wit spirits ook. They think they are main manne, Vodka, Gin, Tequila, Witblitz. Hulle verbeel hulle hulle is high and mighty royals wat wat ice-cream kak en hoop so desperately dat die spirits hulle binnekant wit kan was, want al wat hulle weet is die: hulle voel siek, siek van hulle ma, siek van hulle pa, siek van hulle ouma, oupa, die helle happy lot wat klomp jare se kak van 'bruin- wees' af van hulle keele af druk.

[I see how you watch those youngsters who are sitting over there drinking spirits, and they are drinking white spirits too. They think they are the main men, Vodka, Gin, Tequila, Witblitz. They imagine to themselves that they are high and mighty royals who shit ice-cream and hope so desperately that the spirits will wash their insides white, because all they know is this: they feel sick, sick of their mother, sick of their father, sick of their grandmother, grandfather, the whole happy lot who took many years of shit about ‘being brown’ being forced down their throats.] [My translation]

Shaun's father continues to say that this new breed of 'Gam yuppies' are also the first to distance themselves from the rest of the group, as they are suddenly not that type of Coloured any longer, or have never been in other cases. This is seen in Marc Lottering's newest offering 'Grootbek' (2005), where he refers to *those Coloureds* as never being the group any other Coloured really wished to aspire to. Yet somehow, this also fulfils a role in creating a part of a group identity. This is typified when we look at Blackman Ngoro's comments in retrospect, where Coloured people suddenly responded in an individual and a collective fashion to his statements, in the public arena. The 'Jou ma se...' headline of the new regional tabloid, which is seen as predominantly Coloured (*Daily Voice*), brought chuckles of mirth from many. That this is the type of response Coloured people are stereotyped with is one thing, but no letters objecting to the headline were published either. Was this in fact a public demonstration saying that it is okay to be Coloured? Was this then an instance of group identification, under the banner of accepting a stereotypical response to a stereotypical (and obviously dated) outlook?



Fischer-Lichte further says that in "post-colonial times after national independence, the evolution and confirmation of the own cultural identity naturally became one of the most important tasks of theatre" (1996:34). The comedies in this study, in turn, show this evolution by their unwillingness to use aspects "of their own culture in order to romanticize pre-colonial history and the traditions of that era" (1996:34). Their starting points and their situatedness are in the present. They act as confirmations of 'now' as 'here'. This contrasts with the drama of 'Suip' where the present is linked to the past. The past is portrayed as having many pitfalls. The past here does not mirror, but perhaps illustrates a cycle where mistreatment and hardship fall onto a specific group of

people. This cycle is portrayed as spanning generations. It thus shows that the nature of transition in South Africa still necessitates a performance trend where norms can be confronted. 'Suip', while recounting the past, also shows that discrimination comes in many forms, which is tangibly linked to the hardships faced by Cape Town's homeless today.

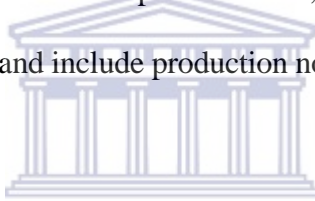
It is perhaps here where we see the theatre being tasked with affirming current representations of different groups, and not just the national identity. These tasks are not for the benefit of race purists, or classifiers even. They are there as signifiers of negotiated identities, wrought by changing conditions in the country. An awareness of the situatedness of productions into time-frames is of use simply in that they can be located in spaces where they can be contested. A representation of Coloured people still living in District Six, which at present (November 2005) is still under construction after demolition decades ago, simply does not have the same effect on those who were not present, or even born. This is not to say that the memory of what happened should be discarded, nor that plays looking at the past are of less value; instead, it could be better to place these as part of the process of transformation. It is part of the middle of a story, and the story now has new actors inhabiting lead roles. The issues confronted, concealed, or simply revealed should also allude to what is relevant to the viewer who has come for more than a distorted history lesson. In order to situate the responses which participants have expressed in the study, I move to exploring the performances in the following two chapters, first as texts, and then as performed.

Chapter Four

Framing the Performances

A text cannot convert itself to each reader it comes into contact with. (Wolfgang Iser, 1980)

The focus here is firstly on reading the plays as texts and then as staged in Chapter Five. In order to introduce the case study, Chapter Six will examine the methodology framing the case study investigation before examining participant responses gained from questionnaires. I now examine the texts of two performances, ‘Joe Barber’ and ‘Suip’, which were provided by the writers and include production notes.



My study of the performance texts, as taken from scripts, is informed by Jason and Segal’s (1977:3) structuralist distinguishing model for locating the ‘*real*’ structure beneath enacted performances. This consists of four levels: wording, poetic texture, narrative, and the meanings of the symbolic components. Emphasis is placed upon wording, narrative and symbolism for the purposes of this project. The use of social science concepts mainly serves to shed additional light on issues like identity and culture. As case study interviews and questionnaires are designed primarily to gauge attitudes and perceptions about identity, the social science analysis of texts - and the performances *as* texts - supplement a performance analysis on the topics.

The discussion includes a literature based analysis of the scripts of ‘Suip’ and ‘Joe Barber’. The writers acknowledge the scripts to be the closest existing textual versions

of the actual staged performances. These scripts provide a useful foundation for exploring the original ideas the writers strove to get across to readers, and (eventually) spectators. In addition to the scripts, I also transcribed sections of the recorded performances where necessary. The use of ‘Gamtaal’, or the combination of English, Afrikaans and slang forms has been noted previously in this work. As the collective cast uses quite explicit language at times, it is also interesting to see the students’ responses to how ‘Gamtaal’ can be received, as well as the class association it possibly denotes.

I now explore Balme’s (1996) expansion of Erving Goffman’s theory of ‘frame-breaking’. The discussion centres on ‘frame-breaking’ and the conventions this process manipulates, which is then linked to the ways in which the performances as staged are represented through different framing mechanisms. This approach is also useful when looking at the texts as ‘frame-breakers’ for the reader. This chapter deals with frame-breaking firstly as a discussion tool, as in the texts, and is then followed in the next chapter by a similarly informed application to staged versions of the performances.

Erving Goffman’s (sociology-based) ‘frame analysis’ is primarily focused on social experience and its organization and perception, yet he draws heavily upon a range of cinematic, theatrical and radio dramas to illustrate his analyses. Goffman defines framing as:

[D]efinitions of a situation [which] are built up in accordance with principles of organization which govern events, at least social ones, and our subjective involvement in them; frame is the word I use to refer to such of these basic elements as I am able to identify.

(cited in Balme, 1996:10)

Balme expands on Goffman's theory by applying it analogously to the theatre. He sets forth these categories as explanations of Goffman's work, but claims them as his own:

Dramaturgical framing... informs, narrates, tells us where and when the actions take place... Performance framing [are] the sets of conventions which control the shift from the everyday world to the fictional world of the theatrical performance and the behaviour of both actors and spectators, which obtains during the performance. (1996: 65-84)

He explains that at "certain cues" such as house-lights being dimmed or the curtains being raised, the theatre-goer becomes the "on-looker" (Goffman's distinction), the "actor assumes his role, and, traditionally in Western theatre, in so doing divorces himself in varying degrees from his personal identity" (1996:130). Balme says:

[G]eneric framing... is the information provided to inform the spectator as to what genre of theatrical performance s/he will be witnessing, which in turn influences his activity as a spectator. For example, spectatorial behaviour should be different in a night-club show or music hall than in the performance of an Ibsen play. Generic framing influences performance framing. It is a component of the 'horizon of expectation', a term introduced by the theorists of reception aesthetics to denote primarily reading strategies. (1996:73)

In order to set up the exploration of the framework, I look at specific aspects while applying it to the four performances. Balme asserts that several criteria comprise a generic frame (1996:74). These include how productions are identified through posters, setting up the frames by means of music and/or dance, as well as the progression from a generic frame to a

dramaturgical frame. Using 'Suip' as a case in point, the actors who appear onstage and subsequently speak directly to the audience members make them a part of the spectacle. The posters and promotional leaflets figure a facial shot of a Coloured woman, blurred against a black background, with one of the stereotypes associated with Coloured people evident even in this blurring. The woman does not have front teeth, and her mouth is wide open to reveal this to the viewer. The representation of the homeless people in the first scene of the play also upholds this image. When the actors challenge the audience, and tell them that this is a play within another play, and it is for remuneration, they also set up the framework inside the theatre. The additional dramaturgical framework is assigned as interactive, and the audience is also assigned dual roles. The audience is now cast as spectators to the play the characters are performing, which occurs within the theatrical production they paid to see. Dramaturgical framing also occurs through the use of "narration as a flashback" (1996:80), such as the flashback to nightclubbing days as recounted by Gamat and Joe in 'Joe Barber'. In this way, lighting cues and music also contribute to the sense of stepping into the past. The changes also transform the representation of the characters into representations or re-formulations of themselves, where they give their own perspectives on 'how things used to be'.

Costumes used in the production are simply exchanged between characters, as for instance in 'Joe Barber', where the Barber's white jackets are removed revealing shirts or sweaters underneath them allowing easy transition into various characters. The actors also use different hats, caps or

scarves in order to represent this change. Marc Lottering's costume changes are more extravagant, with dresses, wigs, scarves, as well as music and lighting effects contributing to the scene and character changes. With Lottering often appearing flustered by the process of costume changes, the audience laughter at this irritation expressed by the actor also serves to highlight the role change. It also foregrounds that this is a representation of a character, as opposed to a real person, and is thus a dramaturgical construction.

Analysis of the performances as textual and as staged also includes looking at linguistic codes, where the languages in all four performances include 'Gamtaal' as previously mentioned. I focus on these codes more specifically in discussion of the plays as staged. In the reading of the 'Joe Barber' and 'Suip' texts, no transcription from English to Afrikaans is present, making certain portions of the material inaccessible to those unfamiliar with 'Gamtaal'. This is possibly a point where the reader could be 'othered', and thus distanced from the writing.

Linguistic differences are highlighted in 'Joe Barber', as described in Chapter Two, where Gamat is teaching his son how to use correct grammar. Rose, in 'Suip', is also corrected by her husband Shaun for using incorrect forms, with the modified forms being supplied as chastisement. 'Suip' also continuously drifts between Afrikaans and English, with the differences being foregrounded for the audience members by characters repeatedly

asserting to one another that they “must also speak some English too because most of these tourists do not understand Afrikaans.”

Proxemic and kinesic codes also inscribe meaning upon the performances, according to Balme (1996:80), “these kinesic codes [can] range from sign language, to mime, to dance, to stylized, sculptured movement.” I look at physical proxemics in my discussion of stylized movement, where the taxi ‘gaatjie’ in Lottering’s ‘From the Cape Flats With Love’ is seen as representing a stereotype partly because Lottering affects certain movements in his characterisation of him. This is further discussed in Chapter Five, and can also be seen in the analysis of ‘Joe Barber’, where the gangster is represented as affecting many of the same traits describing the taxi ‘gaatjie’.

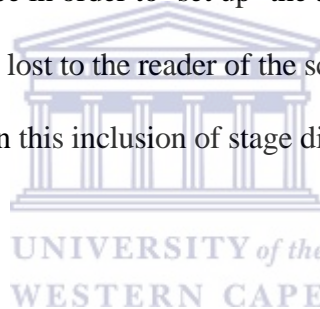


The Performances as Texts

‘Joe Barber’ – The Script

The script of ‘Joe Barber’ includes, in its denotation boxes for scene changes, a phrased synopsis of important moments in the forthcoming scene. This provides an introduction to what is to be expected from the performance, and acts similarly to a headline framing a journalist’s by-line. At certain points in the script, these synopses also include directed instructions for the performances and performers as to meanings they should try to evoke from the audience. As Goffman and Balme’s analysis show, this generic framing often involves using music and dance in order to ‘set up’ the audience expectation.

While the song and dance routine is lost to the reader of the script (but is covered in *staged* performance analysis), it is in this inclusion of stage directions that we can often see nuanced meanings attached.



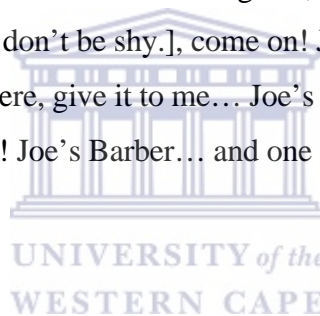
‘Joe Barber’ tells the story of a barbershop and its two inhabitants, Joe and Gamat.

Experiencing a typical day at the shop, the two recount stories from their past, merging it with frequent references to current events, thus situating the story in the present day.

The characters speak directly to the audience, often asking for assistance with tasks such as sweeping the floor of hair clippings, to asking for audience opinion about topical issues. The two actors share triple roles, however, as they also represent themselves as ‘real’ people (David and Oscar), as well as alternate characters Washiela and Outjie.

One nuanced meaning afforded by scripted stage directions occurs at the beginning of Scene Three in 'Joe Barber': 'Mo Dif: There is more to Coloured people'. Already, the reader is encouraged (or directed) to acknowledge that a difference exists in how Coloured people are regarded, and that in this play it is a thematic trend. The characters are noted as David (Isaacs) and Oscar (Petersen) at this point, as they have just welcomed the audience with a song and dance routine. Later in the performance, they assume their various supporting roles. The two have just welcomed the audience into the theatre, and now turn towards the stage. The song includes a refrain where the audience is encouraged to sing along to the words 'Joe Barber', which is emphasised by David's scripted shouting:

I can't hear you, louder... Joe's Barber... ag nee, moenie
 skaam wees nie [Oh no, don't be shy.], come on! Joe's
 Barber... and this side here, give it to me... Joe's Barber...
 one more time, come on! Joe's Barber... and one last time...
 Joe's Barber.



The synopsis heading Scene Three states that it will: 'Play on names and stereotypes - to please an audience: Different characters incl. Gaatjie, Flower Seller, I&J, Watch Seller, Daar Kom die Alibama.' This follows the song routine in Scene Two. As the performers play with the words 'jy' (you) and 'jou' (your) and the title of the play, they launch into stereotypical representations as they *themselves* see them performed. The first stereotype they perform contains part of the 'jy/jou' discussion, where it is suddenly repeated and manipulated into being the first utterance of an expletive:

David: Dis jou Barber. [It's your Barber]
 Oscar: Jy jou jy jou jy jou jou naai... man, so se die
 whities mos vir hulle coloured tjommies dan dink

hulle dis 'n fokken joke. [You your you your you
you're your... no man... That's what the whiteys
tell their coloured friends, and then they think it's
a fucking joke.

While transgressing social boundaries within a framework that is sometimes profane, the actors continue to challenge stereotypes of Coloured people. As noted in the script synopsis, the actors are constrained by the writing to adopt characteristics often seen as representative of the Coloured community. Within the text, as opposed to the performance-enhanced view, these characteristics are essentially language driven. In the text and the performance, it is also the images that these utterances evoke which play a key role in ascribing meaning to them. In the discussion on Marc Lottering's 'From the Cape Flats With Love' in Chapter Five, I deal with this performer's rendition of a taxi 'gaatjie' (taxi tariff collector). In 'Joe Barber', the 'gaatjie' appears as another stereotyped reproduction for the reader. This has been noted twice, by the writers, and by the actors' assigned lines. In opposition to Lottering's, this version of the gaatjie character is involved in some 'shady' deal, where he tries to sell (suspected) stolen goods while working at the taxi rank:

David: Hello my darling, man. Ek het 'n nokia cell
phone vir jou my sweetheart. Only R17 for
you my dear... dis nog in die pouch en so
aan... moenie so is nie man. [It's still in the
pouch... Don't be like that, man.] Huh- uh!
Mowbray! Claremont! Wineberg!
Mowbray! Claremont! Wineberg! Kaap toe
nou, Mowbray! Claremont! Wineberg!
Kaap toe nou. [Cape Town, next.]

In reading the text we are afforded an opportunity to see the subtlety that the writers intend. From my own experience as spectator, the pronunciation of ‘Wineberg’ (a suburb and commercial shopping district in Cape Town) was not in any way different to ‘Wynberg’, the place. The text allows a different view of this *mis*-pronunciation as intended, and as associated with the stereotype being portrayed. The allusion to alcohol plays on another stereotype. It situates Wynberg as home to, as well as associating the place with the conditions faced by, the many homeless who find shelter in its corners and alleys. An ascription has occurred, and it is confronted not as a Coloured group ascription, as represented all too often, but instead a product of the substance being abused.

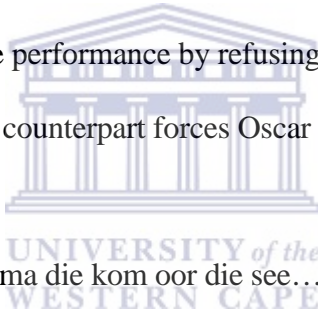
Another stereotype is then portrayed, that of the flower-seller:

Oscar: Hello Mrs. I’ve been standing here the whole day in the sun. It’s the last one. Last one for you. Ek vra vir R5 vir die bos, man. Five roses for you. Aartappels, uie, tamaties, R2 a bag for you! Hier’s ‘n geluk nou vir you. En die Here het gese liewe broers en susters, die here het gese hulle kan sover soos by die maan gaan, but verdure as daai, verdure as daai my liewe broers en susters, verdure as daai gaan julle kak!

[I’m asking R5 for the bunch, man. Five Roses for you. Potatoes, onions, tomatoes, R2 a bag for you! Now here’s a bargain for you. And the Lord said dear brothers and sisters, the Lord said you can travel as far as the moon, but further than that, further than that my dear brothers and sisters, further than that you are in for some shit!]

In this monologue, the actor moves through stereotypes rapidly, blending them together almost seamlessly as he also changes whom he represents. The representation becomes collective, instead of individual, with the common link between the representations being the language used. The flower-seller becomes the vegetable ‘hawker’, who while telling the reader that a bargain is in store for them, becomes the evangelist often seen ministering on trains and public platforms.

The representation then includes a reference to a television commercial for a major seafood company in South Africa, which in this treatment is rendered stereotypical of framing Coloured people as fishermen. Another prevalent stereotype, that of the dancing and singing Coon or ‘klopse’, is then affected by both the characters. It is at this point that David Isaacs stops the performance by refusing to participate, as directed by the script. The response from his counterpart forces Oscar Petersen to stop in mid-sentence. They debate:

- 
- Oscar: Alibama die kom oor die see... {dancing up the stairs.
He realises David is not with him.} Kom nou, David,
jy. [Come on, David.]
- David: No man.
- Oscar: Dans saam jy David. [You, David, dance with.]
- David: No...
- Oscar: Hey, ons het die hele number gechoreograph, you
should have been onstage here... David, we're doing it
for the tourists this time. [We choreographed the whole
song...]
- David: No... Jy! There's more to coloured people than
Mowbray, Claremont, Wynberg, aartappels, uiwe,
tamatie... Chang challangalang chang chang.

In a display of defiance, Isaacs in-character (as himself) reveals that he is tired of enacting a version of ‘being’ a Coloured person, for others. He takes on the call of the many street vendors selling fruit and vegetables, along with the call of the taxi ‘gaatjie’, who calls out his route continuously for prospective passengers in the streets to hear. These are two of the stereotypes closely associated with Coloured people, albeit ‘derivatives’ showing Coloured people in low-income positions. His character here affects what Goffman calls ‘breaking-frame’, which attempts to redefine the roles traditionally associated with the group. While many more instances of frame-breaking occur in ‘Joe Barber’, I move on to examples of this phenomenon in ‘Suip’.

‘Suip’ – The Script

Act One of ‘Suip’ is divided into separate scenes, each with their own heading. Under the main heading, ‘CULTURE’, scene one is titled “The Bite”, and is an introduction centred on familiarising the audience with cast members. ‘The Bite’ here refers to attracting an audience, and keeping them at the performance site so that they feel obliged to pay for the entertainment. The boundaries constraining this initiation are immediately tested by the actors, where they are directed to interact with the audience. Opening scene directions, with stage directions in parentheses:

{The stage erupts with the noisy entrance of the five characters, pushing a trolley into the empty space. They are making a noise but still look very unsure about what they are doing. With them, they carry a street sign and pole which they ceremoniously place in the centre of the stage. The stage is declared a street. They realize the audience and become very shy, they are not sure about how

they will be received.}

Shaun, one of the lead characters, reveals to the audience that they, the ‘bergies’ (vagrants), are not ‘bad people’, a common stereotype of the homeless, but that they are just in the process of setting up a scene to entertain the shoppers in Cape Town’s St George’s Mall. The play is thus located in a space outside the theatre, in an ordering process the audience can relate to. Goffman (1959) refers to this as setting up the ‘reality’ of the performance. In Chapter Two, I referred to Garfinkel’s expansion of Goffman’s theories, where he describes the ordering process as a means to establish the status quo, or as a way to delimit what is acceptable or not. In the representation of the ‘bergies’ in this scene, Shaun steps out of the frame, breaking frame from the actor confined to the stage, who then interacts with the stage manager, as well as the sound technician. He hands the technician a cassette to be played, so that music can accompany their performance. In this frame break, he also appropriates an indigenous (Zulu) performance form, along with the rest of the cast, who follow suit in a mimicking display:

Sorry for shouting so loud but those Zulu dancers
 wat so hane vier voet in die lug spring maak n
 hell of n’ geraas met hulle kwaai dromme. Met
 hulle dromme! {The rest try and make the
 appropriate sounds} Ja you like it when Zulu
 dancers are busking while you shop, cause you
 take out your camera and take nice pictures.

Ja en daar, shame die arme Sarafina choir kan
 skaars mekaar hoor. {The rest sing a flat
 imitation of Sarafina, with a few moves}
 Vooitog is al Sarafina version 54 maar al wat

sing is hulle. Hey you take some more photos for your 'out in Africa photo collection' It's true yes you tourists love other people's culture ne, find it romantic ne. So? Hier's dit nou, Kyk vir ons, die original Africans. Yes the original copies on the original map. So I bid you welcome to the Cape and welcome to our show. Yes missus you are welcome to take pictures of us too, spreken zie duits lig nog mig, welcome to the new South Africa.

The articulation of how the characters are seen, from the outside, alludes to how the performance has been set up. This is in response to a set of expectations that the actors onstage assume the audience has, and as they attempt to fulfil these expectations we find them questioning the methods they have to employ in order to gain viewer attention. The references to another staged production, 'Sarafina', is also relevant in that it was during this time, in 1999, when public outcry denounced the spending of millions of Rands in order to launch a second instalment of this show, to tackle AIDS education in South Africa. The production remained mired in controversy, eventually emerging as a failed attempt at a sequel, with significant financial losses. The actors thus locate themselves, and the re-presentation of themselves, as situated in the 'New South Africa' in this production. The critique of 'Sarafina' is embodied in their actualising it for the audience, where they are directed to "sing a flat imitation of Sarafina, with a few dance moves" thrown in for effect. The half-hearted attempt also points to the way in which they received this production and others seen as popular, as they also refer to the writers of 'District Six: The Musical', David Kramer and Taliep Petersen next:

Ons entertain vir julle. En sommer lekker ook,
so lekker dat David Kramer en Taliep se nuwe

Musical oor ons sal wees, hulle sit ons mos on
TV ook, cause yis you got it, these are the days
of our lives...

[We entertain you. And very well too, so well
that David Kramer and Taliep's new Musical
will be about us, they put us on TV too, 'cause
yes, you got it, these are the days of our lives...]

Here the explicit reference to 'District Six: The Musical' is associated with performing a version of being Coloured that is better equipped to lure voyeuristic tourists. David Kramer (who is White) is also referred to by first and last names, as opposed to the 'familiarity' afforded Taliep Petersen by only using his first name. The Reisenhoffer, Petersen and Isaacs trio's 'Joe Barber' also refers to the writers of 'District Six: The Musical' in their production, after a local-lyric infusion song routine, using a popular melody. The writers supplant what they consider an intrusive cultural influence in South Africa. As an anti-statement to this cultural intrusion, they insert images of a play they associate with facets of this culture in their own productions. This perhaps shows a strong movement away from one form of what was once considered 'popular' representation, to a re-negotiated version.

The representations the actors contest are further compared to being normalised as in a soap opera. The play on the words "days of our lives" shows that everyday interaction has been represented as if it were part of an American soap opera. This television series is located in sensationalism, and is strongly based on stock characters. Interestingly, the stock characters are often replaced by a multitude of actors, who play the same characters in a fluidity of role changes. Much more disturbing is the association between the homeless trying to earn some money while in the process of re-performing

a commercialised and thus more acceptable version of themselves for tourists. This is linked to a series where the suspension of belief and logic is key to accepting any part of its premise. It is what is represented on television, and in this case perhaps compares the Coloureds on-stage to stereotypical figures in an Americanised soap opera. The Coloured thus exists *for* the entertainment of others. The challenge to the way that the piece is received is thus implicit in the next part of the performance, where they sing a song dedicated to Table Mountain, as the location that they are seen as coming from. The characters introduce themselves individually to the audience here. Rose, while attempting to introduce herself, finds that her effort to break frame from the performance is constrained by her husband, Shaun:

Shaun: Kom Rose, Rose naai man, doen it the way we practiced
(Shaun struggles, Rose is too shy)

Rose: Hello my name is Rose en Shaun is my
husband en...
het missus nie miskien vir my werk nie...
[Madam, don't you perhaps have work for
me...]

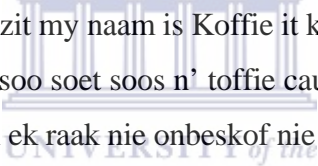
Shaun: Rose, nie nou nie [not now] man this is a show.

Rose: Ooh Ja! Shaun is my husband and he is an intellect...

Rose is not allowed to forget that she is performing a version of what is acceptable to the viewer of the play. Her effort to look for employment from a passer-by is stopped, as it is made evident that this is not the way to attract an audience, much less entice them to stay and watch the performance. Shaun reminds her that this recital of who she is, for these particular viewers, has been rehearsed. It has a form, and it has a function. This relocates the performance into a frame dictated not by the actors, but by the viewers. The audience in the theatre, being made part of this ploy, are also thus

assuming dual roles where they act as the passers-by and as the people watching the duality unfold. In this setting, they are possibly able to reflect upon their own experiences of having witnessed similar events occurring outside the theatre. Their reactions have been pre-empted by the actors however, and in this space it is possible that they can reflect upon their own actions when confronted by similar scenes in their own lives. For the reader of the texts, however, perhaps the proposed form could be mediated through their own sets of expectations about visualising the scenes.

Further character introductions include Koffie, Sophia, and the character referred to as ‘Kid/ Kind [Child]’. Koffie’s introduction is lyrically rhythmical, where he uses his name and rhymes words with it accordingly in Afrikaans and English:



Koffie: Jo ja yis ja, hoezit my naam is Koffie it klink soos moffie maar is soo soet soos n’ toffie cause why ek is nie rof nie en ek raak nie onbeskof nie en nou die ding is die ek hou nie van die hof nie want die magistraat hy kan praat en sy dinge sal jou raak. Skrik wakker, hou op slenter, jo nigga watch out for Vanderwatsins klenter raak wys ek is Koffie, sharp maar nie Te rof nie...hosh West Side!
 [Yes, howzit. My name is Koffie, it sounds like moffie (effeminate man), but it’s sweet like toffee. Why? I’m not rough, I don’t get rude, and the thing is I don’t like the courts, because the magistrate can speak and his judgements will affect you. Wake up, stop dawdling, yo nigger watch out for Vanderwhatsins and recognise that I am Koffie, I’m sharp but not too rough... West Side!]

Koffie makes reference to sexuality, violence, rudeness and the judiciary system in a set piece which uses ‘Gamtaal’ throughout, but ends with a reference to the African American gang culture typified in certain American rap songs. His inclusion of this genre also thus makes the point that cultural affectations often do stem from outside the group being viewed, and shows acceptance of this performance form. Perhaps this is also a comment upon the appropriation of a more acceptable form that the Coloured actors have to present. Mimicking an intrusive culture, as in ‘Joe Barber’, is a theme examined in ‘Suip’, where copying Western cultural expressions is often one way of showing that it has pervasive effects upon local representations.

Sophia refers to her position in relation to her employers when she describes herself, further mimicking the identity she has to present:

Sophia: I am Sophia die madam en die baas se Sophia
 so good, Sophia Sophia soo good,
 (sings: Sophia!!!...)
 [I am Sophia, the Madam and the Boss’
 Sophia...]

Sophia does not say anything personal which reveals her as an individual to the audience. Instead, she locates her identity as an ascribed one, where the job she fulfils and the success with which it is received define her introduction. She assigns ownership of herself to her Madam and Boss. This is in sharp distinction to the identity ascribed to the boy (Kid/Kind), who, when he sees an opening to introduce himself to the audience, is immediately stopped. He tries to dance into his introduction, but is assaulted by the other characters. Not allowed to speak, his silence could be seen as situating him in the ‘New South Africa’ as a voice not yet tested, and thus not important enough. The other characters are hesitant to allow this ‘untested’ voice into their dialogue, where he might

upset the balance they are trying to achieve so they can get the audience to accept their ‘bites’, and thus give them some money. For the entire first scene, he is thus a presence on the stage, but an unspeaking presence. The silence also shows that the boy had not been situated into the framework of acceptability being portrayed. It thus makes it even more important that his voice does emerge later. In this way, he can perhaps properly express his views against those held by his counterparts.

In the second scene, titled ‘The History of the Bottle’, the characters follow the audience’s ‘payment’ to their requested donations by sending Rose to buy liquor. Their directed dis-ease is evident in the stage directions:

{The people up to this point have hidden their anxiousness quite well, but now its beginning to show a lot more. They are clearly anticipating Rose’s return. They try maybe to sing a song, with the audience. It’s a very uncomfortable moment. Rose returns in a festive mood and very excited with a huge crate full of liquor. There is every kind of alcohol from different wines to spirits. }

The characters are invigorated by Rose’s return with alcohol, and Sophia suddenly changes her discomfort about having to act by saying, because of all the alcohol she received, that she now “likes acting”. Rose warns them all:

Rose: Nou mense drink ordentlik. Hulle kyk vir ons.
 [Now people, drink nicely. They are watching
 us.]

{They all go into a line and share the wine in an almost ceremonious way. They are desperate for their first sip but they try to be as civilized about it as possible. A change happens, they seem to loosen up almost immediately. }

Shaun: Hey I am excited about everything around us, we feel good because it is good to be free because why...

Sofia: Weywey a iah!

Shaun: Yes Sofia thank you. Because why we were not always...free, our country has changed and Mandela is president.

Sofia: Mandela se poes man.

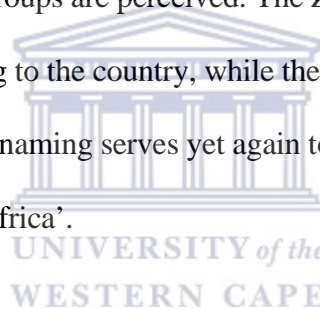
The discussion around politics emerges without warning, and the reaction of the audience is one of discomfort. Upon my viewing of the performance, audible commentary in the audience accompanied this last statement. The explicitness of the text, where the words are visible, has a similar effect upon the reader, as the iconic status that Mandela enjoys is rarely challenged in South Africa, and if so, regarded as misdirected. Rose quickly says, as part of a stage directed qualification, that this show is not for the Coloured people in the audience, but for those who can afford to pay them. She further questions why the ANC are not giving homes to 'bruinmense' [brown people], and contests conditions she finds are only improving for others, and not for her. She is thus placing herself, as a Coloured, up for sale. She is acknowledging that only the acceptable or stereotypical version is rewarded, and that there is no reward for being herself. This, she notes, is also lacking for other Coloured people, and she is thus more at ease perpetuating the stereotype others define her as, rather than trying to be herself.

Shaun launches into a discussion of what 'bergie' means, and says that the name is associated with Table Mountain, as I discussed in Chapter One, where 'Coloured'

meant 'from the Cape'. The meaning in the dictionary is revealed by Shaun as 'vagrant', but it is the associations that come with the name that rankle him:

Vagrant... hey my friends I think it is a bad word because when people say it they think they are better than you and you are a nothing. Because why? Hey man when you say 'Zulu' people say it with pride and respect. We are people too, we have feelings too. If someone calls me bergie I just think, this person he is stupid because he don't know what it really means.

Shaun uses the comparison between the terms vagrant and Zulu, and suggests that while they do not expressly compartmentalise themselves under a Coloured banner, differences do exist between how groups are perceived. The Zulu's are accorded a history and a relevance as belonging to the country, while the name 'bergie' marks the Coloured people on this street. The naming serves yet again to deny them a history, and thus relevance in the 'New South Africa'.



In the next Chapter, I continue to investigate stereotypes of the Coloured, but move from textual versions of the performances to their staged counterparts. These stagings often illustrate that stereotypes function best when they are physically performed, as they are associated with specific groups who are seen as continually re-performing the actions. While this re-enactment of stereotype occurs it is perhaps pertinent to state that, for the people going about their normal activities, they are not performing a stereotype, but a way of doing things, a way of being.

Chapter Five

The Performances

Re-staging the Coloured

The performances as staged reveal many nuanced readings not as apparent in the texts, simply because they are framed by theatrical conventions and inventions designed to elicit specific reactions from the audience. In this section, I look at Lottering's 'From the Cape Flats With Love' as the primary performance, using frame analysis of this production and the other three performances to investigate these enacted versions of Coloured people on the stage.



Conveying Meaning and Method

In 'Joe Barber', the audience are welcomed into the theatre by the two actors (Petersen and Isaacs). This framing of the theatrical experience occurs as part of the generic frame-breaking, as discussed in the previous Chapter. The actors frame a dramaturgical experience for the audience members where conventions or norms for *this* performance are established. This frame-shifting mechanism is performed at the entrance to the theatre. As an informal prologue to the set-piece about to unfold onstage, this is a performance piece in itself. It promotes its informality while serving to aid the spectators' entries into what for some was the familiar, and for others the unfamiliar space they were walking into.

The selected plays do not attempt to convey only one ‘truthful’ and representative Coloured individual or community. Class differences are portrayed as much as any mention of race. This study looks only briefly at perceptions of class differences within the plays, as there is not scope for a rigorous investigation here. There are marked differences in the representivity being portrayed, as Lottering’s plays give, firstly, a personal reading of being a Coloured in South Africa, played as Marc Lottering. Secondly, in both plays, he gives a multi-character interpretation, portraying various roles while interweaving these stock figures by hosting the show as himself. The ‘himself’ he represents onstage is a warm and funny individual, characterised by (and attributed to) being reared within a very religious family. This family upbringing also helps the audience to be suitably shocked when he recounts more off-colour anecdotes as well, in keeping with another version of Butler’s ‘injurious speech’ theory, where the actor and his various characters transgress boundaries in order to elicit response from the viewer.



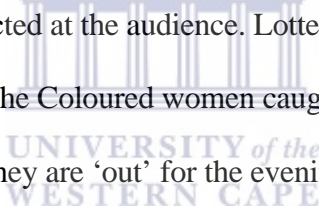
‘From the Cape Flats With Love’

As the stage lights come up and Marc Lottering emerges from the wings holding a hair-dryer in his hand, the actor welcomes the audience to the Baxter Theatre¹⁶. Lottering associates the bad weather outside the theatre, the dimming of the house lights, and the ‘relief’ certain female members of the audience must be feeling as part of the generic frame of the performance. This shows a transition from the generic frame to the dramaturgical frame, where the conventions and ‘norms’ of the performance are set out for the audience. The ‘relief’ Lottering ascribes to ‘some women in the audience’ is

¹⁶ Participants in the case study viewed ‘From the Cape Flats With Love’ in a screening room at UWC. The play was recorded and is available on VHS. I also attended the performance during its first run in 2001, at the Baxter Theatre.

located in the darkness the audience are now surrounded by since the house lights have dimmed, thus giving them time to fix their hair.

That hair issues and Coloured identity enjoy a sometimes uneasy relationship is a strong theme in this production, as with all of Lottering's productions since. In this production, Lottering (appearing first as Marc Lottering the comedian/actor) relates three anecdotes about hair, and these alone occur in the introductory transition to a dramaturgical frame. This preface is lengthy, running about twelve minutes. This is possibly the actor/writer's attempt to foreground certain issues like race and stereotype, and serves to frame how the audience sees him as a Coloured actor, re-performing versions of being Coloured.



The first anecdote about hair is directed at the audience. Lottering here uses the hair-dryer as a familiarising tool, where the Coloured women caught in the rain outside would understand its relevance, as they are 'out' for the evening. Implicated in this reaction is (what is presented as a) group insecurity about hair, and what hair thus says about Coloured people in social settings like the theatre. The actor highlights how important hair still is in making people feel at ease, in an aspiration to have sleeker, straighter hair in order to attain a cosmetically enhanced ranking in the social hierarchy.

The second hair-related anecdote shows how Lottering is able to use his own hair as an excuse to deal with situations he would rather not confront. He claims, by using his hair in these situations, to be en route somewhere with a hair emergency, and as the stereotypes of the Coloureds contain 'problematic' hair references, it can here serve an affirming purpose.

Here Lottering claims a positive side to ‘naming’ (and perhaps un-shaming) his hair, which is interestingly enough only done explicitly while in the guise of one of his characters, Merle Abrahams (see Footnote)¹⁷.

Lottering interrupts his hair-theme by telling the audience about his first staged appearance at ‘Die Klein Karoo Kunstefees’ [The Klein Karoo Arts Festival]. He reveals his trepidation about performing at an event that had been described to him (by friends) as predominantly White/Boer, allowing the audience a glimpse of an insecurity about expressing a Coloured identity, or aspects thereof. Lottering says the ‘tannies’ (older, White, Afrikaans women) were very nice to him:

Marc, ons lag vir jou, jong,

Jy verskaf ons met groot plesier.

[Marc, we laugh for you, man,

you provide us with much pleasure/ great entertainment]

Die toilette vir julle is daar agter, hoor?

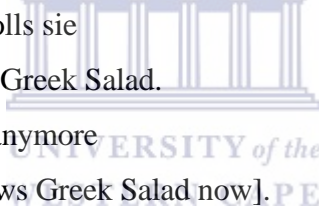
[The toilets for you (people) are at the back there, you hear?]

The laughter this brings from the audience is punctured only by Lottering’s confessions that he made up the last sentence. As the laughter continues, he again reiterates that the statement was a lie: “No, I confess openly that I made it up. No, everyone was very nice to me.” Lottering reverts to Afrikaans in order to familiarise the audience with his experience, using Afrikaans as the medium in which to reveal ‘real’ or emotional attitudes to the audience: “Maar die toilets was maar daar om die draai. [But the toilets

¹⁷ Even here, Merle Abrahams claims a ‘German, fair, fair, fair mother...’ She associates her hair with a sleek and straight look, which it obviously and ridiculously (against her claims) is not. She reacts in bewilderment to the audience’s laughter at this claim. She then states, shouting above the laughter, that she and her sisters have ‘Caribbean- German hair’! The incident is received as highly comic by the audience, and Merle pretends to be confused about why this happens. She pretends to be located in a specific culture, but disavows any indigenous aspect to South Africa simultaneously. The mis-representation of the character’s ancestry foregrounds a perceived willingness by Coloureds to cast aside African heritage in favour of ancestry beyond the country’s borders.

were around the corner.]” He code-switches again, back to English, when he justifies his emotional responses about feeling out of place in the environment: “But everyone went there, and I only went when the White people went.”

It is striking that in his ‘fitting into the crowd’, Lottering’s narration describes how he had to follow the conventions set by the White people he was now surrounded by. In order to fit in he had to emulate their actions. He carries the line of discussion further, telling non-White audience members that he now, as a University of Cape Town (UCT) alumnus, has made and maintains relationships with White people. He tells the audience, “Julle moenie bang wees vir Wit mense nie” [You mustn’t be scared of White people]. He says that White people have given him access to many new experiences, recounting:



Ek vrietie meer chiprolls sie
 My mag ken ook nou Greek Salad.
 [I don’t eat chiprolls anymore
 My stomach also knows Greek Salad now].

This is where Lottering’s third reference to hair occurs, as he is speaking about what is currently (at the time of staging) happening in South Africa. With land claims being a hotly debated topic since democracy, he says that the audience should be growing their hair, as all Khoisan people could challenge for significant property qualifications under the system of redress: “I told you, grow your hair, now I’m Khoisan!” The willingness to cast aside an identity is again foregrounded, this time with a financial incentive as motivation to go back to being classified as having ‘First Nation’ status. Lottering enacts a skit where he goes to the V & A Waterfront in Cape Town, running from store to store, not paying for his selections as he ‘is’ now Khoisan, and the Khoisan could

possibly lay a claim to this land as theirs, because they were arguably the original inhabitants of that space.

The explicit naming of what many Coloureds see as 'selling out' by 'hanging out' with White people serves to illustrate the perception that Coloured people change their identities around White people. This is also particularly relevant in that they are perceived to change their positions for White people as well, in what one participant called the 'uneasy state' Coloureds feel around other groups, where these Coloureds try 'to act White'. This student had also responded to a ('Crash' performance interview) question asking respondents to reveal stereotypes they held about different groups, and the Coloured group was attributed a sense of shame about their racial mixing, and a willingness to adopt a 'whiter' image while disregarding their mixed heritage. In Chapter Two, I looked at Chief Joseph D. Little's commentary about Coloured people reverting back to a 'First Nation' status, where they would disregard other ancestral influences while reclaiming their Khoisan roots. Lottering's performance here sarcastically foregrounds what this limiting of identity would then incorporate for the audience, and the participants react to this suggestion negatively.

Lottering continues his discussion of how Coloured people change their identities in accordance with their surroundings, particularly highlighting linguistic changes and choices that Coloured friends attending the University of Cape Town (UCT) make, or have made. He juxtaposes two identities, the older version of the Coloured perhaps read as stereotype, versus the new educated Coloured attending the prestigious university. This occurs through a representation where 'Gamtaal' starts to approximate an Americanised pop-culture lingo at the university, and is thus associated with a move to

higher education. The prevailing stereotype was that you needed to dumb down in order to be understood by a person of colour, now the educated person of colour is seen as becoming White in order to fit into the 'New South Africa'. 'Gantaal' is reduced to a few words, which fit into a Westernised student language predominantly stemming from American media sources. Lottering reacts with derision to this trend, in a move perhaps highlighting the intrusiveness of other cultures into what he sees as his own. Although one should guard against assuming the stage persona represents the actor's personal views, this derision occurs during the introduction to the performance, where the actor has a more personalised dialogue with the audience.

Lottering explains his opening up to White people, almost justifying his experience of the process. This leads to a full progression from the generic frame to the dramaturgical frame. This occurs as the stage lights slowly dim, revealing a spotlight directing the actor and the audience's attention to a piano, where the actor sits down and starts to play and sing:

From the Cape Flats with love,
 Where we say 'hoesit my broe' [howsit my brother]
 I see you frowning, in the back row there,
 You must get over my hair,
 Then stay with me for an hour or so,
 From Grassy Park to Mitchell's Plain we will go,
 While pearls of wisdom from my full lips flow

(frame-breaking interruption- speaks to audience directly, speech in italics)

*I used to have what they called 'dik lippe' [thick lips],
 But now I'm in showbiz, it's full lips baby*

From the Cape Flats with love.

From the Cape Flats, with love

I trekked across the Karoo

It's true, just to come to you

Not in a Valiant, but with SAA

And what a kak flight, I'm telling you

The pretty hostess was from Athlone too,

She had that lekker Athlone attitude

So I asked for water

She said 'kruip in jou moer' [roughly translated- *not a chance*]

You're from the Cape Flats, with love

And I hope I'm not spoiling the picture,

That you had of me

See I made it through high school,

With all my front teeth,

My schooling I had,

Why you could say quite extensive

I got through Matric

But shit hey,

Those papers were expensive

From the Cape Flats with love,

That's how I'll give it to you,

And if you're White, you may be tickled pink,

I'll turn you Coloured, my broe [my brother]

There are things about me you don't know,

Come board my taxi,

Jy gat wys raak, gou [you'll learn quickly]

What rhymes with gou,

Ooh fok, I don't know

I'm from the Cape Flats, with love,

I'm from the Cape Flats,



Sien jy my broe, Shirley Bassey se moer, [see brother, never mind Shirley Bassey]

Ek skryf my eie Bond songs [I write my own Bond songs]

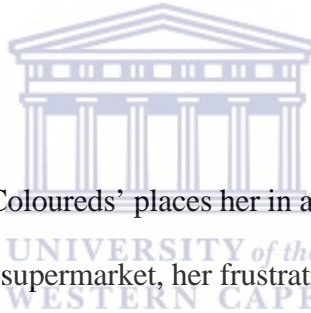
I'm from the Cape Flats, with love.

Lottering, in this transition song, reveals a performance trend he wants the audience to be aware of. He sings that his hair/image may be a major part of his representing Coloured people on the stage, but confronts an ascription of this identity based on the way he looks. He sings, perhaps occupying a stereotyped role and thus foregrounding it, that he hopes he is not spoiling a vision, or the *image* attached to a version of being Coloured for some in his audience, as he does not conform to the toothless and uneducated stereotype. He alludes to a tertiary education as being what some might say 'quite extensive'. Lottering then 'others' the White audience members by naming them as such. He reverses the role-play ascribed to many Coloured people, where the identity shifts often occur through trying to 'be' White, and says he could subvert their White identities. In this song, he says that he could turn White audience members Coloured (my broe/brother), inverting the perceived stereotype of Coloured people 'selling out' and trying to be White.

Lottering continues by telling the White audience members that a few misconceptions exist about him. Perhaps, as my readings of these propose, he confronts the misconceptions as they may in turn attribute another view representing the Coloured group. Here he challenges pre-existing stereotypes, which framed the performance for certain members of the audience about him as a Coloured performer. Lottering, in this de-familiarising framing, tells those now rendered 'unfamiliar' to his Coloured theme that he will reveal what these mis-representations are, and then clear them up, by

launching into the first of five characters in this performance, Colleen the supermarket cashier constantly at odds with customers and staff alike. Colleen is followed by Lottering slipping into the role of Travis, a young man pre-occupied with social status and attracting what would make him look good to others.

Merle Abrahams is the third character he inhabits, each time slipping into a role helped by a simple costume change of a shirt, jacket, dress or wig. Merle is followed by the taxi 'gaatjie', Smiley. The final character is the young woman, Galatia Geduld, an aspiring singer/ actress who is being pursued by a zealous older man, posing as a producer/agent. I next look at three of these characters appearing in 'From the Cape Flats with Love', where links to dialogue threads in this paper appear in the discussion which follows.



Colleen's references to the 'uppity Coloureds' places her in a working class environment. As a cashier at a local supermarket, her frustrations with customers and management alike reflect an unhappiness at work. She says of Coloured managers: "Never, ever, ever work under a Coloured. Give a Coloured person a position, and it goes straight to their heads." Colleen also says that Coloureds in any positions of authority, no matter how insignificant, are often lazy, and do as little as possible to maintain their positions. She uses a figurine for a national charity which often appears at check-out points in supermarkets, making it part of her familiarising technique. Here she links stereotype to an object, and not to a person or a group. Looking directly at the audience, Colleen points to a blank spot on the stage wall:

Check it here,
 Look at that statue standing at the door for years
 This one with the yellow hair

And the blue dress
 And the red tin in her hand
 Looking like Heidi's friend Clara
 This tief [bitch], without even opening her bek [mouth]
 She gets even more change than I do, man...

The arbitrary object, here a plastic figurine of a physically challenged young girl, is placed as an item 'familiar' to most of the audience. Colleen's reference to a stereotypical object that is associated (through constant representation/placement) with a place could, perhaps, be viewed as showing how arbitrary and reductionist stereotyping is.

Lottering's Merle is arguably his most (in)famous role or characterisation to date¹⁸. Blessed with an over-eager mouth filled with opinion, Merle is obsessive about how she is regarded from the outside. The characterisation hinges on how others see her as a Coloured woman, a community member, a wife, and as an employer to her maid 'Lydia, from Gugs' [Gugulethu]:

Madam Merle, you must stop taking the taxi
 (Merle pauses her recounting, and speaks to the audience)

I've been trying to get her to stop calling me Madam for years
I've just never had the time
 Just the other day, Lydia is sitting in the lounge
 With eyes half-closed, and I'm vacuuming all around her
 No, you must,
 You can't just give orders anymore, not anymore, no, no...
 Things have changed, hey,

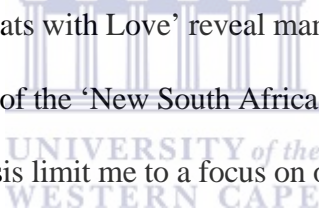
¹⁸ See Appendix A for a picture of Lottering as Merle Abrahams, Colleen, and as himself in 'From the Cape Flats With Love'.

They answer back now
 Just such big sentences
 Ek se, my gits, [I said, my goodness]
 Waar kry jy jou subject, predicate en verb? [Where do you get your...]

Merle reveals that the maid calls her Madam, and is almost flippant (and dismissive) about the relationship she allows to be characterised as employer and employee. Her representation as Coloured contains another ascription, which she appears to accept, and this acceptance is justified through a negligent inaction. This leaves the power balance between the Coloured employer and the Black employee hanging in the air, as an issue to be addressed at an undisclosed point. The maid challenges this inactivity spanning years, where an identity has been ascribed to her by her employer, and Merle refers to a collective ‘they’ when she acknowledges the challenge. A stereotype of the maid as lazy and as slacking off at work then becomes injuriously ascribed to Black people in general under her rationale, perhaps illustrating how one person’s actions can be read as representing a group trend. Lottering here inverts stereotype through a direct confrontation, a re-presentation of it under another frame of reference, and then re-locating it in the new political and social environment.

Lottering also assumes the role of a taxi ‘gaatjie’ (Smiley), affecting certain stylized movements to portray the role. He assumes a swagger when walking, places a cap back-to-front on his head, has his hand in his pocket, and adopts an almost vacant look on his face. The combination of these, and the countless little affectations that comply with this archetype make the audience members see the ‘gaatjie’ as soon as Lottering (in character) yells “Green Point, Sea Point, die kant toe...” [Green Point, Sea Point, come this side...] The combination of the physical identification with the linguistic identification illustrates just how easily roles can be attributed to individuals, based on

random collections of characteristics. The audience immediately laughs at the line, although nothing comic has been said. They react to a stereotype in this case, and the stereotype is played out as a young man who, during the course of trying to get his child to pre-school in the morning, also has to work in the taxi. Lottering represents him as someone who has many duties, but also as someone who tries to become a better father to his child, and partner to his spouse. The representation, while on the whole positive, also alludes to many stereotypes of taxi drivers and those who work for them, including a section where Smiley includes sexual innuendo about young girls in his comments. This commentary creates a dis-ease in the audience, where laughter comes across as forced and muted, perhaps signalling an uneasiness in that the audience felt that the boundary transgressed was approaching indecency.



The characters in 'From the Cape Flats with Love' reveal many more attitudes, perceptions and acknowledgements of the 'New South Africa', and their place within it. However, the constraints of this thesis limit me to a focus on only a few characters. I will expand on 'From the Cape Flats with Love' in the following section as well, linking it to trends identified in 'Crash' and 'Joe Barber'.

'Joe Barber', while hilarious to the audiences, some of whom 'complain' about how funny it was, could also be read in many different ways. It could be funny, amusing, stereotypical, and even satirical. My reading of it is situated in the use of its present-tense staging to show that while certain things change, perceptions attached to the changes are rarely acknowledged, even in the 'New South Africa'.

Kelwyn Sole (1987) writes about the need to be wary of laying ownership to a national culture in South Africa. He says that “any attempt to conceive of an oppositional ‘national culture’ will have to... include working class expression as a major constituent” (1987:92). Although Sole’s piece was written during the apartheid years, all four plays used within this study still adhere to his reflection that the working class has to be central in representations of local examples of cultural experience. ‘Joe Barber’s’ set is as familiar to me as going to my own home. The décor might be a bit different, but the sense of realism the set had for me was striking. Its liminal value, where it places audience members between the condition of what is real and what appears as real on the stage, function as putting one ‘back in the barber shop’. This communicates itself to members of the audience who remark upon the pieces of furniture, implements, etc, while waiting for the show to begin. That the set is part of the show is obvious, but the realism of the piece is conveyed primarily through the characters.



As I referred to in the Introduction, Martin Orkin forecasts what is needed in future theatrical projects:

The foregrounding and exploration of theatre as the representation of *present* struggle, invariably involves multiple positions, diversities and practitioners who themselves, have multiple different perspectives with which, dramatically and dialogically, to engage becomes, arguably, one of the most vital undertakings at present urgently required in South African Theatre studies.
(1996:63)

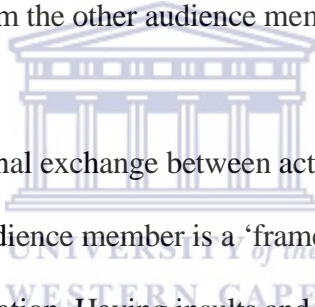
This present struggle is evident in the fact that many more affluent citizens can attend theatre or performance events than the working class, and this is also represented in the performances. Lottering, in 'From the Cape Flats With Love', delivers various renditions of both the middle and lower classes in the Coloured community. His middle-class Merle Abrahams is so self-oblivious to her bias against 'the other' that it moves away from mere racist rendition of a stereotype. Injuringly stating her opinions, Merle's dialogue emerges as honest. Through being blatantly 'truthful' and naming 'the other', it also typifies those who mask their prejudices, and characterises how one 'should never say that, but...' She thus offers an uncensored opinion to the audience, transgressing boundaries often while performing an ignorance of doing so.

In 'Crash' Lottering also subverts the experience of the nouveau-riche. He uses his context as a Coloured, and new celebrity, suddenly the resident of a new home and the concomitant lifestyle and social sphere. He makes fun of his assumption that his celebrity would have a drunk-driving incident annulled, and laughs complicitly with the audience at his own behaviour. He takes a swipe at his mistake and at his new life, also displaying the class differences between the neighbourhoods he came from and then moved into. He here also claims that race is still a telling factor in this new lifestyle, as he names (and performs) having to act in certain ways in order to be accepted within this new lifestyle. This is a form of generic performance framing on Lottering's part, which forms the basis for the next section. Balme says:

[P]erformance training is the set of conventions governing transitions to and from the social world of the actors and the audience to the aesthetic world of the play in performance... Traditionally in Western theatre there are strict rules and conventions governing the behaviour of the performers and

spectators; most modes of performance do not permit direct physical or verbal interchange between the parties. (1996:73)

He uses Goffman's 'frame-breaking' analysis to explain when these conventions are broken, and this indicates another type of the "transgressions" (Purdie, 1993) discussed earlier. In the four performances in this study, a frame-breaking mechanism occurs. This could be seen as a direct effect of the performers' need to establish a convention of 'speaking the other', or marking themselves as 'othered'. While this convention can no longer be considered ground-breaking or new, having multiple stagings occurring during one performance still has effect. Audience members becoming a part of the performance, or being situated on the stage, as well as the actor/s portraying multiple characters elicits much response from the other audience members present.



In 'Suip' the (directed) confrontational exchange between actor Ivan D. Lucas as a *bergie* (homeless) and a selected audience member is a 'frame-breaker' which places that person in an uncomfortable situation. Having insults and slurs thrown at one person in the audience highlights the tensions being represented. It is more immediate. The audience almost cringe as they imagine that they could also be singled out. I think that it is more about whether a 'real' anger is being projected that is implicit in this self-reflexive tactic. Apart from the unwillingness to be the target of the actor's attention, there are also other reasons why this discomfort is manifest.

For some people, this discomfort is located in being 'othered' amongst a collective of strangers. Being singled out for attention, and not pleasant attention, from an actor while in a theatre could do that. Reactions from people who are with this audience member range from nervous laughter to silence, all shying away from focus. Within

another context, a stranger hurling insults at any member of a group would be likely to have a response. Any response. This retaliation could come from the member being targeted, from any member of the group, or even a collective barrage directed back to the offender. Within this context, however, the conventions in the theatre allow the actor to perform without the restrictions in place 'outside'. The audience, here, are discursively controlled by what the performers and their performances allow. They can only express themselves in a circumscribed manner, by applause or jeering. Both of these reactions are also framed themselves - as to whether they would be appropriate or not in a theatre. I discussed this facet of the theatre in Chapter Two, where audience members are also less constrained to dispute statements they find contentious, or which they disagree with than in the social realm. This dual framing mechanism is explained by Balme (1996), who presents another reason. He claims:

[In the] South African context, the scene takes on a more political significance of existential proportions. Not only does the spectator actually experience prosecution purely on the grounds of skin colour, but s/he is forced to confront the fact that the political situation is ultimately every white citizen's affair and responsibility. (1996:75-6)

While Balme's focus on White South Africans is singling out only one group, I use the same notion of having the performance act as social vehicle, but applicable to all South Africans. I do not believe that only White people would be surprised by the animosity of being singled out in the performance of 'Suip'. Not all White people would regard it as something new either. Not all Black people would be surprised, nor all Coloured or Indian people. Its value is that it would make them think about it, and place themselves within its ascribing context. This would situate them into groups, and the effect does not seem to be diminished by having students watch the screened version either. In

discussions about the performance itself, they responded to questions: Where did you situate yourself as part of the social world within the audience, still the same or as different? Did you become sympathetic to the social world portrayed, or did it offend you? Did any of your views about that social world change?

Another facet of performance framing analysis can be applied to Marc Lottering's 'From the Cape Flats with Love' and 'Crash'. In 'Crash' Lottering contextualises stereotype by 'othering' the owners of these familiar notions. He makes the audience an accomplice to the stereotypical rendering, because without their help (or complicity) he would not be in a position to perform these generalisations of society. In the audience's laughter, there is also an awareness that the focus could shift to another group at any time. This is a dis-ease that afflicts the viewer, and Goffman's frame analysis allows us to investigate the acts of redefinition taking place. This is also a space where the frames are negatively defined by their possible outcome for the individual watching, as the gaze of the spectated (or viewed) in turn becomes focussed upon the viewer.

When Lottering, in 'Crash', poked fun at a particular hairstyle that some Black women are seen wearing, I noticed one of the questionnaire respondents, also a Black female, stop laughing. She had the same hairstyle that was being described to a laughing audience. She stopped laughing because the shift in stereotype affected her, and the fact that she was wearing this hairstyle on that night, and being 'othered' because of it, meant that she had been singled out. From sitting two seats away from her, I had noticed her laughing along with the rest of the audience as Lottering poked fun at White people in Clifton, a wealthy beachfront suburb on the Cape coast. Lottering set out how some of the residents were so privileged that they lived lives of dullness brightened by

his coming, but in an infamy-related manner. He here uses perceptions some people have of being Coloured, that wherever ‘they’ go, ‘they’ will ‘take over’, “Coloureds vat oor waa’ever hulle gaan” (Coloureds take over wherever they go). This statement, and it is uttered as a statement of almost wonder, could be phrased differently, using the word ‘gam’ instead of ‘Coloureds’. ‘Gam’ is the derogatory context of the word Coloured, seen as the lower class. It is also used by some Coloured people to refer to ‘those Coloureds’ who are perceived to be a bad reflection of the group.

In ‘From the Cape Flats With Love’, Lottering also comments on a class stereotype held in the Coloured community. He uses the audience to lay an attitude of class superiority upon residents of a predominantly Coloured suburb in Cape Town, Fairways¹⁹. The name notwithstanding, the stereotype referred to here about Fairways is that the residents feel they are better than those living in the areas around them. This is closely related to an aspect of ‘trying to be’ White. Lottering, by including this framing of not only his performance, but as himself as a ‘real’ Coloured, thus frames himself as ‘authentic’. The audience laughs at his rendering of ‘otherness’ upon this group, also perhaps thinking about their own positioning. In Chapter Six, I look at this in more detail, where one student (Student C), relates her ‘paranoia’ about being in a ‘white environment’ for the first time, when she attends a newly integrated high school. First, however, I focus briefly on methodologies used to investigate the case study, before moving to the views the participants reveal.

¹⁹ Fairways is also referred to in ‘Suip’, where characters dismiss the people who live there as not being Coloured enough, but state that “at least they build nice homes” in an acknowledgement of perceived class difference.

Chapter Six

The Case Study: Methodology and Discussion

Since my own identity is also located in the subject under discussion, I needed to investigate whether any changes occurred in my relationship with, and my participation in, the study. Finding myself examining any aspect of what I saw around me, in terms of how these aspects could be framed for different people, occurred frequently.

Socially, I steered conversations toward sensitive issues, trying to wring answers from other people to questions not usually broached, not even in our most raucous conversations. I needed to get past the political correctness pervading how people expressed themselves. Just having people watch Marc Lottering's video of 'From the Cape Flats With Love' provided a platform upon which to start having these conversations, as a (White) friend remarked that Lottering was 'brilliant, and captured the Coloured people so'. I have also been involved with many of the student participants in this case study on both an academic level, as well as within the performance arena provided by the Centre for Performing Arts at UWC. This aspect aside, it has only been through this study that I was able to explore culturally entrenched and often newer and very nuanced reflections about their perceptions of South Africa, and who they were in relation to each other. This situatedness is focussed upon in this chapter, where I 'read' these reflections, as well as the very often contradictory behaviours and roles they perform everyday. I attempt to read these responses within the theoretical framework explored in earlier chapters. It is my intention to explore whether, with roughly about ten years separating myself in age

from the students, a generational ‘gap’ exists, which indicates a changed view regarding aspects of South Africa from students at UWC. This section deals with looking at these participant responses in detail, and using them within a discussion of the principles set forth previously. I use the following guidelines, informed by the Association of Social Anthropologists’ Ethical Guidelines (1999), to clarify specific aspects of the case study.

The sample

The sample being studied consists of ten undergraduate and postgraduate students at UWC. There are five undergraduate students who have just (first or second year) entered university, and thus provide fresh perspectives to the notion of being integrated into a new environment. These are in addition to the five post-graduate students (B.A. Honours), who have participated in an academic-structured class on “Theatre and Performance”, where they were exposed to topical performance where culture was enacted and reinterpreted, rather than simply represented²⁰. Their responses were then gauged to see if any identity shifts occurred as a result thereof. These students submitted responses to this performance, and filled out a questionnaire dealing with their perceptions of ethnic integration since being involved in attending other performances²¹. The demographic makeup of the groups are such that Coloured and Black members form an almost equal portion, with there being one more Coloured student in the undergraduate group. The group of ten students used in this study also form part of a larger ensemble of forty drama and performing arts enthusiasts at UWC. ‘The Brown Paper Studio’ is an initiative at the newly opened (2003) Centre for Performing Arts. These participants form part of an initiative at UWC to build a

²⁰ For instance, they attended Brett Bailey’s *iMumbo Jumbo*, staged at the Baxter Theatre, Cape Town, 2003. The play caused a media frenzy when a chicken’s head was cut off at the final performance, which had many of the participants questioning whether cultural tradition had any place on a Western stage.

²¹ The questionnaires dealt with performance and identity, and were designed/ set up by myself as part of another (2003) study at UWC.

performing arts character and component at the university, for students, staff and community alike.

Ethics Statement

Subjects were chosen due to their association with the Centre for Performing Arts at UWC, their interest in performance generally, and contingent upon their affiliation to UWC as registered students. As the study explores attitudes and perceptions to controversial and personal opinion in some cases, the identities of all participants are kept anonymous in all phases of the investigation²².

Aware of the pitfalls around participant and interview relationships, relationships have largely been formed between the participants and myself. I contend that this enhances the study instead of acting negatively toward data collection, as a level of responsiveness has developed which overshadows a simple researcher's enter-and-study paradigm. This also allowed myself as researcher to gain access to utterances and behaviour more reserved for an in-group member.

In order to avoid too much intrusion into participants' privacy, all questionnaires contain printed notices that answering the questions is voluntary, and that any questions which they do not want to respond to may be omitted. In this particular case study, very few of the questions were left unanswered. The most popular responses during

²² Subjects were asked whether or not their views could be attributed to them at every phase of the investigation, and this is stressed on the written questionnaires (see appendices), as well as orally prior to any data collection. Negotiated consent to all aspects of this study was undertaken with student participants, as well as writers and performers. Names were changed accordingly, in a participant shielding where students are referred to as Student 'A', 'B', 'C', and so forth. As the students will be able to access copies of this paper, their frequent interaction means that recognition of individual views could be present, and therefore pseudonyms too, would be rendered useless. I therefore only include limited data about each participant, and vary the types of information given about each as well. All documentation, taped or recorded footage pertaining to the study will be sealed when not in use, and will not be available for dissemination without consent.

discussion with participants, as to why they had not completed certain questions, were that simply writing down a response would have been inadequate to express what they felt²³.

The Participants as Spectators/Audience

This portion of the study concentrates on the attendance of performance events as spectators. The message is directed compellingly toward participants, marking them as receivers. This in effect places another liminality in the foreground, where students have the ‘space’ to decode the message being portrayed to them away from the confinement of their structured classes. Within the classroom, the social roles concomitant to being in such a multi-cultural environment simply cannot compare to the dimmed lights offered in the theatre. Being lost in its space allows the removal of having to enact multiple roles necessitated daily. As the role of the ‘watcher’ must be considered a performance act in itself, the differences that could emerge, or the similarities to the act of watching and relaying a message, are very telling. This ‘space’ is not a distancing effect where the participants are left feeling excluded from the act of performing themselves either, as participants often remarked about how they were watching, and being watched by, other audience members. It is, rather, an opportunity to examine ways in which their own performances of themselves could be received. What lies open to the participants, as audience members, is what Yi-Fu Tuan calls “the unguarded and unrehearsed – hence vulnerable and genuine – moments in people’s lives” (1990:159).

²³ As the research occurs in a growing area of interest at UWC, the subjects were also able to participate in setting up attendance of screenings and performances. In this way, certain areas for future post-graduate research have already been identified by two of the respondents, making the investigation part of a series of UWC-located projects.

As spectators, the participants exercise the “fluidity of roles” (1990:161) that exists in ordinary life. From performing the role of the actor, student, family member, and participant in the study, roles constantly adapt to situations and contexts. This ties to Farred’s notion of the fluidity of Coloured identity, as evolving on a continuum where social survival necessitates change. It also leads to a comparison with the responses provoked by the article discussed in Chapter One of this work. Within an individual Coloured identity, there are various roles which make the whole person. These roles manifest themselves in different situations, as well as in different ways to different people.

Audiences and Venues

The audience-member role that participants take on as they watch the plays are not exercised in what could be called conventional venues. Venues range from a black box studio to a dinner theatre, and to a video screening room. For instance, in the Baxter Theatre Studio, the physical distance between the performers and audience is almost non-existent. A raised fringe separates the audience, but seating is so close to the bar that the distinction is as if one is sitting right in front of the television screen and yet able to touch, manipulate, and affect the performances. The informal dinner theatre setting of *On Broadway* in Cape Town allows for beverages to be ordered before the show, and to be consumed as the performance proceeds. It is also important to note that in this venue, the audience members are more visible to the performers themselves, making for a far more direct engagement visually. This is when looking at them from the stage as a performer, as well as looking at the performer as an audience member and knowing that they can see you as well. In the screening room situated at the University of the Western Cape, participants find themselves within a group of students who are

growing ever more familiar with each other, due to their participation in this study, as well as their participation in the Brown Paper Studio theatre group. Other members of the campus community are welcome, and encouraged, to view the performances along with the students. This helps to guard against a (participant) sense of not being part of an audience, but simply as those who are being watched themselves.

Special Features of the Performances Useful for the Investigation

Lottering's two shows, as well as Joe Barber, also encourage a great deal of audience participation. Indeed, 'Suip' uses the familiarising tool of directly engaging with the audience as well, although as discussed earlier in an almost ominous manner. The involvement of the audience members is greatly encouraged in the comic productions by means of calls for applause, going into the audience or getting members onto the stage, and by directly focussing on one subject and asking for audience feedback, thoughts, or responses. While some audience members shy away from being part of the performance in this way, others see it as their opportunity to show another side of themselves. For the case study participants, it is also an opportunity to see how the actors are in turn also performing an action, in order to elicit a response.

Methods of data collection

At the end of each of the two performances, each participant is required to fill out a questionnaire based on issues as mentioned in this study, dealing with ways in which identity shifts can be negotiated. These results, and trends reflecting changes or similarities to those found previously in the CLIDE Project (2003) survey at UWC, are then used as a basis for a final individual-based interview with the participants. The individual interview process is conducted after the attendance of the final performance

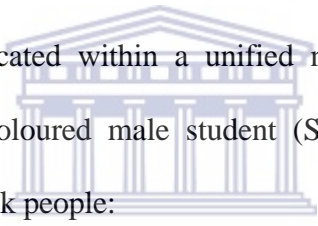
or screening. Results are then compiled and analysed in order to investigate whether negotiations of identity have occurred, and to extract hypotheses and suggestions from them²⁴. I focus on two of the performances for each aspect of the analysis, as textual ('Joe Barber' & 'Suip'), and as staged/viewed ('From the Cape Flats With Love' & 'Crash'), and will now use participant responses to the performances. I additionally examine all four of the performances as having seen them performed 'live' myself, which was not possible for all of the students due to screening dates and this study's timeframe conflicting.

In the Introduction of this thesis, I used a student quotation about the ways in which any of her perceptions about the Coloured group had changed after watching Marc Lottering in 'Crash'. The student (now referred to as Student A), a black female, 21 years old, said that her previous view of the Coloured as "content to earn money in factories and drink their cents away" had changed. This change does contain, however, nuanced contradictions as well. While Student A responds to her changed perceptions, she also illustrates an ever-present stereotypical facet to her 'injurious speech', as Judith Butler says. In her response to another question as to what she (honestly) thinks about Coloured people, she used money as the basis for her saying that "those that are poor they go to extremes, in terms that if they are poor they are very poor. Or, they are very rich." She does, however, add that through being involved in this experience (theatre attendance and screenings), she had been able to "see beyond that, and through interacting with other races you get to know them, get to see the real truth." My surprise at the length to which the respondent had gone to in order to explain herself was made

²⁴ A database of previous (2003) questionnaire research forms the background rationale for the study, processed using the SPSS programme, with cross-referencing of the variables showing many areas for further research and study, such as attitudes towards notions of "Africanism" and the inclusivity (or exclusivity) of this term itself.

even more apparent when I realised that this student had foregone the option to have her name omitted from the research if published. She had stated her name and then chose 'no' to the set question whether to allow or withhold respondent names. Perhaps this is a reflection of my own apprehension about disclosing such (what might be considered to some) sensitive information. This apprehension would be magnified if I said that anyone could read it on publication, and see my name attached with a quotation of my own attitudes and prejudices.

A trend was quickly noted however, especially as many elected the option for their names to be included. Another trend I noted was that many references are made to 'The New South Africa', and extremely positive reflections are made on aspects about being an individual, with an identity located within a unified nation, but with different cultures represented equally. A Coloured male student (Student B), 21 years old, reflected on what he thought of Black people:



On campus, I would say that black people are real opportunists, they take full advantage as to what is on offer, they think they were the only disadvantaged people and think they deserve everything.

While he articulates a grudge against the apparent inversion of power relations as a student at UWC, he also offers a view as to what he thinks about the Coloured people. This view is presented as one in opposition to Black people, where the Coloureds "don't stand together as a whole in general. They'd see something happening to their fellow man and yet not help them. I think that it is in the way they were brought up."

This student had a similarly negative reaction about Coloured people as representing his community when he responded to a question; [Do you think your community is racist?]. “A portion of them are, they still refer to the Blacks as ‘kaffirs’ and still treat them with disrespect.” He says that “Coloureds are normally very jealous people who wouldn’t give someone else their due when due is expected.” Student B here illustrates what he sees within his community by focussing on himself, as an ‘individual’, almost removed from the view of the Coloured group he attributes his family and other races having of him. Previously he had chosen no options in the category for which ethnic group he belonged to. This disjunction between how he was viewed by others points to a slippage in the ways in which he preferred to be viewed, where while he was initially not comfortable with being labelled a Coloured, he also saw others as belonging to the Coloured group, and was able to place them within it by naming them as such himself.

Another contradiction is revealed when Student B speaks about the attendance of Marc Lottering’s ‘Crash’ Here the student argued that through the attendance of the show, he could “look back and relate to a lot of things; almost everything sounded familiar to me”. This was also the case for myself as researcher, where I have often remarked in the course of this work to having felt a certain level of comfort, or a sense of the familiar, to settings depicted in the various productions. Suggesting a level of comfort with the familiar settings as well, Student B says that this was a positive experience of seeing how Coloured people were presented on the stage, because “somewhere, somehow, someone is keeping the old traditions alive.” Located in this positive experience, however, is another contradictory statement. The respondent says that while the representation in the play had enhanced the image of the Coloured community, he also relocates his ascription of Colouredness. He says, after attending this performance:

It made me proud of my identity. You can look back and laugh at reality. If you are aware of your identity, where you come from - it makes you proud, because if other people can listen to it and laugh at it, they find it acceptable. It's taught me not to be ashamed.

This student takes note of the use of this comedy as breaking down these 'barriers', where while stereotype is being represented, it is simultaneously contested before it can be construed as depicting the 'real' Coloured group. Whether or not this should be read as the re-formulation of stereotype is crucial to this study, as discussed previously, where Fischer-Lichte (Chapter Three, this work) says that one of the 'tasks' of transitiono-confrontational theatre should be to help the 'evolution and confirmation' of identity.



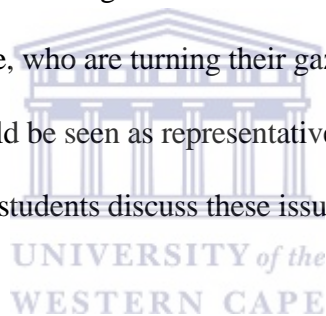
Student C is a 19 year old female, Coloured, and in her second year of studies. She emphasises Fischer-Lichte's call for identity negotiation through the theatre. Student C answers the question about her perception of the ways that the 'Crash' performance has added to her views of the Coloured community. She says, however, that her perceptions were unchanged, as "the way that the Coloureds were described is what they truly are like, through and through. The depiction was raw and real, and that's what I loved about it." She says that the portrayal of the 'raw' Coloured was a positive for her, as it was more honest, and showed that "we are who we are". This respondent had only selected Coloured as a descriptive of her own ascribed identity, foregoing the option South African. Her family's, and her perception of what she thought other ethnic groups thought about her as a Coloured, were also stated without any attachment of "South African" status. She is forthright about whether or not stereotype is being represented. She claims Lottering's piece is:

Very stereotypical, and the way most of us see the Coloured and Black community, and that's what made it funny. We saw and heard things we are exposed to everyday.

Her view of racial discrimination at UWC also included an observation where “in terms of race, it is a Black/ Coloured thing where most people, especially the Coloureds, look down on Black people.” While she is aware that discrimination does occur on campus, she also notes that this ‘looking down’ could be because the “Coloured people feel like the Black people are taking over.” This point is made more telling when she states that upon first entering a ‘white environment’, she experienced a ‘sense of paranoia’ about what ‘they’ were thinking about her. She says this involves stereotyping herself as a Coloured as well, not just by race but by class distinctions between the groups. “For example: If you come from Mitchell’s Plain, people immediately see you dodging bullets and seeing gang fights, which isn’t necessarily the case.” This could be her reaction to previous apparently ‘paranoid’ assumptions that people were typecasting her, as she stated beforehand that the paranoia was unjustified, as she “ended up having many White friends, and today I don’t see them as White but as my friends.” She attests that through the attendance of the performance and involvement in the performance arena at UWC, she has had a “better understanding of the Black community and their culture. Performance has allowed me to see the positive cultural aspects of any community and the diversity of our country.” This is firstly a negotiation of her identity in relation to her location within an ‘unfamiliar’ environment. It shifts to a state where she claims being part of the (Coloured) ‘majority’ at the university. This also includes her reflection that this negotiation happened via the performance-related activities. In the same way as Student B, she says that watching the performance had re-affirmed her

status as a Coloured, and it had made her able to “definitely appreciate [her own Coloured] cultural identity more”.

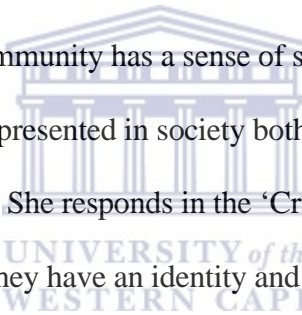
Student D sees the older generation as problematic in society in general, and not just the Coloured community. Student D is a Coloured female, 21 years old, who is undertaking an Honours Degree. “I think especially the older generation are more prone to make racist remarks.” She says that this is not just a Coloured community occurrence however, but one which occurs in Black and White communities as well. She imagines that older White and Black people would be offended at what Lottering was saying onstage, but makes no mention of whether or not any Coloured person in the audience would react in the same way. This can be regarded as her awareness of the (non-Coloured) onlookers in the audience, who are turning their gaze upon what she feels is stereotype. That this stereotype could be seen as representative of the whole group is a problem, and she proposes that, “If students discuss these issues, we might come to understand other races better”.



It also appears to be problematic that she acknowledges the differences in reception between the Coloured audience members and other groups represented. She says, of Lottering’s ‘Crash’, that “the way Coloureds speak, dress, act, etc., is still represented the same way” and she thus “thought it was stereotypical of some matters.” She expresses a sense of fear that the image that she holds of Coloured people as a group today is to be displaced by Lottering’s ‘stereotyping’. This argues strongly, as well, that opinions are constantly being contradicted, and thus negotiated, throughout the process of engaging with the performances. With student D, this occurs when she does concede that she would not have changed anything about the performance when asked about it.

Student E is described by her family as Coloured, 18 years old, and professes to present many sides of herself to different groups. For her own view, she says she is ‘South African’. She says other groups see her as ‘White’. Her family, she says though, still see her as ‘Coloured’. This student repeats the assertion that at both her high school and at UWC, the discrimination she witnessed came primarily from ‘the students themselves’. She says that “most students tend to stick within their own racial group.” Student E also remarks on the class differences within these racial groups, and makes her own stereotype about ‘especially the Asian students’ on UWC’s campus, as having ‘more money’ and ‘sticking together’.

Student E says that the Coloured community has a sense of shame about their identity, which I explored as to how it was represented in society both ‘front-stage’ and ‘back-stage’, as discussed in Chapter Two. She responds in the ‘Crash’ questionnaire:



 I don’t think that they have an identity and I am
 of the opinion that they think this too. In not
 having a specific identity, they mock and criticise
 others for having an identity. They are generally
 insecure and tend to want to hang out with other
 Coloureds. This is if they are narrow-minded,
 which is more than often.

Student E is making a claim to there being no ‘front-stage’ identity for the Coloured group. She links the problems of gaining exposure to theatre in her community to another view she holds of the Coloured group, where “these events or groups are seen as things only White people do.” In choosing to be involved in performance, she is also distancing herself not only from these comments, but her sense of ‘belonging’ to this

community. She had previously specified that she saw herself as ‘South African’, and not as ‘Coloured’. The problem she experiences with being regarded as ‘Coloured’ also, perhaps, points to the fact that she notes that she has friends from across the ‘racial barriers’. These friendships include her being able to “still maintain and portray the same views when it comes to the question of discrimination, be it to Blacks or Coloured people.” Her response to whether or not she saw her community and the Black community as still racist was:

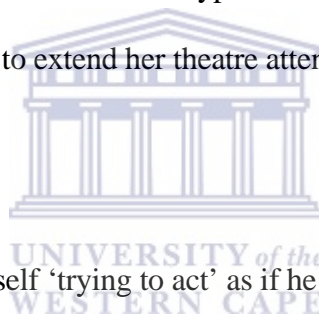
I think my own community is still very racist.
They tend to only have one opinion about a racial group, and it tends to be taboo. They are narrow-minded and think that Blacks are out to get everyone.

For this student, there is a sense of hopelessness about the Coloured community, in her view, from a position of self-imposed cultural ‘exile’. ‘Crash’ added to this perception, as she says:

It confirms what I know and experience within the Coloured community. It also makes me think somehow that the stigma attached to the Coloured community will never be eradicated. In some ways this is the Coloured people’s culture, which is sad because it means they are settling for less than they are worth and just accepting what they are perceived as.

While saying that Lottering’s performance of a Coloured onstage is stereotypical and unflattering to the image of the Coloured people, Student E also makes a complex negotiation of locating herself. She maintains her distance from the group she says her family ascribes to themselves, but for the first time also acknowledges that a Coloured

culture does exist ‘in some ways’. Drawing on this acknowledgement, I pose the question whether or not it could also be the reason for her ethnic self-distancing? If the version of the Coloured person she saw as represented onstage was false to her, then she was dissatisfied because the absence of something ‘realistic’ or recognisable was portrayed. She had perceived the stereotypes she identified as portraying an outdated image of a community she both distances herself from, and yet acknowledges in contradictory statements. In these statements she speaks about ‘her’ community. This is also contradicted quite strongly in her response as to whether the image of the Coloured onstage had been changed since 1994. She contradicts herself, and says that it has changed though, because the “performer has challenged his own ability to bring a fresh perspective to the character”. Here she reads stereotype and a new perspective on it a bit differently and illustrates her desire to extend her theatre attendances, as *this* performance “needs a new angle”.



Like Marc Lottering’s satire of himself ‘trying to act’ as if he belonged in his new surroundings, where suddenly he was seeing himself ‘act White’, a trend amongst the Coloured respondents emerged that acknowledged this portrayal. Student F explains how he sees his Coloured community:

My community is racist. People in my community all have this idea of the white people, and they regularly speak bad about the ‘blacks’. [For example] Hulle almal stink. [They all stink.] And, Hou jy vir jou wit? [Are you trying to be White?].

The connection made with White people as he (Student F) explains it has, at its base, a relationship with acting above one’s station as a Coloured. Within the group, some use it to admonish other Coloureds that they are trying to act like the White ‘other’, in a

social contest engineered by the apartheid government. The ascription of acting below this standard simultaneously contains a reference to the perceived lower position that Black people occupy. While the use could be intended to be an admonishment from group members, its opposition to the lowly and demeaning status attached to the 'blacks' in *this* respondent's community speaks volumes about racial and class representations in the communities.

In 'Crash', Marc Lottering inverts the process of 'becoming' another character onstage. He places himself as a member of society on the stage, and proceeds to utter 'injurious statements' regarding Coloured and other groups. He performs the same function in 'From the Cape Flats With Love'. His characters express statements which would immediately identify them as racist – if not contextualised by the framing of the theatre. That Lottering is not mobbed for expressing these views points to the audience's awareness that the stage offers a space to utter these words and perceptions. I mentioned previously in this chapter how Merle Abrahams refers to her maid, Lydia, as one of 'them', in actual fact a Black woman. She confronts issues of power by saying that in the 'New South Africa', care must be taken when telling 'them' what to do, and also in the way that any directive is expressed. Her expressions often lead the audience to laugh aloud, as she utters the phrases and terms long considered taboo, but which still exist. The familiarity of the character thus overwhelms what could be considered normal reactions to these statements, as the participants agree, these are statements made without malice. They are simply representing attitudes associated with an older generation, and thus show viewpoints the participants do not necessarily find applicable to themselves.

The performances also had a strong accent marking them as Coloured. This accent refers to their using specific mechanisms to illustrate points about language, culture, and belonging. In 'Joe Barber' and 'Suip', two of the instances remarked upon in Chapters Two and Three both feature the father giving advice to the son. The correction in 'Joe Barber' is a linguistic one, where the father teaches his son an incorrect form of the English language. In 'Suip', the father rebukes his son for aspiring to be like what he terms the new breed of 'Gam yuppies'. In these instances, we see the passing of opinions, whether right or wrong, to another generation. This symbolic process is also a mechanism whereby the culture of the group is reproduced. In the reproduction, a symbolic law is stated, which is transgressed. For language, it is the structure of the code which is broken, and the audience reacts complicitly by laughing. In an aspiration to another way of being Coloured, the young man is told that this elevation he aims for is despicable, and unsavoury. It is related to the White part of his identity, which to the father is shameful. The young man, in this rebuke, is also being told that the Whiteness in him is bad, and that he should only have contempt for it. This also serves as motivation for the father's anger, located not just in his homeless state, but in his status as a Coloured person, which connotes shame. Many of the respondents spoke about having families where views were sometimes very outdated, and not in keeping with the 'New South Africa'. They, however, profess that their own responses differ, in sometimes small ways, but which do reflect change.

In 'Suip', a paternal role is assumed in a role-switch by actor Ivan D. Lucas. He assumes the position of Shaun's father, in a transition which also incorporates a quick reference to how the streets 'welcome' their newest runaway tenant. Through Lucas becoming the paternal figure, the play also illustrates the substitution of homes and

support structures. The performance thus imposes a set of rules about being on the streets, just as in many families. These rules are examined in the course of the play, as they are constantly contradicted by the actors themselves. Transgressions are marked, in this case several times as repeat references to alcohol and its crippling effects upon their lives show that prominent determinants in characters' fates lie in substance abuse. The characters note that it is a problem, but it is the cycle of addiction that juxtaposes the cycle of discrimination, where race-awareness is passed along from one generation to the other, and here shown as the tutelage of manhood. This rite of passage is also equated in the text to knowing where Shaun's roots as a Coloured, or 'brown person', lay. Student G, a 23 year old Coloured female, says:

Coloureds don't have a real sense of their heritage, and they feel ashamed that they might just have some Black ancestors. Because they are from a racial mix they have trouble identifying themselves.

In our last discussion after watching Lottering's 'From the Cape Flats With Love', she says that stereotypes will probably remain the same, and lists Coloured stereotypes including those "stuck in a situation of poverty, drunkenness, trying to improve themselves, and if they do get out, then they forget their roots". She acknowledges that her perceptions of race and ethnic belonging have not shifted, since she was seeing her own community represented primarily in the performances. Student G also attests to recognising a familiarity in the performance, and says it offers people outside the group "a glimpse of what it is to be a Coloured, and [to] grow up in a Coloured community". She thus contests stereotype as derivative, but concedes that it can function as an indicator of the 'familiar'.

Student I says that another dominant stereotype exists about Coloured people:

They suck up to whatever race is in power. And one should note that in South Africa, the shift of power is always between White and Black. The Coloureds expect things to be done for them.

She points out that these stereotypes, however, did not appear in the comic performances she had viewed. She says that other stereotypical images about Coloureds do exist, but that

It has kind of made us [Coloured people] unique. I like being musical, but that is as far as it goes personally. I have relatives who drink, but they don't get drunk, and they drink in company. Although the gangster aspect is damaging, but what race does not have violent tendencies?

Student I also accepts that stereotypes differ, and that they change according to circumstances, as the roles performed have to adapt themselves in different situations. Her rejection of the roles assigned through stereotype occurs when she applies it to herself, and to her family, and finds it to be derivative. Her distance from the stereotypical associations made with Coloured people are not extended to how she sees herself, as she elected both 'Coloured' and 'South African' to describe herself. She defends selecting the terms:

One needs to define oneself so that a distinction can be made. I like being a Coloured because the word coloured suggests multi-faceted... I am a Coloured yes, but no two Coloureds are the same.

Student I reiterates her Coloured individuality, separating the group from others in South Africa, and says that the plays show:

The differences about a specific group of people and how they see themselves when in the company of others. There is always history to back up one's reason for being different. The characters that these kinds of plays portray offers insight and allow one to see that one can always find humour in our situations.

Student H perhaps appears as most complex with her responses, as she states that her multiple roles in society are so common that

Labels are a fact of life. I am either woman, Muslim, Coloured, South African, Malay, etc. It was easier for me to assume my own identity and not one given to me. Depending on mood of occasion, I am one or all of the above. [her emphasis]

She says that she hopes the plays will give other people some new perspectives, but says that they do



Give a brief view of everyday life, and places it on stage for all to see and comment on. It becomes a safe environment to discuss 'hot' topics. By exaggerating and making fun of what we see as a South African identity that is mixed, and weird, and wonderful. [her emphasis]

She says the older generations is especially guilty of race discrimination, as "with the younger generation it's hard to have a truly racist opinion when you are thoroughly integrated in schools and universities, etc." She says stereotypes simultaneously construct and deconstruct identity on the stage, especially in 'From the Cape Flats With Love'. While presenting perceptions which could still be misconstrued by the public, it at least provided a place to discuss the issues which needed to be raised, in her opinion.

This affirmation of the space offered through performance, along with the multiple roles that she sees herself as being, is perhaps stating her own view of the Coloured identity, which incorporates various facets. Each facet thus operates as it contains just enough of the 'familiar' so that it functions as a stereotype, but it is recognisable as being unfulfilled, and incomplete. She also foregrounds her cultural heritage as a Coloured, selecting all of the options available under group descriptives in the 'From the Cape Flats With Love' questionnaire, and states that she plays many of the roles inter-changeably. Discrimination is thus the legacy of the older generation's current influence, and it is through the performance, according to her, where these views can be challenged.

These responses contained much more information than I have been able to expand upon, but do show that negotiations of participant identity have occurred. While using stereotypes themselves at times, the participants were very forthright in their responses to me, and often asked questions they felt should have been addressed, but were not. While sometimes contradicting what they responded to in discussion and questionnaires, they were willing to deal with any inconsistencies in order for their attitudes to be reflected fairly. A willingness to have their attitudes attributed to them by name also marked the study, showing perhaps an enthusiasm for dealing with topical issues in South Africa.

Also apparent are the positive attitudes which participants characterise South Africa with, but this is tempered with their perceptions that many stereotypical images of all the country's groups still exist. These derivatives play a primary role in assigning identities to the people who fall within them. They are also not phenomena found in one

group alone, but shared, according to the participants. Participants found that these stereotypes, when performed on a stage, could be seen as only a part of what 'being' Coloured was. For those not from the group, it offered what one participant called a 'slice of' being Coloured. For those within the group, it often carried a sense of the 'familiar', as something that was in the performance that perhaps was authentically Coloured, and yet only a part of the whole of being Coloured. There seemed to be a consensus that the country had changed for the better, but that a changing society needed to have negotiated attitudes reflected and acknowledged.

Stereotypes of the staged Coloured featured prominently in most discussions. When asked where the stereotypes stemmed from, all of the respondents indicated their social environments, especially their families and friends in the communities they came from. Many students responded to questions by quoting stereotypes, and in discussions which followed attributed these as mainly coming from their parents. While it was important for all of the participants to acknowledge or investigate a cultural heritage, half of them changed their identity and group ascriptions during the course of the study. These ranged from South African, to Coloured, to Mixed, to Other, until the options chosen started to reflect what Student H called her own identity, which she constructed from a wider range of group characteristics. It also suggests that most participants have become more aware of their own social 'performances' in different situations in society, while playing different roles. Awareness of adopting different behaviours for different situations is also reflected through participant awareness that their own attitudes and perceptions do not mirror their social settings on many occasions. They thus perform various 'selves' to their families and friends daily. Seeing pieces of what is arguably

Coloured culture being performed serves to accentuate how fluid the transitions are, between and in these roles both on the stage, and in society.



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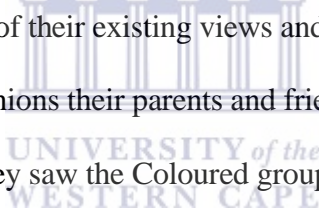
Chapter Seven

Conclusions

From the views expressed amongst participants in this study, it has become evident that a great many stereotypes still exist within our society and that many of these are negative toward other groups. A trend amongst Coloured respondents showed that they saw themselves as being Coloured in an apparently prescribed manner. Significantly though, they also felt that there were different roles attached to being Coloured. These roles have not been represented sufficiently in the media for them, and what continues to be reflected instead affirms that the stereotype *is* the culture. They felt strongly about this, and thus spent considerable effort denying affiliation to outsider notions of the group, which they saw as problematically stereotypical and derivative. The negativity surrounding the way that they could be seen provided much scope for investigation, here covered only in a cursory way, and only as much as the focus of this work would allow.

The common connotations that participants had of particularly the Coloured group were negotiated in two ways. For the Coloured participants, they found that their own identities were sometimes constructed without their participation. Their inactive (or passive) roles in this ascribing process were highlighted while viewing what they sometimes found stereotypical theatre performances. These participants, however, noted them as performances where the derivatives were simultaneously being challenged by the performers themselves. Their common responses to Marc Lottering and the 'Joe Barber' performance was that while the characters the actors played were


familiar to them, they were still only partial representations of the Coloured group. Coloured participants markedly revealed that the familiarity they felt with the performances stemmed from recognising certain elements from their own lives. These elements were both linguistic, as well as having a nostalgic value in that it recreated or re-performed a setting they knew. The language used in the plays was acknowledged as being an accurate representation of how *some* Coloured people speak. The fact that they also acknowledge that it can only be attributed to certain group members point to their heightened awareness of the many roles that they play themselves. The Coloured participants show that negotiations of their own perceptions about what constructs someone are continuous, and that the engagement in the study had some consequence in foregrounding these.

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Black participants found that many of their existing views and attitudes to Coloured people stemmed primarily from opinions their parents and friends had. While very open to expressing perceptions of how they saw the Coloured group, they also exhibited a great willingness to learn more about the group in the process. To them, the performances often showed the opposite of what they had assumed about the Coloured group. As these perceptions were not their own, but had been generated from elsewhere, it seemed that negotiating their stereotypes of Coloured people often included looking at stereotypes that Coloured people had about them. As this area is not part of this thesis description, I can only briefly state that many of their views were negotiated through viewing the performances, as well as examining how they often found that the stereotypes were just variations of a single prejudice or theme.

Like the outsider views which frame how the participants see themselves, it was important to determine negotiated attitudes about connotations attached to the terms used as ethnic or racial descriptives (Black, Coloured, White). Amongst the Coloured respondents, connotations about being White included references to social and class differences, where White was seen as 'better'. Black students remarked that Coloured people were known to ingratiate themselves with White people. Coloured participants countered unknowingly by saying that Coloured people tried to ingratiate themselves with *anyone* who was in power. Their negative views of the Coloured groups seemed to originate in their respective homes and surroundings and were constantly attributed to other people, possibly sidestepping appearing politically incorrect themselves.

However, they felt that they were continually being negatively judged, according to outdated stereotypes still functional in the New South Africa. The performances tended to highlight this for all the participants as well, regardless of ethnic affiliation.

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The Coloured respondents also point to social environments as the settings where their attitudes were reified. Representations from two Coloured participants, gained primarily from their social experiences within their families and communities, posit that in certain cases Black people are still viewed as occupying a lower level in society. While not very surprising to anyone reading this material in 2005, it has a bearing on the representations pertaining to themselves which participants find acceptable.

Coloured participants felt that the performances contained enough references to what they perceived as only part of being Coloured, and it was therefore also a partly personal portrayal of themselves on the stage. Naming themselves as Coloured thus became problematic to some of them. If the stereotypes were all that people were aware

of, then being called Coloured would also constrict who they were by narrowing and defining them within the derivatives. As shown in the discussion of the case study, suggestions about being regarded as being comprised of a few general traits were often negatively viewed, and as being outdated. This ambivalence about being ascribed an identity leads to a distancing where the staging of cultural performances, in both the theatre and in social interaction, is under question. In certain popular productions in the theatre, the Coloured was continually represented as a stereotype located in the past, and not a stereotype as encompassing or even acknowledging the present. In the social world the students inhabit, they see changes that they do not believe are reflected in the older generation's perceptions in their communities. They thus encourage that the 'task of theatre' should include playing with, and negotiating identity, as it currently applies to the country. Through portraying at least a questioning of entrenched stereotypes in South Africa, the playwrights, actors and their works were received positively by participants. These stereotypes were challenged through engagement in the study, and in many cases found to be unrelated to the participants themselves, but attributable to others in the community.

It is also suggested in this study that certain views of the Coloured community could be read as retrospective. Some of the Coloured respondents locate their present day situatedness as Coloured people by searching for the familiar in the performances onstage and at the university. This familiar is what to me, perhaps, was represented as stereotype on certain occasion. The respondents disagreed with this view, as they said that it was in seeing what was the familiar to them that they located the performances as 'real'. For participants, the performance was not constrained by dominating views of stereotype, because they did not see it as representing them. They could thus interpret a

different message in the absence of being attributed a general way of being Coloured. This is then the effect of 'passive performativity', where although what is being portrayed is being staged; it has an acceptance with certain spectators as to its representivity and authenticity in the re-telling.

Marc Lottering's code switching from English to Afrikaans also point to an interesting phenomenon. While Lottering used the English language as his medium to inform the audience about an 'objective' version of the story he was relaying, he used the Afrikaans language to insert subjective views, often off-colour or biting remarks causing the audience to laugh. The English versions were almost constrained by the setting of the theatre for his performances, and it was as though only through the use of another language that he could attribute a cultural viewpoint, as located within the Coloured group he so frequently foregrounded. My own reactions to these views being expressed in the Afrikaans medium were almost unconscious, as it felt as if the code switch made me understand him a bit better than anyone else in the audience. The sense that through a code switch, which perhaps acted as a barrier to some in the audience, I could understand the nuances implicit in his performance, perhaps most effectively illustrates my sense of a Coloured culture. Some Black student participants reflected that they did not understand some of the code switches, but that others around them seemed to know, and it seemed as if sometimes only the Coloured people were sharing a joke. Retrospective discussions allowed them to acknowledge that perhaps a culture does exist, where previously in this study I quoted a student as saying that no Coloured culture exists at all. The University of the Western Cape with its varied student base and its multitude of language groups is perhaps fortunate that the performing arts has slowly been established on its campus, with student interest steadily increasing. With this growing interest, and the interaction between students from different groups serving as

the birthplace for new performance pieces, relationships between students unaware of other group dynamics could acknowledge many new perspectives on identity in the New South Africa.

Finally, the term the 'New South Africa' can be argued to be causing a disjunction between how people are perceived, and how they characterise themselves. The call for a unitary national identity thus implicitly threatens to do what some theorists quoted in this thesis propose, by making cultural difference less important and emphasising instead shared traits between the country's various groups. Coloured identity, already here seen as problematic, is further threatened under this argument. While this work often shows that contradictions exist which make ascertaining this identity almost impossible, it also illustrates a wealth of research potential into why and how the group descriptive has been allocated, and how it has changed while the country concurrently shifts its own paradigms. The variety of responses perhaps show that nothing is new about this study's results, and that stereotype continues to define those unwilling to be classified under the term 'Coloured'. I argue that it is this very variety within the Coloured group which should further be examined. This fluidity of role-change warrants recognition, instead of having it subsumed by yet another derivative associated with the reconstructive processes the country went through, and still continues to negotiate. The motto that diversity should continually be reflected in South Africa holds promise for the future, but this call should acknowledge the negotiations of identities still in-process, which are now ascribed by the term: 'New South Africa'.

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Daily Voice, 21 July 2005. 'Jou ma se...'

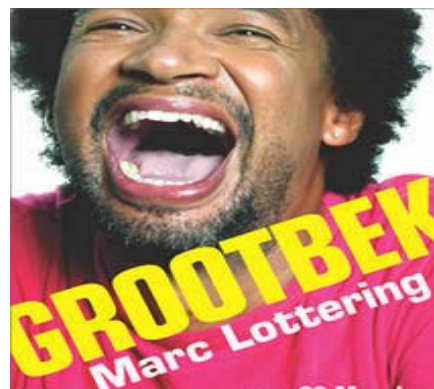
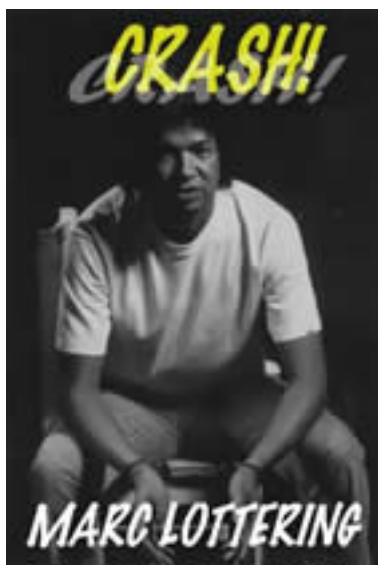
The Star. 6 February 2003. 'Race, Class Issues Pushed to the Back'. M. Makhura.



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APPENDIX A: Images

[All photographs used with permission]

Lottering as Merle Abrahams**'From the Cape Flats With****Love'****Lottering as Colleen****Lottering appears as himself****Promotional material from 'Crash' and 'Grootbek':**

'Crash' Promotional Material:

MARC LOTTERING

Crash

BASED ON A TRUE STORY

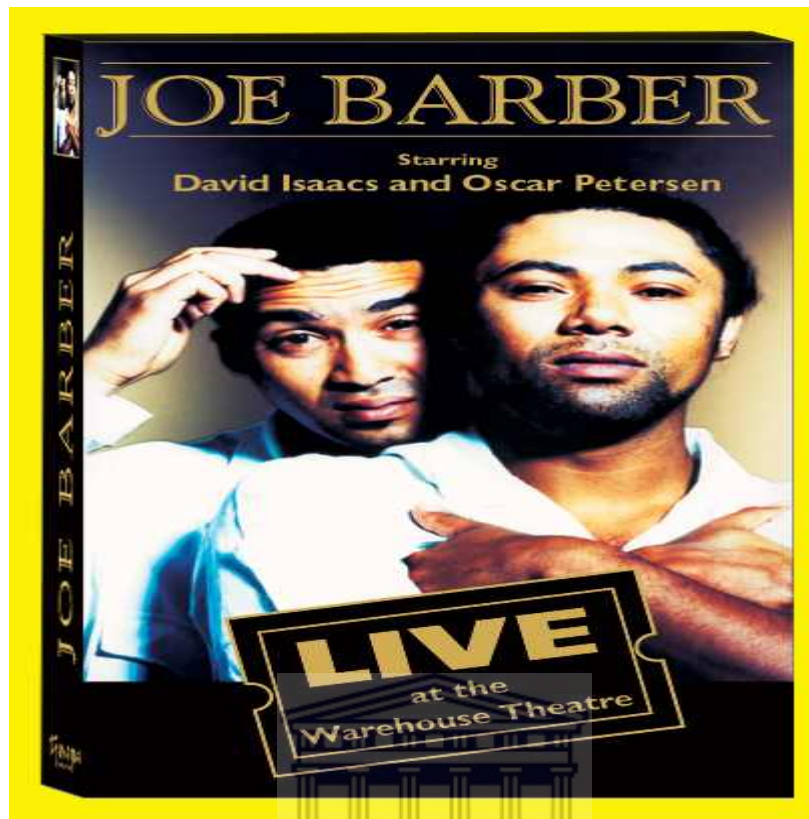
ON BROADWAY
FROM 14 APRIL 2004
TICKETS: (021) 418 8338

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16

ARRIVE ALIVE

The poster features a central image of Marc Lottering, a Black man with a large afro, wearing a white suit and sunglasses, sitting in the driver's seat of a severely damaged car. The background is dark and smoky. A faint watermark of the University of the Cape of Good Hope is visible in the center of the image.

‘Joe Barber’ video jacket copy:



David Isaacs (laughing) and Oscar Petersen in character:




'Suip' Promotional Material:

SUIP!

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'n NUWE TONEELSTUK deur
HEINRICH REISENHOFER en OSCAR PETERSEN

aangebied deur **DIE BAXTER TEATERSENTRUM** en
die **STANDARD BANK NASIONALE KUNSTEFES**

 **Standard Bank**

met
Mary Daniels, Ivan Abrahams, Shaun Arnolds, Celeste Matthews & Nicol Sheridan

**BAXTER
THEATRE
CENTRE**



GRAHAMSTAD ♦ 29 Junie - 2 Julie
KAAPSTAD ♦ vanaf 7 Julie 1999
BESPREEK BY COMPUTICKET

APPENDIX B: Sample Questionnaire

From the Cape Flats with Love

Performance and Identity Questionnaire

Name:

Year of study:

Age:

Gender:

Disclaimer: All information contained in this document is treated as confidential. If you do not want your name attached to your opinions, please tick 'withhold name'. Please fill in all the responses, as the information is used for a study on student attitudes.

Allow use of name:

Withhold name:



Culture, Language and Identity.

University of the Western Cape 2005

In many forms that we fill in for administrative purposes both here on campus, and in the general public sphere, we are asked to tick various categories, which identify us in terms of gender, race, etc. Please fill in this questionnaire as truthfully as possible, as your responses are anonymous, and therefore do not identify you, or your opinions.

1. How would you identify yourself? (*read carefully, then tick those applicable: ONE or MORE if you wish*)

- South African African Black woman/man
- Coloured Khoisan Cape Malay
- Of Mixed Euro/African/Asian descent White

2. Is this identity important to you? Yes No
Why *your* answer?

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3. What does the term 'African' mean to you?

- a) Of the African continent
- b) Of African descent
- c) Other.

If 'other', please specify

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4. Does the term 'Coloured' mean something different to 'African'? Explain?

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5. Does it mean something different to 'Black'?

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6. Have you always identified yourself as belonging to a certain group, or do you see yourself as experiencing shifts of identity?

Always like this

Experiencing shift

7. Did these shifts of identity begin: (tick one, please) – ignore if 'Always like this' in 6.

Before you came to UWC When you started studying at UWC

How and why/ why not? Did something happen to change your attitudes?

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8. Do you think that there is race discrimination at UWC? Explain?

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9. What do you think about the way plays like these (From the Cape Flats with Love, Joe Barber, etc.) offer perspectives on what it means to be African/ South African in 2003?

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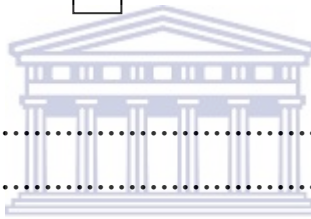
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10. Do you think it offers people not from the Coloured group any new perspectives?
YES

NO

HOW, or WHY NOT?



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11. Has your brief involvement in, *and* attendance of, performance events (*eg. Going to the Baxter Theatre, reading and analysing performances in-class, watching a screening of a play*) affected your perception of (or about) the concept of identity itself?

Yes No

12. Do you think that the Coloured community/ group is racist? Why/ Why not?

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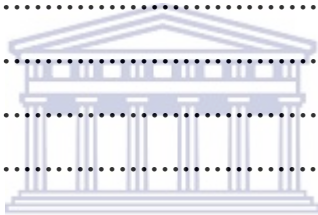
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13. What are the main stereotypes about Coloured people that you think exist in South Africa?

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14. Were any of these stereotypes/ representations changed after the screening? Explain?

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15. Do you think that representations of what have been called stereotypes (such as the musical, drunk, gangster Coloured) damage the image of the group? Explain?

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16. Do you think the portrayal in 'From the Cape Flats with love' represents an old representation of the Coloured, or a newer identity? Explain?

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17. Does this representation differ from a play like 'District Six: The Musical' or 'Kat and the Kings'? Why/ why not?

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18. Do you have any additional commentary about these issues, or any other you may like to add?

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