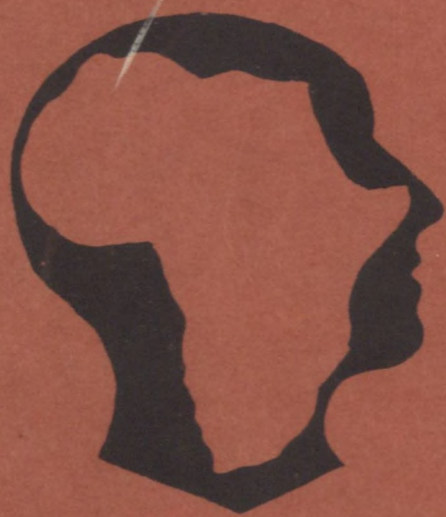# PSYCHOLOGY
IN
SOCIETY

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Psychology in society is a journal which aims to critically explore and present ideas on the nature of psychology in apartheid and capitalist society. There is a special emphasis on the theory and practice of psychology in the South African context.

This issue was produced by the DURBAN editorial group

CONTENTS

EDITORIAL

While there is no distinct theme that pulls the articles in this
edition together, the issues covered do cohere around two broad
central problems of concern to psychologists and social
scientists in South Africa at the moment.

The one set of articles (Natalie Leon and Susan Lea; Tammy Shefer
and Beatie Hofmeyr; Henk Eichhorn) raise some important issues
related to black students' experiences and social struggles on
the predominantly white university campuses in this country.
Leon and Lea's, and Shefer and Hofmeyr's arguments are based on
empirical work done with students at UCT last year. Whether one
agrees with their analyses/findings or not, one is forced to
accept the importance of doing this kind of empirical work if we
are to proceed beyond the statements of political sympathy about
non-racialism. It seems that we need to research the interstices
of the social psychology of 'race' as it affects black students
on the predominantly white campuses, if we are to contribute
meaningfully to understanding this social world. These two
contributions from UCT take us some way along this road.
Eichhorn's article, while not related directly to students'
experiences, raises some important considerations about the
social psychology of crowds. Seeing as blacks – students or other
social groups – are often amorphously 'seen' by the media as

'unruly mobs', 'angry crowd', 'rampaging youths', etc, his
article is therefore a useful theoretical summary of the social
psychological perspectives of crowds as a social phenomenon which
can elucidate our thinking about social movements in a more
complete and comprehensive way.

The other set of articles have to do with the restructuring of
mental health practices, one in relation to Nicaragua (Vogelman),
and the other South Africa (Perkel). Lloyd Vogelman's summary of
his discussion with Dr Sequeira - director of the psychiatric
hospital in Managua (the capital city of Nicaragua and head of
mental health training programme in that country) points to some
potentially optimistic outcomes around the practice of mental
health given a sympathetic government, and a government - unlike
our present regime - that takes seriously social issues and
practitioners involved in the social struggles around health.
Vogelman does not present his delightful discussion with Dr
Sequeira as a utopian solution to our mental health problems in
this country, but rather offers it as an important example of
what can be achieved given different social relations and hence
in this sense can become a basis for discussion for us in a
different social formation. It is at this point that Adrian
Perkel picks-up the argument in his rather provocative article.
Perkel argues that for clinical psychology to be located in
different social practices which address the central mental
health problems of working class communities some fundamental
changes, at a structural level, will have to be made. He poses
this question as a challenge to a lot of what goes for radical
interventions in clinical psychology in South Africa at the

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moment. He asks clinicians and their theorists to address some thorny issues concerning the articulation of clinical practice and social transformation. It is hoped that he does this in a way which will stimulate debate and further contributions about the applications of psychology in times of major social upheaval and reconstruction.

This number ends with a selection of book reviews from a range of South African publishers. While the texts are all quite varied they do - with the exception of the theoretical collection from the HSRC - point to life experiences bearing on the effects of (the history of) apartheid on ordinary people.

PSYCHOLOGY IN SOCIETY will be producing a special issue on PSYCHOANALYSIS early next year and would like to call for contributions in this area (see advert elsewhere in this edition).

The editorial collective has undergone some changes. In Johannesburg Clive Fullagar, Cheryl Narunsky, and Mahommed Seedat have left the editorial. Sam Karani, and Ian Moll (one of the founding editors) have joined the Johannesburg editorial group. In Durban Catherine Campbell has joined the editorial group.

Grahame Hayes

PSYCHOLOGY IN SOCIETY will be producing a special issue on
PSYCHOANALYSIS early next year.

Consistent with the editorial brief we would be particularly
interested in articles which try to locate the significance, or
irrelevance (!), of psychoanalysis in this country. In other
words we would especially welcome contributions about
psychoanalysis and social theory; psychoanalysis and social
struggles; psychoanalysis and apartheid; psychoanalysis and
socialism, etc.
The interest in psychoanalysis and social issues is not an
exclusive one, and hence we would also be interested in
interdisciplinary uses of psychoanalysis (literature, art, music,
sociology, politics); clinical or case study reports informed by
psychoanalytic theory and/or method; and in general any
interesting intellectual engagements with psychoanalytic culture.

The deadline for submissions is 12 December 1988.   Submissions
and queries should be directed to Grahame Hayes, Dept of
Psychology, University of Natal, Durban; OR Cyril Couve, Dept of
Psychology, University of Cape Town, Rondebosch.

Alienation amongst black students at a predominantly white university

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In South Africa today there are twenty-one universities. Like so many other aspects of existence in South Africa, universities are broadly segregated along racial lines. Certain universities are regarded as "open" universities - in effect these are mainly white English - speaking universities which accept some black students, but these remain very much in the minority. At UCT black students make up 20% of the university student body (van der Merwe, 1987). This situation raises questions about how black students adjust to attending a white majority campus.

There is considerable interest in what has been termed the "alienation" of university students (Holian, 1972). Many authors working in this field define alienation in accordance with Seeman (1959) who delineated four major components: meaningless, powerlessness, normlessness and social isolation. Keniston (1960) and others believe alienation to be a dominant theme in the lives of university students. Moreover, it has been postulated that students experience alienation with reference to society as a whole as well as within the university and other

specific contexts (Keniston, 1960). Some theorists have recognized the influence that social structures bring to bear upon creating the individual's feelings of alienation (Burbach and Thompson, 1973).

Loo and Rolison (1986) have sought in particular to examine the alienation of minority students at predominantly white universities in the USA. Their definition of alienation, based on Tinto's conceptual constructs of academic and social integration (1975, in Loo and Rolison, 1986), takes specific account of the position of ethnic minority students on university campuses. For this reason, the definition they provide is the most appropriate in terms of examining black students at white English-speaking universities in South Africa. We therefore define alienation in accordance with Loo and Rolison as "the outcome of one's holding values highly divergent from those of the social collectivity, and ... insufficient personal interaction with the other members of the collectivity" (1986:59-60), noting that alienation may occur in both the academic and social subsystems of the university.

There is substantial international evidence to suggest that all college students experience some degree of alienation. Various studies have sought to examine cross-cultural differences (eg. Tomeh, 1974) and the position of minority group students on campuses in different countries; for example Hong Kong (Ma, 1985). In the USA, one of the most recent and thorough studies is that of Loo and Rolison (1986). They conducted in-depth interviews with 109 minority group students and 54 white students. Their

findings revealed that "the sociocultural alienation of minority students was significantly greater than that of white students" (1986:64) and that minority group students felt that they faced more academic difficulties than white students.

Mphahlele (1982) has noted that black students at predominantly white campuses in South Africa experience similar feelings of alienation to those of minority students at American universities. Mphahlele views these feelings as resulting from pressure to surrender to the cultural values of the dominant white group. He notes further that the psychological experience of a minority group will involve a regrouping or voluntary segregation in order to protect their distinct cultural experience and self-image as black.

Few studies in South Africa have sought to systematically examine the position of black minority students on white majority campuses. However, a major study by Honikman (1982) investigated the experiences of first-year students at UCT in an attempt to identify factors that influence students' well-being and academic performance. Aiming for a holistic perspective, the author looked at social, emotional, political and academic functioning. The study devotes much time to the specific problems of black students, though these are not seen in isolation from the problems of students in general. Honikman found that social and emotional factors are highly influential in affecting the general well-being of students. In this regard, black students showed particularly severe and "a-typical"

problems. Difficulties encountered in the transition from school to university, compounded by inadequate educational background, were found to undermine the confidence of black students and to affect their academic performance. Black students were also found to experience greater initial confusion and feelings of alienation. More significantly, black students experienced accommodation, transport and finance problems which the author felt probably had wide ranging effects. She suggests further investigation of these material factors for the social, emotional and political difficulties they might generate. This she feels is important in understanding the attitudes and perceptions of black students.

It is Honikman's (1982) contention that these problems must be viewed in context; that is the university should be seen as a micro-society which is experiencing problems generated by the macro-society of apartheid South Africa. In this regard she gives details of apartheid legislation like Population Registration and Group Areas acts, education and security legislation, labour regulation, the homeland system, etc. which are seen to directly or indirectly affect all students at university. In other words the structure of the apartheid society has differential effects on black and white students and the position of these students on campus reflect those differences.

The connection between students on campus and the broader society has implications. Since universities are not seen to operate in a vacuum, Alexander (1985) puts forward the view that the student has a role to play in society. He notes that one cannot be a

student out of the context of total existence. Hence the black
student remains oppressed in society and at the university.
Struggle for liberation occurs both in society and on the
university campus. It is therefore part of the students' role to
challenge structures which are oppressive, including educational
structures that reproduce the values, ideals and rules of the
dominant class.

A recent study conducted by academics at Wits explored views of
"people of three different 'constituencies' to identify their
perceptions of Wits at present and elicit suggestions as to how
our university may play a more constructive and creative role in
the future" (Perceptions of Wits, 1986:2). Findings revealed
widespread agreement amongst all three groups that the university
could do more to support the disadvantaged community by
increasing access to university education and to decision-making
structures, and by making the university curricula, teaching and
research more relevant to the South African situation. Black
students in particular felt that more affirmative and radical
action was needed; for instance, opening dialogue with the ANC,
establishing resource centres for use by community organizations
and trade unions, and locating part-time courses within the
community.

The political function of education then may be seen as important
to a large number of persons in South Africa, as was
demonstrated by Danziger. He analysed the future
autobiographies of three groups of black African pupils who

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wrote about their expectations, plans and aspirations for the future. These revealed that pupils engaged in limited personal planning and were increasingly occupied with socio-political problems. Danziger suggested that the "tendency to see the future in social rather than individual terms represents a reaction to conditions of political oppression and social discrimination which govern the lives of these subjects" (1975:119). By contrast, trends in the white sample revealed that pupils were pre-occupied with realistic personal plans, similar to Euro-American patterns.

In a replication of this study, Du Preez and collegues (Du Preez, Bhana, Broekman, Louw and Nel, 1981) found that Black pupils tended to have a more revolutionary orientation to change than whites; that is, to view violent overthrow of the state as the only means for social change. Whites tended to move away from the conservative image found in Danziger's study, towards more liberal or catastrophic views of the future. These studies suggest that black pupils may evidence a greater concern for political rather than personal issues, and may adopt a more revolutionary standpoint with respect to these. This is not unexpected given the differing positions of black and white pupils in the broader society.

More recently, an analysis of how deeply social reality penetrates the personal sphere has been offered by Foster and Finchilescu (1986). They put forward the notion that South Africa is a society in which there is little interpersonal contact between 'races'. The authors criticise the contact hypothesis

which states that increased contact per se will improve intergroup relations. Using social identity theory, they argue that only contact of a certain type will bring about change. It is further argued that where there is a common goal to change the apartheid structure, there is also an effort to change racially defined group identities, for example in liberation movements and activist groups. In other words, interpersonal contact between people of different 'race-groups' such as on an open university campus is not enough to improve group relations since the social reality and group identity of those individuals will still be intact.

Given the scant opportunity for meaningful intergroup contact (Foster and Finchilescu, 1986), and the reality of voluntary segregation on both American (Loo and Rolison, 1986) and South African campuses, the perception of other 'racegroups' by a particular 'racegroup' is of considerable interest. Cooper (1981) proposed that this lack of intergroup contact results in different racegroups evidencing mistrust towards one another and his research findings suggest that this may indeed be the case. On the basis of these findings Cooper surveyed the attitudes of black students on UCT campus to being at a predominantly white university. He found that 90% reported feeling alienated in this regard. This finding supports the work of Honikman (1982) and Loo and Rolison (1986).

In summary, the scant South African literature on black students at predominantly white universities reveals that the problems

experienced by black students at white majority campuses are material, socio-political, psychological and academic. Moreover, socio-political factors are determinants of black student perceptions and attitudes. Finally, it is important to recognise that the racial divisions evidenced in South African society at large are reflected in the microcosm of the university.

It appears then that in South Africa the concept of alienation is not used, but that the problems of university students are seen in terms of the material, socio-political, psychological and academic. Alienation is implied, but explicit links are not made. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to employ the framework of alienation and within that, to explore the various factors which underlie this experience.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

A two-group design was employed for comparative purposes. A group of 10 black and 10 white students was selected. The term "black" refers to those students classified as "African" in terms of South African legislation. The rationale for the exclusive use of "African" students was that those students are usually the most disadvantaged and underprepared in terms of socio-economic status and educational background. Attempts to match the participants in the two groups proved difficult, but the variables of age and level of university training were controlled for.

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Sampling

The initial sampling pool was defined as all UCT first-year
students between the ages of 18 and 23 years, registered for
Psychology I. Random selection using psychology department
student records yielded too few black students who met the
criteria of age and level of university study and difficulty was
encountered in contacting the sample in this way. The first
author therefore approached the Psychology I class for
volunteers. This yielded 6 white students and one black student
who met the criteria. Since this sample was inadequate, further
participants were sought by asking interviewees for other
contacts. This seemed particularly important in the case of
black students who initially seemed wary of the motives of such
research.

The final sample therefore comprised of 10 black and 10 white
students, mainly from the Arts and Social Science faculties.
There was altogether 9 males and 11 females with a mean age of
19.5 years. Most white students had matriculated in 1986. Most
black students had matriculated earlier and had either worked or
studied before coming to UCT. Most white students came from
families where both parents had matric and some tertiary
education. The minority of black students came from homes where
parents had matric and tertiary education.

Procedure

Participants were contacted telephonically and asked to
participate in a study exploring their adjustment to UCT. Of

those whom the first author managed to contact, only one student refused to participate. Interviews were conducted on campus, lasted approximately one hour, and were taped in all cases except one. A semi-structured interview schedule was used which included both closed and open ended questions. The schedule covered the following broad areas: material problems, academic satisfaction, social and political experiences. All tapes were transcribed and quantitative and qualitative analyses performed.

FINDINGS

The findings revealed that black students experience far greater alienation than white students and that this stemmed from three broad areas, that is the material, the social and the academic.

Material

With respect to accommodation, transport and finance black students had more problems than white students. The majority of the former (90%) did not get into residence in the first semester and were forced to move from place to place. Lack of transport posed an added financial strain upon these particular students and encroached upon their study time, exemplified in the following quotation:

> "My friends helped me with some money for the taxi to Mowbray. Then I take the bus or walk to campus - using the library after hours was a problem in this way."

These kinds of problems made students feel unsettled and insecure, and appeared to have repercussions for their academic performance.

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White students did not have these problems because they were
still living with their parents (which reduced their expenses),
and the majority had adequate financial support and transport
arrangements.

Academic

Both black and white students felt underprepared for coming to
university. Although black students felt confident initially,
due to poor academic performance this confidence was undermined.
Most of the latter students were achieving low marks for course
work, failing exams and had to attend academic support programs.
By contrast, white students were performing better than they had
expected and had gained confidence from this.

All of the black students interviewed felt dissatisfied with
their academic performance. In the main these students had
difficulty in pinpointing their problems, feeling it was a
combination of factors as the following quotation illustrate:

> "I don't know exactly why, it's linked to
> many things"

Nevertheless, various problems were identified; these included
language difficulties, study skills, perceived prejudice and
difficulty with acclimatising to UCT. In addition, the material
problems mentioned earlier negatively affected black students in
particular, in that lack of adequate accommodation, financial
strain and transport difficulties detracted from time available
for academic pursuits.

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Social

The importance of the social sphere in the alienation of minority students has been noted (Loo and Rolison, 1986). Honikman (1982), for example, draws attention to the importance of social and emotional factors in the alienation or "well-being" of black students in particular at UCT. However, most authors in this field have neglected the role of the political sphere in influencing the alienation of university students. It is our contention that for the South African university student the political sphere is intrincally bound up with the social sphere, and that this needs to be acknowledged when discussing the alienation of these students.

Students were asked about the social and political aspects of their life at UCT. White students found it easy to separate these two areas whereas black students did not. All white students could identify with the values, goals and ideals of the university and expressed feeling integrated into the university, as one student put it:

> "It's a brilliant environment- I'm becoming
> increasingly more integrated."

Another student said:

> "It's what I expected - a jol"

These students felt that their political views were also congruent with those espoused by UCT. It therefore appears that white students do not feel alienated from the university since in terms of Loo and Rolison's definition they do not hold "values highly divergent from those of the social collectivity" (1986:60).

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By contrast 60% of black students described not feeling
integrated into the university as the following two quotations
illustrate:

> "UCT is just that place on the mountain.
> I am not part of this community."

> "I don't feel at home here - there are
> too many things to remind me it's a
> white university."

The university was seen not to cater for their social and
political needs and as representing only the interest of whites.
Consequently these students felt that the political views of the
university and their own were not congruent. They spoke at
length of this:

> "UCT has a non-racial policy in public,
> but this is not really so."

> "I found UCT hard, arrogant and out of
> touch with black suffering."

A number of authors have described black students as experiencing
alienation from the univerity in this way. These findings
support those of Vilakazi and Tema (1985) and Lea (1987).
Vilakazi and Tema noted that black students may have difficulty
in adjusting to what they term the "whiteness of the
university". Furthermore, Lea (1987) using Vilakazi and Tema's
concept, found that 73% of black students in her sample also
reported difficulty in adjusting to the "whiteness" of UCT.

Essentially white and black students were not interacting
socially with one another, a situation of voluntary segregation
which supports the work of Loo and Rolison (1986) and Lea (1987).
In fact, black students felt that UCT was racially polarized.

Thus one student commented:

> "I thought black and white conflict
> would be less at varsity level,but
> you still find people with racist
> ideas."

It thus appears, in accordance with Loo and Rolison's definition
of alienation , that black students at a predominantly white
university do experience feelings of alienation in that they hold
"values highly divergent from the social collectivity" and have
"insufficient personal interaction with other members of the
collectivity" (1986:60) The collectivity in this case
characterized by "white" values, goals and ideals.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this small and exploratory study suggests that
black students at a predominantly white university experience
greater feelings of alienation within that context than white
students.

The findings of this study illuminate the socio-political
components of black students' alienation. On a psychological
level, many of the black students interviewed felt distanced from
UCT, mainly because they felt they could not identify with the
values of the institution. The majority of black students in the
sample expressed political sentiments in this regard. For these
students, the political level is important for them as oppressed
people. The realization that the university environment mirrored
the divisions and dilemmas of the broader society came as a

serious disappointment. This would also imply that the struggle for liberation continues on campus and as such, black students cannot separate their political ideals and academic aspirations. As pointed out by Danziger (1975), socio-political goals for liberation took precedence over the personal, individualistic aspirations of black pupils, whereas white pupils had predominantly personalised goals. It is suggested here that this may also be the case for black and white students on UCT campus. In other words, the different life experiences of these students has resulted in them developing different goals and in experiencing the university differentially.

It could be said that the belief in the non-racial nature of UCT pervades sectors of the UCT community. While UCT may be following a non-racial policy, this study showed that students do not necessarily experience it as that. A blind belief in UCT as non-racial can lead to the denial of racially defined problems such as those problems explored in this study. Keeping in mind that such "racial" problems result from the system of apartheid, it could be argued that a denial of these problems can lead to complacency. While it is important for us to commit ourselves to a policy of non-racialism, it is alo important to raise our consciousness of the dynamics at play in this situation.

It is recognised that this study has various limitations, conceptually and methodically. The concept of alienation as used by Loo and Rolison (1986) remains somewhat vague and therefore requires further refinement. For example, Loo and Rolison do not explain what is meant by "insufficient personal interaction". A

qualitative methodology was considered to be the most appropriate means of investigating the experiences of black students on predominantly white university campusus. Although this method has gained increasing recognition in recent years (Kirk and Miller,1986), the small sample size and difficulty in matching the two groups of students place constraints upon the generalisability of the findings. Nevertheless, it is our contention that this study has highlighted some important concerns which should, in the future, be subject to more systematic research.

Finally, this study has implications for the university as a whole. The UCT community (i.e administration, staff and students) needs to become sensitive to the issues and concerns of black students. Thus the university should seek ways to minimise feelings of alienation of black students. This will necessarily involve critical self-examination on the part of the university in terms of whether it really is an agent of change, or a supporter of the status quo. Moreover, further research into the issues and concerns of black students is warranted if these are to be clearly understood by all concerned and if meaningful change is to be affected within predominantly white universities in South Africa.

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"Unrest" at UCT: Psychological sequelae of police action

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Beatie Hofmeyr

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Introduction

In the last week of April 1987, police reacted to student demonstrations at the University of Cape Town by invading the campus. This paper explores the psychological implications of police action for those students who were involved as victims and/or witnesses of this violence.

During the past two decades there have been intermittent clashes between police and protesting students at UCT. The protests have traditionally been confined to the grass embankment below campus and above the freeway. Over the years an informal protocol developed - police armed with sjamboks and teargas would arrive soon after the demonstrators sat down with their banners. The police usually grouped on the opposite side of the freeway. A period of negotiation with student leaders or university authorities would follow. Students would usually refuse to leave the area, a warning to disperse would be issued and students would leave the area. Police would withdraw soon afterwards. On the majority of such occasions no violence would be used by either side. On a few occasions teargas, batons or quirts were used to force the students to disperse or a number of students were arrested. There have been exceptions to this pattern - notably the student march to Athlone in 1976 and the dispersing of a demonstration in 1985, where police chased students using teargas and quirts against protesters.

Seen in a wider context of police action against opponents of Apartheid, action against students at "white" universities has always been relatively restrained and within the limits of the law. Among students a widely held assumption was that as long as you stuck to the informal protocol, you would not get hurt or arrested. It is because of this tradition that the police action during April 1987 came as a surprise to the students and staff of UCT, and the psychological sequelae among students have to be understood within this context.

On Friday, 24 April, students demonstrated in solidarity with
striking South African Railway and Harbour Workers Union (SARHWU)
members. This demonstration took place on the grass embankment
and was dispersed by police with teargas. On Monday, students
prepared to demonstrate again after a mass meeting. For the
first time police came onto campus. A helicopter hovered metres
above faculty buildings, police vehicles drove around the campus,
the library and lecture theatres were invaded by armed police and
groups of students and staff were beaten and chased. A few
students were bitten by police dogs and at least ten were wounded
when police ambushed a small group of students and opened fire
with shot guns. On Tuesday approximately 1000 students and staff
held a placard demonstration on the embankment. Police closed
the freeway to traffic and after about an hour of peaceful
protest, stormed the demonstrators from behind and dispersed the
crowd using sjamboks. 18 people were arrested and at least 9
were injured seriously enough to require medical attention.

Psychological implications of the "unrest" on campus

"It wasn't just a physical invasion on campus, it was actually an
emotional invasion as well"   (quote from student)

A violent confrontation must be understood as having
psychological implications for those involved. Psychologists and
psychiatrists utilise the notion of a "post-traumatic stress
disorder" to describe the effects of external stressful
experiences on individuals who witness or are the victims of
these events (DSM-111, 1980). Research on stress related to
violence has focussed on areas like the effect of war on
soldiers, the effects of natural disasters, and the psychological
implications of civil unrest on adults and children (Gibson,
1986). The post-traumatic stress disorder has also been applied
to individual experiences of trauma like rape, physical assault,
detention and torture.

In South Africa there has been an increasing focus on the
psychological effects of the present political crisis on the
people of this country. Research arising from academics and
community organisations (involved in providing support for the
victims) have focussed on two main areas: the effects of violence
in the townships on adults and children (for e.g. Straker, 1986);
and on the effects of detention and torture (for e.g. Foster,
Davis and Sandler, 1986; Detainee Counselling Services, 1985).
The term post-traumatic stress disorder has been used in both
these contexts to describe the psychological effects of these
experiences.

The events on campus are clearly an example of a stressful event
which brings with it psychological implications for those
involved. Despite the fact that it was an acute example of
violence in an increasingly violent society (and seems irrelevant
in the context of experiences of township residents),
highlighting the students' experiences can only add to mental
health workers' understanding of these issues.

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Interviews were carried out with 15 students (3 women, 12 men) involved as witnesses or victims. In order to tabulate quantitative measures, checklists (based on categories drawn from the post-traumatic stress disorder) were also utilized. Of the sample, 8 students were physically assaulted (4 shot, 4 beaten with sjamboks).

Emotional responses at the time
During the attacks on students, emotions experienced ranged from shock or surprise (reported by 73%), to panic and fear (reported by 53%), to feelings of powerlessness (73%) and a predominant experience of anger and frustration (87%). Students who had been involved in demonstrations before were expecting some response from the police, but many were shocked at the extent of the violence and the fact that the police had actually come onto campus. This was clearly related to a shattering of expectations concerning the informal protocol of action between police and UCT students:

    I could not believe that they'd actually come on to campus.
    It was a really peaceful protest. I was really shocked by
    the whole thing.

    What I was amazed at was that they went as far as they did,
    and that evoked the horror ...

Feelings of surprise/shock were related to the nature of the attacks, that is an unexpected attack from behind on Monday, and the use of plain-clothed police on Tuesday, for example:

    I was probably confused. It was completely unexpected. If I
    had been taunting one of the "boere", maybe I would have had
    very different emotions. But the fact is I was just sitting
    there peacefully and the next thing I was running without any
    time to think ...

Together with shock, was the experience of fear, specifically related to anticipating detention and arrest. After the initial shock and fear/panic response, the overriding experience of students was that of anger, outrage and frustration. For many, the experience of anger was associated with a feeling of powerlessness:

    I felt a total helplessness. I'd say that was my predominant
    feeling the whole time ... We were a group of students who
    were witnessing something that was hurting us. We were
    innocent and the people being hurt were innocent. Yet there
    was nothing we could do.

    I felt really powerless - that was the major thing. Here they
    come cruising onto our campus, armed to the teeth and there's
    nothing you can do about it. There's a complete lack of power
    as basically we were experiencing the end point of state
    power.

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The feeling of not being able to respond, or to defend oneself against the greater power of the police, was a particularly frustrating and negative experience. Many people felt a strong desire to protect themselves by responding in some active way to the police. The desire to repond aggressively was reported by 73% of the sample and expressed as follows:

> In the heat of the moment, most people who were there wanted to get back at the police ... I'm sure if we were armed at that point there would have been a lot of shit !

> If I had a gun, would I have bumped that guy off ? I actually think I would have, which is kind of worrying ...

Post-stress response

Most students, even those who had been through similar experiences, found that the confrontations on campus had some effect on their daily routine, feelings and behaviour, for the days immediately following. All of the responses reported are present within the psychiatric formulation of the post-traumatic stress disorder (DSM-111, 1980).

- Recurring images of the event/s and preoccupation with thinking about them was reported by 73% of the sample:

> I woke up this morning thinking about it. It's been coming back to me during the day. It's one thing hearing about it and seeing it on a screen, but to actually be in it, is something different.

> There is this one policeman I keep seeing - short, fat character - his whole face fills his visor and his nose pushes up against it. This image just keeps recurring.

Preoccupation with the events was also illustrated by the desire to verbalize them and to express what they were feeling (reported by 73%):

> I haven't talked about anything else for a week and that freaks me out as well. You just can't escape it. You can't escape thinking about it, talking about it, dreaming about it. Everything is related to it ... the horror, the violence.

> That night, I specifically made a point of bringing up the issue. It had been bottled up inside of me all day.

- Lack of concentration was reported by 93%. The compulsive thinking about the events was cited as one reason for this:

> On Monday (after the Friday events), I had to give a tut and I found it unbelievably difficult. I found that even while I talked I just had these images of the police and the teargas.

> I spent 15 hours writing an 8 page essay and everytime I would get over one section, then suddenly this whole thing would come flooding back ...

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Lack of concentration was also related to a general lack of
interest in their normal routine, including work and recreation.
53% of the sample reported feelings of disorientation and
experiencing their daily routine as irrelevant, for example:

> Everything's changed. It's as if I've been in a tumble dryer.
> I feel a total lack of direction, of meaning. I'm not what I
> normally am. I feel as if something inside me has been
> severed. It's a feeling of detachment. Everything just loses
> significance. I can't find interest in anything.

> Everything else seems more important than your own life. Your
> normal life becomes small and irrelevant by comparison. I
> can't believe that people are just normally going to
> lectures. It just feels bizarre because everything feels
> upside down.

> There is a feeling of incredible disparity in terms of your
> lifestyle. What am I doing here ? Being on campus, I just
> could not carry on working. I could not help thinking that I
> should be doing something else, rather than studying.

- Anxiety related responses, like tension, nervousness,
irritability and restlessness were experienced by two-thirds of
the sample:

> I would not have noticed, but I've been told that I've been
> quite impatient with people, arguing over details that I
> wouldn't have normally argued about.

> Last night my housemate said "you're behaving so strangely".
> I had been through a crisis earlier in the year and she said
> it was like how I was then.

For some, the irritability was related to feelings of frustration
with individuals, on campus and off, who were not concerned with
the political situation in the country:

> I work at a restaurant. I look at the people around and I
> just want to go up to them and shake them. There is an
> impatience with them - they must open up their eyes.

For four interviewees, the heightened anxiety stimulated an
increased use of substances like cannabis, tobacco or alcohol, in
order to relax. Exaggerated startle response was also common
(reported by 53%). Interviewees described the experience of
being easily startled by sudden noises, especially those sounding
like shots (e.g. car back-firing):

> I'm like a live wire. The slightest thing sets me off into
> this feeling of panic and terror.

> I can understand how people get shell shocked. I've almost
> dropped on my stomach a couple of times.

- Sleep disturbances, related to increased arousal, including nightmares, late night and early morning insomnia and sleeping too much, was reported by 73% of the sample (two of these were injury related).

- Emotional lability and mood disturbances were reported by a third of the sample. Most interviewees described an intensification of their emotions. For some there was a depressed mood, while others described emotional fluctuations:

> I have been feeling really depressed. I don't know if its a function of actually being hit. I just felt, in a sense, an emotional mutilation ... I think it stems from not being able to respond - from helplessness.

- Fantasies, particularly violent ones, related to responding to the police, were reported by a third of the sample and were often shared with friends:

> I said to a friend today "I think I should buy a gun". Of course it was a fantasy !

> I would love to see that helicopter blown out of the sky !

Political consciousness

> They try to beat your beliefs out of you. In fact, it doesn't work. They just intensify those feelings. They politicize you even more. (quote from student)

The experience on campus was not only traumatic, but one which precipitated changes in individual's political belief systems. These changes were strongly related to the feelings of anger and powerlessness experienced at the time. Students felt that they could now identify with the experiences of oppressed people in the country, which lead to increased support for their struggles:

> There are people living in the townships like this all the time ... I keep remembering that moment when I saw those "boere" coming towards me - that's how it must be living in the townships, walking out and seeing the "boere" and wondering if they've come for you.

> What was happening here is just a small part of what's happening in the whole country ... What we experienced is what a lot of people in this country experience.

> For once I felt like I was really on their side. I feel more for their cause now.

The emotions of anger and the desire to respond to the police actions, also facilitated a new understanding of violence. Being the victims of a violent action allowed them to understand, not merely in a theoretical sense, but in an empathetic sense, how being violated can lead to the desire to defend oneself or to respond in a violent way. This personalised understanding of violence stimulated in all interviewees, the need to re-evaluate their attitudes towards violence within the political struggle:

I just felt really angry ... I still don't think that I'm
capable of picking up a stone and hurling it, but I can
really understand and identify with people who did feel that
because I was starting to feel really violent at the way they
were treating us.

You begin to understand why people do turn to violence and
that's something I haven't been able to justify before. I'm
beginning to understand more ... not rationally, but
emotionally I can understand why.

I try to cling to ideas of non-violence but when things like
this happen, it becomes realistically difficult to hope for
that. It has resulted in a narrowing of choice. I still don't
see violence as being the answer but there's difficulty in
seeing anything else.

This kind of thing shocks one out of being academic about
violence !

Following both the emotions experienced at the time as well as
the disturbances in normal life following the events, changes in
political attitudes and motivation for action were reported by
100% of the sample. For those already concerned about the
political situation, the experience spurred them on to greater
involvement:

On Friday, I came very close to just chucking up everything
and getting seriously involved. But I think it is better if
I stay and finish my studies. It's forcing me to realize that
I can't just sit around ...

It's had an effect on my motivation, not my direction. I've
been kind of involved here and there, but now I'm really far
more keen to actually get involved with leadership and
planning. It's too psychologically clean to say: "the boy
was beaten and now he's ready to fight". But the motivation
is certainly there to a larger degree than it was before.

Those not involved in organisations or who were doubtful of their
political position, were motivated to feel more opposed to the
present status quo and to desire more involvement in challenging
it:

To a large extent I had been fence-sitting before. Now there
is no question about which side I'm on.

I'm taking sides now. I've always been pretty blase' about
it: "It's not my struggle. I'm just a 'whitey' on the
sidelines." But now I realize that the abuse of police of
their power is not only directed at blacks, but at the
community as a whole, at any one who challenges them.

The central psychological aspect within these changes or
reinforcements in attitude, appears to be the personalisation of
intellectual ideas which was inherent in the experience:

> On a fairly intellectual level I've felt the same way up here
> that I feel now very much down here. Whereas before it was
> based on ideology, it is now very much a gut feeling

> You grow up in a liberal family, school ... one believes in
> things without actually believing in them. But when you're
> confronted with the reality, with things one has only heard
> about, you suddenly have to believe in what you profess to
> believe. It's far more real ... I don't believe I really had
> integrity before.

Associated with these changes in political attitudes, was the
effect on students' attitudes towards the forces of "law and
order". Extreme negative feelings towards the police and state
authorities emerged. Any credibility or legitimacy which the
police might have had was seriously undermined:

> A month ago, I would have said perhaps that troop assistance
> is needed in the townships. Now I feel that it is a menace
> there, because I know what they do.

> I've always had a fairly negative view of them, but I suppose
> I'm waking up to the fact that they can really take the law
> into their own hands ... this has certainly come a long way
> towards strengthening my negative feelings.

> I never knew that the police did incite violence until I saw
> it. They were really being provocative ... They can't tell me
> that they're here to keep the peace. I just won't believe
> that anymore.

The experience served not only to undermine the police as
peace-keepers or protectors, but to construct them as the enemy:

> The perception of the police as enemy is emerging for me. Now
> I'm identifying them as the enemy. I'm taking sides.

Conclusion
It has been shown that events on campus, April 1987, where
students were the victims and/or witnesses of violent
confrontations, had implications for their psychological
well-being and political consciousness. Many of the
characteristics of a post-traumatic stress disorder were present
in some form for all those interviewed.

It is evident that the emotions of anger, powerlessness, fear and
shock experienced at the time, as well as the post-stress
effects, had implications for the attitudinal schema of those
interviewed. Liberal and radical views about the S.A. situation
were reinforced, and motivation to actively challenge the status
quo was reinforced or invoked.

Students were stimulated to re-evaluate their attitudes towards
violence as a means of political struggle and defence against
police action. The overriding attitudinal outcome was an
increased support and/or understanding of violent action within
the present political context.

Negative attitudes towards the police were stimulated or
increased in intensity. On many levels, the direct experience of
state violence personalised the political situation and
experiences of the oppressed people of this country for those
interviewed.

It is the process of personalisation, the interpretation of
theoretical/academic knowledge into emotional experience, that
can be seen as central to the changes in attitude and belief
structures reported here. In a real sense, the actions of the
police did not have the effect of silencing student protest.
Rather they served to intensify this site of resistance.

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Psychological perspectives on crowding: A materialist critique

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INTRODUCTION

Social and environmental psychologists engaged in crowding
research have traditionally employed idealist rather than
materialist perspectives. This paper argues that idealist
perspectives have a number of fundamental shortcomings which
inhibit their ability to come to grips with their subject matter.

Traditionally, crowding is taken as the starting point for
research, with associated psychological consequences and
processes being central issues of concern. Traditional
scientific methodology, and its assumed neutrality, is never
questioned except in order to seek methodological refinements.
In this way, researchers have been able to ignore the web of
relations which provides the context within which crowding
occurs.

The paper is divided into two main sections. The first initially
outlines significant research, together with a methodological

evaluation of this work, and later presents some of the major

theoretical dimensions posited, with a critique of these. The

second section attempts to extend the theoretical critique by

suggesting a number of issues which are avoided in traditional

work in the field, and which are held to fundamentally influence

the phenomenon of crowding.

1. TRADITIONAL CROWDING STUDIES

Problems of definition

Problems are of two types. Some (particularly older) studies

view terms such as "crowding", "density", and even "slum

conditions" as interchangeable, while others claim that each term

relates to a different "thing" : see, for example, Jacob (1965:

218). A fairly widely-accepted measure of clarity has been

achieved by Freedman (1975), who views "crowding" as a

psychological state and "density" as a physical one. The second

type of definitional problem relates to the meaning of specific

terms. "Crowding" has been defined as the amount of space per

person; the excess of demand for space over supply; excessive

social stimulation; loss of personal control; and the

"overmanning" of a situation see Fischer, Baldassare, and Ofshe

(1975). To escape the definitional trap Zlutnick and Altman

(1972) resort to a three-part description including
"situational/environmental characteristics", "inter-personal
events", and "personal/subjective events".

As can be seen, although environmental and interpersonal factors
may be included in attempts to definition, wider-scale social
processes are excluded. In particular, the process of poverty is
taken as a given, to which the "lower and working class" respond
through coping strategies in relation to a dangerous living
environment (see for example, Yancey, 1971: 4).

Leaving these difficulties aside for the moment, it is apparent
that crowding and density are related concepts, and that they
operate across different environmental scales.

Experimental studies

The fundamental aim of this approach is, to quote two prominent
researchers, "one of generalizing the laws and relationships
uncovered under highly controlled, artificial laboratory settings
with regard to the role of individual stimulus variables to the
effects of corresponding environmental variables on behaviour"
(Wohlwill and Kohn, 1976: 20-21).

Interests in the topic of crowding was greatly stimulated by John Calhoun"s experiments with rats, living at high density for prolonged periods. Over time behaviour such as homosexuality, rape, autism, delinquency and cannibalism occurred. Calhoun referred to this condition as a "behavioural sink," and concluded that crowding led the rats to "go beserk" (Calhoun, 1962: 147).

Probably the best-known experimental studies using human subjects are those conducted by Freedman et al (see Freedman et al, 1972), who placed subjects in rooms of various sizes, and studied subsequent behaviour patterns such as social interaction and severity of "mock jury" judgements. The general procedure adopted by Freedman has been extensively used in other studies. Zeedyk-Ryan and Smith (1083) found that crowded subjects exhibited higher levels of anxiety and hostility than non-crowded controls, and that this intensified over time. Worchel and Hunter (1984) studied perceived crowding in subjects watching "arousing" or "nonarousing" movies under conditions of "appropriate" or "inappropriate" social spacing. They argue that arousing movies reduced the experience of crowding because arousal was attributed by the subjects as due to the movie rather than to spatial restrictions.

Various other kinds of experiments have been conducted. Desor (1972) requested subjects to place human figures in a model room

until the room was felt to be crowded. Results indicated that appropriate density was heavily influenced by the type of activity suggested as taking place in the room, and also by architectural features such as barriers and partitions. Six, Martin, and Pecher (1983) used diagrams of simulated crowding situations to study effects of various variables on perceived crowding and discomfort in the USA and West Germany. Results are complex, with a general finding being that interpersonal distance is a more important variable than numbers of people present. A problem here is that perceptions and stereotypes may have been reflected in these studies, rather than behaviour (see Epstein and Baum, 1978).

Generalizations are difficult to draw from these studies. Variations regarding the definition of "crowding" have led to wide variation in experimental conditions to test these conceptions. Animal experiments are sometimes lauded, sometimes debased. Durations of crowding, seating arrangements, numbers of subjects, types of activity, measures of behaviour, and units of statistical analysis (individual or group), have all ranged widely. These factors all suggest that a fundamental aim of the experimental approach, that of generalisability to the real world, is certainly not being met.

Naturalistic observations

Several researchers, dissatisfied with laboratory surrogates of the "real world", have undertaken observational studies under natural conditions.

Schmidt (1984) conducted two field studies (one in a bookstore in the USA, the other in a residential environment in Singapore) in testing the relationship between stress and annoyance. He considered this data to support a current theory of crowding stress which explains reactions to the physical environment on the basis of perceived personal control over events. He found some evidence for cross-cultural generalisability for this explanation.

In recent years a number of studies have investigated the effects of crowding in prisons. Cox, Paulus, and McCain (1983) found that, in general, crowding appeared to be related to increased pathology.

The large difference between these studies is symptomatic of the body of research of which they form a minute sample. The enormous variations between individual studies make generalization to the population at large a hazardous

undertaking. As is the case with the experimental studies discussed previously, this is a severe handicap in view of the idealist wish to do so. This problem is usually considered transient, eventually to be overcome through more rigorous research in which the phenomenon of crowding will become precisely defined. When this is achieved, its manipulation as an independent variable would become unproblematic. This view does not consider the methodology used to apprehend the phenomenon of crowding as part of the problem: instead, the methodology is considered neutral in relation to it. In this way, crowding becomes reified, with a status independent of the methodology used to research it. The methodology is held to protect the subject of research from whatever ideological biases the researcher might unwittingly have.

Housing studies

A considerable body of work exists in this field, the majority of which has been based on interviews with, and reports of, residents.

The best-known study is probably that of the Pruitt-Igoe Housing Project in St Louis (Missouri), which consisted of 43 large residential buidings. It had a widespread reputation as

being an "extreme example of the pathologies associated with lower-class life" (Yancey, 1971: 7). Yancey goes on to argue that such conditions are at least partially attributable to the physical design, and recommends that a sense of "turf" be encouraged through the design of semi-public spaces in such buildings, to which adjacent residents are presumed to respond with a sense of identification and organization. Even in terms of Yancey's own research, this simple rearrangement of space may be incapable of resolving the severe interpersonal conflicts (including gang warfare, assaults, rapes and murders) found at Pruitt-Inge: "informal social networks did not form in the corridors and stairwells"; and friendships bore little or no relationship to the physical proximity of families to each other" (Yancey, 1971). Yancey's concern with reflecting the social status quo (rather than with reflecting upon it) is encapsulated in his conclusion: "If housing must be designed for the ghetto - ... - the architect can make some small contribution by facilitating the constructive adaptations that have emerged as a means of defense against the world of the lower class" (Yancey, 1971: 16). The dismal failure of Pruitt-Igoe as a living environment is reflected in the fact that the entire project has since been demolished.

The failure to focus upon social issues is common amongst such studies: unfavourable social conditions, which are observed as

operating on an interpersonal level, are seen as at least
partially the result of the incorrect architectural arrangement
of the living environnment. It is the improvement of the spatial
configuration of space which is the primary emphasis of these
studies. The balance of the cause of these unfavourable social
conditions is not addressed, and is located in an amorphous mass
of social forces which are seen to be beyond the individual's
ability to change.

Research examining cross-cultural instances of crowding has been
reviewed by Mitchell (1975), who concludes that many societies
have been able to maintain housing levels at a high density
without unusally high levels of pathology being apparent.
Duckitt (1983) studied effects of household crowding in a sample
of "Coloured" South Africans, living in a "dormitory suburb for
an industrial center" (1983: 233). He found crowding to be
associated with adverse psychological effects, manifested by
increased negative affect rather than decreased positive affect.
He notes the influence of Group Areas legislation, and suggests
that residential crowding may be perceived as a political issue
by residents. He considers it possible that this perception
might have affected their psychological response to crowding, but
does not pursue this line of reasoning.

The case-study nature of much of the research on residential crowding obviates the drawing of generalizations. However, literature emphasises the importance of physical design of the environment: this orientation is to be expected owing to the situation of environmental psychology's subject matter on the interface between psychology and the spatial and design-orientated fields. Nonetheless, to ignore the antecedents of crowding may be viewed as accepting crowded conditions as a starting-point from which to engage in drawing correlations with other social interpersonal conditions, and never to embark on an exploration of why these conditions arose in the first place.

We now turn to the implications that these various studies have for theory.

Theoretical perspectives

The above research has been, without exception, conducted within the positivist, idealist conception of science. As may be expected, therefore, the equivocal nature of the research findings has led to a wide variety of explanatory models.

This section cannot possibly be exhaustive, and rather seeks to highlight some of the problems and contradictions. Two of the more interesting theories will be outlined.

A problem already dealt with is that of definitional incoherence: see section 1.2 A second problem is that of factors which are seen to affect, or be affected by, the crowding variable. Typically, these are induced from research findings rather than being derived from theoretical models. The consequence is a constantly-expanding "check-list" of factors, which makes statements such as "... no research on crowding offers conclusive evidence" (Loo, 1977: 156) an inevitability. Accordingly, many alternative explanations have been posited. Some theorists (for example, Mitchelson, 1977), in attempting to mold the multiplicity of theories into a single, overarching one, do no more than add to the proliferation.

The nature of theory in this field can best be illustrated by an example. A widely-quoted and respected theory is the "Density-Intensity" theory postulated by Freedman (1097), which arose from experimental research findings such as those mentioned in section 1.2 above. High density is held not to affect arousal at all, "but rather serves to intensify the individual's typical reaction to the situation" (1975: 90). This "typical reaction" is based upon the individual's evaluation of the situation as being inherently pleasant or unpleasant, and Freedman has found this to be sex-specific. He theorises that "it is likely that for most

men in our society, entering a room full of men in a formal, scientific setting is a somewhat threatening experience. Men typically think of other men as rivals, are suspicious of other men, and in particular are prepared to have to prove themselves or to compete with other men (Freedman, 1975: 96) Therefore, a room full of men is seen by men as hostile, thus unpleasant; the fuller the room, the more intense the unpleasant feeling of being crowded. On the other hand, "women compete less with each other.... In fact, most women probably respond to a group of other women as a potentially interesting, intimate, friendly group" (Freedman, 1975: 96-97). (One might be tempted to assume, therefore, that the more women there are in a room the happier they become!).

The experiences of this paper dictate that Freedman's theory cannot be evaluated in depth, fruitful though such an exercise might be. However, three main points may be made with regard to the theoretical perspectives outlined above, when seen as a whole: firstly, the "facts" are seen as residing in the world, and it is merely a matter of time before the "correct" understanding or objective "truth" is achieved; secondly, these theories have an inherently conservative bias in that their "facts" and the conditions within which they reside are taken as given and are not analysed in relation to the wider scientific

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and social contexts in which they are embedded; and thirdly, related to the first point, they are "modelled on the Newtonian paradigm of the physical sciences, which views man as equivalent to a physical object whose actions are determined purely by external forces" (Ellis, 1982: 123).

This latter point has introduced a relatively new perspective into the theoretical superstructure of environmental psychology: Rom Harre's ethogenic approach (see Stringer, in Adams-Webber, 1979; Ellis, 1982).

Social transactions are the starting point for this approach, and are the unit of study. The structure of such transactions is only ascertainable by reference to the accounts of participants, engaged in them, of their behaviour and its antecedants. The physical environment is not seen as deterministic, but is rather relevant for study insofar as it affects the social goals of the participants involved in a particular episode. The application of this approach to studies of crowding is still in early stages of development, but appears to offer considerable promise. As Ellis comments, "the study of spatial language has hardly started" (Ellis, 1982: 124). However, the ethogenic approach nonetheless steers away from the reintegration of the phenomenal episode in the wider social and structural context from which it

was originally abstracted, and is thus incapable of examining the social processes which allow it to exist. For to suggest that the fundamental social reality is to be found at the interpersonal level is to ignore the existence of other levels of social organization; and if they are acknowledged to exist must either be understood as having their own reality (which is clearly untenable from the ethogenic viewpoint), or as multiples of interpersonal espisodes (which could be understood as denying the fundamental structure roles played by (for example) ideology and education in society).

General evaluation

Two related problem themes may be isolated from the literature which has been examined in section 1.

Firstly, most research studies and their attendant theories have tended to understand the phenomenon of crowding as something "out there", existing independently of the methodologies, apparatus, and theories used to apprehend it. This would appear to be a direct consequence of the philosophical tradition of positivism in which they are embedded, according to which variables of study are viewed as properties of an independent object. As such, they become potentially measurable. It is then the work of positivist science to separate the variable under study from its entangle-

ments with other variables, and thereafter to record its extent
and "interactions", if applicable. In this way the object of
study becomes removed from its context of relations.

The second problem theme is that crowded conditions are addressed
as givens and by implication as unchangeable. The work of the
researcher is required to remain untainted by political
considerations, although such forces may be acknowledged as
enjoying a separate (rather unscientific) existence. It is
therefore not considered desirable, from within the framework of
traditional crowding studies, to undertake a critical analysis of
the processes by which crowded conditions are created.

It is upon a consideration of the implications of these problems
that the next section is based.

IDEOLOGICAL DIMENSIONS OF CROWDING

The primary concern of this section is not with crowding as such,
but rather with the processes which produce crowded conditions.
This concern will be examined initially from liberal perspectives
on the nature of the problem, and subsequently from materialist
perspectives. The point from which this exploration begins is
the almost axiomatic finding that crowded conditions and poverty
are related, and often co-exist in a given geographic area.

Jacobs (1965) writes that: "Overcrowding within dwellings or rooms...is almost always a symptom of poverty or of being discriminated against" (Jacobs, 1965: 220).

Liberal perspectives

Generally, from within this viewpoint, the "poor" are understood in a factual sense: for example, having a mean income less than a given proportion of that of society as a whole. The liberal solution to the problem of poverty is to provide better opportunities for the disadvantaged, such as better education or the undertaking of income equalization programmes. The question of whether such policies can in fact eradicate poverty is debatable: parallels with the "better design means less crowding" argument are evident.

The intertwined nature of the political and economic system is a major factor in the evaluation of whether or not poverty-eradicating policies can succeed in their aims. Goodman (1972) states that "it is clear that, in common with other capitalist states, there has been a converging identity of interest between business and government" (Goodman, 1972: 45). The maintenance of poverty, and conditions of crowding found in relation to it, must be considered an implicit "given" of the capitalist mode of

production. It is precisely upon this given that traditional
crowding studies are based.

It is within this framework that Michelson (1977), speaking of
the conditions under which high-rise apartment blocks come to be
erected, says that "we have to rule out consumer demand for this
type of housing from the start. ... Rather most people credit
this phenomenon to... (high land values). When land becomes
highly expensive, it is quite rational to divide such a cost
among many potential residents rather than to create other forms
of housing that are priced outside the borderlines of
marketability" (Mitchelson, 1977: 216). It is of course, within
such high-rise apartment blocks that research into housing found
high levels of crowding.

Materialist perspectives

As a natural extension of Mitchelson's (1977) point noted above,
David Harvey (1973) says that "it is a general characteristic of
ghetto housing that if we accept the mores of normal, ethical,
entrepreneurial behaviour, there is no way in which we can blame
anyone for the objective social conditions which all are willing
to characterize as appalling and wasteful of potential housing
resources. It is a situation in which we can find all kinds of

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contradictory statements 'true'. Consequently, it seems
impossible to find a policy within the existing economic and
institutional framework which is capable of rectifying these
conditions" (Harvey, 1973: 140-141).

Castells (1977) writes: "The sociological problematic of housing
must set out from a reversal of the usual psycho-social themes
and centre itself on the analysis of the process of production of
a certain durable commodity (i.e., housing), in the diversity of
its qualities, forms, status and in relation to the economic
market and, consequently, its social context" (Castells, 1977:
149). In doing so, he recognizes housing as an essential element
in the reproduction of labour power. As such, it follows the
movements of concentration, dispersal, and distribution of the
working class. When industry becomes grafted onto an already-
existing urban fabric, it "causes a strong migratory movement
whose dimensions go well beyond the building and amenity
capacities of a city inherited from an earlier mode of
production. Thus the shortage of housing, the lack of amenities
and the unhealthy conditions of the residential space are a
result of the sudden increase in urban concentration, in a
process dominated by the logic industrialization" (Castellis,
1977: 149).

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Marx, in his paper "the housing question", wrote that "In such a
(capitalist) society the housing shortage is no accident; it is a
necessary institution and can be abolished together with all its
effects on health, etc., only if the whole social order from
which it springs is fundamentally refashioned" (quoted in
Castells, 1977: 146). From this perspective, to believe that
crowding can be overcome by merely manipulating the arrangement
of the physical environment, as proposed by traditional research,
is very wide of the mark indeed.

CONCLUSION

This paper provides no more than a very brief overview of an
extensive body of literature, and only tentative explorations
into theoretical perspectives and implications. Inevitably, more
questions are raised than erased, particularly with regard to the
application of a theoretical perspective which strays far from
those traditionally used.

Does the materialist critique invalidate traditional crowding
research? In the context of the socio-economic system in which
it is immersed, which produces crowding as a byproduct of its
central process of generating wealth for those who own the means
of production, the answer must be "yes". However, such a

categorical rejection needs to be tempered by research findings, however interpreted: that is, that some relation does appear to exist between crowded conditions and sociopathy and psychopathology. It is essential to apply such data to the process of assessing the social and psychological impact of the environment, and of proposed development, on those likely to function within it. Particularly in the USA, the psychologist is beginning to play a substantial role in environmental inpact assessments, and it is to be hoped that in the future in South Africa the importance of this role will be recognized.

However, from the perspective of theoretical understanding, it would appear that current mainstream theories can only obscure underlying issues, and are incapable of engaging them in the task of ameliorating the social and psychological problems which exist in tandem with crowded conditions. A fundamental restructuring is required if these issues are to be addressed.

For most South Africans, crowded living conditions are part of life. Duckitt (1983) suggests that these conditions may be perceived as a political issue by those who endure them. For those who seek to undertake research from a community-based perspective, it is clearly necessary to break with tradiitonal scientific neurtrality, and to take up such issues. The wider context of crowding can no longer be ignored.

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Towards a model for a South African clinical psychology

Adrian K Perkel

Apartheid and mental ill-health are inextricably linked in South Africa (Vogelman, 1986). A radical transformation at the structural level remains a prerequisite for appropriate change. In this context neutrality by psychologists is a myth and the choosing of sides an inherent necessity (Dawes, (1985). The clinical psychologist who acknowledges this need and does so is faced with a difficult problematic. How, in attempting to resolve the broad structural issues of societally produced mental ill-health and make him/herself relevant to this task, does the psychologist use his or her skill as a psychologist ? In other words, how do we resolve the tension between the clinical psychologist dealing with the individual or system clinically and the need to address the issues of the community or society. Two issues arise:

1. Are clinical skills useless in embarking on a "community psychology" path - how do we make ourselves clinically relevant to the community we serve ?
2. Can any activist not do the task of the "community psychologist" with equal efficiency ?

Prior to tackling these fundamental issues which will begin
to provide us with a conceptual model for attacking the
problematic, an important myth needs to be dealt with.
Many psychologists in attempting to deal with the problems
outlined above and make themselves relevant, have opted for a
community psychology approach, one which is posited to begin
to broach the tension between individual and community.

This approach looks beyond the individual and attempts to
treat the system instead by empowering communities or
sections of it to change their circumstances. The primary
area of focus is in the broader community. According to
Heller and Monahan (1977) community psychologists are
interested in the health and well-being of all members of a
community.

> "The work of community psychologists is focussed on
> improving community life for all citizens, preventing
> disorder, and in promoting psychological well-being in
> the population. Unlike most clinical psychologists,
> community psychologists do not restrict the scope of
> their concern to those with established disorders" (pp.
> 4-5).

Amongst the roles defined by Heller et al for the community
psychologist is helping citizens organise to more
effectively accomplish their goals by being interested in
improving the health and well-being of community members
through research and action oriented toward producing
significant social change.

In a paper by Lazarus (1986) dealing with community
psychology in South Africa, the prime focus of community
psychologists in South Africa revolved around interracial
tensions, education system, resources, social class
inequalities, public policy (such as Apartheid structures)
and the preparation for a future South African society. The

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empowerment and social action perspective were considered the basis of community psychology interventions in South Africa.

Rappaport (1980) argues in his model of empowerment that "we will need to be more a social movement than a profession..." (p. 1), and work towards the social empowerment of individuals through our work. Shinn (1985) has argued that community psychologists should focus on efforts at collective empowerment in a broad array of settings.

In all these approaches, the community psychologist takes on the cloak of social activism and begins to disrobe the clinical persona of professional skill. It may be contended, however, that there is a conflation of issues in applying this model to the South African context which needs to be disentangled prior to being able to formulate a coherent exposition of the latter.

In the first instance, the notion of a separate branch of community psychology within the framework of applied psychology needs to be challenged. Clinical psychology evolved as a branch of psychology operating within the mainstream of applied psychology in the USA and became oriented to serving the needs of the "community" as opposed to the individual. According to Rappaport (1977) community psychologists have come to recognise that the paradigms of individual psychology fail as a basis for community change.

In attempting to serve the "community", community psychology implicitly assumes that mainstream psychology does not serve the community. At its crudest level, the community which community psychology aims to serve and empower becomes defined as the working class community, poor community, "needing of intervention" community, or needing of empowerment community. In short, psychology is assumed to serve the individual - with community psychology constructed

as a separate branch within the field to serve the
"community". This may be construed as an ideological myth.

According to Dawes (1986) the development of community
psychology in thé United States carries with it a similar
humanistic imperative that is largely uncritical in any
radical sense of the structural determinants of many of the
problems which it attempts to address. It may be seen, he
argues, as an "exemplar of relevant practice within a
liberal humanist framework" (p. 32) that gives rise to
political pressuring and calls for a "better deal" for
disadvantaged sections of the citizenry, doing so within an
unchanged liberal capitalist framework.

This humanistic effort employs a false inference for its
foundation. That myth is that mainstream psychology does not
serve a community. According to Hayes (1986) there is
nothing wrong with therapy and the various therapeutic
approaches. Therapy has specific origins, arising out of the
dynamic crises facing bourgeois society. Therapy (and
clinical psychology as a whole) is not according to Hayes
(1986) a transhistorical problem for humanity, but rather a
specific historical practice related to identifiable social
problems. Psychology evolved to meet the needs and problems
of bourgeois society.

Clinical psychology as it stands, has been broadly
constructed within the parameters of white, western, middle
class values and infused with the ideology of this backdrop.
If we accept that middle class western society, of which
white South Africans generally form part, is individualist,
competitive, isolated and non-social in character, then a
helping science such as clinical psychology constructed to
serve the "composits" of this system, is in effect serving a
community that contains these elements. Mainstream
psychology, treating middle class problems of the individual
or family unit, is nevertheless serving a community - the

white middle class community.

> "So when I say that there is nothing wrong with
> therapy, in some senses I am saying that bourgeois
> therapy for bourgeois individuals is okay ! We might
> not like it, but it certainly has a class consistency
> to it" (Hayes, 1986: 2).

Community psychology, however, is constructed to serve the
needs of some other community, a community construed as
needing of rescue and empowerment. Working class problems
are conceptualised as social problems which are unamenable
to therapy and this conceiving of working class
psychological problems as social ones operates at a subtle
and complex level which arises from the "contradiction of
bourgeois ideology" (Hayes, 1986).

It seems possible, therefore, to understand mainstream
psychology as a community psychology oriented to the needs
of a particular community. To create a division within this
mainstream from the framework of a middle class liberal
humanistic discipline aimed at addressing the needs of a
working class community is, therefore, an ideologically
loaded venture which obscures the fact that psychology as a
whole serves the community (albeit a western middle class
one).

We have to therefore move beyond a narrow definition of
community and begin to consider the application and
reorientation of clinical psychology with the skill it
offers, beyond a limited framework of application towards a
broader, more relevant one. Mainstream psychology **as a
whole** needs to become more relevant to the oppressed
community - towards becoming relevant to the community as a
whole.

At the bottom of this argument lies the notion that

attempting to construct a socially progressive psychology
from the framework of a socially reactive psychology is
inherently problematic. It is not so much the clinical skill
that needs redirection - it is rather the ideological
foundation that instructs to whom, and how these skills are
applied that requires attention.

The conflation of social activism and psychological practice
which this approach tends to evoke, is an unstable
construction which negates the very foundation of applied
clinical skill and makes psychology no more relevant to a
community that has psychopathology and psychological stress
and requires intervention at this professional level.
In effect, it perpetuates the myth that working
class people do not have psychopathological problems
and turns working class individuals' psychological problems
into social ones (Hayes, 1986). It implies that oppressed or
working class people do not require skilled intervention to deal
with their problems.

Against the backdrop of the above issues let us briefly
return to two initial questions :

1) Are clinical skills useless in embarking on a "community
psychology" path ?

2) Can any activist not do the task of the "community
psychologist" with equal efficiency ?

Let us deal with the first part of this question and dispose
of it in order to attempt to answer the second one which
lies at the heart of a reconceptualisation of clinical
psychological practice as it may become relevant to the
oppressed South African community.

1) According to Berger and Lazarus (1987) the heightened
level of political conflict in this country has highlighted

the dilemmas of the practicing professional, and "thrown many psychologists into a state of insecurity, confusion and self-doubt" (p. 6) regarding their relevance and role in South Africa. Their training perpetuates an elitist professional ethic based on uncritical, decontextualised and imported "non-African" psychology, that "psychologises" the causes and cures of human functioning and neglects political, cultural and ideological factors as well as structural conditions.

Swartz, Dowdall and Swartz (1986) argue that training (in Cape Town) falls within the general ambit of British/ American models with the overall approach reflecting a reactive, individual/ family based, one-to-one psychodynamic approach with those trained generally ending up working with affluent middle-class patients.

Does this make psychological training incorrect and clinical practice irrelevant ?

Swartz et al., (1986) go on to argue that there are substantial strengths in a formal course outlined above, in that trainees become readily conversant with the concepts and developments (and clinical skills) of mainstream "western" clinical psychology and are able to draw on these resources.

In their work in dealing with "unrest interventions" at a clinic in Cape Town, they found the pattern of problems emerging from these interventions falling into three groups: unmanagable levels of anxiety or depression as a result of prolonged exposure to stressful situations; Post traumatic stress disorders with its consequent array of symptoms; and an exacerbation of problems existing prior to the crisis (for example chronic marital conflict, alcohol abuse, psychotic breakdown, and prolonged depression intensified in some cases as a result of exposure to stress). An examination of the

presentation of these problems highlights their "non-social" nature and the necessity of providing appropriate clinical skill in intervention. Such intervention cannot ignore the clinical expertise that may be required for this purpose.

Dohrenwend (1975) argues that they know enough now to realise that some of their more extreme speculations about the influence of socio-cultural factors are not supported in fact. He cites the example of the once popular hypothesis that psychopathology is simply different in cultures other than their own. That western nomenclatures are inapplicable is contradicted by actual psychiatric research in those cultures. Whilst environmental factors in communities may increase the severity and intensity of psychopathology, the treating of psychiatric disorders remains a necessary clinical task in the community.

It thus becomes clear, that rendering working class community psychopathological, emotional and psychological problems to the dungheap of "community intervention" (i.e. socialising the treatment of these problems) is a reductionism of necessary symptomatic treatment to partly responsible structural causes. Treating individual white middle class patients with these disorders would not pose a clinical identity crisis in progressive therapists. Why then should it do so with black working class patients ?

A number of issues arise in the application of clinical skill to working class communities and the transformation of psychology towards becoming more relevant to the broader South African community:

It bears repeating, that the structural inequality visible throughout the provision and maintenance of mental health resources for the black (i.e. african, coloured and indian) community needs fundamental restructuring and redistribution (De Beer, 1986; Floyd, 1986; Vogelman, 1986). The structural

transformation of Apartheid remains a prerequisite for such a
modification which in turn depends on the broader
socio-political and economic struggle being waged in the
country and psychologists may participate in this struggle as
activists. In doing so, they may not be doing so under the
umbrella of their profession.

Whilst psychologists (**as** psychologists) can have a role in
pressurising the state to symptomatically part remedy the
situation by providing better services, this remains a
peripheral, though important part of the clinical
psychologists function. Organisational participation in
bodies such as OASSSA, or pressurisation from other
professional bodies may go some way towards this task. But
what of clinical skill and psychopathology ?

Berger and Lazarus (1987) in their study of the views of
community organisers on the relevance of psychological
practice in South Africa, found that such dimensions as
political consciousness, attachment to a trusted
organisation, collective use of resources, counteracting
public wariness of psychological services, dissemination of
skills, establishment of trust, credibility and
accountability, and alignment with, and support of other
progressive organisations within the democratic movement
were considered necessary components of a relevant
psychological practice.

Nowhere is the application of trained clinical skill
negated. Nowhere is the psychologist expected to throw off
the tools of expertise that the psychologist of necessity
is equipped with.

"Involvement in the struggle for a new social order
does NOT preclude the need to address people's more
immediate problems" (Berger and Lazarus, 1987: 20).

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Hayes (1986), despite being critical of the ideological
content of therapeutic practice, does not intend, he argues,
to "damn all therapies on this account" (p. 46). Rather, we
need to work toward affecting their possible transformation
in making them more relevant.

Turton (1986) in explaining the failure of a community
project in an african community (based on Rogerian type
counselling) argues that of the many factors which
contributed to its failure, the organisation's attempt to
apply its counselling to african working class clients in an
unmodified form was of most interest. The skills per se are
not negated. Rather, elements of modification and
transformation to them need to be affected. In this regard
Straker (1987) has outlined a treatment programme designed to
be of use in the current climate of crisis and involves the
compression of intervention strategy into a single
therapeutic interview. It also involves the reconceptualisation
of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)(APA, 1980) into The
Continuous Traumatic Stress Syndrome. As Straker argues:

   "The term post-traumatic stress syndrome is a misnomer
   in the South African context. Individuals living in
   South Africa's black townships are subjected to
   continuous traumatic stress" (p. 48)(emphasis in
   original).

In both this modification of PTSD, and the transformation of
the therapeutic process into one that is conducted over a
single interview, where transference is not necessarily
encouraged and where clinical skill is directed towards
meeting the direct needs of those affected, does not involve
at any point the negation of skilled intervention and
therapeutic practice. It simply highlights the need to
transform our clinical skill towards a more relevant
practice in line with the political, cultural and
socio-economic context in South Africa.

Swartz and Swartz (1986) in reviewing their intervention in workshops for pre-school teachers in Cape Town, found that their expertise was both demanded by the community members they were working with, and necessary in the context of having access to skill that others did not have. They argue that their experience suggests that we cannot simply slough off our expert role in a social hierarchy. Whilst needing to be aware of the problems generated by psychologists "expert" role, we also need to recognise its salience for an appropriate intervention.

Part of this process involves what has been described as the democratisation of knowledge and service (ESG, 1986). Rather than impose models and therapeutic practice onto the community, knowledge needs to be shared and democratised, "a process which tends towards an amalgamation of skills and ideas rather than a one-way "giving"" (ESG, 1986: 2). The failure of the community project outlined above which attempted to enforce a Rogerian model where this was inappropriate without dialoguing with the needs and context of those who it was designed to serve, highlights this point (Turton, 1986).

As described earlier, our therapeutic skills, whilst not useless or irrelevant, need to be modified and transformed to make them more accessible to the broader community. It is necessary in this process to be educated by the political and socio-economic dynamics of the society in which we operate. AS Swartz, Dowdall and Swartz (1986) argue:

> "Without some knowledge of the South African political
> economy, for example, clinical psychologists cannot
> hope to have an adequately contextualised understanding
> of the organisations, families and individuals with
> whom they consult" (p. 138).

It involves, as Hayes (1986) describes, the opening up of ourselves to the experiences and knowledge which working class people can give.

An additional component of this process involves a reconceptualisation of the myth of individual intervention reinforcing a "bourgeois" therapeutic practice. Many community psychologists, such as Rappaport (1977), have argued for the necessity of dealing with groups of people in the community rather than with individuals.

This argument involves, in part, a naive reductionism. It does so because it conflates the concepts of individualism versus working with individuals (Hayes, 1986). According to Dawes (1986), psychological professionals have utilised theories of personal psychological functioning which reflects an individualistic conceptualisation of the person. Dawes does not, however, reject the provision of individual assistance. What he suggests is a change from a view of the person's problem which emphasises the notion of the individual "locked into a psychic dilemma, to a person whose dilemma is understood in the context within which it occurs" (p. 34).

It is unnecessary to pursue the notion of group intervention being the alternative to individualist practice. Group therapy is relevant where people coming together have a common denominator that informs their psychological problem (for example, released detainees, or rape victims). However, the individual may often remain the primary focus of clinical intervention, taking into account the interactive context operating including the community and society. Contextualising the individual problem in which it occurs, remains therapeutically relevant.

Radford and Rigby (1986) argue that any attempt to make psychology relevant without taking into account the societal

context in which mental health occurs, "would be both
dangerous and foolhardy" (p. 14). One way of accomplishing this
task is to utilise the conceptual base of Systems Theory for
examining the relationship between the community and mental
health.

This enables an examination that goes beyond the one-way
causality of the traditional model of positivist science
"to include the mutual interaction of elements in an
organised whole" (Radford and Rigby, 1986: 6).

Radford and Rigby (1986) use systems theory as the
conceptual base for a relevant South African psychology
because, they argue, it holds out the possibility of dealing
with the interaction of a complex of elements, it enables an
understanding that shifts the focus of psychological
analysis from only that of the individual to include also
the context in which the individual functions and finally
because it provides an holistic view of the individual.

One conceptual system that seems to begin to provide such a
basis of understanding, is Ecosystemic Therapy. It is
founded on the principles of human ecology and systems
theory and is a multi-level treatment perspective focused on
the context of interaction among individuals and their
environment (Stachowiak and Briggs, 1984).

This context is composed of a series of interlocking system
levels. Physiological and intrapsychic processes interact
with dyadic and family dynamics all within a network of
social relationships, role responsibilities and
community-cultural (general environment) influences. The
person-environment context is taken to constitute the
totality of relationships among individuals and their
environment (Stachowiak and Briggs, 1984).

Whilst the application of therapeutic intervention may still

be at individual level, the conceptualisation of the
individual takes on an ecological perspective, overcoming
the problem of individualism whilst not necessarily
socialising all pathology or psychological needs of working
class people. It allows for appropriate clinical intervention
with individuals without becoming entrapped in an
individualist construction that remains outside of the
broader South African reality.

From the matrix of systemic interactions, relevant elements are
selected from each level that allows for an appropriate and
effective intervention specific to the case concerned.
Environmental forces as they effect the individual, for
example, can be modified through intervention at any
other level given the interactive nature of the
systems involved. Central to this, therefore, is the
notion that intervention at a specific system
or systems will depend not on a prescribed pattern, but
on its relevance to the problem situation. Even when treating the
individual, the conceptualisation of the problem may remain
operative at the ecosystemic level.

This distinction, finally, frees us from the myth of
clinical practice being irrelevant and leaves clinical skill
a necessary and important function of psychologists where
this practice is informed by the context, and such notions
as democratisation and choosing sides. Psychological skills
remain useful in the South African context and clinically
relevant in serving the broader community.

2) Rephrased, if community psychologists play a role of
conscientisation, mobilisation or empowerment (for example,
Shinn, 1985), then why can any activist not serve this
function as adequately or more so ?

In answering this second question at hand, i.e. whether any
activist can not fulfil the task of the community

psychologist with equal efficiency, a reconceptualisation begins to take place towards the construction of what is an attempt at a model of relevant South African clinical psychology.

This search for a socially relevant psychology, for alternative or appropriate practices which respond to the needs and concerns of the majority of South Africans in the building of a future democratic society (Berger and Lazarus, 1987) leads to the construction of a model that attempts to distinguish the function of the psychologist as psychologist in rendering an appropriate clinical service to the community, from the role of psychologist as activist wherein the cloak of function as clinician is shed.

It is implicitly obvious that this separation artificially isolates what are essentially interactive functions. This is so, it appears, for two reasons:

a) because as activist one may still be a psychologist and
b) because as psychologist one may still be an activist.

Let us briefly examine these in turn:

a) Political experience in South Africa has demonstrated the efficacy of belonging to the group that one is trying to organise, mobilise or work with. Organisational functioning has tended to isolate the roles of organisation in focussing on specific population needs and membership. Hence, the proliferation of youth groups, women's groups, worker groups (unions), civic groups specific to a community, "white" groups (such as the End Conscription Campaign or Pietermaritzburg Democratic Association, PDA), "indian" groups (such as the Natal Indian Congress) etc. In each case, the focus, although not perpetuating ethnic division, has been relatively specific in its membership aims, despite contextualising issues within the broader democratic struggle.

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In other words, in choosing to be an activist one may not necessarily be operating from the perspective of one's professional identity. In belonging to a political, civic or woman's organisation, for example, one's role as psychologist would be irrelevant. Any activist from the relevant community of focus would probably be able to organise and empower people, groups of people or communities of people with greater competence than any psychologist.

In being an activist, therefore, one is not necessarily being a psychologist. One is, rather, absorbing the role of membership to a particular grouping and functioning in a clinically "deroled" sense.

b) The second criticism weighs slightly more heavily. This is so because within one's professional role one may be taking on the task of organising the community of psychologists (for example, OASSSA membership). And indeed, in so doing one would be playing the role of activist. Such activism, however, still involves a clinical derobing in that one is not applying clinical intervention but involving oneself in a role of organisational membership on the basis of being a psychologist, rather than on the basis of applying psychological skill. Nevertheless, in this narrow sense the psychologist as psychologist may be construed as an activist. In the wider sense, however, the activism within a community that a psychologist may be involved in would be distinct from his or her role as a professional. As a professional health worker, the psychologist is serving the needs of the community rather than organising it. "The service groups are not organisers in the factories" (de Beer, 1986: 6).

It is argued, therefore, that whilst partially a synthetic division in reality, the conceptual separation of the role of the psychologist as psychologist and as activist is a

useful and helpful distinction so as to avoid conflation of issues (for example, the false role of community psychologist in "empowering" communities) and assists in attempting to build an appropriate model for South African psychology.

This does not however imply the depoliticisation of the psychologist. As Vogelman (1986), Dawes (1986), Hayes (1986), Radford and Rigby (1985) have argued, it is necessary to have a political understanding and to apply one's skill within a political framework.

It is clear that as activist, the psychologist may play any number of chosen roles in the community or broader society. As psychologist, however, the question of the construction of a relevant psychological practice remains. How, in other words, do we modify our therapeutic skill to be of relevance to the community ?

In the first instance, we need to evoke the notion of therapeutic priority. Therapeutic regression of an individual to resolve psychosexual fixation to bring about greater psychic integration in an individual who has just been released from detention and suffering consequent symptomology (Foster, 1987), or in someone living under conditions of chronic stress and suffering the Continuous Traumatic Stress Syndrome (Straker, 1987), or in someone whose stomach takes precedence over his or her head (Maslow, 1954 cited in Hilgard, Atkinson and Atkinson, 1979) is to be therapeutically inappropriate.

Turton (1986) in explaining the failure of a counselling service established in an african working class community near Johannesburg, makes the point that its primary emphasis was on helping clients to gain insight into their emotions or feelings rather than on helping clients to solve material problems. The counselling was designed to help

clients meet their "actualisation needs" rather than their "survival needs". Implicit in this design, Turton argues, "is the assumption that "actualisation needs" are the most pressing needs experienced by the clients" (p. 88).

This issue is an important part of the problem of an unmodified therapeutic practice. Anonymous (1986) attempts to address it by discarding mainstream psychology. He argues that "Eurocentric theories of human behaviour can never be relevant to South Africa where the majority is still concerned with "bread and land issues" (p. 83). Modification should not, however, equal negation.

Allwood (1985) cited in Radford and Rigby (1986) argues:

"The people want concrete advice and direction - they want action not interpreted feelings... The need is for practical help for a community undergoing severe stress" (p. 5).

Implicit in Anonymous's arguments and explicit in those of Turton 1986) and Allwood (1985), is the notion of psychological or psychic prioritisation. Immediate, concrete psychological needs take priority over more emotional or intrapsychic ones. This does not render feelings or "actualisation needs" irrelevant to working class people. It simply places them at a lower level of the individual psychological hierarchy.

It seems fair to assume that once the "bread and land" issues have become less pressing in South Africa, the more abstract emotional, interpersonal and intrapsychic concerns will emerge towards the forefront of people's needs and the demands on psychologists may be towards meeting such evolving needs.

This prioritisation of psychological needs can be argued to

begin with immediate concrete needs (concrete life problems) corresponding to a broader structural or societal inadequacies and amenable to change via remedying these inadequacies. In other words, the more immediate the psychological needs, the more rooted will these needs be in the broader socio-political context and the more amenable to change via environmental change. In the therapeutic setting, problem solving therapy, for example, (or other behavioural interventions), may be relevant.

The deeper we move down the psychic model of needs, the more individual becomes the remedy and the more intrapsychic the intervention.

Second to the concrete life problems, can be placed symptomology of a concrete form. Stress responses, depression, sleep problems, and general outward symptoms that can be relatively concretely remedied lie at this level.

The third priority involves feelings, emotional needs, issues of self-esteem, self-concept and self-actualisation in the person's general life circumstance.

The fourth priority involves intrapsychic needs. Here, therapeutic regression to resolve intrapsychic fixations or impasses may be relevant with redicision work, early cathartic needs and unconscious resolution being the focus of therapy.

Fifthly and finally, the "existential resolution" may become the focus of therapy.
What we arrive at, is a model of psychological needs that is prioritised in form. It is clear however that a linear, hierarchical construction falls into a deterministic trap that is theoretically and clinically unsound.

It is obvious that concrete life problems may involve
symptoms and feelings and that therapeutic intervention may
therefore need to deal with symptoms and feelings
interactively prior to, in order to, or as an adjunct to
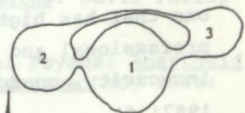solving concrete life problems.

Psychologist As:

ACTIVIST (weighted):

ACTIVIST

1 - Immediate localised issues
2 - Broader Community Issues
3 - Societal and Structural Change in
    broader Apartheid Context

Environment (context)
-weighted-

PSYCHOLOGIST

PSYCHOLOGIST (weighted):

1 - Concrete life problems
2 - Concrete definable symptoms
3 - Self-actualisational and emotional,
    feeling needs
4 - Intrapsychic resolution
5 - Existential resolution

Individual (psychic needs)
-weighted-

A linear conceptualisation therefore needs to be shelved in
favour of an interactive model that nevertheless takes
account of the prioritised nature of psychological needs. In
so doing, a "weighted", interactive hierarchy that avoids
the rigid connotation of prioritisation becomes useful.

This part of the model has to be constructed, however,
together with the first issue dealt with previously - viz.

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the role of psychologist as activist. By making these aspects
interactive and weighted, we arrive at activism that involves
primarily immediate, localised issues, secondly, that challenges
broader community issues and finally that effects societal
and structural change in the broader Apartheid context.

These two "layers" of the model are interactively operative
in completing the "holism" of the role of the psychologist
in contemporary South Africa. Hopefully, it may assist in
overcoming the reductionism of many attempts at resolving
the role of psychologists in the South African community,
one that has highlighted the dilemmas of the practising
professional and "thrown many psychologists into a state of
insecurity, confusion and self-doubt" (Berger and Lazarus,
1987: 6).

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PSYCHOANALYSIS   **PSYCHOANALYSIS**   **PSYCHOANALYSIS**

PSYCHOLOGY IN SOCIETY will be producing a special issue on
PSYCHOANALYSIS early next year.

Consistent with the editorial brief we would be particularly
interested in articles which try to locate the significance, or
irrelevance (!), of psychoanalysis in this country. In other
words we would especially welcome contributions about
psychoanalysis and social theory; psychoanalysis and social
struggles; psychoanalysis and apartheid; psychoanalysis and
socialism, etc.
The interest in psychoanalysis and social issues is not an
exclusive one, and hence we would also be interested in
interdisciplinary uses of psychoanalysis (literature, art, music,
sociology, politics); clinical or case study reports informed by
psychoanalytic theory and/or method; and in general any
interesting intellectual engagements with psychoanalytic culture.

The deadline for submissions is 12 December 1988.   Submissions
and queries should be directed to Grahame Hayes, Dept of
Psychology, University of Natal, Durban; OR Cyril Couve, Dept of
Psychology, University of Cape Town, Rondebosch.

Interview — "Mental health in Nicaragua"

Lloyd Vogelman
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Johannesburg

Lloyd Vogelman in discussion with psychiatrist Dr Sequeira. Dr. Sequeira is Director of the psychiatric hospital in Managua, and also head of the mental health training programme in Nicaragua

Nicaragua is a country which has had a long history of dictatorial rule. The last of the great dictators, Somoza, fell in the 1979 revolution. Despite the efforts of the Sandinistas in attempting to improve the quality of life through various social programmes, increased political participation, and a better distribution of wealth, 36 000 people have died, been injured or disappeared since 1979. The primary cause of death has been the war against the Contras. Almost all Nicaraguans have lost someone close to them.

Although bereavement is so prevalent in Nicaragua, Dr Sequeira claims that "there has been little pathological mourning (which consists in part of obsessive thoughts about the dead, depression and a complete loss of interest in one's usual activities) because death is strongly linked to the process of liberation and freedom". "Mourning is easier if there is hope in the future and if you are prepared for death". Dr Sequeira however was quick to add that this did not mean that mourning was denied in Nicaragua. A number of measures had been taken to remember the dead and a number of

self-help groups had been established. Groups like the Association of Widows, Sequeira said, not only helped with the process of mourning, but provided solidarity and confidence.

The psychiatric syndrome that is common to hundreds of thousands of Nicaraguans is Post-Traumatic Stress Syndrome. The symptoms of this syndrome are the continual recalling of the trauma, nightmares, an inability to sleep, poor concentration, a lack of energy, a feeling of detachment from others and constricted affect. This syndrome is normally the result of the actual experience of a traumatic situation as well as the fear that the trauma may occur again. Sequeria says there are special circumstances which may increase the intensity of Post-Traumatic Stress, for example "when soldiers find the dead bodies of their compatriots who have been tortured and killed by the Contras".

For Dr Sequeira the Contra war is both a terrorist and a psychological war. He states that when "the Contras kill someone it is done in a refined way. They kill them in front of people so as to touch the morale of our people and to negatively affect their mental health". These tactics he believes are linked to a book produced by the CIA on how to conduct psychological warfare, which is part of a broader aim of ensuring that a low intensity war ensures in Nicaragua. Psychological warfare has been successful in some areas. It has demobilised people, and increased passivity to the extent that "some have become spectators in the construction of our new society". This is illustrated by individuals losing interest in the literacy and vaccination campaigns. A further negative effect of the psychological warfare has been the increased incidence of alcoholism.

While the Contra war, together with the strains of keeping the revolution alive, the economic crisis and the heritage left by Somoza have caused enormous psychological damage, a number of improvements in mental health, and particularly in mental health care are evident. However, one of the most difficult things Dr Sequeira says about comparing mental health before and after the revolution is that no comprehensive statistics were kept during rule. He said that before the revolution there was only one structure that dealt with mental illness in Nicaragua and this was a large psychiatric hospital in Managua. For Sequeira, "a great tragedy is that Somoza never created any structure and institutions that helped to promote mental health."

Dr Sequeria stated that "since the overthrow of the Somoza regime, the numberof people admittted to our psychiatric hospital in Managua has decreased from 2,600 in 1979 to 1,200 in 1987. Of these 1,200, 70% are readmissions. This means we have only had 30% new admissions in six years. While this shows a big improvement we cannot draw any real conclusions about mental health, because this is only one indicator".

According to Sequeira, extreme mental pathology, like suicide and psychotic states, has decreased substantially amongst those Sandinistas directly involved in the war against the Contras. This is because in war you cannot allow yourself to become too vulnerable. Many psychological studies tend to confirm Dr Sequeira's statements − suicide decreases in war. For Dr Sequeira it was not just the preservation of psychological defences that helped lower the incidence of severe mental pathology, but also the fact that "people are mobilised, involved and dedicated in preserving our revolution". On a more general level, Sequeira stated that if one had to

talk about the most primary factor that was responsible for the improved quality of mental and physical health in Nicaragua, it was that the society was now more based on collective enterprise. On the medical side Sequeira spoke of the great reduction in the infant mortality rate and that polio had almost been eradicated. Psychologically, he said collective enterprise had led to people feeling supported and not feeling alone with their problems.

On the question of psychiatric services and mental health care, Dr Sequeira's thinking reflected a strong anti-psychiatry attitude. This was illustrated most clearly by his anti-institution philosophy. Dr Sequeira commented that "a psychiatric hospital is not a mental health structure, a psychiatric hospital maintains mental illness". "The Italian anti-psychiatric tradition has shown that the mental health of inmates of psychiatric hospitals does not improve their mental health. Hospitals are asylums not places of care".

Dr Sequeira's perception is in contrast to the Cuban view which favours institutionalisation and specialisation of treatment. Such is the emphasis on specialisation in Cuba that it has been said that Fidel is like a Jewish mama, he wants everyone to be a specialist.

Dr Sequeira pointed out that it was not easy to change the mental health care system because of the shortage of skilled personnel. At present there are 20 psychiatrists, 75 psychologists, 15 social workers, and 25 psychiatric nurses in Nicaragua. Besides immigration (9 psychiatrists have left the country since the revolution) the difficulty that presented itself

in terms of transforming the mental health system, was that the remaining professionals tended to be conservative. Dr Sequeira said "the psychiatrists resist the new conception of mental health work by staying with the biological model. They disapprove of our new model which is based on psychology, social work and community work. In the new model psychologists have a lot more power than the psychiatrists".

Training of psychiatrists in Nicaragua is a new phenomenon. Prior to the Sandinista revolution, psychiatrists were trained in Costa Rico, Spain and Mexico. Dr Sequeira himself is primarily responsible for developing the new training programme for psychiatrists in Nicaragua. The emphasis the Sandinistas have placed on health care is further indicated by the role and training of psychologists and the provision of counselling skills for members of communities who are called mental health workers. Before the Sandinistas came to power, almost all psychologists were employed within industry. Their role within mental health care was minimal. Now not only has their role changed but they have in many instances acquired great power within newly established psychological and psychiatric services. According to Dr Sequeira, the initial training that psychologists received after 1979 was based on the Cuban model which is highly behaviourist. He said "we now no longer use this model, the Cuban model has been very good for Cuba but our society is more pluralist and this means we cannot have a fixed model".

Dr Sequeira described the new therapeutic approach of the new model. Greater stress is placed on the use of traditional medicine. Therapeutically, group rather than individual work is encouraged. The style of therapy that is favoured is crisis intervention. It is this therapeutic model that mental health workers in the villages and larger

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communities are trained in. Dr Sequeira believed that the crisis intervention model was useful because "you utilise the moment of crisis to mobilise emotional growth, just as we use the political crisis to mobilise the people. In crises we always find out about new factors that can improve the situation and tap new potential". Dr Sequeira went on to talk about the need to link the psychology of crisis intervention to the politics of prevention and rehabilitation. The latter involved decreasing the social and personal hardships of the individual and having a preventative vision of the world. To illustrate his point Dr Sequeira said that "if, for example, you meet someone who is in emotional pain, you must try and predict the worst consequences of his pain. If he is depressed and isolated, the mental health worker must try and help him and also ensure that his community involves him more in their activity". Another aspect of the new model that is taught to mental health workers and psychology students alike is the need to detect the healthy part of the individual so that it can be used to its full potential. Such training is clearly part of a wider psychology training philosophy which teaches about factors that can promote mental health and not just about factors which enhance pathology.

It is clear that as long as the war against the Contras continues, the mental health of the population will continue to suffer. But what is also obvious is that the Nicaraguan people's participation in creating a new society, together with new developments in mental health care, have had a positive effect on the quality of psychological life in Nicaragua.

Book review: "Detention and torture in South Africa"

Ann Harper
OASSSA
Durban

Don Foster with Dennis Davis and Diane Sandler. (1987).
Detention and Torture in South Africa: Psychological, legal
and historical studies Cape Town: David Philip.

"Detention and Torture in South Africa" (198) systematically

documents and analyses the personal experiences and realities

of those South Africans who have suffered physical and

psychological trauma consequent on their treatment during

detention under Security Legislation prior to the present

State of Emergency.

That this book should emerge on bookshelves at a time when

far-reaching censorship and press clamps have specifically

prohibited an expose of the plight of detainees and the

conditions under which they are held, serves to highlight the

paradoxes which bedevil this country. The latter part of the

book alludes to the adamant denials, recriminations and press

campaigns against the preliminary report released in September

1985 based on the empirical study which forms the core of this

book. This evokes memories of the angst and heated confrontations which became a feature of the PASA AGM of that year when irreconcilable ideological divisions within the psychology profession emerged around issues raised by these findings.

It is recognised that the nature of the detention experience for the majority of emergency detainees, and the groups targeted for this form of harrassment and oppression, has changed significantly following the massive and seemingly indiscriminate initial wave of detentions under Emergency regulations. However as anyone offering legal, psychological of medical assistance to the victims will attest, the conditions exposed in this study, the treatment meted out to those detained by the Security Forces, the physical and psychological sequelae, remain unchanged, particularly for those held for interrogation in police cells or under Internal Security legislation. In fact in many cases these are complicated and exacerbated by particular features of the present emergency situation.

Recent campaigns, international conferences and reports have focussed critical attention on detention and specifically on the plight of children caught up in the escalating violence

and relentless repression which constitutes a daily reality for the majority of South Africans. The iniquities, excesses and injustices which are committed in the name of the of the "total onslaught" and "State Security" are again receiving international attention. It is therefore timeous that Foster et al should situate present repressive practices in an historical framework which traces detention without trial in South Africa to the 1953 Public Safety Act and the "seeds of the modern system of security law" (p12) to 1927 before the National Party came to power. This highlights the fact that "despite persistent and widespread protest... (it) could be argued that provisions for detention have become broader in scope and more draconian in effect over the passing years". (p1) The opening chapters focus on historical and legal considerations and not only trace the development of these laws, but provide a significant and revealing analysis of those "social and historical processes within which (these) legal devices are embedded" (p11) and the role that security legislation has played in buttressing an unjust social order.

The book goes on to give a survey of the psychological and psychiatric literature and international research pertaining to sensory deprivation, psychological sequelae of concentration camp experiences, torture research and the

learned helplessness theory. This provides a basis and theoretical framework for an understanding of the process of detention under South African Security Laws prior to the present State of Emergency and the associated physical and psychological effects which become the focus of the empirical investigation reported in detail in chaptes 5 and 6.

Although it is acknowledged that researchers who attempt to understand the psychological outcome of detention and torture are not in complete agreement (pp160-162), from the point of view of psychological theory and empirical research (not to mention conference presentations) it is often tempting and convenient to cluster these psychological signs and symptoms under the diagnostic rubric of Post-traumatic Stress Disorder. The inherent danger for practice is that it might be as easy for counsellors of ex-detainees to move from diagnosis to a focus on individual pathology thereby not taking significant cognisance of the continuing stress generated by the material, social and political conditions of apartheid South Africa which confront ex-detainees on their release.

Since 1985 in particular, these include amongst others, likely unemployment and extreme financial hardship, exclusion from the school system, disruption and possible non-existence of

family, community and organisational supports, and an on-going
threat to personal safety be it from Security Forces or the
chaotic violence such as that found in townships around
Pietermaritzburg.

It would seem that Security Forces at present are not placing
the same reliance on detentions as a means of discouraging
support for popular organisation with the focus moving to a
build up of kitskonstables, municipal police and vigilante
groups (cf _Descom Bulletin_,No 15, Dec 1987). However the need
to put detention on the agenda of those community and worker
organisations which have been specifically targetted remains a
priority. In this regard, the conclusion by Foster et al
that,

> "A common feature of all the psychological literature
> surveyed in chapter 4 from sensory deprivation through
> concentration camps and torture research to learned
> helplessness theory, was the notion that effects of
> stressors was mediated and exacerbated by variables that
> have been labelled as ambiguity, unexpectedness, lack of
> preparation or unpredictability" (p164)

is significant, if organisations are to formulate a coherent and systematic response to members who run the risk of being detained as well as those who have been released.

Detention and torture have been a focus of concern and protest in South Africa for many years and various articles and reports have emerged based on the extensive information gleaned from court records, inquests, personal testimony and investigations initiated by church groupings and organisations such as DESCOM/DPSC and NAMDA. The pioneering work of Foster, Davis and Sandler represents however, the first national large-scale indepth empirical study of the realities identified by these reports. As they say in their study,

"The intention of this study is to examine in detail the events conditions, and psychological processes associated with detention practices in South Africa" (p86)

This was achieved by a countrywide investigation by means of 158 personal interviews representing 176 incidences of detention focussing on

"claims from former detainees regarding conditions, events, and actions prior to and during detention, as well

as....claims by former detainees of psychological processes associated with detention practices in South Africa" (p86)

The sample breakdown highlights aspects such as gender, "race", age, religion, area of political work at the time of detention, educational level, geographical distribution and type of detention.

"Within the process of detention itself, results are further presented for physical conditions of detention, interrogation patterns, personal contact with both authorities and non-authorities as well as claimed physical and psychological torture. Health problems are examined in terms of symptoms experienced during detention as well as upon release" (p92)

The importance of the descriptions obtained in this study cannot be underestimated and represent clear proof of the severity of detention conditions in South Africa and unequivocal evidence that these constitute a grave risk to physical health and psychological well-being. The contention that detainees in South Africa are frequently and fairly systematically subjected to torture can no longer be dismissed

out of hand as fabrication and ANC inspired propaganda and
conspiracy.

The questions not addressed by the Rabie Commission set up
after the death of Steve Biko to investigate allegations that
the security system does not provide safeguards to prevent
physical and psychological torture of detainees, are answered
with analytical thoroughness and academic care. While the
Commission placed "undue reliance on the evidence of the
security police without examining the other side of the cases"
(Dugard, in Foster et al, p3) and omitted to investigate
methods of interrogation, Chapter 6 gives detainees a voice
and descriptions of their experiences provide rich qualitative
data which "convey the feelings, thoughts, reactions,
interactions and hopes and fears of persons in this situation"
(p 119)

For those using this book as a resource for their work with
ex-detainees or those who risk detention, it is as well to
heed the warning by Foster et al that group-based variations
such as those which "show that in general women and African
respondents reported higher symptom frequencies" (p162) still
leave the question of individual differences unanswered. "This
is a complex issue....since coping strategies may vary with

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For those using this book as a resource for their work with ex-detainees or those who risk detention, it is as well to heed the warning by Foster et al that group-based variations such as those which "show that in general women and African respondents reported higher symptom frequencies" (p162) still leave the question of individual differences unanswered. "This is a complex issue....since coping strategies may vary with

different stages of the detention process." (p163) It is also acknowledged that a wide range of factors may influence the relationship between events during detention and possible sequelae. These include duration held, specific nature of treatment including severity of interrogation and experiences of solitary confinement etc. This issue is presented in a tentative exploratory manner with the intention of identifying themes and possible avenues for further research.

Chapter 7 concludes with a wide range of recommendations directed at the State legislators, the courts of law and professional bodies representing law, medicine, psychology, education and religion. The present emergency regulations give extensive powers of arrest and detention to all members of the security forces while virtually indemnifying them against prosecution arising from these acts, and place a total clamp on the publication of information relating to detentions and detainees. These recommendations should be seen in the context of,

"The extent of the present repression and the scale of detentions (which) make it all the more impor-
tant for the court to restrict executive power." (p193).

and all the less likely that they will be able to do so. The
virtual banning of DESCOM and DFSC on 24 February 1988 only
increases this sense of despondency. For as Foster el al
conclude

"......justice is hardly to be expected in a fundamentally
unjust society. It is recognised that the origin of
torture (and detention) in South Africa is located in the
procedures and institutions designed to maintain the
oppressive and exploitative social order. Until these
injustices are removed, until the oppressive social order
is changed, grave fears are expressed about future
protection against torture in South Africa." (p 180)

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Durban Descom (1987) Descom Bulletin Number 15

Book review: "Not either an experimental doll"

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Marks, Shula, (1987). <u>Not Either an Experimental Doll</u>. Durban and
Pietermaritzburg, Killie Campbell Africana Library and University of
Natal Press. Pp. 217 ISBN: 087980 542 8   R17,95.

One could well question of what relevance a review of a history book
is to a psychology journal. However, Shula Marks' "Not Either an
Experimental Doll" is an unusual and multi-dimensional documentation
of the correspondence of three women which offers a fascinating
insight into the personalities and relationships between these three
central figures. In her introduction, Shula Marks describes how she
came upon the correspondence by chance in going through some of Mabel
Palmer's papers at the Killie Campbell Africana Library. With
painstaking research and a remarkable integration of material
concerning this particular period (1948-1951) in Natal/South African
history, Ms Marks creates a context in which to situate and to some
extent analyse the communications between Mabel Palmer, Lily Moya (a

pseudonym) and Sibusiswe Makhanya. The letters themselves, which form
the bulk of the text, tell an intricate and compelling story, but it
is Ms Marks' thorough and imaginative use of both archival material
and verbal interviews that illuminates and enhances the reader's
understanding.

In essence the book documents the correspondence between a young 15
year old Xhosa girl, Lily Moya, who writes to Mabel Palmer, an elderly
woman involved in "Non-European" education at the University of Natal,
Durban, begging her assistance in helping her to complete her high
school studies. Mabel Palmer is so taken by Lily's unusual command of
English and her unfortunate position that she becomes involved in
educating and supporting Lily at some personal expense. However, Lily
and Mabel Palmer appear to have a different understanding and need of
their relationship and a progressive alienation becomes apparent in
their letters. As Shula Marks writes, although they both shared a
strong commitment to a "common western cultural inheritance which the
Christian educated elite of South Africa had by this time made their
own, there were hidden assumptions on both sides, and chasms in
experience, which decisively divided them." Lily was desperately
seeking a more intimate parenting relationship which Mabel Palmer
resisted fiercely and uncompromisingly. Lacking support and facing
contradictions in values and experience concerning sexuality,
Christianity, discipline, etcetera, Lily eventually becomes very
depressed and seemingly paranoid. She runs away from Adams School and
writes in her last letter to Mabel Palmer: "For congenial reasons I
had to leave Adams, due to the fact that I was never meant to be a

stone but a human being with feelings not either an experimental doll
..." (p. 42), hence the title of the book. From interviews with Lily
and her family during the writing of the book it becomes apparent that
Lily's condition deteriorated further and despite consultations with
traditional healers and western doctors she was to be admitted to
Sterkfontein psychiatric hospital, diagnosed as schizophrenic. Lily
became a chronic patient, was transferred to Randfontein and spent
approximately 25 years of her life in these institutions before being
released into the care of her sister.

The third correspondence in this interchange is a woman called
Sibusiswe Makhanya, an intelligent and extremely competent Zulu woman,
well-respected and powerful in her community and yet an emancipated
woman in terms of her American education and her independence. In her
concern for Lily's lack of integration into Adams School, Mabel Palmer
requests Sibusiswe to take an interest in her protegee. Lily appears
to have spent some happy weekends and holidays at Sibusiswe's home but
still does not seem to find the attachment she so much desires.
Although Ms Makhanya's contributions to the correspondence are much
fewer and less central the contrast in the three women's lives "the
English Fabian, the Zulu social worker and the Xhosa schoolgirl"
(p. 2) is fascinating and informative.

The text raises issues of concern to historians, educationalists,
feminists, psychologists, sociologists and others. The reconstruction
of history through oral tradition provides a compelling exploration of
the relationship between the personal and social. Shula Marks'

comprehensive background and postscript to the correspondence display
a subtle and intricate understanding of the manner in which the
personal is shaped by the political. As she herself writes, "The
correspondence moves us beyond the aridity of an unpeopled political
economy to the ambiguities of everyday life. Yet through it we see
the overarching constraints of social structure on human agency, and
the complex relationship of individual psychology with a
culture-bounded social order. If what is precious in the letters is
the personal and the ideosyncratic, it is nonetheless possible through
them the show that the 'private lives, even (the) obsessions of ...
individuals, far from being simply psychological quirks or even
aberrations, flowed directly from the social situation of these ...
individuals.'" (pp. 1-2).

Ms Marks' ever-conscious interposing of the social with the personal
is what serves to make the text both eminently readable and
instructive at the same time. The correspondence and the background
material are a superb example of how this style of documentation can
serve to illustrate the dialectical relationship between individuals
and their social circumstances. In my first reading of the book I
became so absorbed in the story/plot that I had the same avid reading
experience as when reading a good novel. On second reading, however,
I became much more cognisant of the more general issues highlighted by
the text, particularly issues concerning education in South Africa in
the fifties and some of the particular pressures experienced by women
by virtue of their sex. Again from the text, "Problems of sexual
'purity' and identity run as a leitmotiv through the history of the

three women in this correspondence : a reflection of the dominated and distorted nature of sexual relations for both black and white women in the twentieth century" (p.24).

There is little speculation in the text. Throughout, Shula Marks remains rigorous to the correspondence and what information can be found through documentation of the time. However, one retains a feeling of personal warmth and sympathy of the central 'characters'. As a psychologist, particularly a clinical psychologist, there were points at which I felt frustrated at the lack of information, particularly about Lily's progressive psychological alienation and pathology which seems to have been largely related to the life stresses she was experiencing. However, the disciplined level of analysis was a salutary lesson in that all the information presented is based on reconstruction or interposing of factual information and any hypothetical statements are acknowledged as such. The discussion of Lily's diagnosis and treatment (pp. 200-204) is an example of this. Shula Marks makes clear the complexity of analysis in this area. "Lily's tragedy raises in acute form one of the central questions for the social scientist : how to relate individual psychology and psychopathology to social structures and the realities of a specific social order" (p. 202). A psychologist writing about the same material may have extrapolated further in this area from the case information presented, but I recognized the possible degree of supposition in such an approach in acknowledging the historical accuracy of the text as is.

What makes the text of as much relevance to a psychologist as a
historian is Ms Marks' ever-constant acknowledgment of the importance
of individual psychology. "Structural preconditions do not, of
course, explain personal psychology. The delicate chemistry between
the individual and his or her social context can never be reduced
simply to that social context. At the same time, however, individual
psychology is a profoundly historical phenomenon, the product of
multiple determinations which in the final analysis shape the forms
and meanings of experience" (p.24). That the text is such a cogent
illustration of this synthesis must be attributed to both the three
remarkable women correspondents and Shula Marks' skillful editing.

One can only appreciate the documentation and sharing of such
information with a wide range of readers through the publication of
this text. In a sense this is a real illustration of the old cliche
that 'history becomes alive' or this correspondence would have
remained seldom read in the archives of the Killie Campbell Africana
Library. The quotation chosen to introduce the text perhaps most
succinctly illustrates what one serves to gain in reading the text: "I
turn to history not for lessons in hope, but to confront my experience
with the experience of others and to win for myself something which I
should call universal compassion — a sense of responsibility for the
human conscience." Zbigniew Herbert (quoted in Marks, frontpiece).

Book review: "Psychology in context"

K. F. Mauer and A. I. Retief (eds.) (1987) _Psychology in_

Context: Cross-cultural research trends in South Africa.

HSRC Investigation into Research Methodology; research

report series 4. Pretoria: Human Sciences Research

Council. 225pp. + xii. R20 + GST.

Don Foster

University of Cape Town

The seven papers presented here emerged from a one-day HSRC
seminar in July 1985 with a focus on current trends in
cross-cultural research psychology. The participants were
apparently invited due to their established interest and
active involvement in the field , their divergence in
approach and their concern for methodological issues. The
result is an interesting, wide-ranging and challenging set
of papers - a worthy contribution to the contemporary debate
about psychology in South Africa.

Without further ado I would happily recommend this
collection to post-graduate students and scholars interested
in matters South African and psychological. This is not
necessarily due to agreement with the proponents, but to the
fact that many interesting areas for debate are raised.
With the exception of the American Sechrest, all
contributors are certainly active in local research circles

and their work constitutes no mean slice of either earlier
(Biesheuvel) or contemporary research output. This provides
sufficient grounds for recommending the work.

Of course there are quibbles. Why not other contributors?
Why not more black contributors? Why not participants of a
wider range of ideological perspectives?   For there is
little doubt that this merry band is drawn dominantly from
the apparently "reasonable" middle-ground, and were probably
so chosen. This does not however constitute grounds for not
listening. Furthermore, the references, both to local and
international work, by themselves make it worth reading.

The range of positions - from tight, sound methodological
advice (Sechrest) to doubts about western, first-world and
positivist approaches (Andy Gilbert) is quite nice, despite
the limitations raised above.   The editors, Mauer and
Retief, give us some help in their preface by distinguishing
two perspectives among the papers: the "disengaged" and the
"committed". The disengaged, represented by Lee Sechrest,
John Verster and Peter du Preez take the broad stand of
science above application in service to any particular
group.   They also generally stand for a defence of
positivist or conventional methods, while recognising the
need for better theory and for awareness of methodological
pitfalls.   The disengaged position may be usefully

summarized in the words of du Prees: "After a prolonged diet of ideology, social scientist should sit down to the job of explaining social processes" (p.152).

One may note that Simon Biesheuvel who wrote the introduction, was not labelled by the editors, presumably on grounds that he was not part of the original seminar but was subsequently invited to contribute an introduction. His paper indicates a stance toward the disengaged side, a position with which I feel he would not be unhappy.

In contrast, the "committed" stance offers "argument in favour of an engaged form of cross-cultural enquiry" (p.vii) and the editors regard Bhana, Miller and Gilbert as comprising this group.

Bhana is critical of conventional methods and standardised tests for cross-cultural research, claiming the need for a more basic "emic" approach using qualitative devices. For research with "political minority groups" she advocates an approach which focuses on meaning, not on tests. In conclusion she suggests a "move away from the value loaded culture construct" (p.178).

Ronnie Miller also supports a shift away from positivism and comes down on the side of realism, with models provided by Harre, Geerts and Vygotsky. For Miller the most urgent need

is to study social change "whether as an aloof observer in the manner of an astronomer, or as a dedicated functionary committed to some vision of the future" (p.184). Culture he suggests is "not amenable to analysis by means of experimental method any more than history or evolution" (p.190). In the end via Vygotsky, he proposes a view directed towards a "developmental analysis of the processes that generate change" (p.202).

Andy Gilbert also challenges positivist assumptions, introducing critical views from third world psychologists and propounding a model through Morgan (1983) of strategies of critical reflection based on the metaphor of conversation. Such strategy implies a three fold operation of (i) engagement with other social scientists offering different views (ii) engagement with the subject matter of inquiry, and (iii) engagement with the respondents or participants. In this, the role of the scientist is altered from that of "arrogant manipulator, wanting to predict and control, to that of the sensitive facilitator, wishing to improve understanding" (p.221).

One can see what the editors are driving at with their distinction between "disengaged" and "committed", but considerable problems exist, particularly with the latter term and how it may be read at this juncture of history in South Africa. It also reflects a deeper problem regarding

the volume as a whole. Commitment to what? For among the labelled "committed" contributors, one does not get much sense of engagement other than methodological/academic. It is somewhat astonishing, in a volume initially presented in July 1985 (after the declaration of the state of emergency) and published in 1987, to find hardly a mention of the real context and grim reality of contemporary events other than a statement in the preface of a "specific historical period (1985-1987) ... characterised by violent social and cultural upheaval" (p.xi). In this regard the title of the volume "Psychology in Context" may be something of a misnomer; more sensible to employ the more restricted and accurate sub-title - "cross-cultural research trends in South Africa".

It could be counter-argued that a focus on methodology largely precluded the discussion of politically contextual issue. If so, it would be a very sorry position to take. Furthermore some of the papers do touch on political matters - in a rather bland fashion: du Prees by raising the question of identity (but little on ascribed identity), Bhana in her focus on the "minority group" of Indians (no mention of oppression, though she does recognise Indian people as a "politically defined group" (p.161), Gilbert in recognising third-world conditions, and Biesheuvel in talking about a "plural society" faced with "political dilemmas" (p.15).

Furthermore it could be argued that to take a stand against apartheid would be to be ideological rather than scientific. Here the hoary issue of neutrality and social science raises its head again. But to be "neutral" in the face of apartheid is quite clearly also an ideological position. In these debates, false positions are being set up, notably along the lines that those who take a highly critical stand against apartheid are incapable of being scientific. Here one may note Biesheuvel's attach on a "small but militant group carrying little weight scientifically" in reference to earlier criticism lodged by Cloete et al (1986). In a disastrous turn Biesheuvel suggests that the influence of this militant band could influence "the disposal of funds made available by South African subsidiaries of American corporations for research and development programmes on behalf of disadvantaged ethnic groups" (p.12). It is simply sad that someone of Biesheuvel's considerable stature has to be so defensive of the NIPR work and to stoop to such lowly tactics. Equating militancy (if being strongly opposed to apartheid and/or capitalism is classed as militancy) with lack of scientific credibility is a wretched argument and merely demeans such advocates.

A good deal of attention, quite rightly, is given to critical discussion of the concept of "culture". All contributors appreciate that the term presents theoretical

problems and useful coverage of recent writers such as
Segall, Irvine, Rohner, Geertz, G Jahoda, Sinha and Berry is
provided. The papers of Biesheuvel, Verster and Bhana also
offer tidy summaries of some Southern African work. Despite
this (not unimportant) review of international theory, it is
really only du Prees's paper that begins to get to grips
with the notion that "culture" and "identity" ("dirty words"
to some, as he recognises) are not givens but are contested
on the political terrain, and thus have as much to do with
power and economics as with psychology.

In this respect du Prees's paper is arguably the most
interesting and innovative in the volume. He has some
useful data and challenging things to say about identity - a
central term unjustifiably ignored by other writers. I
think that he, along with Miller, is correct in suggesting
that understanding and explaining processes of social change
should be a major concern. In the end however his use of
models drawn from evolutionary theory, while not
uninteresting, could be queried. In particular his use of
the "Lottke-Volterra predator-prey equations" to account for
a claim that "the radicals prey on the liberals at
conferences and in journals" (p.149) reminds one
uncomfortably of other examples in Andreski's (1972)
splendid book entitled "Social Sciences as Sorcery".

It would be a sad day if we did agree with everything found
in any particular book. In the present case there is little
danger of such. I do not think that "Psychology in Context"
takes us very far towards answers in striving after an
appropriate psychology for South Africa, but it is a most
interesting contribution to debate. It certainly should be
read, and I for one would happily prescribe it as part of
the reading for any postgraduate course in this and related
fields.

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PSYCHOANALYSIS   PSYCHOANALYSIS   PSYCHOANALYSIS

PSYCHOLOGY IN SOCIETY will be producing a special issue on
PSYCHOANALYSIS early next year.

Consistent with the editorial brief we would be particularly
interested in articles which try to locate the significance, or
irrelevance (!), of psychoanalysis in this country. In other
words we would especially welcome contributions about
psychoanalysis and social theory; psychoanalysis and social
struggles; psychoanalysis and apartheid; psychoanalysis and
socialism, etc.

The interest in psychoanalysis and social issues is not an
exclusive one, and hence we would also be interested in
interdisciplinary uses of psychoanalysis (literature, art, music,
sociology, politics); clinical or case study reports informed by
psychoanalytic theory and/or method; and in general any
interesting intellectual engagements with psychoanalytic culture.

The deadline for submissions is 12 December 1988.   Submissions
and queries should be directed to Grahame Hayes, Dept of
Psychology, University of Natal, Durban; OR Cyril Couve, Dept of
Psychology, University of Cape Town, Rondebosch.

Book review: "Black mamba rising"

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One of the most important things to remember when reading Black Mamba Rising, a collection of worker poetry by Qabula, Hlatshwayo and Malange, all members of the Durban Workers' Cultural Local, is that the poems by and large are intended for public performance as opposed to private, leisurely reading. Studying the poems quietly in one's study, one is therefore not receiving them as they were intended to be received. Furthermore, in the case of Qabula's and Hlatshwayo's poems, one is reading them in translation as they were originally written in vernacular and therefore some of the resonances and layers of meaning have probably been lost in the transition. Despite these two drawbacks, however, this anthology is well worth reading and it marks an exciting step forward in worker poetry. The three poets in different voices dwell on the same themes: the struggle against oppression and exploitation in

which the praises of FOSATU, then COSATU, together with those of individual heroes are sung.

This anthology has a very focussed aim which can be roughly summarised as follows: to regain "the dignity of the working class. The dignity that has been slain countless times. The dignity that has been buried in countless forms. The dignity needs strong cultural foundations. We shall build them".[1] It is refreshing to see that the importance of cultural work in the struggle towards liberation from oppression and exploitation is stressed, and, furthermore, that the vital necessity to control one's own cultural work is recognised: "This makes us say that it is time to begin controlling our creativity: We must create space in our struggle - through our own songs, our own slogans, our own poems, our own artwork, our own plays and dances. At the same time, in our struggle we must also fight against the cultural profit machines".[2]

With the aims clear, how does the poetry in this collection go about trying to illustrate them? Many of the poems fall within the imbongi or praise poem genre with a difference however, in that traditional images are galvanised to the struggle versus racism, oppression and exploitation, bearing witness to a tension or unease unlike the sense of stasis and security conveyed by traditional imbongi. Sitas explains this well:

> "Through such 'paradoxes', Hlatshwayo achieves something peculiar: he creates a 'turbulence', a 'restlessness', and through rapid contrasts he undermines the traditional imbongi form. If one compares this with the structures of composition in imbongi poetry (of the poetry of Jama, Dingane, Shaka, etc) what is destroyed is the calm authority of the wholesome world - a world whose meaning were un- ambiguous; a world whose cosmology was adorned with metaphors comprising of sturdy subjects".[3]

Thus is the traditional genre suitably modified to describe present conditions of South African working class life.

Another common thread linking the three poets are the calls to the divine and frequent Biblical references, evidence in Hlatshwayo's case of his involvement in the eCibine (St. John's Apostolic Church). These divine invocations and exhortations marry well with the high formal style of the praise poem resulting in some passages which have a definite biblical ring to them:

> "On our side are your
> Brothers even at the new
> Jerusalem
> Let it be workers! They say,
> The heaven above also approves".

<div align="right">(from 'The Black Mamba Rises')</div>

While such passages call workers to look forward to a promised land, other poems invite workers to imagine a past, pre-lapserian Africa, notably Hlatshwayo's "Workers' Lamentation for Ancient Africa":

> The harvest ceremonies
> Recall
> Marriage ceremonies
> Recall in our struggle
> That Spirit
> When we were a community of concern
> One in grief
> One in joy
> Maye!
> Maye Africa!"

The poet looks back wistfully to a (mythical?) time of cultural dignity and social coherence and looks angrily at what has become of this unity. However, by calling on the paradisal myth of African Hlatshwayo shows a short sightedness not evident elsewhere in his poetry:

> "From: our crowded dawn trains
> From: the yawning queues of the unemployed
> At the labour offices
> Can the real African
> Resurface?"

The problem arises with the word 'real' - the Africa of today is one version of reality but not the one the poet desires. 'Real' Africa for him is one long lost, which perhaps never existed, but which is nevertheless 'real' for Hlatshwayo in that it is the one he chooses to construct. In comparison Malange, a product of the 1976 student revolts, has no such illusions, preferring a flatter, more prosaic style of writing.

An interesting, if thorny, debate this anthology has raised - as witnessed in the response to one review in Weekly Mail - is that of aesthetics. One correspondent objected to the "patronisingly high praise" bestowed "on passages of very minor achievement. This kind of thing does harm - not least to black poets, both accomplished and aspirant. Its main message to them is: "The best is not for you".[4] This anthology, to my mind, is not so much concerned with crafting 'fine', 'difficult' verse as aiming to share with as many workers as possible creative effort and vision in a tradition that would be familiar to many in the audience. Another voice in the debate refers to these poems as "slogan poetry .... nothing more than praise poems to selected organisations, like the praise poets of old that sang out to monarchs in blind faith, in spite of their injustices".[5] This is to deny the rich metaphorical texture of much of the poetry, its freshness and immediacy - so, for instance, in "Praise Poem to FOSATU" which perhaps by nature of its subject could be expected to lean towards slogans and the formulaic:

> "You're great FOSATU
> Bayete!
> Amandla kubasebenzi"

one will also find:

> "You moving forest of Africa ...
> You are the hen with wide wings
> that protects its chickens".

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Similarly, "The Tears of a Creator" in praise of COSATU which ends "Woza 'msebenzi; woza COSATU; woza freedom!" also includes the passage

> "We have rebuilt its head
> We lathed its teeth on our machines.
> The day this head rises
> Beware of the day these teeth shall bite".

To see these poems merely as slogan poetry is also to deny their flashes of humour - in "Praise Poem to FOSATU" there is a damningly funny interchange between 'baas' and worker conducted in fanikalo

> "You are a good muntu
> Mina bhilda wena 6 room house
> lapha lohomeland kawena.
> Thatha lo-machine gun, vala logates
> Skathi wena buka lo-union
> Bulala lo-union".

Judging from the energy, anger and sense of solidatority conveyed by these poems, it seems then that this collection is one of what one hopes will be many further responses from the mamba that that has been "tease(d) ... in its/Century old sleep". (The Black Mamba Rises).

FOOTNOTES

1. Black Mamba Rising, p72, extract from talk for FOSATU'S Education Workshop, 1985.

2. Ibid, p69.

3. Sitas, A. (1986). 'A Black Mamba Rising: an introduction to Mi S'dumo Hlatshwayo's poetry', Transformation 2, 50-61.

4. Weekly Mail, March 20 to March 26, 1987.

5. Ibid.

TWO BOOKS from

Worker Resistance and Culture Publications

Qabula, Hlatshwayo and Malange are familiar names in Natal's worker movement. They are increasingly becoming familiar names nationwide as their reputation as "Worker izimbongi" is spreading with every major issue in the country. By now thousands of people have witnessed their powerful oral poetry at mass-meetings and at worker and community gatherings. They are part and parcel of an exciting and militant cultural movement which is daily becoming central to the lives of working people in South Africa: indeed, a "Black Mamba Rising" in dignity.

This book gather's together Qabula's, Hlatshwayo's and Malange's poetry from the beginnings of 1984 to the launch of COSATU in November 1985, it captures the oral peotry from the time Qabula started wandering through worker gatherings with his "Praise Poem to Fosatu" to the time when he and Hlatshwayo orated their joint composition, Tears of a Crator. In between these two major compositions, the poems here, sometimes in short and harsh lines, sometimes in complex Nguni symbolism, capture the power, the commitment and the pride of the progressive labour movement.

Price - R6.

This book looks at the history of Indian workers from 1860 to the present. It tries to show how the actions of the bosses and the laws of the government have created and reinforced divisions between Indian and African workers. There were times when the workers were able to unite together, but more often Indian and African workers were involved in separate struggles.

In the days of early industry Indian workers were militant and organised. The bosses then used African workers against Indian workers. Today, in the 1980's, it is the African workers who have come together in strong unions and a militant federation, COSATU. Most Indian workers are not involved in these unions.

These experiences are looked at, and where possible this is done through the words of workers and organisers who try to understand the divisions and the way forward to unity.

Price R4.50

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'Psychology in 'society' is a journal which aims to critically explore and present ideas on the nature of psychology in apartheid and capitalist society. There is a special emphasis on the theory and practice of psychology in the South African context.

The editorial collective welcomes contributions which will develop debate on psychology and psychological issues in South Africa. In addition to articles and book reviews, short discussions on previously published material or on issues of the moment will be encouraged. Contributions should not normally exceed 6000 words in length. Authors should adopt non-sexist and non-racist conventions in their contributions.

FORMAT. The APA or the Harvard system of referencing is preferred. The list of references, in alphabetical order and not numbered, should follow immediately after the end of the article. Footnotes should be kept to a minimum and where possible each should appear on the same page as its reference. Left and right margins should be about 25mm each. On all pages except the first page, top and bottom margins should be about 30mm each. On the first page only a top margin of 100mm (for titling) and a bottom margin of 40mm are required. Pages should be numbered in pencil by authors and the copy as a whole should be suitable for reproduction as is. Prospective contributors should send three copies of any piece, including a good original. These will not be returned.

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