

The place of the past in the present: A discourse analysis of the threatened eviction of Cape
Town's De Waal Drive residents

By

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NOTES ON POSITIONALITY AND LANGUAGE USE

I am a white South African currently completing graduate school in the United States. I have lived most of my life in Cape Town and consider this city my home. The De Waal Drive flats, about which I write here, are buildings that I passed everyday on my journey to and from my private middle and high schools and on countless occasions since. I always wondered who lived in the flats but never knew and never needed to know. I believe my motivation to write about the De Waal Drive situation is symbolic of my growing awareness of just how in-your-(white)-face poverty, inequality, racism, and white supremacy can be and the ease with which white South Africans (including myself) are able to be both ignorant and dismissive of these features of our society. This study has thus, at least in part, been an attempt to confront my own ignorance, privilege, and racism through a re-encounter with the De Waal Drive flats. These experiences and motivations undeniably influence my analysis of this case and so, I do not present this analysis as “objective” or “unbiased” because, how could it be?

I would like to make one note on language use here. I refrain from using the term “nonwhite” which is fairly ubiquitous in writing about South Africa. This choice is based on the idea that “nonwhite” is a term that problematically re-centers whiteness and defines people by what they are not. Instead I refer to the racial designations that, while problematically instituted by the apartheid state, continue to have social, material, and political relevance in South African society. During apartheid, the Population Registration Act (1950) designated four “populations groups” namely white, colored, Indian/Asian, and African. “African” or “black” refers to people who speak a Bantu language. “Colored” refers to a broad range of people including people of mixed race, of Malaysian descent (brought to the Cape as slaves), descendants of the indigenous people of the Cape (Khoikhoi), among others (Thompson & Berat 2014). Racial groups were hierarchically arranged during apartheid: the white group was believed to be superior to all other races and “the darker the skin tone, the lower a person’s rung on the social ladder” (Teppo and Millstein 2015: 424). These racial designations, while arbitrary and rooted in apartheid ideology, are used in South Africa today.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	ii
NOTES ON POSITIONALITY AND LANGUAGE USE	iii
Chapter	
I. Introduction	1
II. Background	4
III. Extending analyses of post apartheid spatiality: a discourse analysis approach	8
Competing imperatives	10
The Transformation imperative.....	14
Wounded spaces and the politics of memory	16
IV. Methods	19
Data sources and collection methods	19
Approach to data analysis.....	20
V. Analysis	22
Mainstream media	22
Something that is simply happening	22
A misunderstanding	23
A partisan issue	24
The place of the past in the present?	25
Activist media.....	26
Classism	26
Repeating history	29
Threatening Transformation.....	30
Government media statements.....	32
An economic problem.....	33
The irrelevance of history	35
Undeserving, undisciplined residents.....	36
A benevolent government	39
VI. Conclusion	41
Appendix	
A. Sources	43
B. Transcription codes.....	45
REFERENCES.....	46

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Cape Town, often lauded for its cultural and racial diversity, natural beauty, and creativity is also a racially segregated and socially unequal city. Although racial segregation has decreased since the end of apartheid, the white minority still occupy the wealthiest and best served areas close to the ocean and city center, while the city's majority colored and black residents live in the underserved Cape Flats and "township" areas on the periphery of the city (Parry & van Eeden 2015).¹ Racial/spatial segregation are the legacy of over 40 years of apartheid social engineering and the several hundred years of colonialism that preceded it. Thus Miraftab (2007: 602) writes, "Dispossession from land and exclusion from urban areas have been at the center of people's struggle in South Africa." Violent, unjust forced removals of people from areas deemed desirable by and for white people is ubiquitous in South Africa's history. Displacement and evictions, however, are also part of the country's present. News media frequently reports on poor people facing eviction from state-owned land, the demolition of their informal homes by specialized police units, displacement, and threats of displacement from centrally located areas. Across the country, housing-related concerns are a major driver of protest and "are the most common socio-economic rights cases to be brought before the Constitutional Court." (Tissington, Munshi, Mirugi-Mukundi & Durojaye 2013:17).

It is against this backdrop that in April 2015, Cape Town news media began reporting on a story of the threatened eviction of low-income residents from the De Waal Drive flats by the provincial government of the Western Cape.² The flats, home to 92 racially diverse households, are one of the few state-owned properties that is located close to the affluent, well-served city center and the opportunities this affords. Adding to the significance of this situation is that the flats are located in historic District Six – an area that was declared "white" during apartheid and which was subsequently razed to the ground, displacing its mostly colored residents to the Cape Flats and other peripheral areas (Dewar 2001). Some residents that lived through this infamous forced

¹ The Cape Flats and "townships" are low-lying areas on the periphery of Cape Town that were designated for "colored" and "African" people, respectively, during apartheid. Residents were displaced to these areas as the urban center and surrounding suburbs were increasingly declared for "whites only." Persistent today is the tendency to refer to spaces predominantly inhabited by black people as "townships" while predominantly white areas are referred to as suburbs – hence the scare quotes.

² The South African government is divided into three "spheres" of government: national, provincial, and local (or city). Both the provincial government of the Western Cape and the City of Cape Town are involved in the provision of housing in the city.

removal are current residents of the De Waal Drive flats, and thus find themselves facing displacement once more.

The threatened eviction of the De Waal Drive residents raises some pertinent questions about what drives such a situation and about how this might be theorized. Current urban theory applied to both cities of the global North and South largely points to the process of neoliberalization as an organizing logic of urban development. But in the South African context, other logics such as the imperative to provide welfare and housing remain firmly on the urban agenda (albeit imperfectly). Thus a neoliberal critique of evictions from the Cape Town city center and surrounding areas is likely to obscure more than it reveals about the drivers of these occurrences.

In this study I advocate for the use of discourse analysis of news media as a method, grounded in everyday discursive practice, to inquire into how different groups of people think about and make meaning of urban issues. As a ubiquitous issue in South African society, housing concerns are frequently reported in the media and as such, the media becomes an important site where multiple groups (government, activists, journalists, affected residents, and members of the public) represent their interests and advocate particular ways of understanding these issues. Given South Africa's tumultuous past and that of District Six in particular, I use the case of the De Waal Drive flats to explore the place of this past in the present - that is, to understand how the memories and histories of racial/spatial violence and forced removals come to bear on meaning making of present day exclusions from "desirable" parts of the city. I also explore the notion of Transformation which in South African parlance refers to the aspiration to dismantle the legacy of apartheid. The analysis explores how this aspiration is both desired and worked against as Cape Town struggles to be both an inclusive and world city.

The study is presented in 5 chapters following this one. Chapter 2 provides more detail about the De Waal Drive situation, shares historical background concerning apartheid era spatial planning, and outlines relevant information about current public housing practices in South Africa. This is followed, in Chapter 3, with an exploration of how current analyses of housing issues may be extended through the use of discourse analysis as a methodological tool and through considerations of Transformation and the politics of memory as conceptual tools. Chapter 4 outlines how and why I employed the methods of grounded theory and discourse analysis to conduct an analysis of the news media concerning the De Waal Drive situation. The analysis in

Chapter 5 is divided into three main sections that explore how the De Waal Drive situation was framed in mainstream media, activist media, and government media statements. The final chapter is a short conclusion that considers how the politics of memory relates to the politics of the De Waal Drive situation and suggests this as a useful extension for theorizing post-apartheid spatiality.

CHAPTER 2

BACKGROUND

“District Six has always been a place in which struggles have occurred and over which fierce battles have been fought” (Jeppie & Soudien 1990: 11)

It was with sad irony that on Freedom Day 2015 - a national holiday commemorating South Africa's first democratic elections - that a Cape Town newspaper carried the first detailed story about the Western Cape provincial government's threat to evict low-income households from the De Waal Drive flats. Sad irony because the flats are located in an upmarket area of the city from which thousands of people were forcibly removed during apartheid. With sweeping views of Table Mountain to the south, the Atlantic Ocean to the north, and the city bowl in between, the views from the De Waal Drive flats are spectacular. Their close proximity to the Cape Town city center is also valued for the access it affords to public transport, good schools, health care, and employment opportunities. The De Waal Drive flats have stood in this prime position for at least 70 years.³ Today, they are owned by the Western Cape provincial government, Department of Human Settlements⁴ and have been rented to low income residents since the end of apartheid as part of the government's many housing programs. Currently, 92 racially diverse households live in these flats – many of them seniors and many having lived in the flats for several years. About six weeks after the first report on the threatened eviction, the media reported on government plans to renovate the flats, increase the rent to align with “market-related” prices, and relocate any residents unable to meet this new rent to a housing development in Pelican Park, an area some 20 kilometers southeast of city and far away from the opportunities associated with living in the city center.

For black, colored, and Indian Capetonians, the opportunity to live in this area is hard won. Prior to South Africa's transition to democracy in 1994, apartheid legislation controlled where people could live based on their so-called “population group.” The Group Areas Act (1950) designated certain geographic areas for the different groups, which in urban areas took the form of

³ It is unclear when exactly the flats were built but they are visible on aerial photographs of the city taken in 1945 and are not present in a 1926 photograph. Aerial photographs accessed through City of Cape Town council. The council has no plans of the flats on record likely because they were destroyed in a fire (A Davison, personal communication, July 29 2015).

⁴ The Department of Human Settlements is the name for the South African government department that deals with housing.

racialized zones (Thompson & Berat 2014). Cities and surrounding suburbs were increasingly declared zones for white people while black, colored, Indian and anyone else not considered “white” were relegated to areas on the outskirts of the city. Since apartheid laws did not require the white controlled state to deliver equal services for races considered inferior, these areas were underserved in every way leading to massive inequalities in the provision of services and thus the development of significant racial disparities in health, education, and income (among others) (Thompson & Berat 2014). As cities became whiter spaces, black, colored, and Indian people were dispossessed of land and property and increasingly forced to the periphery of the city.

One of the most highly contested mass forced removals to take place during apartheid took place in the very area where the De Waal Drive flats are located – District Six (now Zonnebloem). Some current residents of the flats were victims of this forced removal. In 1966 District Six was declared a white area and under the pretext of “slum clearance” the apartheid state justified forcibly removing over 60,000, mostly colored, residents to housing estates on the peripheral Cape Flats (Dewar 2001). The vibrant, cosmopolitan suburb that was historically home to a racially and ethnically diverse group of working class people was razed to the ground (Bickford-Smith 1990; Breytenbach 1997). All but a few buildings were demolished. Those that remained were houses of worship, and a few residential buildings - including the De Waal Drive flats - that either housed predominantly white people or were earmarked for renovation for the benefit of white people (Hart 1990).

In recognition of the devastating impact of these apartheid practices, the Bill of Rights of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996) now protects citizens from arbitrary evictions by both private property/land owners and the state. Section 26(3) of the Bill of Rights states that “no one may be evicted from their home, or have their home demolished, without an order of court”. This essentially declares that any eviction that results in a violation of other rights protected by the Constitution, such as the right to human dignity, is unconstitutional (SERI 2015). Further, the Constitution protects citizens’ right to “have access to adequate housing” and obliges the state to use its available resources to help citizens realize this right. This is the basis for a number of housing programs in South Africa that began with the African National Congress’s (ANC) 1994 election campaign where Nelson Mandela famously promised (but did not deliver) 1 million houses in 5 years. Since 1994 local and provincial governments have implemented and reworked a number of programs aimed at providing formal housing to millions of South Africans.

In its 20-year review, the state celebrated the building of 2.8 million houses in the two decades after apartheid (The Presidency 2014). The most recent housing plan is commonly known as Breaking New Ground (BNG) and includes a number of programs including *in situ* upgrading of informal settlements, new housing developments (like the Pelican Park development) and the maintenance of rental housing (like the De Waal Drive flats). Access to the government owned De Waal Drive flats has afforded a few former District Six residents the opportunity to move back to the area where they live alongside white families that lived in the flats during apartheid, as well as other residents previously excluded from the urban core by virtue of their “population group.” The opportunity to move back to District Six is significant as the area remains largely undeveloped because of an exceedingly slow process of land restitution that is still in progress.⁵ This has meant that very few families that were forcibly removed from District Six have been able to move back despite having valid and documented claims on the land.

Media concerning the De Waal Drive case penned by a housing activist suggested the provincial government were repeating the “city’s eviction history in the name of money” and accused them of leading gentrification in the area (see Knoetze 2015a and 2015b). After the publication of this media, the story gained widespread attention and the Minister of Human Settlements, Bonginkosi Madikizela, gave a media briefing. In June 2015, he denied any impending evictions, but outlined the situation as economically “unsustainable”. He explained that residents of the flats pay little in rent, some fail to pay rent, and that money is needed to renovate and conduct maintenance on the flats. The proposed remedy: to move current residents to a home ownership situation in Pelican Park – a government housing development 20 kilometers away - thus allowing higher income tenants to move into the De Waal Drive flats. Backtracking on earlier suggestions that residents would have to pay substantially increased rent, current residents were assured that they can stay as long as they comply with their lease agreements (see Western Cape Government 2015c and 2015d). Some residents accepted the offer of home ownership in Pelican Park while others vowed to remain in their current homes. In consultation with a local nonprofit, the residents formed an action committee to ensure they all keep up with their rent and that mechanisms exist to alert each other should anyone be struggling. The focus on rent compliance ensures that the government has no legal grounds to pursue eviction. Although everything is quiet

⁵ In mid-2015, only around 130 families had moved to back District Six since they were forcibly removed during apartheid (J Schaffers, personal communication July 14 2015).

now, the feeling among housing activists is that this is not the last chapter of this story (D Knoetze, personal communication July 22 2015). It remains unclear what the provincial government's motive is for wanting to move the De Waal Drive residents and what the ultimate plans are for the flats and/or the valuable land they occupy.

While the De Waal Drive residents are being offered homes in Pelican Park, over 300,000 households within the City of Cape Town alone have registered their need for formal housing on the official "demand database" (Western Cape Government 2015a). The most recent census shows that in the Western Cape, 18.2% of people live in informal dwellings (i.e., shacks) – a figure that has grown by 53% since 2001 and which does not include the proliferation of so-called "backyard shacks" (Borel-Saladin & Turok 2011; Statistics South Africa 2011). The growing number of people living in informal dwellings is often attributed to high rates of urbanization, but while urbanization is significant in the country as a whole, Cape Town is not urbanizing more rapidly than other major cities in South Africa (Borel-Saladin & Turok 2011; Sacks 2014). Considering that between 2009 and 2014 about 64,500 houses were built in the whole Western Cape province (Western Cape Government 2015b), the current wait for a house could be up to 29 years – and this does not account for new and growing demand. The provincial government's singling out of the De Waal Drive residents - people that are already housed - for the "opportunity to become property owners" is thus puzzling (Western Cape Government 2015c).

CHAPTER 3

EXTENDING ANALYSES OF POST APARTHEID SPATIALITY: A DISCOURSE ANALYSIS APPROACH

In this section I consider using media discourse analysis as a method to extend analyses of post-apartheid spatiality. I argue that this approach allows for building theory that is grounded in everyday discursive practices and can thus contribute to a broad call to consider the multiple, complex, and contradictory logics that often characterize global South cities. From this perspective, I review literature concerning the multiple imperatives and their related discourses that have been highlighted as important in considerations of post-apartheid spatiality specifically. I argue for extending these analyses to include the notion of “Transformation” (explained below) and relatedly, the politics of memory. I aim to show that a news media analysis of the De Waal Drive situation offers a unique opportunity to explore this conceptual extension.

Media discourse analysis

News media has received a lot of attention from scholars interested in discourse analysis and related fields because it is believed to meaningfully contribute to our “social and political knowledge and beliefs about the world” (Van Dijk 1991:110). The idea that what we read or hear in the news plays an important role in shaping how we think about current events and the people, places, and ideas they represent reflects the assumptions of discourse analysis that language is constructive of social reality, is a form of social power, and can be used as a means to achieve particular social or political ends (Marston 2002; Wilson and MacLean 2011). Indeed, the media space is used by multiple parties – including journalists, politicians, and activists – to share information about current events and promote particular understandings of these events. The publication of news online now also allows news consumers to react to what they read, watch, or hear and to interact with other consumers of the same news. Accessing news online, the public often have the ability to share news stories on social media, indicate their “like” or “dislike” of content, make comments on a story and engage other people’s comments. Discourse analyses of contemporary forms of news media with all their interactive components thus offers a rich source of information about how multiple groups represent, understand, and talk about current events.

For discourse analysts, semiotic choices, like those made in news media, can encourage people to interpret events or issues within a particular discourse, that is within “broader ideas

shared by people in a society about how the world works” (Machin and Mayr 2012: 11). By drawing on shared ideas, language choices can shape representations of people, issues, or events, promote certain worldviews, and make particular ideologies appear non-ideological, natural or as common sense (Fairclough 1995; Machin and Mayr 2012). Power is thus conceived as operating through language: different ways of talking and thinking about an issue may be ‘ruled in’ (allowed, made visible, made sayable) or ‘ruled out’ (constrained, obscured, made unsayable) in how the issue is represented (Hall 2013). This has consequences beyond the discursive realm; what is allowed/limited, included/excluded, made visible/invisible, made sayable/unsayable can have very real, material consequences for people’s lives. Thus, with reference to urban issues, Pieterse (2008) asserts that in working toward more just and radically democratic urban futures, it is important to examine the dominant discourses through which urban issues are understood and talked about. This is because these discourses ultimately come to bear on urban policy formation and on decision-making about urban issues, for example. Reflections on discourse can helpfully illuminate whose interests are really being served in these processes.

Discourse analysis offers an approach to analyzing urban issues that is grounded in the everyday, meaning making, and discursive practices of people concerned with these issues. This methodological approach can thus contribute to the project of decolonizing urban theory as it seeks to develop theory from the ground up rather than an applying dominant (Western, Northern) urban theory from the top down (Fredericks & Diouf 2014). Indeed, an on-going critique of urban studies scholarship of global South cities is that scholars tend to inappropriately apply dominant urban theory largely developed in (and thus most often relevant to) the global North to the global South. This tendency fails to challenge dominant views of global South cities as “necessarily dysfunctional” (Fredericks & Diouf 2014: 1; Zeiderman 2016), as “sources of data rather than as sites of theorization in their own right” (Parnell & Robinson 2012: 596 following Connell 2007), and/or fails to appreciate them as “important loci of global processes or generators of urban stories worth telling and worth learning from” (Myers 2011:6). With such critiques in minds, scholars have called for considerations of cities as complex, contradictory, and operating with multiple logics (Parnell & Robinson 2012; Fredericks & Diouf 2014; Roy & Ong; Pieterse 2008). An openness to considering the multiple influences on urban processes offers an antidote to the sometimes narrow theorizing of cities outside of the West within the single logics of capitalism or

post-colonial theory (Roy & Ong 2011) or in the South African context, beyond “the legacy of apartheid or the effects of neoliberal policy” (Haferburg & Huchzermeyer 2015: 6).

The intention in the following section is to bring together scholarship concerning South African cities that point to multiple competing imperatives that characterize post-apartheid spatiality. In keeping with the focus of this study on discourse, I attend primarily to what this scholarship has to say about the dominant discourses pertaining to housing and urban change more broadly. Rather than critiquing this literature and/or suggesting where it might be insufficient or require nuancing, I undertake this review as a way to inquire into how these analyses may be extended through the method of discourse analysis and through the conceptual consideration of the politics of memory (discussed later).⁶

Competing imperatives: neoliberalism, world cityness, welfare provision, and party politics

Following trends in studies of cities of the global North, studies of urban change in Cape Town often draw attention to the process of neoliberalization and its influence on economic and urban policies. Early in its democracy, South Africa abandoned the Reconstruction and Development Program (RDP) - the ANC government’s equity focused policy guiding job creation, service delivery, education, welfare provision, and land redistribution. After intense criticism and the failure of RDP to stimulate significant economic growth, it was replaced with the more neoliberal Growth, Employment and Redistribution plan (GEAR) that decreased barriers to trade, liberalized capital flows, reduced government expenditure and generally prioritized economic growth and efficiency over redistribution (Peet 2002; Thompson & Berat 2014). This shift toward more neoliberal economic policies is often identified as having an important influence on urban policies and urban change processes. McDonald (2008), for example, characterizes Cape Town as a neoliberal city where urban policy discourse is imbued with world city ambitions aimed at offering world class amenities and investment opportunities to a network of largely white transnational elites. The imperative to build Cape Town’s attractiveness to elites, foreign investors, and tourists is easily observed. For example, in bids for international events and accolades (e.g., FIFA World Cup in 2010 – see Steinbrink, Haferburg & Ley 2011, World Design Capital 2014-

⁶ The approach of extending, inquiring into rather than critiquing or pointing to insufficiencies, is inspired by McKittrick’s (2006) approach in bringing together contemplations in human geography and Black studies.

see Wenz 2015), the adoption of urban development policies and public-private partnerships to “upgrade” the city center (e.g. City Improvement Districts much like New York City’s Business Improvement Districts - see Didier, Morange & Peyroux 2012; Miraftab 2007), or the investment in infrastructure. Embedded in discourses concerning the imperative for achieving world cityness, is the naturalized notion that such measures are necessary for economic growth, which in turn is both necessary for and effective in addressing poverty and social inequality (Lemanski 2007; McDonald 2008; Robinson 2002). The major critiques of such notions are similar to those made in global North contexts. That is, that overinvestment in such commitments actually promotes uneven urban development, intensifies race and class segregation, and ultimately neglects the interests of the city’s poorest residents (Gibson 2015; Lemanski 2007; McDonald 2008; Miraftab 2007).

Gibson (2015) interprets the continued marginalization of poor residents through government housing developments located on the outskirts of the city as consistent with a neoliberal discourse in which the poor are viewed as undesirable “morally corrupt and behaviorally undisciplined” people that are therefore being moved out the city (Gibson 2015: 336). In her analysis of the governance and discursive practices of the City Improvement Districts in Cape Town, Miraftab (2007) relatedly highlights “world-class city” discourses that legitimate disciplining certain undesirable residents and socially sanitizing public spaces in the city center “for greater marketability in the global economy” (p. 603). However, she argues against viewing the process of neoliberalization as being uncontested and points to the many ways in which it is challenged from within and outside of the state. Till (2012) notes a general trend in modern cities whereby “unwanted people” are blamed by elites for urban problems and are thus “cleared away from sight” both physically and discursively (p. 8). In so doing, the city is fashioned in accordance with “Western visions of the city” (Till 2012: 8) or what Lipstiz (2007) calls a “white spatial imaginary” – that is, an imaginary of homogenous or “pure” space that values exclusivity and exchange value. In this vein and ahead of the FIFA World Cup in 2010, news reports that Cape Town’s homeless people and informal traders were being removed and excluded from areas surrounding the soccer stadia was generally considered to be an exercise in sanitizing the city by hiding away people deemed undesirable for the benefit and comfort of international tourists (see for example Smith 2010).

In Cape Town world city ambitions and the pro-growth, neoliberal economic agendas that support them exist alongside other competing imperatives or logics that influence urban change and development. One example is the state's "pro-poor" policies and rhetoric - exemplified in their long standing commitments to welfare provision that includes providing housing and basic services for poor people. Along these lines and arguing for the study of the multiple processes beyond neoliberalization that shape urban development in global South cities, Parnell and Robinson (2012) draw attention to policies that have actively sought to address social inequality in South Africa. They argue that although

there are certainly examples of neoliberalism evident in South Africa... a backtracking of the state from a commitment to redistribution is not one of them. South African cities, notoriously unequal places, are fairer now than 20 years ago because of this policy position, a fact ignored or distorted by the authors of most neoliberal critiques (p. 604)

The provision of housing is an example of a commitment that has indeed remained on the urban agenda since the end of apartheid. Although the state cannot be accused of backtracking on this commitment, housing programs have been widely criticized. For one, the promise of housing and dealing with the housing "backlog" continues to be a hot button issue in South African election campaigns. Pithouse (2009) argues that politicians have been successful in framing the issue of housing as a technocratic rather than urban problem. This framing suggests that if government can simply build enough houses, the housing problem would be resolved. This position is useful for electioneering as it makes the problem of housing appear easily solved by a large enough budget allocation. Huchzermeyer (2004) suggests that promises of housing (for votes) has led to a situation where large numbers of homes are built quickly and inexpensively causing problems with the quality of housing and a tendency to locate housing on land that is easily and/or cheaply attained. There has thus been a tendency to develop housing on the periphery of the city – sometimes on land historically earmarked by the apartheid government for "township" development. These practices are criticized for failing to disrupt the spatial logic of apartheid – that is, they carry out the mandate of apartheid spatial planning by continuing to marginalize and exclude the poor – largely black and colored people - from the city thus entrenching both race and class segregation (Charlton & Kihato 2006; Huchzermeyer 2004). A technocratic framing thus obscures the power dynamics underlying the pursued solutions to the housing "problem" and detracts from the political effects (de facto racial segregation) of these solutions (Pieterse 2008).

Housing projects have been further criticized for the ways in which they engage housing beneficiaries. To contrast with a dictatorial, authoritarian and oppressive apartheid state, current housing policies are rich with rhetoric pertaining to public participation processes aimed at promoting democratic practice through transparency and inclusion. In practice, however, there has often been a lack of meaningful engagement with housing beneficiaries and documented marginalization of their “voice and choice” (Huchzermeyer & Haferberg 2015: 11).⁷ People living in both formal and informal homes that have faced eviction by the state have been dealt with oppressively and sometimes violently. This has been true at different levels of government (provincial, local) as well as is in different cities governed by different political parties.⁸ Shack dwellers in the Western Cape, such as those in Marikana (Philippi East), Lwandle, Joe Slovo, Symphony Way, and Wolwerevier, have faced demolitions of their homes and evictions from land owned by different spheres of government, national government agencies, and private owners (see: Chilemba 2014; Shandu, 2014; Symphony Way Pavement Dwellers 2011; Knoetze 2015d). In some cases, violent clashes have taken place between residents of these areas and the police or the City’s ominously named “Anti Land Invasion Unit” that is tasked with demolishing illegally constructed shacks and/or evicting residents – sometimes repeatedly and without the required court order. Some evictees have been displaced to deplorable conditions in city-built Temporary Relocation Areas (TRAs). An infamous TRA is locally known as *Blikkiesdorp* (Tin Town) so named for its nearly 2,000 one-room sheet metal structures housing roughly 20,000 people evicted from areas all over Cape Town – some having lived there since it was built in 2007 (Open Democracy Advice Centre 2015).

A number of social movements (e.g., *Abahlali baseMjondolo*, the Western Cape Anti Eviction Campaign; the Social Justice Coalition) along with a number of non-government organizations and popular campaigns (e.g., “Reclaim The City” in Cape Town) have been dedicated to protesting, documenting, and challenging the constitutionality of state actions and

⁷ For instance, around the same time that the De Waal Drive story made headlines, another group of Cape Town residents had been issued with eviction notices from their state-owned homes that were to be demolished to make way for a new road as part of the MyCiti bus project. Residents were able to fight the eviction because of the City’s lack of consultation with them about the proposed plans (WRAA, n.d.; Abbas, 2015a).

⁸ At the time of writing, the Western Cape was the only one of South Africa’s nine provinces to be run by the official opposition party (The Democratic Alliance (DA)). While their campaigning highlights comparatively better results in “service delivery” in comparison to ANC led provinces (see DA 2016), residents of the Western Cape have faced similar challenges to residents in other provinces when it comes to housing and evictions.

highlighting the inconsistencies between housing policy and practice. Protest has also taken the form of contesting how housing beneficiaries and the demand for housing itself have been framed by the state. Housing activist and founding president of *Abahlali baseMjondolo* (The Shack Dwellers Movement) S’bu Zikode (2011) suggests that poor residents are viewed by the state as passive recipients of services rather than as people capable and worthy of being included in a process of discussing and problem-solving around urban issues. While the state has characterized protests of the poor as “service delivery protests” – a characterization readily taken up in the media - the movement rejects the notion that what they demand is services (or even houses) and frame theirs as a moral struggle to be recognized and treated as human (Gibson 2015; Zikode 2011).

The Transformation imperative

Another related imperative that I seek to explore further is what is locally referred to as “Transformation,” which is well defined by McEwen and Steyn (2013) as “the undoing of the legacy of apartheid” which has the functions of “reconciliation and healing of a divided nation and redress of the racialized economic inequality that structured apartheid” (p. 2) Transformation can thus be thought of as having material, relational, and affective dimensions: it speaks to the need for actions that address the massive racial disparities that exist in so many tangible aspects of daily life as a result of apartheid (including wealth, health, education, housing and so on), but it also speaks to desires for a cohesive, inclusive, nonracial, and less oppressive society – an idea embodied in Archbishop Desmond Tutu’s famous declaration of South Africa as the “Rainbow Nation.”

In South African terms, housing, land reform and other spatial projects have been positioned as integral for achieving Transformation. McEwen and Steyn (2013) note that the “reconstitution of spaces and identities has been key to the Transformation project because the regulation of spaced and raced hierarchies was apartheid’s central means of achieving and protecting white supremacist rule” (p. 2). Apartheid’s program of “separate development” engendered racialized ideas about who belongs where and why. By apartheid logic, white people above all other groups were imagined as having the highest levels of morality, decency, and goodness. On this basis, citizenship, material resources, the well-developed spaces of the city, and the right to rule were claimed as belonging to white people (Teppo & Millstein 2015). Those

excluded from white spaces were both physically displaced and rendered outside of the state's purview; this took place unevenly, with colored people receiving relatively more advantages than black people who were the most disenfranchised by the apartheid state. The resulting prosperity of white people and deepening poverty and social ills in the "townships" were not viewed as a result of the state's abandonment of these people and places but rather constituted further evidence of the superiority of white people. Through the ordering of space, apartheid thus not only entrenched patterns of racial segregation and created massive racial disparities in a number of areas, but also created a fractured society with deep-seated ideas about race, white supremacy, and the untrustworthiness of government to act in the best interest of all citizens equally (Fjeldstad 2004).

Paying attention to apartheid as a moral as well as racial/spatial project, Teppo and Millstein (2015) advocate consideration of a moral, post-colonial, racial discourse that is used to legitimate uneven urban development in South African cities. They argue that the country's colonial and apartheid histories and the resulting social hierarchies and inequalities are important contextual nuances that ought to be considered in analyses of urban change because of what these "reflect and reproduce" in the social imaginary (Teppo & Millstein 2015: 421). In their analysis of gentrification in Cape Town, they show that discourses such as those of renewal/development are very often naturalized and legitimated as moral projects or are otherwise couched in the language of nation building and democracy. This observation connects current modes of framing and justifying urban renewal projects with the dominant discourses of apartheid while also acknowledging the ways in which these discourses have shifted to align with the ideals of the "New" South Africa (e.g., nation-building, democracy, multiculturalism, non-racialism).

The Transformation project of the present arises from (and is thus linked with) South Africa's apartheid and colonial past. Implicit in the imperative to Transform, is the recognition of a past that is undesirable and from which we seek to progress and differentiate. It would seem, however, that we have a complex, contradictory and somewhat flexible relationship with this past: the past is invoked to inspire inclusive urban policies while past logics are simultaneously deployed that systematically exclude marginalized people from the opportunities these policies seek to create. Housing is a case in point. At a policy level, government housing programs are described as playing an important role in Transformation. The Western Cape Department of Human Settlements describes its vision as "Developing integrated and sustainable human

settlements, with access to social and economic opportunities for all the Province's citizens" (2015: 19). However, as this review has described, the failures to disrupt apartheid spatial planning and respectfully engage housing beneficiaries would suggest a truly Transformational approach to housing remains largely unrealized.

What does a consideration of Transformation add to analyses of urban issues? I suggest that the Transformation project pushes for considerations of the politics of memory in relation to urban issues and the possibilities for more just urban futures. As discussed, the Transformation project requires an engagement with or recollection of the past, but to what extent are urban histories present in meaning making around urban issues? And with what consequences? In the final part of this chapter, I suggest that an analysis of the De Waal Drive situation provides a unique opportunity to explore these questions.

Wounded spaces and the politics of memory

Although evictions (threatened and actual) take place all over Cape Town and in other South African cities, the threat of eviction of the De Waal Drive residents has some unique features that make it an interesting situation to analyze. First, the flats are located in close proximity to the city center – both a desirable place to live and a fairly unusual location for public housing because of the high property value. Second, the flats are located in historic District Six. During apartheid, dispossession of land and property and forced removals were ubiquitous and the destruction of District Six has become emblematic of these racial/spatial injustices. Many artists, writers, and activists have contributed to the symbolic status of District Six through various types of memory-work. Several well-known plays, poems, art works, and books are dedicated to preserving the memory of the District Six community and its destruction. That residents living in District Six today could, once again, be threatened with relocation from this symbolic place raises the question of how such an action – one that so effortlessly mirrors the area's and some residents' history – can be justified. This is not to suggest that other evictions or threats of relocation are any less problematic or traumatic, but the De Waal Drive situation does exemplify something of an extreme case; one would expect that the symbolic nature of District Six would give government officials pause in dealing with the De Waal Drive residents, but this does not appear to be the case.

The seeming lack of pause can be considered with reference to the politics of memory. Several scholars have considered the role that the recollection of past violence plays in

perpetuation of violence in the present. Mills (2007) notes that when it comes to social memory – memories of the past that are shared by a group - it is apparent that different groups with varying degrees of power and social status will have different perceptions of “what is important in the past and what is unimportant, what happened and does matter what happened and does not matter, and what did not happen at all” (p. 29). He proposes that while there are aspects of the past that are selectively remembered, there must also be those that are forgotten or denied – this is what he calls *collective amnesia*. Rose (2004) relatedly notes how different group of people have different recollections and understandings of the past; amnesia, she contends, tends to surround histories that are uncomfortable and inconvenient to remember. In what ways do the provincial government’s plans for the De Waal Drive flats and their engagement with residents both require and promote this kind of amnesia? What is at stake when histories of oppression and violence are sidelined, selectively remembered and/or forgotten? What happens if the past no longer has a place in the present?

Mills (2007) asserts that selective recall/forgetting of past events, and practices that are used to manage memory have a key role in the development and maintenance of systems of (white) ignorance, that is, “the recalcitrant active ignorance of privileged white subjectivities on racial matters” (Medina 2013:8). The operation of such systems of ignorance in the South African context are perhaps demonstrated in the results of a representative survey where shockingly only 34% of white South Africans agreed that land inequality today is attributable to apartheid (Gibson, 2009). Such denial or ignorance of the impact of apartheid on present conditions was linked with extremely poor knowledge (or possibly poor/selective recollection) of the country’s land history.

It thus seems that it is difficult for some (privileged) South Africans to regard the country as a *wounded space*: “a geographical space that has been torn and fractured by violence and exile” (Rose 2004: 34) and/or to think of a city like Cape Town as a *wounded city*: a city “harmed and structured by particular histories of physical destruction, displacement, and individual and social trauma resulting from state-perpetrated violence” (Till 2012: 259). Thinking of spaces or cities as *wounded* requires acknowledgment and remembrance of the violent histories of these spaces and understanding that realizing more just, ethical, and moral futures depends on this remembrance (Rose 2004; Till 2012). Speaking specifically to the urban, Till (2012) notes that when we think of cities as wounded, it becomes impossible to think of urban space as “property only”; instead, we are forced to consider the value of land and property beyond its exchange value to also consider

its social, political, and historical meaning and use value. Taking these considerations of the politics of memory into account, Transformation can be said to require a moral engagement with the past, that is, we have to recognize past violence as having happened, as mattering, as being unjust, and as reflecting practices that destroy the possibility of realizing the (just, ethical, inclusive, nonracial) future we hope to achieve (Rose 2004). Transformation – a forward, future focused aspiration - thus fundamentally requires remembering and caring about the past.

In conclusion, I return to the start of this section and the considerations of media discourse analysis. The media space can be considered an interface between news producers, the public, and the state. As such, it is an important site where knowledge about urban issues is produced. In this process, recollection of relevant urban histories may be stimulated or repressed and so, the media can be said to play a role in the process of public memory (Till 2012). As discussed above, the extent to which past histories are recalled has implications for the kinds of urban futures that are possible. With this in mind, I approach the analysis of the media about the De Waal Drive situation asking: how is this issue and the people involved framed? What is made visible/invisible about this situation? What is the place of apartheid or District Six history in these framings? What possible futures are opened or foreclosed?

CHAPTER 4

METHODS

Data sources and collection methods

Data analyzed for this study include 11 on-line and/or print news articles and one opinion piece that were written about the De Waal Drive flats and the residents' possible displacement. The comments made by members of the public on these stories (159 comments in total) were also captured and analyzed. Additionally, the Western Cape Province's two official media releases concerning the De Waal Drive flats were analyzed along with a news media interview (video) with a city official commenting on the story. All data are publicly available and were collected between April and September 2015 through weekly news searches except the Western Cape Province media releases that were obtained from the Western Cape Department of Human Settlements directly (available on request). The included media represent all the news media that, to my knowledge, were published in English about the De Waal Drive situation during this time period. Although news media are published in other languages, publications in English dominate the South African press and are widely read (Bosch 2010; Danso & McDonald 2001). A list of included sources is detailed in Appendix A. While public officials are referred to by name, the names/screen names of members of the public that commented on the news stories are not included. A guide to the transcription codes of the included news media interview can be found in Appendix B.

The majority of reporting about the De Waal Drive flats situation (seven sources) appeared in mainstream media. By "mainstream" I denote publications or website that have a wide readership and are popular sources of daily news. Of the seven I have called mainstream, four appeared in large daily newspapers or their weekend versions (The Cape Argus, Weekend Argus, and Pretoria News). Articles from these sources are also published and widely accessed online (through Independent Online). The other three mainstream articles, and the first to be written about the De Waal Drive situation, appeared on one of the country's largest on-line news sites (Eye Witness News). I designate these sources as "mainstream" to contrast them with the remaining four articles that were published in more "activist" publications. Three of these were written by a journalist that is also a land justice activist. Three activist pieces appeared in the online publication "GroundUp" which is nonprofit organization that describes itself as reporting "news that is in the public interest" and on "social justice stories in vulnerable communities" (groundup.org.za/about). The final story appeared in the weekly print and online newspaper, *The Mail and Guardian*. This

newspaper was started in 1985 at a time when there was intense censorship of the media by apartheid state. It was started by journalists committed to continuing to report on human rights abuses in South Africa. This is a widely read, weekly newspaper that continues to have a reputation for publishing in-depth, investigative pieces that more openly critical of government as compared to mainstream news media.

Approach to data analysis

A qualitative design using grounded theory and discourse analysis was used. Following a grounded theory approach, line-by-line coding of the data was first used to develop the initial codes that gave each line a descriptive label (Charmaz 2006). This helped organize data into categories while maintaining a critical stance, that is, one that required me to continuously ask questions of the data such as “what is being referred to here?” or “who is/is not represented here?” Focused coding, in which “the most significant and/or frequent earlier codes [are used] to sift through large amounts of data” (Charmaz 2006: 57), was then used to bring larger units of data together into thematic categories. An iterative process was undertaken in which the data were consistently revisited to ensure the larger categories encompassed the meaning of initial codes. Alongside coding, memo writing was used to keep track of how each code was defined, how categories were developed and changed, and to record emerging theoretical propositions, ideas and reflections on the data analysis process (Charmaz 2008).

This method was appropriate given the objectives of the research to explore not only *what* is being communicated about the case of the De Waal Drive flats but also *why*, *to what end* and *with what consequences*. To enrich this aspect of the analysis and to incorporate considerations of power and the politics of semiotic choices, analytic tools of discourse analysis were incorporated. Discourse analysis involves examining word choices and grammar in texts as a way to think about the discourse(s) they evoke and is a process of “de-naturalizing” language choices to “reveal the kinds of ideas, absences and taken-for-granted assumptions in texts” (Machin & Mayr 2012: 5). The broad analytic tools that I used included three of Gee’s (2014) Building Tasks pertaining to identities, politics, and relationships. “Identities” concerns the identities that a piece of language is used to enact or attribute to others. “Politics” concerns what is normalized in a piece of language, that is “what is being communicated as to what is to be taken to be ‘normal,’ ‘right,’ ‘good,’ ‘correct,’ ‘proper’... ‘the ways things are,’ ‘the way things ought to be’” (Gee 2014: 34).

“Relationships” concerns the kinds of relationships the piece of language is seeking to enact with others. For closer analysis of semiotic choices, I applied Fairclough’s (2001) ideas concerning the experiential, relational, and expressive value of words and grammar. Formal features that have experiential value signal “the way in which a text producer’s experience of the natural or social world is represented” (Fairclough 2001: 93). Similar to Gee’s relationship building task, formal features with relational value give cues as to the relationships that are being enacted. The expressive value of words and grammar signal the text producer’s judgments or evaluations of the situation being discussed.

CHAPTER 5

ANALYSIS

The analysis is organized into three broad sections which explores how the De Waal Drive situation was represented in three different types of media: mainstream media, activist media, and government media statements. The broader questions informing the analysis include: how is the issue and people involved framed? What is made visible/invisible about this situation? What is the place of apartheid and/or District Six history in this framing? What futures are made possible or foreclosed? For readability, I use italicized text to indicate text that is quoted from news media.

Mainstream media

Mainstream news articles comprised the bulk of the initial reporting on the De Waal Drive story and generally employ a detached style focused on “neutrally” presenting what is happening, rather than why or with what consequences. In some cases, no obvious stance is taken toward either residents or the provincial government and blame for the situation is unattributed. In other cases, the issue is presented as a possible misunderstanding or a situation that should be regarded as a partisan issue. Little to no mention is made of apartheid or District Six history in these articles which contributes to a decontextualized, dehistoricized framing of the situation. Although the majority of the media about the De Waal Drive story was published in mainstream new media, relatively few public comments were made on these stories (39) compared to activist media (120) (discussed later). Although this could reflect differences in readership, it may also speak to the failure of such coverage to elicit a reaction from the public.

Something that is simply happening

The first report on the De Waal Drive issue (Theletsane 2015) reports residents *were ordered to relocate*, *received eviction orders*, and *believe they have been strong-armed into moving*. None of these sentences, or any others in this article, identify who is carrying out these actions - that is, who has ordered them to relocate, who did they receive eviction orders from and who is strong-arming them? Without identifying who is doing these actions and it appears as if they are simply happening and there is no one to be blamed. Government is made invisible. A second article (Abbas 2015) labelled the De Waal Drive situation a *housing debacle*. Although this article named the provincial government as involved and used the strong word *debacle* (fiasco,

disaster) to describe the situation, the report did not elaborate on this debacle but instead focused on the divisions and ill feelings between residents that were allegedly resulting (*tensions are running high*). In both articles, attention is drawn away from the government's actions and their possible motivations and is placed on residents.

One slightly more detailed article about the De Waal Drive case (Lewis 2015) did include comments from both residents and an official from the provincial government, but the approach to presenting this information attempts to be neutral. This article includes perspectives from residents including direct quotes that explain why residents are against moving and includes statements from the provincial government that speak to their future plans and motivations:

"We will not move there. Our children were raised here and some still go to school here. Why must we move to place where we must constantly look over our shoulders?" said Carol.

Zalisile Mbali, spokesperson for MEC of Human Settlements Bonginkosi Madikizela, said there were, no plans for a "mass eviction" or forced removals of people. He also denied that the complex would be sold to a developer. But he said the department wanted to use its rental stock to accommodate people who were economically active and wanted to live closer to their work in the CBD.

(Lewis 2015)

This format gives both "sides" a chance to share their views and frame the issue from their perspective without the reporter obviously judging either stance or taking a position. This detached style, that reports on what is happening, leaves it to the reader to judge why it might be happening and how they should feel about it. No blame for the situation is assigned and no broader contextual information is provided.

A misunderstanding

As the government is invisibilized, residents are positioned as people with a problem about which they feel *disgruntled* (Abbas 2015; Theletsane 2015) and *distressed* and *too worried to even sleep* (Theletsane 2015), and *prepared to fight* (Pitjeng 2015). Doubt is cast on the authenticity of the residents' problem, however, and in many cases their concerns are not stated as fact but presented as a belief or claim:

Community members claim they were given an ultimatum to pay market-related rent of up to R6,000 or move out.

(Pitjeng 2015)

...tenants of a block of flats along De Wall Drive stood in the street...to show a united front against the local government, which they claim wants to relocate them to Pelican Park
(Tswanya 2015)

Language such as residents *claim* or *believe* attributes the negative evaluations of the situation to residents alone (rather than the journalist) and presents their propositions as unverified. This leaves open the possibility that what is being reported may be incorrect, that others may not share these evaluations, or may interpret the situation differently. Such language arguably works to preserve a sense of the reporter's neutrality by ensuring that, on the basis of these statements, they cannot be said to be taking a position on the matter.

However, this language also makes it possible for readers to dismiss these reports as possibly untrue or exaggerated and the issue as isolated to these particular residents. Without the inclusion of broader contextual information including residents' backgrounds and other evictions in the city center, it becomes possible to confine this issue to this group of *disgruntled* residents. The possibility of imagining evictions from the city center as a pattern or shared concern among numerous Capetonians is precluded. Once the government made a statement on the situation an article with the headline *De Waal Drive residents have nothing to fear, says MEC* [Minister] (Weekend Argus July 14, 2015) was published that mostly quoted the Minister's statements from his briefing. The background of the situation was summed up: *Two weeks ago, allegations of evictions and coercion by the government began circulating*. The framing of the issue as an *allegation* that was *circulating* (much like a rumor) suggests that the situation was simply a misunderstanding thus shifting blame away from government and suggesting the issue as false allegations rather than the threat of eviction of residents from the city center.

A partisan issue

Although the provincial government's actions and motivations are never directly criticized or questioned in mainstream media, two articles include comments from named members of political parties that stand in opposition to the party that governs the Western Cape (the DA). While neither of these articles includes quotes from residents or the provincial government, rival politicians give these comments and analysis of the De Waal Drive situation:

But the Economic Freedom Fighters' Nazier Paulsen said poorer communities were being targeted across the City Bowl to make way for upmarket developments. "What is surprising is that government is undergoing a massive change of the Cape Town CBD, where poorer people are being moved out of the CBD to make way for people willing to pay a premium"

(Pitjeng 2015)

The DA-led Western Cape government was developing Cape Town in much the same fashion as the apartheid regime would have, said ANC provincial chairman Marius Fransman yesterday. “We have seen a re-emergence of apartheid spatial development under the DA,” he said.

(‘DA uses apartheid model in Cape’ June 13, 2015)

In keeping with the imperative to maintain neutrality, these opinions are presented as the views of those making the statements and not necessarily the view of the journalist. The choice to include these analyses suggests that the provincial government are being criticized, albeit indirectly. Through these inclusions it is implied that the DA works against the interests of poor people (*poorer communities were being targeted*), is classist (*poorer people are being moved out of the CBD to make way for people willing to pay a premium*), and racist (*a re-emergence of apartheid spatial development under the DA*). While these statements may provide a way for a reporter to offer a critique of the situation whilst appearing neutral, it also makes it possible to frame the situation as a result of the policies of one political party (the DA) despite the fact that evictions take place all over the country under the governance of different political parties. This works to narrow the discussion about and possible solutions to evictions from the city center to discussions about party politics.

The place of the past in the present?

Within mainstream media coverage of the De Waal Drive situation, no mention is made of District Six history or the fact that some of the residents are former residents of District Six. This history, it would seem, has been judged as not mattering or important to recall with reference to this story. The only mention of apartheid history is made in the statement by a rival politician quoted above that suggested that the situation signifies *a re-emergence of apartheid spatial development*. Here history is invoked for the purposes of connecting the DA with the racist policies of the apartheid state. This draws on a long and widely held perception that the DA is a ‘white’ party – a perception that their new leader Mmusi Maimane has worked hard to dispel (see, for example, Spies 2016). This invocation forecloses considerations of the politics of the present moment. The actions of the DA-led provincial government can certainly be criticized for entrenching racial segregation, but they are a democratically elected party whose policies are not those of the apartheid state but yet appear to have potentially exclusionary outcomes. Without engaging current urban policies, it obscures the fact that similar issues are occurring nationally –

including in ANC run cities (see, for example, Nicolson 2015) and despite a progressive constitution and extensive housing programs. History is invoked not to start a conversation about housing issues or the shortcomings of housing policy, but as a method to win party support.

An oblique reference is perhaps made to the destruction of District Six in an article that reported *Zalisile Mbali, spokesman for the MEC of Human Settlements, Bonginkosi Madikizela, said there were no plans for a “mass eviction” or forced removal of people* (Lewis 2015). The inclusion of the term *forced removal* by the author is certainly in keeping with the way District Six history is referenced but it is left to the reader to make this connection (or not). The failure of mainstream media, in this case and overall, to draw attention to the location of the flats in District Six could be read as part of the attempt to appear neutral, as already discussed. But, the decision to ignore this history at once also suppresses and invisibilizes it, and along with it the added significance of the De Waal Drive residents’ threatened eviction.

Activist media

Four activist media articles frame the actions of the provincial government as socially unjust for three related reasons: it is classist, it parallels apartheid era practices of forced removals, and it symbolizes a threat to Transformation. This framing relies on emphasizing the particular location of the flats - close to the city center and in District Six – and the meaning that this location has for residents. Residents are constructed as a community of deserving, moral people in contrast to the provincial government that is constructed as malevolent, uncaring, classist, and seeking to (re)establish a spatial order where undesirable (i.e., poor) people are relegated to “their place” on the periphery of the city. Residents are humanized through the inclusion of vignettes and photographs of them taken in and around their homes. This contrasts with the majority of mainstream media that included photos of the buildings or of the city. The more personal photos put a human face on the issue, making residents, their lives, and their histories visible and offering a perspective from the “inside” rather than “outside” of the flats.

Classism

The De Waal Drive flats have a prominent place on Cape Town’s most iconic skyline – the one of the cityscape back dropped by Table Mountain. At the foot of Devils Peak, they rise old and fortress-like to shield the chic neighbourhood of Vredehoek from the still-undeveloped District Six below. It is a robust row of buildings, sheltering around ninety households – most of whom look back on lives

of hardship unknowable to their wealthy mountainside neighbours. Yet, they have maintained (or gained) a position of unrivalled opportunity for low-income families in modern day Cape Town.
(Knoetze 2015a)

The above is the opening paragraph of a more activist news article in which there is a focus on detailing the particular location of the flats in Cape Town: they are located on the city's *most iconic skyline*, at the *foot of Devil's Peak*, in a space between District Six and *the chic neighbourhood of Vredehoek* where the resident's *wealthy mountainside neighbours* live. This establishes that residents live in an upmarket area of the city, later described as *prime property* in a *lucrative real estate market* that serves the *economic elite*. As *low-income families* with histories of *hardship* then, residents are somewhat "out of place" here – this is not a place one would ordinarily imagine poor families live. The emphasis on the location of the flats emphasizes this unique situation.

The position that it is wrong for poor residents to occupy this *prime property* is attributed to a malevolent government - *that's exactly how officials frame it as they go door to door to inform tenants that their relocation to a housing development on the urban periphery is imminent* (Knoetze 2015b). There is an accusation that residents are viewed by government officials as disrupting the spatial order and it is this transgression, this out-of-placeness, that government actions seek to correct by relocating residents to the *urban periphery* – the place we are to imagine government views as the "correct" place for poor people. The malevolence of the government is reinforced in a description of an interaction between a government official and a resident:

Last week tenant Carol White (57) had the dreaded knock on the door.... "It is decided that it is no longer viable for us to receive the rent we're currently charging," an official (who asked not to be named) explained in his best officialese... To White's protests that a move to Pelican Park would spell disaster for her grandson entering matric [grade 12] next year, the response was, "Ma'am we all have our problems. But we wouldn't get our job done if we were to consider everyone's problems. Have you seen the views from around here? We all want to live close to the city. But you can't pay so little when people pay millions to be able to live around here. Just look at the views."

(Knoetze 2015b)

This government official is constructed as acting unapologetically against the interests of this resident for financial benefit. The official speaks in *officialese* – a negative evaluation of the official as literally not speaking the same language as the resident and demonstrating power by doing so. Further, this official *asked not to be named*, suggesting this as a figure to be suspicious of or to consider as cowardly. In their interaction the resident's concerns that moving would *spell disaster* (ruin, catastrophe, calamity) for her grandson are dismissed by the official that judges her *problems* as interfering with the government's work (*we wouldn't get our job done if we were to*

consider everyone's problems). This depicts government officials as uncaring, callous, and unconcerned with the consequences of their actions for the De Waal Drive residents. The final piece of the quote suggests that this official views this resident as not belonging or as underserving to live *close to the city*, given that she can only *pay so little*. The exposition of this interaction seeks to make the malevolence of the provincial government visible thus allowing the De Waal Drive issue to be politicized, that is, it becomes a situation in which a figure with power (government) is seen to be exercising control and domination over a figure(s) with less power (residents).

Spatializing the issue (i.e., locating it in a particular space) and representing government officials as acting malevolently further allows government actions to be framed as classist – as a form of state-led gentrification. The headline of one activist piece, *When government gentrifies* (Knoetze 2015b) as well as quotes from residents speak to this framing:

“...we know what this is: this is gentrification. Our own government, the one that is actually supposed to look out for the people, is now acting like a property developer. They want to put yuppies in our homes”

(White (resident) quoted in Knoetze 2015b)

“And now, long after we retired, the government comes one day to say that we are on prime property and that our own home is too good for us?”

(Pace (resident) quoted in Knoetze 2015b)

Gentrification here is not regarded as a normal or natural process but is understood as a deliberate targeting of poor residents that are seen to be “out of place” and occupying a desirable and valuable space in the city considered *too good* for them. Their place or belonging in the city is, in the view of these residents, judged solely on the basis of their income. By not assisting the government to extract more monetary value from this *prime property*, residents suggest they are perceived as not good enough to live there. As the second quote suggests, other factors such as their long tenure does not factor into the calculation of their belonging. While public comments suggest that gentrification is seen by some as a natural process, several others challenge this notion. One commentator suggests that gentrification is perhaps a *nice word for economic or financial apartheid* (comment on Knoetze 2015b) - a view of a malevolent government sanctioning segregation based on income or class.

Repeating history

Apartheid and District Six history are recalled and paralleled to the current situation and suggest another reason why the De Waal Drive situation should be regarded as unjust. The opening paragraph (quoted above) begins to draw attention to the particular history of the area, marking it as wounded. The flats are said to *shield* (protect, defend, buffer) residents' *wealthy mountainside neighbours* from having to see District Six – a suggestion that echoes an urban legend that the De Waal Drive flats were built prior to the Queen of England's visit to Cape Town in order to block the view of the "slum" from the road.⁹ As well as physically blocking the view, there is a suggestion that the flats protect those with privilege – those for whom the De Waal Drive residents' *lives of hardship* are *unknowable* - from being reminded of District Six- its associated history and/or that the area is yet to be restituted to its former residents (*still-undeveloped*). The ability for privileged subjects to "not see" and "not know" about hardship, poverty, and recall the history that makes this space wounded is bound up with the production and maintenance of their ignorance about these issues.

The headline of another activist piece - *Cape eviction history repeats itself in the name of money* – highlights the location of the flats as an area from which people have historically been displaced – the *eviction history* alluding to apartheid era forced removals generally and/or District Six in particular. The current situation is cast as a repetition (recurrence, replication) of this history – a history associated with racial violence, oppression, and injustice. The particulars of the history that is alluded to is clarified within the piece as residents' personal experiences of displacement from District Six are recounted. These stories emphasize the idea of the government's threat of eviction as analogous with the area's violent past.

...The trauma of those evictions and the defiance he felt towards them re-emerges as he speaks of the new government's plans to do the same to his family that was done to his parents. This is the rightful place for him and his children, he says

(Knoetze 2015a and 2015b)

In response to the present government's actions, this resident is described as remembering and re-experiencing the same emotions (*trauma, defiance*) he associates with his forcible removal from District Six during apartheid. This re-experiencing along with the description of the present government's actions as a *plan to do the same* connects past and present. It suggests that the

⁹ Joe Schaffers, personal communication, July 14 2015

consequences of the current government's actions for this resident are much the same as the apartheid government's – regardless if their intent is different. This resident is described as viewing this particular area as *the rightful place for him and his children* – a judgement not based on his income or the land/property value, but based on his unjust displacement from this particular place. Here we can observe that by acknowledging District Six's violent past and remembering it as a wounded space, it becomes possible to see how the De Waal Drive flats can be considered more than just property. What is significant about them is not only the economic land/property value, but what they symbolize as a form of restitution and thus Transformation (explored further below).

The style of writing about residents' attachments to District Six further works to lessen the distance between the reader and residents and makes it difficult to dismiss their attachment and claim to living here:

As he speaks, he points here and there to the now non-existent street corners, girlfriends' homes and rugby fields of his youth in District Six. He sends his eleven-year-old son to fetch a crumpled photograph of Windsor Street, before it was bulldozed, to show you the place of which he speaks....

(Knoetze 2015a and 2015b)

The use of the present tense (*he speaks, he points, he sends*) invites the reader into imagining the District Six that this resident remembers. That his son gets a photograph to *show you the place of which he speaks* positions the reader as being present in this interaction, as being directly addressed and confronted with this history. The recollection and recounting of past injustices through resident's personal narratives in this manner makes history visible and positions it as important in making sense of the present situation. Public comments on the De Waal Drive situation such as *Apartheid rides again!* and *Disgraceful! This is a re-run of the destruction of District Six* and *This sounds like forced removals part2* pick up on the idea that government actions are seen as continuous with, if not akin to, apartheid era forced removals (first two comments on Knoetze 2015a and last on Furlong 2015).

Threatening Transformation

Another reason that activist media suggests that De Waal Drive issue should be regarded as unjust is because it represents a threat to Transformation (redress and reconciliation). Poor, previously marginalized residents live in an upmarket, historically white area from which they describe enjoying practical benefits such as proximity to good schools, hospitals, and employment

opportunities (redress). Residents are also a racially diverse group constructed as a close-knit community (reconciliation). To threaten residents with eviction thus becomes a symbolic threat to Transformation.

This home saved my life. I do not know where we would be today as a family had it not been for this. And all that we have worked for as a family to improve our lot is thanks to this home... With the security of this home, close to the city, I was given the second chance I needed. My eldest son asked 'mummy, why don't you finish school?' And so I enrolled to finish my matric [grade 12]. I was 42 years old. Today I am a qualified nurse with a good job at a Bellville Hospital...

(Adonis (resident) quoted in Knoetze 2015a)

This vignette illustrates the very real, material benefits that living in a well-placed home has had for this resident and her family. The story identifies her *home* as pivotal in providing her with a *second chance* to complete her schooling, gain employment and thus help her family *improve* their *lot*. This speaks to the aspect of Transformation concerned with redress: in having access to resources previously reserved for white people (a flat close to the city), this resident's life opportunities were greatly enhanced.

Beyond the meaning that living in the De Waal Drive flats has for residents individually and materially, activist media suggests that residents living in these flats also has social meaning and value. The flats and other developments like it are described as the *key to transforming city spatial patterns inherited from apartheid* (Knoetze 2015a and 2015b) – a key being an item that gives access to or unlocks something, in this case a more just future. Quotes from residents similarly call for the De Waal Drive flats to be viewed in this way:

"what they do not realise is that they are taking an example-community out of this city. They can say what they want about us — that there is drugs here and gangsters. I know the truth. You walk this street at night and you are safe, because we look out for one another. When a granny gets sick on the drive we all, almost every one of us, will make a little food parcel and visit her until she is better. That is who we are and that is the spirit Cape Town needs..."

(White (resident) quoted in Knoetze 2015a)

"It can be a good story for government to tell. People that were once separated by apartheid have come back together and have built a strong community. Over and above the property value, that is what's really important about De Waal Drive"

(Johnson (resident) quoted in Knoetze 2015a and Knoetze 2015b)

These residents describe themselves as *an example-community* that *look out for one another* and as *People that were once separated by apartheid* that *have come back together and have built a strong community*. These quotes suggest the De Waal Drive residents care for one another, are a cohesive group, and should be regarded as a moral *community*. This, it is argued, has value *over*

and above the property value not just for residents but for the city as a whole: they exemplify *the spirit Cape Town needs*. This speaks to the affective and relational aspects of Transformation, that is, the desire for previously divided people to co-exist and care for one another. Residents call for their *community* to be recognized as Transformed and thus celebrated and valued. By explaining how an unjust, divided past has been overcome by living in these flats, these residents offer another way of viewing and valuing the flats beyond their monetary worth. Some public comments pick up on this idea and suggest that the possible eviction of the De Waal Drive residents is not only detrimental to the residents' welfare but is also detrimental to social relations and the Transformational futures aspired to.

Such actions do nothing but further increase the gap, and hatred, between social economic classes of this country.

(Comment on Knoetze 2015b)

The greater issue here isn't that the tenants are entitled to be there (in a way they are since they aren't squatting and they're keeping up with the terms of their rental contracts). The greater issue is that WCDHS [Western Cape Department of Human Settlements] is saying "No!" to integrated communities.

(Comment on Knoetze 2015a)

Here, public commentators think beyond the De Waal Drive situation and grapple with what the threatened eviction of the De Waal Drive residents means for and about South African society. *Such action* are imagined to divide rather than unite people of different classes and are imagined to represent the government's active, deliberate work against the Transformation project. There is thus an assessment that the current situation is important because of the undesirable futures it portends (*hatred between economic classes; "No!" to integrated communities*).

Government media statements

Although mainstream media published several stories on the De Waal Drive case throughout April 2015, it was only when more activist media was published at the end of May that a formal response was issued by the Minister of Human Settlements in the form of media briefings and statements.¹⁰ Analyzed here are two statements issued by the Western Cape Government and

¹⁰ The media release of 11 June 2015 has two versions: one that was distributed to journalists on the day of the briefing and one that was subsequently edited and is the version that is sent to people, like myself, when they request this particular briefing from the Western Cape Government. I have elected to analyze the first version given that this was the one that was first made public and from which journalists first gleaned the provincial government's position on the De Waal Drive situation.

an interview with a DA spokesperson who was asked to comment on the situation. These media frame the De Waal Drive issue as one of economic sustainability to which the government is responding benevolently and reasonably. I argue that the economic discourse depersonalizes and depoliticizes the De Waal Drive situation and shifts blame away from the provincial government to economic forces and undisciplined residents. In deploying this framing, the present situation is explicitly and implicitly detached from the city's history of racial segregation and forced removals. This has the effect of making arguments that invoke history or accusations of racism or classism appear unwarranted.

An economic problem

...one of the.. things we need to- need to analyze is... is really who's staying in State owned.. property on State owned property. And as far as I am aware that a whole lot of people that are staying there been- although they've been staying there for 20 or 30 years can't afford to pay the rents. So the MARKET.. prices around and the- and the rental income that should be demanded of those properties are not being met by ah- for provincial government and they would like to actually upgrade those and get a far greater return on on rentals in that area.

(Beverley Schafer, News24)

After valuations conducted by an independent valuer in the area, the current market related rental in this particular area is between R3500 - R6500 [South African Rand]. Our tenants currently are massively subsidized and are paying between R100 - R2500

(Western Cape Government 2015d)

These quotes contain a number of words that relate to an economic discourse such as *state owned property, market prices, rental income, greater return, market related rental, sustainable*. These encourage consideration of this case as it relates to economic forces. In the first quote, it is presented as common sense that if government can get a *far greater return on rentals in the area* that this is indeed what they ought to do. The flats' potentially new exchange value is made visible and focused on here. The notion that rental income *should be demanded* (i.e., must be required, claimed, insisted upon) suggests this as the right, proper, and only course of action. The second quote mentions an *independent valuer* – suggesting an objective person, not associated with the government has assessed that by market standards, residents are *massively subsidized*. The relevance of the market to a public housing situation is unclear, but we are to assume that what the market dictates is to be regarded as indicative of the rational, and only way to proceed.

The economic language does further work in distancing this issue from the people involved, rendering them and their lives largely invisible. In the first quote word *property* is repeated several times. This word is used instead of words like homes, housing, or dwellings which

have less of an economic focus and more readily suggest a place where people live their lives. The idea that residents are *staying there* as opposed to living or residing in the flats similarly sidelines the human aspect of the situation: *staying* (like occupying or squatting) makes their presence in the flats sound questionable or temporary while also detracting from lived experiences and attachments we would associate with living (rather than *staying*) somewhere.

Further distancing from and invisibilizing of residents takes place when the spokesperson in the first quote says that the rental income is to be demanded not of the residents (or any other people) but *of those properties*. Similarly, in the media statement, it is stated that *rental accommodation is meant to be self-sustainable* (Western Cape Government 2015d); the idea that rental accommodation can sustain itself detracts from the reality of people paying rent and obfuscates the responsibilities of the government to sustain public housing. In both cases, what is emphasized and thus made visible are the flats as an economic asset (versus people's homes). Overall, the assessment is that by market logic, this asset is not being properly or efficiently utilized, but would be by increasing the rent to *market related* prices, thus displacing the current residents.

Commentators echo the economic framing of the situation and demonstrate the extent to which this position is regarded as common sense. Exclusionary processes of urban change are additionally regarded as normal and natural consequences to a progressing city and thus not a cause for concern.

I don't agree with forced removals, but if you cannot pay the rent in terms of market related prices then you gotta move on... We've all got to live in the real world!

(comment on Knoetze 2015a)

Call it what you will, it is an inevitable part of any city's progress. Look at any major city anywhere in the world. We can moan all we like but as cities grow, the richer push out the poorer.

(comment on Knoetze 2015b)

...most places that are let out have an annual increase in rent - if they can make more money with the flats rented out to better, more economically viable tenants then it is the owners right to do so

(comment on Tswana 2015)

By these comments, *the real world* is one where people accept as given that property issues operate within a neoliberal, capitalist system. Further, we are to accept that *progress* requires an acceptance of the dominance of one class over another, and that such processes of urban change that have taken place in other *major cities* will inevitably take place in Cape Town, too. For these

commentators, it is difficult (and perhaps considered naïve) to imagine urban change/growth taking place in a way that is equitable and does not necessarily follow dominant economic systems. This demonstrates a protracted view of what urban futures are considered possible.

In the economic framing there is an implied necessity to follow market-logics to achieve “progress” and “economic sustainability”. Rose (2004) writes about how future-orientations or narratives of progress are used to justify violence in the present and is so doing, make us complacent about the suffering of those experiencing this violence because it is understood as taking place in sacrifice for a future that we are always *just* about to realize. In this case, the economic argument depoliticizes the potential eviction and displacement of the De Waal Drive residents, making this action and its imagined economic benefits appear rational, inevitable, justifiable, even desirable. This, despite the suffering residents say they would experience should they be forced to move.

The irrelevance of history

Future orientations also work to detach the present from the past (Rose 2004). Government statements to the media do not engage with apartheid or District Six history or residents’ personal experiences of these histories. However, in an interview a spokesperson for the DA was asked by a journalist to respond to the major criticism levelled at provincial government by activists and residents - that the De Waal Drive threatened evictions is akin to the forced removals of District Six. In her response she says,

... w- we can quite easily put it into the box of the past and say well this is.. you know around race and and re... you know ah- ah- issues around discrimination but it actually isn't as such. Um you know Minister Bongki Madikizela is.. um... um has come from a- a str- you know... a.. disadvantaged background who's now the MINISTER so he fully understands.. um... that wouldn't be his motivation. I think very much it's based on economics and often Human Settlements HAVE TO make the correct decision based on economics.

(Beverley Schafer, News24)

As a metaphor, the past as a box creates a discursive separation between then and now; a box having a definite inside and outside. By this description, the *box of the past* contains issues of *race* and *discrimination* and as such, these issues are bounded, discrete, and separable from the present. The evidence that is offered for this issue not fitting into *the box of the past* is the identity of the Minister of Human Settlement as coming from a *disadvantaged background* - a common term used in South Africa to euphemistically refer to people disenfranchised by apartheid. The fact that the

Minister is a previously poor, black person is offered as evidence for the impossibility that the current situation is racist or classist. The emphasis that a previously disadvantaged person is now a *MINISTER* stresses the assertion that we are no longer in the *box of the past*; instead we are to imagine that we occupy a new box: a new moment or locality where the discrimination of the past does not exist and its effects do not linger. Having dismissed the idea of this issue as discriminatory, the spokesperson reinforces the position that this is an issue of *economics*. Emphasis on the idea that the department *HAVE TO make the right decision based on economics* stresses a stance that there is no other option available aside from what *economics* dictate. Thus, what makes financial sense is what is to be considered the *correct* (i.e., good, right) course of action – which in this case means moving residents from their current homes.

Within an economic framing, apartheid and District Six history, and thus the meaning residents' attach to living in the De Waal Drive flats now, is detached from the current situation: the past has no place in the present. Although the government are technically attending to residents' welfare by offering housing elsewhere, by failing to attend to the meaning that living in this *particular* area has for residents, the offer of a “free” house can be viewed as an unjust action. The economic framing, divorced from the city's history, arguably assists a wider collective amnesia regarding this history. Indeed, understanding the De Waal Drive case in purely economic terms is a comfortable justification for privileged subjects to adopt as it necessarily ignores and works to silence any discussion of past or present racism, classism, and/or injustice.

Undeserving, undisciplined residents

In keeping with the economic framing, government media statements focus on residents insofar as they have a financial relationship with the provincial government. Analyses are offered as to who residents' are in financial terms, as opposed to who they are as people with histories, ties to the area, needs, or desires. Residents are categorized by their income brackets, it is noted that many are elderly, unemployed or – in keeping with the discourse - not *economically active*. These characteristics along with accusations of residents failing to pay rent, damaging property, and therefore incurring costs to the government are offered as a basis for understanding the unsustainability of the situation and the proposal to have them move to Pelican Park.

Then there's the income between... from 4000 Rand up to 15,000 Rand and THAT is the income, really that that property fits into. So that property is not ACTUALLY for people who are not paying rent at all.

(Beverley Schafer, News24)

Many of the tenants in the De Waal Drive flats are pensioners. We would like to see these rental units occupied by economically active people to bring people who work in the City closer to their place of work and to improve the culture of rental payment.

(Western Cape Government 2015a)

The first quote gives an outline of the different housing options offered by government and residents' incomes in order to justify an assessment that residents are living in *property* that is *not actually* for them. This positions residents as taking something they do not qualify for or living somewhere where they do not belong. The second quote states a clear preference for *economically active* people to occupy the flats, which is likely code for employed, young, higher earners, or all three. Current residents, by contrast, are elderly and imagined as having limited participation and contribution to the economy and thus less claim on living close to the city. Further, hypothetical *economically active* residents are imagined to possess a *culture of rental payment* – ostensibly in contrast to current, poorer residents that are imagined to lack this culture. There is an intimation that what stops residents from paying rent is not a lack of money, but a character defect or attitude that predisposes them to unscrupulously taking from the government.

A *culture of non-payment* is frequently cited by government officials as an explanation for why poor citizens fail to pay for municipal services (Fjeldstad 2004; Makhulu 2015; McDonald 2008). von Schnitzler (2008) shows that non-payment for water services is similarly described by officials as rooted in “a ‘culture of nonpayment’ ... seen to emerge out of a ‘sense of entitlement’, a particular ‘attitude’” (p. 906). This *culture* is understood as having its origins in the rental boycotts of the 1980s where township dwellers refused to pay increases in rent and other rates as a form of resistance to an increasingly oppressive apartheid state. Ostensibly, the *culture of non-payment* is a legacy of this – suggesting that residents are in some way “stuck” in the past, are exercising an “old” method to register their discontent, and/or have failed to modernize. However, high rates of poverty and unemployment in South Africa mean that many people are unable rather than unwilling to pay for services – as is likely the case with De Waal Drive residents that the government reports fail to pay their rent (Desai 2002 cited in Ballard, Habib, Valodia, & Zuern 2005; Makhulu 2015). As demonstrated in this case, there is a reflex for government to respond to the issue of non-payment as “a problem of discipline” (Ballard et al 2005:625) often taking punitive/disciplinary measures in reaction. In this case, it is used to justify the need for residents

to move to a home ownership situation (thus eliminating the need to pay rent). Given the reality of limited resources, the issue of the economic sustainability of the flats may indeed be a valid issue. However, the diagnosis of poor rental compliance as a behavioral problem, precludes engagement with why some residents might be struggling to pay rent, or where nonpayment may be a signal of dissatisfaction or dissent, to engage with why this is.

The belief in a *culture of non-payment* and a sense of entitlement among poor residents is not confined to government officials but is an idea that is alive in a wider social imagination as the following comments illustrate:

Its once again this culture of not wanting to pay increased rent...

(comment on Tswana 2015)

have a look at the cars some of the tenants drive - not all the people living there are "social welfare" cases, and there are major issues with a criminal element and drugs

(comment on Knoetze 2015a)

lived in a private block 100m from these flats. To say that my car was broken into once a month, locked inside a garage behind a security fence over 4 years is not an overstatement. Many time the perpetrators would be seen running in the direction of the De Waal flats to be hidden by friends and relatives... If people pay they would have the sense of own[e]rship required to improve the area and keep it safe for all.

(comment on Furlong 2015)

So what is wrong with Pelican Park? There are thousands of other people who live there. What makes the tenants in De Waal Drive so special?... This is an issue of tenants who want to be bankrolled by ratepayers... is 35 years of subsidised living not enough?

(Adams 2015)

Along with allegations that residents are criminals, a consistent opinion is that residents wrongly feel a sense of entitlement to live in the flats and are unwilling to pay rent, thus taking advantage of public assistance. The third quote suggests that paying rent should be seen as a corrective measure: paying rent is associated with a *sense of ownership* which in turn is imaged to *improve* residents' characters such that they become less tolerant of or prone to criminal behavior. This echoes government sentiment that new, *economically active* residents would have a correcting influence, helping to *improve the culture of rental payment*. Government suggestions that residents are willful rent defaulters thus both draws on and provides further justification for such perceptions, arguably contributing to ill feelings toward and distorted perceptions of poor people. That income inequality largely divides along racial lines means that these views are at once also racialized.

A benevolent government

The negative framing of residents makes it possible for the actions of the provincial government to be constructed as benevolent and forgiving in contrast. While activist media frames the De Waal Drive situation as a threat of eviction, statements by the government call the proposed move of residents to Pelican Park an *opportunity to participate in the Breaking New Ground (BNG) programme and become home-owners* (Western Cape Government 2015c) and an *offer [of] free accommodation...to relieve those families that are unemployed and those who are struggling to pay their rent* (Western Cape Government 2015d). The language used in these statements suggest a caring, generous government that is in touch with and sensitive to the difficulties residents face. The notion that residents are being given an *opportunity* or an *offer* suggests that they are being given something valuable, something they might want, or which they can choose/choose not to accept. Resident opinions expressed in activist media, however, suggest that they perceived being told to move to rather than being given a voluntary opportunity to move.

In addition to being generous, the department suggests that it is also forgiving of undisciplined residents. Under the heading *Positive act by the department*, it is stated that,

There is no eviction pending for tenants that are in breach of contract due to non-payment or for other defaulting acts. The department is also willing to write off all the outstanding moneys that these tenants owe, including arrears which are currently in excess of R902 466.39, if those qualifying tenants take up our offer.

(Western Cape Government 2015c)

Residents are judged as guilty of *defaulting acts*, for which the provincial government will not evict them and additionally will forgive their arrears. While couched as forgiving the final part of the paragraph (*if those qualifying tenants take up our offer*) shows that the department's forgiveness is contingent on residents doing as the department wishes and moving to Pelican Park. Though not directly stated, residents that choose to stay (not doing as the department wishes) may thus not enjoy the same generosity and mercy, or stated differently, may be punished for this choice. In the same way that the threat of eviction is reframed in government statements as an opportunity for homeownership, the interactions described in activist media between residents and government officials are labelled as *Communication with residents* in which *department officials were available to talk to tenants on an individual basis to provide more clarity and listen to tenants* (Western Cape Government 2015c). While activist media suggest the individual meetings were a coercive tactic deployed by the department to isolate and strong arm residents into moving, the

government's description positions them as being in service of residents and as caring about their reactions and concerns (*available to talk, provide clarity, listen*). This language implies a process of engagement with residents, in line with government's stated commitment to public participation processes as a good governance practice. Thus the use of this language invokes a framing in which government are not only acting benevolently but are also acting ethically and in accordance with their legal duties.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

Using a media discourse analysis, I draw attention to the politics of memory as it relates to the politics of the De Waal Drive situation and suggest this as a useful extension for theorizing post-apartheid spatiality. The analysis suggests that when economic framings (specifically ones that follow capitalist logics) are deployed in the media to make sense of urban issues like evictions, this has important implications for public memory. As the De Waal Drive flats are made visible as economically valuable property only, the wounded space they occupy is necessarily rendered invisible. This has the effect of making an economic framing appear apolitical and impersonal although its effects are not; by invisibilizing wounded spaces, histories of oppression, racial violence, and displacement become inaccessible “imaginative resources” through which the De Waal Drive situation may be evaluated (Medina 2013:250).

With reference to the urban renewal plan that created the City Improvement Districts in Cape Town, Miraftab (2007) notes how this plan “suppresses collective memories, obliterating the capacity to construct alternatives from within” and “establish a public assumption that there is no alternative” (Miraftab 2007: 620). Similarly, in the De Waal Drive case, the economic framings of the situation in government media statements and in comments by some members of the public, suggests that there is no viable alternative to dealing with the situation, other than to have residents move to an area more “in keeping” with their socioeconomic status. Following Mills (2007) this contributes to amnesia about important aspects of the city’s history as well as the maintenance of systems of ignorance whereby privileged subjects become detached, disconnected, or complacent about the marginalization of (certain) people in their city.

The analysis also suggests that silences and omissions in media discourse can similarly have implications for public memory. Like the economic framing, the mainstream media’s approach to reporting from a “neutral” stance appears to be apolitical and to be representing the De Waal Drive situation objectively. However, the silence about resident’s histories, connections to the area and the omission of wider contextual information about past and present evictions and displacements in the city similarly constrains the available imaginative resources through which the situation may be understood by the public at large.

While Miraftab (2007) suggests that the suppression of collective memories “obliterates” the possibility of imagining alternative futures, it is important to note the ways in which such futures

are imagined and how active resistance to forgetting does take place. At the level of discourse, activist media, challenges the economic framing and the neutrality of mainstream media in a few ways. It reinserts apartheid and District Six history into an analysis of the De Waal Drive situation thus appealing to collective memory. It is openly critical of the provincial government – not only of continuing the legacy of apartheid spatial planning but of failing to execute their own progressive urban agenda. Activist media also draws on collective, future desires for Transformation which forces thinking both about the city’s past (where we have come from) and the future we hope to achieve (where we are headed). The fact that this media got widespread attention and was likely an important factor that led to the Minister of Human Settlements to address the media and meet with residents, means that this approach had the desired effect of stirring emotions and eliciting engagement. It also suggests that challenges to the dominant discourses through which urban issues are framed do exist and do provoke a response.

The analysis as a whole suggests that struggles over housing in a wounded space represents much more than a fight for a place to live (following Safransky 2016). Struggles for housing represent an intensely political battle for belonging and for histories of violence and oppression to be remembered and ethically engaged in the present. Struggles for housing in the post-apartheid city also represents a battle to redefine how we come to value land and property. This analysis shows that spatially and temporally decontextualized views of property are concerned only with calculations of worth based on exchange value. As this case suggests, however, property can have many other forms of value including practical, social, symbolic, and reconciliatory value that need to factor into calculations of worth if we are to realize a Transformed urban future.

APPENDIX A

SOURCES

List of analyzed sources listed in chronological order

<i>Data Source</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Type</i>
Theletsane, W (2015, April 9) Residents along De Waal Drive oppose eviction order. <i>Eye Witness News</i> . Retrieved from http://ewn.co.za/2015/04/09/De-Waal-Drive-residents-oppose-eviction-order	On-line news article + public comments	Mainstream
Abbas, G (2015, April 13) Housing debacle divides De Waal Drive residents. <i>Eye Witness News</i> . Retrieved from http://ewn.co.za/2015/04/13/Housing-debacle-divides-De-Waal-Drive-residents	On-line news article + public comments	Mainstream
Pitjeng, R (2015, April 21) Residents prepared to fight De Waal Drive relocation order. <i>Eye Witness News</i> . Retrieved from http://ewn.co.za/2015/04/21/De-Waal-residents-threaten-court-action-over-homes	On-line news article + public comments	Mainstream
Lewis, A (2015, April 27) Tenants stand together in the face of massive increase. <i>The Cape Argus</i> . p. 4	Print news article	Mainstream
Knoetze D (2015a, May 29) When government gentrifies: The case of De Waal Drive flats. <i>GroundUp</i> . Retrieved from http://groundup.org.za/features/gentrification/gentrification.html	On-line news article + public comments	Activist
Knoetze D (2015b, May 29) Cape's eviction history repeats itself in the name of money. <i>Mail & Guardian</i> . p. 12-13	Print/On-line news article + public comments	Activist
Knoetze, D (2015c, June 8) South Africa: De Waal Drive tenants mobilize against potential evictions. <i>GroundUp</i> . Retrieved from http://groundup.org.za/article/de-waal-drive-tenants-mobilise-against-potential-evictions_3010	On-line news article + public comments	Activist
Tswana, Y (2015, June 9) Tenants facing rent increase hold vigil. <i>The Cape Argus</i> . Retrieved from http://sbeta.iol.co.za/news/crime-courts/tenants-facing-rent-increase-hold-vigil-1869375	Print/On-line news article + public comments	Mainstream
Adams, Y. (2015, June 10) Burden on ratepayers to fund poor. <i>The Cape Argus</i> . p. 12	Opinion piece, print news	(comment)
Western Cape Government (2015c, June 11) Media Release. Western Cape Government	Government issued media release	(government statement)
Western Cape Government (2015d, June 12) Media Briefing. Western Cape Government	Government issued media briefing	(government statement)
Furlong, A (2015, June 12) De Waal Drive residents assured they will not be evicted – if they pay. <i>GroundUp</i> . Retrieved from http://groundup.org.za/article/de-waal-drive-residents-left-mixed-feeling-after-being-told-no-one-being-evicted_3025	On-line news article + public comments	Activist
'DA uses apartheid model in Cape' (2015, June 13) <i>Pretoria News Weekend</i> . p. 2	Print/Online news article	Mainstream

Also published online: Apartheid segregation under DA: Fransman. (2015, June 12). Retrieved from: http://www.iol.co.za/news/politics/apartheid-segregation-under-da-fransman-1871148		
De Waal Drive residents have nothing to fear, says MEC (2015, June 14) <i>Weekend Argus</i> (Sunday Edition). p. 8 Also published online: Bernardo, C. (2015, June 12) No plans to evict De Waal Drive Residents. Retrieved from http://www.iol.co.za/news/south-africa/western-cape/no-plan-to-evict-de-waal-drive-residents-1871071	Print/On-line news article	Mainstream
De Waal Drive relocation battle 'purely economics' (2015, September 3) News24.com [Video] http://www.news24.com/Live/SouthAfrica/News/De-Waal-drive-relocation-battle-purely-economics-20150903	On-line news article and video interview	(government statement)

APPENDIX B

TRANSCRIPTION CODES

The following table is a key to the transcription conventions used. Conventions are based on those described by Dressler and Kreuz (2000).

?	rising intonation
.	falling intonation
TEXT	stress
..	short pause
...	long pause
-	speech cut off

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