

APARTHEID AND POST-APARTHEID
DISCOURSES IN SCHOOL SPACE:
A STUDY OF DURBAN

JENNIFER KARLSSON

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
UNIVERSITY OF LONDON
FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY


September 2003

Educational Foundations and Policy Studies
Institute of Education
20 Bedford Way
London WC1H 0AL



DECLARATION

The work presented in this thesis is my own.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jennifer Karlsson", is written over a horizontal line.

Jennifer Karlsson

ABSTRACT

In this thesis the transition from one political dispensation to another provides the opportunity for examining spatial practices and political discourses in South African schools. The starting point is the Lefebvrian proposition that space is inscribed with past and present discourses and that new political discourses establish practices that compel the reshaping of space. Six public schools in the South African city of Durban provided the data and context for the study, which focused on apartheid and post-apartheid spatial practices. The objectives were to identify how the social relations of apartheid were learned through spatial relations in schools, how residual traces of apartheid spatial practices remained after the official demise of that political and economic system in the early 1990s, what forms new spatial practices in schools took and what aspects of the new political dispensation these revealed.

A range of visual methodologies is used as a means to examine questions concerning spatial relations. Data was collected at six schools (three primary and three secondary) five of which exemplify different administration regimes under apartheid, and one of which opened in the post-apartheid era. Data sources comprised photographic observations recorded during participant observation and some photographs taken by learners from the selected schools. In-depth interviews regarding spatial practices during the apartheid era were conducted with eight adults, including one teacher from each school.

Past spatial practices led learners to comprehend apartheid discourse as a nexus of race, class and linguistic hierarchies. Remnants of such spatial practices endure in the conditions at school sites, perpetuating the conjunction of race and class in particular, despite the termination of apartheid education. In the post-apartheid era new spatial practices have emerged that reconfigure social relations within school premises along past hierarchies and in the way that schools work together with other social services. These practices reflect a discursive uncertainty as to whether shared or narrow interests will be the greater force forging political discourse in public schools in the future.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Several years ago my friend and colleague, John Pampallis, advised me to seek out Elaine Unterhalter, a South African scholar who had settled abroad, for the supervision of my thesis. His advice represented an institutional practice of Education Policy Units in South Africa. In the twilight years of apartheid, these organisations had sent their researchers for professional development among South Africans in exile at universities in the United Kingdom. Though I did not know Elaine then, I have come to know the privilege of receiving her guidance for this thesis. I was exceedingly naïve at the outset to stray into my chosen field of study when my previous work had been in library and information studies. Elaine was adventurous enough to look past such obstacles and urged me onwards, helping me to craft my blunt ideas into something worthwhile.

The cost of study abroad is prohibitive for most South Africans, but this research was made possible through financial assistance from several sources, for which I am deeply grateful. I received a scholarship from the National Research Foundation in South Africa, and a grant towards field expenses from the University of London. My employer, the Education Policy Unit (Natal), allowed me two sabbaticals and contributed towards my fees. Opinions expressed in this thesis and conclusions arrived at, are my own and are not necessarily to be attributed to these organisations and institutions.

Many others have assisted me, and I thank them all. However, I must mention especially the six schools that allowed me to wander around their premises, learners who photographed their experience of school for me, and teachers and a colleague who let me trawl through their memories; librarians from the Education Policy Unit (Natal) and Institute of Education who tracked down numerous publications; my colleagues in Durban who were understanding when I was unavailable to them; my scattered friends Michele, Ingrid, Rob, John and Karin, and my mother, who is always there for me, as well as Hannah and Thor. But it was Fassil who inspired this intellectual journey and pointed me to new ways of seeing.

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CHAPTER 1: AT THE ENTRANCE: OUTLINE OF THE STUDY



1.1. THE STUDY AND ITS OVERALL AIM

During the decades of apartheid rule (1948-1994), racist discrimination was systemically inscribed on South African schooling. Nothing was exempted. The curriculum, teaching and learning practices, per capita funding and salaries, teacher education, administrative authorities, institutional governance, learning and sporting facilities, textbooks, the school calendar, examinations, school architecture and basic infrastructural utilities: all bore testimony to the apartheid ideology of white supremacy. Although most apartheid education laws were repealed in 1995-6, approximately 27,000 school premises remained much as they were during the apartheid years, 1948-94 (Department of Education, 1998a:97). In early 2000, for several hours each school day about 12 million South African children returned wearing the same uniforms to those same schools, classrooms and playing fields that once resonated unambiguously with racist discrimination. Yet many things have changed: discrimination and segregation in education were prohibited in 1994 and a unitary non-racial education system has been

established. However, differences between schools in the bricks and mortar, foundation stones, chalkboards and the basic utilities of toilets, electricity and running water, remain stubbornly embedded within the past. These features in the material conditions of schools represent collectively the discriminatory intent inherited from apartheid education planning. This study examines what those differences in school space meant for learners of years past, how the spaces constituted apartheid relations, and how the transition from one political dispensation to another has left a residue of that past. It looks at how school space has been reconstituted with different meanings and social relations in the post-apartheid era.

The conditions in South Africa's apartheid-era schools followed the legislative and fiscal framework of that system, an exploitative social arrangement that was quintessentially spatial in its discriminatory separation of communities and social relations on the basis of race. The material features of the built environment and accompanying practices in the government's schools were developed from the style of early European schools in South Africa that had been borrowed and introduced by colonial administrators, settler teachers and missionaries (Jacklin, 1995:3; Morrell, 2001:51).

At the start of 1990, President de Klerk unbanned the extra-parliamentary liberation organisations such as the African National Congress, South African Communist Party and Pan African Congress. This heralded the process of political negotiation and dismantling of apartheid. Leading up to national elections in 1994, the ANC and its alliance partners published the *Policy Framework for Education and Training* (African National Congress, 1994). While this became the seminal text to inform post-apartheid education policy, neither this nor its foundational volumes from the *National Education Policy Investigation* (National Education Policy Investigation, 1993), nor the National Party's *Education Renewal Strategy* (Department of National Education, 1992), gave significant consideration to school space.

In the post-apartheid era, two *School Register of Needs Surveys* (Human Sciences Research Council, Education Foundation and Research Institute for Education Planning, 1997; Department of Education, c2001) measured inequalities in basic infrastructure, utilities, facilities and conditions of school environments and the effect of government's redress and equity strategy that channels the greater part of school funding to disadvantaged and neglected schools. Notwithstanding the yield of important and

previously unavailable data, the *Surveys* only monitored and tallied indicators of water, power, libraries, laboratories, sports fields and the condition of buildings, and needs such as the number of classrooms and toilets to be constructed. The *Surveys* were unconcerned about qualitative dimensions such as how such spatial conditions influence everyday social relations, how practices for teaching and learning, management, governance, and discipline are constituted in space. They ignored ways in which school space is structured and used to control site access and monitor the activities of learners and teachers, advertise commodities, generate revenue and possibly entrench authoritarian social relations.

These omissions are not trivial. Whether spatial relations and practices augment or subvert the formal curriculum, they are powerful vectors for communicating social values to children and youth, stimulating them to construct their identities and understandings of social organisation and control in particular ways, and providing the scaffolding for future careers and road maps for making their way in an adult world. This study of school space specifically addresses itself to these neglected spatial concerns.

This examination of spatiality is premised on an understanding that schools are more than simply instructional sites. Instead, schools are conceived as commingled in the composite institutional landscape of society, so that how school space is used, configured and appropriated through spatial practices is laden with information and meaning that is not discrete to schooling alone but is about the society as a whole. Thus, by examining school space, this study aims to illuminate aspects of deeper social organisation, ordering and meanings that are hidden and unobtrusively communicated to learners in and through school spatial relations and practices. In order to examine these questions more closely, I have undertaken this study of spatiality at six schools in the city of Durban.

In the South African context, this study of school space aims to offer insights into how public schools carried meanings about racial division and discrimination, what elements of apartheid remain embedded and operative despite the demise of that political dispensation, which new practices and relations are emerging and what meanings they might hold in the post-apartheid dispensation. Such deliberations about these deeper meanings in South African school space entail discussions using concepts

such as space and spatiality, discourse and the discursive field, as well as South African constructions of racialised categories, all of which need careful explication.

1.2. KEY CONCEPTS IN THE FIELD OF STUDY

At the outset it is important to define how I use the main concepts that are pivotal to the study and occur frequently throughout the thesis.

Unlike the layperson's narrow notion of *space* as a physical measurable area, landscape and stage or container to be filled with objects, my use of this concept springs from an understanding of space as a complex realm that always manifests in the dimension of time, and is of most sociological interest because it concerns ways social subjects relate to each other. In this thesis my concerns about physical space are limited to the built environment that can be assembled and reassembled, navigated, inhabited and experienced by subjects. Physical space is not static and fixed, but concerns ensembles and interrelationships of physical objects and beings. I also understand space as intangible and in the mental realm that is experienced through the imagination. I will employ this understanding of space in my discussions of memories, metaphors and representations such as photographs and signs. When social subjects act in, with and through the physical and mental dimensions of space – simultaneously in the dimension of time – I will refer to this as a *spatial practice*. Using this notion living itself can be said to be a spatial practice. *Spatiality* is the noun used to express spatial quality, character or existence.

Discourse and *discursive field* are two other frequently occurring concepts that require explication here. For this study of space, my use of the term *discourse* refers to the systems of meaning in material arrangements of objects and people, social practices and interactions, and relational positions with which subjects can identify (Howarth and Stavrakakis, 2000:3). The concept, however, originated from an analysis of written and spoken language, prompting some analysts to refer to the organising logic of a discourse as its 'grammar' (Kress and van Leeuwen, 1996; Norval, 1996:3). Meaning is not intrinsic to the physical object/s but they become invested with meaning in the way they are deployed singularly and in concert, and differently from other arrangements, to represent a significance or idea. Thus, a practice that involves objects and people in particular arrangements and relations in space might be described as having discursive meaning. I use the term discourse in relation to particular discourses, such as apartheid

discourse, where the consistency and recurrence of these arrangements establish and articulate a coherent system of meaning.

. The area or domain in which spatial arrangements that are invested with meaning occur can be referred to as a *discursive field*. In this thesis, school space is posited as the discursive field under investigation.

South Africa's recent history of apartheid classifications of identification has made it difficult to discuss social relations analytically without reference to racialised categories. The somewhat arbitrarily named categories of race, alluding to phenotype, language and geography, were legislated in the Population Registration Act of 1950, bearing witness to the constructed nature of such social identifications. These racialised categories and their underpinning logic were resisted through inversions of the white/non-white to white/black, that yielded alternative identifications with their own logic to unite opposition to the apartheid regime (Howarth, 2000a:173-5). In the post-apartheid era, the repeal of legislated racial classification has given rise to keen social debate about identity and re-racialisation tendencies in endeavours to redress inequalities inherited from the past (Posel, 2001:69).

The four categories I use in this thesis are *black* (rather than African), *white*, *coloured* and *Indian*. The 'black' descriptor is used to refer to the original inhabitants of Africa. I prefer the term 'black' to 'African'. Both terms are problematic by virtue of their usage, which is often interchangeable and loose, and some speakers use them intentionally, as I do in this thesis, to articulate different political projects. 'Black' was first popularised and used politically within the Black Consciousness Movement as an umbrella-unifying technique for South Africans who were not 'white', to mobilise opposition to the apartheid regime, promote self-esteem and build a shared identity (Howarth, 2000a:174). Although many speakers use the term 'African' to indicate the racialisation of people of black African descent, this term is gaining currency as a self-identifier among some white, coloured or Indian people in the post-apartheid era. This identification practice aims to promote social cohesion for the post-apartheid political project, and to signal the affiliation of loyalties of those people to Africa rather than other continents.

'White' is used to indicate people of diverse settler and migrant origin, mainly from European countries, who settled in South Africa over three centuries. Originally, settler communities were predominantly from the Netherlands and British Isles, giving

rise to two cultural groups clustered around language (Afrikaans or English), culture and religion. White migrants from other societies also settled in South Africa over the years, diffusing the English/Afrikaner white community. The descriptor of 'coloured' refers to people of mixed-race origin, which occurred through miscegenation mainly between white settlers and black servants, as well as descendants of former Dutch East India Company slaves. 'Indian' indicates people whose ancestors mainly originated from the continent of India, either as indentured labourers in 1860 or later arrivals of merchants and their families. I use racialised categories in this thesis because this is unavoidably necessary for an analytical discussion of school space that was racially segregated during the apartheid-era.

1.3. THE PROBLEM OF SCHOOL SPACE

In researching the problem of school space, two particular facets have been isolated for special attention in this study. The first relates to the nature of school space and how it can be theorised as a discursive field. The second concerns discourses that are of special concern in South African school space, namely the apartheid and post-apartheid transformation discourses, and how they are inflected in schools. Each facet is discussed separately in this section although they are interrelated in everyday life.

School space as a discursive field

Although many liberal and conservative approaches to inquiry view schools as institutions engaged in a neutral and apolitical process of educating learners and preparing them for adult life in society, many scholars (see for example, Apple, 1995; McLaren, 1995; Bernstein, 1996; Murphy and Gipps, 1996; Freire, 1996/1970; Teese, 1997) have asserted that education serves to (re)produce social values and power relations. From a critical perspective schools are implicated in the enculturation of individuals as:

(t)hey learn the system and conventions of representation, the codes of their language and culture, which equip them with cultural 'know-how' enabling them to function as culturally competent subjects. Not because such knowledge is imprinted in their genes, but because they learn its conventions and so gradually become 'cultured persons' - i.e. members of their culture. They unconsciously internalize the codes which allow them to express certain concepts and ideas through their systems of representation -

writing, speech, gesture, visualization, and so on - and to interpret ideas which are communicated to them using the same systems (Hall, 1997a:22).

This suggests that the order and priorities of society are not inherent and inherited notions, but that through the long exposure to the active and passive induction process of schooling learners might be assimilating and internalising social values and socially constructed positions and permutations of power, as well as the protocols and political knowledge for navigating social organisation and hierarchies of power.

The reproductive nature of the schooling process is achieved through the way schools operate as carriers and propagators of discourses. These discourses are hidden in practices that allow activities and social relations to privilege certain groups over others, and certain forms of knowledge and visions about the past, present, and future to predominate (McLaren, 1995:30-2). That process does not happen in a disembodied abstract space. It involves three-dimensional schools and social actors in space and time, shaping the quotidian of learners and other participants in schools, as they spatially experience and engage physically, mentally and socially in those school sites and activities. In South African schools during the apartheid era, the ideology of white supremacy and its attendant discriminatory social hierarchy would have been among the primary values and knowledge reproduced discursively in the quotidian of school space.

Nevertheless, within the critical tradition, a perspective that coincides with my own understanding of education portrays schools also as potentially agencies for subverting a narrow reproductive social agenda that privileges a minority instead of advancing social transformation (Apple, 1995; McLaren, 1995; Freire, 1996/1970). The critical perspective is alert to the availability and malleability of school space for the political reproduction project of dominant social groups, because it is recognised that too often the layperson naïvely accepts the physical school environment of construction materials and architecture as a backdrop, transparent and free of any ideological implication (Gordon, Holland and Lahelma, 2000:137-8). In this way principals, teachers and parents accept without question many of the most universal spatial practices in schools. For example, the social stratification of grouping learners by age and allocating each group a separated and (usually) enclosed space for differentiated learning with appropriate forms of equipment, materials and activities to suit the group is usually regarded as the appropriate way of teaching children (James, Jenks and Prout, 1998:41-2). School rules about entrances for learners versus the visitors' entrance,

places for walking, running and lining up, corridor and playground usage, playground duty for teachers, and prohibiting learners from standing near boundary fences are not challenged for how they control and monitor the movement of learners in school space. Such regimes perpetuate the order and behaviour preferred by those with power.

Various critical pedagogy studies on South Africa and other settings (see Kallaway, 1984; McLaren, 1989; Van Zanten, 1990; Unterhalter et al., 1991; National Education Policy Investigation, 1993; Harber, 1995; Nespor, 1997; Christie, 1998; Hyslop, 1999; Taylor and Vinjevold, 1999a; Van Zanten, 2001) acknowledge the fundamental that schooling occurs within a space called 'school' comprising a physical environment laden with culture, enculturation 'apparatuses', a value system, and governance and administrative structures. Nevertheless, as a discrete category for analysis, school space has been under-researched in favour of the more common historical, economic, sociological and pedagogic categories. The earliest empirical investigations of school space were undertaken in France (see Van Zanten, 1990; 2001) and the United States (see Nespor, 1997), two countries where intellectual communities have engaged in inter-disciplinary debate about theorising spatiality in the post-modern era (Soja, 1989:43, 52).

The two threads in the problem of school space (that it is discursive and relatively under-researched) have led me to questions about political discourses in school space and the way South African school space is appropriated as an arena for political discourse.

Discourses in South African school space

If schooling has a social production function, the examination of South African school space to explore how apartheid discourse was produced and reproduced spatially and how new discourses are being produced, stands as a worthwhile project. Studies of South African architecture, planning and urbanisation (see Lemon, 1991b; Beavon, 1992; Dewar, 1992; Robinson, 1996; Demissie, 1998; Judin and Vladislavic, 1998) and history and literature (see McClintock, 1995; Darian-Smith, Gunner and Nuttall, 1996) have argued that space was central to the character of apartheid's social reproduction. Indeed, the way the former National Party government in South Africa constructed and reproduced apartheid in school space may be a classic exemplar of social determinism in which social relations and hierarchies become structurally fixed. At the opening of

the *blank_architecture, apartheid and after* exhibition in December 1998 in Rotterdam, Carl Niehaus, South Africa's then ambassador to the Netherlands, referred to the spatial embeddedness of apartheid discourse in the present as 'the dictatorship of the architecture of the past' (Haffajee, 1998:42).

Scholarly analyses of apartheid education have tended, however, to focus on race and class in the political, economic and social stratification that played out in racially differentiated curricula, school funding and legislation (see Christie and Collins, 1984; Kallaway, 1984; Cross, 1986; Cross and Chisholm, 1990; Nkomo, 1990b; Unterhalter et al., 1991; Wolpe, 1991; Taylor, 1993). A dimension that has been overlooked, however, is the study of how apartheid discourse was practised spatially at schools and its role in domination and subordination. It is the relative permanence of physical space that in the post-apartheid era poses an uneasy challenge to education policy developers and planners. Understanding the extent to which apartheid practices remain inscribed deeply and concretely (literally) in school space and how they have shaped social relations is important if South African educationists are to understand the extent of the transformation endeavour and the resources and effort it requires.

There is a need to examine the school types that catered for learners across the racial and class divides of the country during the apartheid era of 1948-94, and to analyse their differentiated spaces - not to celebrate diversity but to understand the ways these forms of institutional difference resonate with apartheid.

The durability of schools and their site location poses challenges for transformation, for even when school managers rearrange the way they use space in existing schools, their efforts might be constrained by the durability of buildings, walls, windows and doorways - not to mention the permanence of a locality's spatial arrangement. The discourse that determined past formation, architecture and social relations therefore places a limit on the post-apartheid transformation project. However, the relative permanence of the built environment that makes it an index of the past that is more durable than spoken language and less vulnerable than written texts that can be mislaid, lost, erased and that deteriorate rapidly, is advantageous for researching the past in the present (Morris, 1986:11). This study, therefore, asks questions about where and how apartheid discourse continues to reside in school space and exert influence, and the ways in which a post-apartheid discourse is beginning to manifest in school space.

1.4. AIMS AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Arising from the framing of the problem of school space above, there are two aims in this study:

- i. To examine the different spatial practices that manifested the discourse of apartheid in public schools and that is embedded and residual in post-apartheid school space;
- ii. To identify new spatial practices in South African schools that might signal the post-apartheid political discourse.

Four research questions, flowing from the overarching question that drives the direction of the study, are:

- i. What spatial practices at urban public schools are attributable to apartheid discourse?
- ii. How do differences in school spatial practices provide continuity for apartheid discourse even though apartheid policies have been disbanded in the post-apartheid era?
- iii. What new spatial practices in public school space indicate the nascent political discourse of the post-apartheid era?
- iv. For post-apartheid policy makers, what are the implications of embedded apartheid discourse and what are the potentialities emerging in trajectories of new political discourses in public school space?

1.5. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study is significant because it makes a contribution to sociological knowledge of education in two ways. First, literature theorising and explicating spatial formations in society has paid scant attention to school space. This is true of the work from the French social theorist Henri Lefebvre (1971; 1991; 1996) and geographers such as Anglo-Americans Edward Soja (1989; 1996; 1997; 2000) and Doreen Massey (1994; 1999). These scholars have focused on urban and city studies and related labour and economic markets. South African geographers such as Jennifer Robinson (1996; 1998) have been little different, though their empirical work has been valuably grounded in the African political context.

Although the work of French sociologists of education, such as M-C Derouet-Besson (1984) and Agnes van Zanten (1990), indicate that there was a growing corpus of literature and empirical studies about relations between school space and the urban context before 1990, similar publications among Anglo-American and other European educationists only appeared late in that decade. These were ethnographies of school spatiality from Jan Nesor (1997) in the United States, and Tuula Gordon, Janet Holland and Elina Lahelma (1996; 1997; 1998; 2000) in a London-Helsinki collaboration. Carrie Paechter (1998; 2000), from the United Kingdom, also foregrounded space as an important aspect for the inflection of power and gender in her critical analyses of schooling and curriculum. This study will be, therefore, among the first studies in the English-speaking world to concentrate on school as a spatial formation within the social context.

My thesis is also significant in its focus on political discourse that has not been addressed in other school spatiality studies. In education researches, linguistic forms of discourse are usually given primacy. But Henri Lefebvre, the French social theorist, cautioned against neglecting the spatial dimension:

To underestimate, ignore and diminish space amounts to the overestimation of texts, written matter, and writing systems, along with the readable and the visible, to the point of assigning to these a monopoly on intelligibility (Lefebvre, 1991:62).

The spatial dimension of how public schools have become deeply implicated in the political process of producing and reproducing social relations and power in society has been largely unrecognised and therefore under-researched. This is apparent in the *National Education Policy Investigation* (National Education Policy Investigation, 1993), which segmented its debates and deliberations into thirteen reports that were silent about the interface of spatiality in the system and each structural and sub-sector focus. It is important that educationists begin to recognise school space as a discursive field and, particularly for South African scholars, that they research the connection between discourses such as apartheid and spatiality in schools. In that respect, this thesis opens up a relatively unexplored terrain for theoretical analysis by examining how changes in political dispensations manifest in discursive spatial practices at school, which practices are sufficiently robust and embedded in school space to outlive a political dispensation after its official termination, and new spatial practices that convey meanings ascending as post-apartheid political discourse.

1.6. OUTLINE OF THE THESIS

The conceit of naming chapters for places linked to school, with complementary photographs, brings thematic unity to the structure of the thesis. In this chapter, we have stood at the entrance to the imagined school site to apprehend the object of the study, its boundaries, its concepts, and to signpost my route through the thesis.

In the second chapter, I 'line up to go in' and learn from scholars who have gone before me in theorising spatiality. I tackle the key concepts and theories that frame the study. On the whole, these are drawn from the disciplines of geography and urban planning. I discuss the way in which Henri Lefebvre, Edward Soja, Doreen Massey and others theorise space, and look at treatments of school within a city context. I then trace how key education theorists conceptualise school space and review how South African writers are contributing to these debates.

Considering my methodological approach to this study, I depict myself standing at the threshold of the door to the school reception office and present this as the theme for Chapter 3. Seeing my own image staring back in the glass is the starting point at which I reflect on my identity as a researcher and white South African woman who attended public schools during the apartheid era. I explain my methodology as being primarily visual with ethnographic aspects. Secondly, I address the constructedness of the instruments, data and analysis while discussing the unit of analysis, research methods and how I selected the schools and participants. I justify these choices and their ethical implications in relation to this as a study of South African school space and give an account of the analytical frame I use to work towards answering the research questions.

Following Edward Soja's spatio-analytical style of writing, in chapter 4, I climb aboard an imagined school bus for an excursion to visit the six schools in the city of Durban. Through this technique I describe the school sites, sketch the spatio-temporal social context of the schools on which the study draws, locating them within the colonial, apartheid and post-apartheid eras of Durban in an unfolding story of race, class and gender inflected by the politics of the city.

In chapter 5, memories of school space highlight the differences that drove 'a kind of gap between us', those who attended South African schools during the apartheid era. I discuss memory accounts from eight adults who attended South African schools during the apartheid era in order to illuminate how school space was appropriated for

teaching and learning apartheid. Following this, I draw out the places and ways in which they learned about apartheid's hierarchies while they were in school uniform either while at school or travelling to and from school. For this I closely analyse some selected memory capsules that indicate how participants learned to position themselves within that stratification.

In chapter 6, I begin looking at the political discourse of apartheid, and I identify some of the key features relevant for a discussion of school space. In my exploration of photographs of schools taken in the post-apartheid era, I show that spatial practices continue to promote apartheid discourse in that they mirror racial hierarchy and discrimination even though apartheid has been officially abandoned. These spatial practices, however, only become clearly apparent in a cross-case analysis of school spaces. I isolate examples of places where these practices predominate and argue that non-pedagogic space has the greatest tendency for the retention of apartheid discourse.

The future discourse of the post-apartheid era is the focus of chapter 7 and I start by examining new spatial practices at the schools that would not have been present during the apartheid era. A typology of new practices is identified and I explore the meanings the practices may indicate for political discourses of the post-apartheid political dispensation. I also consider schools with deteriorating material conditions and explore the spatial practices that might account for the decay and their discursive implications.

In the concluding chapter I sum up the main findings in relation to the research questions posed at the outset of the thesis. Then I consider the implications of finding residual strands of apartheid discourse co-existing alongside spatial practices that suggest emerging post-apartheid discourses, and the potential opportunities and dangers in the new trends. I reflect critically on my study and identify some limitations before closing with suggestions about issues that deserve further investigation and possible directions for future research.

CHAPTER 2: LINING UP TO GO IN: THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS



2.1. INTRODUCTION

When we say that school is a social space, what is meant by ‘space’ and ‘school space’ in particular? In the South African school context, we need to understand both how spatiality constituted apartheid relations and how apartheid was taught and learnt in school space. In addition, we need to explore how school spatiality is being reconstituted for a different meaning and different relations in the post-apartheid era.

Many scholars in diverse disciplines are now writing about spatiality; those that I have cited here were selected for their relevance to the discussion of the above questions. In this chapter, I first look at how space is theoretically framed as a discursive field and consider some principles of how space functions. Second, I explore how spatiality has been taken up, elaborated and applied by some post-modern geographers. Third, I expand my scope to consider education theorists who have been

influential in South African writings on education and how they use space as an analytical tool, and lastly, how writers within South Africa are addressing questions of school space.

2.2. THE SPATIAL TURN

In the latter half of the 20th century, a number of social scientists began to enquire about and debate social space. This shift away from a predominantly historical approach concerned primarily with change over time, has been described as the ‘spatial turn’ (Soja, 1989:39). In this section, I briefly retrace that development before examining a number of approaches to theorising space.

It is sometimes argued that, together with time and nature, space is an *a priori* dimension that forms the philosophical background of all social theory (Shields, 1997:188). In the 19th and 20th centuries, capitalist modernisation reached a zenith through industrial and technological successes, confirming much of the Marxian theory of social class dialectics (Benko, 1997:2-7). The sociological field of study expanded as scholars began to examine national and imperial conquests, class conflicts, markets and accumulation of capital. Too often, the spatial dimension of these enquiries was not discussed as an important and separate category of analysis even among critical social theorists such as Marx who concentrated his analysis on history, politics and economics (Price, 1986:3-37). However, the awakening in the 20th century to the potential of space as an analytical category was led by spatial disciplines of planning and architecture, which conceptualised and designed new urban forms for a modernist society such as in Le Corbusier’s functionalist buildings (Demissie, 1995).

The spatial discipline of geography lagged behind as geographers concentrated on regional studies (Cresswell, 1996:11) which ‘degenerated into an essentially descriptive and untheorized collection of facts’ (Massey, 1984:2). In the 1960s, human geographers were caught up in the positivist pursuit of quantitative research that focused on mathematical modelling and reduced spatial concerns to issues of distance (Massey, 1984:2). Those writing in English attempted to theorise the spatial organisation of society through common principles that underpin human behaviour and stress efficient use of space in various locations (Morrill, 1970; Relph, 1976; Tuan, 1977). They failed, however, to question how space inflects power in society and might be used as an organising principle to create and maintain social stratification (Cresswell, 1996:12-13).

For this, a set of analytical tools different from descriptive accounts and mathematical modelling was needed. These tools would explore the interface of power, space and social relations.

The late 1960s and 1970s were years of rapid social change that are regarded by some as the beginning of the post-modern, post-industrial era (Benko, 1997:7). The established order of the modern nation state and market was disrupted by the uncertainty of accelerated change and mobility, social fragmentation, alienation from western Judeo-Christian values and cultural practices and commodification on an unprecedented scale. Many countries in the developing world gained independence from their colonial rulers, while the western world was troubled with urban resistance sparked by uneven industrial development, inner city decay, unemployment, the United States' involvement in Vietnam and the rise of youth sub-cultures. The turbulent change of those times brought attention to uneven development.

Together with the growing disquiet about development inequalities and dependency dynamics between the west and the independent former colonies, the 1980s ushered in two decades of diverse challenges to the modernist way of thinking about society's structures. These included contradictory social turbulence, the diminishing ethos and milieu of local places through constructed cultural façades at shopping malls, the 'McDonaldisation' phenomenon, the growing importance of 'non-spaces' such as airports (Benko, 1997:23-6), and the increasing importance of communication technologies that transcended spatial limits (Shields, 1997:195).

Spatial questions were posed from critical, feminist and post-modern perspectives as geographers tried to understand the unsettled social space of late capitalism (Natter and Jones, 1997:5). Such enquiries breached the discipline of geography by opening up sociological questions about context and the contingency of social relations. Thus, post-colonial, diasporic, feminist, gay/lesbian, auto/biographical and other marginalised embodiment themes formed a corpus of literature that was space/place conscious. This is illustrated in examples such as Paul Carter's (1987) classic critique of Cook's 'discovery' of Australia, in which he explicated how space was used metaphorically in spatial forms and place names to articulate conquest and social organisation. Similarly, in his study of colonial texts from former South West Africa, John Noyes (1992:12) rejects the limited conception of space as a physical stage for accounts of imperial history. Instead, he uses space to explicate the workings of colonisation as a political

discourse, in his analysis of articulations between territory and textual representations. Avtah Brah (1996:1-16), in her writing about diasporic identities, quashes the validity and reliability of space/place when it is used as a marker and representation of, for example, ethnic identity. Lastly, Steven Robins (2000) uses the category of space to explicate trends in the marketing of South African cities to international tourists, in which the space-race interstices of the apartheid city are avoided in preference for the commodification of poverty which is masqueraded as an exotic cultural heritage.

Many of the writers about social space cite the work of the French social theorist, Henri Lefebvre. I, too, use Lefebvre's theory of space as the theoretical framing for this study of school space. My reasons are diverse. In the first instance, *The Production of Space* (Lefebvre, 1991) was among the early volumes I read on spatiality for this study, and another South African education researcher (Petersen, 1998) had explored his ideas to explicate plausibly developments in public school space. Second, Lefebvre is widely acclaimed among Anglo-American scholars for his 'magisterial' (Harvey, 1991:425) and critical theorisation of spatiality within society, which offers a comprehensive framework for understanding school as a social space. Michael Foucault's (1977/91; 1980; 1984; 1986) writings on space are less extensive and limited to particular institutional formations such as prisons. Lefebvre's (1968; 1969; 1971; 1996) elaboration of the discursive capacity of space, which was gainfully used for my study of political discourses in school space within an urban social context, is augmented in some of his other work in which he expounds his political understanding of social justice and writes about urban events and cities as a social formation.

2.3. HENRI LEFEBVRE

Henri Lefebvre (c1901-1991),¹ a French philosopher and prolific exponent of Marxism, lectured at the University of Nanterre during the May 1968 student uprising in Paris. Protests against the authorities concerned urban problems of poverty and alienation (Harvey, 1991:430-1). Lefebvre's (1969) ensuing analysis about the spontaneity of these critical events and their relation to urbanisation and his critique of everyday life (1971) led him to formulate a unitary theory of space and social relations. Because the English translation of *La Production de L'espace*, published in French in

¹ The accuracy of Lefebvre's birthdate is uncertain with the Encarta encyclopedia citing 1905 as the correct year. Lefebvre was allegedly secretive about his correct birthdate, whimsically implying that his birth coincided with the start of the 20th century (Soja, 1996).

1974, became available only in 1991, his ideas were slow to be received among Anglo scholars. Among the first were human geographers and urban planners because of the relevance of his theory to their disciplinary interests, which are spatial and include the city.

Lefebvre was invited by the post-modernists Frederic Jameson and Edward Soja² to present a series of guest lectures at the University of California in 1983-4 (Soja, 1996:28). Edward Soja (1989; 1996; 2000) has since emerged as Lefebvre's disciple and exponent. Although Lefebvre may be a little-known philosopher internationally and beyond spatial disciplines, he is not alone in flagging up spatiality as a central question about society. Indeed, Michel Foucault's (1977/91; 1980) analysis of power in institutions is spatial in the way he analyses the operation of institutional sites. However, Foucault's analysis is weighted towards power rather than space, and in Lefebvre's eyes, Foucault drew only on space in relation to peripheral examples of prisoners, the sick and marginal groups, unlike Lefebvre who emphasises space as the foundation for understanding human history (White, 1993:90) and theorises the spatial implications of central political power for the everyday life of the mass of people.

Increasingly in the 1990s, scholars from other disciplines began to consider Lefebvre's ideas and explore spatiality as an analytical category. In the fields of politics (Elden, c1998), literary criticism (Phillips, 1998) and development studies (for example, on El Salvador and Faroe Islands see Beard, 1997; and Haldrup, c2001, respectively), it has been argued that Lefebvre's work extends Marx's theory of social change and the political economy by foregrounding the political importance of space.

2.4. LEFEBVRE'S THEORY OF SPATIALITY

For Lefebvre space is neither a 'thing' in itself nor a container for society; instead, he redefines space as lived simultaneously within physical and mental realms (1991:73,83). He asserts that social relations 'project themselves into a space, becoming inscribed there, and in that process producing that space itself' (1991:129). In turn, space reproduces and shapes social relations. Lefebvre outlines the circularity and simultaneity of this dialectical process by saying that:

² A following among some Anglo geographers who read 'underground' translations of Lefebvre's original French texts had grown in California, United States (Pers. Comm. Fassil Demissie on 23 March 2001 in London, United Kingdom).

Social space contains a great diversity of objects, both natural and social, including the networks and pathways which facilitate the exchange of material things and information. Such 'objects' are thus not only things but also relations (Lefebvre, 1991:77).

In addition to social space being a process, Lefebvre describes it as an outcome of complex processes:

Every social space is the outcome of a process with many aspects and many contributing currents, signifying and non-signifying, perceived and directly experienced, practical and theoretical (Lefebvre, 1991:110).

Thus, the complex nature of social space emerges in the triad of spatiality i.e. a physically apprehended space, imagined or conceived, as a mental space, and encountered as lived space, which is both perceived and conceived in its duality as simultaneously process and outcome. Nevertheless, these distinctions are inadequate to explicate the spatial outcome. For that, Lefebvre employed a second conceptual triad of spatial practices, representations of space and representational spaces (Lefebvre, 1991:33,38-9).

i. Spatial practices concern society's relational use and physical positioning and repositioning of things in space over time to reflect its changing knowledge and values. Lefebvre uses the metaphor of secretion to describe the concealed nature of the process:

The spatial practice of a society secretes that society's space; ... it produces it slowly and surely as it masters and appropriates it. From the analytic standpoint, the spatial practice of a society is revealed through the deciphering of its space (Lefebvre, 1991:38).

The particularity of a spatial practice relates to the society that rendered it. Every social formation forges its discourse in a particular spatial practice through its own distinctive way of using and appropriating space. As Lefebvre succinctly puts it:

...every society ... produces a space, its own space (Lefebvre, 1991:31).

Spatial practices are not fixed and permanent. The metaphor of secretion also yields the sense of flux. The spatially produced arrangements of social relations slowly gain currency as the established norm of a society, or are resisted and ignored, to be displaced by newly asserted spatial practices, rendering the first practice docile, dormant or obsolete.

ii. Representations of space (1991:38-9) are imagined or conceived ideas presented in spatial forms such as architectural plans of schools, signboards and crests. Linked and associated with social relationships and their organisational logic, representations of space are:

...tied to the relations of production and to the 'order' which those relations impose, and hence to the knowledge, to signs, to codes, and to 'frontal' relations (Lefebvre, 1991:33).

As symbolic forms, representations of space can act as the masks or encodings for social relationships. Through their association with relationships, they exert order and control space in a social setting. Representations of space are mentally conceived and influenced by practices that are then intellectually worked out emblematically. Urban planners, architects, designers and scientists craft representations of space, and the representational object will be discursive in that it conveys a deeper meaning than its surface appearance.

iii. Representational spaces (1991:39-42) are experienced and directly lived-in spaces that individuals and communities inhabit:

...everyday life also figures in representational spaces – or perhaps it would be more accurate to say that it forms such spaces (Lefebvre, 1991:116).

These spaces draw together perceived (experienced and physical) spatial practice and conceived (imagined and mental) representations of space in a dialectic that is also time bound. The dialectic yields contradictions and ambiguities that Lefebvre asserts is because directly lived representational spaces 'need obey no rules of consistency or cohesiveness' (1991:41).

Schools may be analysed as representational spaces in that they are an amalgam of the direct spatial experience of everyday teaching and learning activities and routines, physically perceived objects within the premises, and conceptions of things like order rules and academic performance in the encoded representations of space. It is this complex of relationships, production, meaning and experience that renders representational spaces a compelling field of analysis.

The triad of spatial practices, representations of space and representational spaces as aspects of social space is recognised by reviewers of *The Production of Space* as

Lefebvre’s own significant contribution to the theorisation of space (see Soja, 1989; White, 1993; Westfall, 1994; Merrifield, 1995; Soja, 1996; Soja, 2000; Elden, c1998).

Lefebvre cautions against reducing social space to an abstraction, and urges any analysis of social space to retain the interconnected unity of experienced space in all its dimensions and over time. Thus, in mapping his conceptions of space, spatial change, and power onto the built environment of real places and directing his attention to matters of form and function, Lefebvre extends his theorisation to incorporate a third triad, of spatial realms that constitute form and function (1991:147-158). He contends that all built environments follow an arrangement of the three realms that extend between the centre of city power to the periphery and the private domain of the citizen. He terms these the *global* realm comprising society’s most treasured and prestigious domains, the *private* realm of home, ablutions and other intimate activities, and an *intermediate* realm of passage and transition between the *global* and *private* realms. In turn, each realm is organised with sub-realms according to the same order.

Table 1: Lefebvre’s scheme of realms

Realms	Sub-realms
Global	Global
	Intermediate
	Private
Intermediate	Global
	Intermediate
	Private
Private	Global
	Intermediate
	Private

The triadic scheme of realms helps to ground applications of Lefebvre’s spatial conceptions in real space/place and, together with his entire conceptual framework, spatial forms such as cities and schools can be mapped spatio-analytically as exemplified in Table 1 above. This analytical frame illuminates centre-periphery

relations of school and city space, and sub-realms of school space that are most retentive of past discursive practices and most amenable to new spatial practices.

These triads (the three ways in which space is apprehended as physical, imagined and lived experience, the three manifestations of the process outcome as spatial practices, representations of space and spatial representations, and the triad of the global, intermediate and private realms) are significant for they provide a coherent framework for the analysis of social space and spatial relations.

Following Lefebvre's triad, I posit school as a socially constructed representational space because this enables me to think of school space as a totality comprising the deliberations that preceded the turning of the first sod of soil, the ideas that determined where the school would be sited, how the site would be changed from its natural or 'given' state to a constructed school plant, the bricks-and-mortar physicality and dimensions of the school building, doors, desks, toilets, sports fields and so on. These imaginings and conceptions of school space are socially constructed notions. They also comprise the everyday practices within space that determine the order of each compartment of the school, how even the smallest of places is arranged and routinely used and to which learners are habituated.

Lefebvre does not seek to separate space from time in his deliberations about space because the historical dimension was important for understanding processes of spatial change. He sees change as a constant condition of space, with space manifesting the inherent tendency to either dissolve old relations or generate new ones (1991:52). The unfolding and shifting nature of ideas and social relationships, which render differences that require attention and resolution, compel the appropriation and reconfiguration of social space through the creation of new spatial practices (1991:59). This entails a transition from old to new spatial arrangements, manifested in 'all kinds of displacements, substitutions and transfers' (1991:119).

Spatial change raises questions of power and agency in social relations:

The analysis of any space brings us up against the dialectical relationship between demand and command, along with its attendant questions: 'Who?', 'For whom?', 'By whose agency?', 'Why and how?' (Lefebvre, 1991:116)

Lefebvre argues that power was knowledge about spatiality, understanding how it could be appropriated to produce social relations, and how it could be manipulated

(1991:10-1). His translation of the Gramscian notion of hegemony for his theorisation of space is that power and knowledge are articulated so that spatial relations and practices are established as a coherent, consistent and regulated system (1991:293). He also refers to the creation of 'counter-space' where power in the knowledge of space is used to disrupt and resist the established system and order of social relationships, and spatial practices are subverted (1991:383).

Recognising that Lefebvre's range of deliberations in *The Production of Space* extend in many other directions, his explication of social space provides a strong theoretical foundation for this study of school space at the conjuncture of political transition and social change.

2.5. DISCOURSE AND SPACE

There is a point at which theoretical conceptions of space and discourse flow into each other. This conjuncture is reached when spatial theorists such as Henri Lefebvre explicate discursivity in space, and discourse theorists such as Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe stress the materiality of discourse.

My starting point for this explication is Lefebvre's rejection of the notion that space is neutral and devoid of politics. He contends that this is a naïve and illusory understanding of the field of action (1991:94):

[f]or space is never empty: it always embodies meaning. The perception of gaps itself brings the whole body into play. Every group of places and objects has a centre... The centre may be perceived from every side, and reached from every angle of approach... The centre so conceived can never become neutral or empty (Lefebvre, 1991:154).

The project of discourse analysts is to decipher meanings embedded in space and understand how they are assembled and articulated as gaps of continuities and discontinuities in the centre-periphery or differently positioned and contingent relations. The task of identifying discourses embodied in the spatial field is not to understand objects as merely occupying physical space, but to see how they are used to structure power and social relations, shape the way people interact socially and think about each other and their world.

The spatial field and articulated elements therein hold and convey multiple meanings so that discursive fields can be said to be brimming with contending meanings that offer different ways of understanding representational space (Laclau and Mouffe,

2001:113). This insight led Lefebvre to describe space as ‘over-inscribed’ with meaning, resembling a jumbled and self-contradictory draft text (1991:142). The way the spatial field is assembled to control and order social relations, and communicate discursive content, is an inherently political process (Lefebvre, 1991:142).

From these insights that discourse in space concerns the exercising of power, we can conceive of school space as including political meanings about the organisation of social life, in among the multitude of available discourses in that field of action. Space is politically charged, with powerful social agents arranging and re-arranging the representational space to assert their control and fix social relations to generate certain meanings. It follows, then, that the spatial field is a site of struggle. Some subjects might comply with and perpetuate spatial practices that give voice to dominant discursive meanings, while others might act to disrupt the arrangements that convey meanings they dispute. The space of a school, therefore, forms a discursive field where discourses are inflected and contested between the various social actors. This political understanding of school space is consistent with the analysis made by critical pedagogy theorists who regard schools as serving a social reproductive function as well as having potential for social transformation (McLaren, 1995:38-9). The endeavour to analyse political discourses in the representational space of school requires the identification and analysis of ensembles in and around sites and in everyday routines, the quotidian, of those who inhabit the school.

Lefebvre has usefully distinguished between ‘thought and discourse *in* space...[and] thought and discourse *about* space’ (1991:104, italics in original). This alerts us to avoid slippage that might occur in too loose an analytical discussion using the same word. The conceptual distinctions concern discourse as the social practice of discussion, thought and theorisation for particular meanings, such as apartheid, articulated and conveyed in and through space. These are discourses *in* space. By contrast, my thesis may be understood as standing within the corpus of literature that comprises discourse *about* space, while the objects of my study, i.e. apartheid and post-apartheid discourses, are discourses *in* space, namely school space. In Lefebvorean terms, space is the discursive field or plane of everyday life, the quotidian, so that all discourses are spatialised in one way or another.

To discuss further Lefebvre’s conception of space as a discursive field of everyday experience, I have singled out six propositions that he puts forward about

social space. It is these propositions that run through the analysis in this thesis and to which I turn next.

Space is Used Politically to Produce Social Relations (1991:8-9)

Tangible objects and representations in space are inflected and appropriated for the purpose of forming hierarchies of power in social relations. For example, in a school, how a teacher's desk is positioned represents and exerts power, and this constitutes relations between the teacher and the learner. The planned arrangement of learners' desks in the geometric space of the classroom is a material representation of the teacher's authority and discipline. In the arrangement, the teacher tries to resolve the dilemma of establishing order in the classroom, providing learners with access to the teacher as the human learning resource, and enabling an environment for learners to collaborate. Lefebvre's proposition implies that how to appropriate space and manipulate the available objects and materials in order to structure social relations to one's own advantage, is spatial knowledge that has political currency. Yet he warns against making a fetish of space in a preoccupation with spatiality and its objects in and of themselves:

...instead of uncovering the social relationships ... we fall into the trap of treating space as space 'in itself', as space as such (Lefebvre, 1991:90).

Rather, Lefebvre urges the search for knowledge about the social relations hidden in the production of space.

Space Inherently Conceals the Political Use of its Knowledge (1991:27-30,92)

Lefebvre refers to the transparency, luminosity and illusion of space that allows the eye to see the tangible, physical space without noticing and decoding how the space has been appropriated discursively to produce and arrange power relations. Thus, the learner's desk in the classroom appears as an object providing a work surface; but its concealed political use is as an object that connotes confinement, subjugation, and surveillance. An official discourse about school desks conveys positive features of learning such as useful work surfaces and efficient classroom management practices without acknowledging the negative manipulative implications about confinement and surveillance. Analysing discourses in the spatial field requires going beneath the illusion of a spatial field. Yet Lefebvre affirms that 'an already produced space can be decoded,

can be *read*' (1991:17, italics in original) through the considered interplay between social actors, their appropriation and configuration of space, and the appearance and disappearance of practices. This dissertation is an attempt to illuminate that phenomenon in school space in South Africa.

Those Implicated Cannot Distinguish the Concealed Political Practice from Spatial Knowledge (1991:9)

Those engaged in a spatial practice are so immersed in it that their experience of space and the political implications are not apparent. The spatiality of day-to-day teaching, learning and assessment activities and institutional management practices cannot be distinguished from their representation as textbooks, examination records, and attendance sheets or even numbers of desks or children in classrooms. A form of 'blindness' occurs when spatial knowledge is de-contextualised and read physically and conceptually only (Shields, 1997:187). The full, lived, contextual meaning of how power is exercised and experienced in and through space is missed. Spatial practices and their everyday representations curtail the possibility of school managers, teachers and learners developing a critical reflexivity that might reveal how school spatial relations are complicit in an educational project of social reproduction or resistance. Similarly, the hidden curriculum of values that plays out through institutional practices is relatively unrecognised. For example, in some South African schools, girl learners are required to sweep classrooms and corridors daily while boy learners are expected to wash windows and move school desks (Karlsson, 2000). The values promoted in these practices are articulated within a cleanliness discourse and it is not recognised that the hidden curriculum of such spatially differentiated cleaning practices constitutes gender power relations in the division of labour, contributing to learners' assumptions about male/female roles in their adult lives, homes and public spaces.

New Social Relations Call for a New Space (1991:59)

In this proposition, Lefebvre draws attention to the match between the configuration of space, spatial practice and social relations. As one ensemble of social relations eclipses another, there will be changes in the transitional period or interstice. By asserting that 'a revolution that does not produce a new space has not realized its full potential' (1991:54) Lefebvre contends that old spatial practices will not fit or be

appropriate for a new set of social relations, and if obsolete practices remain entrenched, the transition has not been completed. The current South African president, Thabo Mbeki, expressed a similar view in 1997 about the rhetoric of transformation and effecting social change in South Africa:

...we need to make the point that talk of "restructuring the political landscape" is nothing else but a chimera, that is born of a failure to recognise the fact that no new landscape can emerge and hold until our country has made serious forward strides towards its fundamental reconstruction (Mbeki, 1997:4).

The examination of transition and space is one of the themes of this study. The majority of schools in South Africa are spaces originating in and through an apartheid education system that promoted discrimination. This study aims to investigate how South Africa's democratic 'revolution' has started to dismantle apartheid discourse in school space and is producing a 'new space' in schools. This entails not so much tinkering with the physical appearance of a school with a fresh coat of paint, but challenging the organising principles of apartheid education and identifying and dismantling the derivative spatial practices and spaces of representation in a school and across schools. To what extent this is happening in South African schools is investigated in this thesis.

The Past Leaves its Traces in Space (1991:37)

Lefebvre contends that space is a palimpsest in which there is a continual re-inscription of spatial relations. Thus, traces of the past may be excavated from materials, structure and practices in present space, much like at an archaeological dig. This proposition has great importance for those investigating spatial histories. Careful observation of schools might reveal trace evidence of past spatial practices. Since apartheid education laws were repealed only in 1996, I expect still to find the strong footprint of apartheid education in the spatial practices of schools in the post-apartheid era. However, the imprinted spoor of apartheid might have been so light that it has already been overprinted in the fast chase of post-apartheid education. These are questions that this study explores.

Spatiality Produces Difference (1991:52)

This proposition concerns the dialectic or fluidity in social space that produces difference. This is achieved by virtue of centre-periphery spatiality whereby alternatives develop at the periphery in response to the homogenising force of the centre, and produce difference (Kofman and Lebas, 1996:18, 26-7). Although Lefebvre expressed this proposition in relation to the 'right to city' (1971), it is not the city per se as an entity of modern life that produces difference. Rather, the way in which space is constituted through the urbanisation process bonds the centre and periphery, the global and local, the public and personal, and this unfolds as a differentiation of space in different ways for people to relate to one another and construct belonging and identity. The dialectic of centre-periphery challenges us to conceive of school space as distinct but inseparable from city context, connected and coexisting with it for, as Lefebvre asserts:

Social spaces interpenetrate one another and/or superimpose themselves upon one another... Visible boundaries, such as walls or enclosures in general, give rise for their part to an appearance of separation between spaces where in fact what exists is an ambiguous continuity... [c]onsequently the local... does not disappear, for it is never absorbed by the regional, national or even worldwide level (Lefebvre, 1991:86-88).

The point to draw is that while school institutions may be based in the local neighbourhood and relate daily to the life of the local community, they are caught up unavoidably in larger projects of city, province or national spheres, creating social relations that are always in this tension.

To conclude thus far, I have outlined Lefebvre's project concerning a theoretical framework about social space and spatial relations. The handle on Lefebvre's analysis of social space is grasped initially through his triads of spatiality comprising perceived, conceived and lived space, and spatial practices, representational spaces, and spaces of representation. These over-arching ideas were illuminated by six propositions drawn from Lefebvre that showed how space functions as a discursive field and pointed to the potential these ideas have for the examination of school space. Before exploring that prospect, I turn to two geographers who have explored Lefebvre's spatial theory. The first of these scholars is Edward Soja from the United States.

2.6. EDWARD SOJA'S DEVELOPMENT OF LEFEBVRE'S THEORY OF SPACE

Edward Soja (1989; 1996; 2000) has become the chief proponent of Lefebvre's theory of spatiality. Soja sought to emphasise Lefebvre's influence on the spatial turn and in doing so he presents 'the trialectics of being' that propose balance among conceptions of space, time (history) and relations (society) (Soja, 1996:71). Nevertheless, Soja privileges space in his writing (as do I in this study of school space) in order to explore spatiality previously so under-researched.

Soja has worked with Lefebvre's ideas in a context of post-modernism. He has renamed and clarified Lefebvre's spatiality triad of perceived, conceived and lived space as a trialectic comprising first- second- and thirdspace. In trying to speak in a post-modern idiom about Lefebvre's lived space, which referred to a simultaneously perceived and conceived experience of space, Soja translates it dramatically as a real-and-imagined thirdspace (1996:56-7). He takes this notion of thirdspace and elaborates it as an attitudinally open approach that he uses to break the either/or constraint of binaries and disrupt the centre-periphery spatial dichotomy (1996:60ff). This 'thirthing-as-othering' approach is elided to 'thirthing', which he constructs as:

...a new spatial conception of social justice based on the politics of location and the right to difference within the revised situational contexts of post-modernity (Soja, 1996:96).

From this platform he argues for a lived (thirdspace) difference that includes space for marginalised cultures, ethnicities and sexualities, rather than the narrow enumeration and eradication of physical (firstspace) differences from the familiar world of geography. This gives Soja's thirthing the political charge implicit in Lefebvre's notion of periphery that challenges power and control emanating from the centre. Some geographers have criticised Soja for his conceit in inventing new terms and failing to show the relevance of thirthing to the production of space (Pratt, 1998:193). Indeed, Soja's post-modern celebration of difference rings hollow when we consider how difference produced subordination and inequality in South Africa (Nkomo, 1990b). Is the system of apartheid schools, designed and equipped for separated learners of different racial and linguistic groups, a celebration of difference? Does the diversity in schools of privilege for girls from middle class families and the poorly equipped township schools for working class children represent a celebration of difference?

Clearly, difference through negative discrimination is not what Soja means in the invocation of thirding as a celebration of difference.

Soja's (1989:190-248; 1996:184-320) application of Lefebvre's spatial analysis for his study of real-and-imagined places such as Amsterdam and Los Angeles has shown how post-modern place disguises centre-periphery power through representational contradictions where the imagined is made real and the real is façade. The names of many South African schools exemplify this inversion. Despite poor material conditions and alienation of communities, the names of township schools claim imaginaries such as *Simunye*, 'We are one' and *Khayalihle*, 'Beautiful home'. In the case of former white schools the names re-imagine the countryside, villages and towns that early settlers left behind in Europe when they came to South Africa, ignoring that the schools are situated on the continent of Africa. An analysis of the real-and-imagined school delves into questions about the aspirations represented in school names, crests and architectural and décor elements of schools.

Although education is not a spatial discipline like architecture and geography, the innovative richness of Soja's spatio-analysis methodology for his studies of Amsterdam and Los Angeles 'begins with the body, with the construction and performance of self, the human subject as a distinctively spatial entity involved in a complex relation with our surroundings' (Soja, 2000:6). Consistent with his conception of trialectics of being that argue the balance of space, time and society, Soja's approach to place yields a montage of academic, literary and stream-of-consciousness writing styles that locate the author as subject in space/place and time, and incorporate his reflections on the intertextuality of texts such as scholarly works, diverse generated and found texts and words including statistics, photographs, maps, poetry, newsclippings, shop window signs and memories. His city studies offer exemplars for approaching and comprehending South African schools in the city of Durban in a way that is more richly textured than using discrete spatial, historical and sociological analyses of apartheid education.

More recently, Soja (2000) has explored the geohistory of cities and regions. He has argued that the modern city, as a concentric geographical entity with a centre-periphery binary, has been superseded in the last two decades of the 20th century by a polycentric urban form. It comprises several cities in a vast sprawling urban region that incorporates rural areas (Isin and Wood, 1999:98; Soja, 2000:16). Such a city space is a complex region that incorporates inhabited and uninhabited areas. In South Africa, the

eThekwini 'uni-city' (UniCity Committee Durban, 1999:1-2), formerly comprising six councils, incorporating Durban and the towns of Pinetown, Verulam, Tongaat, Umhlanga Rocks and Amanzimtoti, as well as rural areas such as Ndwedwe and Folweni, has such an urban form and is the location of this study (UniCity Committee Durban, 1999:3).

Soja (2000) elaborates on Lefebvre's proposition about spatiality producing difference in his attention to synekism, a principle of urban spatiality concerning the influential centralising and decentralising pulls and tensions between centre and periphery. This has a bearing on the dialectical relations and interplay between school space and its context that play out between local communities, district and provincial authorities, and national government. Synekism is also a useful concept for exploring the fortunes of schools as urban centres develop and decline, which was among the themes in Jan Nesor's (1997) and Agnes van Zanten's (1990) studies of school space in the United States and France respectively. What happens in the city affects the school because they occupy the same local space. Although I do not closely examine the synekistic relation between Durban city space and the six schools of the study, my concern is to understand the schools' spatial development and histories within their urban context as is described in Chapter 4.

To sum up, Soja elaborates on Lefebvre's theory of space while giving it tighter coherence and relationship to late 20th century urban contexts. As a postmodernist, Soja reconstructs Lefebvre's theorisation of lived/everyday space, the quotidian, as a real-and-imagined thirdspace, and develops a concept of thirding as the challenge to modernist binaries. He exemplifies Lefebvre's theorisation through his spatio-analyses of real-and-imagined places and deepens the theorisation of urban spatial relations through the principle of synekism, in which city schools are inevitably caught.

2.7. DOREEN MASSEY AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF SPATIAL THEORISATION

While Edward Soja in Los Angeles, California, reworked and opened up Lefebvre's theory within a postmodern frame, a feminist geographer across the Atlantic in the British Isles, Doreen Massey, was pushing the boundaries of spatial theorisation to explore how space is gendered by the confluence of capitalism and patriarchy.

Soja refers to 'real-and-imagined places', even popularising this phrase in the subtitle of his monograph *Thirdspace* (1996), while Massey uses the term 'specific

envelope[s] of space-time' (1994:9). Massey retains the historical-material tradition of Marxism in her perspective, in contrast to Soja's inclination towards post-modern innovation. Her interpretation of Lefebvre's triad of spatiality sees social relations developing within ever-changing space-time, and she inflects the spatial metaphorically as 'social relations 'stretched out'' (1994:2). The metaphor cuts across the individual's conceived, perceived and lived space to imply a shared experience, which is a different inflection to Soja's implication of an individuated experience in the trialectic of being. Unlike Soja whose spatio-analysis exploration of place embraces a subject position and, borrowing from creative arts, incorporates diverse text forms, Massey's writing about place follows established academic writing conventions. But she has not shied away from the subject position, using it to illuminate her experiences of gender in space/place and in 'doing geography' in one chapter of *Space, Place and Gender* (1994:185-190).

What is relevant for this study of space at six different South African schools is that Massey (1994:254) advances analyses of place that are based on Lefebvre's proposition that spatiality produces difference. This illuminates connections between gender and space, and she makes the point that gender relations vary over space when spatial fields are configured to allow particular permutations of gender relations. For example, Massey (1994:191-211) has found that places of work and social practices in the United Kingdom of the 19th and early 20th century reproduced patriarchy and social class hierarchies in the way that women were excluded from the male world of pits and mills, and were discouraged from finding work away from home, which was constructed as the rightful domain for women. In her argument that the locale of home space represents a subordinated female gendered (local) place, in contrast to the (global) workplace, which is infused with masculinity, Massey (1994:10) extends Lefebvre's analysis of power in centre/periphery relations.

One way of reflecting on public school space is to map Massey's representation of global/local gendered power relations on to central state/provincial and city/suburban/township relations. In these binaries, decision-making occurs at the centre of power and the execution of decisions occurs within the periphery. Flowing from this, I see the public suburb and township school in the city as the subordinated lesser-powered and feminised place that Massey associates with home – the feminised spatiality of schools being more pronounced at primary than secondary schools. This is a fresh way of thinking about the unequal school-city power relations. Schools are

usually places associated with children, nurturing, initiation and play, and teaching in South Africa is overwhelmingly a female profession with women comprising over 70 percent of primary school teachers, and over 60 percent in secondary schools (Wolpe, Quinlan and Martinez, 1997:82). This has implications for the spatial social relations of school.

Neither Lefebvre, Soja nor Massey have written about schools as a significant urban institutional space or paid sufficient attention to space for the young in society. This is a common oversight among urban theorists. Even *City A-Z* (Pile and Thrift, 2000) has no entries for school(ing), education and children, and these concerns only receive passing mention in feminists' writings such as in the volume *Gender, Work, and Space* (Hanson and Pratt, 1995:42, 81, 117, 147). This neglect among urban theorists is remarkable when one considers the role of learning in modes of cultural, scientific and economic production, that schools as public institutions comprise a large portion of national and local government budgets, and that children comprise the greater proportion of the population in cities of the developing world. Such oversights suggest authorial life experiences that orient them to thinking of the city as the political space of adults.

2.8. SPATIALITY IN WRITINGS ABOUT EDUCATION

As much as schooling is neglected in the literature on cities and urbanism, on the whole, Anglo-American education scholars are on the fringes of debates about social space and urbanism. Nevertheless, two education theorists working within a critical social theory framework and who have been influential in South Africa, will be briefly reviewed here to consider how they have referred to school space in their work. They are Paulo Freire from Brazil and Peter McLaren from North America.

Critical pedagogies such as Freire's (1996/1970) emancipatory pedagogy arrested the attention of those in South Africa seeking alternatives to apartheid education (Naidoo, 1990:121-124; Nekhwevha, 2002:134). Freire examines the relationship between the teacher and learner in formal schooling and how their interaction produces docility and passivity. He stresses the subject's agency through a process of critical reflexivity and interrogatory dialogue, thereby revealing the power and domination underpinning given knowledge. Although his intention is for the learner to be reflexive and interrogate his/her societal experience in relation to power relations, Freire's

approach fails to give specific attention to the role of spatial relations in the production of teacher-learner relations. Spatial practices fell in a shadow cast by Freire's overwhelming illumination of dialogic critical enquiry between the teacher and learner. Nevertheless, Freire's analysis addresses self-initiated strategies to achieve social justice within the context of everyday life suffering. This resonates with Lefebvre's idea of lived space and power imbalances implied in centre-periphery relations.

Appearing to be more aware of the spatial turn than Freire, Peter McLaren (1995), a theorist and practitioner of critical pedagogy, has noted the spatial field of learning where official and hidden curriculum is available. The discursive objects and practices that he identifies in the following extract show his understanding of school space as real-and-imagined, conceived, practised and lived space:

...descriptions, discussions, and representations in textbooks, curriculum materials, course content, and social relations embodied in classroom practices... standardised learning situations, and through other agendas, including rules of conduct, classroom organization, and the informal pedagogical procedures used by teachers with specific groups of students... teaching and learning styles that are emphasized in the classroom, the messages that get transmitted to the student by the total physical and instructional environment, governance structures, teacher expectations, and grading procedures (McLaren, 1995:191).

Here McLaren works with Lefebvre's triad of spatial fields that distinguish spatial practices in the routines and organisation of the classroom environment, the abstracted representations of space that manifest in diverse learning support materials, and the representational space of the totality of school experience which functions as a discursive vehicle.

Elsewhere McLaren has described schools as 'structural embodiments of ideological forms' and the classroom as 'a site of discursive production and reception' (1995:38-9) and 'a gathering point for the construction of Otherness in which racial, class and gender determinations are tightly woven' (1995:47). While not an explicit engagement with the theatre of space, this critical pedagogical perspective considers school space as a discursive field where 'radical educators work to reveal the social and material conditions of schooling's production and reception' (1995:31). In the following vivid description, McLaren critically analyses curriculum discourses and teaching practices in a classroom and how learners take them up:

Throughout classroom life, student gestures become reified into corporeal manifestations of hegemony. The cramped, defensive posturing of students and the brusque, authoritative gestures of teachers reveal the relations of power that have been grafted on to the medium of living flesh. Student bodies became tablets upon which teachers encoded a belief in their own class and cultural superiority (McLaren, 1995:48).

Here we see political use of space at work, although the description may be overly generalised. McLaren's cameo about the social reproduction process in school space, illuminates the concealed violence in power relations between adult teachers and child/youth learners at school, reminding us of Lefebvre's proposition that space conceals how it is used politically. McLaren casts teachers as having superior political knowledge about space and, in the implied spatial routines and conventions of school discipline and classroom furniture, able to manipulate it to subordinate learners. This is similar to Lefebvre's passing mention of mandatory tests for children and adolescents in 'reserved spaces, such as places of initiation' (1991:35). Although McLaren's bleak scenario has the classroom dialectic rendering learners without agency to become writing 'tablets', Lefebvre's conception of social space that has an inherent tendency to the dissolution of old relations and generation of new ones, holds promise that school does not have to be a violent space (Lefebvre, 1991:52).

Yet, although McLaren theorises school as an institution totally implicated in the reproduction of social relations and attitudes that sustain the dominant discourse and power relations of larger society, his focus is on pedagogic practices without stressing spatiality or the spatial relations between city and school and its social context.

Spatial questions began to interest South African educationists in 1987 when a conference about the design of learning spaces was held in Durban.³ It was only in the 1990s that a small group of American and European scholars began to write about school and space in English, and later the dynamic between city and school space came to the fore at the 2001 International Standing Conference on the History of Education, which had city-school relations as an overarching theme.⁴ The earlier emergence of such questions among South Africans can be understood in the context of apartheid, which was a highly developed form of spatialised racism.

³ The conference was organised by the Department of Education at the University of Natal and papers were published in *The Design of Learning Spaces* (Criticos and Thurlow, 1987).

⁴ The conference on July 12-15, 2001 was organised by the University of Birmingham in the United Kingdom.

Though educationists were slow to enter spatial debates, this did not hinder western architects of schools who were exposed to new thinking about social space and the urban form. In Britain, the design and construction of new schools in the 1960s, celebrated and showcased post-World War II ideas about the relationship between school and society that entailed learning in a collaborative social setting under the guidance of non-authoritarian teachers (Maclure, 1984:121, 123). The social organisation of the school into small specialised activity areas and resource-based learning were some of the innovations that extended the design trajectory in the 1970s (Seaborne and Lowe, 1977:195-6).

In one of the first Anglo-American sociological studies about educational space, Daphne Spain examines the institutional settings of the home, education and workplace (1992:145-168). Spain looks at the establishment of gender-separate institutions and sites since the 18th century when architecture was used to segregate and maintain gendered and later racialised social stratifications. Her work is historical, concentrating on North American institutions, and her analysis does not probe space as a discourse.

An American education scholar who considers school space, social relations and their interplay with local political and urban developments, is Jan Nesor (1997). His analysis of school as one element of a system that is 'spread across time and space' (Nesor, 1997:xx), is resonant with Massey's conception of spatial that is 'social relations 'stretched out'' (1994:2). Nesor's conception of school as part of a social system that relates historically to past and present events and spatially to local, district and state and federal spheres, alludes to the Lefebvrian proposition of centre-periphery dialectical spatiality. Although Lefebvre is not central to Nesor's ethnography of a primary school in the United States, he draws on Lefebvre for ideas about the body in space and for making finer points about urban housing. On the matter of global/local spatiality, Nesor agrees with Soja and Massey about their inter-related spheres and the futility of drawing sharp distinctions between them (Nesor, 1997:165). From this he has been able to substantiate his rejection of the narrow conception of school space as a container or physical entity, showing the validity of the Lefebvrian theorisation of experienced social space being caught in the centre-periphery dialectic. Nesor's study usefully exemplifies Soja's urban principle of synekism, demonstrating the tension between the economic decline of the socio-political and economic urban context and lives of families that constituted in spatial practices of school choice, enrolment and

learner mobility. He also tracks corporate and school managers ineffectively engineering curriculum-based changes in classrooms and through learners' written assignments. His analysis of the school manager's endeavour to shift the school focus from educational to economic discourses confirms that an examination of the spatial field can reveal political discourses in school space, as this thesis aims to do.

A research team led by Tuula Gordon, Janet Holland and Elina Lahelma (2000), conducted a comparative ethnographic study of everyday practices at two London and two Helsinki schools, in order to explore how space and spatiality inform constructions of citizenship and difference in schools. Like critical pedagogy theorists, the team conceive of schools as having potential to advance emancipatory social change. Although space is identified as the significant analytical category in the study, the team's approach to spatial theory is somewhat limited.

The team warn of drilled and routinised spatial practices that promote compliance among learners, and note that learners devise ways to subvert and transgress institutionalised spatial routines (Gordon, Holland and Lahelma, 2000:148-156). They do not analyse these discursive practices within a spatial or political discourse theoretical framework. Their emphasis on the physical school site limits the spatial field of action to practices within the institution and the overarching metaphor used for the school narrows the conception of school space to a stage or container of action. Further, although centre-periphery relations are suggested in their chapter on markets and politics, the team do not follow this through in the empirical study because their focus is on physical school space rather than the spatiality of centre-periphery social relations with the city and state.

There have been a number of recent studies examining special areas and practices of school space, such as Jane McGregor's (2000) study of British school staff rooms and gender, and John Devine's (1996) ethnography of inner-city school corridors and security in New York. Although theories of spatiality are not the concern of these studies, they are increasing our understanding of spatial practices in the discursive field of school, how school spatiality constitutes power and gender relations, and discourse concealed in school space. Devine draws on Foucault's work on discourse in institutionalised space and panopticism to contend that ritualised school violence masks a wider discursive malaise in the education system related to 'two clashing traditions [of] the received pedagogy and the policing function of the state' (1996:15). Although

the schools in my study do not share the same inner-city texture of New York schools, nevertheless, Devine's analysis of contending discourses in corridor violence at schools serving the urban poor provides a useful starting point for understanding contradictions in South African school space.

In summary, despite some notable exceptions, international theorists and sociologists of education have been slow in engaging spatial questions. Since 1996, however, some scholars have focused on school space and their studies illuminate the way school space is ordered, controlled, monitored and routinised. In South Africa, it has been impossible to ignore spatial considerations in everyday life. How this has been addressed among educationists is the central question of this next section.

2.9. SPATIALITY AND SOUTH AFRICAN SCHOOLS

Spatial issues are at the forefront of South African politics and everyday life because apartheid was a spatialised system of racism. Jennifer Robinson (1996) has argued this convincingly in her thesis on the apartheid government's location strategy. Although Robinson does not address herself to school space, she includes schools in her proposition that the location strategy was consistent with the orderly arrangements of a modernising state. John Dixon (1997:19) also refers to ways Afrikaner nationalism used spatial location in Africa together with ethnicity of early Dutch settlers to build a *volk* [=people/folk] myth. A rudimentary level of compliance with this subordination was required of black, Indian and coloured communities, and this was secured through the provision of minimal levels of social services such as schools in spatially separated areas. Racial domination was consolidated through the persistent subordination running through home life, street life, and the workplace. A minimum provision of social services such as schools was effective only to the extent of producing sufficient capacity for compliance and self-government.

Townships of apartheid cities were planned to be relatively self-contained to reduce the need for black residents to venture into other racially-segregated zones of the city. In the self-deluding idealism of a prominent apartheid township planner addressing post-graduate town and regional planning students in the early 1960s, we see that schools were an integral part of township conceptualisation:

Streets, refuse-removal, water-supply, health service, schools, sports grounds, water-borne sanitation, street-cleaning service, and landscaping

are all provided. The township has its own police force, administration and social welfare services, and the town belongs to the people (Calderwood, 1964:80).

The exaggerated claims of a conceived space conceal the lived suffering of black residents that was in part attributable to inadequacies of township infrastructure and undemocratic governance.

The injustice of inequality in apartheid cities was among the range of factors that led to uprisings in 1976. In the 1980s, research institutions linked to the apartheid state admitted to the sparse facilities and rented low-cost housing that yielded the township as a 'dormitory' (National Building Research Institute, 1987:2). Thus, in collaboration with the state, capital established a non-governmental organisation, the Urban Foundation, to attend to township development and improvement that worked to deliver some of the conditions made in early claims of apartheid township planners (Davies, 1991:86).

The struggles around education especially among youth from 1976 to the late 1980s were predominantly, but not exclusively, based in urban areas (Hyslop, 1999). This yielded student movements that largely represented urban working-class youth and enabled alliances with militant black labour unions and emerging teacher organisations. However, although school space was used politically among these urban groups for resistance, the critique of apartheid education did not separate out spatiality in its discussions of structural cleavages, curriculum practices and national unity and cultural concerns (see Naidoo, 1990; Unterhalter et al., 1991; Cross, 1992; Hyslop, 1999).

While black schools in cities were disrupted by the events and aftermath of the 1976 uprisings, education authorities responsible for white schools had introduced a differentiated approach to teaching and learning, aimed at giving each learner the opportunity to work at his/her own pace. One initiative related to that development is relevant to the spatial focus of this study. A Schools Research Steering Committee was set up by the National Building Research Institute in 1973 to look into the spatial design implications of the differentiated approach (National Building Research Institute, 1975). Their report worked with ideas for configuring space to constitute the relations between different learner groups by managing classroom space for diverse activities to happen simultaneously in different areas of the classroom. They compared a compact clustering of school buildings that centralised activities around an administrative core, with a

palmate decentralised layout with fingers of classroom rows splayed out from a central administrative centre. But their discussion of school layouts as an administrative efficiency concern concealed how centre-periphery spatial arrangements might constitute power relations within school institutions.

In South Africa two conferences hosted by the University of Natal were held in 1987 and 1995. These opened windows for cross-disciplinary discussion about learning space, design and development. The conferences anticipated a paradigmatic shift in South African education policy from discriminatory apartheid that privileged education for whites, to national reconstruction and development based on redistributive justice. The publication from the first 1987 conference (Criticos and Thurlow, 1987) and unpublished papers from the September 1995 conference capture the innovative impulse of the period by loosely conceptualising generic and particular learning spaces to include the outdoors, virtual libraries, resource centres as well as the traditional classrooms and laboratories. Overall, the papers were limited in their stress on physical space and education planning processes, overlooking power in the spatiality of everyday school life, and thereby implying that power in education would be unproblematic in a democratic South Africa.

In his paper to the first conference, Ben Parker (1987) advocates that school spaces should be appropriate for the active participation of all, and used for various levels of education. The school design process should be inclusive and participatory where 'the 'expert' becomes a resource to be utilised (even exploited) by the potential users... [because] it is users to whom the architects should be accountable' (Parker, 1987:93-4). He reiterated Father Smangaliso Mkhathshwa's statement to the first National Education Co-ordinating Committee in 1985 that it was 'not possible to provide alternative schools ... [Thus] current schools must be taken over and transformed within' (Parker, 1987:91). This view speaks to Lefebvre's idea that new practices must create new spaces, and neglecting this task signals an incomplete social transformation. While the Parker/Mkhathshwa point about school transformation also recognises that transforming the school system in South Africa is a discursive project that should not necessarily entail physical demolition, it implies a reconstitution of spatial practices (such as segregated enrolment) and representations of space (such as curriculum materials) within the discursive field of school space.

Although modes of beneficiary participation for groups such as parents was a frequently raised question at the 1995 conference, none of the presenters at the conference (many of whom were architects, academics and development workers) advocated shifting power away from experts such as architects and designers towards those who would be responsible for maintaining the school sites in the future. While papers from Phebon Kangai (1995), Henry Paine and Alan Lipman (1995) and Pierre Louwrens (1995) did not use a theoretical approach, they pointed to power located in architects' specialised knowledge of articulating conceived space and how this was used through building aesthetics, planning and construction processes, to shape spatial practices.

The many under-theorised papers about delivery and governance in planning, construction and maintenance of school space concerned the problems and politics of space unfolding in the first year of the post-apartheid era. Louwrens (1995), Paine and Lipman (1995) and van Heerden (1995) discuss various practices entailed in relations of spatial professionals and local communities that yield positive and negative imaginaries of school space among neighbourhood communities. Karlsson and Pampallis (1998) look at how policy texts functioned as representations of space that constitute state and school governing body practices and power over physical school space. In their discussion of governing bodies' capacity to maintain school premises, they touch on the interrelatedness of space-time in their concerns about inequalities inherited from the apartheid past and how these would affect maintenance practices in the future. The tension they identify in the interplay between representations of space (policy texts), the representational space of school sites, and spatial (maintenance) practices was grounded, they assert, in social conditions produced during the apartheid era. Soobrayan (1995) discusses the same tension played out over the issue of classroom backlogs. Although these papers deal with how space is socially produced and shaped through social interaction, they fail to theorise the tensions and limitations of power articulated spatially or discursively.

Some scholars in presentation to this conference dealt more with the conceived space of architecture and political discourses than how social space is socially negotiated. Their papers identify a mismatch between South Africa's existing physical school space shaped by 19th century mission education (Harber, 1995; Jacklin, 1995) and 20th century architecture of modernity (Demissie, 1995) and the spatiality of new

pedagogic practices of the post-apartheid era. These papers open a spatial analysis of apartheid discourse manifested in the design of township schools (Demissie, 1995) and different material conditions for state and state-aided schools (Jacklin, 1995). Jeanne Prinsloo (1995), in her case studies of two single-sex schools in Durban, explores how institutional spatial practices reproduce gendered roles for learners that reach into their adult years.⁵

All these papers from the 1995 conference in Durban give consideration to spatiality only one year into the post-apartheid era. In the same year, Smit and Hennessy (c1995) propose ways to ameliorate the geo-spatial centre-periphery inequality among urban schools. With their emphasis on physical space and urban planning, Smit and Hennessy argue for new school sites to be clustered so that resources, facilities and personnel could be shared between several institutions. It was too early for all these South African authors to have studied changes in school spatiality and to analyse the discourse articulated in that transition. With the passage of more years, my study is tackling that challenge. This thesis will address some of the questions these early writers left unattended, and will explore the openings arising from them.

In 2000, an exhibition/installation of apartheid and post-apartheid architecture visited Museum Afrika in Johannesburg. The exhibition, *blank_Architecture, apartheid and after*, and its accompanying volume of papers and photographic essays, highlighted the accumulated understanding that South African architects and urban planners have of social space and its political use and abuse in all spheres of the built environment, including educational institutions. In the publication, the University of Pretoria (Fisher, 1998) and Rand Afrikaans University are used as exemplars of apartheid discourse in modernist architecture that incorporates tropes of Afrikaner mythology such as the circular *laager* formation of wagons used during the Great Trek (Herwitz, 1998:415-6). Although this exhibition and publication are not explicitly framed within a theorisation of space and discourse, they drive home the argument that the built environment as a representational space, in conjunction with the quotidian of those living in that space, is a political discourse project. The spatial practices of repression and subordination in apartheid discourse are traced from representations of space on town planners' drawing boards through to the invented technologies for garrisoning properties and building

⁵ It is coincidental that one of the two schools discussed by Prinsloo is in the sample selected for study in this dissertation.

barriers between people. Exhibited photographs of post-apartheid community centres iterate concerns about spatial practices that were raised at the 1995 conference in Durban. While the exhibition and book bring together a rich collection of material and analyses of spatial practices and apartheid discourse in South Africa, the space of public schools is notably absent – a gap which my thesis seeks to fill.

To conclude, South Africans writing about school space have recognised that the development of school space is an important component of the national transformation project. Understandings of space as a discursive field are growing, but the politics of school space has not yet been sufficiently problematised and theorised.

2.10. CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I have mapped out the theoretical terrain that frames my study of urban school spaces. I have done this by briefly reviewing the accelerated recognition of social space in the last half of the 20th century, detailing the main scheme and principles of the Lefebvorean theory of space in relation to urban social relations, and how a selection of critical geographers and education theorists – abroad and in South Africa – have and have not engaged with the theory.

Three main points emerge from the theoretical review. They are that:

- i. Social space and the city have been subjected to critical reflection and analysis among social theorists and geographers especially, but the interconnectivity of spatiality in terms of the school and its development within the urban context have been under-researched, especially among South African scholars. This study addresses itself to that gap.
- ii. The theorisation of spatiality I am using requires us to conceive of school space as a dialectic discursive field that is used politically to reproduce and disrupt hegemonic discourses. The built environment, physical objects, practices and subjects are all implicated as elements and agents in the activation of political discourses in school space. School sites are not conceived as neutral, value-free, physical spaces because school space is deeply infused with power and meaning. Discourses associated with apartheid and post-apartheid can be examined from observation of the material conditions and practices in South African school space.

- iii. The fluid nature of any discursive field implies that the objects and practices in school space are constantly being re-inscribed with new meanings. How this has happened in South African schools during the apartheid and post-apartheid eras requires closer examination and is the primary intention of this study.

From among the many political discourses flooding the field of school space, this thesis is solely concerned with the political discourses constituted by the political dispensations of the apartheid and post-apartheid eras. The reason for this narrow scope is because these discourses provide a clearly defined axis for examining spatiality.

In the next chapter, I will tackle the ontological, epistemological and methodological challenges of studying discourses in school space and the methods chosen to examine aspects of place and changes emerging in the transition from the apartheid to post-apartheid period in South Africa.

CHAPTER 3: LOOKING THROUGH THE DOOR AND SEEING MY REFLECTION: METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES



3.1. INTRODUCTION

To examine and analyse spatial discourses and spatial relationships, the study has utilised visual research to engage with the problem of recording and fixing the ever-changing school space. In research, the researcher's role is central in fixing the data and interpreting meanings. In so doing, the researcher constructs the interpretation, but it is not entirely subjective because other social actors have produced the observed social relations. For this study, I bring to the interpretation my professional understanding of

South African schools, my first-hand experience of attending some of these schools, and my political perspective that is concerned with social injustices and inequalities. I have made specific choices about how to study spatial practices and discourses in South African urban schools, how to analyse the data, the methods that would be appropriate and ethical, and solutions for the problems I encountered in the field. Against all these ‘confessions’ are the two issues of whether a critical interpretation that is partisan on issues of social justice research is compatible with a reflexive approach, and whether the micro-macro interface of six schools in one city are a sufficient sample to understand discursive practices at a systemic level. These questions about subjectivity, reliability and validity, generalisability and ethical concerns are the focus of this chapter.

3.2. ON BEING A REFLEXIVE RESEARCHER

The researcher is the primary actor in any research project. Indeed, the construction of knowledge in any project is largely determined by the researcher. Arguments that the politics of the researcher are a central issue in the construction of knowledge have been advanced by feminist and postcolonial theorists *inter alia* (Griffiths, 1998:130-134). With such significant power it is important for the researcher to use a confessional voice (Scott, 1996:153; Coffey, 1999:116) to examine her values, knowledge, position and purpose in order to uncover her influence over the construction of knowledge. Further, instead of distancing herself from the subject field, in the ethnographic approach, the researcher works alongside the subject community. This requires a responsive research practice that again implicates the researcher as a subjective agent (Scott, 1996:153-6).

These perspectives concerning the research endeavour raise questions about who I am as a researcher. What do I bring to the research field in terms of my values, knowledge, position and power? How have I inflected my power in this study? In this section, I consider my political agency as the researcher in this study through a discussion of my values, knowledge, social position and reasons for undertaking the study. I also present my strategies to temper my influence.

My identity as researcher is both as an outsider and insider to this study. I am an outsider in that I am studying South African school spatiality as a research student from a university in the United Kingdom. To some extent this positions me within the ethnographic tradition of 19th and 20th century Anglo-American researchers studying

distant, exotic and developing communities (Mydin, 1992:249; Prosser, 1998b:100-101; Banks, 2001:42-3). But I am also an insider in that I am a South African studying South African schools – without denying that South Africa is not a single homogenous society. This perspective of examining one's own society has currency in post-modern ethnographies where the familiar is made strange (Marcus, 1994:570-1). In the case of South Africa, the powerful and educated social class of whites has a history of conducting educational research that examines its own society. Distinguished in that tradition is the research by E G Malherbe (1932), most renowned for his investigation of education among South Africa's poor whites in the 1930s.

Social conditions have changed significantly in South Africa since the pre-apartheid period when Malherbe conducted that study. Researchers of education in the present era cannot ignore the history of unequal racialised power relations, and how they might be perceived and imagined by subjects in the field. This required me to reflect on my insider status as a South African. What sort of insider South African am I? I am a professional, white, middle class, English-speaking woman, who was educated at South African state schools and also taught in them. Thus I have first-hand experience and understanding of how apartheid worked to shield and prohibit white, black, coloured and Indian learners from contact with their peers across the racial divides. I have lived for forty years in the city where the schools on which this study is based, are located. Since the early 1980s, I have been professionally and personally active among organisations with an overt agenda of eliminating apartheid and advancing social justice within South African society. Therefore, I have personal associations with some of the schools in which this study was conducted and some of the informants consulted. These professional and personal identities by which I am known in the field, position me unequivocally as an 'insider' researcher in South Africa. But my critical approach to education and my concern that social justice should infuse South African schooling situates me beyond the binary of insider/outsider and familiarity and strangeness (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995:109-110, 112). It is a hybrid insider-outsider position, similar to the Lefebvrian-Sojan thirding that was covered in Chapter 2, because it conjoins the outsider's critical theoretical perspective informed by principles of social justice and the insider's knowledge of the politics of social injustices, with the insider's fine-grained empathy of what is familiar and understanding of what is possible.

For almost 20 years I have actively supported efforts to abolish apartheid and introduce social policies that build democracy and social justice in South Africa generally and in schools in particular. It is largely my concern for improving schooling in South Africa that underpins my reasons for this study. However, there is a danger of me adopting an *a priori* stance in relation to my critique of apartheid discourse in school space. Although I have attempted as much as possible to bracket out my bias, in this study I prefer to admit to my condemnation of apartheid by clarifying my critical stance. Nevertheless, to reduce bias and ensure consistency and evenness, I have used a deductively developed instrument, which I discuss later in this chapter, and have endeavoured to maintain an open attitude on finding data that might yield surprising conclusions.

Inasmuch as I admit to my engaged stance on apartheid, I realise that a researcher's data and interpretations are always partial and constructed (Winston, 1998:61, 66). What I, as the researcher, could see limited the visual representations of school space. Indeed, the everyday life of a school may remain hidden to the visitor, as noted by Pink:

The public front of any institution is often a veneer that holds fast the conflicts and organizational problems that are part of its everyday order (Pink, 2001:43).

This knowledge of the partiality of my view has led me to seek ways to increase subjects' participation in the study. Although other participants' views might be as partial as my own, my assumption was that their perspectives would counter the partiality of my view in the field, and build bridges between informants and me (Prosser and Schwartz, 1998:119). The power differential between the learners and myself is addressed in the section below on ethics.

Above, I have given an account of my agency as the eyes that are looking through the methodological lens. My approach to this study has also been to turn the metaphorical lens on myself and participate as one of the informants. Thus, in the role of participant observer and informant, I am simultaneously on both sides of the lens, a fluid position ambiguously phrased in the post-modern, post-colonial and feminist metaphor of 'third space' (Rutherford, 1990:211, 220; Soja, 1996:56).

3.3. ETHICAL CONCERNS

How the researcher approaches ethical issues influences the integrity of the study and the fragile rapport that the researcher develops with informants (Cohen and Manion, 1994:347-9; Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995:19, 74; Prosser, 1998a:119-121). Ethical issues regarding anonymity of participants and research sites, ownership of data and power relations between the researcher and researched are thorny for any study. In visual ethnography, whereby the researcher generates photographs of a community in the field, the visual form of the research accents these ethical concerns in particular ways.

Surveillance and ‘the gaze’, activities criticised in cultural, postcolonial, feminist and discourse studies, are inherent features of visual imaging. Foucault (1977/91; 1980) criticised modern and postmodern institutional spaces that promoted a panoptic practice of surveillance. Cultural, postcolonial and feminist scholars such as Stuart Hall (1997b), Mary Louise Pratt (1991), Ann McClintock (1995), and Njabulo Ndebele (1998) refer to the politics of ‘the gaze’ in race and gender relations. From that vantage point, the gazes of image-takers (through the camera lens) and image-readers may involve surveillance, spectatorship and scopophilia, while there may be subjectivity, resentment and defiance in the eyes of those within the image (Burgin, 1982:146, 148; Hall, 1997b:318, 268, 317; Banks, 2001:128). Anonymity of those represented in images is at issue because cameras capture a likeness of faces and settings. Images may be stored and later used and distributed in ways different from the initial research purpose yielding outcomes that may diverge from the wishes of the person photographed. Pink cites the danger to subjects as reasons why researchers need to work ethically:

The publication of certain photographic and video images may damage individuals' reputations; ... Institutions may also be damaged by irresponsible publication of images... (Pink, 2001:43).

However, Banks (2001:129) points out, correctly, that the issue for the researcher is not about rights to photograph but rather negotiating with subjects how and under what conditions representations may be used. Banks asserts that denial of the right to photograph would undermine representation in all forms of media and art.

As a researcher associated with a social justice agenda in South Africa that aims to improve schooling for all but especially those disadvantaged and marginalised during the apartheid era, my approach to ethical concerns was underpinned by several

principles of doing social justice research (Griffiths, 1998:94-7). I will discuss these concerns later in this chapter, when I expand on the methods used in the study.

3.4. VISUAL METHODOLOGIES TO EXAMINE SPATIAL PRACTICES

This study of discursive meaning in urban school spatiality is a study that entails analysing school space, i.e. the objects, practices, and people in school space. For meaning-making and understanding social relations, Henri Lefebvre asserts that the written, spoken and visual texts cannot be privileged over multi-dimensional space:

To underestimate, ignore and diminish space amounts to the overestimation of texts, written matter, and writing systems, along with the readable and the visible, to the point of assigning to these a monopoly on intelligibility (Lefebvre, 1991:62).

He makes this argument because non-verbal spatiality is 'irreducible to the mental realm' (Lefebvre, 1991:62) and it is to strategically refocus attention on discourse rather than on signs and symbols. However, when Lefebvre advocates going beyond visible and written linguistic systems, he fails to resolve the pragmatic issue of how to research spatiality without resorting to such texts. Michael Emmison and Philip Smith (Emmison and Smith, 2000) suggest visual research as an appropriate methodological approach for researching space because:

...[the] visual is also spatial. ... and spatial considerations also enter into the ways we think about the meaning, or relevance of these items as data. The objects, people and events which constitute the raw materials for visual analysis, are not encountered in isolation but rather in specific contexts. [...] It is this spatial existence which serves as the means whereby much of their sociocultural significance is imparted. Visual data, in short, must be understood as having more than just the two-dimensional component which its representation in the photographic image suggests (Emmison and Smith, 2000:5).

Two-dimensional visual imaging advocated by Emmison and Smith as a representational record for researching the spatial is a pragmatic response to the empirical research enterprise even though it thins Lefebvre's uncompromising insistence on observation of multi-dimensional everyday lived space. Representations reduce the fullness and immediacy of *in situ* spatiality but they provide a fuller record than written field notes because photographs have a likeness to the material context.

Furthermore, they enable researchers to continue analysing spatiality after having left the field.

The theoretical question about the embeddedness and transformation of discourses in spatial practices requires a method that enables an exploration of particular school settings, which Lefebvre described as '*places of social space*' (1991:88, italics in original). Unlike Foucault's (1972; 1977/91) discursive approach that analyses texts and institutional and social practices historically by uncovering the origins of practices and how they evolved over time, my approach aims to unmask power concealed in social relations constituted in the visible spatial field at one particular time. This entails a study of the dialectic of material objects (artefacts, buildings, people and living things) and practices (routine activities, rules and rituals) within the built environment of schools. I have chosen this methodological approach because my study is not simply about the past (history) or linguistics (words). It is about socially constructed meanings in contemporary South African school space. These meanings are embodied in physical objects, spatial arrangements and practices as well as being imagined and represented materially. My visual study of school spatiality observes South African urban public schools at a specific moment in the intersection of the apartheid and post-apartheid eras to examine the range of meanings current in those spaces. A visual approach combined with other methods including interview and document analysis, allows for the discursive objects and spatial practices that produce social myths, collective imaginaries and resistance to dominant discourses, to be recorded for analysis.

Visual images, like language, are now widely recognised as a form of text that reveals discourses, i.e. the deep structures of thought and relationships among people (Chaplin, 1994; Kress and van Leeuwen, 1996; Hall, 1997a). Nevertheless, linguistic and visual texts differ and require different data gathering and analytical strategies. In their comments in the first edition of *Ethnography: Principles in Practice*, Martyn Hammersley and Paul Atkinson (1993:161) contend that visual data may be too precise a method for ethnography, requiring particular cases to be singled out from within a group (see Banks, 2001:176). Their statement is tempered in the second edition to a warning that visual data requires 'considerable investment in detailed and specialized analysis of images' (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995:189). Nevertheless, they admit that visual recordings are an 'under-exploited' aspect of ethnographic fieldwork and that the scholarly tradition favours 'a discipline of words' (1995:189). Stuart Hall (1997a),

Michael Emmison and Philip Smith (2000), Douglas Harper (1998a; 1998b), Jon Prosser (1998a) and Elizabeth Edwards (2001) - to name but a few - assert that analysing visual images provides a fruitful line of enquiry that can lead to a reconstructed meaning and statement about discourse even when the meaning is subject to constant changes according to context. For example, Elizabeth Chaplin (1998) analyses John Constable's 'The Cornfield' that hangs as a masterpiece in Britain's National Gallery. She shows how the meaning of the painting shifts from 'artistic appreciation' when it is commodified as 'heritage' and 'rural nostalgia' in cheap reproductions on wallpaper, dishcloths and fireguards, and as 'naturalness and purity' in cereal advertisements. In South Africa, Jeff Guy (1999) has examined photographs taken over a period of fifty years in the nineteenth century of the men and women associated with the Colenso family and the Ekukhanyeni Mission. He has shown how colonial and imperial literature infantilised and demeaned the image of Africans. But Guy re-interprets posture and dress of photographed subjects within the context of Zulu cultural practices, and he argues that by the end of the period African leaders had appropriated photography for their struggle against imperialism by permitting newspapers to publish photographs of their group.

Visual research, whereby cameras are used to record events, objects and processes and the produced images as text for analysis, has been used by anthropologists since the 19th century (Mydin, 1992:249). But it was only in the 1930s, with Bateson and Mead's Balinese study involving 25,000 photographs of cultural practices and artefacts, that visual research captured the imagination of social scientists (Harper, 1998a:25-26; Emmison and Smith, 2000:31).

Emmison and Smith (2000:23) note a visual research surge in the social sciences since the 1960s that they attribute to visual text gaining dominance over word text in post-modern society, driven largely by advancements in reprographic and computer technologies. Gunther Kress and Theo van Leeuwen (1996:21-33), concur with this explanation. In their analyses, they show that school learning materials at the end of the 20th century were less authoritarian and directive and more visual than in the mid-century. Contemporary materials require learners to engage with a variety of viewpoints and knowledge extracted and reproduced from other primary sources.

Visual methodologies in educational research tend to follow four trajectories. The first concerns documenting the built environment focusing on architecture and design,

with visual images being used primarily in an illustrative mode to substantiate arguments. The work of Donna Huse (1995) which shows photographs and diagrams of different classroom spatial arrangements, and others published in the journal *Children's Environment*, are examples of this approach. The second trajectory is associated with social semiotics and media studies. It focuses largely on criticism of pre-existing materials such as educational texts and published literature for children (Rowell, 2000), with leaders in this field being Kress and Van Leeuwen (1992; 1995; 1996). They analyse the geometric design of textbook pages, relational weighting and positioning of text to image and the semiotics of images and fonts. In this way, they assess how design affects learning and meaning-making. The third trajectory concerns questions of cognition, perception and memorisation by examining learner-constructed texts and representations. Examples are Sharon Sutton's (1992) study of children mapping their environment and the work of Susan Golbeck and Lynn Liben (1988) on children representing their environment. In such research the use of learner-generated visual representations elucidates psychological processes of thinking and learning.

The fourth trajectory advanced by Prosser (1992) and Hallie Preskill (1995) is a visual ethnography of educational communities in which photographs of schools taken by researchers and evaluators, for example, are used to record and analyse changing practices and their effect at schools and to elicit reflection and discussion with members from the school. My study falls within the ambit of this last trajectory of visual ethnography because my focus is not on the image or the photographer *per se*, but on the real schools observed through a camera lens and represented in the visual images. This is because the school space - not the image or photographer - is the unit of analysis in this study. Nevertheless, this does not prevent discussion of the image-maker's subjectivity in the photographic process. The visual ethnographic approach allows photographs the status of near likenesses of objects and practices occurring in school space, and fixes the moment so that the viewer has a sense of having been present when the photograph was taken (Schratz and Walker, 1995:74).

In Southern Africa there are several historians who use visual methodologies for research (see Callinicos, 1980; 1987; Hartman, Silvester and Hayes, 1998; Callinicos, 2000 and Kronos, *Journal of Cape History Special Issue: Visual History*, No 27, November 2001), but there is very little tradition of a visual ethnographic approach in South African educational research. A scattering of photographs of 19th and 20th century

schools exists in various South African archives. The most substantial collection is three photograph albums of E G Malherbe's fieldwork experiences from the first Carnegie enquiry into (poor white) poverty in South Africa stored in the University of Natal's Killie Campbell Collections. In his report for the enquiry, Malherbe (1932) used a small sample of these photographs as illustrative material. It is only since 1998 that Malherbe's albums have begun to interest social scientists such as art historian Michael Godby (1998). Other researches of South African education and childhood such as *Apartheid and Education* (Kallaway, 1984 see photos between pages 48-9, 114-5, on 126, between 204-5, 268-9, 302-3, and 352-3) and *Growing Up in a Divided Country* (Alberts, 1986 see between pages 332 and 333) include photographs but solely to document and illustrate social conditions, without an accompanying analysis, i.e. they are examples of the first trajectory.

In the past, other eminent South African scholars such as anthropologists, Eileen and Jack Krige, included photographs of rural schools as evidential records in their writings (Godby, 1998:35). Several books have documented apartheid education in photographs that affirm and promote, or evoke and expose, apartheid conditions, discrimination and differentiation (for example, see Weinberg, 1981; Badsha, 1986; Hoddinott, c1960). Research using pre-existing images for sociological enquiry and knowledge about South African education appears, perhaps for the first time, in Kallaway's edited volume on *The History of Education under Apartheid* (see Karlsson, 2002a). The methodological approach of that work distinguishes it from the photo-documentation in earlier South African education literature.

The Second Carnegie Enquiry in the mid-1980s foregrounded visual research by commissioning several documentary photographers to generate photographic essays of poverty among black South Africans (Godby, 1998:32-7). The photographic essays include five images of schools and student protests (Badsha, 1986:2-3, 102, 163, 164-5). Fourteen images accompany the Second Carnegie Enquiry's volume dedicated to education issues (Nasson and Samuel, 1990:7-14, 109-114). In his introductory sections to the photographic essays, Francis Wilson (1986a; 1986b) does not discuss photographs as data to be analysed, but instead describes them as 'documentary work' and uses the images merely as evidential records. This draws the viewer's gaze to their pictorial quality, without building a bridge between the images and social analysis. The approach to visual research evident in the two Carnegie enquiries assumes that

documentary photography exposes social injustices and will be a catalyst for social change. But such assumptions fall short of their goals. Harper explains the weakness of this approach:

... [It] focuses on the specific and thus hides or mutes the critiques of the system; social problems are seen as personal stories and social ugliness is made beautiful or provocative (Harper, 1998b:135-141).

The tendency to this assumption is illustrated in Omar Badsha's photograph below, in which the pictoriality works through the punctum (Barthes, 1981:27) and symmetry in the cruciform and evocative force of the figure leading the oncoming group. By leaving the viewer open to a decontextualised reading of form and content, this image could yield a meaning of a 'blind' messianic youth leading and, with outstretched arms, binding/restraining his followers/disciples. Such a reading lacks the historical socio-political context of South Africa to elucidate the issues that gave impulse to the march and explain the t-shirt acronym and slogan that could be used to caption the image. Such a reading also fails to account for the raised fist and belts held by the male youths.

Image 1: Cosas students photographed by Omar Badsha (1981:163)



Captioning, however, tends to fix the interpretation and lead the viewer to narrow readings of the image. This leads to consideration of some technical aspects of using photographs in research. The selection of what the photographer chooses to see through the camera lens and what is framed within the flat geometric space of the photograph presents opportunities to censor and manipulate images. For example, through techniques such as angling and zooming the lens, the photographer can construct

different visual images of the same scene that can encourage different interpretations, as shown below.

Image 2: 06K20d: Simunye Secondary: Morning assembly



Image 3: 06K20e: Simunye Secondary: Morning assembly



The close-up shot of the assembly (image 2) draws the viewer into the gathering, giving an impression of crowded fullness whereas the long-shot (image 3) pulls the viewer out to see the wider context of school buildings. The effect makes the gathered learners seem few in number. In a visual ethnography, such effects hold the potential to skew interpretations by drawing attention to some spatial practices rather than others. This can be avoided by verifying the effect, explicitly noting it, and triangulating data

inter-textually, if possible, using photographs of the same view taken from different angles.

The image-maker can also manipulate the image through cropping and/or erasure as shown in image 4 below where the school's name on the bus in the mural has been blocked out to hide its identity in this thesis.

Image 4: 01K10e: Heather Primary: Mural near car park and entrance



The reflection in the rear view mirror on the left of the image gives the clue that the photographer was driving a car at the time. The image-maker can crop such 'betrayals' in order to focus the viewer's attention or prevent the viewer seeing something that was not intended to intrude into the frame. Such intrusions may prove fortuitous to expose phenomena during analysis that went unnoticed by the researcher in the field. Tampering with images, however, is an ethical issue which should be avoided because it exposes the data to the researcher's subjectivity and bias (Prosser, 2000:118-124).

Selection, framing and manipulation raise the question about the status and reliability of visual images. Are photographs accurate and true copies of life? In the latter half of the 20th century, such questions about the subjectivity and objectivity of the photographer and visual image became key issues among ethnographers. John Collier, Jr. (1967:2-3), working in the Americas, claimed that visual images support the researcher's project by objectively recording reality. But this view is dismissed by social scientists who draw attention to the image-maker's subjective role in constructing

the visual image (see Harper, 1998a:29; Emmison and Smith, 2000:29; Banks, 2001:112, 144; Pink, 2001:19-20). They understand the photograph to be a constructed representation full of meaning rather than a reality and objective truth. Harper (1998a:31) also asserts that the ethnographic approach should emphasise the point of view, voice and experience of the researcher. These are positions with which I agree because the photographer's perspective is partial and a situated subjective view is inescapable. From this perspective, the visual image is not merely illustrative. The visual representation is a text that carries knowledge and meaning, which require study.

The photograph is not the actual space but a representation of real space. Epistemologically, this does not undermine the value of the visual image because the researcher recognises the nature of the image as a two-dimensional object whose content is a likeness of but distinct from the real space that it represents. The visual image as a construction of the photographer's eye and ideas is full of meaning – in as much as linguistic text is. Its meaning is amenable to an interpretation of spatial practices. For example, a photograph of learners lined up in gendered rows within a courtyard, all facing a raised platform on which stands an adult male facing them is appropriate for an examination of school assembly spatial practices. Thus, in this study, visual images of objects and practices in real places are not accorded the status of illustrations, but are used as ethnographic data, thick with meaning. The photograph's 'fixed' representation of discursive objects and practices in school space makes ethnographic visual research suitable for a study of discourses. The relational proximity, positioning, quantity, quality and patterning of objects and people within the built environment, the presence and absence of objects and people in a space, observed in the visual image, are the currency that indicate the meaning of the social value present and/or being exchanged. They also indicate how power is inflected within the spatial relations of the study institution or community at the time when the photograph was taken.

From that analysis and noting the continuities and discontinuities observed in inter-textual readings of several visual images, researchers build up an interpretation of the prevailing discourse(s) operating within the particular social context of the study community. The validity of an interpretation is confirmed by checking against other data and the conclusions of similar researches.

Notwithstanding the momentum in the social sciences towards visual sociology, there are several problematic issues with this methodology (Harper, 1998b:136, 138-141). First, contrary to popular belief, images are not 'true and real' because they represent a constructed view that is inherently partial and time bound. This is especially pertinent during the interpretative stages and when making generalisations or drawing conclusions on the basis of constructed visual images. Second, the meaning of what is framed photographically is negotiated and constructed directly and indirectly by the image-maker and viewer, changing the meaning in different viewing contexts. On this basis, I can only propose tentative meanings, as is consistent with the nature of interpretive research. Third, although the research subject's participation in visual ethnography may be greater than is the case with more conventional qualitative methodologies, it remains limited because control continues to reside with the researcher.

To sum up, visual ethnographic research is the methodological approach used in this study because visual images of schools are representations of school space and discourses in school space. Inasmuch as features of images such as the perspective, framing, content and cropping of the photographs are determined by the photographer, the visual images are his/her subjective constructions. Despite such constructedness, my approach to visual research is to treat photographs as data that are full of meaning that can be analysed and interpreted, although the limits of representation, interpretation and the power of the researcher continue to exist. My analytical approach to what was represented in the visual images is discussed in the next section.

3.5. A DISCOURSE ANALYSIS APPROACH

The analysis of the data collected was complex due to the range of different forms. In her discussion about visual methodologies, Rose (2001) elaborates five analytical approaches. The first, compositional interpretation, was developed among art historians and pays attention to the content, colour, spatial organisation, light and expressive content, while being disinterested in the social implications of the visual imagery (Rose, 2001:33-53). The second approach, content analysis, is statistically oriented in that what is seen is classed, enumerated and codified (Rose, 2001:54-68). It also pays attention to being replicable and valid without recognising the multi-vocality of visual images (Banks, 2001:144). Further, it does not require the researcher to be

reflexive about her own construction of meaning-making. Semiology, the third approach, rests on Roland Barthes' (1967; 1972/1993; 1981) theory of semiotics (Rose, 2001:69-99). This approach depends on a denotational reading of the signifier, signified and the sign, followed by a connotational reading to develop 'myth' or meaning statements. Semiology accommodates the notion of multi-vocality in the visual image and the social implication of the meaning, but is less concerned with the viewing audience and reflexivity in the viewer. The fourth psychoanalytic approach is concerned with subjectivity, sexuality and the unconscious (Rose, 2001:100-134). Issues of the gaze and spatial proximities are important to illuminate fantasy, fetish and voyeurism. However, as Rose points out, even with the detailed vocabulary of the psychoanalytic approach, it cannot address social practices of display and audiencing. The fifth approach that Rose presents is discourse analysis, for which she distinguishes two analytic trajectories (Rose, 2001:135-186). The first addresses how meaning is crafted through the organisation and structure of objects and thematic content and connections within a visual image. Contradictions within the image are significant in interpreting the meaning, but the social context and presentation of the visual image as an object is of less concern. The second approach to discourse analysis foregrounds context, to ask questions about the discursive intentions of the institution of origin and production, the nature of authorship, and how the visual image as an object and practice is captioned and framed. Critical reviews of installations and exhibitions on the street or in books, the Internet, museums and galleries might use this second discourse analysis approach.

Of the five analytical approaches presented by Rose, discourse analysis is most relevant for this visual study because my primary research questions concern discourses in space. Of the two analytical strands within discourse analysis that Rose identifies, the first fits the requirements of this study, since the photographs have the status of observations, do not comprise a collection from an exhibition or family album, and because I am interested in the social context.

The compositional interpretative approach is not suitable since the images in this study do not have status as discrete units of analysis as might be the case for a photographic essay. Since the status of the visual images generated for this study is a series of participant observations that depict 'slices' of school space, the analysis of the visual images is not concerned with the discursive agency of the photographers or the composition of the photograph. How the photograph as a photograph configures spatial

proximities is not analysed. That approach also prohibits the manipulation of images, and I do manipulate some images in this thesis. My reasons for doing this differ in each instance. Erasing institutional identity aims to maintain anonymity of participating institutions. The technique of fuzzy faces protects individuals from any harm resulting from the image being displayed. Cropping 'noise' such as extraneous parts of an image or enlarging a detail emphasises a point of analysis for the reader's attention. Some manipulations might skew the analysis towards an *a priori* conclusion that apartheid is being reproduced with township (black) schools inevitably being analysed as victimised and suburban (former white) schools as automatically privileged. While this point is pertinent at a time when image manipulation software is widely used in media production (see Banks, 2001:151-174), the same danger of skewing data to produce *a priori* conclusions exists for other analytical approaches.

The statistical orientation of content analysis, exemplified in Philip Bell's (2002) study of magazine covers, would imply school space is a physical container, which would undermine the Lefebvrian framing of this study if it were the sole analytical approach. The static notion in semiotics that meanings correspond to signs is avoided because, as an approach that emerged from language studies, it fails to take account of power in dialectic spatial relations. Lastly, a psychoanalytic approach has no relevance for this study, which is not concerned with the unconscious and viewer, and examines political rather than psychological concerns.

The focus of this study is an investigation of discourses in school space, requiring an analytic approach informed by a discourse theory that illuminates the discourse-filled spatial field in which all objects and actions are meaningful. Political discourse theory, developed by Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe (2001) and expounded by David Howarth (2000b), is a useful analytical base for the application of my approach to visual methodology for three reasons. First, it accepts the discursivity of spatial objects and practices, and the interface between dominant and emergent discourses such as those linked to apartheid and the post-apartheid era. Second, unlike linguistic models of discourse that assume closed systems of meanings and practices, political discourse theory maintains that meanings in objects and practices are only partially fixed because they are polysemic with their meanings being contingent and relational, depending on differentiation from other discourses (Laclau and Mouffe, 2001:112-114). This notion of relational identity and contingency is relevant to my concerns with the interface of

apartheid and post-apartheid discourses in school space. Third, political discourse theory encourages an analysis of the struggle between dominant and emergent discourses in spatial relations.

Political discourse theory is complex with several principles developed to characterise how a discourse is constituted, achieves dominance and is contested. These can be summarised as follows:

- Discursive objects and practices have no innate or natural discursive meaning but are elements with partially fixed socially-constructed meanings (Laclau and Mouffe, 2001:112-3). School badges and names are elements that may encapsulate the partially fixed vision, value, aspiration and identity meanings of a school.
- A discourse requires a discursive opposite or 'outside' that differentiates it and gives it definition and identification (Laclau and Mouffe, 2001:114, 118, 122). So, for example, apartheid ideas of 'own culture' offer versions of 'white', 'Indian' and 'black' cultures as a contrast that provides identification for spatial practices.
- The relational discursive impulse is predicated on antagonism in which some social actors can be described as external to the discursive formation and therefore are alienated and oppositional (Laclau and Mouffe, 2001:122-134). Logics of equivalence and difference can operate. In the logic of equivalence, particular identities are dissolved into and negated by a single identity. In this principle, the apartheid discourse might set up whiteness as the negation of all other ethnic and racial identities. Such shared negation might yield unity from which resistance to the dominant discourse emerges. Simultaneously, following the logic of difference, unity is disrupted by establishing different subject positions such as segregated schools. Disruptions to the dominant existing discursive order are challenges from a contending discourse. Disruptions may be seen as discontinuities (such as unexpected objects) as well as absences (as in languages not used) that jar with and fracture stable, established meanings by asserting alternative meanings.
- The role of social actors is central to the constitution of discourses (Laclau and Mouffe, 2001:115). Many discursive positions are available from which social actors such as principals, teachers and learners can identify themselves. Each

subject position is produced and supported by sustaining spatial practices such as uniforms, timetables, special furniture, rooms, play areas and so on.

- A discourse becomes dominant when the diverse discursive objects, practices and social actors and their discursive identification achieve a regularity and coherent stability in meaning, that seeks to eliminate contending discourses and achieve primacy as the organising principle for the society and/or institution such as the school (Laclau and Mouffe, 2001:106, 112).

In applying discourse theory to analyse the data, my approach is inductive, looking for nodal points rich with apartheid and post-apartheid meaning, practices that sustain apartheid constructions and constitute different post-apartheid identities, continuities and discontinuities, absences and presences. I do this by posing five questions linked to the main research questions of the study and the propositions in Lefebvre's theory of the production of space:

- What is the 'blind' reading of what is happening in these image-spaces? In answering this question, I describe as fully as possible what can be seen in the perceived space represented in the image.
- What traces of apartheid can I see? Here, I identify elements that constitute nodal points that act as a scaffolding to illustrate the apartheid order and social actors' spatial practices in relation to this conceived space.
- What post-apartheid discursive practices can I see? Here, I look for the presence of new elements that constitute spatial practices, which disrupt and displace the apartheid discursive order. These may be in the form of discontinuities and absences of elements from the past or unexpected objects that will work to establish new meanings.
- What other views of school space do learners see that I did not see and what do these imply? Here, I consider images that challenge my perceived and conceived views of space and I examine them in relation to issues about apartheid and post-apartheid discourses.
- How is space being used to produce political and social relations of the intersecting apartheid and post-apartheid discursive orderings? I examine how objects or practices stabilise the meaning of apartheid or constitute challenges in the form of new post-apartheid spatial practices and the nature of the interface between these.

Analysis of visual data was deployed at two levels: local and systemic. At the local level, analysis worked on one or more of the 24 views of a single school. Findings concern the objects and practices in that school. At the systemic level, cross-case views, such as the front entrance of the six schools, allowed systemic findings to develop. Thus, the spatial practice of apartheid constituted at two scales, systemically and within institutions. Whereas systemic apartheid and post-apartheid were concealed in the spatial practices and relations of individual institutions, the spatial practices that accumulated in the ensemble of schools revealed the discourses of apartheid and post-apartheid more clearly.

Supplementary data from interviews and other documents were used to further substantiate or clarify analysis emerging from the images.

In the following section, I give an account of the choices I made in conducting the fieldwork, and describe the methods used to collect data.

3.6. EMPIRICAL COMPONENT

Six schools were selected for the study and a range of methods were used to gather information about the schools. Some of the methods presented problems in the field and I give an account below of how I solved these difficulties, reflecting on my success or failure.

Selection of the sample

As a study of urban school space, my unit of analysis is the school in the city. For easy access, I restricted my selection of urban schools to Durban, the city where I live and work. Four criteria were used to select the schools, the latter two being theoretically linked to my research questions about apartheid and post-apartheid discourses (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995:42). They were:

- The schools should be geographically located within the ‘uni-city’ boundary of eThekweni that includes the city of Durban. The uni-city, established within the provisions of the *Local Government Municipal Structures Act, No 117 of 1998* (Republic of South Africa, 1998), refers to the local government structure for certain of South Africa’s largest cities. Several former municipalities are incorporated into a single local government that has authority for the planning and

delivery over a region to function as one economic area. This criterion enabled me to examine the relations of the six schools with a single urban space.

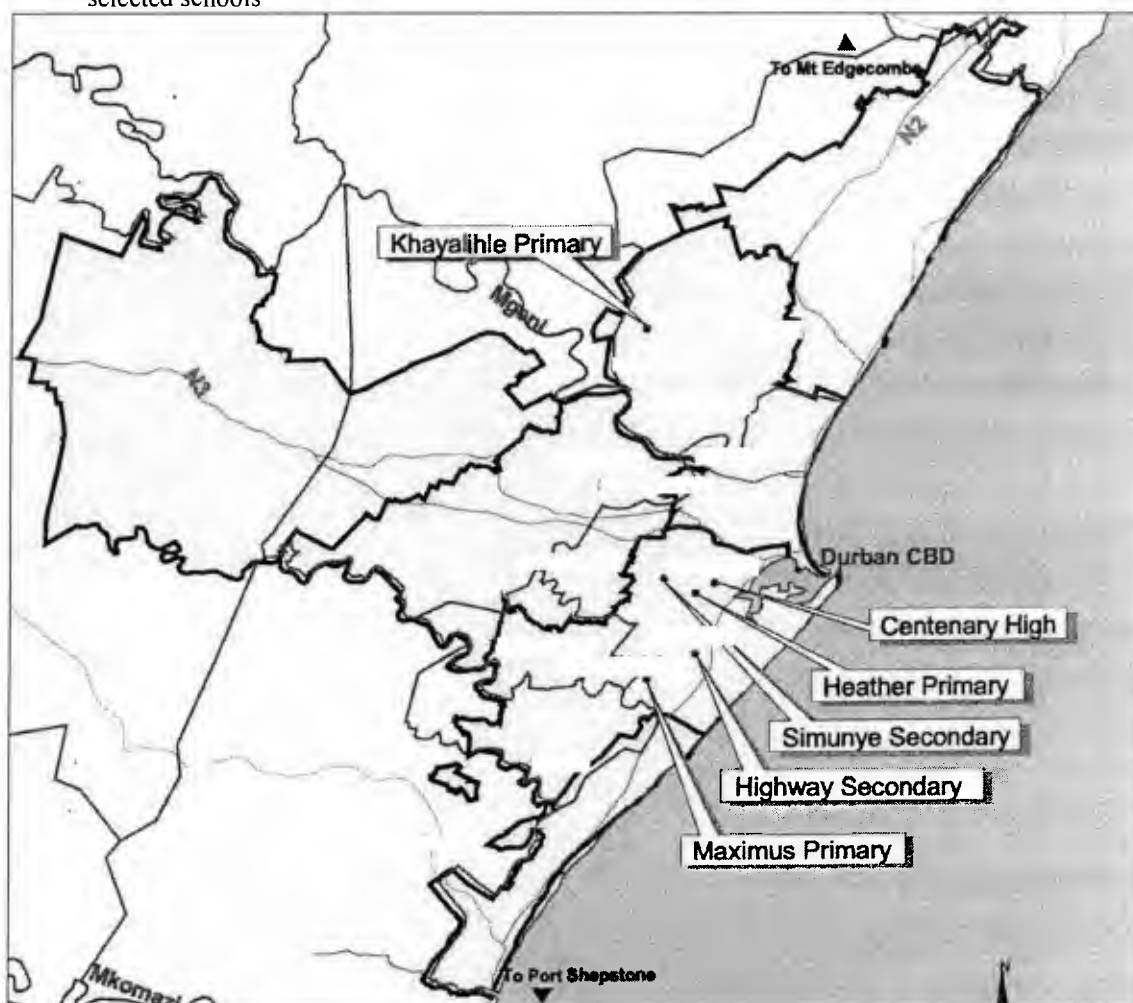
- The schools had to be classed as public schools in terms of the *South African Schools Act, No 84 of 1996* (Republic of South Africa, 1996b), which means that, *inter alia*, the schools were subject to national policy and the government was the employer of staff. This ensured that comparisons were of schools within a current homogenous typology, all having the same relation to the state and the same potential exposure to official policy discourse.
- The schools had to be representative of a spread of the previously race-based apartheid era schools within Durban. The reason for this criterion was to explore how the apartheid discourse of former race-based education authorities manifested differently in school space even though the *Constitution of South Africa, No 108 of 1996* (Republic of South Africa, 1996a) prohibits school enrolment from being prescribed by race. Although this meant that all schools became desegregated and administered by one authority, the racialised past of a school, administered through previously segregated authorities, is significant. In Durban, apartheid-era education authorities were the Department of Education and Training (DET) for black learners living within 'white' urban areas, Natal Education Department (NED) for white learners, and Department of Education and Culture for the House of Delegates (HOD) for Indian learners. Schools selected for the study represented this range of administrative histories.
- A post-apartheid era school should be included. That is a school built and opened after the passing of the *South African Schools Act, No 84 of 1996*. This criterion assumed that the design of such a school would be an 'outlier' among the set of six schools (Miles and Huberman, 1994:269) in that the objects and practices would not manifest the apartheid discourse. It was assumed that in this instance school space would be infused with a transformation discourse advanced in the new education policies of the post-apartheid government, and therefore useful comparative dimensions would emerge.

Heather Primary and Centenary High⁶ were selected as two schools administered by the former NED for whites. These are schools I attended as a learner and I could therefore bring some depth of historical perspectives to the analysis. Maximus Primary

⁶ Fictitious school names are used in this study.

and Highway Secondary were selected as schools administered by the former HOD (for Indians). Khayalihle Primary was selected as a school formerly for black learners only and administered by the DET (for urban blacks). Simunye Secondary was selected on the basis of its geographic position within a major reconstruction and development area as the example of a post-apartheid school opened in 1999, after the official end of apartheid. Some personal contacts facilitated discussions with all the schools selected regarding their participation in the study.

Figure 1: Map of the eThekweni uni-city showing the Durban central business district in relation to selected schools



The six schools are spread across the city, serving middle class and working class communities in (previously) segregated black, Indian and white areas that spatially characterise the ‘apartheid city’ (Lemon, 1991a). The map of eThekweni (see Figure 1 above) shows their location within the uni-city limits. Centenary High, Heather Primary and Simunye Secondary are clustered near the centre of the city, the first two being in middle class residential areas formerly allocated to the white community, and the latter,

a post-apartheid school in an area targeted for redevelopment. Highway Secondary is located in a semi-industrial area not far from the harbour, and Maximus Primary is in a suburb previously zoned for middle class Indians south of the city. Khayalihle Primary is on the northern side of the city in a sprawling, heavily populated and informally settled area in which pockets of townships were built in the 1980s. Townships are low-cost housing estates for black people that the state began establishing from the 1950s on the outskirts of urban centres, to replace the ‘spectacles of filth, contamination and invasion’ that characterised the shantytowns where many black urban dwellers had lived (Minkley, 1998:208).

Some key characteristics of the six schools are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Description of selected schools

School name	Opened in	Former Dept.*	Primary/ Secondary	Residential zoning	Distinguishing features
Heather	1961	NED (white)	Primary	Middle class suburb	Desegregated; coeducational
Maximus	1969	HOD (Indian)	Primary	Middle class suburb	Desegregated; coeducational
Khayalihle	1981	DET (black)	Primary	Working class township with squatters	Racially homogenous but formally desegregated; coeducational
Centenary	1882	NED (white)	Secondary	Middle class suburb	Girls only; desegregated
Highway	1956	HOD (Indian)	Secondary	Semi-industrial/ working class	Desegregated; coeducational; academic & technical curriculum

Simunye	1999	Not applicable	Secondary	Working class development area with squatters	Racially homogenous but formally desegregated; coeducational
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* NED: Natal Education Department (for whites); DET: Department of Education and Training (for blacks in urban areas); HOD: House of Delegates (for Indians)

Since the early 1990s when racial restrictions on school enrolment were relaxed, there has been greater mobility of learners in search of better schools, with attendant changes in the racial profile of learner populations (Vally and Dalamba, 1999:17). This is apparent in race/class enrolment patterns presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Race and class features in past and present learner enrolments in sampled schools

Schools	Learners enrolled prior to 1990 (apartheid era)	Learners enrolled in 2000
Heather Primary	White co-ed, resident in nearby working and middle class neighbourhoods	34% white from nearby working and middle class neighbourhoods, 49% black, 9% Indian and the remaining 8% being coloured/other as new residents in the neighbourhood or commuting from other areas and townships in the city
Maximus Primary	Indian co-ed, resident in nearby middle class neighbourhood	Overwhelming majority black, resident in nearby townships; less than 10% Indian learners from nearby middle class neighbourhood
Khayalihle Primary	Black co-ed, resident in nearby working class neighbourhood	100% black co-ed, resident in nearby working class neighbourhood & informal squatter settlements

Centenary High (girls only)	White girls, from nearby middle and working class neighbourhoods	48% white girls from nearby middle and working class neighbourhoods, 24% black, 22% Indian and 6% coloured new residents in the neighbourhood or commuting from other areas and townships in the city
Highway Secondary	Indian, from a wide feeder area of middle and working class neighbourhoods	60% black, 37% Indian, 2% coloured, 1% white/other, all from a wide feeder area, primarily working class neighbourhoods
Simunye Secondary	Not applicable	100% black, from nearby working class neighbourhood comprising formal low cost housing & informal settlements

The assumption that micro studies of six schools could illuminate systemic social practice raises the question of generalisability. Qualitative micro-studies elicit a wealth of minutiae and enable a close analysis of images and representations of difference but there are difficulties situating such studies within an understanding of the macro context. Aaron Cicourel (1981:52-67) averted this worry when he argued that macro phenomena are aggregations and repetitions of micro everyday experiences and he criticised the conceptual divisions between these levels as false constructions of researchers. His contention that micro and macro levels are connected and interactive can be seen by micro-level researchers' references to macro-theoretical concepts and the micro-level exemplars used by macro-level theorists. Cicourel's argument is salient for this micro level investigation of six urban schools. I am interested in generalisations about school space that may be drawn from the articulated differences and similarities in spatial practices and relations between and within segregated schools. It follows that the micro-macro interface, which is an important focus of analysis in city-school

relations, divests this study from needing to increase the school sample quantitatively to represent further examples of South Africa's urban public schools (Scott, 1996:151-2).

The decision to conduct the research as a visual ethnographic study had practical implications that required careful planning. First, as an uncommon methodological approach, detailed explanations of the approach and its implications needed to be presented to gatekeepers such as principals when negotiating access to the schools. This was also necessary when seeking agreement from participants to be involved in the study. Careful attention to such matters at an early stage was time consuming but essential for ensuring participants understood their roles and expectations of them during the study. Second, specialised technologies such as digital and disposable cameras were required for recording observations, and those gathering data had to develop appropriate technological skills. For this study, a booklet was developed as a pedagogic instrument for introducing learners to photography and using a camera. Third, the data management processes in visual research were lengthy because time was needed to allow for film developing, manually labelling photographs, digital scanning, electronic sorting and filing, labelling and filing negatives, and recording and transcribing participants' explanations about their photographs. Fourth, the technologies and data processing of visual research were costly and required budgetary consideration during the research design stage.

Framing the image was a challenge because the camera lens does not replicate the full parameter of human vision. Selecting where to point and shoot the camera was also difficult for three-dimensional space where one photograph may be insufficient to record a view, for example, of a classroom. Of necessity, the camera lens could only be directed and focused in one direction at a time, leading the photographer to take several images from different angles. Nevertheless, no amount of photographing could ever achieve a complete viewing of school space because of the infinitesimal positions and perspectives from which space is experienced differently by each person (Soja, 1996:56). In this study, photographs were therefore considered to be 'slices' of partially viewed school space at one particular moment.

The methods used to collect and generate data in the field are explained in detail in the next section.

Methods

Primary data was gathered through two participant observation methods and interviews.

i. Outsider participant observations

In designing the study, I followed researchers such as Preskill (1995) and Prosser (1992) who photographed British school culture, by adapting the participant observation method used in ethnographies of schools. Participant observation is a method whereby the researcher joins the studied community in its real setting to observe and gather substantial quantities of detailed data about the community and its practices (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995:1). Within this method, the field note is commonly used as the technique to record observations. However, for this study of space I recorded participant observations of objects and practices in the schools photographically using a digital camera. Still images closely resemble more conventional participant observation techniques recording great quantities of data. Contrary to Hammersley and Atkinson's (1995:189) assertion that this generates too much detail, visual recordings have the advantage of including relevant as well as extraneous data that may later be found to be pertinent. Digital images are easily stored electronically, transported and readily accessed with a computer. The disadvantages of this technique are that it does not record movement and also that electronic data digital images are more technologically complex and sensitive than paper-based recordings. The start-up capital costs of digital imaging are also higher than materials required for field-note taking.

One difficulty with visual imaging as observation is that it is an uncommon technique in educational research with most practical guidance in the 20th century being available only from anthropologists such as John Collier, Jr. (1967). Even in the recent writing about visual research methodologies by anthropologists Banks (2001) and Pink (2001), cultural geographer Rose (2001) and educationist Prosser's edited volume (1998a), there has been very little disclosure about the technicalities of instrument design. Jon Rieger's (1996) visual study of social change in United States towns suggests a structured approach using the same view. However, his study was historical, comparing the same view over time, whereas my study entailed a cross-case analysis conducted synchronically. The instrument I designed, therefore, was developed in

response to the research setting and the questions under investigation, and was not an adaptation of an existing instrument.

For visual comparisons of and across the six schools in this study I developed a structured instrument that standardised observations. The instrument was deductive, making deliberate observations of 24 specific spatial objects and practices (see Table 4: Photograph views and sub-categories of objects or perspectives to be photographed). Material and technological differentials, territoriality, ritual and routine, information processing, and private and public representation informed the categories. In order to generate the list of images to be assembled, I drew on a number of studies concerning school space. The list was partly modified in the field.

A School Register of Needs Survey (Human Sciences Research Council, Education Foundation and Research Institute for Education Planning, 1997) of South Africa's approximately 27,000 schools was conducted by the Human Sciences Research Council, the Education Foundation and the Research Institute for Education Planning in 1996 in order to describe material conditions at schools and map the geographic areas where schools had the greatest need. Eight categories, drawn from the *Survey's* need indicators, were photographed in each school. These provided views of resource utilities. In these views, I anticipated finding traces of apartheid-based resource differentials that would illuminate the hierarchical subordination and identification of apartheid.

In his theory of human territoriality, Robert Sack (1986:19-20) has shown how boundaries demarcate the interstices between one place and the next. Ownership, power, values, rules and rituals are signalled in the way in which the boundary and entrance is treated, the proportion of space allocated to the various institutional functions and how it is controlled. Lefebvre's scheme of realms (1991:155), in which he distinguishes a global realm for places of worship, power and privilege, and his statements of 'reserved spaces, such as places of initiation' (1991:35) provided impulses for categories of rituals and routines. Thus, I developed ten categories of boundaries, and territorial and identification markings. In these views I anticipated data about power, rules and rituals of privilege and status, and values.

Jennifer Robinson (1996:58-80) has contended that a feature of the modernising apartheid state was the increased bureaucratisation of public institutions in order to maintain control and power over communities, especially subordinated groups such as

black communities. In looking for connections between bureaucracy and apartheid discourses, I included three views of school bureaucracy: administration furniture, equipment and notice boards. In these views I anticipated finding traces of apartheid-based resource differentials that would illuminate the hierarchical subordination and identification of apartheid.

At the time the study was conducted, the outcomes-based education (OBE) curriculum was being introduced in the Foundation Phase (grades R-3) and was effecting spatial changes in teaching and learning practices. Thus, I included views of two classrooms where different curriculum phases were taught in order to observe pedagogic practices.

While in the field, I noted that there were significant areas of the school not covered in the above categories. I therefore added two views of informal social space. I anticipated that the car park might provide information about the economic status of teachers and transport practices of the school. The tuckshop was chosen as a view as I anticipated practices concerning the preparation and consumption of food might reveal aspects of cultural and economic practices not visible elsewhere in the school.

Table 4: Photograph views and sub-categories of objects or perspectives to be photographed

View	Sub-category
Resource utility views	Energy-based object
	Water supply
	Toilets
	Telephone
	Library
	Laboratory / specialised room
	Sports fields and playground
Boundary views	School entrance as seen from road
	Road as seen from main entry point of school building
	Main door to school
	Door to principal's office
	Door to classroom
	School as a whole

Views of rituals and routines	Control over movement/routines in the corridor
	Staff room
	Assembly
	Public representational images
Views of school bureaucracy	Administrative office furniture
	Administrative equipment
	Staff room notice board
Classroom views	First phase classroom
	Second phase classroom
Informal social space	Car park
	Tuck shop

In the category of classroom views, Foundation and Intermediate Phase classrooms were observed at primary schools, but since at high schools classrooms for specific phases were not allocated in the ways used at primary schools, specialist learning rooms such as the drama room, science laboratory or technical subject workshop were observed. In many cases more than one image was photographed for each sub-category so that this data set referred to as the Karlsson (K) image bank comprises about 500 images. Occasionally an event, such as learners locked out for late-coming, occurred while I was photographing a school. These events were recorded as observations even though they were not part of the scheduled and structured observation. This responsiveness to events occurring in the natural setting is characteristic of an ethnographic approach (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995:37). These visual images supplement those within the structured categories and are included in the K image bank.

ii. Insider participant observations

The second major source of observation was learners who provided insider participant observations. Although as participant observer I walked freely around the schools, my view of the school sites was mostly of publicly open space, curtailed by my limited time for each visit. To offset the partiality of my observations I incorporated a sample of learners as insider participants to observe their schools by giving them disposable cameras containing 27 frames and asking them to photograph 'me and my school'. My preliminary thoughts about the challenges of employing this method with

young learners from the socio-economically complex context of Durban and the lessons I learnt in the process, have been published in the journal *Visual Sociology* (see Karlsson, 2001). This unstructured instrument was based on the phototherapy instrument developed by Jeanne Combs and Robert Ziller (1977) in their work with college students in the United States. I considered adapting their visual method suitable for this study because this method of data collection was not contingent on learners' linguistic competence – an important factor in South Africa's linguistically complex school context. It avoided direct questions about complex concepts that informants might not comprehend.

Two reasons informed my decision to include learners as insider participant observers. First, learners would supplement my outsider/frontstage view with insider/backstage views that I might not have had access to during my school visits. Experiencing school space from the perspective of a learner is impossible for an adult researcher. Nevertheless, it is necessary to find ways of researching that perspective in South Africa because, as Bill Nasson states:

To construct any authentic [sic] imagery of childhood and education, one needs to move into the complex worlds of divided children, with their own consciousness, social relations, and inherited expectations (Nasson, 1986:95).

Second, in a visual study of school space, there is a danger of objectifying learners as part of the material landscape. For me to construct visual representations of school spaces and analyse spatiality without having learners visually represent their own experiential observations of school space, would approximate the colonial gaze on the less powerful 'other' theorised by post-coloniality scholars such as Homi Bhabha and Gijartri Spivak (Moore-Gilbert, 1997:74-151). To avoid othering of learners, the data gathering needed to incorporate representations of school space produced by learners for themselves. A strength of this method is that it gives learners counteractive agency over the discipline that characterises the way adults control and monitor school space (James, Jenks and Prout, 1998:41-7). Not only were the learners' photographs conceived as complementing my constructed outsider visual images of their schools, they were a construction of school space from a perspective that is under-researched i.e. the school as seen by the young insider subject. These photographs comprise the Learner (L) image bank.

A sample of 24 learners (four learners from each school) was randomly selected from an alphabetical class list stratified by age (10 and 15 year olds) and gender. (See Appendix 3 for further information about sampling.) I had a recorded semi-structured conversation with each learner who took photographs in order to gain some explanation of the content and location of their photographs. The transcripts of these discussions supplement their photographs.

Two difficulties were encountered with this method in the field. The first concerned learners' familiarity with the technology of disposable cameras. I developed an educational booklet and 60-minute training session to build learners' technical capacity to use the cameras and undertake the task of photographing 'me and my school' (see Appendix 2). The second difficulty concerned my language competence that only includes *isiZulu* greetings and introductory phrases. I needed an interpreter to communicate with the *isiZulu*-speaking learners from Khayalihle Primary in the briefing session before they used their cameras and afterwards when they explained their photographs to me. My difficulties were compounded by the interpreter's inexperience with young research participants and the use of improvised *isiZulu* vocabulary for technical camera and photography terms. The effect was that the four learners who were briefed in *isiZulu* took a higher percentage of 'unsuccessful' indoor photographs that are so dark that there is uncertainty about the photograph's contents. Despite this, the instrument design for learners was successful, yielding 24 'visual diaries' (Prosser and Schwartz, 1998:122-3) that constitute the L image bank comprising 572 images in total.

iii. Memory accounts

The third method used in this study was memory account. This requires the teller to translate into words and arrange into a sequential narrative the internalised visualisation (Engel, 1999:6). In the reworking of memory, details are changed, added and deleted so that the 'truth' of a memory is conventionally challenged in research (Schratz and Walker, 1995:40-41). However, Susan Engel asserts that an informant's 'memory is true if it resonates with [her]self, illuminates [her] life, and affords a sense of continuity' (Engel, 1999:13).

Collective memory-work methodology was pioneered by a group of feminist researchers in Berlin (Haug, 1987). It usually involves subjects working in groups discussing memory accounts they have written in the third person. This methodology challenges notions of objectivity in research by bridging the divide between subjects

and objects of research (Schratz and Walker, 1995:44). The intent is not to focus on the self, private experience or nostalgia about the past. Instead, collective memory accounts conducted in this manner blur distinctions between what is personal and what is social and therefore are useful for considering how political discursive processes worked in the past lives of subjects, and may continue to work in their present.

I used memory accounts to generate data from adults about what it was like to attend an apartheid school and, by so doing, to reflect as adults on their personal experience of apartheid school space while they were children. However, my application of memory-work is unlike the collective memory-work of Haug's group in that the memory accounts utilised for this study were oral, spoken in the first person to me and/or by me. They followed a semi-structured interview that included the use of photo-elicitation in order to trigger memories and comparative reflection on past experiences of school. The accounts were recorded and transcribed.

Eight adult informants provided memory accounts. One teacher from each of the six schools in the study provided an account. In addition I drew on memory accounts provided through discussions between a colleague and me. We had both attended schools in the sample. My participation as an informant disrupts conventional research practices that separate the researched from the researcher. However, this is characteristic of the memory-work methodology pioneered by Frigga Haug and other feminists in Berlin who used personal experience as a basis of social knowledge (Haug, 1987; Schratz and Walker, 1995:40).

In all, there were five female and three male informants who provided memory accounts. The racial composition of the group was unrepresentative as there were only two black informants, three Indian and three white.

Table 5: Race and gender composition of adult informants

Black		Indian		White		Total
2		3		3		8
M	F	M	F	M	F	M = 3
1	1	2	1	0	3	F = 5

The memory accounts were generated from two instruments (see Appendix 1). The memory account from a colleague and me was elicited during a recorded conversation about several photographs we had taken of entrances to 'our' schools. The questions were developed in advance to guide the flow of memories. The second

instrument was based on questions used for the memory conversation. The instrument was an open-ended, structured interview comprising six questions. In the last question I used a photo elicitation technique (Banks, 2001:87-96) by presenting four photographs of schools in the sample to further dislodge participants' memories of the past. The interview was recorded and took on the tenor of a conversation with the questions loosely structuring the account. Reflexive questions occurred throughout in order for me to check my understanding and interpretation with the informant. The techniques of open-ended interview questions supplemented by photo elicitation were successful in generating a flood of memories. The informants as adults were articulate and responded positively by sharing personal memories.

iv. Supplementary data

During visits to schools I occasionally found documents comprising examples of representations of space such as school yearbooks and fire evacuation maps with simplified floor plans. In addition, if I was shown around the school I had informal conversations with some of the school staff or on occasion I requested verbal clarification about something seen at the school. Information from these sources was recorded as field notes. In two memory accounts, pencil-drawn layout maps of schools were made. This diverse range of information has secondary status that I used to supplement and/or confirm my interpretative meaning of the visual images generated through participant observations.

In my approach to gathering data, I took several principles of doing social justice research into consideration (Griffiths, 1998:94-7). The first of these was that I worked in consultation with subjects of the study as well as their gatekeepers, taking advice about the availability of a particular class and their teacher at each school, negotiating access to subjects and the field, adjusting my schedule to their lesson and break routines, and so on (see Appendices 1-6). Through this open approach, I built their trust that I would not cause them any harm, loss of teaching and learning time, and that their superiors would not censure them. This required careful attention to communication exchanges and in some cases it necessitated the use of an interpreter and the translation of documents into *isiZulu*. In other cases, it entailed my guaranteeing anonymity. Secondly, I sought to be transparent to subjects and their gatekeepers about my identity, research purpose, process and product. I attended to this in conversations with principals and teachers, in letters to schools and parents (see Appendices 5 and 6), and in a booklet

copied for each learner that included photographs about myself and promised the learners copies of their photographs (see Appendix 2). Adult informants were asked to check and vouch that the transcripts were a fair representation of what was said in their recorded interviews. This was aimed also at establishing a climate of trust and confidence in the integrity of the study, and required me to be reflexive about my role in education, my identity and my values. Thirdly, I was open to encountering a range of viewpoints expressed by diverse subjects even when these opinions were in conflict with my own. This required me to temporarily suspend my own critical judgements, though during analysis my interpretation of data entailed the critique of certain perspectives. Using fictitious names for subjects and schools provided the distance to avoid evaluative comments about individual subjects in their personal capacities.

I obtained written consent from school principals and governing body chairpersons for institutional participation, and from parents for learner participation, in *isiZulu* when necessary to ensure participation was communicated effectively (see Appendices 5 and 6). In explaining the purpose of the study to adults and children, I was able to be open and honest, one of the principles of social justice research (Griffiths, 1998:96) and an ethical code of practice (British Educational Research Association, 2002; British Sociological Association, 2002). The openness was possible because this study of school space did not require information of a personal and sensitive nature, as might be the case in a study of racism and sexuality. A device I used to build the trust of learners and parents and demystify me as an unknown researcher, was visual images of me as a child and as an adult, which I included in the booklets about photography and cameras (see Appendix 2). In order to gain principals' confidence to give me access to all areas of the school sites, to photograph things that might not often be exposed to public scrutiny, and for learners to trust me with whatever activities they photographed, I agreed to give them personal and institutional anonymity when I analysed and reported the research (see Appendix 5). Such respectful negotiation with participants and the collaboration that it yields flows from the need to 'work within, against and through existing power differentials' (Griffiths, 1998:135). On the basis of the free rein I was given to photograph school sites and judging by the content of photographs taken by learners – some of which show domestic scenes or acts of transgression in school space – I assess that I was successful in establishing trust with participants.

Assurances of institutional and participant anonymity were given at the outset of gathering empirical data. For a visual study of particular places, the issue of anonymity was later to pose problems. Although the ethics of protecting participants and institutions from harm initially drove anonymisation in this study, the difficulties of reliably ensuring anonymity and the implications of an anonymising practice were later considerations. Some of the things that undermine the reliability of an anonymity guarantee are questions posed by inquisitive onlookers, friends and colleagues observing the researcher going in and out of the field over a period of time, and briefing a range of people encountered during the course of the study who are peripheral to it but who need to know about the study, such as learners' parents, other school staff members and government officers (Nespor, 2000:547). My approach in these situations varied, depending on my relations with the person and my knowledge of their status in relation to informants and the schools, and mainly followed a 'need-to-know' common sense.

There are several arguments against defaulting to an anonymising practice in qualitative research on the assumption that it is reliable and theoretically desirable. The argument *for* anonymisation, on the grounds that it facilitates generalisation so that social life can be distilled and represented for considering theoretical categories, is congruous with the ethical argument to cause no harm to participants. However, as Nespor argues, generalisations that remove indexical references to time and place, reduce the meaning and critical value of the research:

'When the settings and places where events unfold are simply taken as givens instead of scrutinized as contingent and unfinished outcomes of power and struggles, we detach our accounts from such struggles or, worse, become complicit in the political projects of dominant groups and organizations to produce spaces to serve their own needs (Nespor, 2000:552).

In some studies, Nespor's contention may hold in that the critical value is diminished through generalisation. I have worked in this thesis against that loss by locating the informants and schools in relation to the specific spatial and temporal politics of the South African city of Durban – even as I anonymised local neighbourhoods, schools and informants through the use of fictitious names, contracting personal names to initials, avoiding the use of neighbourhood names, and using the 'fuzzy face' effect. Banks (2001:130) contends that using pseudonyms solves only part of the problem of causing harm to subjects in visual research. He asserts that the fuzzy face effect is associated with criminality, and instead he recommends that the problem

should be explored and utilised as an opportunity for open collaborative work between the researcher and researched. I did not explore this option because of the multi-institutional dimension of the study and because almost all those photographed were under-age.

Nevertheless, though I sought to protect informants and institutions in the process and reporting of this research, a caveat about anonymity is that it cannot be guaranteed in perpetuity:

Participants or observers near the events described are unlikely to be misled by pseudonyms or other anonymizing practices, and distant outsiders who have the resources to investigate a case can likely identify the sites and individuals it describes (Nespor, 2000:549).

It is unlikely that there will be those within the international community of scholars and readers who will endeavour to uncover the identity of schools and informants. Disclosure of the school identities is possible, however, among South African education researchers, who comprise a relatively small group and who are familiar with South Africa's cities, including Durban, and who will recognise descriptions and photographs of particular schools in this thesis from their own researches as well as media reports. Many of these external factors are beyond my control. Nevertheless, my responsibility as researcher is to honour the guarantees of anonymity given to participants to the full extent of my power.

The challenge of the ethical and theoretical dilemma around anonymisation in this thesis, for which political discourses and space are central, has been to balance honouring participant and institutional anonymity with the historical and socio-political specificities of place. The resolution in text has been to maintain anonymity through fictitious names for schools, referring initials or alphanumeric code-names for individuals, and anonymising place only up to the scale of neighbourhood. Pink (2001:43) asserts, correctly, that effecting anonymity with visual images is 'usually impossible' because the faces and settings can be seen and recognised. Reconciling the ease of visual identification with the anonymity that I assured has vexed this study. My approach has been to use photographs selectively and to obscure place names and faces using the block-out and fuzzy face technique. Implementing manipulation in order to uphold agreements with participants is one level of ethical practice. Admitting to these research practices here is yet another level for which readers from the research

community may adjudicate. Nevertheless, as Pink explains, even with consent and the best intentions of the visual researcher, control over future scholarly use of photographs cannot be guaranteed:

...once visual and other representations of ethnographic work have been produced and disseminated publicly neither author nor subjects of the work can control the ways in which these representations are interpreted and given meanings by their readers, viewers and audiences (Pink, 2001:43).

To prevent unauthorised usage, Banks has recommended measures of embedding watermarks digitally and only releasing low-resolution digital images to distributors. This issue points to the ethical dilemma of ownership. Anthropologists have been criticised for ‘exploiting’ exotic communities with gifts in exchange for disclosing their knowledge and practices with the researcher (Pratt, 1986:44). In this study, I gave participating learners albums containing copies of their photographs, and simultaneously I reflected critically about how this gesture might be interpreted by learners. I assessed that it was not an exploitative practice in this study since the albums were not used to extort participation but were a memento of participation. In visual research, such as in this study, where visual images are generated in the field, legal ownership of photographs usually resides with the researcher. But, as Banks asserts, those who participate in creating the photographs have a claim of moral ownership (2001:132). In such cases, copies of images should be returned to participants as was done with learner participants because they had taken the photographs. Sets of photographs were not returned to schools for three reasons. I did not regard the schools as creators of the photographs; I had not made that undertaking at the outset; and at no time did school principals and teachers request to view or receive copies of any photographs.

All subject participation, whether adult or child, is mediated by and in the control of the researcher (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995:54-123). However, learners’ vulnerability by way of these unequal power relations, not only between researcher and researched but between adult and child, compels the researcher to work ethically (Cohen and Manion, 1994:352). Especially in a culturally and linguistically complex context such as South Africa where there is a history of profound injustices of racial and economic subordination, the researcher must exercise caution because these features compound the unequal power relations of the research process. Griffiths disaggregates

the social justice principles relevant to this ethical concern about power as recognising ‘an equal respect for and appreciation of every individual; a recognition that persons are constructed and interpret themselves in relation to power relations in society’ (Griffiths, 1998:134-5).

I used diverse strategies to reduce the power differential between learners and me in this study. First, a booklet and 60-minute briefing session was developed to build participants’ technical capacity as insider participant observers (see Appendix 2). Ensuring that no harm came to the learners during the days when they were taking photographs was largely beyond my control. However, during the 60-minute briefing session, the consequences of thieving and damage and ways to prevent theft and care for their cameras were discussed. Learners were assured that there would be no repercussions from their teachers and me if such misfortunes befell them. They were also advised to ask permission of their teachers and other learners before they photographed them. This strategy was effective in that all the learners successfully completed the task of photographing ‘me and my school’.

Second, for learners to communicate freely, I used an English-*isiZulu* interpreter at Khayalihle Primary where the participants were unfamiliar with English. Despite my attention to this ethical concern, the strategy was poorly executed because I failed to prepare the interpreter sufficiently for working with young children and helping them understand their task. Their photographs pointed to misunderstandings that arose through my poor briefing of the interpreter. Inasmuch as the study is my construction, learners’ explanations and interpretations of visual images are constructions with no less claim to truth. This is in keeping with the multi-vocality of visual images (Harper, 1998a:32; Banks, 2001:144; Pink, 2001:117) in which diverse meanings can be read off one photograph. For this, learners’ explanations were recorded and transcribed verbatim. Transcriptions of the learners’ explanations from Khayalihle Primary were of limited use because it was only at the translation stage that I became aware of the interpreter’s poor interview technique, which intimidated the young learners. I had also not anticipated the need for an interpreter with the older secondary school learners at Simunye Secondary, who were all assumed to be conversant in English. They were unable to communicate with confidence in English and this yielded limited explanations of their photographs.

To sum up, there are no easy solutions to the ethical dilemmas in visual ethnographic research. Anonymity was resolved partially by using fictitious institutional names, anonymising locations, contracting names, and erasing visual identifications in this thesis. The strategies I devised to ameliorate the unequal power differential between me and participating learners was only partially successful because I had not attended more carefully in advance to the intricacies of doing research in a linguistically complex field.

I affected the research setting by being known in some schools and by some informants. My personal associations meant that I had trusting contacts in the field that gave me easy access to data. My political association with a critical pedagogy for social justice in South Africa gave my contacts and informants confidence in the purpose of the study. These personal contacts have, however, introduced a tension for me when my interpretations of politically sensitive issues diverge from how school managers construct spatial practices in their schools and how informants explicate their experiences of apartheid education and spatial practices at schools in the post-apartheid era. I have resolved this tension by anonymising schools and informants.

As a white middle class South African woman, most black and Indian South Africans would see me as representing whites who wielded power during the apartheid era, and who continue to do so economically. Regardless of my personal values and political affiliations, this surface reading of my identity highlights the problem of unequal power relations between those participating in this study and me. Long-standing systemic social conditions as well as the nature of research which vests responsibility in the researcher, prevented me from resolving this problematic entirely. But my methodological stance that acknowledged my observation of schools as partial and constructed and needing to be supplemented, attempted to offset the imbalance of power somewhat. This stance is consistent with postmodern ethnographies of marginalised individuals and communities such as rural women, migrant workers and the homeless that confront issues of power relations between the researcher and researched (Harper, 1998b:138, 141). Through itinerant stays at overnight shelters in the United States that divested Douglas Harper (1982), a sociologist, of his image as a participant observation researcher, he was able to gain experiential insight into the way shelter institutions subordinated unemployed men. This would not have been possible through interviews and daytime observation. Ruth Behar (1995), a feminist

anthropologist from the United States, refers to her post-publication quandary in the face of her Mexican informant's indifference and her father's outrage at what she has written about her family and herself. This deflected her power as a researcher, pointing up multiple aspects of that identity which I recognise.

I successfully strengthened the validity of this study by generating data through a variety of methods and from various participants, and cross-checking the accurate transcription of memory accounts and my understanding of the data (images and statements) generated by the participants during structured interviews (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995; Scott, 1996). Despite the low number of schools in this study, the cases were sufficiently representative of schools in Durban, and the data was suitably fine-grained and sufficiently comprehensive of spatial practices at school to offer a thorough analysis of political discourses in urban school space.

3.7. CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I situated myself within the research process and explained my choices for conducting this study as a visual ethnography of spatial practices, using a political discourse analytical approach. The ways in which I dealt with ethical concerns in the field and this thesis were discussed, and I also explained the school selection and the methods and instruments I used for data gathering.

Chapter 4 is the first of four chapters in which I discuss the schools in this study and analyse observed spatial practices. In chapter 4, I climb on a school bus for an imaginary excursion around the city of Durban to visit each school in the study.

CHAPTER 4: ON EXCURSION: SIX SCHOOLS IN THEIR CITY OF DURBAN CONTEXT



4.1. INTRODUCTION

Urban schools are nested in and intrinsic to life and development in the local sphere of the city and its centre-periphery relations. Through its spatial placement, each public school relates directly to communities living in its vicinity, and it participates in the unfolding development of the city, while simultaneously being a consumer of the local government's infrastructural services and utilities, and subject to local government spatial planning. How these schools were spatially and historically positioned in the city, and in relation to each other, is pivotal for understanding the internal spatiality of each school and the differences between them.

All six schools in this study share the distinguishing feature of being geographically situated in Durban, South Africa's second largest urban centre with a population estimated to be 2,4 million in 1997 (Crothers, 1999:42).⁷ In 2001, transitional local government arrangements came to an end and the greater Durban region was re-demarcated and named eThekweni after the original *isiZulu* name for Durban and surrounding areas. This name derives from *itheku*, referring to the horns of a bull, as seen in the curvature of the bay (UniCity Committee Durban, 2000:4).

⁷ Johannesburg, the largest urban formation, is estimated to have a population of 4,175 million, while Cape Town's population is estimated at 2,279 million (McCarthy and Bernstein, 1996:5)

In this chapter, I describe the six schools within Durban using the spatial imagination technique that Edward Soja (1989:190-248; 1996:184-320) utilised in his studies of Amsterdam and Los Angeles. Boarding an imaginary bus on an excursion to visit all the schools, we will encounter the urban spatial history of the schools, familiarise ourselves with the spatial layout of the school sites, and consider the centre-periphery politics revealed through the schools' location within an unfolding development of urban space.

The starting point for the imaginary bus excursion is on the hills overlooking Durban's city centre and harbour. Durban is a rapidly expanding city on the eastern coast of South Africa. It is a distinctive South African city in terms of its population, culture and built environment. The population comprises roughly 70% black, 13% white, 15% Indian and 0.8% coloured (Crothers, 1999:42), with a ratio of blacks to whites that far exceeds the other metropolitan centres of Johannesburg and Cape Town (McCarthy and Bernstein, 1996:7). The white community differs from many other parts of South Africa by being almost totally English-speaking (McCarthy and Bernstein, 1996:7). Durban is home to most of South Africa's Indian population, infusing the city with an Asian orientation. These features give Durban an unequivocally culturally mixed character.

In terms of developing the built environment for its population, Durban is challenged by a growing 'squatterscape' (Beavon, 1992), the spread of informal settlements, that outstrips all South Africa's other cities by having 2.25 shacks per township house (McCarthy and Bernstein, 1996:7). Almost one third of Durban's households live in shacks (Durban Metro Urban Strategy Department, 2000:4). A major challenge is meeting the educational needs of the large informal settlement communities and the pavement traders, many of whom are illiterate and have strong ties to rural areas outside the city.

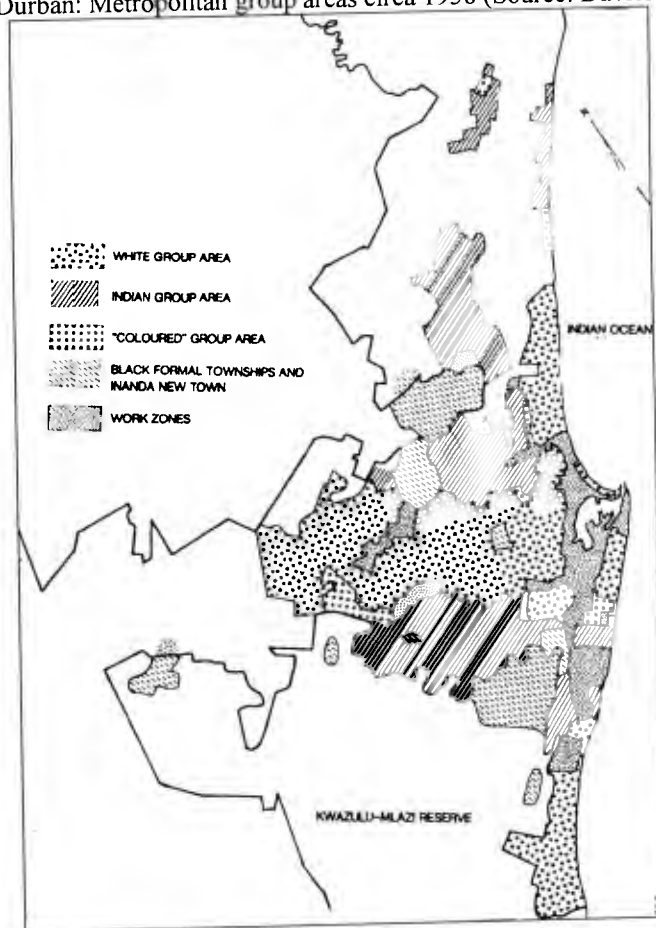
Many place names in Durban speak to the city's colonial past from the era of the infamous land scramble by Europeans, which entailed the erasure of an earlier history when Zulu kings bathed on the lagoon verges. These were renamed by colonisers as Victoria Embankment after the Thames riverside in London, United Kingdom. Durban was once named Port Natal to commemorate the Portuguese sailor, Vasco Da Gama, who landed there on Christmas Day in 1497. Following unsuccessful attempts in 1688 and 1705 by Simon van der Stel, the Dutch East India Company representative at the

Cape of Good Hope, to acquire title deeds to the bay from Zulu chiefs, Durban was permanently settled by Europeans in 1823 after British lieutenants King and Farewell took refuge in the bay (Morrison, 1987:8). In 1835, the colonial settlement was named Durban, taking its name from Sir Benjamin D'Urban, the British governor of the Cape colony at the time.⁸ Durban's future as an important commercial harbour and industrial city, however, was assured after a harbour engineer was appointed in 1850 and South Africa's first railway line was laid in 1898.

In the three decades 1920-50, Durban experienced dramatic growth in African urbanisation (Lemon, 1991a:4). Durban's whites, however, were less threatened by blacks than they were by Indian residents of the city who were rising in numbers and achieving success in their commercial ventures (Lemon, 1991a:3,13-4). By 1950, the majority of Durban's black residents lived in relatively uncontrolled concentrations such as at Cato Manor near the city centre. There was rioting between blacks and Indians in 1949 that exacerbated anxieties among Durban's whites (Davies, 1991:82) and left a painful legacy in the collective memory of the Indian community (Thiara, 1999:161-2). Following the proclamation of the Group Areas Act in 1953, which applied to ownership and occupation of property and fixed certain geographic zones for the use of only one racial group, Durban's City Council rezoned the city's residential areas along strictly segregated lines in 1958 (Davies, 1991:79).

⁸ <http://www.durban.gov.za/visitors/about/history/index.asp> (Consulted on 25 Jul 2003).

Figure 2: Durban: Metropolitan group areas circa 1958 (Source: Davies, 1991:80)



This necessitated the appropriation of properties and building of vast low-income Council housing estates and a few middle class suburbs for Indians, followed by their forced removal to these areas during the 1960s. The townships of KwaMashu to the north and Umlazi to the south of the city were established in 1958 and 1962 respectively (Davies, 1991:82). These developments concentrated and fixed power at the core of centre-periphery relations of the apartheid city and the arrangements also justified the imposition of segregated education systems (Davies, 1991:80-1). Despite central government's establishment of KwaZulu as a self-governing territory to reduce the flow of black people moving from rural areas into towns and cities, urbanisation continued, with people settling informally in the interstices such as Inanda that lay between the city and KwaZulu territory. By the 1980s, Durban had grown as a metropolis, with regional and town planners conceiving of Durban, satellite towns and outlying rural areas as a single economic region (Davies, 1991:83-4). Collaborative engagements for 'orderly urbanisation' brought groups like the Urban Foundation and state together for the development of new housing schemes on Durban's northern fringes (Davies, 1991:86).

In the early 1990s, the city began to relax segregated access to beaches (Davies, 1991:86). Fractures in the segregated school system began to emerge as Indian schools admitted small numbers of black learners. Then, in 1990, new models of school governance and funding were proclaimed for white schools, ushering in the first stage towards formal desegregation of public schooling in Durban (Karlsson, McPherson and Pampallis, 2001:145-6)

Following South Africa's democratic elections in 1994 and the start of transitional local governments, Durban began to position itself internationally as a tourist destination and a world 'hub port' (McCarthy and Bernstein, 1996:5). These are suitable choices since an impediment to Durban's industrial development has always been its hilly topography and shortage of flat land (Freund, 2000:149). Four of the six schools selected for this study are located on hilltops with expansive views. The fifth school nestles in a valley and the sixth school is located on a flood plain where the Umbilo River empties into the harbour.

4.2. CENTENARY HIGH SCHOOL

Near the city centre is the oldest school in this study, Centenary High School, representing approximately 120 years of tradition as a single-sex school for girls. In the 1880s, the school was located on a site nearer to the harbour, but in the 1930s the school relocated to its present position in a middle class, predominantly white neighbourhood. This is the school I attended in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

The colonial wooden gates that graced the entrance when I attended the school were replaced with automated steel gates in 1997-8,⁹ installed between heightened stone portals to retain aesthetic proportion. A street-side signboard announces the school's name to passers-by and conspicuously advertises the national English language radio station. An instructional notice in English and intercom meet visitors at the gate.

⁹ Pers. Comm. School Administrator, on 22 June 2000, in Durban.

Image 5: 03K12c: Centenary High: Notice to visitors at main entrance



Image 6: 03K22i-X: Centenary High: Signboard at main entrance



Near the main entrance is a separate gate and bridge for learners to enter and exit directly onto corridors of the 1930s wing.

A foundation stone near the original front door states that:

*This stone was laid by the honourable H. G- W- I.S.O. the Administrator of the Province of Natal on 29 September 1937.
Hierdie steen is gelê deur die edelagbare H. G- W- I.D.O. Administrateur van die Provinsie Natal op 29 September 1937.*

The official English-Afrikaans inscription is an early referent to the hegemony that apartheid discourse would have over language in the public sphere. With English and Afrikaans being the languages among South Africa's white communities, their use

in official signage such as foundation stones at schools, consolidated whiteness and represented racial supremacy. Bilingualism in English and Afrikaans constituted a European linguistic supremacy, which was enforced later at schools serving all other linguistic communities through legislation such as the *Bantu Education Act of 1953*, to become an important issue for organising resistance against the apartheid regime as occurred on June 16, 1976 (Hyslop, 1999:158-164).

Centenary High's buildings from the 1930s are sturdy three-storey wings with wide airy corridors, triangular stairwells and an electric lift. Connecting the wide 'V' of classroom blocks are reception rooms, principal and administration offices, with staff rooms and a library on the upper floors. Between the classroom blocks stretches the large hall with proscenium arch stage, steps and balcony and wide colonnaded verandas on either side. There is a fully equipped gymnasium above the hall.

In the years when I attended the school, 1967-71, the classroom blocks also included specialist teaching rooms and laboratories for home economics, biology and science classes, and a basement refectory served lunchtime meals. Around the sweeping outer side of the 'V' ran a driveway with wooden gates and stone portals opening onto roads at either end. The driveway's retaining wall and stately steps down to the sports fields are constructed in the same stonework as used at the entrance to the school. Growth in enrolments necessitated the construction of extra classrooms in the mid 1970s and these were built in the path of the driveway as two additional three-storey blocks adjoining the 1937 wings.

Image 7: 03K22f: Centenary High: Aerial photo of school site displayed in reception foyer



Catwalk bridges and breezeways connect the two 1970s wings. It is the modern edifice and bulkhead of these blocks and catwalks that face the city and stand guard over the school's hockey field and track, six tennis courts and swimming pool, with adjacent park-like gardens. The box-like architecture presents a faceless presence of implacable severity and grounded resolve in its geometry and bulk, which I associate with the harsh social climate from that repressive period of apartheid history. The blocks hold an outlook of enduring the ordeals and vicissitudes of that and any later era.

Image 8: 03K19d: Centenary High: Classroom wings and catwalks built in the 1970s



The school building brings to mind a prison for Angela, a teacher at Centenary High:

It seems that the building is very cold and the small windows and the bars. I mean that's the first impression I got of this particular building...

Angela's words take us beyond the space conceived by architects, into the quotidian of these blocks as lived space. She leaves us with an impression of confinement behind security bars, and we sense discomfort in a cold, dark place, providing coherence between the unsettling exterior demeanour and interior anxiety of the building. Overlooking the hockey field and in striking contrast to the modernity of the blocks, stands a bell tower to commemorate the centenary of the school in 1982. Its construction incorporates stone masonry that matches the main entrance to the school, a trope signalling the school's enduring history. A paved terrace with benches ensures

that this proud representation of history and school identity enters the real-and-imagined experience of girls sharing lunchtime in these surroundings.

Image 9: 03L204: Centenary High: Memorial bell and plaques erected in 1982



Words on the two pillars of the bell tower state that:

This bell tower erected by past and present pupils and staff, generously assisted by the Durban City Council, was unveiled by the Mayor of Durban, Councillor Mrs S- H- on 26th April 1982.

“Time lost is never regained”. Erected to commemorate the centenary of [Centenary] Girls High School 1882-1982. Fortiter Fideliter Feliciter.

The absence of Afrikaans and the use of English and Latin in this inscription signals subtle shifts in the school’s politics and identity since the 1937 foundation stones. The honourable mention given to a female elected (liberal Jewish) city councillor, rather than the male bureaucrat from the education authorities in the provincial capital who was cited in the 1937 foundation stone, suggests a strong connection had been established with the city’s liberal politicians, in contrast to the increasingly ruthless and repressive central government of the apartheid regime. The gender shift in mentioned dignitaries on the plaques suggests a deepened identification as a school for girls, while the epigram and Latin motto restate the school’s pursuit of a classical liberal education tradition with connections to Europe.

The most recent addition to the school site, a post-modern style three-storey science and counselling wing, was opened in 1999. That wing adjoins the 1937 building and runs alongside the hall to enclose a paved courtyard with palms and drinking

fountain reserved for prefects and grade 12 learners. A granite plaque commemorating the opening of the wing bears a brass plate bearing the wing's three-storey profile overprinted with the words:

*[Centenary] Girls High School
The A- M- Wing
Opened 7 May 1999*

This plaque differs from previous inscriptions by dropping the classical references and excessive wording, preferring an economical use of language that, nevertheless, bears significance. The reference to a female dignitary in the centenary inscription is continued in this plaque, but the female now represents the heart and (literally) the head of the school: the incumbent principal. Thus, by avoiding the choice of a city dignitary in the post-apartheid era when city government fell under the control of the African National Congress, the school assumes a stance of political fence-sitting. Rather than progressing to recognition of a post-apartheid black leadership, the choice of a white principal on this commemoration plaque signals a withdrawal into the continuity of institutional history and culture as a school traditionally for white English-speaking girls. Further, while the previous inscriptions merely state the names of two dignitaries present at the event, the 1999 plaque assigns the name of the dignitary to the building, thereby fusing the identification of the subject with the new wing (the A- M- Wing is A-M-) and ensuring such continuities into the future.

The new science and counselling wing is named after the principal in tribute to her vision of a state-of-the-art science teaching wing that would fully prepare girls to consider scientific careers in the 21st century.¹⁰ The wing has a science lecture theatre with tiered seating, a teacher's demonstration table and computer projection facilities, and nearby are a fully equipped laboratory with extractor fan and teachers' preparation room. The corridor includes a large permanent display of scientific paraphernalia and wall niches where bags are stored during classes. Another level of the wing houses a career guidance and counselling suite. It includes a carpeted space for larger casual group sessions, a soundproof counselling room, an office for counsellors and a records storeroom. Adjacent to the suite is a large room that can be divided. This room is used for writing examinations.

¹⁰ Pers. Comm. School Administrator, on 22 June 2000, in Durban.

The three-storied additions to the school over the years yield a collage of architectural styles with various corridors and stairwells coursing through the buildings, offering learners options for routes to and from their classrooms.

Image 10: 03K17c: Centenary High: 1930s triangular stairwells



Image 11: 03K17i: Centenary High: 1930s block, corridor open to the elements and with classroom sash windows



Image 12: 03K17b: Centenary High: 1930s enclosed corridor and modified classroom louvre windows



Image 13: 03K17e: Centenary High: 1970s high catwalks between classroom blocks, glazed on exposed weather side



Image 14: 03K17m: Centenary High: Corridor of A-M- Wing (1999), with niches for bag storage during lessons



The walk to and from classrooms takes its physical toll on the learners who are required to carry their school bags throughout the day. As one learner commented:

...there are so many stairs in this school. It's tiring to walk up and down. Especially from break because you actually walk up four floors.

The multi-storied buildings, many specialised facilities, and labyrinth of stairways and passages represent a history of financial investment in the education of girls. But, when combined with the school-bag regulation, the perceived space from that investment weighs heavily in the quotidian of learners, to be experienced bodily as physical effort and fatigue, and undermines the value in that investment.

The corridors surrounding the original administration rooms display school trophies and mementoes, and one room has been refurbished as a boardroom for meetings. This is attractively decorated with a valuable oil painting and a photograph of former President Nelson Mandela.

Image 15: 03K06d: Centenary High: Boardroom



The way boardroom space has been treated reminds us of Lefebvre's reference to 'reserved spaces' (Lefebvre, 1991:35). The spatiality of this room, a place for meeting dignitaries, senior education officers, and the governing body that is chaired by an elected parent representative, signals the value the school assigns itself through a constructed identity, as well as the respect it accords groups such as parents. Given the history of the school dating to the colonial era, the trope of the president's image in this special room signals that the school is constructing a post-apartheid identity in accord with the political dispensation. The school's yearbook provides some background about the framed photograph:

...Professor D, previous Chairman [sic] of the Governing Body... had once commented that the school should have a picture of President Mandela for whom he had great respect. L P [President of the Learners Representative Council] therefore presented to Professor D a framed photograph of President Mandela which will grace the walls of the school... ([Centenary] High School, 1999:30)

From this we learn that, far from the displayed photograph being an interior decorator's conceit, the object entails a history that represents the interplay of city-school relations. The values of one of the city's leading academics provided the intervention that, through its punctum (Barthes, 1981:27), pushes the boardroom space to being a representational space of the post-apartheid era.

As Centenary High's built environment has developed over the years and as the post-apartheid political dispensation has brought a new generation of learners

commuting from the periphery of the city, spatial practices have been recalibrated in keeping with technological advances and economic dynamics. Yet the gendered schooling for girls and the middle class encoding of quality education remains constant.

When viewed from the street and commercial centre of Durban, the wealth and weighty physical presence of Centenary High's spatiality within its showcase of middle class homes, represents a dramatic contrast with the modest township and flimsy informal settlement homes where most of Durban's population reside. This gives Centenary High a potentially significant position in city-school power relations. However, the school's inward retreat since 1994, garrisoning itself behind the façade of its own buildings, security walls and locked gates, indicates that the potential to exercise that power positively in the city has not been exploited. Reasons for this might be related to fears about a post-apartheid political dispensation and the ANC-led government's funding policy of radically reducing non-personnel funds to schools in middle class areas so that previously under-resourced schools serving poor communities will receive higher levels of funding than in the past (Department of Education, 1998b). Within this regulatory framework, schools such as Centenary High are expected to mobilise local community-based funds through enrolment fees and donations, and these sources of funding have been utilised for much of the development in Centenary High's built environment since 1994.¹¹ In her foreword to the school's 1999 yearbook, a representation space in which the school showcases its achievements, the principal signalled a confident yet guarded stance that locates the school in the local position on the multi-tiered global-local stage of world history:

Established in 1882 [Centenary] Girls High School has responsibly educated the girls of this city for 118 years. This school will move forward into the next decade – century – millenium with confidence. During this century meaningful education continued through two world wars. In the last decade we have coped with the social and educational changes brought about by democratic rule in the Republic of South Africa.

Although the principal does not finger any particular tier of government, her reference to the country's official name suggests that the national rather than local level of government is presenting the school with the most challenges. Her phrase of 'coping with' conceals the power in the social bulwark being constituted through the school's spatial arrangements. The defence is for a place that secures middle class privilege, that

¹¹ Pers. Comm. School Administrator, on 22 June 2000, in Durban.

affords recreation and leisure in its park-like grounds, courtyards that are exclusive to certain grades, sports facilities and learning facilities that ensure an offering of diverse career prospects, and classroom conditions that ease the discomfort of the sub-tropical heat. The defence in a post-apartheid era for such a socially classed place has eclipsed the forfeiture of apartheid-era racial exclusivity, while the racially integrated spatiality conceals learners' informal spatial practice of segregation. That is seen in matric dance friendship group photographs in the yearbook (image 18), in which the girls are mostly segregated as an Indian group (top left), black group (top right) and white group (bottom). One white learner's and one Indian learner's insider participant observations also revealed similar informal separations among their groups of white (image 16) and Indian (image 17) friends respectively.

Image 16: 03L202-X: Centenary High: Friendship group in garden



Image 17: 03L325-X: Centenary High: Friendship group under the catwalks



Image 18: Centenary High: 'Matric dance' photographs (Source: [Centenary] High School, 1999:64)¹²



¹² Although Centenary has published these photographs, the faces seen here have been obscured in order to protect the identities of learners from the other photographs, who might be linked to these individuals.

As I leave the school grounds by the main entrance, the receptionist from her office monitors my exit by camera and releases the lock on the pedestrian gate.

Image 19: 03K13c: Centenary High: Main entrance to street, with camera high among branches



The pavement outside the gates is a contact zone between the school and the city. This was the site where the driver of a passing vehicle once traumatised me with lewd suggestions, an incident seared in my memory. A safer waiting room than the pavement is the library within the school, where increasing numbers of learners commuting to Centenary High from townships on the outskirts of the city, wait in the afternoons. One learner comments on this:

I spend a lot of time in the library- 'cos I wait after school in the library... I sit on the table and do [my] homework.

The incident in my memory and this learner's account illuminate one perspective on city-school power relations, that Massey (1994:10) suggests in her gendering of global-local space, in which school space becomes a local (maternal) protective refuge from the potential danger lurking in the global (predatory male) space of the city.

I leave the school with mixed feelings about the memories my visit has stirred up, concerned about the opulent gloss being given to this government school, yet mindful that the quality education I received at this school would never again be the exclusive preserve of white girls.

Not far from historic Centenary High stands one of Durban's newest schools, Simunye Secondary. These two schools, with their sharply contrasting spatial and social histories, provide an important framing of schools in this study.

4.3. SIMUNYE SECONDARY SCHOOL

The approach to Simunye Secondary School is over the first spine of hills that fill the sightline from the harbour, and along newly tarred roads into an area of hills where the bush is being bulldozed to make way for the rapid construction of countless matchbox-size houses on bleak terraces. In some places the ragged cardboard and iron shelters of informal settlements huddle in the remaining pockets of bush.

On the spine of one row of hills, Simunye Multi-purpose Community Centre has been built. Within its precinct stands Simunye Secondary, which first opened its doors to learners living nearby in 1999. Its age makes Simunye Secondary the only school in this study conceived within post-apartheid politics and dynamics. The development of its spatial configuration within the Simunye Multi-purpose Centre is distinctive from the other five schools. Although a new school, its location has resonance with the city's colonial and apartheid history and marks the period of Durban as a post-apartheid city, the development of which the school is part.

The area in which the school is located was formerly named in *isiZulu* after the river where Durban's first mayor, George Cato, started to farm in 1845 (Dingezweni, 2001:12-13). By the 1930s, ownership of the farm was taken over by Indian market gardeners who sublet, turning the area into a culturally mixed shantytown of 120,000 people (Dingezweni, 2001:12-13). Following riots in 1949 between blacks and Indians, and the passing of the Group Areas Act in 1950, which the Durban City Council was among the first to implement in 1958 (Davies, 1991:79), this area's residents were forcibly removed to townships on the perimeter of Durban. Lemon (1991a) has noted that such removals signalled the transition of a segregated city, in which urban residential patterns were segregated loosely along racial lines, to the apartheid city with rigid racial zones of 'group areas' (Lemon, 1991a:1). From that time, these hills stood fallow and became reforested, pending expansionary endeavours of the white City Council to develop this valuable real estate so close to the city centre.

It was only after 1983 that fringes of the area came under residential construction by the (Indian) House of Delegates. However, since 1994 the area has been earmarked

for redevelopment by the post-apartheid government in collaboration with the local development association, to become one of South Africa's largest urban renewal programmes (Dingezweni, 2001:12-13). Forty-one thousand houses are planned, serviced with shopping centres, markets and multi-purpose centres that will incorporate 106 schools, four libraries, ten community halls, four sports complexes and five clinics (MacGregor, 1994:23-4).

Image 20: 06L402-X: Simunye Secondary: Informal settlement near Simunye Multi-purpose Centre



Housing shortages became acute in South African cities at the end of the apartheid era when influx controls, which had restricted black people's access to the city for employment and residence, were abolished. People fled the poverty and underdevelopment of rural areas and flocked to cities in hope of employment and an improved quality of life. In the fluidity of the transitional period (1990-4), informal settlements sprang up on vacant lots nearest to transport routes. When the urban renewal programme got underway in the late 1990s, Simunye Multi-purpose Centre was among the first institutional clusters to be constructed on a narrow ridge with steep slopes falling away into a valley. The Centre serves the urban poor living on the hills round about in informal shelters and the post-apartheid matchbox houses built as part of the Reconstruction and Development Programme (Ministry in the Office of the President, 1994) for those in the low-income bracket.

Image 21: 06L213: Simunye Secondary: Street entrance to Simunye Multi-purpose Centre, (L to R) hall, Simunye Secondary, library



Image 22: 06K11a: Simunye Secondary: Perimeter fence and pedestrian entrance from the valley



A palisade fence surrounds the Simunye Multi-purpose Centre with the main entrance for pedestrians and vehicles being at the street verge, and a second pedestrian entrance via a steeply winding path from the valley side. Visitors to Simunye Secondary pass through the main entrance, navigating between cars, to follow steps and a sloped paving that lead between the community hall and library. Durban's eThekweni local government is responsible for the staffing and maintenance of both these institutions. Simunye Secondary clings to the ridge between the community hall and the valley, while behind the library stands the hidden primary school. Unlike the hall and library, the schools are administered by provincial government's KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education and Culture.

A brass plaque on a pedestal near the library commemorates the opening of the centre:

*[SIMUNYE]
MULTI-PURPOSE CENTRE
THE
[SIMUNYE]
LIBRARY
COMMUNITY HALL
PRIMARY SCHOOL
and
[SIMUNYE]
SECONDARY SCHOOL
WERE OFFICIALLY OPENED
BY THE HONOURABLE
DEPUTY STATE PRESIDENT
J Z
ON 14 AUGUST 1999*

Five items are particularly striking in this plaque. Firstly, although the Centre is located within an area where the community is predominantly *isiZulu*-speaking, the plaque uses only English indicating a preferred language for public use. Secondly, the *isiZulu* name represents official recognition of the pre-1960s history when mostly people of Zulu ethnicity populated the area. Thirdly, the high rank of the deputy president officiating at the opening ceremony signifies the importance of the development of the area as a form of post-apartheid restitution and social transformation of land from which communities were once evicted. Fourthly, the officiating dignitary is not white – as was the case for other schools in the study – but is a black political leader respected for brokering peace in the city in the early 1990s when Inkhatha-ANC rivalry ravaged Durban’s townships. Lastly, the opening ceremony for Simunye Secondary was not separated from the multi-purpose centre, signifying the fusion of function implicit in multi-purpose centres and the concrete establishment of the ANC government’s aspiration that schools should be centres of community life (Department of Education, 1995; Asmal, 1999:9-10).

Simunye Multi-purpose Centre was designed by a team of four architects, with each responsible for one of the four institutional facilities: a public library, community hall, primary school and secondary school.¹³ This accounts for the distinctive yet complimentary architectural styles of each institution. The architectural team designed

¹³ Pers. Comm. Andre Duvenage, Architect, 10 September 1999, in Durban.

the Centre as a conceptual whole for optimal use of shared facilities. However, each institution needs to function and articulate separately since different government spheres administer them. Thus, each institution manages its own territory and secures its property. Two fundamental ideas inform the conceptualisation of the Multi-purpose Centre. First, local residents should be able to access a range of public services and information offered at the Centre (Matsepe-Casaburri, 2000; Department of Public Works, 2001). This accounts for the two public schools, free library and information service, general purpose rooms above the library that are suitable for adult education classes, the hall that can be hired for any large group meeting, and cultural and sporting activities. Second, the Centre is designed with economic sustainability in mind, namely to avoid the duplication of costly specialist facilities. Thus, neither of the schools have halls or libraries since they are expected to use the specialist facilities provided elsewhere in the centre. Apart from the shift of planning the school and its facilities in relation to other social services, according to the architect involved in their design, the classrooms at Simunye Secondary are conventional and follow established standards.¹⁴

At Simunye Secondary's entrance, there is another gate kept locked during lessons and after hours. During break time learners have a choice to either find some place to relax around the school or wander freely through the Multi-purpose Centre, using the library if they wish, buying snacks from traders' stalls on the street, and so on.

The narrow hilltop site led the architect to concentrate the buildings in an upward direction, yielding a three-storey building, rather than spreading out as would have been possible on flat terrain. This has led to a school design that makes optimal use of the narrow hilltop plane for a courtyard where large groups of learners can mingle, and turns the outer wall of classroom blocks away from the vista across the hills. All corridors, ramps for people with disabilities and classroom entrances face inward, overlooking the central courtyard. Essentially, the school buildings comprise two parallel multi-storey classroom blocks with the staff room and heads of departments' offices closing the gaps at either end, and affording them a vantage point over anyone in the courtyard and classroom wings – much like Bentham's panopticon model (Foucault, 1977/91:200-209). In this we see a strong link between the terrain of the physical site and architect's conceived school design, and the effect this has in funnelling the

¹⁴ Pers. Comm. Andre Duvenage, Architect, 10 September 1999, in Durban.

school's educational and social activities and attention around the hub of the courtyard. This is an example of the point Lefebvre made about space constituting social relations.

The exterior of Simunye Secondary has a bold presence established through the low-maintenance band of red face-bricks baked from the red clay of the region and iterating the red bricks of countless other local schools, with painted blue plasterwork above an imagined dado line and panels of mosaic at the drinking fountains. The brickwork also frames each classroom door, giving the public school environment an aesthetic beyond government's building standards. This matches the roof of red clay tiles, another hallmark of Durban, especially of its older suburbs.

Image 23: 06L210-X: Simunye Secondary: Brickwork design along walls and around door frames



As a post-apartheid school, Simunye Secondary has been provided with many specialist facilities that might not have been standard at older township schools serving the urban poor. One wing of Simunye Secondary comprises fully equipped purpose-built rooms for science and technical subjects such as technical drawing, home economics and laboratories. Another distinctive feature at Simunye Secondary, not found at schools built in the apartheid-era, are toilets for people with physical disabilities and wheelchair access ramps.

Image 24: 06K03a: Simunye Secondary: Toilets for people with physical disabilities



Image 25: 06L120: Simunye Secondary: Wheelchair ramps to access classrooms



Despite the density of the school buildings on the narrow site, the architect has achieved a number of discrete areas, in addition to the central courtyard, to which learners might disperse in smaller friendship groups without having to leave school property at break times. Above the staff room there is a sundeck overlooking the courtyard and Centre, and the upper corridors widen in aprons near stairwells. The lower floor has wide shaded passages, water fountain rest areas, a tuck shop and, further back, a basketball and netball court. There is also a grassed and paved terrace on the outer rim below the school for looking out over the valley. The architect's efforts are not lost on learners who photographed themselves in some of their favourite places. One learner said:

Everything I like here... It's beautiful...The whole building... It's so beautiful. Everything.

Image 26: 06L317: Simunye Secondary: Girls enjoying the sundeck, with the library behind



Image 27: 06L307: Simunye Secondary: Hanging out around the breezeway near the tuckshop



Image 28: 06L208: Simunye Secondary: The drinking fountain and rest area



Image 29: 06L308: Simunye Secondary: Break time at the tuckshop



Image 30: 06L421: Simunye Secondary: Friends chatting on the shady outer terrace



While during apartheid the children of the black working class had inferior and inadequate school buildings and education, Simunye Secondary within Simunye Multi-purpose Centre offers good teaching and learning facilities, professional support from public librarians, a library collection, and community hall that might provide school-leavers with further study and career opportunities. Despite the huge intellectual and economic investment in Durban's largest and historically most significant urban renewal project, Simunye Secondary showed signs of theft and vandalism and deliberate effacement of the buildings within its first year. Graffiti is scratched outside cloakrooms, change rooms and toilet areas, inside toilets, and on walls furthest from the administration offices and adult eyes. In one of the girls' cloakrooms, toilet seats and mirrors are missing, water leaks onto the floor and one ceramic bowl and cistern have been smashed to pieces.

Image 31: 06Kgraffitidoor01: Simunye Secondary: Graffiti in boys' cloakroom

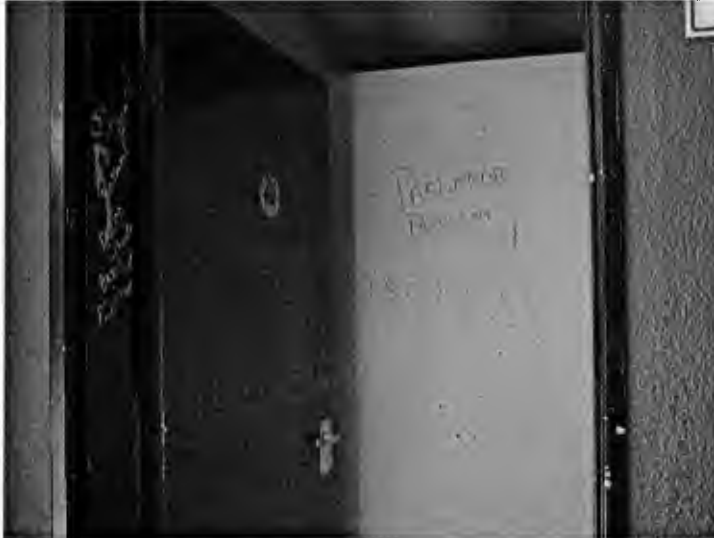


Image 32: 06K03d: Simunye Secondary: Girls' cloakroom with graffiti and mirrors missing



Image 33: 06K03f: Simunye Secondary: Smashed toilet bowl and cistern



One learner implicates male learners in the graffiti without illuminating their motives:

In the [boys'] toilet. ... It's very- so dirty... they making it very, very dirty... They write on the wall. [It's] not good.

Although graffiti may not be uncommon in public toilets, the theft and damages inflicted at Simunye Secondary after only one year by the very learners intended to be beneficiaries of post-apartheid schooling and urban renewal, raise questions about forms of relationship to the school.

An ambiguous politics of space is evident at Simunye Multi-purpose Community Centre and in the spatial field of the neighbourhood. First, notwithstanding the boundary security fence around the Centre, the open entry and access to the Centre's precinct during the day signals the Centre's endeavour to maintain a balance between public access and security concerns. This arrangement and the school ramps and toilets for people with physical disabilities, signal the post-apartheid government's *batho pele* [=people first] public service policy (Department of Public Service and Administration, 1997) in centre-periphery power relations that aim to provide a caring and professional service to communities. Second, the conceived space articulated in the single foundation stone and perceived outer perimeter fencing and continuous paving in the interstices between each component of the Centre, allows the Multi-purpose Centre to masquerade as a single institution for the local community. However, as Lefebvre noted, spatiality produces difference and the inner security gates, roof structures and distinctive architectures distinguish the institutions, their different functions and administrative authorities. The outer fence conceals power relations that require the principal of Simunye Secondary to regularly negotiate access to the shared facilities. Use of the hall for assemblies or other events first requires a booking fee being paid at an administrative office in the city. As a result, the school rarely uses the hall, preferring to use the courtyard for school assemblies.

Thirdly, Simunye Secondary is an exemplar of Lefebvre's proposition that new social relations render new practices and new spaces (Lefebvre, 1991:52-59), since it was opened in 1999, after the end of the apartheid dispensation in 1994. Construction at Simunye Multi-purpose Centre and in the surrounding area to produce the urban infrastructure for residents is intense and focuses attention on the production of new space. Careful examination of the Centre and its vicinity reveals the concealment of the past history of the area. Traces of the past are the name of Simunye Multi-purpose Centre, which appears on the library wall and foundation plaque, and iterates the original *isiZulu* name of the river and surroundings, and a Moslem memorial and place of prayer, which stands adjacent to the Centre and refers to a period when many Indians lived in the area.

Lastly, in the neighbourhood there is a disjuncture between the spatiality of the surrounding homes and that of Simunye Secondary. As conceived spaces, the replicated matchbox houses stand as a post-apartheid revision and reduction of Calderwood's

(1964:80) notion of the nuclear family township residence and contrast with the elaborate customisation and complexity of the architect-designed Simunye Secondary School. These representational spaces point to differences in the politics of global-local relations. In the global realm, Simunye Secondary benefits from public funding and, in its context, is a richly endowed space, while the local realm of the matchbox house reflects the confined space of poverty. The inequality in these power relations may account for the vandalism, a manifestation of antagonism, at Simunye Secondary.

If Simunye Secondary is an exemplar of post-apartheid school space being sited among the urban poor, what sort of school space did the apartheid education authorities produce in townships for black working class communities? Climbing back aboard our excursion bus, we wend our way northward to reflect on this question at the township school of Khayalihle Primary.

4.4. KHAYALIHLE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Leaving the motorway, the road climbs through the vast area of Inanda to reach Khayalihle Primary School. In the spread of valleys below Khayalihle Primary, Mahatma Gandhi established Phoenix Settlement in 1904, originally comprising the Kasturba Gandhi Primary School, a printing press, museum, library and clinic (Nyathikazi, 2000:14-15). Gandhi had emerged as a community leader when, as a lawyer, he helped Indian communities fight discriminatory laws and practices. Phoenix Settlement was badly damaged during the riots of 1985 and taken over by informal settlements. Rebuilding the Settlement as a cultural heritage site has commenced and Gandhi's house has been reconstructed and was reopened by President Thabo Mbeki in February 2000. Nearby lies the house and grave of John Langalibalele Dube, an educationist and the first president of the African National Congress, who established the Ohlange High School nearby (Nyathikazi, 2000:14-15).

Although Khayalihle Primary is in a township established in the 1980s, the ideas of early apartheid era township planners help us to understand the way schools were socially constructed to inflect particular centre-periphery relations between the city and school.

...sites selected for school and hostel buildings affect not only the educational process and the school environment but also the greater area of the surrounding neighbourhood or town. The school is, in fact, a social centre and is an important and integral part of the locality... The site must

therefore meet the requirements of the greater town plan, provide the school with a complementary setting and finally supply the children with a satisfactory environment in which to play and learn (le Roux et al., 1956-7:3)

In the 1970s the apartheid government reconstituted the Trust having jurisdiction over Inanda as the South African [ex Native] Development Trust (Hughes, 1996:305-7). The infrastructure in the area was minimal and conditions were reminiscent of rural areas, with many homes built from wooden poles, a mud or cement mix and corrugated iron sheets, and having pit latrines. In the aftermath of the 1976 township uprisings, South Africa's largest corporations, fearing further unrest among a discontented black working class, established the Urban Foundation, a development initiative. The Urban Foundation led and funded the planning and development of a section of Inanda in the 1980s. The new township offered prospective homeowners a house built according to established urban building standards and with basic amenities and public services such as clinics and schools. To serve the densely populated area, a cluster of four schools was established atop a hill, one being Khayalihle Primary. The school's name, meaning 'beautiful home', and motto *imfuno isisekelo*, which means 'education is the foundation', signalled the aspirations of planners and occupants for the new houses and the futures of their children.

In its first years Khayalihle Primary occupied prefab premises adjoining its present site, but once buildings were ready in 1985, the institution moved. Two schools and road frontages, with houses and vacant land across the way, bound the school site. As a government primary school, the layout resembles the other primary schools in the study in the red bricks and parallel rows of classrooms and open corridors, with a discrete administration wing.

Image 34: 05K20a: Khayalihle Primary: Classroom wings, corridors and paths



The foundation stone inside the administration offices states that a senior manager from the Department of Education and Training, Mr N., officially opened the school at the end of 1985. Although this school would have been the most poorly funded of the five apartheid-era schools in this study and it only had the most essential facilities, its built environment is in relatively good condition and general assistants maintain the grounds and guard entrances. However, the under-funding from the apartheid era remains visible in a number of ways. For example, although an electric bell marks the timetable, it has to be rung manually, the help desk and shelves in the receptionist's office are homemade and insubstantial, and though special facilities such as a library and tuck shop may have appeared on architect's plans, no such rooms exist at Khayalihle Primary.¹⁵

¹⁵ Pers. Comm. Patrick Culligan, Deputy Chief Architect, KwaZulu-Natal Department of Works, on 14 November 2002, in Durban.

Image 35: 05K01-X: Khayalihle Primary: Acting principal watches as a learner takes her turn to ring the timetable bell



To identify the school to passers-by, the crest was once painted on a wall facing the street, but this has deteriorated in the weather. A commercially sponsored signboard at another end of the site has been erected for identification purposes.

Toilet facilities are modest and, with water seeping all over the floors, are clearly in need of attention. A septic tank system is in use, but the clay soil of the area requires the school to alternate between sets of learner toilets to allow the tanks to rest.¹⁶

Image 36: 05K03c: Khayalihle Primary: Girls' cloakroom



¹⁶ Pers. Comm. Acting Principal, 17 August 2000, in Durban.

The learner and educator profile at Khayalihle Primary is unchanged since 1985 so that there is much continuity in spatial practices and social relations from that time.

Although the hall of the adjacent secondary school was intended for shared use with Khayalihle Primary, the gate between is permanently locked. All assemblies at Khayalihle are held out-of-doors in a courtyard area where the principal uses the stairs as his elevated platform. During assemblies, prefects keep watch over lower grades with educators in attendance and an unequivocally rousing Christian address is delivered to Khayalihle's learners and educators.

Image 37: 05K06a: Khayalihle Primary: Locked gate and ramp to the hall of the adjacent school



The distance of Khayalihle Primary from the centre of the city has yielded a weak articulation of centre-periphery relations. This is concealed in the school's lack of access to the city's sewerage system and its reliance on inadequate septic tanks. The poor infrastructure of septic tanks points to the past when the school was under-funded by the state since it was classed as a school for black learners. Similarly, the school buildings, utilities and sports facilities are basic and limited to the most basic pedagogic considerations. Thus, while there is a strong room where school records are secured, there is no kitchen for staff, built tuckshop for learners or library, and facilities such as classrooms and toilet washbasins are minimally functional and without any additional features such as overhead projectors and mirrors. These conditions conceal the past spatial practice of the state's racial politics and conception of Bantu education that

offered black learners minimal levels of education and state investment. While the spatial practices inherited from the past yield inadequate material conditions, one effect is a closely-knit dependency on social relations among those using the school. We see this in the tuckshop area of the schoolyard where, by mutual consent, the women selling snacks have appropriated some school desks for their operation that generates their livelihood.

Making my way across the school grounds towards the parked cars I note the general condition of the school premises. The paintwork throughout the school building is fresh, no windowpanes are broken, the lawn is neatly mown and flowers bloom in the beds outside the administration block. Despite the limited facilities and years of underfunding since Khayalihle Primary was opened, teachers and learners are busy in lessons. Perhaps things have not changed much since the apartheid years when the school was administered by the Department of Education and Training. However, in the car park I meet the principal and a van driver checking a large consignment of new curriculum workbooks and stationery. I leave the school thinking about the seemingly inconsequential events and spatial adjustments in the quotidian of school life that signal the slow transformation of South African education.

4.5. MAXIMUS PRIMARY SCHOOL

South of the city lies a sprawling low-economic housing development and the Maximus Primary School established in the 1960s. These huge estates had been set aside specifically for City Council housing development near the city's southern industrial belt and oil refinery where working class Indians were relocated to act as a labour pool and buffer against the southern townships that central government had established nearby for black workers (Davies, 1991:80). Ironically, this area for low-income families was named after a wealthy country estate in England. At the entrance to this vast council housing estate, the Council laid out a suburb with a shell of roads, shops, schools and religious sites, and plots earmarked for middle class Indians from whom the Council had appropriated properties located among white residential zones near the centre of the city. Laila, a former pupil at Maximus in the 1970s, grew up in the area:

[The school] was built so that it [could] service the incoming residents, the new young families that were beginning to reside and build homes in the

suburb...with the assistance by the [City] Council... There was a high level of professional people that had moved in, predominantly teachers, and then lawyers and doctors that had moved into the area. So their kids were coming to the school and there were a few odd families like mine where the parents were not professional but the Council had allocated them property - I suppose because they could meet the deposit and meet the payment for that kind of property. My dad was a [supervisor] at the factory at the time when we moved in here. But he had received assistance from his family...

In contrast to the monotony of nearby hills covered by rows of identical terrace houses for working class families, each home in this neighbourhood is uniquely designed to serve the needs and aesthetics of the owner. Ashwin Desai (2001:23), a social commentator, has asserted that the Council's placement of an affluent area at the entrance to a low-income area served to hide the poor social conditions resulting from the relocation programme. Maximus Primary School nestles in a valley between these homes, a Hindu temple and a cluster of local shops.

Image 38: 02K19e: Maximus Primary: Classroom blocks and neighbourhood in the background



The lower road running along the valley's marsh, acts as a boundary separating the suburb from an adjacent black township. Since 1994, new housing developments on a nearby hill have eroded the buffer zone between black and Indian residential areas.

Maximus Primary has a classical Latin name. This signals the high aspirations and inspiration of the Indian community to excel educationally in ways that had resonance with colonial education with its affection for Roman symbolism. An alternative interpretation might highlight the community's determination to rise above the spatial

partition and evictions that were meted out by the white councillors of apartheid-era Durban.

Image 39: 02K11h: Maximus Primary: Sports field, perimeter fence and new houses in the nearby black township



Image 40: 02Ktaxi: Maximus Primary: Black learners climbing into taxi to return to their homes in the township



An administration block with specialist areas for staff, library, music room and tuckshop is the first building encountered from the car park. Behind this there are tiered rows of red brick classrooms, each row opening onto a covered corridor facing away from oncoming southerly weather, with a science laboratory and toilets on the flanks. Washtubs are installed along the terraces adjoining classrooms. The grounds are planted

with various trees indigenous to the coastal belt, with some trees lending their names to corridors.

Image 41: 02K17b: Maximus Primary: Washtubs outside classrooms, Hindu temple in the background



Various sport facilities with change rooms are available for netball, soccer and cricket. In terms of its facilities, Maximus Primary is well equipped but, as with Highway Secondary, there are signs of decline and deterioration in the discontinued use of the science laboratory, the closure of the art room that vagrants had broken into, an empty music room, peeling paint, graffiti, forlorn cricket nets, change rooms used as the security guard's lodging, and the recent addition of a concrete palisade fence topped with razor-wire to secure the school site from the surrounding community who allegedly use water from taps in the grounds.¹⁷

In the apartheid era, Indian schools such as Maximus Primary were well funded compared to black township schools such as Khayalihle Primary. That more generous funding contributed to the investment in buildings and sports facilities. Although this has diminished in the post-apartheid era, the past has left its trace. Adjacent to the sports field, disused cricket nets stand rusting and overgrown with grass and benches in the playground lie broken. The poor maintenance around the school, which is in need of exterior painting, and missing doors and dankness in toilets, which need fixing, points to shifts in centre-periphery relations. In the past, middle class families from the neighbourhood enrolled their children at Maximus. They had held sufficient wealth and

¹⁷ Pers. Comm. Principal 17 August 2000, in Durban.

power to develop the school site and offset the maintenance costs. This has changed so that local Indian families no longer enrol their children at Maximus Primary. Instead, most learners attending Maximus Primary in the post-apartheid era are black low-income families from nearby working class townships. The power vested in wealth and the sense of local ownership that once supported the school's resources is diminished, leaving the school's facilities vulnerable and decaying. To counteract the loss of power and prevent theft and vandalism, the school has adopted a defensive spatial strategy to secure property and conserve the condition of what resources remain. This manifests in the new fence and gate.

The secure perimeter conceals the changing social relations between Maximus Primary and the surrounding area. Whereas in the past the boundary between school and neighbourhood was not rigid and impenetrable so that mutual identification would have been strong, in the present the security fence cordons off the school and alienates it from families living in adjacent homes. The increasing spatial isolation weakens school-neighbourhood identification and undermines any prospect of the school being a centre of community life.

4.6. HIGHWAY SECONDARY SCHOOL

Leaving Maximus Primary via a highway named after a prominent white city councillor who contributed to planning the area, we turn southwards, past an industrial harbour area, along a busy thoroughfare towards a semi-industrial and residential area in the southern corridor that starts between the Bluff and hills straddling the harbour.

The area lies on the swampy river delta entering the harbour precinct near the busy terminal that handles 80,000 containers monthly (Local History Museum and Portnet, 2000:15). The river is canalised to drain the land for industrial use and control flooding (Freund, 2000:151). Although initially the domain of early Indian land-owners outside colonial boundaries of Durban, the area was incorporated in 1932 and became a densely populated and thriving Indian enclave that is described by Dianne Scott (1994) as a 'communally constructed space', partly because the facilities and institutions, including schools, were developed through the vision and social cohesion of kinship and relations of local residents. By the 1960s, over 50,000 residents including fishermen, merchants, artisans and market gardeners, were housed here (Scott, 1994:1). However, local white politicians and industrialists targeted the zone as a growth point (Scott,

1994:2-3). Thus, the resident Indian community had the distinction of being among the last to be threatened with forced removal during the apartheid era.¹⁸ This would have entailed Council appropriation of properties and the relocation of the community, against their will, to another area of Durban. Although forced removal was socially and economically disastrous for all who were affected, poor families were hardest hit (see Desai, 2001 for accounts of the effect within family groups). Geographer, Dianne Scott, outlined the City Council's strategy for this southern area of Durban:

When the racial segregation of space became the purview of the national state with the promulgation of the Group Areas Act [in 1950], the Durban City Council had to rely entirely on planning and technical procedures in order to achieve its goal... [M]any other strategies were implemented to reduce the residential component and character of the area and force residents to relocate either by expropriating their properties or by creating a climate of uncertainty about the future. Also occurring simultaneously with this process was the systematic removal of thousands of Indian families from the shack areas in the surrounding 'District' [...], by terminating their leases on Council property. This removal process dovetailed with infrastructural developments and the provision of alternative housing in the large-scale public housing schemes provided for to accomplish racial segregation via the Group Areas Act (Scott, 1994:3).

Highway Secondary is wedged between the shoulders of highways that link the airport and southern townships to the city centre so learners have to negotiate heavy traffic routes on their approach to the school each day. The highways also form a barrier between residential parts of the area and the school, isolating the school, with nearby factories and shops providing a cover for people such as drug traffickers to target learners.

Access to Highway Secondary is via an obscure *cul de sac* that leads to two sets of security gates. The first boundary encompasses an adjacent primary school and Hindu shrine, while the second gate marks the beginning of Highway Secondary's premises. A security guard and dog patrol the gates to prevent unauthorised entry and to enforce the school's policy of keeping the inner gate locked during class time to deny latecomers access.

One learner had another perception of the dog's role:

¹⁸ With the support of civil society groups the Clairwood community were successful in resisting removal.

L1: ...most of the students [bunk classes], so they have to have a guard and a dog to stop them cos some of the students are violent. So to protect the guard, he needs a dog.

Image 42: 04K12a: Highway Secondary: Guard with dog at outer perimeter gate, with primary school on the left and the shrine seen directly behind the guard



The uniformed guard and dog from a contracted security company, signal the levels of danger and violence that threaten Highway Secondary. These security arrangements are a more professional arrangement than the elderly guard with *knobkerrie* at Khayalihle Primary, yet are less costly than the closed circuit camera, intercom and automated gates at Centenary High. Since any security arrangement is funded from parent-paid fee income, the moderate low technology measures imply that the parents paying fees to Highway Secondary are neither predominantly low-income working class nor middle class.

Once through the main gate, the driveway winds past factory-style workshops, sports fields, desolate paved areas and cast concrete buildings, and various two-storey brick classroom blocks, eventually reaching the car park. The untidy sprawl and contrasting architecture of workshops and classroom blocks, named A, B, C, and so on, are referents to previous school sites that were amalgamated to form an academic and technical high school that was once the largest Indian school in KwaZulu-Natal province.¹⁹ The conceived spatiality of Highway Secondary distinguishes the school from the others in this study. The curdled aggregate of face-brick classroom blocks,

¹⁹ Pers. Comm. Gregory McPherson, March 2000, in Durban.

moulded-concrete classroom and administration blocks, and vast sheds of warehouse-like workshops, is bound together in a continuous flow of tarred and concrete paving and courtyards. This spatial texture creates an unpleasantly bleak landscape that is either harshly over-exposed to the sun or lost in dimly lit rooms and dark passages. This learning and teaching site jars with Lefebvre's conception of a hallowed space for initiation (1991:35). Although the sports field lawns are mown, to the rear of the site, sub-tropical forest has overtaken some prefabricated classrooms.

While the later concrete constructions are purpose-built and are arguably therefore a 'reserved space', their heavy modernist commitment to concrete congeals with the other blocks to form a disorienting and alienating spatiality. A teacher at the school described the school space as:

This line of buildings... [are] reminiscent of a kind of barracks and factory kind of environment. ... It does not create the best educationally sound environment for various reasons. Being on the plant itself, I think, it has to do with control, administrative control, pupil control, access to people and so on. So it's not the best one could have. ...[The area] offers a lot of opportunities for pupils to be milling around.

The teacher's negative use of army 'barracks and factory' plants as metaphors to describe the school space, juxtapose against his notion of an 'educationally sound environment' through his repetitive reference to 'control' and concerns about access and disorder.

Despite the hard urban-edginess in the overuse of concrete and asphalt, the school buildings show great deterioration. One block is condemned as unsafe and there are broken ceilings, broken windows, missing mirrors in the cloakrooms and even rotted classroom doors.

Image 43: 04K16a: Highway Secondary: Classroom door



Image 44: 04K17h: Highway Secondary: Broken ceilings in a passage



Image 45: 04K03b: Highway Secondary: Girls' cloakroom with wall marks where mirrors once were, and leaks from drains



The tension and decay in Highway Secondary School's spatial texture play out in the diverse ways school managers and learners have left inscriptions on the school's surface.

There are traces of an ethos stressing discipline in notices forbidding learners access to administration offices through certain entrances. The administration block is inscribed with the once-proud school history in a carved school crest commemorating the school's jubilee in 1980, paintings by past students, a photo gallery of past principals and a cabinet of award trophies, though discontinuity in the incomplete photo gallery of principals conceals institutional rupture and distress.

Image 46: 04K15a: Highway Secondary: Incomplete photo gallery outside principal's office



A commemorative plaque in the foyer reads:

This building was officially opened by the director of Indian education, G-K- Esq., during the silver jubilee celebration of the [Highway] Secondary School on 30 August 1980.

Hierdie gebou is amptelik geopen deur die direkteur van Indieronderwys, Mnr. G- K-, tydens die silwerjubileumherdenking van die [Highway] Sekondere Skool op 30 Augustus 1980.

The use of the two official languages of the apartheid era, reference to ‘Indian education’ and a white bureaucrat acting as the officiating dignitary, signal the school’s history of segregation and subjugation during the apartheid era.

The school emblem, an elephant, appears on glazed doors at the entrance to the administration block and on a carved panel decorating the foyer outside the principal’s office. As a reference to the Hindu god, Ganesh, and the working elephants of India, the motif asserts the strength of the community’s cultural links with India. But the device in the apartheid-era of using an elephant to represent Indian identity was an oversimplification of what constitutes Indian-ness in the Durban context and denies the linguistic, religious and caste diversity within the Indian community (Ebr.-Vally, 2001:84-5).

Along some of the distant corridors and stairwells, in the grounds away from easy viewing, and hidden in cloakrooms, walls are filled with graffiti. The mismatch between that apartheid-era identification of the school and changes in learner enrolments in the post-apartheid era, may account for an alienation that has driven some learners to inscribe the school with graffiti and acts of vandalism.

Image 47: 04K17j; Highway Secondary: Graffiti



Other learner misdemeanours are also in evidence. In a corridor, one boy cavorts wearing an item of clothing from the girls' Punjabi-style school uniform, on a stairway boys gamble with a deck of cards, some windowpanes are broken, a girls' cloakroom is appropriated for boys' use, and a room is pointed out where couples go to be alone. On the lawn a fight has broken out, and around a corner a group of boys indulge in some smoking.

The social alienation embodied in these spatial practices has resonance with the inhospitable buildings and urban context of the school site. Learner dislocation may also be compounded by perceptions of their career prospects. In an apartheid-era industrial society, Highway Secondary's industry-style workshops were purpose-built for teaching technical subjects that prepared learners to be spray painters, mechanics and electricians. These were careers for subordinate maintenance functions in society. Some of these technologies and equipment in the workshops have become obsolete, rendering the school's education in technical subjects inappropriate for the new economy where learners are generally destined for non-technical employment.

Issues of authority, access to resources and learners' perceptions of their value within the school are contributing to learner inscriptions on and in their school space. This is evident in a learner's comment about the pristine swimming pool to which learners are denied access:

Even though it is cleaned, it is never used. It's never used. I do not understand it. ... We students never get to use it.

At the end of each school day, learners spew onto the driveway leading out of the school towards waiting buses that take them to the southern boundary of the eThekweni local government. Others wander through the shopping area and among pavement traders before heading home.

The contradictions and tensions that infuse the spatiality of Highway Secondary conceal imbalances in power relations between school management and learners, and in an identification disjuncture as the school's character has changed during the aftermath of the apartheid era. The school's security responses also point to difficulties the school management has to resolve the mismatch between the school's mission as an educational institution and the hostile urban industrial context surrounding the school premises.

4.7. HEATHER PRIMARY SCHOOL

Returning to Durban's white suburbia, we come to the final school in this excursion: Heather Primary, a school I attended for four years between Std 2 and 5 (grades 4-7). Heather Primary is only two kilometers over the hill from Centenary High. It was formerly for white children living in the surrounding middle class suburbs and nearby working class council flats. The area name commemorates the deep valleys between the Northwest Highlands and Grampian Mountains of Scotland, beloved by a 19th century settler whose farm had covered the hills surrounding the school site (Fielden, 1887/1973). In the suburb, roads named after settlers from Scotland also recall this colonial past.²⁰ Although the school was opened in 1961, there is no foundation stone to mark that event.²¹ The school's crest, displayed on signage at the main entrance, includes two spikes of Scotch Heather that grows in the valleys of Scotland. The white and green of the heather forms the colour base for the school uniform, repeated in green cardigans and blazers, checked cotton dresses for girls and striped ties and socks for boys.

The approach to the school is from a dangerously undulating through-road. Bounding the leveled hilltop site are the through-road, steep slopes and middle class houses. Cottages for elderly descendants from English settlers and a municipal cemetery lie across the road from the school.

²⁰ Pers. Comm. Neville Brooks, resident, in April 2001, in Durban.

²¹ Pers. Comm. Principal, 22 May 2003, in Durban.

Image 48: 01K22b: Heather Primary: Aerial photo displayed in assembly hall



Dangerous passing traffic has led the municipality to provide a drop-off and pick-up car park. A general assistant provides pedestrian assistance between the school and the parking area.

Image 49: 01L424: Heather Primary: A general assistant ensures safe crossings to the pick-up point



Although government architects designed the reception to be the first entry point for visitors from the street, traffic and security considerations have led the school to permanently lock off the main pedestrian entrance to the school and set vehicle and pedestrian gate entrances elsewhere, deeper into the school grounds.

Image 50: 01K13b: Heather Primary: Blocked off original entrance for visitors



Image 51: 03K12b-X: Heather Primary: Main vehicle and pedestrian entrance, with signboard



On the street there is a large signboard displaying the school name and crest. Gates at the main entrance block access to the premises. Visitors find only an intercom to buzz and are required to identify themselves to a voice from the reception office. Once access is approved, gates are electronically unlocked and opened from the reception.

By prioritising security in reconfiguring and rationalising access to a single point, the spatial relations of zones within the school have been inverted. Visitors enter into a macadamised courtyard and wander past classrooms and the hall, eventually to climb stairs to a long corridor leading to the administration centre with reception area, principal's office and staff room. In this way, the principal's office holds the position of

a sanctuary and is a distant rather than near point for visitors. In Lefebvre's spatial scheme of realms, positions of depth indicate a private sanctum to minimise vulnerability and protect intimacy, in contrast to the publicly-viewed façades of the intermediate realm and the great value of a place such as the hall that would be characteristic of his global realm (Lefebvre, 1991:155). The inverted spatial relation points to a trade-off that has weighed security concerns over visitor convenience and public image.

Image 52: 01K14a: Heather Primary: Corridor leading to administration offices



Image 53: 01L402: Heather Primary: Security gate and buzzer at reception office



Image 54: 01K04b: Heather Primary: Principal's office



The parallel rows of red brick classrooms joined together by covered corridors open yet sheltered from the weather, are tropes of countless other public schools throughout Durban, including most in this study. The wing for Foundation Phase classes is purpose-built with inter-leading toilet and wash areas and special storerooms for the bulky materials and equipment used in teaching younger learners.

When I attended the school in the 1960s, there was a home economics classroom for senior grade girls. The room was equipped with several stoves for the occasional cooking class and high stools that we perched on during sewing lessons. While we were busy learning our gendered functions as future housewives, the boys from our class busied themselves in the woodwork room, learning how to use tools that might be used for home maintenance when they would be heads of households. I never once entered the woodwork room in the four years I spent at the school. Both those rooms, central to gendered stereotyping at primary schools, have been reconstituted as the library and music room. This suggests that cultural and aesthetic pursuits have greater pedagogic currency within the school than the curriculum, which advanced a narrow vision of male and female roles in family life, taught when I attended the school.

Image 55: 01L425: Heather Primary: Library



Image 56: 01L117-X: Heather Primary: Township taxi picking up learners in the afternoon



Enrolled learners who do not live locally commute from townships and other areas by taxi or private transport. These are generally black children.

Major constructions have taken place since I attended this school in the 1960s. A school hall and swimming pool have been built, and near the sports field and pool there is a wooden structure that functions as the school tuckshop.

Image 57: 01K23: Heather Primary: Swimming pool and tuckshop



In the Foundation Phase playground there is special play and climbing apparatus for younger learners, which is also used by a private after-care service for learners whose parents work the entire day. A little water fountain and rock garden marks the hall entrance.

Both the site and demographic changes confirm that Heather Primary is no longer the school space of my middle class childhood quotidian. Despite changes in state funding to the school in line with the post-apartheid norms and standards for school funding (Department of Education, 1998b), the school governing body has been able to sustain and improve the quality of the built environment, unlike the situation at Maximus Primary. Furthermore, a more richly diverse educational and cultural experience is available to the learners in the 21st century than I knew almost forty years earlier during the segregated apartheid era. A library, swimming pool and computer centre open up many learning opportunities for these learners and their classes are racially integrated so that they can build friendships across the racial divides from an early age.

The school's past privileged status as a school for white learners is concretised and remains visible in the spatiality of the purpose-built facilities for Foundation Phase grades. These classrooms have adjoining washrooms and toilets, sinks and storerooms. Despite changed social relations whereby Heather Primary is no longer receiving the same apartheid-era levels of superior funding, these architectural tropes will continue to exemplify privilege until a time that they deteriorate spatially and fall into disrepair. As was the case at Centenary High, such spatial conditions conceal the embedding of

middle class values in schooling offered at Heather Primary. In those Foundation Phase classrooms, young learners assimilate spatial knowledge and practices in relation to ablution routines for personal hygiene and for cleaning and tidying their work area.

Although Heather Primary shares the same concerns about security as the other schools in this study, its security measures are not isolating it from the local community. There is a strong bond of mutual identification between school and community, which manifests when the community faces a challenge such as the killing of a local shopkeeper by thieves. At one crossroad, a signboard announced that a community meeting to discuss ways to keep such shared threats in check was being held in the school hall. This spatial practice reveals continuity between community and school values, although sharing strategies to combat the common external enemy of crime may conceal apartheid-era racialised stereotypes.

4.8. CONCLUSION

When the six schools in this study are mapped in Durban's city space, they fall across all three realms of Lefebvre's scheme, revealing each school's centre-periphery relational position. This recalls the structure of the apartheid city, which drew white group areas (and therefore former white schools) around its centre of power, where access to public services, amenities and shops was convenient, and which pushed the suburbs and townships for black and Indian communities (and their respective schools) towards the periphery. Simunye Secondary, a new school for the urban poor, is positioned within the global realm. This points to the spatial management of Durban as a post-apartheid city, where areas close to the heart of the city are being redeveloped and upgraded.

Table 6: Lefebvre's scheme of realms with schools studied mapped onto Durban city space

Realms	Durban City	Schools
Global	Central business district Universities Inner core of white suburbs	Centenary High Simunye Secondary Heather Primary
Intermediate	Highways Roads Junctions	Highway Secondary
Private	Outer periphery of black and Indian townships and suburbs	Maximus Primary Khayalihle Primary

In this study, two schools take up parenthetical and antithetical positions in relation to the city of Durban. Centenary High, as one of Durban's oldest schools, represents an isolated privileged space of cumulative institutional history, with traditions going back to the 19th century when single-sex schooling was the norm (Spain, 1992:148-152; Morrell, 2001:48). It has retained its central and middle class privileged position close to nodes of power for the city: the university, harbour and commercial centre. In contrast, Simunye Secondary represents an integrated, shared social space that militates against a class-based entitlement to quality education with an egalitarian rights-based education for the children of poor and working class families in a space not yet encumbered with tradition. In relation to the city, it is ironic that Simunye Secondary stands just three kilometres over the hill from Centenary High. It stands to reclaim the apartheid history of Durban in the vicinity where injustices of racially motivated riots and forced removals once took place. It is a rebuttal of that history of violence, dispossession and discrimination affirming the rights of blacks and poor people to live in peace and with adequate shelter, schooling, social services and leisure, near their places of work in the city centre. To what extent that vision is being spatially realised in all the schools is one of the concerns of the following three chapters.

In the next chapter, I discuss my analysis of school spatiality, sifting through memory accounts of adults who attended some of the sampled schools to establish aspects of spatial relations in the past.

CHAPTER 5: 'A KIND OF GAP BETWEEN US': MEMORIES OF APARTHEID



5.1. INTRODUCTION

Between 1948 and 1994, the white minority National Party government organised South African society and public institutions, including schools, in accordance with apartheid legislation. Apartheid schooling was legally abolished in 1996. The post-apartheid education policies introduced thereafter were a radical departure from the past and led to far-reaching changes in schools. Changes included the prohibition of race-based enrolment at schools, of differentiated administration, organisation, governance and funding of schooling, different curricula, examinations, and so on. Yet, as mentioned earlier, material differences embedded in school space such as the building of classrooms, toilets and libraries, were not of a nature that could always be amended by policy pronouncements. Changing buildings requires time for planning, design and construction, and is dependent on the availability of funds. Furthermore, the post-apartheid *South African Schools Act, No 84 of 1996*, devolved many aspects of schooling to new school governing bodies (Republic of South Africa, 1996b). Some of

these responsibilities such as security and maintenance of assets, and practices such as the wearing of school uniforms concerned school spatiality. Thus, in addition to the school buildings and grounds, many objects and practices in schools have been untouched by policy reforms.

This study assumes that apartheid was the major force in differentiating South African public school space from 1948 until the early 1990s when the apartheid government resigned itself to negotiating democratic change with organisations representing interests of the black majority such as the African National Congress (ANC) and Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu). It follows from the Lefebvrian theorisation that social formations forge their discourse in distinctive spatial practices, that apartheid manifested in the spatial practice of schooling, representations of school space and representational space of schools. How was this effected in the lives of those who attended apartheid-era schools? How did their spatial practice at school link with apartheid discourse? Which parts of the school were especially appropriated for the teaching and learning of apartheid? These are the key questions for this chapter.

Before examining how apartheid discourse operated in the quotidian of learners' spatial practices, I present an outline of apartheid discourse, drawing on literature in which apartheid and apartheid education is theorised. Then, to examine how apartheid was learnt spatially, I turn to memory accounts about schooling during the apartheid era. My analysis will focus on where and how apartheid discourse manifested and operated within local institutional space. I have looked at this in a preliminary way in my contribution to a book on spatiality, learning and curriculum (see Karlsson, forthcoming 2004) and in an article for the journal, *Culture, Pedagogy and Society*, which is planning a special issue on space, identity and education (see Karlsson, 2004).

5.2. THEORISATIONS OF APARTHEID SCHOOLING AND APARTHEID DISCOURSE

South Africa's apartheid system was not only about racial separation, stratification and subjugation (Kallaway, 1984). The economic interests of white capital established a labour system that articulated class with race, thereby ensuring that blacks were exploited as a cheap and relatively un- or semi-skilled work force for an economy that generated profits. The structures of the state, including government schools, were harnessed for the apartheid project so that in education the racially differentiated

curriculum and segregated schooling system sustained the apartheid nexus of race and class (Cross and Chisholm, 1990:49-54).

Those theorising apartheid from the vantage of the 1990s concur that apartheid was not a single, grand plan conceived in its totality from the outset in 1948. Critical social theorists writing during this period increasingly refer to the unfolding complexity of apartheid, as the state introduced new strategies to respond to errors of previous policies, new ideas and increasing resistance (Cross and Chisholm, 1990:55; Norval, 1996:174-8, 216-8).

A number of South African writers have pushed the theorisation of apartheid in new directions. Among them are Deborah Posel, a sociologist, Jennifer Robinson, a geographer, and Aletta Norval, a political theorist – scholars who each use the focal lens of their discipline to examine the peculiarities of apartheid.

In an analysis of the early years, 1948-1961, of the apartheid regime, Deborah Posel (1991) has contended that apartheid was shaped largely, but not solely, by a confluence of class-race capital-state interests and urban-rural dynamics, with the state taking a reactive course over the years. She disputes any *a priori* grand design. Instead, Posel interprets apartheid as a system that was adapted unevenly through reform, negotiation and compromise as crises and conflicts arose (Posel, 1991:256). She highlights the urban-rural dynamic of urbanisation, which saw rural adults migrating to and settling in towns and cities in pursuit of employment and economic relief from poverty, often to be followed by family members and dependents. Apartheid policy-makers sought to address this movement through influx controls that required blacks to acquire permission to visit, work and live in urban areas (Posel, 1991:256). However, as a sociologist theorising the apartheid state, Posel does not consider the effect of urbanisation on educational institutions and family life. Nevertheless, she argues against assuming that apartheid racialised categories implied homogeneity and she contends that state and capital interests did not necessarily dovetail during apartheid.

The modernising state and its spatial strategies in cities and townships are the main pillars in Jennifer Robinson's (1996) argument of how apartheid controlled South African society. Using a Foucauldian discourse analysis of power, Robinson foregrounds how the state rolled out its power through a racially differentiated replication of administrative bureaucracies at the centre, nationally, and at the periphery in provinces, cities and townships, and eventually in bantustans, territories to which the

apartheid regime awarded self-governing or independent status. The spatial partitions necessitated replicated social services (such as schools and clinics) in each township and replicated bureaucracies (such as the racially differentiated education departments). These were all harnessed to control, monitor and manage the state's racially constructed and segregated subjects. Robinson shows how space and bureaucracy were used politically by the apartheid state as instruments for monitoring and control.

Aletta Norval's (1996) analysis of apartheid took its entry point as the dislocated Afrikaner identity in the first half of the 20th century that yielded *volkseie* [=people's own / own people] as the organising principle of apartheid. After 1948, *volkseie* rights were extended to other races structured within a race, culture and language hierarchy that privileged whites and yielded white supremacy. Norval contends that the National Party government retooled the apartheid system to retain hegemony in the face of resistance and various challenges over the decades until 1990. In the white education sector this occurred in the early 1990s when the state shifted the onus onto white parents to decide whether to soften exclusionary enrolment policies by introducing quotas, the trade-off being a governance and financial responsibility. The decentralisation of governance masked the state's strategy to retain control over its well-resourced schools within the white community while appearing to have relinquished racial exclusion (Karlsson, McPherson and Pampallis, 2001:145-7).

Posel and Robinson are both concerned with specific spatial policy responses of the apartheid system, with Posel focused on the state's approach to the influx of black workers and families from rural areas to towns and cities, and Robinson analysing the state's confinement of black communities within urban areas. Their work lays a base for understanding segregated urban and township schools as spatially compartmentalised schools whose identifications and life histories of learners and teachers might exemplify the urban-rural migrations and social relations that challenged the apartheid regime and reveal diversity within racialised categories. Norval's work differs from that of Posel and Robinson in that it is not concerned with apartheid spatialisation *per se*. She stresses the relational identification that sprang from Afrikaner self-differentiation and eventually led to the racially and linguistically segregated school system. This perspective of apartheid as initially a relational identification discourse pulls the study away from a narrow township interest that excludes, for example, former white schools. Instead, examining apartheid in urban schools requires the inclusion of schools serving

communities in all racialised categories. Although I have teased out from the thinking of these scholars useful insights for this thesis, none of their theorisations explore apartheid in education. It is necessary to turn to the work of education scholars for that perspective.

Many scholars in South Africa and abroad have written histories of apartheid education for diverse readers. For this study, the work of emancipatory or critical pedagogy scholars is most relevant because their work came to influence the shaping of a post-apartheid education agenda that is the subject of the next chapter. Among the better known works are Pam Christie's (1991) *The Right to Learn*, first written for popular readership in 1985 and, more for scholarly readership, Peter Kallaway's (1984; 1997) volumes on *Apartheid and Education*, Mokubung Nkomo's (1990b) *Pedagogy of Domination*, and *Apartheid Education and Popular Struggles* edited by Elaine Unterhalter et al (1991).

The concern of these scholars during the 1980s and early 1990s was to determine the relation between education and apartheid. Two conceptions predominated: that apartheid education was crafted in the interests of the dominant capitalist class to reproduce the capitalist system and its class divisions; and that apartheid education was reproducing the racial order. These two conceptions emerge in Kallaway's (1984) first edited volume. However, resistance to apartheid from within education structures was not accounted for in either of these conceptions that reduce education to a functionalist instrument of the state (Wolpe and Unterhalter, 1991). That analysis was criticised as an over-simplification of schooling, failing to account for learners' resistance to apartheid education in particular. Nevertheless, Harold Wolpe and Elaine Unterhalter acknowledge that education in apartheid South Africa was 'granted [a] privileged role in a variety of ways – for example, in the reproduction of the racial order and relations of production' (1991:3). Their alternative conception, informed by resistant and subversive processes, sees education as 'a contested terrain, even when the conditions of the capitalist social formation favour the reproductive role' (1991:6). While Wolpe and Unterhalter open up the debate to a broader theorisation of education as a dialectical process under apartheid conditions, they shift the focus away from a narrow focus on apartheid education in isolation from the wider social context. This resonates with the argument advanced by Posel, Robinson and Norval, that apartheid was not a fully

conceived social system from the outset but was shaped over time in response to unfolding conditions and resistance.

With the focus of this chapter being reminiscences that reveal how apartheid discourse was spatially sedimented and resisted in and through spatial practices, I turn to Mokubung Nkomo (1990a) to distinguish five aims of apartheid education that echo the race-class themes emerging in the work of Posel, Robinson and Norval and radical educationists. The aims were to (Nkomo, 1990a:2):

- Produce a semi-skilled black labour force in the interests of a capitalist economy;
- Socialise black students so they accept apartheid social relations as natural (including their supposed inferiority against the superiority of whites);
- Forge a consciousness and identity accompanied by a sense of superiority among whites;
- Promote acceptance of racial and ethnic separation as the natural order of things;
- Promote black intellectual under-development by minimising the allocation of educational resources for blacks while maximising them for whites.

Nkomo's formulation that included the intended effect on black and white learners, did not fall victim to criticisms made against Kallaway's *Apartheid and Education* (1984) that focused on black education and neglected the apartheid experience of learners attending schools serving the coloured, Indian and white communities (Cross, 1992:31-2). His formulation that apartheid's racial and ethnic separation of schools and differentiated rationing of resources promoted an acceptance of racialised hierarchical social relations as the natural order, and by extension that white supremacy is common sense, ties in with Lefebvre's propositions, which link social relations to the spatial articulation of resources, and the concealed political effect of that articulation being the acceptance of the configured social relations as a natural order and common sense.

To sum up, radical scholars have agreed that apartheid education was harnessed for an apartheid agenda and deeply implicated in the spatially segregated, racist and economically oppressive system of apartheid. Mokubung Nkomo expressed this crisply:

Segregated and inferior education ... providing an ideological cornerstone for the social segregation, economic exploitation and political oppression of these groups, calibrated according to the location on the racially hierarchical social system (Nkomo, 1990a:1).

In the next section, I turn to memory accounts to explore how those who attended apartheid-era schools had separate and different school experiences that are captured in one informant's euphemism that there was 'a kind of gap between us'. In particular, I consider how the informants learnt apartheid discourse, what they conceived apartheid to be, where they positioned themselves within the discourse, and which areas of school space were pivotal in that process. I will also identify incidents that point to a few learners who exercised their agency to resist apartheid even if only modestly.

5.3. PERSONAL HISTORIES SHAPED BY APARTHEID

As a spatially divided system, apartheid education presented each community, family and child in South Africa with a different set of circumstances, conditions and contexts over the period 1948-94. This is evident in the memory accounts collected from the eight adult informants in this study. The memories of attending apartheid era schools reveal how family histories, sometimes predating the years of official apartheid era, shaped their school experiences. Their accounts give us glimpses into the unfolding of apartheid and how the system affected the lives of children.

The school that a learner attends depends on her/his residential location and age. A learner might also change school if the family moves to another city. These contingencies are true for working and middle class children. Further, parents might make deliberate school choices that they deem are in the child's long-term social interests, such as sending a child to boarding school. Lastly, environmental and political events such as famine and civil unrest might intervene in personal lives, driving families to relocate to new residential areas. I will show that political events of this order occurred in the lives of several of the informants, indicating that apartheid was experienced spatially in the everyday lives of families, deeply affecting how children were educated during the apartheid era. The incidence of this contingency in at least half of the small sample of eight informants suggests the significance of this spatial effect of the apartheid system.

If we were to consider the longer history of colonialism that predated the apartheid era, then political influences shaping the school paths of learners draw in all the informants. For example, six of the informants are from communities originating either from the British Isles or the Indian continent. Vishnu and Laila refer to grandparents and great-grandparents coming to the Durban area from India as

merchants and indentured labourers to work in market gardens and the manufacturing industries of Durban. Angela is a naturalised South African having settled in the country as a young child after her family of English origin left Zambia on its independence.

The family histories of a number of informants are linked to the apartheid political economy. When British and Dutch governments colonised parts of Africa, they brought over military and administrative staff as well as slaves from their Malaysian and Indonesian colonies (Zegeye, 2001). Many of these people settled permanently in Africa. These were followed by European industrialists, entrepreneurs, artisans and farmers, as well as the poor and asylum seekers such as French Huguenots and Jews, in search of a better life than in their country of origin. In general, their improved livelihoods involved the exploitation of the labour of blacks and (as was the case for the British colony of Natal) indentured labourers brought with their families from India. At the end of the contractual period, Indian workers were offered small plots or a return passage to India. Many chose to remain in Natal with their families, despite later government-sponsored inducements to return to India, South African citizenship rights being awarded finally in 1961 (Ebr.-Vally, 2001:92; Zegeye, 2001:13) .

Informants of Indian descent were educated at Durban schools. This contrasts with the other informants (black and white) whose school careers reflect greater geographic movement, as I will elaborate below. Vishnu, a teacher at Highway Secondary, reflects the geographic rootedness, albeit as new arrivals to South Africa, in the account of his family origins and home:

We lived in K. as long as my parents were there. [...] So my grandparents were from India, my father was born in South Africa in 1921. The place that we used to live in for almost 80 or 90 years is where my grandparents built up, where my father was born. It's only now about 30 years that we've moved to this place where I now live. But it's in the same area, in the same road that I live in, just further up. [...] My grandparents] were indentured labourers. They did market gardening. Much of Seacowlake, Springfield and the entire area was a massive market gardening area...

We see his geographic movement confined within Durban where he has domiciled in one neighbourhood his whole life, only moving a few houses from the house where his father was born and where he grew up.

Vishnu's schools were all within walking distance or a short bus ride from his home. This forged close links between school and neighbourhood. He attended a pre-primary school (a private neighbourhood initiative) and two state-aided primary schools

and one high school. Vishnu was the only informant mentioning a pre-primary education. This indicates the value his family placed on education and exemplifies the educational projects initiated by Durban's Indian community in the absence of sufficient public schools (Ebr.-Vally, 2001:89; Zegeye, 2001:16).

One of Vishnu's favourite places was the school grounds and verges of 'jungle...prime virgin territory' where he often played in a stream and little waterfall, watching the variety of birds and plants. This contrasts sharply with the experience of Mike, another Indian informant and teacher at Maximus Primary.

Mike attended three schools, all within his working class area of Durban's largest sprawling Indian township. Like Vishnu's experience, the township yielded close bonding of Mike's school and neighbourhood life in that friends from his road were also his classmates. However, unlike Vishnu's relatively carefree forays into forested areas and the decades of living in the same family home, Mike's locale comprised a dense urban sprawl of relocated families in rented council houses and duplexes, requiring him to negotiate a hard street life:

Ninety-nine percent of the people were in the low socio-economic- There were lots of people unemployed. [...] Each road had their own gangs as such. Actually we were in gangs. These groups had children going from the different roads [...] Ja, ja, all of us had to. You can't beat them, you joined them so there were numbers you see.

Thus, although Vishnu and Mike grew up within Indian neighbourhoods, their experiences of school differ because of spatiality differences. According to their accounts, Vishnu's lived space that included his own inter-generational family home and a forest nearby gave him opportunities for solitude and reflection about nature and society as well as companionship. By comparison, Mike's lived space was a crowded ghetto with territorial gangs where security and survival were sought in collective defence and combative energy rather than solitude and pensiveness.

Mike's family was among hundreds of thousands of Indian families resettled during the 'grand apartheid' era of the 1970s and 1980s. This period included forced removals of many communities to consolidate bantustans and 'white' South African group areas. As the peri-urban area north of Durban fell under the control of the South African (ex Native) Development Trust in the late 1970s, making it an area for black residents (Hughes, 1996:305-8), Mike's Indian family were relocated to the Indian township south of the city. The social dislocation and levels of unemployment and

poverty provided fertile conditions for the formation of gangs as an urban sub-culture (Desai, 2001:31-33). Since gang membership dovetailed with the road on which a youth lived, the identification between the local school and street gang was strengthened.

Laila, a past pupil of Maximus Primary, attended only two schools (the least number among the selected informants), which provided continuity in friendships from primary school through to university. Her father was the son of a trader who had made his own way in the early twentieth century by ship from India to South Africa, much later than the first contingent of indentured labourers who were brought across the Indian Ocean in 1860. As a factory floor supervisor, his aspirations for economic mobility had enabled him to secure a plot and build a home in the middle class suburb where Laila grew up. Thus, Laila attended a primary school alongside the children of professional families from the neighbourhood. Although her home life was secure and settled, she experienced tension through her family's working class origins and their aspirations to be accepted within a local middle class neighbourhood. This led her to be unusually selective when making friends and competitive in schoolwork. For example, she recalled that even at the age of six she selected her friends on the basis of their parents' professional status. According to Laila, she 'worked incredibly hard at home' to be 'the model pupil' and among the top students. As there was no neighbourhood high school, Laila's cohort commuted to a school in the adjacent working class Indian township. Although she perceived that the values promoted at this school in a working class area were consistent with her middle class neighbourhood and family values, there were strong class cleavages among enrolled learners:

I don't think that although we were wearing the same uniform and standing in line that that distinction was blurred - that [affluent suburb / working class township] distinction.

Here Laila commented on her lived experience of school space as an ambiguous contact zone because while the cohort appeared the same by way of their uniform dress code and the spatial practice of standing and moving in a single line formation, each learner continued to embody a representational space of social class. Thus, the chain of learners was neither working class nor middle class but each learner as a link in the chain was distinguished by his or her social class. The spatial technologies and techniques of a uniform dress and line formation were insufficient to eliminate differences among learners coming from working and middle class families and areas.

Laila did not disclose how this was achieved, leaving us only with her doubts about the effectiveness of the technologies and techniques. This points to the power of imagined representations of space over real or physical space, within representational space. The real-and-imagined social class space from which these learners come each morning and to which they return each afternoon is a physical space outside of the school site. Yet Laila's comment showed that each learner represented such a real-and-imagined space even when s/he was not in them physically.

From Laila's experience and from the accounts of Vishnu and Mike, it is clear that the Indian community of Durban was not economically homogenous and the economic differences positioned them to recall the spatial dimensions of apartheid differently.

Economic issues also emerge as a driver in the story of black informants' families, with aspirations inflected in different school choices contingent on a family's class position. Bheki, a teacher at Khayalihle Primary, told of his parents leaving distant rural areas of the province in search of urban employment, making him the first urban generation of his family. Like so many leaving the countryside and migrating to the city during the influx of the late 1970s, they initially lived in an informal settlement (Hughes, 1996:306). With few schools in the settlement, Bheki was bussed to a private school on a sugar estate. The transport expense led his parents to move him to a school nearer his home, which was founded by a prominent black political leader and educationist. New townships built on the outskirts of Durban in the 1980s provided the opportunity for his family to buy a modest home in these 'greener pastures' with electricity, water and sewerage systems. This triggered Bheki's third change in primary school. Stability in terms of secure home ownership for his family provided him with settled high school years and post-matriculation education at a nearby college and eventually his appointment as a teacher at his old primary school.

Lindiwe, a teacher at Simunye Secondary, had a family background that differed markedly from Bheki's account, dispelling the assumption that the black community is economically and educationally homogenous. Both of Lindiwe's parents were middle class professionals, her father being a school inspector and her mother a teacher. As a young child, Lindiwe lived in a racially mixed neighbourhood of a large town along the south coast of the province. Although her school career path does not mirror parental career movements, it was prescribed by their own educational achievements and social class:

...my mother wanted me to at least to attend where she knew and had made research the schools better and the kids are not loitering around and those kind of things. She wanted the best for me. [...] So it was a good school. It was a very good school. Order in everything. [...] So my parents were going for results more than anything [...my school] was the best in everything. It was the best.

Lindiwe's mother selected her schools on the basis of perceived 'good' spatial practices such as 'kids not loitering around' and 'order in everything' and representations such as examination results. The physical school space is implied in the judgement '[my school] was the best in everything'.

Thus, Lindiwe's high school changes moved her geographically around the province as well as changing her from a day to a boarding scholar who only returned home at the end of each term. The boarding school where Lindiwe matriculated was a renowned mission school with a reputation among the black community for superior schooling.

Great geographic movement is a distinguishing feature of the school paths followed by the three white informants, prescribed by their parents' career paths. Lucy's father was a civil servant with South Africa's post office. Thus, Lucy, a teacher at Heather Primary, attended schools in Johannesburg, Pretoria and Pietermaritzburg, following her father's career trajectory around the country. Lucy remembered her apartheid schools as comprising diverse spaces. In Grade 7, her classroom was teacher-centred with formality established through spatial distance and height, and direct gaze and scrutiny between the teacher and learners. One of her high schools was an older building with big classrooms and high ceilings, while another was newer and well equipped.

[M]y parents decided to move me to a technical- well, a commercial high school in Pretoria and I enjoyed that a lot more. I actually felt much more comfortable there. There were boys and girls. It was dual medium. And in fact it was English and Afrikaans. Some of the assemblies were conducted in English and others in Afrikaans. [...]

Lucy attributed the good physical facilities at this coeducational, dual medium school to a hunch that the ruling Afrikaans-dominated Nationalist party 'had probably put quite a lot of money into developing that school'. Thus the school was an ambiguous space for her. She claimed she 'felt much more comfortable there', yet recalled 'a foreign climate' and remembered assemblies for their linguistic duality.

Angela's school path crossed international boundaries within Africa as her parents traversed Zambia and Swaziland, eventually settling in South Africa. Angela, a teacher at Centenary High, remembered her first school in Zambia being racially mixed. Other schools she attended included day schools and a brief stay at a Catholic boarding school. Her high school years were completed as a day scholar commuting by bus to a large, well-resourced school in a north coast town:

[I]t was a very large school for its time. Obviously a totally white school at that stage as well. Very large in terms of buildings. One of the biggest schools in terms of buildings as well. In terms of grounds, the grounds were massive. Our sports facilities were unbelievable. I think there were three rugby fields and three hockey fields, netball fields, um, tennis courts, virtually every facility you can think of. A very big swimming pool. In fact I think it was probably bigger than the swimming pool [at Centenary High]. It was a proper 25 metre pool.

Angela's awe at the excess in the facilities of her secondary school, which was exclusively for white learners, was undiminished even from her adult perspective as a teacher at Centenary High. She recalled battling with Afrikaans lessons because she was an immigrant and perceived her secondary school to be more concerned about discipline than her previous schools in Swaziland and Zambia. Nevertheless, she declared that she was 'happy with her lot in life' and did not draw comparisons between her secondary school and any others.

Of all the informants, my own school path, which included Heather Primary and Centenary High, stretched furthest afield, yielding six school changes in towns and cities of South Africa as well as in Nashville, United States. These changes included two years at a combined, dual medium boarding school, co-educational and single-sex day schools and several months attending an inner city vocational high school in the United States.

In recalling my schools, I referenced them to two 'traditions'. My reference to Heather Primary positions it within the global/local relations of state and state school with the state schooling tradition indicated in the quality of physical space:

...very much a traditional school and fully funded [by the state]. Not a wealthy school. There wasn't like massive elaborate resource provisioning and you can tell that by the school buildings [that] were actually quite functional and just concrete floors.

Although the school being remembered was for white learners and therefore would have received funding far in excess of schools for coloured, Indian and black schools, my conception of this state school space was minimalist and frugal, without extravagance and embellishment. In 1969/70, per capita spending on white learners was R461, while funding for black learners was R25,31 (5% of white expenditure) compared to R124,40 (27% of white expenditure) for Indian learners (South African Institute of Race Relations, 1992:195). The contradiction between my assessment of my primary school space and its relative luxury signals that, as a learner, I had no knowledge of the minimal facilities at schools in townships and could only use two previous schools I had attended for comparisons. This points to the apartheid system's effective insulation of racialised categories of learners.

The second tradition is associated with Centenary High's spatio-temporal location within city space:

A well-established, older neighbourhood of Durban. Very close to the university. [...] It was a big school even then and it had a long history and after matric you were expected to join the old girls' club. So there was quite a bit of tradition to it.

In this fragment, I do not construct Centenary High as marginal to centre/periphery power relations of the city. Instead, the school is among several opulent manifestations of an entrenched and enduring political force, the others being the neighbourhood and university. My naïve descriptive reference to the locale and educational institutions inadvertently reveals the inter-linking nodes of white supremacy in the city, and the way political knowledge about spatial proximity is articulated strategically to accumulate power. This exemplifies Lefebvre's proposition that those implicated (like learners and teachers) cannot distinguish the concealed political practice from spatial knowledge.

When I traced informants' social context and school histories, identifying the type of schools they attended, their school changes and reasons they gave for the moves, a pattern emerged. Indian informants had the most confined school experiences because they only attended Durban schools. White informants had the greatest number of school changes. The geographic scale for white informants was greater than for blacks and this reflected the responsiveness of middle class families to reposition themselves advantageously in the supply and demand of a labour market. By contrast, the mobility

of the black learners was more complex. In Bheki's school, changes were made in pursuit of basic standards of living and in Lindiwe's case, they related to her parents' perceptions about quality education.

5.4. ENCOUNTERING THE OTHER AND LEARNING YOUR POSITION IN SOCIETY

From all the accounts it is evident that racial segregation was effective in schools and kept learners apart. The system's spatial and administrative segregation of race-based schooling generally sealed learners from encountering their peers of other races. There was thus a vacuum of knowledge and understanding about the 'other' rendering 'a kind of gap between us'. Lucy said that contact across racial barriers was only possible for her once she reached university. I only recalled encountering people of other races as domestic workers, clerks and laboratory technicians at the whites-only schools I attended. Laila only met white learners when she participated in an inter-school debating competition. She made no mention of contact with any black learners. Mike stated that he had never had any contact with schools and learners outside of his neighbourhood when he was growing up, and that football league events were restricted to Indian schools. Although Lindiwe attended a former mission secondary school that employed many white teachers, mixing with pupils of other racial groups was beyond her wildest dreams:

We wouldn't go to any white school. It was only white teachers that taught us who were white, but otherwise with white schools altogether, no Indian schools, no coloured schools, no mix. That was a dream [laughs] which came true when we got the freedom [from apartheid].

Given this almost total insulation of schools and administrative authorities within the apartheid education system that prevented learners of different racial groups from learning together and even engaging in extra-curricular activities and competing on the sports field, it is no wonder that the informants' young notions of social hierarchy are not mostly about race, but foreground cultural and social class differences instead.

Vishnu conceived of society as a lateral geo-economic dichotomy of in/out of town/country. During occasional visits to a city branch of the main public library, Vishnu observed other Indian learners from city schools. (This branch library was restricted to Indian members and located within the Indian commercial district of Durban's city centre – following the model of the compartmentalised apartheid city

(Lemon, 1991a.) These encounters developed Vishnu's understanding of social class that operated through cultural capital, linguistic and religious differences which he articulated poignantly in his reminiscence of encountering other Indian learners at a public library:

A lot of those [Indian] pupils [...were] from very affluent homes in town and in a sense their lifestyle was a lot different from those of us that came like maybe from an outlying area. [...] Those kids and the schools that they come from are very different from where we are and what we hold near and dear to us. So one could feel a kind of gap between us. [...] You see, a lot of people that come from those schools belong to the Muslim community, the Gujarati community and so on, and in a sense there are differences in lifestyle and [...] you find that you come from these institutions and areas where you have working class parents and so on, and these are businessmen, children of businessmen, and much affluent people. So you could see [the gap] in, I think, different ways, in the dressing, just in the sense of superiority and arrogance that one could detect. [...] They have had the opportunity for greater achievement in different fields. They even played different kinds of sport that we never even had the opportunity of. [...] Straight away you can see and maybe as you say, the kind of confidence, possibly because that is also their own environment, that library is something that they visit on a daily basis so they have a greater affinity and greater knowledge about things that go on around them. But for us [the library] was like coming to a strange environment.

In this account, we see the public library as a contact zone (Pratt, 1991) in which Vishnu experienced the 'gap' of social class differences albeit only among Indians. He noted these differences as being marked through dress, language, religion, cultural practices and values, as well as deportment. Vishnu's account reveals a complex calibration of privilege within Durban's Indian community. He constructed middle class and Muslim Indian learners as the 'other', against whom he felt inferior and disadvantaged. His remembrances also give us insight into the way apartheid forced the erasure of heterogeneous groups by collapsing their official identification under one rubric (Ebr.-Vally, 2001:97-100).

Vishnu's library encounter with middle class learners from city schools left him with a sense of deficit as a working class youth, that his horizons were limited in terms of academic, sporting and recreational opportunities:

[City] schools had that kind of reputation of having maybe very bright learners, pupils that went to law school after that and went into medicine. [...] And I think maybe we measured ourselves- and we also came from an environment in terms of our own home where we never had any information

about any further education and what was to happen after matric and things. Because there was nobody who was educated and people were just, were just living within their own little world. But if you went to [city] schools, these children were of either professionals, of businessmen, and I think their world and life experiences were much different from ours. So I think what I saw was two worlds and maybe you just looked at them with maybe a touch of jealousy as well, you know, they've got this and we don't...

Here Vishnu redefined his earlier 'gap' metaphor for class difference as 'two worlds' where social classes live in separate spaces. The world of his working class experience was 'little' in relation to the expansive, confident world of the affluent middle class Indian. His working class family's self-absorption of 'living within their own little world' suggests the burden of economic struggle that restricted the horizon of his working class life, preventing him from spatially experiencing the apartheid landscape more widely.

However, by Grade 8 his reading of newspapers and his inquisitive approach to black construction workers in his suburb led him to rethink society in terms of race. He conceptualised social order as a white/black dichotomy but within his notion of 'black people' there was a further calibration of racial privilege:

...white people being the rulers and the black people being everybody else, that is not enjoying the kind of privilege and the society that one would have [...] and having this very deep sense of the African society and African people [...] the worst off.

For his teenage conception of society Vishnu drew on two political discourses about apartheid. First he employed a colour discourse initially developed by the apartheid government as white/non-white and which, from the 1970s, was adapted by the Black Consciousness Movement as white/black (Howarth, 2000a:173-4). In these dichotomies, the logic of equivalence neutralises differences among disparate groups (e.g. black, Indian, coloured) not defined within the first term of 'white'. But, by using the words 'privilege' and 'worst off' Vishnu used another discourse of race/class hierarchy that breaks the chain of equivalence for the multiple and complex relations of privilege and subordination within South African society. Vishnu first came to this discourse not through theory but experientially after first constructing blacks as 'others', spatially remote and foreign to his cultural world:

I can remember chatting to them, talking to them about from where they came, where they lived and how far away that was and when they would be going back home. [...] I had a sense that there was a difference and it was something that just built up from there onwards. [...] When I was in Std 9 it was the 1976 riots, I think for the first time I was able to articulate a lot of what was happening cos there was a piece of work that I did write for a composition within school. So I was able to put it down in writing although the concepts may not have been very clear even at that stage. But one could see that there were those differences in society.

By using the complex race/class hierarchical discourse, Vishnu implicitly admitted to his own economic privilege as a working class Indian, that positioned him below whites but not 'worst off'.

Mike's account revealed less analytical reflection and spatial consciousness of other races than Vishnu, even though he was born in a racially mixed area and his working class family was subjected to relocation because it was Indian:

Mike: Actually I was born in Inanda, that's in Verulam. But when I was little we shifted to [the township south of Durban].

JK: What was the reason for the move?

Mike: It was the Group Areas Act. Group Areas Act came.

JK: So your family lived in an area that was going to be declared white?

Mike: No, actually, they were getting rid of everybody who stayed around.

Here Mike used three techniques to anonymise the role of the white government in his experience of apartheid. First he assigned responsibility for the decision to relocate to his family: 'we shifted'. Then he animated legislation, whose arrival instigated the relocation. Last he laid the blame on a faceless 'they'. While his implied denial of white culpability can be construed as politeness in the face of my whiteness (as researcher), the extract also reveals a denial that blacks were residents – indeed, the majority – of Inanda. Blacks were excluded from Mike's experience of 'everybody who stayed around'. Once Mike's family was relocated to the township south of the city his memories of childhood and youth do not extend beyond the township horizon to realise a wider conception of apartheid society. It would have been his poor working class conditions in which unemployment was common that limited his movement to the Indian township and schools and hence his lack of experience encountering learners of other racial categories. This fits Vishnu's description of the working class as 'living within their own little world'.

Laila's experience of spatialised apartheid was similarly limited, as was Vishnu's and Mike's, to her experiences within her neighbourhood and schools. Only in secondary school did she have one experience, which offered her a perspective on apartheid spatiality that concerned the production of stratified difference across diverse kinds of schools. The contact zone was an independent school in an affluent white residential area in a wooded part of the Durban uni-city where there are large residential plots, smallholdings and places specialising in equestrian sports. The occasion for Laila's visit to the independent school was a debating competition. She began this capsule of memory account through remembering the material differences in her primary and secondary schools:

Suddenly there was a big jump between primary school and high school. High schools were better resourced so there were specialist rooms. There were kits for sport and activity. There was a change room for the gym. It was like 'we've got a change room - with showers!' And there was a bit of excitement about these extras. But in comparison, I subsequently discovered this was next to nothing compared to what some schools had. [...] I was on the school debating team, I was eventually chosen to represent the school in some circuit where we came up against other schools. It was hosted at [an independent school]. The experience of going there with the teachers and going into the [school] and looking at the buildings and the school hall. It was amazing. Just to see the contrast. [...] I was aware that I came from a disadvantaged institution [...] I became very despondent about having so little. I felt that I had little in my home in terms of academic assistance...

Overawed at her 'discovery' of difference in the racially-differentiated physical space of school, Laila reappraised her school as 'disadvantaged' and herself as having 'little'. Although she lived in a middle class Indian neighbourhood with middle class friends, Laila's response to the superior space of the independent school initially established to serve learners of a white elite, was similar to the 'jealousy' Vishnu felt for the spatial practices of Indian middle class learners at the public library. It left Laila with negative feelings of despondency and deprivation. Through experiencing apartheid school spaces that extended beyond her Indian working and middle class schools to include a superior school space designed for a white elite, Laila's earlier inflections of class as the principle of social order became eclipsed by race. While in earlier reminiscences Laila had referred to her endeavours at school to ensure her upward mobility along the axis of class, her devastation in this extract suggests that through this

visit to a previously unknown school, she comprehended the finality and hopelessness of any classification less than 'white' on the apartheid axis of race.

Neither Laila, Vishnu nor Mike recalled contact with black learners or experiencing schools in black townships. This indicates the effectiveness of apartheid schooling that restricted enrolment at schools in Indian areas to Indian learners only. However, spatial restrictions of apartheid schooling often coincided with class cleavages. Laila's and Vishnu's accounts of class difference encountered within and across race showed that when the self was perceived to be disadvantaged this was a traumatic experience.

Bheki's and Lindiwe's memories of school experiences foregrounded how they both learnt about social class distinctions. As was the case with other informants in their racially insulated school world, for Bheki and Lindiwe their memories concerned the black community. Not only were the distinctions economically indexed, they stratified learners along a rural/urban spatial divide, thus exposing a complexity within the black community ignored by apartheid's racial classification system.

Bheki's experience of growing up working class in a peri-urban area of informal settlement and township can also be described by Vishnu's phrase of the working class 'living within their own little world'. Bheki had no experience of white or Indian learners and schools. As a young learner he found his peri-urban neighbourhood to be 'a rough place' and 'corrupt' where 'school was danger' and there were 'bully guys'. His coping strategy was to participate in every playground activity and sport – even gambling, until he felt secure enough to assert his will:

I was new in that school so I have to go where there are people to familiarise myself, you see, even if the place that I go into, I may say, is not good for the rules of the school. So I used to find myself in those places because I was afraid of the time where there would be those guys whom I- I was attending the same schools and then find myself I'm not in there. Then it's like you have missed something so you like to know everything that they do. Then as time goes, I decided to know this is right, this is not right. This is good for me, this is not good for me. And then, by the end of the year, then I told the sport that is good for me. So we used to go and play soccer.

The younger Bheki's conceptual ordering of society was a moralistic dichotomy of right/not right, good/not good. But as he proceeded to high school he was able to go on excursions to other black schools so that his social class dichotomy shifted to an

urban/rural divide and he identified himself as having a strategic advantage over his rural cohort:

We used to go to rural areas where I will say our uniform was perfect compared to the rural areas. Mind you, the rural areas there's no running water, you see. And then in some excursions we used to go to schools which are situated in urban areas. They used to wear no different [uniform] comparing this with mine.

In this fragment we see that through his school excursions Bheki had begun to learn that apartheid's hierarchy included an urban advantage. His explanation for urban and rural differences was not politicised though they were about inequalities and injustices of apartheid. His generous acceptance of the spatial practice (inadequate infrastructure for providing a water supply to rural schools) as a norm exemplifies two Lefebvrian propositions used in this study. Firstly, from Lefebvre's statement that space is used politically to produce social relations, we see how in this case running water constituted urban/rural social relations so that Bheki constructed himself as an urban learner superior to his rural counterpart. Secondly, Bheki's explanation that limited itself to the lived experience of perceived urban/rural space in which there was or was not running water for washing a school uniform, failed to plumb the underlying politics of spatial practices around the supply of potable water to homes. His limited analysis shows what Lefebvre means when he says that space inherently conceals the fact that it is used politically. Bheki's spatial insulation in the city that closed him off from seeing the superior privileges of white learners prevented him from going further in his critical understanding of apartheid spatiality especially in relation to the city. Thus, he stopped short of expressing a negative perspective on the state's miserly township investment, which was merely a sop to ensure a minimal level of hygiene, social stability and effective administration (Robinson, 1996:64-7).

Another dichotomy of social order that he remembered concerned the authorities that administered black schools: Department of Education and Training (DET)/KwaZulu Government (ZG). Schools differed spatially contingent on their administrative authority:

The former DET school, even today, when you compare them with ZG schools, they are much better. [...] So we had [better] facilities compared to other schools. [...] Financial advantage. [DET schools] will have electricity, running water and the school will be fenced.

Physical infrastructure in educational institutions determines spatial practices for curricular and extra-curricular activities (McLeod, 1994). For example, electricity and water are needed in the teaching of biology and science, and Bheki was signalling the advantage of having such infrastructure at his school. However, the horizon of Bheki's DET/ZG social ordering only included black schools. This limitation is directly related to his lack of spatial experience with schools for other races because such contact might have reduced the DET/ZG differences to appear relatively insignificant.

Lindiwe was from a middle class black family, and both her parents were education professionals. In their endeavour to give her a good education, they chose to send her to boarding schools. Her memories of boarding school and then on holiday at home in the township, mapped further complexities within the urban/rural divide to include an ambiguously positioned black middle class that, like their white counterparts, used rural boarding schools to school their offspring (Morrell, 2001:50-5). Sometimes Lindiwe associated middle class with being urban, but when in the township she distanced her middle class practices from loitering urban youths:

...That boarding school was in a rural place and people from rural areas don't even care whether the child is at school or not. Eh, absenteeism is kind of day [scholar] thing ... Kids can drop out any time, you know. The community they have, doesn't have the sense of doing things, unlike at A. School. At A. there they were known for loving education. [...] During holidays I used to go back to the township. The kids I used to go to [day] school with, you know, they kind of distant themselves from you, I think maybe even to themselves they say 'oh they are now better than us' and the child from the boarding school is used to staying home, watching TV. You know you don't just go and loiter around streets like township life. ... When you are from a boarding school you do get resent because most of the time your life has been structured and it has got a programme.

Here Lindiwe structured a social order - but it is not about racial hierarchy. Instead, her reminiscence foregrounded social class and space, thereby undermining the apartheid-era reductionist myth of a monolithic black population. Lindiwe did this by juxtaposing conscientious middle class boarders from urban centres against dropout day scholars from poor rural areas. The exposition is textured in Lindiwe's spatial contrast of the unfocused, spontaneous life on the township street and the controlled, technology-infused schedule that confined her middle class home life.

In one of Lucy's memory capsules she made similar observations to Vishnu, but for her the differences were about linguistic and cultural cleavages within the white

community. The time she recalled was when she attended schools in Pretoria, the executive capital of the South African government, once the symbolic heartland of white supremacy. Her learning about apartheid social order sprang from a linguistic dichotomy of English/Afrikaans white learners, which created barriers even in institutions:

I remember there was a lot of animosity between Afrikaans schools and the English schools. We always- for one thing we had no interaction. [...] I don't often remember speaking to people from Meisies Hoër [=Girls High] and Seuns Hoër [=Boys High]. They were like other creatures. They just didn't interact. We were quite resentful of them because we saw them as [...] Nationalist kids.

By attending an English language school, not only was Lucy isolated from her cohort of other races, the cultural divisions among schools for white learners alienated her from her Afrikaans-speaking peers. For her, white Afrikaners were the 'other', 'like other creatures', and worthy of resentment because of the subjugating power they represented by dominating the ruling political party of the apartheid system.

Like Lucy, the high school that Angela attended in South Africa was for English-speaking white learners only, so that Angela conceived of her society in terms of divisions among whites only. But her perception of hierarchy refers to spatial practices that fractured along social class rather than linguistic lines:

[Our school was] a dumping ground for problem children from Durban. [...] Hostel groups stick together and the day scholars stick together in terms of area where you live, particularly in a big high school like that you tend to group yourselves. I would never have made friends with one of those [hostel] pupils. They were not just- socially they just were very different to me. [...] They were already going to discotheques and using makeup and they were far more advanced socially, I think, than I was. [...] I think they were more experienced in terms of sexual relationships and that type of thing...

By defining boarders at the school hostel as 'problem children' who behaved in ways prohibited within her family's middle class culture, Angela constructed the school boarder as the 'other', and she used the school hostel as the organising principle to maintain her concept of social hierarchy at school.

Unlike Vishnu and Bheki who constructed their urban/rural dichotomies with urban in the dominant or positive position, Angela tended towards reversing the order to rural/urban. For her, city was an ambiguous representational space. It was a dangerous

place where youths have an early experience of adulthood through music, dancing, makeup, and sex. Yet in her envy, Angela acknowledged a cultural capital in the experience and knowledge that is associated with the city. In her spatial practice, however, Angela privileged her small town society when she asserted that she ‘would never have made friends with one of those pupils.’

My recollection of various schools I attended shows that, like the other informants, I used dichotomies to conceptualise order in society:

Whereas [Heather] primary school would have been about 500 learners, [Centenary High] – even when I went there – had about 1,000 girls. [...] Well, I had been to a very, very large school in my first two years. I went to a boarding school which was a combined school in Pietersburg, my first school. That was very large. [Heather Primary], compared to the little school I'd been to in Cape Town, was a much larger school and it was more affluent neighbourhood... The first school that I went to was co-educational and it was bilingual, it was English and Afrikaans, and it was combined primary and high school, and a boarding school and a day school. So it was a huge institution. And the school down in Cape Town was a little private junior primary school... So [Heather Primary] really was the first time that I felt I'd come into an English neighbourhood, a state school. But I wasn't very conscious of all of those things. [...] When I went to [Centenary] high school it was a huge big establishment so there was quite an adjustment. There were several classes of Std 6s. There must have been about 8 groups of Std 6s.

My litany of dichotomies of English/Afrikaans, public/independent, day scholar/boarder, points to the permutations of white schooling in apartheid South Africa, my disjointed and interrupted lived experience of that complexity, and seems to confirm assertions that many South Africans have internalised the need to define and differentiate themselves and their experiences from each other (Ebr.-Vally, 2001:79). My adult interpolation about a child's weak understanding of distinctions in the schooling system acts as a foil to offset the pat inventory of place façades. However, the inventory shows the penetration into everyday conversation of the apartheid regime's penchant for the minutiae of social classification.

On the whole, the memory accounts show that while the insulation around segregated schools masked the most significant apartheid stratifier of race, nevertheless the structuring of hierarchy in the social relations of these learners had been learnt and was operational albeit along axes of class and culture. Arguably, these findings from a few South Africans might mirror the quotidian of learners anywhere in the world. But

the significance here is twofold. First, these memories bring to the surface the way everyday school experiences are implicated in and support the internalised structuration of social hierarchies. Schooling failed to provide these learners with an alternative compass point for understanding and organising society other than an hierarchical nexus of economic, cultural and spatial privileges. In the second place, these memories point to a learnt social order that provided the branch for grafting on a racist hierarchy as the natural order.

These memory fragments indicate that learning apartheid was not a matter of objectifying and being objectified simply by the indicator of phenotype. The apartheid order was internalised through direct and censored experiences that allowed a complex and nuanced differentiation of interlinked race, class and spatial relations.

5.5. PLACES FOR LEARNING APARTHEID

The memory extracts discussed above are remarkable in that school lessons and classrooms did not emerge as necessarily essential for learning apartheid. This is important because, as was noted above, in much of the literature about apartheid education, the curriculum of fundamental pedagogics and Christian National Education are foregrounded and criticised for enslaving the minds of South Africans. Instead, in the memories of the eight adults, there are anecdotes about other places *en route* to and from school and beyond their own schools that shaped thinking about the apartheid social order and positioning oneself within the racial, class and cultural hierarchy.

In the public sphere of the street and on public transport travelling home at the end of a school term, which in Lefebvre's scheme of realms are intermediate zones, Lindiwe found racial difference foregrounded and that was where she learnt her most acute lessons of being black and that race was the primary measure of a person in apartheid South Africa:

This racial thing, the hatred about this racism would only be felt when we supposed to get into public places where you were not allowed to buy from and get into this restaurant. You are supposed to peep through the window to get something you need. You were not supposed to get into first class of a train. You were supposed to use the third class. Those are the kind of things to make you feel that, ay, I'm black now.

To be black was a negating experience. Although Lindiwe had not changed phenotype from when she was in class with her white teachers, she found that the

interstice between segregated school space and the public sphere of intermingling apartheid society, diminished and restricted her social status and stature. Her expression 'I'm black now' reveals the shifting consciousness of socially constructed identity that moved rapidly from a 'learner' identification to an acute moment that reduced her to a phenotype identification only. This experience highlights the importance of the public sphere as a place for learning apartheid. It was on buses and trains and on streets travelling to and from school that limited racial contact may have occurred to act as a fracturing of segregated experience.

The significant contact zone for Laila was beyond the premises of her own school and at a privileged independent school that she visited with her school debating team (see 5.4 above for her recollection of that occasion). In Lefebvre's scheme of realms, that independent school falls in the global realm because it is conceived as a place of exclusive prestige, where only the sons of wealthy families are enrolled. While Laila referred to the impressive buildings of the school in general, she singled out the school hall, a global realm within school space, probably because this was the venue for the debate. Lefebvre refers to the global realm as a prestigious place where treasures might be deposited. Indeed, halls are large rooms for mass gatherings of children, parents and other members of the public as guests. The display of school 'treasure' might include rolls of honour, crests, trophies, grand pianos, and as a venue for large events, the room might have multiple entrances, be structured with high ceilings, raised platforms and a proscenium arch, and sometimes even balconies, to lend status to the proceedings and facilitate visibility. The nature and significance of the events that might be held in the hall have led some schools to invest the space with special sound and lighting equipment, draperies and adjoining rooms and entrances. The furniture in many halls is of better quality than might be found in classrooms. Although Laila provided no details about the hall where the debate was held, her real-and-imagined experience of the venue led to her epiphany about racial hierarchy. Had Laila not visited that school for the debating competition, it may have been some years before she learnt that lesson about apartheid.

There were some memories, also outside the classroom, specific to white informants that showed that rituals and mass parades were used to promote the nationalism and triumphalism of apartheid among white learners. These spaces also were the global realm. In the school assembly hall, Lucy recalled being subjected

regularly to rituals that blurred boundaries between religion and national symbols of flag and anthem. It was through such repetition at school that white learners absorbed nationalistic loyalty to the apartheid state. Participation as a school representative at provincial celebrations of the apartheid republic's fifth anniversary might be an unlikely site for learning about apartheid, but it was one that I remembered:

There was going to be a huge big celebration by the province in Pietermaritzburg in a massive big stadium... every primary school, every high school, was sending representatives... I was the 'lucky' one who had to go and sit through this dreadful experience in Pietermaritzburg, sitting shivering in a cold stadium and having to walk around the field holding the school banner... the song that they sang in the evening and there were fireworks...

Despite my own particular account of hollow white triumphalism that was filtered through my perspective as an adult, my reminiscence gives us the opportunity to see how white learners were gathered together occasionally for spectacular mass events in stadiums. Although such events were infrequent, the stadium provided white school learners with the collective imprint of 'buildings of extraordinary size and grandiosity, the built expressions of an unbridled power' (Herwitz, 1998:415-6) that the apartheid regime achieved through the architecture at some higher education institutions.

I recalled an incident from my first year of school in my boarding school bathroom, which concerned black caregivers and white children. What occurred in the bathroom is a norm in countless white households across South Africa where white children learn a 'natural' order of being waited on and served by black adults. In Lefebvre's scheme of realms, ablution areas are private spaces where one has dispensed with defences and facades and is most vulnerable to perform the most intimate and private acts. Apartheid discourse of white supremacy operated even in the intimacy of ablutions when young white learners were naked and vulnerable, in contrast to the fully clothed bathroom attendant. I recalled having a conversation with the attendant during bath time:

I remember very specifically the instant when I became conscious that I was talking to [the bathroom attendant] in a language that nobody else in the room - the other little kids with me - understood...

The non-participation of other English and Afrikaans-speaking white children in our conversation triggered an epiphany much like Laila's sudden 'discovery'. In

speaking sePedi, I had stepped out of the dominant and official languages of my white school into a conceptual space that, at that time (1960s), signalled rurality, blackness, being uneducated and primitive. I had crossed apartheid fences of language/culture, race and class, and the silence or non-involvement of the other white girls declared my action to be transgressive. Their silence had the effect of drawing me away from my spatial practice based on adult/child relations in which the adult position held seniority, and pushing me back into the group of white girls. There the white/black interaction posited me superior to the attendant, as a future white madam over black maids. The bathroom event sharply focuses the nexus of race-class-culture found in apartheid discourse.

When the places where these informants learned apartheid are mapped onto Lefebvre's scheme of realms (see shaded blocks in Table 7), I find that the places are not restricted to schools.

Table 7: Places for Learning Apartheid Mapped onto Lefebvre's Scheme of Realms

	City context		School space
Global	Prestigious schools		Assembly hall
Intermediate	Highway Railway system Junction Road	Shops and restuarants	
Private			Bathrooms

Places in the global and intermediate realms of the city have been recognised as zones that provided platforms for mixing and encounters (Robinson, 1998:163-4). Although elite independent schools are exclusive places, in this case such a school was pushed into the public domain when it was used as the venue for an inter-school event. Also in the public domain were trains with segregated carriages and commercial enterprises such as shops and restaurants. Significantly, informant accounts did not include the private realm of the city context, i.e. homes. Perhaps this is because home is usually accessed by family and invited friends only and therefore constitutes a more restricted and controlled space than the contact zone of public and prestigious places. In

the apartheid context, where geographic zones were designated for specific racial groups only, various legal instruments including the *Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act of 1949* and the *Immorality Act of 1950* inhibited any prospect of social mixing. Contact across racial divides was mostly limited to employer-employee relations.

Informants' memories of learning apartheid drew attention to private and global realms of the school. Those were the bathrooms of a boarding school in the case of the private realm, and the assembly hall for the global realm. The polarity of these being the remembered realms points to the important social role of schools in fostering collective public displays and rituals that promote publicly-approved shared values and attitudes such as patriotism, that involve relations between the individual and state/society. School space was also found to be instrumental in constituting private conduct that involved relations between individuals. Cleaning and ablutions at schools concealed social class and racialised practices that nurtured young learners to accept certain life paths as common sense and 'natural', and to mould their social interaction in that relation. Entrances, pathways and classroom areas were not raised in these informant memory accounts, perhaps because of the insulated segregation of schools and because they do not recall apartheid being taught didactically as part of the curriculum.

5.6. PLACES FOR RESISTING APARTHEID

While the extracts above about learning apartheid convey the impression that young learners passively assimilated and accepted apartheid as a natural social order - and this was true for many - evidence from the memory accounts, even among this small sample of informants, shows that learners were not necessarily and/or entirely passive.

Much has been written about mass-based struggles against apartheid (for example, see Unterhalter et al., 1991; Cross, 1992; Hyslop, 1999; Kallaway, 2002), but these have largely concentrated on resistance from black learners, headlined by the media. Very little is known about the comparatively inconsequential, un-dramatic and highly personalised resistance among learners who did not take to the streets. Even in relation to wider analyses of power relations, Paechter (1998:56) asserts that such 'micro-resistances' are often overlooked. Yet in these eight accounts, three forms of resistance surface: defiance against a school assembly nationalism ritual; raising current political issues in a written assignment; and in a display on a classroom pinboard.

Though these forms were subjective, individualised and unremarkable in the significance of their overall effect on the apartheid system, they were sufficiently meaningful for the individual to have been remembered at all. It is in the intimacy and modesty of the personal resistance that we see the pervasive intrusiveness that apartheid had on the everyday life of all South African learners. Further, these small signs of resistance attest that fascism, violent suppression and racism were, indeed, challenged in the consciousness of apartheid-era learners.

Lucy's defiance manifested in modest, almost imperceptible, body movements in the global realm of the school hall at assembly where she was required to stand for the former flag of apartheid South Africa and sing the anthem in Afrikaans. She clearly recalled 'hating having to stand for the school – for the South African flag - *vierkleur* [=four-colours, a derogatory reference to former Boer republics] - and tried to sort of drag [her] feet and stand and not sing *Die Stem* [=The Call/Voice (the former national anthem of South Africa)]'. The coerced nationalistic patriotism of a white school assembly led to her defiant attitude and posture. She had become adept at self-censoring her defiance and reduced her movements so that only she was wise to her meaning, thereby avoiding detection and punitive measures. Thus, even in the ritualised space of the school hall, the cover and anonymity in the mass of her cohort provided conditions for a spatial practice – however modest - of resistance.

I also made provocative attempts to decorate the notice board in my classroom with images of forbidden relationships across the colour line:

...I put up- ...photographs from magazines, Time-Life magazine. I had put up a picture of a mixed couple, the photograph was in black and white, and I was told to take it down.

The space of the notice board is an intermediate realm of the classroom since notices are viewed in passing. Although the outcome of my challenge was unsuccessful and I was required to remove the magazine pictures, like Lucy's account of resistance, it demonstrated the political nature of white schooling where discussion of race was discouraged as politicking and learners learnt a manner of acting blind to the problematic of apartheid society by accepting the racist hierarchy as the natural order. Censorship and threatened censorship, which yielded self-censorship, were widely used by the authorities to prevent the populace from developing an understanding of the full extent of oppression and atrocities within the system (Merrett, 1994). The ruling from

my teacher, a state employee whose job might have been threatened had she not insisted that I remove the photographs, taught me that even imagining racial integration was disallowed. Censoring such images in white schools ensured that white learners never constructed racial integration as 'normal' and they continued to internalise the peculiarities of the white South African supremacist myth of *swart gevaar* [=black danger].

In contrast to the control over debate and gaze at white schools, at his Indian school Vishnu found more latitude to express thoughts about the atrocities of apartheid:

When I was in [Grade 11] it was the 1976 riots, I think for the first time I was able to articulate a lot of what was happening cos there was a piece of work that I did write for a composition within school. So I was able to put it down in writing although the concepts may not have been very clear even at that stage. But one could see that there were those differences in society.

He used his composition notebook, a private realm of conceived space, as a place to engage with the issue of racial difference in a South African context. As assignments, essay compositions require individual expression and perspective. This gave Vishnu a private yet public space where he felt sufficiently secure and permitted to venture into a discussion of race and South African society. His silence about the teacher's reaction implies that he was not censured for using his schoolwork to register his voice of protest.

While the apartheid system sought to regulate all aspects of public and private life, it appears from the experience of Lucy and Vishnu that at schools, more private modes of protest and defiance were tolerated (in Vishnu's case) or went undetected (in Lucy's case). However, the public sphere of the class notice board that I had sought to appropriate was a space that I found to be controlled and subjected to censorship. I found no latitude in the teacher at my white school to allow a representation of an alternative to the apartheid way of life. Such a public display would have been too dangerous, too infectious.

Mapping these places onto Lefebvre's scheme of realms, I found that only school space was mentioned (see Table 8 below). This indicates that their schools provided places where the informants in this study felt sufficiently secure and protected to express themselves, in contrast to the public domain of the city where they might have felt exposed, powerless and alienated. The places where the informants were able to express their resistance were in the global realm of the assembly hall and in the private

realm of the classroom. The resistance actions were more conceptually developed and articulated in the classroom sub-realms of the pin board and essay book, in contrast to the non-verbalised and inconspicuous shift of posture in the presence of the watchful assembly of all learners and teachers. The reason for this difference is likely to be related to the scale of classroom where interaction could be relatively controlled and confined to one teacher and/or a class of peers, and which would constitute an important component of an informant's quotidian, whereas the assembly hall and the rituals associated with assemblies are not constituted to give the massed congregation of learners a sense of individual power and decision-making over the order of service.

Table 8: Places for resisting apartheid mapped onto Lefebvre's scheme of realms

	City context	School space
Global		Assembly hall
Intermediate		
Private		Aisle
		Pin board
		Desk and chair Work book

There is a pattern match in the school realms that emerges from the mapping of informants' remembered places for learning (see Table 7 above) and for resisting apartheid (see Table 8 above). It is logical that a realm suitable for the hidden curriculum of a political project would be similarly suitable for an individual's modest and covert projects of resistance.

5.7. CONCLUSION

To sum up, the memory accounts of the eight adults who attended South African schools during the apartheid era show that the quotidian of the representational space of

school, which included the interstice between home and school as well as school premises, was formative for learning apartheid discourse and its articulated nexus of race, class and culture. The peculiarities of each informant's family history and racialised identification within the South African apartheid context led to great differentiation in their experiences of school spaces, spatial practices and conceptions of centre-periphery relationships. These rendered a particular understanding of apartheid's social order for each informant, yet all held recollections of the 'other' that showed their conceptions of hierarchy, privilege and disadvantage.

Memories of apartheid-era school life showed that classrooms were not a significant space for learning apartheid discourse. Instead, it was in spaces such as the street between home and school, in places like school assembly halls and contact zones like excursion and competition visits to schools where the 'other' was encountered, that were meaningful. These were global and intermediate realms. Further, memory accounts showed that learning apartheid was more than learning the racial ordering of South African society, because spatial practices also concealed social class and the urban/rural divide.

Also in these accounts we find that outside the momentous political upheavals of South Africa's social history, such as the events around June 16, 1976, in their lived experience of school space, young people across the racial spectrum found their own openings and outlets for a personal form of protest, appropriating whichever realm was available and useful to their purposes.

These accounts of resistance revealed that aspects of white supremacy in apartheid discourse, such as nationalism and phobia of misogyny, were concealed in spatial practices at schools for white learners.

Although we may now understand more about how apartheid discourse was spatialised in and through school space during the apartheid era whereby 'a kind of gap between us' became systemic and was internalised by young people, Henri Lefebvre's proposition that the past leaves its trace in space turns our attention to residual apartheid discourse during the post-apartheid era. This is the subject of the next chapter.

CHAPTER 6: THE PAST IN THE PRESENT: EMBEDDED APARTHEID DISCOURSE



6.1. INTRODUCTION

Underpinning this chapter is Lefebvre's proposition that the past leaves its traces in space, implying that traces from the apartheid era can be found inscribed and embedded in school space although the political system of apartheid has officially ended. Using Nkomo's (1990a:2) assertions about the aims of apartheid education to guide my search for that past, I examine spatial practices and social relations in the present and work towards understanding the nature of embedded apartheid discourse residual in school space. Three questions have driven my examination:

- i. How is apartheid discourse spatially embedded so that it provides continuity for practice in the present?
- ii. What aspects of school spatiality in the post-apartheid era represent residual apartheid discourse?

- iii. What are the implications of embedded apartheid discourse in post-apartheid public school space?

Data from only five schools sampled in the study were subjected to these questions because the sixth school was opened in 1999, i.e. during the post-apartheid era.

Nkomo's (1990a:2) formulation of apartheid education's aims juxtaposes how it worked with different effect on white and black learners, signalling that the schooling system was steeped in inequality and racialised hierarchy. In this study, the search for these traces in school space brought to the fore that the field of action for apartheid discourse in education was on a greater scale than individual institutions. Thus, there was no archetypal apartheid school, which singly manifested all the apartheid education aims. This was because apartheid discourse was constituted in a conceptual space of system, and articulated through the nodal points of racially differentiated education administrative regimes. The trace of apartheid discourse is spatialised *systemically* as disparities and similarities, continuities and discontinuities, that only become apparent in ensembles of differently articulated schools. This character of apartheid discourse is the foundation for my discussion in this chapter of embedded inequality and racialised hierarchy from the apartheid past that is traceable in present school space.

In the next three sections, I provide examples of that residue. These concern the system of racially based inequalities in facilities for pedagogy and technologies for knowledge and comfort, and the racialised hierarchy of work.

6.2. INEQUALITIES IN PEDAGOGIC SPACE

At the core of every school is a pedagogic mission. The most important places for that purpose are the library and classroom. As places where teachers and learners engage formally, the library as a treasure-store of learning materials, and the classroom where groups are closeted away, occupy global and private realms respectively within the school. According to the Deputy Chief Architect for KwaZulu-Natal, library and classroom areas are prescribed as equipped containers in national norms and standards (Information and Physical Planning Services, 2001).²²

²² Pers. Comm. Patrick Culligan, Deputy Chief Architect, KwaZulu-Natal Dept of Works, 14 November 2002.

Of the five schools, only Khayalihle Primary, in the working class black township, had no library, showing that racialised inequality was embedded in the provision of libraries. In the past, it was common for schools serving the black community to be constructed without a library (National Education Policy Investigation, 1992:9-10; Stadler, 1993:5-6). Surveys of built environments at schools confirm that libraries exemplify educational inequality inherited from the past (Human Sciences Research Council, Education Foundation and Research Institute for Education Planning, 1997; Department of Education, c2001).

The other four apartheid-era schools, all had school libraries. Their libraries provided by apartheid education authorities, were based on a centralised model of a library that serves the needs of the school alone. Centenary High's library contains diverse types of resources and equipments, each with their own area, so that the library space comprises several rooms and a librarian's office. At Heather Primary, Maximus Primary and Highway Secondary, the libraries were a single open rectangle with shelves lining the walls and reading desks, chairs and benches in the middle, with circulation desks near the entrance. Differences in furniture, window curtaining and the volume of the collections were observed, with Maximus Primary manifesting the emptiest shelves and disparate seating arrangements. The reason for this was not apparent.

The observed spatial practices, such as classification and circulation systems, for using library resources at the four schools to a large extent followed international conventions for school libraries and could not be construed as a trace peculiar to apartheid discourse. From photograph observations, collection development could not be analysed discursively.

Image 58: 01K05a: Heather Primary: Library



Image 59: 02K05b: Maximus Primary: Library



Image 60: 04K05: Highway Secondary: Library



Image 61: 03K05b: Centenary High: Library - current periodicals



Image 62: 03K05c: Centenary High: Library – issue desk, computer terminals and librarian's office



Image 63: 03K05d: Centenary High: Library – photocopier for learners' use



Image 64: 03K05e: Centenary High: Library -- section of reference collection



Image 65: 03K05f: Centenary High: Library -- video collection



We see in the contrasted presence or absence of the library as a special facility for learning the systemic operation of apartheid that implied that whites and Indians, but not blacks, accessed quality education in a resource-rich learning environment. However, there was considerable variation between the ways in which learning resources were housed in Centenary and the two former Indian schools. Centenary High's library was distinguished by the diversity in its collection of learning resources and facilities such as

photocopier and computers for learners to use for the processing and repackaging of information and assignments. Arguably, the collection had changed since 1994, however, the superiority of that school's rich depository of resources in the library was consistent with the superior conditions that obtained at the school during the apartheid era. These conditions had enabled Centenary High to provide a privileged education for white learners in the past and prepared them to assume the superior roles that Nkomo (1990a:2) pointed out was an apartheid education aim. The continuity of such favourable conditions in contrast to schools formerly for Indian and black learners represented the embeddedness of apartheid discourse.

Turning to classrooms, there were similarities and differences among the Foundation Phase classrooms of the primary schools. While all the primary school classrooms were of similar dimensions and equipped with similar basic furniture, the facilities at Heather Primary were qualitatively superior to those at Maximus and Khayalihle Primaries. At Heather Primary the Foundation Phase classroom was well lit, with a carpeted story-telling area, a washtub and storeroom, as well as junior toilets that were shared with an adjoining classroom – all features that did not exist at Maximus and Khayalihle. At Khayalihle, the classroom was congested with bulky modular desk-bench units that were too large for small learners and unsuitable for activities requiring horizontal surfaces. Learning was desk-bound and there was no equipment to supplement teaching from chalkboards and charts. Maximus Primary, and to a greater extent, Heather Primary, were less congested, more colourful and equipped for a range of educational activities that extended beyond the chalkboard.

Image 66: 01K7b-X: Heather Primary: Foundation Phase classroom



Toilet area that leads through to adjoining class

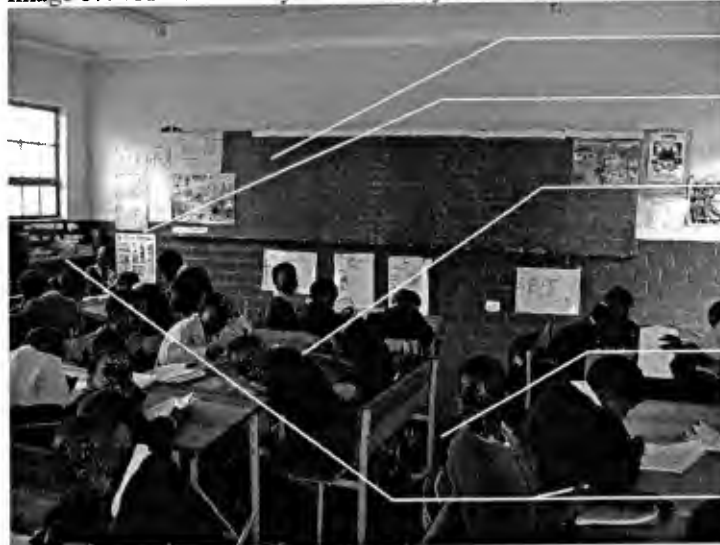
Washtub

Carpeted story-telling area

Activity table

Mobiles

Image 67: 05K7c-X: Khayalihle Primary: Foundation Phase classroom



Chalkboard

Posters & charts

Bulky desks with sloping writing surface and attached bench

Narrow aisle restricting movement between workgroups

Bookshelf

Image 68: 02K07c-X: Maximus Primary: Foundation Phase classroom



Charts

Activity display table

Teacher's desk

Aisle for movement between
workgroups

Intermediate Phase classrooms showed similarity in permanent features of the built environment such as walls, windows and door, but the pattern of difference remained in equipment, furnishings and paraphernalia.

Image 69: 01K08b-X: Heather Primary: Intermediate Phase classroom



Overhead screen; wall clock

Built-in stationery cupboard

Chalkboard with charts on
adjacent pin boards

Teacher's desk

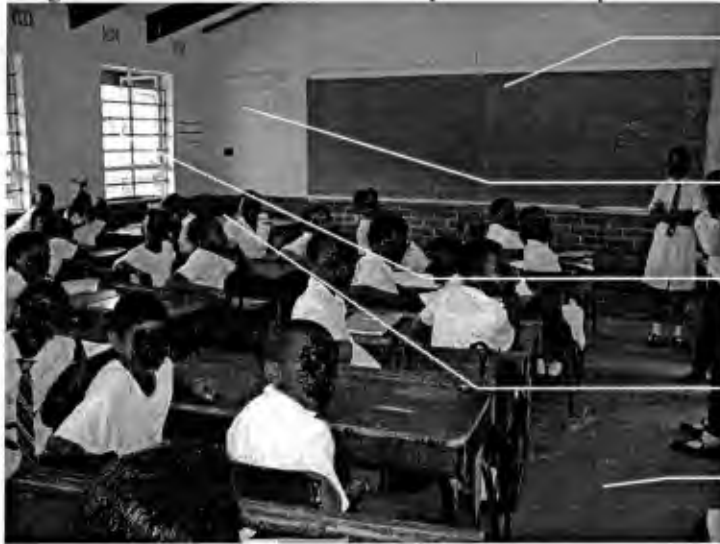
Curtains

Bookshelf with globe

Filing cabinet

Spacious aisle

Image 70: 02K08c-X: Maximus Primary: Intermediate phase classroom



Standard chalkboard

Timetable notice

Burglar bars at windows

Teacher's desk in corner

Spacious aisle, yet congested rows

Image 71: 05K08d-X: Khayalihle Primary: Intermediate Phase classroom



Standard chalkboard

Metal stationery cupboard

Teacher's desk at window

Narrow aisle and congested desks

The quality of facilities and inferred access to resources at Heather and Khayalihle Primaries mirrored polar positions of relative advantage and disadvantage on the apartheid racialised hierarchy. The former House of Delegates school, Maximus Primary, was situated between them in the hierarchy. The Heather Primary Intermediate Phase classroom was a cornucopia of colourful objects, posters and books that stimulate interest and can be used in diverse learning activities. In Image 69, most of these things are at the front of the classroom in the section that the teacher has organised for her convenience. The room is not over-filled with desks, which facilitates freer movement and interaction among learners, and between learners and teacher. The built-in cupboard indicated a conceived norm and standard of a teacher's basic needs in white school

plans during the apartheid era, but the additional filing cabinet, bookshelf, wall clock and overhead screen suggest that this teacher's needs surpass those basic needs and the school has been able to afford those acquisitions. The discourse in the spatial practice of this classroom implies that teaching and learning is conceived as an enjoyable interactive social process that entails orderly organisation and timekeeping while allowing high levels of informal discussion, body movement and engagement with learning materials. Although many of the ephemeral resources may belong to the teacher herself, and the tone of the classroom is of her design, the basic conditions and ethos at Heather Primary provide the enabling environment. This contrasts dramatically with the austerity in the Intermediate Phase classrooms at Maximus Primary and Khayalihle Primary.

The classroom space at Maximus Primary (Image 70) comprises only the most basic furniture: a chalkboard, desks and chairs. There is no stationery cupboard, the teacher's desk is almost bare of any papers and the room colour is monochromatic. The learners' movements are confined to their desks and chairs. In the teacher's absence, a learner has been given responsibility to monitor her peers and the names of those who have flouted the teacher's ruling appear on the board. The wooden desks are designed with flip lids for learners to store their books and other things. The discourse in the spatial practice of this classroom implies that learning is teacher-centred and disciplined, and without much variation in activity. Laila's reminiscences of attending Maximus Primary School and a secondary school nearby highlight this:

But it was the GOVERNMENT that had made the school the way it is and it was the government that had done all of this. [...] Yes. It was very clear to us that this was state property when the inspectors would come in with the GG vehicles. It was very clear that it's not HOME, it's STATE property. We were told that 'this is state property, don't deface the desks'. Oh, we were TOLD that. [...] The way it was structured. The classroom, the way everything was laid out, the desks in a row, the table here, the steel cabinet there. That wasn't a space that I had any control over.

The schools administered by the government's House of Delegates (i.e. Indian) education department complied with apartheid-era prescriptions of a segregated state education system. The complicity, revealed in Laila's account, of inspectors and teachers being submissive to the apartheid project and teaching subservience to government authority appears to continue and current spatial practices suggest the

teacher's professional disengagement from activity-based learning. The stress is on discipline and austerity in this classroom.

The Intermediate Phase classroom of Khayalihle Primary (Image 71) is similarly austere. The minimal differences are that the Khayalihle Primary classroom has a standard-issue stationery cupboard, and learners' desks are inexpensive models with no storage space.

The congested classrooms at Maximus Primary and Khayalihle Primary suggest overcrowding through high learner-teacher and learner-classroom ratios that characterised most classrooms except those at schools for white learners during the apartheid era. Overcrowding, coupled with the apparent stress on discipline observed in these classrooms, may account for the different spatial relations at the three Intermediate Phase classrooms. The learners in the Heather Primary classroom were observed freely walking about the classroom and interacting with each other and with the seated teacher, whereas at Maximus Primary and Khayalihle Primary, the learners were mostly restricted in their movement and confined to their seats.

To sum up, library and classroom space, which are places central to the schooling pedagogic mission, continued to be infused with apartheid disparities in the relative advantage and disadvantage manifested in former white and township schools respectively. Khayalihle Primary and Centenary High brought the inequality into sharp focus with the complete absence of a library at the township primary school while the former white secondary school had a surplus of learning resources and equipment arranged in a multifaceted precinct. Similar extremes were seen in Foundation Phase classrooms, in which purpose-built classrooms for young learners at Heather Primary, the former white school, included ablution sinks, adjoining toilets and a storeroom. In contrast Khayalihle Primary's Foundation classroom was sparsely and inappropriately furnished for the young learner. Inequalities in Intermediate Phase classrooms were not as acute as in Foundation Phase classrooms. The different spatial practices, however, pointed to different professional engagements between teachers and their classroom discipline regimes. These unequal learning and teaching conditions suggested that the past disparate investment in per capita funding of learners and teacher education could be traced visibly in classroom spatial practices.

6.3. INEQUALITIES IN TECHNOLOGIES FOR KNOWLEDGE AND COMFORT

At the five schools in the study, there were marked differences in how electricity and water were utilised and consumed, and these linked to spatial practices of apartheid. Basic utilities such as electricity and water are among the equity indicators for school spatial conditions in South Africa (Bot, Dove and Wilson, 2000:5-6). Technologies are used to various extents by education authorities, principals and governing bodies, to harness these utilities at schools so that teachers and learners can perform better, either by enabling greater access to knowledge production processes, or by improving the comfort of working conditions.

i. Electricity

Although in South African schools many rural disadvantaged schools do not have electricity, in urban areas schools are rarely without power because towns and cities are connected to the national electricity grid. Electricity can be used for lighting and heating classrooms, operating teaching and learning equipment such as overhead projectors, and for administrative and communication purposes. Increasingly, accessing the curriculum and building learners' knowledge base requires Internet connectivity and the use of data projection and processing technologies that are powered by electricity before, during and after lessons as well as in the library. Electricity is also used for preparing refreshments and meals at break time and special events. How energy was used at the schools revealed substantial inequalities that mirrored the polarities of racial privilege and disadvantage noted above. An inventory of energy-based technologies taken at all schools is presented in Appendix 7.

The inventory shows that Heather Primary and Centenary High, former white schools, had greater diversity of technologies than Maximus Primary and Highway Secondary as former Indian schools, Khayalihle Primary as a school for black learners, and Simunye Secondary, the new school. Clearly, the consumption of energy at these schools was not equal. The energy-based objects that were only found in the former white schools were an elevator, refrigerators, microwaves, computer projection, TV and VCR, laboratory extractor fans, stage spot-lighting, classroom intercoms, and automated gates.

Not only did the greater and more technologically-advanced range of commodities indicate higher energy consumption at these schools, it showed greater diversity and complexity in teaching and learning practices as well as higher expectations of comfort

levels in the workplace. By contrast, the former Indian and township schools had fewer sorts of teaching and learning electricity-dependent technologies and, similarly, workplace conditions were improved only minimally.

The acquisition of expensive commodities and greater consumption of energy at the two former white schools related directly to the school's finances and capacity to meet running, repair and replacement costs, from income derived through learner fees, fund-raising and investments made with donations from middle class parents and surplus from state funding over many years. The former Indian schools were more favourably positioned than Khayalihle Primary whose modest electricity-based technologies reflected a history of minimal state funding and the limited resources of poor working class township families that constrained learner fee levels and potential fund-raising ventures. There the technologies of photocopiers and computers were all in the administrative wing of the school. At the former Indian schools, there were traces of investments once made in advanced technologies. A television aerial stood sentinel on the roof above Maximus Primary's library, but the television was nowhere to be seen. Similarly, workshops at Highway Secondary were filled with equipment for artisan training, although the technologies were obsolete and standing idle.

ii. Water

Access to water has been recognised as another differentiator in apartheid-era school practice (Human Sciences Research Council, Education Foundation and Research Institute for Education Planning, 1997). Water is important at school for sanitation and refreshment. Science, art and the home economics curricula as well as certain sports all require water. While in 1997, the majority of South Africa's schools had either indoor taps (26%) or on site taps (38%), almost one quarter were not within walking distance of water (24%), and the remainder only had access to a communal tap (8%), or some 'other' source of supply (4%) (Bot, Dove and Wilson, 2000:56).

All the schools in this study fell in the first category of having an indoor water supply. Notwithstanding this initial appearance of equality, the range of water usage at the schools (in kitchens, toilets and yard taps, drinking fountains, swimming pools and washing machines) and the number of water points (see Appendix 7) showed that the former white schools, Heather Primary and Centenary High, and the former Indian schools, Maximus Primary and Highway Secondary, were greater water consumers than Khayalihle Primary.

Kitchen, toilet and yard taps, flush toilets, a washing machine, swimming pool, fire extinguishers, grounds hose sprinklers, a garden pond, and fish tank were observed at Heather Primary. Most of these water applications were also present at Centenary High and Highway Secondary. While at the former white and Indian schools water usage went beyond basic ablutions and beverages, at Heather Primary water was used aesthetically in a garden pond near the entrance to the assembly hall, and in a fish tank in the school reception.

Image 72: 01L301: Heather Primary: Water feature and garden under construction



Image 73: 01K10d Heather Primary: Water feature and garden completed



The ornamental water feature attempted to soften the hard edge of bricks and mortar, as well as promote an ethos of contemplative serenity and environmental sensitivity.

Similarly, at Centenary High a drinking fountain was an aesthetic feature of the refurbished courtyard between the assembly hall and new science wing.

Image 74: 03K02b: Centenary High: Mosaic drinking fountain



The embellished mosaic drinking fountain was simultaneously functional, monumental, and recreational, inviting learners to linger on banquettes. Such refurbishments as Centenary's drinking fountain and Heather's pond were not state-funded but, according to Centenary's administrator, they were projects funded through school fees and other community sources.²³

By contrast, water applications at Khayalihle Primary were limited to essential functions of ablutions and refreshment, and remained as provided since the school was opened in 1984 within the norms and standards that DET would have set for its schools.²⁴ Even Khayalihle's toilet septic tanks were a less sophisticated technology than the city sewer system to which the former white and Indian schools were connected. Apart from hand basins in toilets, Khayalihle's wash facility was limited to one heavy-duty outdoor tub which learners supplemented by washing lesson equipment at garden taps.

²³ Pers. Comm. Administrator, Centenary High, 22 June 2000.

²⁴ Pers. Comm. Patrick Culligan, Deputy Chief Architect, KwaZulu-Natal Dept of Works, 14 November 2002.

Image 75: 05K02b: Khayalihle Primary: Wash tubs outside administration block



Image 76: 05K02a: Khayalihle Primary: Washing at tap outside toilet block



The spatial organisation of ablution taps and the differentiated treatment of ablution at the schools in terms of the placement and quality of wash facilities in the architecture of the built environment and maintenance by school managers, determined that learners were socialised daily into specific ablution practices that were different across race and class divisions. Wash facilities for play and equipment at the township school were provided in the playground only. By contrast, the other schools had kitchens hidden within the main building and even, in the case of Heather Primary, within the Foundation Phase classroom. This differentiated design mirrored the apartheid practice in which township houses followed the notorious 51/ design series, which were without internal taps and toilets (Minkley, 1998:209, 211, 215). At the time

of the study, over 50% of households in KwaZulu-Natal were still without piped water (Bot, Dove and Wilson, 2000:25) and the continuity of such conditions between home and school was confirmed in the yard washing that one learner photographed near his home.

Image 77: 05L314: Washing in the informal settlement, observed by a Khayalihle Primary learner



In contrast, the other schools continue the socialisation of ablutions enclosed within buildings, associated with the 'reining in of body' and hiding away of natural body functions that has characterised European socialisation over the last few centuries (Nespor, 1997:127).

In the toilets, there were similar differences. In Khayalihle Primary and Maximus Primary, the toilet facilities were in various states of degradation through neglect and a lack of adult surveillance. The toilets at these two schools were a learner-controlled space where games and other behaviours unacceptable to adults took place. Doors and mirrors were broken or missing, with floors wet and smelling from urine and leaky pipes. At Maximus Primary, walls were covered in graffiti and dried tissue wads clung to ceilings as evidence of past competitive mischief. Girls at Highway Secondary smoked in the privacy of their toilets (boys were photographed smoking behind a distant shed in the grounds), and boys had invaded one of the girls' cloakrooms.

L1: ... I had seen it before but not for a while. Recently now I found out that one girls toilet the boys have completely taken over it. It may have 'Girls' written over it but you'll only find boys using it. It's- it's strange. Boys smoke there probably, and take drugs.

Image 78: 04L106: Highway Secondary: Girls' cloakroom



By contrast, the toilets at Heather Primary and Centenary High were in good condition, clean, provided with hand towels and with minimal if any graffiti. At Centenary High, a courtesy sign even alerted girls to avoid one hand basin in need of repair. These conditions in a non-pedagogic and private space for learners signalled adult surveillance and supervisory regimes that ensured hygienic practices and discouraged transgression. As Nespor has pointed out, it is through such practices that learners understand that the 'civilized body is a schooled body ... class specific, a bourgeois or middle-class body supposedly free from the sweat, smells, bodily urges, and needs of poor people or the working classes' (Nespor, 1997:131). Thus, through wash facilities and toilets, learners were absorbing an implicit class-encoded pedagogy.

The comparison of evidence from the five schools showed that although all schools had an adequate water supply, the apartheid hierarchy of privilege and disadvantage continued to reflect and characterise the spatial practices relating to water at these schools. Khayalihle Primary had fewer water access points and was only equipped with basic facilities for ablution and drinking, while Maximus Primary, Highway Secondary, Heather Primary and Centenary High had numerous access points and used water in multiple ways that included non-essential recreational, sport and aesthetic functions. The effect was that teachers and learners at former Indian and white schools enjoyed more comfortable and pleasing workplace conditions and were greater water consumers than their counterparts at the township school.

To sum up, different energy- and water-based technologies were unevenly spread across the ensemble of schools. The concentration of technologies in the former white schools that offer improved access to knowledge and make time spent at school more convivial, make these schools more desirable places to be in than the former Indian and township schools, which are less well equipped. This situation is a continuance of the racialised system of inequality that, as Nkomo (1990a:2) outlines, aimed to forge a sense of superiority among white learners and inferiority and under-development among black learners. Although the technologies constitute one striation in the trace of systemic inequality embedded by the past in the present, their use is no longer prescribed to racialised categories of learners. Instead, the privileged learner-users, who can pay the fees that cover the capital and recurring costs associated with these technologies, are categorised mainly by social class.

6.4. RACIALISED HIERARCHY IN WORK

During the apartheid era, those whose racialised categories were low in the apartheid hierarchy were employed to carry out menial jobs at schools, such as grounds maintenance and cleaning. The main workplaces for those in menial jobs were marginal places such as corridors, grounds and parking areas, as well as in ablution areas such as toilets and kitchens. The sanctity of classrooms as curricular space, and places of professional authority and decision-making such as the principal's office, staff room and reception, could only be entered on certain terms such as the routine cleaning before and after school.

Images of managerial and professional space (classrooms and reception areas) and marginal and ablution space (corridors, grounds and kitchens) signal aspects of apartheid discourse that relate to manual and menial work.

Image 79: 01K18b-X: Heather Primary: Staff room at lunch break



Image 80: 02K15e-X: Maximus Primary: Reception foyer with teacher signing in at the start of the day



Image 81: 05L226-X: Khayalihle Primary: Teacher in Intermediate Phase classroom



Image 82: 03K09b-X: Centenary High: Administration office and secretary



Image 83: 04K04b-X: Highway Secondary: Principal and deputy (on left) in principal's office



The nature of professional, managerial and clerical work, at the top end of the work hierarchy, is clean and light compared with cleaning and gardening, which require protective clothing. The status was signalled in the clothes of these professional, managerial and clerical staff members, with most men dressed in light-coloured shirts and ties. Their tools and accoutrements included books, papers, pens, and furniture and equipment such as desks, bookshelves, computers and filing cabinets. In staff rooms and principals' offices, comfortable chairs, coffee tables, wall pictures and curtains created an ambiance for their social relaxation, and intellectual reflection and discussion.

Although changes had occurred in learner enrolments at former white and Indian schools so that these schools were no longer racially homogenous, the race of those people filling managerial, professional and clerical posts were largely unchanged since 1994. Thus, at Heather Primary and Centenary High, the principal and educators were predominantly white, at Maximus Primary and Highway Secondary, they remained entirely Indian, and at Khayalihle Primary, the principal and educators were all black.

At the bottom end of the work hierarchy were general assistant and maintenance staff. At all the schools the maintenance staff were black. In some cases, the protective uniforms suggested that the workers were employees of companies contracted to schools.

Image 84: 01K02b-X: Heather Primary: Cleaners in kitchen



Image 85: 01L424: Heather Primary: General Assistant at road crossing



Image 86: 02L412-X: Maximus Primary: Gardener



Image 87: 03K17a-X: Centenary High: Cleaner in corridor



Image 88: 03K18c: Centenary High: General Assistant in staffroom



The three general assistants at Khayalihle Primary were all male. This was the only school at which management had delegated regular corridor and classroom cleaning to the young female learners. Though learners performing such duties are a common sight at rural schools, which usually have no general assistants whatever, the absence of female general assistants at Khayalihle Primary might have influenced the spatial practice that deployed girls into the cleaning role.

In all schools, the maintenance staff were observed in places subordinate to the pedagogic enterprise of the school in that their tasks related to body functions and maintaining, through manual labour, the school's physical condition as a safe place for learners and pleasant for public view. Maintenance staff were confined primarily to the kitchens, corridors, gardens, yards and in the streets. They were further distinguished from professional staff by their distinctive work uniforms and overalls. In Centenary High, a girls' school, there was an inversion of gender conventions whereby black men, in the service of predominantly white women, undertook the traditionally female tasks of preparing refreshments and cleaning.

In the work strata of all schools, where professional and managerial posts were at the top and cleaning and maintenance jobs were at the bottom, a racialised hierarchy was observed that consistently had black workers performing the most menial jobs. This systemic labour pattern of the black racialised category filling the most inferior jobs at schools is an embedded continuance of the racialised hierarchy in apartheid discourse.

Every day learners observe this entrenched racialised labour pattern in their school landscape. The regularity and consistency of the persistent practice has the potential to encourage learners in the present era to assimilate the racialisation of these menial jobs as a natural order for work at school, perhaps yielding future education professionals who would perpetuate this aspect of apartheid discourse at schools.

6.5. IMPLICATIONS FOR POST-APARTHEID SCHOOLING

The seepage of apartheid discourse through the racially differentiated education system stained each school in this study in different ways, and areas within each school to different extents. None of the schools could be singled out as exemplifying simultaneously the range of apartheid education aims such as inferiority and superiority in black and white learners respectively, and black intellectual under-development and white maximal development. The stark inequalities in libraries, which function as valuable storehouses and showcases for learning materials and equipment, fall within the global realm, and the accumulated inequalities where learners engage with their teachers as a discrete group within the seclusion of classrooms are in the private realm.

Table 9: Apartheid inequalities and racialised hierarchy mapped onto Lefebvre's scheme of realms

	City context	School space
Global		Library
Intermediate		Corridors School grounds
Private		Classroom

Inequalities in technologies for knowledge and comfort and racialised hierarchy of work show up a limitation in Lefebvre's scheme of realms. As crosscutting categories, the technological inequalities and racialised work hierarchy affect all realms. Technologies for knowledge operate in the global realm of the library storeroom where equipment is kept safe and with an Internet computer terminal, in the intermediate realm of the sports fields where the skill of swimming is learned, and in the private realm of the classroom where a data projector might be used in a lesson. Technologies for

comfort can be found in the global realm of the school hall and its public address system, in lights on a school path in the intermediate realm, and in an extractor fan in the private realm of a laboratory classroom. Likewise, the category of work hierarchies involves every realm of the school when it is cleaned and maintained.

The starkest inequalities, and most vulnerable places for embedded apartheid discourse, manifest in non-pedagogic space such as toilets, tuckshops, kitchens, libraries, play and sports facilities. Improvements in such space fall squarely on the shoulders of parents through the governing body. The extent of improvements that governing bodies can undertake is largely determined by the economic capacity of parents to pay school fees and fund-raise. A result of this limitation is that enormous disparities remain in school space and become entrenched.

A technician response to the *School Register of Needs Surveys* (Human Sciences Research Council, Education Foundation and Research Institute for Education Planning, 1997; Department of Education, c2001) that might see government installing water, electricity, and telephone connections, and building libraries and so on, would be inadequate. As was evident in the township school of Khayalihle Primary, the provision of basic utilities and basic classroom shells and furniture did not necessarily ensure a school environment that supported quality teaching and learning. Spatial inequalities were related to the parent community's wealth and capacity to pay fees. To procure sophisticated technologies and install specialised facilities that are in excess of government norms, school governing bodies would need to mobilise the necessary funds. For that to be feasible, South Africans would have to have greater income parity.

Although responsibility for perpetuating apartheid must be shared by those who benefit from it, social actors at each institution in the present era were not directly implicated in the design of *systemic* spatial discrimination. That responsibility must reside with those operating above institutional level, within district offices, provincial planning and national policy levels. In post-apartheid South Africa, it is they who are in positions to redress such discrimination.

Residual apartheid also fosters an enculturation of difference whereby some learners become accomplished in using particular objects of privilege (computers, libraries, swimming pools) and practising the routines of privilege with familiarity (using a range of learning materials, indoor assemblies and large events).

Simultaneously, learners at under-resourced schools become accustomed to the poor or

inadequate material conditions at their schools. Becoming adept in diverse technologies and practices in the school environment or incapacitated by the lack thereof, has implications for learners' further education and training options and personal career choices as well the pace for changing the racial profile in the workplace. For example, although Highway Secondary had numerous workshops for training artisans, the obsolete equipment undermined those learners' future prospects, while at Centenary High the advanced technology available in lecture theatres and laboratories provides an effective springboard for girls competing for enrolment in university science faculties.

6.6. CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I have presented evidence that the past apartheid discourse is traceable in contemporary school spatiality. The implication of comparisons across different types of schools is that ameliorative strategies need to be systemic and should not be the sole responsibility of school level decision-makers such as governing bodies. Apartheid discourse was residual in mostly non-pedagogic places and practices and this had potential to perpetuate race-class identifications of schools as well as workplace stereotypes and also influence learners' career prospects. Implications are that redress should not be limited to a mechanical material improvement of the school environment such as adding new classrooms and glazing broken windowpanes. Instead, school managers need to examine spatial practices and courageously interrogate the underlying logic and intention.

In the next chapter, I examine the photographs of school space for evidence of an emerging post-apartheid discursive practice.

CHAPTER 7: THE FUTURE IN THE PRESENT: NEW PRACTICES



7.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter explores the emergence of new spatial practices in the post-apartheid era and how these are changing social relations at public schools. I look at this in a preliminary way in papers presented at the *Education and Decentralisation: African Experiences and Comparative Analyses* international conference in 2002 and the *International Visual Sociology Association* annual conference in 2003.²⁵ The paper presented at the *Education and Decentralisation* conference is abridged for *Indicator South Africa* (Karlsson, 2002b) and included in full in a forthcoming post-conference English-French publication. The new spatial practices are interpreted as manifestations of post-apartheid political discourse in the school space. My springboard was Lefebvre's proposition that:

²⁵ The *Education and Decentralisation* conference held on 11-14 June 2002 in Johannesburg, South Africa, was funded and organised by several South African and French governmental and non-governmental organisations and research and development agencies. The *International Visual Sociology Association* conference was held on 8-10 July 2003 at the University of Southampton, United Kingdom.

A revolution that does not produce a new space has not realised its full potential; ... A social transformation, to be truly revolutionary in character, must manifest a creative capacity in its effects on daily life, on language and on space...new social relationships call for a new space (Lefebvre, 1991:54).

In dispensing with the apartheid regime, South African schooling is subject to a new political dispensation of non-racialism and democracy. The new social relations and attendant spatial practices constituted by the politics in the post-apartheid era 'call for a new space' (Lefebvre, 1991:54). My criteria for isolating and distinguishing the practice as post-apartheid discourse were that:

- i. The practice would not have been present and experienced during the apartheid era.
- ii. The practice had a logical coherence in that it was responding with strategic intent to a perceived apartheid-era problem, had a policy base and was being adopted systemically.
- iii. The new practice was becoming commonplace and a norm in schools, which had potential to be sufficiently persuasive that it would be implemented at schools with unquestioned conviction.

These criteria drew on Lefebvre's ideas that the dynamic of social relations played out in spatial practices strive to establish a logical coherence, cohesiveness, equilibrium and regulation (1991:293). From this perspective, the continual reconfiguration of space constitutes an endeavour to produce stability, continuity and order, a meaningful flow in spatial use, and to avoid inconsistency. Laclau and Mouffe's inflection of antagonistic articulating practices as a confrontation striving for discursive stability and regularity (Laclau and Mouffe, 2001:135-6) was useful and complemented what was gleaned from Lefebvre in the formulation of these criteria. Thus, I also looked for the irregularity of disruptive practices that disturbed and threatened discursive stability, coherence, regularity and continuity.

Significant new patterns of school spatiality have emerged and these new spatialities were taken to represent the embryonic post-apartheid discourse within schools. Some of the new practices proceeded along a progressive redistributive discursive trajectory that specifically reacts against apartheid's segregationist and exclusive white supremacy to prioritise shared interests. Other practices point towards a neo-liberal trajectory in which public space has characteristics of private-ness found at

home and in privately owned corporate space, that serve narrow class interests. Disruptive practices were also found to undermine both the shared interest and the narrow interest discursive practices. The co-existence of these differing trajectories has led me to propose that in school space a post-apartheid political discourse is still a work-in-progress.

7.2. INSIDERS AND OUTSIDERS

The first area of the school site that is encountered during a visit is the entrance. This is the zone of transition from being outside to being inside. This is the boundary which differentiates insiders from outsiders, and where they are kept apart. Within Lefebvre's framework of spatial realms (1991:155), entrances fall within the intermediate category, serving an arterial and transitional function in the movement between places such as the street and school. The school fence and gate mark the boundary that divides street and school territory. When strategically defined and configured, boundary is an area that can be used to control or restrain members of the school, especially learners, as well as to exclude members of the public, such as trespassers, and to prevent unwanted interference (Sack, 1986:19-21).

Across all schools this zone has shown the most dramatic change since the apartheid era in terms of Lefebvre's physical, abstract and experienced moments of space. The consistency of these spatial changes and their pervasive effect on educators, learners and school visitors alike, point to its significance within the emerging post-apartheid discourse and hence is examined closely here.

At all the schools studied, the boundary between school and street was sharply defined and controlled. In all the pre-1994 schools, modifications to the school entrance were made between 1994 and 2000, a period between the official end of apartheid and the end of fieldwork, and at all schools, monitoring strategies were in place.

At Heather Primary, automated steel vehicle and pedestrian gates with intercom connection to the reception office were installed during the period of data gathering, 1999-2000. There was no security guard, but displayed notices about a commercial rapid-response security firm were displayed near the gate to deter any malcontents.

Image 89: 01K12a: Heather Primary: Main vehicle and pedestrian entrance



The original street entrance to the administration wing had been blocked off with high fences ensuring that all visitors were redirected to the entrance monitored by an intercom link to the receptionist.

Image 90: 01K13b: Heather Primary: Original entrance from the street to reception



During the period of fieldwork at Maximus Primary, the hedge and garden gates that Laila remembered from her years as a learner, were replaced with steel gates and high concrete fencing topped with barbed wire. The principal reported that monies from special fundraising events were insufficient for more elaborate security arrangements (such as those at Heather Primary).²⁶ However, the vehicle gate was designed for later

²⁶ Pers. Comm. Principal, 1999.

modification when there might be sufficient funds for automation. In the meantime, a uniformed guard operated the gate and he recorded visitors' particulars in a logbook.

Image 91: 02K12b: Maximus Primary: Main vehicle and pedestrian entrance



Although Bheki, the teacher from Khayalihle Primary, recalled that the wire fencing and gate were unchanged from when he attended the school as a learner, he asserted that the practice of keeping gates locked was more recent. An elderly man in dustcoat and with a *knobkerrie*²⁷ was observed operating both pedestrian and vehicle gates.

Image 92: 05K12a & b: Khayalihle Primary: Main entrances



During school hours, he controlled entry and exit, with a principal's permission note being required from learners leaving the premises.

²⁷ A traditional wooden club carried by Zulu men.

Image 93: 05K13a: Khayalihle Primary: Two boys leave the premises at break time after handing permission note to guard



At Centenary High and Highway Secondary, security also featured as the primary reason for changes in boundaries. At Highway Secondary, visitors passed through two checkpoints. Concrete fencing topped with razor wire and a manually operated steel gate marked the outer enclosure that was shared with a primary school. Although this gate was installed prior to the fieldwork period, it was similar in style to that at Maximus Primary, suggesting that the gate at Highway Secondary had been installed during the post-apartheid era. On most visits to the school, a uniformed guard with dog was in attendance to operate this manual gate.

Image 94: 04K12a: Highway Secondary: Outer gate with security guard and dog



When the guard was absent, the gate was left open, with access monitored by a general assistant at the second checkpoint.

Image 95: 04K22a: Highway Secondary: Opened inner gates to premises



Perimeter security at Centenary High was tightened in the period immediately prior to the commencement of fieldwork in 1999. The main entrance stone buttresses had been rebuilt for added height and to accommodate an automated galvanised steel vehicle and pedestrian gate. The hedges along the main street façade had been replaced with stone pillars, stylistically similar to the buttresses, and an iron palisade fence. Further, an intercom and remote camera at the entrance connected to the reception office enabled the receptionist to monitor those requesting access to the school site. Concrete palisade fencing secured the secondary street boundaries. Access was only possible via the main entrance during school hours.

Image 96: 03K13c: Centenary High: Looking out at the main vehicle entrance



A special entrance and bridge for learners had been built near the main visitors' entrance, providing direct access from a classroom corridor onto the street at the start and end of the school day.

Image 97: 03K12b-X: Centenary High: Special entrance and bridge for learners only



Image 98: 03K13b: Centenary High: Learners' entrance looking out to the street



At other times, the street and corridor sides of this entrance were heavily barred, giving the corridor an imprisoned outlook. Congestion and the logistics of security keys deterred one learner from using this exit at the end of the day:

It gets quite crowded trying to get through there. Ja. Sometimes the keys don't arrive in time, you wait when you get there. And then the buses are there so most people go [through the main vehicle gate].

Image 99: 03L120: Centenary High: Learners exiting via the corridor entrance



Even teachers found the logistics of Centenary High's security arrangements difficult to negotiate. Angela described the lengthy process for her to exit school property during school hours as having nightmarish proportions:

For me to leave this school is actually a nightmare. I have to go to the front reception office. I have to get a key. I have to walk down to where I've parked on the other side. Open it up, drive out, come to the front entrance, return the key, sign it back in and then go for security reasons. So that those keys are also not just left lying around.

Close examination of the security measures introduced by the apartheid-era schools between 1994 and 2000 pointed to a continuum that included a range of low to increasingly complex technologies for gates, monitoring systems and weaponry. Gates were manual, manual with automation potential, or automated. Monitoring mechanisms included guards, intercoms and remote cameras. Within the guards category, there was differentiation between an elderly man in overcoat who functioned primarily as a gatekeeper, and a trained, uniformed guard from a contracted security firm. The weaponry range included the low technology of a *knobkerrie*, a trained guard-dog, and the abstract representation of firearms through notices warning of an armed rapid-response security firm. In some cases, areas within these schools, such as the staff room, administration offices and prefects' den, were subjected to similar barrier treatment as site entrances.

The treatment of the boundary at Simunye Secondary differed somewhat from the other schools by virtue of its construction within a community centre and topography of the narrow hilltop site. Although security considerations were as important at Simunye Secondary as at other schools, visitors to Simunye first had to access the community centre premises. These were enclosed with concrete palisade fencing and, although the gate was open to all during the day, a guard monitored the entrance.

Image 100: 06L319: Simunye Secondary: Main entrance to community centre



Within the precinct of the Multi-purpose Centre, which was entirely open during the day, the premises of Simunye Secondary were cordoned off by palisade fencing and gates that were only opened at the start and end of the school day and at break times.²⁸

Image 101: 06L321: Simunye Secondary: Main entrance to school



A comparison of each school's security technologies and arrangements reveals a hierarchy, which had former white schools at the top and former township schools at the bottom (see Table 10).

²⁸ Simunye's soccer field and tennis court were separately fenced in the valley below the community centre.

Table 10: Comparative summary of school boundary arrangements

	School	Perimeter enclosure	Main entrance gate	Monitoring mechanism	Weaponry
Former white schools	Heather Primary	Wire fence topped with razor wire in places	Automated steel gate	Intercom	Contracted armed rapid response security firm
	Centenary High	Steel & concrete palisade fencing	Automated steel gate	Intercom & closed circuit camera	Contracted armed rapid response security firm
Former Indian schools	Maximus Primary	Concrete wall topped with barbed wire	Manual steel gate	Uniformed guard	[Not observed]
	Highway Secondary	Concrete wall and palisade topped with razor wire	Manual steel gate	Uniformed guard	Dog on leash
Township school of black learners	Khayalihle Primary	Wire fence topped with barbed wire	Manual wire gate	Elderly man in dustcoat	<i>Knobkerrie</i>
Post-apartheid era school	Simunye	Steel & concrete palisade wall	Manual steel gate	Not observed	Not observed

Advanced technologies (automatic gates, intercoms and closed circuit camera) noted in the former whites-only schools are not standard government issue and would have been bought and installed out of governing body funds such as fees paid by

learners regardless of their race. In the post-apartheid era, hierarchy has shifted from being race-based to being driven by economics.²⁹

Angela gave an account of new governance roles for parents and fee levels that they set in terms of the *South African Schools Act*, which pointed to parents as the critical factor providing the conditions for the continued racial pattern.

But now that we [parents] are paying – not exorbitant fees – but we're paying fees which are specifically going for the upkeep, it has enabled the school as an entity on it's own to become resourceful. [In the past parents] played a big role in providing teas and helping with matric farewells but I think they've now taken on far more significant roles and that's obviously come with the governing body. They actually control the school whereas before they didn't. You know they really had no say. [Parents] like to think they had a say in terms of the running of the school, but they didn't really. That was departmental control. Whereas now I think they have a far more significant role to play.

In the context of these post-apartheid governance relations, I linked the kind of role played by technologies to monies schools gained from fees. The modest and low technology measures evident at the township school of Khayalihle Primary, which was attended by working class learners, contrasted markedly with the complex technologies implemented at the suburban Heather Primary that served generally middle class learners. A similar contrast was evident at Highway Secondary, which served lower middle and working class learners, and Centenary High, which had set the highest school fees of the six schools.

What was observed in the garrisoned school spaces at Centenary High and Heather Primary, and to a lesser extent at Maximus Primary, Khayalihle Primary and Highway Secondary, resonates with Lefebvre's contention that although public space 'ought to be an opening outwards [... w]hat we see happening is just the opposite' (Lefebvre, 1991:147). It is ironic that publicly funded schools that serve the educational needs of the public should cordon off their premises, thereby excluding and alienating the public as though they are outsiders with bad intentions. This also contradicts the spirit of political change in South Africa since 1994, which strives to build social unity

²⁹ It is erroneous to assume that all learners enrolled at former white schools are middle class. Some black learners attending the former white schools commuted daily from their working class neighbourhoods, and township taxis were observed outside Heather Primary, as well as at Maximus Primary in a former Indian middle class neighbourhood. Working class parents of such learners usually made great financial sacrifices for their children to attend suburban schools charging high learner fees, or they applied for fee exemption.

and take down the racialised barriers erected by the apartheid regime and make schools centres of community life (Asmal, 1999:9-10).

Angela, the teacher from Centenary High, proposed that the reason for the strict control of entrances and the garrisoning of the perimeter was associated with security and political concerns:

[This is] one of the big ways in which school has changed from a security point of view there were no such things as- There were bomb drills and fire drills [in the past] but it was just a thing that might, might, but never, never will happen. I mean, whereas now it's become a reality of life. Security, the reality of security is far more [prevalent]. Most of your schools are very much encircled with fences. ... I think it's because of the political situation in our country. We've had to become more security conscious. People never used to go in and get visitors' [identification] things and you could literally walk onto the campus unknown before. It would be virtually impossible to do that [at Centenary High] now...

This explanation of security arrangements, which were apparently erratic events in the past but that have become a quotidian, shows how elements such as fences and visitors' cards are articulated in a security discourse. For many people, these practices carry a logical coherence: their daily practice, linked to a resigned acceptance of it, gathers a momentum of regularity until it is constructed as normal and common sense.

Whereas the primary impulse for fortifying the school perimeter was linked to external threats from criminals and vandals, disciplining learners was another reason. The locking of gates soon after the first bell was observed being used as a disciplinary instrument against latecomers at some schools.

Image. 102: 04K13b: Highway Secondary: Latecomers locked out by general assistant (centre)



Image 103: 06K20g: Simunye Secondary: Assembly in progress with latecomers locked out



Although this practice was only directly observed at Highway and Simunye schools (as shown above), Angela confirmed that this practice prevailed at Centenary High as well:

JK When I came into the school this morning the gates were open. But every other time I've come they've been locked. At other schools that I've been to they're using the 'lock-out' principle for ensuring that learners come to school on time.

T3 Yes, we also use that [tactic] as well.

JK Did you ever experience that when you were a learner?

T3 No. Never. Never.

JK So there wasn't a problem of late arrivals?

T3 Uh-uh.

JK Is the lock-out used only for late arrivals?

T3 No, no. It's for late arrivals, yes, that's when the gate is closed. Initially it's for that. But really it's a security thing.

Once caught arriving late, warnings and various sanctions were meted out to learners, such as being excluded from joining the assembly where important announcements were often made, and, in the extreme case that was observed at Highway Secondary, being refused entry to the premises altogether and thereby missing all lessons that day. Variations of the lock-out practice were observed at Khayalihle Primary where a duty teacher blocked the path of latecomers, preventing them from joining the morning assembly.

Image 104: 05K201: Khayalihle Primary: Latecomers held aside with duty teacher during assembly



At Maximus Primary, one latecomer with a young sibling was observed arriving in the middle of the morning and being accompanied by the security guard to report at the secretary's office.

Image 105: 02K13a: Maximus Primary: Security guard accompanying latecomer with sibling to the secretary's office



The common spatial practice of locking gates to discipline latecomers may be school managers' skewed interpretation of the *Tirisano* priority for schools to become centres of community life by reclaiming disciplined teaching and learning. *Tirisano* promised regulations that would make school sites safe by 'restricting access only to those who have legitimate business in the school' (Asmal, 1999:10), and when these

were promulgated, they gave school principals search and confiscation responsibilities (Department of Education, 2001b:6-7).

The architecture of school buildings in South Africa is an added security burden for school managers and governing bodies. The South African climate and relative availability of land allow purpose-built school architecture to have a low, spreading profile with corridors open to the elements. Thus, the street usually represents the first security perimeter, with second, third and sometimes fourth security perimeters being within schools. In some schools, there are additional infrared movement detection beams in certain rooms, with the attendant services of contracted rapid-response security firms.

Image 106: 05K14: Khayalihle Primary: Security doors to reception



Image 107: 06K14b: Simunye Secondary: Entrance to administration wing



Image 108: 03K14c: Centenary High: Security at reception window and corridor to administration offices



Image 109: 04K15: Highway Secondary: Security at door to principal's office



The layered inner gates ensure that in the event of breached security, movement would be restricted to that section of the school. Although these gates and barriers remain constantly visible everyday as learners move about, their presence has been assimilated and accepted as the norm of their quotidian. Photographs of one learner's dwelling showed this to be her experience even in the private space of her home in an informal settlement for the urban poor.

Image 110: 06L408-X: Simunye Secondary: Learner's home showing security on door and windows



Variations in layered fortifications evident in the inter-textual reading of the six schools suggest that the state had not played a significant role in choosing and procuring the technologies for monitoring and controlling boundaries. Instead, the variations suggest that each school's managers and governing body determined the precise arrangements for their security strategy within the limits of their funds, and that the school governing body – not the state – had met the costs thereof. This conclusion is validated in national *Regulations for Safety Measures at Schools* that delegate principals to take any steps necessary to safeguard public school property and protect the people on the site (Department of Education, 2001b:5). In the *Circular* from the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education and Culture, school managers are informed that costs of securing the site perimeter cannot be met by the state (KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education and Culture, 2001:2). Section 20 of the *South African Schools Act* (Republic of South Africa, 1996b:16) requires governing bodies to administer and control school property, and the *Regulations* (Department of Education, 2001b:6-7) empower principals to control entry to the premises, remove unauthorised people as well as undertake searches and confiscation. Obligatory signs are to be displayed at entrances indicating that those entering school property may be subjected to a search, and visiting procedures are stipulated for parents, members of the public, political office bearers, public representatives and the media. The right to visit public schools in terms of public accountability are eroded by this policy – and this is acknowledged (Department of Education, 2001b:7). Although the *Regulations* tip state-civil society power relations in favour of government (via the principal) rather than the governing body (Karlsson,

2002b:77), they represent a closure of public space that was unknown to apartheid-era public schools.

The frequency and extent of the security gates and barriers observed within schools such as those sampled here, point partly to the enforcement of these regulations and partly to the social climate of widespread criminality that threatened school communities and premises, suggesting a defensive panic among those responsible for the safety of school inhabitants and resources. Although the main threat at United States inner city schools with high security has been an internal threat of armed, violent and socially dislocated learners (Devine, 1996), in the South African schools studied, the threat was perceived to be primarily external. Angela, in an extract quoted above, attributed these threats to political changes, while Mike referred to the urban poor seeking access to resources such as shelter and water. Perceptions of external threat are read off the security notices on outer perimeters and walls warning would-be trespassers of armed reaction.

Image 111: 03K12e: Centenary High: Signs on the fence along the site perimeter



Who are the perceived threats to schools? Bheki's rationale for a secure perimeter at Khayalihle Primary revealed that the distinction between inside and outside threat is not straightforward:

Bheki *You must make it a point that the school is safe for the teachers as well as for the kids. It must be wired. Not only with any wire. The razor wire.*

JK *I want to know who do you need to keep the teachers and the*

learners safe from? [...]

Bheki It's a combination of the teachers, learners as well as the parents. By the parents I mean the community. The community must be taught about the school, that the school is for them. Gone are the days where schools were seen like the property of the government, you see. The schools are for the community. So it is the responsibility of the community to look after the school, you see. The community, I mean the parents, the parents. Because now we must be safe from the bad people like the thugs. The thugs they help the parents, you see[sic]. The parents must tell their kids that they mustn't go to school to do things that are not supposed to be done at schools like going and taking belongings of the teacher or the kids as well. It's like the school is not good for the person who's not supposed to be inside the school. It's like a sacred place. It's only go there to get knowledge, nothing else.

JK So the danger, you identify the danger as people who don't belong in the school, they have no business in the school?

Bheki They have no business.[...] Schools they become now, I don't know how I'm going to put it, the place where other business they take place, like drugs, you see. The adults they take the drugs to schools, you see. Inside the school you'll find there is a merchant. The child is running the business of selling drugs inside the school.

JK That has happened in this school?

Bheki Eh, yes, there is a case, recently.

JK What about theft and vandalism.

Bheki Theft and vandalism? Yes, there is theft and vandalism, you see.

JK So these would be reasons why the school takes such security measures?

Bheki Yes, yes.

Here, Bheki revealed that outsiders linked to insiders are leveraging such relationships for their own illicit purposes at Khayalihle Primary. Perimeter security would provide a weak defence in such situations. It emerged in a discussion with Angela that Centenary High was not immune to such damaging opportunistic relationships:

Angela So we've got to be very security conscious in terms of the parents' needs and demands [to protect their children]. And obviously from, uh, people coming in to plant bombs, that may be trying to make a political statement of some sort. Ja, so basically from the baddies, if you like. [...] Yes, yes, we have had vandalism ... It doesn't happen within very much during the school day. We've had 'Miss [Centenary], for example, a function last year, where they had visiting people, boyfriends, etc, come in and vandalise toilets and that type of thing for no apparent reason. They ripped toilet seats off the toilets and toilet paper was all over and they were running around the building and that type of thing. Ja.

JK You've mentioned members of the public and parents that have some relationship with a learner, you know, there's a link. But what about

absolute strangers?

Angela *Not that I can say has been a problem here.*

It was only after a probing question that Angela admitted that the unknown ‘other’ was rarely a threat. The facile construction that Bheki and Angela initially slipped into, of the outside threat as an external ‘other’, concealed the nuance that security problems are bound up in individuals’ inside-outside social relations.

My comments about boundaries and entrances so far have demonstrated four points. Firstly, the territories constituting the representational space of state schools are progressively being blockaded for self-protection against a perceived threat. Secondly, the specifications of the perimeter defences are determined locally and are indexed to the social class of parents. Thirdly, some of the self-protection mechanisms have been appropriated to buttress internal discipline regimes as seen in the lockouts. Fourthly, members of school communities misconstrue the perceived threat as an unknown ‘outsider’. This enables them to rationalise and justify security practices as self-evidentiary. However, the security practices conceal a socially divisive discourse at work, which produces state school space as an exclusive domain of only socially accepted groups as determined by that local school.

The security arrangements at schools produce a complex politics of inside and outside that has led to various mechanisms being instituted for unravelling the ambiguity of outsiders who could have legitimate or illegitimate intentions. For this, national regulations have devolved power locally, not to parents who fall into the legitimate outsider category, but to an officer of the state. Socially divisive race-class tensions between those with a wealth of resources and the urban poor without resources and who are mostly black, are masked by members of school communities in their constructions of the illegitimate outsider as a criminal.

7.3. BRANDING THE SCHOOL

Signs at entrances and on boundaries are meant as differentiating tokens to indicate ownership, identity and social function. Within Lefebvre’s framework, signs are a representational simulacrum for the encounter between the passer-by and the concrete objects and persons of the school (Lefebvre, 1991:41-2, 313). In Lefebvre’s theorising of space, school signage would fall into the category of representational space because signs are a designed abstraction of school identity. Through the inclusion

of concise information and icons and in the choice of typography, construction material and position relative to the targeted audience, the school communicates its identity succinctly and determines what it wants the viewer to understand about itself and how it differs from other schools.

The practice of signage at public school entrances in South Africa has become a convention to serve an informational purpose, announcing the school to passers-by. This was evident at Heather Primary, Centenary High and Highway Secondary. Khayalihle Primary displayed its signboard at the back of its premises where it was most visible to passing motorists. Maximus Primary and Simunye Secondary were exceptions to the convention. At Maximus Primary the new perimeter fence erected a few weeks prior to the start of data-gathering in 2000, obstructed the view from the street of its sign posted on the administration block (see image 116 below). The reason for no signage at Simunye Secondary was unclear but may have been because it did not have direct frontage to the street. The part of the Multi-purpose Centre at the street interface fell under local government and not provincial education authorities. The effect was a partial eclipsing of the school's identity with the Centre, even though their names differed.

Image 112: 01K12b-X: Heather Primary: Main entrance and signage



Image 113: 03K22i-X: Centenary High: Signage at main street interface



Image 114: 04K22b: Highway Secondary: Signage at approach to main entrance



The photographs reveal that increasingly the convention is serving an additional function: that of marketing commercial commodities. We see this at three of the schools that included corporate branded advertisements. Khayalihle Primary displayed the colours, name and slogan of a national low-budget furnishing company. The sponsor's interests might have been paramount in the sign's placement to the rear of the school rather than at the main entrance, the rear being most visible to passing traffic.

Image 115: 05K22c-X: Khayalihle Primary: Signage at back of school



Maximus Primary's sign on the administration block advertised a globally marketed soft drink.

Image 116: 02K22-X: Maximus Primary: Administration wing and signage



Centenary High's sign provided advertising space for the national public broadcaster's main English-language radio station (see image 113 above).

Not only is the effect a product endorsement, lending brand-associated legitimacy and status to a targeted consumer, it implicated local learners and parents as consumers of the products. A match appears between the school's perceived community and their aspirations, and the commodity. For example, the identity of Centenary High, with a history serving Durban's predominantly English-speaking middle class white

community, was associated with the national English-language radio station whose slogan 'for the well-informed' was an implied promise of the school similarly fulfilling the learners' ambitions to be among the 'well-informed'. In so doing, the school's education mission is eclipsed and concealed by branded values, and school identification becomes associated with particular narrow linguistic and cultural interests. The underlying and hidden message is that enrolled learners speaking English as an additional language will acquire the necessary linguistic competence, cultural capital and academic success for entry to an English-dominant social context and labour market.

The signboards at Centenary, Maximus and Khayalihle schools functioned as advertising billboards, promoting a product, supplier or service, in effect branding the school and positioning it within a market where learners and parents are identified as consumers. The corporations marketing the brands sponsor the signboards, and one government officer contended that this was a well-conceived source of income for public schools starved for funds, with mutual benefits for the school and corporate body.³⁰ The 'logo visibility [and] brand-extension opportunities' (Klein, 2000:96) are rarely challenged at public schools for the way commercialisation and corporate globalisation might undermine the public character of public schooling.

A new political relation is emerging in the involvement of corporations sponsoring signboards for public institutions of learning. Overtly, the intention of capital appears charitable. However, while a school communicates its identification, commercial interests harvest public attention and conceal their co-option of a state school in consumerism. In exchange, up to half of signboard surfaces are given over to brand visibility, so that school signboards become a contested space in which the school's identification vies for visibility against the marketing of a commercial commodity.

³⁰ Pers. Comm. Patrick Culligan, deputy chief architect, Dept of Works, KwaZulu-Natal, on 14 November 2002.

7.4. COLLABORATIVE LEARNING

The classroom, where structured teaching and learning occurs, is the most pedagogically significant discrete part of school space in relation to the mission of schooling, which is to educate learners. Using Lefebvre's scheme of realms, classrooms are a private realm within the school site, and they comprise sub-realms of micro global, intermediate and private zones such as the more personal private place of a single desk and chair, the global zone consisting of important focal areas such as chalkboards and activity corners, and where important resources are deposited and displayed such as teachers' desks and book shelves. A pattern was observed in the Foundation Phase classrooms, the phase where a new curriculum was first introduced in 1997, which differed from intermediate and senior phases.

Image 117: 01K07c: Heather Primary: Foundation Phase classroom view towards door



Teacher's desk

Image 118: 02K07a: Maximus Primary: Foundation Phase classroom view from door



Image 119: 05K07a: Khayalihle Primary: Foundation Phase classroom view from door



Teacher's desk

Without exception, the seating for all Foundation Phase classes was arranged for collaborative learning and group activities. Gone were the regimented rows of desks that would have been common in the past. Such rows continued to obtain in intermediate and senior phases. (See images 120-122 for Intermediate Phase classrooms.)

Researchers in the President's Education Initiative (Taylor and Vinjevold, 1999a) understood curriculum reform in post-apartheid South Africa as a progressive pedagogy that constructed collaborative and experiential learning as efficient and required learners to assist each other to develop consensual understandings and build on their shared knowledge, interests and values. This approach counters apartheid-era fundamental

pedagogics that have been characterised by individualism, competition and authority resident in the teacher and textbook (Christie, 1991). Thus, group work became associated as ‘a cornerstone of Curriculum 2005’ (Taylor and Vinjevoll, 1999a:268) and was interpreted among pre- and in-service teachers as the classroom technique that promotes learner-learner interaction and participation thereby contributing to improvements in learners’ understandings, knowledge and skills – though studies have found little or no evidence to substantiate this rationale (Taylor and Vinjevoll, 1999b:150-151). According to Linda Chisholm, chairperson of the Curriculum 2005 Review Committee, curriculum policies do not specify seating arrangements *per se*.³¹ Nevertheless, because of the focus in the new curriculum on collaborative learning in order to develop learners’ skills for working in teams, I have attributed the consistency in Foundation Phase classroom seating arrangements to the introduction of the outcomes-based curriculum policy within grades 1-3 (Department of Education, 1997).

Teachers’ desks in Foundation Phase classrooms were no longer the single significant focal point for learners. Rather, they worked collaboratively facing each other in groups. At Heather Primary, the teacher’s desk was placed to the side and near the door (see image 117), at Khayalihle Primary the desk was in the farthest corner from the door (see image 119), and although the teacher at Maximus Primary had positioned the desk near the front chalkboard (see image 68), with well-developed activity corners elsewhere in the room, the teacher’s desk no longer held the learners’ gaze entirely. This new spatial practice contrasted with panoptical teacher-centred practices and aisles separating regimented rows of desks still evident in intermediate and senior phases and further education (grades 10-12) classrooms at all the schools, with learners’ attention being centred on teachers and chalkboards (see images 120-5 below).

³¹ Pers. Comm. Prof Linda Chisholm, Chairperson of the Curriculum 2005 Review Committee, 9 May 2003.

Image 120: 05L410: Khayalihle Primary: Intermediate Phase classroom



Teacher's desk

Image 121: 01K08a: Heather Primary: Intermediate Phase classroom



Teacher's desk

Image 122: 02K08b: Maximus Primary: Intermediate Phase classroom view from door



Image 123: 04K08b Highway Secondary: Senior Phase classroom view from rear



Teacher's desk

Image 124: 03K06f: Centenary High: Further Education Phase science lecture room



Shelf for lecture notes

Image 125: 06K08b: Simunye Secondary: Senior and Further Education Phase classroom



Teacher's desk

Several reasons account for collaborative learning not being so prominent in Intermediate, Senior and Further Education and Training (FET) Phase classrooms. Firstly, at the time of data-gathering, the new curriculum had not been introduced officially in all grades and no outcomes-based curriculum was available for the Further Education Phase. Secondly, there were logistical reasons for not having collaborative learning seating arrangements, including room area, furniture size and class numbers, with many classes exceeding the learner-educator ratio (Department of Education, c2001). Educator quality and capacity is a third reason, especially in township and rural schools where many teachers were under-qualified and lacked professional skills (Taylor and Vinjevd, 1999a; Department of Education, 2002).

Consistency in the seating arrangements at all observed Foundation Phase classrooms signals a spatial practice that has changed from the apartheid-era fundamental pedagogy in which the teacher was the authority figure controlling and occupying the learners' gaze. Although I cannot corroborate this from data collected at schools in this study, several Foundation Phase teachers at other schools in KwaZulu-Natal that I have researched for other purposes, have informed me of this. A photograph of a classroom for younger learners at the ANC's Solomon Mahlangu Freedom College in Tanzania also reveals non-collaboratory seating arrangements (see Karlsson, 2002a:349). In addition, the over-crowded classroom conditions that characterised most schools in the past would have given impetus to regimented classroom arrangements being the norm. The effect of the new practice is a re-balancing of the power relations between teachers and learners in the Foundation Phase, so that learners, being a majority in the classroom, become central to classroom-based learning for a post-apartheid democracy.

7.5. CAPITAL PROJECTS

Since 1994, the two former white schools, Heather Primary and Centenary High, have made costly improvements to their premises. This would have required their school governing bodies to acquire capital because these schools would not have been prioritised for government's capital expenditure on public works and annual budgetary allocations from the state to these schools were minimal.³² The effect of the school's initiated improvements was to add quality to the school curricular programmes and environments, add to the prestige of the school and improve the status of the enrolled learners. Similar enhancements were not in evidence at the other four schools. Conditions at Highway Secondary and Simunye Secondary were in decline, while the environments at Maximus and Khayalihle Primary Schools were being maintained to a minimal standard of repair.

At Heather Primary, a computer room was opened in 1997, and a little garden and fountain was established at the hall entrance in 1999 (see images 6 and 7 above).

³² Post-apartheid school funding norms and standards for public schools have established a system of redistributive funding according to a formula that favours schools serving poor communities.

Image 126: 01K06a: Heather Primary: Computer room



The computer room holds a global status in Lefebvre's scheme of realms because it represents a precious investment and a scarce resource that must be shared in turn-taking among all classes of the school. The value is also indicated in the higher levels of protective security than required for regular classrooms. As an abstract gateway to information elsewhere in the world, the computer room might be classed as a conceptual intermediate realm. The computer room pointed to a curricular practice that would provide Heather Primary learners with a globally connected and competitive education. One classroom had been refurbished as a computer centre for use by all grades. The computer centre had been equipped with about 15 computers at which learners were observed engaged, each on his or her own, in the virtual space of the Internet and programmed learning. The individuated activity in this room contrasted with the group work promoted in Foundation Phase classrooms.

Heather Primary's rock garden and water feature is an intermediate realm by being at a busy juncture of classrooms, corridors and the prestigious space of the assembly hall. The garden acts as a foil to the unpleasant corner of austere brick walls and tarmac and provides a focal relief for reflection, conversation and rest on a nearby bench. As a conceived space, the garden and water feature are associated with similar spaces of relaxation and contemplation outside the school, in home gardens. The garden was not essential to the teaching and learning function of the school, but it fulfilled an aesthetic function, beautifying this corner of the school hall, and signalling that the governing body of Heather Primary were attentive to their duty to maintain and develop

the school premises as set out in section 20 of the *South African Schools Act* (Republic of South Africa, 1996b). In the post-apartheid legislative context of parents being able to enrol their children at schools of their choice and schools wanting to attract learners whose parents can afford the fee levels, such signals can be interpreted as part of a management and governance strategy to leave positive impressions on visiting parents of prospective learners.

At Centenary High, the tennis shelter was refurbished as a clubhouse in 1997.³³ It is a prestigious feature of the school grounds, which comprise the intermediate realm of school space. A tennis club run as a voluntary association leased the tennis courts over weekends. Income derived from club fees was banked in a school fund for the sole purpose of court and clubhouse refurbishment. According to the school administrator, Centenary High's governing body regarded these refurbishments as cosmetic and not educationally justifiable, therefore only R4,000 from school funds had been invested. Club funds were used for tiling and an awning in 1999, and in 2000 the school spent R2,000 to replace court poles and aluminium netting. The lease of these facilities to a community association enabled the school to mobilise non-school fund resources for maintaining Centenary's six tennis courts and clubhouse. Although sport facilities were costly to maintain, the administrator reported that the school governing body saw them as assets that added value to the schooling experience offered at Centenary.

The embellishment of this asset included terracotta floor tiles, a built-in bar, two decorative wrought iron and wood benches and an attractive white plastic awning attached to a frame by green thongs and suspended between pillars. None of these were standard features of a government school, but were peculiar to Centenary High. Indeed, they are items more readily associated with middle class homes and private gardens. Such commercial products configured in relation to each other to create a place of leisure, are promoted at South African house and garden exhibitions such as the annual *Decorex* exhibition, now in its tenth year, which is held in KwaZulu-Natal, Western Cape and Gauteng (Decorex SA, 2003), in advertising brochures such as the *Adz Guide* (Mini Adz, 2003) and monthly lifestyle magazines such as *House and Leisure* that are distributed nationally through convenience stores and bookshops. These events and publications are targeted at private homeowners such as those who might own houses in the vicinity of Centenary High. As tropes of the middle class home and garden, the

³³ The school administrator provided details about the refurbishments on 22 June 2000.

tennis clubhouse is coherent with middle class identifications, and carries the ethos of privately owned space.

Image 127: 03K11j: Centenary High: Tennis clubhouse



In another corner of Centenary High school grounds, paved paths had been laid and grass planted beneath mature trees, turning this area of the grounds into a garden milieu for meandering walks and conversations. Learners used the enhanced garden area as a meeting place for friendship groups at lunch times (see image 129). The configuration of plantings, paths and benches enables the space to be associated with home gardens. Set aside as a place for learners' leisure when they are not in lessons, the development of this area of Centenary High is not central to the pedagogic mission of the school. Instead, the improvement of the area adds value to the school and contributes to the impression that the governing body and management are attentive to their responsibility to maintain and develop school premises. As I argued above in relation to the rock garden and water feature at Heather Primary, the value of the garden enhancement at Centenary High can be understood as a component in a plan to create a favourable impression with parents exploring the options for a secondary school at which to enrol their daughters.

Image 128: 03K10d: Centenary High: Gardens overlooking the hockey field



Image 129: 03L313-X: Centenary High: Friendship groups during lunch break



In May 1999, Centenary High opened the AM Wing (see image 133 below). This was a multi-storeyed block that included state-of-the-art science laboratories and lecture theatres with data projection facilities, career guidance lounge and counselling suites, and a multi-purpose room. The wing represented the school's greatest capital expenditure since the 1970s.

Image 130: 03K06i: Centenary High: Science laboratory in the AM Wing



Image 131: 03K06m: Centenary High: Career guidance lounge and counsellor's office in AM Wing



Image 132: 03K17p: Centenary High: Science exhibition in a permanent display-case island on an AM Wing corridor



Despite its prestigious features, the predominance of teaching space in this wing class it as a private realm of school space, with global, intermediate and private sub-realms. A courtyard adjacent to the AM Wing had been refurbished with a decorative drinking fountain, tiled paving and seating areas, and planted with palms (see also image 74 above).

Image 133: 031419-X: Centenary High: AM Wing and refurbished courtyard with drinking fountain



At a time when educational policies placed no limit on school feeder areas and parental choice, such assets as the sport, counselling, science and computer facilities and the ambiance of contemplative and leisurely gardens and courtyards denote a school market in which schools like Heather Primary and Centenary High schools aspire to

attract learners of parents who can afford the fee levels at these schools. The improved material conditions of Heather Primary and Centenary High conceal a subtle shift in social relations that has occurred since the prohibition on segregated enrolment in 1994. The middle class public, which these state schools served, has become a sought-after consumer in a competitive education market. Disguised in capital projects such as these at Heather Primary and Centenary High, which depend on parents who can afford to become fee-paying 'clients', is a social division that excludes the poor from enrolling at these schools and deriving the benefits. The obscured effect of such capital-intensive refurbishments and constructions is their contribution to a two-tier class-based public education system. Thus some state schools have above-standard facilities that are available to all – on condition of fee payment – while other state schools, such as Maximus Primary and Khayalihle Primary, have standard to below-standard facilities which are affordable to the working classes and poor.

7.6. INCLUSIVE ACCESS

Attention in the post-apartheid era to equality and rights to equal access to basic and further education and training institutions was manifest in the physical approach to and within Simunye Secondary. In the past, state schools were designed only with able-bodied people in mind. Those with physical disabilities were discriminated against in that they were not assured easy access to the premises, but the new political dispensation introduced ramps and special toilets as a new norm for public works (Radebe, 1995:1). Education policies in the fourth White Paper have advanced this egalitarian approach, setting out the plan for inclusive mainstreaming of learners with disabilities (Department of Education, 2001a). Based on Lefebvre's scheme of realms, access ramps are understood as part of the intermediate realm, and toilets are in the private realm.

Only Simunye Secondary provided access ramps and toilets for people with physical disabilities.

Image 134: 06L120: Simunye Secondary: Corridors and ramps



Image 135: 06K03a: Simunye Secondary: Toilets for persons with physical disabilities



Facilities such as ramps and toilets for those with physical disabilities were observed as a new spatial practice in school design, driven by post-apartheid policies aimed at promoting inclusive education that did not isolate learners with physical disabilities from mainstream schooling. However, the practice had not become systemic in that the facilities were not yet installed widely. One reason for this lag between policy and practice is the high capital expenditure required.

Centenary High had an aging lift in its original building, designated for special use by learners with disabilities. When the new wing opened in 1999, ramps were not included as an alternative to the electricity-dependant lift. This implies that people with

physical disabilities, when considered in relation to the governing body's great investment in the construction of science and counselling facilities, were overlooked or were not considered as learners likely to use the facilities. The focus on preparing girls for careers, especially in the sciences, conceals the subtlety that the affirmation is of able-bodied girls in the first instance.

Image 136: 03K17n: Centenary High: Lift in the original wing from the 1930s



Image 137: 03L117: Centenary High: The AM Wing



Ramps and special toilets are not cosmetic features of a school site—unlike the paved pathways, courtyard, display unit and tennis clubhouse at Centenary High and the water feature at Heather Primary. The inclusive access that ramps and special toilets offer serves to narrow the difference in spatial relations between able-bodied people and

those with physical disabilities. The frequent use of ramps by able-bodied people obscures the contribution of these representational spaces to new levels of parity in access to state schooling. The high cost of installing special access facilities at all state schools constrains implementation of the policy for mainstreaming learners with physical disabilities, especially when provincial education and public works departments such as those in KwaZulu-Natal identify classroom backlogs as their building priority (Information and Physical Planning Services, 2002). Despite implementation of inclusive access facilities at a few new schools like Simunye Secondary and possibly at older schools where governing bodies can mobilise non-state resources, the public works capital required to install these facilities at all state schools together with competing priorities such as classroom backlogs, may relegate inclusive education policies to being largely political symbolism – as has been a criticism levelled at other post-apartheid education policies (Jansen, 2001).

7.7. INTEGRATED PLANNING

Simunye Secondary was unique in its configuration and relation to other government social services. Simunye Secondary, together with a primary school, public library and hall, were conceived and constructed as a single multi-purpose centre and service point for the surrounding residents. The multi-purpose centre that has a broader function than schooling, falls within the schematic realm of city context rather than institution. As a composite of institutions and service points, I have classed the multi-purpose centre as an intermediate realm with discrete zones that serve as one-stop information and training centres. Government has conceived of multi-purpose centres as decentralised nodes that will meet the information needs of previously disenfranchised and marginalised communities where they reside and provide government with an avenue for communicating its policies to these groups (Government Communication Information Systems, 2000:[n.p.]; Matsepe-Casaburri, 2000:[n.p.]).

As I described in chapter 4, this community centre on local and provincial government sites had four discrete yet complementary components that functioned as an integrated public service node. The primary school was feeder to Simunye Secondary, and both schools were feeders to the public library, providing ‘captive’ cohorts of future adult library users. The library functioned according to a joint-use library model (Department of Education, 1998c:18-20), by making its collection and professional

services available to Simunye Secondary's teachers and learners as well as to local residents. Similarly, for a small fee, Simunye Secondary could use the municipal hall for special events and activities. In these ways, Simunye Secondary was an integral part of the multi-purpose centre's comprehensive public service to the surrounding community.

Though integrated physically with the other three components through the fenced enclosure of the shared location and conceptually through the overarching name of the centre, the composite did not neutralise or blur each component's special features. Instead, components displayed distinctive design tropes in their architectures. The hall's curved roof, mosaics and flag-like window shades contrasted with Simunye's pitched roof and blue, red and green colour scheme and framed doorways and the library's imposing modernist tiled entrance. The design differences distinguished Simunye Secondary from the other service points and signalled its separate identification.

Image 138: 06K14c: Simunye Secondary: Different institutions and functions signalled in the contrasting roof designs



Image 139: 06L213: Simunye Secondary: (From L to R) hall, Simunye Secondary, library.



Image 140: 06K20f: Simunye Secondary: Hall window shades



Image 141: 06K16b: Simunye Secondary: Brickwork at each classroom entrance



The distinctively new spatial practice exemplified at Simunye Secondary is the state's embedding of educational institutions in a multi-purpose centre that offers social services beyond the formal education system. This practice is consistent with the Minister of Education's pronouncement in 1999 that government schools must be centres of community life that 'create an enabling environment for parents whose children have physical disabilities or other special needs' (Asmal, 1999:10). All the other schools selected for this study had been built as discrete entities. Although Khayalihle Primary was meant to share the hall of an adjacent secondary school, sharing never took hold and the inter-leading gate in the school fence was permanently locked. But even in Khayalihle's setting, the sharing was school-to-school, whereas at Simunye Secondary the community service crossed administrative boundaries to include local government library services and community halls. It is too early to tell in the case of Simunye Secondary if the spatial practice of sharing facilities will endure and be sustained among the local principal, librarian and hall caretaker. The composite architectural design, however, points to a socially integrated way of thinking spatially among town planners and decision-makers.

The spatial practice of embedding schools within multi-purpose community centres establishes new social relations in which schools, as public service institutions, have parity with other government services such as public libraries. This gives learners greater visibility within the city and enhances the status of learners as existing members of the public, and having value as a public investment in future decision-making and social development. In these arrangements, centre-periphery relations remain centralised while rendering development at the periphery. Unlike the benefits of new spatial arrangements at Centenary High which were conditional on fee payments and therefore limited to those with economic wealth, the benefits derived from the spatial practice of integrated planning at the Simunye Multi-purpose Community Centre and Simunye Secondary were accessible to all members of the public, including the poor.

The new practice, seen in the case of Simunye Secondary, of conceptualising schools to cohere within a planned community centre denotes one of government's new ways of thinking about public service and society, and it also illuminates how some architects are interpreting those conceptions in the construction of lived space.

7.8. SCHOOL DISAFFECTION

Another new spatial practice evident in photographs of damaged and defaced parts of school sites and in acts of misdemeanour denoted school disaffection and pointed to troubled social relations and social alienation. The school disaffection manifested in graffiti and vandalism at Highway and Simunye Secondary Schools. The evidence of the breakdown of discipline from these two schools is unlike the apartheid-era student uprisings of 1976 and the mid-1980s when township street battles, organised mass action, boycotts and pickets were a form of resisting Bantu Education (Hyslop, 1999:166-8; Brink et al., 2001).

School disaffection was mostly photographed in toilets, behind sheds, in dark stairways and on distant corridor walls and corners. The use of non-pedagogic parts of school space for these transgressions is coherent with Lefebvre's assertion that places associated with leisure often escape the control of the authorities and therefore become deviant and diverted spaces (Lefebvre, 1991:383). At Highway secondary, where heavy graffiti, broken ceilings and windows were photographed, learner informants asserted that other learners were responsible. An inter-textual reading of the learners' photographs indicated a poor discipline regime within the school that allowed learners (mostly boys) to commit a litany of misdemeanours: fighting in the yard, missing lessons to loiter in courtyards, smoking behind sheds and in cloakrooms, gambling in dark stairwells, boys taking over the girls' toilet, and so on. One learner photographer reported that he was stabbed during the fieldwork period while trying to stop his peers fighting and it was his opinion that the guard's dog served to protect the guard from learners. The underlying cause of disaffection at Highway Secondary was not readily apparent.

Photographs from Simunye Secondary indicated the prevalence of theft and heavy vandalism. Although the school only opened in 1999, wall graffiti was seen inside toilet stalls and along corridors, ceramic toilet bowls were smashed, toilet seats and mirrors were broken or missing, and welding burns on the tuck shop serving-hatch indicated that security bars were a recent addition to protect staff and goods at break time.

Image 142: 06Kgraffiti02 : Simunye Secondary: Boys' change room entrance showing graffiti, broken sign and missing light switch



Image 143: 06K03d: Simunye Secondary: Missing toilet mirrors, and wall graffiti



Image 144: 06K03f: Simunye Secondary: Vandalised toilet



Image 145: 06K23b: Simunye Secondary: Tuckshop showing roll-down shutter and new security bars with welding burn marks



The school architect's belief was that poverty, and local housing and informal settlement conditions, together with the rurality of many members of the local residents were reasons for the thefts and vandalism.³⁴ Talking about his photographs of Simunye, one learner spoke with pride and chagrin about his school environment. He held other learners responsible for the destruction but, unlike the architect's more abstract analysis, he only considered the effect, fingering poor learner attitudes as the cause:

L1 Everything I like here.

JK Why?

³⁴ Pers. Comm. Andre Duvenage, architect, Durban on 10 September 1999.

L1 *It's beautiful.*
 JK *Ah-ha, you think it's a beautiful school.*
 L1 *Yes.*
 JK *Mm. Tell me some of the things that are beautiful in this school.*
 L1 *[pause] Eh. The whole building [unclear]. It's so beautiful.*
'Everything. [...]
 JK *Why were you taking a photo inside [the boys' toilets]?*
 L1 *Because it's very- so dirty and maybe if they going to see the*
photo maybe they change their mind because they making it very,
very dirty.
 JK *Mm.*
 L1 *They write on the wall [unclear] ...not good.*

While it is difficult from photographs and informants' speculations to draw firm conclusions about the deeper significance of school disaffection, my loose interpretative reading of the data offers one way of making sense of it.

The aberrant spatial practice at Highway and Simunye Secondary Schools is a reminder that social space comprises dynamic power relations. At schools, these relations are between management and learners and/or members of the local community. Authority from a school principal leads many learners to be passive while others challenge that domination and strive to assert themselves and take control over school resources. This might be the case at these schools.

Society has expectations about what are acceptable and unacceptable actions for specific places and these mores are sometimes resisted spatially through transgressions such as graffiti (Cresswell, 1996:1, 21-7). While I have no data about any intentions of school graffitists and vandals, Tim Cresswell's study of graffiti in public space contends that the graffitist is denying and subverting the official meaning of the space (Cresswell, 1996:31-61). This opens up several avenues for understanding the graffiti, vandalism and other misdemeanours at Highway and Simunye Secondary Schools as representations of a contested space.

In the case of Highway Secondary, the signs of disaffection may be related to power struggles between teachers and learners. Learner accounts and photographs provide evidence of a wide range of activities that appear to undermine managers' efforts to control space and spatial practices, which Vishnu asserted was a managerial challenge. In an observed assembly in February 2000, a member of the school management team had privileged himself in an infantilisation of learners who were between about 13 and 19 years of age, by addressing them as 'boys and girls'.

In the case of Simunye Secondary, the disaffection may be linked to the alienating effect of social inequality among the poor. Simunye Secondary, as a school site within the midst of the urban poor living in informal shelters and tiny box houses provided by government, represents a rich deposit of desirable state resources. Although the school serves the urban poor, some objects and practices, such as in the flushing toilets, represent the quality of living standards and quotidian those learners did not know and that they might think was unattainable. The contradiction between their school and home conditions may have yielded a weak link in learners identifying with their school. Learners may also perceive from the design and quality of the school's material conditions that the state has a wealth of resources to replenish the school and repair any damage. Such conceptions of government weakens any sense of responsibility and ownership over the space. Thus alienation and discontent arising from conditions of social inequality and misconceptions of the state are possible impulses for the vandalism and theft.

To sum up, the disaffection evident at Highway and Simunye in destructive and prohibited spatial practices suggest different explanations. The practices may be linked to managerial relations and discipline with learners in the case of Highway Secondary and broader social inequalities and misconceptions in the case of Simunye Secondary.

7.9. POST-APARTHEID DISCURSIVE TRAJECTORIES

What is the meaning of the post-apartheid discourse concealed in the new practices at the observed schools? Political discourse analysts assert that political projects, such as the post-apartheid political dispensation, organise fields such as school space by weaving together different strands of discourse that fix the meanings of objects and practices in a particular way (Howarth and Stavrakakis, 2000:3) In this chapter, I have identified seven separate strands of discursive practice, but their differences are significant and suggest divergent meanings. On the one hand, the elaborate security arrangements and branding in the intermediate realm and capital projects in all realms point in the direction of narrow class interests that mostly favour the wealthy. On the other hand, the collaborative learning in the private realm of classrooms, inclusive access for those with physical disabilities (in the intermediate realm) and integrated planning (which I have positioned as a intermediate realm of city space, because of the interface it represents) stress shared interests. School disaffection, which manifests in

intermediate and private realms of school, is an exception and falls away from both these trajectories.

From what was observed of new practices at the ensemble of schools, all realms of school space were mapped to some extent. This indicates that all of lived school space was available and yielding to the dynamic of contending discursive forces.

Table 11: Lefebvre's scheme of realms showing areas where new practices were emerging

	City context	School space
Global		Computer room Laboratories
Intermediate	Multi-purpose community centre	Entrances Corridors, ramps, stairwells School gardens and ponds
Private		Classroom seating arrangements Toilets

The new practice that I have referred to as integrated planning went beyond the bounds of education and, by virtue of the interlinked facilities of the multi-purpose centre, I have posited the integrated planning practice in the intermediate realm of city space.

I was initially confounded by the disparate new practices I had observed and what the differences might mean. Diverse discourses in contention in a spatial field point to the spatial dynamic that Lefebvre saw as producing difference (Lefebvre, 1991:52). As new discursive practices are constituted in reaction and relation to other discursive forces that comprise an outside or external context (Howarth, 2000b:106), apartheid discourse, still fresh in the recent collective memory and in its hidden and residual components (as shown in chapter 6), would have been an important influence for new discursive practices at state schools in 1999/2000. Although the apartheid legislative framework has been officially repealed, it constitutes the important 'outside' discursive context for a discussion of emerging discursive forces.

Officially, the post-apartheid political regime has replaced apartheid with a social order that is based on human rights (Republic of South Africa, 1996a:6-24). The *Constitution's* prohibition on discriminatory practices, compels public institutions such

as schools to institute new inclusive practices as an antidote to past exclusionary practices. This provides the underpinning conception for the new spatial practices observed at Simunye Secondary that aim to make physical school space accessible to those who live with physical disabilities. Similarly, the conception of social equality that informs the *Constitution's* Bill of Rights militates against inequalities rendered by apartheid's racial segregation and discrimination. An articulation of this was observed in the practices of classroom seating arrangements for collaborative learning, ramps and toilets for those with physical disabilities, and the integrated planning of a community centre to facilitate complementarity of social services. These new discursive practices that promote inclusivity and equality, aim to reduce past differences among South Africans and to serve the interests of the majority. I have interpreted these practices as a discursive trajectory of shared interest.

Although shared interest practices were mostly informed by national policies, at the time of the study the discourse had not gathered sufficient momentum to manifest across all schools and become systemic. Collaborative learning was found in the foundation phase at primary schools only, and the inclusive access and integrated planning practices only manifested at Simunye Secondary, the post-apartheid school.

The co-existence of divergent discursive trajectories pursuing shared interest or narrow interest paths, both being contested through disaffective practices, indicates that, at the time of the study, neither discursive force had achieved the requisite cohesion, coherence, regularity and equilibrium to be a discursive system. In the next and final chapter, I will stand back from the close analyses of six schools that characterised these last three chapters, and take stock of the study as a whole.

CHAPTER 8: GOING HOME: THE CONCLUSION



8.1 INTRODUCTION

At the end of each school day learners pack up, ensuring they have what is needed for homework assignments and, once the final bell has rung, they leave school and make their way homeward. This chapter entails a very similar purpose for the thesis as a whole. In closing, I take stock by revisiting the research questions posed in chapter one and briefly consider the implications of the study, and identify openings that suggest further examination.

8.2 OVERVIEW

This thesis has contributed to the critical literature about South African education by drawing attention to the spatial dimension and the political significance of spatial practices. The period of transition from one political discourse to another in South Africa provided the opportunity for examining political meanings in spatial practices at schools. Following Lefebvre's proposition that the past leaves its trace in the present,

my one aim was to examine how a political discourse like apartheid had manifested in school space and where it was embedded and hidden in different spatial forms in public schools after the legislative system and bureaucracy of apartheid had been disbanded. My second aim arose from another of Lefebvre's propositions that a social revolution is incomplete until it has created new spatial practices. On the basis of this proposition I sought to identify new spatial practices emerging in South Africa's public schools, which might signal a post-apartheid political discourse.

I posed four questions about apartheid and post-apartheid spatial practices exploring data from six schools in the City of Durban for the answers. In answer to my first question of what spatial practices at urban public schools were attributable to apartheid discourse, I found that the segregated school system rarely, if ever, allowed learners opportunities to have encounters with those who were categorised differently from them. Although the spatial practice of segregated schools was devised primarily to partition learners into hierarchies of race and language, learners perceived that apartheid social order incorporated additional categories such as social class and geographic location. Other apartheid spatial practices at schools propagated nationalistic patriotism and gave certain jobs a racialised character. In the past these spatial practices of apartheid discourse powerfully shaped South African children's understandings of social differences and hierarchies.

Turning to the question of how differences in school spatial practices provided continuity of apartheid discourse even though apartheid policies had been disbanded in the post-apartheid era, I found that the past racialised order at the systemic level was embedded in a range of inequalities at schools. On the one hand the inherited and persistent differences between schools point back to their respective apartheid-era racialised administrative regimes. On the other hand the differences point to the social class of each school's locality and past parent community, signalling how social class and race were interlinked in apartheid. Until there is greater equity among public schools in terms of their teaching and learning conditions, and until disparities in the fiscal capacities of local communities are less stark, such inequalities will constitute a perpetuation of apartheid's discriminatory system. In the division of work at schools I also uncovered an embedding of apartheid spatial practices. I found that only black workers held the semi-skilled and least-desirable jobs – a practice reminiscent of apartheid's racialised hierarchy. During lesson time these workers were kept away from

professional teaching and learning areas and activities, and were involved in the peripheral, non-pedagogic areas of schools such as the grounds, corridors and kitchens. Unless these spatial practices are contested and disrupted, such continued racialised work hierarchies, which learners consciously and unconsciously observe daily, are available for learners to understand them as a natural order. Through such practices schools might be reproducing apartheid social relations in a post-apartheid era.

In response to the third question about new spatial practices that might reveal post-apartheid discourse, I found the presence of two contending discursive forces. In one direction, new practices showed that school decision-makers are being propelled by threat and competition from perceived external forces that require them to secure and control their territories and, where possible, enhance and embellish their existing assets. The capacity to mobilise financial resources is fundamental for these sets of practices and some schools were succeeding in this by virtue of the social class of the parent community, and through their income-generating partnerships with community associations and collaboration with the corporate sector. The discursive force underpinning these spatial practices appeared to conceive of public schooling as required to operate within a competitive market and hostile environment. In the other discursive direction, new spatial practices implied an expansion of public service and a socially integrated way of thinking about schools and learning that emanated from a higher level of national policy-makers and professional experts such as architects and educational advisors. From that, flowed practices aimed at facilitating collaborative learning, the inclusion of learners with special education needs at ordinary state schools and various public services working together with schools to offer the public a comprehensive social service.

The fourth research question was two-pronged and concerned the implications of embedded apartheid in school space for policy-makers and the potentialities emerging from the new discursive trajectories.

The continued presence in school space of practices and conditions left behind as traces of apartheid implies that those working in schools are vulnerable to the continued influence and effect of apartheid. In this way apartheid joins other discourses available as a hidden curriculum that learners assimilate and incorporate into their attitudes and knowledge about social relations and social order. Eradicating this continued presence is

important in the case of post-apartheid South Africa, which seeks to build social cohesion and celebrate diversity in a way that does not use race divisively.

The finding of a narrow interest discourse, which caters for the needs and interests of a local group such as parents and school staff, emerged at some schools. This discursive trajectory undermines the post-apartheid project of a state school system that seeks to serve learners' rights to basic education of a similar quality and under similar conditions at any public school in South Africa. This implies that some post-apartheid school policies are having consequences that are unintended and that run counter to the post-apartheid project. For this reason, the practices associated with a narrow interest discourse deserve the attention of policy-makers.

The co-existence of the two nascent political discourses showed that there is contention about a post-apartheid social order. Neither of these discursive trends is systemic yet. Both discursive trends are signalling a post-apartheid discourse that has discarded race, which was the primary logic of apartheid discourse, in favour of other organising principles. They are operating within the context of a post-apartheid *Constitution* that seeks to balance equal rights and rights to difference. This brings to mind Lefebvre's proposition that spatiality produces difference, which implies different social relations, positions, powers and practices. The emerging inflections of rights to difference in the two discursive trends are different from Lefebvre's. Instead of inflecting the right to difference as a spatial conception of social justice, the narrow interest imputation of difference secures privilege and builds barriers against the Other. That appropriation of rights to difference runs counter to educational projects that monitor advances in the amelioration of spatial inequalities as schools. The discursive articulation that opens up school space to provide access for more members of the public to be educated, and gives the public easier access to a range of public services offered by the state, is derived from equal rights. In tension with this 'shared interest' discursive strand is a political discourse that showed a narrowing of public access to school sites and an overprinting of localised economic capacities in public school space. That 'narrow interest' discourse, which depends on the divisive use of social class as the organising principle, may be positioned to deploy rights to difference as its defence against calls for equal rights.

Apartheid and post-apartheid discourses permeated all realms of school space as a concealed informal curriculum about society, and were more strong in non-pedagogic

than pedagogic parts of the school. This highlights that areas peripheral to or only indirectly involved in the pedagogic endeavour might be overlooked and poorly understood among educationists as a space with curricular significance and in that neglect those areas become more subject to the practice of political discourses. This should alert education policy-makers that school space and spatial practices are as politically significant as the formal curriculum and therefore deserve similar scrutiny, in addition to the surveys of school needs that have been conducted to measure and monitor improvements in material conditions at schools.

An unexpected finding from the study was learner disaffection at the post-apartheid school, which had been opened only one year prior to data gathering. The breakages and defacement of this new school were interpreted as a dislocation arising from the disparities in school and home spatial conditions. The well-equipped school and elaborately designed multi-purpose community centre, which were integral to the urban renewal project of the area, contrasted dramatically with the nearby informal settlement and box-like low-income houses where learners dwelt.

8.3. SOME CRITICAL REFLECTIONS ON THE LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

In his theory of the production of space, Lefebvre ranges widely in his discussion to provide a complex and rich body of thinking about space, from which I have drawn selectively for the framing of this study. His critical approach provided a useful lens to examine political discourses in school space because he focused on the politics of social space and spatial knowledge. However, with his stress on urban forms and urban exemplars, the theoretical framing did not transfer easily for an empirical study of educational institutional settings and for thinking about spatial practices at both systemic and institutional scales.

Lefebvre's densely philosophical and generalised discussion suggested decades spent observing, pondering and theorising social life. There was, however, little evidence of empirical work in *The Production of Space* and this showed when I applied his scheme of realms to this study. The scheme did not accommodate the crosscutting spatial practices that I found manifested in all realms of school space, and its further development would increase its usefulness and application.

An issue in which his work provided little guidance was methodologies for empirical studies of social space. In that respect, Soja's innovative studies of Los

Angeles and Amsterdam were more exemplary, drawing on an eclectic collection of sources and reflexively locating himself within the field of study. My methodological approach, which relied almost solely on visual methodologies, proved suitable for data gathering, and provided valuable insights into spatial practices that might not have come to the surface through an approach such as interview transcripts and more commonly used observation schedules. However, the scope of the study, which included the entire field of school space, and the sample size of six case studies, was too extensive for a qualitative study and placed constraints on data gathering as well as on the volume of data that could be deeply analysed and used in this thesis.

I made limited yet worthwhile use of political discourse theory for the analysis in this study, supplementing that approach with content analysis when it seemed more suitable for reducing data in a comparative analysis of cases. Where I did apply political discourse theory analysis, it was partial because my focus was on spatial practices rather than identity and discursive hegemony, which are primary concerns of political discourse theory.

8.4. LOOKING FORWARD: OPENINGS FOR FURTHER STUDY

Although this study has been significant in its exploration of an under-researched field of education and it posed important questions and yielded worthwhile answers, the study was unable to go beyond apartheid and post-apartheid political discourses for practical reasons. Other discourses such as patriarchy and gender deserve to be examined spatially, in addition to a closer examination of the discursive interaction between the city as the primary political force in a local context and the school, and also to look at ways in which school space influences the development of learner identifications.

The photographs gathered for this study comprise a data set that I have not exhaustively analysed. Other enquiries that deserve more full attention than was possible here concern detailed analysis of particular places such as reception rooms and principal's offices, thematic studies such as school safety and security, and the intersection of family and school life in learners' quotidian. These will be the focus of future work.

While I was able to use memory accounts to explore how learners in the apartheid era had perceived the apartheid social order, positioned themselves within apartheid

hierarchies and resisted it in some ways, this study did not extend to examining the effect of embedded apartheid on learners attending schools in the post-apartheid era. If, as I have argued, apartheid is embedded in the hidden curriculum of school space, then it is likely that apartheid discourse is still exerting an influence on learners. The nature of the effect of residual apartheid on learners warrants further research.

An obvious limitation of this study has been that several types of South African schools were omitted. These included schools in rural areas, schools for Afrikaans-speaking learners and formerly for coloured learners only, as well as schools for learners with special education needs. Notwithstanding these limitations, this thesis has shown school space to be a relatively uncharted but fruitful field of enquiry, with horizons that lead across theoretical boundaries and offer fresh insights about how societies construct schooling systems.

APPENDIX 1: MEMORY ACCOUNT INTERVIEW INSTRUMENT

Draft Interview Instrument

1. What memories (general and specific) are evoked by these photographic representations?
2. How have the school boundaries changed since you attended this school?
3. How do you explain / account for the boundary changes you notice?
4. What used to happen each day when you crossed over the boundary into the territory of the school?
5. Whose territory was it, and how was that signified?
6. How were your school's boundaries and markers used to socialise, engender, and racialise your schooling experience?

Interview Instrument including profile completed by an informant

INTERVIEW INSTRUMENT FOR ADULTS (PAST LEARNERS)

Interview date 08/06/2000
 School 01 / 02 / 03 / 04 / 05 / 06

1. Describe to me the schools you attended as a learner.
2. Where were your favourite and least favourite (or feared) places at school?
3. How did you feel about your school when you came into contact with learners from other schools? (e.g. at sports meetings or cultural events)
4. What contribution do you think your schools made in preparing you for who you are today?
5. Do you have any comments on these photos and how school life has changed from the days when you were a learner? What made the changes possible?
6. Which schools did you attend as a learner and for what period of time?

	School name	Years	Grades / Stds	Province
1	Combined School - Estate School	75-76	1-2	} KZN
2	J.P. School - State funded &	77-78	3-4	
3	Primary School - Private funded	79-81	5-6	
4	M. P. Sc	82	7	
5	High School - State funded	83-87	8-12	
6				
7				
8				

7. Some information about you (mark the appropriate response)

GENDER Male / Female
 AGE GROUP 20-30 31-40 41-50 51-60 61+
 RACE Black Indian White Coloured Other _____
 HOME/FIRST LANGUAGE Zulu English Afrikaans Other _____

THANK YOU!

APPENDIX 2: INSIDER PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION BOOKLET AND INSTRUMENT

PHOTOGRAPHING MY SCHOOL

Notes compiled by Jenni Karlsson
August 1999



WHAT DOES THE WORD PHOTOGRAPH MEAN?

It comes from two Greek words. **Photo** means **light** and **graph** means **to draw** or **to write**. So photography is **drawing with light**.

A photograph is a **still picture** unlike the moving pictures you see on film, video and TV.

The word was first used 160 years ago after the photographic technique was invented, but the first real colour photographs were only taken in 1936, just over 60 years ago.

Photographs, or photos, **last** a long time if you take care of them so the image or picture in the photograph can remind you of a place or something that happened from a long time ago. For example, here is a photo of me when I was a little girl!



Photographs are kept in **albums**, special books for showing a collection of pictures.

At the end of my visit to your school you will receive your very own album of photographs that you have taken.

HOW IS A PHOTOGRAPH MADE?

A photograph is made when an amount of light shines through a small opening called a lens onto a roll of film coated in light sensitive chemicals. The image focused onto the film matches whatever had light shining on it and could be seen through the lens.

A **camera** is the tool or instrument used to take photographs.



The person using the camera is called a **photographer**. The camera has no brain and it cannot think. Just like a pencil doesn't draw pictures, people do! So it is the photographer that takes the photo.

These days there are many different **kinds of cameras**. Here is a short list of the cameras for taking **photographs**, not including video and film cameras.

- **Reflex lens** cameras used by serious photographers and those who take photos as a job.
- **Compact** cameras for hobby and family photographers.
- **One-time** cameras with a film built into the inexpensive camera case.
- **Digital** cameras that don't use film but work a little like a computer.

HOW SHOULD I CARE FOR MY CAMERA?

Some parts on a camera:

- ⊕ Viewfinder
- ⊕ Lens
- ⊕ Shutter release
- ⊕ Winder
- ⊕ Counter

Keep it **dry**.

Don't let it get wet or damp. Water will ruin both the camera and film.

Keep it **cool**.

Unless you are using it, keep it out of the sun. Don't leave a camera in a locked car, the heat will ruin the film.

Keep it **clean**.

Sand, dirt, or dust can hurt your camera.

Keep it **safe**.

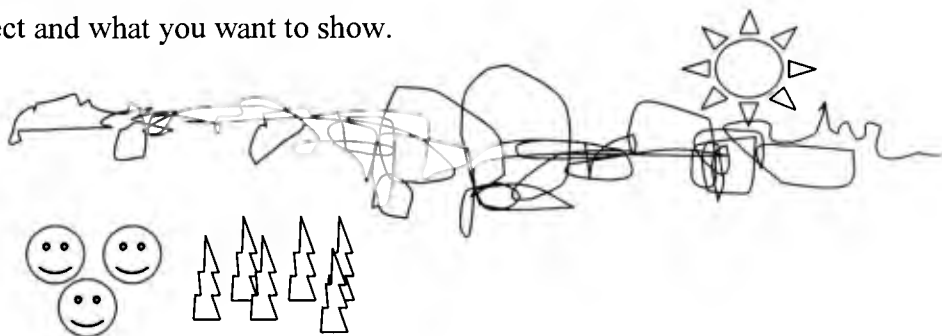
Don't drop it, or bang it around. It may break.

Don't try to open the camera box. If you do, you will expose all the film to light and ruin every one of your photographs.

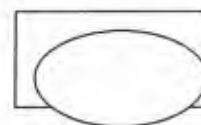
TIPS FOR TAKING PHOTOGRAPHS

Preparing your photo

Decide on your subject and what you want to show.



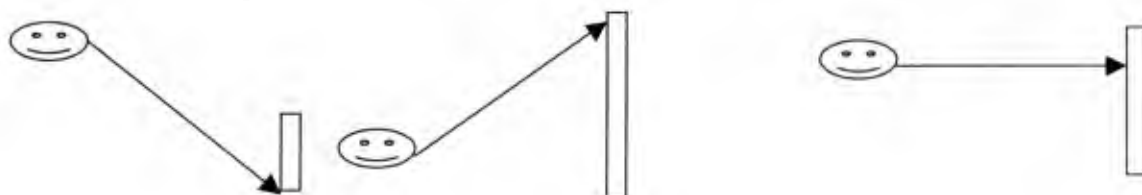
Decide on what should be in and out the picture.



Decide on the horizontal or vertical frame.



Decide on the angle or point of view.



Don't get closer than 1 metre.

Take photos outside with the sun behind you or in the shade.

Taking your photo

Hold the camera still and level. Or rest it on something.

Breathe half out and hold.

Keep your fingers away from the lens.

Squeeze the shutter release between thumb and finger.

Assignment

Imagine that you have distant cousins who live in Johannesburg and you have never met them. Your cousins do not know much about you. You want to send them photographs to tell them about yourself and your school.

Use the one-time camera to take photographs about you and your school.

The subject of the photographs can be anything you choose, as long as you think it is communicating something about your school and who you are. I am not interested in your photographic skills and techniques. The photographs are only a way of saying something about your school and who you are without using words.

In a few days I will collect the camera to have your photographs developed.

When the photographs are developed, I want you to tell me about them.

IsiZulu Translation

Umsebenzi owenziwayo

Awucabange nje ngabazala bakho abahlala le kude eGoli futhi awukaze ubonane nabo. Abazala bakho abazi lutho ngawe.

Ufuna ukubathumelela izithombe zekhamera ukubazisa ngawe kanye nangesikole sakho.

Sebenzisa ikhamera ekhipha isithombe ngaso-lesosikhathi ukuzishutha wena nesikole sakho.

Ungashutha noma yini, ingobo nje uma ucabanga ukuthi iyona ezobanika umqondo nolwazi oluphelele ngawe nesikole sakho. Qaphela ukuthi angifuni ikhono

noma ubuhlakani bokuthatha izithombe. Ukusebenzisa izithombe, kuyindlela echaza ngokubanzi ngawe nesikole sakho ngaphandle kokukhuluma ngomlomo.

Ezinsukwini ezimbalwa, ngizolanda ikhamera bese ngizikhulisa izithombe zenu.

Uma sengizikhulisile, ngiyocela ukuthi ningitshela ngazo.

APPENDIX 3: BACKGROUND ABOUT SAMPLING AND INSTRUMENT ADMINISTRATION

SCHOOLS

The design of the qualitative study was refined in the field. This was the case for this project. Initially I planned to include ten schools to represent all types of South African schools from the typology used in the *Report of the Committee to Review the Organisation, Governance and Funding of Schools* (Hunter et al., 1995). However, with the onset of fieldwork at Heather Primary and Maximus Primary, I realised that conducting a qualitative study of ten schools was overly ambitious for the time and resources available. Thus I contracted the sample to six schools in the city where I live and work for easy access to sites and informants. Recasting the research as a study of urban schools enabled me to draw meaningfully from the corpus of literature about urban spaces.

Three of the schools were within a two-kilometre radius of my office and the other three could be reached within a 30-minute drive. Regular physical access to the site required permission in the first instance from the school governing body and the principal. In all but one school permission was granted. A substitute school was easily found and this too proved fortuitous because the substituted school offers a technical curriculum and is located in a semi-industrial area, adding variety and an unequivocally urban 'hard edge' to the study. See Appendix 4 for a sample of a signed permission form.

INSIDER PARTICIPANT OBSERVERS

The age of ten years for the primary school learners was determined because they would have reached an age of physical independence and with sufficient dexterity and cognitive development to handle a camera and perform the assignment to generate data. In secondary schools, learners of the age of fifteen years were deemed suitable for the study because this age group is post-puberty, arguably with a clearly constructed identity and developed communication skills. In addition, they were deemed to be more available than older learners because they were not yet in grade 12 and preparing for the summative Senior Certificate examination.

The total of 24 learners (4 per school) is disaggregated by race, gender and language in Table 12.

Table 12: Learner profile by race, gender and language

Total	Race				Gender ³⁵		Language ³⁶			
	Black	Coloured	Indian	White	Female	Male	Zulu	English	Afrikaans	Other
24	13	1	5	5	14	10	12	10	0	1

The number of learners was not sampled for the race and language profiles to be in proportion to the demography of the city of Durban that is about 70% black. Racial and linguistic proportionality was not sought since the school, as the unit of analysis for this study, was the primary consideration, with one of the selection criterion being the administrative history. With the exception of learners from the single-sex school, the learner sample for each school was balanced for gender.

Permission from parents and/or guardians was sought for the participation of selected learners (see Appendix 5)

One of my basic assumptions was that learners would have diverse experiences of cameras. I developed a pedagogy that would optimise learners' participation and facilitate their use of cameras. I expected middle class learners to be familiar with cameras, probably with their own camera or at least a camera owned by their family and, by contrast, I anticipated some of the working class learners never to have seen a camera close-up much less held and used one. Advice from a professional photographer involved in training was that I ought to spend two days in workshop preparation with learners before giving them the 'assignment'. This was not feasible logistically and financially, so that I developed an alternative strategy.

Not only is the childhood context characterised by play and (sometime) rough physicality, thieving and crimes are not uncommon in urban schools in South Africa. Participants had to be alerted to the possibility of camera theft and breakage and how to take precautions against these risks. These matters had to be included in the 60-minute session.

³⁵ The weighting of female (F) over male (M) learners is because one of the secondary schools is a single sex school for girls.

³⁶ Although there are at least eleven official languages, the languages most commonly spoken in the city of Durban are isiZulu (Zul), English (Eng) and Afrikaans (Afr) and these are also the official languages of the province of KwaZulu-Natal. The learner with another (Oth) first language is an isiXhosa speaker. isiXhosa is more commonly spoken in the Eastern Cape province, south of KwaZulu-Natal.

After consulting books for young readers such as *First Photos* (Evans, 1992), I developed a 5-page booklet that functioned as the assignment as well as a simple illustrated educational text to demystify cameras and photography. Some vocabulary was deconstructed and explained and, assuming learners' prior knowledge from television, types of cameras were introduced. The essential camera parts and functions present in a disposable camera were explained, together with basic things to consider in composing a photograph. The educational text ended with tips for looking after a camera and the last page of the booklet was the assignment.

During a 60-minute session at each school I provided learners with their own disposable cameras (marked with their initials) and booklet. As I briefed them about the project, cameras and photographs, we worked through the booklet and each learner gained familiarity with his/her camera and how to use it for the assignment. The session ended with a portrait photo session so that the first frame would function as a marker in the negatives to differentiate informants' images.

By developing a single pedagogy for learners to rapidly acquire the basic skills to use the technology of their data collection instrument, the text had to be simple and clear enough to address the youngest and most inexperienced participant, but have sufficient pace and content to interest the oldest and /or experienced learners. As a mostly self-funded study and the higher cost of flash disposable cameras, participants had to be alerted to the limits of outdoors-only cameras. This was unavoidable but severely restricted the scope for insider and backstage views of schools.

Before starting the recorded conversation I laid out the photographs in their sequence on a desk. In order to have a good view of the photographs the learner and I stood side-by-side looking over the desk while we talked and pointed to the various images. In one primary school the floor was carpeted so we sat informally on the floor with the images laid out around us. By being side-by-side and looking constantly at the photographs I avoided direct eye contact and was able to reduce any anxiety the learner may have had. Our conversation began with the learner being praised for the photographic results and then the learner was invited to go frame by frame through the sequence telling me about the photographs.

MEMORY ACCOUNTS

The first adult informant who shared her memories about attending apartheid schools was a woman that I met in the early 1990s at the University where I worked and where she was studying to be a teacher. She was friendly and politically engaging and we often chatted about the various non-governmental organisations where we had previously been employed. As an unmarried Moslem woman, she invited me to her parent's home for dinner, but after her graduation we lost contact. After several years of marriage and motherhood, she applied for a researcher's post in the organisation that I manage. Although we did not socialise outside of working hours, we deepened the friendly rapport we once had and through our intellectual debates, bridged the cultural, generational and professional differences by finding many aspects of our lives had common features.

When I invited her to be a co-informant in the memory component of this project, I did not anticipate that we would breach our collegial friendship. During the lengthy conversation/interview we shared memories of intimate childhood fears, insecurities and unpleasant encounters that left us feeling emotionally and physically drained. Although I had failed in advance to negotiate the terms of our disclosure, our professional understanding of data gathering and the respect we have for each other as individuals reconciled the strangeness of being researcher and researched and the familiarity of friendship and collegiality.

During a respondent validation meeting to share with her how I was interpreting her account, the roles we had managed to keep separate began to disintegrate and we politely agreed to disagree. She asserted that her memory account was incomplete and deserved to be modified. Asserting my control as researcher, I decided to limit the interpretation to data I had recorded – as with other interviewees. With this stand off, we returned to our professional and collegial roles and neither has sought to revisit the tension. Although this informant now works for another organisation, we retain collegial and friendly contact and she has subsequently assisted me to understand objects seen in my photographs of Maximus Primary, her old school.

The principal of Heather Primary is an old family friend and although he was not to be an informant, he was the main contact person for access to the school and informants. Our negotiations were conducted in a collegial and friendly manner, and I

assumed a foundation of trust existed that would ensure permission. This assumption was not, however, the basis of including this school in the set of six case studies. Nevertheless, my assumption proved correct when he offered me the use of the 'Principal' parking bay, complete freedom of the school site, and when selecting the grade 5 teacher whom I would interview, he confided that the teacher's union activism had motivated his selection of her. I doubt that I was singled out for his friendliness because he was the same to any adult and child. In the lunchroom he sat as an equal among all members of staff, children chatted with him in the corridors, and even when a learner listening into our conversation interjected to remind him about some detail, he took no offence and instead expressed his appreciation to the child. Despite his consistent pleasantness, I endeavoured to promote cordiality by way of polite chat and a brief progress report whenever we met, and I determined not to take advantage of our social connections.

I had a nodding acquaintance with the interviewee from Heather Primary that went back to the 1980s when we both worked for socio-political organisations located in the same community centre in Durban. I also knew of her sister as a prominent policy analyst in the trade union movement and since 1994 as a senior manager in the Department of Labour in Pretoria. Our shared past provided a good bridge for communication. However, unlike the formal presentation I had made to her principal, I used our common political orientation and values to explain aspects of the research project through a politicised 'shorthand' that she recognised. Throughout fieldwork I tried to avoid expanding our roles beyond those explicit in the research, only once or twice enquiring about job applications she had made and her perception of the school's attitude concerning her union responsibilities that interfered with class teaching. Once we crossed paths outside of school and then we dropped our professional roles for a friendly chat and some political gossiping. By that time I had completed gathering data from all the informants at Heather Primary so that our communication could not be construed as influencing data collection. On the other hand, the friendly exchange was made easy as a follow on from data gathering because her memory account contained disclosures about her personal and political development and this might have acted as a bond of trust.

A part-time post-graduate student that I once taught self-elected to be an interviewee when we agreed on a reciprocal research arrangement. He had approached

my office as a representative of Highway Secondary's governing body with a request for independent and free advice about the school's growth strategies. As Highway Secondary fitted the profile of a case school that I sought to complete my set of six schools, I negotiated access to the school in exchange for the independent investigation that he sought. The investigation was undertaken by a colleague to avoid me having any conflict of interest. With access to Highway Secondary secured by way of a friendly barter, I found my role as researcher and my patience later strained by my previous contact with the informant. He became my key contact at the school so that I met the principal only once briefly. I found it awkward to have to nag my key contact when he was tardy in returning the form granting me formal permission to access the school. It took three fresh forms, completion of fieldwork, several reminders and almost a year before I received permission by way of a signature on a re-faxed reminder letter. This was annoying since I had complied promptly with the principal's request to send written notification to his circuit manager – a request that none of the five other schools made. Nevertheless I maintained polite and cordial relations with my informant, agreeing to conduct his interview in my office at his convenience.

All of the four individuals mentioned above I knew socially and/or professionally before I entered the field. This history could not be ignored when I approached them as a researcher. In all cases the past relations facilitated contact and data gathering although I experienced tension in two instances, resolving it through adherence to professional conduct and politeness. Whenever I was stepping into or out of my roles as researcher/friend/colleague/associate, I tried to use conversation cues to signal this to the informant.

The duration of an ethnographic study encourages familiarity to develop between the researcher and the group, and the contact person or participant may develop expectations of the researcher (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995:77). This occurred at two schools during fieldwork. During an exploratory visit to Simunye Secondary in the post-apartheid resettlement and development project, I encountered the City Councillor for the ward, who expressed financial expectations for the new school and community centre as a result of the study being associated with a university abroad. Similarly, in the black township school the principal continually dropped hints during fieldwork visits about his hope that I would be the catalyst to channel educational resources towards his

school. Meeting their expectations was beyond my scope and on each occasion I reiterated the purpose of the investigation.

In summary, the blurring of my roles as education policy analyst and research student in the field and my residency in Durban required me to ensure my conduct was exemplary and would not be detrimental to my professional practice as a researcher and the reputation of my employer.

**APPENDIX 4: LETTERS APPLYING FOR AND GRANTING
PERMISSION TO UNDERTAKE THE STUDY AT SCHOOLS OF
THE KWAZULU-NATAL DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND
CULTURE, SOUTH AFRICA**



Education Policy Unit (Natal)

(An Association incorporated under Section 21)

University of Natal

Durban 4041

Telephone (031) 260-2607

Fax (031) 260-2118

E-mail epunatal@mtb.und.ac.za

Dr Mike Jarvis
Superintendent General
KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education and Culture
Ulundi
Fax: 0358-8743593/1

5 July 1999

Dear Dr Jarvis

Permission to conduct research in ten KZNDEC schools

At present I am a doctoral candidate with the Institute of Education, University of London, conducting a study of *The Transformation of Public School Space in South Africa and Learner Identities*. I am planning to conduct my fieldwork this year and request your written permission to undertake this study at ten schools under the authority of KZNDEC.

My study examines ten public schools in order to answer the question 'How is socially-produced school space transforming, and affecting learner identities in South Africa?' There are four aims:

1. To explain how Apartheid education produced certain forms of school space and continues to be embedded and residual in school sites;
2. To take account of recent changes in the use of school space that may be attributable to the current government's education policy;
3. To explore how learners are developing self-image in relation to school spaces; and
4. To identify ways in which spatial and material differences evident in public schools can be contested and transformed for greater equity and democracy.

The data that I plan to collect include:

- Accounts of ten past learners i.e. educators who attended racially differentiated schools in the Apartheid era
- Photograph images made by 40 learners presently attending the ten public schools in this study and their comments about the photos
- Photograph images that I make while observing the ten schools.

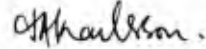
I will provide each learner in the sample with a disposable camera and film and he/she will receive copies of the photos.

Although all ten schools are now under the authority of KZNDEC as public schools, I wish to sample nine schools originally administered by the five former educational authorities in this province. They comprise state (2), state-aided (2), community (2), farm (1) and model C (2) schools. The tenth school is one built since the passing of the South African Schools Act in 1996.

I will keep the identity of sampled schools and learners confidential.

I look forward to your response and hope to receive your written permission shortly so that I can then approach Regional Chief Directors and school managers about access to selected schools.

Sincerely



Jenni Karlsson
Executive Director

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE
UMNYANGO WEMFUNDO NAMASIKO
DEPARTEMENT VAN ONDERWYS EN KULTUUR
Province of KwaZulu-Natal / Isifundazwe saKwaZulu-Natal / Province KwaZulu-Natal

Tel: 035 - 874 3407
Fax: 035 - 874 3583

From the Desk of the
Superintendent General :
Dr M A M Jarvis

3 August, 1999

Ms Jenni Karlson
Executive Director
Education Policy Unit
University of Natal
Durban 4041

Dear Ms Karlson

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN TEN KZNDEC SCHOOLS

Thank you for your letter dated 5 July 1999.

Permission is hereby granted for you to undertake research in 10 KZNDEC schools. Kindly provide this office with a list of the names of the schools you intend approaching. While your undertaking to keep this information confidential is appreciated, it is necessary for us to have a record of the schools involved.

We would like to wish you well with your studies.




Mr N S Shamase
Act. Superintendent-General

Secretariat: H J de Bruin
Private Bag X 04, Ulundi 3838

APPENDIX 5: SAMPLE OF THE FORM SIGNED BY THE PRINCIPAL AND CHAIRPERSON OF THE GOVERNING BODY, GRANTING PERMISSION TO CONDUCT THIS STUDY AT THE SCHOOL

SCHOOL INFORMATION SHEET To be completed by the Principal	[School no.] 03
School Name	GIRLS' HIGH SCHOOL. Centenary High
Postal Address	Private Bag
Postal Code	4013
Physical Address	90 ROADS
Tel	(031)
Fax	(031)
School started in year	1882 by *community / government / church / farmer / other.
Former administrative authority	*KDEC / DET (NED) / HOD / HOR
Grades now taught at this school	*1/2/3/4/5/6/7/8/9/10/11/12
Educator-Learner ratio at present	1:22

I have agreed for this school to be photographed for the purposes of research being conducted by Jenni Karlsson, a doctoral candidate of the Institute of Education, University of London. I understand that in this study the identity of the school and members of the school community will be kept confidential.

Principal  Sign A.M.
 Date 26-8-99.
 Governing Body Chair  Sign A.C.
 Date 26-8-99.

Delete whichever is not applicable.

**APPENDIX 6: SAMPLE OF THE FORM SIGNED BY PARENTS
GRANTING PERMISSION FOR THEIR CHILD TO PARTICIPATE
AS AN INSIDER PARTICIPANT OBSERVER IN THIS STUDY**

Letter to parents

Date

Dear Parent

I am a doctoral student of the Institute of Education, University of London, conducting a study of *The Transformation of Public School Space in South Africa and Learner Identities*.

Your child's school has agreed to be included in this study and I am requesting permission for your child to participate by taking photographs of his/her school.

I will provide your child with a disposable camera and film and will have a discussion with your child about his/her photographs when they are developed.

Your child will benefit from this participation by i) attending a short talk on cameras and photographs, ii) having the first-hand experience of using a camera and seeing the results of the photographic process, and iii) receiving free copies of his/her photographs. The name of your child and school will be kept confidential.

Please complete the form attached to indicate your response to this request and return it to the school before [date].

Yours sincerely

Jenni Karlsson

Granting of Permission

Researcher Jenni Karlsson

I agree to allow 2 N (50) of Primary
School to participate in this study by his/her attending a short talk on cameras and
photographs, taking photographs of the school, discussing these with the researcher
and showing some of them to his/her class.

Signed  (Mrs)
Parent / Guardian

Date 30 - 08 - 1999

**UKUSHITSHA KWENDAWO EZIKOLENI ZOMPHAKATHI ENINGIZIMU
AFRICA KANYE NEDLELA ABAFUNDI ABAZIBANDAKANYA NGAYO**

Umcwani: Jenni Karlsson

Ngiyamvumela u *P. S. Ny* weGrade 10B e Secondary

School ngokuhlanganyela enkulumeni emfushane kumakamera nasezithombeni

ukushutha izithombe zesikhole ebonisana ngazo nomcwani

Sayina ~~.....~~

Umzali/Umgadi

Usuku *17.02.2000*

APPENDIX 7: COMPARATIVE TABLES OF TECHNOLOGIES AVAILABLE IN SCHOOLS

Table 1: Comparison of the observed total forms of energy-based technologies available in the schools

	Heather	Centenary	Maximus	Highway	Khayalihle	Simunye
Total forms of technologies	24	32	9	10	9	(9)
Urn	X	X		X	X	X
Microwave	X	X		X		
Washing machine	X					
Hot water pipes/geyser	X	X				
Fridge	X	X				
TV aerial (implies TV & VCR)		X	X			
Timed bell			X			
Push-button bell					X	
Circuitry board	X		X		X	X
Computer	X	X	X		X	X
Lights	X	X	X	X	X	X
Overhead projector	X	X				
Photocopier	X	X	X	X	X	X
Lift		X				
Workshops for technical subjects				X		X
Fax machine	X	X	X	X	X	X
Fish tank light	X					
Electric typewriter	X				X	
Electrified water fountain	X					
Yard light	X	X		X	X	X
Swimming pool [pump]	X	X		X		
Auto gate	X	X				
Inter'com	X	X				
Aircon	X					

Ceiling fans	X	X				
Tape recorder	X					
Video camera	X					
Security alarm	X	X	X			
Standing fan		X				
Computer projection		X				
Remote security camera		X				
Vending machine panel lights		X				
Gas geyser		X				
Slide projector		X				
TV and VCR		X				
Extractor fan with hood		X				
Laboratory desk power points		X				
Network computer concentrator		X				
Automatic kettle		X				
Microphone		X		X		
Portable PA sound system						X
Stage & spot lights	X	X				
Electric till		X				
Pie warmer		X	X	X		

Table 2: Comparison of observed water sources and uses

	Heather	Centenary	Maximus	Highway	Khayalihle	Simunye
Total forms of uses	10	8	5	5	4	6
Kitchen taps	1	1	1	1	1	1
Toilet taps	1	1	1	1	1	1
Yard taps	1	1	1	1	1	1
Flush toilets	1	1	1	1	1	1
Swimming pool	1	1		1		
Fire extinguishers	1	1	Missing		Missing	1
Grounds hose / sprinklers	1	1				
Garden / drinking water feature	1	1	1			1
Washing machines	1					
Fish tank	1					

Table 3: Comparison of observed toilets

	Heather	Centenary	Maximus	Highway	Khayalihle	Simunye
Mirrors	✓	✓	-	missing	-	missing
Wash basins	ceramic	Ceramic	Ceramic	ceramic	metal	ceramic
Doors	Intact	Intact	Some missing	Intact	Intact	Intact
Towel rails	✓	✓	-	-	-	✓
Towels	✓	✓	-	-	-	-
Bins	-	✓	-	-	-	-
Graffiti	-	-	-	✓	✓	✓
Breakage	Seat missing	Wash basin with courtesy note	Seats missing	-	Seats missing	Bowls cracked
Toilets for people with disabilities	-	-	-	-	-	✓

Table 4: Comparison of observed numbers of telephones

	Heather	Centenary	Maximus	Highway	Khayalihle	Simunye
Total official telephones	2+	4+	2	2	2	1
Office phones	2	3[+]	1	1	1	1
Office fax	[1]	1	1	1	1	
Pay phones			1	1	1	
LAN Internet Concentrator		✓				

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