

CENTRE FOR
SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH

Social Surveys Unit

**Race, class and inequality in the
South African City**

Jeremy Seekings

CSSR Working Paper No. 283

November 2010

Jeremy Seekings is Director of the Social Surveys Unit in the Centre for Social Science Research, a professor of Political Studies and Sociology at the University of Cape Town (South Africa) and a Visiting Professor at Yale (USA).

This will be published as a chapter in Gary Bridge and Sophie Watson (eds), *The Blackwell Companion to the City* (new edition, Blackwell).

Race, class and inequality in the South African City

The apartheid city

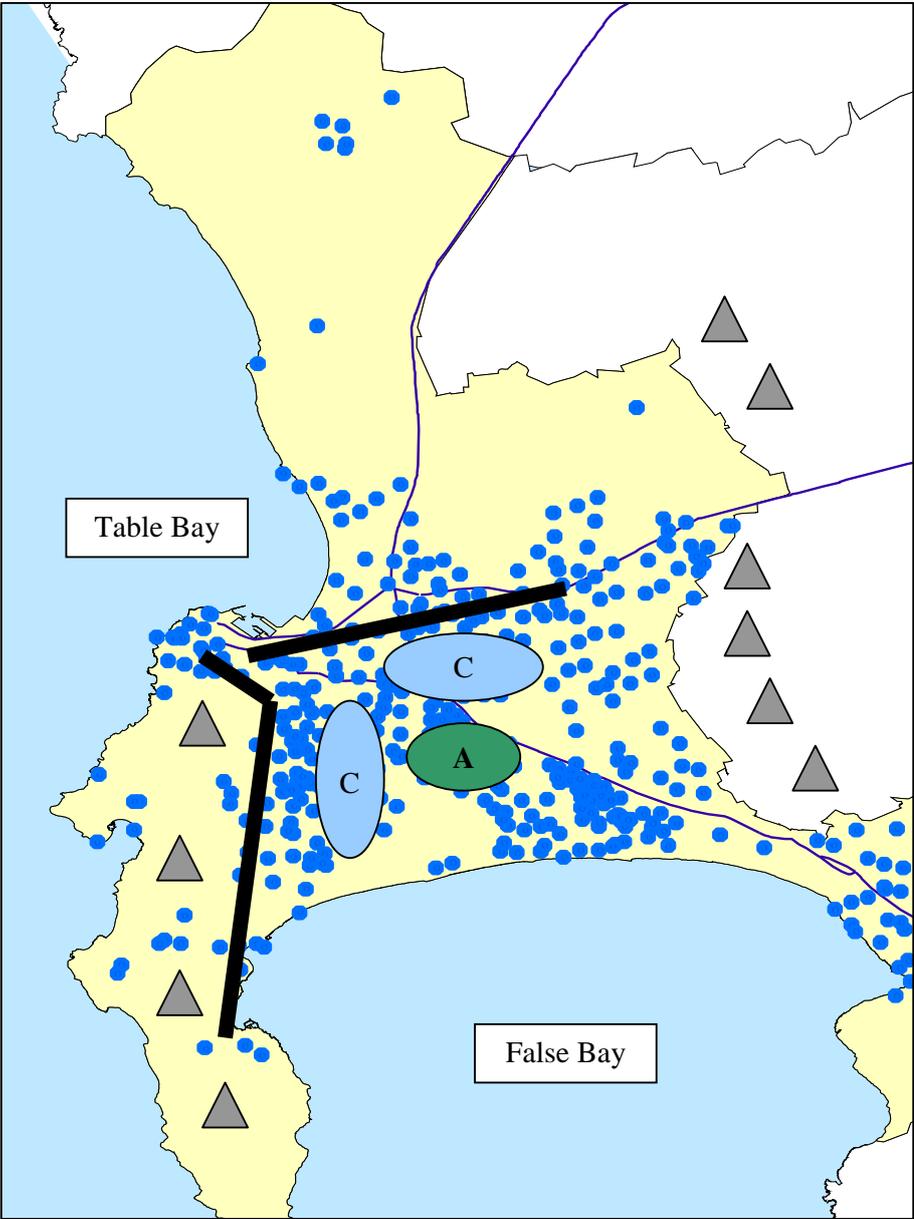
The 'apartheid city' in South Africa stands out as an extreme example of urban social engineering. Urban segregation was pervasive across the colonial world, some other cities in colonial and even post-colonial Africa were subject to massive forced removals or restrictions on urbanisation that compared to South Africa under apartheid (Freund, 2001; Burton, 2005), and ghettos are certainly not uniquely South African. Nonetheless, the apartheid city was distinctive in several important respects.

Firstly, its basis was not simply the usual binary division between 'white' ('European') and 'black' ('native', 'Bantu' or 'African'), or citizen and subject, or colonial and colonised, with some ambiguity surrounding people of mixed descent as well as African people of high status. Instead, statutory 'racial' classification demarcated also separate 'coloured' as well as 'Indian' populations: the category 'Indian' referred to the descendents of people brought from South Asia, mostly as indentured workers in the late nineteenth century; 'coloured' encompassed an arbitrary mix of people, including the descendents of the indigenous Khoi and San populations of the Western Cape, people descended from slaves brought to the Cape from Malaysia and Indonesia, an people of 'mixed-race' (Christopher, 2002; Posel, 2001). This rigid classificatory system combined with strict prohibitions on inter-racial marriage and sex, removing the possibility of assimilation or other forms of boundary-crossing.

Secondly, residential segregation was especially thorough, and controls on urbanisation unusually severe. Residential segregation (under the Group Areas Act) resulted in towns that were mercilessly divided into separate 'white', 'coloured', 'Indian' and 'African' areas. Hundreds of thousands of people were forcibly removed, especially in the 1960s, into racially-designated 'group areas' (Western, 1981; Field, 2001). Residential segregation was linked to the systematic regulation of social interaction in both public spaces (especially municipal facilities). In addition, 'influx control', i.e. restrictions under the 'pass' laws on where African people could live and work, served both to limit the growth of the urban African population and to determine where African workers could live if they were allowed into the cities. Many male African

workers were confined to overcrowded migrant hostels, whilst shack settlements were largely prohibited from the cities and towns in ‘white’ South Africa. Family accommodation for African people in the cities was limited to the small and standardised ‘matchbox’ housing in highly planned townships such as Soweto. Unemployed African men and most African women and children were excluded from the apartheid city through mass arrests, prosecutions and deportations.

Cape Town: African townships and coloured “group areas” in mid-20th century



The apartheid city was thus highly ordered spatially, with the archetypal design illustrated tellingly by Davies (1981; see also Lemon, 1991; Christopher, 1994: 103–40). Figure 1 illustrates this for the port city of Cape Town. The historic city centre, the ‘Southern Suburbs’ stretching down the Cape Peninsula and the ‘Northern Suburbs’ curving along low hills inland to the north-east – the axes indicated by black lines – were almost entirely set aside for white settlement. African settlements were successively removed eastwards, away from the city centre, to the areas marked as “A”. The coloured population was the primary victim of forced removals from the 1960s through to the 1970s, subjected to relocation from what became uniformly white areas to more distant areas, especially on the sandy ‘Cape Flats’ to the south-east (marked “C”).

Thirdly, and perhaps most importantly of all, the purpose of racial segregation was not simply to separate ‘racial’ groups but also to ensure a clear racial hierarchy in which ‘poor whites’ would be lifted, economically and socially, above almost all non-white people. The consequence of this was that inequality in South African cities took on a *caste*-like form, with largely impermeable boundaries between castes. Caste shaped class in that someone’s racial classification shaped the range of possible class positions open to him or her, although each caste comprised a set of classes. At the same time, class shaped the caste system, in that some aspects of racial discrimination and segregation served the interests of some sections of the bourgeoisie (notably the gold-mining houses and many commercial farmers) and many white South African workers (who restricted competition from black workers for better-paid employment).

Urban segregation therefore also entailed ghettoisation. South Africans classified as white lived in relatively prosperous neighbourhoods with good municipal infrastructure, with lucrative pockets of commercial activity. Rapid economic growth under apartheid resulted in suburbanisation. South Africans classified as coloured or Indian were removed to less-serviced neighbourhoods, where poverty, drugs and gangs were rife. ‘Townships’ for the African population were provided with minimal infrastructure on the grounds that African people were temporarily resident in ‘white’ South Africa, and would and should return to the rural areas in due course. In addition, any infrastructure should be funded out of revenues raised from within these poor neighbourhoods. Policing was thorough, but services were minimal (with electrification only in the 1980s). In most townships, African people were not permitted to own their houses. Restrictions on construction meant that, at least from the 1970s, housing in coloured, Indian and African neighbourhoods was severely overcrowded, and shacks proliferated in backyards (Swilling *et al.*, 1991).

The most impoverished ghettos in apartheid South Africa were located not in the city, however, but in the supposed rural areas in the 'bantustans', i.e. the supposedly self-governing (and even 'independent') 'homelands' set aside for African people so that the denial of South African citizenship might be more defensible. Urbanisation was 'displaced' (Simkins, 1983; Murray, 1987) into slums such as Phuthaditjaba (on the border with Lesotho), whose population grew from 24,000 in 1970 to (officially) 342,000 in 1991 (Nattrass, 2000). Only a few of these slums were in commuting distance of cities in 'white' South Africa (see Lelyveld, 1986: ch. 5).

Economic growth and change brought changes in the class structure of South Africa which in turn shaped political conflict. Skill shortages in the late apartheid period led to the steady relaxation of the 'colour bar' in employment, especially in the service sector. Growing numbers of African men and women moved into better-paid employment (Crankshaw, 1997). At the same time, deagrarianisation together with a stagnant demand for unskilled labour in urban areas meant that open unemployment rose rapidly. Influx control kept many, but not all, unemployed people in 'rural' slums. Continuing racial segregation and ghettoisation helped to forge the political coalition in African townships that drove the 'township revolt' against the apartheid state in the 1980s: upwardly mobile, skilled workers and the nascent African middle-class, forced to remain in infrastructurally-deprived and ever more overcrowded townships, and repeatedly denied dignity; semi-skilled workers suffering from industrial stagnation; rural immigrants contesting influx control; and growing ranks of young unemployed. Mass unemployment also helped to fuel defiance of the state in many of the quasi-urban slums in the bantustans (Seekings and Nattrass, 2005).

The persistence of inequality after apartheid

In 1990, Nelson Mandela was released from prison, the African National Congress (ANC) and other organisations were unbanned, and negotiations over political change began. Four years later, in 1994, the country held its first democratic elections, won by the ANC. By 1994, almost all legislation which discriminated on explicitly racial grounds had been abolished: people could now vote in elections, live or attend school anywhere, do any work, and marry and have sex, all without regard for racial classification. Inequalities, however, remained: the legacy of the past could not be undone overnight.

Researchers, political leaders and (of course) poor South Africans themselves had long been aware of the persistence of poverty, but accurate data had only become available for the first time in 1993. Using the standard and ungenerous international poverty measure of US\$1 per person day (adjusted for local purchasing power), one in four South Africans lived in (deep) poverty in 1994, whilst as many as one half had incomes below the more generous poverty line favoured in South Africa itself. One in six South Africans was not expected to survive to the age of forty – a proportion that was to grow as the AIDS pandemic reduced life expectancy by one quarter. At the same time, a minority of South Africans, almost all white, enjoyed evident prosperity. Inequality meant that the ‘poverty gap’, defined as the aggregate amount by which poor peoples’ incomes are below the poverty line as a proportion of the total income in society, was very small. A perfectly targeted transfer of only 5 percent of national income from rich to poor would have sufficed to eliminate poverty, even using the higher South African poverty line set above US\$1 per person day. Given that the top household income decile, i.e. the richest 10 percent of households, earned almost exactly one-half of the national income, they would only have to forsake one-tenth of their aggregate incomes to have eliminated poverty (Seekings and Nattrass, 2005).

The transition to democracy, marked by democratic elections in 1994, was unsurprisingly accompanied by high hopes that income poverty and inequality would be reduced. The votes of poor people had helped to ensure victory for the ANC, which had campaigned around the promise of ‘a better life for all’. Its election manifesto – the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) – identified ‘attacking poverty and deprivation’ as ‘the first priority of the democratic government’; all South Africans should enjoy ‘a decent living standard and economic security’ (ANC, 1994). The 1996 constitution also recognised socio-economic rights, to health care, ‘sufficient food and water’ and income security, albeit subject to the availability of resources, as well as education. These and other rights were said to be based on the ‘democratic values of human dignity, equality and freedom’.

The performance of the democratic ANC-led government following the 1994 elections is a matter of some debate. On the one hand, the ANC itself cautiously lauds its success, at least in ‘laying the foundations’ for the elimination of poverty (South Africa, 2003, 2007). On the other hand, a series of critical commentators have argued that the ideals of 1994 have been betrayed repeatedly, as the ANC has adopted ‘neo-liberal’ policies that reproduced the inequities of the past. ‘Apartheid did not die’, in the words of John Pilger (2006). In this view, the racialised inequities of apartheid gave way to new ‘market’ inequities, as the post-apartheid political elite embraced (or was

embraced by) global neo-liberalism. Neo-liberalism was seen to be especially rampant in South African cities, which offered appropriate spaces for global capitalism to circumvent possible restrictions arising from national politics. Neo-liberalism is said to have made Cape Town, for example, into ‘one of the most – if not *the* most – unequal cities in the world’ (McDonald, 2008: 42; emphasis in the original). The deep inequalities that were nurtured by apartheid, through direct, coercive and inegalitarian intervention, are now being reproduced, it is argued, precisely because the state has withdrawn from playing an active role in the regulation of markets, i.e. the state is withdrawing from any commitment to decommodification. Scholars pointed to policies such as the privatisation of or introduction of user-charges (and cost-recovery) for municipal services, the delegation to the private sector of house-building, and the proliferation of gated communities and business-led improvement districts (McDonald and Pape, 2002; Beall, Crankshaw and Parnell, 2002; Harrison *et al.*, 2003; McDonald, 2008).

There is indeed strong evidence that both income poverty and inequality worsened in the years immediately following the transition to democracy in 1994. Income poverty and inequality worsened disproportionately in South Africa’s cities as the urban elite and middle classes prospered whilst rapid rural-to-urban migration combined with rising unemployment rates to swell the ranks of the urban poor. In the early 2000s, however, income poverty seems to have declined, in part due to a modest decline in unemployment, but primarily because of the expansion of public welfare programmes (Van der Berg *et al.*, 2008; Leibbrandt *et al.*, 2009; Seekings, 2009).

Delineating the class structure of South Africa – or of South African cities – is not straightforward, given the limits of both the available data and the theoretical understanding of what constitutes a meaningful conception of class in a context such as South Africa’s. Using data on occupations, income from wealth and business activities, and household composition, the class structure can be understood in terms of ten classes, which can be combined into three composite categories. The composite ‘upper class’ category comprises households with substantial earnings from wealth or business, or including people in professional or managerial occupations. A middle category encompassing households that included people in semi-professional, supervisory and skilled occupations, as well as semi- and unskilled workers outside of domestic work and agriculture. It also included households with modest earnings from wealth or business (labelled ‘petty traders’ for convenience). A lower category comprised households in which workers were in unskilled occupations in the marginal sectors of domestic work and agriculture or in low-income self-employment, together with a systematically disadvantaged

‘underclass’ trapped in unemployment (Seekings and Natrass, 2005: chapters 7 and 8). In 1993, on the eve of the first democratic elections, the upper classes accounted for 12 percent of the total population of households but 45 percent of the national income. The middle category accounted for 48 percent of households and 45 percent of national income. The lower classes accounted for 41 percent of households, but only 10 percent of national income. Household incomes in the upper category were, on average, more than fifteen times larger than household incomes in the lower category (Seekings and Natrass, 2005: 254).

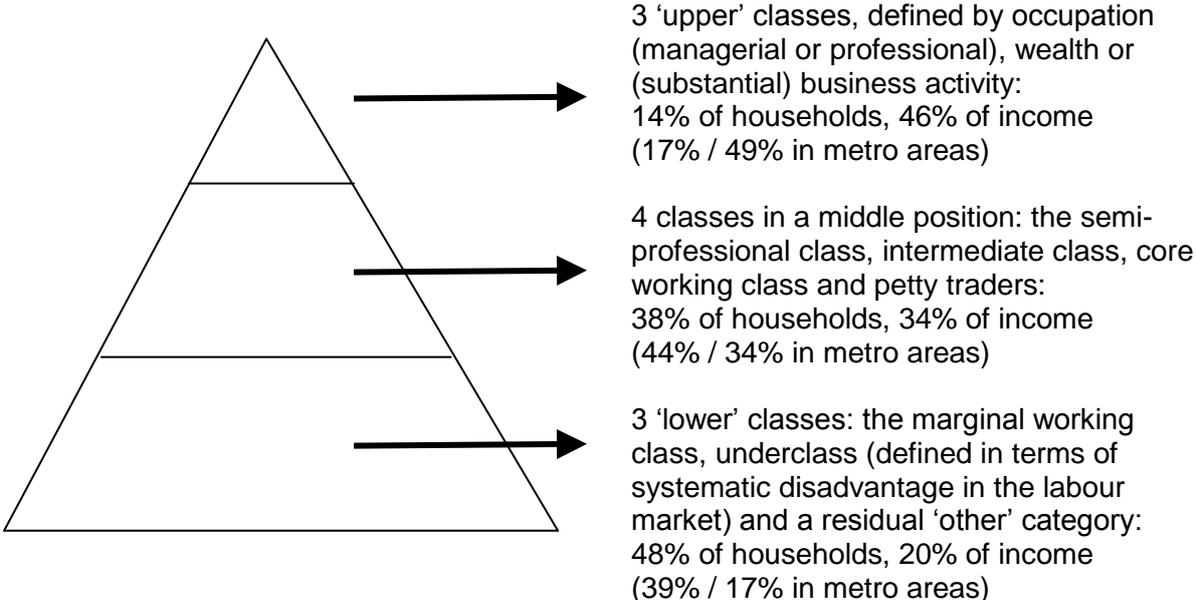


Figure 2: The Class Structure of South Africa, 2008 (calculated from NIDS data)

Fifteen years later, the class structure shows limited changes. Figure 2 shows the distribution of households and income in 2008, using data from the first wave of the National Income Dynamics Study. Figures in brackets refer to the six major metropolitan areas only. Whilst the data from 1993 and 2008 are not precisely comparable, they suggest that the upper classes have maintained their privileged position, and perhaps even grown slightly. The middle category has, however, shrunk in terms of its share of the total population of households, and the lower category has grown in terms of its shares of both the total population of households and the national income. Many households in the lower category have benefited from the government’s social assistance programmes (as well as housing programmes). Inter-class income inequalities have declined somewhat since 1993, but remain large: households in the upper category have, on average, incomes three and a half times larger than households in the middle category, and approximately eight times larger than households in the lower category.

A comparison of data from 1993 and 2008 suggests that there has been some continued social polarisation in post-apartheid South Africa. Such a conclusion is supported by an additional detail. The ‘core working class’ – defined as households dependent on semi-skilled and unskilled workers in sectors other than agriculture and domestic work – seems to have shrunk very dramatically across this fifteen-year period, perhaps by as much as two-thirds. The effect of this has been muted for reasons suggested by Borel-Saladin and Crankshaw (2009), on the basis of their analysis of somewhat older occupational data from censuses. They found, in the case of Cape Town, that there was significant deindustrialisation in the late apartheid and early post-apartheid periods. The decline of middle-income jobs in occupations such as artisan, machine operator and driver between 1980 and 2001 was matched, however, by rising employment of middle-income clerks, sales and personal service workers. Household and labour force data suggest, however, that *formal* semi- and unskilled employment has declined in general, possibly because of the effects of labour market institutions and regulations. This has also been partly offset by rising low-income *informal* employment. The decline of lower-paid, semi- and unskilled but formal working class occupations has entailed some polarisation.

The lower cluster of classes has grown in terms of both its share of the total population of households and its share of national income. The former is explained primarily by the growth of the ‘underclass’, i.e. households who (to borrow from Wilson, 1987) are ‘truly disadvantaged’: households with unemployed but without any working members, disadvantaged not only by their lack of skills but also by their lack of social capital, in a labour market in which connections are imperative in the face of very high unemployment (with the unemployment rate standing at about 35 percent, down from a peak of 40 percent in the early 2000s) (Seekings and Nattrass, 2005). The growth in the lower cluster of classes’ share of national income reflects primarily the expansion of government social assistance programmes.

Insofar as the class structure has changed, it has not resulted in any major diminution of interpersonal inequality. The social structure has changed, however, in terms of the relationship between race and class. The lower cluster of classes remains entirely African, but the higher cluster of classes has continued to diversify in racial terms. Improved educational opportunities for African people combined with government policies that promoted affirmative action (in both public and private sectors) and ‘black economic empowerment’ (meaning primarily transfers of capital from white to black, and especially African, people) meant accelerated upward mobility of some African people into the upper classes (Seekings and Nattrass, 2005). In Johannesburg, by 2001, ‘middle-class’ was evenly divided between white people, on the one side, and

black (i.e. African, Indian and coloured) people on the other (Crankshaw, 2008: 1697). Nationally and in cities such as Johannesburg, the distribution of income within the African population has become as unequal as for the population as a whole, i.e. including all racial categories (Leibbrandt *et al.*, 2009; Seekings, 2009). Nowhere is the deracialisation of the elite and middle class more apparent than in urban shopping malls (see, for example, Nkuna, 2006).

The persistence of segregation

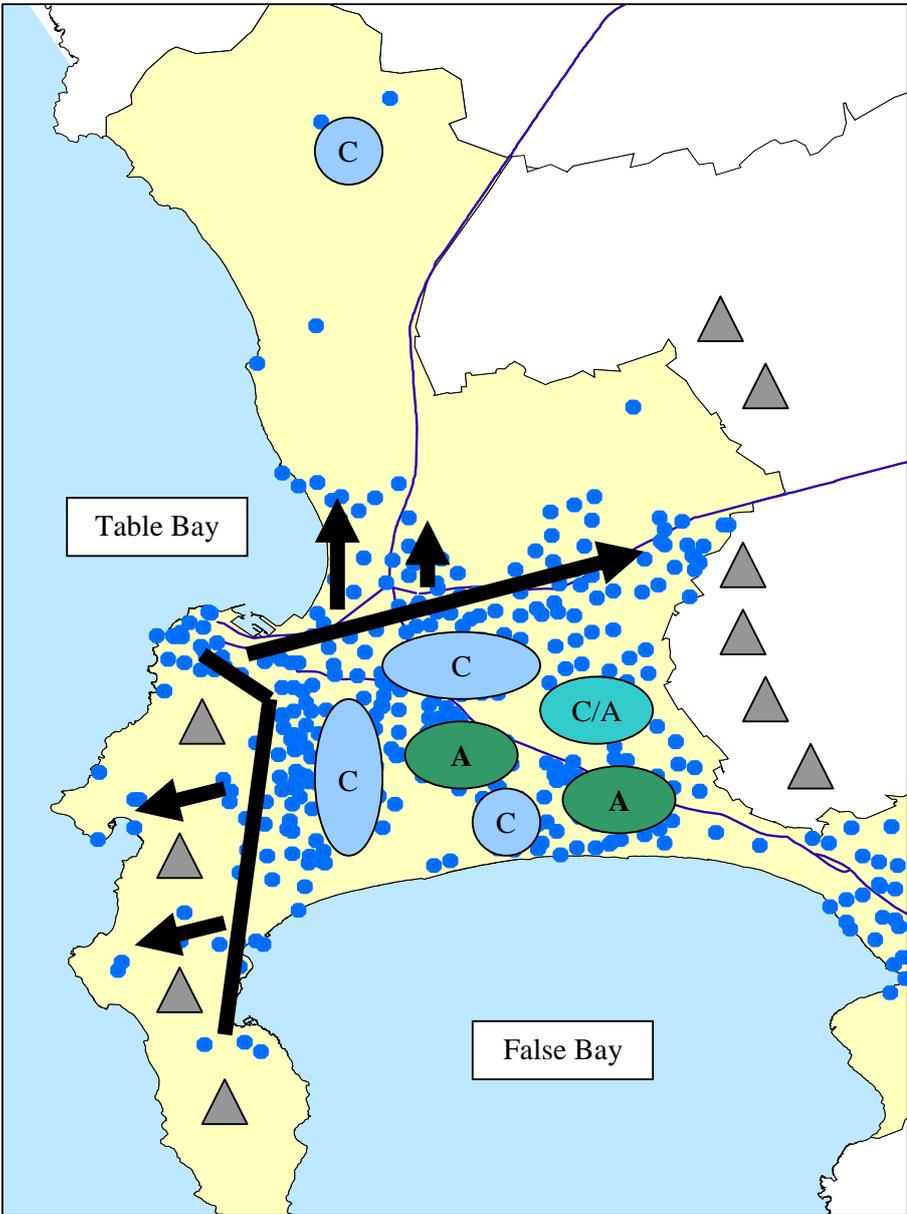
Given that the class structure remains largely unchanged, and highly unequal, whilst deracialisation is limited to the upper cluster of classes, one might expect that racial segregation would have declined only in higher-income neighbourhoods. Initial studies of post-apartheid segregation found that the pace of desegregation was very slow indeed (Christopher, 2001, 2005): the ‘post-apartheid’ city should perhaps be viewed as a ‘neo-apartheid’ city, with the overwhelming majority of people living in mono-racial areas.

There are exceptions to this general pattern. In Johannesburg, in the early 1990s, the inner city was rapidly transformed as African people moved in and white residents moved out (Morris, 1993). In Cape Town, a handful of neighbourhoods were established for low-income African people in the midst of middle-class suburbia (notably Imizamo Yethu, Masiphumelele and Westlake on the Cape Peninsula, and Marconi Beam in northern Cape Town; see Saff, 1998) – although, in general, public housing projects have been located on low-cost land on the urban periphery. Lower-middle-class private housing developments provide an opportunity for racial integration (for example, Summer Greens in Cape Town: see Broadbridge, 2001). On occasion, the state has explicitly sought to create mixed neighbourhoods by allocating new houses to both coloured and African people (for example, in Delft; see Oldfield, 2004; Millstein, 2007; and Westlake, see Lemanski, 2006a). Overall, however, the ‘post’-apartheid city remains heavily segregated.

To describe the contemporary South African city as a ‘neo-apartheid’ city reflects one of its dimensions, i.e. the persistence of segregation, but distracts attention from a second, i.e. that the consequence of rapid metropolitan growth is that a large proportion of the segregated city comprises neighbourhoods that did not exist when statutory residential segregation was abolished during the transition to democracy. Figure 3 shows the pattern of segregation in post-apartheid Cape Town. The expansion of the city has entailed the reproduction of segregation in newly-developed neighbourhoods: predominantly white suburban

neighbourhoods, often gated and walled, on the northern and north-eastern periphery of the city, or down the Cape Peninsula to the south (indicated by the black arrows); the rapid expansion of overwhelmingly African neighbourhoods in an easterly direction (marked “A”), and the slower growth of coloured neighbourhoods in pockets around the former coloured ‘group areas’ (marked “C”). Only in one area – Delft (marked “C/A”) – has there been significant racial integration of coloured and African people.

Cape Town: expansion at end of 20th Century



Economic factors are clearly part of the explanation of segregation in new as well as old neighbourhoods. As Besteman (2008: ch. 2) emphasises in the case of Cape Town, coloured and African people face severe economic obstacles in moving into formerly white neighbourhoods where the prices of housing and land are inflated. As in the USA, access to higher-paid employment does not mean that the upwardly-mobile can put down deposits on property. In Cape Town, the gaps between each step on the housing 'ladder' are so large, relative to incomes, that getting onto one step does not mean that it is easy to ascend further (Lemanski, 2010). Economic factors might be buttressed by racism on the part of richer, white South Africans. Johannesburg's city centre transformed rapidly because, when African people began to move in, white residents fled to the city's gated and walled northern suburbs. Employers followed them, and Johannesburg's northern neighbourhoods themselves were soon transformed into a new 'edge city' that was largely independent of the former central city (Beavon, 2004; see also Saff, 1998; Lemanski, 2006b). The continuing separation of rich and poor neighbourhoods reflected also the failures of public planning (Watson, 2002; Harrison *et al.*, 2008).

These explanations are not entirely adequate, however. For one thing, as Crankshaw (2008) emphasises, many early studies underestimated the extent of desegregation in richer neighbourhoods. In Johannesburg, he found, somewhere between one-quarter and one-third of the residents (excluding domestic workers) of Johannesburg's middle-class northern neighbourhoods were African, coloured or Indian by 2001, and the proportion was higher still in formerly white neighbourhoods in the south of the city. Novels provide the most vivid illustration of the growth of the suburban African upper classes. There are echoes of Pierre Bourdieu in Kopano Matlwa's novel *Coconut*. Matlwa (2007) describes Ofilwe (or 'Fifi', as she prefers to be called), who lives in the Little Valley Country Estate with her newly-rich (African) family. Ofilwe speaks English (the 'TV language') at home, and attends a formerly white school. Every Sunday her family goes to the Silver Spoon Coffee Shop (in the Little Square Shopping Centre) to eat Traditional English Breakfasts. The central moral issue at the heart of novels such as *Coconut* is the dilemma that arises when newly-rich African people seek to emphasise their own status, relative to other African people, whilst themselves encountering white racism and social exclusion. The fact that embourgeoisment is accompanied by such a dilemma does little, however, to mitigate the divides of class-segregated cities.

There has been less desegregation in most cheaper areas of the post-apartheid city, but economic explanations do not suffice in such areas, especially in Cape Town where segregation persists among similarly poor African and coloured populations. Despite the emergence of a housing market in even low-income

neighbourhoods, segregation is reproduced to a far greater extent than would be expected given patterns of income distribution. One reason for this is that opportunities exist in most cities for many upwardly-mobile people to find better housing within the overall racial pattern of the city. In Johannesburg, a prosperous middle class lives in elite suburbs *within* Soweto, and can shop at the massive Maponya Mall ('where South Africa's vibrant and trendy Sowetan community gather to shop, socialise, eat, and to see and be seen': see www.maponyamall.co.za). Cape Town's Khayelitsha is home to far fewer middle-class people than Soweto, but it too now contains gated communities built for African teachers and other relatively high-income households. Similarly, prosperous coloured families can extend their existing houses or build large new properties within the broad confines of formerly coloured neighbourhoods. The precise motivation for such patterns is unclear, but is likely to entail a mix of economic constraint and social preference. Post-apartheid Cape Town thus increasingly comprises a patchwork of differently classed neighbourhoods within broadly mono-racial areas of the city.

Another reason for continued segregation in the city is the mechanism by which plots and houses have been allocated in the massive new public housing projects that have contributed greatly to the expansion of every major South African city. Most public housing has been ear-marked for residents of specified informal settlements, with disregard for city-wide waiting-lists. When a number of informal settlements are pressing claims to public housing, complex negotiations are undertaken to allocate certain numbers of sites to each 'community'. Moreover, continued immigration into informal settlements generally means that the allocation of houses to the 'community' fails to solve the 'problem', and additional housing projects need to be earmarked to the (new) members of the existing 'community'. In a situation where, for a mix of reasons, informal settlements are both almost entirely African and politically militant, new housing projects are as mono-racial as the older parts of the city. People living in the backyards of formal townships or sharing overcrowded housing with older kin are rarely able to mobilise the collective political pressure required to ensure an allocation of new houses or plots. The consequence is that most new neighbourhoods remain unmixed by various criteria, including racially.

Whatever the reasons, the persistence of racial segregation in most parts of the city has important social and perhaps political consequences. Many urban South Africans remain extraordinarily ignorant about their fellow-citizens. In Cape Town, for example, white and coloured people remain deeply ignorant about the city's growing African population, whilst the many unemployed people in African (and coloured) neighbourhoods have little contact with their richer and white fellow citizens (see Besteman 2008, ch.3; Bray et al., 2010). Urban

politics remains highly racialised, with white, coloured and Indian voters supporting the opposition Democratic Alliance whilst urban African voters supported the ANC (at least until 2009, when a section of the ANC split to form the Congress of the People, taking a significant minority of the urban African vote).

Decommodification

The post-apartheid city remains deeply divided by class and, for the most part and for whatever reason, race also. A series of studies suggest that these inequalities are linked to ‘neo-liberal’ policies with regard to urban infrastructure, housing and services. The privatisation or commercialisation of municipal services, and the accompanying emphasis on cost-recovery, have allegedly led to the denial of basic social and economic rights to the poor. Whereas racial discrimination underlay the fragmented and unequal apartheid city, now neo-liberalism and class underlie the fragmented and unequal post- (or neo-) apartheid city – although these inequities have been challenged by militant urban social movements. In this view, the pervasive application of neoliberal principles has not only prevented the decommodification required to realise the progressive ambitions of the RDP and constitution, but has even rolled back the partial decommodification that preceded the transition to democracy (McDonald and Pape, 2002; Beall, Crankshaw and Parnell, 2002; Harrison *et al.*, 2003; McDonald, 2008).

This argument requires ignoring important aspects of post-apartheid policy. It relies overmuch on the form in which public services are provided and the discourse sometimes used by public officials. It pays too little attention to the actual distribution of public services or to the financing thereof. Whilst post-apartheid service delivery is indeed characterised by an emphasis on ‘cost-recovery’ and ‘private-public partnerships’, these are underpinned by highly redistributive financing, such that rich taxpayers (and ratepayers at the municipal level) finance heavily public schooling, health care and municipal services for the poor. High-income neighbourhoods typically receive better-quality services than low-income ones, but they pay a disproportionate share of the cost of services city-wide. In other words, there has been a widespread and rising decommodification of service provision for poor people in many parts of South Africa’s major cities.

Access by the poor to these public services has improved since the end of apartheid. In Cape Town, for example, only 33 percent of African households

lived in formal housing in 1996; by 2003, 55 percent did so. In 1996, about two-thirds of African households had their refuse removed by the council at least one per week; by 2003 this proportion had risen to 87 percent. The improvement of service delivery is even more striking when it is presented not in terms of percentages of the relevant population, but in absolute numbers, because immigration from rural areas accelerated population growth. Between 1996 and 2001, for example, the absolute number of African households in Cape Town rose by 50 percent. Over this period the actual number of African households with weekly refuse removal doubled, even though the proportion only rose by about 20 percentage points. Since the transition to democracy there has been a massive improvement in services in poorer parts of the city, and this has *not* been funded along market principles.

The most important element of decommodification in South Africa is the government's set of social assistance programmes. The ANC inherited a system of unusually generous, non-contributory pensions and grants payable to categories of deserving poor: the elderly, disabled, and single mothers. After 1994 the ANC government expanded this system, such that it entailed the redistribution of approximately 3.5 percent of national income by the late 2000s. In the six major metropolitan areas, approximately one half of all households receive one or more government grants. Among the lower cluster of classes, the proportion is close to two-thirds.

Post-apartheid South African cities are certainly characterised by deep economic and social inequalities as well as spatial fragmentation. But they are also cities undergoing important processes of partial transformation. Most importantly, African people may have been the victims of apartheid, but they are now active agents in the remaking of the city, playing major roles in both the desegregation of higher-income neighbourhoods and the reproduction of segregation in lower-income areas, as well as – through the mechanisms of representative democracy as well as direct action – in the continued uneven decommodification of municipal infrastructure and services.

Guide to Further Reading

The classic studies of South African cities were prompted by the imposition of the Group Areas Act: Kuper *et al.* (1958) and Western (1981). On migrant labour in towns, see for example Ramphele (1993). Lemon (ed., 1991) includes chapters on all of the major cities. Robinson (1996) focuses on urban governance. Bickford-Smith, van Heyningen and Worden (1999) is an outstanding illustrated history of Cape Town. The massive literature on urban history is ably reviewed in Maylam (1995), Freund (2005) and Bickford-Smith (2008). On the changing political economy nationally, see especially Seekings and Nattrass (2005).

Notable recent book-length studies of South African cities in the 1990s and 2000s include: Saff (1998), Watson (2006), Bahre (2008), Jensen (2008), McDonald (2008), and Besteman (2008) on Cape Town; Morris (1999), Beall, Crankshaw and Parnell (2002), Tomlinson *et al.* (eds, 2003), Beavon (2004), and Murray (2008) on Johannesburg; and Freund and Padayachee (eds, 2002) on Durban.

Post-apartheid urban policy is analysed critically in many writings, including especially McDonald and Pape (2002), Watson (2002), Pillay *et al.* (2006), McDonald (2008), Harrison *et al.* (2008), and in numerous journal articles (especially in the *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, *Urban Studies*, and the South African-based *Urban Forum*). Urban ethnography is weak in contemporary South Africa; for exceptions, see Ross (1995), Ramphele (2002), and Bray *et al.* (2010), on Cape Town, and especially the exceptional study of witchcraft in Soweto by Ashforth (2005). Urban politics is another neglected area, but on social movements see Ballard *et al.* (2006).

South Africa is unusual in that many (although not all) survey datasets are readily available online. Surveys from the parastatal Statistics South Africa cover, inter alia, the labour force and household well-being (see www.statsSA.gov.za). Readily available datasets from universities include the Cape Area Panel Study (of adolescents in Cape Town, from 2002; see www.caps.uct.ac.za) and the National Income Dynamics Study (from 2008; see www.nids.uct.ac.za). New research is often available online through working paper series (see e.g. www.cssr.uct.ac.za, www.saldru.uct.ac.za, www.dpru.uct.ac.za, www.ekon.sun.ac.za/wpapers, and www.hsrc.ac.za).

Bibliography

ANC (1994), *The Reconstruction and Development Programme* (Johannesburg: African National Congress).

Ashforth, Adam (2005), *Witchcraft, Violence and Democracy in South Africa* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press).

Bahre, Eric (2008), *Money and Violence: Financial Self-Help Groups in a South African Township* (Leiden: Brill).

Beall, Jo, Owen Crankshaw and Susan Parnell (2002), *Uniting a Divided City: Governance and Social Exclusion in Johannesburg* (London: Earthscan).

Beavon, Keith (2004), *Johannesburg: The Making and Shaping of the City* (Pretoria: University of South Africa Press).

Besteman, Catherine (2008), *Transforming Cape Town* (Berkeley: University of California Press).

Bickford-Smith, Vivian (2008), 'Urban history in the new South Africa: continuity and innovation since the end of apartheid', *Urban History* 35,2: 288-315.

-----, E. Van Heyningen and Nigel Worden (1999), *Cape Town in the Twentieth century* (Cape Town: David Philip).

Borel-Saladin, Jacqueline, and Owen Crankshaw (2009), 'Social Polarisation or Professionalisation? Another Look at Theory and Evidence on Deindustrialisation and the Rise of the Service Sector', *Urban Studies* 46,3; 645-664.

Bray, Rachel, Imke Gooskens, Lauren Kahn, Sue Moses and Jeremy Seekings (2010), *Growing Up In The New South Africa: Childhood and Adolescence in the New South Africa* (Cape Town: Human Sciences Research Council Press).

Broadbridge, Helena (2001), 'Negotiating Post-Apartheid Boundaries and Identities: An Anthropological Study of the Creation of a Cape Town Suburb', unpublished PhD thesis, Stellenbosch University.

Burton, Andrew (2005), *African Underclass: Urbanisation, Crime and Colonial Order in Dar es Salaam* (Oxford: James Currey).

Christopher, A.J. (1994), *The Atlas of Apartheid* (Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press).

----- (2001), 'Urban Segregation in Post-apartheid South Africa', *Urban Studies* 38,3, pp.449-466.

----- (2002), "'To define the indefinable": population classification and the census in South Africa', *Area* 34,4, pp.401-8.

----- (2005), 'Further Progress in the Desegregation of South African towns and cities, 1996-2001', *Development Southern Africa* 22,2, pp.267-76.

Crankshaw, Owen. (1997), *Race, Class and the Changing Division of Labour under Apartheid* (London: Routledge).

----- (2008), 'Race, Space and the Post-Fordist Spatial Order of Johannesburg', *Urban Studies* 45,8 (July), pp.1692-1711.

Davies, R.J. (1981), 'The spatial formation of the South African city', *GeoJournal Supplement* 2, pp.59-72.

Field, Sean (ed., 2001), *Lost Communities, Living Memories: Remembering Forced Removals in Cape Town* (Cape Town: David Philip).

Freund, Bill (2001), 'Contrasts in urban segregation: a tale of two African cities, Durban (South Africa) and Abidjan (Côte d'Ivoire)', *Journal of Southern African Studies* 27,3 (September), pp.527-46.

----- (2005), 'Urban history in South Africa', *South African Historical Journal* 52, pp.19-31.

----- and Vishnu Padayachee (eds, 2002), *(D)urban Vortex: South African City in Transition* (Durban: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press).

Haferburg, Christoph and Jurgen Oßenbügge (eds, 2003), *Ambiguous Restructurings in Post-Apartheid Cape Town: The Spatial Form of Socio-Political Change* (Hamburg: Lit Verlag Münster).

Harrison, Philip, Alison Todes and Vanessa Watson (2008), *Planning and Transformations: Learning from the Post-Apartheid Experience* (London: Routledge).

Jensen, Steffen (2008), *Gangs, Politics and Dignity in Cape Town* (Oxford: James Currey).

Kuper, Leo, Hilstan Watts and R. Davies (1958), *Durban: A Study of Racial Ecology* (London: Jonathan Cape).

Leibbrandt, Murray, Ingrid Woolard and Christopher Woolard (2009), 'A long-run perspective on contemporary poverty and inequality dynamics', in Janine Aron, Brian Kahn and Geeta Kingdon (eds), *South African Economic Policy under Democracy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), pp.270-99.

Lelyveld, J. (1986), *Move Your Shadow: South Africa, Black and White* (London: Abacus).

Lemon, Anthony (ed., 1991), *Homes Apart: South Africa's Segregated Cities* (London: Paul Chapman).

Lemanski, Charlotte (2006a), 'The impact of residential desegregation on social integration: Evidence from a South African neighbourhood', *Geoforum* 37, pp.417-435.

----- (2006b), 'Desegregation and integration as linked or distinct? Evidence from a previously "White" suburb in post-apartheid Cape Town', *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 30,3, pp.564-86.

----- (2010, forthcoming), 'Moving up the ladder or stuck on the bottom rung? Homeownership as a solution to poverty in South Africa', *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*.

Matlwa, Kopano (2007), *Coconut* (Johannesburg: Jacana).

Maylam, Paul (1995), 'Explaining the Apartheid city: 20 years of South African urban historiography', *Journal of Southern African Studies* 21,1 (March), pp.19-38

McDonald, David (2008), *World City Syndrome: Neoliberalism and Inequality in Cape Town* (New York: Routledge).

----- and John Pape (2002), *Cost Recovery and the Crisis of Service Delivery* (Pretoria: Human Sciences Research Council Press).

Millstein, Marianne (2007), 'Challenges to substantive democracy in post-apartheid Cape Town: The politics of urban governance transformations and community organising in Delft', PhD thesis, University of Oslo.

Morris, Alan (1999), *Bleakness and Light: Inner-city Transition in Hillbrow, Johannesburg* (Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press).

Murray, Colin (1987), 'Displaced urbanisation: South Africa's rural slums', *African Affairs* 86, pp.311-29.

Murray, Martin (2008), *Taming the Disorderly City: The Spatial Landscape of Johannesburg after Apartheid* (Ithaca, Cornell University Press).

Nattrass, Nicoli (2000), 'Wage strategies and minimum wages in decentralized regions: the case of the clothing industry in Phuthaditjhaba, South Africa', *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 24,4, pp.873-88.

Nkuna, L. (2006), "Fitting-In" to a "Classy Place": The Zone and Youth Identity, in P. Alexander, M. Dawson and M. Ichharam (eds), *Globalisation and New Identities: A View from the Middle* (Johannesburg: Jacana): 261-74.

Oldfield, Sophie (2004), 'Urban networks, community organizing and race: an analysis of racial integration in a desegregated South African neighbourhood', *Geoforum* 35,2 (March), pp.189-201.

Otter, Steven (2007), *Khayelitsha: uMlungu in a Township* (Johannesburg: Penguin).

Pilger, John (2006), *Freedom Next Time* (London: Bantam).

Pillay, Udes, Richard Tomlinson and Jacques du Toit (eds, 2006), *Democracy and Delivery: Urban Policy in South Africa* (Pretoria: HSRC Press).

Posel, Deborah (2001), 'Race as common sense: Racial classification in twentieth century South Africa', *African Studies Review* 44,2, pp.87-113.

Ramphela, Mamphela (1993), *A Bed Called Home: Life in the Migrant Labour Hostels of Cape Town* (Cape Town: David Philip).

----- (2002), *Steering by the Stars: Being Young in South Africa* (Cape Town: Tafelberg).

Robinson, Jennifer (1996) *The Power of Apartheid: State, Power and Space in South African Cities* (Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann).

Ross, Fiona (1995), *Houses without Doors: Diffusing domesticity in Die Bos* (Pretoria: Human Sciences Research Council).

Saff, G. (1998) *Changing Cape Town: urban dynamics, policy and planning during the political transition in South Africa* (Washington DC: University Press of America).

Seekings, Jeremy (2009), 'Poverty and Inequality in South Africa, 1994-2007', in Ian Shapiro and Kahreen Tebeau (eds), *After Apartheid: The Second Decade of Democracy* (University of Virginia Press).

----- and N. Nattrass (2005), *Class, Race and Inequality in South Africa* (New Haven: Yale University Press).

Simkins, Charles (1983), *Four Essays on the Past, Present, and Possible Future of the Distribution of the Black Population of South Africa* (Cape Town: Southern African Labour and Development Research Unit, University of Cape Town).

South Africa (2003), *Towards a Ten Year Review* (Pretoria: Policy Co-ordination and Advisory Services, the Presidency).

----- (2007), *Mid-Term Review* (Pretoria: The Presidency).

Swilling, Mark, Richard Humphries and Khehla Shubane (eds, 1991), *Apartheid City in Transition* (Cape Town: Oxford University Press).

Tomlinson, Richard, Robert A. Beauregard, Lindsay Bremner and Xolela Mangcu (eds, 2003), *Perspectives on the Post-Apartheid City* (London: Routledge).

Van der Berg, Servaas, Megan Louw and Derek Yu (2008), 'Post-transition poverty trends based on an alternative data source', *South African Journal of Economics* 76,1, pp.58-76.

Watson, Vanessa (2002), *Change and Continuity in Spatial Planning: Metropolitan Planning in Cape Town under Political Transition* (London: Routledge).

Western, John (1981) *Outcast Cape Town*. George Allen and Unwin, London