

**Surfing, gender and politics:  
Identity and society in the history of South African surfing  
culture in the twentieth-century.**

by Glen Thompson

Dissertation presented for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy (History)  
at Stellenbosch University



Supervisor: Prof. Albert M. Grundlingh  
Co-supervisor: Prof. Sandra S. Swart

Marc 2015

## **Declaration**

By submitting this thesis electronically, I declare that the entirety of the work contained therein is my own, original work, that I am the author thereof (unless to the extent explicitly otherwise stated) and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it for obtaining any qualification.

Date: 8 October 2014

Copyright © 2015 Stellenbosch University

All rights reserved

## Abstract

This study is a socio-cultural history of the sport of surfing from 1959 to the 2000s in South Africa. It critically engages with the “South African Surfing History Archive”, collected in the course of research, by focusing on two inter-related themes in contributing to a critical sports historiography in southern Africa. The first is how surfing in South Africa has come to be considered a white, male sport. The second is whether surfing is political. In addressing these topics the study considers the double whiteness of the Californian influences that shaped local surfing culture at “whites only” beaches during apartheid. The racialised nature of the sport can be found in the emergence of an amateur national surfing association in the mid-1960s and consolidated during the professionalisation of the sport in the mid-1970s. Within these trends, the making and maintenance of an exemplar white surfing masculinity within competitive surfing was linked to national identity. There are three counter narratives to this white, male surfing history that have been hidden by that same past. Firstly, the history women’s surfing in South Africa provides examples of girl localisms evident within the masculine domination of the surf. Herein submerged women surfer voices can be heard in the cultural texts and the construction of surfing femininities can be seen within competitive surfing. Secondly, surfing’s whiteness was not outside of the political. The effects of the international sports boycott against apartheid for South African surfing were two-fold: international pressure on surfing as a racialised sport led to sanctions in the late 1970s against the amateur national surfing teams competing internationally or maintaining international sporting contacts; and, as of 1985, the boycott by professional surfers of events on the South African leg of the world surfing tour further deepened South African surfing’s sports isolation. By the end of the 1980s, white organised surfing was in crisis and the status of South African as a surfing nation in question. Lastly, the third counter-narrative is the silenced histories of black surfing under apartheid. Alongside individual black surfer histories, the non-racial surfing movement in the mid-to-late 1980s is considered as a political and cultural protest against white organised surfing. The rationale for non-racial sport was challenged in 1990 as South Africa began its political transition to democracy. Nevertheless, the South African Surfing Union, the national non-racial surfing body, played a pivotal role in surfing’s unification in 1991 which led to South African amateur surfing’s return to international competition in 1992. However, it was an uneasy unity within organised surfing that set the scene for surfing development as a strategy for sports transformation in the post-apartheid years. The emergence of black surfing localisms after 1994 is located within that history, with attention given to the promotion of young, male Zulu surfers within competitive surfing, which point to emergent trends in the Africanisation of surfing in the 2000s. It is concluded is that while cultural change in South African surfing is evident in the post-apartheid present, that change is complicated by surfing’s gendered and apartheid sporting pasts.

## Opsomming

Hierdie is 'n sosio-kulturele studie oor die geskiedenis van die sport van branderplankry in Suid-Afrika vanaf omstreeks 1959 tot 2000. Dit behels onder meer 'n kritiese bespreking van die "Suid-Afrikaanse Branderplank Argief" wat in die loop van navorsing opgebou is. Daar word veral op twee temas in kritiese sport historiografie in suidelike Afrika gefokus. Die eerste is die wyse hoe branderplankry in Suid-Afrika as 'n wit manlike sport ontwikkel het. Die tweede is of branderplankry as politiek beskou kan word. Hierdie onderwerpe word onder die loep geneem deur te let op die dubbele witheid van Kaliforniese invloede wat die plaaslike kultuur op "slegs blanke" strande onder apartheid help vorm het. Die rasgebonde aard van die sport kan gevind word in die totstandkoming van die amateur nasionale branderplank vereniging in die middel 1960s en is gekonsolideer met die professionalisering van die sport in die middel 1970s. Vervat in hierdie verwickelinge is die vorming en instandhouding van 'n besondere tipe manlikheid wat as 'n ideaal tipe voorgehou is en deurmiddel van mededingende branderplank kompetisies aan 'n nasionale identiteit gekoppel is. Daar is drie kontra narratiewe tot hierdie wit manlike geskiedenis wat deur dieselfde verlede verberg is. Eerstens is daar die geskiedenis van vroue branderplankry wat blyke gee van plaaslike vroue se betrokkenheid in dié oorheersende manlike domein. Gedempte vrouestemme klink op in kulturele tekste en die konstruksie van vroulike identiteite binne mededingende kompetisies. Tweedens was branderplankry se witheid nie onverwant aan die politieke dimensie nie. Die uitwerking van die internasionale sportsboikot teen apartheid was tweeledig: internasionale druk op branderplankry as 'n rasgebonde sport het in die laat 1970s tot sanksies teen amateur spanne gelei wat oorsee meeding het of internasionale kontakte gehad het, en sedert 1985 het die boikot van professionele branderplankryers van kompetisies in Suid-Afrika die land se isolasie verdiep. Teen die einde van die 1980s was wit georganiseerde branderplankry in 'n krisis en die status van van Suid-Afrika as 'n branderplankry nasie in die gedrang. Laastens is die derde kontra narratief die vergete geskiedenis van swart branderplankryers onder apartheid. Samehangend met swart geskiedenis word die nie-rassige branderplankry beweging in die middel 1980s as 'n kulturele en politieke protes beskou. Die rasionaal vir nie-rassige sport is in 1990 uitgedaag tydens die oorgang na volledige demokrasie in Suid-Afrika. Desnieteenstaande het die Suid-Afrikaanse Branderplankry Vereniging 'n bepalende rol gespeel in organisatoriese eenwording in die sport en die hertoelating tot internasionale kompetisies in 1992. Dit was egter 'n ongemaklike eenheid waarop transformasie gedurende die post-apartheid fase gebou moes word. Die groter teenwoordigheid van plaaslike swart branderplankryers moet in dié konteks gesien word, veral ten opsigte van jong Zoeloe ryers wat alhoemee navore tree en op die Afrikanisering van die sport sedert ongeveer 2000 dui. Daar word ten slotte op gewys dat hoewel kulturele verandering in die huidige bedeling merkbaar is, die sport se geslagtelike en rasgebonde verlede nog steeds sake kompliseer.

## Acknowledgements

The research for this dissertation began in 1996, prior to the beginning of my formal doctoral study period in 2009. It has benefited from many in the surfing community who have provided me with insights into surfing's pasts. I am especially grateful to those who have added to the making of the "South African Surfing History Archive". In particular I wish to acknowledge Derrick Berry, the Bertish brothers, Greg, Conn and Chris, Deon Bing, Paul Botha, Wendy Botha, Katherine Bull, Roxy Davis, Robin de Kock, Jaco Delpont, Ross Frylinck, Zaheer Goodman-Bhyat, Glenn Hollands, Shani Judes, Mandy Lancellas, Ross and Kay Lindsay, Andy Mason, Bryony McCormick, Shannon McLaughlin, Shafiq Morton, Igshaan Nagia, Andrew Ogilvie, Peter Petersen, Steve Pike, Therese Russell, Brian Salter, Bernie Shelly, Adam Shapiro, Tammy Gardner, Gary van Rooyen, Steven Weiss, John Whittle, Holle Vlokas, Sihle Xaba and the Waves for Change team, Tim Conibear, Aphiwe Tshetsha and Bongani Ndlovu. Dick Metz and the assistance of the staff at the Surfing Heritage and Cultural Centre in San Clemente, California made for a productive visit to the centre's library in February 2012. Special thanks to Pieter Streicher and Richard Simpson for the sabbatical to focus on this dissertation; and Samantha van Putten for her encouragement over this research journey.

My research on surfing's history has also been informed by critical engagement with the academic community. I am indebted to those who attended my first splash into surfing history studies at the October 1996 History and African Studies Seminar Series in the History Department at the then University of Natal, Durban (now the University of KwaZulu Natal) for their commentary and stimulating debate. Over the course of this study I particularly wish to thank: David Johnson who has been a valued sounding board over the years and a firm advocate of a critical surfing praxis; Robert Morrell for introducing me to masculinities studies, inviting me to contribute to his groundbreaking volume on men in South Africa, and continued encouragement to finish this study; Meg Samuelson for opening up a research collaboration on the film *Otelo Burning* and pushing the agenda for a critical engagement with the littoral, Carli Coetzee for "wave-spotting" during the writing of Zulu surfing histories; Scarlett Cornelissen for the opportunity to consider Surf City and the post-apartheid beach; Paul Wienberg for opening a space for a poetics to reflect on the history of the beach; and Deborah Posel for reminding me that surfer voices are best heard at the beach rather than in texts. I have also benefited from engagements over the years with other scholars working on surfing, namely: Lance Bertelsen, Douglas Booth, Clifton Evers, Scott Laderman, Dexter Hough-Snee, Joan Ormrod and Belinda Wheaton. They, and other scholars, have been influential in making critical surfing studies possible within the academy.

My supervisors Albert Grundlingh and Sandra Swart have offered valued guidance, critical commentary and on-going encouragement in my pursuing a beachin' topic. Furthermore, I wish to thank the History Department for funding support towards this doctoral research and the opportunities to travel to attend conferences and present my work in progress.

Special thanks goes to my mother, Lynne Thompson, for her constant support, in providing a surf spot as a front yard for many years as well as assistance in locating source material. To my brother Lance Thompson, with whom I shared formative surfing moments, this dissertation offers a context to those years when we were groms. To my partner Kerry Chappell, your love and support has been an inspiration in the final writing up of this study, especially as it's birthing followed shortly on that of another.

This dissertation is dedicated to the memory of my father, Graham Thompson, who pushed me into my first wave but did not see me finish riding this wave of surfing history.

... the demand for happiness used to be something oceanic and emancipatory ....

*Jean Baudrillard in America, 1988*<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Jean Baudrillard, *America*, trans. Chris Turner, (London and New York: Verso, 1988), 45.

## Table of Contents

Acknowledgements .....	4
List of Figures .....	7
Introduction: Surfing about Gender and Politics: From Archive to History .....	8
Chapter 1: Making Waves, Making Men: Whiteness, Exemplar Masculinities and Surfing, 1959 – 1979 .....	31
Chapter 2: Liquid Girls: Changing Surfing Femininities, 1965 – 1994.....	69
Chapter 3: Boycott Moves: Surfing and the International Sports Boycott Against Apartheid, 1970 – 1994 ..	105
Chapter 4: Subaltern Surfers: Black Surfers and the Non-Racial Surfing Movement, c.1965 – c.2000.....	141
Conclusion: Writing Surfing History in South Africa .....	178
Bibliography.....	187

## List of Figures

Figure 1.1: Dick Metz and Durban surfers, South Beach, 1959.....	37
Figure 1.2: Whiteness and the surfing dream.....	39
Figure 1.3: Leftie freaks who surf: <i>Vittoke in Azania</i> underground cartoon, late 1970s.....	44
Figure 1.4: Extracts from <i>The Ballard of Jeffery's Bay</i> , c.1975.....	48
Figure 1.5: The contest zone, 1966 Natal and South African Surfing Championships, Durban.....	49
Figure 1.6: <i>George Thomopolous</i> , the functional surfer, Cape Town contest, December 1964.....	56
Figure 1.7: Neville Calenbourne's big wave, Ansteys Beach, Durban, 2 July 1966.....	60
Figure 1.8: The cousins Tomson surfing Hawai'i, <i>Zigzag</i> magazine covers.....	63
Figure 1.9: Shaun Tomson's sartorial style, SATV interview c.1978.....	66
Figure 1.10: Shaun Tomson on <i>Down The Line</i> cover, 1977.....	67
Figure 2.1: Bernie Woods surfing Scarborough Beach, December 1964.....	70
Figure 2.2: Gender in surf advertising, <i>South African Surfer</i> , 1960s.....	72
Figure 2.3: Gunston and Gotcha surf magazine adverting, 1970s.....	79
Figure 2.4: The male gaze in surfwear advertising, 1980s.....	87
Figure 2.5: Advertising women as surfers in <i>Zigzag</i> , 1980s.....	88
Figure 2.6: Shavonne Hill "lip-dancing", <i>Zigzag</i> , 1982.....	89
Figure 2.7: 1982 Springbok surfing team.....	96
Figure 2.8: Wendy Botha on the cover of <i>Zigzag</i> , 1988.....	98
Figure 3.1: Shaun Tomson photograph in Department of Sport and Recreation <i>Annual Report</i> , 1979.....	123
Figure 3.3: Tom Carroll in <i>Zigzag</i> , before and after the surfing boycott call.....	126
Figure 3.4: Tom Carroll as global icon and local nemesis in <i>Zigzag</i> , 1986.....	130
Figure 4.1: Peter Clarke's <i>Surfers at Strandfontein, Cape</i> (1973).....	144
Figure 4.2: Cass Collier surfs a Cape wave, 1989.....	146
Figure 4.3: Wynberg Surf Club members, c.1988.....	148
Figure 4.4: Cass Collier and Ian Armstrong at Madiba's Left, Robben Island, 31 May 1998.....	154
Figure 4.5: Unity Talks delegates, November 1991.....	157
Figure 4.6: Surfing and race at the Durban beach, 1966.....	159
Figure 4.7: Safari Surf Shop advertisement in <i>South African Surfer</i> , 1967.....	162
Figure 4.8: Takkies "surfing" his Z-type shield, <i>South African Surfer</i> , 1965.....	163
Figure 4.9: Hawaiian Dane Kealoh, <i>Zigzag</i> cover, 1979.....	166
Figure 4.10: Faizel Omajee, Gunston 500 competitor, 1982.....	167
Figure 4.11: Walter Mbengu, Durban surfer, c.early 1980s.....	170
Figure 4.12: Sharon Ngongo: the "surfing Zulu", 1997.....	174
Figure 5.1: #Freedom: Surfing and the politics of the present.....	179



## Introduction: Surfing about Gender and Politics: From Archive to History

South Africans are realising that they have their own identity, made up of their own form of surfing, their own waves, and way of life, and are shaping their boards and styles accordingly.

Cornel Barnett, *Hitting the Lip*, 1974<sup>1</sup>

*You should've seen  
who struggled out of the sea,  
today: a tired, rock-sliced  
miner, with clogged pores,  
who'd given up the race,  
foxing them completely,  
locking his hands  
into the sand!*

Andrew Salkey, *Sechaba*, 1975<sup>2</sup>

*Waves treat everyone equally though, and never enquire your sex before wiping you out.*

Lorna Currie, *Down The Line*, 1977<sup>3</sup>

When I began this research on South African surfing histories I was faced with no formal archive. I first looked for South African surfing magazines, the cultural texts I assumed would provide a sense of chronology, place and time, and a narrative thread from which to expand on in the search for further documentary, literary, audio-visual, and oral sources. I looked to artefacts from which traces of the surfing past could be salvaged and began to thread together reportage, conversations, observations and chance stumbling onto surfing texts. Yet, layers of mythologies obscured the South African surfing past.<sup>4</sup> These surfing myths are mediated and reproduced through surfing's promotional culture; a subcultural substructure of aligned values of individuated freedom and pleasure made visual by the surfing cultural industries (the print and online surfing magazines alongside the advertising of the surfing retailers and manufacturers), surf films, the spectacle of competitive surfing and, more recently, the consumption of social media via the Internet. The pervasiveness of this surfing imaginary in the local surfing culture creates a fantasy whereby oceanic desire affirms the naturalness of *petit bourgeois* social distinction and lifestyle choices within the global flows of neoliberal capitalism. I took to sifting through these mythologies for fragments of surfing pasts. Herein the South African surfing history narrative emerged as I persisted in the search for documents,

---

<sup>1</sup> Cornel Barnett, *Hitting the Lip: Surfing in South Africa*, (Johannesburg: Macmillan South Africa, 1974), 93.

<sup>2</sup> Andrew Salkey, "Rays of Hope," *Sechaba*, 9, 3 (March 1975), 15, Digital Innovation South Africa (DISA), <http://www.disa.ukzn.ac.za> [accessed on 6 September 2009].

<sup>3</sup> Lorna Currie, "Women in surfing: Are they for real?" *Down The Line*, 8 (September 1977), 16.

<sup>4</sup> This notion of mythologies draws on a reading of Roland Barthes critiques of popular culture and sport to consider the consumptive ideologies within the surfing lifestyle. See Roland Barthes, "Myth Today" in Roland Barthes, *Mythologies*, trans. Annette Lavers, (London: Vintage Books, [1957] 2009). For mythologies and sport, besides his essay on wrestling in *Mythologies*, see Roland Barthes, *What Is Sport?* trans. Richard Howard, (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2007). The latter text was for a 1961 film, *Le Sport et les homes*, about the meanings of sport. The film was a collaboration between Barthes and Canadian filmmaker and writer Hubert Aquin.

artefacts and testimonies. These were added to what I have termed the “South African Surfing History Archive”, cited in this study as the “Surfing Archive”.

This study is the first to attempt to locate, describe and interpret the Surfing Archive’s holdings. This text is not an inventory of that archive. Rather, in approaching the Surfing Archive, themes informed by surfing’s present were decided on in asking two questions: first, why is surfing in South Africa considered to be a white, male sport? And second, does surfing in South Africa have a political history? These two questions are related yet answering them requires a consideration of the makings of South African surfing as a white and male sporting culture in apartheid South Africa, and how the counter narratives of white women, black men and, less so, black women, have been suppressed in surfing’s cultural texts.<sup>5</sup> It requires contemplating, in bringing to the fore these submerged voices, how those histories were part of the wider historical processes of beach segregation and the anti-apartheid movement. It also takes into account that white women surfers benefited from the social privileges of whiteness and that a gendered history of surfing would make visible an aspect of the gender order of white coastal society. Building on the two questions above, a further question is asked as to whether social trends identified before 1990 persisted into the post-apartheid era. Here again, the history of black surfing proves useful in tracing the processes from surfing unification through surfing development to the emergence of black surfing localisms. These questions frame an approach that looks to social change and changing cultural identities in order to write a critical sports history of surfing at the South African beach from the 1960s to the 2000s.<sup>6</sup>

### **Of Genealogies and Positionality: A Reflexive History**

In writing these surfing histories, I am mindful of Greg Dening, an historian of the South Pacific beaches during the era of colonial exploration and conquest, who considered the limitations of the historical in relation to an archive as “[t]he past I experience is shaped by the genres of its expression and the ways of its preservation.”<sup>7</sup> I have lived through much of the period under review in this study. I came to surfie consciousness as a teenager in Durban in the early 1980s; predating that was a family and holiday beach culture that was formative in the making of my white coastal South African identity. It was in late 1996 that I became a participant-observer of South African surfing culture and began the archiving and writing processes that have culminated in this study. Three events stimulated my academic interest in writing critical surfing histories. The first was the panel “Surfin’ Safaris: Race, Gender and Narratives of Imperialism in Surf Culture” at a literary and cultural studies conference at the University of Hawai’i in Honolulu in April 1997.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>5</sup> A note on terminology: in acknowledging that racial classification was a product of the apartheid state’s ideological apparatus to institutionalise and administer racial segregation, I consider the post-apartheid everyday, where “in writing about race in South Africa we have little choice but to use the racial classifications of the past” as “they acquired an experiential reality and people continue to see themselves in these terms as black, white, coloured or Indian.” See Kevin Durrheim, Xoliswa Mtose and Lyndsay Brown, *Race Trouble: Race, Identity and Inequality in Post-Apartheid South Africa*, (Scottsville: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, 2011), 31. In considering gender, the concept is used to “denote the perceived differences between and ideas about women and men, male and female ... that these differences are socially constructed ... [and] the characteristics of male and female identities – all are the products of culture.” See Sonya Rose, *What is Gender History?* (Cambridge and Malden: Polity Press, 2010), 2-3.

<sup>6</sup> The unfolding of the post-apartheid era remains located within its apartheid past. Hence, this study considers the 2000s as within periodisation of the late twentieth-century.

<sup>7</sup> Greg Dening, *Mr Bligh’s Bad Language: Passion, Power and Theatre on the Bounty*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 5.

<sup>8</sup> I presented a paper titled “‘Hawaiian Winters’ and ‘Bay Boys’: Representations of Hawai’i, Men and Politics in a South African Surfing Magazine, *Zigzag*, 1977-1980,” First International and Eleventh MELUS Conference, Multi-Ethnic Literatures Across the Americas and the Pacific: Exchanges, Contestations, and Alliances, Honolulu, Hawai’i, 18 April 1997. The panel included: Renée Bergland, as panel chairperson, with papers by Kim Brink-Johnsen (on Hawaiian surfing and American imperialism), Carin Crawford (on Southern Californian surfing after World War Two) and Lance Bersleson (on hegemonic surfing style and the longboard revival in the 1990s). Besides Crawford, these scholars had not worked on surfing academically before the conference. For Crawford see “The Waves of Transformation: California

The second event was the *Masculinities in Southern Africa Colloquium* held at the University of Natal, Durban in July 1997, which set the agenda for new men's studies in southern Africa.<sup>9</sup> An outcome of this conference was Robert Morrell's edited volume *Changing Men in Southern Africa* published in 2001, to which I contributed a chapter.<sup>10</sup> The third event came more than a decade later at the *Sport History and Sport Studies in Southern Africa International Conference* held at the University of Stellenbosch in July 2008.<sup>11</sup> Three published journal articles as well as a television appearance resulted due to my participation in that conference.<sup>12</sup> One article was re-published as a chapter in 2011 in *Sport Past and Present in South Africa: (Trans)forming the Nation*, a volume of new South African sports histories edited by Scarlett Cornelissen and Albert Grundlingh.<sup>13</sup> These intellectual trajectories sparked my interest in how the study of critical surfing histories, based on historical and ethnographic research, could draw on cultural studies, gender studies and sport studies. The genealogies of knowledge outlined above inform this present study; the formal research for which began in July 2009.

Despite my hiatus from the academy from 1998 to 2008, I continued gathering evidence that went into the making of the Surfing Archive. No new research was written up in that decade. Rather I enjoyed the outdoors in a manner similar to how John Lowerson, a historian of leisure, described late nineteenth-century historian Cyril Ransome; he "did not waste good fishing-weather on writing history books."<sup>14</sup> In my case it may be said, "he did not waste good surfing conditions on writing history books." Yet, ludic pleasures aside, the point to take from Lowerson's consideration of the possible pitfalls of leisure and sport history is that the writing of surfing histories from my own past, or even through my past, may be a "pseudo semi-detachment", making me less able to historicise the sporting lifestyle in question and falter in using my academic discipline as a means for social intervention.<sup>15</sup> Nevertheless, in researching South African surfing histories of race and gender, I do so as an academic who surfs (but who may not necessarily be considered a "surfer" in the

---

Surf Culture Since World War II," Masters Thesis (History), University of California, San Diego, 1993). I do not recall Douglas Booth or other scholars on the Australian beach referenced in this panel, pointing to the wider distances between scholars before a Google search quickly turned up relevant research in a field of study. Prior to the Hawai'i conference I presented my paper as work in progress at the History and African Studies Seminar Series in the History Department at the then University of Natal, Durban in October 1996. However, I was not the first to bring surfing to the History Department's attention; that distinction resided with Alison Dell in her final year as an undergraduate student. See her "The History of Surfing in Durban," History 3 Long Essay, University of Natal, Durban, July 1992.

<sup>9</sup> For an overview of this colloquium see Rob Morrell, "Of Boys and Men: Masculinity and Gender in Southern African Studies," *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 24, 4, (December 1998). My paper for this colloquium was titled: "Making Waves, Making Men: The Emergence of Competitive Surfing and the Construction of Masculine Identities in South African Surfing, c.1950s to c.1970s."

<sup>10</sup> Glen Thompson, "Making Waves, Making Men: The Emergence of a Professional Surfing Masculinity in South African during the Late 1970s" in Robert Morrell (ed), *Changing Men in Southern Africa*, (Pietermaritzburg, London and New York: University of Natal Press and Zed Books, 2001).

<sup>11</sup> My paper was "A Surf Riding Contest is Basically a Matter of Opinion": Beach Apartheid, Gender and the Emergence of Competitive Surfing in South Africa during the 1960s and 1970s."

<sup>12</sup> Glen Thompson, "Judging Surf Culture: The Making of a White Exemplar Masculinity during the 1966 Natal and South African Surfing Championships held in Durban," *Journal of Natal and Zulu History*, 26 (2008); Glen Thompson, "Certain political considerations: South African Competitive Surfing during the International Sports Boycott," *The International Journal of the History of Sport*, 28, 1 (January 2011); and Glen Thompson. "Reimagining Surf City: Surfing and the Making of the Post-Apartheid Beach in South Africa," *The International Journal of the History of Sport*, 28, 15 (October 2011). In a television episode featuring Jeffreys Bay I was interviewed about gender and history in surfing while walking along the beach at Supertubes the television programme, see episode 8 of *Shoreline*, dir. Sanet Olivier, (South Africa: Homebrew Films/SABC2, 2009).

<sup>13</sup> Scarlett Cornelissen and Albert Grundlingh (eds), *Sport Past and Present in South Africa: (Trans)forming the Nation*, (London and New York: Routledge, 2011).

<sup>14</sup> John Lowerson, "Review Article: Starting from Your Own Past? The Serious Business of Leisure History," *Journal of Contemporary History*, 36, 3 (July 2001), 517 footnote 1.

<sup>15</sup> Lowerson, "Starting from Your Own Past?" 529.

sense used in this study).<sup>16</sup> Yet, following critical sports sociologist Belinda Wheaton's comments on the need for reflexivity in research, I am mindful of my own positionality within South African surfing as a white, middle-aged, English-speaking, heterosexual male living in Cape Town.<sup>17</sup> I am also aware of my position as participant-observer. Prior to 2009 I was little concerned with competitive surfing and its organisation, holding to a "soul surfer" identity within the subculture.<sup>18</sup> For that matter, my 2008 article in the *Journal of Natal and Zulu History* was a Foucauldian critique of competitive surfing culture in its use of contest judging criteria as social constraint to encode an exemplary surfing masculinity onto men's bodies. This was to give evidence for Ford and Brown's observation that "[m]any aspects of masculine domination in surfing, sport and society have, until quite recently, been socioculturally *invisible*."<sup>19</sup> While I remain convinced of Ford and Brown's statement, my theory did not hold up completely when experiencing contest surfing as a participant. As part of my research methodology, from 2009 my immersion in local surfing took the form of surfing competitively at regional and national levels. In making an age-specific division final at the national longboard champions two years running (2009 and 2010), I had begun to find surf contests empowering and pleasurable despite their discipline of practices, rather like, as reflexive gender theorist Clifton Evers has noted, "[g]oing surfing and doing masculinity are lived texts, in which any felt experience is fluid."<sup>20</sup> With fluidity found in structure, my next immersive experience was becoming involved in surfing administration – co-founding a national association in a related surfing code (namely, Stand-Up Paddling South Africa [SUPSA]) in 2010, judging local contests, and co-founding the Earthwave Tandem Surfing Club in 2013.<sup>21</sup> My involvement in these arenas of organised surfing, and gaining some distinction within that community by surfing competitively, opened up conversations that led to interviews or access to archival source material.<sup>22</sup> Additional immersive acts included: surf journalism, being a juror for the Wavescape Surf Film Festival (2012 to 2014) and taking up a position in 2013 on the Board of Trustees for Waves for Change, a non-profit organisation that uses surfing as part of its life-skills and leadership training for township youth in Masiphumelele and Khayelitsha, Cape Town. Taken together, however, there has not been a reliance on participant-observation as a primary methodology but a use of that positionality as a researcher within surfing culture to begin to see the flows of

<sup>16</sup> "Stand-up board surfing", with its pre-colonial Polynesian and Hawaiian roots, was introduced to the West in the early twentieth-century and entered Californian popular culture in the 1950, and dispersed globally in the 1960s. Since the 1970s a hegemonic surfing lifestyle and sporting activity located in stand-up shortboard surfing has captured the popular imagination and media attention within a broader arena of "surf-based aquatic pursuits", such as bodysurfing, body boarding, paddle surfing, wake-boarding, windsurfing, kite-boarding and stand-up paddle boarding. For the definition and quotes see Nick Ford and David Brown, *Surfing and Social Theory: Experience, Embodiment and Narrative of the Dream Glide*. (London and New York: Routledge, 2006), 2.

<sup>17</sup> See Belinda Wheaton, *The Cultural Politics of Lifestyle Sports*, (London and New York: Routledge, 2013), 13 and 19.

<sup>18</sup> Douglas Booth has described soul surfing as it emerged in the late 1960s, a description which continues to hold resonance in surf culture today. Booth note that "[o]n the one hand, it was a reaction against corrupt competition; on the other, it was an oppositional cultural practice symbolising counterculture idealism," see his "Ambiguities in Pleasure and Discipline: The Development of Competitive Surfing," *Journal of Sport History*, 22, 3 (Fall 1995), 195. See also footnote 97 below.

<sup>19</sup> See Ford and Brown, *Surfing and Social Theory*, 84 (emphasis in the original).

<sup>20</sup> Clifton Evers, "How To Surf," *Journal of Sport and Social Issues*, 30, 3 (August 2006), 231. I had competed in the grandmasters division for surfers aged 35 to 40 years of age. This was not the prestigious Open Men's division.

<sup>21</sup> Stand-up paddling, drawing on Hawaiian "beachboy surfing" of the inter-war period and re-imagined in the 2000s, where a surfer surfs with the aid of a single-blade paddle, came to South Africa in 2006. Tandem surfing, surfing two-up on a surfboard, also draws on Hawaiian surf tourism practices which become codified in 1960s surf contests as a man and a woman performing dancing-like tricks on a surfboard; interest waned from the late 1960s as longboarding went out of vogue but the sport of tandem surfing was rekindled in the late 1980s during the longboard revival. Nevertheless, it remains a minor practice within wider surfing disciplines that emphasise individualism on the waves.

<sup>22</sup> My method was to make field notes and record all anecdotal evidence or life history narratives and capture them using Evernote, a note-taking software tool. This software application is loaded to both my computer and mobile phone (as an iPhone application), with the capability of synchronising data between devices, and in storing data offsite (in the computing cloud) it acts as a virtual ethnographic archive.

meaning, the nuances of relations of power, the changing institutional landscape, the shaping of surfing by means of new technologies, and the social structures supporting surfing's sporting lifestyle.<sup>23</sup>

The position of participant-observer has also opened up moments when marginalised surfers or citizens spoke back to power and privilege or when conversations pointed me in the direction of counter-narratives or silences. Again, I have found Wheaton's methodology useful, especially her model of doing research with an awareness of the "many stratified positions of sameness and difference" that structure me, as a white, male academic when engaging with subordinated or marginalised surfing subjects, and thus "my research strategy was led by pragmatic rather than epistemological concerns, that historically such 'subaltern voices' have been heard neither in academia, nor, until recently, in popular accounts of surfing."<sup>24</sup> It is this same research imperative that guided my reading of the cultural texts in the Surfing Archive, even when there were silences. On writing with the postcolonial in mind, Denning in his 1998 essay "Writing, Rewriting the Beach" pointed to ways of reading silence in texts; "[s]ilence isn't empty soundlessness. Silence is always a relationship. Silence always has a presence in something else. Silence is contingent on something we experience in another way," and he continued,

We catch the contingency of silence in our imagination. Not our fantasies. Our imagination. Imagination is the ability to see those fine-lined and faint webs of significance. Imagination is hearing the silence because we have heard some of the sounds. *Imagination is seeing the absent things because we have seen so much else.* That is its dream-like quality. It is built on rearranged experience.<sup>25</sup>

It is in seeing the repository of cultural texts over time, and in relation to new evidence found, that the "webs of significance" in the Surfing Archive give shape to historical writing that foregrounds the cultural politics of surfing in South Africa's past and present. In turn, the view from the beach and the surf zone beyond the breakers offers a new space for the historical imagination to revisit key periods in the history of southern Africa and engage with broader social, cultural and political themes.

### Mapping the Surfing Archive

The collections on which the "South African Surfing History Archive" is built are housed (currently) as a personal research collection. I am of the view that the next phase of this surfing histories project is to digitise the collection, and avenues are currently being explored to undertake this in manner that will be administratively and technically sustainable and an open access resource. However, the undertaking of digitalising and archiving the collections requires a mapping of the extant sources. This is begun below as a summary and not a comprehensive list of the Surfing Archive, which is referenced in the Bibliography.

There are two main collections, one print and the other digital in the Surfing Archive. In the print collection, surfing magazines (more on these below), surf contest programmes, minutes of meetings and other documentation for provincial and national associations, clippings of newspaper articles, clippings of popular culture magazines mentioning surfing, copies of documents housed in local and provincial state archives, and primary sources in the form of surf literature, autobiographies, interviews (as audio-visual

<sup>23</sup> For a history of participant-observation within ethnography, from privileging the objective to considerations of representation, see James Clifford, "Introduction: Partial Truths" in James Clifford and George Marcuse (eds), *Writing Cultures: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography*, (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, [1986] 2011), 13-5.

<sup>24</sup> Wheaton, *The Cultural Politics of Lifestyle Sports*, 19.

<sup>25</sup> Greg Denning, "Writing, Rewriting the Beach: An Essay," *Rethinking History: The Journal of Theory and Practice*, 2, 2 (1998), 146 (emphasis is mine).

records), films, photographs, other surfing memorabilia, and copies of documentation that were once housed in the Timewarp Surfing Museum in Durban.<sup>26</sup> This also includes secondary sources such as theses and articles that are dated to a period in surfing history. The digital collection comprises of five core repositories. Firstly, the Surfing Heritage South Africa (SHSA) digital archive, including historic photographs, video clips, interviews or autobiographic accounts (a full copy of this was provided to the Surfing Archive on 14 June 2012 by SHSA). Secondly, the South African Files sourced from the Surfing Heritage Foundation Library collection housed in San Clemente, California during a field trip in February 2012.<sup>27</sup> Thirdly, collections gathered from online repositories (from SA Media, University of the Free State, Digital Innovation South African (DISA) hosted by the University of KwaZulu-Natal, and overseas newspapers). Fourth, items from personal collections (copies or originals of documents, photographs, scrapbooks, audio-visual interviews, and other primary sources). Finally, oral history interviews conducted in the course of this research, stored as digital recordings with ethical clearance.

These print and digital collections provided a rich body of surfing knowledge about South Africa. They sit along side books on South African surfing, published in the past or more recently. This set of literature, with a more popular appeal with sections on how or where to surf, was written by insiders, mostly surf journalists, and usually include a brief chapter on the history of the sport. These texts include: Cornel Barnett's *Hitting the Lip* (1974); Mark Jury's, *Surfing in Southern Africa* (1989); Steve Pike's *Surfing South Africa* (2007), of which a first edition was published in 2001 under the title *Surfing in South Africa* with an historical essay by Paul Botha; as well as Craig Jarvis and Daniel Betty's *South African Surf* (2007) and Miles Masterson's *How to Surf* (2009).<sup>28</sup>

While there is a growing literature on surf heritage filled with anecdotal and historical accounts of international surfing legends from California, Hawaii and Australia, there are few accounts from South Africa. Notably, the accounts by Sixties Springbok and hippie surfer Donald Paarman (2010) and surfer and musician David Butler (2010) are rare self-published autobiographies of South African surfing lives.<sup>29</sup> *The Reef* (2012) by surfer, social activist and researcher Glenn Hollands provides the first instance of a published

<sup>26</sup> My research at the Timewarp Surfing Museum was undertaken in 1997, where I made photocopies of source material. The Timewarp Surfing Museum, New Pier, Durban (in operation from 1996-2006), was closed when the curator, Baron Stander Snr, passed away in 2006. As no full inventory was available to determine ownership of artefacts, the museum's collection fell under the estate of the late Baron Stander, and then transferred to the Stander family. In 2009, Arthur Limboris, a Durban-based surfing retail entrepreneur, in his private capacity, purchased some of the artefacts, including surf craft, photos, art and other surfing memorabilia. The remaining artefacts remain with the Stander family in Durban. Limboris made a commitment to donating the artefacts to a surfing museum and this led to the establishment of Surfing Heritage South Africa (SHSA) as a non-profit company in June 2009, with founding board members drawn from individuals involved in the sport as surfing icons, administrators, entrepreneurs, cultural brokers and the surf media. A primary goal of SHSA was the establishment of a surfing museum. Limboris financially supported John Whittle to manage the process of setting up and running of the surfing heritage organisation. In September 2010 SHSA successfully won an eThekweni Municipality tender to establish the Surfing Heritage South Africa's Visitor Centre, with a surfing museum, at the New Pier site on Durban's central beachfront. However, with insufficient capital to execute its business plan, the visitor centre and museum initiative was not realised. SHSA lost momentum due to this setback and Whittle stepped away from the active management of SHSA in 2011; a decision influenced by Limboris no longer providing seed funding for his position as managing director of the organisations. The Timewarp Surfing Museum artefacts purchased by Limboris are currently housed, under his custodianship on behalf of SHSA, in a Quiksilver warehouse in Durban. Personal communications with John Whittle, SHSA director, Durban, 14 June 2012. More further organisation information see the SHSA website, <http://www.surfingheritage.co.za>. A disclaimer is required here; I am one of the founding members on the board of SHSA – a further immersion of mine in local surfing culture.

<sup>27</sup> The Surfing Heritage Foundation was renamed the Surfing Heritage and Cultural Centre in early 2013 to reflect its work in preserving, promoting and exhibiting surfing's heritage.

<sup>28</sup> Barnett, *Hitting the Lip*; Mark Jury, *Surfing in Southern Africa, including Mauritius and Reunion*, (Cape Town: Struik, 1989); Steve Pike, *Surfing in South Africa*. (Cape Town: Compress, 2001); Steve Pike, *Surfing South Africa* (Cape Town: Double Storey, 2007); Craig Jarvis and Daniel Betty, *South African Surf*, (Johannesburg: Jonathan Ball, 2007); and Mile Masterson, *How to Surf*, (Johannesburg: Penguin, 2009).

<sup>29</sup> See Donald Paarman, *Lunatic Surfer or Destiny? Autobiography of a Springbok...whaaat!* (Wilderness: Donald Paarman, 2008) and David Butler, *The Adventures of a Reluctant Printer*, (Cape Town: David Butler, 2010).

local history of a South African surfing centre in recounting East London's surfing past and heritage as part of the development of the city's beaches.<sup>30</sup>

Filmic sources on South African surfing are also available; with many of these in the post-apartheid period moving away from documenting the whiteness of South Africa's surfing past to focus on narratives of black surfing. Notably among these latter films are *Taking Back the Waves* (2005), *Black People Don't Swim* (2008) and *Zulu Surf Riders* (2008) next to more recent documentary films on surfing development programme's such as *9 Miles Surf Club* (*9 Miles Project: Going the Distance* [2014]) and *Waves for Change* (*Waves in Masi* [2013]) in Cape Town as well as films depicting new trends in black surfing in Durban (*Kushaya Igagasi* [2013]) and Muizenberg (*Berg Boys* [2013]).<sup>31</sup> There is one surf documentary on South African women, the Saltwater Girl production *Beautiful* (2008) on white surfer girls that reflects on beauty culture and surfing athleticism.<sup>32</sup> An international surf magazine's video archive includes a biography of Shaun Tomson's rise to fame in the mid-1970s as part of the "tops guns of the Free Ride generation," which is revisited in *Bustin' Down the Door* (2008), a documentary film narrated by Tomson.<sup>33</sup> There is an emerging film and television trend to use South African surfing as key to narrative plot, for example, the Hollywood *Blue Crush 2* (2011, only released on DVD) and the youth drama television series *Amaza* (2014) which both feature black women's surfing.<sup>34</sup> In the isiZulu-language feature film *Otelo Burning* (2011), Zulu surfing as an expression of freedom is elided into the turbulent death throes of apartheid.<sup>35</sup>

However, in considering the primary and secondary sources above, it is the surfing magazine themselves that provide a more tangible sense of South African surfing's cultural past. The various magazines published over the years in South Africa provide a near continuous record of the South African surfing imaginary, and the whiteness and masculine nature thereof.<sup>36</sup> All the magazines except for *Zigzag* have had short shelf lives owing to, firstly, a small market of (mostly male) consumers available to purchase a niche lifestyle magazine and, secondly, a reliance on surf advertising spend to support the magazine's business model. The following brief survey aims to provide an overview of this set of primary sources for the years under review in this study.

The Durban founded *South African Surfer* (1965-1968) was the first surfing magazine in the country and, under the editorial control of Harry Bold, along with Roger Ashe and Brian Wilson, documented the birth of modern surf culture in South Africa. However, when production moved to Cape Town in late 1967, with Philip Smuts at the helm, only two issues were published before the magazine folded due to financial pressures and technology and cultural changes within surf culture. The next magazine was *Southern Surfer* (1970-1971), initially launched by the Natal Surfriders' Association and then taken over by the South African South

<sup>30</sup> Glenn Hollands, *The Reef: A Legacy of Surfing in East London*, (East London: Glenn Hollands, 2012). Hollands has a Masters Degree in political science from Rhodes University.

<sup>31</sup> *Taking Back the Waves*, dir. Nicolaas Hofmeyr, (South Africa: Uhuru Productions/SABC2, 2005), *Black People Don't Swim*, dir. Lucilla Blankenberg, (South Africa: Community Media Trust/SABC2, 2008), *Zulu Surf Riders*, dir. André Conje, Carlos Francisco and Brenen Nortje, (South Africa: Scratch The Surfers, 2008); *Waves in Masi*, dir. Jodie White, Hannah Svanteman and Martina Gatica Gustafsson, (Sweden: Jodie White, Hannah Svanteman & Martina Gatica Gustafsson, 2013); *9 Miles Project: Going the Distance*, dir. Hewett de Villiers (South Africa: Hewett de Villiers, 2014); *Kushaya Igagasi*, dir. Omelga Mthiyane, (South Africa: Blue Fire Productions, 2013); and *Berg Boys*, dir. Meghan Adams, (South Africa: University of Cape Town Production, 2013).

<sup>32</sup> *Beautiful*, dir. Viki van den Barselaar, (South Africa: Saltwater Girl/Imagine Afrika, 2007).

<sup>33</sup> *The Surfer's Journal Biographies, Volume Two: Shaun Tomson, Mark Richards*. Opper Sports, 2000 and *Bustin' Down The Door*, dir. Jeremy Gosch, (USA: Fresh and Smoked, 2008).

<sup>34</sup> *Blue Crush 2*, dir. by Mike Elliott, (USA: Universal, 2011) and *Amaza*, dir. Lucilla Blankenberg, Laddie Bosch and Tim Spring, (South Africa: Community Media Trust/SABC1, 2014).

<sup>35</sup> *Otelo Burning*, dir. Sara Blecher, (South Africa: Cinga Productions, 2011).

<sup>36</sup> A further source is overseas magazines that have published articles on South African surfing since the early 1960s. These are drawn on selectively in this study, largely due to difficulty in easily accessing historic surfing magazines from America, Australia or elsewhere.

African Surfriders' Association, which covered news about local amateur surfing. The next magazine that came out was *Surf Africa* (1974-1976), published and edited by photographer Snowy Smith from Durban. *Surf Africa* wrote against the hippie (countercultural) surfing lifestyle and presented an image of surfing supporting the commercialisation of the sport and the emergent professional era. *Down The Line* (1976-1977), run by professional surfer and surfing journalist Michael Tomson, focused on surfing along with other edgy youth lifestyle interests (fashion, motor-cross and music) but folded when it ran out of finances. *Zigzag* entered the South Africa surfing imaginary in early 1977, with the launch of its December 1976/February 1977 issue, with Paul Naude, Doug Macdonald, Graham Fiford and Michael Larmont as owners and managing editorship handled by Naude, Macdonald and Fiford. *Zigzag's* primary focus was competitive surfing, promoted the surfing lifestyle a secondary theme, and covered related water and street sports of waveski (paddleski), bodyboarding and skateboarding. In 1988, after facing a precarious financial period, *Zigzag* changed ownership and retired professional surfer Craig Sims and Rob van Wieringen took over the business of the magazine. Van Wieringen remained involved with *Zigzag* until 1991. Under Sims' editorship the competitive and promotional ethos of the *Zigzag* was continued to create a niche youth market magazine. In 2001, *Zigzag* was included along other aquatic sports and youth lifestyle magazines with within the newly formed Atoll Media, with Sim's as managing publisher.<sup>37</sup> In March 2007 Touchline Media (owned by Media24) bought a majority shareholding in Atoll Media, which included *Zigzag* among with *blunt*, *Saltwater Girl* and other titles. Facing closure due the Media24's rationalizing of print publications in the face of digital publishing, *Zigzag* was sold to Jingo Media in September 2013. As the magazine's new publisher, Andy Davis thus returned *Zigzag* to its prior independent magazine status.

Taking advantage of the uncertainty in the local surf magazine market in 1987, when *Zigzag's* financial future as a magazine and its subcultural hegemony was in question, surf photo-journalist Shafiq Morton and professional surfer David Stolk launched *Offshore* (1987-1989) as a Cape based magazine to counter *Zigzag's* Durban-centricity. While also covering the competitive surfing scene, as a result of Morton and Stolk's involvement in non-racial sport *Offshore* documented black surfers and the non-racial surfing movement. The magazine also feature power boating to attract advertisers outside the surfing industry. However, this strategy did not carry the magazine and its ceased publication. There was a brief appearance of one issue of *Backdoor* in late 1998 by surf photographer Paul Maartens and surf journalist Lawrence Atkinson; which also failed in its advertisement dependent financial model. Another attempt to enter the local surf media marketing was *Wet* (1989-1990). Surf journalist and photographer Pat Flanagan in Durban published *Wet* with a focus on surfing competitions, the surfing lifestyle as well as bodyboarding and skateboarding. In early 1990 the magazine incorporated *South African Boardsailer*, a magazine established in 1982 when windsurfing became popular in South Africa. However, the association of this water sport, itself declining in popularity globally, did not provide *Wet* with the market to continue the publication. The last issue of *Wet* was published in December 1990.

In 1998, *Zigzag* ran its first supplement for women surfers titled *Saltwater Girl*, edited by top amateur surfer Georgina King. This was an annual publication until 2001. *Zigzag's* aim with *Saltwater Girl* was to test the local girl surfer market in an expansion of its focus on the youth magazine market. Due to a perceived small women surfer market, in 2002 *Saltwater Girl* shifted its initial focus on women surfing shifted to that of a bi-monthly beach lifestyle magazine for teen girls. By the mid-2000s, and with Lari Brown as editor, this

<sup>37</sup> These were *Blunt* (for more on this magazine see footnote 38 below), *Saltwater Girl* (which is discussed below), *SA Body Boarding* (bodyboard surfing), *SA Paddler* (featured canoeing, kayaking and surf-ski paddling) and *Hip2B<sup>2</sup>* (focused on youth science and geek culture).



magazine had a large readership and moved over to Touchline Media as part of its investment in Atoll Media in 2007. Due to financial downturn as of 2008 reducing surf industry advertising budgets the magazine, with Bryony McCormick as editor, was closed down in 2013 as part of Media24's pruning of its print publications. *Saltwater Girl* was not the only attempt by Atoll Media to benefit from the global popularisation and commercialisation of women's surfing and beach fashion as of 2002. In 2005 the earlier *Saltwater Girl* concept was returned to by Atoll Media with the publication of *Saltwater Girl Surf*. Initially compiled by Olivia Jones under the editorial management of *Zigzag*'s William Bendix, its focus was on the promotional culture for core surfing women's surfing. However, the primary rationale for its launch was to retain Atoll Media's dominance of surf advertising market share and undercut the market for the independent girl localism of *Liquid Surf Girls Magazine* (2005-2006), edited by Capetonian Shannon McLaughlin. However, *Saltwater Girl Surf* folded in 2008 due to the effects of global financial downturn on the big surf brands that drew resources away from the surfing industry's investment in and promotion of women's surfing. In surveying these surf magazines for overall trends, besides *Offshore* all these mediated spaces for surf culture perpetuated representations and social constructions of whiteness and, except for *Saltwater Girl* and *Saltwater Girl Surf*, were aimed at a consumer who was young, male and a surfer.<sup>38</sup>

### Counting Surfers over Time

These surfing magazines also raise the question of the size of the South African surfer readership. The reality is that surfing demographics in South Africa are at best as vague today as they were reported for the 1960s. Writing in 1964, surfer and journalist Anthony Morris estimated that there were "about 350 riders in Durban and the South Coast."<sup>39</sup> In 1966 John Whitmore, the national surfing association president, reported 800 surfers around the Cape Peninsula.<sup>40</sup> The next real evidence for the size of the South African surfing community was in 1986 when *Zigzag* reported a readership of "20,000 plus" in an article calling on advertisers and surfers to support the magazine.<sup>41</sup> Whether this was readership reach, actual circulation or simply an estimate of the surfing population in the country was not stated.

Towards the end of 2007 the South African surfing population was reported as "perhaps" 60,000, with a caveat asking whether the lifestyle of surfing had broader appeal than the sport itself.<sup>42</sup> Even surf magazine readership figures do not give a clear indication of the size of the surfing population. In December 2006, *Zigzag*, a surf magazine with 74% male readers, had a circulation of 11,614 (and a potential readership reach of 103,000). *Saltwater Girl*'s advertising rate card had a publication circulation to primarily teenage girls of 31,133 in June 2007 (and a wider readership reach of 126,000). Yet, it was noted that only two to five percent of these readers actually surfed. Furthermore, the majority of *Saltwater Girl* readers, including the more than half of all readers who resided away from the coast, "buy into the lifestyle".<sup>43</sup> What these

<sup>38</sup> Later South African surfing magazines were: *African Soul Surfer* (1995-1996), run by Garth Robinson, which documented the anti-competitive counterculture surfing ethos but closed after losing a battle over surf industry advertiser spend with *Zigzag*. Similar pressures seemed to face *Amped* (2003-2006), *African Surfrider* (2006-2009) and *theBOMBSurf* (2009-2013). The youth lifestyle *Blunt Magazine* (1997-2012), featuring surfing along with other boarding cultures (skateboarding, snowboarding and wakeboarding) and extreme sports, was founded by Mile Masterson in Cape Town and by the early 2000s had been incorporated into Atoll Media. In December 2012, the first township surfing magazine aimed at black surfers, *Amaza* was published by the Cape Town based non-profit organisation Waves for Change to promote the surfing development programme.

<sup>39</sup> Anthony Morris, "Hurtle ashore in a flurry of foam," *The Natal Mercury*, 25 June 1964. He also noted that there were 200,000 surfers worldwide.

<sup>40</sup> John Whitmore, "Surfing Around the Cape," *South African Surfer*, 1, 1 (April 1965), 5.

<sup>41</sup> See "Editorial: You're the Cure," *Zigzag*, 10, 5 (September/October 1986), 7.

<sup>42</sup> Pike, *Surfing South Africa*, 37.

<sup>43</sup> Figures for these Atoll Media publications were drawn from *Atoll Media Website*, <http://www.atollmedia.co.za> [accessed 14 September 2008].

readership figures indicated was a general trend in the growth over time in the South African surfing community and the on-going consumer appeal of surfing to the youth. Yet, these readers of surfing and beach lifestyle magazines were not simply driven by consumptive practices stimulated by the surf industries, as Chapter 1 notes, other material factors shaped surfing's popularity in the late 1960s.

In all, and compared to school, amateur and professional participants in South Africa's mainstream sports of rugby, cricket and soccer, surfing has a relatively small active sporting population. Even within that number, competitive surfing has, throughout its history, been a sporting arena open to a few who live near the coast and have access to regular transport to the beach, shown prowess by winning contests, and drew on sponsors or family to finance surfing equipment and their travel to compete in events.<sup>44</sup> However, it is competitive surfing that has remained the most aspirational of surfing pursuits and consequently received proportionally more surf media exposure than surfing as a lifestyle sport and has been used as a means to advertise and promote through surf journalism the surf brands and their products. Herein, the local surf media's focus on competitive surfing fits into wider trends in the professionalisation and mediated consumption of sport in South Africa after 1994.<sup>45</sup>

### **Sports History at the Beach**

In 1971 anti-apartheid sports activist Dennis Brutus offered four reasons for the prominence of sport in white South African society. The first was "the splendid climate all the year round, which makes it possible for so much outdoor activity to be engaged in," second, "the abundance of open space," the third placed sport as a cultural activity during a context of cultural boycott by alluding to "the poverty of cultural life, so there are few other pursuits to distract."<sup>46</sup> The last reason linked victories in the sporting arena as "contrive[d] to reassure White South Africans of their worth, and allow them to crow over those who condemn them." Brutus added "sport had become the great link, as well as the great means by which the national psyche can find compensation."<sup>47</sup>

Brutus' summation has resonance for the history of surfing under apartheid, and in the case of the former two points, also in the post-apartheid present. South Africa's geographic position and the coastal environment offer rich wave resources for surfing centres such as Cape Town, Jeffreys Bay and Durban. The differences between these urban surfing centres are a result of their geographies, urban histories and surf cultures. Durban's trendy urban beach vibe translated into flashy performances in the surf with the piers offering an amphitheatre for watching the consumption of waves in the warm Indian Ocean, arenas that convey a sense of safety due to the shark nets beyond the backline. Cape Town's more laid-back approach to surfing is part of the dispersed nature of the surfing community around the Cape Peninsula, allowing for an ocean-mindedness amplified in isolated experiences of surfing in cold-water Atlantic swells with mountainous backdrops, where of late at popular beaches black Shark Spotters stand watch over the activity of great white sharks and call out bathers and surfers from the water if there is an imminent shark threat. The city itself is mostly tucked out of sight from surf spots, except when viewed from the more northerly beaches. Away from the cities, Jeffreys Bay's rustic sand dunes frame a demanding world-class right-hand wave that

<sup>44</sup> In 2008, a new surfboard retailed at between R2,100 to R3,200, depending on the length of surfboard. See *Lifestyle Surf Shop Website*, <http://www.surfboards.co.za/boards.htm> [accessed on 27 September 2008]. Further essential surfing equipment adding to the cost of participating in the sport would include: wetsuits, leg cord, board bag, wax, and sun protection lotion.

<sup>45</sup> For these trends in South African rugby see Albert Grundlingh, *Potent Pastimes: Sport and Leisure in Modern Afrikaner History*, (Pretoria: Protea House, 2013), 156-8 and 169-71.

<sup>46</sup> Dennis Brutus, "The Sportsman's Choice" in Alex La Guma (ed), *Apartheid: A Collection of Writings on South African Racism by South Africans*, (New York: International Publishers, 1971), 150.

<sup>47</sup> Brutus, "The Sportsman's Choice," 151.

breaks down the point in the chilly winter months, luring international and local surfers annually to an otherwise quiet, conservative town.

As an outdoor sporting and leisure activity reliant on the vicissitudes of Nature, the surfing lifestyle has over the years offered a philosophy of transcendence in the experience of riding waves and a liminality of space in opening up an oceanic wilderness for social escapism, or at least a retreat from modernity beyond the shoreline. As a lifestyle sport, surfing was, and is, as much a cultural practice as a sport, in that its sporting lifestyle appealed to many more than those who engaged in competitive surfing. However, the post-apartheid period requires a re-consideration of Brutus' fourth point based on Peter Hain's 1996 observation of white society during the transition years, "[w]here sport had been used as a stick to force change, now it was a carrot."<sup>48</sup> The same national psyche that was attacked during the sports boycott became the focus of the African National Congress's post-1994 "sport for all" policy in seeking racial redress for previously disenfranchised citizens on the sporting fields.<sup>49</sup> Sport's role in social transformation as of the early 1990s and its place in the making of the "Rainbow Nation" shifted the scholarly analysis from racial difference and exclusion to social inclusion and nation building, and the critique thereof.<sup>50</sup> However, narratives of social inequality in sport remained within a newly democratic South Africa, and demanded the need for historical analysis.<sup>51</sup> The concentration on racism and sport, emerging out of studies focused on change in apartheid society and the limits of post-apartheid transformation, was nevertheless one category of analysis. A further consideration is that of gender relations in the context of racialised sport in apartheid and racial practices in post-apartheid sport. This requires a rethinking of Brutus's political narrative to include that of changing identities within sport.

Lifestyle in neoliberal capitalism "is intrinsically linked with patterns of consumption" and "helped encapsulate the ways in which participants and, increasingly, consumers of the activities sought out a particular *style of life* that was central to the meaning and experience of participation in the sport and that give them a particular and exclusive social identity."<sup>52</sup> How to address "style of life" with an "exclusive social identity" historically in South Africa requires seeing sport as a cultural practice that is open to self-fashioning

<sup>48</sup> Peter Hain, *Sing the Beloved Country*, (London and Chicago: Pluto, 1996), 180.

<sup>49</sup> This policy has been critiqued for not building class into the transformation agenda, thus perpetuating privilege and elitism in sport, see Ashwin Desai and Dhevarsha Ramjettan, "Sport for All? The Boundaries of Sport and Citizenship in 'Liberated' South Africa" in Adam Habib and Kristina Bentley (eds), *Racial Redress and Citizenship in South Africa*, (Cape Town: HSRC Press, 2008).

<sup>50</sup> See Basil Brown, "The Destruction of Non-Racial Sport: A Consequence of the Negotiated Political Settlement" in Cornelius Thomas (ed), *Sport and Liberation in South Africa: Reflections and Struggles*, (Alice and Pretoria: University of Fort Hare and Department of Sports and Recreation, 2006) and John Nauright, *Long Run to Freedom: Sport, Cultures and Identities in South Africa*, (Morgantown: Fitness Information Technology, 2010), Chapter 7.

<sup>51</sup> See Andre Odendaal, "Sport and Liberation: The Unfinished Business of the Past" in Thomas, *Sport and Liberation in South Africa* and Avis Smith, "The Invisible Factor: Women in the Non-Racial Sports Movement" in Thomas, *Sport and Liberation in South Africa*.

<sup>52</sup> Wheaton, *The Cultural Politics of Lifestyle Sports*, 26 (emphasis in the original). Wheaton points to nine characteristics, a family of resemblances, that outlines a sociology of lifestyle sport, noting that their histories may be specific to practices and the context of social relations. These characteristics of lifestyle sports are: they emerged in the recent past in North America with Sixties counter-cultural roots [the Californication of surfing culture]; technology and innovation drive the consumption of objects [surfboard, fin and wetsuit technologies]; have a distinctive lifestyle and social identity [subcultural youthful identifications in language, dress and tanned bodies at the coast]; there is a commitment to an embodied and risky experience [the thrill, flow or "stoke" of riding waves]; an expressive sport [wave-riding performance as displays of embodied individuated style]; some oppositional or ambiguous relationship to competition [the soul surfer identity]; largely white, male, middle class and Western with transnational affinities [observation at most local surf spots would affirm this, as does the surfing imaginary perpetuated in surfing magazines and surf films]; predominately individualistic activities without bodily contact [the don't drop-in etiquette gives priority to a one wave, one surfer rule, as well as the privileging of one person riding a surfboard in relation to a wave]; and practiced in non-delineated spaces in non-urban settings [this would be the ideal of an uncrowded surf, yet within the city limits new spaces are opened up to experience nature beyond the pavement in the surf zone]. See Wheaton, *The Cultural Politics of Lifestyle Sports*, 29-30 (my qualifications relating to surfing indicated by parenthesis).

as social contexts change or despite that change. Historian Jonathan Hyslop has argued that new identities formed through lifestyle consumption in white South African society in the 1970s and 1980s “create[d] new narratives of the self” as part of the effects of globalisation.<sup>53</sup> An example of these new selves can be seen in Katie Mooney’s study of white youth ducktail subculture in the 1950s. Herein she provides a case for the application of subcultural theory to historical context, in finding that “subcultures provide a space for youths to experiment with and express their identities,” as part of the construction of multiple identities (class, race, gendered, ethnic) specific to historical, social and cultural contexts.<sup>54</sup> Surfing in South Africa as a lifestyle sport fits into Wheaton’s theorising of sporting lifestyles, Hyslop’s contextualisation of consumption and lifestyles, and Mooney’s approach to the self-fashioning of youthful subcultural and other identities. Thus, for the post-apartheid period, and before, the consideration of identity in a context of flux, put forward by anthropologist Robert Thornton in 1995 while South Africa was still in political transition, has bearing: “South Africans have multiple identities in common contexts and common identities in multiple contexts.”<sup>55</sup> Fluidity and hybridity may be found in the surfing identity yet categories of race, ethnicity and gender that circulated in South Africa society before and after 1994, which is focused on in this study, may be seen to shape the surfing lifestyle as raced and gendered.

These identities, when performed over time, display the reiterations of the play of gender power with masculinities as dominant, complicit, subordinated or marginalised, as per R.W. Connell’s conceptualising of hegemonic masculinity, and its presence as a category of analysis in southern Africanist studies.<sup>56</sup> In surfing, while a case for hegemonic masculinities has been made in my earlier work, the preference in this study is to consider exemplar masculinities that perform or “do” gender within organised surfing and surfing’s promotional culture. While it could be hypothesised that hegemonic masculinities have been present in surfing culture, the grounds for their hegemonic status within the social dynamics and institutionalisation of surfing, their location within the wider gender order or contributing to that gender order has not been examined in this study. Rather, these surfing masculinities were part of “multiple masculine forms that were intertwined with other forms of identity and power relations between males within and outside of the subculture.”<sup>57</sup> What is presented here are continuities in representations of ideal values about male surfers’ style of riding waves located in contest surfing at a time of the competitive citing itself as the ideal within the surfing world and through the surfing imaginary.<sup>58</sup> Nevertheless, I am cognisant of Connell and James Messerschmidt’s argument that “hegemony works in part through the production of exemplars of masculinity

<sup>53</sup> Jonathan Hyslop, “Why did Apartheid’s supporters capitulate? ‘Whiteness’, class and consumption in urban South Africa, 1985–1995,” *Society in Transition*, 31, 3 (2000) 8-9. For a consideration of lifestyle sport in 1960s America see Bill Osgerby, “Rapture of the Deep: Leisure, Lifestyle and the Lure of Sixties Scuba” in David Bell and Joanne Hollows (eds), *Historicizing Lifestyle: Mediating Taste, Consumption and Identity from the 1900s to 1970s*, (Aldershot and Burlington: Ashgate, 2006).

<sup>54</sup> Katie Mooney, “Identities in the Ducktail Youth Subculture in Post-World-War-Two South Africa,” *Journal of Youth Studies*, 8, 1 (2005), 44. See also Katie Mooney, “‘Ducktails, Flick-Knives and Pugnacity’: Subcultural and Hegemonic Masculinities in South Africa, 1948-1960,” *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 24, 4, (December 1998).

<sup>55</sup> Robert Thornton, “The Potentials of Boundaries in South Africa: Step Towards a Theory of the Social Edge” in Richard Werbner and Terence Ranger (eds), *Postcolonial Identities in Africa*, (London and New Jersey: Zed Books, 1996), 150.

<sup>56</sup> See Robert Morrell, Rachel Jewkes, Graham Lindegger and Vijay Hamlall, “Hegemonic Masculinity: Reviewing the Gendered Analysis of Men’s Power in South Africa,” *South African Review of Sociology*, 44, 1 (2013), especially 6-10.

<sup>57</sup> Mooney, “Identities in the Ducktail Youth Subculture,” 48-9.

<sup>58</sup> For that earlier argument see Thompson, “Making Waves, Making Men”. I am mindful of other surfing spaces where exemplar masculinities may be performed, such as non-competitive big wave surfing – yet for that practice I have a preference for heroic masculinities rather the exemplar masculine designation due to the increased risk factor, and smaller number of surfers, riding big waves compared to those involved in competitive and recreational surfing more generally seen as local beaches.

(e.g., professional sports stars), symbols that have authority despite the fact that most men and boys do not fully live up to them.”<sup>59</sup>

The whiteness in surfing masculinities however began to shift within competitive surfing from 1990. Black surfing masculinities came into view as black men carved out alternative and, at times, oppositional identities and values to white male surfers and from subject positions determined historically as excluded from the beach. In negotiating the whiteness of surfing’s promotional culture, black male surfers open up new configurations of masculinities centered in an aquatic cultural practice with the possibilities of social mobility through the recognition of talent and the processes of sports transformation.<sup>60</sup>

In terms of femininities, discursive practices, such as “the assignment of femininity to femaleness” are, according to Butler, social processes that provide “one mechanism for the production of gender itself.”<sup>61</sup> Mari Haugaa has demonstrated this for women’s soccer in South Africa, and Holly Thorpe for snowboarding cultures in New Zealand and North America, a sister boardriding sport to surfing.<sup>62</sup> In approaching the histories of women and girls that have surfed, and some who still do, in this study, femininities provide a useful category of analysis. As feminist historian Penny Summerfield argues for the writing of gender history, “the contradictory constructions of gender in the cultural and ideological resources on hand have, historically, constituted spaces not only for conformity and the repetition of gender norms, but also for subversive and resistant performances.”<sup>63</sup> Thus, in not constructing an over-determined structuring of femininities, feminist cultural critic Dorothy Smith argued, for “women’s active participation in the process of ‘femininity’. Women aren’t just the passive products of socialization; they are active; they create themselves.”<sup>64</sup> There is question embedded therein: contemporary configurations of the professional “surfer girl”, since the mid-1990s but especially since *Blue Crush* screened globally in 2002, genders athletes as feminine within a surfing beauty culture that promotes sexualised marketing imagery of women. Within this masculinist gaze, as Cori Schumacher has observed, some women professional surfers “self-sexualise” themselves in an attempt to gain more celebrity status and thus material reward from sponsorship.<sup>65</sup> This surfer girl image would fall within sociologist Shelley Budgeon’s citation “[t]hat new femininities are able to assimilate masculine attributes without upsetting hegemonic masculinity [that] can be explained by the ideological function these femininities serve. As symbols of cultural development, social progress and the triumph of mainstreamed

<sup>59</sup> R.W. Connell and James Messerschmidt, “Hegemonic Masculinity: Rethinking the Concept,” *Gender and Society*, 9, 6 (December 2005), 846. See also the discussion on the “iron man’ surf-sports champion” as exemplar and hegemonic despite ambiguities in gender processes (838).

<sup>60</sup> This builds on the beach-orientated masculinities of African lifesavers in Durban described by Crispin Hemson, see his “*Ukubekwezela or Ukuzithemba: African Lifesavers in Durban*,” in Robert Morrell (ed), *Changing Men in Southern Africa*, (2001). In so doing it and shifts the terrain of study from the land to the shoreline and the waves so as to open up new avenues for researching the transformations and continuities of black masculinities in post-apartheid South Africa and exploring histories of surfing on the West and East coasts of the African continent. On these African contexts and masculinities studies see Robert Morrell (ed), *Changing Men in Southern Africa*, Graeme Reid and Liz Walker (eds), *Men Behaving Differently: South African Men since 1994*, (Cape Town: Double Storey Books, 2005) and Lisa Lindsay and Stephen Meischer (eds), *Men and Masculinities in Modern Africa*, (Portsmouth: Heinemann, 2003).

<sup>61</sup> Judith Butler, *Undoing Gender*, (New York and London: Routledge, 2004), 10.

<sup>62</sup> See Mari Haugaa, “Tackling Femininity: The Heterosexual Paradigm and Women’s Soccer in South Africa,” *The International Journal of the History of Sport*, 28, 1 (January 2011) and Holly Thorpe, “Foucault, Technologies of Self, and the Media: Discourses of Femininity in Snowboarding Culture,” *Journal of Sport and Social Issues*, 32, 2 (May 2008).

<sup>63</sup> Penny Summerfield, “Concluding thoughts: performance, the self, and women’s history,” *Women’s History Review*, 22, 2 (2013), 351.

<sup>64</sup> Dorothy Smith, “Femininity as Discourse” in Leslie Romna and Linda Christian-Smith with Elizabeth Ellsworth (eds), *Becoming Feminine: The Politics of Popular Culture*, (London, New York and Philadelphia: The Falmer Press, 1988), 39.

<sup>65</sup> This is not to say that there are not challenges to this exemplar femininity from within surfing culture. Feminist and pro-feminist surfers have taken issue with the sexism of contemporary surfing; see ex-professional longboard world champion Cori Schumacher, “And what of the current state of women’s pro surfing?” *Cori Schumacher: State of Flux Blog*, <http://www.corischumacher.com/2014/03/19/current-state-womens-pro-surfing> [accessed on 21 March 2014].

equality strategies they are viewed as 'progressive but also consummately and reassuringly feminine'.<sup>66</sup> A genealogy of these new femininities can be found in 1980s women surfers in South Africa, which replicated global patterns. They offer a prefiguring of the recognition of women surfing in South Africa that occurred in the mid-to-late 2000s, years that are outside of the scope of this study. Nevertheless, these concerns were the domain of privileged white women as surfers in South Africa until the 1990s. Histories of black women surfers – of which there is one documented example from Cape Town in of the late 1980s and early 1990s – would make visible the life histories of sporting women in South Africa who were, as historian Nombonisa Gasa stated in looking to women in the struggle era and after,

continuously moving boulders, crossing rivers, and swimming, sometimes in the direction of the tide and, where necessary, daring to swim against it. It is a constant struggle for self-identification, to change society and self, and define new values and forms of engagement.<sup>67</sup>

These processes of self-fashioning could also apply to white women surfers, marginalised from surfing's historically mainstream male-orientated sporting lifestyle. As gender theorist Raewyn Connell noted, conceding to post-structuralism's influence on gender studies, "[s]ociety is unavoidably a world of meanings. At the same time, meanings bear the traces of the social processes by which they are made. Cultural systems bear particular social interests, and grow out of historically specific ways of life."<sup>68</sup> In bringing sports history into play with gender studies, the question of how social processes and identity formation come to be shaped by a wider context comes to the fore. This provides rationale for adopting a pro-feminist approach to South African surfing histories in this study.<sup>69</sup>

Following the initial path-breaking studies by Ben Finney and James Houston's *Surfing: A History of the Ancient Hawaiian Sport* (1966), Kent Pearson's *Surfing Subcultures of Australia and New Zealand* (1979) and Douglas Booth's *Australian Beach Cultures* (2001), there is a growing multi-disciplinary scholarship on the beach and surfing emerging out of Australia, the United Kingdom the United States of America and

<sup>66</sup> Shelly Budgeon, "The Dynamics of Gender Hegemony: Femininities, Masculinities and Social Change," *Sociology*, 48, 2 (2014), 325. These "new femininities" fit in with scholarly analysis of women surfers as exemplary of third-wave feminism. See Leslie Heywood, "Third-Wave Feminism, the Global Economy, and Women's Surfing: Sport as Stealth Feminism in Girls' Surf Culture" in Anita Harris (ed), *Next Wave Cultures: Feminism, Subcultures, Activism*, (New York and London: Routledge, 2008).

<sup>67</sup> Nomboniso Gasa, "Introduction" to Nomboniso Gasa (ed), *Women in South African History*, (Cape Town: HSRC Press, 2007), xxxvi-xxxvii. The consideration of black surfer girl femininities in the South African context would offer a means of problematizing the notion of an exemplary surfing femininity; especially when considering the theoretical insights of Rachel Jewkes and Robert Morrell in their study on HIV and adolescent African girls in the Eastern Cape where no one femininity was seen as hegemonic: "As with masculinities, these femininities were dynamic in nature ... yet no femininity was 'hegemonic' because there was no single set of values endorsed by all the women. Nor was one position considered to be ideal. Each position had its own values and legitimating discourses. Critically, there was not an obvious hierarchy among the femininities which is such a key factor in analyses of masculinities ... All femininities were subordinate to the power of men." See Rachel Jewkes and Robert Morrell, "Sexuality and the Limits of Agency among South African Teenage Women: Theorising Femininities and their Connections to HIV Risk Practices," *Social Science and Medicine*, 74 (2012), 1735.

<sup>68</sup> Raewyn Connell, *Gender In World Perspective*, (Cambridge and Malden: Polity, 2009), 83.

<sup>69</sup> I am mindful of my positionality as a white, heterosexual, male as well as the nature of the sources I am using in salvaging women's surfer histories and black male surfing histories. The ventriloquizing of the Other has received criticism for not taking into consideration the politics of memory and representation in southern African historiography. See Gary Minkley and Ciraj Rassool, "Orality, Memory, and Social History in South Africa," in Sarah Nuttall and Carli Coetzee, (eds), *Negotiating the Past, The Making of Memory in South Africa*, (Cape Town: Oxford University Press, 1998) and Ciraj Rassool, "Power, Knowledge and the Politics of the Public Past," *African Studies*, 69, 1 (2010), 83-84. On the need for pro-feminist scholarly interventions by men, see Robert Morrell, "Men, Masculinities and Gender Politics in South Africa: A Reply to Macleod," *Psychology in Society*, 35 (2007). In relation to pro-feminist politics, Morrell notes, "[t]he introduction of a masculinities dimension into gender research has profound implications for gender politics. It enables men to see themselves as part of a gendered world in which they have an investment in seeking gender equity" (23).

elsewhere (as discussed further below).<sup>70</sup> Within southern African studies, lagging Australian sports studies in particular, as Christopher Merrett noted in 1995, these topics are becoming an object of study by social and cultural historians with interests in Africans and the sea, international relations, and the cultural politics of leisure and sport in South African society.<sup>71</sup> Herein, Heather Hughes work on African beach culture in Durban brings to the fore neglected themes in African leisure practices and segregation.<sup>72</sup> Albert Grundlingh's history of the Hartenbos holiday resort on the southern Cape coast is illuminating of the making of an Afrikaner cultural nationalism at the beach.<sup>73</sup> On the other hand, Lance van Sittert has shown how the coloured squatter fishing community at Oudekraal, on Cape Town's Atlantic seaboard, lost their livelihood when forcibly removed to the Cape Flats in 1965 as group areas legislation rezoned and limited access to the sea for black persons.<sup>74</sup> On surfing's political history during apartheid, Scott Laderman has added to an understanding of the period in approaching South African surfing and apartheid from a global history perspective.<sup>75</sup> In addition to these historical studies, there are literary and cultural studies scholars considering the social dynamics and representations of the (southern and east African) beach as a littoral zone within the coastal imaginary.<sup>76</sup> Meg Samuelson has opened up the idea of amphibian aesthetics, moving between land and sea, in considering narratives of southern African shorelines and littoral cultures of the Indian Ocean.<sup>77</sup> The September 2014 issue of the *Journal of African Cultural Studies*, with several essays reflecting on context, content and form in the isiZulu-language feature film *Otelo Burning* (2011), has placed the beach and surfing in South Africa in dialogue with Africanist and postcolonial scholarship.<sup>78</sup> Warranting mention here are two scholars that have opened up enquiries on aquatic cultural practices among Africans in West Africa, including notes on surfing practices. Anthropologist Ben Finney in 1962 found records for "surfboard riding" and "canoe-surfing" among West African fishermen; pointing to a ship's record from 1837 as an early report of wave-riding as well as noting evidence for aquatic activities for Senegal in the 1940s

<sup>70</sup> Ben Finney and James Houston, *Surfing: A History of the Ancient Hawaiian Sport*, (San Francisco: Pomegranate Artbooks, 1996); Kent Pearson, *Surfing Subcultures of Australia and New Zealand*, (Brisbane: University of Queensland Press, 1979) and Douglas Booth, *Australian Beach Cultures: The History of Sun, Sand and Surf*, (London and New York: Routledge, 2001).

<sup>71</sup> In sport studies lagging Australia see Christopher Merrett, "Sports Historians Are a Motley Bunch," *South African Historical Journal*, 33, 1 (1995), 181. I convened the panel "The Beach in Southern African History" at the Southern African Historical Society conference held at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban on 27 to 29 July 2011 – which included papers by Heather Hughes (on Africans and the seaside in Durban), Albert Grundlingh (on Afrikaner cultural nationalism at Hartenbos), Felix Schürmann (on colonial contact at the beach in Namibia) and Glen Thompson (surfing and the Californian dream).

<sup>72</sup> Heather Hughes, "Struggling for a Day in the Sun: The Emergence of a Beach Culture among African People in Durban" in Tricia Cusack (ed), *Art and Identity at the Water's Edge*, (Surry and Burlington Ashgate, 2012).

<sup>73</sup> Albert Grundlingh, "Holidays in Hartenbos: Sand, Sea and Sun in the Construction of Afrikaner Cultural Nationalism, c.1930-c.1961" in his *Potent Pastimes*.

<sup>74</sup> Lance van Sittert, "'To Live This Poor Life': Remembering the Hottentots Huisie Squatter Fishery, Cape Town, c. 1934–c.1965," *Social History*, 26, 1 (2001).

<sup>75</sup> Scott Laderman's chapter "When Surfing Discovered it was Political: Confronting South African Apartheid" in his *Empire in Waves: A Political History of Surfing*, (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 2014).

<sup>76</sup> Notably among others, the special issue on ecocritical studies in *Alternation*. See especially, Hermann Wittenberg, "Editorial: Coastlines and Littoral Zones in South African Ecocritical Writing," *Alternation*, 6 (2013); Meg Samuelson, "Sea Changes, Dark Tides and Littoral States: Oceans and Coastlines in Post-apartheid South African Narratives," *Alternation*, 6 (2013); and Julia Martin, "Witness to the Makeshift Shore: Ecological Practice in A Littoral Zone," *Alternation*, 6 (2013).

<sup>77</sup> Meg Samuelson, "Abdulrazak Gurnah's Fictions of the Swahili Coast: Littoral Locations and Amphibian Aesthetics," *Social Dynamics*, 38, 3 (2012). Herein Indian Ocean studies provide a context for narratives and histories focusing on East and South East African oceanic interconnections with India. See Pamila Gupta, Isabel Hofmeyr and Michael Pearson (eds), *Eyes Across the Water: Navigating the Indian Ocean*, (Pretoria and Delhi: UNISA Press and Penguin India, 2010).

<sup>78</sup> See Meg Samuelson, "Re-telling Freedom in *Otelo Burning*: The Beach, Surf Noir, and *Bildung* at the Lamontville Pool"; Glen Thompson, "*Otelo Burning* and Zulu Surfing Histories"; Bhekizizwe Petersen, "*Otelo Burning* (dir. Sara Blecher, 2011)"; Litheko Modisane, "*Otelo Burning*: On the Turbulence of Freedom" and David Johnson, "Beyond Tragedy: *Otelo Burning* and the Limits of Post-Apartheid Nationalism".

and Ghana in the 1950s.<sup>79</sup> Historian Kevin Dawson's more recent studies have found earlier evidence in West Africa's pre-colonial past as of the mid-1600s in excavating swimming, diving and surfing practices within Atlantic slave and African diaspora histories, arguing that there were African adults and children surfing waves well before a filmmaker and two surfers from California "introduced" surfing to the West African surf frontier in *The Endless Summer* (1964).<sup>80</sup>

These recent southern Africanist beach and surfing history studies described above build on earlier research located in case studies from Durban by Crispen Hemson on African lifesaving masculinities and Robert Preston-Whyte on the cultural geographies of the beachfront and surf zone.<sup>81</sup> Social psychologists Kevin Durrheim and John Dixon have analysed the Durban and Scottburgh beaches for continuities in racial practices at the de-segregated post-apartheid beach.<sup>82</sup> Even earlier studies on sport and society made mention of the beach as illustrative of segregation in the apartheid everyday. Robert Archer and Antoine Bouillon in *The South African Game* (1982) documented the lived experience of sport and racism in South Africa's divided society. In what seems to be a first entry in South African sports studies, they included reports of how racial segregation structured swimming and access to swimming pools as well as bathing at the beach. Surfing was conceived as a "white" activity, while blacks were relegated to inadequate swimming pool facilities in the townships and unsafe beaches out of sight from white society.<sup>83</sup> The political predicament of the early 1980s also led American William Finnegan, in *Crossing the Line* (1986), to decide to write about the hard realities of life under apartheid rather than "the lightest subjects – surfing, vacations – [fit] for only the breeziest publications."<sup>84</sup> Finnegan, however, does let surfing slip into his journalistic narrative of teaching at a 'coloured' high school in Cape Town in 1980, as well as in his accounts of travels along the South African coastline to Durban and Jeffreys Bay. The next mention of surfing in an academic sports studies text seems to be in Douglas Booth's *The Race Game* (1999), where beach apartheid is mentioned in a note on the "surf wars" in Durban in 1989.<sup>85</sup>

Academic texts are not the only place where the beach has been interrogated as an object of historical and social reflection. South African produced visual arts have looked to the beach as a site of meaning in the creation of new identities in South Africa. The changing nature of recreation on the shifting shorelines of the postcolonial beach have been explored in the art of Katherine Bull; her 1999 engravings entitled *Holiday in Cape Town in the 21st Century* and *Milnerton* reimagined a modern Cape Town seaside layered with traces of its pre-colonial and colonial pasts.<sup>86</sup> A photographic essay by Paul Weinberg captures the shifting cultural

<sup>79</sup> Ben Finney, "Surfboarding in West Africa," *Wiener Völkerkundliche Mitteilungen*, 5, (1962).

<sup>80</sup> See Kevin Dawson, "Enslaved Swimmers and Divers in the Atlantic World," *The Journal of American History*, 92, 4 (March 2006) and Kevin Dawson, "Swimming, Surfing, and Underwater Diving in Early Modern Atlantic Africa and the African Diaspora," in Carina Ray and Jeremy Rich (eds), *Navigating African Maritime History*, (St. John's: International Maritime Economic History Association, 2009). The politics of *The Endless Summer* film will receive further discussion in the chapters that follow.

<sup>81</sup> Hemson, "African Lifesavers in Durban"; Robert Preston-Whyte, "Constructed Leisure Space: The Seaside at Durban," *Annals of Tourism Research*, 28, 3 (2001) and Robert Preston-Whyte, "Constructions of Surfing Space at Durban, South Africa," *Tourism Geographies*, 4, 3 (2002).

<sup>82</sup> Durrheim and Dixon, "The Role of Place and Metaphor in Racial Exclusion" and Kevin Durrheim and John Dixon, "Studying Talk and Embodied Practices: Toward a Psychology of Materiality of 'Race Relations'," *Journal of Community and Applied Social Psychology*, 15 (2005).

<sup>83</sup> Robert Archer and Antoine Bouillon, *The South African Game: Sport and Racism* (London: Zed Press, 1982), 38, 106-7 and 241.

<sup>84</sup> William Finnegan, *Crossing the Line: A Year in the Land of Apartheid*, (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, [1986] 1994), 356.

<sup>85</sup> Douglas Booth, *The Race Game: Sport and Politics in South Africa*, (London and New York: Routledge, 1998), 142. Beach apartheid and surfing are also noted in Booth's *Australian Beach Cultures*, xx-xxi.

<sup>86</sup> Katherine Bull, *Holiday in Cape Town in the 21st Century*, 1999, hand engraved acrylic, printed in relief on Fabriano Rosapina Bianco paper, [http://www.katherinebull.co.za/art/cape-town-print-series/holiday-in-ct\\_web.jpg](http://www.katherinebull.co.za/art/cape-town-print-series/holiday-in-ct_web.jpg) [accessed on 28



practices at the Durban beachfront in *Durban: Impressions of an African City* (2002).<sup>87</sup> *The Shoreline* (2009) documentary television production took a broad “rainbow nation” sweep of South Africa’s west and east coasts to represent the shoreline as a space for all South African’s despite histories of racial injustice. The beach’s presence in society along Cape Town’s False Bay coastline, and the space it opens up to reimagine gendered identities, have come also under photographic scrutiny in the *Beyond the Beach Exhibition* (2014) curated by Paul Weinberg, and includes an art installation I produced reflecting on surfing’s fragmentary pasts.<sup>88</sup>

What emerges from these critical studies of the beach is a body of knowledge where there is an openness to explore social, cultural and political themes. These areas of inquiry open up considerations of the place of smaller, non-mainstream lifestyle sporting activities within sports historiography and the reading of the beach as a space where cultural practices (like surfing) are complicit in perpetuating social power through a racially structured past and race trouble in the present. Yet, new perspectives on the beach and the waves also offer sites for reflecting on challenges to the social order and cultural imaginaries. As such, these studies are part of a growing body of work on sports history in South Africa that grapple with the historical and contemporary processes of (trans)forming the nation as well as the consumption of sport and leisure in coastal borderlands as well as spaces in-between the nation and the self in the everyday.<sup>89</sup>

The historiographic moment to consider the beach and smaller sports was not available in the southern Africanist studies before South Africa became a democracy in 1994. In the struggle years, neither the beach nor surfing was seen as serious subjects of academic enquiry, largely due to the whiteness of coastal leisure and surfing as a minor sport. Rather, within studies of sport and politics studies comment and analysis focused on accounts of racial injustices, social and economic inequalities, and the draconian nature of the apartheid state and racialised sport. These studies looked for evidence of fractures within apartheid sport, recounted the struggles of black sports persons and non-racial sports bodies, and offered perspectives on the impact of the international sport boycott in challenging apartheid in sport and society.<sup>90</sup> The persistence of sporting pasts from the apartheid era, despite the break from institutionalised racism as of 1991 and the aims of national development and transformation programmes and strategies, is a question that is receiving more and more attention in more recent sociological, anthropological and historical studies. Herein racial redress, the politics of sports transformation and gender studies of sport have come to the fore for athletics, cricket, rugby, soccer and swimming.<sup>91</sup> Evaluations of nation building and commercialism in sport have too been a present theme; the 1995 Rugby World Cup and the 2010 FIFA World Cup offered an opportunity for

---

July 2011] and her *Milnerton*, 1999, hand engraved acrylic, printed in relief on Fabriano Rosapina Bianco paper, [http://www.katherinebull.co.za/art/cape-town-print-series/milnerton\\_web.jpg](http://www.katherinebull.co.za/art/cape-town-print-series/milnerton_web.jpg) [accessed 28 July 2011].

<sup>87</sup> Paul Weinberg, David Robbins and Gcina Mhlope, *Durban: Impressions of an African City*, (Brixton: Porcupine Press, 2002).

<sup>88</sup> See the *Beyond the Beach Exhibition Catalogue*, Casa Labia Gallery Website, <http://casalabia.co.za/wr-pdv/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/Catalogue-Beyond-the-Beach-for-MOP6.pdf> [accessed on 24 September 2014].

<sup>89</sup> See the collection of essays on several major and smaller sports in Cornelissen and Grundlingh, *Sport Past and Present in South Africa*; and Susann Baller and Scarlett Cornelissen, “Prologue: Sport and the City in Africa,” *The International Journal of the History of Sport*, 28, 15 (October 2011).

<sup>90</sup> Examples of this scholarship are: Archer and Bouillon, *The South African Game*; Grant Jarvie, *Class, Race, and Sport in South Africa's Political Economy*, (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1985); Booth, *The Race Game*; Cheryl Roberts, *Against the Grain: Women and Sport in South Africa*, (Cape Town: Township Publishing Co-operative, 1992); Christopher Merrett, “Sport, Racism and Urban Policy in South Africa: Pietermaritzburg, a Case Study,” *Sporting Traditions*, 10 (May 1994).

<sup>91</sup> These sports are addressed in Aswhin Desai (ed), *The Race to Transform: Sport in Post-Apartheid South Africa*, (Cape Town: HSRC Press, 2010).

case studies in local and transnational sport.<sup>92</sup> Related to these moments in history and sport, and their mythologising in popular culture, scholars have considered how sport and film, as in the case of *Invictus* (2009), work nostalgically to flatten the complexities of South Africa's transition to a democracy.<sup>93</sup> What emerges from this historical and southern Africanist scholarship is a view of sport as a cultural practice that holds changeable symbolic meanings that have been, and are, contextually determined. It is here that the academic field of play has opened up modes of inquiry about society and identities viewed from the beach and the surf.

### Towards a Critical Surfing History Studies

Surfing in South Africa fits within the global narrative of the Californication of surfing culture since the 1960s, especially after its waves were “discovered” in *The Endless Summer* (1964) surf film. In modern surfing, Southern California is a signifier for the configuration of lifestyle, commerce and competition within a promotional culture that idealises sun, sand, and active, youthful, (predominantly) male (tanned) bodies in the waves. This version of surfing also denotes whiteness, social privilege and the tyranny of blondness.<sup>94</sup> It incorporates other surfing nations, such as Australia, despite the fact that it draws nostalgically on an imagined cultural authenticity from Hawaiian pre-colonial surfing pasts. Academic histories of surfing from the West/North are returning to this Hawaiianness and the American appropriation of it and interrogating surfing's cultural traditions, ideologies of cultural conquest, the processes of globalisation driving and driven by the consumption of surfing lifestyle, how nostalgia and memorialisation are at work within surfing, and the politics of play and pleasure within the past and present of the surfing lifestyle.<sup>95</sup> Herein, Timothy Cooley's ethnomusicology of surf music is also attentive the production and reproduction of surfing culture within the global.<sup>96</sup> There has nevertheless been a political side to surfing's globalisation. Historian Scott Laderman has strongly argued that the pursuit of pleasurable aquatic leisure in modern surfing is implicated in the expansion of the American empire, Western power and neoliberal capitalism in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.<sup>97</sup> Surfing in South Africa until 1990, with its privileged whiteness constructed and maintained in beach apartheid, found affinity in this Californication of surfing culture, which played a part in perpetuating into the post-apartheid era the idea that surfing was a sport reserved for white bodies and culture.

Invariably male until the mid-1990s, when competing white surfing femininities were foregrounded by the surf industry, the image of the surfer shifts over the course of the development of surfing from a leisure pastime in the 1950s to a professional sport by the mid-1970s. The non-conformist laid-back Malibu surfer of the 1950s gave way to organised surfing and its endeavour to assert competitive surfing as the mode of

<sup>92</sup> See Albert Grundlingh, Andre Odendaal and Burrige Spies, *Beyond the Tryline: Rugby and South African Society*, (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1995); Douglas Booth, “Recapturing the Moment? Global Rugby, Economic and the Politics of Nation in Post-Apartheid South Africa” in Timothy Chandler and John Nauright (eds), *Making the Rugby World: Race, Gender, Commerce*, (London and New York: Routledge, 1999) and Peter Alegi and Chris Bolsmann (eds), *Africa's World Cup: Critical Reflections on Play, Patriotism, Spectatorship, and Space*, (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2013).

<sup>93</sup> See Albert Grundlingh, Stéphane Robolin, Abigail Hinsman, Lily Saint, Sharrona Pearl and Samantha Pinto, “Roundtable on *Invictus*,” *Safundi: The Journal of South African and American Studies*, 13, 1-2 (2012).

<sup>94</sup> Wheaton, *The Cultural Politics of Sporting Lifestyles*, 134-5.

<sup>95</sup> See Booth, *Australia Beach Cultures*; Kristin Lawler, *The American Surfer: Radical Culture and Capitalism*, (New York and London: Routledge, 2011); Jim Nendal, “Surfing in Early Twentieth-Century Hawai'i: The Appropriation of a Transcendent Experience to Competitive American Sport,” *The International Journal of the History of Sport*, 26, 16 (2009); Joan Omrod, “Surf Rhetoric in American and British Surfing Magazines Between 1965 and 1976,” *Sport in History*, 27, 1 (March 2007); Gary Osmond, “Myth-making in Australian Sport History: Re-evaluating Duke Kahanamoku's Contribution to Surfing,” *Australian Historical Studies*, 42, 2 (2011); and Peter Westwick and Peter Neushul, *The World in the Curl: An Unconventional History of Surfing*, (New York: Crown, 2013).

<sup>96</sup> Timothy Cooley, *Surfing about Music*, (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 2014).

<sup>97</sup> See Laderman, *Empire in Waves*, 7.

determining exemplary male surfing styles and cultural capital in the 1960s. Despite this dominant surfing masculinity, which culminated in the professional surfer of the late 1970s, 1980s and 1990s, “soul surfers” from the late 1960s and early 1970s have “signified self-expression, freedom and escape from the dictates, structures and norms of bourgeoisie society.”<sup>98</sup> In adopting the philosophies and practices of the Sixties youth counterculture, or discursive variants of non-commercialism and environmentalism that ascribe to that ethos in later years, the image of the surfer has periodically challenged the managed athleticism and commodification of the competitive surfer. Nevertheless, identities are fluid and there were contradictions in that some surfers have held to the values of both the competitive and soulful surfing identities. Nevertheless, in her historical sociology of American surfing, Lawler makes the point that surfing in the new millennium “remains without much legitimacy as a ‘real’ sport *and* retains a countercultural image in mass culture.”<sup>99</sup> The mediated effect has been that the image of “the hippie surfer dude” and “the free-and-easy beach bum” has retained its popular appeal, and mostly displaces that of the contest surfer as *the* image of the surfer. Ironically, by the 1990s and 2000s, this “soul surfer” trend had also become commodified by the surfing world as sponsored “free surfers” who (re)produced the surfing imaginary in their lifestyle and travel outside of professional competitive surfing. In addition to the social and cultural factors noted above, the making of both competitive and countercultural surfing identities, as Andrew Warren and Chris Gibson have shown, have been made possible due to the technical determinism of surfboard manufacturing shaped by cultural heritage, innovation and economic drivers in global surfing centres.<sup>100</sup>

Mark Stranger’s sociological analysis of co-opted and oppositional identities within the consumption within Australian surfing provides a nuanced examination of the consumption of the surfing lifestyle in the 1990s and 2000s.<sup>101</sup> Stranger also maps out ideal types of surfer identities; categories that help explain the contemporary spectrum of surfing identities while recognising the fluidity of boundaries between types in relation to surfer commitment (and self-investment in) to their sporting lifestyle. Herein, age increasingly plays less a role in considering commitment to the sport, especially with Sixties surfers still out in the waves.<sup>102</sup> These surfing identities are: “hardcore” surfers “whose level of commitment to surfing is such that they orientate their daily lives around swell, tides and wind directions”, which includes both soul surfer and professional or contest orientated surfers; “core” surfers “whose lives are largely orientated toward going surfing as often as possible” while balancing the values of family or career; “recreational” surfers “goes surfing when he or she has some spare time from their other commitments ... and who uses surfing as a leisure break from the serious business of their working life, or as just one of a range of activities” within their lifestyle; and pseudo-surfers are those not considered a real surfer “but someone who adopts a surfing identity (usually temporarily) through the purchase of ‘symbolic tokens’.”<sup>103</sup> The linkages of surfer identity and commitment to the waves have also been considered in relation to environmental action, as in Belinda Wheaton’s analysis of the activism of the Surfer Against Sewage organisation in the United Kingdom, or in surfer environmentalism emerging from animistic and Gaian spiritualities, what Bron Taylor has explored as

<sup>98</sup> Booth, *Australian Beach Cultures*, 113.

<sup>99</sup> Lawler, *The American Surfer*, 139, (emphasis in original).

<sup>100</sup> Andrew Warren and Chris Gibson, *Surfing Places, Surfboard Makers: Craft, Creativity and Cultural Heritage in Hawai’i, California, and Australia*, (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2014).

<sup>101</sup> Mark Stranger, *Surfing Life: Surface, Substructure and the Commodification of the Sublime*, (Farham and Burlington: Ashgate, 2011), 52-4.

<sup>102</sup> On age and body-ability in surfing see Wheaton, *The Cultural Politics of Sporting Lifestyles*, 60-4.

<sup>103</sup> See Stranger, *Surfing Life*, 52-54.

expressions of dark green religion as a result of surfers' environmental mindfulness as a result of their oceanic practices.<sup>104</sup>

Critical surfing studies have recently begun to focus on marginalised sites of surfing that resist, subvert or accommodate global surfing culture in the global South. Studies of professional women surfers in Brazil, girl localisms in Mexico and subaltern Balinese surfers in Indonesia illustrate the interplay of the local and the global in shaping surfing identities outside of the mainstream.<sup>105</sup> Gender and queer studies scholars are looking at how men and women surfers self-fashion themselves and come to terms with gendered embodiment and sexuality within a largely homophobic sporting culture.<sup>106</sup> As Krista Comer has observed of the contemporary women surfer's experience,

The visual narrative transmitted about women and surfing by mass culture is often at odds with girl surfers' daily subcultural life. Girls know it, talk about it, and long for a more sustained "insider" narrative to explain to themselves how it is they have managed, in relatively large numbers and in short order, to defy the aggressiveness of collective male surf culture and paddle out anyway.<sup>107</sup>

This de-centering of American (and Australian) cultural hegemony can be seen in the assertion of native Hawaiian postcolonial surfing identities in the surf zone as argued by Eric Ishiwata and Isaiah Helekunihi Walker as well as in John Clark's careful empirical work documenting Hawaiian pre-modern surfing traditions and practices.<sup>108</sup> In providing histories from below, scholars are turning to studies of black surfing experiences. McGloin has documented indigenous surfing histories among Australia's Aboriginal peoples and Wheaton has investigated the cultural politics of surfing among African-Americans in California.<sup>109</sup> Wheaton's cultural sociology of sporting lifestyles is significant for also pointing to "contemporary surfing spaces" and new identities for black youth in Durban and Umzumbe, on the south coast of KwaZulu-Natal.<sup>110</sup> It is here that critical surfing studies and histories of surfing in southern Africa begin to converge.

<sup>104</sup> Belinda Wheaton, "Identity, Politics, and the Beach: Environmental Activism in Surfers Against Sewage," *Leisure Studies*, 26, 3 (July 2007) and Bron Taylor, *Dark Green Religion: Nature, Spirituality and the Planetary Future*, (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 2012), see his Chapter 5, titled "Surfing Spirituality".

<sup>105</sup> Jorge Dorfman Knijnik, Peter Horton and Livia Oliveira Cruz, "Rhizomatic Bodies, Gendered Waves: Transitional Femininities in Brazilian Surf," *Sport in Society*, 13, 7 (2010); Krista Comer, *Surfer Girls in the New World Order*, (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2010); Alex Leonard, "Learning to surf in Kuta, Bali," *Review of Indonesian and Malaysian Affairs*, 41, 1 (2007).

<sup>106</sup> See Clifton Evers, "'The Point': Surfing, Geography and a Sensual Life of Men and Masculinity on the Gold Coast, Australia," *Social and Cultural Geography*, 10, 8 (2009); Clifton Evers, *Notes for A Young Surfer*, (Carlton: Melbourne University Press, 2010); Lucy Spowart, Lisette Burrows and Sally Shaw, "'I just Eat, Sleep and Dream of Surfing': When Surfing meets Motherhood," *Sport in Society*, 13, 7 (2010); Georgina Roy, "Women in Wetsuits: Revolting Bodies in Lesbian Surf Culture," *Journal of Lesbian Studies*, 17, 3-4 (2013); Georgina Roy, "'Taking Emotions Seriously': Feeling Female and Becoming-Surfer through UK Surf Space," *Emotion, Space and Society*, 12 (August 2013). For an earlier debate between the politics of gender representation and an affective reading of an Australian surfing magazine, which brings attention to how masculinity is maintained and expresses as normative while providing space for women in surfing culture, see Margaret Henderson, "A Shifting Line Up: Men, Women, and *Tracks* Surfing Magazine," *Continuum: Journal of Media and Cultural Studies*, 15, 3 (2001) and the response by Douglas Booth for a more dynamic and open reading of gender in the surfing magazine, "(Re)reading The Surfers' Bible: The Affects of *Tracks*," *Continuum: Journal of Media and Cultural Studies*, 22, 1 (2008).

<sup>107</sup> Comer, *Surfer Girls in the New World Order*, 88, (emphasis in original).

<sup>108</sup> Eric Ishiwata, "Local Motions: Surfing and the Politics of Wave Sliding," *Cultural Values*, 6, 3 (2002); Isaiah Helekunihi Walker, *Waves of Resistance: Surfing and History in Twentieth-Century Hawai'i*, (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2011) and John Clark, *Hawaiian Surfing: Traditions from the Past*, (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2011).

<sup>109</sup> See Colleen McGloin, "Aboriginal Surfing," *International Journal of Humanities*, 4, 1 (2006) and Wheaton, *The Cultural Politics of Sporting Lifestyles*, Chapters 8 and 9.

<sup>110</sup> Wheaton, *The Cultural Politics of Sporting Lifestyles*, 114-118.

It would be remiss to not include Douglas Booth's writing of 2012 on South African surfers' experiences within a wider discussion of violence and territorialism (also termed, localism) in the surf.<sup>111</sup> Here Booth meditates on the dark side of surfing: how emancipatory desires, the consumption of waves, commercially driven over-crowding, and masculine aggression can spark conflict in the surf zone. However, Booth is not concerned so much with the empirical except as a textual effect. Rather, Booth brings to the fore historical representations of the past and how to write the histories of embodied experiences. He re-authors South African surf journalist Craig Jarvis's narratives of his experiences of "surf rage" to write an affective history of surfing bodies, as an "expressionist-type history of surfing."<sup>112</sup> What Booth signifies is a move within sports history to deconstruct its disciplinary practices and write of the subjectivities of historical actors and historian's themselves in making meaning from the past as a form of self-reflexive historiography. In the case cited here, Booth thus brings postmodernist historical practice to surfing studies by drawing on South African surfing pasts (or at least Jarvis's representations of those pasts as remembered experiences).<sup>113</sup> He does so to question the mode of writing history in the emancipatory mode, as an academic project with a progressive politics, that uses conventional historical methods to constructs the past. My *feeling* is that Booth's "historiographic turn" resides in an interest in the meta-historical (*ala* Hayden White) that come into the field of play when sufficient monographs on a subject circulate within an area of enquiry.<sup>114</sup> Writing in the affective historical mode requires historical texts to exist through which experience can be re-remembered or re-authored; yet after the reincarnation of the affective author are we not left with memoir?

This study of South African surfing histories does not venture into Booth's current historiographic field; it is not an "expressionist-type history of surfing" nor a deconstruction of sports history. Rather, in this study I am mindful of the cultural turn in history and draw conceptually and methodologically from its attention to "historical context, theoretical method, political commitment and textual analysis."<sup>115</sup> In so doing, there is a return to an earlier "Booth" as a guide to a socio-cultural history of surfing. In this approach "I maintain that we can hold on to all the gains of the new cultural history without having to abandon everything we have

<sup>111</sup> Douglas Booth, "Seven (1 + 6) Surfing Stories: The Practice of Authoring," *Rethinking History: The Journal of Theory and Practice*, 16, 4 (December 2012), 568. Booth's article appeared amongst others in a special issue of *Rethinking History* focusing on "Sport History as Modes of Expression: Material Culture and Cultural Spaces in Rethinking Sport and History". Booth draws on Craig Jarvis, "Imported Surf Rage" in Nat Young, *Surf Rage: A Surfer's Guide to Turning Negatives in Positives*, (Angourie: Nymboidea Press, 2000) and Craig Jarvis, "Fight club," *Waves* (July 2009), 86–90. The term "surf rage" was given subcultural currency in 2000 with the publication of Young's *Surf Rage*. See S. Olivier, "'Your Wave, Bro!': Virtue Ethics and Surfing," *Sport in Society*, 13: 7 (2010) for a response to how localism acts in "serving a regulatory function in situations of scarce resource (more people, less waves)" (1224).

<sup>112</sup> Booth, "Seven (1 + 6) surfing stories," 568.

<sup>113</sup> While Booth's interest in deconstructing sports history is evident in "Escaping the Past? The Cultural Turn and Language in Sport History," *Rethinking History: The Journal of Theory and Practice*, 8, 1 (2004), it is his more recent postmodern oeuvre that is invoked in his "Seven (1 + 6) surfing stories." See his "Beyond History: Racial Emancipation and Ethics in Apartheid Sport," *Rethinking History: The Journal of Theory and Practice*, 14, 4 (2010) and "Invitation to Historians: The Historiographical Turn of a Practicing (Sport) Historian," *Rethinking History: The Journal of Theory and Practice*, 18, 4 (2014). Booth's postmodern affects as a sports historian have been critiqued by Allen Guttman, "Review Essay: The Ludic and the Ludicrous," *The International Journal of the History of Sport*, 25, 1 (2008). Guttman's review was of Booth's sports history survey *The Field: Truth and Fiction in Sport History*, (London: Routledge, 2005) and his essay "Sports Historians: What Do We Do? How Do We Do It?" in Murray Phillips (eds), *Deconstructing Sport History: A Postmodern Analysis*, (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2006).

<sup>114</sup> This is acknowledged by Booth in "Invitation to Historians." Brian Rutledge has made a similar point about southern African historians writing about the production of history, which in writing about representations of the past require an already existing field of histories about people, processes and events, see his "Premesh Lalu's Post-colonial Push: Is it Time to Dismantle the Discipline?" *South African Historical Journal*, 63, 1 (2011), 162.

<sup>115</sup> This quote is from Jonathan Dollimore and Alan Sinfield, "Forward to the First Edition: Cultural Materialism" in Jonathan Dollimore and Alan Sinfield (eds), *Political Shakespeare: Essays in Cultural Materialism*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1994), vii, as referenced in Andrew Milner, *Re-Imagining Cultural Studies: The Promise of Cultural Materialism*, (London, Thousand Oaks and New Delhi: Sage, 2002), 173. Similarly see Dominick La Capra, *Soundings in Critical Theory*, (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1989), 208.

learnt as social historians.”<sup>116</sup> I have had a hand in prefiguring the Surfing Archive, the practice of documenting (in selecting and forgetting) traces of surfing’s pasts. Then through processes of interpretation of cultural texts I refigured that archive as a southern Africanist contribution to the body of knowledge on the history of surfing. In so doing, I approached surfing histories as a cultural practice that writes back to the power of surfing’s white, male past in the present. A dialogue is thus opened between southern Africanist sports history and critical surfing studies. This approach opens up three modes of enquiry in this study.<sup>117</sup>

The first looks to continuities and discontinuities in the politics of cultural politics of surfing. Herein, surfing’s oceanic allure, “with its iconography of escape, freedom and transcendence – the ‘dream of the good life’ – has recurrently been described as holding political potential,” as Belinda Wheaton has argued within her critical cultural studies of sporting lifestyles.<sup>118</sup> The second is a gender history of surfing, and in following feminist cultural critic Krista Comer’s argument in *Surfer Girls in a New World Order* for making visible self-empowered girl localisms in the past, to reshape understandings of changing gender relations and the construction of gender identities as experienced in surfing and represented within surfing culture.<sup>119</sup> The third is to consider the postcolonial in writing against whiteness and the Californication of surfing. Hawaiian studies historian Isaiah Helekunihi Walker opens a point of departure for southern African histories of black surfers in how “Hawaiian [male] surfers simultaneously defined themselves as active and resistant Natives in a history that regularly wrote about them as otherwise.”<sup>120</sup> This is not unfamiliar territory; in (southern) Africanist historiography subaltern agency remains a mode of writing back to colonial and apartheid power as well as shaping the politics of transformation and redress in the post-apartheid.<sup>121</sup> It is drawing from these critical surfing studies that an eclectic framework for considering surfing within South African sports history emerges as cultural materialist, pro-feminist, and postcolonial.

## Summary of Chapters

This study focuses on how surfing as a sport and cultural practice is gendered and shaped by the political context. Each chapter focuses on a specific theme and the chronology in each overlaps to present a layered account. Together this series of micro-histories of South African surfing culture covers the years from 1959 to the 2000s, addressing both the apartheid and post-apartheid periods in contemporary South African history. This is not to say that surfing was not practiced earlier in South African history. It was but the documentary record is thin on surfing before 1960, that is, before the popularisation of surfing as a sporting

<sup>116</sup> See Geoff Eley, *A Crooked Line: From Cultural History to the History of Society*, (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2005), 11.

<sup>117</sup> For scholarship from the North, interdisciplinary research has been identify as a recent trend in sports history, Richard Holt, “Historians and the History of Sport,” *Sport in History*, 34, 1 (2013), 26-7.

<sup>118</sup> Wheaton, *The Cultural Politics of Lifestyle Sports*, 182.

<sup>119</sup> See Comer, *Surfer Girls in the New World Order*, 3 and 139. Specifically noting Comer’s approach of girl localisms within global surfing culture as a feminist project: “I try to think through the role of play in the recent history of U.S. women’s liberation, arguing that certain forms of intense play or sport, like surfing, implicitly politicize and alter consciousness in ultimately feminist directions ... I am interested in making sense of groups of women for whom female liberation means something about the female body’s ability to play hard, play rough, and play for keeps, as though one’s life depended on it” (127).

<sup>120</sup> Walker, *Waves of Resistance*, 3. Walker also notes that “[a]lthough competing definitions of manhood often clashed in the waves, for many Hawaiian surfers expertise in the surf helped strengthen their identities as both men and Native Hawaiians” (7). It should be noted that the “Native” designation here, unlike the use of “native” within histories of colonialism and apartheid in South African, has a progressive identity politics within the Native Hawaiian rights movement. On this point see Haunani Kay Trask, *From a Native Daughter: Colonialism and Sovereignty in Hawai’i*, (Monroe: Common Courage Press, 1993).

<sup>121</sup> Herein the “subaltern” is used in a Gramscian sense as read through Subaltern Studies. It denotes the non-elite and “the political and social condition of certain marginalised groups in Sub-Saharan Africa,” as described by Christopher Lee in “Subaltern Studies and African Studies,” *History Compass* 3 (2005), 5. As such, for black surfers in South Africa, the subaltern condition would also include culture, or more specifically subculture, as part of their social and political marginalisation.

lifestyle as it is known today.<sup>122</sup> Chapter 1 focuses on the period from 1959 to the late 1970s to provide cultural, gender and political explanations for surfing as a white male sporting lifestyle. Chapter 2 shifts attention from white men to white women surfers in South Africa for the period mid-1960s to 1994. Chapter 3 demonstrates that surfing's whiteness was not outside of the political arena by looking to the effects on organised surfing of the international sports boycott against apartheid for the years 1970 to 1990. This chapter also points to developments in surfing after 1990. Chapter 4 turns to the histories of black surfing under apartheid and the non-racial surfing movement in South Africa to document a silenced past. It records the uneasy unification of surfing in 1991 and the how surfing development was used for sports transformation in the post-apartheid era. The social effects of this latter process for young, male Zulu surfers points to new and unfolding trajectories in South African surfing.

While much ground is covered in this study, it is recognised that this not an exhaustive account of the histories of surfing cultures in South Africa. Rather the endeavour has been more modest in focusing on themes that highlight how gender and politics have shaped South African surfing culture, and in turn, point to how surfing has begun to shape South African identities and society. Herein, this study is the first of its nature in contributing to an academic body of knowledge on southern African sports history, consolidating and adding to my earlier explorations into surfing's pasts. Furthermore, in writing from the South, this study engages with an international academic literature on surfing and adds to the emergent field of critical surfing studies.

---

<sup>122</sup> The earliest reference found to date is for 1897 when ship's engineer, Captain T.W. Sheffield, "took to the waves in Durban riding a two metre wooden board weighing bout 75 kilograms," see Bartle Logie, *Governor's Travels: A Journey along the Konga/Tsitsikamma Coast*, (Hunters Retreat: Bluecliff, 1999), 47. Surfboard riding on short belly boards was popular at the Edwardian beaches of Durban and Muizenberg from around the time of the Union of South Africa in 1910 (see Michael Walker, *Muizenberg: A Forgotten Story*, [St James: Michael Walker, 2009]). There are photographic records showing Heather Price stand-up surfing at Muizenberg in 1919 and on the beach with two American marines (stationed at Simonstown) with surfboards (see Ross Lindsay Collection, Surfing Heritage South Africa Archive). There are fragmentary records for the inter-war years and for the post-1945 period the evidence becomes more readily available within the memory work of chroniclers of local surfing heritage. These records show the sport as a leisure activity of white society. What may be the first instance of surfing appearing in an academic text can be found in a 1949 social work study on leisure facilities for white children in Cape Town, see Levina Arnold, "Opelug-Ontspanningsfasiliteite vir Blanke Kinders in Kaapstad, (Masters Thesis (Social Work), Stellenbosch University, 1949), 127. Surfing at Muizenberg was recommended as a policy intervention.

## Chapter 1: Making Waves, Making Men: Whiteness, Exemplar Masculinities and Surfing, 1959 – 1979

*Surfing is an ideal South Africa sport. It raises those involved in it above the mundane levels normally prescribed by our social environment.*

Cornel Barnett, *Hitting the Lip*, 1974<sup>1</sup>

*It's a man's world and never more so than in the water.*

Philip Scales, *Down The Line*, 1977<sup>2</sup>

The whiteness of South African surfing was founded in how apartheid structured leisure and sporting practices at the South African beach and the how the cultural diffusion of global surfing culture from California and Australia buttressed that whiteness. This South African whiteness, the power of race due to histories of colonialism, segregation and apartheid and its concomitant class privilege, was a surfing identity that was situated within an “unsteady combination” of constructions of gender and nation.<sup>3</sup> This chapter focuses on how surfing came to be seen as a white sporting lifestyle. It addresses those founding moments when the global shaped South African surfing culture in the 1960s and 1970s and how South African surfers played a part in shaping the global in the mid-1970s.<sup>4</sup> In so doing, masculinities and South Africa as a surfing nation are considered key configurations of the identity and image of the South African surfer. In looking to the period under review, this chapter does not aim to provide an exhaustive account of white, male surfing. Rather, the attempt is to frame the institutionalisation of surfing as a sporting lifestyle in giving historical context to the discursive and social processes making for amateur surfing (in the 1960s) and professional surfing (in the 1970s). Herein, the 1966 South African Surfing Championships and Shaun Tomson’s winning of the 1977 World Professional Surfing Championship title can be argued as founding moments for South African white surfing that privileged white men making waves.<sup>5</sup>

### California Dreaming and the Surfing Lifestyle

The Sixties were the “Golden Years” of South Africa surfing, as referred to within surfing magazine and surf heritage discourse. These were the years that saw the emergence of a surfing and beach leasured

<sup>1</sup> Cornel Barnett, *Hitting the Lip: Surfing in South Africa*, (Johannesburg: Macmillan South Africa, 1974), 30.

<sup>2</sup> Quoted in Lorna Currie, “Women in Surfing: Are They For Real?” *Down The Line*, 8 (September 1977), 14.

<sup>3</sup> The term “unsteady combination” is drawn from Paul Gilroy, *Between Camps: Nations, Cultures and the Allure of Race*, (New York and London: Routledge, 2013), 99.

<sup>4</sup> These global/local processes were not unique to South Africa. Transnational trends in surfing for the Pacific Ocean region, and Hawai’i’s place in that diffusion to California and Australia have been well documented in the scholarly literature and surf histories written from within surfing. For scholarly studies see Kent Pearson, *Surfing Subcultures of Australia and New Zealand*, (St Lucia: University of Queensland, 1979), Douglas Booth, *Australian Beach Cultures: The History of Sun, Sand and Surf*, (London and New York: Routledge, 2001), Kristin Lawler, *The American Surfer, Radical Culture and Capitalism*, (New York and London: Routledge, 2011), Scott Laderman, *Empire in Waves: A Political History of Surfing*, (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 2014), Peter Westwick and Peter Neushul, *The World in the Curl: An Unconventional History of Surfing*, (New York: Crown, 2013) and Andrew Warren and Chris Gibson, *Surfing Places, Surfboard Makers: Craft, Creativity and Cultural Heritage in Hawai’i, California and Australia*, (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2014). For histories produced by surf insiders see Nat Young with Craig McGregor, *The History of Surfing*, (Palm Beach: Palm Beach Press, 1983), Drew Kampion and Bruce Brown, *A History of Surf Culture*, (Los Angeles: Evergreen, 2003), Murray Walding, *Blue Heaven: The Story of Australian Surfing*, (Pahran: Hardie Grant Books, 2003), Matt Warshaw, *The History of Surfing*, (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2012), Phil Jarratt, *Surfing Australia: A Complete History of Surfboard Riding in Australia*, (Pahran: Hardie Grant Books, 2012).

<sup>5</sup> The making here is two-fold: in the historical, as the practices and processes making for the historical possibility of surfing as white and male; and a play on surfing terminology, which describes surfing ability and flow (and what defines stand-up surfing on a surfboard) in the surfer’s act of paddling to catch and then standing up on the crest of a wave, dropping down the face of a wave, and then successfully riding a wave.



culture as well as the birth of the surf industry and organised, competitive surfing at a national level. These early years of surfing's popularity was also the preserve of a small coastal population of white surfers due to the allure of the beach for aquatic sporting pursuits and leisured sociability as part of a South African outdoors lifestyle, access to automobile transport due to increased white prosperity during the post-war consumer culture of the Sixties, and the structuring of social space due to beach apartheid legislation phased in at most urban beaches by local authorities from the mid-1960s. The mechanisms for beach apartheid were complex and the apartheid state expanded its governmentality of the social exclusion of beach leisure through several iterations from the promulgation of the Reservation of Separate Amenities Act (1953) through to the Reservation of Separate Amenities Amendment Act (1960) and then the Sea Shore Amendment Act (1972). In the Reservation of Separate Amenities Act, petty apartheid was used to structure and limit race relations by creating separate spaces for blacks and whites in the everyday, and especially for sport and leisure. The Reservation of Separate Amenities Amendment Act expanded group areas to include the coastal sea and seashore, and therefore the beach, within its definition of land and thus extended segregated group areas into surf zone. In the Sea Shore Amendment Act powers were given to local authorities to implement and enforce beach apartheid. This apartheid legislation provided the structural conditions for the perpetuation of the whiteness of the urban beach in a manner planned to limit social contact between "races".<sup>6</sup>

---

<sup>6</sup> A brief overview of beach apartheid is required. From the early 1950s, the Nationalist Party's petty apartheid regulations in the Reservation of Separate Amenities Act (1953), along with a matrix of racial laws proscribing African access to urban spaces, formally structured South African leisured activities, with recreational, sporting and outdoor spaces and amenities designated by "race". Nevertheless, beach apartheid itself was delayed in its implementation by local authorities due to a lack of definition of the beach and thus the application of group areas to the coastline. In 1960 the apartheid state used the Reservation of Separate Amenities Amendment Act to re-describe "land", as defined in the Sea Shore Act (1935), so as to include the idea of the "beach" as seashore and sea within three miles (nearly five kilometres) of the shoreline. Two further legislative interventions should be noted in the consolidation of beach apartheid. The Separate Amenities Amendment Bill (1966), which did not come into effect as an act nevertheless established the national government's planning policy that "public premises", included the beach, could be reserved for use on racial grounds by a local authority. Then the 1972 the Sea Shore Amendment Act enabled the Minister of Agriculture to delegate control of beaches to provincial administrations, which in turn were able confer the same powers on local municipalities. Taken together, and especially in the 1972 amendment, these laws limiting beach use on the basis of "race" gave local authorities, such as Durban City Council, the ability to enforce the intent of 1950s petty apartheid on the beach through fines or imprisonment. Despite these national laws, local municipalities and provincial administrations unevenly implemented beach segregation depending on local political will (liberal councils were slower than Afrikaner nationalist to segregate beaches) or available financial resources for developing black beach facilities. Yet, by the early 1970s, the official National Party discourse of beach apartheid was in place in South Africa and, by the early 1980s, much of the pristine coastal spaces had been set aside for whites. As was said for Natal: Peter Miller, MEC for Local Government, indicated in 1988, that 90% of the Natal coastline, as quoted in *The Natal Mercury*, "was either a white group area or a controlled area effectively controlled by whites." Chief Minister Mangosuthu Buthelezi of Inkatha considered the KwaZulu homeland's coastline north of the Tugela River to the Mozambique border as "white" space. For beach apartheid see Valerie Møller and Lawrence Schlemmer, "Attitudes Toward Beach Integration: A Comparative Study of Black and White Reactions to Multiracial Beaches in Durban," (Centre for Applied Social Studies, University of Natal, Durban, 1982), 4; Kevin Durrheim and John Dixon, "The Role of Place and Metaphor in Racial Exclusion: South Africa's Beaches as Sites of Shifting Racialisation," *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 24, 3 (May 2001), 436; Robert Archer and Antoine Bouillon, *The South African Game: Sport and Racism* (London: Zed Press, 1982), 167; and Inkatha's minutes of a meeting between Piet Koornhof and a Inkatha delegation, Cape Town, 3 May 1982 in Gail Gerhart and Clive Glaser, *From Protest to Challenge, Volume 6: A Documentary History of African Politics in South Africa, 1882–1990, Challenge and Victory, 1980–1990*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2010), 236. Another sign of whiteness at the beach were shark nets in KwaZulu-Natal. Installed from the early 1950s in Durban and in the early 1960s along the south and north coast of Natal, shark nets created "safe" protected swimming beaches for coastal dwellers and upcountry holidaymakers. The fact that these shark nets were found at white-designated beaches, usually resourced with lifesavers, went far to entrench white privilege at the beach. See Melissa Joyce van Oordt, "A Historical Overview of the Origins of Anti-Shark Measures in Natal, 1940-1980", (MA Thesis (History), University of KwaZulu-Natal, Howard College, 2006), 58-62. Herein, the history of beach apartheid as regulating leisure and lifestyles provides support Deborah Posel's argument that "regimes of race have co-produced regimes of consumption" in South Africa. See her "Races to Consume: Revisiting South Africa's History of Race, Consumption and the Struggle for Freedom," *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 33, 2 (2010), 172.

In this context, white surfers in coastal towns and cities “remained at all times unconcerned in their racially cosseted world.”<sup>7</sup> What provided social cohesion and sporting identities for white surfers was a shared “collective consciousness based on common experiences” riding waves standing-up on a surfboard; an embodied experience expressing through surfing styles, as Douglas Booth has noted: “when surfers dance they express, within the bounds of technology, an interpretation of their immediate, and constantly changing, physical and cultural environments”.<sup>8</sup> These environments mentioned by Booth when considering South African surfing point to several configurations: the nature of the surf spots due to the natural environment orientated toward a cold Atlantic Ocean and a warm Indian Ocean; the social geographies of place at urban surf spots; how local surfing cultures held to a cohesive or fragmented sense of a “surf city”; the sportisation of surfing; what transnational countercultural influences informed local surfing and created the mainstream impression of rebellious youth; and the broader social and cultural contexts of living in, or travelling to towns on, the South African coastline. Thus, at urban centres such as Durban (KwaZulu-Natal) and Cape Town (Western Cape), or the more rural Cape St. Francis or Jeffreys Bay in the Eastern Cape, while the social was disciplined by racial segregation in society, the identities and everyday experiences of surfing were also shaped by global identifications among white South Africa surfers, as a displacement of white English and Afrikaans ethnicities, and to some degree class – or, as this chapter argues, a “California dreaming” and its associated affinity with the surfer image.<sup>9</sup>

In place of these white ethnicities there was a re-imagination of the self through a received Californian surfing culture, part of the Americanisation of South African society during the Cold War years through the lifestyle consumption of recreation and sport.<sup>10</sup> The Californication of surfing re-orientated the South African beach away from nineteenth and early twentieth-century histories of British imperialism, especially the importation of imagined Brighton seashore to settler colonies as part of that imperial identification.<sup>11</sup> These transnational processes of culture and consumption were evident by the 1970s in coastal South Africa. Historian Jonathan Hyslop has argued that the emergence of new white subjectivities in the middle classes from the early 1970s were determined more by individualism and consumer choice, irrespective of language and culture, that created social and subcultural lifestyle formations and began to break with the submission to political and patriarchal authority encouraged by the official discourse of the conservative apartheid

<sup>7</sup> See Anthony Heard, *The Cape of Storms: A Personal History of the Crisis in South Africa*, (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1991), 2 and 47. This point was made by Anthony Heard, a late 1950s surfer who went on to become a political journalist in the 1980s and then advisor to the Mandela Presidency in the early 1990s. This was a reference to Durban’s segregated beaches which preceded beach apartheid. In 1930, Durban’s central beachfront was proclaimed white by the local authority to limit black persons’ use of the beach as a labouring class and promote white, domestic tourism from the inland regions to the coast. See Robert Preston-Whyte, “Constructed Leisure Space: The Seaside at Durban,” *Annals of Tourism Research*, 28, 3 (2001), 584-5.

<sup>8</sup> Quoted in Douglas Booth, *Australian Beach Cultures: The History of Sun, Sand and Surf*, (London and New York: Routledge, 2001), 7 and Douglas Booth, “Surfing: The Cultural and Technological Determinants of a Dance,” *Sport in Society*, 2, 1 (1999), 52.

<sup>9</sup> On the making of the Californian Dream, the homogenisation and imagining of a democratised, youthful, outdoor leisured coastal society combined with the consumption of the popular and the touristic, see Kirse Granat May, *Golden State, Golden Youth: The California Image in Popular Culture, 1955-1966*, (Chapel Hill and London: The University of North Carolina Press, 2002) and Lawrence Culver, *The Frontier of Leisure: Southern California and the Shaping of Modern America*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010). Historian Kevin Starr points out, “[by] the late twentieth-century, in fact, the California surfer, male or female alike, had become an icon of the California lifestyle, celebrated in song, film, advertising, and other media.” See Kevin Starr, *California: A History*, (New York: Modern Library, 2007), 300.

<sup>10</sup> See James Campbell, “The Americanization of South Africa” in Andrew Offenburger, Scott Rosenberg and Christopher Saunders (eds), *A South African and American Comparative Reader: The Best of Safundi and Other Selected Articles*, (USA: *Safundi: The Journal of South African and American Comparative Studies*, 2002). Laderman in his *Empire in Waves* has argued for the globalisation of surfing and its place in the American imperial project.

<sup>11</sup> On the South African beach and its Britishness in Durban see Preston-Whyte, “Constructed Leisure Space” and Heather Hughes, “Struggling for a Day in the Sun: The Emergence of a Beach Culture among African People in Durban,” in Tricia Cusack (ed), *Art and Identity at the Water’s Edge*, (Surry and Burlington: Ashgate, 2012).

state.<sup>12</sup> Lifestyle consumption, as part of process of globalisation in South Africa, can be seen as drawing on “liberal” or more “open” ideals and values – which not necessarily politically progressive, but rather socially and morally permissive – that pushed against the regulation and moral authoritarian of white social life under apartheid’s Christian nationalism.<sup>13</sup> From the mid-1960s authorities saw surfing as part of the youth anti-social trend in seeking new social identifications in lifestyles that drew inspiration from “liberal” and permissive influences from outside of South Africa.

Beyond the beach, the Californian dream and its free-and-easy fun ethos at the beach circulated among South African youth through the surf rock music of, among others, the Beach Boys, Jan and Dean and The Mamas and Papas or South Africa’s own fronting of a Californian band, The Fantastic Baggies.<sup>14</sup> Yet, the emergence of these new ways of youthful self-fashioning and the surfing lifestyle were based in the material and the economic boom of the 1960s that benefitted Afrikaner and English-speaking white South Africans and created the conditions for the new middle classes in South Africa.<sup>15</sup> With material possessions, such as cars and surfboards taking on values to define social status and the outdoor manliness through advertising in surfing magazines in the mid-1960s and 1970s, the linkages between unsettled whiteness, consumption and leisure became a mode of conforming to apartheid in the everyday.

In this consumer culture, the beach becomes a useful site to come to terms with some of the cultural signs that perpetuated unequal social and gender relations. The privilege of the “whites only” beach, itself a place to consume leisure, was a racially constructed geographical space that ironically became a place where surf-riding for leisure or sport kept at bay the social anxieties of the *rooi gevaar* and the *swart gevaar* manufactured by the apartheid state. This is not to say that surfing or social relations at the beach were not unaffected by its context; they were but the response of white surfers to that context was usually one of distancing or withdrawal from the political. “It is an escape from the drabness of everyday life,” as Anthony Morris, a surf journalist writing for *The Natal Mercury* in the mid-1960s said of surfing; and he added, “[t]he freedom attained beyond the breakers is perhaps unequalled in any other sphere.”<sup>16</sup> Continuing into the 1970s, the promotion of surf and beach culture in advertisements created strong cultural links between male

<sup>12</sup> See Jonathan Hyslop, “Why did Apartheid’s supporters capitulate? ‘Whiteness’, class and consumption in urban South Africa, 1985–1995,” *Society in Transition*, 31 (1) 2000, 37-9.

<sup>13</sup> For the notion of the open society and youth cultures where “[o]penness is anomic” see Frank Musgrove, *Ecstasy and Holiness: Counter Culture and the Open Society*, (London: Methuen and Co, 1974), 46. Hyslop has argued that the apartheid state’s cultural hegemony was “a drive to protect whites against what were seen as the behaviours representing the disintegrative effects of modernity.” Hence, censorship on popular music, heavy handed policing against drug use, making homosexuality illegal and the delayed introduction of television were all part of the state’s attempts to control and contain any forms of dissent against the apartheid ideology. See also Deborah Posel, “The Apartheid Project, 1948-1970” in Robert Ross, Ann Melke Mager and Bill Nasson (eds), *The Cambridge History of South Africa, Volume 2, 1885-1994*, (Cambridge and Cape Town: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 335. For an example of the use of the state broadcaster, the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC), through its Springbok Radio station, to produce a discourse against the open society, what was seen as “evidence of the fact that South Africa has not escaped the worldwide youth revolt against the Establishment,” see Brian Rose and Bryan Chilvers, *The Broken Link*, (Cape Town: Nasionale Boekhandel, 1969), 7. Hyslop has noted that the view in *The Broken Link* of anti-social youth trends offers evidence of how “apartheid officialdom was not entirely wrong to see a link between the counterculture and coming political problems” among white youth anti-apartheid activists and dissidents in the 1970s and 1980s. See Jonathan Hyslop, “‘Days of Miracle and Wonder?’ Conformity and Revolt in *Searching for Sugarman*,” *Safundi: The Journal of South African and American Studies*, 14, 4 (2013), 495.

<sup>14</sup> For an ethnomusicology of surfing and the fad of Californian surf music in the 1950s and 1960s see Timothy Cooley, *Surfing About Music*, (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2014), Chapters 2 and 3.

<sup>15</sup> For this economic context, and consumption’s effects on Afrikaner identity, see Albert Grundlingh, “Are We Afrikaners Getting too Rich?” Cornucopia and Change in Afrikanerdom in the 1960s,” *Journal of Historical Sociology*, 21, 2/3 (2008), 144-148. See also William Beinart, *Twentieth-Century South Africa*, (Cape Town and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 175. For a view on the new middle classes in post-World War Two America, as part of a process of globalisation, and the emergence of a ethic of fun in aquatic lifestyle sport, see Bill Osgerby, “Rapture of the Deep: Leisure, Lifestyle and Lure of Sixties Scuba” in David Bell and Joanne Hollows (eds), *Historicizing Lifestyle: Mediating Taste, Consumption and identity from the 1900s to 1970s*, (Aldershot and Burlington: Ashgate, 2006).

<sup>16</sup> Antony Morris, “Sport of Pagan Kings not Rule Thousands,” *The Natal Mercury*, 4 July 1966.

dominance in society and supportive femininities, especially in the middle-classes – a trend reflected locally in the promotion of beer as a stimulus for sociability in various places associated with outdoor and sports lifestyles, such as at the private braai or public beach.<sup>17</sup> Surfing was replete with branded images portraying active men on waves and women on the beach in a bikini associated with the aspirational California beach lifestyle, especially as seen in the Gunston cigarette advertisements associated with surfing on the back page of 1970s surfing magazines. To understand the subterranean currents of utopianism and individualism within South African society, and the gendered nature of the surfing imaginary reproduced through the consumption of the surfing lifestyle, it is necessary to look more closely at what it was in the Californian dream that was alluring for local white surfing culture.

### The Californication of South African Surfing

It was in the Sixties that surfing as it is known today emerged. This was largely due to the global circulation in popular culture of a southern Californian surf culture located around the myth of a 1950s carefree Malibu Beach, with a genuflection to surfing's roots in Hawai'i. As documented by Carin Crawford in her 1997 paper "Waves of Transformation" on the post-war bohemian Californian surf culture and typified in David Rensen's 2008 biographical sketch of surfing's anti-hero Miki Dora in *All For A Few Perfect Waves*, what surfing represented was an idealised countercultural and hedonistic outdoors ethos that broke with social norms during a time of increased leisure and automobility within a post-World War Two economic boom.<sup>18</sup> Surfing's social outcasts became popularised through Hollywood beach party films in the Sixties that started with *Gidget* in 1958, surf rock music, and the surfing magazines and surf films, such *The Endless Summer* (1966).<sup>19</sup> The loss of the innocence of the Californian beach lifestyle, and the changes within surfing and America society, as the heady Sixties gave way to the disillusionment of the Seventies, have been memorialised in John Milius' 1978 film, *Big Wednesday*. *Big Wednesday* nostalgically traced the changing shape of the beach from youthful freedom to responsabilised citizen, the social effects of the draft for the Vietnam War (1955 to 1975) on American youth, and the shift within surfing as a sport from the longboard was replaced by the shortboard as the technology determining hegemonic surfing styles and performance on the waves.<sup>20</sup> What *Big Wednesday* also illustrated was that the Californian dream could persist nostalgically into other times and places as part of the consumption of surfing heritage.

The Californian dream were imported to coastal South Africa in several ways during the 1960s as a combination of factors that provided cultural templates from which local surfers re-shaped their lifestyles. At times this Californication was mediated through Australian surfing subcultural influences, which had

<sup>17</sup> See Anne Mager, *Beer, Sociability, and Masculinity in South Africa*, (Cape Town: Cape Town University Press, 2010), 47-52.

<sup>18</sup> Carin Crawford, "Waves of Transformation: Californian Surf Culture since World War II," Unpublished paper for the *First International and Eleventh MELUS Conference, Multi-Ethnic Literatures Across the Americas and the Pacific: Exchanges, Contestations, and Alliances*, Honolulu, Hawaii, 1997 and David Rensen, *All For A Few Perfect Waves: The Audacious Life and Legend of Rebel Surfer Miki Dora*, (London: Yellow Jersey Press, 2008).

<sup>19</sup> Surfing magazines and film are addresses further in this chapter. For surf rock music see Timothy Cooley, *Surfing About Music. Gidget*, based on a 1957 novel of the same name by Fredrick Kohner, was a near-autobiographical account of his daughter Kathy Kohner's experience of surfing at Malibu during a summer holiday. Despite the popular appeal, the *Gidget* phenomena showed signs of a "rebel girl femininity", which Krista Comer argues, prefigures the athletic and independent women representations of the Californian surfer girl as of the mid-1990s. See her *Surfer Girls in the New World Order*, (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2010), 38-53.

<sup>20</sup> For this see Joan Ormrod, "Just the Lemon Next to the Pie: Apocalypse, History and the Limits of Myth in *Big Wednesday* (1978)", *Scope: An Online Journal of Film and TV Studies*, 2 (February 2005), [http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/film/journal/articles/big\\_wednesday.htm](http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/film/journal/articles/big_wednesday.htm) [accessed on 18 January 2009]. Milius also co-wrote the screenplay for Francis Ford Coppola's *Apocalypse Now* (1979) which reimagines Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, and depicts co-option of the Californian beach within the American imperial endeavour when US troops surf "Charlie's Point" during an attack on a Vietnamese village. On surfing and the Vietnam War see Westwick and Neushul, *The World in the Curl*, 134-6.

themselves diffused from California through travelling surfers, surf film and surfing magazines.<sup>21</sup> These cultural effects were: the introduction of new surfing styles and board technology by travelling surfers, the filming of *The Endless Summer* in late 1963 and then the showing of this surf movie and others locally, the circulation of surfing magazines from abroad, the reception of youth countercultural ideas circulated through surfing subcultures, and the broader popularity of surf music in South Africa. The local dissemination of these cultural determinations of the Californian surfing lifestyle fitted well with the outdoors recreational and sporting lifestyle and beach culture already evident along the South African coast by the 1960s. The political effect of the reception of this Californication was in how it reinforced the social bubble of whiteness in the everyday for youth at the beach in apartheid South Africa. What South African surfing icon Shaun Tomson has called a "cosseted innocence", as noted in his 2008 reflection on his adolescent years in the mid-1960s,

Still, world events and the beginnings of our ostracism of our government from the Western world were not part of our daily reality as greemies. Barely teenagers, we were interested mainly in the beach and the surf and in emulating the Southern California style that was filtering south, mainly through surf magazines and surf movies – we knew about David Nuuhiwa and Dewey Weber and Miki Dora and wore our baggies low and sported two golden feet on our T's, the coveted and exclusive hang Ten logo. Overall, though, the surf explosion of the sixties never penetrated our country's mainstream culture as it did in the USA, never moved off the sand into a national fad ... So to the lives of us kids on the beach there was a cosseted innocence.<sup>22</sup>

### ***Travelling surfers and technological determinants***

In the late 1950s, travelling surfers from California such as Dick Metz, on a world tour, as well as South Africans such as Harry Bold who travelled to California, established linkages with surfboard manufacturers (suppliers of polyurethane foam and surfboard shapes), surfwear retailers, the surf magazine editors, and surf filmmakers that shaped South African surfing in the 1960s. Metz's early 1959 meeting of John Whitmore at Glen Beach, Camps Bay in Cape Town has become a founding myth in South African surfing.<sup>23</sup> Despite the details of their chance meeting, which Metz himself considered more story than fact in a 2012 interview, the significance of the Capetonian "father of surfing" establishing contact through Metz with Californian surfboard manufacturers and surf cultural producers was the beginnings of South Africa's inclusion and legitimisation within global surfing.<sup>24</sup>

After three months in Cape Town, Metz went on to Durban and made contact with the small surfing community at South Beach, Durban (see Figure 1.1).<sup>25</sup> Included within that group of surfers were Baron Stander and Harry Bold, who both went on to become key figures in the local surfing industry. Stander, in 2001, recounted that first Durban encounter with Metz and his California style of surfing that re-shaped local surfing practices. This encounter is quoted at length, giving a sense of the subcultural alternation experienced by these Durban surfers in their first encounter with the Californian surfer's sartorial and surfing style.

<sup>21</sup> See Booth, *Australian Beach Cultures*, 95-6.

<sup>22</sup> See his autobiographical chapter titled "Shaun Tomson" in Shaun Tomson, *Bustin' Down The Door: The Surf Revolution of '75*, (New York: Abrams, 2008), 16-7.

<sup>23</sup> Whitmore recalled their meeting was at Solly's surf spot in Sea Point. See interview by Deon Bing with Dick Metz and John Whitmore, Elands Bay, December 1999, Video Tape, Deon Bing Collection.

<sup>24</sup> See interview with Dick Metz, Digital Recording, Surfing Heritage and Cultural Centre, San Clemente, California, 20 February 2012. Metz has recounted his meeting with Whitmore many times. See also the interview by Steve Pike with Dick Metz, San Onofre, California, 11 May 2010, Digital Recording, Steve Pike Collection.

<sup>25</sup> "Champion Hitch-Hiker Visits Durban," *Daily News*, c.1959. Press clipping in Dick Metz Scrapbook, Surfing Heritage and Cultural Centre Archive, San Clemente, California.

Anyway this day was a marginal three footer, so we were just hanging around the lifeguard tower talking bull, when this thin guy with an American accent approached us. He introduced himself as Dick Metz from California, and asked if he could hire one of our surfboards. Harry Bold offered his board to the stranger, and the guy went into the change rooms and reappeared wearing the biggest pair of boardshorts we had ever seen. They were sort of knee length and had bands, similar to the long shorts that were worn by apartment cleaner staff in those days. Lots of sniggers from the boys, and Harry pointed to his new board with the red and white shield painted on the top deck. Dick asked: "got any wax?" and looked quite puzzled when Harry tossed him a piece of broken off candle. Dick the dropped to his knees next to the board, and started waxing from the tail end, eventually moving forward and started waxing over the fancy paint-job. We never ever put wax that far forward, especially over painted designs. A lot more sniggers were happening, as a perplexed Harry asked: "Why are you doing that?" "In California we walk to the nose and stand there, and it is good if you can put your toes right over the nose," said our man from the States. One of the boys asked: "Why the hell would you want to do that. The nose will plough in, and you will just fall off." Anyway, D[ick] M[etz] takes the board to the water, paddles out at Kontiki [South Beach], takes off on a nice little well shaped right, turns, walks right up to the nose and puts five toes over the front.<sup>26</sup>



Figure 1.1: Dick Metz and Durban surfers, South Beach, 1959, Timewarp Surfing Museum exhibit.<sup>27</sup>

As a result of these transnational influences, which inspired surf travel to California and Hawai'i as well local surfboard-making, surf retail, a surfing magazine, and organised competitive surfing, South African surfing got the impression that it had become included within the surfing nations of the West. By the end of 1964, surfboard manufacturer Safari Surfboards had opened a retail store and surfing contests were held in

<sup>26</sup> Baron Stander, "1959 Toes On Nose In Durban," 2001, South Africa, File 3: Surfing Heritage and Cultural Centre Archive.

<sup>27</sup> Photograph from Timewarp Surf Museum Collection, Surfing Heritage South Africa Archive. Metz, with goatee beard, is standing on the right of Harry Bold. Baron Stander is sitting in the front.

Cape Town and Durban with view of creating a national surfing association. In April 1965 the newly launched *South African Surfer* magazine noted, “[d]uring the past few years South Africa surfers have ‘caught up’ to their counterparts in Australia and America in the art of riding a surfboard.”<sup>28</sup> In November 1967, on a return trip to South Africa, Metz’s comment on the growth of surfing in South Africa was reported on in the *Daily News* newspaper. “He could not believe the transformation which had taken place over the last eight years in Cape Town and Durban,” and more specifically for Durban Metz said, “Man, this is ‘outasight’, sort of like Waikiki [Hawai’i] on 4<sup>th</sup> July.”<sup>29</sup> However, this is not to say surfing was as popular a sport or pastime when compared to cricket or rugby or tennis. In a 1965 *South African Surfer* magazine feature on surfing in Durban, Brian Wilson reported that when weekends corresponded with South Westerly wind conditions and smooth “well shaped hollow waves” then there were “approximately 200 surfers in the water with both right and left slides to be had.”<sup>30</sup> In 1966 it was estimated by the local surf media that there were 800 surfers around the Cape Peninsula and 200 around Durban’s South Beach.<sup>31</sup> Women were in the minority, for example, in Durban in 1965 about twenty woman surfers were counted, most from the vibrant Addington Surf Club.<sup>32</sup> Mark Jury, writing in the late 1980s, noted that by 1968 the number of surfers in South Africa were 5,000.<sup>33</sup> Cornel Barnett writing in 1974 indicated that while in the late 1940s and early 1950s there were some 50 surfers in South Africa, by the early 1970s there were “thousands carving tracks.”<sup>34</sup> In the year before the 1966 national championships, Anthony Morris offered a compelling profile of the sociology of those who surfed in Durban: “[o]ne is likely to find a group of, say, 20 surfers on a Sunday off one of Durban’s beaches – 10 schoolboys, two lifeguards, two tradesmen, one doctor, one lawyer, one journalist, one businessman, [a] university student and one confirmed beach boy.”<sup>35</sup> Yet, surfing’s broader cultural visibility by in 1960s South Africa, however, was more than that of the number of its practitioners.

Nevertheless, the South African surfing population in the 1960s did provide enough of a market for the consumption of surfwear and surfboards and emergence of the surf industry. Surfboards therein were the material base for the Americanisation of surfing in South Africa, located specifically in the imported polyurethane foam technology (the foam blanks used in the construction of a surfboard) that made the act of surfing possible. This was seen in the advertising rivalry between local surfboard manufacturers in the surf cities of Durban and Cape Town for who produced the better product. Besides a clear identification with the surfboard shapers, who were surfing icons themselves, such as Max Wetteland in Durban and John Whitmore in Cape Town, advertisements run by surfboard manufacturers illustrated to the Californian supply of their materials or surfboard design knowledge. In the April 1965 issue of *South African Surfer*, the Surf Centre advertisement for its Wetteland Custom Built Surf Boards, based in Durban, claimed that Max Wetteland had “returned from California with a greater knowledge of surfboard manufacture” and that “Walker foam as used in California” went into the building of Wetteland Surfboards. Whitmore Surfboards from Cape Town advertised the use of Clark Foam and other materials in the July 1966 issue of the same surfing magazine, further illustrating the replication and circulation of surfing’s Californian dream in local

<sup>28</sup> Editorial to the article by Dick Evan, “Body Surfing”, *South African Surfer*, 1, 2, (July 1965), 7.

<sup>29</sup> Stokely [Harry Bold], “Surfing,” *Daily News*, 23 November 1967.

<sup>30</sup> Brian Wilson, “Modern Day Surfing,” *South African Surfer*, vol. 1, no. 1, 1965, 12.

<sup>31</sup> For Cape Town see John Whitmore, “Surfing Around the Cape,” *South African Surfer*, 1, 1 (April 1965), 5 and for Durban see Brian Wilson, “Modern Day Surfing,” *South African Surfer*, 1, 1 (April 1965), 12.

<sup>32</sup> Anthony Morris, “Now the girls discover that stoked feeling,” *The Natal Mercury*, 3 December 1965.

<sup>33</sup> Mark Jury, *Surfing in Southern Africa, including Mauritius and Reunion* (Cape Town: Struik, 1989), 13.

<sup>34</sup> Barnett, *Hitting the Lip*, 50.

<sup>35</sup> Anthony Morris, “A fast-growing sport has now matured,” *The Natal Mercury*, 3 September 1965.

surfer aspirations for subcultural authenticity through their consumption of surfboards. The Whitmore Surfboards advert read,

We are so proud of it that we specially import a cloth from California to wrap around it, double ... We even use Redwood and balsa so that you Mr. Surfer can have in your surfboard exactly what a surfer in California can get.<sup>36</sup>



Figure 1.2: Whiteness and the surfing dream:  
(a) Whitmore Surfboards advertisement, 1967 and (b) The Endless Summer poster, 1964.<sup>37</sup>

South Africa surfers had drawn surfboard design ideas from California since the mid-1950s and these advertisements continued this deference to American technology. Yet, as South African surfers gained cultural capital in their own right in national contests in the later 1960s, advertisements by Safari Surfboards, Whitmore Surfboards and Wetteland Surfboards, among others, emphasised less of the Californian linkages and more of a sense of South Africa as a surfing nation. Most surfboard manufacturers used top surfers to promote their surfboards, with branded surf teams designating an elite status within surfing. Some also drew on the cultural iconography of ethnicity and nation to offer distinction in the surf market. Durban based Safari appropriated symbols of Zuluness in its company logo (which will be discussed further below) and Whitmore Surfboards drew on John Whitmore's Afrikaner heritage and surf pioneer status within the Cape. In a September 1967 advertisement in *South African Surfer* for Whitmore Surfboards, the poster imagery of a surfer carrying a surfboard and the sun on the horizon from the film *The Endless Summer* (1966) was combined with an Afrikaner cultural heritage nostalgically referencing the Great Trek as symbolised by an ox wagon (Figure 1.2a). In this visual bricolage the whiteness of surfing during apartheid South Africa was conjoined with a sense of freedom and pleasure as well as the opening up of the South African surf frontier

<sup>36</sup> See Whitmore Surfboards advertisement in *South African Surfer*, 2, 2 (July 1966), 24.

<sup>37</sup> Image from Wikimedia, [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Endless\\_Summer\\_movie\\_poster.jpeg](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Endless_Summer_movie_poster.jpeg), [accessed on 23 September 2014].



as found in the global surfing imaginary of escape and travel to uncrowded surf destinations.<sup>38</sup> Further consolidating the Afrikaner identification in the Whitmore Surfboards advertisement was the spelling of South Africa as “Suid-Afrika”. However, this foregrounding of Afrikanerdom’s past as part of the cultural hegemony of apartheid’s founding myths and as an assertion of a surfing South Africanness was a rare moment in surfing’s cultural history.

Cultural politics aside, the practical implication of the use of these American-sourced foam materials for surfboard manufacturers was that surfboards could be made much lighter than in earlier years. In a 2011 interview, Andrew Ogilvie, who was Safari Surf Centre surfboard shaper in the mid-1960s, indicated that the average weight of a standard 9 foot 6 inch (3m) board dropped by more than half from forty-five pounds. These lighter surfboards were a key factor in making the sport of surfing more accessible, or, at least, enabled teenagers to carry a surfboard more easily to the beach.<sup>39</sup>

In early 1968, a further disruption in surfboard technology in South Africa occurred as a result of two Australian surfers who travelled by ship to Cape Town from Australia and then on to Durban by car. Inspired by *The Endless Summer* film to visit South Africa, Tony Wright and John Bachelador brought over shorter surfboards. These shortboards were part of the late 1960s Australian moment where innovation and technological changes in surfboard design drove rapid experimentation in surfboard shapes so as to allow surfers to explore greater manoeuvrability on a wave; these material changes in surfboard design an effect of new surfing subjectivities inspired by the countercultural ethic and psychedelics.<sup>40</sup> John Bachelador, quoted in 2014, noted his links to John Whitmore and thus an Australian’s influence on the manufacturing of surfboards in Cape Town.<sup>41</sup>

Brian Jackson made the short board I took to Africa ... The boards were called Plastic Fantastic machines. Bob MacTavish and George Greenough invented them in the Yamba/Byron Bay area ... I was riding a short board for about a year before me and Tony left for South Africa. / The boards were revolutionary. They were very different from the normal Malibu’s we’d been riding. They were much shorter, lighter and had “V” concave bottoms and also a long flexible fin. / The board I brought with me was 8ft but when we got to Cape Town John Whitmore made another board down to 7ft 6” which was much more manoeuvrable.”<sup>42</sup>

In Durban, the Australians sought out Max Wetteland and Wright worked in the Wetteland Surfboards factory shaping surfboards. In this way, the Plastic Fantastic influence came to Durban’s warm water waves and, like Metz nearly a decade before, changed how local surfers’ perceptions of surfing style and performance. The point to note here is that these technological advances in surfboard design were part of a milieu that

<sup>38</sup> Whitmore Surfboards advertisement in *South African Surfer*, 4, 1 (September 1967), 11.

<sup>39</sup> Interview with Andrew Ogilvie, Durban, 27 May 2011, Digital Recording.

<sup>40</sup> On the 1967 surfboard innovation in Australia and its place in the youth counterculture see Australian surfing icon Nat Young’s autobiography *Nat’s Nat and That’s That*, (Angourie: Nymbodia Press, 1988), 163 -166 and the autobiography of Bob MacTavish, the Australian surfboard shaper responsible for the Plastic Fantastic surfboards, *More Stoked*, (Sydney; Harper Collins, 2013), 80-95. On the context of the “shortboard revolution”, see Warren and Gibson, *Surfing Places, Surfboard Makers*, 100-1.

<sup>41</sup> When the Australians surfed at Surfers Corner, Muizenberg in Cape Town, their shortboards inspired other local surfer/shapers to reduce the length of their Malibu inspired boards. Capetonian Greg Stokes was one of the first to do so and in April 1968 took these shorter board designs to Newquay in the United Kingdom when he began shaping there. See interview by Deon Bing with Western Province Longboard Club members, Cape Town, November 1999, Video Tape, Deon Bing Collection. The interconnections between South Africa and the United Kingdom and Europe requires further exploration in the circulation of surfing’s transnational whiteness.

<sup>42</sup> Quoted in Pat Flanagan, “Something Happening Here,” South African Surfing Legends website, <http://southafricansurfinglegends.com/?p=44>, [accessed on 9 June 2014].

was shaped more by culture and context than surfboard design innovation itself.<sup>43</sup> It was cultural factors that stimulated surfboard innovation in South Africa and allowed local surfers' imagination to imitate and adopt the styles of surfing as performed by overseas travellers or as represented in international surfing films and magazines that were imported to South African shores.

### ***Surf Films and the Discovery of South Africa***

While Californian-made films such as *Surf Mania* (1960), *Waterlogged* (1963) and *The Performers* (1966) circulated in South African surfing centres in the Sixties, it was the discovery of South Africa by California (and then the rest of the surfing world) through the cinematic lens of Bruce Brown's travelogue surf movie, *The Endless Summer*, initially released in 1964 to surfing audiences and then theatrically in 1966, that has had the most significant cultural impact on South African surfing (for the film's poster see Figure 1.2b). According to Bernie Shelly, a Capetonian involved in the 1960s surfing scene, and still involved in surfing contests today, the surf film played to packed audiences in Cape Town and inspired many young men and women to take up surfing.<sup>44</sup>

Brown, along with "ace Californians Robert August and Mike Hynson", as Durbanite Brian Wilson wrote in an article for a 1965 issue of *South African Surfer* of the film crew who visited Cape St. Francis, in the Eastern Cape, in November 1963.<sup>45</sup> This surf spot had been chosen on the suggestion of their South African host, John Whitmore, who had been introduced to Brown through Dick Metz. It was the discovery of what became called "Bruce's Beauties" that brought South Africa as a surfing destination to the world's attention. The cultural imperialism of the film also semantically removed the local name of "Sea Vista" for the place from later records – so named for a nearby holiday resort. This renaming of surf places followed the rhetoric of American conquest of the frontier as an act of cultural consumption, as argued by film historian Joan Ormrod, especially when Brown, as narrator, described the American travellers as finding a perfect, unspoilt wave over the sand dunes of rural South Africa.<sup>46</sup> Hynson in his surf memoirs, and appealing to a Californian post-war nostalgia, called it "little Malibu".<sup>47</sup> The filmic myth surrounding this wave inspired Durbanites, Capetonians as well as Australians and Americans (as well as surfers from other nationalities) to travel to the area. It was here that the idea of a surfari (that is, surf tourism as a surfing safari) in search of the perfect wave away from South Africa's urban centres in coastal wildernesses was born. It should be noted that the film captured an idyllic and dehistoricised view of South Africa that provided a pleasurable sameness for white American audiences' tourist gaze to explore: wildlife, white surfers and white beaches. The political was absent; *The Endless Summer* made no mention of South Africa's apartheid.<sup>48</sup>

In 1966, the organisers of the World Surfing Titles held in San Diego, California, pitched the idea in the official programme of hosting the 1970 world championships at Cape St. Francis, South Africa due to the publicity generated from the showing of the film in North America. This remained no more than a dream as the 1970 contest was eventually held in Australia. Nevertheless, in a friendly rebuttal to the idea in 1967, Harry Bold, editor of *South African Surfer* magazine, noted, "[d]on't expect to come over the sand dunes and

<sup>43</sup> For this globally see Booth, "The Cultural and Technological Determinants of a Dance".

<sup>44</sup> Interview with Bernie Shelly and Therese Russell, Cape Town, 16 September 2010, Digital Recording.

<sup>45</sup> Brian Wilson, "Cape St. Francis: South Africa's premier surf spot", *South African Surfer*, 1 (2) July 1965, 17.

<sup>46</sup> Joan Ormrod, "Endless Summer (1964): Consuming waves and surfing the frontier", *Film and History*, 35 (1) 2005.

<sup>47</sup> Michael Hynson and Donna Jost, *Mike Hynson: Transcendental Memories of a Surf Rebel*, (Dana Point: Endless Dreams, 2009), 34.

<sup>48</sup> There was one obscure reference that can be construed as commenting on racial segregation at South African beaches. In a segment on Durban's shark nets Brown narrated, "sharks and porpoises have yet to integrate in South Africa." See *The Endless Summer*, dir. Bruce Brown, (USA: Bruce Brown Film, 1966), Video Tape, released 1997.

find [the waves] tubing as Bruce did.”<sup>49</sup> Bruce’s Beauties was in fact a fickle surf spot, its geography requiring the alignment of specific swell, wind and tidal conditions before it was surfable. However, Bold offers a further interpretation of this surf spot, one located in the emerging tensions between organised surfing and the countercultural ethos of an nascent “soul surfing” lifestyle that eschewed the emerging trends towards competitiveness and commercialism in surfing. He stated, while maintaining a discourse of surfing neo-colonialism, a sense of the allure of the surfing dream within constructed within the imaginary of surf films and surf magazines that,

It is a legendary spot which will continue to be exaggerated by those who in their own minds, like to dream of a far off endless tube, constantly hissing spray out of the vortex. Maybe such as dream helps to relieve the tensions of the competitive world in which the dreamer exists. We all like to think that there is an ultimate, unspoilt, perfect wave somewhere, just waiting to be conquered. Cape St. Francis comes close to this dream.<sup>50</sup>

What *The Endless Summer* does point to were the consolidation of cultural linkages between Californian and South Africans surfers and South Africa’s newfound place within the global surfing imaginary of the 1960s. The film, as historian Scott Laderman has stated, had “stimulated dreams of exploration and discovery, and in the process it placed South Africa on the global surfing map.”<sup>51</sup> In particular, surfer pursuits of the dream of Bruce’s Beauties lead to the discovery of nearby waves at Jeffreys Bay, a place that came to eclipse the latter surf spot as *the* South African surfing destination as of the late 1960s.

### ***The Popularisation of Surf Rock Music***

With surf films came music and as such a further popularisation of Californian surfing culture was to be found in popular surf rock music. This sonic surf history was augmented by surfing images displayed on record covers that had subcultural appeal to surfers. For instance, as a teenager in the mid-1960s, Capetonian Paul Botha would look at the cover of The Beach Boys *Surfin’ USA* album and dream of surfing waves overseas.<sup>52</sup> The image on the album cover was of three surfers riding a Hawaiian wave at Sunset Beach, each poised on longboards beneath a towering tropical wave, torsos bare and wearing surf trunks. This was a far cry from Botha’s usual Cape Town cold-water surf spots of Fish Hoek, Muizenberg or in the Kommetjie area. The album’s visuals and its sounds from California provided Botha, and other South African surfers, with the possibility of access to the global surfing imaginary and added to a sense that surfing experience overseas would lend more credibility and authenticity to one’s surfing identity.

Further capturing the youthful imagination, surf films came with surf rock music soundtracks. Songs like The Mamas and Papas’ 1965 “California Dreamin’” with the lines: “I’d be safe and warm / if I was in L.A. / California Dreamin’ / on such a winter’s day” were part of the milieu of music inspired by Californian beach and surf culture popularised by bands such as The Beach Boys.<sup>53</sup> This song and the youthful, carefree, outdoors lifestyle associated with it travelled to South African shores from the mid-1960s and found popularity not only among surfers but a broader white South African audience open to American popular

<sup>49</sup> Harry Bold, “Bruces Beauties”, *South African Surfer*, 3 (1) 1967, 23.

<sup>50</sup> Bold, “Bruces Beauties,” 23.

<sup>51</sup> See Laderman, *Empire in Waves*, 96.

<sup>52</sup> Interview with Paul Botha, Cape Town, 17 May 2011. Digital Audio Recording.

<sup>53</sup> “California Dreamin’” by The Mamas and Papas, *If You can Believe Your Eyes* (Dunhill Records, 1965). The song was a cover for The Beach Boys in the early 1980s.

culture.<sup>54</sup> In 1965, The Beach Boys released “California Girls” internationally; sales for this track saw it reached number one on the Springbok Radio charts.<sup>55</sup> This was not the first Californian surf rock song to make this popular radio station's music charts. In August 1964 “Tell 'em I'm Surfin’”, by the Los Angeles based band The Fantastic Baggys, reached number two in South Africa. The success of this song, and the genre of surf rock, inspired the Johannesburg based Teal Record Company to set up a local band to do play the songs of American The Fantastic Baggys, despite the fact the American band had come late to a North American surf music market already in decline due to the exploitation of this music style by commercial music interests.<sup>56</sup> There is evidence that the surf rock music sounds of the era also influenced the likes of The Flames, a band of black musicians from Sydenham, Durban who were popular in the late 1960s (and who later went on to tour with The Beach Boys).<sup>57</sup> The cultural effects of surf rock music were to shift popular attitudes towards the South African beach as a place for youthful freedom and fun and for surfers to identify with their sporting lifestyle through that music.<sup>58</sup> As Californian popular culture turned on in the late 1960s to psychedelics and Jimi Hendrix, surf rock music's hold on the surfing imagination faded as new experimental rock sounds reflected the ethos of the surfing counterculture. This move away from surf rock within surf culture is best reflected in the 1970 surf film *Pacific Vibrations* that featured Cream and The Steve Miller Band.<sup>59</sup> This musical shift was also an indication of cultural change within global surfing, as the countercultural soul surfer ethos came to shape surfer identities.

### **Countercultural currents in South African surfing**

Already briefly noted were the emergent countercultural trends in late 1960s surfing. This requires further explanation, as surfing became a means for the permissiveness, rather than the political radicalism, of the youth counterculture in the West to travel to South Africa. This is not to say that some white surfers were not radicalised within apartheid society; a few were. Andy Mason was one of these radical surfers in Durban whose politics gave expression to satire through underground comic art. Illustrative of this was his *Vittoke in Azania* cartoons, published under the pseudonym Pooh in 1978 and 1979 in the progressive student magazine presses of *Dome* in Durban and *Varsity* in Cape Town (see Figure 1.3). Reincarnated in 2006 as *The Vittoke's*, Mason reminisced on Durban student radicalism and youthful counterculture that mixed “resistance” and “flower power” with psychedelics, rock music and the idolisation of Gerry Lopez, a Hawaiian soul surfing icon, whose image travelled the globe as an exemplar of Seventies surfing style and countercultural consciousness.<sup>60</sup> While Mason's imaginings point to a later periodisation in considering when the Sixties happened (and ended) in South Africa, the seeds of the “freak” rather than the “leftie” counterculture were to be found in surfing culture of the late 1960s.<sup>61</sup> These designations lent to the making

<sup>54</sup> On the reception of surf rock in South African surfing see the brief mention in Barnett, *Hitting the Lip*, 96-7.

<sup>55</sup> Tertius Louw, “Springbok Hit Parade: 1965-1971: No 1 Hit Records: SA Pressings,” The South African Rock Encyclopedia website, November 2004. [http://www.rock.co.za/files/springbok\\_hits\\_1965.html](http://www.rock.co.za/files/springbok_hits_1965.html) [accessed on 21 December 2010].

<sup>56</sup> Tertius Louw, “The Fantastic Baggys”, The South African Rock Encyclopedia website, 7 June 2004. [http://www.rock.co.za/files/fantastic\\_baggys\\_index.htm](http://www.rock.co.za/files/fantastic_baggys_index.htm) [accessed on 18 May 2011].

<sup>57</sup> See Owen Coetzee, “Steve Fataar: Shelter for the Burning Soul,” *Down The Line*, 6 (July 1977), 26-7. The Flames later recorded under The Beach Boys label, with The Flames band members Ricky Fataar and Blondie Chaplin going on to play with The Beach Boys in the late 1970s and 1980s after the The Flames had split up.

<sup>58</sup> Surf rock retains its nostalgia, as was evident at the 2010 Surfers Corner Sixties Reunion in Muizenberg, Cape Town. For observations of this see Glen Thompson, “Tears Flow as Ballies Reunite”, 21 March 2010. <http://www.wavescape.co.za/general/tears-flow-as-ballies-reunite.html> [accessed on 22 March 2010].

<sup>59</sup> See Cooley, *Surfing about Music*, 81.

<sup>60</sup> See N.D. Mazin (Andy Mason), “The Vittokes” in *Mamba Comix 4*, (Durban: Artworks Communications, 2006), 35.

<sup>61</sup> These two terms are from Andy Mason, *What's So Funny? Under the Skin of South African Cartooning*, (Cape Town: Double Storey, 2010), 86.

of the surfer image as a long blond-haired hippie. This image of the surfer was embodied in the life of Donald Paarman, a South African Springbok surfer in 1966, 1968 and 1970 who turned to drug use and Western Buddhism in the late 1960s. This Cape Town surfer entered South African historiography in 1999 in a photograph and caption published in the social history *Cape Town in the Twentieth-Century* within a discussion of the Western counterculture in the city, noting the “Hippy” Market in Cape Town’s Loop Street.<sup>62</sup>



Figure 1.3: Leftie Freaks who Surf: Vittoke in Azania underground cartoon by Pooh (Andy Mason).<sup>63</sup>

This is not to say that tensions over the surfer image were not seen among South African surfers themselves. While the younger generation were generally more open to the countercultural values and

<sup>62</sup> See Vivian Bickford-Smith, Elizabeth van Heyningen and Nigel Worden, *Cape Town in the Twentieth-Century*, (Cape Town: David Philip, 1999), 193.

<sup>63</sup> The cartoon is republished online by Andy Mason at <http://ndmazin2.wordpress.com/blog/vittoke-in-azania/> [accessed on 5 August 2014].

fashions of California, older surfers mostly did not and held onto a form of social respectability, despite their own desire for a hedonistic beach lifestyle. For example, the hegemony of official surfing, represented in the interests of older surfers and administrators of the South African Surfing Association (SASA) in their disciplining of younger members, attempted to show the new sport of surfing as acceptable to a conservative South African society and uphold the formality and national prestige of being a Springbok sportsman at a time when the national surfing body had recently gained affiliation to the state sanctioned South African Sports Federation. This display of institutional power was also a play of masculinities by asserting of the dominance of older men with values tied to the Fifties clean-cut, macho outdoorsman and, especially for Durban, lifesaving culture. This notion of masculinity contrasted to that of the teenage Donald Paarman. In his autobiography, *Lunatic Surfer or Destiny?* Paarman recounted a turning point in his early surfing life when he was nearly fourteen years old. In Durban in early July 1966, he was sleeping alone in a tent near Addington Hospital set aside for contestants for the South African Surfing Titles. This was the night after his selection as a junior member of the first official national surfing team to represent South Africa at the world championships in San Diego, California. Paarman was woken by drunken contest officials who then proceeded to cut his hair, stating, “[y]ou are in the Springbok team for California but first, you must have a haircut.”<sup>64</sup> While this was probably seen as a rite of passage by the “men”, as Paarman refers to these twenty and thirty something officials while reminiscing about his boyhood, this – and later similar incidents of authoritarianism by surfing official – played a part in Paarman distancing himself from organised surfing's disciplining of the nascent sport of surfing and turned toward a counterculture ethos.<sup>65</sup>

In looking back at that era through the lens of a surfer who had journeyed within the hippie lifestyle into his twenties and beyond, Paarman's teenage experiences hint at the generational tensions between those who took to surfing in the immediate post-war years of the 1950s and the later Sixties and early Seventies generation of surfers. Hair remained a site of subcultural difference, as Paarman noted, “[l]ater, in the Gestapo mentality of the time, Max Wetteland had a surf shop [in Durban] where he stored named envelopes containing the hair of unlucky surfers caught by the officials and lifeguards.”<sup>66</sup> Photographs in the *South Africa Surfer* magazine from 1965 to 1967 shows Wetteland, who surfed in the first World Surfing Titles in Sydney, Australia in 1964, and others exemplar male surfers of the time, as wearing short hair as a show of normative manliness. Complimenting these photographs, a Jantzen sportswear advert in the early issues of *South Africa Surfer* embodied notions of a surfing masculinity that were “trim and neat / cut for action / and leisure alike ...” with a sketch of a blonde, bronzed male riding a wave on a surfboard.<sup>67</sup> This ideal surfer as athlete was not the same surfer as represented in a cartoon drawn by Jannie Celliers, who illustrated under the name Lencel, which appeared in the same surfing magazine in 1967 depicting two long-haired surfers making fun of a barber.<sup>68</sup> Longer hair for men then became a marker for the cultural hedonism

<sup>64</sup> Donald Paarman, *Lunatic Surfer or Destiny? Autobiography of a Springbok...whaaat!* (Wilderness, Donald Paarman, 2008), 15.

<sup>65</sup> Paarman notes another incident with surfing officials that occurred when travelling in Portugal with the national surfing team en route to the world titles in Puerto Rico in 1968. Paarman and Peers Pittard were “wearing super brightly coloured floral bell bottom pants with our Springbok blazers ...thinking how cool we looked. Until we walked into the hotel, then all hell broke loose! Both being juniors, we got a heavy talking to from the team management.” See Paarman, *Lunatic Surfer or Destiny?* 15 and 23.

<sup>66</sup> Paarman, *Lunatic Surfer or Destiny?* 15. These tensions were not dissimilar to Australian coastal cultures where disciplined lifesavers and hedonist surfers reflected contesting masculinities at the beach; see Booth, *Australian Beach Cultures*, 109-110 and 114.

<sup>67</sup> See *South African Surfer*, 1, 1 (April 1965), 26 and *South African Surfer*, 1, 2 (July 1965), 26.

<sup>68</sup> The cartoon is dated 5 March 1966. See “Lencel's Surf Laughs,” *South African Surfer*, 3, 2 (April 1967), 13. Jannie Celliers, went on to contribute sexist cartoons to the South African soft-porn magazine, *Scope* in a style already evident during his time at *South African Surfer*.

of the counterculturalist surfer and blurred with the hippie image. This mirrored the trend globally of youth cultures using the body and sartorial style as a symbolic break from expectations of social conformity and as signs of the formation of a, supposedly, softer “manhood in the Age of Aquarius”.<sup>69</sup>

South African surfers who took from hippiedom did so with a desire to appropriate Californian ideals that circulated South from the hedonistic and permissive tendencies of the American youth counterculture.<sup>70</sup> While a pervasive image within surfing, the countercultural or “hippie” surfer was more a counter-current that gained public attention in the media as representing youthful surfing culture. Paarman’s autobiographical narrative of his surfing and travels to America and Australia, and back to South Africa, is one of the search for meaning for a white male from a lower middle class family growing up in the late 1960s and 1970s.<sup>71</sup> As Booth has stated for Australian “soul surfing”, which can be read for the transnational ethic among countercultural surfers at the time, “[s]urfing signified self-expression, freedom and escape from the dictates, structures and norms of bourgeoisie society.”<sup>72</sup> Paarman, as one such soul surfer, showed a cultural phenomenology of the self located in a mysticism induced by the consumption of variants of Eastern spiritualities, vegetarianism, and drugs (such as LSD, or “California Sunshine” as it was called in South Africa, marijuana and “Magic Mushrooms”) that enhanced his experience and philosophy of surfing as an inward path close to Nature.<sup>73</sup> Paarman’s story is not unique; many local and international surfers who travelled along the South African coastline shared in these youthful social outcast identities at the beach.<sup>74</sup>

This was especially seen at the transient surf camp in the rural locale of Jeffreys Bay from the late 1960s to the early 1970s, which became a place for gathering soul surfers and hippies seeking alternative lifestyles. It was also evident at international surf contests, such as the 1966 World Surfing Titles in San Diego, California and the 1970 World Surfing Titles held near Torquay, Australia, where some surfers mixed competition with the counterculture. The official surf media however took an anti-drug approach. In an editorial to a 1967 issue of *South African Surfing*, Harry Bold wrote, “[t]here is a sect of ‘rooney boys’ in California who advocate the use of Marijuana and L.S.D. to get their brain attuned before they go surfing. This they claim relaxes them completely and they are able to surf much better ....”<sup>75</sup>

<sup>69</sup> On manhood and the counterculture see Tim Hodgdon, “Introduction: With Flowers in Their Hair? Remembering Countercultural Masculinity” in *Manhood in the Age of Aquarius: Masculinity in Two Countercultural Communities, 1965–1983*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007). [www.gutenberg-e.org/hodgdon](http://www.gutenberg-e.org/hodgdon) [accessed on 14 October 2010].

<sup>70</sup> The term “hippie” is contested as whether it stands for “counterculture”. As historians Peter Braunstein and Michael Doyle have argued for America in the Sixties, and which has applicability for South African soul surfers, “[s]ince the term ‘hippies’ was used unproblematically at the time primarily by the mainstream news media, it may be safer to consider the ‘hippies’ as an ideological charade adopted temporarily by the some “counterculturalists,” but then dropped by 1968-69, after which the term persisted as an assumptive signifier to designate a look, an attitude, or a lifestyle.” See their “Introduction: Historicizing the American Counterculture of the 1960s and ‘70s” in Peter Braunstein and Michael Doyle, (eds), *Imagine Nation: The American Counterculture of the 1960s and ‘70s*, (New York and London: London, 2002), 11.

<sup>71</sup> Hippiedom’s eschewing of the material was usually a marker of the rejection of normative values by “restless middle class young”, as Theodore Roszak termed the cultural radicals. See his *The Making of the Counterculture: Reflections on the Technocratic Society and its Youthful Opposition*, (New York: Doubleday and Company, 1969), 34. Despite the middle class roots of many of the hippies, for soul surfers too class was fluid in the pursuit of pleasures inward and aquatic. On the countercultural identity, Braunstein and Doyle note, “[i]t was an inherently unstable collection of attitudes, tendencies, postures, gestures, “lifestyles”, ideal visions, hedonistic pleasures, moralisms, negations, and affirmations. These roles were played by people who defined themselves first by what they were not, and then, only after having cleared the essential ground of identity, began to conceive anew what they were.” See their “Historicizing the American Counterculture,” 10.

<sup>72</sup> Booth, *Australian Beach Cultures*, 112-113.

<sup>73</sup> The contradictions within soul surfer have been noted by Booth as an aside; “[i]f drug taking was revolutionary praxis, it also paradoxically affirmed the culture of indulgent consumption with its instant gratification: drugs – ‘private pleasures giff-wrapped in permissiveness’ – were the archetypal symbols of middle class hedonism.” See Booth, *Australian Beach Cultures*, 116.

<sup>74</sup> Interview with Paul Botha.

<sup>75</sup> “Editorial”, *South African Surfer*, 3 (2) 1967, 3.

Bold offered the example of the then world champion, Australian Nat Young whose “skill and know-how” outperformed the “acid heads”. However, this clean-cut surfer athlete image blurred with that of the countercultural soul surfer by 1970. Young himself, as an exemplar of contest surfing, too took to the countercultural. As Young recalled of his trip with Sixties South African surfing icon Anthony van den Heuvel, “[w]e spent three weeks in South Africa, totally intoxicated by the [Durban] Poison [marijuana] and the awesome barrels of Jeffrey’s Bay.”<sup>76</sup>

Public reaction in conservative coastal towns to the soul surfer, whether they were international travellers or South Africans, was negative. For example, Mossel Bay residents and authorities felt a threat from “certain surfers” who travelled to the Southern Cape town in “an old bus or van” from Cape Town for weekends. The front page of the *George and Knysna Herald* in July 1971 reported that, “Although residents have stressed the fact that the average surfer is welcome, they are afraid that the hippie-type under the guise of surfers has begun to stream into the town lately.”<sup>77</sup> In this case, and noting that the nearby holiday destination of Hartenbos had a Afrikaans cultural history as a beach resort for the Christian nationalist *volk*, “surfers” were seen as permissive males, a sexual threat to the chastity of town’s young women, and flouting bourgeois values and property laws by using unoccupied beach houses as free weekend accommodation on their surf trips to Mossel Bay.<sup>78</sup> It was public images such as this that determined the image of the surfer as a social dropout and deviant, a representation that persisted into the late 1970s.

If Jeffreys Bay was an indication of the pulse of the South African counterculture’s surfing past, then it too was the place of change within the wider youth counterculture.<sup>79</sup> By 1969, Jeffreys Bay had become a refuge for surfer and city-dweller alike, as depicted in Rick Andrew’s underground comic “The Ballard of Jeffery’s Bay”, published as a supplement to the July/September issue of *Surf Africa* in 1975. As a panel in Andrew’s narrative illustrates: “In the smokey rooms of distant towns / Jeffrey’s Bay was spoke aloud / The place to go before life’s strife / A place to laze around” (Figure 1.4).<sup>80</sup> Supporting Andrew’s view on the prevalence of the drug culture in this coastal town, top surfer Jonathan Paarman, Donald’s clean-cut older brother, as interviewed in *Zigzag* surfing magazine in 1977, noted that it was the arrival of international surfers who smuggled drugs that introduced a darker side to the Jeffreys Bay experience in the early 1970s and ended the innocence of Jeffrey Bay in the surfing imaginary. Jonathan Paarman stated, “[i]t started with the American and Aussies coming over and finding grass [marijuana] easy to obtain. They started using Jeffreys as a depot and stored it there until they had elsewhere to take it.”<sup>81</sup>

<sup>76</sup> Young, *Nat’s Nat and That’s That*, 225. In his surf travels to Hawai’i and California in the mid-1960s, van den Heuvel had become immersed in the countercultural, returning to South Africa in 1966. Providing a further example to Paarman’s self-expression and anti-authoritarianism, van den Heuvel was refused his Springbok colours for not cutting his hair. In September 1968 he moved to Jeffrey’s Bay to pursue a less material surfing lifestyle. See the interview by Deon Bing with Anthony van den Heuvel, Jeffreys Bay, 1999, Video Tape, Tape 4, Deon Bing Collection, and Marcus Sanders and Kimball Taylor, *Down the Line at the World’s Best Pointbreak*, (St Petersburg, FL and Huntington Beach, CA: Airborne Media and Surfline/Wavetrak, 2007), 52.

<sup>77</sup> “Town is Concerned at Surfers”, *George and Knysna Herald*, 16 July 1971. George Museum Archives.

<sup>78</sup> Hartenbos was eight kilometres away from Mossel Bay. For this beach resort see Albert Grundlingh, “Holidays at Hartenbos: Sand, Sea and Sun in the Construction of Afrikaner cultural nationalism, c.1930 to c.1961” in his *Potent Pastimes: Sport and Leisure Practices in Modern Afrikaner History*, (Pretoria: Protea Book House, 2013).

<sup>79</sup> Interview with Paul Botha.

<sup>80</sup> Rick Andrew, “A Ballard for Jeffrey’s Bay”, supplement in *Surf Africa*, 5 (July/September 1975). This comic has incorrectly been accredited to Snowy Smith, the publisher of *Surf Africa*, in Robbie Hift, *Legends of Jeffreys Bay*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, (Jeffreys Bay: Robbie Hift, 2003), 21. Andy Mason has noted that “[t]he style and ethos of the period were wonderfully captured” by Andrew’s comic, see *What’s So Funny?* 86. Mason indicates that this underground comic first appeared in 1973.

<sup>81</sup> Paul Naude, “Juice Man Jonathan,” *Zigzag*, 1, 1 (December 1976/February 1977), 16. On the international context, the film *Sea of Darkness* documents the role of drug smuggling in the beginnings of surf tourism to Indonesia as of the 1970s. See *Sea of Darkness*, dir. Michael Oblowitz, (USA: Deco Entertainment and Instinctive Film, 2008).



Juxtaposed to this Jeffreys Bay as an international drug trafficking route and a white hippie retreat, Andrew drew on the countercultural imaginary of Native American lore on the freedom of the land and the sea to bemoan the transformation of the place from a surfing paradise into space for the consumption of alternative lifestyles.

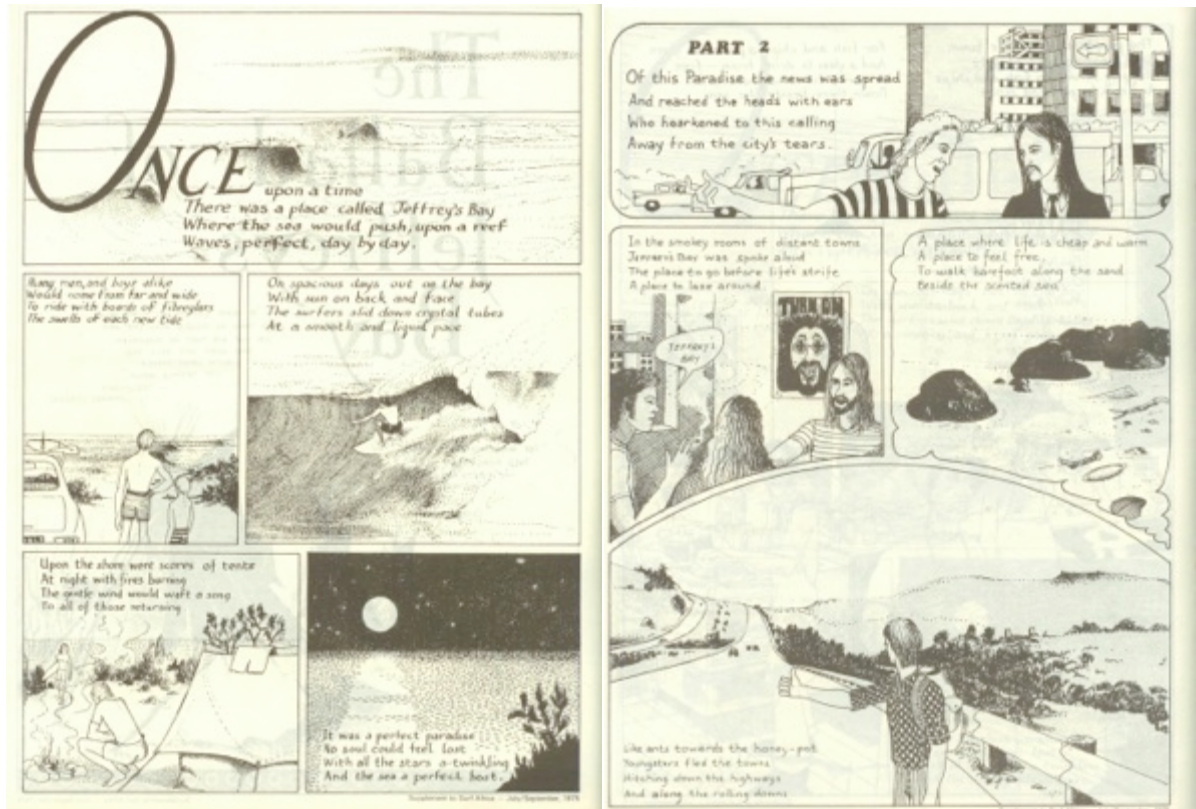


Figure 1.4: Extracts from Rick Andrew's *The Ballard of Jeffrey's Bay*, c.1975.<sup>82</sup>

By the mid-1970s, the countercultural as a feature of the Californian inspired dream of self-expression at the beach had been incorporated into the South African soul surfing imaginary. Yet, from the mid-1960s to the late 1970s, that same soul surfer image has come under pressure from surfing officials seeking to retain respectability within regional and national amateur surfing associations. As of the mid-1970s, and part of global trends, the commercialisation and professionalisation of the sport re-asserted a clean-cut male surfer image as a marketable aquatic athlete. While this latter process will be discussed later in this chapter, it is to the founding moment of amateur surfing in 1966 and its determination of an exemplar surfing masculinity that we now turn.

### Surfing, Style and Masculinities at the 1966 South African Surfing Titles

There was a debate within the Sixties surfing community as to the best style of surfing. Informed by the performances of local icons and the adoption of surfing styles drawn from international surf stars, surfing on heavy, nine to eleven foot surfboards was seen to require surfing styles that displayed athleticism and a muscular manhood on the waves. Foregrounding male bodies, and a male heterosexual gaze on those bodies in the judging of surfing standards, national and regional amateur competitive surfing bodies determined how the sport was to be played in the surf. In so doing, organised surfing configured an exemplar surfing masculinity that cited the performativity of male competitive surfing practices that were reiterated in

<sup>82</sup> Andrew, "A Ballard for Jeffrey's Bay" in the July/September 1975 issue of *Surf Africa*.

the local surfing magazine. The founding moment of this exemplary surfing masculinity was at the 1966 Natal and South African Surfing Championships, and shaped the future trajectory of South African surfing as white and male. It did so by prioritising the masculine surfing styles of white men who surfed competitively in the official judging criteria.



*Figure 1.5: A contestant's view of the 1966 Natal and South African Surfing Championships, Durban.<sup>83</sup>*

The national surfing championships were held over the weekend of 1 and 2 July 1966 at Durban's "whites only" beaches during the peak winter swell season (see Figure 1.5). It was the first official national surf contest in South Africa and was organised under the auspices of the newly formed national surfing association, the South African Surfriders' Association (SASA). Under SASA's direction, surfing as a leisure pastime was transformed into catching waves within the sporting arena as institutionalised in surf clubs, regional associations, and the national surfing body that was affiliated to government sporting structures. As part of the sportisation of surfing, SASA implemented a judging system for the 1966 national surfing championships; the objective of these contest rules was to determine which white, amateur South African surfers could compete for a place in the Springbok team. The prestige associated with being part of the national team was to surf in the third World Surfing Titles, which were to be held in September 1966 at Ocean Beach in San Diego, California, USA. The codification of this judging system for the 1966 national titles thus also throws light on how organised amateur surfing in South Africa sought out international acceptance as a sport so as to be recognised as a surfing nation. Nevertheless, this emergent competitive surfing culture was undertaken in a context of racialised sport in South Africa that faced the threat of international sanctions due to its exclusion of black surfers from contests, as will be discussed in Chapters 3

<sup>83</sup> Photograph by Harry Bold, Harry Bold Collection, Surfing Heritage South Africa Archive.

and 4, and in a maintaining male-dominated gender order that marginalised women surfers, as addressed in considering the history of women surfing in Chapter 2.

The competitive surfing pool for the making of national icons was small. The official programme for the 1966 Natal and South Africa Surfing Championships estimated that “possibly two hundred surfers” from each of the four coastal regions (that is, the Western Cape, Eastern Cape, Border and Natal) could be drawn on for selecting regional teams to compete in the national titles.<sup>84</sup> Of that number, a provincial association could only send a maximum for seventeen surfers for the allotted gender and age divisions: the Men’s and Junior Men’s divisions included six surfers respectively, there were three surfers in the Women’s division and two surfers in the Senior Men’s division (35 years and older). In terms of the prioritisation of these divisions, it was from the Men’s, Junior Men’s (that is, boys under the age of 18) and Women’s divisions from which a national team was to be selected. The Senior Men’s division was excluded due to that age division not featuring in the world titles, an indication of the ageism within surfing that emphasised the sport as a youthful pursuit. The hierarchy of these divisions was gendered in the favour of young men, and then these men over boys, resulting in the subordination of women to the masculine. For the 1966 national team there were five places available for the men, drawn from either the Men’s or Junior Men’s divisions, based on the highest accumulated scores gained through the quarter-finals, semi-finals and finals contest heats, and two places for the top scoring women in the final.

Within the national contest arena, all surfers were scrutinised by male judges using a formalised criteria for scoring surfing performance. Judging, as a form of cultural determinism and social prescription of the elite surfer within organised surfing, therefore came to be that cultural practice which prescribed how surfers’ bodies and surfing styles were to be read as normative within surf culture beyond the contest zone. In asserting the normativity of the judges’ gaze, this judging discourse was then promoted through the *South African Surfer* magazines and surfing correspondents in the mainstream press. The appropriation of competitive surfing of the oceanic play of the surfing lifestyle illustrates that “[s]urfing offers a concrete example of the economic and cultural constraints and ambiguities which define freedom in leisure and sport.”<sup>85</sup> The seeming contradictions that surfing’s hedonistic, playful beach lifestyle arranged about an individual’s leisure time and the vicissitudes of weather, swell and tides could be regulated and codified as a sporting practice resided in the need for South African surfing to be organised so as to be acceptable to international surfing, a modification, to some extent, of Wray Vamplew’s schema of constitutive rule development in the formalisation of a sport.<sup>86</sup> Nevertheless, as Douglas Booth has observed, in the rise of competitive surfing in California, Hawaii and Australia in the as of late 1950s, “[t]he codification and objectification of surfing rules, however, were no simple matters.”<sup>87</sup> The main consideration here for surf

<sup>84</sup> See “Outline of the Contest Judging System,” *1966 Natal and South African Surfing Championships Souvenir Programme*, 6. Natal Surfing Association Files, Dave Lee Collection.

<sup>85</sup> Douglas Booth, “Ambiguities in Pleasure and Discipline: The Development of Competitive Surfing,” *Journal of Sport History*, 22, 3 (1995), 206.

<sup>86</sup> See Wray Vamplew, “Playing with the Rules: Influences on the Development of Regulation in Sport,” *The International Journal of the History of Sport*, 24, 7 (July 2007), 845. Vamplew’s schema establishes the regulation of sport development from “a) One-off rules for head-to-head contests individually negotiated; (b) Rules for head-to-head and all-comers contests using common features; (c) Rules for contests using standardized rules; (d) Codification of rules by ‘national’ authorities; (e) Rules developed to ensure acceptance of the nationally codified rules; (f) Codification of rules by ‘international’ authorities; (g) Rules developed to ensure acceptance of the internationally codified rules.” In South African surfing the schema can be applied as follows, with slight a modification of Vamplew’s schema to prioritise the international as the driver for sportisation: the need for part of (g), the need for international sporting acceptance, that led to the constitution of (c) followed by (d) and (e) and then (f) and a return to (g) with gaining the status of a surfing nation.

<sup>87</sup> Booth, “Ambiguities in Pleasure and Discipline,” 193. On the beginnings of amateur competitive surfing, including early twentieth-century examples in Hawai’i and California, see Warshaw, *The History of Surfing*, 177-185.

contest organisers seeking to produce a spectacle of surfing and attract crowds was how to regulate an aesthetic, the embodied freedom of an individual in the act of surfing, undertaken in relation to other surfers, and take into consideration that no two waves are alike, as well as take into account the subjectivity of the observer of these acts. Hence the need for rules that allowed for a measure of subjectivity within standardised criteria. By 1966 the rationale for the deployment of a judging system within organised amateur surfing in South Africa was to select top local surfers and for South Africa to gain entrance to the world amateur surfing championships.<sup>88</sup>

### ***International Impetus for Organised Surfing in South Africa***

By 1966 two world surfing titles had already been held: in Sydney, Australia in 1964 and Lima, Peru in 1965. The latter was run under the auspices of the International Surfriders Federation (ISF), of which South Africa was a founding member in May 1964.<sup>89</sup> Max Wetteland from Durban was selected by peers to represent South Africa in Australia in 1964, as discussed further below, and Max Wetteland, George Thompson, and Anthony van den Heuvel were the 1965 South African representatives in Peru.<sup>90</sup> 1966 was to be different, as a South African team had been invited to compete in California. The selection of the Springbok surfing team for the 1966 World Championships was seen by organised surfing in South Africa as an impetus to boost local competitive South African surfing culture and gain recognition from the top echelons of the international surfing community. It was also realised that the codification of the judging criteria for surfing contests was required to ensure South Africans competed to global standards.

While the 1966 world titles provided the possibility for South Africa to be configured as a surfing nation, the initial catalyst for the institutionalisation of South African surfing were the May 1964 World Surfing Titles in Australia. In a 6 December 1963 letter from the Australian Surf Riders Association to Harry Bold in Durban, South Africa was invited to send their “national surfboard champion” to compete in “the first fully representative amateur World Surfboard Titles” that “would be run under the rules and regulations covering the sport in Hawaii.”<sup>91</sup> However, South Africa had no national champion or a national association. The only form of organised surfing was to be found in surf clubs at local beaches. Bold’s response is not on record, although the South African quandary would have been noted as referred to in a second letter from the Australian Surf Riders Association in 25 February 1964 which clarified that “A.S.A. will respect any decision you make in sending a representative”, that the surfer would be receive sponsored airfare and accommodation for the contest, and that the Australian oil company, Ampol Petroleum was the sponsor of the contest.<sup>92</sup> South Africa was also encouraged to send a team but this would not be fully funded. Bold, in a 5 March 1964 response to the invitation, put forward Max Wetteland as South Africa’s representative. Wetteland’s participation in the world titles was confirmed in a letter of 19 March 1964 from Ampol’s Chief of

<sup>88</sup> See Minutes of Western Province Surfing Association, 12 August 1964, 1 and Anthony Morris, “Urgent need for S. African Surfriders Association,” *The Natal Mercury*, c. April 1965.

<sup>89</sup> The ISF was formally constituted on 17 May 1964, on the final day of the world titles held in Australia. See Matt Warshaw, *The Encyclopedia of Surfing*, (Orlando: Harcourt, 2003), 291.

<sup>90</sup> Wetteland received an invite as an inaugural world titles participant. Thompson and Van den Heuvel were selection on their performances in Durban and Cape Town events held in 1964. However, the 1966 selection was governed by the rules of new national surfing body, and Van den Heuvel was excluded from the Springbok team as he did not return from overseas to compete in the 1966 Natal and South African Surfing Championships. See Anthony Morris, “Durban Lifeguard to Represent S.A.,” *The Natal Mercury*, 24 December 1965 and Rodger Ashe, “Interview with Ant van den Heuvel,” *South African Surfer*, 3,1 (1967), 11.

<sup>91</sup> Letter from Australian Surf Riders Association to Harry Bold, 6 December 1963, Harry Bold Collection, South African Surfing Heritage Archive.

<sup>92</sup> Letter from Denis Colette, Secretary, Australian Surf Riders Association to Harry Bold, 25 February 1964, Harry Bold Collection, South African Surfing Heritage Archive.

Public Relations.<sup>93</sup> While no mention of how Wetteland was chosen can be read from this correspondence, Bold has indicated that Anthony van den Heuvel was the second choice.<sup>94</sup> With some grandstanding, Baron Stander recounted in 1985 how the choice of Wetteland was made. This story has entered into local surfing lore.

Max Wetteland, Harry Bold and myself were building the first Safari Surfboards in the backyard room when we received a letter asking for the name of our South African champion. We wrote back and said we did not have any clubs or associations, nor had we staged any competitions. They in turn wrote back and asked us for the guy who we thought was the best in South Africa and they would invite him anyway – all expenses paid! The three of us decided to play matches for this one. Max won and Max went to Oz – the first competition in his life being the first World Champs.<sup>95</sup>

Although Wetteland did not perform well against the international line-up, he did bring back to South Africa the “functional” style of surfing as performed by the top Australian competitors as the de facto standard for good surfing and the basis for judging who would be a champion surfer. His return also galvanised groups of South African surfers into action with the realisation that if there were no formal contests under a constituted national body then South Africa had little chance of competing internationally in future world amateur championships. This spurred Durban surfers to hold the first organised surfing contest in South Africa on 7 June 1964 at Dairy Beach and a second on 20 September 1964 at South Beach.<sup>96</sup> This was followed by an unofficial Natal team travelling to Cape Town in December 1964 to compete in what was termed a “national championship” held at Long Beach, a first for the Cape peninsula, and hosted by the Western Province Surfing Association (WPSA) that had been formed on 12 August 1964.<sup>97</sup> This inter-provincial contest took place a few months before the formation of the Natal Surfriders’ Association (NSA), which was constituted on 25 March 1965.<sup>98</sup> On the 6 September 1965 the South African Surfriders’ Association (SASA), was formed in Jeffreys Bay and included regional surfing associations from the coastal regions Natal, Border, Eastern Cape, and the Western Cape.<sup>99</sup> John Whitmore was voted in as President of the national surfing body, a position he held until 1973. The inaugural Natal and South African Surfing

<sup>93</sup> Letter from T. Southwell-Keely, Chief of Public Relations, Ampol Petroleum to Harry Bold, 19 March 1964, Harry Bold Collection, South African Surfing Heritage Archive. Bold’s 5 March 1964 letter is referenced in this Ampol letter.

<sup>94</sup> See Scrapbook, 30, Harry Bold Collection, South African Surfing Heritage Archive.

<sup>95</sup> Baron Stander, “The South African Connection,” South African Surfing Association (SASA), *Moments: 21 Years of South African Amateur Surfing*, (Durban: South African Surfing Association, 1986), 9.

<sup>96</sup> For the April 1964 contest see Andrew Ogilvie, “Classic Moments”, *African Surfrider*, 3, 3 (2009), 28 and for the September 1964 contest see Anthony Morris, “Paddling Plays its Part Too,” *The Natal Mercury*, 24 September 1964.

<sup>97</sup> See Anthony Morris, “Surf Riders’ Association Has Been Plagued by Apathy,” *The Natal Mercury*, 7 January 1965; “1<sup>st</sup> Natal Team Trip to Cape Town 1964,” SASA, *Moments*, 49; and the interview with Andrew Ogilvie. For WPSA’s formation see the Minutes of First Inaugural Meeting of the Western Province Surfing Association, De Waal Hotel, Cape Town, 12 August 1964, Natal Surfing Association Files, Dave Lee Collection. WPSA based its constitution on those of the Australian and Californian surfing associations.

<sup>98</sup> Anthony Morris, “It’s a Big, Big Week-end of Sport,” *The Natal Mercury*, 15 April 1965 and Baron Stander, “Natal Surfriders Association,” SASA, *Moments*, 49. However, an earlier attempt to establish the association on 2 August 1964 had faltered. See Anthony Morris, “Things Start To Move On Land Now,” *The Natal Mercury*, 6 August 1964. In October 1964, the NSA was still in the process of finalising its constitution. See Anthony Morris, “Durban is Now South Africa’s Major Surfing Centre,” *The Natal Mercury*, 22 October 1964. The NSA held a general meeting on 16 November 1964 but no quorum was forthcoming, blamed on surfer apathy, and the constitution was not ratified. See Anthony Morris, “Surf Riders’ Association Has Been Plagued by Apathy,” *The Natal Mercury*, 7 January 1965.

<sup>99</sup> See Anthony Morris, “Natal Championships were a Great Success,” *The Natal Mercury*, 15 August 1964 and Anthony Morris, “New surfing body for SA formed,” *The Natal Mercury*, 10 September 1965. Southern Natal and Southern Cape associations were formed in the 1970s and Zululand Surfriders’ Association in the 1986. See SASA, *Moments*, 51, 53 and 57.

Championships held in Durban in July 1966 was run under the auspices of the newly established SASA, which drew its recognition as a national sport from the national Department of Sport and Recreation.<sup>100</sup>

Through its recognition as a minority sport by the government, SASA, and its provincial associations, adhered to apartheid state's requirements for the practice of racially segregated sport. This regulation was effected through the institutionalisation of surfing. For example, the NSA regulated a surfer's entrance into the competitive arena through local surfing clubs, membership fees, and age groupings by means of the authority of its constitution, memorandums and official correspondence.<sup>101</sup> Membership to a local surf club was itself prescriptive and advanced the National Party government policies on the racial segregation of sport. Membership of the Mahakane Surfing Club, the Point Surfing Club, and the Southside Surfing Club, all in Durban, was only open to "Male and Female South African Citizens of the White Group" while the membership of the Zinkwazi Surf Club, on the Natal North Coast, took a step further to create a boy's own club that was only open to white males.<sup>102</sup> The Western Province Surfing Association (WPSA) took these social and institutional constraints a step further in their constitution. One of the aims of this sporting body was "to hold contests, according to international rules, as determined by the International Surfriders Federation at such times and places to be determined by the Committee."<sup>103</sup> The judging system was, therefore, part of the discursive practices enabling a regional association "to control surfing and all matters pertaining to and arising out of or from surfing at all beaches within the area governed by the Association."<sup>104</sup> In this way, surfing was institutionalised with the power to regulate the practice of surfing within contests and designated as white and male dominated. This discursive regime had the social and cultural effects of privileging whiteness, the masculine and competitive sporting ability within South African surfing.

### ***Becoming Functional: Defining Surfing Style***

The importance of determining normative standards within the sport of surfing ensured that the judging system was a contested site within competitive surfing culture in the mid 1960s. Dave Lee, Chairman of the NSA and a head judge during the mid-1960s, pointed out that one of the most significant issues dealt with in the NSA was how to codify a judging system and ensure objectivity when judging in surfing contests.<sup>105</sup> Informing SASA's idea of good surfing was the aesthetic criteria for judging the world surfing contests from the mid to late 1960s; that of determining "functional" surfing – smooth and stylish surfing, alternating between displays of controlled power turns and spontaneity on a wave. A style of surfing that had become hegemonic in the 1960s primarily due to the influence of the Californian surfboard shaper and surfer Phil

<sup>100</sup> SASA was reported as receiving a R400 grant from the Department of Sport and Recreation for the administration of the national surfing association. See Republic of South Africa, *Annual Report of the Department of Sport and Recreation for the period 1 July 1966 to 31 December 1967*, (Pretoria: Republic of South Africa, 1968), 6. This financial support was reported in SASA's Income and Expense Account for June 1967 as "State Treasury – Grant R400.00," see South African Surfriders Association, Balance Sheet as at 30 June 1967, Natal Surfriding Association Files, Dave Lee Collection.

<sup>101</sup> Natal Surfriders' Association Constitution, 1965, sub-sections 2 (d) and 2 (g); NSA Memorandum from D. Lee, Chairman, 19 October 1966; and Letter from Mrs Doreen Smithies, Secretary NSA, 19 October 1966. All documents in from Natal Surfriding Association Files, Dave Lee Collection.

<sup>102</sup> See Makane Surf Club Constitution, Point Surfing Club Constitution, Southside Surfing Club Constitution, and Zinkwazi Surf Club Constitution. All documents in Natal Surfriding Association Files, Dave Lee Collection. The Addington Surfing Club did not specify membership based on race or gender and the Kon-tiki Surfing Club accepted "girls" as members. See Addington Surfing Club Constitution and Kon-tiki Surfing Club Constitution, Natal Surfriding Association Files, Dave Lee Collection.

<sup>103</sup> Rules and Regulations of the Western Province Surfing Association, 1964, sub-section C (5), Natal Surfriding Association Files, Dave Lee Collection.

<sup>104</sup> Rules and Regulations of the WPSA, sub-section C (11).

<sup>105</sup> Telephone conversation with Dave Lee, 11 March 1997.

Edwards.<sup>106</sup> Edwards' functional style of surfing was made popular in South Africa as a result of the circulation of surfing knowledge disseminated from overseas. Firstly, in the person of Max Wetteland, a local surfboard designer and the first South Africa surfer to compete internationally in Australia and Peru, who adopted Edwards' style of surfing as his own after witnessing functional surfing determining contest winners at the 1964 world surfing titles in Sydney. Secondly, as of the early 1960s, the local circulation of the Californian magazine *Surfer*, and then later the Durban based *South African Surfer* as of the mid-1960s, in which photographs and articles featured Edwards and other international surfing icons from California, Hawaii and Australia. These surfing magazines provided South African surfers with the ideals of surfing practice. And, thirdly, the screening of surf films produced in California – such Bruce Brown's *Waterlogged* (1963) – that provided local surfers with a glimpse of Edwards' style of surfing without the need to travel overseas to gain first-hand surfing knowledge.

As a result of the above sporting and cultural factors, functional surfing gained in popularity within the newly instituted competitive surfing scene in South Africa from mid-1964. However, functional surfing was contested by other styles of surfing, especially by disinterested surfers who only surfed recreationally. Anthony Morris writing in *The Natal Mercury* noted that, “[m]any Durban surfers still do not understand what ‘functional’ surfing is. They will learn slowly because all contests in Durban are judged in this style of surfing.”<sup>107</sup> Furthermore, competing for attention with surfing “functionally” was what were seen in *South African Surfer* in April 1965 as the “aggressive surfer” and the “trickster or flamboyant surfer”.<sup>108</sup> Yet, these designations should not be seen as clearly demarcated for the mid-1960s; rather there was a spectrum of surfing styles of which the functional style was balanced between hotdogging (more tricks) and graceful (more flow) ways of surfing, with an aggressive style associated with both functional and hotdogging in emphasising power and control. These embodied surfing styles were a reflection of age, attitude, the type of wave ridden, and personal expression when riding small to medium sized waves – a distinctive, individuated surfing habitus performed within the field of organised surfing.<sup>109</sup> Nevertheless, with the impetus for regulation in the sport of the surfing in its seeking of national and international acceptance, for “functional” surfing style to be affirmed as hegemonic it had to be cited as good surfing.

One means of normalising “functional” surfing, and thus the competitive over recreational surfing, was the promotion of this style of surfing in a newspaper. This can be seen in operation for the surfing centre of Durban. Anthony Morris (known by his journalistic pseudonym “Wipe-out”) used his weekly surfing column in *The Natal Mercury* to educate the local surfing community and public. Morris was important chronicler of surfing culture in documenting and affirming the emerging discourse about competitive surfing within South African surf culture at time; beside his career as a journalist, he was a founding member of the NSA and a

<sup>106</sup> On Edwards's style in the formative competitive era of the late 1950s and into the 1960s see Warshaw, *The History of Surfing*, 185-187. While, the term “functional” surfing has remained within competitive surfing, the manoeuvres associated with the term have changed due to the introduction as of 1969 of shorter surfboard shapes and the quest for progression in surfing performance. For instance, the “hang ten” of the mid-1960s had been replaced by “hitting the lip” in the 1970s, the “floater” in the 1980s and the “aerial” as of the 1990s.

<sup>107</sup> Anthony Morris, “Paddling Plays its Part Too,” *The Natal Mercury*, 24 September 1964.

<sup>108</sup> See “Surfing Sidelights,” *South African Surfer*, 1, 1 (April 1965), 30.

<sup>109</sup> See the discussion on the social practice of surfing, the “surfing body” and the field of surfing that determines surfing style and hence prestige, that draws on Bourdieu's sociology, in Nick Ford and David Brown, *Surfing and Social Theory: Experience, Embodiment and Narrative of the Dream Glide*. (London and New York: Routledge, 2006), 124-131. See also the discussion of surfing habitus and identity politics in relation to African American surfers in California in Belinda Wheaton, *The Cultural Politics of Lifestyle Sports*, (London and New York: Routledge, 2013), 140-141.

surf contest judge.<sup>110</sup> His advancement of functional surfing as part of “modern” surfing was evident in his first article of 25 June 1964, where he provided historical and cultural continuity for modern surfing’s global diffusion from California to Hawai’i and Australia, and then to South Africa and Durban.<sup>111</sup> This article and those that followed over the next 3 years contributed extensively to the institutionalised hegemony of “functional” surfing within the surfing associations and the diffusion of this style as exemplary within the local surfing. Yet, while Morris’ journalism allowed for other voices from within the broader surfing community to contest this hegemony, the effect of his writing was to neutralise dissent, or at least hold differing views in tension, when ascertaining what was “good” surfing. While gesturing to the American Phil Edwards’ as “voted the best surfer in the world”, and the 1964 world champion, Australian Midget Farrelly, both advocates of functional surfing, Morris isolated two other modes of surfing that competed for performative hegemony as the “good surfer”.<sup>112</sup> The first was that of the “expressive” surfer,

The “expressive” surfer uses the wave to express himself. His object in riding it is to see how many tricks he can do. He sacrifices some control of the board and willingly takes a “wipe-out” to achieve his aim ... he does these things when he wants to, not when the waves dictates that he should. He is an exhibitionist to spectators and himself.<sup>113</sup>

The second style Morris described was that of the “aggressive” surfer,

The “aggressive” surfer is one who rides with all the force he can muster, as if the wave is his greatest enemy. His is characterised by his sharp turns and vigorous “cut-outs.” He often takes spectacular “wipe-outs” because he refuses to yield an inch to the wave.<sup>114</sup>

In contrast to these styles, the “functional” surfer was cited as the best of both styles, incorporating elements without the excesses of the “expressive” or “aggressive” surfer. For Morris, the functional surfer “is in control all the time”; a statement set in opposition against the citations of “wipe-out” for the expressive and aggressive surfer.<sup>115</sup> While the masculine pronoun had guided Morris’ description of “the surfer”, he shifted his language to explicitly cite the “functional” surfer as gendered male and exemplary (see Figure 1.6 for the embodiment of this).<sup>116</sup> This thus becomes an instance of describing an exemplar white surfing masculinity within a discourse associated with organised surfing – making visible the supposed invisibility of masculinity in surfing and its ideological mirroring of the gender order beyond the beach.<sup>117</sup> Morris stated,

<sup>110</sup> Until the short-lived publication of the *South African Surfer*, in the years 1965 to 1967, Morris’ weekly newspaper column is the best remaining record for examining the cultural representations surrounding 1960s Durban and wider South African surfing culture. His column ran in the newspaper from 1964 to 1967.

<sup>111</sup> Anthony Morris, “Hurtle Ashore in a Flurry of Foam,” *The Natal Mercury*, 25 June 1964.

<sup>112</sup> Anthony Morris, “Expressing Yourself in Surfing,” *The Natal Mercury*, 15 July 1964 and Anthony Morris, “Let Your Style Come Naturally,” *The Natal Mercury*, 23 July 1964.

<sup>113</sup> Morris, “Expressing Yourself in Surfing.”

<sup>114</sup> Morris, “Expressing Yourself in Surfing.” Of interest, it is the definition of an “aggressive surfer” that has survived in a lexicon of “old surf slang” compiled by Paul Botha for Pike’s *Surfing in South Africa*, which was published in 2001.

<sup>115</sup> Morris, “Expressing Yourself in Surfing.”

<sup>116</sup> The masculine use of the pronoun “his” dominates the language of Morris’ articles, and other forms of literature related to surf culture during the 1960s. John Tosh has rightly noted, “gender is inherent in all aspects of life, whether women are present or not.” See his “What Should Historians Do With Masculinity? Reflections on 19th Century Britain,” *History Workshop Journal*, 38 (1994), 180.

<sup>117</sup> The masculine identification in sport is noted in David Whitson, “Sport and the Social Construction of Masculinity” in Michael Messner and Donald Sabo (eds), *Sport, Men and the Gender Order: Critical Feminist Perspectives*. (Champaign: Human Kinetic Books, 1990), 21. This exemplar male surfing identity leans toward becoming a hegemonic masculinity although it did not “stand out as a sharply defined pattern separate from all others” available in the sporting lives of white South African men. Rather, competitive surfing offered a social and cultural space for men where “[a] degree of overlap or blurring between hegemonic and complicit masculinities [wa]s extremely likely if hegemony [wa]s [to



The “functional” man adapts his riding to the mood of the sea. His is characterised by his smooth riding, by his blending with the wave. He never does anything unnecessary ... But no matter how the waves are breaking, the “functional” always strives to stay in the “hottest” section of the wave. And he does this with smooth, functional manoeuvres.<sup>118</sup>

Morris further described the masculine functional surfing style as epitomising a utilitarian economy of motion, where “[e]very turn, ever “cut-back”, every stance on the board is done for a reason – to trim the board.”<sup>119</sup>

Meaning in surfing style thus resided in control of self and surfboard within a changeable environment, as Morris concluded, “[t]he truly functional surfer is the one who can ‘trim’ his board properly. And to do this he must move his board fast and control it. This involves quick thinking and perfect timing with the changing movements of the wave.”<sup>120</sup>



Figure 1.6: The “functional” male surfing: South African surfing icon, George Thomopolous, Long Beach contest, December 1964.<sup>121</sup>

This “functional” surfing masculinity hints at the mid-1970s configuration of the professional surfer as a managed athlete (which will be discussed in the next section of this chapter). In this 1960s instance, ideals of bodily ability and self-control combined with an ethic of fun and personal gratification to establish the active male surfer as using a surfboard (technology) while adapting to the ocean waves (nature). This was a masculinity that differentiated the will to dominate the waves by the “expressive” surfer (via technology and showmanship) and the “aggressive” surfer (via a muscular manhood). The “functional” surfing masculinity

---

be] effective” within the surfing lifestyle. See R.W. Connell and James Messerschmidt, “Hegemonic Masculinity: Rethinking the Concept,” *Gender and Society*, 9, 6 (December 2005), 839. In this way, the exemplar masculinities noted here should be seen as complicit in the sporting world of white South Africa, despite the marginalised status of surfing in the 1960s, and enjoying the privileges of whiteness due to the context of racialised sport.

<sup>118</sup> Morris, “Expressing Yourself in Surfing.”

<sup>119</sup> Anthony Morris, “Trimming is the secret,” *The Natal Mercury*, 13 August 1964.

<sup>120</sup> Morris, “Trimming is the secret.”

<sup>121</sup> Photograph from the Lorna Thomopolous Collection, Surfing Heritage South Africa Archive.

was thus a depiction of values and attributes of the emerging dominance of the model of surfing masculinity as “muscular, heroic and technically competent.”<sup>122</sup> The “functional” male surfer thus reinforced an adaptive masculine cultural ideal, reflexive of 1960s global surf culture, and which affirmed surfing’s place within white society, and predominately among the middle classes, at the South African coast. In this way, the Durban beach was not too different to the Californian beach at that time. As cultural historian Bill Osgerby has noted for California, “[i]n its hedonistic values and cultural orientations surf culture was *adaptive* rather than rebellious. Rather than confronting or resisting the dominant cultural order, the 1960s surf phenomenon” and thus surf culture “helped pioneer and popularize new, expressive and indulgent lifestyles integral to white, middle-class America’s move away from an ethos of inhibition and restraint into a world of pleasure and personal gratification.”<sup>123</sup>

Yet, male surfer attempts at self-fashioning as the “functional” surfer ideal throws light on the inability of some men to perform that masculinity and claim to be named a “good surfer”. Unsettled surfing masculinities could even be found within the surfing elite. For instance, considered “an outstanding surfer” by other Durban surfers, Anthony van der Heuvel in September 1964 expressed his psychic anguish and dissatisfaction with his surfing ability in attempting to conform to the image of a functional surfer. He stated, “I try to be ‘functional’ but I am still ‘aggressive’ in many ways.”<sup>124</sup> By the end of 1964 and in early 1965, the debate on style, however, remained in play within the Durban surfing community.<sup>125</sup> This debate was held in a context with no provincial association as yet in place to provide an avenue for prestige and subcultural recognition among competitively aspirant male Durban surfers; a situation that was to change from March 1965 when the NSA began to organise surf contests with surfing “judged on international functional rules.”<sup>126</sup> In this way, surfing style and ability, as the primary signifiers of an emergent hegemonic surfing masculinity, were then located in the culture and criteria of competitive surfing. Nevertheless, the construction of the “good surfer” was not stable despite the institutionalisation of surfing. This was seen in competing images of masculine surfing prowess and ability that remained in play during the 1966 Natal and South African Surfing Championships.

### ***Judging the 1966 Natal and South African Surfing Championships***

R.W. Connell has pointed out that the physical activity of sport “provides a continuous display of bodies in motion”.<sup>127</sup> Surfing contests provide the arena for this display of surfing bodies and can be seen a space for the creation of surfing as a cultural commodity. It was in the promoting of regional and national surfing contests as of 1966 that amateur surfing co-opted and regulated the surfing lifestyle to produce surfing champions whose images were then reproduced in the local surfing magazine, *South African Surfer*, or in newspaper columns, such as those written by Anthony Morris. It was within this context of aligned interests within organised surfing and surf media that the “functional” surfer was manufactured as the “good surfer”. Thus, it was through the first official South African national surfing titles in held in Durban in 1966 that “functional” was accepted as the definition for exemplary performance within the sport of surfing. This contest asserted a hegemonic surfing masculinity that embodied in the idea of the “functional” surfer the

<sup>122</sup> See Ford and Brown, *Surfing and Social Theory*, 87.

<sup>123</sup> Bill Osgerby, *Playboys in Paradise: Masculinity, Youth and Leisure-Style in Modern America*, (Oxford and New York: Berg, 2001), 108.

<sup>124</sup> Anthony Morris, “The strange lure of the waves,” *The Natal Mercury*, 17 September 1964.

<sup>125</sup> See Anthony Morris, “Three Schools of Thought on Style,” *The Natal Mercury*, 19 November 1964.

<sup>126</sup> Anthony Morris, “Easter Tournay Can Put Sport on Map,” *The Natal Mercury*, 1 April 1965. See also Anthony Morris, “Natal Championships were a Great Success,” *The Natal Mercury*, 15 August 1965.

<sup>127</sup> R.W. Connell, *Masculinities*. (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995), 54.

associated designation and prestige of a national surfing champion. These associations between functional surfing and sporting prowess were seen in the “Hints to Competitors” in the 1966 Natal and South African Surfing Championships Souvenir Programme. A surfer was seen having “a good chance of being a surfing champion” when performing in the following manner: “the smooth stylish surfer with plenty of graceful, fluid, manoeuvres has the edge in any contest ... [with] a proper blend of ‘riding the board’ and ‘riding the wave’ as well as a thorough knowledge of the rules of his event.”<sup>128</sup>

The web of textual signification in the official programme for the South African Championships discursively framed how the surfer’s body, the wave, the contest arena and surfing was to be judged. As stated in the NSA Chairman’s message in the contest programme, and as an effort to educate the public about surfing as a sport, “[i]n order that those of you who are spectators may better understand the skills that each competitor is attempting to display we are listing below some standards upon which every competitor bases his performance.”<sup>129</sup> It was these standards that the judges used to determine “good” surfing. The judges were drawn from provincial surfing administrations or from the Men’s Senior division, and alternated between Dave Lee (who was chief judge for the national championships), Cliff Honeysett, Anthony Morris, Mally Johnstone, John Whitmore, M. Toms, Robin Solomon, Bob Joubert, B. Killian, Robney Lemkus and Roy Lindley.<sup>130</sup> In the judging criteria, the allocation of points (from zero to ten) per wave ridden was based upon an aggregate system of scoring per heat. During a heat the seven judges each totalled up the scores of a competitor’s best three rides. The highest and the lowest scores were then cancelled out, leaving the remaining five judge’s scores to be added together. The resultant score was the total gained by a surfer and this determined his or her position at the end of a twenty-minute heat. For the Men’s and Junior Men’s events, the thirty minute finals were contested by the six surfers with the highest aggregate scores accumulated in the semi-finals. Surfers who met the judging criteria scored points on “wave selection and position, wave control, board control, repertoire, actions and style, form and balance.”<sup>131</sup> One manoeuvre in particular scored high – that of “nose-walking”, where a surfer rode the wave while stepping forward to stand at the front of the surfboard.<sup>132</sup> However, for the above criteria to apply to a competitive surfer, he or she had to perform smooth stylised acts within a designated contest area at a nominated beach.<sup>133</sup>

The judges’ gaze, therefore, took into account the surfer’s bodily control over both surfboard (technology) and wave (nature) as interpreted in the rules of the contest and the judging criteria (culture).<sup>134</sup> Within this regulated system of competitive surfing discourse and practice, judging therefore provided the cultural possibility of a “stylised repetition of acts” for doing the surfer’s body as masculine.<sup>135</sup> The judges’ gaze located the “good” and “functional” surfer as masculine and the surfers’ performativity in the contest was a “reiterative and citational practice by which discourse produces the effects that it names.”<sup>136</sup> Gender, as configured within this discourse of organised surfing, was the “effect of productive constraint” on the surfing

<sup>128</sup> “Hints to Competitors,” *1966 Natal and South African Surfing Championships Souvenir Programme*, 13.

<sup>129</sup> See *1966 Natal and South African Surfing Championships Souvenir Programme*, 4.

<sup>130</sup> Harry Bold, “S.A. Titles 1966,” *South African Surfer*, 2, 4 (1966), 13.

<sup>131</sup> *1966 Natal and South African Surfing Championships Souvenir Programme*, 6.

<sup>132</sup> It was “nose-walking” to “hanging ten” (both feet and all toes on the front of the surfboard) came to epitomize the longboard surfing style of the Sixties, what early 1970s South African surf chronicler Cornel Barnett called “the ‘Hang Ten’ era”. See his *Hitting the Lip*, 88.

<sup>133</sup> *1966 Natal and South African Surfing Championships Souvenir Programme*, 13.

<sup>134</sup> Similarly see Rob Shields, “Surfing: Global Space or Dwelling in the Waves?” in Mimi Seller and John Urry (eds), *Tourism Mobilities: Places to Stay, Places to Play*, (London: Routledge, 2004), 45.

<sup>135</sup> The quote is from Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. (London: Routledge, 1990), 140. The notion of “doing” draws on Butler’s later work, see her, *Undoing Gender*, (New York and London: Routledge, 2004), 1 and 9-10.

<sup>136</sup> Butler, *Bodies That Matter*, 2.

body. Observing the surfer in the contest, the judge's way of seeing, informed by culture and experience, and then cited the surfer's ability as a score on the judges' score sheets. The surfing body was thus textualised, ordered and then categorised as winner or loser. The awards ceremony made material that discursive effect in giving recognition to a surfing champion. Yet, for the surfer to become complicit in this judging gaze, the act of surfing and self-regulating to the cultural norm of functional surfing in the contest had to be seen as pleasurable by the surfer and the distinction of winning, or competing well, a possibility.<sup>137</sup> This discursive making of idealised surfing men in the competitive surfing area thus embodied the masculine as normative within organised surfing and, along with surf industry sponsors, as a commodity to be circulated beyond the contest through the promotional culture of the surfing cultural industries.<sup>138</sup>

This cultural configuration of the "good surfer" did not exclude women *per se*. Rather, women were subordinated to the male judging gaze in determining ability, prowess and style in competitive surfing – a theme that is addressed in Chapter 2. Thus, the representations of style at the 1966 Natal and South African Surfing Championships took little heed of the sexed bodies which performed on the waves, except, in so far as noting that the women surfers competing in the event competed within the same judging system as the men and boys. Nevertheless, some women surfers who performed well in contests, such Margaret Smith, a WPSA competitor, were cast in the masculine as impressing "local surfers with her ability and boy's style."<sup>139</sup> The not-quite man status applied to Smith was indicative of the discourse surrounding masculine transitions from boyhood to manhood.<sup>140</sup> Yet, herein the transition was at the same time toward and away from the masculine ideal in bestowing recognition on Smith's surfing talent. An accommodation of women within the masculine surfing order yet excluded nonetheless as a "good surfer".

A further social exclusion from this exemplar surfing masculinity at the national titles was male non-competitors. The effect was that the judging system placed surfers under a "construction of constitutive constraints."<sup>141</sup> Surfers either participated within the arena and rules or were seen as interlopers despite there being no fixed playing field boundaries as in track and field sports. Furthermore, a technical limitation to judging the "functional" style of surfing was the size of the wave ridden by a surfer; in big waves a surfer style adapted to that of the "aggressive" surfer as it was less about controlled trim across a wave and more about surviving the drop on a wave in determining surfing prowess. The judges at the 1966 Natal and South African Surfing Championships faced both these social and technical challenges in determining the "good surfer" on the morning of Saturday, 2 July, first day of the contest. First, the waves were big at the Anstey's Beach contest venue on the Bluff, to the south of the Durban harbour, and the Men's and Junior Men's heats went ahead in the twelve to fifteen foot high waves.<sup>142</sup> Second, in the midst of that competitive surfing arena, one episode casted doubt on the edifice of the exemplar masculinity constructed within organised surfing. As

<sup>137</sup> The notion of the judges' gaze draws on a Foucauldian sense of governmentality and the discursive production and self-regulation of the body. See "The Eye of Power" in Michel Foucault, *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972 - 1977*, Colin Gordon (ed), (New York: Pantheon Books, 1980), 155 and 156 and Michel Foucault, "Technologies of the Self" in Luther Martin, Huck Gutman and Patrick Hutton (eds), *Technologies of the Self: A Seminar with Michel Foucault*, (London: Tavistock, 1988), 19. It was the cultural demands of the surfing judges' gaze that circulated beyond the contest arena as an "act of seeing" in which surfers self-fashioned themselves toward the "good surfer" through those "modes of articulation which work[ed] by setting up standards or 'norms' against which individuals culturally measure[d] and 'correct[ed] their behaviour and presentation of the self" to produce a hegemonic surfing style that made for an exemplar surfing masculinity. The quotation is from Susan Bordo, "Feminism, Foucault and the Politics of the Body" in *Reconstructing Foucault: Essays in the Wake of the 80s*, eds. Ricardo Miguel-Alfonso and Silvia Caporale-Bizzini (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1994), 223, note 6.

<sup>138</sup> See Judith Butler, *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of "Sex"*. (London: Routledge, 1993), x.

<sup>139</sup> Anthony Morris, "First SA Surfing Championships this Week-end", *The Natal Mercury*, 30 June 1966.

<sup>140</sup> See Connell, *Masculinities*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995), 54.

<sup>141</sup> See Judith Butler, *Bodies That Matter*, xi.

<sup>142</sup> Anthony Morris, "Waves of 15 Feet Pound Boards," *The Natal Mercury*, 4 July 1966.

the swell rose to the eighteen feet range, four non-contestants, namely, Wilbur Baars, Neville Calenbourne, Frenchy Fredericks and Bob Trevethan paddled out and successfully rode these waves. As Harry Bold reported in the *South African Surfer*,

Some good performances during the morning were put up by non-competitors who could not resist the good surf and held a contest of their own to see who take off the furthest inside, on the biggest and most ridiculous looking wave! They all had good rides, and if anyone was scoring, Neville Calenbourne would probably have beaten [the other] Anstery's regulars ... by a narrow margin.<sup>143</sup>

This day has become etched in South African surf heritage memory. In 1993, Pat Flanagan recorded in *Zigzag* surfing magazine, and making a comparison to macho Hawaiian waves, that Calenbourne's "Sunset Beach-sized" wave "would have won him six heats in a row" if he was competing in the national championships (see Figure 1.7).<sup>144</sup>



Figure 1.7: Contesting the "good surfer": Neville Calenbourne, Ansteys Beach, 2 July 1966.<sup>145</sup>

Photographs of Calenbourne's wave made the pages of *The Natal Mercury* in Anthony Morris' surfing column and took a page, with two sequence photographs, of the *South African Surfer* magazine article covering the national titles. Calenbourne in surfing a big wave thus gained more visual recognition than the other top national competitors featured in the magazine. In so doing, his gain in subcultural reputation subverted the cultural norms defining the "functional" surfer, raising questions of the judges' gaze on "good" surfing given recognition within organised surfing, and casting doubt on the final determination of who the "best" surfer was in South Africa in 1966. Furthermore, Calenbourne and the other three male surfers

<sup>143</sup> Harry Bold, "S.A. Titles 1966," *South African Surfer*, 2, 4 (October 1966), 9.

<sup>144</sup> Pat Flanagan, "Timewarp", *Zigzag*, 17, 3 (May-June 1993), 45. See also Garnet Currie, "The Last Wave", *Zigzag*, 3, 3 (June-August 1979), 13.

<sup>145</sup> Photograph from Neville Calenbourne Collection, South African Surfing Heritage Archive. This same wave was photographed by John Thornton and appeared in *South African Surfer*, 2, 4 (October 1966), 11.

provided evidence of alternative configuration of an exemplar surfing masculinity that accrued subcultural status without the need for organised competition, that is, a non-conformist hyper-masculinity of risk, bravado and male sociability that drew meaning from a mythologised Hawai'i mediated through a received Californian surfing imaginary.<sup>146</sup>

For the awarding of the national surfing titles, the big waves unsettled the judging and the hegemony of "functional" surfing. This allowed the nineteen year-old Robert McWade's high scoring rides in the large waves of the Saturday at Anstey's Beach, rather than the in two-to-three foot "fun" waves on the Sunday at the Wedge, next to the West Street Pier, on the Durban beachfront, to secure him the Men's title and a place in the 1966 Springbok surfing team.<sup>147</sup> This was an "unexpected result" as McWade scored more than the favourites, George Thomopolous, Errol Hickman and Max Wetteland, who already had been recognised as "good" surfers through prior contest performance.<sup>148</sup>

The 1966 Natal and South African Surfing Championships therefore show that both the codification of amateur competitive surfing and the nature of recognition in surfing culture were constructed within gender relations that prioritised exemplary surfing acts by men. This male cultural distinction within the sport was made possible within the institutionalisation of organised surfing by means of the judges' gaze. Furthermore, this masculine domination of surfing and the objectives of SASA in selecting "functional" surfing as the standard for "good" surfing were promoted through aligned interests in the surf and mainstream media. The making of male surfing champions who could gain their national colours and prestige through a national championship was the pinnacle of amateur surfing's ability to confer recognition on a surfer for sporting prowess in the waves. This then made the male surfer into a cultural commodity that was marketable by the surf industry in promoting the consumption of surfboards, surf wear and the surfing lifestyle in South Africa. These masculine and promotional trends within local surfing continued into the 1970s, however, they were adaptable and the competitive surfing identity fluid. This can be seen in how the professionalisation of surfing in the mid-1970s consolidated the earlier image of the exemplar male surfer within the commercialisation of the sport and advance the credibility of South Africa as a surfing nation in global surfing.

### **Re-imagining the Surfer: Shaun Tomson, Professionalism and the Surfing Nation**

Shifting the criteria use for judging longboard surfing in the Sixties, and thus redefining "functional" surfing for riding waves on shortboards, the official 1977 Gunston 500 Programme judging criteria determined a champion in the following way, "competitors would score the most points by riding the biggest wave at the greatest speed for the longest time, using functional manoeuvres to do so."<sup>149</sup> This need for different codes in the making of exemplar surfing men emerged from two factors that came to the fore in the early 1970s. First, the technological shift to shorter surfboards (as noted above in the discussion on the diffusion of the sport from the global to the local) allowed for a more manoeuvrable approach to surfing that made for more aggressive styles of riding waves. This made the sport of surfing more spectacular to watch from the beach and contest organisers capitalised on this cultural determinism. The second factor was the emergence of professional surfing events in Hawai'i, California and Australia where a champion surfer could win both prize-

<sup>146</sup> In addition to the overseas surfing magazines circulating in South Africa, Bud Browne's surf film *Locked In* (1964) captured Californian Greg Noll surfing a 25-foot wave in Hawaii. On the history of big-wave surfing by Californians travelling to Hawai'i from the 1940s to the 1960s, see Douglas Booth, *Surfing: The Ultimate Guide*, (Santa Barbara, Denver and Oxford: Greenwood, 2011), 27-29 and 88-90.

<sup>147</sup> The South African team was announced by Harry Bold in "S.A. Titles 1966," *South African Surfer*, 2 (4) 1966, 17. The other team members were: George Thompson, Errol Hickman, Donald Paarman, Cornell Barnett, Margaret Smith and Marlene Webb.

<sup>148</sup> "Surfing Personality No.6," *South African Surfer*, 2 (4) 1966, 23.

<sup>149</sup> Quote from the *1977 Gunston 500 Programme*.

money and international prestige. South African surfing was part of that process; the annual Gunston 500 surfing event, started in 1969 and associated with the main sponsor Gunston cigarettes, provided the arena for the spectacle of professional surfing locally and opened the way for top international surfers to travel to South Africa despite the boycott against apartheid sport (as addressed in Chapter 3).<sup>150</sup> This trend towards professionalism was advanced in the early 1970s when the organisation of international amateur surfing collapsed due to poor organisation and a lack of sponsorship.<sup>151</sup> Adding to the waning of amateur team surfing contests was a backlash from soul surfers globally who eschewed contests for individual paths of personal pleasure and playful lifestyles within the counterculture. Ironically, as Booth has noted, “the counterculture also raised new opportunities for professional surfing, alerting disciples to the potential to transform the traditional work and leisure dichotomy into a work-is-play philosophy.”<sup>152</sup> As reported on in Durban’s *Daily News*, “[t]here’s a whole new breed of surfer growing up around the world today, with aspirations of making big money and earning international renown rather than dropping out on a desolate beach.”<sup>153</sup> It was this new sensibility and its co-option by commercial interests within competitive surfing that was a large part for making the conditions possible for the emergence of Durban born Shaun Tomson as a professional surfing icon in the mid-1970s. It was through the processes of surfing’s professionalisation globally and locally that competitive surfing provided the podium for a nascent surf industry and an avenue for the surf media to lock commercial interests to a narrower view of the surfing lifestyle.

Drawing on the global imaginary constructed during the Californication of surfing, professional surfing’s centre in the mid-1970s was the North Shore island of Oahu, Hawai’i.<sup>154</sup> South African surfers as of the 1960s had mythologised Hawai’i, especially as site to prove their manhood and gain subcultural recognition internationally and locally. It was this gendered cultural privileging that located “Hawai’i” for the South African surfers in the South African surfing magazines *Down The Line* (1976-1977) and *Zigzag* (from December 1976) in the mid-to-late 1970s. These magazines became a site for the production and dissemination of local and international surfing knowledge and masculinities located in the image of the professional surfer. Nevertheless, for South African surfers the Hawaiian surfing experience was represented as both a personal paradise and purgatory. It was a palm tree “surfer’s paradise” worthy of “pilgrimage” yet was also the “testing grounds”, intimidating in its assertion of a macho image in the crowded winter waves that “break you in.”<sup>155</sup> Yet, the big Hawaiian waves of the Northern Hemisphere winter months of December/January had a humbling effect on a surfer, displacing aggression with fear. Professional surfer and surf journalist Michael

<sup>150</sup> From a South African perspective, the founding of the Gunston 500 in Durban in 1969 meant that South Africa had a ready platform when the world professional surfing tour was established in October 1976 by the International Surfing Professionals (ISP). The Durban 500 in 1969 was the inaugural professional contest in South Africa and was renamed the Gunston 500 in 1971 after Gunston Cigarette came on board as sponsors. The event added to Durban’s “Surf City” standing, although the contest was taken to East London in 1974, 1976 and 1978. The Gunston 500 remained on the contest circuit after the ISP was replaced by the Association of Surfing Professionals (ASP) in 1982 to manage the world professional tour. Along with a high points rating as a prestigious event on the surfing calendar, the Gunston 500 event organisers were able to secure key sponsorship from the Gunston tobacco brand throughout the apartheid years to ensure that South Africa always had a materially appealing contest on offer to international and local professional surfers. Gunston continued to sponsor the event until 1999 when legislation banning tobacco product advertising was introduced in South Africa. Thereafter, local clothing retailer Mr Price continued the corporate sponsorship of this professional event, renamed the Mr Price Pro. On the Gunston 500 see *1973 Gunston 500 Programme*; Pike, *Surfing in South Africa*, 19; Warshaw, *The Encyclopedia of Surfing*, 241; and, for the East London events, Glenn Hollands, *The Reef: A Legacy of Surfing in East London*, (East London: Glenn Hollands, 2012), 182-9.

<sup>151</sup> Warshaw, *The History of Surfing*, 259.

<sup>152</sup> Booth, *Australian Beach Cultures*, 117.

<sup>153</sup> *Daily News*, 13 July 1977, Brenda Gatfield Scrapbook, Timewarp Surfing Museum Collection.

<sup>154</sup> See Nat Young with Craig McGregor, *The History of Surfing*, (Palm Beach: Palm Beach Press, 1983), 118-125 and Booth, *Australian Beach Cultures*, 126-7.

<sup>155</sup> “Hit Hawaii, Brahs,” *Zigzag*, 2, 1 (December 1977/February 1978), 7 and Paul Naude, “Hawaii...All the Answers,” *Zigzag*, 4, 2 (March/May 1980), 12.

Tomson's wrote of this experience, "Hawaii ... unzips your soul, spreads your wares out like an elaborate psychic buffet."<sup>156</sup> Thus, surviving those waves engendered a status based on physical prowess and an induction into what Michael Tomson termed a surfing "brotherhood". Within this discourse of risk and peak experience was the elevated status of the professional surfer; as noted by Michael Tomson, "[s]urfers everywhere talk of having 'made it' once they've surfed Hawaii. They talk of it as a sort of final experience – something one must do at some point in one's career."<sup>157</sup> This link between "Hawai'i" and surfing prowess as a rite of passage for the young, competitively-orientated South African male surfers in the mid-1970s was entwined within Hawaiian contest promoters' establishment of a world professional circuit and the emergent promotional surfing culture that linked sponsorship exposure as part of the making of a career from surfing contests.<sup>158</sup> Thus, surfing magazine representations of South African male professional surfers foregrounded both celebrity and nation at the epicentre of a global competitive surfing culture. The June/August 1977 *Zigzag* cover of Shaun Tomson and the May/May 1978 cover of the same magazine of his cousin Michael Tomson surfing Hawaiian winter waves both attest to this promotional culture and these South African surfers from Durban elevated place therein (see Figure 1.8).



Figure 1.8: Surfing Hawai'i on Zigzag magazine covers: Cousins Shaun Tomson (L) and Michael Tomson (R).<sup>159</sup>

<sup>156</sup> Mike Tomson, "Survival," *Zigzag*, 3, 1 (December 1978/February 1979), 12.

<sup>157</sup> Mike Tomson, "Survival," 12.

<sup>158</sup> There was a politics to this process of surfing's global professionalisation. In the 1975-1976 Hawaiian surfing season, the Tomson cousins (in particular, although among other South Africans) and several young Australian professional surfers were seen as pushing their surfing performance to gain entry into Hawaiian professional contests and in so doing challenging the Hawaiian-born surfing establishment and the *aloha* surfing ethos that gave meaning to that local surfing order. The result was that Native Hawaiian surfing saw the Australian surfers, in particular, as advancing a neo-colonial whiteness in the surf zone and responded with threats and acts of violence against the Australians. The South African surfers distanced themselves from what was called the "Hawaiian Saga" by Michael Tomson. He indicated that it was an Hawaiian-Australian issue, thus attempting to absolve the South Africans, himself included, in any complicity with the Australian lack of respect for Hawaiian surfing culture. Rather, Tomson placed the responsibility for the conflict on the international surfing media's coverage of the Hawaiian contest season. See Michael Tomson, "Who's Tops Now," *Down The Line*, 3 (February 1977), 19 and 22. The historical record however does show that the South Africans were complicit here but were seen as not as brash as the Australians. For a review of this period and the politics of insiders and outsiders in Hawaiian surfing see Westwick and Neushul, *The World in the Curl*, 149-156. For a history of the assertion of a Native Hawaiian cultural identity, the reclaiming of surfing spaces from *hoale* (white) international surfers, and the negotiation of material benefits for Hawaiians from IPS contests see Isaiah Helekunihi Walker, *Waves of Resistance: Surfing and History in Twentieth-Century Hawai'i*, (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2011), 130-150. Notably, Shaun Tomson does not feature in Walker's analysis of the politics of surfing in this period.

<sup>159</sup> See covers for *Zigzag*, 1, 3 (June/August 1977) and *Zigzag*, 2, 2 (March/May 1978).



The prominence of Shaun and Michael Tomson in the South African surfing imaginary requires comment. Reflecting on the late 1970s in Durban, surf entrepreneur Mike Larmont indicated that the Tomson cousins were important to the making of Durban into a “global surf city” and focused “the world spotlight on the Bay of Plenty”, Durban’s premier surf spot at the time and the place from where local surfing talent had made waves globally.<sup>160</sup> A Springbok surfer in his teenage years, Shaun Tomson had turned professional in 1974 and, in the second year of the International Professional Surfing (IPS) tour, become the 1977 World Professional Champion at the age of twenty-two years.<sup>161</sup> The world title win was acknowledged by Michael Tomson, reporting on the 1977/1978 Hawaiian professional season, that “[f]or South Africa it was a good one; we asserted our national pride squarely in the epicentre of international surfing, and in so doing got ourselves a local world champion.”<sup>162</sup> In 1978, as professional surfers, and continuing to make visible South Africa as a surfing nation, Tomson along with South African professional surfers Jonathan Paarman and Gavin Rudolph were in the world professional top sixteen rankings. According to Larmont, by 1979 “surfing competitive success was backed up and supported by a local fledgling surf industry that began in Durban and went on to achieve global recognition ....” These surf businesses included Shaun Tomson’s Instinct Clothing, Michael Tomson’s Gotcha surfwear alongside Larmont’s agency for the international Lightning Bolt (Hawai’i) and Rip Curl (Australia) brands, his surfboard manufacturing business, Larmont Surfboards, and Spider Murphy at Safari Surfboards. Warren Wareing’s Island Style and Barry Wolin’s Bear International followed them in the early 1980s. In the Tomson family, Shaun’s father, Ernie Tomson was a surf contest organiser who co-founded the Gunston 500, and was instrumental in funding Shaun Tomson’s initial overseas travel to Hawai’i. These intertwined competitive and commercial interests were closely aligned to the Durban based South African surfing magazines of the 1970s, *Down The Line* and *Zigzag*. Michael Tomson, who had also surfed professionally, was the publisher of *Down The Line* and Larmont was a co-founder of *Zigzag*.

The South African surfing imaginary was thus determined by the material and cultural power of a small number of Durban’s surfing elite. It is thus not surprising when the twenty-three year old Springbok surfer, Kevin Todd, pointed out, “[w]hat really blows me out about surfing in South Africa is that the general public thinks there are only two surfers in this country – Shaun and Mike Tomson.”<sup>163</sup> The cultural effect of the Tomson cousins’ prominence locally and in Hawai’i was to cite a white professional surfing masculinity, emanating from Durban, as the dominant surfing identity in South African surfing culture. This masculine identity eclipsed the exemplary nature of amateur competitive surfers as constructed since 1966. A further effect was that recreational male surfers were placed outside of the focus of camera lens and thus were not a representational threat to the exemplary status accorded the professional surfer. Similarly, while the surfing imaginary included women competitive surfers when sporting recognition was required, in the main the surfing industry and surfing magazines’ preference was to represent women, whether surfers or not, in a bikini at the beach (as addressed further in Chapter 2). Black male surfers, absent from the white surfing

<sup>160</sup> Mike Larmont, “History Of Modern Era Of Durban Surfing (From Late 1960’s),” nd, 1, Mike Larmont Collection, Surfing Heritage South Africa Archive.

<sup>161</sup> See the autobiographic essay on his entry into professional surfing, “Shaun Tomson” in Shaun Tomson, *Bustin’ Down The Door: The Surf Revolution of ’75*, (New York: Abrams, 2008), 18-26. This publication is part of Tomson’s revisiting of his role in that historical moment, further mythologised through the production and promotion of the documentary film *Bustin’ Down The Door*, dir. Jeremy Gosch, (USA: Fresh and Smoked, 2008). The film does point to Tomson’s role and place within the “Hawaiian Saga”, as noted in footnote 157 above, reinterpreted as progress in a move toward the professionalisation of surfing and not as surfing neo-colonial.

<sup>162</sup> Mike Tomson, “Surf Wars in Hawaii,” *Zigzag*, 2, 2 (March/May 1978), 16.

<sup>163</sup> Tony Kinnear, “Kevin Todd: Just Cruising,” *Zigzag*, 2, 1 (December 1977/February 1978), 10.

everyday due to beach apartheid, were beyond the margins of the South African surfing imaginary of the late 1970s (as discussed in Chapter 4).

### ***Institutionalising the male professional surfer***

*Zigzag's* manufacturing of the professional male surfer as the cultural ideal within surfing aided the institutionalisation of professionalism in surfing. The formation of the South African Professional Surfing Association (SAPSA) occurred after the Hawaiian winter of December 1977/January 1978 and the association formalised links with the International Surfing Professionals (ISP) for in October 1976.<sup>164</sup> There were twelve male professional surfers listed as members of this surfer administered association.<sup>165</sup> SAPSA drew clear lines between professional and amateur surfing with professional surfing carrying more sporting status than amateur surfing. This distinction between amateur and professional surfing was enforced within organised surfing whereby a professional could not surf in an amateur event and an amateur could not accept prize-money for winning a pro-am event. This distinction aimed at protecting professional surfers material interests and created the sociological division between surfing for money (a career) and surfing for honour (a pastime). However, conflict over access to financial sponsorship pointed to a means for amateur surfing to undermine the birthing of local professional surfing. In early 1978, Michael Tomson considered amateur surfing's "interference with the growth of professionalism in the country" as two-fold: reputational in the damage to professional surfing's status as surfing's premier league due to SASA, the amateur surfing body, planning the 1978 World Surfing Titles for South Africa, and financial in SASA's approach to Gunston to sponsor R10,000 toward that international event.<sup>166</sup> This move by amateur surfing was seen to put economic pressure on local professional surfing by drawing sponsorship away from investment in the Gunston 500. For Tomson, the result would be that "we will be in danger of becoming a non-venue on the pro tour, because there is not enough prize money to make travel to this country worthwhile."<sup>167</sup> Tomson's point came with the recognition also that Gunston Cigarettes, as principal sponsor of the annual Gunston 500 since 1971, had "received a phenomenal return on its investment in surfing" as "publicity for the Gunston 500 is running rampant, and the prize money is more or less remaining constant."<sup>168</sup> What this discourse of a struggle over resources within local organised surfing demonstrated was the precarious place professional surfing maintained in holding onto the distinction that professionalism was structured in the hierarchy of competitive surfing as above that of amateur surfing. Yet, despite a lack of SAPSA's institutional power locally due to SASA's longer organisational history and its affiliation to government and international sporting structures, in instituting a surfer ranking system and the categorisation of contests in relation the value of prize money and points, SAPSA's system associated professionalism's status with financial gain and the recognition for sporting prowess outside of, and not dependent on, amateur surfing.

As this was a male dominated sport at the time in South Africa, the institutionalisation of professionalism centred on men who made surfing their business while romanticising the surfing lifestyle. Thus, the professional surfing masculinity had a circular materialist configuration; he was a young, aspirant, middle class surfing businessman who was promoted as a subcultural icon and whose currency lent credibility to surf brands products. There was a further identity formation at work here; that of "managerial athleticism", as

<sup>164</sup> Mike Tomson, "Power to the Pros," *Zigzag*, 2, 2 (March/May 1978), 38.

<sup>165</sup> The surfers listed were: G. Rudolph, S. Tomson, M. Esposito, P. Naude, M. Tomson, J. Paarman, K. Todd, M. Ginsberg, R. Meiring, M. Larmont, B. Sharp and J. Sanders. Most of these surfers were from Durban.

<sup>166</sup> Tomson, "Power to the Pros," 38.

<sup>167</sup> Tomson, "Power to the Pros," 38.

<sup>168</sup> Tomson, "Power to the Pros," 38.

used by Booth in drawing on Bryan Turner's sociology of the body, "a notion of professionalism as a political system of embodied ethical values and attitudes" where "professional athletes, including surfers, must carefully manage their public presentation to convey acceptable images of the body (especially to potential corporate sponsors)."<sup>169</sup> Appearance therefore became part of the marketability of a professional surfer as a cultural commodity and a sign for making surfing respectable and success-orientated in the eyes of the public (see Figure 1.9). This, as observed by Garnet Currie in a 1979 article in *Zigzag* titled "Surfers ... Are They Losing Their Identity?" on surf fashion, was also located in the consumption of fashionable male sartorial style and distinction,

[I]t is likely that the surfer was merely drawn along in the wake of a general awakening in men's fashions in the early Seventies. / An awareness of style and appearance, frowned upon in yesteryear, emerged and it was no longer considered un-manly to take pride in one's dress.<sup>170</sup>



Figure 1.9: A fashionable and clean-cut athlete: Shaun Tomson interviewed by SATV, c.1978.<sup>171</sup>

Currie's observations were in contrast to the dissenting masculine image of the long-blonde-haired, tanned beach bum (as noted above in the discussion of the counterculturalist soul surfer). The possibility of this non-conformist masculinity subverting the exemplar configuration was recognised within organised surfing community and especially SAPSA in their promoting of a "clean cut" surfer image. The mobilisation of Shaun Tomson in the press and television had a specific goal for professional surfing (with associated discursive benefits for amateur surfing), namely, to help South African surfing re-orientate itself away from the early 1970s image of "drug addicts, layabouts and beach bums."<sup>172</sup> The performativity of the exemplary

<sup>169</sup> Booth, *Australian Beach Cultures*, 136 and 222, footnote 84 for Turner's term from his *The Body and Society*, (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1984), 111-12.

<sup>170</sup> Garnet Currie, "Surfers ... Are They Losing Their Identity?" *Zigzag*, 3, 2 (March/May 1979), 10.

<sup>171</sup> Photograph from Independent Newspapers Collection, Surfing Heritage South Africa Archive.

<sup>172</sup> Baron Stander, "Natal Surfriders Association," 49.

professional surfer, and the circulation of that image, flew in the face of earlier portrayals of surfers as resistant to a work ethic.



Figure 1.10: "I've never tried to create an image": Shaun Tomson poses for a *Down The Line* interview, 1977.<sup>173</sup>

In upholding the values and appearance of a middle class-bound, market orientated surfing masculinity, along with the display of a "muscular, heroic and technically competent" masculinity, as noted for exemplar amateur surfers, Shaun Tomson as the 1977 World Professional Surfing Champion provided the South African surfing community and public with a national sporting hero. For organised surfing, both professional and amateur, Tomson willingly stepped into the role of an ambassador for South African surfing in the international sporting arena.<sup>174</sup> Tomson's world-class surfing status was also used for public relations purposes by the South African government as evidence for South African international sporting contact during the international boycott against apartheid sport (as discussed further in Chapter 3). Yet, for the twenty-one year old Shaun Tomson in 1977, a few months prior to his world title win, his professional career was about individual choice and self-expression and not that of a responsabilised surfer with global distinction, "I'm surfing for myself and not for anyone else ... I've never tried to create an image. I try to remain natural as possible and just be myself, I don't think I need to mould an image."<sup>175</sup> This statement by Tomson was at odds with this posturing in a kimono for the *Down The Line* cover photograph, the issue in which Currie's article appeared (see Figure 1.10).<sup>176</sup> If Tomson's own managed image as a professional

<sup>173</sup> Cover for *Down The Line*, 6 (July 1977).

<sup>174</sup> See "Shaun Tomson – We Salute You!" in SASA, *Moments*, 63.

<sup>175</sup> Garnet Currie, "Shaun Tomson: Is There Life After Success?" *Down The Line*, 6 (July 1977), 22.

<sup>176</sup> The homoerotic language as a homosocial aside on the cover alludes a homophobia within the heteronormativity of surfing, as noted by Clifton Evers, "The Point': Surfing, Geography and a Sensual Life of Men and Masculinity on the Gold Coast, Australia," *Social and Cultural Geography*, 10, 8 (2009), 896. The reference to Tomson's "5<sup>th</sup> title defense"

surfer was invisible to himself, then so too was his masculinity and his whiteness. Not so his cousin Michael Tomson, who in 1978 pointed to the gendered, classed and raced nature of South African professional surfers and their embodiment of a national identity; sentiments that have travelled from the 1970s to the 2000s within the South African surfing imaginary. In citing Shaun Tomson, Michael Tomson stated in *Zigzag* surfing magazine,

But surfing in South Africa is not a one-man event, and I hope for the sake of the sport, that Gavin Rudolph and Jonathan Paarman and Mike Esposito save, scrape, and suck every cent they can get their hands on, to get themselves at least partially on the pro. tour. These are *our Great White Hopes* for the upcoming series of contests. Naturally Shaun is as well, but it's time others entered the fray, and I'm not only talking about The Gunston and Hang Ten contests [locally]. I'm talking about Brazil, Florida, Hawaii and Australia as well [emphasis mine].<sup>177</sup>

It is to the political challenges to South African surfing's "Great White Hopes" and the unsettling of surfing's masculine identities that we now turn in demythologising the surfing imaginary as produced historically in South Africa.

---

was for his multiple consecutive wins of the Gunston 500. Tomson was to win this event in 1977 and again in 1978 for the sixth time. On this see Matt Warshaw's entry on Gunston 500 in his *The Encyclopedia of Surfing*, 241.

<sup>177</sup> Mike Tomson, "Line Up of the '78 Pro Show," *Zigzag*, 2, 3 (June/August 1978), 10 [emphasis mine].

## Chapter 2: Liquid Girls: Changing Surfing Femininities, 1965 – 1994

“There is more to being a women surf board rider than meets the eye.”

Cecile Charlesworth, 1966<sup>1</sup>

In the September 1977 issue of *Down The Line*, Lorna Currie wrote an article about the attitudes of white women and men in Durban towards women who surfed. Currie found a pervasive sexism at the beach; men saw women in the surf as entering a male domain and women felt they would become muscular from surfing. Both views created a cultural politics of difference subordinating women to a male dominated gender order that discouraged women from taking up surfing. Currie observed, “there is obviously a school of thought that believes surfing requires aggressive strength and is distinctly unladylike. Apparently, a women’s femininity is washed off somewhere between paddling out and dropping into the wave.” This provoked her questions: “Where does it go? ... And what is feminine?”<sup>2</sup>

This chapter takes up Currie’s questions about gendered surfing identities by exploring the construction of white surfing femininities in South Africa from the mid-1960s to 1994. Drawing primarily on South African surfing magazines, under review are the constraints and possibilities in the making of the image of the surfer girl as an athlete in South African surfing during the years of apartheid.<sup>3</sup> It argues that this representation emerged as a hegemonic surfing femininity in women’s surfing, in relation to men and other surfing and beach femininities that over time wove the self-fashioning of girls in the curl with the shaping of the surfer girl by surfing’s competitive and promotional cultures.<sup>4</sup>

### Femlins and girl surfers, 1960s

The Sixties has resonance today for women who surfed at the time, and for those who still surf today. In an April 2013 Facebook post by Bernie Shelly (nee Woods) of Andrew Ogilvie’s photograph of her surfing on a heavy, nine foot board in a bikini as a teenager at Scarborough Beach, Cape Town in December 1964, Shelly commented that this was “[m]y first summer of surfing, one of [my] first rides ever - on a borrowed board” (Figure 2.1).<sup>5</sup> Comments to Shelly’s Facebook post included a note by Alison Muller pointing out that they were surfing a few years before wetsuits were available to ward off the cold Atlantic Ocean water. There

<sup>1</sup> “Cecile Charlesworth, “Girls Overboard,” *South African Surfer*, 2, 3 (July 1966), 33.

<sup>2</sup> Lorna Currie, “Women in Surfing: Are They for Real?” *Down The Line*, 8 (September 1977), 14.

<sup>3</sup> Surfing culture has cited “girl” for young and older women surfers since the mid-1960s. “Surfer girl” affirms a surfing identity as well as positions women surfers as acquiescing to male subcultural practices. While her antecedents are noted in this chapter, since the mid-1990s, the “surfer girl” has become a sign, not unproblematic, of a fit, attractive and independent femininity within global consumer culture. See Leslie Heywood, “Third-Wave Feminism, the Global Economy, and Women’s Surfing: Sport as Stealth Feminism in Girls’ Surf Culture” in Anita Harris (ed), *Next Wave Cultures: Feminism, Subcultures, Activism*, (New York and London: Routledge, 2008).

<sup>4</sup> “Girls in the curl” draws on the title of Andrea Gabbard’s *Girl in the Curl: A Century of Women in Surfing*, (Seattle: Seal Press, 2000) which made visible women’s surfing history internationally. I am mindful of my positionality as a white, heterosexual, male as well as the nature of the sources I am using in salvaging women’s surfer histories. The ventriloquizing of the Other has received criticism for not taking into consideration the politics of memory and representation. See Gary Minkley and Ciraj Rassool, “Orality, Memory, and Social History in South Africa”, in Sarah Nuttall and Carli Coetzee, (eds), *Negotiating the Past: The Making of Memory in South Africa*, (Cape Town: Oxford University Press, 1998) and Ciraj Rassool, “Power, Knowledge and the Politics of the Public Past”, *African Studies*, 69, 1 (2010), 83-84.

<sup>5</sup> Bernie Shelly, Facebook, 11 April 2013, <https://www.facebook.com/bernie.shelly1/posts/364005577037298> [accessed on 16 April 2013]. Shelly, after a hiatus from surfing due to motherhood, has returned to her surfing life. In her sixties, she is a regular competitor in the South African Longboard Surfing Championships, representing Western Province in the Divas division (age 35 years and above) in 2014. Shelly exemplifies Belinda Wheaton’s observation that “[o]lder women surfers, in particular, are challenging dominant discourses about physical activity, risk, age and embodiment.” See her *The Cultural Politics of Lifestyle Sports*, (London and New York: Routledge, 2013), 63.

was also more than a hint of nostalgia in Muller's remembering of their youthful adventurous outdoors identity in the surf.



Figure 2.1: Bernadette (Bernie) Woods surfing Scarborough Beach, December 1964.<sup>6</sup>

The photograph, while offering only a silhouette of Shelly's active teenage body, and Muller's reminiscences of a white female subjectivity, that sought to be defined as not conventionally feminine, illustrate that for young white women the surfing lifestyle of the mid-1960s was seen as liberating yet within the constraints of gender relations configured by a white, male surfing culture that designated women as subordinated to the masculine ideal.<sup>7</sup> While white women has access to the beach, and hence surfing, this was not necessarily on their own terms within this male dominated sporting culture.

Institutionalised surfing in the mid to late 1960s had active surf club structures that affiliated to a regional association. Club membership was only open to "Male and Female South African citizens of the White Group" at the Mahakane Surfing Club, the Point Surfing Club and the Southside Surfing Club, all of which affiliated to the Natal Surfriders Association (NSA).<sup>8</sup> Age was not a criterion of membership, unless an applicant was under the age of twenty-one years and required parental consent. The Zinkawzi Surfing Club on the Natal North Coast, however, expressly excluded women and only allowed male members from the age of sixteen. These organised surfing bodies were masculine in orientation to cater for male surfers and its leadership comprised of men. They were assisted by women in administrative duties, such as Doreen Smithies, the secretary of the NSA in 1966.<sup>9</sup> In a September 1967 review in *South African Surfer* of twenty-two surf clubs there was mention of women surfers in two cases, both for clubs based in Muizenberg, Cape Town. The Wave-Rider Surf Club was a social surfing club catering for "a group of keen enthusiastic young

<sup>6</sup> Photograph by Andrew Ogilvie, Andrew Ogilvie Private Collection.

<sup>7</sup> For whiteness of surf culture due to beach apartheid see the Introduction.

<sup>8</sup> For these surf club constitutions see Dave Lee Collection.

<sup>9</sup> Letter from Mrs Doreen Smithies, Secretary of the Natal Surfriders Association to Natal Surfriders Association members, 19 October 1966, Dave Lee Collection.

boys and girls” and supervised by adults.<sup>10</sup> The second was the Seal Surf Club, the “only ‘Girls only’ club in South Africa”, with all its six members part of the Western Province surfing team.<sup>11</sup> For the Durban surf club scene it was reported by surfer and journalist Anthony Morris that in December 1965 of the twenty “girls” who surfed most were members of the Addington Surf Club.<sup>12</sup> As indicative of the club scene, which probably did not account for all recreational surfers in South Africa, it can be said that women made up a small percentage of the total local surfing population at the time.<sup>13</sup>

The first mention of South African “surfer girls” was in the first issue of *South African Surfer* in April 1965. John Whitmore, president of Western Cape Surfing Association (WPSA), wrote that the “[Cape] Peninsula Surfer has much to be thankful for, for not only has he or she, and there are now many up and coming girl surfers, many spots from which to choose, but there is always the escape from crowds and adverse winds.”<sup>14</sup> Whitmore’s comments were part of his promotion of the emergent sport of surfing in South Africa and the identified need within organised surfing at the end of 1964 to affiliate surfing to the national sports federation. From late 1965 a further pull factor for local women’ surfing was the need for the newly constituted South African Surfriders’ Association (SASA) to meet the requirements of the International Surfrider Federation (ISF) in fielding a national team of male and female surfers for the 1966 world championships. Thus, the promotion of women surfers in the surf media and through formal institutional structures was in the interests of local amateur surfing despite its primary orientation towards male surfers.

While the organised sport of surfing in the Sixties reluctantly drew in women surfers, surfing culture used women within beach culture to bolster surfing masculinities. As narrated by a Durban surfer in a fictive account of his first surf experience, and attesting to surfing’s sensual allure, the feminine gaze maintained, or unmade in this case, a muscular masculinity within surfing.

Patiently I waited for the day when I would try out my surfboard. I had visions of myself shooting down a blue wave, watched by admiring bikini girls on the beach. But this was not to be ... I looked around and saw a group of bikini girls laughing at me.<sup>15</sup>

The active/male and passive/female dichotomy of this social setting on the beach, with the male surfing body in action in the surf gaining meaning in relation to a feminine gaze embodying docility on the beach, even when engaged in capturing surfing memories, established a logic of gender difference where men surfed in the ocean and women were seen as decorative objects on the beach. Taking the binary a step further, a girlfriend of young male surfer was placed in a secondary relationship to a surfboard, the technology enabling him to play on the waves. *South African Surfer* recounted this male desire of the ideal surfer’s girl in a 1965 article.

The surfboard (second hand, R40), is the most cherished possession. Even the girlfriend takes second place. If she’s not a beach girl and she wants to stay in the picture she must grin and bear surf talk. If she really hangs on him (five or ten!) she’ll swot up on surf lingo, sit on the sands and watch the rides and the wipe-outs, or better still train her camera on the conquering hero.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>10</sup> “South Africa and Its Surfin’ Scene,” *South African Surfer*, 4, 1 (September 1967), 31.

<sup>11</sup> “South Africa and Its Surfin’ Scene,” 30. The Seal Surf Club was resurrected again in April 2013 for “mature women surfers”. Telephone conversation with Bernie Shelly, 13 April 2013.

<sup>12</sup> Anthony Morris, “Now the girls discover that stoked feeling,” *The Natal Mercury*, 3 December 1965.

<sup>13</sup> Estimates of Durban’s surfing population over time are provided in Chapter 1.

<sup>14</sup> John Whitmore, “Surfing around the Cape,” *South African Surfer*, 1, 1 (April 1965), 6.

<sup>15</sup> Mervyn Fiford, “How not to Ride a Surfboard,” *South African Surfer*, 1, 1 (April 1965), 9.

<sup>16</sup> Honor Rorvick, “A Certain Kind of Madness,” *South African Surfer*, 1, 2 (July 1965), 27.



These same attitudes were reiterated in Sixties surf magazine advertising. Women were cast as objects of male desire within surfing's promotional culture to create an allure for products by the association of sensuality, surfing and male consumption. Examples of this, referencing American consumer culture and surfing, were advertisements for Pepsi-Cola beverages (see Figure 2.2) and Lexington cigarettes in 1966.<sup>17</sup> In South Africa's adoption of Californian automobile culture in the 1960s, Morris Mini and British Petroleum (BP) also framed their adverts with women supporting male adventure in search of surf, with surfboards strapped to the car roof.<sup>18</sup> South African surf industry advertising also maintained the male gaze within the surfing imaginary as evidenced in a 1967 Wetteland Surfboards' advert play on "shape" which discursively functions to gender the surfboard as a feminine object of desire (Figure 2.2).<sup>19</sup>



Figure 2.2: Gender in surf advertising in the Sixties from South African Surfer.

Women who surfed shifted the cultural politics of these gendered representations of active/passive bodies. The formation of surfing femininities therefore occurred as a process of accommodation to the male surfing subculture, and as a self-fashioning process of taking on a youthful, active identity as a women that flouted the conservative roles of domesticity associated with middle-class white women in South African society.<sup>20</sup> While taking up surfing was a going against the grain of social norms during the Sixties for young

<sup>17</sup> These advertisements can be found in *South African Surfer*, 2, 3 (July 1966), 10 and 22 respectively.

<sup>18</sup> For the Morris Mini advertisement see *South African Surfer*, 1, 2 (July 1965), 6 and for the British Petroleum advertisement see *South African Surfer*, 3, 1 (March 1967), 22.

<sup>19</sup> See *South African Surfer*, 3, 2 (April 1967), 2.

<sup>20</sup> On the contrasting constructions of middle-class white Afrikaner femininity as culturally exclusive in 1950s and commoditised in the 2000s, see Louise Viljoen and Stella Viljoen, "Constructing Femininity in *Huisgenoot*" in Jeanne van Eeden and Amanda du Preez (eds), *South African Visual Culture*, (Pretoria: Van Schaik, 2005). In contrast, struggle femininities (liberal or radical) among middle-class white women, whether citing feminism as an identity or not, have been documented in Jacklyn Cock, "'Another mother for peace': Women and Peace Building in South Africa, 1983-2003" in Nomboniso Gasa (ed), *Women in South African History*, (Pretoria: Human Sciences Research Council, 2007).

white women at the South African coast, the social expectations of marriage and motherhood were to follow once they left the beach for adulthood. As a result of this domesticity most women stopped surfing.

In surfing cultural texts and surfer oral historical narratives, women's identities as surfers were constructed in the Sixties through their youthful surfing lifestyle in relation to male surfers: through the social and dating scene at the beach, involvement in a surf club, travelling the West and East coasts to find surf spots, and watching surf movies such as *Waterlogged* and *The Endless Summer* on Sunday nights. Some women entered local, regional and national surfing contests that opened up sociability between women surfers in regions other than Cape Town. An affirmation of their surfing femininity was articulated in describing how traditional feminine norms of wearing a mini-skirt were undermined by their "surfing knots", temporary fleshy protrusions below the knees as result of paddling kneeling on a surfboard.<sup>21</sup> These "surf bumps", as they were also known, were part of a surfing subcultural identity, an embodied badge of honour, differentiating girl surfers from other women who embraced beach culture.

In all, these constructions of their surfing identity were an expression of their femininity. Yet, there was a tension between a self-fashioned female surfing identity and the structuring of women surfers by the male subculture as less able surfers. This was seen in a discourse where women surfers were relegated in the gendered hierarchy as inferior to men who surfed, irrespective of male surfing skill. Evidence in the late 1960s surf media points to linguistic practices that named "girl surfers" as "femlins", that is; connoting the category of women with "Gremmie". The term "gremmie" named those attempting to learn the skill of surfing, also known in surfing parlance as a "Kook", "Gremlins" or "pseudo surfers".<sup>22</sup> While the term "femlin" was only applied to women who surfed, the associated surfing terms were gender neutral and established a hierarchy of proficiency in the surf, determining which surfers could claim the best waves and subcultural capital. "Gremmies", as beginner surfers in this social hierarchy, were required to defer to those with surfing ability and were seen, due to their inexperience, as generally getting in the way of skilled surfers in the surf zone. On the other hand, "pseudo surfers" were cast as beginners who took to surfing because it was a fashionable beach lifestyle. This latter term was applied to inland holidaymakers as outsiders to the local surfing culture as well as to women in the surf. These terms designed not-quite a surfer, or non-surfer, within the identity politics of surfing that valued subcultural authenticity based in a lived surfing experience rather than one derived from the mainstreaming of the surfing image within Sixties popular culture.

Two letters to the editor and an article in *South African Surfer*, all written by women surfers, as well as a biographic profile of women surfing champion written for the same magazine by a women involved in surfing, bear out how women attempted to find a voice and negotiated their surfing identities. A letter from Maureen Kelly from Durban in the March 1966 issue called for the inclusion of "girl-surfers": "Seeing that surfing has become an increasingly popular sport for both sexes in South Africa, (we girls are not so chicken, you know!), how about dedicating a page to girl-surfers?"<sup>23</sup> The response by the editor, Harry Bold, was telling of the magazine's editorial policy toward women's surfing: "We too would like to publish an article on girl-surfers, and have been anxious to do so ever since the first issue. There are however, some difficulties

<sup>21</sup> Interview with Bernie Shelly and Terese Russel, Cape Town, 16 September 2010. After 1968 the style of paddling out to the waves on one's knees on the buoyant longboards was replaced by paddled lying prone only after the adoption of shorter surfboards.

<sup>22</sup> "The Jargon of Surfing," *The Natal Mercury*, 20 August 1964 and "Glossary of Surfing Terms," *South African Surfer*, 1, 2 (July 1965), 37. Girl surfers were also sexualised as "surf bunnies" by men; noticed not for their surfing but for their bodies. On this point see the interview with Bernie Shelly and Therese Russell.

<sup>23</sup> Letter to the Editor from Maureen Kelly, Durban in *South African Surfer*, 2,1 (March 1966), 37.

involved.”<sup>24</sup> Bold continued by creating a distinction between girls promenading in sea with a surfboard and “real girl surfers” who surfed:

We know that there are a few real girl surfers in the country, that is, girls who are really keen to ride a surfboard, and not just paddle around to attract attention and be “in” with the surfing fad as it were. As I said, we know that there are some genuine girl surfers around, but we have not as yet managed to get any action photographs of them, which would be worthy of publication. We do not want to include pictures of girls, just to beautify the magazine; what we want are good action photographs of real girl surfers, and believe me, we are keeping a lookout for them!”<sup>25</sup>

Yet, three photographs published in the same issue of the magazine undermined Bold’s stated editorial policy. These photographs showed women surfers falling off their surfboards during a 1965 Cape Town surfing contest. The significance of these photographs was two-fold. First, surfing “wipe-outs” were not the norm in the magazine, even for male surfers. Second, these were the first photographs published of women in the waves in South Africa’s first surfing magazine. The visual representation of these wipe-out photographs worked to show women as “gremmies”, and in the language of the caption to these photographs, as signifying women surfers as “[s]ome Cape Femlins in action.”<sup>26</sup> Furthermore, a desiring male gaze was sustained in a further caption: “pardon me ma’m, your slip is showing!”<sup>27</sup>

The ambivalence to women in the waves was further seen in the editor’s response to Kelly’s concluding question: “What however, is your honest opinion of ‘Wahinis’[?]”, to which Bold replied that “‘Wahinis’ are fantastic!” The reference to “Wahinis”, an Anglicisation of the Hawaiian word *wahine*, a woman surfer, was a gesture to the history of the sport’s pre-modern roots in Hawai’i as received in South Africa through English-speaking Californian and Australian surf cultural linkages.<sup>28</sup> Yet, like femlin, “Wahinis” cited a gender difference that performed a set of social arrangements that appeared to affirm the naturalness of gender distinctions within surfing.

*South African Surfer*, however, did profile two girl surfers in its July 1966 issue. The article on Margaret Smith and the shorter mention on Marlene Webb were in the interests of organised surfing’s push to promote women’s competitive surfing for the selection of a national team in the build up to the 1966 World Surfing Titles in San Diego, California. Thelma Whitmore’s piece on Smith was not only significant as the only article authored by a women about a women surfer in *South African Surfer*, it was also the first instance of when a young women surfer in South Africa shown to be exemplary. Thelma Whitmore, as the wife of

<sup>24</sup> Editor’s response to letter from Maureen Kelly, 37.

<sup>25</sup> Editor’s response to letter from Maureen Kelly, 37.

<sup>26</sup> See *South African Surfer*, 2,1 (March 1966), 26.

<sup>27</sup> See *South African Surfer*, 2,1 (March 1966), 26.

<sup>28</sup> The recorded evidence from nineteenth-century Hawaiian sources on surfing denoted “woman” by the Hawaiian word *wahine*. Hawaiian studies scholar John Clark indicates that mythopoetic sources such as oral traditions show the place of women in the surf zone – *wahine akamai* translated as: “Expert woman, as a woman who is good at a skill” when described as surfing a wave, and *wahine he’e nalu* as: “Women or female surfer”, “women who surf” or “surf-riding woman”. The term for men who surfed was identified as *kanaka he’e nalu*, although this language also applied to the general word for “surfer” or “person [who] surfs”. Thus the masculinisation of the seemingly gender neutral word for “surfer”, *he’e nalu*, was itself rooted in surfing’s past. See John Clark, *Hawaiian Surfing: Traditions from the Past*, (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2011), 45-48, 198, 254 and 402. This naming practice of the “surfer” as masculine was carried into the American mass-media in the early twentieth century though the travel writings and the popularisation of surfing in Hawaiian tourism promotional literature and film in the post-World War One era, where the sensual and sexual pleasures of learning to surf with Hawaiian beachboys was marketed to women in the American leisured classes. Men were also targeted in this promotional messaging that presented an idyllic island paradise: while affirming a less dominant masculinity in relation to the beachboys, this touristic marketing seduced men with the image of the hula girl. See Jane Desmond, *Staging Tourism: Bodies on Display from Waikiki to Sea World*, (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1999), 124-127 and Kristin Lawler, *The American Surfer: Radical Culture and Capitalism*, (New York and London: Routledge, 2011), 30-55.

SASA president, John Whitmore, legitimised Smith competitive surfing identity and in so doing elevated women's competitive surfing above that of recreational surfers. In describing the sixteen year old Smith as “[b]londe, petite” and “an attractive 115lb bundle of energy and surf-love” and “willing to endure the many hardships in pursuit of a surfing career”, Whitmore associated the competitive surfer with the blonde surfer girl image established in California in the late 1950s.<sup>29</sup> Smith therefore embodied the first configuration of an exemplar surfing femininity in South African surfing culture – a woman surfer who was athletic, competitive, attractive and located within organised surfing. Smith's rise to prominence from starting out surfing in March 1964 at Surfers Corner, Muizenberg in Cape Town, was as a result of her being “‘discovered’ by the surfing fraternity” and then being given her own surfboard. This placed Smith surfing femininity as subordinated to, and receiving patronage from, male surfers. Several pages on in the same issue, the short profile of the blond-haired, twenty-year old Marlene Webb from East London as a contender for the South Africa woman's surfing title, and a photograph of her surfing during the 1966 Border Closed Championships captioned as “the eventual winner of the woman's section”, supported the image of a competitive surfing femininity already established in Smith in the pages of the *South African Surfer*.<sup>30</sup> Smith went on to win the 1966 South African woman's title and was selected, along with the runner-up Webb, for the inaugural Springbok surfing team to represent South Africa in California.<sup>31</sup> However, due to the American organiser's consideration of South Africa as a “minor surfing country”, funding for Webb was not made available by the contest organisers as it has been for the rest of the Springbok surfing team. Webb had to rely on a fundraising event and business backing to provide her with the means to secure her place alongside Smith in the national team.<sup>32</sup>

Undermining the athletic view of a women surfer, the same 1966 issue of *South African Surfer* published an article by Durban surfer Cecile Charlesworth that, despite its irony, reinforced gender relations at the beach as male dominated. Charlesworth authored herself as putting aside her beach girl identity to learn to surf, preferably under the tutelage of “a kind, patient male board rider” rather than being “self-taught”.<sup>33</sup> She also mapped the possibilities for recreational surfing femininities as the “decorative” surfer girl or the “with it” women surfer; with the latter the more privileged surfing identity. Both were subordinated to male surfers yet only the “with it” girl surfer, when entering the surf zone, was seen as posing a threat to the male surfer. This can be read, despite the hyperbole, as accommodating a male surfing cultural ethos. For example, in Charlesworth's description of “with it” surfer girl a definition of a “Gremmie” was maintained. She noted,

This ‘with it’ type of women is more perpetually in the way than the decorative ones. She'll paddle for hours in the same spot, getting no where [sic] fast, fall off all over the ocean, and pop in and out all over the place at the wrong time. In fact, she can create a bigger panic and disturbance among male riders than a shark scare.<sup>34</sup>

Taken with her observations that the surfing lifestyle was linguistically, socially and in surfing practice constructed as male, Charlesworth offered a view of surfing as a misogynistic sport, similar to other sports

<sup>29</sup> Thelma Whitmore, “Margaret Smith,” *South African Surfer*, 2, 3 (July 1966), 5. For the history of the dominance of the Californian surfer girl image within global surf culture, which privileges whiteness, see Krista Comer, *Surfer Girls in the New World Order*, 153-4.

<sup>30</sup> See “Association, Competition and Club News,” *South African Surfer*, 2, 3 (July 1966), 27 and “Leading Contenders for S.A. Titles,” *South African Surfer*, 2, 3 (July 1966), 28.

<sup>31</sup> “Results,” *South African Surfer*, 2, 4 (September 1966), 17.

<sup>32</sup> Glenn Hollands, *The Reef: A Legacy of Surfing in East London*, (East London: Glenn Hollands, 2012), 103-4. Quote from *Daily Dispatch*, nd.

<sup>33</sup> Cecile Charlesworth, “Girls Overboard,” *South African Surfer*, 2, 3 (July 1966), 32-33.

<sup>34</sup> Charlesworth, “Girls Overboard,” 33.

where a muscular masculinity was reinforced in the locker room.<sup>35</sup> In this case the locker room was out at the backline in the surf zone. Surfing thus upheld multiple arenas of exclusion for women, described by Charlesworth as: “[b]oard riding bristles with male terminology, techniques, and rather healthy sounding barroom chatter.”<sup>36</sup>

In an attempt to interpret this masculine surf world, Charlesworth called for “a concise, simple, childlike almost, femalized booklet explaining surfing terms that men throw around so nonchalantly at each other.”<sup>37</sup> Catering for the male *South African Surfer* readers, she adopted a sarcastic tone that, notwithstanding some perceptive observations of gender performativity in the late 1960s, diminished the subversive intent of reciting surfing practices from a woman’s standpoint. For example, where “functional board riding” was applied to the hegemonic surfing style of Sixties longboard riding, for Charlesworth it stood for “not loosing [sic] your bikini”; the hollow, fast part of the wave termed a “hot section” in surfing parlance was recast as “men surrounding a bikini clad rider while she waxes her board”; “curlers”, that is waves, became “things without men in them”; and “ding”, when a surfboard is damaged, as “when someone bumps into you”.<sup>38</sup> Charlesworth ends her article by not asserting that a surfing femininity challenged male surfer culture. Rather, she sexually objectivises herself by drawing attention to her body, specifically her breasts. She did so citing the hang ten, that stylish manoeuvre defining Sixties longboard surfing, where a surfer poses with all ten toes on the nose of the surfboard. “To date, I’m still struggling with putting the terminology into practical use and the only technique I have up my sleeve is – ‘Hanging twelve’.”<sup>39</sup> These performative gestures speak to the gendered nature of women’s surfing experiences. Feminist literary scholar Margaret Henderson could well have been speaking of Charlesworth when she maintained that “[i]n her search for subcultural identity and pleasures as a surfer, the female surfer faces a difficult task of negotiating the traditional codes of femininity, difficulties not faced by men or boy surfers.”<sup>40</sup>

The earlier gendered tropes in *South African Surfer* were repeated in later issues of the magazine. In the September 1967 issue an East London women surfer wrote, echoing Maureen Kelly’s letter of 1966:

Isn’t it about time there was an article on girl surfers, why must they be left out of the mag ... what’s wrong with us, we are just as keen on the sport and do just as much surfing as the boys. It would be nice to have a small article on the girls, not pretty pictures of girls with a surfboard in a bikini, but girls surfing.<sup>41</sup>

As a “girl surfer” she desired that women surfers be made more visible as active surfing bodies and not to be represented along with decorative surfer girls. This desire was situated within a desire for subcultural authenticity, her claim to participant status equated to doing the time in the waves, as men do, to become a surfer. Nevertheless, Bold editorialised her letter by labelling it, “A Femlin speaks her mind”.<sup>42</sup> He thus cast

<sup>35</sup> As has been noted for research on male sport, “a necessity of expressing one’s masculinity comes through the sexual objectification of women.” See “Eric Anderson and Rhidian McGuire, “Inclusive Masculinity Theory and the Gendered Politics of Men’s Rugby,” *Journal of Gender Studies*, 19, 3 (2010), 253.

<sup>36</sup> Charlesworth, “Girls Overboard,” 33.

<sup>37</sup> Charlesworth, “Girls Overboard,” 37. This suggestion by Charlesworth to write for women surfers predated women’s surf literature by some forty years. Examples of girl surf lifestyle manuals, as produced in America, Australia and the United Kingdom, are Izzy Tihanyi and Coco Tihanyi, *Surf Diva: A Girl’s Guide to Getting Good Waves*, (Orlando: Harcourt, 2005), Louise Southerden, *Surf’s Up: The Girl’s Guide to Surfing*, (Crows Nest: Allen and Unwin, 2008), and Louise Searle (ed), *The Surf Girl Hand Book*, (Newquay: Orca, 2011).

<sup>38</sup> Charlesworth, “Girls Overboard,” 37.

<sup>39</sup> Charlesworth, “Girls Overboard,” 37.

<sup>40</sup> Margaret Henderson, “A Shifting Line Up: Men, Women, and *Tracks* Surfing Magazine,” *Continuum*, 15, 3 (2001), 328.

<sup>41</sup> Letter to the Editor from Girl Surfer – East London, *South African Surfer*, 4, 1 (September 1967), 5.

<sup>42</sup> Letter to the Editor from Girl Surfer – East London.

“girl surfer” within the family of resemblances cited for “femlin”, subordinated to men and within the male gaze of the surfing imaginary. As had been done in the March 1966 issue, in the sexualising of the photographs of women contestants, this disciplining textual strategy was made visual in the same September 1967 issue as the anonymous girl surfer’s letter. In a review of the 1967 South African Surfing Titles held at Nahoon Reed, East London, no photographs of women contests surfing were published. Rather, the camera had captured the women finalists on the beach, before and after their heat. The second photograph was captioned “Striptease” and showed two woman competitors taking off their contest singlets, worn over their one-piece bathing suits.<sup>43</sup> The narrative effect was to frame women competitors not as girl surfers but as femlins, maintaining male power in naming the feminine within surfing. This was despite the fact that South African women’s surfing icon, Margaret Smith, in winning the woman’s title for a second year, was conferred recognition for her surfing style and ability in the article on the contest results. *South African Surfer* staff surf photographer John Thornton, who reviewed the event, reported “an obvious clear victory falling to Margret [sic] Smith, after the first few waves has been surfed. Margret’s [sic] style, basically unchanged, shone out giving the other competitors not even a slight chance of taking her throne.”<sup>44</sup> Girl surfers, notwithstanding their efforts to assert a voice and an active surfing femininity within Sixties surf culture, were therefore made as what men desired them to be whether on the beach, within institutionalised surfing, or in representations with surfing popular culture.

Thornton’s comments raise a further limitation placed by men on girl surfers: the use of surfing standards within the competitive arena as a means to naturalise gender differences and structurally unmake women surfers. There is evidence that male attitudes within organised surfing were not supportive of women’s competitive surfing. When the provincial association recognised surfing ability by awarding colours for the sport, some men saw women surfers as undermining the performance standards, and thus the amateur sporting recognition, attained by male surfers. The Natal Surfriders’ Association (NSA) was a case in point in expressing these sexist attitudes toward women surfers. With no women’s surfing voice in association committee meetings, the nature of women’s surfing was decided on by the opinions of men elected to surfing bodies. Consistent lobbying on the poor standard of women’s surfing compared to that of men’s was one arena where male discursive power had material effects. A NSA committee meeting of 6 June 1968 held in Durban questioned the formal recognition of women in a proposed provincial team to be selected for the forthcoming South African Surfing Championships. Carrying cultural capital within local surfing as a surfboard shaper and the first surfer to compete in an international event, Max Wetteland proposed “that as the womans [sic] standard of surfing was not high enough, at present, Natal colours should only be awarded to women who represented this Province twice, and then only at the discretion of the N.S.A. Committee.”<sup>45</sup> Ernie Tomson, a key role-player in local surfing administration, seconded Wetteland’s proposal. Baron Stander, surfboard shaper and retailer as well as NSA press relations officer, made a counter-proposal, stating, “that as the women has not reached a high enough standard in surfing they should not be sent to the championships”. Nevertheless, Stander was of the view that if women were selected to represent the

<sup>43</sup> “Meanwhile Behind the Scenes,” *South African Surfer*, 4, 1 (September 1967), 20.

<sup>44</sup> John Thornton, “S.A. Titles, East London,” *South African Surfer*, 4, 1 (September 1967), 15. Eleven women surfed off in a semi-final round before the finals. The other competitors who did not make the final were: S. Pierce (Eastern Province), E. Strattow (Natal), Lorna Currie (Natal), F. Goslett (Border) and Philippa Hulett (Eastern Province). The finalists in the order of their placing after Smith were: Bernadette Woods (Western Province), Gayle Wilson (Eastern Province), Marlene Webb (Border), Linda Leveton (Western Province) and N. Snyman (Natal). See results in *South African Surfer*, 4, 1 (September 1967), 21.

<sup>45</sup> Minutes of the Natal Surfriders’ Association Committee, Durban, 6 June 1968, 2-3. Dave Lee Collection.

province at the national titles then they “should be awarded colours”.<sup>46</sup> The final vote by the committee decided in favour of Wetteland’s proposal, while Stander was minuted as requesting that his protests to the decision be recorded. The structural effect was to demote the standing of women surfing at the provincial and national level and further illustrated that women’s surfing was secondary to that of boys and men’s competitive surfing.

This subordination of women’s surfing to men’s was also discursively constructed within competitive judging rules. In the first draft of the “Surfing Contests Rules and Organisation” compiled by the Competition Committee of the South African Surfriders Association (SASA) in August 1966, “Women’s Surfing” as a category of “surfer” were listed below the men’s divisions of “Junior Men’s Surfing”, “Men’s Surfing” and “Senior Men’s Surfing” in describing events within a SASA sanctioned surfing contest.<sup>47</sup> Furthermore, while the men’s divisions were categorised by age, the women’s event had “no age limit” for competitors.<sup>48</sup> This was a factor determined by the numbers of entrants, and a result of surfing demographics – fewer women than men surfed in South Africa. This same logic of classification according to the privileging of events can be found later in the contest rules. In addition, the order of events for the first and second day’s surfing, the women’s preliminary round and semi-final heat were placed after the men’s. However, the ordering of the finals indicated a hierarchy of events where the Senior Men’s final was held prior to the women’s event, with the Junior Men’s the penultimate event followed by the Men’s event, the highpoint of the national surfing contest.<sup>49</sup> In the language of these rules, all pronouns were masculine as assigned to “the surfer”.<sup>50</sup>

Surfing culture in the mid-to-late 1960s set the stage for the next three decades of women’s surfing in South Africa. Structurally, women’s surfing was a sideshow to men’s regional and national surfing competitions, although due to international and national sport federation pressures women surfers were required so as to designate surfing as a sport. Organised surfing was not alone in subordinating girl surfers to male sporting activity. In fostering the surfing lifestyle, the local surfing magazine provided a further limitation when recognising women in the surf. Women were in general represented in text, photographs and advertising as for the pleasure of the male gaze. Nevertheless, in those moments when contest surfing was promoted to women surfers or when the surfing nation celebrated, an exemplar competitive surfing femininity was constructed. Recreational girl surfers and decorative surfer girls were marginalised within a hierarchy of ability by that competitive identification. Yet, as in the use of “femlin”, any woman could be unmade as surfers in those same pages in the interest of maintaining male cultural power.

### **“Chicks” and the new women in surfing, 1970s**

In 1974, Cornel Barnett, then chair of the South African Universities Surfing Association, commented in two pages of his 186-page book, *Hitting the Lip*, on women’s surfing in South Africa. Noting that that “a number of women in South Africa who have found expression in the ocean” and that two women surfers were included in Springbok surfing teams every time a national selection was made, he nonetheless framed surfing as masculine: “[t]he dominating physical and aggressive aspect of surfing has, as we have seen, been largely attractive to men.”<sup>51</sup> He further observed that, compared to other surfing nations, surfing was less popular with women in South Africa. He offered femininities situated in beauty culture and family

<sup>46</sup> Minutes of the Natal Surfriders’ Association Committee, 3.

<sup>47</sup> “Surfing Contests Rules and Organisation”, Competition Committee of the South African Surfriders Association, August 1966, 2. Natal Surfriders’ Association Files, Dave Lee Collection.

<sup>48</sup> “Surfing Contests Rules and Organisation”, 2.

<sup>49</sup> “Surfing Contests Rules and Organisation”, 7.

<sup>50</sup> “Surfing Contests Rules and Organisation”, 11-13.

<sup>51</sup> Cornel Barnett, *Hitting the Lip: Surfing in South Africa*, (Johannesburg: Macmillan South Africa, 1974), 22.

domesticity as explanations for why there were few women in the surf. Drawing on the comment of a “woman surfing friend”, Cornell explained, “members of her sex tended to be put off, because constant contact with the sea did injustice to her locks, build and skin” and thus women “indulged in the sport in moderation”.<sup>52</sup> Citing another female friend who, after her marriage, took on the identity of a housewife despite “looking forward to re-entering the ocean with her surfboard when she had adjusted herself to the family way of living.”<sup>53</sup>

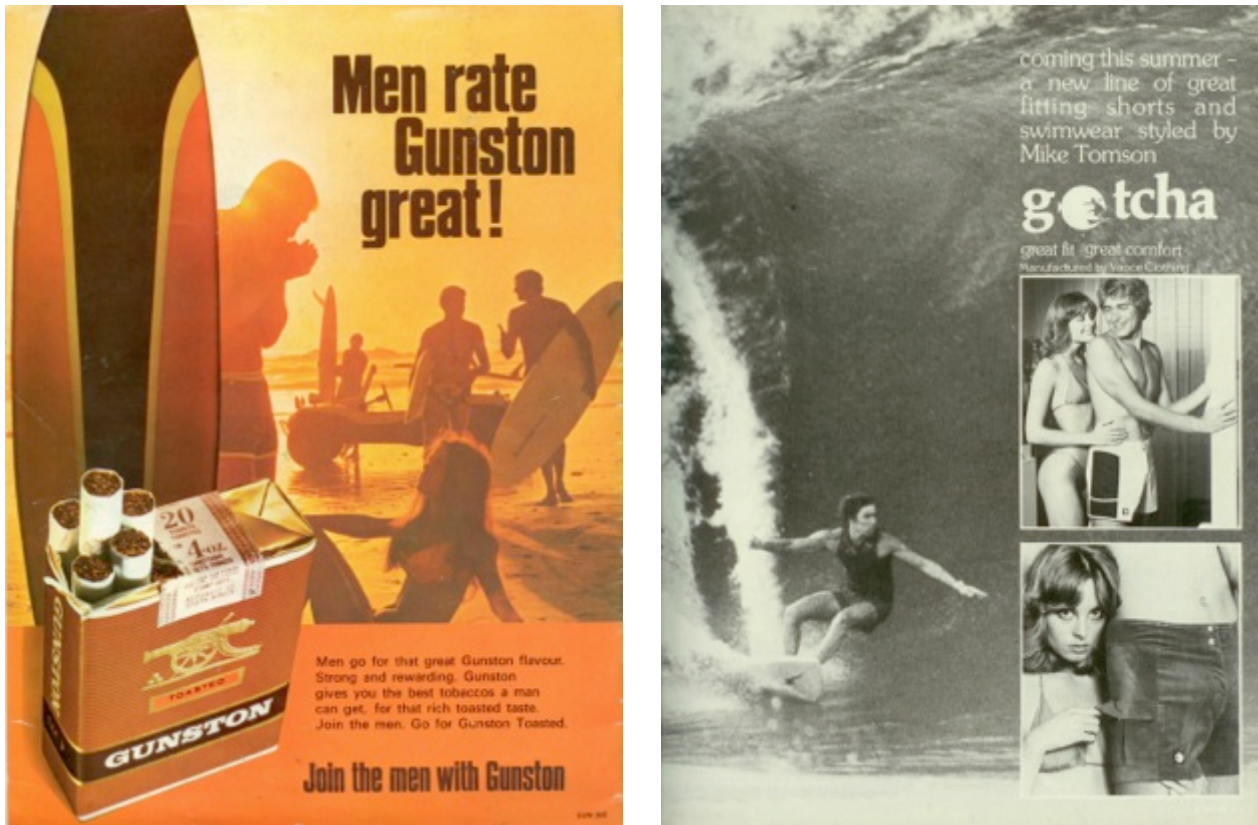


Figure 2.3: Gunston and Gotcha surf magazine advertising in the Seventies.

A third explanation can be read in the pervasive representations of women as decorative at the beach in surfing magazines in the 1970s. In the era of the shortboard, catering to the youthful, male consumption of the surfing imaginary, *Southern Surfer*, the Natal Surfriders' Association publication that ran in 1971, and Durban based commercial magazines *Surf Africa* (1974 to 1976), *Down The Line* (1976 to 1977), and *Zigzag* (from 1976), the Sixties language for girl surfers, “femlins”, was replaced by “chicks”.<sup>54</sup> This masculine discourse carried over into the advertising within surf magazines. A surfing promotional culture emerged in the 1970s that aimed at marketing products and style to male consumers that was suggestive of a sexual permissiveness, drew on countercultural sensibilities, fostered aspirants and youthful sociability, and showed subcultural difference from mainstream society. The first issue of *Southern Surfer* carried a Gunston Tobacco Company advertisement on its back cover, linking the surfing lifestyle and male aspirations of distinction to its cigarette brand (see Figure 2.3).<sup>55</sup> Other lifestyle brands, such as Coca-Cola (soft drinks), Castle Lager and Lion Lager (beer), Mainstay and Seven Seas (cane spirit), carried this same beach

<sup>52</sup> Barnett, *Hitting the Lip*, 22-3.

<sup>53</sup> Barnett, *Hitting the Lip*, 23.

<sup>54</sup> For example see “Durban Contest,” *Southern Surfer*, (April 1971), 1 and *Surf Africa*, (December 1974), 24.

<sup>55</sup> Gunston advertisement, *Southern Surfer*, ([July] 1970), back cover. Gunston rarely gave up the back cover of surfing magazines until 1999, when tobacco advertising laws in South Africa banned the above-the-line promotion of cigarettes.



sociability and free-and-easy lifestyle.<sup>56</sup> This imaginary carried into surf advertising. Local surf industry brands associated surf wear and surf gear with surfing prowess and manliness with women as desired, or desiring. Examples of this surfing orientated sensibility were advertisements by Sondor wetsuits, Gotcha surfwear and fashion (see Figure 4.3) and Larmont surf store.<sup>57</sup> Rarely were women models shown holding a surfboard, an exception was a 1979 Johnson clothing advertisement for men's speedsuits (swimwear), which placed the surfer girl behind Cape surfing icon Jonathan Paarman in privileging the male.<sup>58</sup> A further means of constructing women as invisible as surfers but as decorative bodies on the beach was to include a photograph of a woman model on the cover of the magazine. This was undertaken twice in the 1970s, the first instance was the July 1970 issue of *Southern Surfer* and the second was in the August 1977 *Down The Line*. In the latter, the woman model stands in a one-piece bathing suit holding a surfboard.

The cultural effects of these visual representations were that women surfers' voices were not often heard in 1970s surfing magazines. Rather their voices were editorialised to place women in relation to male desire, to maintain male hegemony and the perceived naturalness of embodied gender difference. Illustrative of this textual practice was a profile titled "Bikini Brigade" in the September 1974 issue of *Surf Africa* of the twenty-two year old Pippa Sturrock, a university student and Springbok surfer from Cape Town. On surfing, Sturrock was quoted, "[to] me it is the most natural [sport]" yet "I think it is a guys [sic] sport, but it is such a fantastic sport. We can never hope to be near their standard. We haven't the same power or courage ...."<sup>59</sup> Gender relations and the experience of women in the surf zone were noted by *Surf Africa*: "Pippa said she sometimes had the feeling that the guys did not like women surfing and that she was intruding."<sup>60</sup> In response to this male indignation, *Surf Africa* reframed women surfers as objects and the waves as a space for male desire and not only homosocial interactions: "com'on guys, surely the odd bikini or two out on the waves is not too unwelcome?"<sup>61</sup>

Nevertheless, a pervasive male attitude evident in the surfing magazines was that women's surfing standards were not on par with the men's and doing harm to the promotion of the sport locally and internationally. With the professionalisation of surfing as of the mid-1970s, and with higher stakes to ensure the recognition of surfing as a sport and not a hippie, beach bum lifestyle (as discussed in Chapter 1), these attitudes pointed to how surfing standards and material rewards were equated. Illustrative of this was a comment by Mike Larmont, part of *Zigzag* publisher team and owner of Larmont Surf Shop in Durban, on the 1977 Hang Ten International held at Umhlanga Rocks, north of Durban. The Hang Ten International was the first South African event to promote competitive women's surfing on a professional basis as part of the global promotion of women's professional surfing. Larmont reported that "[t]he comedy interlude before the men's final was the 'Women's International' with R2000 at stake for 30 minutes of surfing ... The 4<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> places went to South African women who could barely stand."<sup>62</sup> This comment not only pointed to a feeling that the prize money took away from the prestige of rewarding male surfing prowess materially (and drew by implication, took prize money away from the male contestants) but also placed women's surfing at a level

<sup>56</sup> Coca-Cola advertisement, *Down The Line*, 9 (October 1977), 16-7; Castle Lager advertisement, *Surf Africa*, 2 (September 1974), inside front cover; Lion Lager advertisement, *Down The Line*, 8 (September 1977), inside front cover; Mainstay advertisement, *Zigzag*, 1, 3 (June/August 1977), 13; and Seven Seas advertisement, *Down The Line*, 6 (July 1977), inside back cover.

<sup>57</sup> Sondor advertisement, *Surf Africa*, 1 (June 1974), 1, 3 and 5; Gotcha advertisement, *Zigzag*, 2, 4 (October/November 1978), 3; and Larmont advertisement, *Zigzag*, 3, 2 (March/May 1979), inside front cover.

<sup>58</sup> Johnson advertisement, *Zigzag*, 3, 1 (December 1978/February 1979), 38.

<sup>59</sup> "Bikini Brigade," *Surf Africa*, (September 1974), 32. Her birth name was Pippa Sales.

<sup>60</sup> "Bikini Brigade," 32.

<sup>61</sup> "Bikini Brigade," 32.

<sup>62</sup> *Zigzag*, 1, 4 (September-November 1977), 14

similar to that of the men's in the public's eye. In Larumont's view, despite the acceptable performance of the international women surfers, the level of South African women's surfing had done South African professional surfing a disservice at an international contest by publically demonstrating poor athletic standards. Furthermore, this did not reflect well on South Africa as a surfing nation. These views initiated in the professional arena filtered into how the broader surf culture perceived women's competitive surfing (or for that matter, recreational surfing) in the 1970s.

Gendered sensibilities located in surf culture's visual representation of women and a discourse on women's surfing not matching that of men's surfing standard were repeated in *Down The Line*, the Durban based white youth lifestyle magazine that featured surfing. Women were constructed as "broads" or sexualised bodies at the beach, a secondary object within the technological determinism of the sport where a surfboard was a material expression of male bodies in motion. This gendered way of seeing surfing, for instance, was produced in a full-page photographic essay titled "Boobs & Tubes" in the magazine.<sup>63</sup> In the view of the *Down The Line* editorial team, when writing specifically of the Durban surfing scene:

Since man first started riding the surface of the sea ... there has, naturally enough, been women ... Nevertheless, when all is said and done, the broads are only the second most colourful item on the surfing scene. And what's the first? Why ... boards, of course!<sup>64</sup>

Yet, despite, its masculine surfing ethos, *Down The Line* magazine, provided a space for Lorna Currie to navigate the male surfing world and advance women's voices. As a surfer herself, who had represented Natal twice, and married to George Thomopoulos, a 1960s national surfing champion and multiple Springbok, she had distinction within the local surfing community. Writing in her birth name, Currie's contribution to surfing culture in the late 1970s, especially two probing articles published in 1977 in *Down The Line*, raised questions of white middle-class femininities in South Africa at the beach and how Durban women responded to the idea of the "New Women".<sup>65</sup> The section that follows relies heavily on Currie's writings, as these two articles are atypical cases where a woman surfer writes about whiteness and gender attitudes within the pages of a surfing lifestyle magazine.

Published in June 1977, the first article, "Do You Want to Hear about the New Woman (or do you want hear the truth?)", was editorialised in the contents page by Michael Tomson under the heading "Chicks" as: "The New Woman. The fairer sex has graced our pages ... questioning the New Attitudes vs Established Realities amongst South African women."<sup>66</sup> Framed in this way, the potential for challenging the gender order through discourses of women's liberation were limited and can be read as permissiveness serving male interests. Nevertheless, Currie's text attempted to unsettle the gender normativity of *Down The Line* by reflecting on heteronormativity and views on independent women among the nine young women she interviewed. The article focused on the women's attitudes to relationships with men, women in careers and second-wave feminism, offering insights into the subjectivities of white, English-speaking, middle-class

<sup>63</sup> "Boobs & Tubes," *Down The Line*, 1 (November 1976), 15.

<sup>64</sup> "Second Best!" *Down The Line*, 4 ([April] 1977), 5.

<sup>65</sup> Currie, using her Anglicized married name – Lorna Thompson – also wrote a fictional piece for the same magazine in 1977 where the female character chose fantasy, inspired by a Mick Jagger poster, over sex with a male lover. See her "The Dream's the Thing", *Down The Line*, 5, ([June] 1977), 9. The same issue carried a retrospective of the 1950s and 1960s surfing life of her husband, named as George Thompson.

<sup>66</sup> "Whereabouts", *Down The Line*, 5 ([June] 1977), 1.

women in the late 1970s; with values aligned more to the liberal and permissive morals emanating from the West than the moral authoritarian of the apartheid state.<sup>67</sup>

The remarks of the young women mentioned in Currie's text on the "New Women" illustrated modern girl lifestyles which, while asserting gains in independence for some woman, reinforced an essentialist feminine and accommodation, largely, of the gender order.<sup>68</sup> Anne Askew, twenty-one year-old designer/pattern cutter, saw women as "too eager to forfeit their identities" when married and that "[m]en tend to consider women as another possession who must dedicate her life to his career, his lifestyle, and ambitions."<sup>69</sup> Sixteen year-old schoolgirl Tracey Scallan indicated, "I don't hold to the ideas of the feminst [sic] movement for instance because there's nothing to be gained by rebelling against our place in society," rather "I enjoy being feminine and I love courtesies men show us and anyway, they don't react well to independent women."<sup>70</sup> Scallan also hinted at the conservatism of apartheid South African society, where sexual liberation was disciplined in the domestic and public spheres.<sup>71</sup> In her assessment the "whole permissive swing that teenagers have experienced in other countries has passes us by to a large extent because of our isolation...."<sup>72</sup> The thirty year-old shop owner Jill Indrio Roberts observed of whiteness that, "South African women should be the most go ahead in the world because of all her privileges but instead she tends to be uniform and plastic."<sup>73</sup> Gwen van Royen, a twenty-eight year-old a manager of a women's boutique, took the focus on the body and beauty culture further; "South Africa is so much into the 'body vibe' thing and appearance is undoubtedly a woman's best asset."<sup>74</sup> What emerges from these attitudes was Currie's continued need to search for the "New Woman" in the coastal city of Durban. While some of young women interviewed showed emergent modern girl sensibilities, the consensus was that identities embodied in the decorative and in relation to men shaped women's subjectivities.

Following her "New Women" article, Currie's September 1977 "Women in Surfing: Are They for Real?" article can be read as whether women surfers could be considered as "New Women" at the beach. In this article she reported on women's social expectations, gender stereotypes, and the male gender order that shaped South African surfing femininities. Editorially skewed toward undermining Currie's call for gender equity at the end of the article, the article opens with a photograph not of a South African woman surfer but of Hawaiian professional surfer Becky Benson, who was ranked third on the 1977 woman's world tour.<sup>75</sup> Further marginalising and unsettling local women surfers so as to not threaten the hegemony of male surfers, the photograph is captioned with the question, "Becky Benson off the top. As good as any male?"<sup>76</sup>

<sup>67</sup> These "liberal" influences were already resisted by apartheid ideologues in the decades prior to the 1970s. On this see Deborah Posel, "The Apartheid Project, 1948-1970" in (Robert Ross, Anne Klek Mager and Bill Nasson (eds), *The Cambridge History of South Africa: Volume 2, 1885-1994*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 335.

<sup>68</sup> The idea of the "new women" was not new in Western society. Stéphanie Genz has noted that "[p]opular culture reflects the transient and changing definitions of modernity and liberation as it propagates a number of diverse and even paradoxical forms of in vogue femaleness and femininity. The differing incarnations of the "new woman" are bound up with the socially and historically specific politics of identity that circumscribe and delineate the conditions of female subjectivity and agency." See her "Singled Out: Postfeminism's "New Woman" and the Dilemma of Having it All," *Journal of Popular Culture*, 43, 1 (2010), 97.

<sup>69</sup> Currie, "Do You Want to Hear about the New Woman (or do you want hear the truth?)," *Down The Line*, 5 ([June] 1977, 23.

<sup>70</sup> Currie, "Do You Want to Hear about the New Woman", 23.

<sup>71</sup> See Catherine Burns, "Writing the History of Sex in South Africa," paper presented at the Wits Institute of Social and Economic Research, 6 August 2012.

<sup>72</sup> Currie, "Do You Want to Hear about the New Woman", 23.

<sup>73</sup> Currie, "Do You Want to Hear about the New Woman", 23.

<sup>74</sup> Currie, "Do You Want to Hear about the New Woman", 23.

<sup>75</sup> On Benson see Matt Warshaw, *The Encyclopedia of Surfing*, (Orlando: Harcourt, 2003), 53.

<sup>76</sup> Lorna Currie, "Women in Surfing: Are They for Real?" *Down The Line*, 8, (September 1977), 14.

Currie's article reported on the attitudes of male surfers towards women in the surf. Springbok surfer Bruce Jackson "likes to see girls surfing – as long as it is not his lady." Jackson continued, "I really like feminine women, with curves in the right place."<sup>77</sup> Surfboard shaper Matthew (Spider) Murphy felt that "he wouldn't like his wife to surf" despite the fact that "he was all for women in the water." His views were shaped by a perceived sense that his wife would compromise his surfing lifestyle: "It would be too much of a hassle. She'd want to surf there when I wanted to surf here."<sup>78</sup> Philip Scales was more specific about excluding women from the Seventies surfing world: "Everything has a place under the sun and a chick's place is not beside me on a board. It's a man's world and never more so than out in the water."<sup>79</sup>

Currie also garnered the views of women and found that "[g]irls tend to reject the sport too" and spoke of their experience of the surfing body.<sup>80</sup> The explanations offered by non-surfer Shirley Marshall and ex-surfer Ann Hack both focused on the desire to keep their bodies feminine as well as framed surfing as physically demanding or as a male social space. Marshall noted that, "I haven't the stamina to surf and anyway it's too masculine. All those big shoulders and heavy vibes in the water."<sup>81</sup> Hack indicated that she "surfed for a while, but the bruised hips and aching muscles put me off. It can ruin your figure too and it's not very feminine, is it?" These views point to a stereotype of a woman surfer put forward by Currie as, "Women who surf are tough, overly aggressive, probably have too many male genes and are definitely unfeminine."<sup>82</sup> In considering this gender typing, Currie constructed an idealised feminine, with the following attributes ironically noted: "soft (in the head)[,] pretty (dim)[,] fluffy (as in cottonwool [sic])[,] well-dressed (and undressed)[,] passive (as in non-achieving)[, and] compliant (under the hands of a man) human (sic) being ...."<sup>83</sup> Yet, this citation of female identity was what women surfers, in asserting independence in a sport, were seen as resisting when entering the surf zone and categorised as "unfeminine". It is here that Currie's comments on the performativity of surfing, noted at the beginning of this Chapter, were made in questioning the nature of femininity within the surfing: "Apparently, a women's femininity is washed off somewhere between paddling out and dropping into the wave."<sup>84</sup> Currie opens up questions of the body and representation as well as the experiences of women who surfed and the social expectations of what was feminine behaviour. For Currie, what a woman does for sport or lifestyle did not determine her feminine identity, the "truth is that a feminine woman (whatever that means) remains feminine whether she stands on her head and smokes a pipe, trips the light fantastic in a Dior ballgown or hits the lip at Kommetjie."<sup>85</sup>

Currie goes on to tackle three aspects of the sex difference debate about femininity and surfing through interviews with surfers; namely, standards of surfing, athleticism, and representations of women who surf. The discourse on surfing standards, as noted for the 1960s (as discussed in Chapter 1), was established from the masculine gaze judging other men surfing. Paddlerskier Debbie Versfeld, a seventeen year-old, reiterated this: "It makes me mad when someone says I surf 'like a man'. I'm a woman. People think only

<sup>77</sup> Currie, "Women in Surfing," 14.

<sup>78</sup> Currie, "Women in Surfing," 14.

<sup>79</sup> Currie, "Women in Surfing," 14.

<sup>80</sup> Currie, "Women in Surfing," 14.

<sup>81</sup> Currie, "Women in Surfing," 14.

<sup>82</sup> Currie, "Women in Surfing," 14. These ideas of feminine and unfeminine within the culture and sport of surfing remain within the masculine domain. Belinda Wheaton has stated more generally that "[w]hile female entry into previously male-dominated spaces offers possibilities for challenging gender norms, in many lifestyle sports normative gender scripts are also reproduced." See her *The Cultural Politics of Lifestyle Sports*, 51.

<sup>83</sup> Currie, "Women in Surfing," 14.

<sup>84</sup> Currie, "Women in Surfing," 14.

<sup>85</sup> Currie, "Women in Surfing," 14 and 16. Kommetjie is on the Cape Peninsula.

men can set the criteria for a good performance.<sup>86</sup> The discursive shift to surfing 'like a man' had the effect of reinforcing ideas about how athleticism turns bodies muscular, and thus unfeminine, and how perceptions of the body were used to restrict women from surfing and create differences between surfing femininities and a beach bound femininity. Fifteen year-old surfer Debbie Leeson stated, "this talk about surfing being masculine is nonsense. It would take a lot of surfing to put broad shoulders on a girl."<sup>87</sup> Currie notes that women's bodies are different, so some will "perhaps become more muscular" and others would not, "[b]ut so what if they do?"<sup>88</sup> Currie calls this a "fallacy that surfing results in pronounced muscular development" yet alludes to a biological difference that "if subjected to the same proportion of physical activity, she could not develop the same muscular mass, power and speed potential as her male counterpart."<sup>89</sup> While surfing was used to reinforce gender norms in the Seventies, the appearance of bodies thus matter differently for Currie than for the male surfers she interviewed. She called for an inclusive view of women's bodies, stating that it was "a case of each equal and beautiful in their own way."<sup>90</sup> This gesture however separated male and female surfing into different spheres based on a biological determinism referencing an ideal womanhood, and retained the cultural impasse of surfing as a masculine sport and that women's surfing was not athletic, or at least, not athletic enough in comparison to men. This, for Leeson, was not a basis for inequality in the surf, "No one has given me a valid reason yet, why we're aren't entitled to equal time in the water."<sup>91</sup> Twenty year-old surfer Orian Quintal said, "I've always done what I wanted to do. I wanted to surf, so I found an old barge [longboard] and persevered through the rough stages and now I've got the satisfaction of actually 'doing' instead of 'watching'."<sup>92</sup> In the cases of both Lesson and Quintal, aspects of a "New Women" surfing identity can be read.<sup>93</sup>

Explanations for why women only represent a minority of the surfing population were offered. Currie pointed to "social conditioning, media and poor sports programmes in girls school" limiting women's athletic potential while others saw the "bad image" of surfing's "rough" social and drug scene as a reason to, as Christine Thielman did, not "encourage my daughters to surf."<sup>94</sup> Alongside these social factors a feminine

<sup>86</sup> Currie, "Women in Surfing," 16. The sport of paddleski, or waveski surfing, was an emerging sub-discipline within wave-riding in the late 1970s. It received coverage in local surfing magazines through the 1980s but was looked down on by the surf media as a non-core sport.

<sup>87</sup> Currie, "Women in Surfing," 16. Jennifer Hargreaves has argued in the context of Victorian sports for a point that has bearing for surfing in the 1970s, and today: "the cult of athleticism was in essence a cult of manliness, and so if women joined in on an equal footing they could hardly be simultaneously projected as sexual objects by men." See her "Victorian Familism and the Formative Years of Female Sport" in John Mangan and Roberta Park (eds), *From 'Fair Sex' to Feminism: Sport and the Socialisation of Women in the Industrial and Post-Industrial Eras*, (London: Frank Cass, 1987), 142, as quoted in Rachel Winterton, "'A Question of Propriety?': Women's Competitive Swimming in Melbourne, 1893-1900," *International Journal of the History of Sport*, 26, 14 (2009), 2088.

<sup>88</sup> Currie, "Women in Surfing," 16.

<sup>89</sup> Currie, "Women in Surfing," 16.

<sup>90</sup> Currie, "Women in Surfing," 16.

<sup>91</sup> Currie, "Women in Surfing," 16.

<sup>92</sup> Currie, "Women in Surfing," 16.

<sup>93</sup> Leeson and Quintal reflect female liberation in the surf, in what Comer has called a "rebel female history" through their surfing lives. See Comer, *Surfer Girls in the New World Order*, 38. A further example of this configuration was referenced in the letters section of the next issue of *Down The Line*. Charmaine Lindsay of Cape Town, wrote that "I was most disgusted to read that girl surfers are unfeminine" and "I am not by any means muscular and I have surfing for some 7 odd years." Lindsay described the pleasure of surfing in gendered and utopian terms as, "[t]he reason why most girls surf (well, the reason why I surf) is that we want to. We enjoy it and find surfing a way to release all the tensions, hassles and emotions. Quite frankly, when I am surfing I find that nothing in the world worries me (except guys dropping in) and come out of the water feeling incredibly alive and well and happy to be living in S.A." See Letter from Charmaine Lindsay, "So there," *Down The Line*, 9 (October 1977), 29. Undermining her voice through the visual, Lindsay's letter was published above a photograph of a young woman posing in a bikini.

<sup>94</sup> Currie, "Women in Surfing," 16. On the dark side of surfing in Australia see the 1979 young adult novel *Puberty Blues* by Gabrielle Carey and Kathy Lette for a fictionalised autobiography of adolescent sexual exploration and gender politics at an Australian beach. A film of the same name based on the book was screened in 1981. The novel has also been adapted as a television series in Australia; *Puberty Blues* ran for two seasons in 2012 and 2014.

identity was also seen as holding back women entering the surf. Christine Hathrill considered “girls are too ladylike to try” while Jimmy Dartnell observed that “[t]here are too many posers in the beach who are scared to get their hair wet.”<sup>95</sup> This latter point was re-enforced by competitive surfer Michael Burness who felt that “magazines have their own hang-ups too and their treatment of women as decorations or sideshow attractions in the real world of sports has done nothing to inspire females.”<sup>96</sup> In the surfing media, the argument was that women simply do not surf the “hot spots” where the surf photographers were, a notion that circulated back to the marginalisation of women surfers due discourses on standards of surfing and the male gaze in the sport of surfing.

When compared to American and Hawaiian surfing, South Africa was seen as lagging both in an integrated beach lifestyle and, as was the case for competitive women surfers in California and Hawai’i in the late 1970s, women organising to promote the sport. This latter strategy had, according to twenty-two year-old Hawaiian surfer Lynne Boyer, “brought women surfers together and the general vibes towards us from men has improved considerably. Unity is strength.”<sup>97</sup> Boyer observed that Australia was similar to South Africa in the small numbers of women involved in surfing. Boyer further noted the perception that women surfers in Australia were “considered extremely butch, if not out right lesbians.”<sup>98</sup> This view pushed surfing back into the masculine and non-feminine in describing women surfers and had an oppositional sexual politics to the heterosexual norm. The South African women surfers interviewed by Currie upheld heteronormativity and did threaten the hegemony of male surfers. Nineteen year-old national surfing champion, Lyn Bryam stated that, “You don’t have to be unladylike to surf. Each person brings their own degree of aggressiveness or passiveness to a wave.”<sup>99</sup> She went on to describe what she saw as the aesthetic and social benefits of the surfing life, “In fact, what better sport could a girl ask for? Healthy environment, healthy exercise, healthy enjoyment and all in the company of healthy guys.”<sup>100</sup> Laurene Milne, the twenty year-old Natal surfing champion, saw the presence of women in the surf as tempering the masculine aggressiveness, “I’ve never encountered anything but respect from men surfers but perhaps a woman’s presence helps humanise the atmosphere. After all life is co-ed: why shouldn’t surfing be the same?”<sup>101</sup>

Currie’s concern with sexism at the South African beach in this article therefore opens up how gender identities were constructed as feminine in surfing and how women surfers negotiated social expectations, body image and their desire to surf. The constraining factors for women not taking up surfing identified by Currie lay within the social and cultural structuring of the gender order: “Obviously, male chauvinism is a factor, but sadly, it’s largely women’s own reluctance to give up their passive roles that has kept them out of

---

<sup>95</sup> Currie, “Women in Surfing,” 16.

<sup>96</sup> Currie, “Women in Surfing,” 16.

<sup>97</sup> Currie, “Women in Surfing,” 16. The Women’s International Surfing Association (WISA) was formed in 1975 in California. It aimed to address gender inequality in the sport of surfing. Mary Setterholm, co-founder of WISA, stated that “[s]urfing does not demand aggressive strength” and “[w]aves treat everyone equally; men and women are on the same terms as far as nature is concerned.” Quoted in Warshaw, *The Encyclopedia of Surfing*, 705. WISA surfers were convinced to join the International Professional Surfers (IPS) tour in 1976 but the women professionals did not gain the same status, and financial rewards, as the men’s tour. The result was that Women’s Pro Surfing was founded in 1979 to foster professional surfing for women. See Matt Warshaw, *The History of Surfing*, (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2010), 343 and Peter Westwick and Peter Neushul, *The World in the Curl: An Unconventional History of Surfing*, (New York: Crown, 2013), 272.

<sup>98</sup> Currie, “Women in Surfing,” 16. The queering of surfing is bringing sexualities to the fore in critical surfing studies. For example, Georgina Roy’s work on the United Kingdom makes lesbian surfing bodies visible. See her “Women in Wetsuits: Revolting Bodies in Lesbian Surf Culture,” *Journal of Lesbian Studies*, 17, 3-4 (2013).

<sup>99</sup> Currie, “Women in Surfing,” 16.

<sup>100</sup> Currie, “Women in Surfing,” 16.

<sup>101</sup> Currie, “Women in Surfing,” 16.

the water” and “[p]erhaps they fear they will appear unattractive to men because society deems surfing unfeminine?”<sup>102</sup> The crux of Currie’s two 1977 articles was to convey a pessimism about the possibilities of self-fashioning female identities due to a patriarchy in South African coastal society. This left Currie to consider that “women are beginning to be afraid that they might be considered only women.”<sup>103</sup> Despite the affirming surfing femininities referenced, the “New Woman” surfer had not yet paddled out into the South African surf by the end of the 1970s. Or at least, had not been identified as such in South African surfing magazines.

### “Ladies” and competitive surfing, 1980s

In 1985 the South African Surfriders Association (SASAS) published *Moments*, a tribute to the history of South African surfing and a profile of the 1985/86 Springbok surfing team, as a fundraiser for what became a rebel 1986 Springbok tour to California, USA. The text made no pretence of imagining South Africa as a surfing nation despite the sports boycott and treated men and women surfers alike as elite athletes in furthering this goal. Janet Steele, Kay Holt and Tessa Granger, were profiled as surfers of accomplishment alongside the men. However, it was the Border Surfriders Association’s summation of Wendy Botha, South Africa’s first professional women surfer, as “our most successful woman surfer” that framed a exemplar surfing femininity in South Africa.<sup>104</sup>

Besides ensuring national prestige, *Moments* reflected optimism in the commercialisation and sportisation of surfing. It had also provided a view of a hegemony surfing femininity configured in competitive surfing and the possibility of a career in professional surfing. This did not mean that the previous decade’s sexism in surfing had receded. *Moments* advertisers included the men’s magazine *Stab* and *Playboy South Africa*, and other industry advertising and photographs in the SASA publication depicted women as decorative objects of male desire at the beach. Herein *Moments* mirrored South African surf culture’s celebration of subcultural style claimed in *Zigzag* and *Offshore* (1987-89) surfing magazines as a social space for machoism, male sociability and aggressive shortboard surfboard-riding performance in articles as well as visually on *Zigzag*’s covers, in surf photography, advertisements and journalism. It was within this gender order informing the surfing imaginary that independent women athletes fought for their place in the male dominated surf line-up of the 1980s.

In the surfing magazines of the 1980s the promotion of the surfing lifestyle by surf brands linked the professionalisation of the sport and a growing local market for surfwear. Visually women were denoted as subordinated to male surfing icons as girlfriends or sexualised models, as illustrated in advertisements for Shaun Tomson’s Instinct or his cousin Michael Tomson’s Gotcha surfing labels (see Figure 2.4) as well others, for example, Bear surfwear, Catchit clothing, Larmont surfboards, Lightning Bolt surfboards, Rip Curl wetsuits and Zero wetsuits.<sup>105</sup> Later 1980s advertising in *Zigzag*, although these were few, displayed women who surfed competitively as surfers. For instance, in a Surf Centre advertisement in an November/December issue 1986 issue, Candy Berndt was shown surfing alongside images of male surfers, although this image of the girl surfer was undermined by photographs a beach babe model gaining male attention (see Figure

<sup>102</sup> Currie, “Women in Surfing,” 16.

<sup>103</sup> Currie, “Women in Surfing,” 16.

<sup>104</sup> Rob Stone, “Associations Round-up – Border,” *Moments*, (Durban: South African Surfriders Association, 1985), 45.

<sup>105</sup> Instinct advertisement, *Zigzag*, 6, 4 (August 1982), 29 and Gotcha advertisement, *Zigzag*, 8, 4 (August 1984), centrespread poster. Professional surfers Shaun Tomson and Martin Potter appear respectively in these advertisements. Bear advertisement, *Zigzag*, 9, 3 (May/June 1985), inside back cover; Catchit advertisement, *Zigzag*, 12, 5 (September/October 1988), 40; Lightning Bolt advertisement, *Zigzag*, 6, 3, (May/June 1982), inside back cover; Larmont advertisement, *Zigzag*, 10, 1 (January/February 1986), 2; Rip Curl advertisement, *Zigzag*, 6, 6 (November/December 1982), inside back cover; and Zero advertisement, *Zigzag*, 7, 1 (January/February 1983), 2.

2.5).<sup>106</sup> However, it was the Safari advertisement for Hawaiian Island Creations surfboards in a 1987 issue of *Zigzag* that placed Wendy Botha on equal standing with professional surfers, Hawaiian Hans Hedemann and South African Pierre Tostee. All in casual surfwear, Botha is pictured with the men and a surfboard under the slogan “Top Guns” (Figure 2.5).<sup>107</sup> Giving women’s surfing more weight, a standalone water photograph of Botha surfing was used by *Offshore* to promote the magazine in 1988; by then Botha had won her first professional world surfing title.<sup>108</sup> These advertisements were indicative of shifts in surfing culture’s attitude toward women’s surfing and examples of how the surf industry was beginning to see the athleticism and distinction of top women surfers as marketable in promoting the consumption of the surfing lifestyle.



Figure 2.4: The male gaze in surfwear advertising in *Zigzag*, 1980s.

These 1980s visual representations were consistent with the writing on women surfing and girl surfers in the South African surfing magazines. Discursively women who surfed were cited as “ladies” to emphasise the feminine, however, as women’s competitive surfing began to gain some visibility, individuals began to feature as girls who surfed. This was clearly seen in three separate issues of *Zigzag* in 1982, in a series of articles titled “For Ladies Only”, that mapped out gender relations and constructions of the feminine in South African surfing. Male surf journalists wrote all the biographically orientated articles on the featured South African women surfers. While privileging women who surfed competitively as cultural icons, and in so doing affirming an exemplar competitive surfing femininity, these articles also provided views about women whose

<sup>106</sup> Surf Centre was a surf retailer in Durban. For the advertisement see *Zigzag*, 10, 6, (November/December 1986), 10.

<sup>107</sup> Safari advertisement, *Zigzag*, 11, 2 (March/April 1987), 6. The advertisement makes a popular culture reference to the 1986 film *Top Gun*.

<sup>108</sup> See *Offshore*, 2, 1 (1988), inside back cover.



surfing identity was overshadowed by their surfing husband, boyfriend or brother, or, more rarely, women involved institutionally in organised surfing. Prefacing the series, Cape Town's Stephen Morton considered gender and sport in his comment that "[w]oman are coming into their own in all spheres of sport and surfing's no exception as the bastions of chauvinism crumble before feminine wiles".<sup>109</sup> Morton's view that "feminine wiles" were changing surfing's male gender order was both over-stated and cast within gender discourses that de-emphasised women's agency, or shifted agency toward the manipulation, and a maintenance of the status quo, through a practice of gender norms that elevated some women surfers and maintained male power. This latter practice provided *Zigzag* with a means of speaking about women surfers while, at the same time, reiterating the marginalization of women surfers in South African surfing culture. The "For Ladies Only" series therefore worked to frame reflections on women's experience of surfing, their self-fashioning as surfers, and the male gaze on women who surfed.



Figure 2.5: Candy Berndt (R) and Wendy Botha (L): Advertising women as surfers in *Zigzag*, 1980s.

In the first article of the series, Kathy Ivanetich, a Californian bio-chemistry lecturer at the University of Cape Town, a mother of one and married to American surfer Ward Walkup III, provided an outsider view on the South African beach as to why few women were visible in the surf: "Women who want to surf are discouraged by their boyfriends' stereotyped conservative attitudes."<sup>110</sup> Illustrating this view, Linda Paarman, a mother of two married to Cape Town surfing icon Jonathan Paarman, noted that she was a "surfing widow". She indicated that considered herself a "recreational surfer" rather than enjoying competitions.<sup>111</sup> Of

<sup>109</sup> Stephen Morton, "For Ladies Only," *Zigzag*, 6, 3 (May/June 1982), 28.

<sup>110</sup> Morton, "For Ladies Only," 28.

<sup>111</sup> Morton, "For Ladies Only," 29.

the women surfer's involved in organised competitive surfing, Lyn Weight (nee Bryam), who was twice the South African women's surfing champion and a Springbok, was described as "a nice girl who came first".<sup>112</sup> "Nice girl" here re-framed women's competitive surfing as non-aggressive, hence different to men's surfing in the competitive arena. On the other hand, Melanie Waters, treasurer of the Western Province Surfing Association, a provincial surfer and surfing judge, indicated: "I've never had to fight for my identity" and that, in Morton's words: "she claims to be unaffected by the sexist razzmatazz one knows to be part of South African surfing."<sup>113</sup> Waters also noted that women's surfing required increase publicity, a key reason limiting their visibility and hence openness to the acceptance of women in the surf by boys and men in organised surfing.

Unlike the first article in the series by Morton, several male surf journalists authored the second feature of the "For Ladies Only" series. Here, a competitive surfing femininity was held as an ideal within surfing culture in focusing on, as the editorial noted, "local women who grace our waves".<sup>114</sup> While the inclusive "our" references place and nation, "grace" as a term was not used for men who surfed, perpetuating the citation of lifestyle over sport, the objectification of women in surfing as part of a surf fashion beauty aesthetic. This conjunction of naming women surfers in this manner also had the discursive effect of shifting the parameters of the gendered nature of standards of surfing, which operated to place women's surfing performance in the competitive, or even non-competitive, arena as not on par with as the men's surfing. Nonetheless, some women surfers in the 1980s were challenging this outlook.



Figure 2.6: Shavonne Hill "lip-dancing", *Zigzag*, 1982.

Steve Culbert's article on the sixteen year-old Wendy Botha from East London marked this young women surfer as a future surf star. Her surfing accolades, after three years of surfing, included the 1981 South African women's surfing title as well as a third place finish behind top American surfers in a South Africa-

<sup>112</sup> Morton, "For Ladies Only," 29.

<sup>113</sup> Morton, "For Ladies Only," 29.

<sup>114</sup> "For Ladies Only," *Zigzag*, 6, 4 (July/August 1982), 36.

USA team challenge in July 1981. In 1982, her “winning form lasted” and she was selected for the Springbok surfing team.<sup>115</sup> Culbert’s reporting, which is discussed further below, unlike the others, is gender neutral in describing Botha’s competitive surfing and set Botha apart from the other two women surfers featured in the second in the “For Ladies Only” series. Port Elizabeth’s Shavonne Hill, the 1980 South African women’s titleholder and 1981 Springbok team member who toured the USA, was termed by Andrew Honey as a “real lady of the ocean”.<sup>116</sup> In a photograph of Hill surfing by Honey on the same page as the article, the caption re-names the surfing move, a re-entry, as “lip dancing”, shifting the nature of surfing performance to the feminine (see Figure 2.6).<sup>117</sup> Hill is quoted for her attitude to “hassling”, the jostling for position in the surf when waiting for a wave, as a call for gender equality in the surf although the reality of the social dynamics indicates otherwise, were men and boys, especially those with more skills, determine the pecking order in the surf line-up and access to waves, “There is no such thing as ladies first. If you’re on the spot in the line-up, you get the wave. That’s the system and the way it should be for everyone.”<sup>118</sup> Tending toward a similar view of women surfers as independent women, Jenny MacDonald from Port Elizabeth, a top competitor in the annual South African championships and seasoned overseas surf tourist, was quoted by Alex Macun as prioritising surfing as “the second most important thing next to what to do with life career-wise.”<sup>119</sup>

Both Hill and MacDonald commented on surfing standards and the sponsorship of women’s surfing. Hill indicated that surfers “sacrifice style for manoeuvres” in competitions yet felt that top world women surfers such as Alisa Schwarzstein and Kim Mearig, who were competing in South African in 1981, “rip without sacrificing style.”<sup>120</sup> MacDonald considered that the standard of women’s surfing, since the late 1970s, was improving due to increasing numbers of women surfers in the water – pointing to the psychic dynamic that surfing athletic performance was socially determined. In her words commenting on the 1978 South African Championships in contrast to the early 1980s, “Surfing then was very primitive, the standard was slack, now the standard is quite hot, the competition is much greater.”<sup>121</sup> Yet, MacDonald was of the opinion that, despite some advances in surf industry sponsorship for women surfers, “there still isn’t enough interest among sponsors”. Hill, a recipient of “guidance and support” from Country Feeling, a local surfwear brand in Jeffreys Bay started and run by Cheron Kraak, indicated that this sponsorship was an important factor toward her competitive success.<sup>122</sup>

The final part of “For Ladies Only” focused on three “warm water women” from Durban. In contrast to the other articles in the first and second parts, the male journalists here commented on each of these women surfers’ bodies and appearance, directly or indirectly calling on the Californian image of the blond “surfer girl”; a citation of female surfing authenticity within global surf culture. Janet Steele, a Natal surfer who took second to Botha in the 1982 South African championships, was described by Paul Maartens as a “plucky,

<sup>115</sup> Steve Culbert, “For Ladies Only,” *Zigzag*, 6, 4 (July/August 1982), 36.

<sup>116</sup> Andrew Honey, “For Ladies Only,” *Zigzag*, 6, 4 (July/August 1982), 37.

<sup>117</sup> “For Ladies Only,” *Zigzag*, 6, 4 (July/August 1982), 37.

<sup>118</sup> Andrew Honey, “For Ladies Only,” *Zigzag*, 6, 4 (July/August 1982), 37. In a later issue profiling surfing Port Elizabeth a photograph of a smiling Shavonne Hill holding surfboards under both arms by Andrew Honey is captioned “Shavonne Hill, a good ad for the friendly city”. In contrast to this decorative surfer girl image associated with the city’s tourism promotion, most of the other photographs show men surfing. See Andrew Honey, “P.E.: The surfless city of Algoa Bay?” *Zigzag*, 6, 6 (November/December 1982), 15.

<sup>119</sup> Alex Macun, “For Ladies Only,” *Zigzag*, 6, 4 (July/August 1982), 37.

<sup>120</sup> Andrew Honey, “For Ladies Only,” *Zigzag*, 6, 4 (July/August 1982), 37.

<sup>121</sup> Alex Macun, “For Ladies Only,” *Zigzag*, 6, 4 (July/August 1982), 37.

<sup>122</sup> Andrew Honey, “For Ladies Only,” *Zigzag*, 6, 4 (July/August 1982), 37. For Cheron Kraak’s and her surf industry entrepreneurship since the 1970s, as owner and manager of Country Feeling and then Billabong South Africa, labels see *Country Feeling Surf Classic Programme*, (July 1984), 7 and 38, Robbie Hift, *Legends of Jeffreys Bay*, 3rd edition, (Jeffreys Bay: Robbie Hift, 2003), 40. Kraak is credited as making the first surf trunks for male surfers in South Africa in the mid-1970s.

attractive, young lady” who “surfs any size and surfs it well”.<sup>123</sup> Heather Jolley, a twenty-three year old medical technologist who surfed for the Natal team in 1980, when questioned by Doug MacDonald why her “almost luminous flaxen-white hair” was “so blonde”, she indicated that she was “born blonde ... and never needed the proverbial lemon juice [a home-made version of bleach] – years of swimming (for Natal and OFS), and the sun and beach of the past three year’s surfing, did the rest”.<sup>124</sup> This description provides a view of feminine identity formation at the beach and the aspirational nature of looking like a fit and attractive “surfer girl”. On the other hand, teenager Justine Polly, who had surfed for Natal as well as the trials for the Springbok team in 1982, offered a “surfer girl” image as an athlete who surfed. Paul Naude wrote that Polly “is not your idea of the regular California beach bunny – no eeni-meeni bikini, no fancy hairdo, or any of the other trappings of the average 16-year-old beach-goer. Just a plain black full-piece speedo for practicality, a bright wetsuit for warmth, a good board, a wide smile, a ton of determination and the lady rips!”<sup>125</sup>

Steele, Jolley and Polly were all shown to be competitive surfers. Steele was described as “probably one of the most dedicated surfers in Durban. If there are waves, she’ll be out there refining her style and enjoying every wave as a new experience. After four years of surfing it is quite incredible to see how she’s improved.”<sup>126</sup> Steele reported drawing her surfing experience from contest surfing and coaching from a top male surfer, Gavin Spowart. Jolley spoke of being coached in California by ex-world tour surfer, Peter Townend, the coach for then women’s world champion Alisa Schwarzstein, where she learnt “about tactics and aggressiveness”.<sup>127</sup> Polly, after not performing well in large waves in the 1982 Springbok trails held at Nahoon Reef in East London, was reported as returning to Durban and “putting in the practice to take her to the top of the ever-expanding, ever-improving tree of women’s surfing in South Africa.”<sup>128</sup> Yet, Jolley highlighted the surf as a sporting space determined by skill and the masculine, where she showed deference in the waves to men. While “guys give her encouragement out in the water”, she noted, “[b]ut I know my place out there and I don’t try and hussle [sic] waves or drop in on them and they respect me for it. If I’m on the inside they’ll let me go – even Shaun [Tomson] gives me the wave.”<sup>129</sup> Jolley also had the following criticism of how organisers of women’s surfing ran contests, illustrating the structural inequalities faced by women surfers and its psychic affects; although this criticism was largely neutralized due to prevailing normative contest practices. MacDonald noted that the “one thing that makes her ‘fed up’, although she says she can understand it, is that in contests the women are always given the crummy surf – the men always get preference.”<sup>130</sup> Jolley went on to say, “I realise it has to be like that because there is more scope for competition for the guys, but it does tend to dampen your enthusiasm for competition surfing.”<sup>131</sup> This then returns to the theme of the continuities over time, and ambivalence in the male gaze, over questions of women’s surfing standards.

In reviewing the women competitors at the May 1982 Springbok surfing trials held at Nahoon Reef, East London, Steve Culbert indicated that:

<sup>123</sup> Paul Maartens in “For Ladies Only,” *Zigzag*, 6, 5 (September/October 1982), 25.

<sup>124</sup> Doug MacDonald in “For Ladies Only,” *Zigzag*, 6, 5 (September/October 1982), 25.

<sup>125</sup> Paul Naude in “For Ladies Only,” *Zigzag*, 6, 5 (September/October 1982), 25.

<sup>126</sup> Maartens, “For Ladies Only,” 25.

<sup>127</sup> MacDonald, “For Ladies Only,” 25.

<sup>128</sup> Naude, “For Ladies Only,” 25.

<sup>129</sup> MacDonald, “For Ladies Only,” 25.

<sup>130</sup> MacDonald, “For Ladies Only,” 25.

<sup>131</sup> MacDonald, “For Ladies Only,” 25.

Unfortunately the ladies once again failed to set a standard required for a Springbok team. To say that this department is in dire need of serious attention and coaching is an understatement. Admittedly, conditions were tough and the size seemed to be the fearful factor in the general poor showing, but surely surfers at Springbok level should prepare themselves for all conditions and have the utmost confidence to see out almost any situation. Unless they do this, what hope have they got against the Alisa Schwarzsteins and Kim Mearings of the world?<sup>132</sup>

Yet, Culbert's "general poor showing" comment was shown up in performances of women surfers in that same year and the next. The surfing of South African women's champion Lyn Weight was described by surf journalist Stephen Morton in mid-1982 in terms that gave recognition to her surfing ability but nonetheless emphasized her femininity:

As a fluid stylist better in ability than most men surfers, Lyn surfs a lot of juice [powerful waves]. Her style is distinctly feminine and a delight to watch. It is probably her flowing surfing that misleads those armchair critics into thinking she lacks tenacity. Her gusty performances are always overlaid with charming feminine dignity. When Lyn's firing she surfs better than most.<sup>133</sup>

Kay Holt provided another exemplar of surfing talent. Furthermore, she balanced her competitive surfing with other sporting commitments, furthering her education at university, and a career in lifesaving.<sup>134</sup> Holt, who began surfing in 1977 at the age of twelve years, grew up in Port Shepstone on the Natal South Coast. She surfed for the Southern Natal team from 1979 to 1982, then surfed for the Eastern Province team when moving to Port Elizabeth to study physical education at the University of Port Elizabeth. In her early surfing she was coached by Kenny Matthews of Southern Natal. She was consistently placed in the finals South African Champions women's division and was made a Springbok for the Portuguese tour in 1982. In 1984, Holt was the first woman to surf in the South African University Surfing championships, where she beat male surfers in her first heat to advance to round two of the event. She was also selected for the 1985/1986 Springbok team that undertook a rebel tour of the USA in 1986.<sup>135</sup>

While these details of her life showed her to be an athletic woman, it was the nature of her surfing style that was gendered. Holt was described in *Zigzag* and *Moments* as "a young lady with a lot of self-confidence. In her surfing this reveals itself in an almost aggressive manner."<sup>136</sup> *Zigzag* went on to describe Holt's surfing as: "Her powerful thrusting style, she feels, stems from her athletic background ... These [sports] have all contributed to her solid masculine stance which uses the whole body for hard bottom and top turns."<sup>137</sup> Holt went on to win the 1988 national title and was described by Mark Jury, a South African based American surf writer and oceanographer, as "streets ahead of her competitors."<sup>138</sup>

Competitive surfing was the primary avenue for women surfers to gain the attention of the surfing culture industries. However, recreational surfers remained an important part of the line-up in the surf. A 1982 profile of Cecile Charlesworth by Doug Macdonald provides a brief life history of a surfer who shied away from the competitive arena but was seen to have contributed to the local surfing lifestyle.<sup>139</sup> Known as Billy in the

<sup>132</sup> Steve Culbert, "Bok 82 splendour," *Zigzag*, 6, 4 (July/August 1982), 12.

<sup>133</sup> Steve Morton, "For Ladies Only," *Zigzag*, 6, 3 (May/June 1982), 29.

<sup>134</sup> In 1982 Holt was South Africa's first woman to become a professional lifeguard.

<sup>135</sup> "1985/86 Springbok Team Profile – Kay Holt" in SASA, *Moments*, 33.

<sup>136</sup> Jonty Hansford, "Holt," *Zigzag*, 8, 6 (November/December 1984), 10 and "Kay Holt" in SASA, *Moments*, 33.

<sup>137</sup> Hansford, "Holt", 10.

<sup>138</sup> Mark Jury, *Surfing in Southern Africa, including Mauritius and Reunion*, (Cape Town: Struik, 1989), 140.

<sup>139</sup> This was the same Cecile Charlesworth who penned the "Girls Overboard" article in the 1966 *South African Surfer* magazine referenced in the section on the women surfing in the Sixties.

Durban surfing community, Charlesworth was born in Johannesburg in 1930, Fifty-two years of age at the time of the article's writing, she had been introduced to the ocean and bodysurfing as young girl during family holidays at Margate on the Natal South Coast. She started surfing in 1966, at "about 27" years of age, a year after she moved to Durban with her first husband.<sup>140</sup> Her temporal reckoning of when she started surfing was less determined by remembering her age than associating that event with a cultural context, "I can't remember dates but it was the same era as the Beatles 'Eight Days a Week'."<sup>141</sup> In 1978, Charlesworth, with initial support from male "surfer J.J.", started a surf business called Panchos, self-crafting handmade surfboard covers with her Singer sewing machine and supplying them to surfers in South African surfing centres in the Cape and Natal.

Reflecting on her early surfing years and sociability in the late 1960s at the Bluff in Durban, Charlesworth noted, humorously, that male surfers gave her space in the waves due to her new-found surfing ability: "Whereas now they sit and argue with me – then – with 12' of unleashed gun [a longboard] marked Mind Me on the nose, they just got out [of the way]."<sup>142</sup> Male surfer respect for Charlesworth also had a further gendered dimension, one where submitting her body to the sexualised male gaze provided opportunities to access Durban's waves. Reflexive of her body and aging, she related:

I'd also discovered that by kneeling to paddle, I had more strength, and may be this sight – rear and fore – was also too much for them. I was 38 at both ends in those days. (Now I'm just size 38 in the middle). You did not have to hassle [for waves] in those days.<sup>143</sup>

In contrast, her reputation as an aggressive surfer in the early 1980s was a continuation of her late 1960s surfing identity without the sexualisation of her body, which as Macdonald noted, was "running you over in the surf yelling blue murder for you to get out of her way (not always in polite terms)."<sup>144</sup> This surfing identity drew from her surfing hero, the "rebel" Californian surfer icon Miki Dora, who in Charlesworth's words "gave everybody a hard time in the surf."<sup>145</sup>

However, it was Charlesworth's views on the state of women's surfing in Durban in the early 1980s that pointed to the making visible of women in local surfing. She was baffled that Durban had not produced good women surfers despite the conduciveness of the space, ocean and weather conditions to access to the waves: "It makes me ashamed that with our warm water, easy access to the beaches, Durban girls are walked over by all other provinces ... Even the [Natal] South Coast shows us up."<sup>146</sup> Explanations for this, it can be argued, were to be found in the nature of the gender order within Durban's surfing culture, where male and female social expectations for women were to be on the beach rather than in the surf. Charlesworth was hopeful that *Zigzag's* 1982 "For Ladies Only" articles would spur on women to enter the surf. In looking for women surfer icons in Durban, Charlesworth identified Janet Steele as a contemporary top women competitor but, she noted, "I still feel if it hadn't been for Christine Petrucci over the past 10 years, Durban women's surfing would have dissolved completely off the scene, and maybe Janet would not

<sup>140</sup> Doug Macdonald, "Don't Miss Billy", *Zigzag*, 6, 6 (November/December 1982), 37. Charlesworth was divorced at the time and a grandmother.

<sup>141</sup> Macdonald, "Don't Miss Billy", 37.

<sup>142</sup> Macdonald, "Don't Miss Billy", 37.

<sup>143</sup> Macdonald, "Don't Miss Billy", 37.

<sup>144</sup> Macdonald, "Don't Miss Billy", 37.

<sup>145</sup> Macdonald, "Don't Miss Billy", 37. On Dora as social deviant see David Rensin's biography, *All For a Few Perfect Waves: The Life and Legend of Rebel Surfer Miki Dora*, (London: Yellow Jersey Press, 2008).

<sup>146</sup> Macdonald, "Don't Miss Billy", 37.

have materialised?”<sup>147</sup> The importance of exemplars of women’s surfing at South African beaches was thus seen as a precondition for making surfing more accessible and visible to girls and women.

### “Female surfpersons” and professional surfing, 1980s and early 1990s

In contrast to the Durban surfing scene, the presence of pioneering women surfers in the East London area was not a factor in the rise of Wendy Botha as South Africa’s most successful women competitive surfer in the 1980s and into the 1990s, after she had taken up Australian citizenship.<sup>148</sup> The surf media’s treatment of Wendy Botha is illustrative of a further discourse surrounding women’s surfing in South Africa, that is, the connection between competitive surfing, gender and South Africa as a surfing nation. Yet, Botha was seen as an anomaly, or at least pushing under the glass wave of competitive women’s surfing in the country, by becoming South African first professional women surfer. As Cape Town based *Offshore* magazine’s editor Steve Morton observed of the conservative gender order under apartheid in 1988, “Even South Africa, that bastion of Boer chauvinism, has managed to breed a world champ in Wendy Botha.”<sup>149</sup> Nevertheless, Botha was, until 1989, South African surfing’s lone exemplar that it was possible for women from the country make a name for themselves on the world tour. Herein Botha was part of global move in the 1980s and early 1990s that began to make women’s competitive surfing visible. These were the years immediately preceding the commercialisation of women’s surfing as of the mid-1990s, and provided some of the currents that enabled that commercialisation.<sup>150</sup> Within this context, a review of Botha’s surfing life provides insights in the construction of a professional surfing femininity in the 1980s that emerged as the ideal of a exemplar competitive surfing femininity in South African, and it did globally, and provided the foundations for 1990s configurations of the athletic surfer girl image that coalesced around American world professional surfing champion Lisa Anderson as of 1994.<sup>151</sup>

Born in East London, Wendy Botha took to surfing on an old Safari Surfboard at Nahoon Reef as a twelve-year old over the 1978 Christmas holidays. From her early days she recalled surfing with the boys, as there were no other girls surfers in the East London line-up at the time.<sup>152</sup> Her surfing sociability revolved around drawing on male support to travel to the beach and getting coached by peers as part of the “Nahoon

<sup>147</sup> Macdonald, “Don’t Miss Billy”, 37. Christine Petrucci surfed in Hawai’i in the 1960s and won two national titles in the 1970s. She was posthumously inducted into the Surfing South Africa’s Surfing Hall of Fame at the 2010 South African Surfing Awards.

<sup>148</sup> Botha received this accolade as early as 1986, see Rob Stone, “Associations Round-Up – Border” in *SASA, Moments*, 45. To date, her achievements on the ASP women’s world tour have not been eclipsed by another male or female surfer from South Africa.

<sup>149</sup> Steve Morton, “Lindy on the Brink”, *Offshore*, 2, 3 (1988), 24.

<sup>150</sup> For a male surf insider view of professional women’s surfing in the late 1980s see Brian Gillogly, “Post Modern Surf Femme,” *Surfer*, 30, 6 (June 1989); the chapters on professional surfers Frieda Zamba, Pam Burrige, Lisa Anderson and Layne Beachley in Gabbard, *Girl in the Curl*; Richelle Reed, *Waves of Wahines: A History of Women’s Surfing*, (USA: Reed Books, 2010), 98-108; Warshaw, *The History of Surfing*, 417-422; and the scholarly history by Douglas Booth, “Waves of Wahines: “From Bikinis to Boardshorts: Wahines and the Paradoxes of Surfing Culture”, *Journal of Sport History*, 28, 1 (2001).

<sup>151</sup> For Lisa Anderson place in the cultural history of the “surfer girl” see Comer, *Surfer Girls in the New World Order*, Chapter 2. Anderson was the women’s world professional surfing champion from 1994 to 1997, and instrumental in the commercialisation of women’s surfer in her launching women’s surf trunks under Quiksilver’s Roxy brand for women and girls.

<sup>152</sup> Interview with Wendy Botha, 19 April 2013. (This interview was conducted in Cape Town over Skype as Botha resides in Australia). Sociologist Shelley Budgeon would argue that Anderson and Botha perform a hegemonic femininity, as “transformed gender ideals have materialized in the figure of the ‘empowered’ and autonomous yet reassuringly feminine woman. Despite the assimilation of key attributes associated with masculinity this particular expression of idealized femininity does not necessarily rework dominant perceptions of gender difference and their organization into a relation of hierarchical complementarity.” See her “The Dynamics of Gender Hegemony: Femininities, Masculinities and Social Change,” *Sociology* 48, 2 (2014), 317.

crew".<sup>153</sup> On growing up at the beach through her teenage years, Botha reflected on her gendered surfing identity as, "I was a tomboy".<sup>154</sup> I was not long before she was encouraged by "Nahoon crew" surfer Steve Culbert to enter the Border Surfing Association contests, and won the first contest she surfed in. In a later contest, she beat the teenage boys in a Border U16 heat. She represented Border in the 1980 South African national surfing championships. In 1981 Botha, at the age of fifteen years, had come to *Zigzag's* attention when she won the women's division of the South African Championships held on 7<sup>th</sup> July at Durban's Bay of Plenty. Surfing for the Border team, she was reported as,

[S]urpris[ing] all with her determined "go for it" attitude to clinch the ladies title on fine style from Springbok Shevonne Hill with C. Holte [*sic*] taking third. This was a remarkable feat by Wendy who has only been surfing for two and a half years.<sup>155</sup>

On the afternoon of the same day, at same beach, Botha competed as part of the South African women's team against the American National Scholastic Surfing Association (NSSA) in an amateur SASA Invitational international event. This was Botha's first experience of surfing against international women surfers. Botha was the top South African women surfer in this event and placed third behind Kim Mearig and Alisa Schwarzstein, the then world women's amateur champion.<sup>156</sup> Botha repeated this result in the "Ladies heat" of the Junior International contest against the NSSA team held the next day.<sup>157</sup>

A more telling narrative of an individual woman's surfing talent was that of Andrew Honey's comments of 17 year-old Botha surfing at Nahoon Reef in East London. Honey wrote in a 1983 *Zigzag* article of a non-contest surf session, using language reminiscent of descriptions of male surfing prowess and sociability in the surf zone, "[p]addling into the [Nahoon] Reef line-up, I spotted Wendy taking off on a set wave. Driving hard off the bottom, she set a straight line at the pitching lip. Wham! She smacked it with the finesse of a seasoned pro, her look of determination turning into a grin in response to the round of hooting."<sup>158</sup> Botha's surfing, however, illustrated the particular and not the general in surf media commentary on women's surfing.

East London surfer and surf journalist, Steve Culbert had already marked Botha out as a women surfing star when she was selected for the 1982 Springbok team that travelled to compete in Portugal in September of that year (see Figure 2.7). He stated that, "[h]aving both the determination and aggressiveness and the talent to put it together, Wendy must be by far the best female prospect South African has produced."<sup>159</sup> Botha's memory of her selection to the South African team was that of a "tomboy who had to wear a skirt with her Springbok jacket".<sup>160</sup>

Botha's first full profile in a surfing magazine, written by Culbert, appeared in the May/June 1983 issue of *Zigzag* following on the seventeen-year old's surfing achievement in an Australian contest – she placed second in the Stubbies Surf Classic in Sydney. What is noticeable about the article is that Botha's voice is absent. Rather, Culbert draws on comments from her parents, Leo and Joan Botha, and Tim Millward, the president of SASA. Culbert's article has three textual strategies: it seeks to explain why Botha was

<sup>153</sup> See photograph of the Nahoon crew of seven men with Botha at the beach by Andrew Honey in *Zigzag*, 7, 2 (March/April 1983), 11.

<sup>154</sup> Interview with Botha.

<sup>155</sup> Steve Culbert, "SA Champs: Chris Cracks 3", *Zigzag*, 5, 4 (September-November 1981), 35.

<sup>156</sup> Steve Culbert, "International Invitational," *Zigzag*, 5, 4 (September/November 1981), 36. The placings of the other South African women were: Cathy Holt (4<sup>th</sup>), Shevonne Hill (5<sup>th</sup>) and Lynne Weight (6<sup>th</sup>).

<sup>157</sup> Steve Culbert, "Curren Cleans Up," *Zigzag*, 5, 4 (September/November 1981), 36. Botha was placed ahead of Shevonne Hill in this event.

<sup>158</sup> Andrew Honey, "E.L. Territory," *Zigzag*, 7, 2 (March/April 1983), 10.

<sup>159</sup> Steve Culbert, "'Bok 82 Splendour", *Zigzag*, 6, 4 (July/August 1982), 12.

<sup>160</sup> Interview with Botha.



competitive in the surf and where that motivation came from; it positioned Botha as a national surfing icon showing South African surfing in a positive light in an international competitive arena that faced political sanctions, and used Botha's visibility as an athlete as a call for other women to take up surfing. These alignments cite Botha as a women surfer whose identity affirmed the competitive, promoted the nation, and was an exemplar for other women. In short, these were configurations of a hegemonic competitive surfing femininity in South Africa made visible through the agency of Botha in the waves and given institutional and social power through male and parental voices, organised surfing, and the surf media.



Figure 2.7: 1982 Springbok surfing team, Wendy Botha (L) and Kay Holt (R).<sup>161</sup>

While Culbert's article did frame Botha as feminine when pondering how she brushed her hair, as the mirror in her bedroom was covered in surfing stickers, the overall focus of his writing was on Botha's athleticism and competitive nature. Noting that Botha's junior contests required her to surf against the boys as there were not enough women entering Border events, her father commented that she was motivated to surf well, "Wendy knows what she wants and her determination and will to win saw her right. Wendy hates to lose at anything she does and I think it's that attitude that pushes her harder to do well."<sup>162</sup> However, despite these positive overtures, the caption for a photograph of Botha surfing displaces her surfing identity from that equated to the masculine ideal. The caption reads, "Wendy showing feminine grace in home waters."<sup>163</sup> This statement had more to say of the structural position of women's surfing rather than Botha's personal performance per se. Nevertheless, distinction in the surfing imaginary was conferred by the local surfing administration on Botha. As SASA's president, Tim Millward noted, and pointing to individual performance as

<sup>161</sup> Photograph from South Heritage South Africa Archive. Along with Botha, the 1982 Springbok team comprised of Glenn Milne, Leonard Giles, Davie Stolk, Chris Knutsen, Michael Burness, Craig Sims, Kay (Cathy) Holt, Graham Hynes (coach) and Robin de Kock (manager).

<sup>162</sup> Steve Culbert, "Wendy Makes Waves," *Zigzag*, 7, 3 (May/June 1983), 10.

<sup>163</sup> Culbert, "Wendy Makes Waves," 11.

well as a view on how the conditions within the sport that excluded women, “[o]ne has the impression that women’s surfing has, for a long time, taken a back seat in South Africa ... Obviously Wendy’s doing well is a pretty good indication that the standard of women’s surfing is improving vastly here.”<sup>164</sup>

Yet, Botha’s acknowledged significance for South African surfing deemphasised gender when seen in the context of surfing as an expression of a national sporting identity for white South Africa. The 1980s were the years of the sports boycott against apartheid and South African amateur surfing was already barred by the International Surfing Association from competing in the world titles, as will be discussed in Chapter 3. Seen in this light, the South African surf media and the surfing administration’s use of Botha’s national and international surfing successes and prestige to promote South Africa surfing was political. From a surfing point of view, the matter of national prestige was also linked to an idea of South Africa as a founding surfing nation along with Australia, Peru and the United States of America, including Hawaii. Millward went on to locate Botha within the upper echelons of South Africa’s male surfing icons, placing Botha within the vanguard of the surfing nation:

If you’ve got your competitive amateurs and professionals doing well all the time, it only helps to improve your international position. I think the fact that Martin [Potter], Shaun [Tomson] and Wendy have now done well in Australia, can only reflect generally on the betterment of South African surfing.<sup>165</sup>

There was another use of Botha in Millward’s statement; she was as a means to promote the sport of surfing to women in South Africa. From SASA’s perspective, this was part of the development of the sport at a national level, “[t]he fact that we’re turning our best women into Springboks on regular basis obviously provides a considerable amount of motivation for those [women] wondering whether to give it a go or not.”<sup>166</sup> Nevertheless, there was no a formal developmental programme for women surfers. Rather, the surfing administration depended on women willingly joining organised surfing and then to compete in provincial and national contests. Culbert followed Millward in using his article on Botha to promote surfing to women. In this he drew inspiration from a letter he read in the American surfing magazine *Surfer*. Culbert saw that making women visible on the waves should encourage more women to take up surfing as a sport. His call to women was, “[s]o let’s have it girls. Let’s see more of you hitting the lip with the rest of them, and giving Wendy more than just moral support.”<sup>167</sup> If anything, despite the accolades for Botha, the article points to the poverty of women’s surfing in South Africa at a structural level, a condition that continued throughout the 1980s and into the 1990s, despite a handful of individual women, such as Kay Holt, Lindy Brink and Heather Clark, coming to the fore nationally and internationally as competitive women surfers.

Botha started a career as a professional surfer in 1985, building on her competitive successes in South Africa as four-time South African women’s champion, her selection for the Springbok team, and fairing well at the international professional events she competed in during 1984. In her first year on the world women’s professional tour she was named “the most improved women surfer of the year at the ASP award

<sup>164</sup> Quoted in Culbert, “Wendy Makes Waves,” 10.

<sup>165</sup> Quoted in Culbert, “Wendy Makes Waves,” 11. Of the three, only Tomson had an established surfing career brokered through the mid-1970s. Both Potter and Botha were youthful entrants on the world professional surfing stage in the early 1980s.

<sup>166</sup> Quoted in Culbert, “Wendy Makes Waves,” 10-11.

<sup>167</sup> Culbert, “Wendy Makes Waves,” 11.

banquet.”<sup>168</sup> In her second year, she was ranked seventh going into the 1986/1987 women's world professional surfing tour. She had secured several sponsorships and relied on the meagre contest earnings and her savings to support her surfing career, although in 1986 she noted that finding sponsorship in South Africa was difficult.<sup>169</sup> This was one of the drivers, along with the refusal of visa applications to compete in Japan, for her career choice to immigrate to Australia.<sup>170</sup> Botha was granted permanent residency in Australia in early 1988 as the news broke of her winning the 1987 women's world professional title.<sup>171</sup>

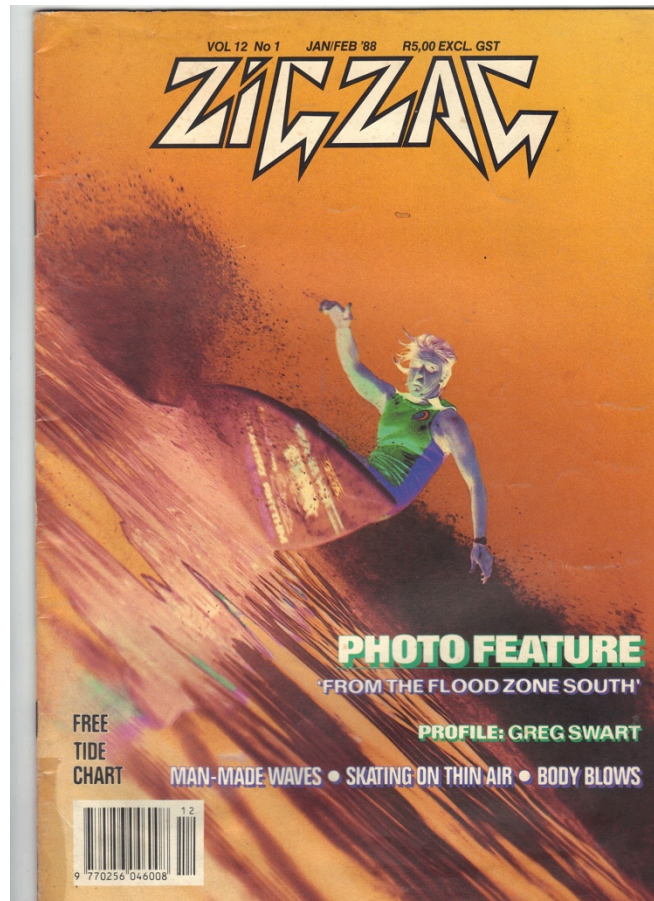


Figure 2.8: Wendy Botha on cover of Zigzag, 1988.

Culbert celebrated the twenty-two year old world champion's achievement in looking to her beginnings, "the blonde East London girl whose talents were nurtured in the waves of Nahoon Reef."<sup>172</sup> In acknowledging Wendy Botha's world title, *Zigzag* surfing magazine ran a photograph of Botha on the cover to the January/February 1988 issue of the magazine (see Figure 2.8).<sup>173</sup> This was first time a women surfer was represented on a cover within the local surfing imaginary (and *Zigzag* did not repeated this or the next

<sup>168</sup> Botha quoted in Steve Culbert, "Wendy Botha: The Forgotten Heroine of South African Surfing?" *Zigzag*, 10, 4 (July/August 1986), 25.

<sup>169</sup> In 1986 here sponsors were: Country Feeling as main sponsor along with Piping Hot wetsuits, Cheetah bikinis, Gorilla Grip and Country Rhythm Surfboards. See Culbert, "Wendy Botha," 25.

<sup>170</sup> Interview with Botha.

<sup>171</sup> Steve Culbert, "Wendy's Story," *Zigzag*, 12, 4 (July/August 1988), 38. So as not to jeopardise her Australian citizenship application, in the context of international pressure on apartheid sport, as discussed in Chapter 3, and drawing radio attention in Australia, Botha had been advised not to travel and compete in South African professional events in 1988. See Robin de Kock, "Scared Wendy Won't Come Home," *The Argus*, 25 May 1988.

<sup>172</sup> Culbert, "Wendy's story," 38. For a video clip of Botha surfing see Warshaw's *The Encyclopedia of Surfing's* online resource, <http://encyclopediaofsurfing.com/entries/botha-wendy> [access on 8 September 2014].

<sup>173</sup> See the cover for *Zigzag*, 12, 1 (January-February 1988).

thirty-five years).<sup>174</sup> Nonetheless, in another first for *Zigzag*, this image of Botha as printed on the magazine cover was the negative of the photograph. The cultural and gender politics of this *Zigzag* cover created the illusion of women surfing's visibility locally and the performance of Botha's surfing body on the world tour spectral.

Representation aside, Botha went on to win a further three world titles, in 1989, 1991 and 1992. Yet, her linkage with South Africa as a surfing nation was diminished due to her taking on an Australian citizenship in 1989. Her surfing, however, remained considered in gendered terms in the South African surf media. In an update on the ASP tour in late 1989, *Zigzag* saw Botha's surfing as "[t]his gutsy, almost tomboyish approach, has provided her with the talent and fair to take many a 'Men's' pro to the cleaners."<sup>175</sup> In 1989, with her self-assurance in talking about her surfing ability in comparison to other women professional surfers seen as arrogance in the international surfing magazines, Botha was quoted in the June issue of *Surfer* magazine as saying, "[o]n any give day I can surf as good as a lot of guys on the Tour."<sup>176</sup> Interviewed in 2013, Botha noted that she had been misquoted and that her intent was in speaking about her surfing outside of contests at her local surf break where she "was often the best surfer out there".<sup>177</sup> Nevertheless, her "I surf better than guys" comment was within the context of a competitive surfing culture where women surfing standards were seen by professional surfing and the media as inferior to that of men's. At the time Botha stated, "I just wish everybody would stop comparing men's and women's surfing. We try just as hard as the next guy to surf well and train pretty hard too."<sup>178</sup>

Aside from the skewing of material rewards in favour of professional male surfers on the world tour, and Botha's view that women did not surf as well as men in general, hinting at differences in athleticism located in bodies, Botha pointed to structural constraints within the institutionalised nature of organised surfing practices in making women's surfing less visible within the masculine ethos of the competitive sporting lifestyle. The ASP system in the late 1980s and early 1990s, prioritised the men's contest over that of the women's and aimed to keep the men on tour content. The result was that, as Botha recalled, the ASP was "never going to put girls in in good surf" despite the fact that women professional surfers trained hard and paid the same to compete in events.<sup>179</sup> Women's heats were: run in poorer surf conditions than the men which made it difficult to surf well, surfed during the lay-days for the men's event, or held first thing in the morning or late in the afternoon when there were not many spectators. In all, the implications were that women's surfing did not feature high on the agenda of the surf media, mainstream media or with spectators, as there was little or no publicity for it. In Botha's recounting, these structural factors further contributed to the perception that women's surfing standards could not meet the men's performances in the waves.

This point on surfing standards mapped to the spectacle of surfing illustrated how the male gaze of the surfing media globally, and locally, excluded women's surfing from gaining visibility and respectability within the promotional culture of the sport. Surfing culture rather focused on the beauty of women's bodies in advertisements and in articles rather than their surfing athleticism. It was due to this beauty aesthetic, the common trope of the decorative woman on the beach in a bikini, and the limited material rewards for

<sup>174</sup> Bianca Buitendag, from George in the southern Cape, in her debut year on the ASP world women's tour, featured on the January/February 2013 issue of *Zigzag*.

<sup>175</sup> "ASP update: Potter's assault, Botha revenge," *Zigzag*, 13, 6 (1989), 21.

<sup>176</sup> Quoted in Gillogly, "Post Modern Surf Femme," 93. Glenn Hollands in his history of surfing in East London mentions that Botha was "known for her aggressive style of surfing in an era when women surfers were more acclaimed for surfing with grace." See Hollands, *The Reef*, 105.

<sup>177</sup> Interview with Botha.

<sup>178</sup> "Personality Parade," *Zigzag*, 13, 6 (November/December 1989), 65.

<sup>179</sup> Interview with Wendy Botha, 19 April 2013.

women's competitive surfing, that Botha sought publicity for women's surfing by posing nude in Australian *Playboy* magazine in September 1992, prior to winning her fourth world title.<sup>180</sup> Botha stated in 2013, "it was just a thing to try give women's surfing more recognition."<sup>181</sup> At the time, Botha noted, "[t]he girls on the tour were a little shocked" while "[t]he guys all think it's unreal."<sup>182</sup> In merging professional surfing and nudity, Botha's competitive femininity had migrated into celebrity culture. At the end of the 1993 world tour, finishing eleventh in the world rankings, Botha retired from professional surfing, married and then went on to a career as a presenter for an extreme sports television show, *On The Edge*, in New Zealand in the late 1990s.

Botha's professional career shaped the making of competitive surfing femininities in South Africa and inspired several other South Africa women surfers to look to the world professional circuit. These female surfing identities either challenged or co-opted, or combined both, the athletic "surfer girl" image in the surf media and in the surf. However, the context of these women surfer's choices in the 1980s were constrained materially; besides visa issues in certain countries, limited surf industry sponsorship and fewer local contests meant less prize-money was available to women who surfed competitively. Thus, the professional world surfing circuit was largely unattainable for South African women surfers in the late 1980s and into the early 1990s. Instead, the local pro-am contest scene became the space where women's competitive prowess was demonstrated by surfers and promoted in the surfing media. However, culturally determined ideas of masculine styles of surfing as equated to good surfing persisted in the 1980s. This ambivalence to women competitive surfers aimed to maintain the surfing gender order as masculine.

In 1988, *Offshore* magazine featured aspiring world tour surfer Lindy Brink, the twenty-three year old University of Cape Town graduate in Zoology and former Springbok surfer.<sup>183</sup> Brink had taken up surfing in Cape St Francis in the Eastern Cape in 1984. She cited a contemporary male surfer, Justin Strong from Cape Town, as a role model while Wendy Botha was not seen as someone who influenced Brink's surfing, due to the fact that Botha had moved away from amateur surfing by the time Brink started surfing competitions. Rather, Brink drew inspiration from amateur surfer Kay Holt, whom she felt should be provided with the opportunity to compete international due to her "aggressive surfing".<sup>184</sup>

What differentiated Brink from other local women competitive surfers was that she turned her back on amateur surfing in May 1988 and, to the surprise the South African amateur surfing administrators, to become a professional surfer.<sup>185</sup> The key factor facilitating this decision was a sponsorship deal from the Durban surf industry: surfwear business Instinct Clothing to fund her world tour costs, accessories support from surf retailer, Island Style, and sponsored surfboards from Gavin Spowart. Morton reported that the sponsorship had upset the Instinct boardroom because Brink was a woman. This boardroom sentiment inculcated this surf retail company within the prevailing gender attitudes to women's world competitive surfing, which Morton identified as "may seem a frivolous thing – gung-ho bum 'n tits sideshow" to the men's

<sup>180</sup> This act of representing the surfing body sexually was not without precedent within surfing culture. Elite male surfers, Californians Mike Purpus and Angie Reno featured nude in *Playboy* magazine in 1974 and in 1975 Australian professional surfer Wayne Bartholomew appeared naked on the cover of the Australian surfing magazine *Tracks*. Hawaiian Laura Blears, who won the first women's international professional event, the 1974 Smirnoff Pro, was photographed surfing naked for the July 1975 issue of *Playboy*. See Warsaw, *The Encyclopedia of Surfing*, 421 and Warsaw, *The History of Surfing*, 321 and 343. In 2013 and 2014, professional women surfers again took to the practice of surfing nude for publicity, foregrounding athletic surfing femininities.

<sup>181</sup> Interview with Botha.

<sup>182</sup> Botha was quoted on this in Warsaw, *The Encyclopedia of Surfing*, 76.

<sup>183</sup> See also Brink's profile in Jury, *Surfing in Southern Africa*, 138.

<sup>184</sup> Steve Morton, "Lindy on the Brink," *Offshore*, 2, 3 (1988), 24.

<sup>185</sup> In 1987, outside of organised surfing, Marguerite Hallen was noted as joining the world professional surfing. See Martin Hallen, "Backwash: From a Husband's Point of View," *Zigzag*, 11, 3 (May/June 1987), 28. No further mention of Hallen was mentioned in the magazine.

professional surfing tour.<sup>186</sup> Yet, Morton was supportive of change in women's surfing, he pointed out that "female surfpersons" such as Pam Burrige, Jodie Cooper, Frieda Zamba, Kim Mearig and Wendy Botha had made women's surfing visible in the global surfing world through the women's world championship tour, sponsorships, and "high-profile acts" on the waves.<sup>187</sup> Brink's stated hope was to continue within that trajectory,

My greatest ambition is to win the world champs within three years. Then I want to do as good a job as I can for my sponsors. Very few local surfers have been offered what I have got. I want to show there's still local talent and not sit back and let things get in our way.<sup>188</sup>

Brink, however, was not to fulfil her professional surfing ambitions. While she was voted by the ASP as the 1988 Women's Rookie of the Year with her sixteenth placing out of seventy-two surfers on the world tour, by 1990 Brink was no longer competing on the tour.<sup>189</sup> After Brink, the next South African woman to enter the professional tour was Heather Clarke from Port Shepstone, Natal South Coast in 1993.<sup>190</sup>

From 1989 to 1994, outside of the professional world tour South African surfing became more conducive for women's surfing despite the material and symbolic constraints for women surfers, as noted above, that remained part of competitive surfing. This led to a small increase in the number of women surfing competitively in these years and laid a foundation for later developments in local women's surfing in the 2000s.<sup>191</sup> There were two inter-linked local factors here. The first was the increased number of amateur and professional competitive arenas, along with the opening up of international sporting contacts after the sports boycott ended, and, second, the organisation of local women's surfing with the formation the South African Women's Surfing Association (SAWSA). Founded by Kay Holt and supported by top women surfers in South Africa, SAWSA affiliated to SASA and thus gained formal recognition within the sport. SAWSA's aims were to promote all surfing disciplines nationally among women and "upgrade the standard of women surfers in the country, and provide an incentive for some of the top ladies to compete internationally."<sup>192</sup> To meet its organisational aims, SAWSA set out to run "all-girls" surfing events and hold coaching clinics. A further effect of SAWSA was to provide a space for a girl surfer sociability within the male dominated organised sport.<sup>193</sup>

SAWSA benefitted from the pro-am South African Surfing Series (SASS), begun in 1986 as an internal response to sports isolation (as discussed in Chapter 3), with its women's events and ranking system. SASS

<sup>186</sup> Steve Morton, "Lindy on the Brink," *Offshore*, 2, 3 (1988), 24.

<sup>187</sup> Steve Morton, "Lindy on the Brink," *Offshore*, 2, 3 (1988), 24.

<sup>188</sup> Steve Morton, "Lindy on the Brink," *Offshore*, 2, 3 (1988), 24.

<sup>189</sup> "ASP Awards", <http://www.aspworldtour.com/pdf/aspawards.pdf> [accessed on 14 August 2013] and "1988 ASP Women's World Tour Final Rankings," <http://www.aspworldtour.com/archivedraws/1988/1988womfinalratings.pdf> [accessed on 14 August 2013]. Botha's tour prize money for 1988, when ranked third, was \$20,425.00; sixteenth placed Brink earned \$1,000 on the tour in the same year. In comparison, the men's tour earnings were higher than the women's. For example, the top placed South African male surfing in 1988 was Shaun Tomson, ranked thirteenth, with yearly earnings of \$21,200.00. See "1988 ASP World Tour Final Ratings," <http://www.aspworldtour.com/archivedraws/1988/1988menfinalratings.pdf> [access on 14 August 2013].

<sup>190</sup> See "ASP update: The Race is On," *Zigzag*, 17, 6 (November/December 1993), 47, "Heather Clark Goes for the Big One," *Zigzag*, 18, 1 (January/February 1994), 12, and *Zigzag*, 19, 4 (July/August 1995), 59. Clark's professional career was under financial pressure through the mid-1990s until 1998, at which point Red Bull sponsored her. She remained on the professional tour until 2006. Her highest ranking was third in 2003. See Renelle Naidoo, "Life's a Beach for Fergie," *Daily News*, 2 April 2004.

<sup>191</sup> Unlike the early 1990s, later trends saw the global surfing industries supporting women's surfing as a means to market to young women consumers. See Westwick and Neushul, *The World in the Curl*, 274-281.

<sup>192</sup> "The Formation of the South African Women's Surfing Association," *Zigzag*, 13, 5 (September/October 1989), 65.

<sup>193</sup> In early 1991, Colette Potgieter indicated that outside of the competitive space, women surfers were few. Her assessment of this was "most are afraid of the criticism from the guys at the beach." See Colette Potgieter, "Boards and Broads," *Zigzag*, 15, 1 (January/February 1991), 31.

also benefited from the slow opening up of the sport of surfing to women in the early to mid 1990s.<sup>194</sup> In 1990, the SASS run Billabong/Country Feeling Classic at Jeffreys Bay was seen to attract women entrants and drew the sponsors' attention. As a result *Zigzag* optimistically indicated "[w]omen surfers are also starting to get the media coverage which so long has been lacking."<sup>195</sup> This was not the full picture as publicity did not translate into improved material benefits from competitive surfing as women surfer Colette Potgieter pointed out in early 1991, "because there are far fewer women surfers, the standard of surfing is considerably lower [than the men's] – and sponsors feel that this justifies their minimal support."<sup>196</sup>

SASS added to the provincial and national contests run by SASA, which led to the selection of national teams. With South Africa's return to international amateur surfing, the national team sent two women surfers to France in 1992 and again in Brazil in 1994.<sup>197</sup> In addition, standalone women-only contests were run, the first of which was the Wella for Women's Surfing Contest held at Muizenberg, Cape Town in March 1992.<sup>198</sup> In 1992, after running for twenty-three years, the Gunston 500 introduced professional women's surfing into the event. This attracted international women surfers to South Africa, a move by the contest organisers that benefited from the opening up of international sporting contacts with the country in the early post-apartheid years.<sup>199</sup> The 1992 Gunston was followed by the Schick Open women's event in Cape Town and the Billabong Country Feeling Surf Classic in Jeffreys Bay in the winter of that same year. This trend in increased contests from the early to the mid-1990s stimulated competitiveness among women surfers and provided a means to gain contest experience, exposure and (some) expenses paid. However, despite the surf media, surf industry and organised surfing opening up to women's surfing in the early 1990s, surf journalist Jeremy Saville commented in 1994 that it "still has a long way to go" even though "there is a growing number of women surfers getting into competitive surfing."<sup>200</sup>

Despite these gains for competitive women surfers reported in the surf media, surfing remained a sporting lifestyle where competitive femininities remained structured as subordinate to competitive and non-competitive surfing masculinities. *Zigzag* continued advertising women as models rather than as surfers in promoting surfing products. In the early 1990s, two women readers from Durban wrote a letter to *Zigzag* in response to a Mrs Palmers advertisement for surfboard wax in the January/February 1994 issue of the magazine; the advert had won the *Zigzag* advert of the month as announced in the March/April 1994 issue.<sup>201</sup> Signing the letter as Giselle and Claire, the women took issue with *Zigzag* running the advert, indicating they were offended and found the advertisement sexist. They gestured to an identity as independent women who embraced beauty culture, and stated, "[w]hen an ad promoting a product demeans and demoralises women, this is when we must take a stand. There are other ways to promote a product without using words and images with vulgar, sexual connotations."<sup>202</sup> *Zigzag*, noted "that everyone has the

<sup>194</sup> See "Changing of the Guard," *Zigzag*, 15, 1 (January/February 1991), 17 and Jeremy Saville, "The Top Sixteen," *Zigzag*, 18, 2 (March/April 1994), 39.

<sup>195</sup> "Women's Surfing News," *Zigzag*, 14, 5 (September/October 1990), 47.

<sup>196</sup> Potgieter, "Boards and Broads," 31.

<sup>197</sup> The 1992 team included Heather Clark and Angela Hoy; Candice Berndt and Georgina King were in the 1994 team. See Pat Flanagan, "The National Team," *Zigzag*, 16, 5 (September/October 1992), 45 and "S.A. Team '94," *Zigzag*, 18, 2 (March/April 1994), 43.

<sup>198</sup> Miles Masterson, "Backwash: Women's Surfing Contest," *Zigzag*, 16, 3 (May/June 1992), 54.

<sup>199</sup> "The Awesome Foursome," *Zigzag*, 16, 5 (September/October 1992), 36-7.

<sup>200</sup> Saville, "The Top Sixteen," 39. Saville recorded the top ten women in the SASS as follows, in order of ranking from one to tied ninth: Heather Clark, Kay Holt, Tamaris Walters, Karlien Oosthuisen, Cindy Gibb, Janet Webb, Georgina King, Janine Baker and Vanessa Kennedy/Justine Polly.

<sup>201</sup> For the Mrs Palmer advertisement see *Zigzag*, 18, 1 (January/February 1994), 16, and for the award see *Zigzag*, 18, 2 (March/April 1994), 12.

<sup>202</sup> Letter from Giselle and Claire, Durban, "Rubbing up the Wrong Way," *Zigzag*, 18, 3 (May/June 1994), 16.

right to their own opinion,” and instead of an editorial response, its usual practice, the magazine printed a reply from Sunboyz, the advertiser for the surf wax.<sup>203</sup> In reinforcing the masculine gaze within the surfing magazine, Sunboyz pointed to the year 1994 as an opening of South African society, “the year of free elections” and “the year we’re all supposed to express our views and be entitled to our own opinions and rights” so as to defend their “right to have more spice in the mag.”<sup>204</sup> In making a tenuous link between national liberation and freedom of speech for commercial publicity from a position of racial and gender privilege, Sunboyz, and *Zigzag*, reiterated gender difference and male power in objectifying women through this advert. A further effect of the surfing cultural industries position was to silence the voices of the women readers who wrote the letter by keeping to a business-as-usual approach to surfing promotional culture.

Visual advertising messages that perpetuated women as objects for male desire provided one means by which the male dominated nature of the sport was maintained with the surfing imaginary. Other mechanisms were material, such as the lesser prize incentives for women surfers in comparison to men’s surfing and female beauty contest entrants at surfing events. A 1989 letter in *Offshore* magazine from a women surfer from Heathfield, Cape Town, using a pseudonym, summarised the marginalisation of women competitive surfers as, “[t]he message to the women who want to start competing is: sell your board, buy a bikini, join a gym and work on a tan.”<sup>205</sup> In a 1990 letter to *Zigzag* from coloured surfer Vanessa Kennedy of Heathfield (who is discussed further in Chapter 4), that displaces the whiteness but not the class position of women surfers as referenced in this chapter, the view that women may not surf as well as men but should “be judged on our own merits” was put forward in addressing gender difference in the surf.<sup>206</sup> Nevertheless, she asked why women surfers were not visible in *Zigzag* and why only women surfers who make the world tour got mentioned in the magazine. Kennedy also called for the representation of surfing femininities, “[w]e’d also like coverage of women in wetsuits. The beach bunny, tits and arse bit we can get in *Cosmo*, along with make-up tips like curling eyelashes.”<sup>207</sup> *Zigzag*’s response in 1990 was conciliatory, unlike the 1994 editorial policy taken by the magazine noted above in regard to the Mrs Palmers advertisement. The magazine’s explanation for the sparse coverage of women surfers was put down as a result of subcultural market dynamics.

Compared to Men’s surfing, Women’s surfing is a very small, albeit significant, part of the sport. Compared to all the other disciplines we try to cover – Men’s surfing, Bodyboarding, Waveski’s and Kneelo’s – Women’s surfing seems even smaller. This is possibly the reason for us not giving Women surfers the attention they deserve. *Zigzag* does recognise and support Women’s surfing and will work towards bringing you up to date info in future.<sup>208</sup>

A lack of incentive for women contest surfers noting few sponsors supporting women’s surfing was also reiterated in a 1993 letter in *Zigzag* from another women surfer from Cape Town, also not stating her name. She commented, “women need to be rewarded for doing well in contests (being called ‘champion’ does little to our egos because we’re still considered grommets anyway).”<sup>209</sup> Demanding the right to fair treatment in contests, as women paid the same contest fees and contributed the same number of points to the team

<sup>203</sup> Reply to Letter, “Rubbing up the Wrong Way,” 16.

<sup>204</sup> Reply to Letter, “Rubbing up the Wrong Way,” 16.

<sup>205</sup> Letter from Miss I.M. de Moerin, Heathfield, “Snake Them!” *Offshore*, 3, 5 (1989), 5.

<sup>206</sup> Letter from V.N. Kennedy, Heathfield, “Surfing Women,” *Zigzag*, 14, 5 (September/October 1990), 12. Noting the tone of this letter, this is possibly the same author of the previous letter.

<sup>207</sup> Letter from Kennedy, “Surfing Women,” 12.

<sup>208</sup> Editorial reply to Letter from Kennedy, “Surfing Women,” 12.

<sup>209</sup> Letter from Concerned, Cape Town, “Broads on Boards,” *Zigzag*, 17, 3 (May/June 1993), 14 and 16.



results, and after experiencing the side-lining of the girls and women's heat at a contest by male organisers, this Cape Town amateur surfer stated, "I have come to the realisation that there is no way spectators are ever going to witness powerful and radical surfing in the women's divisions. This however is not because we don't have the ability but mainly because there are no incentive for us to take part."<sup>210</sup>

What the three examples above point to were the exclusionary cultural practices and gendered dynamics of the surf publication market catering for young males and, in so doing, maintained a male gaze as well as the marginalisation of women as surfers in surf contests. Both these factors worked together discursively in maintaining the male power in the gender order of South Africa surfing in the 1990s. Surfing femininities, as liquid in the early 1990s as they were in the 1960s, were constructed within these cultural constraints. Nevertheless, some women contested male power by means of their competitive surfing practices or giving voice to male domination in the experience of surfing as a woman. In these women surfer's voices, whether named or unnamed, the agency of women could be read within the pages of these South African surfing magazines. "I.M. de Moerin" pointed the way for women to make themselves visible in the waves, "[a]n alternative does exist. Kick the dog. Ladies, go out surfing, drop in on or snake a few hot guys and show them we mean business!"<sup>211</sup> Vanessa Kennedy stated it similarly, citing women as already present in the everyday at the beach, "[g]ive us some recognition for our efforts. Ignoring us won't make us go away."<sup>212</sup>

---

<sup>210</sup> Letter from Concerned, "Broads on Boards," 14.

<sup>211</sup> Letter from Miss I.M. de Moerin, "Snake Them!" 5. In his "Surfikan Slang" glossary, Steve Pike has defined this aggressive act in the waves as follows: "Snake" or "snaking" is a surfing term for "[s]teal[ing] a wave. Some surfers are master at this. They will paddle around you, heading further out, then suddenly paddle towards the inside [of the surf break] to claim right of way over the wave you were going for." See his *Surfing South Africa*, (Cape Town: Double Storey, 2007), 267.

<sup>212</sup> Letter from Kennedy, "Surfing Women," 12.

## Chapter 3: Boycott Moves: Surfing and the International Sports Boycott Against Apartheid, 1970 – 1994

*When I started on the tour, people heard I was from S.A. and went, 'Oh Wow! How's J. Bay? How's the waves?' but by 1986 it meant a political debate and that's when visa troubles started.*

Michael Burness, *Zigzag*, 1988<sup>1</sup>

In 1978, Paul Naude, co-editor of the South African surfing magazine *Zigzag*, disapproved of the Australian amateur surfing team not competing in the world surfing titles held in South Africa owing to political pressure from the Australian government. In 1988, the newly appointed editor of *Zigzag*, Craig Sims voiced his frustration at how international sanctions had closed off South African professional surfing careers on the world tour. Despite the decade between them, both Naude and Sims shared a similar sentiment lamenting the manner in which politics had entered the sport of surfing and put South Africa's standing as a surfing nation into question. In exploring how South African surfing regarded the political, this chapter addresses surfing and the international sports boycott against apartheid. It thus opens up a neglected theme in South African sports history: the shaping of South African amateur and professional competitive surfing by the international boycott of apartheid sport and how white organised surfing and the surfing cultural industries responded to these boycott moves. It seeks to demonstrate that surfing, as a marginal sporting tradition in South Africa, was not disassociated from international political trends that isolated white sport during apartheid. The South African surfing archive, itself skewed towards white surfing, provides a starting point in framing the political views and social privilege of surfers associated with whiteness on the South African coast. Within a context of state reform and repression in response to internal political protest as well as international economic sanctions and cultural boycott, a political history of South African surfing can be written for the years 1970 to 1990 and the effects of surfing's apartheid sporting past considered in the early post-apartheid period of political transition towards a democratic society from 1990 to 1994.<sup>2</sup>

### Adapting to Sports Isolation?

The international sports boycott has its roots in internal protest to apartheid sport as of the late 1950s. With the formation of the South African Non-Racial Olympic Committee (SAN-ROC) in 1963, and then operating from exile as of 1966, a political platform was established for local sports activists and bodies as well as the international Anti-Apartheid Movement (AMM) to campaign for South Africa's expulsion from the Olympic movement. By 1970, sustained international pressure against apartheid sport was successful in ensuring the expulsion for the South African National Olympic Committee (NOC) from the International Olympics Committee (IOC), thus excluding South African sport from the Olympics. The effects of this anti-apartheid sports movement was the ending of international sporting contacts with South African and the

<sup>1</sup> Quoted in Lawrence Atkinson, "Michael Burness: Burn speaks out," *Zigzag*, 12, 4 (July/August 1988), 39.

<sup>2</sup> This latter point is further taken up in Chapter 4. On writing the political into global surfing in arguing that surfing was part of the history of American foreign relations, see Scott Laderman, *Empire in Waves: A Political History of Surfing*, (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 2014). His chapter "When Surfing Discovered It Was Political: Confronting South African Apartheid" draws mostly on American and Australian surfing primary sources in addressing similar themes as are focused on in my work; as such, my southern Africanist approach to surfing and the political complements *Empire in Waves* as a view from the South. For the wider South African historical context of protest and reform see William Beinart, *Twentieth-Century South Africa* (Cape Town and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994); Tom Lodge, "Resistance and Reform, 1973-1994" in Robert Ross, Anne Mage and Bill Nasson (eds), *The Cambridge History of South Africa, Volume 2, 1885-1994*, (Cambridge and Cape Town: Cambridge University Press, 2012) and Saul Dubow, *Apartheid, 1948-1994*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), especially 139 and 195.

barring of white sporting codes from international competition. While the boycott of apartheid sport was structured around a debate about the nature of sport in a racially divided society, John Nauright has argued that the “paramount discourses surrounding the sports boycott movement were in effect not at all radical, and amounted to demands by educated blacks for inclusion within the dominant sporting structures.”<sup>3</sup> The anti-apartheid sports boycott movement held to the view that “apartheid structured all social relations in South Africa” and required the elimination of South Africa’s involvement in international sport. White sport and its international supporters, on the other hand, in arguing to maintain international sporting relations, held to the position that “sport is separate and different” from other forms of social interactions.<sup>4</sup> Increasingly, as the former point of view gained international currency as of the late 1960s, and especially after the Olympic ban in 1970, political pressure came to bear on international sports federations in the traditional sports to boycott South African involvement in sporting competitions as the Springbok teams were not representative of the South African population. Soccer and cricket and later rugby gave way to sports sanctions, which resulted in the isolation of these mainstream white sports.<sup>5</sup> This brought the anti-apartheid campaign into the everyday lives of white South Africans who had previously been cushioned from political protests. Isolating South Africa from the international sporting arena highlighted how the white South African public’s yearning for international sporting respectability was simultaneously undermined by their support for apartheid legislation.

Sports isolation, however, crept in more slowly in “minor” or “technical” sports outside of the Olympic movement, such as surfing and model yacht racing which both held an international championship in South African in 1978.<sup>6</sup> These “world” contests were used by the Department of Sport and Recreation to create an inflated view of South African sporting accomplishments and a sense that white sport was “acclimatized to isolation” in the face of the continued sports boycott.<sup>7</sup> The Department’s outlook cannot be substantiated when looking to amateur surfing in the 1970s and 1980s and professional surfing as of the mid-1980s. Sustained sports sanctions over these years against white South African surfing led to a pessimistic view within organised South African surfing and the surfing media of the state of South African surfing by the late 1980s. However, surfing never experienced the same overt political pressure and protest as cricket and rugby from the international community and local activists and the boycott of surfing lagged behind mainstream sports. Nevertheless, as this chapter will show, there were key moments in the 1970s and 1980s that politicised South African surfing. Following on the late 1970s ban of South African amateur surfing from

<sup>3</sup> John Nauright, *Long Run to Freedom: Sport, Cultures and Identities in South Africa*, (Morgantown, WV: Fitness Information Centre, 2010), 129.

<sup>4</sup> The quotes are from Douglas Booth, *The Race Game: Sport and Politics in South Africa*, (London and New York: Routledge, 1998), xix.

<sup>5</sup> On sports historiography for specific sporting traditions, among others, see Albert Grundlingh, André Odendal and Burridge Spies, *Beyond the Tryline: Rugby and South African Society*, (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1995), Peter Alegi, *Laduma! Soccer, Politics and Society in South Africa*, (Pietermaritzburg: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, 2004), Bruce Murray and Christopher Merrett, *Caught Behind: Race and Politics in Springbok Cricket*, (Johannesburg and Pietermaritzburg: Wits University Press and University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, 2004), John Nauright, *Long Run to Freedom: Sport, Cultures and Identities in South Africa*, (Morgantown, WV: Fitness Information Centre, 2010), Ashwin Desai and Ahmed Veriava, “Creepy Crawlies, Portapools and the Dam(n)s of Swimming” in Aswin Desai (ed), *The Race to Transform: Sport in Post-apartheid South Africa*, (Cape Town: HRSC, 2010), and Albert Grundlingh, *Potent Pastimes: Sport and Leisure Practices in Modern Afrikaner History*, (Pretoria: Protea Book House, 2013).

<sup>6</sup> See Robert Archer and Antoine Bouillon, *The South African Game: Sport and Racism*, (London, Zed Press, 1982), 242. The terms “minor” and “technical” draw on Archer and Bouillon’s classification in listing other sporting bodies to hold world titles in South African in the 1970s, for example: parachuting, trampoline, and water skiing (in 1974), fishing and bodybuilding (in 1975), parachuting, snooker, men’s bowls, gymkhana, model boating, power boating and tug of war (in 1976), and yachting, pistol shooting and radio-controlled model aerobatics (in 1979).

<sup>7</sup> See Archer and Bouillon, *The South African Game*, 241. The pro-government South African Olympic and National Games Association promoted the view of sporting acclimatisation in 1981. See also Department of Sport and Recreation’s *Annual Report* for the years 1974 to 1979.

international contests, it was with the professional surfing boycott from the mid-1980s that consolidated South African surfing's isolation. Yet, despite the sports boycott, and in pursuance of material rewards and surfing titles, some American, Australian, Brazilian, European, Japanese and Hawaiian amateur and professional surfers visited South African shores throughout the 1970s and 1980s. Surfing therefore offers a view of the sports boycott era from the edge of the field of apartheid sport. Nevertheless, what comes to the fore when examining the South African surfing archive for competitive surfing during these years were attitudes among the cultural brokers, surfing organisers and competitive surfers themselves that ranged from opposition to apartheid by seeing the political in sport to political apathy or withdrawal by arguing that sport and politics did not mix. The irony was that the latter argument was strategically dropped in the 1990s when sports unification became a pre-request for South African surfing's return to international competition and inclusion within democratic sporting structures.<sup>8</sup> To understand surfing's place and politics within the early post-apartheid sportscape, we turn to the isolation of amateur surfing and then the boycott of professional surfing under apartheid.

### The Isolation of Springbok Surfing

South African amateur surfing's first recorded experience of anti-apartheid sentiment from the media occurred during the World Titles held at Bell's Beach in Australia in early May 1970. The 1970 Springbok team captain, George Thompson, in reflecting on the event in the mid-1980s in SASA's *Moments* publication, reported that this was South African surfing's "the first encounter with persistent journalists and TV on political matters."<sup>9</sup>

The 1970s world championship was a foretaste of the Australian Surfing Association's (ASA) lead among surfing nations in the boycott of South African surfing as of the late 1970s. ASA's stance was a result of anti-apartheid views and protests in Australia. In the 1960s the Australian government had begun to take a stance against apartheid South Africa; this was due foreign relations informed by South Africa's exit from the Commonwealth, the civil rights movement in the United States of America, and the independence of African states. By 1970, AMM groups in Australia were active in organising against South African sports tours following the 1968 United Nations General Assembly declaration against educational, cultural and sporting exchanges with the institutions of apartheid and anti-apartheid demonstrations in Britain.<sup>10</sup> Denis Brutus was also in Australia in April 1970, on a second tour lobbying for the sports boycott, and drew much media attention to racialised sport in South Africa.

George Thompson's experience of anti-apartheid sentiment as a competitor was not recorded by Ernie Tomson, the national team judge for the contest and father of teenaged Shaun Tomson, who was part of the national team. In a 1970 diary of the contest and travels in Australia, Ernie Tomson described the day-to-day surfing related activities of the team and popularity of the South African surfers with the other surfers in the contest. He indicated that there was media coverage, "plenty of cameras and T.V. The radio is full of the contest."<sup>11</sup> A media event Tomson did record was to do with an incident that in his view detracted from surfing's respectability as a sport: "A very unfortunate thing happened. Two of the U.S. Team were allegedly

<sup>8</sup> The politics of surfing unification in the early 1990s is addressed in Chapter 4.

<sup>9</sup> George Thompson, "Springbok Tours 1964-1985," South African Surfing Association (SASA), *Moments*, (Durban: South African Surfing Association, 1986), 13.

<sup>10</sup> Historian Peter Limb notes that "[i]n Sydney in 1969/70 there were demonstrations against apartheid politicians, all white netballers, surf lifesavers, tennis players and golfer Gary Player." In 1971 the New Zealand AAM organised a protest of the South African lifesaving team; protestors placards read: "South African Surf Brings Out the Team All White." See Peter Limb, "The Anti-apartheid Movements in Australia and Aotearoa/New Zealand," *The Road to Democracy in South Africa, Volume 3, International Solidarity*, (Pretoria: UNISA Press, 2008), 920 and 927 respectively.

<sup>11</sup> Ernie Tomson, "The 1970 World Championships," *Southern Surfer*, (1970), 6.

caught with narcotics and the papers have run it really big on the front pages – not a good image.”<sup>12</sup> A hint of the political, however, can be read in SASA president, John Whitmore’s report on the contest in a 1971 issue of *Southern Surfer*.

There are numerous little incidents which occurred to make everyone in the team proud of one another at some stage, and it may suffice to say that if anyone had any ideas of criticising South Africa they must have felt too ashamed to do so in the light of the solid performance of the Springboks and no demonstrators or criticisms were even voiced.<sup>13</sup>

Whitmore’s comment was the last word on international opposition to South African surfing until the late 1970s. The reasons for this were two-fold. Firstly, there is a lacuna in the archive and no mention in *Moments*, South African amateur surfing’s collation of its past, despite male-only Springbok tours to Hawai’i in 1974 and California and Hawai’i in 1976. The surfing magazines for that period were few: *Southern Surfer* stopped publication in December 1971 and *Surf Africa* (1974–1976) was in circulation during the years when no amateur world championships were held. *Surf Africa* did mention that South Africa was “prepared to host the World Champs in 1976”.<sup>14</sup> Secondly, there were no world championships held after the 1972 event in California due to the collapse of the International Surfing Federation (ISF). Several factors accounted for the disarray within international amateur surfing in the early to mid-1970s: there was a pervasive anti-contest sentiment among top international surfers drawn to the ideals of the youth counterculture, already evident in Australia in 1970; poor contest administration by the ISF, including poorly defined judging criteria, and an inability to secure sponsorships; and the emergence of professional surfing contests in several global surfing centres with material rewards for competitive surfers.<sup>15</sup>

In a forewarning of things to come for South African competitive surfing, the prospect of a surfing boycott was raised by Michael Tomson, editor-at-large of *Down The Line*, in the September 1977 issue of the magazine. Titled “Boycott Move: Will Apartheid Hit Surfing?” Tomson responded to the call by the editor of the Australian surfing magazine *Tracks*, Phil Jarratt, for top professional surfers to boycott South African contests on the newly founded International Professional Surfers Associations (IPS) tour.<sup>16</sup> Jarratt, whose editorial appeared in the August 1977 issue of *Tracks*, also argued for excluding South Africa from world amateur surfing. Jarratt’s ire for the planned 1978 World Titles in South Africa was most evident. He saw organised surfing as acquiescing to apartheid sport in its pursuing of Olympic hopes and international sporting legitimacy.

[S]urfing conveniently sticks its official head in the sand and refuses to believe that the thinking people of world have finally said no to apartheid. No other sporting body would even consider holding

<sup>12</sup> Tomson, “The 1970 World Championships,” 7. This incident was a result of a raid of contestant rooms by state narcotics agents, with no arrests made. See Matt Warshaw, “World Surfing Championship, 1970,” *The Encyclopedia of Surfing*, (Orlando, FL: Harcourt, 2003), 715. Warshaw does not document anti-apartheid sentiment at the event. In his autobiography, Springbok team member Donald Paarman makes no mention of political questions or the drug incident, although he does recall smoking “grass” during the contest period. See his *Lunatic Surfer or Destiny? Autobiography of a Springbok...Whaaat!* (Wilderness: Donald Paarman, 2008), 44.

<sup>13</sup> John Whitmore, “Report on 1970 World Championship,” *Southern Surfer*, (February 1971), extract (on the reverse of a Natal Surfriders’ Association membership application form inserted in the association’s magazine).

<sup>14</sup> “Surf Briefs: On—Off,” *Surf Africa*, (December 1974), 31. A report on “on-off” nature of a proposed 1974 World Championships was also reported here.

<sup>15</sup> See Booth, *Australian Beach Cultures: The History of Sun, Sand and Surf*, (London and New York: Routledge, 2001), 208 footnote 24, Warshaw, “International Surfing Federation (ISF)” in *The Encyclopedia of Surfing*, 291-2, and Matt Warshaw, *The History of Surfing*, (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2010), 259.

<sup>16</sup> The Gunston 500 and the Hang Ten International, both in Durban, were the professional surf contests in question.

such an event in South Africa while apartheid still exists – a fact that has resulted in South Africa's decline in international prestige and caused considerable internal dissent [sic] – but surfing clings to the absurd belief that the world isn't watching it.<sup>17</sup>

Michael Tomson's fear was that Jarratt's "chanting MIGHT just raise the issue" of a boycott of the sport internationally as "[u]p 'till now surfing was the only international sport in South Africa which remained unharrassed by international political opinion."<sup>18</sup> While overstating the case of surfing's particularism, as other marginal and "technical" sports shared the same recognition by the South African Department of Sport and Recreation, Tomson's argument against Jarratt was a complex mix of: defending South African sport, keeping sport out of politics, accusations of Australian hypocrisy in its racism against Aboriginal people, that professional surfing was a career for an individuals and not a team sport, that professional sportspersons make decisions as individuals, and with a material self-interest in maintaining the fledgling international professional surfing circuit "at a crucial stage in South African surfing's development."<sup>19</sup> It should be noted that Tomson's was the editor of *Down The Line*, a surf journalist writing for South African newspapers and *Surfer* magazine in California, and a top professional surfer on the international tour sponsored by the emerging Australian surf brand Quiksilver. In 1978, Tomson and business partner Joel Cooper, after refusing a commercial opportunity in 1977 as a Quiksilver licensee in South Africa, started Gotcha, a surfwear business that was to become a global surf brand in the 1980s.<sup>20</sup> Michael Tomson's stake in professional surfing and the nascent surfwear industry was also related to family linkages. He was the cousin of Shaun Tomson, who, by the end of 1977, was crowned the world professional surfing champion. It was these personal, commercial and competitive interests in surfing that shaped Michael Tomson's argument against Jarratt's move for a boycott of South African contests. Tomson concluded his response by dismissing a surfing boycott and reiterating his investment in professional surfing, and, by implication, organised surfing in general.

"The boycott plea is tired. Surfing in South Africa is not big enough for its excommunication to have any effect whatsoever on the political basis of our future. Non-one would even notice. In fact, boycotting any country presently on the international circuit will do immense damage to the professional movement the world over."<sup>21</sup>

Tomson's stand seemed vindicated when, on 3 July 1978, the South African Surfriders' Association (SASA) hosted the seventh World Surfing Titles at Nahoon Reef, near East London.<sup>22</sup> However, the event itself, as Tim Millward, SASA president in the mid-1980s reflected, was "plagued by political malady" as the event was boycotted by the Australian team.<sup>23</sup> This was a setback for the newly formed International Surfing Association (ISA), which had replaced the International Surfing Federation (ISF) in December 1976, under

<sup>17</sup> Phil Jarratt, "To Go or Not to Go? Aussies in Africa," *Tracks*, 83 (August 1977), 9, as quoted in Laderman, *Empire in Waves*, 113.

<sup>18</sup> Tomson, "Boycott Move: Will Apartheid Hit Surfing?" *Down The Line*, 8 (September 1977), 4.

<sup>19</sup> Tomson, "Boycott Move," 4. Tomson cited professional African American tennis player Arthur Ashe's 1973 visit to South Africa as an example of how an individual could effect political change. Archer and Bouillon in *The South African Game*, 102, however, saw Ashe as a tennis star that benefitted from a "limited amount of mixed competition at the highest levels" due to commercial interests during tennis' early years of professionalism.

<sup>20</sup> See Gotcha's company history, Kevin O'Sullivan, *Going Big: Gotcha and the Evolution of Modern Surfing Style*, (Los Angeles: Full Force, 2008), 10-11 and Phil Jarratt, *Salts and Suits*, (Melbourne and London: Hardie Grant Books, 2010), 145-146.

<sup>21</sup> Tomson, "Boycott Move," 4.

<sup>22</sup> East London as a coastal city was a location outside of the main political spotlight. It was favoured as a location for the South African amateur national championships in 1967, 1971, 1974 and 1976.

<sup>23</sup> Tim Millward, "On the March," *Zigzag*, 8, 6 (November/December 1984), 30.

the presidency of the South African Basil Lomborg.<sup>24</sup> Nevertheless, the other main surfing nations, Britain, France, Puerto Rico, Hawaii, the USA and South Africa, were represented at the contest, as Paul Naude noted while attempting to remain optimistic about the future of South Africa as a surfing nation:

Conspicuous by their absence was, of course, Australia. Unfortunately, due to [Australian] Government pressure on the ASA [Australian Surfing Association] by certain political considerations, Australia was prevented from sending a team to South Africa. So for the first time since 1964 they weren't represented ....<sup>25</sup>

While South Africa won the 1978 team title ahead of the USA and South African Anthony Brodowicz was crowned as the world amateur champion, South Africa's international prestige and claim as the top surfing nation was undermined by Australia's absence from the world titles. The Australians were seen as the top national team since the inauguration of the 1964 world championships, buoying an Australian national identity located in the surf and the beach.<sup>26</sup>

The Australian surfing team's absence from South Africa was due to the fact that the Australian government's stand on apartheid had hardened since 1970. ASA's boycott, followed closely on Australia's support, as part of the Commonwealth of Nations, for the December 1977 "Gleneagles Declaration on Apartheid and Sport" that dissuaded member nations from fostering sporting ties with South Africa and competing against South African athletes. The Gleneagles Declaration "emerged as perhaps the most important international landmark in generating more comprehensive sports sanctions" in amateur and professional sporting codes.<sup>27</sup> This multi-lateral international agreement "had the effect of once again raising questions about the responsibilities of surfers as competitors in international sport."<sup>28</sup> In July 1978, the same month as SASA hosted the world championships in South Africa, the United Nations Centre Against Apartheid reported on South African surfing as one of the "Other Sports" continuing international sporting contacts.<sup>29</sup> By 1980, white surfing had come to the attention of both SAN-ROC and the United Nations. SAN-ROC chairman Sam Ramsay in his 1980 report to the United Nations Centre Against Apartheid noted the 1978 World Surfing Champions, and the fact that "South Africa participates in international surfing

<sup>24</sup> The ISF had been inaugurated in 1964 and administered the biannual world titles till 1972, by when there were some 20 countries affiliated to the federation. The ISA was formed in late 1976 in Hawai'i under the impetus of Basil Lomborg, the president of the SASA and several representatives of national amateur surfing associations. The initial aim was to reform the ISF but the group was not able to secure the naming title to the ISF and so decided to establish a new international amateur surfing body. Lomborg was president of the ISA from 1976 until his death in 1980. In 1982 the ISA was recognised as surfing's world governing body by the General Association of International Sports Federations. In 1997 the International Olympic Committee admitted the ISA into the Olympic movement. On the ISA see Booth, *Australian Beach Cultures*, 208 footnote 24.

<sup>25</sup> Paul Naude, "7<sup>th</sup> World Surfing Championships," *Zigzag*, 2, 4 (September/November 1978), 13 and 15.

<sup>26</sup> On semiotics of the Australianness and the beach see the chapter titled "The Beach" in John Fiske, Bob Hodge and Graeme Turner, *The Myths of Oz: Reading Australian Popular Culture*, (London, Sydney and Wellington: Allen and Unwin, 1987), 53-72. In revisiting *The Myths of Oz* analysis of Australian national identity, Amelia Johns has argued that "[i]n re-focusing some of the sites of overlap between surfer culture and the Anzac myth [in lifesaving], we may uncover a third space where governmental iterations can flow into the identity space of the surfer, re-ordering loyalties and forging a new assemblage of white Australianness on the beach." Further, in Johns view, the surfer in 2008 had "become co-opted into the Australian mainstream" and reframes Australianness as white. See her "White Tribe: Echoes of the Anzac Myth in Cronulla," *Continuum: Journal of Media and Cultural Studies*, 22, 1 (2008), 3, 7-8 and 14.

<sup>27</sup> See Nauright, *Long Run to Freedom*, 149-150.

<sup>28</sup> Laderman, *Empire in Waves*, 112.

<sup>29</sup> United Nations Centre Against Apartheid, "South Africa's Standing in International Sport," Notes and Documents No. 20/7 (New York: United Nations, July 1978), 4. Aluka Digital Library, Melville J. Herskovits Library of African Studies Northwestern University, [http://www.aluka.org/action/showMetadata?doi=10.5555/AL.SFF.DOCUMENT.nuun1978\\_20](http://www.aluka.org/action/showMetadata?doi=10.5555/AL.SFF.DOCUMENT.nuun1978_20), [accessed on 13 September 2014].

competitions held in the United States,” as examples of an apartheid sport that had avoided isolation and gained recognition from the South African government.<sup>30</sup>

Although the 1978 World Championships were to be the last international surfing contest run by the ISA that South African surfing participated in until 1994, the South African government used this event to illustrate South Africa’s international sporting competitiveness. By 1978, Piet Koornhof, the Minister of Sport and Recreation, was aware of surfing’s value in the promotion of sport in South Africa and abroad through SASA’s administrators’ efforts in ensuring sporting respectability for organised surfing in the country. In the programme for the 1974 South African Surfing Championships, held on Natal’s South Coast, Koornhof’s support of surfing in furthering state discourse on international sporting relations was evident.

Surfing is fast becoming an extremely popular sport, not only with those lucky enough to live close to the sea, but even our people from up-country have shown an intense interest in your sport. I am sure that this challenging and exciting sport will go from strength to strength – several South African surfers have already proved [that] with the impact they have made in international competition. I have no doubt that the standard of these, the 7<sup>th</sup> South African Surfing Championships, will reach new heights and that competition will be very stiff.<sup>31</sup>

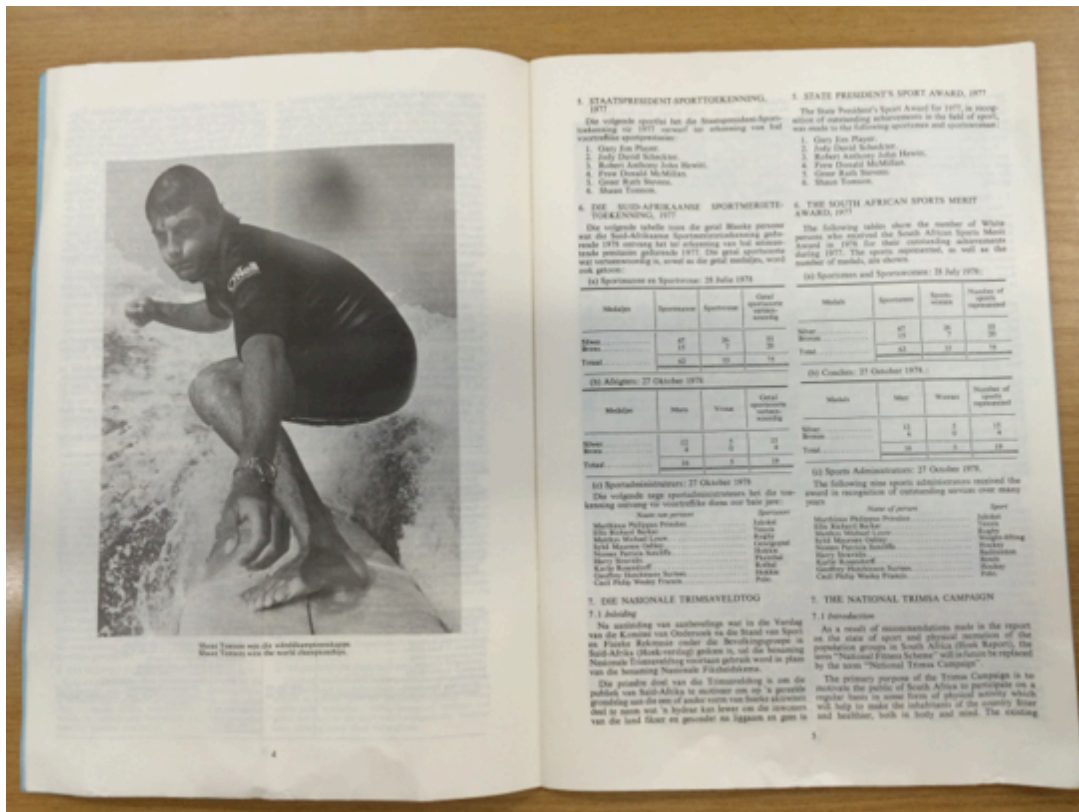


Figure 3.1: Photograph of Shaun Tomson in the Department of Sport and Recreation’s Annual Report, 1979.

Surfing’s international and national visibility was noted within the Department of Sport and Recreation’s *Annual Report* through the 1970s, referencing surfer competitive involvement in local and international contests, and the nationality of visiting international surfers. In recognition of his world title win in 1977, the

<sup>30</sup> Ramsamy’s report was requested by the Special Committee Against Apartheid, see United Nations Centre Against Apartheid, “Racial Discrimination in South African Sport,” Notes and Documents No. 8/80 (New York: United Nations, April 1980), 71, Aluka, [http://www.aluka.org/action/showMetadata?doi=10.5555/AL.SFF.DOCUMENT.nuun1980\\_10](http://www.aluka.org/action/showMetadata?doi=10.5555/AL.SFF.DOCUMENT.nuun1980_10), [accessed on 13 September 2014].

<sup>31</sup> “Message by Dr The Honorable P.G.J. Koornhof, Minister of Sport and Recreation,” *SA Champs ’73 Souvenir Programme*. 1.



Department, in 1978, presented the State President's Sport Award for 1977 to Shaun Tomson and, in reporting on the Award in 1979, published a surfing photograph, a first for a South African government publication, captioned: "Shaun Tomson wins the world championships" (see Figure 3.1).<sup>32</sup> The hosting of 1978 World Championships by South Africa were also noted by the Department in 1979, as was the fact of that South Africa won the team event and the men's title. In the same departmental *Annual Report*, with a clear inference to surfing, the Secretary for Sport and Recreation, B.K. de W. Hoek reported "[t]here is still strong bonds with countries abroad at sports administrator level" and that "[a]lthough it is true that there was no competition in the main types of sport, there is nevertheless proof that South Africa still has many sports friends and that sportsmen from abroad still wish to compete against us."<sup>33</sup> Following on the 1978 World Championships, in 1979 the Department conferred two further awards on South African surfing: the State President's Sport Award for 1978 to Anthony Brodowicz for "surf-riding" and Basil Lomborg, the SASA president, received the South African Sports Merits Award for 1979, an award for sports administrators.<sup>34</sup>

With this apartheid state interest in surfing, and due to increased international political option against apartheid sport as a result of the efforts of SAN-ROC and the AMM, and United National member states taking a harder line on apartheid sport, South African amateur surfing was barred from competing in the 1980 World Championships held in Biarritz, France. Nevertheless, the process of the South African team's exclusion from the event illustrated the international organised surfing's ambivalence to the political. In late 1979 and early 1980, the decision to invite South African hung in a balance. While the French surfing association, Federation Francaise de Surf et Skate, was divided over what action to take in September 1979, the Holland Surfing Association had voiced protest against South Africa's participation in France in early December and threatened to withdraw from the event.<sup>35</sup> In mid-December, the British and Irish surfing associations had come to the view, despite both governments' policies on no sporting contact with South Africa, that they would forego government subsidies to surf in France if South Africa was competing. There was an apolitical pragmatism in their stance to go surfing in France. The administrator for the British Surfing Association indicated, "[o]bviously if the championship were being held in Hawaii or Australia, we would be in trouble without the grants. But we can afford to pay our own way across the Channel to Biarritz."<sup>36</sup> In March 1980, the French Foreign Ministry banned the Springbok surfing team and asserted a policy of refusing to issue visas, a move that it had used to ban a 1979 Springbok rugby tour to France. The French Foreign Ministry had seen the South African attendance at the world titles as "inopportune" and there were reports that political pressure was placed Federation Francaise de Surf et Skate not to issue an invitation to South Africa with the threat of revoking a French Sports Ministry grant, without which the French surfing association could not host the world championships.<sup>37</sup> Despite SASA's lobbying of the ISA to gain an invitation, the World Surfing Championships were run in October 1980 without the Springboks and South African surfing entered a period of international amateur sports isolation.<sup>38</sup>

<sup>32</sup> Republic of South Africa, *Annual Report of the Department of Sport and Recreation for the calendar year 1978*, (Pretoria: Government Printers, 1979), RP41/1979, 4 (photograph) and 5. The other sportspersons to receive the award in that year were: Gary Player (golf), Jody Scheckter (motor racing), Robert Hewitt, Few McMillan and Greer Stevens (all for tennis).

<sup>33</sup> Republic of South Africa, *Annual Report of the Department of Sport and Recreation for the calendar year 1978*, 1.

<sup>34</sup> Republic of South Africa, *Annual Report of the Department of Sport and Recreation for the calendar year 1979*, (Pretoria: Government Printers, 1980), RP66/1980, 4-5.

<sup>35</sup> "Dutch hint a big surfing boycott over SA," *The Star*, 3 December 1979.

<sup>36</sup> "British, Irish surfers to defy govts over SA," *The Star*, 14 December 1979.

<sup>37</sup> See "SA surfers face French wipe-out," *The Star*, 12 February 1980 and "SA surfers banned from world event, French Govt decision," *Eastern Province Herald*, 7 March 1980.

<sup>38</sup> On the SASA lobbying the ISA see "S.A. gooi nie tou op oor branderry," *Die Oosterlig*, 6 March 1980.

In South Africa, *Zigzag* was mostly silent on the Springbok's ban from the world titles in France. Despite the significant impact on Springbok surfing, the topic was addressed in one article and mentioned in a letter prior to the world titles, and a further article reported on the event after the fact.<sup>39</sup> Rather, *Zigzag* took on the 'Springbok debacle' that debated the implications of selecting a national surfing team, and the associated national sporting prestige for individual surfers, without a world title event or another international tour planned for 1980.<sup>40</sup> The immediate effect of the cancellation of the South Africa's participation in the world titles was that Springbok colours were not awarded in that year but pushed to 1981 when a Springbok team toured California. A secondary effect was that the incentive for surfers to represent their country via the amateur competitive path had been removed. This also upset the proving ground for surfers at an international level that was seen locally as a possible entry for top amateur talent into professional surfing.<sup>41</sup> What this debate did not address was that the Springboks had not been able to compete in France for political reasons.

Baron Stander, the Natal Surfing Association secretary who travelled with SASA's president Tim Millward to the French event, noted it in a report on the 1980 world titles that "South Africa's future in the international amateur surfing scene was very much in the balance before we left [France]."<sup>42</sup> ISA placed the responsibility for South Africa's exclusion from the championship with the French government. Stander gave the impression that ISA was seeking a solution to ensure South Africa's participation in future amateur world titles; a fact that seemed to carry weight in the election of Tim Millward as ISA vice-president.<sup>43</sup> Strategies for addressing official sports isolation and a possible return to international amateur competition were mentioned. Stander reported that the South Africans had an ISA resolution passed "that only countries in which South Africa can participate will be allowed to stage the World Champs. Should we **not** be allowed in, then that county would **not** be allowed to stage the contest."<sup>44</sup> A second strategy was to undertake rebel tours. "We made a lot of friends," wrote Stander, "and it is my recommendation that we invite surfers from most of the countries participating, to surf for a World Team against our 1980 Springboks as soon as possible."<sup>45</sup> Stander's calls were in recognition that there was pressure on SASA's policy to ensure the furtherance of opportunities for South African amateur surfers to compete internationally – the rationale for participation in the ISA world titles under normal sporting conditions. After September 1980, SASA therefore needed to find other international competitive arenas outside of the ISA structures to maintain South Africa's standing as a surfing nation. To this end, South African surfing administrators sought alternative approaches to official ISA sanctioned contests to provide surfers with the opportunity to wear the green and gold Springbok jacket and gain international surfing experience and exposure. It was to the United States of America (USA) that SASA first turned.

In 1980, at the world titles in France, SASA officials Tim Millward and Baron Stander had found an ally in John Rothrock, president of the National Scholastic Surfing Association (NSSA), the most prestigious

<sup>39</sup> *Zigzag* was running issues quarterly at the time and thus breaking news was not necessarily current.

<sup>40</sup> See Paul Naude, "Springbok Debacle," *Zigzag*, 5, 1 (December 1980/February 1981), 34, Letter from Lista Sagnelli, Durban, "Boks On Trial", *Zigzag*, 5, 2 (March/June 1981), 4 and Paul Naude, "Bok Team 801," *Zigzag*, 5, 2 (March/June 1981), 26. The debate also focused on the process of the Springbok team selection and depth (or lack thereof) of talent in the team.

<sup>41</sup> The competitive surfing career path was described by Paul Naude as: "The natural progression for any competitive surfer is to compete on a provincial, then national level, and once he has won his Springbok colours, to advance into the fiercely competitive Pro ranks." See Naude, "Springbok Debacle," 34.

<sup>42</sup> Baron Stander, "Championnats Du Monde De Surf," *Zigzag*, 5, 1 (December 1980/February 1981), 37.

<sup>43</sup> This was joint position shared with Jean-Pierre Bianca.

<sup>44</sup> Stander, "Championnats Du Monde De Surf", 37, (emphasis in the original).

<sup>45</sup> Stander, "Championnats Du Monde De Surf", 37.

amateur surfing body in the USA. Despite Rothrock's "don't like your politics much" sentiment, he forged a friendship with the South Africans.<sup>46</sup> This led to an invitation for the Springboks to compete in the 1981 International Team Challenge in California. In language reminiscent of a rebel sport tour, Millward recalled a year later that: "The day of the test arrives and so do the NSSA, the English, ourselves and sole representatives from Peru and Spain; the Australians withdrew because of our participation – a shame, but we were resolutely determined to do well."<sup>47</sup> The NSSA team beat the Springboks by a single point while South Africa's up-and-coming teenage surf star Martin Potter, who later turned professional then boycotted South African surfing, took the individual men's title. The team then travelled to Florida for a Springboks versus the Eastern Surfing Association (ESA) event, with a repeat of the Californian results. The highest placed women Springbok surfer in both contests was Lyn Weight, who took a second place in California and a third in Florida.

The next year the Springboks toured Portugal. This rebel tour occurred after the Australian Surfing Association (ASA), the host country association, excluded the South African amateur team from the 1982 World Surfing Championships held in Brisbane, Australia.<sup>48</sup> The Iberian tour provided South African officials with an opportunity to foster sporting relations with European surfing bodies, although the South Africans were reported as having had little competition in these "small tournaments and 'tests' against fully representative Portuguese sides."<sup>49</sup> In 1983 the SASA administration adopted a domestic strategy by hosting a tour of British and New Zealand teams. The Springbok Surfabout Series included contests in Cape Town, Casino Beach (in the Transkei, now Eastern Cape) and Umhlanga Rocks (near Durban). *Zigzag* led with the story headline, "Local surfers make mincemeat of touring international side." Steve Morton commented, "although it is exciting to have teams visiting this country, SASA must surely feel that for our surfing to really develop we need *tough* competition. However, politics being what it is, this is not always possible."<sup>50</sup> Lacking an international platform for the tour, SASA stated that the support provided by local municipal councils and the national Department of Sport and Recreation went far in conferring "immense credibility" on this South African hosted surfing series.<sup>51</sup> The paucity of SASA's use of unofficial tours to bolster surfing's national image can be seen here.

Two further points on the 1983 tour emerged in *Zigzag*. First, a critique indicating that individual surfers should rather travel to Hawai'i, seen as the main stage for testing surfing prowess (and manliness), than seeking out team contests against weaker surfing nations as the way to gain more experience against top international surfing talent. Second, in the face of this criticism, surfing officials promoted the 1983 tour as an important success for local surfing. Barry Campbell, then chairman of the Natal Surfriders' Association

<sup>46</sup> Tim Millard, "1981 Springbok Tour California," SASA, *Moments*, 15.

<sup>47</sup> Tim Millard, "1981 Springbok Tour California: The Great American Dream," SASA, *Moments*, 17. Unofficial, or rebel, tours became a means for rugby and cricket to continued seeking international competition in the 1980s. See Nauright, *Long Run to Freedom*, 152 for rugby and for cricket, Murray and Merrett, *Caught Behind*, 205-6 and 208-9.

<sup>48</sup> The exclusion from the world titles is noted in "What's News: Bok Tour," *Zigzag*, 6, 6 (November/December 1982), 40. The ASA's position can be read from how the Australian Pro Surfing Association (APSA) responded to the 1982 Smiths Industries World Team Classic. Paul Naude reported: "Competitors, sponsors and Peter Burness [South African contest director] were obviously disappointed at the Aussie withdrawal and Burness felt their decision was a 'political one'. He said the APSA had been under pressure from the Government and were forced to withdraw from the SISA for fear of jeopardising the Commonwealth Games to be held in Brisbane later this year." See his "South Africans triumph as politics wipes out the Aussies," *Zigzag*, 6, 5 (September/October 1982), 12.

<sup>49</sup> See "What's News: Bok Tour," 40. However, the representative nature of the "test" against national "team riders" was undermined by the inclusion of two French surfers, an Australian and Duncan Duffet, a South African student at the University of Cape Town. For this see Robin de Kock's report on the tour, "Our Portugal Tour '82," *Zigzag*, 7, 1 (January/February 1983), 10-11.

<sup>50</sup> Steve Morton, "The Encounter," *Zigzag*, 7, 6 (November 1983), 9-10. (emphasis in the original).

<sup>51</sup> SASA also gained financial support from Gunston, the cigarette brand run by Winston Tobacco Corporation, which had already invested in the local professional surfing circuit through the Gunston 500 event in Durban.

(NSA), defended amateur surf officials who, “despite being up against ever increasing political pressure, seem to hold a steady course maintaining diplomatic relations with most of our fellow surfing countries.”<sup>52</sup> He continued,

However, Politics has taken its toll! It has affected the standard of opponent against whom we have had to surf. The Americans have, to date, been undoubtedly our toughest opposition. The Australians are a highly rated amateur surfing nation, but so far, politics have kept us apart.<sup>53</sup>

By 1984, a pessimistic mood had descended on South African surfing as the boycott of the Springbok team continued. South Africa was again excluded for political reasons from the ISA’s World Surfing Championships, which was held in California in July of that year. This barring from the world titles despite the institutional power South African had in the ISA – Tim Millward, the SASA president, was also the ISA executive chairman and had been selected as the ISA contest director for the Californian event. South Africa’s international standing as a surfing nation, however, could only be found in rhetoric, as Millward was reported as saying, “the Springboks would not only have given the Americans and Aussies a run for their money in the team event, but also in the individual titles.”<sup>54</sup> To counter this deflated mood, SASA official Robin de Kock speculated, “With the next Worlds scheduled for Great Britain [in 1986], South Africa looks set to sit out once again, but perhaps there’s hope for 1988 when Puerto Rico host the event.”<sup>55</sup>

In 1985, a further attempt by SASA was made to stimulate local surfing through international sporting contact. South African amateur surfing’s links with the National Scholastic Surfing Association (NSSA), the USA’s elite national squad, were rekindled and a domestic rebel tour took place. An international team challenge against a “shadow” Springbok team was held at St. Michaels on the Natal South Coast.<sup>56</sup> After a good performance by the South Africans against the American NSSA surfers, South African amateur surfing entered 1986 with a sense that its international sporting prowess was on par with the other top surfing nations. There were high hopes expressed by surfing administrators that the Springboks would show the international surfing community that South African surfers could successfully challenge the USA – who held the 1984 world surfing team title. As the Springboks had demonstrated in 1985 that they could match the USA at home, and with the next world championships scheduled for September 1986, officials within local amateur surfing was of the view that the USA had to beat the Springboks if they wished to enter the world titles confidently as champions.<sup>57</sup> With local confidence in South African surfing talent, a Springbok tour to California was planned for June 1986 to compete against the NSSA.<sup>58</sup> However, two days before the Springboks were due to leave for California the US government withdrew travel visas for the team. As this was not longer an official tour, the South African sports authorities canceled their Springbok colours. Nevertheless, the tour went ahead, albeit unofficially, and the South Africans travelled as individuals, as surf journalist Lawrence Atkinson noted: “[a]ll that was left was for the team of individuals to leopard crawl

<sup>52</sup> Barry Campbell, “Natal Snaps,” *Zigzag*, 7, 6 (November 1983), 40.

<sup>53</sup> Campbell, “Natal Snaps,” 40. In 1990, Lawrence Atkinson, in a review essay on South African surfing during the 1980s he stated that “SASA in desperation, arranged a visiting tour for the Boks ... it all marks an all time low in our attempts to secure international competition.” See his, “A Decade of Deliverance,” *Zigzag*, 14, 1 (January/February 1990), 14.

<sup>54</sup> Robin de Kock, “World Amateur Contest,” *Zigzag*, 8, 5 (September/October 1984), 31.

<sup>55</sup> De Kock, “World Amateur Contest,” 31.

<sup>56</sup> “SA vs NSSA,” *Zigzag*, 9, 5 (September/October 1985), 21 and “1985 Springboks-International Team Challenge” in SASA, *Moments*, 23. The team result was a tie, and the men’s and women’s divisions were won by South Africans Craig Sims and Kay Holt respectively

<sup>57</sup> “The Glorious Green and Gold” in SASA, *Moments*, 24

<sup>58</sup> The team’s fundraising activities for this tour included “Disco’s, raffles and boerewors sales” and the sale of the special issue of *Moments*. See Lawrence Atkinson, “California Cruising,” *Zigzag*, 10, 5 (September/October 1986), 22.

through the USA customs, with one hand covering the 'Bok' badges on the green-and-gold bags."<sup>59</sup> Surfing three contests against the NSSA, the South Africans went on to claim a hollow victory over the Americans. As Steve Morton stated of the status of this rebel tour, this was "the 'Springbok' tour of America."<sup>60</sup> Writing in 1990, Lawrence Atkinson noted that this tour was the "end of international surfing for amateurs. Now no major surfing country is interested in our problems."<sup>61</sup>

SASA's Robin de Kock reported on the 1986 World Surfing Championship, held in September in Newquay in the United Kingdom, and provided a clear indication of the state of South African amateur surfing's isolation and an awareness of the international political climate, "[t]he Springboks were missing – again. Sadly, not many of the teams even missed the Boks ... It's terrible being an outcast – perhaps there is some irony in that."<sup>62</sup> De Kock also provided feedback on the ISA's position for maintaining the isolation of South African surfing, which remained in place until the early 1990s. He stated that "South African amateur surfers can forget about both the 1988 and 1990 World Surfing Championships" as it had been "made clear to the SA representatives who returned from the recent International Surfing Association meeting held at the same time as the World Championships ...."<sup>63</sup> De Kock went on to detail the nature of ISA's stance as located in external pressure on national surfing bodies by their governments' policies of sustaining the international sports boycott of apartheid sport. In this light, ISA's position could be argued to have been more material and pragmatic in maintaining its membership, and to keep in good standing in the eyes of other international sporting federations, than taking a political stand against white sport in South Africa. De Kock stated that,

South Africa's political situation has ensured isolation in amateur surfing, not because countries like Australia and Great Britain don't want to compete against the Springboks, but because most amateur surfing bodies are funded by their own governments – and these government bodies would withdraw their lucrative grants if South Africa took part in, say the World Championships. It seems that only a radical turnaround by the SA Government on apartheid and its many facets will see SA surfing back in world competition.<sup>64</sup>

Symbolically, South African surfing's pariah status within international amateur surfing was reinforced by the ISA writing South Africa out of international surfing's past on the poster for 1986 World Surfing Championships held in the United Kingdom. The "poster, depicting all the world champions since 1964," as criticised by de Kock, "leaves out 1978 and the South African Ant Brodowicz. It is as if South Africa does not exist in amateur surfing anymore."<sup>65</sup>

The ISA was not the only party adhering to the isolation of competitive sporting contacts with South African surfing. De Kock indicated that the "Americans [were] reluctant to compete against the Springboks" and South Africa was to lose a champion at the NSSA in the resignation of the Iain Cairns as that body's director.<sup>66</sup> Furthermore, structural limitations on international competition were also in effect. A proposed "rebel" tour to South Africa of a team of international amateur surfers was "scuttled because no sponsor was

<sup>59</sup> Atkinson, "California Cruising," 22.

<sup>60</sup> Steve Morton, "Letters: Press-ing issue," *Zigzag*, 10, 5 (September/October 1986), 2.

<sup>61</sup> Lawrence Atkinson, "A Decade of Deliverance," 16.

<sup>62</sup> Robin de Kock, "Backwash: 1986 Quiksilver World Surfing Titles," *Zigzag*, 11, 1 (January/February 1987), 29.

<sup>63</sup> Robin de Kock, "Backwash: The I.S.A.," *Zigzag*, 11, 1 (January/February 1987), 28. The ISA meeting confirmed the continued membership of SASA and Tim Millard remained the ISA executive chairman.

<sup>64</sup> De Kock, "Backwash: The I.S.A.," 28.

<sup>65</sup> De Kock, "Backwash: The I.S.A.," 28.

<sup>66</sup> De Kock, "Backwash: The I.S.A.," 28.

prepared to back the tour” and South African surfers were refused visas by Australia, Japan and New Zealand.<sup>67</sup> In de Kock’s summation of the state of South African amateur surfing in the international arena, “[so] surfing [was] taking it on the mouth” and only through “major political reforms” in the country would international sporting ties be re-opened.<sup>68</sup>

Despite this low ebb in amateur surfing due to the tightening of international sporting isolation, SASA officials remained determined to provide top South African amateur surfers with opportunities for international competition, despite the allure of wearing the green and gold Springbok blazer fading. In mid-1987, and “much to the shock to the surfing fraternity”, an unofficial “SA Team” was hurriedly constituted to compete against a Portuguese squad in a contest run without much notice given.<sup>69</sup> This was seen as sporting expediency, and “circumspection” in a political climate, as the *Zigzag* editors noted, as the surfers had travelled to Europe for reasons other than national surfing prestige; they were all there as self-funded competitors on the French leg of the professional world tour.<sup>70</sup> Nevertheless, SASA president, Tim Millward indicated that the tour was in the interests of developing local surfing talent and gave “isolated surfers” a chance to surf overseas. “Either we lie down and die and do nothing about our isolation,” said Millward, “or we have national squads and give out surfers an opportunity to at least go and surf in other countries and events.”<sup>71</sup>

As the decade came to a close, with the apartheid government under pressure internally and externally, the international sports isolation of white amateur surfing in South Africa remained in place. SASA was barred from sending a national team to the 1988 World Surfing Titles in Puerto Rico for political reasons.<sup>72</sup> In addition, in late 1989, amateur surfing’s key sponsor threatened to pull out its funding for SASA. The surf apparel brand Gotcha Clothing, facing a sudden downturn in retail sales globally due to the mass-market uptake of neon surfwear, announced that its sponsorship of SASA would not continue in the following year.<sup>73</sup> These structural challenges to amateur surfing, and the sustained isolation of South Africa from the international arena through the 1980s, changed the nature of local organised competitive surfing and cast doubt on the value of becoming a Springbok surfer. A further trend following in South African amateur surfing’s wake was an increase in the number of surfers who, especially after the South African national amateur championships in 1989, turned professional in their attempt to gain recognition as athletes in their chosen sport.<sup>74</sup>

### Politics and Professional Surfing

South Africa’s competitive surfing elite may have seen some future in the world professional surfing circuit; however, this arena was not immune from the international sports boycott, although in different ways

<sup>67</sup> De Kock, “Backwash: The I.S.A.,” 28.

<sup>68</sup> De Kock, “Backwash: The I.S.A.,” 28.

<sup>69</sup> Lawrence Atkinson, “A Decade of Deliverance,” 16. For the touring surfers experience see Deon Bosman, “The Tour,” *Zigzag*, 11, 6 (November/December 1987), 38-9. SASA’s approaches to the Spanish and French associations had come to nothing.

<sup>70</sup> “Editorial,” *Zigzag*, 11, 6 (November/December 1987), 2. The team was made up of “nine national squad members” and “nine invitees, apparently not selected entirely on merit”. This selection controversy was reviewed in the *Zigzag* editorial.

<sup>71</sup> Quoted in “Editorial,” 2. The term “isolated surfers” was *Zigzag*’s. No Springbok colours were awarded to the national squad team members.

<sup>72</sup> An invitation to SASA had been withdrawn. It was not clear if this invitation came from the host association. See Tim Millward, “World Surfing Titles 1988,” *Zigzag*, 12, 3 (May/June 1988), 49.

<sup>73</sup> “Backwash: Amateur Surfing Out in the Cold,” *Zigzag*, 14, 1 (January/February 1990), 57. On Gotcha see Jarratt, *Salts and Suits*, 181-2. Reef Wetsuits took over the event sponsorship in 1990, see ‘Backwash: Reef Wetsuits Back SA Champs’, *Zigzag*, 14, 2 (March/April 1990), 52.

<sup>74</sup> Steve Pike, *Surfing South Africa*, (Cape Town: Double Storey Books, 2007), 22 and *Zigzag*, 14, 1 (January/February 1990), 18.

from the isolation of amateur surfing. The main difference was that professional surfing was a career choice that privileged the surfer as an individual agent rather than as part of a national team. In the writings of surf journalists, the markers of professional surfers on the world tour were, in the first instance associated with masculinity and then later accommodating a competitive surfing femininity: talent and prowess, ranking on the world tour, and place of national origin. Professionalism had an elevated status in South African surfing and a particular South African flavor within the rise of professionalism in the sport globally in the mid-1970s, and specifically, with the establishment of the International Professional Surfers (IPS) and the inauguration of a world professional tour in 1976.<sup>75</sup> First, Durban's Gunston 500, which had started in 1969, had by the late 1970s become, and remained so through the 1980s, a key event on the world professional surfing circuit. The event offered financial rewards and important ranking points as incentives for international surfers to travel to South Africa to compete despite the political context and the cost of international travel. Second, South Africa's surf icon Shaun Tomson, the 1977 world professional champion and top ten performer in the late 1970s and 1980s, played an important role as an ambassador of the sport (as discussed in Chapter 1). Third, the growth of the sport was underwritten by surf brands with South African roots that sponsored professional surfers on the world tour – specifically Tomson's Instinct Clothing and the California-based Gotcha Clothing run by his cousin, Michael Tomson – as well as lifestyle brands associating themselves with surfing; Gunston cigarettes was well known for its sponsorship of surfing events and surfing magazine advertising from 1969. The South African Government, through the Department of Sport and Recreation, also played a part in the subsidising of professional surfers' travel to compete internationally as a counter-measure to the sports boycott or providing financial support for international teams touring South Africa.<sup>76</sup>

Despite this material and cultural capital invested in professional surfing by the local surfing industry, the business sector and government, the boycott of South African sport steadily eroded the ambitions of South African professional surfers in the 1980s by limiting their ability to compete in overseas events on the world circuit. This resulted in a few professional surfers seeking other avenues for maintaining their surfing careers by emigrating or travelling on non-South African passports. On the other hand, top international surfers with a political conscience boycotted the South African leg of the ASP tour, adding further pressure to the viability of staging world-class surf contests in the country. This surfing boycott was followed by a cultural boycott by the American surfing magazine *Surfer*. According to Matt Warshaw the magazine stopped covering the contest scene in South Africa for the remainder of the 1980s.<sup>77</sup>

During this period, and unlike the role played by the ISA in maintaining the isolation of amateur surfing, the successive bodies that managed the world professional tour, the International Surfing Professionals (1976 to 1982) and then the Association of Surfing Professionals (as of 1982), did not interfere in the political

<sup>75</sup> For the making of global surfing professionalism see Booth, *Australian Beach Cultures*, 124-133 and Westwick and Neushal, *The World in the Curl*, 146-64. On the impetus for professionalism in South African rugby linked to the commercialism of the sport during the latter sports boycott years and, in the post-apartheid period, South Africa's inclusion within processes of globalisation, see Grundlingh, *Potent Pastimes*, 155-158.

<sup>76</sup> See Department of Sport and Recreation *Annual Reports* from 1973 to 1976 for the listing of contributions made to SASA to support competitive surfing. This detailed reporting of government financial assistance for white sports associations was omitted from reports for the years thereafter, and in the Department of Education reporting, when sport advancement fell under its administration from 1980. The Department's allocation of funds for the purposes described above were, as reported for a financial year beginning 1 April and ending 31 March: R1,1,41 in 1972/1973, R2,358 in 1973/1974, R5,138 in 1974/1975 and in R3,560 in 1975/1976.

<sup>77</sup> See Warshaw, *The History of Surfing*, 398. However, *Surfing* magazine did not follow suit. Aaron Chang, the senior photographer of the rival Californian magazine *Surfing*, was in South Africa in mid-1985 for the ASP tour. See Tim Williams, "The Kom Steals the Show," *Zigzag*, September/October 1985, 9. Paul Naude did not recall *Surfer's* ban on reporting on South African contests. See my telephone conversation with Paul Naude, San Clemente, California, 24 February 2012.

choices made by professional surfers.<sup>78</sup> Rather, these surfing bodies kept a determinedly apolitical business-as-usual approach to the sport. For example, the ASP's tour executive director Ian Cairns, when asked what the ASP's position was on professional surfers who boycotted the South African contests in 1985, indicated that the Durban and Cape Town events would continue as planned as the ASP did not "have a political position."<sup>79</sup> The ASP's own position here, however, requires scrutiny as two of its eight executive directorships in 1983 were held by South Africans, namely: Peter Burness, one of the founders of the Gunston 500, and professional surfing icon, Shaun Tomson.<sup>80</sup> Burness, in July 1981, was reported as "not unduly concerned" about the United Nations international sports blacklist and that "most professional surfers were more concerned about making living than worrying about politics."<sup>81</sup> Tomson dismissed the blacklist as only applying to amateur surfers. While no surfers, either South African or from other countries were named in the officially termed "Register of Sports Contacts with South Africa" released in May 1981 by the United Nations Special Committee Against Apartheid, surfing was listed in the second register, published in February 1982, and later registers. South African surfers Shaun Tomson and Martin Potter, to whom we turn later, were listed in this 1982 register, as were several American and Australian professional surfers, including Tom Carroll, who plays a pivot role in the boycott of professional surfing events in South Africa.<sup>82</sup> Nevertheless, the commercialisation, sportisation and individuation of surfing on a professional world tour, and the fact that surfing was a minor sport, were factors that added to the apolitical discourse within competitive surfing, thereby influencing international professional surfers decisions to compete in South Africa through the 1980s.

This apolitical discourse was challenge. From 1985 through to the early 1990s, it was the boycott of South African contests by several top international professional surfers that brought home the fact that surfing was political.<sup>83</sup> The surfing sport boycott was initiated in a statement made during an interview with Rod Usher, a journalist from Australian *National Times*, in April 1985 by the 24-year-old Australian Tom Carroll during the last event of the 1984/85 ASP tour at the Bells Rip Curl Classic at Bells Beach, near Torquay in Victoria, Australia. Carroll, sponsored by the Instinct Clothing label, had just secured his second world championship title by narrowly displacing Shaun Tomson in world ranking points during this final event on that year's world professional surfing tour. Carroll's statement, written up by his manager Peter Mansted after the interview, was a protest against apartheid strongly influenced by his involvement in surfing.<sup>84</sup> He announced that his views were a "basic humanitarian stand" and he would boycott South African ASP events "until black surfers are allowed on all beaches."<sup>85</sup>

<sup>78</sup> The ASP changed its name to the World Surfing League in 2015, as a result of new investment in, and the commercialisation of, the sport of professional surfing as a digital media spectacle.

<sup>79</sup> Warshaw, *The Encyclopedia of Surfing*, 468.

<sup>80</sup> "Pro Facelift," *Zigzag*, 7, 2 (March/April 1983), 9. Peter Burness was ASP president from the early to late 1980s.

<sup>81</sup> "World's top surfing pros turn their backs on sports blacklist," *Sunday Express*, 5 July 1981.

<sup>82</sup> United Nations Centre Against Apartheid, "Register of Sports Contacts with South Africa, 1 April - 31 December 1981," Notes and Documents No. 7/82 (New York: United Nations, February 1982), 39, Aluka, [http://www.aluka.org/action/showMetadata?doi=10.5555/AL.SFF.DOCUMENT.nuun1982\\_07](http://www.aluka.org/action/showMetadata?doi=10.5555/AL.SFF.DOCUMENT.nuun1982_07), [accessed on 13 September 2014].

<sup>83</sup> Historian Scott Laderman in *Empire in Waves* has located the professional surfing boycott of South Africa in the international context. His argument demonstrates surfing as political: "The boycott penetrated the cloistered and intimate world of competitive surfing, undermining its perceived apoliticism and forcing countless young people to begin reckoning with an injustice that they likely would have otherwise ignored. If the 'freedom' of surfing had, since the sixties, meant for many an escape from the world of surfing and commerce, the boycott of South Africa ... demonstrated that surfers could not so easily disentangle themselves from some of the pressing political issues of the twentieth century. In so doing, they necessarily became, despite their protestations to the contrary, political actors" (130).

<sup>84</sup> Tom Carroll and Kirk Willcox, *Tom Carroll: The Wave Within*, (Sydney: Ironbark, 1994), 83.

<sup>85</sup> Warshaw, *The History of Surfing*, 397. Carroll writes of his mothers influence on liberal views, see Carroll and Willcox, *Tom Carroll*, 84.



Several factors led Carroll to make his political stand. In mid-1984 Carroll travelled to compete in South Africa as part of his defense of his 1983 world title. Two of the four rated ASP events in South Africa that year were A-rated – the Gunston 500 and the Renault Sport Pro – and offered crucial world title ranking points. He reached the quarter-finals in the Spur Steakranch Surfabout in Cape Town, the Country Feeling Classic in Jeffreys Bay and the Renault Sport in Durban, and went on to win the A-rated Gunston 500. From an athlete's perspective, Carroll saw that Gunston 500 win as crucial to his performance going into the 1984/85 ASP tour. However, it was in a Durban hotel room directly after that Gunston 500 win that he first aired his anti-apartheid views to Cheyne Horan, a fellow Australian professional surfer known for his counter-cultural tendencies in and out of the surf.<sup>86</sup> Carroll indicated that he was not going to return to South Africa in the next year to compete in professional surfing events.<sup>87</sup>

Carroll's political views were shaped by his experience of visiting apartheid South Africa as well as a concern that negative Australia public opinion, especially triggered by his name appearing on the United Nations "Register of Sports Contacts with South Africa", would damage his reputation and career. As Carroll noted in his autobiography published in 1994, "[t]hat turned out to be my last trip to South Africa as the following year I announced my decision to boycott the events because of apartheid. I haven't been there since, despite my love for the wave at Jeffreys." He continued,

The issue of black suppression had been troubling me for a long time and every time I went to South Africa I was never really comfortable being there. Along with most of the surfers, I was put on a United Nations blacklist and back in Australia the way people treated you for going there (especially the media) made me question it myself. Maybe because I had been sheltered from real cultural diversity, living on the northern beaches of Sydney, I was deeply affected when I saw the racial confrontation, disrespect and fear in South Africa ....<sup>88</sup>

Furthermore, Carroll recognised his complicity as an athlete in supporting apartheid and white sport by traveling to South Africa to surf on the world professional tour. He stated, "[s]upporting ties with South Africa are both indirect and direct ways of supporting apartheid. After going there a few times I couldn't stand it. I didn't want to surf there because it appeared to involve me in that system."<sup>89</sup>

A further political influence on Carroll was a meeting with the Australian Prime Minister Robert Hawke at an awards presentation for the Australian Op Pro event in Sydney in late 1984. Hawke, a previous president of the Australian trade union movement with a keen interest in sport, was campaigning in the mid-1980s for the British Commonwealth countries as well as Australian sportspersons to boycott South Africa. In Carroll's view, Hawke saw him as a sports star that could influence the Australian youth bound to a national culture centred on the beach.<sup>90</sup>

Carroll's April 1985 statement drew many critical responses from the South African surfing community, especially from Shaun Tomson. At the ASP's annual awards ceremony in Sydney, the day after Carroll's Bell's Beach boycott press announcement, Tomson used his speech as runner-up in the world title race to call for a stop to the boycott of South African contests. His views were determined by a desire to save

<sup>86</sup> On Horan see Warshaw, *The Encyclopedia of Surfing*, 272-3.

<sup>87</sup> Carroll and Willcox, *Tom Carroll*, 72.

<sup>88</sup> Carroll and Willcox, *Tom Carroll*, 72. Carroll did return to South Africa in 1996, two years after he had retired from the professional surfing.

<sup>89</sup> Carroll and Willcox, *Tom Carroll*, 84.

<sup>90</sup> Carroll and Willcox, *Tom Carroll*, 85. Through Hawke, Carroll received an introduction to Nelson Mandela in Australia in 1997. Mandela was reported as thanking Carroll for his solidarity. See Stu Nettle, 'Bob and Tom ... and Nelson Mandela', *SwellNet*, 16 July 2010. <http://www.swellnet.com.au/news/698-bob-and-tom-and-nelson-mandela> [accessed on 18 September 2011].

professional surfing from what he saw as a major threat to its commercial survival. Warshaw records part of this speech from the awards evening: “Tomson passionately defended the South African pro contests, and then asked rhetorically if the pros should also boycott the American contests because of U.S. support for the Nicaraguan Contras, or boycott the English event over the country’s heavy-handed presence in Northern Ireland. ‘Where will it all end?’ Tomson asked, caught up in his doomsday political scenario. ‘I’ll tell you. It will end with the destruction of pro surfing as we know it!”<sup>91</sup> Reflecting on the surfing boycott in his book *Surfer’s Code*, first published in 2006, Tomson noted that Carroll in that one day had undermined his personal and professional ambitions as well as pushed him to make a public political stand. Tomson took offence that Carroll, as a fellow surfer sponsored by his Instinct Clothing brand, had not notified him in person about making the boycott statement. Beyond this personal sentiment, Tomson also saw the boycott as potentially damaging to the fledgling ASP’s financial sustainability: “Every year we scrambled for an umbrella sponsor to support the administrative aspects of running a world tour and so ensure that the athletes would make enough money to travel and compete.”<sup>92</sup> Tomson felt that if surfers stayed away it “would be a slap to a sponsor [Gunston] that had been a long-time supporter of the tour and also to the memory of my father (he had passed away in 1981), who had helped found the event.”<sup>93</sup> Tomson therein demonstrated familial loyalties to white South African surfing and consciously played this sentimental line of reasoning in the maintenance of professional surfing as a commercial undertaking.

Tomson, who had moved from Durban to California in 1982 for surfing career reasons, did not see his response to Carroll as one representing a “political retaliation from South Africa.”<sup>94</sup> In so doing, and despite his attempt to distance himself from South Africa, Tomson’s complicity in white South Africa’s racial and social privilege through his family and peers was precariously held in balance with his disavowal of the apartheid state’s racist policies.<sup>95</sup> In Carroll’s politicising of surfing, Tomson, when recalling the event in 2006, was of the view that a boycott was divisive for professional surfing and antithetical to his notion of sport as a site for social inclusion.

But boycotting events in South Africa ran against everything I believed sports competition to be: a way to bring people together, not separate them. The South African government had used apartheid as an instrument of cruelty to separate people, not only whites from blacks (and Indians and coloureds), but black ethnic groups and social classes from one another. Surfers were employing the tactics of the enemy and using the sport of surfing as a political weapon ... I thought they were bowing to political pressure. The world tour needed them in South Africa, and South Africa needed them. My former country had become geographically and socially isolated in the world. I did not think that further isolation was the answer.<sup>96</sup>

This reflective statement by Tomson corresponded with his earlier stance on maintaining a professional surfing circuit in South Africa despite the political context; in essence, that sport and politics did not mix. This framed his liberal view of sport as providing a means for social inclusion which, however, stands in contrast to the argument put forward by historian Douglas Booth, “[t]hat sport can integrate society and eliminate

<sup>91</sup> See Warshaw, *The History of Surfing*, 397.

<sup>92</sup> Shaun Tomson with Patrick Moser, *Surfer’s Code*, (Johannesburg: Penguin, 2009), 18.

<sup>93</sup> Tomson, *Surfer’s Code*, 18.

<sup>94</sup> Tomson, *Surfer’s Code*, 19.

<sup>95</sup> There is continuation of Tomson’s view on the political since the mid-1980s to the 2006 publication of his book. For instance see Elliott Almond, “The Old Man Of The Sea: Shaun Tomson Had Left His Homeland and Overcome One Fear of Surfing,” *Los Angeles Times*, 26 June 1986. [http://articles.latimes.com/1985-06-26/sports/sp-1148\\_1\\_shaun-tomson](http://articles.latimes.com/1985-06-26/sports/sp-1148_1_shaun-tomson) [accessed 18 September 2011].

<sup>96</sup> Tomson, *Surfer’s Code*, 19 (emphasis in original).

racial prejudice is a speculative proposition which ignores the origins, functions, and practices of racism and fails to explain the precise properties of sport that make it the medium of integration."<sup>97</sup>

Tomson, the South African surf media, and other professional surfers who benefited from the South African contests, felt Carroll was hypocritical in his political stand, especially since he had competed in South Africa and his Gunston 500 win had gone far in securing his world title. An immediate effect of Carroll's boycott call was Instinct's cancellation of his sponsorship. Carroll's political standpoint thus came at a significant personal cost to his professional career: the following year Carroll lost his world title and an estimated R250,000 in lost sponsorship earnings through his boycotting of South African ASP surfing events.<sup>98</sup> Furthermore, Carroll felt he had been naïve in his dealings with the media as his political intent was undermined by rumours, which were expressed in the South African surfing community, that Carroll's manager had used the sport boycott statement as a means to gain publicity for Carroll.<sup>99</sup>

### **The Professional Surfers' Boycott Movement, 1985-1989**

After Carroll's April 1985 announcement, other high profile professional surfers took up the boycott.<sup>100</sup> The American Tom Curren (the world champion in 1985, 1986 and 1990), Australian Cheyne Horan (a world title contender during the 1980s) as well as the United Kingdom's Martin Potter (the 1989 world champion who had grown up surfing in South Africa), joined Carroll in boycotting South African professional surfing events. However, this surfing boycott should not be seen as a wide-ranging anti-apartheid movement, nor radical in its intent, rather this was political action by a small group of elite male professional surfers that gained wider mainstream and surfing media attention in South African and globally.<sup>101</sup> The boycott surfers remained in the minority on the ASP tour in 1985 and through the 1980s.

Curren's refusal to compete in South Africa was interpreted differently from that of Carroll, Horan and Potter. Curren's "moral standpoint decision" was seen by Tim Williams in *Zigzag* in mid-1985 as a position that "seems to hold more water than Carroll's."<sup>102</sup> The exact reasons for Williams' pronouncement is not stated, although the media-shy Curren was offered a counterpoint to the "interesting characters" of Potter and Horan whose anti-apartheid stands were aired on Australian national television and in the South African press.<sup>103</sup> However, Curren's boycott move was important for the fact that he won the 1985, 1986 and 1990 world championship titles without competing in South Africa. This was possible as a surfer's total tour rankings were based on a count of seventy-five percent of all ranking points accumulated in the year.

<sup>97</sup> See Booth, *The Race Game*, 93.

<sup>98</sup> See Carroll and Willcox, *Tom Carroll*, 85, "SA borg onttrek ná TV-uitsprake," *Beeld*, 23 May 1985, and Rod Frail, "Hawke pledges legal help for champion surfer," *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 22 May 1985. In the light of an injunction from Instinct restricting Carroll's ability to find a new sponsor for twelve months, Hawke indicated that the Australian government would support Carroll with legal aid due to his anti-apartheid stand. This never became a legal issue and Carroll signed up with Quiksilver.

<sup>99</sup> On South African views see "Tom Carroll's SA surf boycott put down to 'pressure'," *Herald*, 5 April 1985. However, Carroll notes that he had not consulted Mansted on the matter. See Carroll and Willcox, *Tom Carroll*, 87. Known for his temper, Mansted's role included that of managing the media publicity received by his client. Mansted's business relationship with Carroll ended in 1989 over Mansted providing the Australian press with stories not approved by Carroll. (By this stage, Mansted had changed his surname to Colbert). See Warshaw, *The Encyclopedia of Surfing*, 363.

<sup>100</sup> The boycott went ahead despite Mansted failing to gain the signatures of other professional surfers for a petition, rather, those surfers who did join the boycott made individual statements in the media in support of Carroll's stand. See Tim Williams, "Pro Wars" *Zigzag*, 9, 4 (July/August 1985), 11. Yet, many more international professional surfers did not take up the protest against apartheid in a bid to further their surfing careers. Americans (including Native Hawaiians), Australians, Brazilians and Israelis surfed in South Africa during the surfing boycott years. The Australian teen surf star Mark Occhilupo noted in his autobiography his win over Shaun Tomson at the 1985 Gunston 500 but made no mention of the surfing boycott in discussing that year on the ASP tour. See Mark Occhilupo and Tim Baker, *Occy: The Rise and Fall and Rise of Mark Occhilupo*, (Sydney: Ebury Press, 2008), 88-89.

<sup>101</sup> The ASP world tour in South Africa in the mid-to-late 1980s did not include women's surfing events.

<sup>102</sup> Williams, "Pro Wars," 11.

<sup>103</sup> See "Tom Carroll's SA surf boycott put down to 'pressure'."

Nevertheless, Curren in winning these world titles had demonstrated that what was seen by *Zigzag* as “a handicap” in skipping the South Africa ASP contests could be made into a political statement.<sup>104</sup>

Cheyne Horan’s involvement in anti-apartheid protest took a different form to that of Carroll and Curren. Despite joining the boycott movement in 1985, Horan returned to South Africa to compete professionally in 1986, 1987 and 1988. Horan’s protest was made within the visual logic of surfing promotional culture and the marking of professional surfers as advertising billboards in the waves. In 1986, while surfing the Gunston 500, he used his surfboard as a political poster and had printed on the bottom of his surfboard the slogan: “Free Mandela”.<sup>105</sup> The progressively minded *Offshore* surfing magazine reported on Horan’s “Free Mandela” board in covering the Sea Harvest Surfers International, an ASP world tour event held in Cape Town from 29 June to 3 July 1988, and provided a glimpse of the South African reception of Horan’s political views. *Offshore* noted, “Cheyn [sic] Horan appeared with “Free Mandela” emblazoned on his board. I could see South African brains spinning ... Rumour had it that Jan Smuts [airport, Cape Town] customs had not been amused by Mandela’s freedom being imported.”<sup>106</sup> Horan again surfed the protest surfboard his 1989, with the slogan in full view on the top-deck of the board to catch the attention of spectators and photographs (see Figure 3.2).<sup>107</sup> At the Gunston 500 contest in 1990, in the July after the freeing of Mandela from prison and the unbanning of the African National Congress and other political organisations by an apartheid government in retreat, his surfboard again carried a political slogan which spoke to post-apartheid people’s power: “If the people will lead, the leaders will follow.”<sup>108</sup> Horan, however, was a lone voice of protest during these South African professional surf contests.

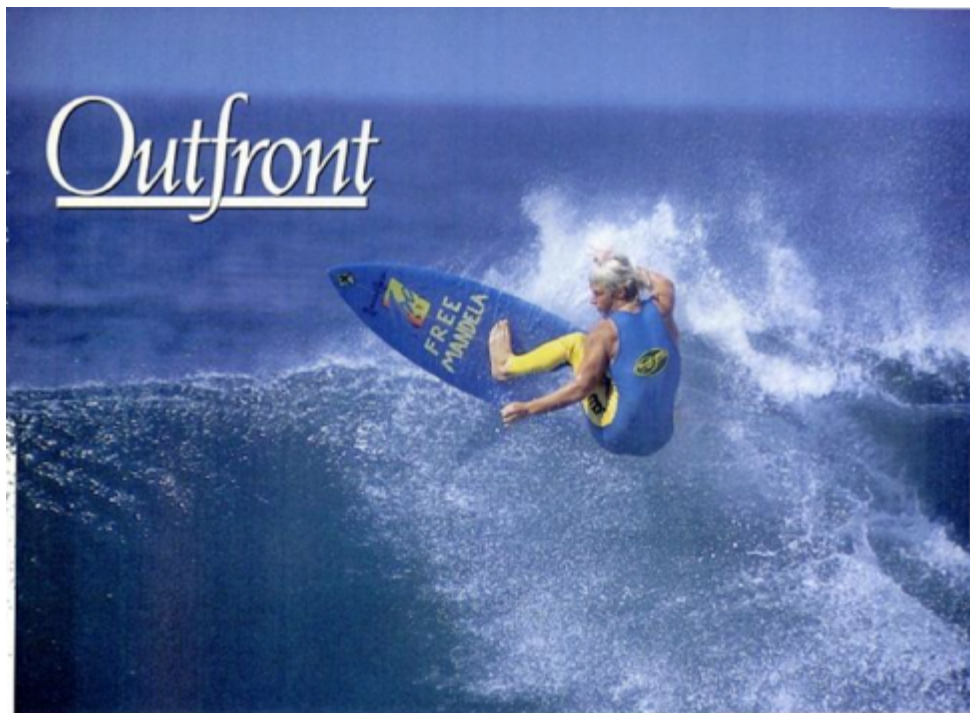


Figure 3.2: Cheyne Horan's 1989 "Free Mandela" surfboard.<sup>109</sup>

<sup>104</sup> Tim Williams, 'Who Is Boycotting', *Zigzag*, 10, 4 (July/August 1986), 1.

<sup>105</sup> See Warshaw, *The History of Surfing*, 398 and Horan's comment in Carroll and Willcox, *Tom Carroll*, 72.

<sup>106</sup> "From the kelp (and other stories)," *Offshore*, 2, 4 (1988), 15.

<sup>107</sup> Edward Silver, "The Last Wave," *Mother Jones* (December 1989), 12 and "Scene Around," *Zigzag*, 14, 5 (September/October 1990), 6.

<sup>108</sup> "Scene Around," 6, with a photograph partly obscuring the slogan on the board.

<sup>109</sup> Photograph by Grodimno/Surfer in Silver, "The Last Wave," 12.

On the other hand, Martin Potter's emigration from South Africa and subsequent support for the boycott of South African events was a personal gesture that became political in a context where South African athletes' careers were curtailed by sporting sanctions. Potter, born in England but raised in Durban, South Africa became a teenage surf sensation in 1981 at the age of fifteen when he made his professional surfing debut. Potter has related how he had become politically conscientised during his ASP tour travels overseas as a young professional surfer. In his first interview with a South African surfing magazine on his anti-apartheid stance, a few months before winning the 1989 world professional title, Potter told *Offshore's* David Stolk,

But on my travels I become more and more aware of the inequalities in S.A. situation, which began to bug me more and more every time I returned to S.A. ... every time I stepped back inside S.A. it was like being in another world where people were treated differently just because of their skin colour. I felt that I needed to do something but I knew I couldn't really change anything inside S.A., so I took the plunge and made my own personal stand against Apartheid which I must emphasize was a decision I reached completely on my own with no influence from managers or friends.<sup>110</sup>

In a 1993 interview with *Zigzag*, when Potter had returned to South Africa for the first time since the mid-1980s, Potter again recounted that his decision to leave South Africa was personal and that his supporting surfing boycott was both a consideration of conscience and career.

Well, competing there didn't do my conscience any good, and it didn't do my reputation on the world tour any good, because a couple of other guys, Tom Curren and Tom Carroll made a stand. You know, I don't believe in apartheid, and I never have; I wasn't born in South Africa so I didn't want to fight for the cause – basically I was given a choice: stay and fight, or leave. So I left. And I don't regret anything that's happened ... it was a personal decision; my career was at stake and I felt that it was the right thing to do at the time ... You know, I sacrificed not winning the world title for quite a few years because of South Africa.<sup>111</sup>

Nevertheless, in his 1989 *Offshore* interview, Potter's politics were revealed as utilitarian. "However, the whole thing [anti-apartheid stand] was blown out of proportion," Potter stated. "[M]y intention was never to upset the people in S.A. or boycott S.A. people who had always been cool to me but rather to criticize a system that to me had become indefensible." He further indicated that he "could no longer condone making money in S.A. Of course, it has also made my life a lot easier in many respects as regards my career."<sup>112</sup>

Thus Potter's decision to emigrate to England, and then relocate to Australia in 1984, and subsequent boycott of the South Africa ASP tour, were choices made within a political context that had political and social implications for Potter, namely; the loss of his British citizenship which would have made him eligible for military conscription in the SADF and he chose to "opt out", a desire to enhance his reputation on the world tour and, primarily, the furthering of his international professional surfing career as his South African passport was limiting his entry to international contests.<sup>113</sup> Despite his actions, Potter held to the view that while apartheid limited sportspersons' careers, sport should not be politicised. In a 1989 *Mother Jones* magazine article, Potter distanced himself from an overtly political stance and emphasised the threat to his career by not surfing the South African events, "I'm a sportsman, not a politician ... People know how I feel

<sup>110</sup> See David Stolk, "The Martin Potter Story," *Offshore*, 3, 5 (1989), 24.

<sup>111</sup> See Miles Masterson, "Potter," *Zigzag*, 17, 6 (November/December 1993), 23 and 25.

<sup>112</sup> Stolk, "The Martin Potter Story," 24.

<sup>113</sup> See Stolk, "The Martin Potter Story," 24. It was in his interview with Stolk that Potter made his "opt out" comment.

by my not being there. It's a risk not to go there, because if your competitor is there and has a good day, you lose."<sup>114</sup> Nevertheless, it was significant in international surfing that Potter held to this anti-apartheid stance and won the 1989 world title without having surfed in South African professional events.

Taken together, Carroll, Curren, Potter, and in a different manner, Horan, introduced the political in professional surfing. By 1989, the influence of these top professionals' boycott of the South African events had had varied results among other international competitors. Besides Carroll, Curren and Potter, in that year, a further four surfers from among the top sixteen professional surfers on the ASP tour had boycotted the South African events.<sup>115</sup> Curren summed up the boycotter's position, "[w]e don't presume any influence on apartheid ... but the number of people going there is getting smaller and smaller."<sup>116</sup> Lawrence Atkinson noted the impact of these surfers' boycott in an early 1990 review of South African surfing through the 1980s. Despite his disparaging view of the boycotters' politics, Atkinson acknowledged of the effect the boycott had had on South African surfing. "The bubble bursts. Four of the top riders in the world boycott the SA leg of the ASP tour ... You can query their motives or dismiss the effect their little voices will have on the system, but for SA surfing, it is the beginning of the end."<sup>117</sup>

### **Zigzag on the Surfer's Boycott**

The pages of *Zigzag* addressed the surfing boycott in reporting on Carroll's call after the end 1984/85 ASP season as well as discussed the boycott in several issues over 1985, 1986 and 1987. Initially, this was a double blow to South Africa's status as a surfing nation. Shaun Tomson as the nation's surfing ambassador did not win the world title and Tom Carroll, the surfer who defeated him, had called for further isolation of South African competitive surfing from the world stage. Subsequent articles were polemical in defense of South African surfing and took pains to show seemingly commonsense contradictions within the logic of Carroll's stance as well as promote international professional surfers did not support the surfing boycott. The views of various *Zigzag* correspondents therefore offer insight into the complicity of white competitive surfing as represented within a local surfing magazine.

---

<sup>114</sup> Silver, "The Last Wave," 12. This article also notes that "Potter was somewhat alarmed to receive a telegram of fraternal congratulations from the African National Congress" in response to his boycott of South Africa. This letter was also mentioned by Potter in an interview with Scott Laderman in October 2008, see Laderman, *Empire in Waves*, 120.

<sup>115</sup> Americans Brad Gerlach and Charlie Kuhn and Hawaiians Sunny Garcia, Hans Hedemann and Michael Ho boycotted South African in 1989. Many of these surfers had competed in South Africa between 1985 and 1988. See Laderman, *Empire in Waves*, 216, footnote 181. See also See Silver, "The Last Wave," 12. Michael Ho, a Native Hawaiian boycotted the 1985 contests. The surf media only reported on those high-profile surfers who supported the surf boycott; this has resulted in a dearth of information about others professional surfers who explicitly supported the boycott and those who did not tour South Africa's ASP contests for other reasons, namely: financial constraints due to the high cost of travel to South Africa or fears about their safety due to political violence in the country. It does not seem that surf brands put pressure on the individual surfers they sponsored to support the boycott.

<sup>116</sup> Quoted in Silver, "The Last Wave," 12.

<sup>117</sup> Lawrence Atkinson, "A Decade of Deliverance," *Zigzag*, 14, 1 (January/February 1990), 15.



Figure 3.3: Tom Carroll in *Zigzag*, (a) before (L) and (b) after (R) the surfing boycott call.

Ironically, Tim Williams in the March/April 1985 issue of *Zigzag* in circulation in South Africa at the time of Carroll's boycott call, in commenting on the dearth of South African surfing talent on the professional tour and the factors making for this, noted optimistically that, "[i]ncidentally, surfing is possibly the only sport where the best 16 sportsmen, including current and past world champions, compete year after year without suffering the effects of the sports boycott that the outside world has imposed on us."<sup>118</sup> This optimism was undermined in the May/June 1985 "Boycott Bombshell" article by the *Zigzag* editorial team that broke the surfing boycott to the South African surfing community.<sup>119</sup> The article led with the words: "It had to happen – Tom Carroll has brought politics into surfing."<sup>120</sup> It carried two images that represented its tone: one a cut-out of *The Daily News* story and another of a smirking Carroll taken by *Zigzag* editor Paul Naude, captioned "Carroll turns nasty" (Figure 3.3b). This image was a counterpoint to all previous articles in prior issues of the surf magazine on the ASP world tour that were accompanied by a smiling photograph of Carroll, including Naude's photograph in March/April issue captioned, "Current world champ Tom Carroll" (Figure 3.3a).<sup>121</sup>

Following this negative shift in Tom Carroll's visual representation at the top of the page above the article, the "Boycott Bombshell" article identified two key issues that were seen to negatively impact on South African surfing. The first was a disruption of world professional surfing tour if the boycott gained significant support from other surfers. This was a threat of unsettling the imaginary of the local and global surfing cultural industries that used the tour for advertising their surf products. The second was the downgrading of the two Durban A-rated contests on the ASP world tour that would materially impact on the local surfing event promoters' ability to secure sponsors, with knock on economic effects on the local surfing industry and tourism. At the time, South Africa was "the second richest leg on the tour", a fact that kept South Africa viable as a surfing destination on the ASP tour. Professional surfers from Australia, Europe, Japan and North America had in the past travelled to the geographically distant South Africa in the hope of securing financial rewards and world ranking rating points; the allure of South Africa without it's A-rated events would mean

<sup>118</sup> Tim Williams, "South Africa's Young Prospects: Where Are They?" *Zigzag*, 9, 2 (March/April 1985), 12.

<sup>119</sup> See "Wipeout threat to SA surf contests," *The Daily News*, April 1985. The news media had broken the surfing boycott story in South Africa prior to *Zigzag* going to print.

<sup>120</sup> "Carroll's Boycott call," *Zigzag*, 9, 3 (May/June 1985), 8.

<sup>121</sup> See "Race for the title," *Zigzag*, 9, 2 (March/April 1985), 7.

that the incentive to tour South Africa was removed for international professional surfers.<sup>122</sup> Taken together, these issues would threaten the fragile image of South Africa as a surfing nation, and the ideological apparatus that offered the South African government one of a few opportunities to promote continued international sporting contacts in the mid-to-late 1980s.

This latter issue points to the dynamics of the political economy of global surfing and the perceived locus of power relations that were seen to favour South African professional surfing. *Zigzag* noted that Peter Burness, as “Durban contest promoter” and “honorary president of the ASP” was to be in Australia for the ASP annual awards function and “will endeavour to iron out the matter while there.” In the article, Shaun Tomson was shown as an ambassador of professional surfing, with a high standing in international surfing circles, in attempting to dissuade surfers taking up the boycott. *Zigzag* also voiced that the protesting surfers were hypocritical in their stance as they were recipients of sponsorships from companies based in South Africa.<sup>123</sup>

Despite the shocked tone of the article, *Zigzag* attempted to present Carroll’s stance accurately. In this, *Zigzag*’s editors drew on their knowledge of Carroll’s announcement from “Press reports”, including Durban’s *The Daily News*.<sup>124</sup> The salient facts were presented to *Zigzag*’s largely youthful reading public. Carroll was on the United Nations’ blacklist of athletes for competing in South Africa and that his moral stand was “because of the country’s apartheid politics and the recent reports of violence here.”<sup>125</sup> Carroll was reported as recognising South Africa’s contribution to professional surfing and affirmed the world-class nature of the country’s waves while making his boycott statement. This discourse worked both ways for *Zigzag* – it affirmed South Africa as a surfing nation yet, at the same time, undermined that same international prestige in the actions of a two time world surfing champion eschewing the South African tour for political reasons. It was with the latter in mind that *Zigzag* aimed to undermine the boycotting surfers’ ethics: “No one can pass judgment on their moral stands if genuine, however local rumours feel there could be publicity manoeuvres and other factors involved in some cases.”<sup>126</sup> The latter hearsay pointed specifically to Carroll’s using the boycott to break his contract with South African based Instinct Clothing. Nevertheless, *Zigzag*’s final take on the boycott was more an offhand rejection of the boycott’s potential effects on the South Africa professional surfing circuit:

At this stage it seems unlikely that much support will be mustered and their absence will make little difference to the success of these South African events ... it would be beneficial to have the world champion competing, but there are many hot young unknowns who will jump at an opportunity of a slightly easier field to make their mark.<sup>127</sup>

Herein *Zigzag* set the scene for further articles in subsequent issues that attacked Carroll in taking issue with the protestors’ stand. The magazine also began highlighting international surfers who came to South Africa despite the boycott. The negative reporting of the boycott movement was clearly evident in the next issue of *Zigzag* after the “Boycott Bombshell”. In an article providing a round-up on the 1984/85 ASP tour, Nick Williams evoked Shaun Tomson’s personality, his history as 1977 world champion, and athletic

<sup>122</sup> “Carroll’s Boycott call,” 8.

<sup>123</sup> Instinct sponsored Carroll. Gotcha, based in California but with South African roots, sponsored Horan and Potter. On Gotcha’s sponsorship of Cheyne Horan and Martin Potter see Jarratt, *Salts and Suits*, 146. Curren’s sponsors were American and Australian surfing businesses.

<sup>124</sup> “Wipeout threat to SA surf contests,” *The Daily News*, April 1985.

<sup>125</sup> “Carroll’s Boycott call,” 8.

<sup>126</sup> “Carroll’s Boycott call,” 8.

<sup>127</sup> “Carroll’s Boycott call,” 8.



pro prowess as recognised by his peers, in a bid to belittle Carroll as a lesser world champion and surfer in what was considered an unsportsmanlike attempt to undermine the world professional tour through the surfing boycott. Williams stated, '[h]is overall contribution to the sport as World Champion has been negligible, and peer respect for him and his manager has dwindled considerably, illustrated in his abortive attempt to organize a boycott of this year's S.A. contests.'<sup>128</sup>

In this, Tomson and Carroll came to signify the old guard and the young Turk respectively in professional surfing. The political use of Tomson for South African surfers (at least those whose wrote for and read *Zigzag*) was nostalgically to shift to his past surfing accolades so as to retain the status of a world-class surfing nation. Carroll provided a break in the global surfing culture by ushering in a new generation of surfers who inherited professionalism from the "Bustin' Down the Door" generation who were part of the genesis of surfing professionalisation in the mid-1970s, of which Tomson was a key player along with his cousin Michael Tomson and Australia's Wayne Bartholomew, Mark Richards and several others from Australia and South Africa.<sup>129</sup> Carroll's boycott call was therefore seen a rejection of an ethics that found unity in a surfing "tribe"; a notion that had been promoted by Tomson since the mid-1970s and perpetuated by global surfing's promotional culture in creating the surfing lifestyle image and associated beach and surfwear industry since the late 1960s.<sup>130</sup> Carroll's call therefore came to represent the individuated career professional surfer working against the interests of the ASP tour's cultural and economic agenda of globalising surfing as well as limiting South African surfing further in a context of increased international pressure against apartheid South African.

Nick Williams' article provoked a strong response from John Elliss, the associate editor of the Australian surfing magazine *Tracks*. In a letter published in *Zigzag*'s September/October 1985 issue, Elliss took issue with how Carroll was represented in the South African surf media as not worthy of his title as world surfing champion. This was put down to either "blind patriotism or deep resentment" on the part of Williams in describing Tomson as unfortunate due to factors other than talent in coming second in that year's world title rankings.<sup>131</sup> The letter raised the question of personality versus athletic ability as the determining factors in what constitutes an exemplary professional surfer, especially a world champion. In Elliss' analysis, Carroll's contribution to the sport of surfing was significant based on his competitive talent – and thus his ability had made him a global sporting icon. The point of discrediting Carroll was also raised in another letter to *Zigzag*, published in early 1986, from D. Schnell of Westville, Durban. Schnell, not without irony in the letter which when on to point to the racism in Durban's surfing fraternity, firmly framed William's article within the context of the international sports boycott: "While other sports have been constantly fighting boycotts and lack of international competition, surfing has been blissfully unaware of the hoo-hah."<sup>132</sup> While a reflection more on professional rather than amateur surfing, Schnell reflected on the cocooned experience of white surfing

<sup>128</sup> Nick Williams, "Shaun Tomson," *Zigzag*, 9, 4 (July/August 1985), 7.

<sup>129</sup> There is a surf heritage mythology that returns to Hawaii in the late 1970s as *the* pivotal period in global surfing's modern history. For this surfing hagiography see See Wayne Bartholomew with Tim Bakker, *Bustin' Down the Door*, (Sydney: HarperSports, 1996), Shaun Tomson, *Bustin' Down the Door: The Surf Revolution of '75*, (New York: Abrams, 2008), and the documentary film *Bustin' Down The Door* (dir: Jeremy Gosch, Fresh and Smoked Films, 2008) that was co-produced by Shaun Tomson.

<sup>130</sup> On the globalisation of surfing culture and commerce see Jarratt, *Salts and Suits*, Andrew Warren and Chris Gibson, *Surfing Places, Surfboard Makers, Craft, Creativity, and Cultural Heritage in Hawai'i, California and Australia*, (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2014), 177-192

<sup>131</sup> See Letter from John Elliss, "Why Isn't Shaun Tomson World Champ?" *Zigzag*, 9, 5 (September/October 1985), 4. These other factors were the notion that Tomson was not popular in Australia and so lost out in judging decisions that favoured other local surfers.

<sup>132</sup> Letter from D. Schnell, Westville, "Racism ...?" in *Zigzag*, 10, 1 (January/February 1986), 7.

during the apartheid years, which through the boycott by professional surfers, was now opened to political scrutiny internally and internationally.

Nick William's piece, along with his brother Tim William's reporting, in the same issue, also provoked the ire of Peter Mansted, Carroll's manager, who was reported as telephoning the *Zigzag* office from Australia and leaving a message on the answering machine asking for an explanation of *Zigzag*'s treatment of Carroll. Mansted then called back a few days later. This telephone call was termed "another tirade" by the *Zigzag* team as Mansted questioned the magazine's journalism and threatened violence to the one of the journalists in question if he found himself in Australia. *Zigzag*'s reaction was to turn Mansted's words against him and misrepresent structural versus symbolic violence in an attempt to undermine his credibility.

We find it ironic that one of the reasons quoted in the Press by Tom Carroll for his boycott of the SA events was his abhorrence of the violence in the townships, yet here was his manager threatening Tim with violence. If this is the calibre of management creeping into surfing, more's the pity.<sup>133</sup>

This was not the last word from *Zigzag* on Carroll and the boycott. In a turn of view in the July/August 1986 issue of *Zigzag*, earlier emotions had been put aside in Tim William's journalistic summary of the surfing boycott a year later. Placed as an editorial comment opposite a Rip Curl wetsuit advertisement featuring Tom Carroll, without any sense of irony or intertextual reference, Williams' article offered *Zigzag* readers a view on the surfing boycott from a South African surf media perspective that remained opposed to the boycott (see Figure 3.4).<sup>134</sup> While maintaining continuity with earlier *Zigzag* discourse on the boycott movement, Williams came out with statements that attempted to separate the political from white South African surfing. Carroll's boycott call was referenced as "his condemnation of the ugly system of apartheid in SA", a position not without some sympathy from Williams.<sup>135</sup> Yet, the political positions of Carroll, Curren and Potter were reduced to matters of personal conscience, as "having the courage of one's convictions is a truly noble virtue, giving much ease of conscience and personal satisfaction."<sup>136</sup> The effect of these convictions was shown to be insignificant on world professional surfing with only the four surfers openly stating that they were staying away from South Africa in 1986. Tomson's position that "[i]f you don't support SA, then voice your opinions, but support pro surfing," was seen as prevailing attitude among professional surfers and accounted for the lack of impact of the surfing boycott.<sup>137</sup> Williams suggested the reasons that other international professional surfers may stay away from the South Africa tour in the future were economic rather than political.

<sup>133</sup> "Splab," *Zigzag*, 9, 5 (*Zigzag*, September/October 1985), 28. In the next issue, *Zigzag* published a short reader note of support for the magazine and against Mansted. See Letter from Jean-Pierre Botha, Stellenbosch, "Tell Him Off," *Zigzag*, 9, 6 (November/December 1985), 4.

<sup>134</sup> The Rip Curl advert was placed by Larmont Surf & Sail, a Durban surf shop run by Mike Larmont who held the South African agency from the Australian company. Larmont was also a joint-owner of *Zigzag*. What can be read here is how a global brand could dictate its advertising to a local agency, or that surf commerce found more currency in Carroll's world champion status than his boycott stance.

<sup>135</sup> Tim Williams, "Who Is Boycotting," *Zigzag*, 10, 4 (July/August 1986), 1.

<sup>136</sup> Williams, "Who Is Boycotting," 1.

<sup>137</sup> Williams, "Who Is Boycotting," 1.



Figure 3.4: Tom Carroll as global icon and local nemesis, *Zigzag*, 1986.

The argument against not supporting professional surfing for political reasons was furthered by quoting Durban surfer Chen Sagnelli on the need for international surfers to come to South Africa to promote social change rather than shun the country. Sagnelli, with roots in 1970s competitive surfing, and other South African surfers were shown to be exemplary in their inter-racial hospitality in hosting and establishing a “brotherhood” with Native Hawaiian surfers such as Dane Kealoha, who had competed in South African professional events as of the mid-1970s.<sup>138</sup> In a rewriting of surfing history, Williams linked this argument of the evidence South African surfer non-racialism to the “open participation” of Eddie Aikau at the 1972 Gunston 500 and an assertion that organised surfing did not restrict members based on race.<sup>139</sup> For the latter, while this may have applied to professional surfing under the ASP as an international organisation, this did not hold true for SASA, which as government recognised sporting association, had not accept black surfers as members through its provincial structures since the mid-1960s, as discussed in Chapter 1. On the former point (as is discussed further in Chapter 4), Aikau’s participation in the Gunston 500 was only made possible by the contest organisers securing a government permit to allow Aikau to surf as an “honorary white” at a “whites only” beach in Durban. A logic that surf contest organisers applied for all international

<sup>138</sup> Kealoh’s name appeared on the United Nations blacklist, spelt: “Dane Kialoha”. In appearing on the composite register for the 1980s, along with 37 other American (including Hawaiian) professional surfers, he would thus have been defined as a collaborator with the apartheid sport by the United Nations Special Committee Against Apartheid. See United Nations Centre Against Apartheid, “Register of Sports Contacts with South Africa, 1 January 1988 - 31 December 1989 and Consolidated List of Sportsmen and Sportswomen Who Participated in Sports Events in South Africa, 1 September 1980 - 31 December 1989,” Notes and Documents No. 11/90 (New York: United Nations, June 1990), 106, Aluka, [[http://www.aluka.org/action/showMetadata?doi=10.5555/AL.SFF.DOCUMENT.nuun1990\\_11](http://www.aluka.org/action/showMetadata?doi=10.5555/AL.SFF.DOCUMENT.nuun1990_11)], accessed on 13 September 2014.

<sup>139</sup> In an article complementing the NSA and SASA twenty-first anniversary of organised surfing in the same issue as William’s boycott article, Shaun Tomson recounted his life in surfing. In consolidating his place in South African, and global, surfing’s past he silenced two key moments when surfing was politicised. He omitted Eddie Aikau from the list of international surfers from the early 1970s hosted by South African contest organisers, despite the fact that Aikau was hosted by his father, Ernie Tomson after Aikau was not permitted to stay in a beachfront hotel. Furthermore, and more surprisingly due to its currency at the time, Tomson did not mention the isolation of amateur surfing nor the boycott of professional contest in South Africa. See “Shaun looks back on 21 years,” *Zigzag*, 10, 4 (July/August 1986), 6-9 and 18.

surfers not considered “white” by the apartheid state. This confusion in white surfing between the apartheid structuring of racial sport, and the exclusion of black South Africans from organised surfing, and inter-racial sporting contact with international surfers demonstrating a form of globalised sociability, did not account for the privileged habitus that professional surfing lifestyle enjoyed and which constructed the recognition of athleticism, regardless of race and class in the global surfing imaginary, in the shared identity of riding waves and the pursuit of financial rewards. It was from this understanding of athletic sameness that Williams put forward the view that close sporting ties allowed international surfers, in following the example of black players on the 1986 New Zealand “Cavaliers” rebel rugby tour, to “voice their disapproval at Press conferences”.<sup>140</sup> Furthermore, Williams stated that, “the truly dedicated could come to SA and NOT compete – certainly a far more effective method to convey one’s message than just not showing up at all.”<sup>141</sup> This latter point followed a note that these “methods” would “make local surfers more aware of the inequalities of apartheid.”<sup>142</sup> If anything, Williams had in this article set out a manifesto in *Zigzag* against the sports boycott of professional surfing contests in South Africa by offering international surfers tactics that would allay their conscience when competing in the South African ASP tour events.

Williams’ “Who Is Boycotting” article initiated a series of letters to the *Zigzag* editors in subsequent issues for and against the surfing boycott. Alan Carter from East London disagreed with Williams’ assessment of the impact of the surfing boycott. Carter saw that “with the move taken by Carroll *et al* not to compete in SA as a sign of protest against apartheid, the attention of many surfers (myself included) has been drawn to the pressing political issues in our country.” He further noted that the publication of Williams’ article was a demonstration, itself, of how the boycott was “in some small way influencing political change in South Africa.”<sup>143</sup> A progressive political critique of Williams’ article and *Zigzag* was found in the letter from a Capetonian from Heathfield with the *nom de plume* Colour Blind.<sup>144</sup> The writer showed strong support for the surfers’ boycott; commenting that, “[i]t is fantastic to see that there are surfers who can see beyond the nose of their boards.”<sup>145</sup> Shaun Tomson’s position on supporting world professional surfing over South Africa was seen as “ridiculous”. Williams’ attempt to argue for South African surfing’s racial openness was seen as a glossing over of the racialised restrictions faced by “non-white” sportspersons traveling to South Africa as well as the boundaries of beach apartheid that local black surfers faced when attempting to access the surf. Colour Blind, who saw the spirit of surfing in general in a favourable light, ended with a note that surfers in South Africa needed to see themselves within their political context, as discussed in Chapter 4, that “it is time surfing be put in perspective and not be seen in isolation as a bunch of fun-loving people who are untouched by and immune to the laws of the country.”<sup>146</sup> In contrast, Michelle from Cape Town came out in defense of Williams’ piece with a conservative retort in pointing to Carroll’s need to review the social and political conditions in their own country first before taking an anti-apartheid stand. In addition, in seeing sport and politics as separate arenas, Michelle evoked the notion of an inclusive surfing fraternity “open to all sizes,

<sup>140</sup> Williams, “Who Is Boycotting,” 1.

<sup>141</sup> Williams, “Who Is Boycotting,” 1.

<sup>142</sup> Williams, “Who Is Boycotting,” 1. The question of why apartheid should only be addressed through an international voice and not in the pages of *Zigzag* by local white surfers goes far to show how the surfing cultural industries in South Africa wished to keep surfing separate from the political.

<sup>143</sup> Letter from Alan Carter, East London, “Don’t Scorn Them,” *Zigzag*, 10, 5 (September/October 1986), 2. Carter also offered a view of the generalised apolitical (male) surfer whose “most pressing daily issue was the wind direction, swell size, bikini-clad bodies etc.”

<sup>144</sup> Heathfield was a suburb to which ‘coloured’ persons were removed as a result of the Group Areas Act. The author of this letter most likely had links to Cape Town’s non-racial surfing movement, as discussed in Chapter 4.

<sup>145</sup> Letter from Colour Blind, Heathfield, “Humiliating,” *Zigzag*, 10, 6 (November/December 1986), 3.

<sup>146</sup> Colour Blind, “Humiliating,” 3.

colours, cultures, religions and whatever other difference there might be” that should foster better sporting relations by nurturing South Africa’s professional talent rather than “trying to solve our political problems.”<sup>147</sup>

Following on from Colour Blind critical assessment of South African surfing, nearly some nine-months later, Donovan Shaw from Hout Bay, Cape Town wrote in 1987 that the sports boycott had become more controversial in that it was “unfair to encourage international pro surfers to break the sport boycott of S.A. by competing here and then for them to discover that they have been competing in a ‘whites only’ area.” These experiences of racial exclusion would then be communicated to other international surfers on leaving the country; which Shaw hoped would bolster the professional surfer’s boycott movement. In this linking the sports boycott to beach apartheid, Shaw then asked what actions South African surfers were undertaking “to do away with apartheid in the water and on the beach.”<sup>148</sup>

After these readers’ letters the professional surfers’ boycott received less mention in *Zigzag* as the decade came to an end. Where the sports boycott was addressed it was in the context of concerns over the future of South African surfing that specifically made reference to attracting international surfers to the South African leg of the ASP tour in the light of a weakened Rand-Dollar exchange rate and increased political violence in the country. By the third-quarter of 1987, *Zigzag* represent the surfing boycott as a matter of personal “principle” with Gary Mersham, in commentating on the 1987 Gunston 500 in Durban, poking fun at the political, “[i]t is perhaps acceptable that surfers of less cerebral inclinations think that a Pariah Nation is a bird.”<sup>149</sup> On the other hand, Captonian David Stolk had a clear understanding of how the surfing boycott was shaping the idea of what it meant to be a white South African surfer. Writing in an 1988 issue of *Offshore* surfing magazine, Stoke commented, “[t]ragically, South African surfers – and South Africans in general – fail to see that there may be good reasons for what these guys are doing what they’re doing.” He notes that “Potts might have been politically naïve at the time or Carroll possibly hypocritical,” yet in the their surfing careers “what most people don’t seem to appreciate is that these surfers are still paying the price [in tour ranking points]. If they’d made a publicity stunt or mistake, a turnaround would hardly be difficult.”<sup>150</sup> Putting aside any careerist pragmatism among the boycotting surfers, Stolk’s analysis turned to that of the South African surfer political worldview. Here he was perceptive of an imagined community holding onto its racial privileges and political acquiescence in the face of international sporting moves to show up the power relations determining white surfing lifestyles in South Africa. “The more serious malaise amongst SA surfers, though, is the mistaking of Pott’s and Carroll’s anti-apartheid stands as being anti-South African,” stated Stolk.<sup>151</sup> He concluded,

In South Africa patriotism is often confused with loyalty to the government. This is the crux of the matter. Wouldn’t it be better for SA surfing if it could just accept what Potts and Carroll have done in unemotional terms and respect their viewpoints.<sup>152</sup>

### **Political Violence, the ASP and the Currency of Surfers’ Safety**

Stolk’s hope however was lost within the state of white, middle class anxiety in coastal cities during the 1980s.<sup>153</sup> Carroll’s boycott statement was made at the time of 1985 State of Emergency in a militarized and

<sup>147</sup> Letter from Michelle, Cape Town, “Not So Clean,” *Zigzag*, 10, 6 (November/December 1986), 3.

<sup>148</sup> Letter from Donovan Shaw, Hout Bay, “Ramifications,” *Zigzag*, 11, 5 (September/October 1987), 4.

<sup>149</sup> Gary Mesham, “Garnish on the Gunston,” *Zigzag*, 11, 5 (September/October 1987), 14.

<sup>150</sup> David Stolk, “The other side of the coin,” *Offshore* 2, 4 (1988), 19.

<sup>151</sup> Stolk, “The other side of the coin,” 19.

<sup>152</sup> Stolk, “The other side of the coin,” 19.

repressive apartheid state showing signs of its demise in the increase of political violence in the country though the remainder of the decade.<sup>154</sup> By mid-1986, despite a continuation of the boycott of the South Africa ASP contests by the key protest protagonists, it was the political violence in South Africa that had gained the attention of the professional surfing through international media.<sup>155</sup> Shaun Tomson, in responses to this disquiet within the ASP and touring professional surfers, noted in *Zigzag* in mid-1986 that,

Internationally there is going to be a lot of pressure to have local contests taken off the pro circuit, but I am going to vote for contests to be held as long as there is no danger to the competitors in terms of a dramatic upsurge in bombings or terrorist attacks.<sup>156</sup>

Tomson was making reference to ASP executive special meeting on 24 June 1986 in Hawaii to discuss the political violence in South African and its threat to the safety of competitors on the South African leg of the tour. This meeting was held in the week prior to the running of the ASP events in July in South Africa and in response to the Umkhonto we Sizwe car bombing of Magoos Bar on the Durban beachfront on 14<sup>th</sup> June 1986, situated near to the Gunston 500 contest venue.<sup>157</sup> The final resolution was narrowly passed in favour of continuing the contests in South Africa. Australians Graham Cassidy (ASP vice-president) and Wayne Bartholomew (ASP surfers' representative) voted against holding the South African ASP events.<sup>158</sup> This vote was a continuation of strong sporting ties between the ASP and South African surfing. Those among the ASP executive who voted for continuing "felt it was too late to pull out, and they apparently received assurances from the ASP president, Peter Burness, a South African, that security measures would be stepped up around the contest sites."<sup>159</sup> Reporting on the Cape Town leg of the ASP tour, and demonstrating organised surfing's links to apartheid state resources, Robin de Kock indicated that "[u]nbeknown to everyone, a policeman was accommodated in the [Woodstock Holiday Inn] hotel during the [Spur Steakhouse] Surfabout and security police were notified of the event's venue each day."<sup>160</sup> De Kock recorded that on the second day of contest a bomb exploded at Mowbray police station yet did not indicate the effect this had on local and international surfers.<sup>161</sup> There was no repeat of the Magoos bombing in Durban during the period Gunston 500 contest in early July 1986.

The Australian newspaper *The Age*, however, noted that the ASP could have postponed the two events or continued running them with sanctions that reducing the ranking points available. This latter strategy was seen as a means to discourage professional surfers travelling to South Africa to compete. Barton Lynch, who

---

<sup>153</sup> An anxiety manufactured in white suburbia by the state through SABC TV broadcasts, see Deborah Posel, "A 'Battlefield of Perceptions': State Discourses on Political Violence, 1985-1989" in Jacklyn Cock and Laurie Nathan, *War and Society: The Militarisation of South Africa*, (Cape Town and Johannesburg: David Philip, 1989), 263.

<sup>154</sup> See Bill Freund, "The Violence in Natal, 1985-1990," in Robert Morrell (eds), *Political Economy and Identities in KwaZulu-Natal: Historical and Social Perspectives*, (Durban: Indicator Press, 1996), 187 and Norman Etherington, "Explaining the Death Throes of Apartheid" in Norman Etherington (ed), *Peace, Politics and Violence in the New South Africa*, (Oxford: Hans Zell, 1992).

<sup>155</sup> Michael Cockerill, "Fears for surfers in South Africa," *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 4 June 1986.

<sup>156</sup> Doug Macdonald, "Shaun Sez," *Zigzag*, 10, 5 (September/October 1986), 12.

<sup>157</sup> The bomb attack killed three people, with some sixty-nine injured. See Human Sciences Research Council, "Unsung Heroes and Heroines of the Liberation Struggle: Draft Report on the Liberation Struggle and Liberation Heritage Sites," June 2013, 259, [http://liberationheritage.co.za/uploads/doc\\_files/Draft\\_Report\\_on\\_unsung\\_heroes\\_and\\_heroines.pdf](http://liberationheritage.co.za/uploads/doc_files/Draft_Report_on_unsung_heroes_and_heroines.pdf), [accessed on 17 August 2014].

<sup>158</sup> Journalist Andrew Barr reported a 5-2 vote, see Andrew Barr, "ASP puts it head deep in the sand," *The Age*, 6 July 1986. Laderman, drawing on John Elliss' "South Africa survives a shaking," *Tracks* (August 1986), indicates that the vote was 5-3, with Shaun Tomson supporting the Australians in not holding the South African events due to surfer safety reasons. See Laderman, *Empire in Waves*, 216, footnote 174.

<sup>159</sup> Barr, "ASP puts it head deep in the sand."

<sup>160</sup> Robin de Kock, "S.A. Pro Season," *Zigzag*, 10, 5 (September/October 1986), 8.

<sup>161</sup> See HSRC, "Unsung Heroes and Heroines of the Liberation Struggle," 69.

had competed in South Africa the previous year and was a world title challenger was reported as deciding not to compete in South Africa in 1986 due, primarily, to personal fears for his safety. This motivation may have increased the number of international surfers, alongside those already part of the surfing boycott movement, who did not compete in South Africa in 1986 – eight surfers out of the top sixteen on the ASP tour had decided against travelling to South Africa that year.<sup>162</sup> However, due to the ASP's maintaining of high profile events in South Africa, many international professional surfers returned in the following years, to pursue tour ranking points and prize-money, Barton Lynch among them.

As the 1980s came to a close, the ASP's internal policies point to a continued favouring of the South African leg of the tour and the strengthening of commercial and sporting ties with South Africa despite differences of opinion within the executive committee as well as international pressure to not sanction these world tour events.<sup>163</sup> The ASP maintained its position of keeping sport and politics separate as Al Hunt, ASP tour director, stated to *Zigzag* in a 1986 interview:

Politically, the ASP doesn't have any political stand and I think most international competitors were concerned about the safety problems and if the situation remains calm here until the ASP meeting in January the only thing which will come up will [be] the cash purse guarantee to keep South Africa going. I can't see any other problems.<sup>164</sup>

The ASP, in vacillating on making a political statement against apartheid sport, held to a position that professional surfers make personal decisions to compete in South Africa. This was not a silencing of objections that political violence was a threat to the safety of competitors rather it was that the ASP's commitment to sporting ties with South Africa were stronger materially than were political threats at the time. While ensuring that A-rated events remained in place in South Africa, the ASP, it can be argued, did attempt to dissuade the surfing boycott of South Africa by offering appealing material rewards and ranking points to justifying international professional surfers to travel to the country to compete.<sup>165</sup> Nevertheless, in promoting that it was an individual's right to consider their personal safety in the context of political violence, the ASP offered international professional surfers an option to take an apolitical position in not competing in South Africa instead of joining with politicised surfers' boycott movement. This choice, however, were not available to South Africa professional surfers, unless they had immigrated.

### **Identity, Passports and the Dilemma of the South African Professional Surfer**

Most white South African professional surfers were without recourse to a non-South African passport, unlike Martin Potter with his United Kingdom birthright. There were two options; several sought ways to circumvent international sports sanctions at government level that resulted in the refusal to issue a visa,

<sup>162</sup> Williams, "Who Is Boycotting," 1.

<sup>163</sup> This decision was made at a time of a weakening Rand, making travel to South Africa expensive for international surfers.

<sup>164</sup> Paul Naude, "SA Leg's Future," *Zigzag*, September/October 1986, 14

<sup>165</sup> In early 1986, in an attempt to increase the material rewards for the South African leg of the tour, two local events applied to the ASP for double-A status, which was first introduced for the 1986/87 season. See "ASP Update: Surfing's future is looking rosy," *Zigzag*, 10, 2 (March/April 1986), 25). This application was not successful and the Gunston 500 and Spur Steakhouse Surfabout remained A-rated events. See Moira Hodgson, "ASP Update: SA's Image Improving," *Zigzag*, 11, 3 (May/June 1987), 7. In 1987, the Spur Steakhouse Surfabout increased the total prize-money to the ASP stipulated US\$28,000.00 for an A-rated contests in line with what the Gunston 500 offered. In 1988, after Spur withdrew as event sponsor, the Cape Town contest sponsorship was taken over by Sea Harvest and renamed the Sea Harvest Surfers International. In 1988, the South African leg of the tour offered R150,000.00 in total prize money. The investment for Sea Harvest Surfer International was seen as securing the running of the ASP circuit in South Africa that year. See Robin de Kock, "The Sea Harvest," *Zigzag*, 12, 5 (September/October 1988), 12. In 1989, the ASP decided on running with only the Gunston 500 and cancelled the Cape Town leg of the South African world tour.

others adapted to the reality that a career in surfing was not feasible. Professional surfers travelling as South African sportspersons found that overseas state bureaucracies denied them entry to countries due to political sanctions. In 1978 Brazilian authorities barred Tomson, the then world professional surfing champion, from competing in a world tour contest.<sup>166</sup> In 1983, *Zigzag* reported a “scare that was shortlived [*sic*]” when Australian authorities revoked a decision not to grant visas to Tomson and Potter, South Africa’s top representatives on the world tour.<sup>167</sup>

By the late 1980s, less high-profile South African professional surfers were regularly cited in *Zigzag* as leaving the ASP tour due to visa problems. The denial of visas for international travel to countries such as Australia, New Zealand and Japan resulted in missed contests and the loss of needed rating points to remain competitive on the tour.<sup>168</sup> Michael Burness was one such professional surfer who had “visa headaches”.<sup>169</sup> Burness recalled that, “[w]hen I started on the tour, people heard I was from S.A. and went, ‘Oh Wow! How’s J. Bay? How’s the waves?’ but by 1986 it meant a political debate and that’s when visa troubles started.”<sup>170</sup> Another was Craig Sims, who left the world tour in 1988 to become co-owner and editor of *Zigzag*.<sup>171</sup> Sims, in summing up the major issues faced by South African professional surfers reported that,

The reason is clear. It is not possible to travel the ASP world circuit if you have a S.A. passport. Restrictions on sporting relations with South Africa have become an increasingly popular alternative with politicians, as a means to publically express their discontent with South Africa’s racial policies. To the pro surfer this means missing at least a double A and a single A rated event in Japan, 2 A rated events in Brazil and a possibility of missing one or both Australian legs (due to deliberate hassling of South African applicants in Australia visa departments world wide.) This has obvious effects on your world championship ratings.<sup>172</sup>

The impact on tour ratings also negatively affected a surfer’s sponsorship opportunities necessary for materially supporting participation on the world tour. In mid-1988, Burness noted how the political undercut his career as a professional, “[m]y visa hassles [a]ffected my marketability as a sponsor’s investment,”

I couldn’t get to Japan for the compulsory AA rated event nor to Brazil and even Australia became a problem. The ASP doesn’t worry about your visa or travel problems. If I could have got around the visa problems and attended 2 more contests this year I would have ended up, at worst, 13<sup>th</sup> on the ratings. I missed 7 contests, so now I’m down to No. 22. Being a South African on the tour is like competing in a road race and starting one kilometre back. I don’t think that I can improve on 7<sup>th</sup> in the ratings [as in 1986] under these circumstances.<sup>173</sup>

<sup>166</sup> “Splab,” *Zigzag*, 2, 4 (September/November 1978), 29. See also United Nations Centre Against Apartheid, “Racial Discrimination in South African Sport,” Notes and Documents No. 8/80 (New York: United Nations, April 1980), 57, Aluka, [http://www.aluka.org/action/showMetadadata?doi=10.5555/AL.SFF.DOCUMENT.nuun1980\\_10](http://www.aluka.org/action/showMetadadata?doi=10.5555/AL.SFF.DOCUMENT.nuun1980_10), [accessed 14 September 2014]. Visa issues were not specific to professional surfers. As discussed earlier in this chapter, the national amateur surfing team had been denied visas to compete in France in 1980 and the United States of America in 1986.

<sup>167</sup> “What’s News: Shock for Star,” *Zigzag*, 7, 2 (March/April 1983), 25. A reason for this reversal was not provided, however, the fact that the surfers were travelling as individuals and not a team, and had non-South African passports may have expedited the decision.

<sup>168</sup> Robin de Kock, “Backwash: The I.S.A.,” *Zigzag*, 11, 1 (January/February 1987), 28.

<sup>169</sup> See Steve Morton “The South African Surfing Scene” in Mark, *Surfing in Southern Africa, including Mauritius and Reunion*, (Cape Town: Struik, 1989), 138.

<sup>170</sup> Lawrence Atkinson, “Michael Burness: Burn Speaks Out,” *Zigzag*, 12, 4 (July/August 1988), 39.

<sup>171</sup> “Editorial,” *Zigzag*, 12, 3 (May/June 1988), 3 and Lawrence Atkinson, “A Decade of Deliverance,” 16.

<sup>172</sup> Craig Sims, “ASP Round Up,” *Zigzag*, 12, 3 (May/June 1988), 34. In addition to passport problems, Sims noted the pressures facing professional surfers from South African were: a “nomadic way of life” on the ASP world tour; surfing talent, contest strategy and dedication is required; and financial pressures when travelling due to devalued Rand.

<sup>173</sup> Atkinson, “Michael Burness: Burn Speaks Out,” 39.



A tactic South African-born professional surfers did adopt to circumvent political sanctions in the 1980s was to research their family history and countries of origin and re-invent their nationalities to continue competing on the ASP tour using a passport from another country. For example, Pierre Tostee travelled on a Mauritian passport, Noel Rahme on a Saudi Arabian passport, and Shaun Tomson on an Irish passport.<sup>174</sup> However, those like Sims, who were professional surfers “of South African descent since the great trek days” were restricted in their travels and had to “carry SA passports whether we like it or not!”<sup>175</sup>

Professional surfers also evaded visa problems by emigrating and applying for citizenship in their adopted country. To this end, Tomson had already gained American citizenship in 1984.<sup>176</sup> Wendy Botha, from East London, a top-ranked surfer on the women’s professional world tour, as discussed further in Chapter 3, left South Africa for Australia to further her professional surfing career. Botha had represented the Springbok team in early the 1980s, turned professional in 1985 and then won the 1987 women’s world professional surfing title at the age of twenty-two. In 1988, she moved to Australia and applied for her Australian citizenship.<sup>177</sup> Several factors influenced her decision to emigrate: little competition among local women surfers, limited sponsorship opportunities from local companies and, when travelling on a South African passport, being the banning from surfing contests in some countries. On becoming an Australian citizen in 1989, Botha overcame these career hurdles and went on to win the world professional titles for that year as well as for 1991 and 1992. Much to the South African surf media’s ire; the Australian press was quick to make Botha their own.<sup>178</sup>

Unlike Potter’s case, where he was “disowned” by the South African white surfing community due to his anti-apartheid stance, *Zigzag* was sympathetic to Botha’s change in nationality in the interests of advancing her career within a political climate. The distinction was of Potter used apartheid to leave South Africa for career reasons while Botha emigrated to remove an external political barrier to her surfing career. *Zigzag*, in reporting on Botha’s first world title, indicated that it was a “hollow victory for South Africans as it “was no secret that South Africa’s Wendy Botha had applied for permanent residency in Australia in order to overcome the political pettiness which has threatened (and wrecked) many a South African sportsman’s career.”<sup>179</sup> With this sentiment in mind, by the late 1980s, white South African surfing could not avoid the fact that it had either lost world-class professional surfers to other countries, or the opportunity to surf professionally was made near to impossible by the overseas government policies against sporting contact with South Africans determined by the international sports boycott against apartheid sport. This was evident in *Zigzag*’s Craig Sims pessimistic summation of professional surfing in mid-1988, “[u]ntil sporting ‘sanctions’ are lifted the hopes of having a South African world champ are limited. This doesn’t do much for the future of South Africa as a strong surfing nation.”<sup>180</sup>

### Internal Response to the Sports Boycott

The same sentiment was evident in amateur surfing by that time. In early 1987, Robin de Kock, the vice-president of SASA, summed up the isolation of South African surfing with a frank assessment of the white amateur surfing,

<sup>174</sup> Sims, “ASP Round Up,” 34.

<sup>175</sup> Sims, “ASP Round Up,” 34.

<sup>176</sup> Tomson, *Surfer’s Code*, 19.

<sup>177</sup> Warsaw, *Encyclopedia of Surfing*, 75-6.

<sup>178</sup> Steve Culbert, “ASP Round Up: Wendy’s Story,” *Zigzag*, 12, 4 (July/August 1988), 38.

<sup>179</sup> “ASP Round Up,” *Zigzag*, 12, 4 (July/August 1988), 37 and Steve Culbert, “Wendy’s Story,” 38.

<sup>180</sup> Sims, “ASP Round Up,” 34.

Like many minority sports, it cannot 'buy' international competition and had to rely on goodwill tours – something which does not happen in South Africa anymore. Only major political reforms will change things according to international sporting officials. Until these changes occur, however, it seems that South African sportsmen and women will have to be content to play with themselves.<sup>181</sup>

And continue to play they did under a new configuration within organised surfing. As a direct response to international sanctions against South African amateur surfing and the boycott of world professional surfing tour contests in South Africa, some local surfing organisers championed the conflating of amateur and professional surfing within South Africa. This was to be done by offering talented surfers national recognition and material rewards through the South African Surfing Series (SASS), a local pro-am circuit with contests in the major surfing centres along the South African coastline.

SASS was inaugurated in late 1986 through the efforts of Peter Burness and Paul Botha, with Botha running SASS out of the surf promotion business, Surfabout Inc – initially set up along with amateur surfing administrator Robin de Kock.<sup>182</sup> While this pro-am event format was not a new idea in South African surfing, it went back to start of the Gunston 500 in 1969 and was immediately preceded by the Country Rhythm Gotcha Pro-Am Surfabout in 1985. However, what was novel was using SASS as a way to maintain a sense of South Africa as a surfing nation and groom talent for the ASP tour.<sup>183</sup> SASS was modeled on the Association of Surfing Professionals (ASP) world surfing tour system of ranking contestants and aimed to offer local surfers a means of competing without the financial costs associated with travelling the ASP's world circuit.<sup>184</sup> This local circuit was also aimed to provide a mechanism to fund South African professional surfers through their winning to compete in events overseas. As a pro-am series, however, amateurs surfers due to the nature of amateur sport as a sporting code, could not retain their cash winnings and Botha set up a process whereby SASS would pay over half of the contest prize-money to SASA and retained the balance to fund the running and promotion of the series.<sup>185</sup> SASA, the national amateur surfing body, then used these funds to support the travel costs or international contest entry fees of its members.<sup>186</sup>

The 1986/7 series was inaugurated in December 1986 with the Great Western Cooler Surf Classic held in Durban with further events in San Lameer (Natal South Coast), Jeffreys Bay and Cape Town in 1987.<sup>187</sup> However, by the end of the first year of the series SASS was facing a crisis despite affirmations in the surf media that the standard of surfing in South African was benefiting from the series and that the series had gained more coverage in the media – especially on television – for local surfing. In particular, the expectations raised among competitive surfers by the administrators were not met due to financial pressures – the earmarked sponsor for the final Cape Town event withdrew three weeks ahead of the contest and the

<sup>181</sup> Robin de Kock, "Backwash: The I.S.A.," *Zigzag*, 11, 1 (January/February 1987), 28.

<sup>182</sup> Morton, "The South African Surfing Scene," 137. On the Botha and de Kock venture see "Backwash: Ocean Edge Service," *Zigzag*, 10, 5 (September/October 1986), 30. SASS was endorsed at a SASA annual general meeting in late 1986, see Robin de Kock, "SASA – Executive New Pro-Am Circuit," *Zigzag*, 11, 1 (January/February 1987), 31.

<sup>183</sup> The pro-am contest scene has a history that links global surfing from the early 1970s with a push in the early 1980s to form local professional surfing clubs and hold events jointly with the amateur surfing associations. Local professionals had also formed the South African Professional Surfing Association (SAPSA) in 1978 to develop the sport.

<sup>184</sup> Paul Botha, "A Brief History of South African Surfing" in Steve Pike, *Surfing in South Africa*, (Cape Town: Book, 2001), 17 and interview with Paul Botha, Kommetjie, Cape Town, 17 May 2011. Botha was South Africa's first career surf promoter, and remains in the business today. He established his company after leaving a job in information technology at Old Mutual in September 1986.

<sup>185</sup> Interview with Botha and "New Series," *Zigzag*, 11, 2 (March/April 1987), 8.

<sup>186</sup> This supported a SASA executive committee decision from November 1984 where "money earned by an amateur in any pro contest would be paid to the Basil Lomborg Fund for the good of the whole association and not the individual surfer." This included monies won from ASP sanctioned events. See "SASA Items," *Zigzag*, 9, 1 (January/February 1985), 31.

<sup>187</sup> See *Zigzag's* "New Series," 8.

series winner, Greg Swart, receive a medal in lieu of monies.<sup>188</sup> Swart's view at the time was: "It's pointless spending money following this Series if there's no incentive at the end."<sup>189</sup>

In addition to the financial issues, several other "teething problems" were noted at the "Surf Indaba" on 16 January 1988 in East London with official representatives of organised surfing in country, namely: Peter Burness (ASP chairman), SASA and the provincial amateur surfing representatives, the South African Professional Surfing Association (SAPSA), the Association of Surfing Judges (ASJ), and Paul Botha (the series director for SASS). The other issues raised were: the level of judging at some of the events was seen as wanting and the organisation of the contest could be improved on. Nevertheless, the outcome of this meeting was positive with a commitment from amateur and professional surfing bodies for the need of a pro-am series so that "the sport is to evolve rather than fragment", secure an overall series sponsor, create further contests that allowed for provincial participation, and provincial surfing colours to be awarded to those who enter events as part of a provincial team.<sup>190</sup> Other unresolved issues that blurred the pro-am distinction were the prominence of the South African amateur championships in national surfing, the desire for amateurs to receive cash prizes, and professionals to be awarded Springbok colours. What the East London meeting did do was to unite key players in supporting SASS. Nevertheless, the surfers themselves, while committed to the contests, were seen as "unprofessional" in their attitude and behavior in undermining the reputation and image of competitive surfing, specifically with "rowdy behavior" and "no shows" at the 1988 awards function in Jeffreys Bay. This was seen by *Zigzag* as frustrating the organisers' attempts to secure sponsors for the SASS. *Zigzag* cautioned, "South Africa's surfers have still not learnt that their attitude and a pathetic approach to the problem could be to the detriment of the sport."<sup>191</sup>

Nevertheless, despite fears to the contrary, in 1988/89, the series secured increased sponsor commitments of R1,45 million from several companies within and outside of the surf industry without securing a series sponsor, with near to R50,000 offered as total prize-money for the contests.<sup>192</sup> In the same year, SASS rating points were included alongside other international pro-am circuits that subscribed to the ASP Pro-Am ratings in Australia, Europe, Hawaii and United States of America. This was seen as providing a driver for South African competitors to aspire to the world pro-am title. This international move was important for three reasons in the context of South African surfing's isolation in the late 1980s. It would provide a South African surfer with a means to further a professional surfing career, it would be attractive to sponsors looking to the sport as a marketing channel, and the local series would attract international surfers to South Africa.<sup>193</sup> The local contest scene was also expanded to include a Semi-Series to cater for the amateur surfing associations, surf clubs, or individual surf promoters and, in so doing, increased the pro-am base of local surfers. By early 1989, the optimism surrounding SASS contest was reported in *Zigzag* in that the

<sup>188</sup> The series had cost R11,000.00 to run, with income was drawn from sponsorships and entrance fees. R4,000.00 in prize-money was paid out but the Cape Town contest exhausted all SASS funding. See Robin Lavery, "The S.A. Series," *Zigzag*, 11, 5 (September/October 1987), 9 and Interview with Botha.

<sup>189</sup> Lavery, "The S.A. Series," 9. In 1988, 20 surfers were listed with ranking points and in the 1988/89 a total of 196 surfers had competed in the series, see Gary Mersham, "Surf Indaba backs S.S. Surfing Series," *Zigzag*, 12, 2 (March/April 1988), 11 and Paul Botha "The S.A. Surfing Series," *Zigzag*, 12, 6 (November/December 1988), 61.

<sup>190</sup> Mersham, "Surf Indaba backs S.S. Surfing Series," 11.

<sup>191</sup> "The Banquet," *Zigzag*, 12, 4 (July/August 1988), 59.

<sup>192</sup> Interview with Botha and Paul Botha "The S.A. Surfing Series," *Zigzag*, 12, 6 (November/December 1988), 61. For example, in 1989 in Durban, the surfwear brand Bear International funded the high profile Bear International Cotton Classic in Durban and the Jockey Kahlua Pro Am represented companies from outside the surf industry. Other sponsors for the 1988/89 season were: Sea Harvest and the surf brands Hang Ten, Instinct, Banzai Wetsuits, Billabong and Country Feeling. Botha saw this securing of financial support largely as a result of his role as a full-time promoter running the pro-am events.

<sup>193</sup> Botha, "The S.A. Surfing Series," 61.

series “finally taken off and become accepted as the top league in surfing.”<sup>194</sup> By 1990, the series was taken over by the newly established ASP Africa office, which was also run by Paul Botha, and the local pro-am circuit continued as a key characteristic of local competitive surfing in South Africa into the 1990s.<sup>195</sup> However, unresolved tensions between amateur and professional interests within a depressed surfing nation continued despite SASS.<sup>196</sup> In review, SASS should be seen as an internal response by organised surfing in South Africa, a middle ground between amateur and professional surfing aspirations, in making the best of a situation where the recognition of South African surfers and South Africa as a surfing nation were limited due to sanctions and the surfing boycott.

### **From Crisis to Inclusion in the 1990s**

This chapter of South African surfing history closed in 1990 as political change in South Africa ushered in the post-apartheid era and the transition from minority to majority rule by 1994. The isolation and boycott pressures that had placed South African amateur and professional in crisis, especially for later 1980s, gave way to processes of inclusion in the 1990s that saw surfing’s return to international amateur competition and ability for professionals to travel due to new foreign policy regimes. Nevertheless, the challenges for amateur surfing were greater than that of professional surfing. Sports isolation did not simply fall away in 1990 as the National Party unbanned the ANC and Nelson Mandela was released from prison; it was only with the undoing of apartheid laws that racially structured sport in 1991 that paved the way for surfing’s return to international competition. As discussed in Chapter 4, new challenges dictated by a changing political landscape emerged along with the continued demands by the international community to see change within sporting codes. SASA was excluded from the 1990 world amateur titles held in Japan as apartheid sport was still in place and the surfing not had not implemented sports unity and transformed the structures of amateur surfing in the country.<sup>197</sup> Amateur surfing officially, under the direction of the newly formed United Surfing Council of South Africa (USCSA), ushered South Africa’s “fairytale return” to the international arena at the World Amateur Titles held in France on 25 September 1992.<sup>198</sup> It was an all-white team of fourteen surfers, including two women, and three officials, that was selected to compete at the ISA event, although one of the two “development” surfers invited to shadow the team, and not surf in the event, was black.<sup>199</sup> Robin de Kock fourth saw the team result of as giving the South African surfing nation a sense of reclaiming its historic place in international amateur surfing after fourteen years of isolation. A sensibility that was reiterated at the

<sup>194</sup> Lawrence Atkinson, “Big Time,” *Zigzag*, 13, 3 (May/June 1989), 13. However, the series was not without its critics from among South African surfers attempting to maintain a professional surfing career. See Letter from David Malherbe, East London, “Herbie Speaks Out,” *Zigzag*, 14, 2 (March/April 1990), 14.

<sup>195</sup> Botha’s links to the ASP were established through his involvement as contest director for the Gunston 500 as of 1988. Botha also sat on the ASP’s Competition Sub-Committee and was involved in drafting the ASP’s surf contest judging criteria.

<sup>196</sup> See, for example, “Green and Gold,” *Zigzag*, 14, 6 (November/December 1990), 17 and 35, and the letters section titled “Green and Gold: The saga continues,” *Zigzag*, 15, 1 (January/February 1991), 9, where SASA, with little prospect of a return to ISA competition at the time, was under pressure from professionals in regard to the awarding of national colours in a context where local surfing talent was not seen as forthcoming. Professional surfers, as the elite tier of local competitive surfing, felt they should gain recognition, and Springbok colours, for their role in representing South Africa as individuals in international competition.

<sup>197</sup> On the conditions for South African surfing’s international return see Dale Granger, “S.A. returns to the fold,” *Zigzag*, 15, 3 (July/August 1991), 20 and 22. See also interview with Robin de Kock, Cape Town, 16 April 2014.

<sup>198</sup> Robin de Kock, “The world titles,” *Zigzag*, 16, 6 (November-December 1992), 26-7. See also “Splab,” *Zigzag*, 15, 6 (November/December 1991), 68.

<sup>199</sup> The black surfer invited was Riyaad Salie. See Pat Flanagan, “The national team,” *Zigzag*, 16, 5 (September-October 1991), 44-5.

1994 World Amateur Titles held in Brazil when surfing became the first sports team to compete internationally under the new South African flag “[w]hile democracy was being forged”.<sup>200</sup>

Within professional surfing, a business as usual approach to competitive surfing was taken and many top competitors began to return to South Africa as of 1990 as the political climate became open to change. The urgency of the rationale for the surfing boycott had thus faded for most international professional surfers. Of the initial surfers’ boycott movement all, except for Horan, returned to South Africa in the 1990s. During the years of the transition, Curren and Potter returned to compete in South African ASP events in 1992 and 1993 respectively. Carroll held to his political convictions that he was not to surf in South Africa until black persons had gained the vote. In July 1996, and after his retirement in 1994 from professional surfing, Carroll took up an invitation to surf at the CSI/Billabong Pro in Jeffreys Bay.<sup>201</sup>

---

<sup>200</sup> Robin de Kock, “Right up there,” *Zigzag*, 18, 4 (July/August 1994), 20-21.

<sup>201</sup> On the return of Carroll, Curren, and Potter to surf in South Africa see Laderman, *Empire in Waves*, 129.

## Chapter 4: Subaltern Surfers: Black Surfers and the Non-Racial Surfing Movement, c.1965 – c.2000

*Many of surfing mates were on the other side of the apartheid fence. Catching waves came against the background of police harassment and prejudice. But, hell, it was still fun.*

Shafiq Morton, *Surfing Behind the Wall Blog*, 2011<sup>1</sup>

In a 1998 book of short essays on surfing, Eastern Cape journalist Hagen Engler provided a descriptive list of fifty-one identities and practices shaping or shaped by South African surfers. Two of his designations broke with the Western whiteness and blonde tyranny of the surfing lifestyle; “Surfers grow up in Nine Miles, in a staunch Muslim family, eventually overcoming apartheid oppression to become the best big wave riders in the world” and “Surfers are Zulu.”<sup>2</sup> Taken together these statements make visible the histories of black surfing in South Africa. Yet, the surfing identities to which “Nine Miles” (a historic Coloured surf spot in False Bay, Cape Town due to beach apartheid) and “Zulu” (a “shifting historical force” now associated with *sefa* via the film *Otelo Burning*) configure followed differing trajectories in the apartheid and post-apartheid years.<sup>3</sup> These histories run counter to the perceived view of surfing under apartheid, and still after apartheid, as a white sporting lifestyle. As stated by a black surf coach writing for *Amaza* in 2013, “[m]any black people see it as an elitist pastime for white people only.”<sup>4</sup> And, in 2004, “[d]uring the apartheid era, it was not possible for black people to even try surfing” as the then deputy Health Minister Nozizwe Madlala-Routledge said when providing sponsorship of surf equipment and training for the Umzumbe Surf Club.<sup>5</sup> The former assertion referenced the black surfing icon Cassiem (Cass) Collier from Cape Town, who was involved in the non-racial surfing movement in the 1980s and, in 1999, one of the two surfers of the South African national team to win the 1999 Big Wave Championships in Todos Santos, Mexico to become the first black surfer from South Africa to stand on the winners podium. The latter statement cited black surfing among isiZulu-speaking youth in Durban and the south coast of KwaZulu Natal – which prefigures the contemporary shifts

<sup>1</sup> Shafiq Morton, “The Blonde Lady and the Surfing the Other Side of Apartheid,” *Surfing Behind the Wall Blog*, 11 November 2011, [http://surfingbehindthewall.blogspot.com/2011\\_11\\_01\\_archive.html](http://surfingbehindthewall.blogspot.com/2011_11_01_archive.html) [accessed 24 November 2011].

<sup>2</sup> Hagen Engler, “Surfers surf”, *Water Features*, (Port Elizabeth: Pocket Assegai Publications, 1998), 96.

<sup>3</sup> Zuluness as a “shifting historical force” is drawn from Jabulani Sithole, “Preface: Zuluness in South Africa: From ‘Struggle’ Debate to Democratic Transition” in Benedict Carton, John Laband and Jabulani Sithole (eds), *Zulu Identities: Being Zulu, Past and Present*, (Scottsville: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, 2008), xiv. In *Otelo Burning* English the act of surfing a wave is translated as *sefa* in isiZulu, a creolisation of the English ‘to surf’ or ‘surfing’. Yet, *sefa* also carries another meaning in isiZulu. Within *isangoma* (traditional healer) practice, *sefa* conveys the ability to foretell or ‘see’ the future. See *Otelo Burning*, dir. Sara Blecher, (South Africa: Cinga Productions, 2011) and actor and surfer Sihle Xaba’s explanation in Meg Samuelson and Glen Thompson, “Interview with Sara Blecher and Sihle Xaba: The Making and Meaning of *Otelo Burning*,” *Journal of African Cultural Studies*, 26, 3 (2014), 358.

<sup>4</sup> “Our Township Surf Culture,” *Amaza*, 2 (December 2013), 10. *Amaza* is produced by Waves for Change, a non-profit surfing development and social welfare organisation working among marginalised youth in the Cape Town townships of Masiphumelele and Khayelitsha. It was founded in August 2011. While Waves for Change is Cape Town based it has more similarities to the development of Zulu surfing in KwaZulu Natal than the trajectory of the Cape’s non-racial surfing movement. Wave for Change has organisational linkages to the Durban street children and surfing development project Umthombo and its ambassadorial project Surfers Not Street Children. Sports and leisure studies sociologist Belinda Wheaton has noted that the idea of surfing as a “white sport” is not unique to South Africa, African-American surfers in California negotiate the whiteness of American surfing’s history and cultural practices. See Belinda Wheaton, *The Cultural Politics of Lifestyle Sports*, (London and New York: Routledge, 2013), 121-137.

<sup>5</sup> Quoted in Nivashni Nair, “Coastal Town Changes Surfer Future,” *Natal Witness*, 5 June 2004.

toward the Africanisation of surfing in South Africa, termed “township surfing” by Waves for Change co-founder and instructor, Bongani Ndlovu.<sup>6</sup>

This chapter thus seeks to explore the trajectories of black surfing in South Africa as the example for the historical possibility for subaltern surfers to have agency in relation to the white domination of a sporting lifestyle and a repressive political context.<sup>7</sup> In looking to black surfing experiences and practices in the surf centres of Cape Town and Durban, and with reference to Jeffreys Bay, and the socio-political and cultural constraints on black surfing, a complex pattern emerges in response to the history of racialised sport in South Africa. First, how discourses of non-racialism among coloured and Indian surfers in Cape Town, Jeffreys Bay and Durban provided the ideological framework for a national non-racial surfing association, and how isolated surfing localisms in KwaZulu Natal that associated Zuluness with surfing maintained ethnic particularism. The first was key to the unification of surfing as a sport in 1992 while the second pointed to early formations that, by 1999, had made the Africanisation of surfing visible at South African beaches. Both themes bring to the fore the experience of apartheid at the beach and in the waves and how the representations of black surfing identities changed from the 1980s to the 1990s while remaining marginalised to the whiteness of local and global surfing culture. Herein, and replicating cultural and gender politics of the wider the South African surfing lifestyle, male surfers shaped black surfing in the years from when black surfing was a subterranean current in the late 1960s to when black surfing has gained international visibility 1999.

### ***Surfing under Apartheid***

The Californication of local surfing, as discussed in Chapter 1, provided a cultural politics that privileged whiteness within the surfing lifestyle. This was doubled for surfers in South Africa, as there was no escape from the ideology and politics of apartheid’s racialised everyday. For black surfers, histories of racial segregation, disenfranchisement and an edifice of racial laws proscribed their surfing lives. What the official discourse of beach apartheid did was to make for the social conditions on the beach and in the surf that were largely shaped, as historian Saul Dubow has argued for late twentieth-century South Africa, by “the reality that, in the realm of perceptions and social existence, whites and blacks inhabited separate universes.”<sup>8</sup> This was exasperated by a racialised discourse about water and inter-racial swimming that splashed fear in the face of white culture. As Robert Archer and Antoine Bouillon has stated in their 1982 study of sport and race in South Africa, *The South African Game*,

Yet, at the heart of white social life swimming is subject to more than any other leisure activity to a pitiless, indeed pathological segregation. For unlike tennis or golf, swimmers are in direct contact with each other, through the medium of water; far from separating swimmers of different races (or sex) water dissolves the physical barriers between them. Innumerable stories describe the “pollution”

<sup>6</sup> See Bongani Ndlovu, “*Dlala-Ngamaza*,” in *Zigzag*, 38, 5 (July 2014), 35-7. In isiXhosa, the term for surfing is *dlala-ngamaza*. As noted in the footnote above, “township surfing” was first mentioned in the December 2013 issue of *Amaza*, with Ndlovu the author of the article not credited in the magazine.

<sup>7</sup> Subaltern is used here as considering the postcolonial in retrieving the voices of surfers, mostly black, and looking to the subterranean currents within surfing that resisted or were implicated within the white surfing lifestyle and the imagined South African surfing nation. Historian Natalie Zemon Davis has considered subaltern agency informing historical narratives: “Through resistance, collaboration, craft, improvisation, or good luck, they can influence outcomes and their own destiny.” See Nathalie Zemon Davis, “Decentering History: Local Stories and the Cultural Crossing in a Global World,” *History and Theory*, 50 (May 2011), 190.

<sup>8</sup> Saul Dubow, *A Commonwealth of Knowledge: Science, Sensibility and White South Africa, 1820 – 2000*, (Cape Town: Double Storey Books, 2006), 11.

which white South Africans fear will result from mixed bathing, and the outrage they feel when it occurs.<sup>9</sup>

This racial discourse of closing off sharing leisured water spaces was translated to beach cultures. From the 1960 to 1989, beach apartheid geographically separated by apartheid classified population groups the histories and experiences of sun, sand and surf along the South African coastline; as discussed in the Introduction to this study, with persons not classified “white” allocated under-resourced and more dangerous swimming beaches. This further accentuated the whiteness of the beach and the privileging of coastal leisure in white society.

Other material and cultural factors provide further explanations for restricting black persons’ access to the apartheid beach and the surf. Besides the far distances to travel from home, train and public transport routes from the townships to the city or coastal towns did not open up the seaside for leisure and few people had motor vehicles. The socio-economic conditions of the working and labouring classes in the townships meant that there was limited surplus time available for leisure (outside of the weekends) and little expendable income available for sports equipment such as expensive surfboards and wetsuits. Furthermore, a prerequisite to surfing is the ability to swim in the ocean. However, with few municipal swimming pools and swimming coaches in townships due to a lack facilities investment by local authorities, there were limited opportunities for black youth to learn how to swim.<sup>10</sup> Furthermore, as anti-apartheid resistance intensified in the townships in Durban and Cape Town during the mid-1980s, the African National Congress (ANC) aligned comrades targeted municipal offices and libraries, along with public swimming pools, as symbols of the apartheid state.<sup>11</sup> Adding to these exclusions was the context of comrades-Inkatha political violence that disrupted the everyday in the townships of Durban and anti-apartheid mobilisation of the mass democratic movement in Cape Town. In addition to these materialist factors were cultural discourses of exclusion that drew on Zulu and Xhosa “traditions” formed within living memory of parents and elders; mythologies of water and the ocean as places of danger and taboo inducing a fear for water among children growing up in townships and rural areas.<sup>12</sup>

### ***Black Surfing in the Cape, c.1960s to 1980s***

Notwithstanding the racialised context of the everyday, and material constraints and cultural limits, black surfers did take to the waves in South Africa’s surfing centres during the apartheid years, even though the visual records were (and still are) few. The Cape Town and Jeffreys Bay surfing experience provides case

<sup>9</sup> Robert Archer and Antoine Bouillon, *The South African Game: Sport and Racism*, (London: Zed Press, 1982), 105.

<sup>10</sup> For the history of township swimming pools in Mitchells Plain, Cape Town see the documentary film on the swimming life of Derek Orderson, *Breathe Again*, dir. Kurt Orderson, (South Africa: Azania Rising Productions, 2012); on Durban and the persistence of the Lamontville Municipal Swimming Pool see Samuelson and Thompson, “Interview with Sara Blecher and Sihle Xaba,” 352-3; for the segregated nature of the sport of swimming under apartheid see Ashwin Desai and Ahmed Veriava, “Creepy Crawlies, Portapools and the Dam(n)s of Swimming” in Ashwin Desai (ed), *The Race to Transform: Sport in Post-Apartheid South Africa*, (Cape Town: HSRC Press, 2010); and for new histories of swimming enabling black surfing, despite the persistence of negative “traditional” views of the ocean held by their parents, see *Blacks Don’t Swim*, dir. Lucinda Blackenberg, (South Africa: Community Media Trust, 2008) and *Zulu Surf Riders*, dir. André Conje, Carlos Francisco an Brenen Nortje, (South Africa: Scratch The Surfers, 2008).

<sup>11</sup> See Samuelson and Thompson, “Interview with Sara Blecher and Sihle Xaba,” 352.

<sup>12</sup> For mention of the cultural explanations see Ndodentsha Mwandla, “Blacks and the Coast: Current Demands and Future Aspiration for Coastal Recreation,” (Masters Thesis, Geography, University of Zululand, 1995), 30; Crispin Hemson, “*Ukubekwezela* or *Ukuzithemba*: African Lifesavers in Durban” in Robert Morrell (ed), *Changing Men in Southern Africa*, (Pietermaritzburg: London and New York: Zed Books, 2001); Desai and Veriava, “Creepy Crawlies, Portapools and the Dam(n)s of Swimming Transformation”; and Claire Keeton, “Street Kids Catch a Wave of Hope,” *Sunday Times*, 14 December 2008.



studies in surfing and politics (Durban's black surfing history is focused on below).<sup>13</sup> Igshaan Nagia, a key figure in the non-racial surfing movement of the 1980s, recounted in a 2011 interview how he “surfed both sides of the fence” in Cape Town.<sup>14</sup> In 1970, at the age of twenty years, Nagia and friends, Mogamad Davids and Tahier Davids, started surfing at surf spot in Mouille Point named after the *Thermopylae* shipwreck, near to the Cape Town harbour. They travelled from their homes in Walmer Estate and shared a Whitmore shaped longboard in the Atlantic waves. It was surfing here that he met, and received encouragement from, from John Whitmore, then president of the South African Surfriders Association (SASA), and another white surfer who lived on the Atlantic seaboard. Nagia also recalled surfing at Nine Miles and Cemetery, between Muizenberg and Strandfontein on the False Bay coastline, however, Surfing Corner, Muizenberg and Long Beach, Kommetjie on the Cape Peninsula, among other beaches, were “predominantly white” and “there were lots of problems getting onto [those] beaches.”<sup>15</sup> This sensibility of racialised exclusion at the beach was captured visually by black Cape Town artist Peter Clarke in his 1973 painting of two black surfers titled, *Surfers at Strandfontein, Cape* (Figure 4.1).<sup>16</sup>



Figure 4.1: Peter Clarke's *Surfers at Strandfontein, Cape* (1973).<sup>17</sup>

Surfing under apartheid however was not about social acceptance on the beach. Nagia recalled an incident in the 1970s at Glen Beach, Camps Bay on a Saturday afternoon. Nagia and Tahier Davids had surfed and were enjoying the sun on the beach. The beach was crowded and several surfers were in the water. Police arrived at the beach, and Nagia and David avoided a night in cell of the Sea Point Police Station by paddling out to sea for some five hundred metres away and around the rocks to Maiden's Cove, a designated coloured beach. A policeman at Muizenberg Beach also assaulted Nagia for his flouting of beach

<sup>13</sup> *Zigzag* briefly reported in the late 1970s, on the donation of surfboards by the Clover dairy company to the Indian lifesavers at a Durban lifesaving club due to “the keenness the Indians are showing in surfing.” There was also a sentence each on the “handful” of Indian surfers at Isipingo Beach, south of Durban, and the “Coloured surfers” in the Cape, numbering enough for “to field a team”, a reference to participation in local contests. *Zigzag* was encouraging yet patronising, “So get in there brahs.” See “Clover Donates,” *Zigzag*, 2, 1 (December 1977/February 1978), 14.

<sup>14</sup> Interview with Igshaan Nagia by Glen Thompson, Cape Town, 29 August 2012. Digital Audio Recording.

<sup>15</sup> Interview with Igshaan Nagia.

<sup>16</sup> This painting is an important cultural artefact for South African surfing. Clarke's painting sold for R672,000 in a 2013 art auction. See *SA Art Times*, (March 2013), [http://issuu.com/arttimes/docs/saat\\_march\\_2013/44](http://issuu.com/arttimes/docs/saat_march_2013/44) [accessed on 28 September 2014].

<sup>17</sup> The image for the Peter Clarke painting is drawn from *Cape Town Surfers Webzine*, 13 February 2013, <http://capetownsurfers.co.za/surfs-up> [accessed 13 February 2013].

apartheid to go surfing. Yet, beach apartheid was not always patrolled. In 1980, Californian and surfer William Finnegan, a teacher at Grassy Park High School, took three coloured students to learn to surf at Muizenberg Beach instead of going down to the nearby Coloured-designated beach of Strandfontein. Despite some bad-mouthing from white surfers, there was no racial incident nor did any authorities enforce beach apartheid.<sup>18</sup> On the other hand, for Faez Abrahams the violence of the everyday under apartheid was apparent when he and other black surfers surfed at white beaches, yet, they were persistent in their strategies to surf at these places due to the good surf.

At places like Muizenberg, Long Beach and later J-Bay, the cops would arrive and threaten to arrest us if we paddled out. At Long Beach, we would pretend to leave, then crawl through the bushes around the back and paddle out. But it didn't stop there. Once you were in the water, you had a lot of guys picking fights with us.<sup>19</sup>

Abrahams continued, "[m]ost of the time it was hostile, seriously hostile, to a point where we had to defend ourselves physically." This racial violence in the surf was framed as both white surfers asserting territorialism and enforcing the apartheid order; "[t]he other [white] surfers didn't want us on the beach. It was illegal for us to be there. They were defending that law – the board that said, 'Whites Only'."<sup>20</sup> Ahmed Collier who had been surfing the Cape Town's waves since the 1960s, and the first reported black surfer to ride waves at Long Beach, was repeatedly arrested for transgressing "whites only" beach proclamations in the 1980s but continued "breaking all the racial taboos" to take his sons to the best waves on the Cape Peninsula that happened to be in white areas.<sup>21</sup> And getting to the waves for black surfers living in the Cape Flats during the State of Emergency was not easy-going. Faez Abrahams' account of one such event is revealing of the conditions under which black surfers negotiated their leisure time in a politicized context.

We had to travel through the townships to get to the surf. It was tough. Once on Vanguard Drive in Mitchells Plain we were nearly stoned by marchers because we had surfboards on our clapped-out old [Volkswagen] beetle! We hung out the winds and said, "Hey we are black surfers." They didn't believe us and gave us a thorough examination, but let us go. Getting to the beach could be as dangerous as when you got there!<sup>22</sup>

The same could be said of travelling up the coast to Jeffreys Bay in the mid-1980s. Abrahams recalled his first trip to this conservative Eastern Cape town in 1987 with white surfer David Stolk to surf in a national contest for the non-racial surf clubs, which are discussed further below. Surfing prior to the contest at Magna Tubes, police with a loudhailer "order us out of the water."<sup>23</sup> Stolk argued with the police that they would continue to surf. The tense situation was only resolved when Cheron Kraak, owner of Country Feeling surf

<sup>18</sup> William Finnegan, *Crossing the Line: A Year in the Land of Apartheid*, (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 1994), 126-7. Finnegan memoir of teaching a Cape Flats school, the school boycotts, and the apartheid everyday was originally published in 1986.

<sup>19</sup> Quoted in Darryl Brandreth, "The Other Side of the Coin," in Steve Pike, *Surfing South Africa*, (Cape Town: Double Storey, 2007), 26. For similar accounts of racism in the surf see also the interview with Igshaan Nagia.

<sup>20</sup> Quoted in Brandreth, "The Other Side of the Coin," 26.

<sup>21</sup> The quote is from Morton, "The Blonde Lady and Surfing the Other Side of Apartheid." Morton records that Ahmed Collier as the first black surfer at Long Beach. See also the interview with Ahmed Collier in the documentary on Cass Collier, *Taking Back the Waves*, dir. Nicolaas Hofmeyr, (South Africa: Uhuru Productions/SABC2, 2005). The role of Ahmed Collier in supporting his son's aspirations was noted by seventeen-year-old Cass Collier in a 1989 *Offshore* surfing magazine interview; this was Cass Collier's first interview to be published in a surfing magazine. Earlier attempts by Shafiq Morton to interview him were denied by Ahmed Collier who felt that "our mag would give local surfing credibility it didn't deserve." Writing under Morton's birth name, see Steve Morton, "Who's That Kid?" *Offshore*, 3, 2 (1989), 24.

<sup>22</sup> Quoted in Brandreth, "The Other Side of the Coin," 25.

<sup>23</sup> Quoted in Brandreth, "The Other Side of the Coin," 26.

stores in Jeffreys Bay, and her husband Ari Kraak, stepped in on behalf of the black surfers. Kraak was the sponsor of the surf contest.<sup>24</sup> Nagia recounted fights with white surfers on his trips to surf Jeffreys Bay as well as the fear of being held for the weekend in Humansdorp prison, but not charged, for surfing at Jeffrey Bay.<sup>25</sup> Student activist Rafiq Bagis was one surfer who did get imprisoned, he recalled in the 2006 surf film *The Pure Line*, a Billabong surfwear company production on the history of Jeffreys Bay,

We went out to surf and some people from the beach has seen us, it was really early in the morning, so what they did they called the cops, the cops came and called us out the water. There was one guy, Warren Kushnick, he stood up for us, a white guy, he got hit by a baton and they broke all teeth for standing up for us. We got locked up.<sup>26</sup>

Besides its conservative town council, Nagia indicated that three groups made for the reactionary white political attitudes in the small beach resort of Jeffreys Bay. Many white surfers who took a territorial view of the famous point break and couched this in racism, the town was a popular destination for Afrikaner holidaymakers from the Witwatersrand, and white international surfers that “not really cared for South African politics” and only came to Jeffreys Bay to surf.<sup>27</sup> The politically mindful American surf journalist Matt Warshaw satirically expressed in 1987, at the height of the surfing boycott against South Africa, Jeffreys Bay’s Supertubes wave was international surfing’s “best reason to toss away all moral beliefs to satisfy cheap, carnal surf lust.”<sup>28</sup> Yet, for the black surfers in Jeffreys Bay and those that came to visit from Cape Town, their experiences of beach apartheid in both surfing centres, and the mid-to-late 1980s struggles years in Cape Town, led to an “almost schizophrenic experience” (see Figure 4.2).<sup>29</sup>



Figure 4.2: Cass Collier taking schizoid pleasure on a Cape wave, 1989.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>24</sup> On Country Feeling/Billabong sponsorship see “Formation of South African Surfing Union,” *Offshore*, 3, 2 (1989), 53.

<sup>25</sup> Interview with Igshaan Nagia.

<sup>26</sup> Bagis interviewed in *The Pure Line*, dir. Chris Merrett, (USA: Billabong, 2006).

<sup>27</sup> Interview with Igshaan Nagia. Finnegan also noted the political apathy of Australian surfers visiting Jeffreys Bay in the early 1980s. He also observed that “I never saw a black person on the beach or in the water at Jeffreys Bay.” See Finnegan, *Crossing the Line*, 269.

<sup>28</sup> Matt Warshaw, “The Best Surf Article in the History of Mankind,” *Surfer*, 28, 8 (August 1987), 142, cited in Scott Laderman, *Empire in Waves: A Political History of Surfing*, (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 2014), 208, footnote 86.

<sup>29</sup> Interview by Glen Thompson with Shafiq Morton, Cape Town, 30 November 2011, Digital Audio Recording.

<sup>30</sup> Photograph by Steve Morton, *Offshore*, 3, 2 (1989), 25. There are few photographic records of black surfers on waves in the South African surfing magazines. *Offshore* magazine was the first in South Africa to publish photographs of local black surfers.

***The Non-Racial Surfing Movement, 1985 – 1991***

The history of the non-racial surfing movement in South Africa provides a means to consider how “race” remained a persistent factor structuring social relations at the beach, access to the sport of surfing, and representation within surfing’s promotional culture in South Africa during the years of demise of apartheid from the mid-to-late 1980s. The apartheid state had escalated its repression of popular protest in the townships and many of the younger generation of black surfers at school or entering tertiary education were radicalised. In surfing under apartheid black surfers uneasily straddled the Struggle and surf; as Shafiq Morton noted for Cape Town in the mid-1980s, a surfer would “come from Belgravia Road [in Athlone] where the barricades are burning, Caspers and people dying, to the relative calm of a Cape Town beach.”<sup>31</sup> It was in this context of the apartheid everyday that enjoying a leisure pastime was a political act when black surfers transgresses the racialised geographies of beach apartheid to surf. The trajectories of these surfing protests by subaltern surfer were largely different in than Cape than in Natal, notwithstanding some overlaps in class and community alliances; while the latter is addressed below, the politics of surfing in the Cape, with its links to Jeffreys Bay and Durban, is focused on here in recording a history of non-racial surfing movement that drew on the localised resistance politics of the non-racial democratic movement of the 1980s.

Competitive surfing and local sociability were the usual impetuses for forming a surf club in a normal society. In the context of racialised sport another factor for organising a surf club was presence in the surf zone at “whites only” beaches. As Brandreth noted, in documenting Faez Abrahams surfing life, the “only way to surf other sport was to organise themselves and paddle out as a group.”<sup>32</sup> This rationale led to the formation of the Wynberg Surf Club in the “winter of 1985”; as P.W. Botha declared a first States of Emergency to further militarised the state against resistance to apartheid.<sup>33</sup> This surf club was distinctive in two ways, as Shafiq Morton wrote in the Australian surfing magazine *Tracks*, well off the South African government’s censorship radar: it was South Africa’s “first surf club to rise from ranks of politically oppressed surfers” and “the club is not exclusive. It embraces all surfers who accept the doctrine of non-racialism and a normal society.”<sup>34</sup> In subscribing to the South African Council of Sport (SACOS) ideology against apartheid sport, Morton outlined how non-racialism related to sport and thus to surfing as an oppositional movement to white sport in South Africa, “the club supports the argument that normal, non-racial sport cannot be enjoyed in an abnormal, Apartheid society. Co-operation with State mechanisms that administer Apartheid is most definitely frowned on.”<sup>35</sup> As such, it was “unaffiliated” to the white surfing body, SASA. Nevertheless, Nagia, a founder and chairman of Wynberg Surf Club, recounted that the club, and a later national non-racial body, were not formally aligned with SACOS. Rather, “we were highly politicised, not just from a sport perspective, but in our own individual capacities we were very involved in politics.”<sup>36</sup> For instance, in late 1985, club member Rafiq Bagis was to appear in the Wynberg court for “public violence” due to his involvement in an

---

<sup>31</sup> Interview with Shafiq Morton.

<sup>32</sup> Brandreth, “The Other Side of the Coin,” 25.

<sup>33</sup> On the founding of the Wynberg Surf Club see Rashied Matthews, “Non-racial Surfing in the Limelight,” *Offshore*, 2, 4 (1988), 51.

<sup>34</sup> See Muhammad Shafique (Shafiq Morton), “Black Surfing in South Africa,” *Tracks*, (August 1986), 46. Muhammad Shafique was noted as a Moroccan journalist who had visited South Africa. Shafique was Shafiq Morton writing under a pseudonym in a context of political censorship in South Africa. See interview with Shafiq Morton. Morton and David Stolk, both white surfers, were members of the club. The only other white in the non-racial movement was an Afrikaans-speaking surfer at the Port Elizabeth club.

<sup>35</sup> Shafique Shafique (Morton), “Black Surfing in South Africa,” 46

<sup>36</sup> Interview with Igshaan Nagia.

anti-apartheid march. Although the charges were dropped, Bagis remained of interest to the South African Police's Security Branch.<sup>37</sup>

Nagia's point was further borne out when the state began monitoring the surf club and considered surfing politically subversive. With several students from the University of the Western Cape as well as the son of United Democratic Front (UDF) activist, Essa Moosa, as members of the club, the Security Branch took an interest in the club's activities. Morton has a humorous account of two incidents that illustrate how surfing came to the attention of the state. In his 2011 blog post, which was also published in *Zigzag* surfing magazine, he wrote,

The Branch took to following us around. We got to recognise a certain officer Mostert, who sported a bristling Voortrekker beard. He was relentless. Late one night he managed to collar one of our members, Addie. / He took him to the police station, and started slapping him around, as was the usual custom. / "Where is the fokkin guns? We know you donnerse fokkers has buried them on the beach?" thundered Mostert, who was trying to catch Rafiq [Bagis] for public violence. / "What does you discuss at your secret meetings on the waves?" he asked. / "Uh, we talk about J-Bay," answered Addie innocently. / In their paranoia the Security Branch had though we were about to launch a military attack on the Western Cape ... as part of an Umkhonto Isizwe unit ....<sup>38</sup>

During the Security Branch interrogation the question was also asked as to who was the blonde lady with the surfers. It turned out that it was Morton with his long blonde surfie hairstyle that the Secret Police had confused for a women club member.<sup>39</sup>



Figure 4.3: Wynberg Surf Club members, c.1988.<sup>40</sup>

<sup>37</sup> See interview with Igshaan Nagia.

<sup>38</sup> Shafiq Morton, "The Blonde Lady and the Surfing the Other Side of Apartheid," *Surfing Behind the Wall Blog*, 11 November 2011, [http://surfingbehindthewall.blogspot.com/2011\\_11\\_01\\_archive.html](http://surfingbehindthewall.blogspot.com/2011_11_01_archive.html) [accessed 24 November 2011]. For the *Zigzag* article see Shafiq Morton, "The Blonde Lady and the Other Sider of Apartheid," *Zigzag*, 36, 1 (January 2012), 31.

<sup>39</sup> I am aware of another instance of apartheid state interest in surfers. In Durban the South African Bureau for State Security approached Michael Larmont in 1971, when he was studying at the University of Natal, Durban campus and the president of the university's surf club, with a request to spy on surf club members as the white campus surfers were considered a front organisation for communism on the campus. Larmont declined for obvious reasons; he considered that the surfers had little interest in politics. Personal communications with Michael Larmont, Scottburgh, 7 November 2010.

<sup>40</sup> Photograph from *Offshore*, 2, 4 (1988), 51. The club members were not named.

Nonetheless, despite the political interest in the club, the Wynberg Surf Club (see Figure 4.3) acted as a catalyst for the formation of other surf clubs and fostering national inter-club contests to promote competitive surfing among black surfers. Here, it should be noted, it was Coloured and Indian surfers who formed the membership of these non-racial clubs in the country. The majority were based in Cape Town; namely, Two Oceans Surf, Comrades Surf Club and Treasure Beach Surf Club, with J-Bay Surf Club in Jeffreys Bay, Sunset Surf Club in Port Elizabeth and Isipingo Surf Club in Durban.<sup>41</sup> In 1986 Wynberg hosted “its first major” contest that using Association of Professional Surfers (ASP) rules, with support from professional white surfers Shafiq Morton and David Stolk.<sup>42</sup> Later that year, the Isipingo Club surfed against Wynberg in Cape Town, and in 1987 a national inter-club contest was held at Seal Point, Cape St Francis with sponsorship from Jeffreys Bay women surf entrepreneur Cheron Kraak of Country Feeling/Billabong. With Kraak’s support again, Jeffreys Bay hosted the 1988 national contest, held at the white-designated beach of Kitchen Windows.<sup>43</sup> As Nagia said in 1988 of black surfing, “We have come a long way since the ‘70’s. Certainly, we have the infrastructure to elevate surfing and we are concentrating on the younger surfers. We hope one day to produce a world champion from Wynberg Surf Club.”<sup>44</sup> As for the last point Nagia was prophetic, as will be seen in the case of Cass Collier discussed below.

While at Jeffreys Bay, and acknowledging “[s]urfing’s growth in popularity, particularly in the underprivileged and politically deprived community, has seen numbers increasing rapidly,” the need for a national structure for non-racial clubs were agreed on.<sup>45</sup> On 14 August 1988, South African Surfing Union (SASU) was founded. Affiliated to the national body were provincial associations for each of the coastal regions, Western Province, eastern Province and Natal. SASU saw its role as a “parent body ... to promote non-racial surfing, to organise contests and to set standards.”<sup>46</sup> SASU’s stated policy was that of “complete non-racialism and non-sexism.” Its view of non-racial sport, nation and citizenship derived from the politics of the mass democratic movement.

The Union interprets non-racialism (as do all non-racial bodies) as all South Africans belonging to one nation regardless of race. In other words, in the Union people are not “black, Asian, coloured or white” but simply South Africans. / The Union, however, does not subscribe to “multi-racialism” which still acknowledges race groups though they may participate together.<sup>47</sup>

SASU thus distanced itself from South African Surfriders Association (SASA), the white organised surfing body, due to its alliance to racialised sport through government grants and the membership of the South African National Defense Force (SADF) as a region affiliate. In regard to no sporting contact with SASA due to its SADF links, a Wynberg club member had stated, “I do not want to surf against somebody who’s going

<sup>41</sup> Clubs drawn from list in Matthews, “Non-racial Surfing in the Limelight,” 51 and interview with Igshaan Nagia.

<sup>42</sup> Matthews, “Non-racial Surfing in the Limelight,” 51. Later in 1986, Stolk resigned from the club when members reversed a decision that a white, professional surfer who state, and this was in reference to the male surfers Stolk and Morton, his politics to white surfing could surf in events outside of the non-racial club. Stolk was doing well on the local professional circuit and did not wish to give his career up. See Shafique (Morton), “Black Surfing in South Africa,” 47.

<sup>43</sup> For these national contests see Matthews, “Non-racial Surfing in the Limelight,” 51 and Rafiq Bagis and Cheron Kraak interviews in the film *Pure Line*. Professional surfer David Stolk, who was sponsored by Kraak, had introduced the non-racial clubs to Kraak.

<sup>44</sup> Quote from Matthews, “Non-racial Surfing in the Limelight,” 51.

<sup>45</sup> “Formation of South African Surfing Union,” *Offshore*, 3, 2 (1989), 53.

<sup>46</sup> “Formation of South Africa Surfing Union,” 53.

<sup>47</sup> “Formation of South Africa Surfing Union,” 53.

to shoot me in the back the next day.”<sup>48</sup> SASU thus provided black, and three white surfers, with a social and competitive space to resist apartheid sport during the latter years of apartheid and find affinity in the international sporting boycott against South Africa.

In 1989 SASU organised for three contests with supporting surf company sponsorship, each to be hosted at the home breaks of the newly established provincial bodies, to decide the South African Champions team and individual events.<sup>49</sup> The first was run in Cape Town, the second in Jeffreys Bay and the last in Durban. The Cape Town event, the Upstairs Surf Shop Surf Around presented by SASU, drew 90 entrants for the contest, an indication of the size of organised non-racial surfing in the country.<sup>50</sup> While surfing Kommetjie’s crowded Long Beach on day two of the contest, the SASU event suffered the malady of all organised surf contests, the encroachment of non-contestants into the contest surf zone and one racial incident where a white surfer was reported as especially troublesome and called the event a “Kook contest”.<sup>51</sup> As in previous years, the standout elite surfers were Cass Collier and Rafiq Bagis (Cape Town) and Stephen and Paul Jeggels (Jeffreys Bay). The Jeffreys Bay contest was held at Kitchen Window, as the previous year, and ran without any similar incident to Cape Town.<sup>52</sup> Not so for the final leg of the national championships held in Durban during September 1989.

This SASU contest was termed a “racial ‘surf war’” in *The Natal Mercury*.<sup>53</sup> This followed on press coverage of racist acts by whites in relation to black participation in leisure and sporting activities.<sup>54</sup> Furthermore, Durban beachfront had been under threat in the white public’s eye during the course of 1989. The process of implementing integrated beaches which begun in 1982. Durrheim and Dixon have argued that the resultant “race war for South African beaches in the 1980s was a battle for space which was fought, mostly non-violently, through representations.”<sup>55</sup> In February 1989 there had been call to introduce “pay beaches” by the mayor of Durban, Derrick Watterson, as a means to retain white privileged access to tourist beach in response to calls to desegregate the beaches. While the privatisation of certain beaches did not go ahead, in May the Durban City Council returned to the question of opening beaches. A deadlocked council decision resulted in the status quo remaining in place until the national government called for the dismantling of beach apartheid in November 1989. Furthermore, resistance to segregated beaches amplified in 1989 prior to the surfing contest. Morris Fynn, a Coloured Local Affairs Committee for Durban member and anti-beach apartheid activist was in the Durban magistrate’s court for the third time in consecutive years for removing “whites only” signs from Durban’s South Beach. A non-racial body of municipal workers, the Durban Integrated Municipal Employees Society, passed a resolution calling for the Durban City Council to open all beach in August 1989 and furthermore undertook not to enforce beach apartheid bylaws. On 3

<sup>48</sup> Quoted in Shafique (Morton), “Black Surfing in South Africa,” 46. Morton notes the ambivalent and resistant views of some white surfers to military conscription, despite the SADF providing a space for competitive surfers in the late 1980s to continue to compete in surf contests during their military service.

<sup>49</sup> The teams were determined by club. The individual divisions were Masters (the elite division), Grand Masters and Juniors. No women’s division was reported. The divisions for the second contest were Junior, Masters and Seniors, with the Seniors the elite division.

<sup>50</sup> R. Matthews, “The Upstairs Surf Shop Surfabout,” *Offshore*, 3, 2 (1989), 39.

<sup>51</sup> Matthews, “The Upstairs Surf Shop Surfabout,” 39.

<sup>52</sup> See Rashied Matthews, “SASU Champs,” *Offshore*, 3, 4 (1989) and in *Zigzag* magazine’s first inclusion of reportage on the non-racial surfing movement, Steven Adshade, “Billabong/Country Feeling Take Two – SASU National Series,” *Zigzag*, 13, 5 (September/October 1989), 63. An editorial comment at the end of the article, however, detracts from the white surfing’s recognition of non-racial surfing by terming SASU as “‘Union’”, noting *Zigzag*’s quotation marks. This article appears at the same time as the announcement of the South African Women’s Surfing Association (SAWSA) (see Chapter 2).

<sup>53</sup> David McGregor, “Competition Sparks Racial ‘Surf War’,” *The Natal Mercury*, 2 October 1989.

<sup>54</sup> See Douglas Booth, *The Race Game*: 143. Booth notes the SASU contest here.

<sup>55</sup> Kevin Durrheim and John Dixon, “The role of place and metaphor in racial exclusion: South Africa’s beaches as sites of shifting racialization,” *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 24, 3 (May 2001), 439.

September, a few weeks before the contest, the Mass Democratic Movement (MDM) held a protest picnic at the white-designated South Beach. Some 5,000 people, the majority black, took to the beach in peaceful protest and the police were reported as shown restraint.<sup>56</sup> In this uncertain context, white anxieties about open beaches were heightened and hardened by late 1989 when SASU arrived for the contest.

The three-day SASU national championship opened on the Friday at the Bay of Plenty, a central Durban beach, with seventy competitors ready to surf. The “surf war” was a confrontation that started on the Friday afternoon when “three heats had to be abandoned ... because of the ‘bad attitude’ of locals”.<sup>57</sup> It escalated on the Saturday when sixteen white teenage surfers who refused to exit the contest area. This was an exaggeration of the experience of the Cape Town event. Igshaan Nagia, who was the SASU contest director, recalled in 2012, standing at the end of the pier with a loudhailer requesting the white surfers to leave the area and respect the rules of beach usage.<sup>58</sup> SASU, though the Isipingo Waveriders Association, had gained permission from the municipality to use the Bay of Plenty, considered a “mixed” beach, for the contest. *The Natal Mercury* reported that this refusal by “local white surfers” to leave the contest area prompted the racial incident. Black surfers were “apparently sworn at and racially abuse” and told that “blacks were not allowed to surf at the Bay of Plenty”.<sup>59</sup> Isipingo Waveriders Association chairman, Deon Vlotman, was cited by the newspaper, “[t]his triggered off a fight and a white guy, who had a bad racist attitude, was hit by a frustrated contestant.”<sup>60</sup> The newspaper gave the impression that the incident was then “defused by local Durban professional Tommy Lawson, who paddled out and urged the white surfers to leave the contest area.”<sup>61</sup> *The Natal Mercury* however had left out some further details. Nagia and Morton remember that the situation remained tense on the beach once the surfers had paddled in as riot police arrived with guns supported by a helicopter.<sup>62</sup> Nagia indicated that some arrests of SASU members were made.<sup>63</sup> As Laderman has rightly argued, this “surf war” was not about the assertion of territorialism by local surfers but an imposing of apartheid constructed white privilege in the surf.<sup>64</sup> This incident can be read as white surfing privilege being challenged and subverted by black surfers and the non-racial surfing movement at a time of social anxiety over the meaning of the beach in “Surf City”, the cultural centre of the white sporting lifestyle fashioned by the surf magazines and films and perpetuated through practice as a white space. White surfers were not only faced with black surfers in the surf at a previously “whites only” beach but the white surfers’ racially construed historic claim to that space was in the SASU championships undermined by the same regulations governing white organised surfing whereby a contest area becomes a borderland between the access and consumption of waves. The white surfers refusal to paddle away from the contest zone was therefore an attempt to reclaim white power in the face of discourses legitimising non-racial surfing and open beaches.

<sup>56</sup> For these examples see South African Institute for Race Relations (SAIRR), *Race Relations Survey 1989/90*, (Johannesburg: South African Institute for Race Relations, 1990), 7-8. Political cartoonist Andy Mason described how he designed an anti-apartheid T-shirt for the Durban beach protest that depicted a black Rastafarian surfer, the waves and the beach freed from apartheid’s bounds. These “Free the Beach” T-shirts were never worn as the police confiscated them from the trunk of an activist’s car before they could be distributed to protesters. Personal communications with Andy Mason, Muizenberg, Cape Town, 22 March 2011.

<sup>57</sup> McGregor, “Competition Sparks Racial ‘Surf War’.”

<sup>58</sup> Interview with Igshaan Nagia.

<sup>59</sup> McGregor, “Competition Sparks Racial ‘Surf War’.”

<sup>60</sup> Quoted in McGregor, “Competition Sparks Racial ‘Surf War’.” The white surfer in question was identified as Dean Geraghty in my interviews. Geraghty was well-known in Durban’s surfing circles at the time as a surfboard shaper and aspiring amateur competitive surfer, who went on to gain a place in the national team.

<sup>61</sup> “McGregor, “Competition Sparks Racial ‘Surf War’.”

<sup>62</sup> Interview with Igshaan Nagia and interview with Shafiq Morton. This is further supported in Brandreth’s account of Faez Abrahams, see his “The Other Side of the Coin,” 26.

<sup>63</sup> Interview with Igshaan Nagia.

<sup>64</sup> See Laderman, *Empire in Waves*, 107. Laderman holds to the account as set out in *The Natal Mercury* as the source available to his research.



*Zigzag*, however, did not support the white surfers in an editorial, noting that “waves were made for everyone, not just an ‘exclusive elite’” but did condemn the resultant conflict between the surfers and SASU as gaining media attention and “unnecessary criticism” that was damaging to the “image and growth of our sport” in the international and local media.<sup>65</sup> In 1989, as noted in Chapter 3, South African surfing was in internal crisis due to the sports boycott of amateur and professional surfing. The “surf war” thus tarnished both white and non-racial surfing, the former at a low point in its history and the latter at its emergence as an organised national surfing structure.

1989 however was to be the peak of the non-racial surfing movement’s activities. February 1990 shifted the political landscape as Nelson Mandela was released from prison and the African National Congress and other liberation movement organisations were unbanned by the Nationalist government under F.W. de Klerk. In the early 1990s SASU retained its non-racial stance as apartheid transitioned to democracy, however, the beginning of the post-apartheid period saw the non-racial clubs facing new challenges as waning interest, disillusionment in the state of sport in the transition, and the need to secure employment after tertiary studies meant that the Wynberg Surf Club, and others, began to lose momentum as a sporting and social space.<sup>66</sup> In a sense, it can be argued, what became visible in 1990 and 1991 was how club member identification in anti-apartheid sport struggle that had given the non-racial surfing movement its politics, meaning and sense of community was fracturing as the ideology of non-racialism became normalised within an emerging democratic society. The rationale for the non-racial surfing movement was further weakened when SASA approached SASU to initiate unification talks, which are discussed below.

There was one success story for SASU, or more exactly the Wynberg Surf Club, as Nagia had foretold in 1988, yet not as Nagia fully imagined politically. Top ranked SASU surfer Cass Collier, who had turned professional in late 1989, had discontinued to “boycott all surfing events in his home country” as a “disenfranchised citizen”.<sup>67</sup> A post-struggle identification shaped by growing up under apartheid, as he stated in a 1991 letter published in *Zigzag* in response to a white surfer’s criticism of his political stand, “does he know what it feels like to be a sixteen year old student witnessing the brutality of the S.A.P. and S.A.D.F. toward myself, my fellow students, my family and having to go through the trauma of having my father detained without trial for our fight for equality in our country?”<sup>68</sup> His identity as a “disenfranchised citizen”, and not a responsibilised citizen-subject, Collier accommodated his Struggle surfing past and his future as a careered surfer as “the surfer as individualistic anti-hero.”<sup>69</sup> Collier, along with Jeggels, were the two surfers of promise that emerged from the non-racial movement in the 1990s. Jeggels attempted the ASP contest circuit in 1990 but soon dropped out. However, it was the name of Cass Collier that was to keep black surfing in the Cape in the national surfing imaginary. Nearing the end of his short ASP professional

<sup>65</sup> Craig Sims and David McGregor, “Editorial,” *zigzag*, 13, 6 (November/December 1989), 10.

<sup>66</sup> See interview with Shafiq Morton.

<sup>67</sup> See Steve Morton, “No Guts, No Glory,” *Zigzag*, 14, 5 (September/October 1990), 33. Collier had entered the ASP world tour as an athlete without recourse to the usual channels in South Africa to move through amateur to professional surfing and into the international arena. His parents as well as surf company sponsorship largely funded him.

<sup>68</sup> Letter from Cass Collier, “Politics and sport revisited take 2,” *Zigzag*, 15, 3 (May-June 1991), 12.

<sup>69</sup> See Meg Samuelson, “Re-telling Freedom in *Otelo Burning: The Beach, Surf Noir, and Bildung* at the Lamontville Pool,” *Journal of African Cultural Studies*, 26, 2 (2014), 318-9. The individualistic anti-hero is a trope within literary, filmic and subcultural representations of “the surfer” as oppositional to mainstream culture that has been in circulation since 1950s Malibu surf culture idealised the social rebel of Miki Dora (see his biography, David Rensin, *All For a Few Perfect Waves: The Audacious Life and Legend of Rebel Surfer Miki Dora*, London: Yellow Jersey Press, 2008); yet this same image has been appropriated by the global surfing imaginary since the 1960s within its advertising and in some competitive surfing persona as marks of distinction, as well as those, who since the 1990s were sponsored “soul surfers” chasing the surfing dream by “free surfing” exotic locations for advertorial content, such as Rip Curl’s marketing campaign “The Search” (see Phil Jarratt, *Salts and Suits*, (Melbourne and London: Hardie Grant, 2010, 211)).

surfing career he was acknowledged by a *Zigzag* on a March-April 1991 cover of Collier in Hawai'i.<sup>70</sup> This was prior to his shifting in identity from a clean-cut Muslim appearance for that of an "underground" countercultural Rastafarian who surfed big waves in the Cape, which was evident on the cover the January-February 2000 issue of *Zigzag*.<sup>71</sup> A 2001 article by politically progressive surfer and journalist Andy Davis captured this shift in a competitive surfing masculinity maintaining the distinction of a non-conformist. Davis attempted to accommodate Collier's "Rasta" surfer self-fashioned identity, which resided not in race or ethnicity but rather in a sacral transnationalism, with the representational and material demands of the professional surfer and surfing's promotional and consumerist culture. In a photograph accompanying the article the caption reads: "Breaded and dreadlocked Rastafarian Cass Collier has that feral quality that many people associate with a soul surfer. Yet the nose of his board is emblazoned with sponsors' logos and to reciprocate their support he certainly doesn't shun the camera."<sup>72</sup>

Alongside this new South African surfer identification, and a hint at a heroic masculinity forged in cold, big Atlantic waves, this latter cover had further significance in the cultural history of surfing; it was published after Collier, white surfer Ian Armstrong, and team manager Micky Dufus, as South African national big wave team members, had won the 1999 Reef Brazil World Big Wave Championships held at Todos Santos, Mexico.<sup>73</sup> While South Africa had one or two professional contenders on the professional world qualifying circuit through the 1990s and had returned to international amateur surfing at the 1994 World Surfing Titles in Brazil, (as discussed in Chapter 3) placing fourth against top surfing nations, there remained a lingering sense of crisis from the 1980s that South African surfing was not on par internationally with its historic showings in the late 1970s as a surfing nation.<sup>74</sup> This pessimistic nostalgia dissipated briefly in 1999 to celebrate South Africa as a new and "rainbow" surfing nation when the South African big wave team won the team trophy at the International Surfing Association's (ISA) big wave world title event.<sup>75</sup> Yet, two media episodes pointed to white surfer attempts to undermine the moment when a black surfer and two white surfers shared the distinction of a world surfing title. In response to views on the beach in regard to development surfing (which is discussed further below), and a general ignorance of black surfers surfing at top levels expressed by white readers of *Zigzag*, *Zigzag* defended Collier as a talented, elite, competitive surfer and not a "token 'affirmative' surfer", adding that he travelled to Hawai'i to surf after the event.<sup>76</sup> The other was a letter from a white Cape Town surfer, despite according due recognition for the team's win,

<sup>70</sup> See *Zigzag*, 15, 2 (March/April 1991). This was *Zigzag*'s first cover for a black surfer from South Africa, the other black surfer being Dane Kealoh as mentioned below.

<sup>71</sup> See *Zigzag*, 24, 1 (January-February 2000). To date, in *Zigzag*'s history, a further two issues have carried local black surfers, Cass Collier again in 2001 (*Zigzag*, 25, 2 (March/April 2001)) and Capetonian aspiring professional Michael February on a 2012 cover (*Zigzag*, (February-March 2012)). The evidence for whiteness in the South African surfing imaginary remained present through these years, and after despite the shifts traced in this chapter.

<sup>72</sup> Andy Davis, "Souled Out," *Zigzag*, 25, 2 (2001), 65. See also Morton's writing on Collier and Armstrong's Rastafarian identity as "reborn Africans" in his *The Surfer Journal* article, "Let He Who is Thirty Drink Clear Water." A brief run by *African Soul Surfer* (1995-1996), in opposition to *Zigzag*, attempted to nurture an anti-competitive, countercultural soul surfer image but lost in the surf advertising battle that ensued over the small surf brand supported promotional market.

<sup>73</sup> Ford and Brown in *Surfing and Social Theory* note that "is probably a complex relationship between sensation, challenge and catharsis in big wave surfing." However, they also consider the gendered nature of the big wave surfing experience as historically located, dominated by men and constructing heroic masculinities as hegemonic; "the return to the heroic masculinities of the early days of surfing is no coincidence, it is the carving out of new territory and establishing new distance between the hegemonic masculine male surfer and the 'Other' (i.e. the females and other men)." See their *Surfing and Social Theory: Experience, Embodiment and narrative of the Dream Glide*, (London and New York: Routledge, 2006), 157 and 107. My observations of big wave surfing culture in Cape Town concur with Ford and Brown's assessments of big waves surfing.

<sup>74</sup> See Chapter 1 for Shaun Tomson's win of the world professional title in 1977, Wendy Botha's 1987 world professional women's title in Chapter 2, and Chapter 3 for the South African team winning the 1978 ISA world titles.

<sup>75</sup> See "larger Than Life," *Zigzag*, 23, 2 (March/April 1999), 66-7 and 101.

<sup>76</sup> "The A Grades Have Landed," *Zigzag*, 23, 3 (May/June 1999), 55.

called for Collier and Armstrong to cut their hair and look presentable in their green and gold national team jackets in taking on “role model duties”.<sup>77</sup> A harking back to Shaun Tomson’s clean-cut, managed athleticism as the image of the nation’s surfing ambassador.

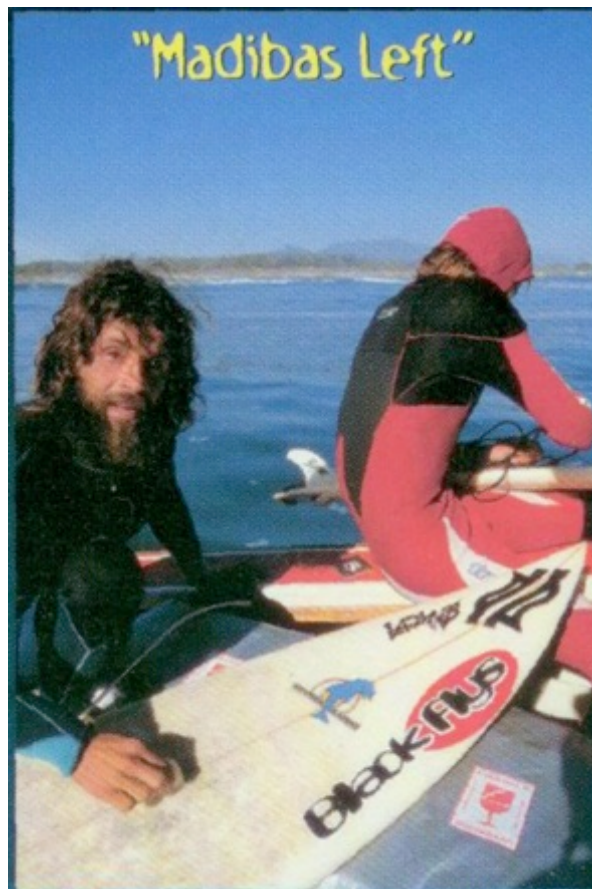


Figure 4.4: Cass Collier and Ian Armstrong:  
Waxing up to surf Madiba’s Left, Robben Island, 31 May 1998.<sup>78</sup>

Yet, besides the reshaping of surfer identities, competitive prowess, and affirmations of the surfing nation from the margins of surfing’s establishment, Collier and Armstrong provided a symbolic figuration in 1998 of post-Struggle South Africa by surfing Robben Island, at surf spot off its western shores that became named on that day as “Madiba’s Left” (see Figure 4.4). In the July/August issue of *Zigzag*, recounting in photographs and text the experience of surfing ‘[o]n the last Sunday of May, [when] the sun was shining with light NE winds and solid 6-8 foot swells running.’<sup>79</sup> In 1998, Robben Island’s restricted coastal zone from its days as a place of banishment for political prisoners remained in place and permission was gained from the island’s authorities to enter the waters, although they surfed “one of the waves not ‘designated’ for surfing purposes.”<sup>80</sup> Nevertheless, this surfing act was a re-remembering and an erasure of apartheid temporality in the post-apartheid - Collier and Armstrong surfed off Robben Island on 31 May, which had, until 1993, been

<sup>77</sup> Jamii Hamlin, Letter: “Cut Thine Hair,” *Zigzag*, 23, 3 (May/June 1999), 30.

<sup>78</sup> Photograph by Nic Bothma in Black Flies advertisement, *Zigzag*, 22, 4 (July/August 1998), 86. The advertisement was placed between the pages of the Robben Island article. Southern California inspired Black Flies, a sunglasses and surf apparel company, was a sponsor of Cass Collier.

<sup>79</sup> Amaza Images [Nic Bothma and Neil Webster], “Robben Island: Madiba’s Left – the Long Wave to Freedom,” *Zigzag*, 22, 4 (July/August 1998), 85.

<sup>80</sup> Amaza Images [Nic Bothma and Neil Webster], “Robben Island,” 87. This was discovered when one of the surf journalists wiped out on a wave and washed ashore; the island authorities arrived and berated him for surfing in the incorrect zone.

commemorated Republic Day in apartheid South Africa. It was this mediated moment, when Cass Collier rides the waves of Madiba's Lefts, which merged surfing's phenomenology of freedom and the surfing imaginary in South African with post-1994 political freedom. In considering this, Shafiq Morton has written in postcolonial mode,

Robben Island is a windswept piece of rock in the middle of Table Bay. From it a person can see Table Mountain and the twinkling lights of Cape Town. This breath-taking view must have been a daily torture for the political prisoner ... It is truly poetic that Cass and Ian, the reborn African, were among the first crew permitted to surf its waves, off limits for 300 years. Both described that session as a liberating experience. "The wave itself was intense, very exciting. It was like a statement to go and surf Robben Island," says Ian, "a sign of the times, a great expression of freedom."<sup>81</sup>

Yet, for organised surfing in South Africa, both non-racial and white, the unity and freedom implied by a black and a white surfer sharing the pleasure and politics of riding waves at Madiba Left's was still an imagined future; its it to the beginnings of organised surfing's post-apartheid present that we return.

### ***"An Uneasy Unity": The Surfing Unity Talks, 1991***

It was within a post-apartheid political context of the beginning of the Mandela decade, social change and uncertainty about the future of surfing as a sport that South African Surfing Association (SASA) official Robin de Kock initiated informal discussions with Igshaan Nagia and Shafiq Morton in early 1991 with the aim of unifying the South African surfing bodies.<sup>82</sup> More formal meeting followed and it was agreed that surfing should work towards unification. Both parties were seen as bringing value to the negotiation table. SASU held the moral high ground in terms of its non-racial credentials while SASA, despite its racialised sport history, had administrative structures in place and formal recognition as a national sports association with the government and membership with the International Surfing Association (ISA).

In discussing the unification proposal internally some SASU members were "not too keen on negotiations" and "suspicious" of SASA motives.<sup>83</sup> Some SASU members were felt that SASA wished to use unification to return to international amateur competition, and thus re-establish South Africa as a surfing nation rather than focus on the transformation of the sport at the grassroots. Furthermore, those radicalised within non-racial democratic movement had held to the view through the apartheid years that one was a "sell-out" if one engaged with white sports bodies. However, with ANC leaders meeting for talks with the Nationalists to begin the negotiation of a new South Africa, a precedent was established in how to navigate the new sports governance terrain. An "anti-talks" lobby resulted in some individuals and club splitting away from SASU. For the "pro-talks" lobby, Nagia, as SASU chairperson, was elected as the spokesperson among other representatives. De Kock too faced opposition from within the SASA committee. Conservative members felt that SASU should simply join SASA as the established sports body for surfing; there was no need to compromise to SASU and treat it as an organisation with equal standing. De Kock's argument for the need for SASA to make sacrifices won the day, however, not without some committee members "left the organisation".<sup>84</sup> De Kock approached Paul Botha, with a history of administration in both amateur and

<sup>81</sup> Shafiq Morton, "Let He Who is Thirsty Drink Clear Water," *The Surfer's Journal*, 10, 4 (Fall 2001), 22.

<sup>82</sup> Interview with Igshaan Nagia and interview with Robin de Kock by Glen Thompson, Cape Town, 16 April 2014. Paul Botha recalls De Kock thinking about initiating unification in 1990.

<sup>83</sup> Interview with Igshaan Nagia.

<sup>84</sup> Interview with Robin de Kock.

professional surfing in South Africa and a perceived neutrality, to facilitate formal talks between SASA and SASU.<sup>85</sup>

However, an article titled “S.A. Returns to the Fold” by watersports journalist Dale Granger published in the July/August 1991 issue of *Zigzag* nearly derailed unification talks. The article focused on the possible return of South African surfing to the ISA world champions after thirteen years of sports isolation. SASA was positioned as the *defacto* entity in local organised surfing, was unified and a non-racial body. De Kock was quoted as seeing SASU among “other splinter groups”, with no constitution and insignificant representation among surfers.<sup>86</sup> In a response to the article in the next issue of *Zigzag*, de Kock’s letter took issue with Granger for not verifying the quotes before publication and therefore undermining the surfing unification process. De Kock wrote,

I am extremely concerned that the trust built up between myself as a representative of the South African Surfriders Association (SASA) and members of the SASU will be severely damaged by this paragraph in the article. It is mine and my executive committee’s view that the SASU is not a splinter group. We accept that SASU is a legally constituted body with a membership that has a broad base.<sup>87</sup>

Then de Kock clarified SASA’s terminology in regard to his liberal legalism claims of “non-racial” and “unified” as set out in SASA’s constitution in relation to SASU’s progressive political ideology,

SASU is an important player in South African surfing and while SASA’s constitution determines SASA as a non-racial body which is unified among its affiliates, it realises that SASU sets different parameters in their definition of “non racial” and “unified”.<sup>88</sup>

And, in further SASA’s distancing from its racialised sporting past, de Kock stated, “we have though our public disapproval of segregated beaches to show our distaste of the system that had divided our country and our sportsmen for so many years.”<sup>89</sup> Taken together, and with consideration of SASU’s non-racial sports stand, as set out in the discussion above, these statements were indicative of the political chasm that required bridging between elite and subaltern surfers in the unification talks.

The Surfing Unity Talks were held at the central surfing city of Port Elizabeth in the Hotel Elizabeth on 9 November 1991. Invitations had been sent to representatives from SASU, SASA, the provincial associations affiliated to SASA, the Defence Force Surf Club, and the South African Professional Surfing Association (SAPSA) (for the delegates see Figure 4.5). By chance, surfer Peter Basford who ran his own film and photography business, arrived “out of the blue” to document the meeting.<sup>90</sup> There is thus a video record of this crucial turning point in South African organised surfing’s history. The following section is based on that visual evidence and interviews with Igshaan Nagia, Shafiq Morton, Robin de Kock and Paul Botha.<sup>91</sup>

<sup>85</sup> Interview with Paul Botha.

<sup>86</sup> Dale Granger, “S.A. Returns to the Fold,” *Zigzag*, 15, 4 (July/August 1991), 22. (Issue misprinted as 15, 3).

<sup>87</sup> Robin de Kock, “Letters: SASA Clarifies,” *Zigzag*, 15, 5 (September/October 1991), 16.

<sup>88</sup> Robin de Kock, “SASA Clarifies,” 16.

<sup>89</sup> Robin de Kock, “SASA Clarifies,” 16.

<sup>90</sup> Interview with Paul Botha.

<sup>91</sup> SASA, *SASU Unification Meeting*, dir. Peter Basford, (South Africa: Thunder Wave Television, 1991). VHS Video Recording, Paul Botha Personal Collection. This video record was digitized during my research.



Figure 4.5: Unity Talks delegates, November 1991.<sup>92</sup>

At the Surfing Unity Talks it was agreed that a new unified, non-racial surfing body was required for the future of the sport of surfing. It was agreed that SASA's government recognition was to be used as a basis for structuring a new organisation. Furthermore, a joint interim leadership including both SASU and SASA officials was to be elected. This agreement to surfing unification was not without white surfing making an important concession to SASU. SASU opposed the continued involvement of the SADF in a new surfing body. The SADF was viewed as part of the apartheid state's military apparatus that enforced the state of emergency to suppress revolt in the townships. For organised white surfing this was significant concession; not only was the SADF Surf Club considered with the same organisational standing as a provincial body, it had provided SASA with infrastructure and judging support for contests. Despite protestations from the SADF that processes of integration were underway within the military, and support for the inclusion of the SADF by some white bodies, SASA agreed to SASU's terms and the SADF was barred from joining a united surfing body.

Following cricket's unification lead, and to emphasise the national unification of the sport, the meeting took on the name the United Surfing Council of South Africa (USCSA).<sup>93</sup> The interim committee of six was elected, three each from SASU and SASA representation, with Igshaan Nagia and Robin de Kock sharing the key leadership responsibilities.<sup>94</sup> The USCSA interim committee was mandated to "establish the mechanics of change" and was to focus on the following three priorities: grassroots surfing development, addressing environmental issues, and the return to international competition.<sup>95</sup> The USCSA was formally constituted in at an annual general meeting held in Port Elizabeth in May 1992, with Igshaan Nagia elected Secretary General, Robin de Kock as President and Neville Wilkins as Vice-President.<sup>96</sup>

<sup>92</sup> These images are frame-grabs from the digital copy of the film *SASA, SASU Unification Meeting*. Igshaan Nagai and Robin de Kock were seated front centre.

<sup>93</sup> See interview with Robin de Kock on the influence of the United Cricket Board of South Africa (UCBSA). On cricket's June 1991 unification, the first South African sport to formally do so, see Ashwin Desai and Goolam Vahed, "Beyond the Nation? Colour and Class in South African Cricket" in Desai *The Race to Transform*, 179-181 and André Odendaal, "Neither Cricketers Nor Ladies': Towards a History of Women and Cricket in South Africa, 1860s-2000s," *The International Journal of the History of Sport*, 28, 1 (January 2011), 127.

<sup>94</sup> Igshaan Nagia, Shafiq Morton and Ahmed Collier (ex-SASU) and Robin de Kock, Gary Gravitt and Mike van Zyl (ex-SASA) were elected. See Pat Flanagan, "The New Surf Africa," *Zigzag*, 16, 1 (January/February 1992), 41.

<sup>95</sup> See Flanagan, "The New Surf Africa," 41.

<sup>96</sup> See "United Surfing Council Unity Process Compete," *Zigzag*, 16, 4 (July/August 1992), 63.

In Morton's view, "South African surfing had undergone a period of uneasy unity between the white-dominated and the non-racial South African Surfing Union (SASU)."<sup>97</sup> The Surfing Unity Talks brought to the fore the role of the political in shaping South African surfing in the post-apartheid years. These sports unification talks set the agenda for South African competitive surfing's trajectory based on a fragile unity yet determined to shape organised surfing on an equitable basis in a democratic South Africa. Notwithstanding, the United Surfing Council of South Africa (USCSA) attempts at nation building through a return to international competitions, the challenge that face organised surfing was social inclusion. The 1990s provide a view of how sports development followed a path of supporting elite athletes rather than the grassroots transformation of South African competitive surfing despite the stated intentions of the USCSA. As Morton, the coach of the national development squad, said in late 1992, the challenge for the USCSA was,

With South African surfing entering the international mainstream after two decades of isolation, there has been much to celebrate with teams being invited to compete overseas. But, although things are looking up, we all have to be warned that surfing is not out of the woods yet. Unity, one of the pre-conditions for international acceptance, was only the first step. Development is the second ....<sup>98</sup>

It could be said that in its development programmes the USCSA provided opportunities for black surfers who had previously been denied access to the sport a means to enter into the surfing lifestyle. It is to this theme of surfing development that we now turn in reviewing key trends in black surfing in the 1990s. Where the previous section addresses black surfing and the none-racial surfing movement centred in the Western and Eastern Cape, the following section looks mostly to KwaZulu-Natal surfing histories and the emergence of the Zulu surfer.

### ***Race and the Surfing Imaginary in Durban, 1960s***

Durban's early black surfing history offers a different view of the apartheid beach than that of the Cape. Durban was part of the whiteness of the global surfing imaginary after the film *The Endless Summer* named it South Africa's "Surf City". However, despite the historical absence of the black surfer's body in the 1960s, there is also a presence of an imagined Zulu iconography in white Durban surfing culture. The former can be explained by the racially segregated nature of leisure at the beach that limited the access black bodies had to the waves, while the latter is illustrated from traces in the surfing imaginary. Both operate as processes of social exclusion during the apartheid years. The effect of beach segregation was to remove Africans from the Durban seaside except as labour, largely serving the tourist industry. It also constructed the beach as racially white with any oceanfront facilities for blacks (Africans, Indians and coloured) consigned to beachfronts outside of white society's view, most to the north of the touristic Golden Mile's central beaches and a coloured-designated beach at Isipingo to the south of the industrial part of the city. The materiality of these spatially determined exclusionary practices aided the perpetuation of racialised discourses of cultural difference within white society that blacks did not enjoy the beach or swim, let alone surf.

<sup>97</sup> Morton, "Let He Who is Thirsty Drink Clear Water," 12.

<sup>98</sup> Letter from Steve Morton, "Pay Up", *Zigzag*, 17, 6 (November/December 1992), 17-8.



Figure 4.6: Surfing and race at the Durban beach: Ron Perrott's photograph in *Surfer* magazine, 1966.

Social and cultural differences however were evident and it was the photograph a black African male youth walking on a Durban beach in 1966 in the Californian *Surfer* magazine that the realities of beach apartheid first entered into the global surfing community. Australian Ron Perrott's photograph of an African youth walking on Durban's central Diary Beach with three white surfers carrying approaching the surf with surfboards (see Figure 4.6). Perrott had captioned the photograph in a long article on his travels in South Africa in article entitled "'Crocodiles', Zulus, and Surf Suid Afrika," as "Durban's beaches are segregated so this native youngster can't join these three surfers strolling along Daily Beach near the West Street Groyne for a little fun in the surf."<sup>99</sup> While American responses in letters to *Surfer* magazine ranged from outrage against racial segregation to the accommodation of South Africa's racial laws, South African surfers' responses did not question apartheid at the beach and cited reasons the why Africans did not surf. "The natives are petrified of the surf," wrote a Durbanite and another "they are terrified of the water and have surrounded it with mysterious myths and legends."<sup>100</sup> South African *Surfer* magazines made two passing

<sup>99</sup> Ron Perrott, "'Crocodiles', Zulus, and Surf Suid Afrika," *Surfer*, 7, no.2, May 1966), 62. Perrott's tone in the article was more affirming of white surfing culture and aimed to stimulate *Surfer's* readers to travel to South Africa. The 'crocodiles' made reference to holidaymakers (59).

<sup>100</sup> See quotes in Laderman, *Empire in Waves*, 102. Without access to most back issues of *Surfer* magazines, Laderman's reading of these letters is relied on here. Laderman also discusses the American responses in detail (97-102). In response to the letters citing the article, many of which criticised *Surfer* for making surfing political, Patrick McNulty, writing for the magazine, defended the magazine's inclusion of Perrot's photograph: "All critics lost sight of the key word in the caption: 'JOIN'. *Surfer* is an international magazine read by surfers of many races. If there is any restriction – whether political, religious or local – that hinders the free movement of any surfer, and if this regulation affects surfing or beaches, obviously this must be mentioned." McNulty also spoke against racism by appealing a cultural ideal within surfing, and middle class coastal cultures, "incidentally, a good tan has always been a status symbol in the sunny world of surfing. So a dark skin pigment is perhaps the weakest reason for limiting a surfer's activity in the water." For both quotes see Patrick McNulty, "Black and White in Photography," *Surfer*, 8, 1 (March 1976). This excerpt is from Sam George (ed), *The Perfect Day: 40 Years of Surfer Magazine*, (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2001), 21.



references to Perrott's photograph. Anthony van den Heuvel, a Durban surfing icon, on his return to South Africa from the United States of America stated that "[b]esides the face that politics should be kept out of surfing, most people thought it was lot of bull anyway. In any case, the whole time I was over there [in California], I only saw two Negro surfers. It's just not their game."<sup>101</sup> Van den Heuvel's reply was telling of the shared whiteness of surfing in South Africa and California (Evers 2010). His comments furthermore look to individual choice and not the structural constraints of apartheid limiting choice in why Africans were not seen to surf in Durban. Similarly, while exhorting that '[w]e in S.A. have certain regulations to keep, and have to abide by the laws of our country,' G. Klug's letter to the editor in a 1967 issue of *South African Surfer* took issue with Perrott's political reportage, "let us wish Ron Perrott 'Bon Voyage' back to Australia, with a request that he sends us a few pictures of his 'Aborigines' riding a surfboard."<sup>102</sup> These comments by white South Africans sought to establish that South Africa's white beach were not peculiar to its politics, that there was a similarity to Californian surfing practices, and calling attention to Perrott's hypocrisy in turning his lens to South Africa and not addressing the racism of other surfing nations. In all, and ignoring international trends in African independent states, the civil rights movement, and the anti-apartheid sports boycott, that apartheid South Africa was not exceptional in its racial discrimination. Nearly a decade later, racist sentiments remained in circulation locally and globally. Australian surfing champion Peter Drouyn, as referenced in the African National Congress magazine *Sechaba*, reiterated similar reasons for why Africans were not riding waves. He re-circulated attitudes developed during his travels in white South Africa in 1973 to *The Australian*, a Sydney newspaper, that the "coloured people there are afraid of the water" and "[t]hey consider the surf a voodoo area, and, as a consequence, they don't develop surfing talent."<sup>103</sup>

Nevertheless, despite the material and discursive nature of the racialised beach, as hinted in Perrott's article title above, an association of Zuluness as an expression of eclectic exoticism within the surfing imaginary can be traced to the mid-1960s. In many ways these representations of co-opted Otherness perpetuated ideas and practices of racial and cultural difference that prefigured the Zulu surfer of the 1990s and 2000s. Zuluness was mobilised as metaphor within surfing culture and drew on an imagined primitive tribalism associated with "Nature". That metaphor was the 'surfing tribe'; an appeal to sameness that was mythologised in the 1964 surf film travelogue *The Endless Summer* sequence in Ghana where, as recalled by Mike Hynson, one of the two Californian surfers who featured in the surf film, "we taught a chief and his villagers how to surf."<sup>104</sup> Historical sociologist Kristin Lawler's comments on these scenes in her study *The American Surfer* are apt in considering white surfer views globally of the surfing Other, "[t]he pleasure of riding waves seems to transcend barriers of language and culture – in this way, the film projects a utopianism whereby people who are supposedly totally different, totally alien, connect through the pleasure of play."<sup>105</sup> In *Surfing Life*, sociologist Mark Stranger similarly considers this notion of constructed sameness in relation to the consumption of the surfing imaginary in that surfers' identity in riding waves is "constituted via an aesthetic anchored in the shared experience of the sublime, the *foundational* experience which

<sup>101</sup> See Roger Ashe, "Interview with Ant van den Heuvel," *South African Surfer*, 3, 1 (January 1967), 11.

<sup>102</sup> G. Klug, "To the Editor," *South African Surfer*, 3, 3 (July 1967), 3.

<sup>103</sup> With reference to an article from *The Guardian*, 8 January 1975, as quoted in Andrew Salkey, "Rays of Hope," *Sechaba*, 9, 3 (March 1975), 15, Digital Innovation South Africa (DISA), <http://www.disa.ukzn.ac.za> [accessed on 6 September 2009]. Drouyn however has a shifting politics, for Drouyn's surfing life history, including his travels to South Africa, and her expressing a transgendered identity as Westerly Windina, the first publically acknowledged transgendered person in the global surfing media in 2008, see Jamie Brisick, "The Rosy Resurrection," *The Surfer's Journal*, 19, 3 (June/July 2010), 30-41.

<sup>104</sup> Michael Hynson and Donna Jost, *Mike Hynson: Transcendental Memories of a Surf Rebel*, (Dana Point: Endless Dreams Publishing, 2009), 27.

<sup>105</sup> Kristin Lawler, *The American Surfer: Radical Culture and Capitalism*, (New York and London: Routledge, 2011), 145.

underpins the subculture, its grounded neo-tribal configurations and its cultural industry.”<sup>106</sup> This cultural phenomenology and white imaginings of Zulu “tribalism” can be seen expressed in two surf advertisements and a cartoon produced during 1960s surfing culture in Durban.

The first was a photograph for a contrived Hang Ten Surfwear advertisement that appeared in the June/July 1964 issue of the American *Surfer* magazine.<sup>107</sup> It shows six young white surfers, including one woman, sporting Hang Ten clothing, standing next to a beehive hut in an unspecific rural homestead. A surfboard leans against the hut. A seventh surfer sits on the roof of the hut. In the foreground, separated from the surfers by a surfboard laid out on the ground, sit a man and three women, dressed in Zulu ceremonial clothing, their black bodies and fancy-dress marking them as different from the surfers. The male, facing the camera, holds a spear aloft in his right-hand; his left-hand carries a cowhide shield. While the scene was scripted locally, the advertisement had a transnational genesis. Bruce Brown, the Californian film producer who visited Durban in 1963 as part of his filming of *The Endless Summer*, saw the uniqueness of associating an imagined Zuluness with surfing in constructing an image for surfing in (South) Africa. His touristic fascination for the spectacle of decorative male, African ricksha pullers in fantasy Zulu regalia on the Durban beachfront, as shown in his film, inspired a letter to the Hang Ten representative in California to contact Harry Bold. Bold, as noted in Chapter 1, was a Durban surfer with contacts to the Californian surfing creative industries and with whom Brown had met while in Durban to film *The Endless Summer*. In a letter to Bold dated 21 January 1964, Dorris Moore of Hang Ten requested a colour photograph for an advertisement of Hang Ten surf trunks stating that, “[w]e are interested in having a group photo, five or six of your local top surfers wearing different styles and colors of our surf-wear. Bruce [Brown] suggested that we get some South African interest in the picture (Zulu natives) so that it doesn’t look like any other beach.”<sup>108</sup> The resultant photograph became part of the alluring exotic surf travel narrative that associated Africa and undiscovered waves with the image of the “primitive” Zulu. In *Surfer* magazine this image circulated globally reaching, as did *The Endless Summer*, publics from North American to Australia.

A second example of the use of the “Zulu” trope in local surfing was the Safari Surf Shop’s advertisements in the *South African Surfer* magazine. Established in 1963 by Harry Bold, Baron Stander and Max Wetteland, Safari Surf Shop was the first surfboard manufacturer and retail store in Durban.<sup>109</sup> Its owners re-imagined the cowhide shield and short stabbing spear of the historical Zulu warrior as a logo that appeared on their surfboards and T-shirts. As advertised in 1967 (see Figure 4.7), the blurring of shield and surfboard and the play on its name, Safari, which was unrelated to the Zulu iconography and referenced traveling in the search of waves, or going on “surfari” as it was known in surfing jargon, provided an identification in a locally manufactured product that could be used to explore Africa’s oceanic frontiers and further the surfing fantasy.<sup>110</sup> The semiotics of advertisement sold an escape from “civilization” and the

<sup>106</sup> Mark Stranger, *Surfing Life: Surface, Substructure and the Commodification of the Sublime*, (Farham and Burlington: Ashgate, 2011), 214 (italics in original).

<sup>107</sup> A black and white copy of the Hang Ten advertisement that appeared in *Surfer* is in the Harry Bold Collection, Surfing Heritage South Africa Archive.

<sup>108</sup> Letter from Doris Moore, Hang Ten Surfwear, Long Beach, California to Harry Bold, Durban, 21 January 1964, Harry Bold Collection, Surfing Heritage South Africa Archive.

<sup>109</sup> See Cornell Barnett, *Hitting the Lip: Surfing in South Africa*, (Johannesburg: Macmillan South Africa, 1974), 86.

<sup>110</sup> The idea of a “surfari” referenced Southern California and resonated in Western popular music culture in the 1960s. In 1962 The Beach Boys release the album *Surfin’ Safari* with a song of the same name and in 1963 they released the *Surfin’ USA* album that again cited “surfin’ safari” in the song “Surfin’ USA”. The lyrics for “Surfin’ USA” create the further slippage and use “surfari”. Joan Ormrod in writing on *The Endless Summer* and its tropes defined the “surfari” as “a type of sojourn, an activity based upon sensation but contains many elements of tourism such as the daydream.” She also noted that the term carried the idea of not only searching for new waves but also rediscovering know surf spots, thus relating to the rhetoric of American surf travel and the frontier experience, including surf travel within Britain. For the

affirmation of the surfer's physical prowess over waves when riding a Safari surfboard.<sup>111</sup> On Safari's surfboards, the symbols of the Zulu warrior had become commodified and the sign of Zuluness detached from ethnicity so that surfers could show their brand affiliation, or aspirations, within the wave-riding "tribe" of surfing sociability. These associations have not diminished, as the Safari logo remained visible on surfboards in the 1970s and into the present.



Figure 4.7: Safari Surf Shop advertisement in the *South African Surfer* magazine, 1967.<sup>112</sup>

A third instance of local surfing's appropriation of Zuluness was that the Durban-based *South African Surfer*, edited by Harry Bold, which made use of the cartoon character "Takkies", a racially stereotyped Zulu male, to satirise aspects of white surfing. The first appearance of 'Takkies' was in April 1965 on the cover of the first issue of *South African Surfer* where he watches, bewildered from the beach as a Californian inspired image of a white surfer rides a wave in Durban; illustrative of Natal and Zululand's cultural encounter with the white Durban surfing subculture.<sup>113</sup> Initially drawn by the cartoonist "Jazz" (Des Cremer) in the first and second issues, the "Takkies" narrative was then taken up from the third issue in 1965 by "Lencil" (Jannie

quote see Joan Ormrod, "Endless Summer (1964): Consuming Waves and Surfing the Frontier," *Film and History*, 31, 5 (2005), 54. For "surfari" and American and British travel see Joan Ormrod, "Surf Rhetoric in American and British Surfing Magazines Between 1965 and 1976," *Sport in History*, 27, 1 (March 2007), 97-9.

<sup>111</sup> Safari Surf Shop was not alone in appropriating Zuluness. Historian Benedict Carton has noted that '[c]orporations continue to manufacture fantasies of Zulu physical prowess' in their advertising of commodities, for example, toys and novelties by Zulu Quality Games in 1926 and Champions women's sports shoes in 2005. See his "Introduction: Zuluness in Post- and Neo-Worlds" in Benedict Carton, John Laband and Jabulani Sithole (eds), *Zulu Identities: Being Zulu, Past and Present*, (Scottsville: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, 2008), 10 and 15.

<sup>112</sup> Safari Surf Shop advertisement from *South African Surfer*, 3, 2 (April 1967), 6.

<sup>113</sup> For the cover see *South African Surfer*, 1, 1 (1965). "On the white surfer character, the editor of *South African Surfer* in reply to letter noted that [a]ny resemblance between the figure on our Vol.1 No.1 front cover and Murphy [sic], is purely coincidental." See the letters section, *South African Surfer*, 2, 1 (March 1966), 37. "Murphy" was the creation of Californian comic artist Rick Griffin whose cartoons appeared in *Surfer* magazine. On Griffin see Matt Warshaw, *The Encyclopedia of Surfing*, (Orlando: Harcourt, 2003), 236-7.

Celliers).<sup>114</sup> The racist caricature was drawn in the paternalistic “humourous Native” tradition of South African white cartooning that had been in evident in 1940s Natal.<sup>115</sup> The cartoon, which appeared between 1965 and 1967 all but the last four issues of the magazine, placed the African as Other and subservient to white society; a reader from Cape Town in the letters to the editor in October 1965 issue of *South African Surfer* denoted “Takkies” as “our African houseboy”.<sup>116</sup> However, the cartoonist gave “Takkies” a sense of adventure and innovation by blending aspects of Zulu culture with surfing. The most obvious was “Takkies” use of a cowhide shield as a surfboard. “Takkies”, however, was never depicted surfing with whites – the closest he got to this was sitting in a calm ocean with a group of surfers at Zinkwazi on the North Coast, and in close proximity to the historic Zululand border of the Tugela River than to Durban. Panels of the cartoon in the October 1965 issue of *South African Surfer* do depict “Takkies” riding his “Z-type shield”, although this is not on a wave but sliding down a hill toward a crocodile (Figure 4.8).<sup>117</sup> The surf references in these panels located “Takkies” within a global surf culture – the emulation of Californian surfer Mike Hyson who featured in *The Endless Summer* film; and the language of surfing manoeuvres, “bottom turn” and “wipe-out”. Other instances of cultural hybridity were depicted in the cartoon strips; naming a repairer of shields “Ding Gaan”, a play on the Zulu king Dingane and code switching between English surfspeak and Afrikaans to indicate the fixing of a hole or dent in a surfboard; and introducing the whites surfers to the “witchdoctor” Dr Amanzimpingo, who reads a surf forecast printout from a large mainframe computer inside a dwelling in a rural area. These representations of a fictional Zulu within the surfing habitus illustrated figurations of the white surfing imaginary as located within the racist attitudes of 1960s Durban. Nevertheless, a sense of self-identification with Zuluness by white surfers was undertaken in affirming place and the surf publication’s own brand identity in the continued publication of the cartoon strip.<sup>118</sup> “Takkies” was confined to the archive when *South African Surfer* folded in 1968.



Figure 4.8: Takkies “surfing” his Z-type shield; frames from cartoon in *South African Surfer* magazine, October 1965.

<sup>114</sup> Celliers also drew sexist caricatures of surfer girls for *South African Surfer*. He went on to illustrate for the men’s magazine *Scope*.

<sup>115</sup> See Andy Mason, *What’s So Funny? Under the Skin of South African Cartooning*, (Cape Town: Double Storey, 2010), 74-77. Mason has said of Monty Wilson’s cartoons of African domestic workers from the 1940s, “while they are undeniably racist, Wilson’s caricatures are, on balance, more benign than malicious. The reason for this is that Wilson’s attitude – and the attitudes of his readers – are saved from maliciousness by a paternalistic attitude that laughs at the mistakes made by a child. Likewise, their ingenuity is celebrated in the same way that parents celebrate the ingenuity of their children” (76). The racist “Takkies” cartoons work in a similar way to Wilson’s.

<sup>116</sup> Letter from Peter le Roux, Cape Town, *South African Surfer*, 1, 3 (October 1965), 5.

<sup>117</sup> In reference to surfboard innovation in Chapter 1, this “Z-type shield” was a cultural reference to the F-type surfboard shaped by Durban’s Max Wetteland, a model based on the Australian Midget Farrelly inspired surfboard designs.

<sup>118</sup> This was also evident in surfing sartorial style; “Takkies” appeared on white T-shirts sold by the magazine and worn by white surfers. See the mail order advertisement on the back page of *South African Surfer*, 1, 3 (October 1965).

**Honorary Whites: Native Hawaiian Surfers in South Africa during the 1970s**

Continuing the theme of the surfing's Others in Durban, the 1970s (and 1980s) posed a question for white organised surfing's handling of racial restrictions imposed on Native Hawaiian professional surfers who came to compete in the Gunston 500 and then travel on to surf the fabled Jeffreys Bay. With Hawai'i seen as the cultural beginnings of the modern sport of surfing and its continued centrality for professional surfing (as discussed in Chapter 1), Native Hawaiian surfers held distinction within global surf culture.<sup>119</sup> South African surfing organisers in their desire to promote professional events and attract international surfers nevertheless found a means to accommodate Hawaiian surfers within beach apartheid restrictions during contests. In coming to this compromise with the state, the Gunston 500 organisers averted a crisis when, in July 1972, Eddie Aikau, a top Hawaiian competitive surfer, referred in the surf media as part surfing's royalty due to his indigenous Hawaiian family connections, came to compete in South Africa's fourth annual professional surf contest in Durban.

Aikau along with two other white Hawaiian surfers, Billy Hamilton and Jeff Hakman, had won tickets to travel South Africa as a result of their top placing in the 1971 Smirnoff Pro in Hawai'i. This was a prize offered by the Gunston 500 organisers to attract top names and lend international credibility to South Africa's only professional event at the time when South African racialised sports were under scrutiny by the international community (a topic further addressed in Chapter 3). As stated by Hakman's biographer by Phil Jarratt, a previous editor of the Australian *Tracks* surfing magazine, Hakman's apolitical view on South Africa, when he was challenged by a Hawaiian political activist Lee Wu Diu to boycott the trip, was that of many other international surfers at the time, "[s]ure, he'd heard about apartheid, but that was politics and he was a sportsman. And how can you knock a place if you haven't been there."<sup>120</sup> While the two white Hawaiians were given an exclusive tour of South Africa's coastline with local surfing icons before the Gunston 500, Aikau only joined them for the contest. His visit however was marred in politics from the onset; as Aikau's biographer Stuart Coleman noted, "racial problems arose for Eddie due to his dark skin colour."<sup>121</sup> Aikau was turned away from a beachfront hotel due to hotel upholding apartheid separate amenities policy and he was not allowed to surf at the contest site as the Bay of Plenty was a "white's only" beach. As reported in black popular culture magazine *Drum*, Aikau also discovered he was "the first Black surfer to take part in a championship in South Africa against Whites."<sup>122</sup> Due to the prestige of Aikau and to avert a publicity crisis, Ernie Tomson, one of the contest organisers and Shaun Tomson's father, hurriedly

<sup>119</sup> Unlike the Californication of surfing and America's touristic version of Hawai'i, Native Hawaiian surfers have looked to a pre-colonial and somewhat essentialised "royal sport" with Polynesian roots and an emphasis on a cosmology that mixed an animistic spirituality with social distinction and political power determined through athletic prowess on the waves. These culturalist factors have remained part of Hawaiian surfing's myth of origins and cultural identity. See Jim Nendel, "Surfing in Early Twentieth-Century Hawai'i: The Appropriation of a Transcendent Experience to Competitive American Sport," *International Journal of the History of Sport*, 26, 1 (2009). Isaiah Helekunihi Walker, *Waves of Resistance: Surfing and History in Twentieth-Century Hawai'i*, (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2011) and Laderman, *Empire in Waves*, Chapter 1, have nevertheless both set out the dispossession of Native Hawaiian rights and land by United States imperialism since the mid-1800s. In the mid-1970s, in response to surfing's professionalisation (see Chapter 1) a Hawaiian national identity was asserted within surfing which reiterated the naming the foreigners to the Hawaiian Islands as *hoale* as part of Hawaiian identity politics which decentred whiteness. I follow Walker's use of "Native Hawaiian" in bringing forward the postcolonial subaltern surfing subject.

<sup>120</sup> Phil Jarratt, *Mr Sunset: The Jeff Hakman Story*, (London: Gen X, 1997), 106. The Aikau episode is also considered by Laderman, *Empire in Waves*, 108-110.

<sup>121</sup> Stuart Holmes Coleman, *Eddie Would Go: The Story of Eddie Aikau, Hawaiian Hero and Pioneer of Big Wave Surfing*, (New York: St Martin's Griffin, 2001), 107.

<sup>122</sup> Aikau quoted in "South Africa is a Wipe Out," *Drum*, 22 August 1972, 14. The only other watersports that *Drum* reported on earlier or in that year were lifesaving in 1955 and surfski paddling in 1972. The beach was also a black leisured fantasy in *Drum*, which ran a cover of actress and musician Dolly Rathebe in a bikini on a Durban beach, see Samuelson, "Re-telling Freedom in *Otelo Burning*," 312.

arranged for Aikau to stay with them in the Eden Rock beachfront apartment.<sup>123</sup> The contest organisers and then made “special arrangements” and obtained honorary white status for Aikau from the government to permit him to surf in the contest.<sup>124</sup> In Jarratt’s assessment, while the Peter Burness and Ernie Tomson were “savvy operators ... when it came to understanding their own government’s racist policies, they appear to have had a rather large blind spot.”<sup>125</sup> Aikau’s experience of apartheid Durban was noted in *Drum*, “I can sense the racial discrimination. There is this colour problem all over the world. But here in South Africa, man, it’s real heavy” and “I feel sad in this sense that a man cannot express his feelings to the ocean because of the colour of his skin. I never knew that the local Black surfers could not take part [in the Gunston 500] because of that.”<sup>126</sup> On his return to Hawai’i, Aikau was reported in the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* as feeling shamed by the experience and “abandoned” by his fellow Hawaiian competitors in Durban as of the hotel incident. In Hamilton’s comments on the trip published in the *American Surfer* magazine later in 1972, the Aikau incident was an “interesting sidelight of the event”.<sup>127</sup> The American surf media however saw this as no more than a pro-South African government publicity ploy by the Gunston 500 contest organisers.<sup>128</sup>

Five years later, in July 1977, Hawaiian Reno Abellira was in Durban for the same contest and stayed with white surfers. He also made the trip to surf Jeffreys Bay. Reflecting on his visit to Durban in the *American Surfer* magazine, Abellira noted, “True, I didn’t see the racial friction or feel the bad vibes. I almost expected to go along with the prohibiting sign that read, “Europeans Only”. People, on the whole, here were curious, kind and courteous.”<sup>129</sup> He added, alluding to an awareness of the wider political context after 1976 in South Africa, “Yet Durban wasn’t Soweto, and in this liberal, beach resort city, and amongst the surfing community, it was hard not to feel insulated from the petty injustices of apartheid.”<sup>130</sup>

Yet, the year before, in July 1976, during the Gunston 500 event, Hawaiian Dane Kealoha was denied service at an East London restaurant.<sup>131</sup> The result of this incident was that Kealoh’s parents lobbied his Hawaiian sponsor, Town and Country, to removed South African contest appearances from his contract, thus refusing to pay for him to compete in South Africa in 1977 and 1978. In 1979, Kealoh self-funded his trip to Durban and went on to win the Gunston 500. Kealoh became the first black surfer to make the cover of a South African surfing magazine in 1979 (see Figure 4.13). In a profile of Kealoh in that issue of *Zigzag*, the

<sup>123</sup> While *Drum* was silent on the Malibu Hotel incident, Coleman indicated that Jeff Hakman’s version of events were at odds with Shaun Tomson’s who recalled, “[m]y impression was that he wasn’t comfortable staying at the hotel where Jeff and Billy were staying.” See Coleman, *Eddie Would Go*, 109.

<sup>124</sup> Coleman, *Eddie Would Go*, 109.

<sup>125</sup> Jarratt, *Mr Sunset*, 107.

<sup>126</sup> Quoted from “South Africa is a Wipe Out,” *Drum*, 22 August 1973, 14. Of note was *Drum*’s questioning of Aikau’s blackness in 1970s South Africa. A smiling Aikau was photographed at the beach with two white women, which was captioned: “I feel more comfortable with Black people’ ... Well, not all the time as Eddie proved in Durban” (16). Linda Holmes, who befriended Aikau in Durban, and with her husband and children travelled with Aikau to visit Jeffreys Bay, pointed to his exotic appeal as a Hawaiian that led to his acceptance in white society, see Coleman, *Eddie Would Go*, 112. A further parody on Aikau’s racial identity can be read in *Drum*’s placing a Close Up advertisement for toothpaste with “two whiteners to make your teeth their whitest” on page 15, in between the Aikau article on pages 14 and 16. During a trip to Hawai’i in November 1973, Ahmed Collier met with the Aikau family, a prominent surfing family on the island of Oahu with strong ideas about outsiders remaining respectful of Hawaiian rights to the waves on the island, and asked for permission to surf. On Collier’s Hawai’i trip see *Taking Back the Waves*. Paul Botha, interviewed in 2011, noted while he was staying in Hawai’i with other top South African surfers at the time, Collier gave the Hawaiians the low-down on the racial injustices of life in South Africa. The result was that the South African surfers in Hawai’i over the winter surfing season of late 1973 to early 1974 received a less than friendly reception from the Hawaiian surfers. See Interview with Paul Botha.

<sup>127</sup> Jarratt, *Mr Sunset*, 108.

<sup>128</sup> See Jarratt, *Mr Sunset*, 108 and Coleman, *Eddie Would Go*, 110.

<sup>129</sup> Reno Abellira, “The Jeffreys Bay Experience,” *Surfer*, 18, 5 (January 1978), 38.

<sup>130</sup> Abellira, “The Jeffreys Bay Experience,” 38.

<sup>131</sup> Bryan Amona made reference to experiences of racism in not being served at a South African restaurant with Kealoh. His realisation of apartheid sunk home when in South Africa. See Walker, *Waves of Resistance*, 131-2. There is no mention in Walker’s study of Aikau’s South African experience.

magazine openly condemned the restaurateur's petty apartheid practice and, in idealising the new champion, broached "[w]eighted issues like equality" but depoliticised the incident by retreating into the waves as that place for Kealoh "to come out feeling good".<sup>132</sup> These 1970s racial practices continued to be experienced by Native Hawaiian surfer competing in South Africa in the 1980s. Sunny Garcia experience beach apartheid in 1987 during the Spur Surfabout at a Big Bay, Blouberg beach, in Cape Town "one of the last segregated beaches in the city."<sup>133</sup>

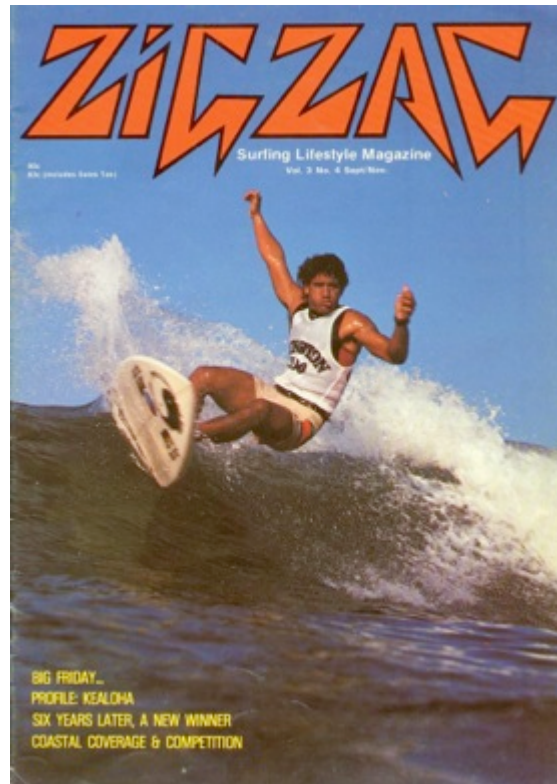


Figure 4.9: Hawaiian Dane Kealoh on Zigzag's cover, 1979.<sup>134</sup>

Nevertheless, Hawaiian surfers continued to visit South Africa for the Gunston 500 in gain rating points and prize-money on the world professional surfing tour. They thus benefited 1973 through to the end of beach apartheid in 1989 from the policy of "temporary honorary status" which was awarded for the duration international sports events.<sup>135</sup> Black surfers from the Wynberg Surf Club in Cape Town were angered by this honorary whiteness permitted Native Hawaiian professional surfers, who were able to travel and surf at beaches local black surfers were denied access to, "[t]he Hawaiians enjoy white privilege while we must suffer."<sup>136</sup> Nevertheless, to benefit local black sportspersons, a 1976 decision by the Durban City Council had "opened to all races" white beaches for the duration of competitive event.<sup>137</sup> While this municipal policy however was contested by white surfers in 1989 during Durban's "surf wars", as discussed above for the SASU national championships, it did provided a space for Faizel Omarjee, an Indian lifeguard at Country Club Beach, to compete in the Gunston 500 in 1982 and 1989 (Figure 4.10).<sup>138</sup> Although Omajee's

<sup>132</sup> Tony Kinnear, "Dane," *Zigzag*, 3, 4 (September/November 1979), 8.

<sup>133</sup> See "Beach Apartheid Angers Surfers," *Sunday Times*, 5 July 1987.

<sup>134</sup> See *Zigzag*, 3, 4 (September-November 1979).

<sup>135</sup> "Apartheid's Still Riding Crests of the Waves on A Durbs Beach," *Sunday Times*, 12 July 1987.

<sup>136</sup> See Shafique (Morton), "Black Surfing in South Africa," 47.

<sup>137</sup> "Apartheid's Still Riding Crests of the Waves on A Durbs Beach."

<sup>138</sup> Evidence drawn from photographs in the Independent Newspapers Collection, Surfing Heritage South Africa Archive.

participation as a black surfer from Durban was outside the norm for competitive surfing in South Africa during the 1980s, South African surfing officials opportunistically cited him as an example that race did not matter in surfing during context of the professional surfers boycott of South African events.<sup>139</sup> Nevertheless, as the 1980s gave way to the 1990s, and South Africa's political landscape changed, and sports in response to that, race continued to matter in South African surfing.



Figure 4.10: Faizel Omajee, Gunston 500 competitor, 1982.<sup>140</sup>

### **Transforming Surfer Boys: Surfing as Development, c.1990 - 1999**

The first surfing archive reference to the challenges of change in South Africa can be found not in the surfing centres of Durban and Cape Town but in Jeffreys Bay. The American made surf documentary film, *The Endless Summer II*, was the first surf film narrative to acknowledge the post-apartheid beach. It was released in 1994, in the same year as South Africa's first democratic elections. The film was a revisit by Californian filmmaker Bruce Brown to some of the locations in his 1964 iconic surf documentary *The Endless Summer*. Thirty years on, Brown continued to structure the juxtaposition of the white Californian surfers following summer to find waves with the indigenous inhabitants of the country he visited. While the 1964 film

<sup>139</sup> See comments from Baron Stander, chairman of the Natal Surfriders Association, who noted Omajee surfed in amateur events, and Peter Burness, Gunston 500 organiser and president of the Association of Surfing Professionals in "Apartheid Claim Angers Local Surfers," *The Natal Mercury*, 18 November 1985. These comments were made in response to Martin Potter's *Surfer* magazine interview on the effects of beach apartheid and pointing to Omajee as an example of a black surfer wanting to surf competitively but excluded due to racial laws, "I know of an Indian surfer I believe wants to compete but who stands no chance under the present system." Quoted in "Apartheid Claim Angers Local Surfers." While Omajee's inclusion in the Gunston 500 would have fallen under the Durban City Council's policy, his inclusion in any amateur events would have been as an individual governed by racialised sporting practices. The argument that one black surfer demonstrated "multiracial sport", as the state called it at that time, was tenuous and opportunistic on the part of white official. As Booth stated after surveying the constitutions of sporting codes in the late 1980s, "[a]ny notion of widely integrated sport in South Africa is illusionary." See Douglas Booth, "South Africa's 'Autonomous Sport' Strategy: Desegregation Apartheid Style," *Sporting Traditions*, 6, 2 (1990), 175.

<sup>140</sup> Photograph from the Independent Newspapers Collection, Surfing Heritage South Africa Archive.



offers visuals of Africans in traditional, rural settings in the area formerly known as the Transkei or Ciskei alongside footage of wild animals as the crew went on “surfari”, the 1994 film, despite returning the tourist gaze to the wild animals of Africa, does not adopt the same Othering strategy when addressing a black South African surfer at the beach. The 1964 film was an adventure along South Africa’s coastline showcasing the African people as content with their rural or urban settings and made no comment on apartheid. In *The Endless Summer II*, the narrative of the Dark Continent is interrupted by a Zulu surfer who enters the domain of the white Californian surfers and is held up as a symbol of transformation within South African surfing.

In many ways the “Zulu surfer” encountered here, and in later iterations discussed below, was a counter-imagining to the “restless’ township youth” of the politically turbulent 1990s in Natal, an alternative, hybrid Zulu masculine identity uncoupled from post-struggle identity of the comrades who fought for national liberation and Inkatha’s conservative ethnic nationalism.<sup>141</sup> Surfing’s Zuluness shares a similarity to the adoption of football in the 1920s, as Peter Alegi explains; ‘isiZulu-speaking Africans on the Rand and in Durban moulded football into a crucible of pleasure and autonomy, and in so doing reformulated the boundaries of a more porous Zuluness in a modern urban world.’<sup>142</sup>

In this new identification of the male isiZulu-speaker who surfs, the political in *The Endless Summer II* is silenced by foregrounding an interview where white South African surfing’s icon Shaun Tomson introduces Walter Ngcobo, a black surfer from Durban, to the waves of Jeffreys Bay. This segment of the film can be read as a performance of surfing in a new South Africa which is undermined through Ngcobo’s casting as the grateful civilised native who is transformed into “a genuine surf dude” when the white surfers give him surfwear. The final frame of the segment is that of a smiling Zulu displaying sartorial subcultural style in wearing cap, sunglasses, baggies, shoes and a T-shirt that’s branded “Tomson: mind, body, soul”.<sup>143</sup> The point is that this film sequence is offered as a symbolic hope of wider social and sporting change, a type of passing of the baton from Tomson to Ngcobo, or at the least a belief that, as South Africa is headed to democracy, that surfing too will offer the same vision of sameness. Furthermore, besides the charitable goodwill of the white surfer providing clothing to poorer black surfers, a welfare gesture that highlights the middle-class and consumptive nature of white surfing culture, it also links development surfing with aspirations of sponsorship and social mobility for black surfers, as well as ambiguous dependencies on white surfing patronage.

The persistence of the past however haunts the film. Earlier in the interview, Ngcobo is introduced as one of several million Zulu in South Africa and the only one who surfs. It later emerges that he cannot swim, perpetuating white stereotypes of Africans at the ocean. This is despite Ngcobo saying he enjoys the waves and is able to escape from his problems there. Filmmaker Bruce Brown sees in this statement an affirmation of the global fraternity of the “surfing tribe” who share a common experience of riding waves – a notion that Tomson ascribes to in his own writings on common values in a neo-liberal global surf culture.<sup>144</sup> These neo-

<sup>141</sup> The quote is from Ari Sitas, *The Mandela Decade, 1990-2000: Labour, Culture and Society in Post-Apartheid South Africa*, (Pretoria: UNISA Press, 2010), 110. On post-struggle masculinities see Thokozani Xaba, “masculinity and it Malcontents: The Confrontation between ‘Struggle Masculinity’ and ‘Post-Struggle Masculinity’ (1990-1997)” in Robert Morrell, Robert Morrell (ed), *Changing Men in Southern Africa*, (Pietermaritzburg: London and New York: Zed Books, 2001), 108-9.

<sup>142</sup> Peter Alegi, “The sport of Zuluness: Masculinity, class and cultural identity in twentieth-century black soccer” in Carton, Laband and Sithole, *Zulu identities*, 279.

<sup>143</sup> *Endless Summer II*, directed by Bruce Brown. USA, Bruce Brown Films, 1994.

<sup>144</sup> See Shaun Tomson with Patrick Moser, *Surfer’s Code: Twelve Lessons for Riding through Life*, (Johannesburg: Penguin, 2009), 19, 129 and 131. This book was first published in the USA in 2006. In *Surfer’s Code* Tomson draws on

liberal sentiments seem to point to a cultural adoption that is one-way; the Zulu becomes a surfer through a Californication of his lifestyle, one designated by hand-outs from the privileged west. This gesture is one that has informed much of organised surfing's response to transformation in the country in creating surfing development programmes that showcased lifestyle rather than fostered talent.

In contrast, there were other possibilities for surfing development, yet these fully emerged a decade later. For example, a more authentic vision for the transformation of South African surfing at grassroots level is depicted in *Taking Back the Waves*, the 2005 film by Nicolaas Hofmeyr that documents the lifestyle of two Rastafarian surfer friends, Cass Collier and Ian Armstrong. The pair had been on the South African team that won the Big Wave world titles in Mexico in 1999, the first team to bring back international accolades to South African surfing in the new democracy. As a black surfer, the end of apartheid facilitated Collier's emergence as a symbol of the future of surfing in the new South Africa. Collier noted in a 2001 interview prior to his involvement in the Red Bull Big Wave Africa event in Cape Town, his intent to develop the sport: "As a youth I wasn't given much opportunity at a provincial level and had to leave SA to seek advancement elsewhere. I want to change that for the guys who are going to come up after me."<sup>145</sup>

As such he, along with other black surfers, found a voice to reclaim their identity as surfers on the post-apartheid beach. The importance of *Taking Back the Waves* for surfing's history is that it depicts the effects on beach apartheid on the career of an aspirant black surfer. In the 1980s Collier was denied access to the white surfing association's contests and took to the international surfing circuit. At that time he remained unknown to most white South African surfers, despite occasional mentions in the surf media. In tracing the path toward the transformation of the sport of surfing, Hofmeyr shows how Collier and Armstrong give back to surfing through their involvement in a surfing development academy at Muizenberg in Cape Town. The film retains a sense of hope in the future of a new generation of black and white surfers sharing the waves.<sup>146</sup>

Taken together, Ngcobo and Collier provide examples of the changing tides on the post-apartheid beach in the 1990s, and into the 2000s, that allow for a reimagining of Surf City in a new South Africa. They each illustrate different paths toward sport transformation in South African surfing caught within apartheid's past. Ngcobo represents a focus on the fostering of token elite sportspersons that benefit from surfing's established cultural and economic centre. Collier demonstrates a grassroots approach to changing surfing practices and opening up opportunities for surfing's youth – and in promoting black surfing, Collier adheres to a broader non-racialism in this endeavour that has continuities with his membership of SASU. In this, both offer paths toward racial redress in recognizing the dignity and equality of black surfers on the beach.<sup>147</sup>

---

history, experience and practices in creating a multiculturalism in a discourse of surfing's sameness, for example: "[a]t its **Polynesia roots, surfing is a communal sport, not an individual one**" (76); "[p]assing along those feelings – that stoke – brings people, young and old, together" (108); and "[t]hese traditions form part of a common language that bonds surfers to one another all over the world. We may ride waves in in waters with different names ... but **even a child will tell you that if look at a globe, there is only one ocean. I prefer to look for ways to comment with other people rather than focus on differences**" (130). Yet, it is the surfing experience that he privileges, "across countries and cultures **surfers are connected not by nationality or religion or politics or age or sex, but by their experience riding waves**" (131), [emphasis in the original].

<sup>145</sup> Dougal Paterson, "Cass Collier" in "Happy Gun Ho" in Red Bull and Lance Slabbert, *Dungeon '01: Red Bull Big Wave Africa*, (Cape Town: Infidels, 2001), 18.

<sup>146</sup> However, that optimism was moderated by Armstrong's own daughter not making the surfing team due to organized surfing's requirements of normalising surfing and fulfilling a quota of black surfers for the Western Province team that competed in the 2003 South African development surfing games held in Durban.

<sup>147</sup> They are not alone in this, as is evidenced by the growing numbers of black surfers today enjoying the waves in the major surfing centres as well as at Umzumbe on the KwaZulu Natal south coast and Port St Johns on the Wild Coast. See Miles Masterson, "Surfing Out of the Past," *Huck* 6, (July 2007).

Yet, the two surfing development mapped above frame a further question; what evidence has there been for black surfers in South Africa before 1994. While Collier and the case study of the non-racial surfing movement point to evidence of surfing under apartheid in the Cape, Ngcobo represents a moment when a Zulu surfer is made visible. Nevertheless, there were other Zulu surfers, but the records of their surfing lives only emerged in the 1990s as South Africa made the transition into a democracy and black surfing narratives became seen as worthy of documentation.



Figure 4.11: Walter Mbengu, Durban surfer, c.early 1980s.<sup>148</sup>

Walter Mbengu's life story was an example of the remembering of the histories of the Durban beachfront and the opportunism of surfing development programmes seeking out black surfers to be role models. Interviewed in 1996 by Baron Stander Snr, a veteran surfer, host of a radio surf report, and development officer for the Ocean Sports Association, the 40-year-old Mbengu indicated that he had begun surfing in his late twenties (see Figure 4.11). He worked as a waiter at a Durban beachfront hotel and was attracted to surfing's healthy lifestyle. He initially started bodysurfing but saved his wages to purchase a surfboard. Mbengu's paddling out into the surf in 1983 "astounded" Durban surfers.<sup>149</sup> To explain this white viewpoint Stander stated, "[n]ot only did black people not surf, they were not even *allowed* on most of the beaches – which ironically, did not include the sea itself."<sup>150</sup> While Stander misrepresented beach apartheid as excluding the ocean, his explanation constructed a spatial epistemology of surfing inclusiveness blurring the apartheid past and the post-apartheid present. This inclusiveness was also socially configured as racial tolerance, "Walter says he was totally overcome by the friendship and assistance shown him ... how he was

<sup>148</sup> Photograph from Independent Newspapers Collection, Surfing Heritage South Africa Archive.

<sup>149</sup> Baron Stander, "Walter the Waiter Just Couldn't Stay Out of the Water," *Sunday Times*, 28 April 1996.

<sup>150</sup> Stander, "Walter the Waiter Just Couldn't Stay Out of the Water," (italics in original).

coached and given tips by some of South Africa's top surfers, including world champion Shaun Tomson and national champion Tommy Lawson."<sup>151</sup>

Mbengu's narrative falls outside of formal development surfing, the most visible means of entry into surfing for Zulu youth in the 1990s, and provides an example of self-realisation and agency in taking up surfing. Another trajectory was that of individual black surfers who came to surfing through the intervention of a white surfer, usually with access to a loan or hand-down surfboard. Walter Ngcobo, of Durban, who appeared in *The Endless Summer II*, discussed above, was one such person. He began surfing in 1988 and by 1992 was a regular in the surf zone. His engagement with surfing led him to take up work in the surf industry, with resultant benefits in surfing essentials – surfboard, wetsuit, leash, wax and “all the right clothes” – as well as a lifestyle that kept him close to the waves.<sup>152</sup> In the words of a white surf retailer, “[h]is daily routine consists of an early surf, off to work, back in for a lunchtime sesh and again after work. This is the commitment surfing deserves and this is the type of person who deserves to surf.”<sup>153</sup>

A similar agency also occurred outside of “Surf City”. Sue Derwent, in her travel story titled “Zulu Wave Warrior”, saw the bleached blonde hair of nineteen-year-old Kevin Mdubeki, despite his blackness, as a surfer.<sup>154</sup> Mdubeki, a lifeguard at Umzumbe beach on the southern KwaZulu Natal coast during the holiday period, had started surfing in 1987 when a white surfer friend gave him a surfboard. At that time he recalled surfing with two other Zulu youth, who later stopped surfing regularly. He remembered experiences of racism on the beach, “when we started surfing, the up-country holiday makers would *jaag* [chase] us off the beach, let alone let us get into the water to surf!” He continued, “It was rough in those days. Man, I speak better English than most of them and I wasn't even allowed on the beach without an argument.”<sup>155</sup> Mdubeki had entered a few surf contests but had never done well and he felt that transport to contest venues and entrance fees were expensive. Rather, Mdubeki took a more laid-back approach to the surfing lifestyle, one immersed in the littoral zone,

There is so much good stuff about surfing like when the dolphins come and swim next to you, and the sun, and like when you get a good wave. It's so cool. It can put you on a high for the whole day!<sup>156</sup>

At the time of Derwent's interview, he had taught other Zulu youth to surf, was hoping of establishing a club to provide unemployed youth with leisure activities, and had heard that “there are some black guys who are surfing in Durban now, which is really cool.”<sup>157</sup> Mdubeki's experience at Umzumbe was not unique; in the early 1990s a group of youth begun surfing together and later formed the Umzumbe Surfriders Club, as discussed below as a later trend in Zulu surfing.

*Zigzag* surfing magazine mentions the role of white team riders of bodyboarding brand Morey Boogie in teaching Muzi Bhengu and Derick Mbhatha, both trainee lifeguards, how to ride waves prone on a short surfboard. The team, it was reported, “put something back into the sport” on Saturday afternoons to “teach

<sup>151</sup> Stander, “Walter the Waiter Just Couldn't Stay Out of the Water.”

<sup>152</sup> Charl Tostee, “Faces in the Lineup,” *Zigzag*, 16, 3 (May/June 1992), 19.

<sup>153</sup> Tostee, “Faces in the Lineup,” 19.

<sup>154</sup> Mbubeki was among those involved in one of the Lamontville community workshops that informed research on the writing of *Otelo Burning's* beach house scenes. See Samuelson and Thompson, “Interview with Sara Blecher and Sihle Xaba,” 354.

<sup>155</sup> Sue Derwent, “Zulu Wave Warrior,” *Out There*. Watersports supplement, (July 1997). <http://web.archive.org/web/19991009161821/http://www.outthere.co.za/Watersports/surfjuly.html> [accessed on 3 September 2013].

<sup>156</sup> Derwent, “Zulu Wave Warrior.”

<sup>157</sup> Derwent, “Zulu Wave Warrior.”

two Black youngsters, who otherwise would never have had the opportunity, to bodyboard.”<sup>158</sup> Bhengu and Mbhatha had been selected for this surfing development programme as they were “at least 15 years old, athletic and able to swim.”<sup>159</sup> There are three implications here for Zulu surfing; this is an early indication of trends to come in the 1990s and 2000s. While this white-owned surf business may have been seen by some as forward thinking at the time, through this development programme it was co-opting black surfers into a white sport. Surfing development here makes it a story about white benevolence rather than black agency. Furthermore, in a subcultural sense bodyboarding was not seen as a challenge to the hegemony of stand-up shortboard surfing (due to a surfer lying on his/her stomach and riding the wave on a bodyboard) as it was portrayed in *Zigzag*, and thus reduced any threat white surfers may feel to the entry of what was perceived by some as an influx of less competent black surfers into historically white surfing spaces in Durban.<sup>160</sup> However, what is significant in this record is the identification of a trend linking lifesaving and surfing development for Zulu surfers at the end of apartheid.

*Otelo Burning* (2011) actor Sihle Xaba gained access to the surf through his involvement in the Thekwini Surf Lifesaving Club (TSLC) in 1989, and his story is emblematic of Zulu surfers in the years of political transition and beyond.<sup>161</sup> As a teenager growing up in Lamontville township, Xaba followed the path of other youth who learnt to swim at the Lamontville Municipal Swimming Pool and then were introduced to the beach through the TSLC.<sup>162</sup> He initially tried stand-up surfing but soon developed a preference for bodyboarding. Xaba was introduced to the sport by Crispin Hemson, a former Durban City councilor and TSLC member and was involved in the Thekwini Bodyboarding Club.<sup>163</sup> Through the 1990s he participated in local bodyboarding development contests as well as in the Ocean Action Sports Festival in Durban and the Natal team trials. In 1998, he competed in the International Surfing Association (ISA) World Surfing Games in Portugal as the first African to be selected to the national bodyboarding team.<sup>164</sup>

These Zulu surfers straddle the political transition to a post-apartheid society and, in the white-scripted records provide evidence of racial integration in the sport. They also offer historical evidence for changing black subjectivities at the beach, accommodating white surfing culture and then adapting it for their aquatic pleasure. Yet these black surfing experiences do not constitute a trend but are instead instances of individuals who appropriated the waves. They did so irrespective of the material and cultural constraints facing black persons entering the surf.<sup>165</sup> Their life histories do not occur in isolation and it is to the

<sup>158</sup> “Zigzag praises team Morey,” *Zigzag* 12, 5 (September/October 1988), 64.

<sup>159</sup> “Zigzag praises team Morey,” 64.

<sup>160</sup> For study of the spatiality and consumption of a Durban central beach surf sport see Robert Preston-Whyte, “Constructions of Surfing Space at Durban, South Africa,” *Tourism Geographies* 4, 3 (2002).

<sup>161</sup> A significant film in the cultural history of surfing and the Struggle, *Otelo Burning* is an isiZulu feature film sent in 1988 to 1990 and uses surfing’s freedom as a counterpoint to the struggle for political freedom in South Africa for Zulu youth. For literary, filmic, cultural and historical studies treatments of the film see the collection of essay in “Contemporary Conversations: *Otelo Burning* in the *Journal of African Cultural Studies*. For an overview see Meg Samuelson and Glen Thompson, “Introduction,” *Journal of African Cultural Studies*, 26, 3 (September 2014).

<sup>162</sup> Hemson, “African Lifesavers in Durban,” 61. Professional African lifesaving in Durban began in the 1970s. Initially these lifeguards were from Malawi. By the late 1980s and 1990s Zulu speaking municipal lifeguards patrolled Durban’s beaches, many received their training at the TSLC. As Hemson has documented, the “end of beach segregation in the 1980s, and the rapid growth in the number of African beachgoers, have made the employment of African lifesavers a necessity. Other [white] lifesavers have had difficulty in communicating with beach users, and cases of racial polarisation in situations of crowd control have spurred on the employment of Africans” (63). Alongside these factors was the migration of white lifesavers to the USA and Dubai that created a shortage of lifeguards locally.

<sup>163</sup> Farook Khan, “Xaba Determined to Life Classic Title,” *Daily News*, 9 July 1997.

<sup>164</sup> South African Bodyboarding Association, “Super Fit Xaba Bound to Make Waves at Vodacom Bodyboarding Classic,” *South African Bodyboarding Association Website*, 26 July 2004. <http://sabodyboarding.co.za/article/120> [accessed on 26 July 2013] and Samuelson and Thompson, “Interview with Sara Blecher and Sihle Xaba,” 352.

<sup>165</sup> The gendered nature of these constraints is noted for the apartheid and post-apartheid periods, as black girls have been invisible in the surf.

processes of social transformation in surfing in Durban that we turn in contextualising Zulu surfing in post-apartheid South Africa.

For the sporting lifestyle of surfing the post-apartheid period was characterised by the deracialisation of the beach and processes of social inclusion within a democratic South Africa, despite Durrheim and Dixon finding that white racial attitudes towards blacks at the beach were slow to change; and a space where African lifesavers “seem to learn to accommodate racism rather than challenge it.”<sup>166</sup> These processes provided Zulu surfers with access to beaches and opportunities to surf through institutional nation-building processes driven by imperatives to foster a “rainbow” surfing nation through the post-1994 national sports policy of racial redress and transformation, which waivered between supporting elite and mass sport, and erred towards the former.<sup>167</sup> This latter structural change effected the implementation of local surfing development programmes within organised surfing to create spaces within white surfing, and concomitant demand, for greater visibility of black surfers. It also meant that social transformation within organised surfing was slow, with surfing development programmes in Durban and the South Coast of KwaZulu Natal beginning to show some traction with Zulu youth by the late 1990s.

The focus on development as a national imperative for sports transformation in South Africa was a policy adopted by USCSA and actively pursued though the 1990s through its regional structures. For KwaZulu Natal, this was the Natal Surfriders’s Association (NSA) and the means for finding national black surfing talent was through the USCSA’s annual National Development Surfing Championship, first introduced in 1993. However, by the mid-1990s, the NSA had recognised that surfing development was hindered by the “problem [of] finding black surfers to serve as role models and assist with development programmes ... They have transport difficulties themselves and lack the time and resources to assist with a programme as envisaged by the United Sports Council.”<sup>168</sup> As a result, much of the focus on surfing development was on identifying black youth to gain competitive experience and exposure from travelling with the all-white junior or national South African teams competing at amateur international contests. At times, black surfers were included in the official event although this was not the norm. For example, in 1996, the 17-year-old Sharon Ngcongco, from the Clermont township in Durban, was the first surfer named by *Zigzag* as the “surfing Zulu”, received sponsorship to join the national junior development squad at the World Grommet Games in Bali, Indonesia (see Figure 4.12).<sup>169</sup> He was reported as showing “potential and while not progressing far in the event, had displayed commendable big wave commitment at Uluwatu which the team visited before the contest.”<sup>170</sup> Ngcongco was quoted in the Durban press as wishing to “act as an ambassador” on completing school and inspire black youth to start surfing.<sup>171</sup> By 1999, Ngcongco had added three further accolades to his aspirations of becoming a professional surfer. In 1996, received R10,000 in sponsorship from Glodina, a towelling company based in Hammarsdale (near Durban), to cover his education, contest fees, and surfing equipment as well as sponsored clothing, sunglasses and shoes from Durban based Bad Boy Clothing.<sup>172</sup> In

<sup>166</sup> Durrheim and Dixon, “The Role of Place and Metaphor in Racial Exclusion,” 439. On African lifesavers experiences see Hemson, “African lifesavers in Durban,” 71-2 and the television drama series *Bay of Plenty* (2007), which aired on SABC and was set in Durban on the post-apartheid beach, which drew on the life experiences of Sihle Xaba and other black professional lifeguards in its pre-production, see *Bay of Plenty*, dir. Sara Blecher, (South Africa: Cinga Productions, 2007).

<sup>167</sup> Ashwin Desai, “Introduction: Long Run to Freedom?” in Desai, *The Race to Transform*, 2-3 and 7-8.

<sup>168</sup> G. Bruniquel, “Lessons from Surfing,” *People Dynamics*, (October 1996), 20.

<sup>169</sup> “Sponsorshit,” *Zigzag*, 20, 4 (July-August 1996), 77. Ngcongco stated that he had been inspired to start surfing after seeing Ngcobo surfing in *The Endless Summer II*.

<sup>170</sup> “Bali Success,” *Zigzag*, 20, 5 (September-October 1996), 77.

<sup>171</sup> Melanie Morgan-George, “Black Surfer’s Ambition is No Pipedream,” *Daily News*, 6 December 1996.

<sup>172</sup> Barbara Cole, “Black Surfer Sharon Heads for Big Time,” *Daily News*, 27 May 1996.

1997, he was the first African to participate in the prestigious Gunston 500 and in 1998 he was first black stand-up surfer to represent South Africa at an amateur world titles.<sup>173</sup> However, his path to the top of the KwaZulu Natal development surfing ranks face social challenges. He experienced racism when punched and then submerged by a white surfer in the ocean and, in a separate event, nearly arrested “because police officers refused to believe I was carrying my own surfboard and I was a surfing enthusiast;” he faced ostracism from a black youth from a Durban township who accused him of taking on a white sport; and he had to calm parental fears that he would be attacked by a shark.<sup>174</sup>



Figure 4.12: Sharon Ngongo: the “surfing Zulu”, 1997.<sup>175</sup>

After losing its initial momentum, by the late 1990s, the NSA had found in Glodina Beach Towels a partner in funding surfing and bodysurfing development clinics in Durban. At these clinics top white surfers coached ‘teenagers from disadvantaged communities’ at Dairy Beach in surfing and judging skills with the aim of fostering proficiency to enter regional or national development surfing competitions.<sup>176</sup> This was not an all-male programme, the clinics held in 1997 were attended by girls from Lamontville and Chesterville township.<sup>177</sup> A further structural change in 1999 was seen as beneficial to organised surfing. For the first time, South African national surfing championships included a development division. This was seen by *Zigzag* as “a step in the right direction from the USCSA,” and

The division was given major clout in that there was no “window-dressing” or tokenism showcasing, as is the case in many sports. The Development winner would add 3000 points toward the team title.

<sup>173</sup> For the 1999 Gunston 500, Ngongo was joined by other Zulu surfers, Blessing Ngcobo, Fortune Mzimande, Zax Nxumalo and Amos Ngcobo.

<sup>174</sup> Ajith Bridraj, “Surf’s Up and Sharon’s the Man,” *Sunday World*, 18 July 1999.

<sup>175</sup> Photograph by Pierre Tostee, *The Saturday Paper*, 15 February 1997.

<sup>176</sup> Pierre Tostee, “Spreading the Word,” *The Saturday Paper*, 8 November 1997.

<sup>177</sup> Barbara Cole, “Making Wave for Equity in the Surf,” *Daily News*, 21 October 1997.

Provinces who don't want to take their development programmes seriously and prefer to send lily-white teams to Quiksilver SA Champs in the future are disadvantaging nobody but themselves.<sup>178</sup>

This move away from tokenism, and optimism in the future of Zulu surfing, was shown in a 1999 documentary aired on the e-TV channel. *Sex Wax and Dreadlocks* focused on four male young adult isiZulu-speaking surfers from Durban; Sharon Ngcongco, Enoch Mlaba, Fortune Nzimande, and brothers Amos and Blessing Ngcobo.<sup>179</sup> The programme was South African retailer Mr Price's showcasing of material contribution to the development of black surfing talent in the "rainbow nation". Despite the documentary's edgy title, only one surfer, who worked as a lifeguard, wore his hair in bleached dreadlocks Rastafarian-style as a sign of a new configuration within the Africanisation of surfing.<sup>180</sup> The other surfers were still school-goers and displayed a "clean-cut" image that matched to a prevailing stylistic norm within competitive surfing. Narrated by white surfing notables, Baron Stander Snr and Greg Swart, *Sex Wax and Dreadlocks* aimed to show how surfing could provide social "upliftment" and therapeutic outlet for urban black youth. It also firmly locates Zulu surfers as assimilating surfing culture as consumers of the surfwear. Nevertheless, the film did point to race trouble in the waves, with one of the surfers indicating that he preferred surfing at South Pier away from the white and male-dominated "vibe" at New Pier was too aggressive.<sup>181</sup> The overall message however was that Zulu youth with surfing talent could find sponsors and the prospect of surfing professionally, yet, this was within the processes of surfing development under white guidance.

At a national level, development within organised surfing become more structured and given more status within the competitive arena by Surfing South Africa (as the USCSA reconstituted itself in 2000).<sup>182</sup> Surfing transformation, however, had remained slow paced. The team management for the 2002 ISA World Surfing Games held in Durban had black representation – Sakhile Deon Ngcobo was the assistant manager – although the national surfing team was all white.<sup>183</sup> These World Surfing Games have another significance besides the South Africans winning the prestigious the open and U18 men's titles; the sporting spirit of the "rainbow nation" was captured symbolically in the singing of *Shosholozza*, a migrant African mine-workers' song which had become a popular anthem in local sporting cultures, and the naming of the national team *AmaQuikQuik*, after their surf brand sponsor Quiksilver.<sup>184</sup>

The success of regional surfing development programmes and the increasing visibility of black surfers began to be seen from the mid-2000s. In 2005, capacity for local development surfing was given recognition when "development surfing officials Niezaam Jappie, [Sandile] Cyril Mqadi and Steven Jeggles became

<sup>178</sup> "SA Champs," *Zigzag*, 23, 4 (July-August 1999), 83. The following black surfers surfed in the development division: Jason-Lee Isaacs, Cyril Mqadi, and Raoul Erasmus.

<sup>179</sup> *Sex Wax and Dreadlocks*, dir. Shelly Nel, Sydney Mgwanya, Debbie Stubbs and Victor Zikalala, (South Africa: e-TV, 1999).

<sup>180</sup> The first part of the film's title comes from the surf accessory product Sex Wax was, and is, a popular Californian brand of surf wax; used to prevent slipping when standing on a surfboard.

<sup>181</sup> Race trouble, while acknowledging the blurring of social, spatial and cultural boundaries, points to "how race and racism are reproduced in the post-apartheid context." See Kevin Durrheim, Xoliswa Mtose and Lyndsay Brown, *Race Trouble: Race, Identity and Inequality in Post-Apartheid South Africa*, (Pietermaritzburg: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, 2011), 23.

<sup>182</sup> See interview with Robin de Kock. SSA, following moves within professional cricket at the time, displayed a shift from emphasising unification to that of normalization within surfing in South Africa in its name change in the face of transformation in national sporting bodies.

<sup>183</sup> Monica Laganparsad, "Surfers Jet in for Games," *Sunday Tribune*, 26 May 2002.

<sup>184</sup> See "What you put in," *Zigzag*, 26, 4 (July-August 2002), 70-75. This nation-building symbolic imagery was already established for soccer as *Bafana Bafana* in 1992, see Peter Alegi *Laduma! Soccer, Politics and Society in South Africa*, (Scottsville: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, 2004), 146; and *Amabokoboko* in rugby in 1995, see Albert Grundlingh, *Potent Pastimes: Sport and Leisure Practices in Modern Afrikaner History*, (Pretoria: Protea, 2013), 135-6.



Surfing South Africa Level 1 accredited surf coaches.”<sup>185</sup> The move was in support of the work these individuals were doing at their local beaches.<sup>186</sup> For Mqadi, that was for the development of surfing in Umzumbe on the KwaZulu-Natal South Coastal. Umzumbe has become one key moment in South Africa’s “new” surfing histories from below as documented in the 2008 documentary film *Zulu Surf Riders*, narrated in isiZulu with English sub-texts, which first made visible black surfing as “Zulu” surfing for South African outside, and within, KwaZulu-Natal’s coastal regions as well as international publics.<sup>187</sup>

*Zulu Surf Riders* provides a record of the pattern for the grassroots beginnings of black surfing in a space seen historically, culturally and socially as white. The film raised how exclusion operated when accessing surfing, including: the lack of swimming ability, a Zulu mythology of the dangers of the sea, the beach as white leisured space, and limited access to surfboards and wetsuits. Black surfing in Umzumbe was also evident in the late 1980s in the person of Kevin Mdubeki, as discussed above, and Alan Ngubane but the movement toward more Umzumbe isiZulu-speaking youth taking up the sport was initially birthed through the intervention of local white surfboard manufacturer Gary Maisch and the white run Localism Surf Club who were concerned about youth unemployment and saw the interest black youth showed in surfing when local contests were run. Access to surfboards was provided through Localism Surf Club and Maisch to Umzumbe youth in the early 1990s – among them, Sandile Cyril Mqadi in 1993 who went on to career in surf judging and coaching.<sup>188</sup> These early interventions in play led, through emergent youth sociability at the beach and swimming lessons from Mqadi and his twin brother Siyanda Meshack Mqadi, to the formation of the Umzumbe Surf Riders Club, and then, as swimming competency advanced, inclusion within the local municipality’s lifesaving service as of the late 1990s.<sup>189</sup> This facilitated exposure to lifesaving and surfing contests in the region, allowing some aspirant Zulu surfers to migrate from rural Umzumbe to the “Surf City” of Durban to find sponsorship from surf brands, compete in surfing contests, or open career opportunities within organised surfing structures as coaches or judges.<sup>190</sup> As such, the competitive surfing lifestyle, for some black surfers, has become a personal means to achieve social mobility from the township to the city.

On the latter point, Sandile Mqadi is noteworthy. He made the move to Durban and took up a career as a surf judge, gaining his ASP accreditation in March 2003.<sup>191</sup> Using his experience of judging local and

<sup>185</sup> See “Surf coaching on the up in SA,” *Zigzag* 29, 5 (July 2005), 96.

<sup>186</sup> Jappie with the Sunset Surf Club in Port Elizabeth and Jeggels with the Jeffreys Bay Surf Club in Jeffreys Bay.

<sup>187</sup> *Zulu Surf Riders*, dir. Andre Cronje, Carlos Francisco and Brenen Nortje, (South Africa: Scratch The Surfers Film, 2008). The film premiered locally at the 2008 Wavescap Surf Film Festival (as part of the Durban International Film Festival), and then went on to screen at 2008 Encounters South African International Documentary Festival and e.TV in 2010. It premier internationally at 2008 Fort Lauderdale International Film Festival in the USA, 2008 Africa in Motion in Edinburgh, Scotland and Ombak Film Festival in Bali, Indonesia. As sports cultural studies scholar Belinda Wheaton has pointed out in her book surveying the current field of lifestyle sports, “[w]hile the black surfing experience in South Africa, as elsewhere [in California, USA], remains largely hidden in mediated and academic accounts, documentaries such as the *Zulu Surf Riders* are important resources in beginning to understand identity and exclusion in surfing. See her *The Cultural Politics of Lifestyle Sports*, (London and New York: Routledge, 2013), 114. This documentary film prefigures the feature film *Otelo Burning* (2011), also narrated in isiZulu, and Umzumbe surfers were involved in the community workshops that gathered surfer life histories and context for *Otelo Burning*, see Samuelson and Thompson, “Interview with Sara Blecher and Sihle Xaba,” 354.

<sup>188</sup> The Localism Surf Club was founded by Bruce Nowell in the late 1980s, and he coached Alan Ngubane in surfing. On the role of local white surfing in Umzumbe’s black surfing development see *Zulu Surf Riders*, Guy Rogers, “Top Surfing Guru Making Waves,” *The EP Herald*, 6 May 2004 and Karen da Rosa, “Soul Surfing with the Wedge Boys,” *South Coast Style Website*, 8 February 2011, <http://southcoaststyle.co.za/soul-surfing-with-the-wedge-boys> [accessed 1 October 2014].

<sup>189</sup> *Zulu Surf Riders* and Claire Keeton, “Street Kids Catch a Wave of Hope,” *Sunday Times*, 14 December 2008.

<sup>190</sup> See Keeton, “Street Kids Catch a Wave of Hope.” Cyril Mqadi has gone on to become an ASP accredited surf judge, and judged top amateur and professional events. This remains the only indigenous language version of the *ASP Rule Book*, the official languages of this guide to surfing contest and judging rules are English and Spanish.

<sup>191</sup> See Rogers, “Top Surfing Guru Making Waves.” In 2014, Mqadi also holds the position within organised surfing as the Development Officer for KZN Central Surfing association.

international surf contests, the twenty-seven year-old Mqadi translated the Association of Surfing Professionals (ASP) *Rule Book* into Zulu in 2004 in an effort to help coach Zulu-speaking surfers in competition.<sup>192</sup> As contest surfing rules and terminology for surfing manoeuvres were unfamiliar among isiZulu-speakers, Mqadi's translations provided cultural coding to ensure understanding of surf terms and practices. For example, Mqadi in a 2007 interview said, "I explained that dropping in was like an off-side in soccer."<sup>193</sup> Consulting a Zulu dictionary, he translated "surfing" as *ukutweza egagasini*, "tube" (that is, riding under the lip of a breaking wave) as *ipayipi*, and the highly technical manoeuvre "floater" (as explained in the footnote below) as *ukusuka phezulu egagasini uyoshaphani ungawanga*.<sup>194</sup> The Zulu-language ASP Rule Book is significant for another reason: it points to the Africanisation of surfing in KwaZulu-Natal as a cultural shift in the social dynamics of surfing in Durban and parts of the South Coast.

What emerges from the example of Umzumbe surfing is a grassroots surfing localism from the 1990s (and continued into the present) that allowed black surfers on the KwaZulu-Natal coast to entry into organised, mainstream surfing by the 2000s. This surfing localism identification was not geared, as organised surfing development programmes were, to ensure racial representativeness in regional and national surfing teams. Rather, through organised play at their local beach, African youthful subjectivities were constructed as responsible subjects through the activity of surfing. As these Zulu surfers talents then came to the attention of organised surfing in local and then provincial contest, they entered into the South imaginary, spurred on by surfing's need to demonstrate transformation at grassroots and elite levels to the Department of Sport and Recreation, as key to the future of organised surfing in South Africa.<sup>195</sup>

<sup>192</sup> "ASP Rule Book Gets Translated," *Zigzag*, 28, 4 (July-August 2004), 31.

<sup>193</sup> Quoted in Masterson, "Surfing Out the Past," *Huck* 6 (July/August 2007), 71. The isiZulu "ASP Rule Book", as of October 2014, while in use for local contests in Durban run by the Umthombo surf development programme, is still not available in the public domain. On the Umthombo Surf Contests, renamed *Kushay'igagasi* (translated as "hit the waves") in 2013, where the contest language is isiZulu, see Samora Chapman, "New kings of the *amagagasi*," *Mahala*. 17 January 2014, <http://www.mahala.co.za/culture/new-kings-of-the-amagagasi> [accessed on 13 February 2014].

<sup>194</sup> The isiZulu terminology was noted in Rogers, "Top Surfing Guru Making Waves." For a definition of "floater" see Steve Pike's "Surfikan Slang" in his *Surfing in South Africa*, (Cape Town: Double Storey, 2007), 260: "Surfing manoeuvre that entails gaining speed along the wall of the wave and ramping laterally over the top of the waves as it folds over. Good surfers can cover 10 meters before free-falling over the foam – a move that scores highly in competitive surfing."

<sup>195</sup> Black surfing localisms, including the Africanisation thereof, have become increasingly visible at other beaches in South Africa since the middle of the first decade of the new millennium; pointing to the emergence of "township surfing". Port St Johns has been in the media for the number of fatal shark encounters experienced by black youth surfing at Second Beach since 2007, see Xolani Koyana, "Young Surfer Dies in Shark Attack", *IOL News Website*, 17 January 2011, <http://www.iol.co.za/news/south-africa/western-cape/young-surfer-dies-in-shark-attack-1.1012737> [accessed on 14 November 2013]. Muizenberg Beach in Cape Town best exemplifies this trend, and that of one of where surfing can be seen at its most inclusive in terms of age, gender, race, and styles of surfing in South Africa. On black surfing in Muizenberg gaining new publics through film see the documentary on the first black national junior longboard champion, Kwezi Qika, *Black People Don't Swim*, dir. Lucilla Blankenberg, (South Africa: Community Media Trust/SABC2, 2008).

## Conclusion: Writing Surfing History in South Africa

*Reconfiguring the historiography of “kool”.*

*N.D. Mazin, Painted Surfboard, 2006<sup>1</sup>*

That the surfing lifestyle in South Africa has a history, as discussed in the preceding chapters, is less the question than the problem of how to articulate that past as raced and gendered. This is especially challenging in the face of the present where the surfing cultural industries and the gatekeepers surf heritage draw on the history of the sport for promotional or nostalgic ends. The surfing cultural industries, in evoking the “surfing tribe” and the “dream glide”, attempt to manufacture an endless summer of youthful lifestyle consumption, driven largely through the alliances of capital and competitive surfing at a professional level. Herein the surfing imaginary conceals race as whiteness but not gender. The surf brands continue to sexualise the body of women athletes who ride waves.<sup>2</sup> The surfing heritage sector, emergent in South Africa since the late 1990s, and connected to a Californian and Australian retelling of the past, has become more vocal since 2010 in publically remembering and re-telling its own history. What is remembered is a youthful, and predominantly male, Sixties – one that was cocooned on “whites only” beaches – or giving new meaning to the professionalisation moment in the mid-1970s and their own youthful making as men.<sup>3</sup> In both there is a politics of the past: for the former it is the elision of past for the sake of the present, or to draw on the past as to rearticulate retro aesthetics. For the latter, the aging surfers, it is, as Raphael Samuel has noted in considering Fredric Jameson’s “nostalgia of the present”, the “desperate desire to hold on to disappearing worlds.”<sup>4</sup>

If both those types of cultural brokers in the South African surfing world have interests in the Californicated whiteness and heroic masculinities of the past and present, and as re-articulations through the global surfing imaginary, then where and how do the local hidden histories of black surfers and women surfers become visible and how to write those histories? This has been the aim of this study. In shifting through the layers of South African surfing’s past, reading against the grain of its surfing imaginary, and finding traces of muffled voices on the margins, both the political and gendered nature of surfing is foregrounded. What is set out in this study was how representations of whiteness, masculinity and the political in South African surfing culture, and the concomitant experiences of those categories for women and

<sup>1</sup> N.D. Mazin (Andy Mason), “Blue Mamba in the Wilderness”, Painted Surfboard, 2006 as documented in N.D. Mazin, *The Legend of Blue Mamba*, (Elysium and Muizenberg: PreZanian Comix, 2013), 80.

<sup>2</sup> See the debates that ensued following the Roxy trailer for the 2013 Roxy Biarritz Pro contest, in particular the online petition by feminist and pro-feminist surfers calling for Roxy to end their marketing campaign; noting that: “[i]nstead of women surfers being presented as an alternative to the sexualization and objectification of women in the culture-at-large, this campaign succumbs to the lazy marketing that is already so prevalent.” See Cori Shumacher, “Tell Roxy That Female Surfers Deserve Better,” *Cori Shumacher Blog*, <http://www.corischumacher.com/2013/07/02/tell-roxy-that-women-surfers-deserve-better> [accessed on 4 July 2013].

<sup>3</sup> Illustrating the former trend, the Surfers Corner Sixties Reunion held in Muizenberg on 19 March 2010 (personal observations), and the 2014 attempts to commemorate white surfing pioneers in a Surfers Circle Walk of Fame memorial in Muizenberg, from which the Muizenberg Improvement District committee later distanced themselves due to submissions from the Muizenberg community arguing that this memorial negated a struggle past and ignored the segregated history of the beach. See Muizenberg Improvement District, Minutes of the Special Board Meeting held on Tuesday 3 June 2014, Muizenberg and Letter from Joe Mark Lippert to Muizenberg Improvement District, “MID Circle Development Response,” 6 March 2014 (letter in my possession). For the latter trend, see Shaun Tomson’s film *Bustin’ Down the Door*, dir. Jeremy Gosch, (USA: Fresh and Smoked, 2008), reclaiming the mid-1970s professional surfing as modern surfing’s founding moment.

<sup>4</sup> Raphael Samuel, *Theatres of Memory: Past and Present in Contemporary Culture*, (London and New York: Verso, [1994] 2012), 140. Samuel draws on Jameson’s 1991 study, *Postmodernism, or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*.

black surfers, have been shaped and reshaped by the apartheid past and the post-apartheid contemporary within a gender order that has become less conservatively masculine since the mid-1960s.

In complex ways, surfing culture too has shaped that raced and gendered past. Freedom in surfing has lost some of its utopian escapism and social inequality and has taken on new meanings to open up what sociologist Ben Carrington has seen as a “precondition for any effective oppositional politics” configured in the recognition of cultural identities.<sup>5</sup> The emergence of girl localisms and black localisms more recently point to how surfing as a cultural practice can be used to empower the self despite surfing’s past. Yet, both the utopian and the progressive tendencies retain the consumptive nature of the surfing lifestyle, and at times, in the post-apartheid, drawn on each other to reinforce the subcultural ethos of the surfing lifestyle. For example, a post on the *Otelo Burning Movie*’s Facebook page in October 2013 demonstrates how political freedom becomes a self-mediated “#Freedom” of surfing social media (see Figure 5.1). Here the past/present and self/political pastiche gestures to the icon of political possibility, Nelson Mandela, to include expressive (“radical”) surfing, a display of exemplar masculinity, and the reclaiming of blackness within the sport. #Freedom does not negate the material conditions for surfing cultural identities; rather in the post-apartheid period the possibilities of reimagining surfing as pleasurable and political is made available for those marginalised by the privileging of surfing’s white and male past. This is a significant move from surfing under apartheid to the expression of black identity as part of the surfing lifestyle.

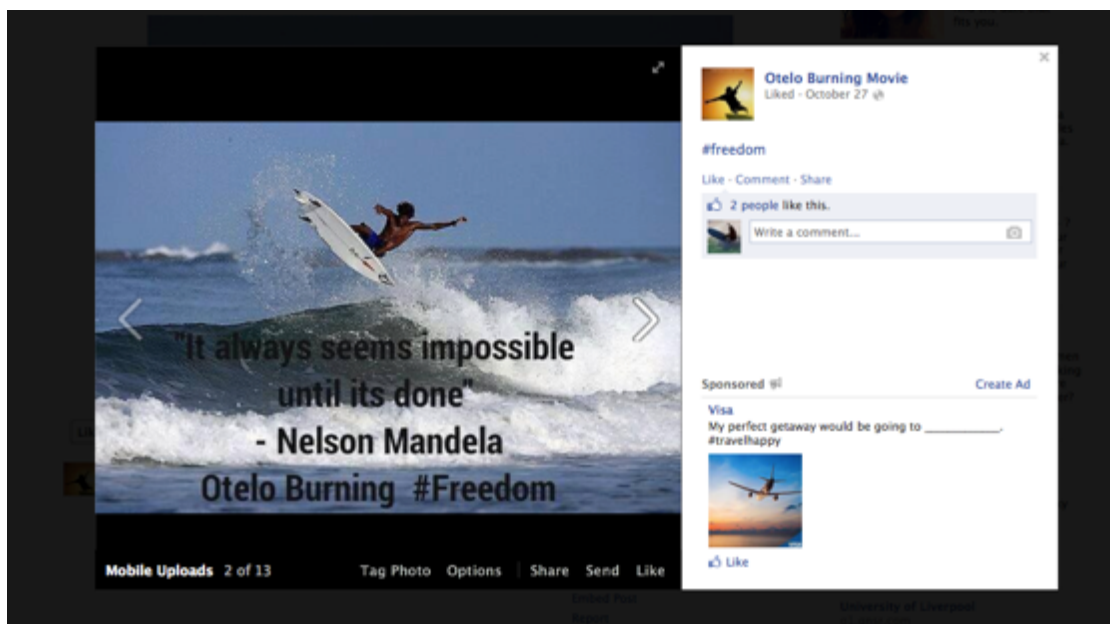


Figure 5.1: #Freedom: Surfing and the Politics of the Present.<sup>6</sup>

What #Freedom also displays is how the masculine remains present in the performance of the surfing body. Gender thus remains an important site for the liberatory potential of the surfing self in South African surfing. Yet despite the advances girl and women surfers have made in surfing as a sport and a pastime since the early 2000s, the challenge to surfing’s heteronormativity remains.

These emergent and subterranean movements in South African surfing’s present have influenced the historical question of this study: what were the historical conditions for surfing’s whiteness and male

<sup>5</sup> Ben Carrington, “Merely identity: Cultural Identity and the Politics of Sport,” *Sociology of Sport Journal*, 24, 1 (March 2007), 49.

<sup>6</sup> Image from frame-grab of *Otelo Burning Movie* Facebook page on 2 November 2013. Personal collection.

domination and was there evidence for alternative configurations of surfing identities in the past? In looking to critical sports histories and surfing studies scholarship, this study has considered socio-political change and the re-articulations of identity within a changing historical context. In so doing it has made an “attempt to reveal the play of power and the complex articulations of dominant ideologies while simultaneously recognising the joy, creativity, and moments of resistance and, occasionally, transformation that popular culture and sport provide us with.”<sup>7</sup> The difficulty at times has been to see the play for what it is within the politics of surfing, and hence not to see surfing as simply an escapist cultural practice. Yet it has been the play ethic that has provided, and continues to provide, surfing’s attraction. As ethnomusicologist Timothy Cooley has observed, surfing “creates no lasting product save a memory, a kinesthetic impression” and is a cultural practice that has “no quantifiable results or functions other than the feelings they engender, and the meanings given to them by people.”<sup>8</sup> It is in those meanings that surfing’s cultural politics is articulated over time – and in those moments of aquatic play, however fleeting, that become transgressive, subversive and oppositional and create the possibility for new cultural and gendered identities and social practices.

While noting the politics of surfing’s present due to its past, this study has described the Surfing Archive as a contribution to the body of knowledge on sporting cultural history in southern Africa. This study is the first of its kind in this regard. It also focuses on a smaller sport, rather than the well-trodden fields of rugby, cricket and soccer, to show that sport has a changing history in South Africa and has gone some way in shaping changes at the beach. Herein it fits within the tradition of looking to the emancipatory potential of sport in society while scrutinizing the historical constraints to that politics. This study has also been in conversation with another body of scholarly, that of an emergent field of critical surfing studies that has been largely focused on the concerns of surfing in and from the North/West. As a contribution from the South, this socio-cultural study of South African surfing foregrounds subaltern surfers and liquid girls in opening a postcolonial study of surfing and speak back to the surfing’s Californicated globalised past and present.

In Chapter 1 the whiteness and male dominance of surfing’s past was established. In considering the cultural imperialism of southern Californian surfing culture, as an expression of a global surfing world in the 1960s that included Australian surfers, several factors were shown to consolidate surfing as both a white and male sporting practice. Travelling surfers opened up cultural contacts between Cape Town, Durban and California that resulted in “South African waves”, epitomized by Bruce’s Beauties in the surf film *The Endless Summer* (1964). This became fixed within the global surfing imaginary which promoted American and Australian surfers, and others, to travel to South Africa with little mindfulness of the whiteness of the beaches due to apartheid.<sup>9</sup> This political context was eschewed in the text, advertising and images in the pages of *South African Surfer* magazine (1965-1968), which reinforced surfing’s whiteness. The heady mix of Californian surf rock music popularised the fun in the sun beach culture and the California-inspired youthful hippie counterculture offered the promise of a permissiveness constructed in opposition to conservative South African society in surfing enclaves such as Jeffreys Bay. Although the hippie surfer was not the only identity that surfers adopted, it was the image of surfing that found traction in the popular imagination and with the establishment. Herein from 1968 technological innovation in surfboard design resulted in shorter surfboards as the countercultural reimagined self and surfing in the desire for greater manoeuvrability when

<sup>7</sup> Carrington, “Merely Identity,” 62

<sup>8</sup> Timothy Cooley, *Surfing about Music*, (University of California Press, 2014), 1.

<sup>9</sup> Similarly, tourists in general to apartheid South Africa were largely indifferent to the country’s politics. For a consideration of this history of tourism see Albert Grundlingh, “Revisiting the ‘Old’ South Africa: Excursions into South Africa’s Tourist History under Apartheid, 1948-1990,” *South African Historical Journal*, 56, 1 (2006), especially 108.

riding waves. This led to the cultural hegemony of shortboard surfing replacing the prior longboard surfing styles, and opened up the spectacle of professional surfing as of the mid-1970s.

As Chapter 1 demonstrated, these cultural currents went hand in hand with the institutionalization of surfing, which began in 1964 with the impetus to be recognised as a surfing nation within the international surfing community. This external competitive sporting pressure on local surfing had the effect of making surfing into a sport rather than a leisure practice. The formation of regional and then a national sporting body gave institutional recognition to surfing and located it as a racialised sport due to its affiliation with apartheid sporting structures. Within this whiteness, the inaugural national surfing championships provided a case study of how the judging system (as a technique of determining cultural hegemony) inscribed good surfing performances within the competitive arena as “functional” and masculine. Thus, an exemplar white competitive surfing masculinity associated with the distinction of representing South Africa at the international level, was constructed that went on to inform amateur and then professional surfing in the years to come. The embodiment of masculinity within surfing was a means of perpetuating the racial and gender order in apartheid sport. This was realised in the professionalisation of surfing, when Shaun Tomson’s surfing masculinity as a managed athleticism, conjoined with commercial surfing interests and the emergence surfing promotional culture. This exemplar surfing masculinity was linked to national pride for South African as a surfing nation when by Tomson’s won the 1977 world professional surfing title on the newly founded international professional surfing tour. This micro-history of the prototypical white male competitive surfer of the mid 1960s to the late 1970s goes some way to support gender theorists R.W Connell and James Messerschmidt’s view that “the hierarchy of masculinities is a pattern of hegemony, not a pattern of simple domination based on force. Cultural consent, discursive centrality, institutionalisation, and the marginalisation or delegitimation of alternatives are widely documented features of socially dominant masculinities.”<sup>10</sup> In maintaining this dominant professional surfing masculinity, *Down The Line* and *Zigzag* magazines named Tomson as an ambassador for South African surfing. This set the stage, as discussed in Chapter 3, for Tomson to become a “great white hope” for the apartheid government in it seeking examples in the minor sports for South Africa sportspersons competing internationally during the sports boycott years.

While the narrative of Chapter 1 ended in the late 1970s, the almost immutable nature of white, male surfing continued to feature in Chapters 2, 3 and 4, however, as the backstory to the subterranean currents within surfing culture, namely; bring to the fore the hidden histories of white women’s surfing, how surfing was political in considering effects of the international boycott against apartheid sport, and giving recognition to the place and role of black surfers and the non-racial surfing movement in the history of South African surfing. These three chapters provided a counter-narrative to that of the surfing mythologies in Chapter 1, and provide explanations for the changed nature of surfing after apartheid as more inclusive both in terms of race and gender yet remaining subordinated to surfing’s whiteness and masculine domination due to surfing’s past.

Chapter 2 took up the histories of women surfers from the mid-1960s as surfing became institutionalised as white and male and look to competing images of women who surfers as either girls who surfed or decorative surfer girls, They were alternatively described through difference by male surf journalists as “femlins” (1960s), “chicks” (1970s) or “ladies” (1980s) and rarely as surfers in their own right except when the status of the sport was promoted nationally or internationally. Surf advertising gave visibility to these

---

<sup>10</sup> R.W. Connell and James Messerschmidt, “Hegemonic Masculinity: Rethinking the Concept,” *Gender and Society* 9, 6 (December 2005), 846.

feminized categories over the years, as women remained objectified for male consumption in the surfing magazines. Owing to the masculine gaze, women's surfing was always considered of a lower standard to that of men and was used to exclude women from the material rewards of competitive surfing or even from surfing good waves during the contest period. It was in response to the hegemony of the masculine in surfing in the late 1970s that Lorna Currie wrote back against the male gaze to claim a place for women surfers, which (despite her feminist appeals to gender equality) remained accommodated to the heterosexual norms of the gender order. Currie's was an isolated female voice in the male surfing imaginary, however, her writings did provide a sense of a shift in the sport of surfing and the future place of women therein. Despite the surfing gender order, a competitive surfing femininity, and a young active body as healthy and heterosexy, linked to a place on the national team, was constructed as exemplary, although subordinated to male surfers irrespective of whether they surfed competitively or not.

It was this history of competitive surfing femininities that was traced in Chapter 2 from the 1960s through the 1970s and into the 1980s as accounting for the recognition given to women surfers by the white male surfing establishment. Exemplars of this surfing femininity were discussed in the attempt to give voice to the experiences of women surfers, however, the masculine nature of the source material of the surfing magazines, in the main, occluded these surfing female subjectivities. A biographical sketch of Wendy Botha was illuminating in showing how a young woman broke with the stereotypes of the surfer girl and entered the professional surfing world in the mid-1980s, and went on to win the world professional surfing title four times. Botha's distinction in the surfing world thus opened the possibility for other South African women in the 1990s to pursue surfing as a career and be taken seriously in the sport. Nevertheless, there was an ambivalence in Botha's narrative to avoid the political and continue competing internationally in the face of sporting sanctions against South African sportspersons, she took up Australian citizenship and then, in the early 1990s, material needs as a professional surfer led her to promoting her body as the surfer girl in a men's magazine. In concluding this chapter, the emergence of women's surfing as an organised movement in the South African Women's Surfing Association in the 1990s was considered as a new trend pointing to the future of women's surfing in South Africa. However, the lone voice of Vanessa Kennedy in the pages of late 1980s and early 1990s surfing magazines pointed to the absence of black women surfer histories for the period under review. The latter case provides opportunities for further research for the post-apartheid period as black surfer girl localisms became visible, most notably in popular culture in the 2011 film *Blue Crush 2* filmed in KwaZulu Natal and Jeffreys Bay and in *Amaza*, the 2014 television drama series set in Muizenberg.<sup>11</sup> However, the reality remains that exclusionary cultural practices remained (and remain) in surfing, subordinating women surfers in the 1990s to the historically masculine pastime and sport of surfing. Women surfers had still to break the discourse of the "second sex", despite Currie's 1977 call for gender equity in the surf where "[w]aves treat everyone equally though, and never enquire your sex before wiping you out."<sup>12</sup>

<sup>11</sup> *Blue Crush 2*, dir. Mike Elliott, (USA: Universal Studios, 2011) and *Amaza*, dir. Lucilla Blankenberg, Laddie Bosch and Tim Spring, (South Africa: Community Media Trust/SABC1, 2014). From the early 2000s, after the Hollywood film *Blue Crush* (2002), which added significantly to the lifestyle appeal of new surf femininities promoting empowerment and a chic athletic style, that the visibility and access to the surf for young and older women was seen as an accepted practice at the South African beach (see interview with Bryony McCormick, Cape Town, 2 November 2012, interview with Shannon McLaughlin, Cape Town, 16 January 2013, and interview with Roxy Davis, Cape Town, 7 February 2013). This can be seen as a process of global consumption begun in the mid-1990s, part of the commercialising and mainstreaming of surf culture. This cultural tendency toward the inclusion of women surfers, despite the constraints noted in this study, offers hope for social change toward gender equity in the surf.

<sup>12</sup> Lorna Currie, "Women in surfing: Are they for real?" *Down The Line*, 8 (September 1977), 16.

While women's surfing from the 1960s to the 1990s cannot be seen as an overtly political challenge to the male gender order, largely due to the small number of women who surfed over the period the international political pressure did reshape white organised surfing from the late 1970s, as Chapter 3 demonstrated. South African surfing first encountered the anti-apartheid sport movement in Australia 1970 at the world amateur titles. However, it was as the international boycott against apartheid sport gained momentum after the 1977 Gleneagles Agreement among Commonwealth nations against sporting contacts with South African, that the political isolation of white sport was felt in surfing, first in amateur surfing and then among professional surfers. In both instances, Australian surfing or surfers were the driving force of the initial protests against racialised sport. In 1978, the Australian team boycotted the International Surfing Association (ISA) World Surfing Titles in South Africa, which subsequently (due to pressures from the Olympic movement) led to the ISA barring South Africa from future world championships. This despite the fact that the ISA president at the time was a South African, and that South Africa maintained membership of the ISA through the years of sanction. Without an international amateur competitive arena, the rationale for Springbok national team colours and white pride in their surfing nation was put in doubt for white organised surfing and the surf media. Yet, surf officials with funding support through the South African government devised numerous strategies to hold international contests overseas or even within South Africa, with the USA providing the strongest support until the mid-1980s.

However, it was the 1985 call by Australian world professional title-holder Tom Carroll to boycott of South African contests on the Association of Professional Surfers (ASP) world tour that sunk home for white surfing the extent of the international pressure on racialised surfing. While the professional surfer boycott movement remained small, its impact was wider in bringing further media attention on South African apartheid sport and beach segregation, as Chapter 3 explained. For South African surfers, the stand by the most vocal and visible boycotts, Carroll and American Tom Curren, could be explained away as either opportunism or personal moral choice. It was the anti-apartheid statements of ex-South African top surfer Martin Potter that irked the most, especially when he was seen as taking up British citizenship to avoid military conscription.

Nevertheless, Potter's choice was more careerist than political in a context where South African sportspersons were denied visas to certain countries. This had resulted in other South African professionals, including surfing's ambassador Shaun Tomson, travelling on non-South African passports or emigrating, as did Wendy Botha.

Despite South African organised surfing's continued protestations that surfing was not political, by the late 1980s the South African surfing nation was in crisis after amateur rebel tours dried up and top professional surfers continued to boycott South African ASP events. Internally, organised surfing established the South African Surfing Series to local white surfers a taste of what was on offer outside of the country yet this limited the South Africa pro-am surfer as no more than a hopeful entrant into the international arena while maintaining a local competitive surfing culture. It could no longer be denied that sport was political. South African surfing's only hope of reentry into the international competitive arena was political change in South Africa.

When this change did occur in 1990, the rationale for the professional surfers' boycott faded and professional surfers returned to surfing the South African leg of the ASP tour in the early 1990s. It was only Carroll who held to his principle that he would not return until black surfers could enjoy the waves as enfranchised citizens. On the other hand, South African amateur organised surfing made efforts to normalise sport through unification and regain admittance into the international arena. This led to the South African



national team's return to international competition at the ISA world titles in France in 1992. It was an all white team of men of women who competed, with one black surfer as part of the two-person development squad that shadowed the team but did not participate in the championship. This gesture towards social change was both a demonstration of the whiteness of surfing as the sport entered the post-apartheid period and an attempt to highlight the structural issue of racial transformation facing organised surfing as it made efforts to ensure surfing was seen as inclusive after the sport's unification and in a new democracy.

To understand the historical reasons for white surfing's inability to demonstrate inclusiveness internationally or nationally in the 1990s, Chapter 4 looked to the histories of black surfing under apartheid. Two trajectories in black surfing were surveyed: the non-racial surfing movement and then that of the Africanisation of surfing as seen in the Zulu surfers in KwaZulu-Natal.

The first theme was that of the history of black surfers and their experiences of surfing during beach apartheid in the surfing centres of Durban, Cape Town and Jeffreys Bay. Beach apartheid, the demarcation of South African coastline in terms of racial exclusion, limited black surfers access to waves. Yet the beach also provided a site for the contestation of these racialised surfing spaces and the whiteness of surfing lifestyle that affirmed a resistance (or struggle) politics. This history thus opens up an exploration of the configuration of black surfing subjectivities and masculinities orientated towards pleasure and politics. Cass Collier was shown as a cultural ideal of how a struggle surfing identity could be reconfigured as a post-struggle oppositional identity within organised surfing after 1990. In Collier's surfing and politics the meaning of surfing's freedom opening up to include that of political liberation. This was most visibly symbolised when Collier and Armstrong surfed Madiba's Left at Robben Island in 1998.

Part of the theme highlighted in the case of Collier was that of the role of a minor sports code in the democratisation in South Africa. This can be seen in emergence of non-racial surfing clubs catering mostly for black surfers in the mid-1980s in Cape Town, Port Elizabeth, Jeffreys Bay and Durban. These clubs provided the impetus through annual national contests, outside of white surfing, for the formation of the South African Surfing Union (SASU) in 1988. SASU was established as a non-racial and non-sexist sporting body and provided a structural challenge to the South African Surfriders' Association (SASA); the white surfing body affiliated to the apartheid government's sporting structures. While not affiliated to the South African Council of Sport (SACOS), a non-racial sports body mobilising internal opposition to the apartheid regime, SASU adhered to SACOS's political philosophy of "no normal sport in an abnormal society". SASU thus provided some ninety black (and three white) surfers, with a social and competitive space opposed to apartheid sport during the latter years of the international sporting boycott against South Africa. As Chapter 4 showed, the challenge to the sporting status quo, and white surfing, came to a fore during the "surf war" at the September 1989 SASU national championships held in Durban. White teenage surfers challenged the legitimacy of black surfers at a previously white-designated beach at a time when Mass Democratic Movement beach protests were taking back and claiming the segregated beach as a non-racial leisured space, fuelling white anxieties in Durban.

Despite this polarisation, the political imperatives of democratic change after 1990 spurred the SASA to approach SASU and hold Unity Talks in November 1991. SASU brought political legitimacy to the table and SASA the institutional relationships with the state and the ISA. An outcome of this meeting was SASA's compromise to SASU's demand that the South African Defence Force surfing club had no part in the future of the association. This "uneasy unity" of surfing as the United Surfing Council of South Africa (USCA), under leadership drawn from both SASU and SASA representatives, paved the way for South African amateur

surfing's return to international competition in 1992 and the introduction of surfing development into organised surfing as a means to effect transformation in the sport. The focus here was initially on elite black surfers, with the resultant paternalism seen as tokenism among white and black surfers.

This trajectory in surfing development pointed to the second theme, that of black surfing in KwaZulu-Natal. This part of the chapter initially stepped back from the 1990s to consider how representations of the Zuluness were co-opted by white surfing in advertisements, a surfboard brand and in the racist cartoons of "Takkies" in *South African Surfer* in the mid-1960s to provide for a distinct South African surfing identity, one that was encouraged and affirmed by California surf culture's fascination for the African exotic following Bruce Brown's film *The Endless Summer* (1964). These local representations were contrasted to that of Ron Perrott's *Surfer* magazine 1966 photograph that first exposed beach apartheid to the surfing world and the racism experienced by Hawaiian professional surfers who competed in South Africa during the 1970s. Of note was the international attention gained from the 1972 petty apartheid experiences of Eddie Aikau, that was also covered in local black popular culture magazine *Drum*. The status of these Hawaiian surfing athletes as "honorary whites" so that they could surf at "whites only" beach showed up the peculiar logic of apartheid sports attempting to promote international sporting contracts within the constraints of the segregation of blacks at South Africa beaches.

Nevertheless, despite the context of petty apartheid, black surfers in Durban and in Umzumbe, on the KwaZulu-Natal south coast, did enter the waves. Evidence for Zulu surfing from the 1980s was presented as individuals seeking out the surf, and then in the mid-1990s, as surfing development programmes gained momentum within organised surfing regionally and nationally, how some selected individuals were promoted through formal structures into mainstream competitive surfing culture. Herein the case of Sharon Ngongo, who represented a South African national team in Indonesia, was acknowledged as the "Zulu surfer" by *Zigzag's* in 1996.

However, organised surfing's development programmes in the 1990s were slow to show substantial transformation. It was only with the emergence of black surfing localisms through grassroots clubs, from outside of Durban in the 1990s as was the case of the Umzumbe Surf Club illustrated, and where talented black surfer migrated to Durban, that by the early 2000s the groundswell of Zulu surfing began to be seen. This emphasis on a mutable Zuluness taking on the surf was best displayed in Sandile Mqadi's contributions to the sport as an ASP accredited surf judge and his translation in 2004 of the *ASP Rule Book* into isiZulu. He thereby provided a means to codify the experience of surfing in isiZulu and promote the language of surfing and its cultural practice in the waves of Durban with little reference to the whiteness and Englishness of mainstream surfing culture in "Surf City". These latter social processes point to the Africanisation of the surf, of largely black male surfers, given further meaning in the present as "township surfing", whether in the Western Cape, Eastern Cape or KwaZulu Natal. Nevertheless, within this Africanisation the sport has remained masculine despite a cultural politics of black surfing localisms reshaping the social dynamics of the surf zone.

These gendered and raced histories of surfing in South Africa thus illustrate that the changing nature of this sporting lifestyle at the beach was flexible in maintaining the white social order under apartheid as well as accommodating challenges to surfing's whiteness before and after 1990. While surfing carried with it a historical normalisation of a white, male and heterosexual culture, accentuated by the local and the global since the 1960s, other meanings could be made for surfing as a cultural practice by women and black surfers over the following decades. The surfing world did become more inclusive surfing from 1994. It is in

the complex reiterations of the cultural within social processes informed by apartheid and then the post-apartheid that personal and political freedoms conflated for South African surfers, whether acknowledged explicitly as such or not, and have begun reshaping the surfing imaginary in the new millennium. It is in the documenting of these changing cultural practice in the waves and on the beach that the possibly of critically writing South African surfing histories is realised.

There are three topics that require further research coming out of this study. First, would aim to extend the analysis of competitive surfing femininities and include black women surfers for the years 1994 to the present. This would require considerations of women surfing as part of consumer culture and an engagement with arguments, as put forward by Leslie Heywood, for the inclusion of surfer girls within third wave feminism.<sup>13</sup> Herein the voices of women surfer as found in oral histories would go far in documenting women surfing experiences. A second theme is related to the first; that of the queering of surfing and the writing up of submerged histories of gay and lesbian surfers out in the waves – a subject largely seen as taboo within a homophobic local and global surfing culture.<sup>14</sup> The third topic would look to extending the theme of the Africanisation of surfing and look to further trends in South Africa, such as in Port St Johns in the Eastern Cape and Elands Bay on the West Coast, as well as to the histories of black surfing localisms in West and East Africa. Herein a postcolonial critique of surf tourism as a cultural and commercial driver for black surfing cultures would need to be considered historically and in comparison to other surfing places in the global South.

In conclusion, while social constraints and cultural politics of the surfing lifestyle have been considered in this study, it was not what initially led me to first consider writing on surfing histories and cultural practices. Rather, it was the pleasurable affect that the beach and surf as spaces-in-between provide, and which capture the fluidity and play of the post-apartheid beach as a social and personal space that is, possibly, therapeutic in the light of the violent and divisive histories that have unfolded after colonialism wash up on these southern shores. There is a feeling I have, and how to write that history I am unclear on at this point, wonderfully expressed by photographer Craig Mason-Jones observation of the beach in recent history. He wrote a sentence that accompanied his photographs, “[a]midst these transitions – at the centre of them all – remains something simple, guilt-free, pleasurable: a morning at the beach.”<sup>15</sup> It may be here in these pleasurable moments that the post-apartheid beach will be rewritten and give new meanings to the sun, sand and surf in southern Africa.

---

<sup>13</sup> See Leslie Heywood, “Third-Wave Feminism, the Global Economy, and Women’s Surfing: Sport as Stealth Feminism in Girls’ Surf Culture” in Anita Harris (ed), *Next Wave Cultures: Feminism, Subcultures, Activism*, (New York and London: Routledge, 2008).

<sup>14</sup> While the Hollywood movie *Tan Lines* (2006) tells a gay coming of age story set within Australian surfing culture, it is the surf documentary *Out In The Line-Up* (2013) that opens up the narratives of gay and lesbian surfing lives. See *Out in the Line-Up*, dir. Ian Thomson, (Australia: Yellow Dot Productions, 2013).

<sup>15</sup> Craig Mason-Jones, “Sea and the City’ in Jenny Altschuler (ed), *The 4th Cape Town Month of Photography: Emergence and Emergency*, (Cape Town: The South African Centre for Photography, 2008), 93.

## Bibliography

### Primary Sources

#### *Archives*

##### *Aluka Online Digital Library (JSTOR)*

United Nations Centre Against Apartheid Files.

##### *Digital Innovation South Africa (DISA)*

Sechaba collection.

##### *Government Records (Stellenbosch University Library)*

Department of Sport and Recreation. *Annual Reports*. 1973 – 1979.

Department of Education. *Annual Reports*. 1980 – 1993.

Sport and Recreation South Africa. *Annual Reports*. 1994 – 2006.

##### *Personal Collections (Surfing Archive)*

Andrew Ogilvie collection.

Derrick Berry collection.

Deon Bing collection.

Paul Botha collection.

##### *South African Surfing Heritage Digital Archive (Surfing Archive)*

Harry Bold collection.

Independent Newspapers collection.

Lorna Thomopolous collection.

Michael Larmont collection.

Neville Calenbourne collection.

Ross Lindsay collection.

Timewarp Surf Museum collection.

##### *Surfing Heritage and Cultural Centre Library (Surfing Archive)*

South Africa Files.

##### *Timeward Surf Museum (Surfing Archive)*

Anthony Morris collection.

Dave Lee collection.

Brenda Gatfield collection.

### **Surfing Magazines (South African) (Surfing Archive)**

*African Soul Surfer*. 1995 – 1996.

*African Surfrider*. 2006 – 2009.

*Amaza*. 2012 – 2013.

*Amped*. 2003 – 2006.

*blunt*. 1997 - 2011.

*Down The Line*. 1976 – 1977.

*Offshore*. 1987 – 1989.

*South African Surfer*. 1965 – 1968.

*Southern Surfer*. 1971.

*Surf Africa*. 1974 – 1976.

*theBOMBsurf*. 2009 – 2013.

*Zigzag*. 1976 – 2014.

### **Oral Sources**

*(All interviews conducted by the author and undertaken in South Africa, except as indicated otherwise.)*

Bing, Deon (former president of South African Longboard Surfing Association, 94.5 Kfm radio surf reporter). Digital Recording. Cape Town, October 17, 2012.

Botha, Paul (surf promoter, former director, Ocean Action). Digital Recording. Cape Town, May 17, 2011.

Botha, Wendy (former world women's surfing champion). Digital Recording, Skype and telephonic interview. Cape Town, April 14, 2013.

Davis, Roxy (owner, Surf Emporium Surf School). Digital Recording. Cape Town, February 7, 2013.

De Kock, Robin (general manager, Surfing South Africa). Digital Recording. Cape Town, April 16, 2014.

Hollands, Glenn (author, *The Reef*). Telephone interview, 08h45 – 09h30. Cape Town, February 6, 2013.

Larmont, Michael (surf retail entrepreneur). Personal communications. Scottburgh, November 7, 2010.

Lee, Dave (former Natal Surfrider Association chairman). Telephone interview, 10h15 – 10h40. 11 March 1997.

Mason, Andy (comix artist and author). Personal communications. Muizenberg, Cape Town, March 22, 2011.

McCormick, Bryony (editor, *Saltwater Girl*), Digital Recording. Cape Town, November 2, 2012.

McLaughlin, Shannon (former editor, *Liquid Girls Surf Magazine*). Telephone interview, 10h07 – 10h:40. Cape Town, February 16, 2013.

- Metz, Dick (founder of the Surfing Heritage and Cultural Centre), interviewed by Steven Pike. Digital Recording. San Clemente, California, USA, May 11, 2010.
- Metz, Dick (founder of the Surfing Heritage Foundation), San Clemente, California, USA, February 19, 2012.
- Morton, Shafiq (former editor, *Offshore*). Digital Recording. Cape Town, November 3, 2011.
- Nagia, Igshaan (former chairman, South African Surfing Union and secretary general, United Surfing Council of South Africa). Digital Recording. Cape Town, August 29, 2012.
- Naude, Paul (former owner, *Zigzag* and former president, Billabong USA). Telephone interview, 11h00 – 11h20. San Clemente, California, 24 February 2011.
- Ogilvie, Andrew (former *South African Surfer* surf photographer and surfboard shaper). Digital Recording. Durban, and 27 May 24, 2011 and May 27, 2011
- Shelly, Bernie and Terese Russell (Sixties surfers and founding members of Seal Surf Club). Digital Recording. Cape Town, September 16, 2010.
- Shelly, Bernie. Telephone interview, 16h25 – 16h40. Cape Town, April 13, 2013.
- Stander, Baron (former curator, Timewarp Surf Museum). interviewed by Deon Bing. Video Recording. Durban, 2000.
- Stander, Baron (former curator, Timewarp Surf Museum) and Max Wetteland (surfboard manufacturer), interviewed by Deon Bing. Video Recording. Durban, 2000.
- Tomson, Shaun (former world men's surfing champion). Telephone interview, 13h00 – 13h20. San Clemente, California, 24 February 2011.
- Van den Heuvel, Anthony (Sixties surfer), interview by Deon Bing. Video Recording. Jeffreys Bay, 1999.
- Western Province Longboard Club Members (Sixties surfers), interview by Deon Bing. Video Recording. Cape Town, November 1999.
- Whitmore, John (former president, South African Surfing Association), interviewed by Deon Bing. Video Recording. Elands Bay, 6 December 2000.
- Whitmore, John and Dick Metz, interview by Deon Bing. Video Recording. Elands Bay, December 1999.
- Whittle, John (director, Surfing Heritage South Africa). Personal communications. Durban, June 14, 2012.
- Xaba, Sihle (surfer, lifesaver and actor in *Otelo Burning*) and Sara Blecher (producer and director of *Otelo Burning*), conducted with Meg Samuelson. Digital Recording. Cape Town, 2 August 2013.

### **Artworks, Comic Art and Exhibitions**

- Bull, Katherine. *Holiday in Cape Town in the 21st Century*. 1999. Hand engraved acrylic, printed in relief on Fabriano Rosapina Bianco paper. Accessed July 28, 2011. [http://www.katherinebull.co.za/art/cape-town-print-series/holiday-in-ct\\_web.jpg](http://www.katherinebull.co.za/art/cape-town-print-series/holiday-in-ct_web.jpg).
- Bull, Katherine. *Milnerton*. 1999. Hand engraved acrylic, printed in relief on Fabriano Rosapina Bianco paper. Accessed July 28, 2011. [http://www.katherinebull.co.za/art/cape-town-print-series/milnerton\\_web.jpg](http://www.katherinebull.co.za/art/cape-town-print-series/milnerton_web.jpg).

*Casa Labia Gallery. Beyond the Beach Exhibition Catalogue.* Accessed September 24, 2014.

<http://casalabia.co.za/wr-pdv/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/Catalogue-Beyond-the-Beach-for-MOP6.pdf>.

Mazin, N.D. (Andy Mason). "Blue Mamba in the Wilderness." Painted Surfboard, 2006.

Mazin, N.D. (Andy Mason). "The Vittokes." *Mamba Comix 5*. Durban: Artworks Communications, 2006.

### **Audio-Visual**

*9 Miles Project: Going the Distance.* Directed by Hewett de Villiers. South Africa: Hewett de Villiers, 2014.

*Amaza.* Directed by Lucilla Blankenberg, Laddie Bosch and Tim Spring. South Africa: Community Media Trust/SABC1, 2014.

*Bay of Plenty.* Directed by Sara Blecher. South Africa: Cinga Productions, 2007.

*Beautiful.* Directed by Viki van den Barselaar. South Africa: Saltwater Girl/Imagine Afrika, 2007.

*Berg Boys.* Directed by Meghan Adams. South Africa: University of Cape Town Production, 2013.

*Black People Don't Swim,* Directed by Lucilla Blankenberg. South Africa: Community Media Trust/SABC2, 2008.

*Blue Crush 2.* Directed by Mike Elliott. USA: Universal Studios, 2011.

*Breathe Again.* Directed by Kurt Orderson. South Africa: Azania Rising Productions, 2012.

*Bustin' Down The Door.* Directed by Jeremy Gosch. USA: Fresh and Smoked, 2008.

*Endless Summer.* Directed by Bruce Brown. USA, Bruce Brown Films, 1966.

*Endless Summer II.* Directed by Bruce Brown. USA, Bruce Brown Films, 1994.

*Kushaya Igagasi.* Directed by Omelga Mthiyane. South Africa: Blue Fire Productions, 2013.

*Otelo Burning.* Dir. Sara Blecher. South Africa; Cinga Productions, 2011.

*Out in the Line-Up.* Directed by Ian Thomson. Australia: Yellow Dot Productions, 2013.

*Sea of Darkness.* Directed by Michael Oblowitz. USA: Deco Entertainment and Instinctive Film, 2008.

*SASA, SASU Unification Meeting.* Directed by Peter Basford. South Africa: Thunder Wave Television, 1991. VHS Video Recording.

*Sex Wax and Dreadlocks.* Directed by Shelly Nel, Sydney Mgwenya, Debbie Stubbs and Victor Zikalala, (South Africa: e-TV, 1999).

*Shoreline.* Directed by Sanet Olivier. South Africa: Homebrew Films/SABC2, 2009.

*Taking Back the Waves.* Directed by Nicolaas Hofmeyr. South Africa: Uhuru Productions/SABC2, 2005.

*The Pure Line.* Directed by Chris Merrett. USA: Billabong, 2006.

*The Surfer's Journal Biographies, Volume Two: Shaun Tomson, Mark Richards.* Directed by Ira Opper. USA: Opper Sports, 2000.

*Waves in Masi*. Directed by Jodie Whife, Hannah Svanteman and Martina Gatica Gustafsson. Sweden: Jodie Whife, Hannah Svanteman and Martina Gatica Gustafsson, 2013.

*Zulu Surf Riders*. Directed by André Conje, Carlos Francisco and Brenen Nortje. South Africa: Scratch The Surfers, 2008.

### **Correspondence and Miscellaneous**

Lippert, Joe Mark to Muizenberg Improvement District, "MID Circle Development Response," March 6, 2014.

Muizenberg Improvement District, Minutes of the Special Board Meeting held on Tuesday 3 June 2014.

Stockenstrom-Trutter, René to author, Surf Life Questionnaire. March 19, 2010.

### **Newspapers**

*Daily News*, 23 November 1967.

*Daily News*, 27 May 1996.

*Daily News*, 9 July 1997.

*Daily News*, 6 December 1996.

*Daily News*, 13 July 1977.

*Daily News*, 21 October 1997.

*Daily News*, 2 April 2004.

*Die Beeld*, 23 May 1985

*Die Oosterlig*, 6 March 1980.

*Eastern Province Herald*, 7 March 1980.

*Eastern Province Herald*, 5 April 1985.

*Eastern Province Herald*, 6 May 2004

*George and Knysna Herald*, 16 July 1971.

*Natal Witness*, 5 June 2004.

*Sunday Express*, 5 July 1981.

*Sunday Times*. 12 July 1987.

*Sunday Times*. 28 April 1996.

*Sunday Times*. 14 December 2008.

*Sunday Tribune*, 26 May 2002.

*Sunday World*, 18 July 1999.

*The Age*, 6 July 1986.



- The Natal Mercury*, 25 June 1964.
- The Natal Mercury*, 15 July 1964
- The Natal Mercury*, 23 July 1964.
- The Natal Mercury*, 6 August 1964.
- The Natal Mercury*, 2 August 1964
- The Natal Mercury*, 13 August 1964.
- The Natal Mercury*, 15 August 1964.
- The Natal Mercury*, 17 September 1964.
- The Natal Mercury*, 24 September 1964.
- The Natal Mercury*, 22 October 1964.
- The Natal Mercury*, 7 January 1965.
- The Natal Mercury*, 1 April 1965.
- The Natal Mercury*, 15 April 1965
- The Natal Mercury*, 15 August 1965.
- The Natal Mercury*, 10 September 1965.
- The Natal Mercury*, 3 December 1965.
- The Natal Mercury*, 24 December 1965
- The Natal Mercury*, 4 July 1966.
- The Natal Mercury*, 18 November 1985.
- The Natal Mercury*, 2 October 1989.
- The Saturday Paper*, 15 February 1997.
- The Saturday Paper*, 8 November 1997.
- The Star*, 3 December 1979.
- The Star*, 14 December 1979.
- The Star*, 12 February 1980.
- The Sydney Morning Herald*, 22 May 1985.
- The Sydney Morning Herald*, 4 June 1986.

### **Surfing Literature: Books, Chapters in Books, Articles and Artefacts**

#### **Books**

Barnett, Cornel *Hitting the Lip: Surfing in South Africa*. Johannesburg: Macmillan, 1974.

- Bartholomew, Wayne with Tim Bakker. *Bustin' Down the Door*. Sydney: HarperSports, 1996.
- Butler, David. *The Adventures of a Reluctant Printer*. Cape Town: David Butler, 2010.
- Carroll, Tom and Kirk Willcox. *Tom Carroll: The Wave Within*. Sydney: Ironbark, 1994.
- Coleman, Stuart Holmes. *Eddie Would Go: The Story of Eddie Aikau, Hawaiian Hero and Pioneer of Big Wave Surfing*. New York: St Martin's Griffin, 2001.
- Engler, Hagen. *Water Features*. Port Elizabeth: Pocket Assegai Publications, 1998.
- George, Sam, ed. *The Perfect Day: 40 Years of Surfer Magazine*. San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2001.
- Hift, Robbie. *Legends of Jeffreys Bay*. 3rd Edition. Jeffreys Bay: Robbie Hift, 2003.
- Hollands, Glenn. *The Reef: A Legacy of Surfing in East London*. East London: Glenn Hollands, 2012.
- Hynson, Michael and Donna Jost. *Mike Hynson: Transcendental Memories of a Surf Rebel*. Dana Point: Endless Dreams, 2009.
- Jarratt, Phil. *Mr Sunset: The Jeff Hakman Story*. London: Gen X, 1997.
- Jarratt, Phil. *Salts and Suits*, Melbourne and London: Hardie Grant Books, 2010.
- Jarratt, Phil. *Surfing Australia: A Complete History of Surfboard Riding in Australia*. Prahran: Hardie Grant Books, 2012.
- Jarvis, Craig and Daniel Betty. *South Africa Surf*. Johannesburg: Jonathan Ball, 2007.
- Jury, Mark. *Surfing in Southern Africa, including Mauritius and Reunion*. Cape Town: Struik, 1989.
- Kampion, Drew and Bruce Brown. *A History of Surf Culture*. Los Angeles: Evergreen, 2003.
- Masterson, Miles. *How to Surf*. Johannesburg: Penguin, 2009.
- McTavish, Bob. *More Stoked*, Sydney: Harper Collins, 2013.
- Occhilupo, Mark and Tim Baker. *Occy: The Rise and Fall and Rise of Mark Occhilupo*. Sydney: Ebury Press, 2008.
- O'Sullivan, Kevin. *Going Big: Gotcha and the Evolution of Modern Surfing Style*. Los Angeles: Full Force, 2008.
- Paarman, Donald. *Lunatic Surfer or Destiny? Autobiography of a Springbok...whaaat!* Wilderness, Donald Paarman, 2008.
- Pike, Steve. *Surfing in South Africa*. (Cape Town: Compress, 2001.
- Pike, Steve. *Surfing South Africa*. Cape Town: Double Storey Books, 2007.
- Rensen, David. *All For A Few Perfect Waves: The Audacious Life and Legend of Rebel Surfer Miki Dora*. London: Yellow Jersey Press, 2008.
- Sanders, Marcus and Kimball Taylor. *Down the Line at the World's Best Pointbreak*. St Petersburg, FL and Huntington Beach, CA: Airborne Media and Surfline/Wavetrak, 2007.
- Searle, Louise, ed. *The Surf Girl Hand Book*. Newquay: Orca, 2011.

- Southerden, Louise. *Surf's Up: The Girl's Guide to Surfing*. Crows Nest: Allen and Unwin, 2008.
- South African Surfriders Association (SASA). *Moments: 21 Years of South African Amateur Surfing*. Durban: South African Surfriders Association, 1985.
- Warshaw, Matt. *The Encyclopedia of Surfing*. Orlando: Harcourt, 2003.
- Warshaw, Matt. *A History of Surfing*. San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2010.
- Young, Nat with Craig McGregor, *The History of Surfing*. Palm Beach: Palm Beach Press, 1983
- Young, Nat. *Nat's Nat and That's That*. Angourie: Nymbodia Press, 1988.
- Tihanyi, Izzy and Coco Tihanyi. *Surf Diva: A Girl's Guide to Getting Good Waves*. Orlando: Harcourt, 2005.
- Tomson, Shaun with Patrick Moser. *Surfer's Code: Twelve Lessons for Riding through Life*. Johannesburg: Penguin, 2009.
- Tomson, Shaun, *Bustin' Down The Door: The Surf Revolution of '75*. New York: Abrams, 2008.
- Walding, Murray. *Blue Heaven: The Story of Australian Surfing*. Prahran: Hardie Grant Books, 2003.

### Chapters in Books

- Brandreth, Darryl. "The Other Side of the Coin." In *Surfing South Africa* by Steve Pike. Cape Town: Double Storey Books, 2007.
- Botha, Paul. "A Brief History of South African Surfing." In *Surfing in South Africa*, by Steve Pike. Cape Town: Compress, 2001.
- Jarvis, Craig. "Imported Surf Rage." In *Surf Rage: A Surfer's Guide to Turning Negatives in Positives*, by Nat Young. Angourie: Nymbodia Press, 2000.
- Morton, Steve. "The South African Surfing Scene." In *Surfing in Southern Africa, including Mauritius and Reunion*, Mark Jury. Cape Town: Struik, 1989.
- Paterson, Dougal. "Cass Collier" in "Happy Gun Ho" in *Dungeons '01: Red Bull Big Wave Africa 2001*, edited by Red Bull and Lance Slabbert. Cape Town: Infidels, 2001.

### Magazine and Internet Articles

- Abellira, Reno. "The Jeffreys Bay Experience." *Surfer* 18, 5 (January 1978).
- Brisick, Jamie. "The Rosy Resurrection." *The Surfer's Journal* 19, 3 (June/July 2010).
- Chapman, Samora. "New Kings of the Amagagasi." *Mahala*, January 17, 2014. Accessed February 13, 2014. <http://www.mahala.co.za/culture/new-kings-of-the-amagagasi>.
- Elliss, John. "South Africa survives a shaking." *Tracks* (August 1986).
- Flanagan, Pat. "Something Happening Here." *South African Surfing Legends*. Accessed June 9, 2014, <http://southafricansurfinglegends.com/?p=44>.
- Gillogly, Brian. "Post Modern Surf Femme." *Surfer* 30, 6 (June 1989).

- Jarratt, Phil. "To Go or Not to Go? Aussies in Africa." *Tracks* 83 (August 1977).
- Masterson, Miles. "Surfing Out of the Past." *Huck* 6 (July 2007).
- Morton, Shafiq. "Let He Who is Thirsty Drink Clear Water." *The Surfer's Journal* 10, 4 (Fall 2001).
- Morton, Shafiq. "The Blonde Lady and the Surfing the Other Side of Apartheid." *Surfing Behind the Wall*, November 11, 2011. Accessed November 24, 2011. [http://surfingbehindthewall.blogspot.com/2011\\_11\\_01\\_archive.html](http://surfingbehindthewall.blogspot.com/2011_11_01_archive.html).
- Nettle, Stu. "Bob and Tom ... and Nelson Mandela," *SwellNet*, July 16, 2010. Accessed September 18, 2011. <http://www.swellnet.com.au/news/698-bob-and-tom-and-nelson-mandela>.
- Perrott, Ron. "'Crocodiles', Zulus, and Surf Suid Afrika." *Surfer* 7, 2 (May 1966).
- Shafique, Muhammad. "Black Surfing in South Africa: A Look at Wynberg Surf Club." *Tracks* (August 1986).
- Thompson, Glen. "Tears Flow as Ballies Reunite." *Wavescape.co.za*, 21 March 2010. Accessed March, 22 2010. <http://www.wavescape.co.za/general/tears-flow-as-ballies-reunite.html>.
- Warshaw, Matt. "The Best Surf Article in the History of Mankind." *Surfer* 28, 8 (August 1987).

### **Websites**

- ASP World Tour. "ASP Awards." Accessed August, 14 2013. <http://www.aspworldtour.com/pdf/aspawards.pdf>.
- ASP World Tour. "1988 ASP Women's World Tour Final Rankings." Accessed August 14, 2013. <http://www.aspworldtour.com/archivedraws/1988/1988womfinalratings.pdf>.
- ASP World Tour. "1988 ASP World Tour Final Ratings." Accessed August 14, 2013. <http://www.aspworldtour.com/archivedraws/1988/1988menfinalratings.pdf>.
- Atoll Media*. Accessed September 14, 2008. <http://www.atollmedia.co.za>.
- Cape Town Surfers*. "Surf's Up." Accessed February, 13 2013. <http://capetownsurfers.co.za/surfs-up>.
- Cori Schumacher: State of Flux Blog*. "Tell Roxy That Female Surfers Deserve Better." Accessed July, 4 2013. <http://www.corischumacher.com/2013/07/02/tell-roxy-that-women-surfers-deserve-better>.
- Cori Schumacher: State of Flux Blog*. "And what of the current state of women's pro surfing? Accessed March 21, 2014 <http://www.corischumacher.com/2014/03/19/current-state-womens-pro-surfing>.
- The Encyclopedia of Surfing Website*. "Wendy Botha." Accessed September 8, 2014. <http://encyclopediaofsurfing.com/entries/botha-wendy>.
- Facebook*. "Bernie Shelly." Accessed April 11, 2013. <https://www.facebook.com/bernie.shelly1/posts/364005577037298>.

Facebook. "Otelo Burning Movie." Accessed November, 2 2013

<https://www.facebook.com/OteloBurningMovie/photos/a.592847977418514.1073741828.289359771100671/616749565028355/?type=1&theater>

Lifestyle Surf Shop, "Surfboards." Accessed September 27, 2008.

<http://www.surfboards.co.za/boards.htm>.

N.D. Mazin Blog. "Vittoke in Azania." Accessed August 5, 2014

<http://ndmazin2.wordpress.com/blog/vittoke-in-azania>.

SA Art Times, (March 2013 Issue). Accessed September 27, 2014.

[http://issuu.com/arttimes/docs/saat\\_march\\_2013/44](http://issuu.com/arttimes/docs/saat_march_2013/44).

The South African Rock Encyclopedia. "Springbok Hit Parade: 1965 – 1971: No 1 Hit Records: SA Pressings." November 2004. Accessed December 21, 2010.

[http://www.rock.co.za/files/springbok\\_hits\\_1965.html](http://www.rock.co.za/files/springbok_hits_1965.html).

"The Fantastic Baggys", Accessed June 7, 2004.

[http://www.rock.co.za/files/fantastic\\_baggys\\_index.htm](http://www.rock.co.za/files/fantastic_baggys_index.htm).

South African Bodyboarding Association. "Super Fit Xaba Bound to Make Waves at Vodacom Bodyboarding Classic." Accessed July 26, 2004.

<http://sabodyboarding.co.za/article/120>.

Wikimedia. "Endless Summer Poster." Accessed September 23, 2014

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Endless\\_Summer\\_movie\\_poster.jpeg](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Endless_Summer_movie_poster.jpeg).

## Secondary Sources

### Books

Alegi, Peter. *Laduma! Soccer, Politics and Society in South Africa*. Pietermaritzburg: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, 2004.

Alegi, Peter and Chris Bolsmann, eds. *Africa's World Cup: Critical Reflections on Play, Patriotism, Spectatorship, and Space*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2013.

Archer, Robert and Antoine Bouillon. *The South African Game: Sport and Racism*. London: Zed Press, 1982.

Barthes, Roland. *Mythologies*. Translated by Annette Lavers. London: Vintage Books, [1957] 2009.

Barthes, Roland. *What Is Sport?* Translated Richard Howard. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2007.

Baudrillard, Jean. *America*. Translated by Chris Turner. London and New York: Verso, 1988.

Beinart, William. *Twentieth-Century South Africa*. Cape Town and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994.

Bickford-Smith, Vivian, Elizabeth van Heyningen and Nigel Worden. *Cape Town in the Twentieth-Century*. Cape Town: David Philip, 1999.

- Booth, Douglas. *The Race Game: Sport and Politics in South Africa*. London and New York: Routledge, 1998.
- Booth, Douglas. *Australian Beach Cultures: The History of Sun, Sand and Surf*. London and New York: Routledge, 2001.
- Booth, Douglas. *Surfing: The Ultimate Guide*. Santa Barbara, Denver and Oxford: Greenwood, 2011.
- Booth, Douglas. *The Field: Truth and Fiction in Sport History*. London: Routledge, 2005.
- Butler, Judith. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. London: Routledge, 1990.
- Butler, Judith. *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of "Sex"*. London: Routledge, 1993.
- Butler, Judith. *Undoing Gender*. New York and London: Routledge, 2004.
- Clark, John. *Hawaiian Surfing: Traditions from the Past*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2011.
- Comer, Krista. *Surfer Girls in the New World Order*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2010.
- Connell, R.W. *Masculinities*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995.
- Connell, Raewyn. *Gender In World Perspective*. Cambridge and Malden: Polity, 2009.
- Cooley, Timothy. *Surfing about Music*. Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 2014.
- Cornelissen, Scarlett and Albert Grundlingh, eds. *Sport Past and Present in South Africa: (Trans)forming the Nation*. London and New York: Routledge: 2011.
- Culver, Lawrence. *The Frontier of Leisure: Southern California and the Shaping of Modern America*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010.
- Dening, Greg. *Mr Bligh's Bad Language: Passion, Power and Theatre on the Bounty*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994.
- Desmond, Jane. *Staging Tourism: Bodies on Display from Waikiki to Sea World*. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1999.
- Dubow, Saul. *A Commonwealth of Knowledge: Science, Sensibility and White South Africa, 1820 – 2000*. Cape Town: Double Storey Books, 2006.
- Dubow, Saul. *Apartheid, 1948-1994*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013.
- Durrheim, Kevin and Xoliswa Mtose and Lyndsay Brown. *Race Trouble: Race, Identity and Inequality in Post-Apartheid South Africa*. Pietermaritzburg: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, 2011.
- Eley, Geoff. *A Crooked Line: From Cultural History to the History of Society*. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2005.
- Evers, Clifton. *Notes for A Young Surfer*. Carlton: Melbourne University Press, 2010.
- Finnegan, William. *Crossing the Line: A Year in the Land of Apartheid*. Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 1994.

- Finney, Ben and James Houston. *Surfing: A History of the Ancient Hawaiian Sport*. San Francisco: Pomegranate Artbooks, 1996.
- Fiske, John, Bob Hodge and Graeme Turner. *The Myths of Oz: Reading Australian Popular Culture*. London, Sydney and Wellington: Allen and Unwin, 1987.
- Ford, Nick and David Brown. *Surfing and Social Theory: Experience, Embodiment and the Narrative of the Dream Glide*. London and New York: Routledge, 2006.
- Foucault, Michel. *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972 - 1977*. Colin Gordon (ed). New York: Pantheon Books, 1980.
- Gabbard Andrea. *Girl in the Curl: A Century of Women in Surfing*. Seattle: Seal Press, 2000.
- Gerhart, Gail M. and Clive L. Glaser. *From Protest to Challenge, Volume 6: A Documentary History of African Politics in South Africa, 1882-1990, Challenge and Victory, 1980-1990*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2010.
- Gilroy, Paul. *Between Camps: Nations, Cultures and the Allure of Race*. New York and London: Routledge, 2013.
- Grundlingh, Albert. *Potent Pastimes: Sport and Leisure Practices in Modern Afrikaner History*. Pretoria: Protea Book House, 2013.
- Gupta, Pamila, Isabel Hofmeyr and Michael Pearson, eds. *Eyes Across the Water: Navigating the Indian Ocean*. Pretoria and Delhi: UNISA Press and Penguin India, 2010.
- Hain, Peter. *Sing the Beloved Country*. London and Chicago: Pluto, 1996.
- Heard, Tony. *The Cape of Storms: A Personal History of the Crisis in South Africa*. Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1991.
- Hodgdon, Tim. *Manhood in the Age of Aquarius: Masculinity in Two Countercultural Communities, 1965–1983*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2007.
- Jarvie, Grant. *Class, Race, and Sport in South Africa's Political Economy*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1985.
- La Capra, Dominick. *Soundings in Critical Theory*. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1989.
- Laderman, Scott. *Empire in Waves: A Political History of Surfing*. Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 2014.
- Lawler, Kristin. *The American Surfer, Radical Culture and Capitalism*. New York and London: Routledge, 2011.
- Lindsay, Lisa and Stephen Meischer, eds. *Men and Masculinities in Modern Africa*. Portsmouth: Heinemann, 2003.
- Logie, Bartle. *Governor's Travels: A Journey along the Konga/Tsitsikamma Coast*. Hunters Retreat: Bluecliff, 1999.
- Mason, Andy. *What's So Funny? Under the Skin of South African Cartooning*. Cape Town: Double Storey, 2010.

- Mage, Anne. *Beer, Sociability, and Masculinity in South Africa*. Cape Town: Cape Town University Press, 2010.
- Mason-Jones, Craig. "Sea and the City." In *The 4th Cape Town Month of Photography: Emergence and Emergency*, edited by Jenny Altschuler. Cape Town: The South African Centre for Photography, 2008.
- May, Kirse Granat. *Golden State, Golden Youth: The California Image in Popular Culture, 1955-1966*. Chappell Hill and London: The University of North Carolina Press, 2002.
- Milner, Andrew. *Re-Imagining Cultural Studies: The Promise of Cultural Materialism*. London, Thousand Oaks and New Delhi: Sage, 2002.
- Morrell, Robert, ed. *Changing Men in Southern Africa*. Pietermaritzburg, London and New York: University of Natal Press and Zed Books, 2001.
- Murray, Bruce and Christopher Merrett. *Caught Behind: Race and Politics in Springbok Cricket*. Johannesburg and Pietermaritzburg: Wits University Press and University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, 2004.
- Musgrove, Frank. *Ecstasy and Holiness: Counter Culture and the Open Society*. London: Methuen and Co, 1974.
- Nauright, John. *Long Run to Freedom: Sport, Cultures, and Identities in South Africa*. Morgantown: Fitness Information Technology, 2010.
- Osgerby, Bill. *Playboys in Paradise: Masculinity, Youth and Leisure-Style in Modern America*, (Oxford and New York: Berg, 2001).
- Pearson, Kent. *Surfing Subcultures of Australia and New Zealand*. St Lucia: University of Queensland, 1979.
- Reid, Graeme and Liz Walker, eds. *Men Behaving Differently: South African Men since 1994*. Cape Town: Double Storey Books, 2005.
- Roberts, Cheryl. *Against the Grain: Women and Sport in South Africa*. Cape Town: Township Publishing Co-operative, 1992.
- Rose, Brian and Bryan Chilvers. *The Broken Link*. Cape Town: Nasionale Boekhandel, 1969.
- Rose, Sonya. *What is Gender History?* Cambridge and Malden: Polity Press, 2010.
- Roszak, Theodore. *The Making of the Counterculture: Reflections on the Technocratic Society and its Youthful Opposition*. New York: Doubleday and Company, 1969.
- Samuel, Raphael. *Theatres of Memory: Past and Present in Contemporary Culture*. London and New York: Verso, [1994] 2012.
- Sitas, Ari. *The Mandela Decade, 1990-2000: Labour, Culture and Society in Post-Apartheid South Africa*. Pretoria: UNISA Press, 2010.
- South African Institute for Race Relations (SAIRR). *Race Relations Survey 1989/90*. Johannesburg: South African Institute for Race Relations, 1990.
- Stranger, Mark. *Surfing Life: Surface, Substructure and the Commodification of the Sublime*. Farham and Burlington: Ashgate, 2011.



- Starr, Kevin. *California: A History*. New York: Modern Library, 2007.
- Taylor, Bron, *Dark Green Religion: Nature, Spirituality and the Planetary Future*. Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 2012.
- Trask, Haunani Kay. *From a Native Daughter: Colonialism and Sovereignty in Hawai'i*. Monroe: Common Courage Press, 1993.
- Walker, Isaiah Helekunihi. *Waves of Resistance: Surfing and History in Twentieth-Century Hawai'i*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2011.
- Walker, Michael. *Muizenberg: A Forgotten Story*. St James: Michael Walker, 2009.
- Warren, Andrew and Chris Gibson. *Surfing Places, Surfboard Makers: Craft, Creativity and Cultural Heritage in Hawai'i, California and Australia*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2014.
- Weinberg, Paul, David Robbins and Gcina Mhlope. *Durban: Impressions of an African City*. Brixton: Porcupine Press, 2002.
- Westwick, Peter and Peter Neushul. *The World in the Curl: An Unconventional History of Surfing*. New York: Crown, 2013.
- Wheaton, Belinda. *The Cultural Politics of Lifestyle Sports*. London and New York: Routledge, 2013.

### **Chapters in Books**

- Alegi, Peter. "The Sport of Zuluness: Masculinity, Class and Cultural Identity in Twentieth-Century Black Soccer." In *Zulu Identities: Being Zulu, Past and Present*, edited by Benedict Carton, John Laband and Jabulani Sithole. Scottsville: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, 2008.
- Booth, Douglas. "Recapturing the Moment? Global Rugby, Economic and the Politics of Nation in Post-Apartheid South Africa." In *Making the Rugby World: Race, Gender, Commerce*, edited by Timothy Chandler and John Nauright. London and New York: Routledge, 1999.
- Booth, Douglas. "Sports Historians: What Do We Do? How Do We Do It?" In *Deconstructing Sport History: A Postmodern Analysis*, edited by Murray Phillips. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2006.
- Bordo, Susan. "Feminism, Foucault and the Politics of the Body." In *Reconstructing Foucault: Essays in the Wake of the 80s*, edited by Ricardo Miguel-Alfonso and Silvia Caporale-Bizzini. Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1994.
- Brown, Basil. "The Destruction of Non-Racial Sport: A Consequence of the Negotiated Political Settlement." In *Sport and Liberation in South Africa: Reflections and Struggles*, Cornelius Thomas edited. Alice and Pretoria: University of Fort Hare and Department of Sports and Recreation, 2006.
- Braunstein, Peter and Michael Doyle. "Introduction: Historicizing the American Counterculture of the 1960s and '70s." In *Imagine Nation: The American Counterculture of the 1960s and '70s*, edited by Peter Braunstein and Michael Doyle. New York and London: London, 2002.
- Brutus, Dennis. "The Sportsman's Choice." In *Apartheid: A Collection of Writings on South African Racism by South Africans*, edited by Alex La Guma. New York: International Publishers, 1971.

- Campbell, James. "The Americanization of South Africa." In *A South African and American Comparative Reader: The Best of Safundi and Other Selected Articles*, edited by Andrew Offenburger, Scott Rosenberg and Christopher Saunders. USA: *Safundi: The Journal of South African and American Comparative Studies*, 2002.
- Carton, Benedict. "Introduction: Zuluness in Post- and Neo-Worlds." In *Zulu Identities: Being Zulu, Past and Present*, edited by Benedict Carton, John Laband and Jabulani Sithole. Scottsville: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, 2008.
- Clifford, James. "Introduction: Partial Truths." In *Writing Cultures: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography*, edited by James Clifford and George Marcuse. 25th Anniversary Edition. Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 2011.
- Cock, Jacklyn. "'Another Mother for Peace': Women and Peace Building in South Africa, 1983-2003." In *Women in South African History*, edited by Nomboniso Gasa. Pretoria: Human Sciences Research Council, 2007.
- Dawson, Kevin. "Swimming, Surfing, and Underwater Diving in Early Modern Atlantic Africa and the African Diaspora." In *Navigating African Maritime History*, edited by Carina Ray and Jeremy Rich. St. John's: International Maritime Economic History Association, 2009.
- Desai, Ashwin and Dhevarsha Ramjettan. "Sport for All? The Boundaries of Sport and Citizenship in 'Liberated' South Africa." In *Racial Redress and Citizenship in South Africa*, edited by Adam Habib and Kristina Bentley. Cape Town: HSRC Press, 2008.
- Desai, Ashwin. "Introduction: Long Run to Freedom?" In *The Race to Transform: Sport in Post-Apartheid South Africa*, edited by Ashwin Desai. Cape Town: HSRC Press, 2010.
- Desai, Ashwin and Ahmed Veriava. "Creepy Crawlies, Portapools and the Dam(n)s of Swimming Transformation." In *The Race to Transform: Sport in Post-Apartheid South Africa*, edited by Ashwin Desai. Cape Town: HSRC Press, 2010.
- Desai, Ashwin and Goolam Vahed. "Beyond the Nation? Colour and Class in South African Cricket." In *The Race to Transform: Sport in Post-Apartheid South Africa*, edited by Ashwin Desai. Cape Town: HSRC Press, 2010.
- Etherington, Norman. "Explaining the Death Throes of Apartheid." In *Peace, Politics and Violence in the New South Africa*, edited by Norman Etherington. Oxford: Hans Zell, 1992.
- Foucault, Michel. "Technologies of the Self." In *Technologies of the Self: A Seminar with Michel Foucault*, edited by Luther Martin, Huck Gutman and Patrick Hutton. London: Tavistock, 1988.
- Freund, Bill. "The violence in Natal, 1985-1990." In *Political Economy and Identities in KwaZulu-Natal: Historical and Social Perspectives*, edited by Robert Morrell. Durban: Indicator Press, 1996.
- Gasa, Nomboniso. "Introduction." In *Women in South African History*, edited by Nomboniso Gasa. Cape Town: HSRC Press, 2007.
- Grundlingh Albert, André Odendal and Burr ridge Spies. *Beyond the Tryline: Rugby and South African Society*. Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1995.

- Grundlingh, Albert. *Potent Pastimes: Sport and Leisure in Modern Afrikaner History*. Pretoria: Protea House, 2013.
- Hargreaves, Jennifer. "Victorian Familism and the Formative Years of Female Sport." In *From 'Fair Sex' to Feminism: Sport and the Socialisation of Women in the Industrial and Post-Industrial Eras*, edited by John Mangan and Roberta Park. London: Frank Cass, 1987.
- Heywood, Leslie. "Third-Wave Feminism, the Global Economy, and Women's Surfing: Sport as Stealth Feminism in Girls' Surf Culture." In *Next Wave Cultures: Feminism, Subcultures, Activism*, edited by Anita Harris. New York and London: Routledge, 2008.
- Hemson, Crispin. "Ukubekwezela or Ukuzithemba: African Lifesavers in Durban." In *Changing Men in Southern Africa*, edited by Robert Morrell. Pietermaritzburg, London and New York: University of Natal Press and Zed Books, 2001.
- Holt, Richard. "Historians and the History of Sport." *Sport in History* 34, 1 (2013).
- Hughes, Heather. "Struggling for a Day in the Sun: The Emergence of a Beach Culture among African People in Durban." In *Art and Identity at the Water's Edge*, edited by Tricia Cusack. Surrey and Burlington: Ashgate, 2012.
- Jewkes, Rachel and Robert Morrell. "Sexuality and the Limits of Agency among South African Teenage Women: Theorising Femininities and their Connections to HIV Risk Practises." *Social Science & Medicine* 74 (2012).
- Limb, Peter. "The Anti-apartheid Movements in Australia and Aotearoa/New Zealand." In *The Road to Democracy in South Africa, Volume 3, International Solidarity*, South African Democracy Education Trust (SADET). Pretoria: UNISA Press, 2008.
- Lodge, Tom. "Resistance and Reform, 1973-1994." In *The Cambridge History of South Africa, Volume 2, 1885-1994*, edited by Robert Ross, Anne Mage and Bill Nasson. Cambridge and Cape Town: Cambridge University Press, 2012.
- Mason-Jones, Craig. "Sea and the City." In *The 4th Cape Town Month of Photography: Emergence and Emergency*, edited by Jenny Altschuler. Cape Town: The South African Centre for Photography, 2008.
- Minkley, Gary and Ciraj Rassool. "Orality, Memory, and Social History in South Africa." In *Negotiating the Past: The Making of Memory in South Africa*, edited by Sarah Nuttall and Carli Coetzee. Cape Town: Oxford University Press, 1998.
- Morrell, Robert. "Of Boys and Men: Masculinity and Gender in Southern African Studies." *Journal of Southern African Studies* 24, 4, (December 1998).
- Morrell, Robert. "Men, Masculinities and Gender Politics in South Africa: A Reply to Macloed." *Psychology in Society* 35 (2007).
- Morrell, Robert, Rachel Jewkes, Graham Lindegger and Vijay Hamlall. "Hegemonic Masculinity: Reviewing the Gendered Analysis of Men's Power in South Africa." *South African Review of Sociology* 44, 1 (2013).

- Odendaal, Andre. "Sport and Liberation: The Unfinished Business of the Past." In *Sport and Liberation in South Africa: Reflections and Struggles*, Cornelius Thomas edited. Alice and Pretoria: University of Fort Hare and Department of Sports and Recreation, 2006.
- Osgerby, Bill. "Rapture of the Deep: Leisure, Lifestyle and the Lure of Sixties Scuba." In *Historicizing Lifestyle: Mediating Taste, Consumption and identity from the 1900s to 1970s*, edited by David Bell and Joanne Hollows. Aldershot and Burlington: Ashgate, 2006.
- Posel, Deborah. "A 'Battlefield of Perceptions': State Discourses on Political Violence, 1985-1989." In *War and Society: The Militarisation of South Africa*, edited by Jacklyn Cock and Laurie Nathan. Cape Town and Johannesburg: David Philip, 1989.
- Posel, Deborah. "The Apartheid Project, 1948-1970." In *The Cambridge History of South Africa, Volume 2, 1885-1994*, edited by Robert Ross, Ann Melke Mager and Bill Nasson. Cambridge and Cape Town: Cambridge University Press, 2012.
- Shields, Rob. "Surfing: Global Space or Dwelling in the Waves?" In *Tourism Mobilities: Places to Stay, Places to Play*, edited by Mimi Seller and John Urry. London: Routledge, 2004.
- Sithole, Jabulani. "Preface: Zuluness in South Africa: From 'Struggle' Debate to Democratic Transition." In *Zulu Identities: Being Zulu, Past and Present*, edited by Benedict Carton, John Laband and Jabulani Sithole. Scottsville: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, 2008.
- Smith, Avis. "The Invisible Factor: Women in the Non-Racial Sports Movement." In *Sport and Liberation in South Africa: Reflections and Struggles*, Cornelius Thomas edited. Alice and Pretoria: University of Fort Hare and Department of Sports and Recreation, 2006.
- Smith, Dorothy. "Femininity as Discourse." In *Becoming Feminine: The Politics of Popular Culture*, edited by Leslie Romna and Linda Christian-Smith with Elizabeth Ellsworth. London, New York and Philadelphia: The Falmer Press, 1988.
- Thompson, Glen. "Making Waves, Making Men: The Emergence of a Professional Surfing Masculinity on South Africa during the late 1970s." In *Changing Men in Southern Africa*, edited by Robert Morrell. Pietermaritzburg, London and New York: University of Natal Press and Zed Books, 2001.
- Thornton, Robert. "The Potentials of Boundaries in South Africa: Step Towards a Theory of the Social Edge." In *Postcolonial Identities in Africa*, edited by Richard Werbner and Terence Ranger. London and New Jersey: Zed Books, 1996.
- Viljoen, Louise and Stella Viljoen. "Constructing Femininity in *Huisgenoot*." In *South African Visual Culture*, edited by Jeanne van Eeden and Amanda du Preez. Pretoria: Van Schaik, 2005.
- Whitson, David. "Sport and the Social Construction of Masculinity." In *Sport, Men and the Gender Order: Critical Feminist Perspectives*, edited by Michael Messner and Donald Sabo. Champaign: Human Kinetic Books, 1990.
- Winterton, Rachel. "'A Question of Propriety?': Women's Competitive Swimming in Melbourne, 1893-1900." *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 26, 14 (2009).

Xaba, Thokozani. "Masculinity and its Malcontents: The Confrontation between 'Struggle Masculinity' and 'Post-Struggle Masculinity' (1990-1997)." In *Changing Men in Southern Africa*, edited by Robert Morrell. Pietermaritzburg: London and New York: Zed Books, 2001.

### **Journal Articles**

Anderson, Eric and Rhidian McGuire. "Inclusive Masculinity Theory and the Gendered Politics of Men's Rugby." *Journal of Gender Studies* 19, 3 (2010).

Baller, Susann and Scarlett Cornelissen. "Prologue: Sport and the City in Africa." *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 28, 15 (October 2011).

Booth, Douglas. "South Africa's 'Autonomous Sport' Strategy: Desegregation Apartheid Style." *Sporting Traditions* 6, 2 (1990).

Booth, Douglas. "Ambiguities in Pleasure and Discipline: The Development of Competitive Surfing." *Journal of Sport History* 22, 3 (Fall 1995).

Booth, Douglas. "Surfing: The Cultural and Technological Determinants of a Dance." *Sport in Society* 2, 1 1999.

Booth, Douglas. "Waves of Wahines: "From Bikinis to Boardshorts: Wahines and the Paradoxes of Surfing Culture." *Journal of Sport History* 28, 1 (2001).

Booth, Douglas. "Escaping the Past? The Cultural Turn and Language in Sport History." *Rethinking History: The Journal of Theory and Practice* 8, 1 (2004).

Booth, Douglas. "(Re)reading The Surfers' Bible: The Affects of *Tracks*." *Continuum: Journal of Media and Cultural Studies* 22, 1 (2008).

Booth, Douglas. "Beyond History: Racial Emancipation and Ethics in Apartheid Sport." *Rethinking History: The Journal of Theory and Practice* 14, 4 (2010).

Booth, Douglas. "Seven (1 + 6) Surfing Stories: The Practice of Authoring." *Rethinking History: The Journal of Theory and Practice* 16, 4 (December 2012).

Booth, Douglas. "Invitation to Historians: The Historiographical Turn of a Practicing (Sport) Historian." *Rethinking History: The Journal of Theory and Practice* 18, 4 (2014).

Bruniquel, G. "Lessons from Surfing." *People Dynamics* (October 1996).

Budgeon, Shelley. "The Dynamics of Gender Hegemony: Femininities, Masculinities and Social Change." *Sociology* 48 2 (2014).

Carrington, Ben. "Merely identity: Cultural Identity and the Politics of Sport." *Sociology of Sport Journal* 24, 1 (March 2007).

Connell, R.W. and James Messerschmidt. "Hegemonic Masculinity: Rethinking the Concept." *Gender and Society* 9, 6 (December 2005).

Davis, Natalie Zemon. "Decentering History: Local Stories and the Cultural Crossing in a Global World." *History and Theory* 50 (May 2011).

- Dawson, Kevin. "Enslaved Swimmers and Divers in the Atlantic World." *The Journal of American History* 92, 4 (March 2006).
- Durrheim, Kevin and John Dixon. "Studying Talk and Embodied Practices: Toward a Psychology of Materiality of 'Race Relations'." *Journal of Community and Applied Social Psychology* 15 (2005).
- Durrheim, Kevin and John Dixon, "The Role of Place and Metaphor in Racial Exclusion: South Africa's Beaches as Sites of Shifting Racialization." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 24, 3 (May 2001).
- Dening, Greg. "Writing, Rewriting the Beach: An Essay." *Rethinking History: The Journal of Theory and Practice* 2, 2 (1998).
- Evers, Clifton. "'The Point': Surfing, Geography and a Sensual Life of Men and Masculinity on the Gold Coast, Australia." *Social and Cultural Geography* 10, 8 (2009).
- Evers, Clifton. "How To Surf." *Journal of Sport and Social Issues* 30, 3 (August 2006).
- Finney, Ben. "Surfboarding in West Africa." *Wiener Völkerkundliche Mitteilungen* 5 (1962).
- Genz, Stéphanie. "Singled Out: Postfeminism's 'New Woman' and the Dilemma of Having it All." *Journal of Popular Culture* 43, 1 (2010).
- Grundlingh, Albert. "Revisiting the 'Old' South Africa: Excursions into South Africa's Tourist History under Apartheid, 1948-1990." *South African Historical Journal* 56, 1 (2006).
- Grundlingh, Albert. "Are We Afrikaners Getting too Rich?" Cornucopia and Change in Afrikanerdom in the 1960s." *Journal of Historical Sociology* 21, 2/3 (2008).
- Grundlingh, Albert, Stéphane Robolin, Abigail Hinsman, Lily Saint, Sharrona Pearl and Samantha Pinto, "Roundtable on Invictus." *Safundi: The Journal of South African and American Studies* 13, 1-2 (2012).
- Guttman, Allen. "Review Essay: The Ludic and the Ludicrous." *International Journal of the History of Sport* 25, 1 (2008).
- Haugaa, Mari. "Tackling Femininity: The Heterosexual Paradigm and Women's Soccer in South Africa." *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 28, 1 (January 2011).
- Henderson, Margaret. "A Shifting Line Up: Men, Women, and *Tracks* Surfing Magazine." *Continuum: Journal of Media and Cultural Studies* 15, 3 (2001).
- Hyslop, Jonathan. "'Days of Miracle and Wonder?' Conformity and Revolt in *Searching for Sugarman*." *Safundi: The Journal of South African and American Studies* 14, 4 (2013).
- Hyslop, Jonathan. "Why Did Apartheid's Supporters Capitulate? 'Whiteness', Class and Consumption in Urban South Africa, 1985-1995." *Society in Transition* 31 (1) 2000.
- Ishiwata, Eric. "Local Motions: Surfing and the Politics of Wave Sliding." *Cultural Values* 6, 3 (2002).
- Johns, Amelia. "White Tribe: Echoes of the Anzac Myth in Cronulla." *Continuum: Journal of Media and Cultural Studies* 22, 1 (2008).
- Johnson, David. "Beyond Tragedy: *Otelo Burning* and the Limits of Post-Apartheid Nationalism." *Journal of African Cultural Studies* 26, 3 (2014).

- Knijnik, Jorge Dorfman Peter Horton and Livia Oliveira Cruz, "Rhizomatic Bodies. "Gendered Waves: Transitional Femininities in Brazilian Surf." *Sport in Society* 13, 7 (2010).
- Lee, Christopher. "Subaltern Studies and African Studies." *History Compass* 3 (2005).
- Leonard, Alex. "Learning to surf in Kuta, Bali." *Review of Indonesian and Malaysian Affairs* 41, 1 (2007).
- Lowerson, John. "Review Article: Starting from Your Own Past? The Serious Business of Leisure History." *Journal of Contemporary History* 36, 3 (July 2001).
- McGloin, Colleen. "Aboriginal Surfing." *International Journal of Humanities* 4, 1 (2006).
- Martin, Julia. "Witness to the Makeshift Shore: Ecological Practice in A Littoral Zone." *Alternation* 6 (2013).
- Merrett, Christopher. "Sport, Racism and Urban Policy in South Africa: Pietermaritzburg, a Case Study." *Sporting Traditions* 10 (May 1994).
- Merrett, Christopher. "Sports Historians Are a Motley Bunch." *South African Historical Journal* 33, 1 (1995).
- Modisane, Litheko. "Otelo Burning: On the Turbulence of Freedom." *Journal of African Cultural Studies* 26, 3 (2014).
- Mooney, Katie. "'Ducktails, Flick-Knives and Pugnacity': Subcultural and Hegemonic Masculinities in South Africa, 1948-1960." *Journal of Southern African Studies* 24, 4 (December 1998).
- Mooney, Katie. "Identities in the Ducktail Youth Subculture in Post-World-War-Two South Africa." *Journal of Youth Studies* 8, 1 (2005).
- Nendal, Jim. "Surfing in Early Twentieth-Century Hawai'i: The Appropriation of a Transcendent Experience to Competitive American Sport." *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 26, 16 (2009).
- Odendaal, André, "'Neither Cricketers Nor Ladies': Towards a History of Women and Cricket in South Africa, 1860s-2000s." *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 28, 1 (January 2011).
- Olivier, S. "'Your Wave, Bro!': Virtue Ethics and Surfing." *Sport in Society* 13, 7 (2010).
- Ormrod, Joan. "Surf Rhetoric in American and British Surfing Magazines Between 1965 and 1976." *Sport in History* 27, 1 (March 2007).
- Ormrod, Joan. "'Just the Lemon Next to the Pie': Apocalypse, History and the Limits of Myth in *Big Wednesday* (1978)", *Scope: An Online Journal of Film and TV Studies*, 2 (February 2005). Accessed January 18, 2009, [http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/film/journal/articles/big\\_wednesday.htm](http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/film/journal/articles/big_wednesday.htm).
- Ormrod, Joan. "Endless Summer (1964): Consuming waves and surfing the frontier." *Film and History* 35 (1) 2005.
- Osmond, Gary. "Myth-making in Australian Sport History: Re-evaluating Duke Kahanamoku's Contribution to Surfing." *Australian Historical Studies* 42, 2 (2011).
- Petersen, Bhekizizwe. "Otelo Burning (dir. Sara Blecher, 2011)." *Journal of African Cultural Studies* 26, 3 (2014).
- Posel, Deborah. "Races to Consume: Revisiting South Africa's History of Race, Consumption and the Struggle for Freedom." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 33, 2 (2010).

- Preston-Whyte, Robert. "Constructed Leisure Space: The Seaside at Durban." *Annals of Tourism Research* 28, 3 (2001).
- Preston-Whyte, Robert. "Constructions of Surfing Space at Durban, South Africa." *Tourism Geographies* 4, 3 (2002).
- Rassool, Ciraj. "Power, Knowledge and the Politics of the Public Past." *African Studies* 69, 1 (2010).
- Roy, Georgina. "'Taking Emotions Seriously': Feeling Female and Becoming-Surfer through UK Surf Space." *Emotion, Space and Society* 12 (August 2013).
- Roy, Georgina. "Women in Wetsuits: Revolting Bodies in Lesbian Surf Culture." *Journal of Lesbian Studies* 17, 3-4 (2013).
- Rutledge, Brian. "Premesh Lalu's Post-colonial Push: Is it Time to Dismantle the Discipline?" *South African Historical Journal* 63, 1 (2011).
- Samuelson, Meg. "Abdulrazak Gurnah's Fictions of the Swahili Coast: Littoral Locations and Amphibian Aesthetics." *Social Dynamics* 38, 3 (2012).
- Samuelson, Meg. "Sea Changes, Dark Tides and Littoral States: Oceans and Coastlines in Post-apartheid South African Narratives." *Alternation* 6 (2013).
- Samuelson, Meg. "Re-telling Freedom in *Otelo Burning*: The Beach, Surf *Noir*, and *Bildung* at the Lamontville Pool." *Journal of African Cultural Studies* 26, 2 (2014).
- Samuelson, Meg and Glen Thompson. "Interview with Sara Blecher and Sihle Xaba: The Making and Meaning of *Otelo Burning*." *Journal of African Cultural Studies* 26, 3 (2014).
- Spowart, Lucy, Lissette Burrows and Sally Shaw. "'I just Eat, Sleep and Dream of Surfing': When Surfing meets Motherhood." *Sport in Society* 13, 7 (2010).
- Summerfield, Penny. "Concluding Thoughts: Performance, the Self, and Women's History." *Women's History Review* 22, 2 (2013).
- Thompson, Glen. "Judging Surf Culture: The Making of a White Exemplar Masculinity during the 1966 Natal and South African Surfing Championships held in Durban." *Journal of Natal and Zulu History* 26 (2008).
- Thompson, Glen. "'Certain political considerations': South African Competitive Surfing during the International Sports Boycott." *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 28, 1 (January 2011).
- Thompson, Glen. "Reimagining Surf City: Surfing and the Making of the Post-Apartheid Beach in South Africa." *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 28, 15 (October 2011).
- Thompson, Glen. "*Otelo Burning* and Zulu Surfing Histories." *Journal of African Cultural Studies* 26, 2 (2014).
- Thorpe, Holly. "Foucault, Technologies of Self, and the Media: Discourses of Femininity in Snowboarding Culture." *Journal of Sport and Social Issues* 32, 2 (May 2008).
- Tosh, John. "What Should Historians Do With Masculinity? Reflections on 19th Century Britain." *History Workshop Journal* 38 (1994).



Van Sittert, Lance. "To Live This Poor Life": Remembering the Hottentots Huisie Squatter Fishery, Cape Town, c. 1934-c.1965'. *Social History* 26, 1 (2001).

Wheaton, Belinda. "Identity, Politics, and the Beach: Environmental Activism in Surfers Against Sewage." *Leisure Studies* 26, 3 (July 2007).

Wittenberg, Hermann. "Editorial: Coastlines and Littoral Zones in South African Ecocritical Writing." *Alternation* 6 (2013).

Vamplew, Wray. "Playing with the Rules: Influences on the Development of Regulation in Sport." *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 24, 7 (July 2007).

### **Other Articles (Magazines and Selected Newspapers)**

Almond, Elliott. "The Old Man Of The Sea: Shaun Tomson Had Left His Homeland and Overcome One Fear of Surfing." *Los Angeles Times*, 26 June 1986. Accessed September 18, 2011. [http://articles.latimes.com/1985-06-26/sports/sp-1148\\_1\\_shaun-tomson](http://articles.latimes.com/1985-06-26/sports/sp-1148_1_shaun-tomson).

Da Rosa, Karen. "Soul Surfing with the Wedge Boys." *South Coast Style*, 8 February 2011. Accessed October 1, 2014 <http://southcoaststyle.co.za/soul-surfing-with-the-wedge-boys>.

Derwent, Sue. "Zulu Wave Warrior." *Out There*, July 1997. Accessed September 3, 2013. <http://web.archive.org/web/19991009161821/http://www.outthere.co.za/Watersports/surfjuly.html>.

Silver, Edward. "The Last Wave." *Mother Jones* (December 1989).

Koyana, Xolani. "Young Surfer Dies in Shark Attack." *IOL News*, January 17, 2011. Accessed November 14, 2013. <http://www.iol.co.za/news/south-africa/western-cape/young-surfer-dies-in-shark-attack1.1012737>.

### **Theses and Dissertations**

Arnold, Levina. "Opelug-Ontspanningsfasiliteite vir Blanke Kinders in Kaapstad." Masters Thesis (Social Work), Stellenbosch University, 1949.

Crawford, Carin. "The Waves of Transformation: California Surf Culture Since World War II." Masters Thesis (History), University of California, San Diego, 1993.

Dell, Alison. "The History of Surfing." History 3 Long-Essay, University of Natal, Durban, 1992.

Mwandla, Ndodentsha. "Blacks and the Coast: Current Demands and Future Aspiration for Coastal Recreation." Masters Thesis (Geography), University of Zululand, 1995).

Van Oordt, Melissa Joyce. "A Historical Overview of the Origins of Anti-Shark Measures in Natal, 1940-1980." Masters Thesis (History), University of KwaZulu-Natal, Howard College, 2006.

### **Reports**

Digby, Claire. "A Focus on the Extent of Organised Sporting Activities amongst the 'Coloured' People of the Cape Peninsula." Cape Town: Urban Problems Research Unit, University of Cape Town, June 1977.

Human Sciences Research Council, "Unsung Heroes and Heroines of the Liberation Struggle: Draft Report on the Liberation Struggle and Liberation Heritage Sites." June 2013. Accessed August 17, 2014. [http://liberationheritage.co.za/uploads/doc\\_files/Draft\\_Report\\_on\\_ungung\\_heroes\\_and\\_heroines.pdf](http://liberationheritage.co.za/uploads/doc_files/Draft_Report_on_ungung_heroes_and_heroines.pdf).

Valerie Møller and Lawrence Schlemmer. "Attitudes Toward Beach Integration: A Comparative Study of Black and White Reactions to Multiracial Beaches in Durban." Centre for Applied Social Studies, University of Natal, Durban, 1982.

Taylor, Vincent. "Outdoor Recreation of Whites in the Cape Town Metropolitan Area: The Resource Base and Utilization Patterns." Stellenbosch: Institute for Cartographic Analysis, University of Stellenbosch, 1984.

### **Conference and Seminar Papers**

Burns, Catherine. "Writing the History of Sex in South Africa." Paper presented at the Wits Institute of Social and Economic Research (WISER), 6 August 2012.

Crawford, Carin. "Waves of Transformation: California Surf Culture since World War II." *First International and Eleventh MELUS Conference, Multi-Ethnic Literatures Across the Americas and the Pacific: Exchanges, Contestations, and Alliances*, Honolulu, Hawaii, 18 April 1997.

Thompson, Glen. "'Hawaiian Winters' and 'Bay Boys': Representations of Hawai'i, Men and Politics in a South African Surfing Magazine, *Zigzag*, 1977-1980." Paper for the *First International and Eleventh MELUS Conference, Multi-Ethnic Literatures Across the Americas and the Pacific: Exchanges, Contestations, and Alliances*, Honolulu, Hawai'i, 18 April 1997.

Thompson, Glen. "Making Waves, Making Men: The Emergence of Competitive Surfing and the Construction of Masculine Identities in South African Surfing, c.1950s to c.1970s." Paper for the *Masculinities in Southern Africa Colloquium*, University of Natal, Durban, 2 - 4 July 1997.

Thompson, Glen. "'A Surf Riding Contest is Basically a Matter of Opinion': Beach Apartheid, Gender and the Emergence of Competitive Surfing in South Africa during the 1960s and 1970s." Paper for the *Sport History and Sports Studies in Southern Africa International Conference*, 29 June – 3 July 2008.