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INTERTEXTUALITY AND MEMORY IN YIZO YIZO

FB Andersson

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ABSTRACT

Intertextuality is used to engage with the 'already said', which according to Umberto Eco is the hallmark of postmodernism. African popular culture in 2005 is frequently created through a dialogue between multiple partners. It is heteroglossic in expression, is capable of withstanding multifocal scrutiny and is fluent in the conventions of the form it chooses. It expresses itself by allusion to the 'already said' and through inclusion of increasingly sophisticated popular audiences. Intertextuality is generally used as a smart tool to express and comment upon hidden narratives relating to, for example, African identities, class relations, corruption and the taboo: abuse, incest, Aids, archaic traditional law practices as well as the not-so-hidden topics of necropower, global capitalism and so on. This study looks at the various uses of intertextuality, including the way it is used as a mechanism to access political memory, in the South African youth TV drama Yizo Yizo.

It is argued that a text must be read in relation to the dynamic and interaction between the producer of the text, the text and the audiences of the text. To understand what producers bring to the text, one must understand the universe of the producers. In trying to understand why Yizo Yizo appears to depict "violence", one needs to understand the experiences and ideologies of the producers in the physical space known as South Africa and reproduced as memory in the chronotope occupied by Yizo Yizo. In analysing the term "violence", it becomes clear the word is inadequate if it is used in the singular only. What is explored here is rather, a hierarchy of violences. Violence is embedded in the very construct of the rainbow nation and returned as the political memory of violence in representation. The pecking order of these violences is identified as political violence, the relations of abuse, sexual violence, violence silence, dialogic violence, violence towards the self, traumatic violence revisited, lifestyle violence, criminal violence and retributive and restorative violence. Yizo Yizo works with the consequences of the apartheid

past in the present and forces one male character after another to take a stand against the continuing violences of their present. Two characters (Papa Action and Chester) become the archetypes of criminal violence. Another two (Thulani and Gunman) answer reactionary and victimising and criminal violence with violence intended to free those it oppresses.

But the proof of the pudding is in the audience tasting. We know from Henry Jenkins that fans rewrite texts in ten different ways—by recontextualisation, expanding the series timeline, refocalisation, moral realignment, genre shifting, cross overs, character dislocation, personalisation, emotional intensification and eroticisation. Using comments by fans, focus group results and media reports, the research looks at the way these rewrites take place in relation to Yizo Yizo. Ultimately it is suggested that the producers of this particular text are able to reach their audiences because they are also fans of movie and TV and of African popular culture. Moreover, they share a country in which a multitude of violences are experienced but invisible, hence the need for the development of a language and aesthetic of violence.

DECLARATION

I declare that this PhD is my own unaided work. It is submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any other degree or examination at any other university.

(Name of Candidate)

_____day of_____, 2004

For Camilo Zain Saloojee

Since we leave school at the same time,
my hope is you will read this one day and enjoy it.

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My greatest debt is to my supervisor, Professor Bhekizizwe Peterson, who has guided me through both my MA and my PhD, and to Professor Isabel Hofmeyr, who has mentored me as part of her group of audience watchers over the past six years. These two individuals have been inspirational in setting standards, encouraging me to participate in conferences and workshops, and in providing an intellectual home for me within the department of African Literature. Professor Peterson, in particular, has helped to focus my interest from a general fascination with popular culture to a specific engagement with the reproduction of political memory within African texts.

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Finally, I wish to thank the author Troy Blacklaws, who is based in Germany, for providing me with extraordinary support and insight via email during the seven-month period in which I was writing. The discussion with Troy began with an attempt to interview him online about his novel Karoo Boy. It evolved into an intense and rich exchange about writers, the unconscious and ethics. In the course of this dialogue, Troy read some of my research, commented on it and corrected my spelling and grammatical errors in one chapter. The exchanges with Troy Blacklaws have convinced me that a writer's ideology, however disguised, creates a link by *content* to critical audiences; while the *form* of the work determines whether it will be embraced by popular audiences. During the period we were writing Troy turned down a lucrative international film offer on his novel in favour of a modest offer by a South African producer and Zimbabwean film director. His choice hinged around three major issues. He was sure a Southern African would understand Eastern Cape light and apartheid-divided space better than a visitor but also, he liked the idea of risking his project with a young black film director passionate about making his first feature rather than handing it to a seasoned British director.

Speaking to Troy helped me to understand the instinctive and hard choices similarly made by the Yizo Yizo producers in the name of African audiences. Producers understand fan audiences *because* they are fans themselves of the emerging popular culture they help to define. They appear to experience the world as producers and as fans.

Chapter 1

Intertextuality: getting to the G-spot of African popular culture¹

Any text that has slept with another text...has necessarily slept with all the texts the other text has slept with (Robert Stam, Film Theory: An Introduction, 2000)².

Yizo Yizo: the backstory

The case study in this research is the award-winning³ Yizo Yizo drama series flighted on SABC1 between 1999 and 2004. The three-season series includes Yizo Yizo 1 (13x24-minute episodes shown for the first time between 3 February and 28 April 1999), Yizo Yizo 2 (13x48-minute episodes shown between 20 February and 15 May 2001), and Yizo Yizo 3 (13x48-minute episodes shown between 8 April and 1 July 2004). This programme, which ran over three seasons from 1999-2004, was groundbreaking in its use of African languages, its claiming of new, 'cool' black youth images which have subsequently informed 'the look' of a spate of other TV youth dramas and the glamour industries, its intervention in terms of local music, its ability to make links between the apartheid past and the post-apartheid present and its unprecedented reception by youth audiences.

¹ The term 'intertextuality' was coined by Julia Kristeva in 1967 in her work on Mikhail Bakhtin and heteroglossia. The researcher supports Anker Gemzøe's explanation (translated online by Agger, 2000, but written by Gemzøe 1997:36) that intertextuality involves replacing a single narrative with a textual mosaic, with its own reference systems, to engage other texts. 'Story' thus becomes a space where dialogue may be encouraged.

² Robert Stam (2000). Film Theory: An Introduction. Blackwell: Oxford.

³ Awards for Yizo Yizo 1 and Yizo Yizo 2 include 1999 Japan International Prize for Educational TV (Hosa Bunka Foundation as well as the Governor of Tokyo Prize); 1999 AVANTI Awards (Africa) —five awards, including best production and best director; 2001 Duku Duku Awards (South Africa)—Best TV Programme; 2002 RITV Award—Episode 5; 2001 Cinema Tout Ecran Award (Switzerland)—best International TV Series.

Yizo Yizo 1 (YY1) exploded on prime-time South African television in 1999 as a product of SABC Education, co-produced by two small innovative companies called Laduma and The Shooting Party which merged in June 2001 to form The Bomb. The 13-part education drama, produced by Desireé Markgraaff and directed by Angus Gibson and Teboho Mahlatsi, performed an extraordinary feat. It became an instant hit with youth while simultaneously promoting the Department of Education's 'Culture of Learning and Teaching in Schools' (COLTS) campaign—which had commissioned the series.

According to a fact sheet written by YY's producers, The Bomb (2001), YY1 "examines the current crisis in education and takes an innovative look at the tentative process of transformation without offering glib or unrealistic solutions. Aimed at teachers, students and parents, the series examines the harsh reality of the volatile and chaotic nature of some South African schools. This groundbreaking youth drama is aimed at stimulating debate on issues surrounding education." The series

charts the passage of Supatsela High—a typical township school—from artificially-imposed order under the autocratic leadership of its conservative principal, Mr Mthembu, to dissolution and chaos. It examines the many socio-political and educational problems underpinning the breakdown of teaching and learning in South African schools. But in detailing the school's social regeneration and the emergence of a differently constituted educational order under the leadership of its new principal, Grace Letsatsi, the series points the way towards possible solutions to the current impasse. Yizo Yizo dramatises the smaller, more personal drama of high school life, like issues of social confidence, academic success, individual identity and sexuality (Yizo Yizo fact sheet: 2001).

Similarly, Yizo Yizo 2 (YY2) continued to enjoy cult status and record-breaking audiences⁴ while supporting the education department's 'Tirisano' campaign, which aimed to encourage community involvement in schools and to promote better management of schools.

According to The Bomb's fact sheet,

Yizo Yizo 2 is the story of an ordinary school overcoming extraordinary obstacles. The series begins at the start of the new school year. Our main characters are now in matric. The violence that engulfed the school the previous year has been contained. Basic security and order have been established but the problems aren't over. This series celebrates the courage and determination of a school community overcoming obstacles in the way of good education. They learn that the best resources are not buildings and money, but people. Yizo Yizo 2 is about ordinary people's struggle to learn, play, change, read, love, dream and find their place in the world.

YY2 was produced by Desireé Markgraaff and Angus Gibson and was directed by Teboho Mahlatsi and Barry Berk.

Both YY1 and YY2 were set in a fictitious high school (although filmed in a real school) in Daveyton, a township outside Benoni to the east of Johannesburg.

Yizo Yizo 3 (YY3) was set within Johannesburg's inner city. The students have finished school and have migrated to the city. Some get into tertiary institutions, some become entrepreneurs, some face unemployment. While still focused on youth issues and advocating positive social action and change, the drama has

⁴ According to a Bomb fact sheet on Yizo Yizo's history (2001), YY1 and YY2 had audiences of more than four million viewers.

shifted its major emphasis from the educational institution to the street, with implications not just for story but for genre and intertextuality itself.

Yizo Yizo was one of the SABC's most successful attempts to unpack the world inhabited by South Africa's majority black population, although it has not been exempt from criticism, as will be seen. It was completely different from other popular local offerings. Popular home-grown soapies like Generations, EGoli, Isidingo and Backstage portrayed a world that is middle class, occupied by upwardly mobile black (and white) people engaged in the usual urban soapie battles: extramarital affairs, drugs and crime, family struggles and obstacles in the path of (the predominantly female) bid for power. Yizo Yizo, while fulfilling its mandate to convey particular educational messages, never walked the path of 'aspirational' TV as many of the other local TV dramas and soapies did.

Because of my involvement with Yizo Yizo 3 as a research consultant⁵, my research status in relation to the production team, changes at a particular point of this study (that point is Chapter 7, but indeed, wherever there are references to YY3, to that of participant observer).

The question driving this research is *how and why is intertextuality used within Yizo Yizo?* The research encompasses both ethnographic and sociological approaches as well as textual analysis. It is primarily qualitative in that it maps and analyses processes, rather than attempts to find a single solution. It also seeks to situate the topic (Yizo Yizo and intertextuality) in relation to the broad economic processes within which it operates, since "commercial television is first an economic medium" (Budd et al 1990:172)⁶. It is expected that the answer will lie within a multifaceted, dialogical account of process, since it is in "the nature of

⁵ I did a consultancy for The Bomb from January-April 2002. I wrote a literature review and identified the research 'issues' for YY3. I then left to work on my PhD proposal. The stint gave me access to both documentation and people. The producers gave the green light for me to continue to observe Yizo Yizo from close up, to attend writers' workshops if I felt like it and continue to interact with the team on a regular basis.

⁶ M. Budd, R.M. Entman and C. Steinman (1990). 'The Affirmative Character of US Cultural Studies' in *Critical Studies in Mass Communication* 7 (1990:169-184).

intertextual space, its codes and conventions, to defy description” (Culler in Taylor & Winquist 1998:20)⁷. However, the research also incorporates a quantitative approach to intertextual mapping through the use of symbols, representing categories of intertextuality, to analyse the text. These symbols create patterns, which are analysed. They are also added up to show the way certain tropes and motifs recur.

Research into TV audiences is showing that what is increasing in importance in the producer-text-audience triangle is not message construction by the production team but message reading by audiences. From my own experience on YY3, the process starts with an identification by the researcher of the major issues affecting the characters’ world. Once the producers have defined these issues, they commission detailed research into them. They meet with experts or people working in a hands-on way with these issues. When they require more detail, in order to produce dialogue, the researcher’s job is to set up a focus group to work through the actual problems encountered in relation to these issues. The core findings from the focus groups are reduced to single ideas: this is the problem, and that would be the solution. The scriptwriters then write scenarios in which individual characters encounter problems and embrace/do not embrace solutions.

The SABC’s research findings, post YY screenings, generally found that youth understood the intended messages, whereas adults did not. However, even the SABC’s various researchers, and especially John Gultig⁸, encountered the need for an understanding of how audiences understood story telling. Gultig’s report makes specific recommendations about narrative devices. However, the teams conducting research on Yizo Yizo made it clear that to understand the message

⁷ J. Culler (1998). Originally printed in *MLN*, Vol 19, No 6, 1976:1380-96. Reprinted in Victor E. Taylor and Charles E. Winquist (1998). Editors, Postmodernism: Critical Concepts Vol II, ‘Critical Texts’. Routledge: London.

⁸ John Gultig (2002) Yizo Yizo 1 and 2: A synthesis of the evaluation reports. Written for SABC Education.

read by the viewer and to understand the viewer's enjoyment of TV, they had to understand the access, the world, and the engagement with other discourses current in the world of the viewer. In unravelling intertextuality in Yizo Yizo, it becomes necessary to understand the way in which audiences read the drama and to recognise the way in which message reading evolves for different generations. This, in turn, has implications for the way images are remembered.

In tracking intertextual references to political memory emanating from the three groups forming the triangle (producer, text, audience) the research in the chapters to follow will simultaneously examine interactivity between the three angles of the triangle. To achieve this end, I will adopt a three-fold approach to the topic.

Firstly, I will attempt to understand the 'producerly text'. This entails exploring how the producers understand the project of Yizo Yizo, how they engage with the research into the topic and work with writers (although most of Yizo Yizo is producer/director written) and actors. All of these people add to the producerly text. How were comments by the broadcaster dealt with? Did the producers rethink moments or characters that had been 'misread' and so on. In tracking the producers' individual influences, I also seek to establish whether there has been any attempt to situate Yizo Yizo within the Third Cinema debates or whether these are meaningless for the Yizo Yizo producers⁹.

Secondly, I undertake a rigorous textual analysis of Yizo Yizo 1 and 2 (both of which were developed and flighted before I had met and worked with the producers) against a backdrop of 'violences' identified in Chapter 3. When it comes to YY3, I have changed tack and provided a subjective account of the

⁹ At the time of writing, October 2004, it appeared to me that there was a movement within Third Cinema that had not yet been documented. There have been debates by, among others, Sarah Maldoror (1977), Nouri Bouzid (1994) and Mweze Ngangura (1996), about the need to work *with* the aesthetic within films that make a statement, but there is not much theoretical material to draw from which looks at Third Cinema's engagement with popular culture and usage of, for example, heteroglossia and intertextuality.

making of this. I have concentrated more on how the producers engaged with my research and the way in which I observed the producers' work becoming consciously more intertextual as they became aware of the categories I was researching. An 'objective' textual analysis cannot be attempted here.

Thirdly, there is an unpacking of audience responses to the text. The final surprise of any text lies in its audience reception. Yizo Yizo engages with audiences from early in the research process. Raw research is explored and developed with focus groups, pilot episodes are tested against focus groups before they are screened and once they have been screened, full-scale research is conducted into audiences to assess just why this programme has become so important. Finally, other mechanisms of 'reading' audiences—from media responses, to fan mail and intertextual referencing in youth culture, to Yizo Yizo itself—are accessed.

It is to be expected that, in a drama ultimately commissioned by the country's education ministry, there would be a lively dialogue generated between the Yizo Yizo team and the SABC, because of the way in which educational messages had been circulated in an earlier era. However, this research does not focus on that formal dialogue and official mandate, both of which have their own narratives, but rather on the additional impact of Yizo Yizo and its mapping of political memory. Chapter 2 of this research looks at what the producers, with their middle-class backgrounds and knowledge of film, brought to this story, which is about growing up in a township.

With Yizo Yizo, "we knew we were breaking ground. There was a sense of yes, *we are making an education series but we are breaking ground*," says The Bomb producer Desiree Markgraaff¹⁰.

¹⁰ Interview with Desiree Markgraaff, 26 July, 2002, Johannesburg.

How Yizo Yizo broke ground is that it resonated with the political memory of the four million youth who routinely watched it. The fidelities and infidelities of political memory, violence to memory and the ten violences of the post-apartheid state are theorised in Chapter 3. However, a story appearing in the *Saturday Star* of 23 October 2004 will be enough to introduce the idea that the very construct of the rainbow nation is a violent concept. What follows is an example of what in Chapter 3 I call 'dialogic violence'.

The story is headlined, "Ex-soldier gets Honoris Crux for bravery during Angolan war". Above the headline is a photograph of a man pinning a medal to another man's (heavily decorated) chest. The caption of the photo says: "Honoured...former Special Forces operator Stuart Sterzel getting his medal yesterday". It does not mention the name of the more senior man pinning the medal on Stuart Sterzel. But in fact, the man pinning the medal of bravery on Stuart Sterzel is the Chief of the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) Lt. General Siphiwe Nyanda, a member of the ANC's National Executive Committee and former armed wing Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK) Chief of Staff. This man is none other than the once legendary 'Gebhuza', former hero of the liberation struggle, Moçambique Frontline Commander of the Transvaal machinery who valiantly continued operating in the face of betrayal by his comrade 'Fear'/Ralph¹¹. 'Fear'/Ralph was working for the Special Forces who assassinated Gebhuza's younger brother 'Douglas'/Zwelakhe Nyanda in Swaziland on 22 November 1983¹² and kidnapped Gebhuza's wife.

¹¹ The spy Edward Lawrence used several aliases in MK including Ralph Ngcima and Fear. He had been working with the Special Forces since 1973, according to Eugene de Kok in *A Long Night's Damage* (1998: 107-8), Contra Press: Johannesburg. De Kok also refers to him as 'Veer', the Afrikaans word for 'feather' which is pronounced in the same way as 'Fear'.

¹² For a full account of this, read the ANC's TRC submission at www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/misc/prc2/html as well as Eugene de Kok's *A Long Night's Damage* (op cit).

The story in the *Saturday Star* says: “Sterzel would not elaborate on the events in 1987 for which he was cited. At the time the SADF was involved in Angola in some of the biggest land battles fought on the African continent since the Battle of El Alamein in 1942. It fought, along with its Unita allies, against a combined Angolan/Swapo/Cuban, Russian and Eastern Bloc force.”

Again, missing from this description is the acronym MK. As anyone with a memory of Angola in the 1980s knows, it was a combined Angolan/Swapo/MK/Cuban, Russian and Eastern Bloc force that engaged the SADF in the events that led up to Cuito Cuanavale, which event changed the course of liberation history for southern Africa.

But here stands Gebhuza, unnamed and unrecognised for the part he played in bringing about South African independence, giving a medal to a man who worked with the force that tried to prevent this independence from coming about.

“Sterzel said,” the report continues, “ ‘This medal is not about me. It’s about the unit. Any one of our operators could have been awarded this medal. We were just doing our duty’ ...At the time of the citation for the medal, Nyanda and Sterzel would have been on opposite sides in the conflict. In his speech at the medal parade, Nyanda said he was proud to be part of an organisation where soldiers made sacrifices for their country and their comrades.” (*Saturday Star*, op cit)¹³.

Just doing our duty. How is someone without MK memory to read this story? How is someone with MK memory, possibly someone who performed brave deeds under SADF fire, supposed to deal with the omissions of memory?

Chapters 4-6 of this research explain the processes by which political memory of different ‘violences’ is reproduced through intertextuality. Chapter 4 looks at

¹³ *Saturday Star*, ‘Ex-soldier gets Honoris Crux for bravery during Angolan war’. 23 October 2004:2.

broad political and social violences told through a 'dialogue of violences'. Chapter 5 looks at the use of archetypes, particularly the ones representing transitional violence in Yizo Yizo. Chapter 6 tracks Yizo Yizo's representation of consumption and the allure of a 'violent lifestyle' as part of youth culture.

Chapter 7 describes the research I did for Yizo Yizo 3 and how the YY producers engaged with it.

Chapter 8 deals with Yizo Yizo's audiences and intertextual categories thrown up in reception theories.

In order to map intertextuality in Yizo Yizo, it is necessary to find out what has already been written on intertextuality and its usage.

The 'already said' is still being written

Iteration and repetition, Umberto Eco¹⁴ has observed, dominate the swirling world of artistic creativity in the current historical epoch. The challenge for the artist then is to bring difference, novelty and excitement to the intertextual party in a way that will ensure enjoyment not only for the purveyors of 'high' art but for those who do not understand the conventions.

It's a tall order: using the "inverted comma" in a fresh way in a world already interbred with cross-reference. Robert Stam's choice of a sexual language ("any text that has slept with another text...") to express intertextuality's lifestyle within visual media highlights the pitfalls of the terrain. Such terminology immediately triggers a global cross-reference to sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and HIV/Aids. The form illustrates the content of a 'promiscuous' subject matter with

¹⁴ Umberto Eco (1990: 84). In The Limits of Interpretation. Indiana University Press: Bloomington. Also see Rocco Capozzi (1997: 18), 'Innovation and Repetition: Between Modern and Postmodern Aesthetics' in Reading Umberto Eco—An Anthology. Indiana University Press: Bloomington.

multiple partners. In the case of television, the partners are (in stark terms): the producers/creative team, the text itself and the audiences. However, the very existence of intertextuality suggests a blurring of the boundaries of the triangle. Audiences, in creating their own meanings, become producers. Producers, in catering for audience demands through focus groups, become recipients. The text widens in negotiability from track to terrain to universe.

Besides noting the huge universe of intertextuality, and in the absence of being able to locate an individual creator to explain why it exists, since it is usually the result of team effort¹⁵, it becomes important to ask what it does, or how it works. Intertextuality is used to ask questions, give responses or engage with the “already said”, which Umberto Eco insists is one of postmodernism's signatures. David Lavery¹⁶ calls intertextuality's engagement with audiences “inclusion by allusion”. It provides audiences, he says, with a certain “pride in the ability to get the references”.

Beyond that, it is argued here, intertextuality engages viewers on turf with which they are familiar and, as a tool of memory, makes accessible linkages from both the past and the current cultural and political worlds inhabited by viewers. In a visual fictional universe, cross references delight and intrigue in exactly the way synchronistic and serendipitous events might in real life.

Intertextuality is not a class tool solely used to engage elites. On the contrary, it is central to the way popular genres function. The literacy of popular audiences is a factor frequently overlooked. As Elaine Showalter (1997:3)¹⁷ points out, television audiences are highly literate—more literate about their medium than

¹⁵ See Gunhild Agger (2000). ‘Intertextuality Revisited: Dialogues and Negotiations in Media Studies’. At www.uqtr.quebec.ca/AE/vol_4/gunhild.htm.

¹⁶ David Lavery (2000). ‘Coming Heavy: Intertextuality, Genre and The Sopranos’ Paper given at the Annual Convention of the Popular Culture Association in the South, Nashville, Tennessee, October 2000. At www.poppolitics.com/articles/2001-03-03-heavy.shtml

¹⁷ Elaine Showalter (1997). ‘TV and the Academy’ in PAW, 3 December 1997:3. Online: www.princeton.edu/~paw/archive_old/PAW97-98/06-1203/1203feat.html.

high-brow audiences are about theirs—and their enjoyment is “both active and comparative”. Emerging research into African popular audiences by, among others Karin Barber, Stephanie Newell and Richard Priebe, is producing fascinating debate not only into what defines ‘popular culture’ but into the cleverness of popular genres and their reception by sophisticated African audiences. As Barber points out, no one should assume that ‘popular’ texts are easier and less demanding than those dubbed ‘elite’ (1997:8). Bhekizizwe Peterson and to a lesser extent, Achille Mbembe, have analysed popular genres in terms of what they are seen to represent in the currencies of the political and cultural economies from which they spring. For Peterson, popular culture both reflects political memory and highlights the double standards of the present society in which it exists. He shows how kwaito, which generates hysteria because of its association with youth criminality in “mainstream” society, “is paradoxically very mainstream”¹⁸. For Mbembe, the grotesque images, “brutal fantasy, compulsive, noisy laughter and endless exchanges of pain and pleasure between agents and victims” in Cameroonian cartoons is a comment on “power in the postcolony and the writing of a history of the immediate present.” The mode in which it is written, he says, is “hallucination”¹⁹. The word he chooses, “hallucination” triggers for some an association, ‘acid flashback’, and for others, ‘panic attack’, although both probably work with the memory in the same way.

But what exactly *is* popular culture? Where the term ‘popular’ in western culture specifically refers to ‘low-class’, this might not be the case in Africa, according to Barber. She says:

¹⁸ See Bhekizizwe Peterson, ‘Kwaito, “dawgs” and the antimonies of hustling’ in *African Identities*, Vol 1, No 2 (2003:210).

¹⁹ See Chapter 4, ‘The Thing and its Doubles’ in Achille Mbembe (2001:148 and 143). On the Postcolony. University of California Press: Berkeley.

...when the term 'popular culture' is transferred to Africa, it brings with it a history of conflicts, assumptions and problems. If it fits uneasily and inadequately with European historical reality, how much more slippery and elusive it becomes in Africa. Here the 'high', if it exists at all, is not the prerogative of an ancient ruling class but of a fragmented, precarious, conflictual new elite, defined by its proximity to an outside power (Barber 1997:3)²⁰.

Is popular culture entertainment which is produced by the people, for the people, and if so, who are 'the people'? Is it that which emerges out of the meeting places, shebeens and churches of ordinary people and which functions in the interests of 'the masses'? Is it able to reach the audiences it targets? Is it that which is current and accessible, or is it rather defined, as Priebe suggests, "in terms of formal stylistic features"? (quoted in Barber 1997:5).

This research supports the view that the use of formal stylistic features is indeed an aspect of African popular culture in the mid-2000s. More specifically, it suggests that contemporary African popular culture's three most distinctive stylistic features are, firstly, it is shaped in a way which allows more than one voice or eye or hand to own it, flex it, or narrate it. It is heteroglossic from within and polysemic—it allows multifocal interpretation—from without. It can be read in terms of performance, product or process, according to the audience's ability and choice. Secondly, it vigorously embraces the very hallmark of postmodernism, intertextuality, in order to access the unofficial and ignored narratives of memory, and compare these with others known to the audience. And thirdly, it displays fluency in the tools of form, in the way it appropriates genres, swops identities, works with reversals, or engages formally, elegantly but differently with what has already been said in order to provide the platform to make the statement.

²⁰ Karin Barber, 'Introduction: Views of the Field' in Karin Barber (1997). Ed. Readings in African Popular Culture. James Currey: Oxford.

Not all readers will immediately make the link between African popular culture and post-modernism precisely because of a prior association, based on our memory of what we have been taught and what we have read, concerning Africa and 'tradition'. We fail to see agility of technique and mastery of form because we have been taught to experience and notice tradition. We understand what is 'heavy' but struggle with the delivery of the narrative of abuse delivered in terms of Arnold's 'sweetness and light'²¹, a touch used with great effect by Bhekizizwe Peterson in his screenplay of Njabulo S. Ndebele's Fools²² and by Troy Blacklaws in Karoo Boy²³. The elite African canon was built on the fall-out between tradition and modernity. It has subsequently taken a well-documented journey. It has been on its pilgrimage from writing back to colonialism, experiencing post-independent disillusionment and finally, opting for growth and regeneration amid the contradictions and continuing class, race and gender struggles of the postcolony. Sooner or later, someone will declare that canonical African Literature has entered its fourth phase. What will it be?

Popular culture, on the other hand, either never declares it has a grand adventure to undertake, or else explains what it managed to do in spite of the journey on which it was sent by the people who own it, or to whom it is accountable. Yizo Yizo managed to be a cult hit despite its mandate to address certain educational problems—the official 'journey' on which it was sent by the education ministry and the public broadcaster.

But if some of the other written genres of the postcolony speak in journey terms at all, it would probably be in the overstated and hallucinatory terms of the absurd, like the stars in Laduma's taxi drive to a "pre-Mall past", which gives a passing nod to Sylvester Stein's 1950s novel Second Class Taxi.

²¹ See Matthew Arnold, Culture and Anarchy (1971:41-71). Ed. With an introduction by J. Dover Wilson. Cambridge University Press: London.

²² Bhekizizwe Peterson (1989). Fools. Screenplay for the film directed by Ramadan Suleman based on Njabulo S. Ndebele's story Fools.

²³ Troy Blacklaws (2004). Karoo Boy. Double Storey: Cape Town.

The taxi continues to Rivonia, pumping its urban mix of house and township rhythms, loudly, rudely, carrying the slaves to their masters, but not without rampant tendrils of dissent uncoiling in the very texture of those grating and jarring kwaito rhythms that are codified exhortations to the slave people to stand up and assert their destiny, to reclaim their land and their power. Laduma stands still for a while watching the stars undulate as they listen to the *Abagan Dub* mixed by DJ S'bu...The stars are not fooled by Einstein's drab prediction that nothing can travel faster than the speed of light. Laduma grins at the dancing stars, clicks his tongue and clicks his fingers and gets an instantaneous response from on high. Kwaito moves faster than the speed of light (AK Thembeka, 2004: 20)²⁴.

Elite authors would never speak to their readers primarily through intertextual references, though two of the African Nobel Prize for Literature winners—Soyinka and Coetzee—are increasingly accessing the popular (might not competing with popular genres in 'accessing popular memory' be the fourth phase of elite African literature?), and presumably increasing their audience bases, through intertextuality. And then again, none of the elite authors would dangle phrases like "rampant tendrils of dissent uncoiling" or "codified exhortations to the slave people" before their readers, or for that matter, use 'click' twice in one sentence. Not unless they wanted to attract the scorn of one of Ivan Vladislavi's narrators, quite a few of whom dissect other people's grammar²⁵. But such wordage is undeniably witty, no less so when one discovers Thembeka, a white writer pretending to be a black writer, is engaging with a white fear of what kwaito is really about. And he has the space to do this, because if a black writer, other than someone working the borders between sanity and insanity like Lesego Rampolokeng, were to 'read' a taxi like this, they

²⁴ AK Thembeka, *Laduma* (2004). Pine Slopes: Bryanston. Even AK Thembeka's name is intertextual. 'Thembeka' means 'trustworthy' in Zulu.

²⁵ See Ivan Vladislavi_ interview by Muff Andersson, 'Skrywers se Skrywer', in *Insig* magazine, forthcoming 2005.

would be accused of holding up the development of the nation. Being someone else, assuming another unlikely identity, rewriting race, rewriting class, rewriting gender, being the bringer of Aids or the rapist of babies in order to access memory that might otherwise be flattened in the glare of rainbow light—or even worse, silenced, because it is out of place and out of time—is a practice that is on the rise among South Africa’s pop culture fashionistas.

Mzekezeke appears in public in a balaclava, jokes a lot in what is supposedly a gruff working-class voice, but says serious things about unemployment and poverty. Lewis Nkosi uses Anthony Ferguson, a white civil servant and South African expatriate in London, to mirror a reversal of black exile experience and the post-struggle return home in Underground People (2002)²⁶. Rian Malan, now sometimes signing emails, “the artist previously known as Nair Nalam,” writes tirelessly to the *Sunday Times* and other papers. He claims that the “apocalypse has been postponed” because he doesn’t see the evidence that people are dying of AIDS²⁷. He suspects, for different reasons than the health minister and the president, that Aids is being blown out of proportion. Having a clown in the ring certainly whets audiences’ appetites for the act of tightrope-walking to follow.

A writer who stylishly reclaims the circus, cliché, propaganda and gossip in order to give his literary visitors a taste of the chthonic realm from which he purportedly operates is Lesego Rampolokeng. He gets down and dirty with everyone who has ever theorised black consciousness, from Eldridge Cleaver and Richard Wright, to Steve Biko and bell hooks in his novel blackheart. What follows is the closest Rampolokeng will admit to ‘the journey’:

a full turn to the fanatic right and the tickled engine laughed its way to life.
immobiliser declared dead on arrival. clutch. accelerator. familiarity made
man and machine friends. free flowing traffic. the hen that laid the golden

²⁶ Lewis Nkosi (2002). Underground People. Kwela Books: Cape Town.

²⁷ Cited in Rian Malan interview by Muff Andersson, ‘Ons Hofnar’, in *Insig* magazine, May 2004.

egg. a friend in death is a friend on earth. the low shall have honour down below (Rampolokeng, 2004:33)²⁹.

Thembeke and Rampolokeng might have sprung from the loins of intrepid guerrilla genres, like the spoken word and performance art, but they are both also highly literate and skilled writers. Rampolokeng, besides having six volumes of poetry and two spoken word CDs under his belt, has written a play engaging with the theories of one of Africa's pre-eminent black thinkers, Frantz Fanon³⁰. He effortlessly and eloquently uses iambic pentameter, like Shakespeare, and whips through a postcolonial menu that sounds as if it was collectively compiled by Ngugi wa Thiong'o, Ayi Kwei Armah, Ahmadou Kourouma, Achille Mbembe and Hanna Arendt. He routinely looks at the themes being carried by the elite genres and then he takes them over: *The cynical and cyclical nature of colonialism. The how and why of the coup d'état in West Africa. The anatomy of a dictator. The ties of excess, binding colony and postcolony. Mbembe's necroeconomy. Arendt's banality of evil.* These are all themes Rampolokeng has redelivered.

Rampoloken's popularity arises both through his word-craft, his relentless delivery of disturbing images and his tendency to say shocking things in public. In this, he has borrowed more from Shakespeare than a sharp pen. He lost his job as MC for the 2004 Urban Voices festival because of his controversial statements. The following piece from the Internet captures Rampolokeng as trope unto himself:

Next, my man Lesego Rampolokeng. After such a buzzy, feelgood evening, he was sobering. I'm used to hearing him complain about things before he reads, saying he is giving up poetry, etc. But this time he was angry. He had just seen Chapman's new book on South African

²⁹ Lesego Rampolokeng, blackheart (epilogue to insanity) (2004). Pine Slopes: Bryanston.

³⁰ Lesego Rampolokeng, Fanon's Children (2002). Unpublished.

Literatures which lumped him, Kgafela oa Magogodi and Seithamo Motsapi together, and talks of their throwaway lines. If anyone crafts their lines, it's Rampolokeng. He said "This particular critic is in this university. He is ugly whichever way you look at him. And he fucks his students." (Audience shock). He read a passage from his play Fanon's Children, a description of kids in the '80s uprisings hacking an informer into pieces and then looting a dairy truck. One of them emerges from the truck with a severed arm in one hand and a tub of yoghurt in the other. To the cheers of the crowd, he pours the yoghurt over the hacked end of the arm and proceeds to lick the blood and yoghurt mixture. (Audience stunned into silence--what happened to the entertainment?) Lesego throws in his afterthought "and you can be sure that boy is in government today".

Robert Berold <http://www.chimurenga.co.za/modules>

Thembeke³¹, in another guise an award-winning and prolific film maker, artist and novelist, has spent years wading through debates about post-structuralism and deconstruction in Holland, apparently poaching what he liked. He returned to South Africa in 1994 to make the movie Nice to meet you please don't rape me.

It is understandable that a movie proclaiming, "From the Country that brought you Apartheid...now the first Rape Musical!" would be considered offensive to a number of people, for various reasons. At the same time there is something compelling and funny about the concept, which contains an inescapable truth, that apartheid violence spawned a litter of other terrifying violences. Narratives of abuse never make pleasant reading but often their writers are skilled enough in their chosen form to know exactly how to hook their readers. Popular culture is not bothered about being 'nice'. Rampolokeng simply reflects, creatively, the way violence and abusive relationships thrive through necropower at the expense of

³¹ A.k.a. Aryan Kaganof, a.k.a. Ian Kerkhof.

what Mbembe suggests needs to be developed, “the politics of care”, in the postcolony³².

Producers of popular culture have the advantage of being in key positions at a moment when the excesses of the postcolony, the colony before it, the cultural economy upholding it, are scrutinized not only by scholars but by all those who consciously bear witness as *The Empire Strikes Back*. But long before 9/11, African popular culture could be depended upon to find smart intertextual ways to express the hidden narratives relating to African identities and political memory in an age of global capitalism. However big or small the cultural product—the penny dreadful romances that sell like hot cakes in Nigeria, the occult videos of Ghana, Bunyan’s Christian approaching the Slough of Despond in Kenya³³ or the Lucky Star pilchard label bowls on the Joburg streets—there is usually a playful appropriation of and recirculation of western ‘retro’, a way of recycling that brings both freshness of delivery and political memory of the original statement.

Intertextuality in African popular culture is proving a useful tool for those seeking ways to get children’s attention. The *Daily Sun*’s Ekasi comic pulls together a fictional world of schoolchildren radio listeners who switch on to DJ Smooth. The DJ talks to HIV-positive youth on a fictional youth chat show modelled on the format of, and sponsored by, the popular youth channel Yfm, also manages to get out the information that needs to reach HIV-positive youth about dietary issues and anti-retroviral treatment (ART) regimes.

Intertextuality can be arty, rethinking the traditional in the way that young design studios like Sun Goddess and Stoned Cherrie are doing with headdresses, aprons and beads in South Africa. It can make references that not all will get. It can highlight a trend embraced by a section of the audience, or add a footnote. It

³² See Achille Mbembe interview in ‘Dreaming of a new kind of freedom’ by Muff Andersson, in *Mail & Guardian*, 30 April-6 May 2004:16.

³³ See Isabel Hofmeyr (2004). The Portable Bunyan. Witwatersrand University Press: Johannesburg.

can be used as an advertising tactic. The Supastrikas comic, which has succeeded in creating a set of heroic soccer characters appealing to millions of South African media empire Johnnic youth in southern, western, eastern and central Africa, pays for itself through the cellphone product placement on the pitch.

Intertextuality can be used to bring humour to the drama, or opinioned difference to the local humour of the sitcom, as in the playful reference to 'the holy'. "Oh, Oprah said that, did She?" is the barbed response of the grandmother to a pious point about being honest to one's true self made by her husband (Next of Kin)³⁴. It can be used to simultaneously engage and thrill the cognoscenti who prefer to read books than watch TV, and indiscriminate viewers who lazily imbibe everything from children's early morning programmes to the late-night horror slot. Sometimes it feels as if the creators of one programme are taking on the creators of another: the conscious engagement appears to be writer to writer, although the spin-off might be that viewers, not intellectuals only, hail a 'clever' drama because of an intertextual reference. This, as we shall discover, is very much the case with Yizo Yizo.

While the business of intertextuality—opening dialogues with other texts—does not appear to be in dispute, there are plenty of debates about how to access and analyse it.

Fiske believes intertextuality must be defined as either horizontal or vertical intertextuality:

³⁴ This episode of Next of Kin was screened in South Africa on BBC Prime on DSTV, 20 March 2002.

Horizontal relations are those between primary texts that are more or less explicitly linked, usually along the axes of genre, character, or content. Vertical intertextuality is that between a primary text...and other texts of a different type that refer explicitly to it. These may be secondary texts such as studio publicity, journalistic features, or criticism, or tertiary texts produced by the viewers themselves in the form of letters to the press or, more importantly, of gossip and conversation (Fiske 1987:108)⁴¹.

He describes how television programmes usually fit into a genre—a cop show, a legal series and so on—which in conforming to a ‘formula’ or flouting convention make value judgements and statements that are both ideological and social. Genres “are popular when their conventions bear a close relationship to the dominant ideology of the time” (Fiske 1987:112). Also, “Genre is a means of constructing both the audience and the reading subject” (op cit:114).

Two statements by Roland Barthes bring to our attention not only the interconnectivity of the ‘writerly’ text with its readership but the systems with which a fictional text is layered.

The first statement reads:

...the goal of literary work, (or literature as work) is to make the reader no longer a consumer, but a producer of the text (Barthes 1992:8)⁴².

The second says:

Structurally, the existence of two supposedly different systems—denotation and connotation—enables the text to operate like a game, each system referring to the other according to the requirements of a certain *illusion* (op cit: 9; italics in original).

⁴¹ John Fiske (1987). Television Culture. Routledge: London.

⁴² Roland Barthes (1992). S/Z. Translated by Richard Miller. Preface by Richard Howard. Blackwell: Oxford.

Both the terms 'denotation' and 'connotation' exist in relation to the defined and the known and thus drive the triangle between writer-text-reader (or producer-text-audience). However, 'connotation', or additional meaning, is a starting point for a study of intertextuality, which could be explained as the way in which texts 'network' to give added value, and hence greater involvement, for audiences. The game and the *illusion* Barthes speaks about link directly to the activation of audiences' becoming producers, producers' becoming audiences and the text's widening in negotiability.

For many, like Agger (2000 op cit) who has written about and translated intertextual debates in the context of media analysis, the Soviet citizens Mikhail Bakhtin (and in turn, his main interpreter Julie Kristeva) and Yuri Lotman are central figures. Agger cites Bakhtin for inspiration with regard to concepts of dialogue, functions and development of genres, chronotopes and the carnival. Lotman's contribution concerns "intercultural transfers", cultural memory and national identity.

But reading Agger's impressive online sweep through the leading lights of intertextual debate it becomes clear to a researcher seeking evidence of its role in popular—not necessarily official—culture that there are bound to be disputes about the nature of the dialogue. Is it one-sided? Is it mass-audience friendly? Does it smack of pretension? Should the form containing it be adapted to allow a response to the call? There will be generic contestation too: intertextuality must have genres of its own, even as it functions within particular genres. For example, a sequence about a psychotic killer within a soap opera could be read in different ways: as reference to any number of movies or cop series to have run with mad killers (like Silence of the Lambs and Profiler), as 'thriller arc', as memory of an actual sociopath known within the country of origin of the soap opera, or as 'psycho killer sequence within soap opera'. 'Stand-up' moments within sitcom could also have a range of origins, with implications for genre. In

animation too there appear to be movements copied from popular video games. It might be possible to interrogate Bakhtin's concepts of the chronotope and carnival in a similar fashion.

So while Agger has rightly pointed to Bakhtin and Lotman's provision of the initial tools for analysis, trying to conclusively map intertextuality is rather like trying to capture samples from a huge, changing body like the sea. Patti Smith, in a song in the late 1970s, referred to "the sea of possibility" (possibly in relation to heroin) and these four words capture the body and movement of intertextuality. It is a sea in which there are possibly places to swim, paddle, sail and dive, but which is too large 'to know' *in the absence of defining the universe more tightly*. A similar difficulty might come with analysis concerning the Internet. Just as it becomes impossible to 'see' the Internet and the information highway, we would all agree it is highly accessible and interactive, ever growing and useful. It is possible to develop approaches that make aspects of the Internet more understandable, and with cult films like the Wachowski brothers' The Matrix (1999) we can have fun with chronotopes, playing around with real time (in representation) and with cyberspace. With this understanding (intertextuality as a "sea of possibility", that can be dissected into parts made up of water, salt, fish, sunken ships, plankton and so on; and seen as relational to these other parts and to the external environment) we seek ways to contain what might otherwise be an overwhelming discussion.

Some theorists question the point of origin of the intertextual dialogue. Before the text, the argument goes, there is a creator or writer. What does that writer wish to say? The writer/creator/producer, for Harold Bloom, is the most important player in the textual triangle. Others, including Fiske, suggest the "power of the audience prevails over the power of the text, thus pushing the concept of dialogue to the point where the receiver's response to the text determines its meaning" (Agger, 2000:9).

Jonathan Culler has come to the rescue of those looking for ways to contain the debate with the argument that intertextuality needs to be situated within “the context of what is known”. The text becomes significant in relation to “a body of discourse, an enterprise, which is already in place and which creates the possibility of new work”⁴³. Culler suggests that even when the author/creator of a text tries to reach beyond mass expectations of the known to that of an individual, that author’s text will still be evaluated “in relation to the critical enterprise” (op cit:21). The writing and reading of an article “depend on the prior existence of codes and conventions, and it is in the nature of codes to be already in existence, to have lost origins” (op cit:22):

The notion of intertextuality emphasizes that to read is to place a work in a discursive space, relating it to other texts and to the codes of that space, and writing itself is a similar activity: a taking up of a position in a discursive space (ibid).

While intertextuality, he says, is “undoubtedly rich...it proves itself, nevertheless, an extremely difficult concept to work with” (op cit:23). Culler finally suggests two ways of approaching intertextuality. The first looks at presuppositions of discursive text and hence at pretext, “an intertextual space whose occupants may or may not correspond to other actual texts” and how the ways of producing presuppositions and pretexts relate to ways of treating them. His second approach concerns the underlying conventions or poetics of rhetorical or pragmatic presupposition (op cit: 32). Culler acknowledges the “middle ground” remaining between these two approaches. He calls the interaction between them “application: the bringing to bear of one body of discourse on another in an effort to release energy” (ibid). It is within this ‘application’ then that he would presumably suggest that Bloom’s theories should be contextualised.

⁴³ Jonathan Culler (1998:40), reprinted in Victor E. Taylor and Charles E. Winquist (1998). Editors, Postmodernism: Critical Concepts.

Culler and Bloom appear to be on opposite ends of the spectrum in terms of approaching intertextuality. Where Culler cautiously maps the two parts of the terrain paying attention to convention, Bloom suggests diving into the space between the two parts and analysing the relationship between the creators of both texts:

A poetic 'text', as I interpret it, is not a gathering of signs on a page, but is a psychic battlefield upon which authentic forces struggle for the only victory worth winning, the divinating triumph over oblivion (Bloom 1976:2)⁴⁴.

And what about the wider universe of Yizo Yizo, the sky above the sea containing the two parts, as well as the space between? What hegemonic rules and applications of discipline govern its wider universe? Where is it situated (beyond the school is the township, but what is beyond that)? What is its ideology? Against what do we read it, particularly if there is a silence about so much political memory? Here's where we remember Yuri Lotman, whose words of caution need to be reproduced at some length:

...it is not enough to know something of the general 'world outlook of the time'. Within any one period there exist various genres of texts, and each of them as a rule has its code specifics: what is permitted in the one genre is forbidden in another. The researchers who contrast the 'realism' of classical comedy to the conventionality of tragedy assume that in the comedies we find 'genuine' life, not encoded by the rules of genre and other code systems. This is of course a naïve view. 'Realism' in this sense usually means that the text-code is similar to the historian's general views on life. The cinema-goer is subject to the same aberration when watching a film about another national or cultural tradition, and naively thinking that

⁴⁴ Harold Bloom (1976). Poetry and Repression: Revisionism from Blake to Stevens. Yale University Press: New Haven.

the film is 'simply' reproducing the life and customs of a distant country with ethnographic precision. The fact which the historian has to deal with is always a construct, conscious or unconscious, of the text-creator (Lotman 1990:218-219)⁴⁵.

Robert Stam et al (1992:203)⁴⁶ view intertextuality as part of the artistic "discourse, responding not to reality but to other discourses" inherent to a semiotic—cognitive of its coded and constructed nature—approach to film:

The concept of dialogism suggests that every text forms an intersection of textual surfaces. All texts are tissues of anonymous formulae embedded in the language, variations on those formulae, conscious and unconscious quotations, confluences and inversions of other texts (op cit:204).

In John Fiske's view intertextuality exists "...in the space *between* texts" (1987:108, italics in original)⁴⁷, rather a woolly concept. In an arena where audiences are active, the text is activated not necessarily by specific or local knowledge but rather from "culture's image bank". His example is Madonna's music video Material Girl, which Fiske describes as a parody of Marilyn Monroe's song Diamonds are a Girl's Best Friend in the film Gentlemen Prefer Blondes:

The meanings of Material Girl depend upon its *allusion* to Gentlemen Prefer Blondes and upon its intertextuality with *all* texts that contribute to and draw upon the meaning of 'the blonde' in our culture (ibid).

Where intertextuality ends and plagiarism begins appears to be more than a matter of crediting one's sources. Depending on how one understands narrative, a creative team has to rework similar storylines over and over. "There are only

⁴⁵ Yuri Lotman (1990). Universe of the Mind: A Semiotic Theory of Culture. Translated by Ann Shukman. Introduction by Umberto Eco. Indiana University Press: Bloomington.

⁴⁶ R. Stam, R. Burgoyne and S. Flitterman-Lewis (1992). New Vocabularies in Film Semiotics: Structuralism, Post-Structuralism and Beyond. Routledge: London.

seven original plots; you try to do them with style and moderation,” according to Dynasty and Dallas creator Aaron Spelling (quoted in Gitlin 1983: 69)⁴⁸. However for NBC’s Gerald Jaffe, “Everything’s an imitation. You can’t sort them out. Everything’s an imitation of something else” (Gitlin 1983:69).

When it comes to television, the “already said” becomes what is called “formula”. Todd Gitlin quotes NBC’s Brandon Tartikoff about three shows on the rival CBS:

Magnum is Rockford with another guy in a moustache; Ladies’ Man is WKRP sideways; Midland Heights is a rip-off of Dallas (Gitlin 1983:70).

Although obvious clones are easily identified by audiences and are often rejected by audiences, clever rewriting of the known, or what Gitlin (1983:75) calls “recombinants of elements” is embraced and considered interesting by “textual poachers”⁴⁹.

TV audiences: ‘textual poachers’?

Michel de Certeau questioned the prevailing view that ‘culture’ and ‘elite’ belong together, as well as the idea that consumers of culture are passive (as opposed to active ‘producers’). The reader of a book “takes neither the position of the author nor an author’s position” (De Certeau 1984:160)⁵⁰. S/he brings to the book her own richness of experience, expectations and powers of invention. “Whether it is a question of newspapers or Proust, the text has a meaning only through its readers; it changes along with them; it is ordered in accord with codes of perception that it does not control” (op cit:170).

⁴⁷ John Fiske (1987). Television Culture. Routledge: London.

⁴⁸ Todd Gitlin (1983). Inside Prime Time. Pantheon Books: New York.

⁴⁹ The term originates from De Certeau’s ‘Reading as poaching’ but is used as the title of Henry Jenkins (1992). Textual Poachers: Television Fans and Participatory Culture. Routledge: London.

⁵⁰ Michel de Certeau (1984). The Practice of Everyday Life. Translated by Steven Randall. University of California Press: Berkeley.

Far from being writers—founders of their own place, heirs of the peasants of earlier ages now working on the soil of language, diggers of wells and builders of houses—readers are travellers; they move across lands belonging to someone else, like nomads poaching their way across fields they did not write, despoiling the wealth of Egypt to enjoy it themselves (op cit: 174).

Henry Jenkins goes further with De Certeau's ideas about poaching as he looks at creative responses to popular TV programmes and the phenomenon of fan culture. In Textual Poachers he describes fandom as a form of resistance to bourgeois aesthetics (1992:18):

Fan culture stands as an open challenge to the 'naturalness' and desirability of dominant cultural hierarchies, a refusal of authorial authority and a violation of intellectual property...The popular embrace of television can thus be read as a conscious repudiation of high culture or at least of the traditional boundaries between high culture and popular culture (Jenkins 1992:18)⁵¹.

Fans have to be viewed, not as mere recipients of texts, but as people involved in the production of texts. Fiske suggests three types of production in which fans participate: semiotic productivity, enunciative productivity and textual productivity (Fiske 1992: 37-39)⁵². Semiotic productivity explains the way in which audiences make their own internal meanings (not necessarily those intended by the producers) from the text. It makes them feel empowered, able to recognise a problem, denied or affirmed. Enunciative productivity refers to the way in which audiences articulate these responses: either talking about the characters of a soap opera as if they were part of their lives, modelling their clothes or hair style

⁵¹ Henry Jenkins (1992). Textual Poachers: Television Fans and Participatory Culture. Routledge: London.

⁵² John Fiske (1992). 'The Cultural Economy of Fandom' in The Adoring Audience: Fan Culture and Popular Media, ed. Lisa A. Lewis (1992). Routledge: London.

on that of a 'star' or challenging convention. The third area, textual productivity, involves the fans taking the text beyond the boundaries of what has been allowed in the producers' texts (op cit).

Lisa A Lewis, editor of The Adoring Audience (1992), looks at fans from different angles. Fans become emotional (rather than rational) torchbearers of a different 'cultural economy'—the term coined by Pierre Bourdieu (1977)—from that which is officially claimed and heralded⁵³. Joli Jenson⁵⁴ defines what it is that separates 'them' (fans) from 'us' (academics, critics and so on). 'They' are deviant and pathological whereas 'we' are normal and ordinary in a system which is biased in favour of the educated, the worthy, the elite. But for Jensen, fans are merely an outcome of, or response to, celebrity or the star system and should be seen as 'ordinary' people (Jenson in Lewis 1992:10). N. Fairclough similarly talks about 'manifest' and 'constitutive' intertextuality (Fairclough 1992:117)⁵⁵. The former includes discourse representation, presupposition, negation, metadiscourse and irony; the latter refers to 'interdiscursivity' (op cit:119).

Categories of Intertextuality

A major tool for analysing 'types' of intertextuality has come through literature via Gerard Genette. Robert Stam has translated his ideas for use in film studies. In this research on Yizo Yizo, they are adapted and expanded to apply to TV series.

Stam et al analyse the contribution by Gerard Genette as revealed in Palimpsestes (1982). Genette, they say, makes the distinction between 'transtextuality' [*all that which puts one text in relation, whether manifest or*

⁵³ Lisa A. Lewis (1992). Ed. The Adoring Audience: Fan Culture and Popular Media. Routledge: London.

⁵⁴ Joli Jenson (1992), 'Fandom as Pathology: The Consequences of Characterization' in Lewis 1992:10

⁵⁵ N. Fairclough (1992). Discourse and Social Change. Polity Press: Cambridge.

secret, with other texts. Transtextuality includes paratextuality⁵⁶, metatextuality⁵⁷, architextuality⁵⁸ and hypertextuality⁵⁹] and ‘intertextuality’ [*effective co-presence of two texts* in the form of quotation, plagiarism and allusion] (Stam et al 1992:206; their quotes from the Genette original are in italics). Genette’s categories include quotation, allusion, celebrity intertextuality, genetic intertextuality, intratextuality, auto-citation and mendacious intertextuality. The types of intertextuality Genette explores by way of literary examples have been translated into examples on film by Stam et al. I have added more details (Stam et al simply give the names of films, with no explanatory notes or dates) and interpretation so that readers might better understand these references. I have also added, where possible, current examples from African literature and more recent examples from film than those given by Stam, examples from ‘international’ popular TV drama, sitcom, animation and soap opera and where appropriate, from Yizo Yizo. Genette’s are:

QUOTATION: when lines of dialogue or pieces of footage from one work pop up in others. In African literature, several of the canonical writers use this device to provide evidence of strange memory moments for a particular character. For example, David Lurie, JM Coetzee’s highly non-PC narrator in Disgrace, inappropriately remembers the lines of “Oh dear, what can the matter be? [Two old ladies locked in the lavatory]” when his daughter Lucy tells the story of her rape to the police (Coetzee 2000:109)⁶⁰. Lurie also frequently quotes lines from Byron and Wordsworth—which can be read as reminders to the reader that these are Lurie’s literary ‘ancestors’.

⁵⁶ Described by Stam et al (1992:207) as referring to “the relation, in literature, between the text proper and its ‘paratext’—titles, prefaces, postfaces, epigraphs, dedications, illustrations, and even book jackets and signed autographs”.

⁵⁷ Described by Stam et al (op cit: 208) as “the critical relation between one text and another, whether the commented text is explicitly cited or only silently evoked”.

⁵⁸ Described by Stam et al (ibid) as “the generic taxonomies suggested or refused by the titles or infratitles of a text. Architextuality has to do with a text’s willingness, or reluctance, to characterize itself directly or indirectly in its title as a poem, essay, novel, film”.

⁵⁹ Described by Stam et al (op cit: 209) as referring to “the relation between one text, which Genette calls ‘hypertext’, to an anterior text or ‘hypotext’, which the former transforms, modifies, elaborates or extends”.

⁶⁰ JM Coetzee (2000). Disgrace. Vintage: London.

In Film: Jean-Luc Godard uses clips of Alain Resnais' documentary footage about the suppression of holocaust memory Nuit et Brouillard (Night and Fog, 1955) in his story about a triangular relationship A Married Woman (1965) (Stam et al 1992:206; www.filmref.com/directors/dirpages/resnais.html). In more recent examples, Titanic (1997) used *National Geographic* footage and Before Night Falls (2000) used real footage of Castro and moments of the Cuban revolution.

In TV Series: The Simpsons frequently sends up different genres by reproducing film sequences in animation. The series has done this with horror movies, the romance, and the western. The episode shown in South Africa on MNet on 16 May 2002 directly quotes The Days of Our Lives by playing the soapie's theme tune and featuring sand dropping through an animated hourglass.

In Yizo Yizo: YY2 shows post-rape sequences of Hazel, looking down, both fists clenched at her side. Slowly she looks up. The camera then shows Hazel from the back, still clenching her fists. The shot is borrowed from the opening sequences of Mathieu Kassovitz's La Haine (1995), a film exposing official racism towards the community from the black and predominantly Muslim ghettos of Paris. By quoting La Haine in this way, there is the suggestion of similarities in the experience of black youth in Paris and in a township in post-colonial South Africa. (Note: this repeating of a shot, with a different character in a different genre, could also be read as allusion—see the next category—but I read it as quotation).

ALLUSION: which can refer verbally or visually to another film/series. In many African Literature texts this is a popular route chosen by the author to share with the reader particular texts the author considers will help the reader understand the author's point better. Phaswane Mpe's narrator in Welcome to Our Hillbrow, pondering some of the anomalies of Hillbrow, reflects: "You remembered what Oom Schalk Lourens of Herman Charles Bosman's short stories had to say,

about some things simply baffling the human mind, even the most agile of human minds” (Mpe 2001:36)⁶¹.

In Film: Vanya on 42nd Street (1994) directed by Louis Malle alludes to Anton Chekov’s Uncle Vanya. Al Pacino’s Looking for Richard (1996) re-enters the debate about ways in which actors have portrayed Shakespeare’s Richard III in the past. Mark Joffe’s Così (1996), an Australian production set in a psychiatric hospital sees the inmates doing their version of Mozart’s Così Fan Tutte. Similarly the Japanese movie Throne of Blood (1957) rewrites MacBeth and Peter Greenaway’s Prospero’s Book’s (1991) is a retelling of The Tempest.

In TV Series: David Lavery finds references to luminaries as diverse as Franz Kafka in Northern Exposure, Marcel Proust and Ernest Hemingway in the drama series The Sopranos⁶², and to the children’s educational programme Sesame Street in the cult hit Buffy the Vampire Slayer (Lavery 2002).

In Yizo Yizo: The behaviour of the headmaster Mthembu is similar to that of Meneer in Ramadan Suleman’s Fools (YY1 Episode 3), an idea reinforced when Papa Action and company spray graffiti on a wall and shout, ‘This is South Africa; all you fools...fools are going to give respect’ (Episode 7). Fools is alluded to again with the rape of Dudu (Episode 9) which features squawking chickens, as does Fools. These intertextual references, conscious or unconscious, concern the ‘already said’ in African literature, in this case by the book’s author Njabulo S. Ndebele and the film’s writers Bhekizizwe Peterson and Ramadan Suleman.

CELEBRITY INTERTEXTUALITY: where the presence of a particular celebrity evokes a genre or context normally associated with that particular celebrity.

⁶¹ Phaswane Mpe (2000). Welcome to Our Hillbrow. University of Natal Press: Scottsville.

⁶² The Sopranos, according to Lavery, “comes heavy...not just with weaponry but with intertextuality and genre accoutrements” (Lavery 2000:1). In reading Lavery’s list of more than 20 intertextual references to, among others, the TV drama ER, the writer Carlos Castaneda, the movie The Remains of the Day, Martin Scorsese’s Kundun (1997), Frankenstein (1931), the

Njabulo S. Ndebele brings a famous fictional character named Winnie Mandela to the table in order to link the issues for ordinary women with those of a VIP, who is also spending most of her life waiting for a man in The Cry of Winnie Mandela (2003)⁶³.

In Film: Stam et al (1992) cite Francois Trauffaut in Close Encounters of the Third Kind (1977) and Norman Mailer in Jean Luc Godard's King Lear (1987). To add to what Stam et al have written, Godard's King Lear is a veritable feast of celebrity intertextuality. It is set in a French seaside hotel. The late comic actor Peter Sellers plays William Shakespeare Jr. the Fifth, Norman Mailer appears as himself, while Godard plays a senile professor. The little-known film is so full of celebrities that actor/director Quentin Tarantino falsely claimed in his CV that he had a cameo role in it—and he was believed, even at the Cannes Film Festival (<http://tarantino.m4d.com/Interview/jay.shtml>).

In more recent examples, Salman Rushdie, appearing as himself, provides a witty reminder of how he achieved notoriety through his own fiction in Dirty Pictures (2000) and Bridget Jones's Diary (2001). Anjelica Huston, playing herself in Robert Altman's The Player (1992), brings with her very presence the knowledge to the viewer that this movie is 'black comedy'. Pierce Brosnan ('James Bond') plays the MI6 spy in John Boorman's 2001 film adaptation of John Le Carré's The Tailor of Panama (1996)⁶⁴, bringing to the movie a certain assurance that events might get far fetched in this movie—terrible even—but that they will work out in the end. It is a curious touch, possibly undermining what appears to be Le Carré's project in his three most recent books: understanding the damage of colonialism and exploring the postcolonial world. From the casting perspective, the use of Brosnan might have been seen to be strategic. He is

suicide of rock idol Kurt Cobain and the Broadway musical Rent, one begins to understand how politically loaded and complex intertextual dialogue can be.

⁶³ Njabulo S. Ndebele (2003). The Cry of Winnie Mandela. David Philip: Cape Town.

⁶⁴ John le Carré (1996). The Tailor of Panama. Hodder and Stroughton: London.

associated with the familiar, he would put viewers at their ease, and the political could then be explored in this easy reception space, and so on.

In TV Series: Dame Edna Everage sprinkles Ally McBeal (SABC3, 3 June 2002) with a dash of queer dust, as does Ellen Degeneres (The Ellen Show), who frequently pops up in other programmes to suggest lesbian subtext.

In Yizo Yizo: The series contains plenty of celebrities—usually from the music world, as explained below—but there are often references to the memory of a celebrity. Javas imitates Nelson Mandela’s way of speaking in YY1 (Episode 3), again suggesting the safe and familiar and in YY2 (Episode 9). Celebrity performers Mandoza and Thembi Seete dramatically add value for youth viewers who might never get a chance to see these idols’ concerts. The performances of Bonginkosi Dlamini (Zola) as Papa Action and Pule Hlatswayo as a drug dealer (Zola and Hlatswayo after YY became the respective presenters of TV youth programmes Zola 7 and Take 5) in YY2, have an element of shock appeal, but it is known shock appeal. The songs that have made Mandoza, Seete and Zola famous provide their own set of intertextual references for popular audiences and heighten the appeal of their performances in Yizo Yizo.

The music in YY is an intertextual category in itself. Producer Desiree Markgraaff has commented: “Producing the soundtrack album has been great fun and a challenge. The music is an integral part of the series. We wanted to produce tracks that were hit material but also related to the stories and characters. We encouraged collaborations that explored new musical terrain, for example, that of Mandoza with actor Israel Makoe. They took a prison song, used it as a chorus, and then added kwaito-style verses. The result is a great new sound”⁶⁵. The album from YY1, featuring TKZee, Skeem, E’smile, Kyllex, Ghetto Luv and O’Da Meesta, sold platinum⁶⁶. The soundtrack of YY2 went triple platinum. Actors

⁶⁵ See Yizo Yizo fact sheet, 2001.

⁶⁶ In SA, going ‘gold’ means selling 25 000, selling ‘platinum’ means 50 000 units, double platinum is 100 000 units, triple platinum is 125 000.

Israel Makoe and Zola (Bonginkosi Dlamini) collaborated with well-known artists such as Mandoza, Thembi, Arthur, Ishmael and Kaybee. Other artists include the late Brenda Fassie (with a remix of Weekend Special), Kyllex, Chiskop, Doc Shebeleza, Wanda and Amu. Ghetto Fabulous by Zola from the YY2 soundtrack was voted the Radio Metro Song of the Year for 2001.

The YY3 soundtrack features Brenda Fassie (recorded performing the YY3 title track shortly before she died), Kabelo, Brown Dash, Mzekezeke, Mandoza, Skwatta Kamp, Ndrebele Civilisation, Bobo and Gunman, Slovas, half Brick, DJ2MZA and Toki M, West 2, Simphiwe Dana, Cashless Society and Fatai Rolling Dollar.

AUTO-CITATION:: This is the way in which a text refers to itself or to its creator. In African literature, auto-citation pops up quite frequently in a way that suggests a political link between the fictional chronotope and reality. Sembene Ousmane's character, Doyen Cheikh Tidiane, decides to write his memoirs, entitled 'The Last of the Empire' in The Last of the Empire (Ousmane 1981:238)⁶⁷.

In Film: Examples given by Stam (1992) of an author/director quoting himself or herself include Vincente Minnelli citing The Bad and the Beautiful (1952) in Two Weeks in Another Town (1962).

Hitchcock's 1956 remake of his own thriller The Man Who Knew Too Much (1934) is often called auto-citation, and stands as an example of how a film maker can engage in a different way with the same genre at a later point in his career. Hitchcock, one can deduce from watching both movies, knows too much about film making to be happy with a single version of a film. Hitchcock's cameo roles in 37 of his own films are another example of autocitation. Similarly, Spike Lee acts in seven of his own films and Ramadan Suleman and Bhekizizwe

⁶⁷ Sembene Ousmane (1981). The Last of the Empire. Translated from the French by Adrian Adams. Heinemann: Oxford.

Peterson pop into their African feature films Fools (1997) and Zulu Love Letter (2005).

In TV Series: A character from The Practice enters the world of Ally McBeal, reminding viewers that both series were written and directed by David E Kelly; and Everybody Loves Raymond, starring Ray Romano, uses the actor's name as a mnemonic device.

In Yizo Yizo: Graffiti on the school wall in YY2 refers to the 'Son of Papa Action'. Papa Action, the villain from YY1 who is in prison in YY2 was originally conceived as "a bit part," says Gibson. But the actor "wrote himself into the script as we went along"⁶⁸. The graffiti is evidence of the directors' enjoyment of the fact that Papa Action had been a hit and suggests they are actively imagining how the character may be put to use in the new series. At the same time, 'son of' is an intratextual reference (see category below) to sequel terminology. In another instance, director Teboho Mahlatsi plays the part of a businessman in YY2, allowing viewers a glimpse of the accomplished and award-winning director participating in his own art⁶⁹.

GENETIC INTERTEXTUALITY: Here the presence of children of big stars "evokes the memory of their famous parents" (Stam 2000:337). The children, or relatives, thus play the role of ambassadors for bigger stars. In African Literature an example is John Matshikiza's collaboration with his late, legendary father Todd Matshikiza in a joint collection of columns⁷⁰. The late Dambisa Kente, daughter of the late playwright Gibson Kente, is another example. She appeared in Friends (1994) and Cry, the Beloved Country (1995) and Fools (1997) among many other movies and in John Kani's play, Nothing but the Truth (2002).

⁶⁸ YY2 DVD, Directors' Commentary.

⁶⁹ Mahlatsi is the winner of a Silver Lion award from the Venice festival for his Portrait of a Young Man Drowning. Following the flighting of YY2, he received the President's Award for Young Achievers (2002).

⁷⁰ Todd Matshikiza & John Matshikiza (2000). With The Lid Off. Mail & Guardian: Johannesburg.

In world music, Femi Kuti's performance recalls the 'afrobeat' sound for which his late father Fela Kuti was famous while his themes, which include inter alia, black consciousness (Blackman Know Yourself), corruption and globalisation, engage audiences in the same ideological way as did Fela Kuti.

In Film: Examples from film spring more rapidly to mind than do ones from TV: Liza Minnelli, who made her breakthrough in Cabaret (1972) was previously better known as Vincente Minnelli and Judy Garland's daughter; Drew Barrymore was cast in E.T.The Extra-Terrestrial (1982), presumably because director Steven Spielberg was her godfather and best friends with her parents John Drew Barrymore and Jaid Barrymore; Ingmar Bergman cast his own daughter as a spectator child in the audience of The Magic Flute (1974).

In TV Series: Music videos, as well as TV series, are full of examples of genetic intertextuality. These include Unforgettable, Natalie Cole's collaboration with her dead father Nat King Cole and Julian Lennon's various releases making him sound and look so much like the late John Lennon. 'Star children' like Keifer Sutherland (son of Donald Sutherland) and Charlie Sheen (son of Martin Sheen) have become big stars like their parents, in much the same way that children of actors from a previous generation like Jane Fonda and Michael Douglas came into film through their parents.

In Yizo Yizo: There are no examples of this except an inappropriate one from YY3 where the writer Njabulo Ndebele's son, Makhaola Ndebele, plays the gay character Thabang. 'Inappropriate' because the actor enjoys a good career with or without his Dad's fame.

INTRATEXTUALITY: This refers to "the process by which films refer to themselves" (Stam et al 1992:206). References might be to a particular genre (as in the 'son of Papa Action' example of a reference to the language of sequels given earlier). In African Literature writers constantly engage with each other and

with the tropes and fashions of both canonical and popular fiction. Chinua Achebe was the first to speak about the 'cargo cult' mentality. This later becomes one of African Literature's major tropes. Novel after novel finds a way to engage with Achebe's initial criticism of unreasonable post-colonial expectations held by African citizens. In Buchi Emecheta's The Joys of Motherhood, we read:

Nnu Ego was like those not-so-well-informed Christians who, promised the Kingdom of Heaven, believed that it was literally just round the corner and that Jesus Christ was coming on the very morrow. Many of them would hardly contribute anything to this world, reasoning, 'What is the use? Christ will come soon' (Emecheta 1979:162)⁷¹.

In another example, a celebrity academic and writer describes the world of a celebrity academic and writer. This is JM Coetzee's Elizabeth Costello (2004). Dambudzo Marechera, Phaswane Mpe and AK Thembeka all also refer to tropes within African literature.

In Film: Various directors enjoy paying homage to their favourite movies. We see this frequently by way of spoofs of genres, where the director 'does' a genre. Mel Brooks' High Anxiety (1977) spoofs all Hitchcock's movies to date, just as Silent Movie, Young Frankenstein and Blazing Saddles send up the old Hollywood genres of silent, monster movies and westerns. Woody Allen is another director who likes to play 'Spot the Plot' as in the 'screwball comedy' The Curse of the Jade Scorpion (2001) and the black and white pre-visual entertainment word of Radio Days (1986)

In TV Series: The most obvious example is The Sopranos which engages with mob movies like The Godfather (1972) and Goodfellas (1990).

⁷¹ Buchi Emecheta (1979). The Joys of Motherhood. Heinemann: Oxford.

In Yizo Yizo: The three series all refer extensively to movies all the time. There is an average of at least one movie reference every 10 minutes of series. This study will attempt to identify most of these.

MENDACIOUS INTERTEXTUALITY: This is the creation of radio news, TV footage, newspaper coverage and headlines within a text that appears to be true, but isn't. It is used not only to blur the boundaries between reality and fiction, but to bring particular debates, for example about the use of media for propaganda purposes, and in Africa the ongoing discussion about the freedom of the media, to the attention of the reader. Chinua Achebe's narrator in Anthills of the Savannah, the editor of the *National Gazette*, explains how he helped one of his columnists become a senior politician:

I proceeded to build him up as a leading African political scientist, as editors often do, thinking they do it for the sake of their paper but actually end up fostering a freak baby (Achebe 1987:11)⁷².

In film: Stam refers to the "pseudo-newsreels of Zelig or the ersatz Nazi films in The Kiss of the Spider Woman, which invent a pseudo-intertextual reference" (Stam et al 1992:207). Taking this idea further, The Blair Witch Project (1999), American History X (1998) and Schindler's List (1993), are more recent examples.

In TV Series: Some series are planned around a headline in the paper. The comedy Just Shoot Me engages with the way stories in women's glossy magazines are billed on their covers, while the drama The West Wing depends for its story lines upon actual political developments in the US. Sex and the City is frequently planned around Carrie Bradshaw's newspaper column, Spin City about the way local government communicators 'spin' crisis after crisis to the media.

⁷² Chinua Achebe (1987). Anthills of the Savannah. Heinemann: Oxford.

In Yizo Yizo: There is ongoing discussion about newspaper headlines, music from Yfm (or articles from Y magazine). In YY1, Episode 10 ends with an image of a poster saying “Winnie Mandela on Aids”.

However, this category raises the question about whether we are witnessing mendacious intertextuality or representation of political memory (a concept explored more fully below), depicted through graffiti, pamphlets, discussions at the school meetings, posters and so on, of both the 1976 uprisings and current youth reality. Yizo Yizo might represent prime time’s most successful attempt to unpack the world inhabited by South Africa’s majority black population, although it has not been exempt from criticism as will be seen.

YY attempts to show “different types of black families and backgrounds”, not just the “poorest of the poor but middle-class homes,” says Teboho Mahlatsi⁷³ and constantly makes use of ‘the real’ within its fictitious world. For example, in YY1, Episode 1, before the students can begin their school year, they must pay for their books. The money comes from the granny, who has money wrapped up in a handkerchief and stuffed into her bra.

For the purposes of this research it is necessary to consider a separate category from ‘mendacious’ intertextuality that deals with ‘reality text’, or political memory. Here the film/TV text would talk to items of text on the news, in debate or speech form, or that collected by the Internet, libraries and archives relating to social movements, governments and communities. Examples we have seen of this in film are what is described on the website as Altman’s examination of “the dark side of the American psyche” with a film looking at a musical event taking place at the same time as a political rally, Nashville (1975)⁷⁴. Tim Robbins’s The Cradle Will Rock (1999) tells a real story of what happened in Hollywood in the

⁷³ YY1 DVD, Directors’ Commentary

⁷⁴ <http://www.selu.edu/kslu/nashville.html>

McCarthy era. Dirty Pictures (2000) examines art and censorship, based on the real-life banning of a photographic exhibition in Cincinnati. Roland Joffe's The Killing Fields (1984), about the Khmer Rouge, uses a person who was tortured in real life by the Pol Pot regime, Haing S Ngor, to act as the translator Dith Pran.

It has become clear through reading Genette's intertextual referencing system against film and series, and through their use in African Literature and popular culture, that intertextuality plays a critical role in memory studies.

Intertextuality, genre and memory

Using Fiske's reasoning it is clear that intertextuality across genres entails knowledge, not only of the genre, but also of the historicity of the genre. Genres shift, notes Fiske: they are modified and reflect different cultural concerns—the rise of feminism, to give one of Fiske's examples, makes room in the Kojak and Magnum, PI cop-show archives for a Charlie's Angels (1976-7), and a Cagney and Lacey (1982-3). Extending Fiske's logic, it is possible to understand this process using a simple dialectical model: male cop show (thesis), female cop show (antithesis), cop shows with equally powerful men and women (synthesis).

If US cop shows with women cops/detectives—Charlie's Angels and Cagney and Lacey—were a way of 'writing back' to male domination of the genre a decade earlier, then shows featuring both men and women, which also entered the scene circa early 1980 like MacMillan and Wife and Hill Street Blues, should represent synthesis. Viewers settle down again to an order and a formula with which the majority can be comfortable—both male and female cops are tough and capable of working together.

And what about race issues in the same era?

Only in the 1990s were minority issues foregrounded in US cop shows like New York Undercover, Homicide, Life on the Streets and NYPD Blue, most of which now sported a black station commander. The contradictions for the black cop, the Hispanic, or the gay man, of working for a system favouring white heterosexual men begin to emerge in a way they would never have in the 1970s or 1980s. Then, if a black cop was featured there might be nothing to distinguish him from a white cop except his skin. With few exceptions, the black lived experience was discounted. Although civil rights debates raged in the US in real time with far more intensity than the gender struggle, the reality of these issues in representation came to the small screen at the turn of the 21st Century, two decades after the gender question had been absorbed into representation. There are many ways of reading this phenomenon. Three that spring to mind are the official response of the US state to race and gender struggles; the ratio in the TV industry of women to men, and of African Americans to whites, and the way in which audiences read TV's messages.

South Africa, at independence in 1994, appeared to have a clear race-class-gender-then-the-rest pecking order of 'issues'⁷⁵, which had been put on the table by the African National Congress, yet the TV themes appeared to be following obediently along the historical route of US soap opera and popular TV drama. South African prime time TV shows, in 2002, were more likely to privilege minority (for example white or gay) characters and to explore gender issues than delve into issues of racism. Yizo Yizo had to insert itself into that mindset.

While the production houses servicing SABC-TV, MNet and etv could be accused of reproducing apartheid through their programmes and of not being responsible about their art, they will respond that they make their decisions about what viewers want according to the ratings and responses to focus group

⁷⁵ This could be argued on the basis of the ANC's 'Strategy and Tactics' document, on the focus of various annual ANC speeches on 8 January (the founding date of the ANC was 8 January 1912), both during the movement's banning and after its ascension to power as a political party, and on the way in which these priorities appeared to have shifted by 2002.

surveys. Yet unless viewers have a forum in which to air their views such as a focus group, how can it be known what their programmes of choice might be? And how could they choose different programmes if the options they are exposed to are limited? Ien Ang asks how “powerful” active audiences actually can be (Ang 1996: 243)⁷⁶. We have seen that vote-in programmes like Idols, Big Brother and Famous South Africans were overwhelmingly skewed in favour of white participants in these programmes. This can not be read as a statement about passive audiences. Instead, it means that white participants had more access to telephones and celltime. Great South Africans (2004) finally proved that democracy cannot be negotiated in terms of who phones in to a TV channel. Gary Player and Hendrik Verwoerd, in? Albert Luthuli, out?

To what extent are South African viewers to blame for a TV culture rolled out of a US tradition?

While some real issues from South Africa’s projected agenda might have in turn fed into US real time (independence in 1994 might, for example, have reawakened civil rights debates), it certainly *seems*, from an analysis of the imported and screened US shows screened in South Africa at prime time, that South Africa’s TV viewing is modelled on a US one. A purely speculative and flippanant reflection of the impact might look like this:

The Big Five

Themes and messages, real time and prime time

<u>Real time themes: South Africa (1994)</u>	<u>Real time themes: South Africa (2002)</u>	<u>Prime time themes: US broadcasts in South Africa (1994-2002)</u>
National issues (race): the	Continental matters: The	Class: ordinary guy with no Ivy

⁷⁶ See Ien Ang (1996). Living Room Wars: Rethinking Media Audiences for a Postmodern World. Routledge: London.

major struggle is against national oppression; the bulk of our resources must be used to tackle this social problem.	African Renaissance.	League jacket up against the system.
Class: Once national issues start to be tackled, the contradictions arising will enable us to attend to the class struggle.	International affairs: e.g. Being diplomatic about US attacks on Afghanistan; offering to broker talks between Israel & Palestine.	Cleaning up corruption: the police are filthy, the CIA's filthy, the FBI's filthy and only the ordinary guy with no Ivy League jacket can tackle the system.
Gender: more than half of South Africans are women, so we need quotas.	Debates about health: 'who really knows what causes Aids?'	Gender: Ditto, except the guy tackling the system is a girl.
Environmental & health issues: these have been skewed under apartheid to favour white interests. People must all have access to the information that will allow them to make decisions about their own lives.	Environmental issues: The World Summit on Sustainable Development has come to us, we have stated that the number one environmental issue in the world is poverty.	Minorities & the rest: Ditto...+ might be Hispanic or gay.
Minority rights: children, gays and lesbians and the disabled have rights too, they must be enshrined in the constitution.	Commissions: everything that was important in 1994 can be put in a commission.	Post 9-11: US rules! The Empire Strikes Back.

Of course, it is easy to disregard these issues as subjective, representing the opinion of one particular person and therefore highly irrelevant. The 'Big Five' table of issues is put forward to highlight the difficulty for researchers everywhere of trying to map what is important to viewers, what they think they are getting versus what they would like to be getting and an understanding of why there is a discrepancy, in the absence of using intertextuality as a tool.

Intertextuality as memory trigger in Yizo Yizo: a theory

The focus of this research is the 'missing' intertextual category (in Genette and Stam's work) defined earlier: intertextuality as tracking device for 'political memory'. The difference between official versus unofficial memory surfaces quite

dramatically in popular TV dramas like Yizo Yizo. Popular TV series, with the exception of period dramas, appear to be in 'the present' of the viewer. Yet frequently episodes are shot months in advance and brought up to date with the insertion of a few seconds of 'TX' (transmission day) footage. Although Yizo Yizo doesn't make use of TX mechanisms, it does use various forms of intertextuality, particularly mendacious intertextuality, and anticipates trends in music and political debates to remain 'current'.

Post-apartheid TV drama faces the unusual challenge of straddling the world that might be memory for the majority of viewers with the 'rainbow nation' that the government and opinion leaders suggest South Africa has embraced. When Gunman wants to be voted into the SRC "because of my role in the struggle" and says he will lead the campaign to release Thiza (YY2, Episode 2), the struggle against apartheid is instantly evoked. In the same episode, when Thiza asks if he can do research into political movements, namely black consciousness, he revitalises a memory of the trigger for resistance to apartheid in the 1970s. Thiza talks about poverty, a reality many of the characters face. At one point Maggie asks her class what they want to do when they leave school. Sticks wants to work at Nandos⁷⁷ "so I can eat a lot of meat" (YY2, Episode 6). Later in the same episode he is questioned about his soccer boots: "What sort of boots are those, they're takkies"⁷⁸.

"I don't have money to buy boots," Sticks responds. Shortly afterwards he faints from hunger.

These references to poverty and hunger in post-apartheid South Africa are as chilling as the constant engagement with the world of designer goods, inaccessible except through crime. There is an ongoing reference to cars: "...chill in that 3 series", "...BMW convertible" (YY1, Episode 7).

⁷⁷ A grilled chicken franchise.

⁷⁸ Plimsolls, cheap canvas footwear.

Although South Africa has entered a new era with new struggles, apartheid and the class struggle are still continuing, albeit in different form, within South Africa, if we have accurately read phrases like “those rural boys crossing the Crocodile River” (YY2, Episode 1) and noted the way in which the ‘class’ struggle can be read in the debate about government-vs-private schools, which is represented as two actual debates between Supatsela and a Model C school (YY2, Episode 9).

Chapter 2

Towards the Producerly Text

The first corner of the producer-text-audience triangle deals with the producers and what they brought by way of expertise, understanding and influence to the text, in this case Yizo Yizo (YY). As pointed out earlier, a drama commissioned by the country's education ministry has its own narratives concerning the ministry's needs and what educational messages it wished to 'get out' to youth audiences, and it incorporates the public broadcaster's thoughts about transformation and democracy. This research does not focus on either the official YY mandate, which is by now well documented, or on whether YY has helped to make the broadcaster realise its mission¹. The focus of this chapter is what the producers brought to this township drama. It is a controversial and covertly political drama, which suggests a sophisticated engagement with the concept, "post-apartheid South Africa".

It became abundantly clear through many hours of interviews and four years of engagement with Desiree Markgraaff, Angus Gibson and Teboho Mahlatsi of the Bomb Shelter that they viewed Yizo Yizo as art, never as propaganda for the official Department of Education and SABC Education TV, even if they footed the bills for them to make the drama. As it turns out, the film makers were wary of being commissioned by the Department of Education. According to Angus Gibson who directed YY1:

I would say that the notion of *education on TV* doesn't interest me. It is not something I'm passionate about. I'm passionate about the community of South Africa and I am passionate about film and narrative. I have a belief we learn from narrative, if they are thoughtful narratives. My education has

¹ The 'new' environment for broadcasting can be read in the SABC's annual report of 1995.

come from a range of things, it has very seldom been a formal education (Gibson 2002)².

Key to being able to create Yizo Yizo was the need to understand its audience, Gibson says:

The primary target audiences were adolescent students, who are very sophisticated in terms of being visually literate, televisually literate. A mistake TV makes with that audience is that it patronises them. These were core feelings. I felt that any kind of whitewash, or creation of a wish fulfillment, rather than a real world would create a distance between the producers and the audience. To reach the audience we had to get the world absolutely right. The other process was that if we were expected to work on TV on different [smaller] budgets then we wanted to [be able to] experiment. The value was that we found a place to do things that other people weren't doing, to flex our creative muscle. The other thing that informed the series was a genuine dislike about the way media were creating this happy rainbow nation. I felt it needed to be kicked in the pants. I had just done the Mandela³ film which felt like a whitewash for me and I wasn't going to do a whitewash again (Gibson *ibid*).

From early on, Gibson continues,

it was our view that we would create a grey world. South Africa is in a sort of grey space; it's very hard to realise what's right and what's wrong. The notion of easy solutions which media presents—I distrust that and I think the audience distrusts that as well and I didn't want to go down that road. I

² Interview with Angus Gibson, 24 July 2002, Johannesburg.

³ Gibson co-directed Mandela: Son of Africa, Father of a Nation with Joe Menel while Jonathan Demme produced it. It was nominated for an Oscar.

had seen a lot of Asian cinema in New York. Wong Kar-Wai⁴ was, I felt, the person who explored the world I wanted to explore, and Satyajit Ray⁵. What these film makers have in common is that they were genuinely fascinated by the communities in which they film, not in such a different way from Woody Allen's fascination with his community [of Manhattan]. Satyajit Ray presents an underworld, a young world, using the camera in a way that's extraordinarily exacting, and playing with every form. There is a grittiness and visual sumptuousness, which directly informs YY. I wanted a combination of these things, of debris and sensuality. It's William's⁶ world too (ibid).

The process started with a group of people Gibson had put together. They'd expressed interest in working on the project and started to do a lot of interviews with people. Says Gibson:

We travelled around the country, returned and made notes. We were working out of the basement in the centre of the town where the windows don't open—opposite the Anglo Vaal building, the World Bank building. We were in the basement. Isaac (Shongwe)⁷ was in the main body of the building. We stuck things all over the walls of where we were working—pictures of Papa Action and quotes. We built a jigsaw of a script without much sense of how one was supposed to go about these things or what constituted real drama. We went by instinct rather than method, although method was linked in there somewhere. We sat for hours together talking about it and arguing about it. We had different positions. On the whole I probably make the final decisions. Our strength is that we

⁴ Chinese film maker Wong Kar-Wai's films include Chungking Express (1994), Ashes of Time (1994), Fallen Angels (1995), Happy Together (1997) and In the Mood for Love (2000).

⁵ Indian film maker Satyajit Ray's movies include the Apu trilogy Pather Panchali (1955), Aparajito (1956) and The World of Apu (1959), Devi (1960), Two Daughters (1962), Distant Thunder (1973), The Home and the World (1984) and The Middleman (Jana Aranya), The Stranger (1988).

⁶ Artist William Kentridge.

⁷ Executive producer and a founding member of The Bomb, which produces Yizo Yizo.

stuck with the final decisions and there isn't a sense of, it would have been better if it had gone the other way (ibid).

But before the project had even begun, the film makers had decided that they did not want to alienate audiences, that they must look to Wong Kar-Wai, Satyajit Ray and William Kentridge. This already hints that there might be unusual intertextual moments to come.

To understand the ancestor texts guiding Yizo Yizo and the mechanisms at place in terms of this particular working relationship, I interviewed the three core 'Bomb' partners Angus Gibson, Teboho Mahlatsi and Desiree Markgraaff about their lives and influences at the point when they began to collaborate on Yizo Yizo. What emerges after a total of 45 hours of interviews⁸, discussions, exchanges of emails and phone calls, is that they have a lot in common in seven specific areas:

1. Each has a dysfunctional experience of 'family', reproduced in many ways within the text.
2. Each has grown up in the apartheid era with strong memories of apartheid violence and a sense of straddling two worlds, one of represented power at the expense of the other. For Gibson it is a 'male' vs 'female' world; for Mahlatsi it is a 'white' vs. 'black' world. For Markgraaff, it is a world of 'integrity' vs. a world of 'schlock'. Each describes, in some way, feeling alienated or being an outsider. They describe a sense of being trapped as performing beings in one world through the structures of violence which

⁸ I interviewed Gibson, Markgraaff and YY2 line producer and YY3 head writer Nantie Steyn on 18 April 2002; Markgraaff, Mahlatsi and Gibson on 19 June 2002; Gibson on his own on 24 July 2002, 31 July 2002, 8 August 2002 and 14 August 2002; Mahlatsi on his own on 22 July 2002; Markgraaff on her own on 26 July 2002; Mahlatsi, Gibson, Markgraaff and YY1 and YY2 head of research Harriet Perlman on 1 April 2003 and Mahlatsi and Gibson on 13 January 2004. In addition, I kept in touch to confirm details with Markgraaff on virtually a daily basis by email in May and June 2004, and with Gibson and Mahlatsi on a sporadic basis by phone, email and SMS (cellphone text) over a three-year period.

keep that world intact. Each describes the actions they took to try to escape these violent structures.

3. Arising out of the straddling of two worlds, the three share an interest in writing and representing 'difference' as a way of highlighting their own political memories which run counter to official post-apartheid state memory, and hence probably to components of the state/SABC mandate.
4. Each has an acute sensitivity to language and the way cultural habits bred in the country must adapt to city life. Gibson and Markgraaff have clear memories of the way the SABC previously tried to instill a sense of ethnicity into its language dramas on TV and radio, and the problems actors had in dealing with this. Mahlatsi has his own experience of language usage, from the South Sotho people spoke in his home town in the Orange Free State to the 'Zulu space' in which very poor people lived in central Soweto.
5. All three of them were youth achievers in the sense that their creativity was recognised at an early age; but curiously their creativity is directly related to death and death themes. This fact enabled them to do two things: firstly, to develop characters within YY who are youth achievers, but secondly to work with characters within YY who have to deal with death in their families.
6. Each of them witnessed or experienced abusive behaviour by a male family member.
7. Each expresses the middle-class maxim that he or she is totally unimpressed by VIPs, even as they name drop. Name-dropping is a trope in much of the new South African fiction, reflecting a celebrity culture that has taken hold in post-apartheid South Africa.

The family

Although their stories and class backgrounds differ, it becomes clear that for all of them there is a dislocation—in two of three cases through a death—at an early

age. Each has partly grown up in a family that was not complete in the nuclear sense.

Gibson's mother called him her 'blessing'. He was born in Durban nearly two decades after his siblings to a family with 'WASP' values, who eschewed anything remotely intellectual and virtually ignored culture, art and literature. The exception was his beloved sister Cynthia, at whose homestead Gibson spent most of his time (Gibson interview, 31 July 2002).

Mahlatsi, born in Kroonstad (Orange Free State) and the first born of four children, grew up in a Catholic environment, from primary school to the first year of High School. He was familiar with church interiors as his father sang in the church choir. He nursed his father, as he lay dying of throat cancer, when he was eleven or twelve (Mahlatsi interview, 22 July 2002).

German-born Markgraaff was eleven when her mom died of a thrombosis. She grew up largely separated from her brother who was studying music. She lived with her father and watched him drink himself to death (Markgraaff interview, 26 July 2002).

For all of them, the early memory of home and of youth is both enchanted and bizarre, while the images they recall depend for texture upon either ritual or contrast.

Desiree Markgraaff grew up "in the home of story" since both parents were opera singers. She was absorbed by "overwhelming images of green and forests and underworlds" because of the Swedish, German and English mythology of the traditional Scandinavian tales told to her by her Swedish mother. A key memory is a stint on a farm in New South Wales, Australia, having a strong sense of "the outdoors", mother and of family. Home was "anywhere she (Mom) made it". There were horses, chickens were plucked, life was simple and pleasurable. It's

not entirely clear why Phillip, a famous South African opera singer in his day, wanted to farm. Markgraaff thinks he must have been “stressed or was suffering from burn out or performance anxiety”. Her Mom, on the other hand, dealt gracefully with her art and worked as a teacher at the Drakensberg Boys Choir when they returned to South Africa. Her Dad worked for Cavalier Films (titles included Liefde in Venetia, Gold Squad and Lied van my Hart) (Markgraaff, op cit).

Teboho Mahlatsi recalls feeling very protected at the Catholic school. White nuns, speaking perfect Sotho, kept strict rules. There was confession every Tuesday. “I liked the rituals of the church,” he says. “The way they folded the cloths at the altar, communion, drinking wine. The re-enactment of the crucifixion by the choir. I absorbed the details. Probably, I wanted to be an actor.” When he set out in search of the city, his mother sent him money every month until he was able to get employment (Mahlatsi, op cit).

Angus Gibson’s sister had married KwaZulu-Natal “sugar money” and managed the estates. She was the only family member who bought art that enabled her to “create a romantic world. She was in a sense an extraordinary art director”. Gibson spent a great deal of time on the estates and in his sister’s romantic home, imagining his future life. He thought he might like to become an architect, because he liked design and space. He thought he might become rich. He thought he might become a movie maker. “But these were abstract notions” (Gibson, op cit).

All three producers were youth achievers. Gibson remembers buying art books by the great masters. “There was nothing unexpected in my choices, but it was happening from when I was around fourteen” (ibid).

At high school, he won a National Navy League essay competition. His entry was about a deranged child taken away by parents on a yacht. They are turning back

to port after the holiday and the “child decides to end it”. There are sharks following the boat and the child pushes the parents overboard. Gibson remembers his line as the child pushes the mother overboard: “black swirl, red diffusion”. As in his film school movie One Intrusion and Then Another, Gibson’s essay privileges the death wish, always lurking anxiously behind the ordinary. While the film school nearly failed Gibson for the movie, One Intrusion and Then Another went on to win a national competition sponsored by Kodak, before the company pulled out of apartheid South Africa. Film critic Barry Ronge was a judge. Gibson’s film school became the winning film school (ibid).

Death and “the extraordinary” became Gibson’s next site of interest. Gibson played around with a black death figure, a body painted with a skeleton, ideas from the Day of the Dead (Mexico) and “people of the cow” (in legend, both Africa and India originally held cows sacred) in his movie Magic in Marabas. His character travels and survives, carries a body, follows powerlines, finds a post-apocalyptic society. Magic in Marabas was shot on location in Marabastad. There was a Hindu temple there which Gibson represented as being on top of a “den of thieves—how’s that for ‘The other’?” The actors were Arnold Vosloo, people from film school and a community “shipped in from somewhere” (ibid).

Mahlatsi “never really liked school” and “didn’t see myself as smart”. He recalls:

There were smart kids and then there was me. I never felt I was contributing anything. I remember two things: A girl I had a crush on from Std 1 throughout my schooling and movies. The principal was obsessed with cinema.

I did my matric. Nothing spectacular happened except that in Std 9 the teacher said we should keep writing diaries. The English teacher, Ndlovu, got hold of my diary. He said: “Do you mind if I read this in front of the class?” And started reading my poem. If there was a moment I felt I was going to be a writer, that was it. I was proud, blushing, embarrassed,

all at the same time. Suddenly this hidden person in me emerged. Kids started to call me a writer, they clapped. My writing was probably religious but dark. With a red pen the teacher had written, “why so dark?” My stories featured crucifixes and blood. They were morality stories about being saved, looking up to God to come and save people from suffering (Mahlatsi, op cit).

When his father was dying of throat cancer, Mahlatsi had to take responsibility and help his father get through his last days. He has poignant memories of those days:

He had a lump in his throat so he couldn't eat. There would be sounds from the backyard of him throwing up. Three months before he died he lost weight, moved to the visitor's room. Every evening after supper he would call me to rub him with Zambac. That was the ritual every evening. Because I was a boy, I absolutely loved him, but he was a very strict man. Once my mother had done the washing and put it on top of two paraffin containers, I threw it out and he beat me until I pissed myself. He was untouchable, but to a certain extent a perfect being, he took care of his family (ibid).

If the death of his father influenced Mahlatsi's creativity, something similar happened to Desiree Markgraaff.

When her mother died of thrombosis on an overseas trip, and Markgraaff had decided to return to her father in South Africa instead of staying with her godparents in Paris (“the French ambassadors at the time”), “there was a long stop at Brussels. I took out a notebook and started imagining how these events about myself and all these people might be told in a story.” Clearly overwhelmed by the tragedy, the fuss, and the fact that her life was about to change rapidly, probably for the worse, because the strong and magical mother who brought

stories to life had gone, the small girl was arguably attempting to *become* her own mother. Before she had entered her teens, Markgraaff would be forced to become the nurturer in the family. Possibly having adult responsibilities provided her with some sort of comfort or coping mechanism (ibid).

At school she subsequently became quite “explorative” in terms of creativity and was good at art. But as time went by, she followed her father into the film world. From being an opera singer⁹, her Dad had moved into acting work—his first job entailed playing John Vorster—before becoming a production manager. He was involved in production when Markgraaff left university. By 1980 her father was an alcoholic and Markgraaff was realising that instead of being looked after by him, she was the one who was going to have to do the nurturing. She rented a small house for her father, and employed him once or twice as a construction supervisor. Eventually she felt she couldn’t fight her father’s ‘sickness’. When she got married in 1993, she bought a house for her father. Markgraaff watched her father die of cirrhosis of the liver over 10 days in 1996 (ibid).

Markgraaff’s divorce settlement had included her former husband’s company The Shooting Party, which had worked on commercials and corporate videos in 1992-3. She paid back her ex’s R300 000 in debt, built a profile working on an anti-drug campaign for three years, with post-1994 Gauteng Premier Tokyo Sexwale her “biggest supporter. He gave me time. His wife too was genuinely supportive”. Markgraaff had wanted to do drama, “it was always my love”. She was asked by the SABC to take over the English drama Flight which she regretted although she acknowledges it gave her experience (ibid).

At this point, casting agent Moonyeenn Lee had a lunch in ‘1996/7’ and Markgraaff and Gibson found themselves sitting next to each other, and found each other to be “interesting and intelligent”. Gibson was a Name. Besides the

⁹ Phillip Markgraaff was a big name, clearly a glamorous star in his day. He was husband number two to Markgraaff’s mom—she’d previously been married to a ‘Jewish Russian’ according to Markgraaff.

Oscar-nominated Mandela: Son of Africa, Father of a Nation movie, there were several other successful projects under his belt (ibid). He'd directed Soweto: A History series, commissioned by Wits University's History Department, and a 7 Up film for Grenada TV. The idea started in 1964. Children are filmed at seven, and again seven years older. Gibson did the seven-year-olds in 1992 and the 14-year-olds seven years later (Gibson 8 August 2002).

About six months later, Gibson invited Markgraaff to produce a series for a collective known as Free Film Makers, founded by Gibson as a vehicle for left-wing film makers including Harriet Gavshon, Patrick Shai and Eddie Wes. Mahlatsi explains he had been working there as an "intern" at the time, "helping everyone". He had done a piece called Ghettoes of the Mind, "a dance from the drama school, inside a net which represented colonialism". About 1993 he worked as an intern on Gibson's Soweto history project. "I started going round with them, started learning to edit" (Mahlatsi interview 2002).

When Gibson left for New York to do Mandela, Mahlatsi wrote a proposal for Ghetto Diaries, which he directed in 1996 with the *Mail & Guardian* and money from the SABC. "I was staying with a friend from the Afrika Cultural Centre in White City, Soweto. Free Film Makers couldn't help with Ghetto Diaries. They were so heavily documentary, and I'd always wanted to do fiction or narrative. Ghetto Diaries was hard to handle emotionally. I was dealing with a poverty-stricken environment. You couldn't just go get images and get out of there. It didn't improve their lives." By the time Ghetto Diaries was over, Gibson and Mahlatsi had reconnected and created Laduma as a creative company. Their vision was to create an incubator for creative talents. Gibson had urged his son's godfather, Isaac Shongwe, who was running a consulting and empowerment company, to put money into a screenplay, based on White city and called Streetbash—a "lot of which ended up in YY," says Mahlatsi (ibid).

YY1 was a co-production between Laduma and The Shooting Party. Markgraaff had the production skills, and Gibson and Mahlatsi had the creative skills.

Markgraaff was delighted to take on the series, which ultimately became Yizo Yizo. “There’s a theory,” says Markgraaff, “that good documentary film makers have the potential to become the best film makers. Of course they’ve got to find drama, emotion, narrative...” (Markgraaf interview 2002).

Gibson and Mahlatsi’s first joint venture out of documentary gave them a chance “to put their roots in reality and at the same time to explore emotion,” says Markgraaff. They relied heavily on her to guide them through the film process but needed no help with the narrative process. “It was a journey that nurtured them rather than made them scared,” says Markgraaff. She states that her major contribution, outside of “making things happen” because she knows the movie industry inside out, is that she has an “instinctive understanding” of popular audiences.

The three got on instantly, although initially there was no social interaction. They only became friends on the second series. “I knew I could trust them creatively, I’ve never doubted that; also that if I offered them information on how to make a film efficiently I wasn’t pissing on their turf. They trusted my instincts about how to get through the film process. I could fight their battles,” Markgraaff says.

For Markgraaff, the relationship with Gibson and Mahlatsi was what she’d been searching for. “Everything came together: integrity, ethics and comfort with each other. I found Gibson a very intelligent film maker, emotionally interesting without being sentimental, though sometimes anxious and agitated. Mahlatsi was harder to read. Initially he was poker faced. He is intensely private” (ibid).

There is a three-way respect and in many ways they have similar points of view. The three of them are able, remarkably, to speak in one voice, or as individuals.

They appear to care about each other's vision. The two directors do movies separately and series together. Although there are sometimes mild power scuffles, this appears to be a relationship that works for the three of them, though the triangle often creates a hard dynamic for others to work with. Gibson has called the triangle "a cabal" and has pointed out that guest directors, like Barry Berk who co-directed YY2 with Mahlatsi, have sometimes found themselves "outside the cabal" (Gibson interview, 8 August 2002). Two of the people who managed to work with the "cabal" over many years were the late writer Peter Esterhuysen and researcher, storyteller and writer Harriet Perlman who continues to work with them on most of their projects.

As glad as she is to have found it, Markgraaff fears for the relationship. "That thing (the careful balance of the triangle) is quite fragile. It's family...it has to be treated carefully". In the very first interview in 2002 she defined the trio thus: "Gibson is really the creator, who has the propensity to give things away and gets great joy from watching someone else fly to the detriment of his own career. Mahlatsi is the provider of texture and I'm the one who makes it possible". At a later stage (2004)¹⁰ she redefines Mahlatsi as a "magic director" and "a genius" who is bringing the company a lot of money.

"I'm the one who makes it possible". Markgraaff, although she is clearly relating her story as a person who has absolutely no knowledge of Bakhtin, nevertheless proceeds to give two sets of descriptions and *analyses* that could have come straight from 'Banquet Imagery'. On the one hand she narrates 'the hearth': the importance of food and festivity and family. In my own experience, Markgraaff delightfully recreates these rituals, which are of the utmost importance for keeping "the family" together, which she learnt from her late mother. In the workplace she is the one to organise the ceremonial drink and feast. An ordinary Friday becomes an occasion; more so if it happens to be a real occasion, as on Gibson's forty-fifth birthday. She brings the writers to her house for workshops.

¹⁰ In discussion with Andersson by phone in May 2004.

She chooses a restaurant where discussion can be unhampered by noisy clientele or obsequious waiters, she has a black tie occasion for her own fortieth birthday. She intuitively understands and reproduces the feast and brings her family together whenever possible for a ceremonial occasion.

Two worlds

The second factor they have in common, probably without realising it, is that all describe childhoods in which they become aware that they are straddling two worlds, both presenting different viewpoints. Gibson (who directed YY1, co-produced YY2 with Markgraaff and co-directed YY3) sees the divide in terms of gender, and talks about the “male” and “female” world (Gibson interview 24 July 2002). Teboho Mahlatsi (who co-directed YY2 with Barry Berk and YY3 with Gibson and Andrew Dosunmu) describes how he watched the “black” world of which he was a part working dysfunctionally with the “white” world that was a “foreign space” (Interview 22 July 2002). Producer Markgraaff, though she notes the way crews working in black townships during the repressive 1980s avoid discussing politics, describes two worlds in terms of creative difference. During the apartheid era, she worked on films in a world that was “soul-destroying” unlike the world of film occupied by other film-makers of “integrity” like Bergman, and to which she yearned to belong (Interview 26 July 2002). The association for her is that narratives created within a repressive system are soul-destroying, and those which work as resistance to official narratives are more likely to be life-affirming and creative.

Gibson's male and female worlds

Angus Gibson's first movie memory is a Charlie Chaplin. He remembers the deco cinema but not the name of the movie. It might have been The Gold Rush. He has a later memory of 2001: A Space Odyssey and of being scornful of its narrative structure, although the Stargate sequence had a “profound effect” and

he could remember it frame by frame. He has a memory of going to see The Godfather with his sister in 1972. His sister was “profoundly disturbed” by the movie, Gibson remembers. He, a “boy from the northern suburbs”, was “profoundly affected”. He thought it was “completely romantic”.

Thus began the straddling of two different worlds. The one world, the ‘male’ world, as Gibson identifies it, was the world of westerns, Vietnam films, the mafia, the vision of Martin Scorsese and of Joseph Conrad. For Gibson, Joseph Conrad has never put a foot wrong. Heart of Darkness remains one of his strongest influences. His brother in law, who represented the “last breath of the colonial polo-playing thing”, wore riding boots, jodhpurs and riding jackets. He whipped small boys caught stealing peaches, which appalled Gibson, “but not completely”, and reminded Gibson of the figure Noah in Chinatown, Gibson’s favourite film. Brother-in-law would take the kids, including Gibson, to the forest and say: “Watch out for leopards.” “Which of course there weren’t,” says Gibson, “but it made it completely magical”. Brother-in-law brought danger and blood to Gibson’s imaginaries. “I would wake to the cry of peacocks and the squeal of pigs being dragged to the slaughter”. Gibson imagined the peacocks would shatter the pane one day and “there would be blood”. It is entirely possible that rod-wielding characters like the principal Mthembu and the vigilante head Nyembe in Yizo Yizo were informed by Gibson’s brother in law.

In the “women’s world” arranged by his sister, Gibson remembers swanning around a sensual home, taking in the “extraordinary, quite wild, flower arrangements”, a garden “like a jungle” where the peacocks strutted, peeping at the Victorian mansion next door, occupied by French Mauritian people. The house, at the edge of a cliff, was dark-panelled, with hunting trophies including a full-grown stuffed lion. Most important, the house contained a beautiful, inaccessible daughter, dark and mysterious too.

Army call-up was to turn Gibson into an outsider to a male world—to such an extent that for the first time, he looked for affirmation in an entirely different universe. He had been posted in Kuruman in the North Western Cape “on the road to nowhere”¹¹ in a spot with the unlikely name Hotazel. He very quickly separated himself from the other white army guys when it became clear he was expected to do “intelligence work”. Gibson’s army “nightmare moment”? “Upon arrival in Kuruman I was taken to a Citizen Force guy’s house, who asked: ‘have you watched James Bond? You can do that kind of work. If you tell me something about someone they can disappear. You will know it’s your work”.

This disturbed Gibson, particularly in combination with the images of John Vorster in the house, since he had no wish to make people “disappear”. He realised that against his will he was being forced to be part of a structure that used force to uphold a particularly violent and repressive system. During that time, the SADF and SAP were increasingly occupying townships. These troops were allowed to shoot whenever and wherever there was the hint of resistance. When they got to Hotazel, Gibson managed to shake off the group he had been deployed with. “I stayed in the house assigned to the troopies and the other guys went off to Kuruman to live with their contacts”.

He lived “pretty much alone” in a community of mud huts and taught at a local school. In his spare time he worked for a radiologist and drove an ambulance. Besides the domestic worker and cook at home in Durban, he hadn’t formed close friendships with black people till then. He became friends with “Lester the dentist” and “Julia, the other assistant”. He also made friends with people from the community. There were parties where “guys arrived with generators for the music”. A big hit in that community was Bill Withers’ Love Is.... Gibson danced for the first time with black girls.

¹¹ Gibson is referring to Talking Heads’ Road to Nowhere (1985). Talking Heads were a big influence for Gibson. The first line of his movie One Intrusion, and then Another is “I listen to Talking Heads a lot”.

He remembers having a “moment of realising” he had moved to the “other side”. White Kuruman technicians came to fix the electricity and Gibson remembers laughing with Lester and Julia about *how the boers were dressed*. This marked the beginning of the “awareness that you didn’t need to leave SA to escape white supremacist thinking. You could embrace black South Africa and be part of South Africa that way”.

Later, when he and his close friend Dewald Aukema were contracted to make a TV drama (Jasone) about a boy from the sticks, a soccer talent who comes to the big bad city and makes it in the soccer world, the contradictions of working for an apartheid broadcaster became apparent. “We were aware we were working for people wanting to make a fast buck who would say things like, ‘You must get the people to sing, black people can sing, you won’t have to pay for a sound track’”.

The name of the ‘baddie’ soccer star was Who’s Fooling Who? and was played by Patrick Shai (“who at that point had been doing tribal dancing,” according to Gibson). Shai won the Star Tonight! best actor award for the role. Gibson and Aukema’s relationship with the SABC ultimately ended in the era of “racial purity” under Broederbond rule when there was an insistence on pure Northern Sotho accents. “We realised,” grins Gibson, “we were not their kind of people”.

Gibson stopped working with SABC’s *Uit-en-Tuis* programme after feeling compromised on a project on Kozi Bay, supposedly about the fauna and flora of Kozi Bay. Gibson had followed the day of six central black characters. It frustrated him being forced to feature them as “noble savages on the landscape”.

After two four-to-six-week army camps, he changed address without telling the army. “I had worked out I would have to do 18 months if I was caught dodging, and figured out I could manage those 18 months if I was caught [dodging]. It was characteristically measured,” says Gibson, “I keep that safety zone around myself”.

By 1983-85 Aukema and Gibson had run up debts so they started working for overseas documentary companies, including Channel 4, both “becoming engaged with SA in a way we hadn’t before, getting to know the townships. I was politically naïve, as was Dewalt...” During the state of emergency, they were not permitted to film the police. They would start to film on the barricades and then “we weren’t allowed to film on the barricades”.

In 1986 Gibson suggested to Channel 4 that they change the project and instead make a feature film about Sophiatown. This collaboration with Kentridge was called Freedom Square at The Back of the Moon. It was, says Gibson, a very consciously stylised film. Gibson was aware that Malcolm Purkey wanted to make a film as well. In that period Anant Singh came to see Gibson and offered him development money for a feature film on Sophiatown. Gibson told Singh to speak to Purkey and then persuaded Channel 4 to give him development money for his own project. But then his own film collapsed.

“When I went to the collective I was led to believe [he was told] that Malcolm would be doing it. They (the collective) had been working together for long a time and I had joined them for this project and that’s how it was. I was very upset. I don’t cry easily and I cried”. Gibson had to internalise the “world of the collective” that “was South Africa in the 1980s” (Gibson 2002)¹².

Mahlatsi’s black and white worlds

For Teboho Mahlatsi, growing up in a Catholic environment in Kroonstad, Free State, the world belonged to church choirs, white nuns, guilt and sin. This amounted to a lot of material for someone with an imagination. In confession every Tuesday Mahlatsi would invent sins. “I’ve stolen something” or “I’ve killed

¹² All information cited for ‘Gibson’s male and female worlds’ is from excerpts from Andersson’s interviews with Gibson on 24 July, 31 July, 8 August and 14 August 2002.

someone,” he would confess, until one of the teachers intervened. On Wednesdays he would watch westerns, or occasionally a kung fu movie, arranged for showing at the school by the headmaster. Frequently it was Charles Bronson or Clint Eastwood and Mahlatsi specifically remembers Once Upon a Time in the West (1969), and The Good, the Bad and the Ugly (1967). The theme that lives on from these movies is that of the tortured hero who comes in to save the community, “an outsider hero” like Thulani and Gunman in Yizo Yizo. “Catholicism,” says Mahlatsi, “instills a sense of guilt, the desire to save everybody”.

Mahlatsi says as a young boy he was “a voyeur of the world”. He watched a girl he liked from a distance, watched funerals and “riots” from a window, and felt a sense of jealousy when he heard about the detention of someone he knew because it meant “there was someone braver than you were”.

The “riots” as he puts it, started on 11 February 1986 in the township Maokeng (“Place of Thorns”) outside Kroonstad.

“The friends I used to play soccer with suddenly became people my parents hated because they were involved in this political thing. One of them had thrown a petrol bomb at a policeman’s house. The guy was the father of a mutual friend. In my house you couldn’t get involved in activities like running around the streets with other students. In my house that was a no-no”. Unable to participate in struggle activities, Mahlatsi wrote poetry and stories featuring crucifixes and blood—morality tales about being saved, looking up to God to come and save people from suffering. At school the English teacher would explain the concept of Romeo and Juliet in Sesotho. At the library next to his house, Mahlatsi started reading Sesotho, then graduated to horror, in English. He read every Stephen King book in the library and then “moved along from horror” and discovered James Baldwin. The title that stands out is Another Country. “It was so erotic that I felt people could see what I was reading, I went to the bedroom. A black guy in

New York was having sex with a white woman. People could see them and they just carried on regardless. Then I read The Amen Corner and Go Tell it On the Mountain. I got into that because of the tortured religious beings”.

“My friends had joined political organisations and I also joined PAC, attended meetings where they were talking about the townships.” It is presumably both the religious rituals and the reading of African and African American Literature in Mahlatsi’s own life that informed the character and experiences of Thiza within Yizo Yizo. Whether it was Baldwin, or the evidence of political resistance that Mahlatsi watched through his window, he became aware that he occupied one world and white people occupied another, and that he was not allowed to live in that other world. “Town was a foreign space. Even now, my reactions with white people are confrontational. I’m always amazed by black and white people interacting.”

In other ways Mahlatsi started to define himself differently, he had started to listen to rock music with a friend “who worked as a gardener in the suburbs. We listened to U2, the Chris Pryor show, The Doors, and soft rock like Bon Jovi. I wrote a lot of poetry in English, ripping off lyrics. I taught myself and got confidence from Radio 5. From the age of 15-16 I would record songs, pretend I’m a DJ, lock myself in a shack and have a show,” recalls Mahlatsi. He says:

After school I had a choice of being a technician. I was thinking about being a writer but didn’t know anyone who could make a living being a writer. Out of ten friends, eight are teachers. One is a lawyer and one is Teboho. A year after being at home, I felt I would definitely be a writer. My Mom just ignored it. I found a copy of *The Star Tonight!* in the library advertising the Afrika Cultural Centre in Newtown, which was running various courses in writing, directing and acting, linked to the drama school. I phoned and made an appointment and in 1991 took the train from Kroonstad to Johannesburg. I landed at Joburg station and went for an

interview with Bheki Peterson and Benjy Francis. There were no trains back to Kroonstad so I slept at the station. The weather was cold but I was afraid of Joburg. A week, two weeks later, I was accepted. The Catholic Church gave me a bursary of about R1500.

Mahlatsi's life "started" when he came to Joburg. Besides Mahlatsi, there were two young men from Namibia, one Zimbabwean, one Malawian, and one young man from Ciskei. Mahlatsi says,

We had nowhere to sleep and no place to rent. We pushed beds into the room where the wardrobe was and stayed there. These were the worst possible conditions, which I wasn't prepared for. We took a basin and washed ourselves over the loo and we cooked on a two-plate stove. Underneath the bed we had a suitcase full of books from the African Writers Series, which Willard Malgas had brought from Malawi. I read the entire series and more. They called me Soyinka because I was obsessed with Wole Soyinka's poetry and would imitate it.

In the evening the youths cooked and read each other's work. At night they went into the city. No one had much money. Mahlatsi's mother sent him money every month. "We would go and break into exhibitions, we'd go in for the food," he recalls. "For the first time in my life I became opinionated [he means, I think, confident of his own opinions]. Bheki (Peterson) made us interested enough to begin questioning things. Before that, things had always been taken for granted. There was a point where I became incredibly happy."

After two years at the Afrika Cultural Centre, "the school couldn't carry us anymore," so Mahlatsi went to some of the acting classes, but knew he didn't want to do that. Bheki taught cinema studies. Eventually Mahlatsi decided it was time to move out of the protective environment. He started going to film companies. He moved into a "different space". "At Afrika Cultural Centre I

thought of myself as a writer. At Free Film Makers, I started to think of myself as a film maker.”

During the making of Ghetto Diaries, Mahlatsi renegotiated the township, but this time not as a relatively privileged youth staring through the windows. It wasn't just the language that he found “different” in his new home in the township:

I found a loneliness at the core of Soweto, more so on weekends. It was completely dry. The language...we were living in a Zulu space. Our people spoke South Sotho, the way you [one] spoke was so different. In the Free State, if someone comes, you offer them food. In Soweto, people just look at you. You must understand the poverty. What was the same was the complete separation of city and town. You would know, I am going to town, I need R5, I need to dress well. It was absolutely different.

Mahlatsi and his friend started listening to hip hop. “My friend had also previously listened to rock music but from a new era—Nirvana and Pearl Jam, the grunge thing I wasn't so into. Hip hop was the new thing.”

“My friend Sibusiso Masondo considered himself a Marxist. He bought all sorts of books,” Mahlatsi says. Being a ‘Marxist’ meant having an understanding of how your labour worked in relation to the capitalist system, of the structures of power and how they are upheld by force. Mahlatsi recalls that:

Sibusiso would wake up in the morning, go to the golf course, get R20 caddying and come home to White City, where he paid for me and for the family. Ghetto Diaries was based on people I knew. It was based on a gangster I knew. I moved to a back room in Mofolo. The house was getting too small. Relatives were moving in (Mahlatsi 2002)¹³.

¹³ All information in Mahlatsi's ‘black and white worlds’ is from my interviews with him on 22 July 2002.

Markgraaff's worlds of schlock and integrity

Like Gibson, Desiree Markgraaff had an early fantasy about becoming an architect, “probably influenced by all the buildings I’d seen on the trips we’d been to as a young girl.” However, because she didn’t have Maths she wasn’t able to enrol for architecture. Through her father’s contacts she got a job as a runner on a film. “I was pathetic, I would have fired me 14 times over”. Markgraaff was drawn towards the centrality of continuity work, because it was “part creative” and “part organizing”. Just as her earlier world had buzzed around her mother, Markgraaff had a feeling that the world of film would buzz around the continuity person.

It was 1980. There were few people in the film industry. Just at that time, says Markgraaff, TV2 and 3 started up. Markgraaff got herself a trainee position doing continuity for Elmo de Witt. The first production she worked on was u’Sensekile, SABC-TV’s first ‘real’ Zulu drama. Markgraaff was given crash courses in continuity, make up and costume. Thus began a period of her life where she worked predominantly in townships. Her political memory of the mid-1980s was that for film crews there was “no acknowledgement” about the repressive political climate. She remembers,

We were shooting at Bekkersdal township outside Randfontein. There were ‘buffels’ and army everywhere but the crews worked without ever discussing what was going on. Actors would struggle to get to work and a system was started in terms of which black actors would be collected from their homes.

She recalls the poor “second level” catering that was on offer for black TV, the accommodation problems when they had to shoot on location, and the Broederbond era of “pure language”. Language advisors, attached to the SABC,

would insist that actors talked 'pure' Sotho and Zulu. "But the actors didn't know the proper dialogue" because most of them had grown up in urban areas where languages, like cultures, mingled and absorbed new influences and meanings not liked by the purists.

Markgraaff made black friends, but they did not risk political discussion. "We lived in our own world, above politics and legislation." Then in 1981, Markgraaff had the "thrilling and shocking" experience of hooking up briefly with a smooth-talking black gangster. Presumably this gave her some thoughts about why the young women in Yizo Yizo should find gangsters appealing. If there was a sense that she was straddling two worlds, it came in the realisation, when she saw movies by Bergman ("everything by Bergman") as well as All That Jazz and Apocalypse Now ("which had a huge impact") that she needed to work on films that had some integrity. She was suffering a crisis of credibility.

She had been working in a world of Afrikaans film makers, the blue-eyed protégée of Jan Scholtz. He was producing progressive Afrikaans series like Jopie Fourie, set in the POW camps that were set up by the British, and he had a reputation for good quality TV. Markgraaff was moving from one production to another between 1981-5. She then decided that if she could not do films that were meaningful, she would start doing them for money. She embraced "American schlock", working for US productions being shot in SA. These were American-style thrillers on espionage and so on. Titles include The Crystal Eye, Lost Valley, River of Diamonds and Paradise Road. It was a new world, removed from TV, and Markgraaff was a quick learner. She would "steal with my eyes": if she was going to work as an assistant editor, she needed to understand editing, so she would talk to everyone to learn every aspect of the work. "I would speak with my cameraman to understand camera work..."

By 1989 Markgraaff was disillusioned. "It was soul destroying. I couldn't stand the twang of another American voice." And inevitably she became worried about the

quality of the work they were doing, feeling that “we skirted the world”, that there was a problem of credibility. “I was desperate to start working on films that had emotional integrity. I was inspired by Italian films and European films that were being shown”.

At this point Markgraaff discovered that Peter Goldschmidt was turning Fugard’s A Road to Mecca into a feature. She felt that this was a project with integrity and intelligence, also it was South African. “I was in 7th heaven!” Officially she was the line producer, but “in reality was probably the producer”. Markgraaff negotiated a tense relationship between Peter and Fugard, whom she describes as “spineless, even though he wrote about people with character.” I would call a meeting to say ‘lets sort this out’.” The major difficulty, reckons Markgraaff, was turning a play into a film. “It worked with The Glass Menagerie because they state upfront: *we are a play and we’re going to ask you to suspend your disbelief.*”

The experience of working on the movie put Markgraaff off to such an extent that she left the film industry. She went into a terrible depression and did not work for a year. “I didn’t want to go near film.” Having given up work she then “messed up my relationship with the man I was totally in love with.” When she finally went to look for a job in the commercials sector, people said she had no experience (despite all the TV programmes and movies she’d worked on).

She still yearned to make films “that had soul, integrity, made people discover something, think about something”. Her father had retired. Markgraaff had been taking care of him from 1986-96 and when he became problematic she would bring him to the hotel she was staying in, send him to rehabilitation and so on. Markgraaff had been coining it like the rest of the white minority at the expense of the black majority in the apartheid era. In 1986, R3 500 was a lot of money. She did not know what to do with her money. She paid cash for a new car.

Markgraaff started her own business in 1993. Straight after the Fugard project she had done one more TV project—Sentinel, a 13-part kids drama structured on a Hardy Boys formula. It was directed by Mark Roper who was “technically very astute” but did not fill Markgraaff’s need to do something with depth. It was at that point that Yizo Yizo came into her life (Markgraaff 2002)¹⁴.

Experiences of otherness and representing ‘difference’

Where the three partners seem to be in complete agreement is the need to examine ‘difference’ in their film making. The representation of homoeroticism, repressed sexuality and the questioning of patriarchal values in film is of major interest to both Gibson and Mahlatsi. Gibson cites Bernardo Bertolucci’s The Conformist (1971) and Ken Russell’s Women in Love (1970) as among his favourite movies, while Mahlatsi lists Zhang Yimou’s Raise the Red Lantern (1991) and Wong Kar-Wai’s Happy Together (1997).

Another theme in their separate and combined work is identity. Gibson cites Antonioni’s The Passenger (1975) as one of his top 10 films of all times, and talks about the way Jack Nicholson exchanges his identity with a Brit. His first-year film school project at Pretoria Technikon was One Intrusion, and then Another. This, he says, was directly influenced by the two male characters in the Wim Wenders film, The American Friend (1977) which is based on Patricia Highsmith’s Ripley’s Game.

The film is based on two male figures, and is “very homoerotic”. Gibson’s description reminds one of Hemingway’s super male and shadow male archetypes. There is a photographer who takes pictures of buildings and who spots a guy very different from himself (a drug dealer) and starts taking pictures of him. The dealer follows him back to the studio and kills him. Gibson plays the

¹⁴ All quotations cited in Markgraaff’s ‘world of schlock and integrity’ come from the interview I conducted with her on 26 July 2002.

photographer, Brant Jordaan the dealer. In The American Friend, Dennis Hopper constantly talks on to the tape recorder, diarising. Gibson also uses this technique (Mahlatsi, June 2002)¹⁵.

The curious thing is that Mahlatsi has a similar fascination with swapping identities, and this is at the heart of his own feature film The Scar (2005), which he wrote with the late Peter Esterhuyzen. “It is a feature—theme-wise an examination into sexuality and identity,” says Mahlatsi. “There are two friends. One becomes a kwaito star and one a gangster. One uses the gangster ID on stage, and has appropriated the other person’s ID. It will be shot in South Africa (in April 2005), probably Soweto, and tells the journey between the two men’s conflict. There is a third character, an American woman—her character [exists] purely because of funding—a journalist film student who is interested in girl culture. The film tells the journey that involves the three of them,” he says. “I want to do quite radical things with it,” Mahlatsi says. “The sexuality between the two men, it gets quite physical. What does that represent? How is it different from innocent playing and the emotional connection that’s never quite explained?” (ibid)

Gibson and Mahlatsi admit that when auditioning young men for parts in YY1 they made them “romance the barrel of a gun in their mouths,” in Mahlatsi’s words, to simulate a sexual act in a way that could be interpreted as simultaneously homoerotic and violent. Gibson and Mahlatsi narrate this story in the context of talking about their interest in homoeroticism in representation but however one considers such an audition, it seems to tell far more about the two directors than about a type of actor they might be searching for. Mahlatsi insists this idea came from a true story told to him in a barber shop. Gibson comments that SABC refused to allow such a scene to be shown, and that the character of the gang leader in YY1, Bra Gibb, was “subsequently weakened”. They had

¹⁵ These comments from Mahlatsi and Gibson specifically come from a combined interview with Mahlatsi, Gibson and Markgraaff on 19 June 2002.

imagined Bra Gibb as someone who would discipline errant gangsters in this way. “That was a battle we lost in the 1st series: it was a totally outrageous scene. When the story started playing, the furore started, the writing group lost courage about the scene. The SABC refused to show it (but it is on the DVD). It was the scene that we used in all the interviews. Tebo was playing the *victim*,” Gibson says (emphasis added—the victim would have to “romance the gun” in his mouth) (ibid).

As far as Gibson is concerned, one significant project dealing with “difference”, also for Channel 4, was the film Conversations with Sowetan Goldfish, made during the apartheid years. Gibson had been asked to make a film about the emerging black middle class. He offered instead a portrait of a group of people, filmed conversations in an impoverished clubhouse bought by a number of Sowetans in Orlando East “where they would drink and chew the cud”. “*What you don’t understand is that the party of the people is the PAC*,” advertising mogul Peter Vundla had told him. And yet Gibson’s observations were that black middle class people simply reproduced the behaviour of the white middle class, that the story he was telling was of the nouveau riche, of Jay Gatsby. He says:

They had pooled their connections and used them to get a place on the golf course. It became a different film although the producer, who was British, did not understand the film. He wanted the film to be neat and present an argument, and I was interested in the chaos and contradictions. Anyway, it was an interesting film, a *verité* film, despite the forces that conspired against it (Gibson, August 2002).

At the same time Gibson was doing a series called Soweto: A History. He was approached by the History Workshop, Wits, to do a film. “They (Wits) said they would raise the money, which they never did. The process was everyone could only talk about their own experience. There were no experts talking about anyone else” (ibid).

“Madala¹⁶ had been appointed at SABC-TV2 and we had lunch with him. He would say, *you must talk to my partner*. We spent a lot of time meeting with men in socks. The feeling was, our audience (TV2), wouldn’t be interested in a film in Soweto, (but) immediately in 1994 they licensed it” (ibid).

Being unimpressed by the media, by criticism, by VIPs

All three claim to go their own way despite what critics say, and to be immune to celebrities.

Mahlatsi: “There was criticism around YY that I had been used by a white group to be a token black face and I didn’t want to do Streetbash (which would have been a similar project). Between the two Yizo Yizos I did Portrait of a Young Man Drowning (Portrait) in response to a big announcement from Channel 4 and Prime Media, who were looking for 11-minute scripts—‘short and curlies’. I’d written Portrait before YY but it only came to fruition after YY. I directed it myself. Most of the cast and crew came from YY. Most critics were saying I’d been used by white people to do YY, that I was ‘not that talented’. I used it (Portrait) to prove the opposite. It won the Venice Silver Lion award” (Mahlatsi interview, July 2002).

Gibson similarly narrates his indifference to big names. In the late 1990s Joe Menel came out to South Africa and spoke to Mandela about doing a documentary. He started working with Free Film Makers and asked Gibson if he would work on the film. Gibson was reluctant: “Mandela is not a good interview. I felt he would be more cagey now that he was becoming president.” Gibson wound up as co-director on the Mandela: Son of Africa, Father of a Nation film, spending nearly two years in New York on post-production work (Gibson interview, 14 August 2002).

¹⁶ Madala Mphahlele, who later became general manager of SABC African enterprises.

30 texts or people who made a huge difference to Angus Gibson, in his own words¹⁷

1. My sister Cynthia Armstrong. She got married when I was seven in 1964 and from then on I spent a lot of time in their household.
2. Joseph Conrad's Heart of Darkness (the book) I am aware of the critiques, I go to see films coming from those perspectives, and think, Nyaa, no, don't agree.
3. Henry James's Portrait of a Lady (the book).
4. D.H. Lawrence's Women in Love (the book).
5. Truman Capote's In Cold Blood (the book). It is a documentary piece of writing, very elegantly constructed like a thriller. If I recall correctly, the murder is first described and then we backtrack to the beginning. We slowly follow the route to the murder with a growing sense of dread. His observation of character and detail is mesmerising.
6. Francis Ford Coppola's The Godfather (1972).
7. Roman Polanski's Chinatown (1974).
8. Wim Wenders' The American Friend (1977).
9. George Tobias, Ronnie Kasril's nephew. It felt more like a dialogue than an influence. George's lover was a close friend, Chris Rodel, George, utterly subversive George, who is like reading Andy Warhol A-Z. George had adapted a Grimm Brothers fairy tale, The Boy who Left Home to Learn Fear. We spent something like three times the budget on a very experimental film which the school *hated*. The school decided to discourage auteurs.
10. William Kentridge. Via George Tobias, I met William Kentridge. who was doing art direction on a television series. I started helping him with the editing of Sales Talk. Very quickly we became very close friends. He was at a low point of his career. William introduced me to his left-wing intellectual world—it was the first time I engaged with that type of world. At the time William was doing some hokey TV work and had been studying mime in Paris. We share

¹⁷ In email correspondence with Andersson over two months from July 2004.

an extraordinary sensibility. William is more informed than me, more knowledgeable about art and literature. We've never had a discussion with the other about meaning in our work, but always at a seminal stage of a project he will tell me what he's doing and ask me what I think. I am William's greatest fan.

11. David Goldblatt's work particularly Some Afrikaners Photographed. It was the first photography book I ever bought. I've been a committed fan of his work ever since.
12. Antonioni's The Passenger (1975) (movie) left me with the conviction, the complete clarity that I'd be a film maker. Consciously there was the architecture of the movie; I'd thought earlier about becoming an architect myself because I liked design, spaces.
13. The Great Gatsby (1974) (film and book). I related to the narrator in a major way: I have a fascination with new wealth. The movie was a deep disappointment, a pale version of the book.
14. John Boorman's Deliverance (1972), another movie which goes back to those men (who preoccupied my boyhood years) and fear.
15. David Lynch's Blue Velvet (1986), particularly the opening sequences where the hose pipe takes on a manic energy.
16. Some Like it Hot (1939), a perfect film, I watch it endlessly. In my view it is very, very funny. I still recall lines of dialogue—'Nobody's perfect'. Like Gatsby it occupies a space on the edge of big wealth and glamour. Like Casablanca. I loved the way the studio movies of that period were written, constructed and edited. It was good story telling—never pretentious but so beautiful. The black and white helps.
17. Bernardo Bertolucci's The Conformist (1971) (movie).
18. Mtutuzeli Matshoba, author of Call me not a Man and To Kill a Man's Pride has been a real influence. His acute interest in the township world around him is reflected in his writing. He provided a glimpse of that world for me for a while. He is intrigued by the working class as well as the fringe low life of the world. What I like about him is that he gravitates towards people on the

streets rather than hanging out with other artists. He was an ex 'Hazel' (Hazels were a gang in the early 1970s) and was in many ways quite comfortable in that world as well. When he and I were overseas together on a Channel 4 gig his second brother was killed mysteriously. At the time he had been trying to broker peace between [the black consciousness movement-aligned] Azanian People's Organisation (Azapo) and the [ANC-loyal, Congress-aligned] United Democratic Front (UDF). Mtutuzeli was completely devastated, losing both brothers within six months like that. The activist, the poet, the gangster...an extraordinary threesome. He had a sister who didn't figure, she was not part of this close circle...there was a policeman who was doing deals with the first guy who died—it was a gangland killing.

19. Manie van Rensburg's Verspeelde Lente (Wasted Spring) circa 1981 with Elsie Cawood as the lead character is one of the best pieces of TV ever. The series is set in an Afrikaner bywoner community in the Karoo.
20. Brett Bailie's iMumbo Jumbo. I liked its visual splendour, its anarchy, its textures and relentless rhythms, its disrespect for political correctness.
21. Pule Hlatswayo's play Gomorra.
22. Saijita Ray's films, particularly The World of Apu. A simple observation of a child's life in a village told in the most moving and lyrical way. The story is told with restraint and delicacy until there is a grand outpouring of grief. Ravi Shankar's score knocks me out.
23. Fiona Rankin-Smith, my wife. Fiona lived two houses away from me in Durban in early childhood. We were part of the same circle. I went to live in the country and she stayed in the city. When I was about 26 Fiona came to Joburg and looked me up. She had studied art, had been teaching art. She came and quite quickly got the job at Wits (University). Her close friends were all artists. She's interested in my world...she's always believed in me. She feels a little shut out by my work world. Her response, partly, is to sometimes not see work that I do. She won't make a point of being the first person to see what I do. She probably hasn't seen every episode of YY1.
24. Woody Allen's Manhattan (1979).

25. Dancer Robyn Orlin. Robyn has a humorous and sensual and absurd view of her world. It is ugly/funny/beautiful which for me is a good combination.
26. Wong Kar-Wai's movies.
27. Teboho Mahlatsi. On my return (from New York) I persuaded my son Luke's godfather Isaac Shongwe to raise money for Teboho and I to do Streetbash. Isaac was starting his own company. But he was mortified when he read Streetbash and found it was such a dark film. He felt he wouldn't be able to raise the finance immediately. He wanted something with a building [he means a drama set in a building] and agreed to tender for the TV series that became Yizo Yizo. Teboho was one of three interns working at Free Film Makers. From the first time we spoke, I found him interesting; and found that we were interested in similar things. Teboho was ravenous in his desire to watch and learn about movies.
28. Malcolm Purkey. Through Kentridge, I made friends with Malcolm Purkey and Pippa Stein. For many years the household which William and Anne shared with Pippa and Malcolm was my second home. And there's been good food and discussion that's gone on for 20 years about the world we were living in, the ironies of South Africa.
29. Joe Menel. He's completely eccentric and subversive. He's met more people in the world than you can imagine.
30. Njabulo S Ndebele. I love Njabulo—the intelligent modestness of his person and his work.

30 texts or people who made a huge difference to Teboho Mahlatsi, in his own words¹⁸

- 1) A girl I had a crush on from Standard 1 right through my schooling.
- 2) Township movie houses playing kung-fu movies and westerns.
- 3) The Catholics, whose rituals I watched.
- 4) My father: to a certain extent, he remains a perfect being.

¹⁸ In email correspondence with Andersson from July 2004.

- 5) My English teacher Ndlovu.
- 6) My grandmother's house, the textures, religious icons on the walls.
- 7) Radio, listening to soccer matches, music, rock music in high school.
- 8) Stephen King—Pet Cemetery.
- 9) James Baldwin, especially Another Country, The Amen Corner and Go Tell it on the Mountain.
- 10) Bhekizizwe Peterson, for how his mind worked and how he made us think differently.
- 11) Soccer, Kaizer Chiefs.
- 12) Wole Soyinka, particularly his poetry, Ogun Abibiman.
- 13) Ayi Kwei Armah for Why are we so Blessed, The Beautiful Ones are Not Yet Born and Fragments.
- 14) Kofi Awoonor, This Earth My Brother.
- 15) Sembene Ousmane, his movie Camp de Thiaroye and his book God's Bits of Wood.
- 16) Amos Tutuola, his crazy fantasy stories, The Palm Wine Drinkard.
- 17) Dambudzo Marachera, House of Hunger.
- 18) My friend Sibusiso Masondo who introduced me to second-hand books, his obsession with Marxism.
- 19) Hip-hop artists—Nas, The Roots, The Geto Boys, NWA, Mobb Deep, Wu-tang Clan, B.I.G.
- 20) Wong Kar-Wai's In the Mood for Love and Happy Together.
- 21) Spike Lee's She's Gotta Have It, Mo' Better Blues and Do the Right Thing.
- 22) Artists Sam Nhlengentwa, Zwelethu Mthethwa for their paintings and photographs.
- 23) Kwaito artist Mdu.
- 24) American television, especially Homicide Life on the Streets.
- 25) Magazines, The Source, Vibe.
- 26) Music videos. Directors like Hype Williams changed the art of music videos.
- 27) Angus Gibson's documentary films.
- 28) Krzysztof Kieslowski films, especially Three Colours: Blue.

29) My grandfather's western pulp fiction books.

30) Zhang Yimou's Raise the Red Lantern, The Story of Qiu Ju and The Road Home.

30 texts or people that made a huge difference to Desiree Markgraaff, in her own words¹⁹

- 1) My mother Nina Zubicky, who was a wise, warm and grounded human being and a great storyteller. Everything that is strong and solid about me today comes from her, she built a wonderful foundation for me—my values, principals, inquisitiveness, open-mindedness, belief in humanity. Mom had been quite enchanted with Marxism and didn't want to live in a place like SA.
- 2) My father Phillip Markgraaff who was an opera singer who had studied in Vienna and was a contemporary of Mimi Coetzee and later worked in film as a production manager. He battled with an alcohol addiction for as long as I can remember and thus I had a love-hate relationship with him, which lasts till today, long after his death. He was warm and loving, but weak when things really mattered.
- 3) My stepmother Jeanette, who was a wardrobe mistress and seamstress who made dresses for all the stars in the 1970s. She was "a little sparrow"—gentle, kind and loving, naïve and vulnerable.
- 4) My brother Gregor Zubicky, a classical musician living in Sweden. He is my rock, my warmth, my place of sanctuary and sanity.
- 5) Stories by the Brothers Grimm—The Seven Ravens, The Riddle, Briar Rose.
- 6) Hans Christian Anderson's The Little Match Girl.
- 7) Astrid Lindgren's Swedish tales.
- 8) All the princess tales—The Princess and the Pea was a big favourite.
- 9) Drakensberg Boys' Choir, where Mom taught. I grew up with boys and wanted to do boys' things. I had a sense of always being an outsider, yet I liked that, as it made me interesting to them.

¹⁹ In email correspondence with Andersson from May 2004.

- 10) Movies Dad was in like Dog Squad and Gold Squad—it was about hanging around the set and being part of the action. I loved being the cute little girl on set that everyone played with.
- 11) Madge Fox, an Art teacher in Standard 8. She made a big impact on me. She believed in me and liked me as a person. I was living then with my Dad in Westrand. I felt that I was in a place where few people shared the values my Mom had, and Madge Fox was the first that I connected with in that way.
- 12) A black boy who spat in my face sometime in 1976. I was in a train going to school, at the station and as the train pulled away this young boy, a little older than me, spat a big gob in my face. It was a very powerful moment for me. I understood in a flash his pain and frustration and felt guilty for my advantages (which were pretty humble anyway).
- 13) Rozelle Vogelmann—training to do continuity with her and she said I would never make it, it was a waste of time. This motivated me.
- 14) Elmo de Witt—I immediately knew I never wanted to make his kind of films or be like him, I despised him, yet knew I could learn a lot.
- 15) Maureen Xoyiya. We shared a house, she was my first real housemate. We shared dreams of being great film makers.
- 16) Jan Scholtz—I admired him as a storyteller and his company was most prestigious when I was a young filmmaker, the only one to make strong stories that were not driven by a commercial imperative but rather personal passion. He was a renegade Afrikaner in my imagination. He really believed in me and my sense of film family today at Bomb comes largely from the nurturing environment he created for me.
- 17) Stan Roup, my film mentor. He greatly influenced my passion for film making and desire to be a producer. He is a very knowledgeable South African film producer.
- 18) Ingmar Bergman's movies, particularly Fanny and Alexander (1982)
- 19) Francis Ford Coppola's Apocalypse Now (1979).
- 20) Bob Fosse's All that Jazz (1979).
- 21) Mopheme. I had a particularly strong working relationship with Lillian Dube.

- 22)u'Sensekile. Both productions really shaped me.
- 23)Peter Goldschmidt's A Road to Mecca—because it was the first script I read that I really believed in.
- 24)Neil Sundstrom's Tiger Tiger—he was the first SA director I felt excited about.
- 25)Angus Gibson—I trust and believe in his creative vision and integrity. He was my first real partner, I have absolute respect for him on every level.
- 26)Teboho Mahlatsi—Teb's is a unique directing talent and I am inspired and driven to make his films realised.
- 27)JM Coetzee, especially Waiting for the Barbarians, Foe, Disgrace, Boyhood.
- 28)Milan Kundera's Immortality.
- 29)Brenda Fassie. She touched me as a human being.
- 30)Andy Okoroafor. My 'complice' who inspires me to make African films and keeps making me fall in love with South Africa.

The way in which these influences become intertextual references is tracked in Chapters 4-6, which form the textual analysis of Yizo Yizo 1 and 2.

I have created nearly 50 categories, depicted by symbol, to make this analysis possible within the space confines of this body of research. Based on an idea from Barthes' SZ, the categories are based on (a) Genette's literary intertextual categories and Stam's filmic ones; (b) typical categories used in critical analysis including class, race, gender and genre; (c) categories that were thrown up by the producers as either mandate, research issues or their own interests, memories and influences; (d) categories to locate Yizo Yizo historically; and finally (e) categories not defined above but which were clearly present in the text.

The categories and symbols are as follows:

Adolescent sexuality	AS
Aids	A
Audience issue	AI

Broadcaster issue	BI
Childhood memory	CM
Class	C
Consumption	Co
Criminal Violence	CV
Discipline	D
Dialogic violence	DV
Gender	G
Generic conventions	GC
Homoeroticism	Ho
Humour	H
Identity	ID
Intertextual reference	I
Intertextuality:quotation	I:q
Intertextuality:allusion	I:a
Intertextuality:celebrity	I:c
Intertextuality:auto-citation	I:ac
Intertextuality:genetic	I:g
Intertextuality:intratextuality	I:i
Intertextuality:mendacious	I:m
Intertextuality:classic storyline	I:cs
The Violent Lifestyle as Power	LV
Motif: apples	M:a
Motif: chickens	M:c
Motif: guns	M:g
Negotiations about a different type of education	NE
Patriarchy	P
Political memory	PM
Political Violence	PV
Producer issue	PI

Race	R	
Relations of abuse	SMV	
Research issue	RI	
Respect	Re	
Retributive or restorative		
Violence	RV	
Self-esteem issues,		
or violence towards self	SEV	
Sexual Violence	SV	
Sexism (also see Gender)	SX	
Traditional values	TV	
'Violence silence'	VS	
Traumatic Violence, Revisited	TVR	
Youth Culture		YC
Xenophobia	X	

The need for a separate set of categories (mentioned in point e, above) arises from images that are in the text, and from the information, obtained from the producers, about the South Africa they know. The producers, on the one hand, have described how they grew up within structural violence caused by apartheid. They explain how they have positioned themselves as film makers against apartheid. As film makers working in post-apartheid South Africa it might seem that they have any easy task because they have post-colonial film traditions within which to work, if they should choose to do so.

Yet of the three producers, Mahlatsi is the only one to cite an African film—if one excludes the reference Gibson and Mahlatsi make to one another—Sembene Ousmane's Camp de Thiaroye as an influence, while Markgraaff speaks about "African films". However, they all talk about African books and Gibson and Mahlatsi refer to film makers like Zhang Yimou (China), Saijita Ray (India) and

Wong Kar-Wai (China). This suggests they see themselves as being associated with Africa but not necessarily with the filmic work coming from Africa.

Part of the problem for South African film makers, when it comes to form, is the need to find a way of working with violence in representation. I suggest, in the following chapter, that any telling of post-apartheid South Africa must be prepared to unravel the *violences* and the silences about violence embedded in the very construct of “the rainbow nation” and returned as memory in representation. These violences are certainly central to Yizo Yizo.

Chapter 3

The fidelities and infidelities of memory within a hierarchy of *violences*

‘So violent’ is a phrase frequently used to describe South Africa in both its apartheid and post-apartheid eras. It is also a phrase used to describe Yizo Yizo (YY), the drama depicting a post-apartheid struggle about education, adolescent sexuality, youth culture and life in a township. ‘Violence’ as a splayed fan of memories that link visitor and citizen, spectator and participant, across the physical space known as South Africa and the chronotope occupied by YY, is the trope that provides the starting point for a textual analysis of YY.

Reading into and through violence in representation is essential when looking at YY, if we are to understand the use of intertextuality as the means by which political memory is accessed in this drama. Violence in YY becomes an intertextual visual language linking the immediate world occupied by the characters to their history, like the *scamto* many of the characters speak and the kwaito they listen to. Without unpacking the visual language of violence, it is possible to propose, as has Rene Smith, that violence is “commodified” in the process of representing the “real” in YY. This, she says, “problematizes, rather than addresses the issue of violence in society and (in the case of Yizo Yizo) in township high schools” (Smith 2000: 35)¹. Similarly, if one doesn’t read into the violence but looks at what else is presented in YY besides violence, one might get to a similar reading to that of Bhekizizwe Peterson, who observes that YY has “a poor sense of historical nuance”. He writes:

¹ Rene Smith (2000). Yizo Yizo: This is it? Representations and Receptions of Violence and Gender Relations. Unpublished Masters Dissertation, University of Natal.

Besides the occasional comments by teachers at Supatsela about the 'struggle', or, as is the case in one episode, a student's project of retrieving and reconstruction of the life of a dead brother, there seems to be an uneasiness with exploring the continuing socio-political, cultural and individual resonances that flow from the legacies of the apartheid past (Peterson 2001: 8)².

I would argue, on the contrary, that YY constantly links the apartheid past with the post-apartheid present but that it does so in an unorthodox way. It does so through the use of both the violent story arc and intertextual linkages, frequently through archetypes, to moments of violence. Arguably, the tools of the aesthetic used by the producers—the colour red used in YY1 which has specific ideological meaning for the producers, as will be explained later in this chapter, and Chester's designer gear—might not be read by audiences in the way the producers intended. Similarly, the tendency by the producers to first present violence from the point of view of the instigator of the violence and only in subsequent scenes by the victim or witness may not be acceptable to many critical viewers. YY undoubtedly uses camera angles that appear to privilege and even glamorize the perpetrator of violence. This is controversial precisely because ideologically, it appears to be a technique borrowed from auteur cinema and seems to belong to edgy mainstream rather than resistance cinema. It is a technique we have come to expect from, for example, Quentin Tarentino rather than something we would expect from marginal cinema including Third Cinema. However, I will return to the debate about intertextual engagement with the mainstream in Chapter 9.

Despite the scenes privileging the point of view of the perpetrator, YY forces one male character after another to take a stand on the continuing violence of their present. Two of the characters—Thulani and Gunman—answer reactionary and

² In Bheki Peterson (2001). 'Yizo Yizo: Reading the swagger in Soweto youth culture' (2001). Paper presented at Africa's Young Majority: Meanings, Victims, Actors. Annual International Conference, Centre of African Studies, University of Edinburgh, May 23-24 2001.

victimising violence with violence intended to free those it oppresses. Unless one distinguishes between the type of violence against which Thulani and Gunman fight and the violence with which they respond to the first type of violence, it is easy to dismiss YY as being either, simply, ‘violent’ or as not adequately representing history. But it is through these characters’ presence and their stories about township self-defence units (SDUs)—frequently but not exclusively armed by Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK)³—working between the late 1980s until the mid-1990s against the violence of the apartheid state and its surrogates, that YY remembers the political violence that gripped South Africa in the period during which post-apartheid president De Klerk declared that he was freeing political prisoners and unbanning liberation movements, between February 1990 and independence in April 1994. Manganyi reminds us that “an estimated 14 000 South Africans—more than were killed during the decade of the 1980s—were killed in political (so-called black-on-black violence)” in that period⁴. The way transitional⁵ violence is remembered in YY is through the transitional⁶ characters Thulani and Gunman. From YY1, Episode 1 viewers are reminded of the political violence of this era not through flashbacks or the insertion of particular sequences but through Thulani’s drawings of political violence, including a dead baby, a headless man and youth engaging armed militia.

³ Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK) at the ANC’s national conference at Kabwe, Zambia in 1985 had declared an era of “People’s War” which would see the armed struggle being escalated by MK in conjunction with affected communities in South African townships occupied by state forces or state surrogates like the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP). But while MK was able to pump weapons into the townships and provide “crash courses” in military training for small numbers of youth and activists who would form the backbone of the self-defence units (SDUs), it was not able to consistently ensure that the members of these SDUs had the political training, discipline and working methods of MK cadres. Subsequently there were excesses within the SDUs, in the name of revolution, and by 1993, the ANC “was calling for them to disband”, according to Monique Marks (2001:76), *Young Warriors*, Witwatersrand University Press: Johannesburg. The media of the day frequently referred to both the slaughter of communities by surrogate state forces and to the defence of these communities by SDUs as “black-on-black violence”, cited by N. Chabani Manganyi (2004:41), ed., in *On Becoming a Democracy*. University of South Africa Press: Pretoria.

⁴ *ibid.*

⁵ “Transitional” here refers to the space between the formal ending of apartheid and the creation of new democratic political structures.

⁶ “Transitional” here refers to minor characters.

We know Thulani was in an SDU because of comments learners, particularly Gunman, make about him throughout the first series. After taking Ken Mokwena hostage in YY1, Episode 8, Thulani talks about his experiences in the SDU and about how he killed a traitor. In YY2 it is Gunman who continues to keep the memory of SDUs alive in his quest to discover how his brother, a suspected traitor, came to be killed by SDU members.

Peterson correctly argues that in YY as a rule, “poverty, squalor, illiteracy and violence are explained away through a teleological argument that is typical of the melodramatic imagination. Social factors are simply a given and their thematic importance lies in how they help to determine the moral fibre and choices of characters” (Peterson 2001:10).

YY's framework, however, is a post-apartheid one, and as such its backdrop is the consequences of apartheid and the presence of apartheid in the present. As we have seen in Chapter 2, the producers were not remotely interested in producing a ‘whitewash’, a rainbow nation product suggesting that all the major contradictions in South Africa have been resolved. Nor were they interested in reproducing a standard South African realist text, retelling the horrors of apartheid. They wanted to tell a story that they knew, incorporating all the contradictions and absurdities they experience themselves. So when it comes to “poverty, squalor, illiteracy and violence” I suggest that the way the producers have chosen to tell these stories is frequently through a violent lens. They concentrate—particularly Teboho Mahlatsi and his co-director in YY2, Barry Berk—on the consequences of apartheid violence. Instead of using visuals to show what transpired in the past, they investigate a litter of violences spawned by apartheid. Among these is a violence directed towards the self, as a result of trauma, which is often portrayed through humour or hallucinatory flashbacks. Telling the victim's tale after one has told the perpetrator's tale is, arguably, violent in itself and for many viewers, inappropriate and inadequate. However, YY's statements about aspects of violence, it will emerge, were frequently

understood and appreciated by teenage audiences⁷. Throughout the series we see the characters Sticks and Bobo trying to keep up the appearances of being normal schoolboys when they are so hungry they both faint, at different points in the series. The story being told is of poverty *after* apartheid. We see that Bobo's self-esteem is so low that he eats from a can and drops the empty can on the floor of the dwelling in which he lives with Sticks. We see the character Mantwa struggle with not being able to read—and only being able to apply herself to this when her mother Lily tells her own story about illiteracy in the apartheid era.

Peterson argues that “the ‘baddies’ are never allowed the space to voice their hopes and fears,” and that “No presence or motivation is allowed to the hijackers” who “kill the wife of a black cop” (op cit). I suggest this might be the case with the criminal archetypes of Papa Action and Chester, who is dressed up in designer gear and drives the fastest cars in YY1. However, it is certainly not the case in YY2 or YY3 when the ‘baddies’—not only Papa Action and Chester and ‘The son of Papa Action’ but the poor hijackers—are shown at home or in prison, in discussion with their mothers, the police and each other. Throughout the years I worked on and studied this project, the producers always claimed that their intention was always to show criminals as ordinary people with families⁸.

⁷ The astonishing discrepancies between the way adults read Yizo Yizo versus the way learners read it is highlighted in John Gultig's research report for the SABC, which is engaged with in Chapter 8 of this research. “Despite public fears and criticisms from some parents that Yizo Yizo 2 encouraged bad behaviour including the taking of drugs, learners did not believe Yizo Yizo 2 had done so. Learners seem to have heard the messages that: drugs damage the individual and society; they cause physical and mental damage, and drug addition leads to loss of self control, crime and even murder” (Gultig 2002:87).

⁸ In a discussion I set up in Johannesburg in 2003 between Angus Gibson, Teboho Mahlatsi and Fernando Meirelles, the director of the Brazilian film City of God (2002), all three directors were in agreement that crime and violence had to be represented as central to the lives of the characters in the respective texts. When I asked if there were not instances in both texts (Yizo Yizo and City of God) that could be seen to be glamorizing violence, Gibson, Mahlatsi and Meirelles defended their representations in terms of the millions of viewers who had apparently read their texts as descriptive, not prescriptive, of the violence in their lives. Meirelles was adamant that political authorities, NGOs and social welfare agencies had only started to address the violence in Rio de Janeiro's favellas after City of God forced it to their attention in such an in-the-face-way.

Peterson's argument shows that there can be a gap between producerly intent and what is actually seen on the screen by viewers. However, in YY1, we are allowed to view a 'good' gangster (we do not witness him performing acts of violence, but see him receiving a stolen car and other goods from Chester, whose violence we witnessed) from close up. This is Zakes, Thiza's big brother. We are also made aware from Episode 1 that for many of the schoolboys, a life of crime seems an inviting option. As viewers we are able to hear the dialogue between the schoolboys and watch as each one in turn positions himself in relation to violence.

As we have seen from the previous chapter, each of the three major YY producers has grown up in the apartheid era, with strong memories of apartheid violence, particularly during the states of emergency in the 1980s. They each have a sense of straddling two worlds, one of which represents power and relates to the other through violence. Whether the powerful world is male, white, "soul-destroying" or all three, for those who belong to or identify with the 'other' of male, the other of white and the other of "soul-destroying", the way in which the powerful world speaks to its other is through violence.

For Angus Gibson the powerful world was communicated in the beatings his brother-in-law meted out, the presence of the white army in the black township, the assumption, by white army officers, that Angus must have a secret fantasy to make people "disappear". For Teboho Mahlatsi it was the understanding that he could read the books, watch the movies, listen to the music and expect to reap the consequences of sin of the powerful world, but never walk in its streets or assume actual rights as a human being. For Desiree Markgraaff it was following her father's footsteps in making the B-grade movies that propped up the powerful world, observing the living conditions of the townships in which these movies were shot, and watching her father drink himself to death because his life was meaningless. Each of the producers has had first-hand experience of working

alongside, or growing up with, violence. It does not follow that the violence they have seen or experienced will be faithfully reproduced. What registers in unconscious memory might trigger an unusual or aberrant telling of a tale. The producer might even be in denial of a particular memory and recreate it, rewrite it, recast in a way that makes him or her feel more in control of that moment than was actually the case when it happened. If this is so, there might be moments within representation where it is the event, rather than the way the event is told, that resonates with many viewers' memories. Similarly, there may be specific events within moments of violence that remind viewers, or confirm a truth, of what they know.

Re-watching YY1, 2 and 3 many times has rendered to this viewer the understanding that for the purposes of understanding memory's relationship with violence, 'violence' needs to be deconstructed and read as a 'dialogue of violence(s)'. It is argued that YY looks at, and engages with, at least ten different violences.

The ten post-apartheid 'violences' and the attendant memory of those violences are arranged in the hierarchical form in which I consider that they make their impact and do their damage, since the one type of violence seems to give birth to the next. Although criminal violence is the fetish with which post-apartheid commentators are preoccupied and is often the imagined violence of the phrase, 'so violent', my argument is that it arises as a consequence of another type of violence ('lifestyle violence'). This in turn exists as a reproduction of political violence and as a way of retreating from traumatic memory, which is memory of a specific violence—sometimes political, sometimes criminal, sometimes sexual—which in returning is suppressed and silenced and constantly challenged by dialogic violence, and so on. But it must be remembered that although these violences might run in one direction in experience, in representation the hierarchy may be reversed. Fiction, visual fictional genres in particular, frequently mirror or

exaggerate the patterns of real life so that they are simultaneously recognisable, and have an element of the real, but are displaced by narrative or made scary by melodrama, in ways we can not always name.

The pecking order in my hierarchy of violences is as follows: firstly, political violence; secondly, the relations of abuse likened to sado-masochistic violence; and thirdly, sexual violence, frequently but not exclusively linked to masculinity in crisis. Fourthly, there is the violence arising from the consequences of not being able to speak about what one has witnessed or endured. I call this 'violence silence'. Fifthly, I name 'dialogic violence' as the event and process of official memory being superimposed on popular memory, or as an adult's memory overriding that of a child's at the expense of trust. Sixthly, there is violence that is directed towards the self. This manifests itself in self-destructive forms like drug addiction and alcoholism as well as self-mutilation and eating disorders like anorexia. Seventhly, I have also identified what I call 'traumatic violence, revisited'. This occurs when one is forced to relive, re-watch or re-enact the known fragments or snatches of violent incidents through panic attacks, nightmares, or hallucinations, until such time as there can be closure. Eighthly, there is what I call 'lifestyle violence', which links to consumption; ninthly, there is criminal violence and finally, retributive or restorative violence.

Political violence

Political violence, and the legacy and memory of political violence, is the first category and it appears to be the parent of most of the other violences. I am not engaging with whether specific Marxist or nationalist resistance theories and liberation strategies were adequate for what they had to match. However, in analysing political violence as a trope in representation, it is necessary to explain how I understand the words and the concept of political violence. Frantz Fanon⁹

⁹ See Frantz Fanon (1967), Towards the African Revolution. Translated from the French by Haakon Chevalier. Pelican Books: Harmondsworth; Frantz Fanon (1965), A Dying Colonialism.

forms my first point of reference and provides an understanding of the violence of colonialism and the way in which this violence is firstly, internalised by the Algerian people and secondly, returned to the aggressor by way of resistance. Amilcar Cabral¹⁰ provides an initial framework to understand how political violence (both that directed by colonisers towards Africa and the resistance this meets from 'the native') is linked to violence involving people from the Caribbean and black America. Parallel discussions appear in history and political economy texts such as Bernard Magubane's The Ties that Bind¹¹ (1989) and in African literature, from Abiola Irele's Literature and Ideology in Martinique¹².

Joe Slovo's No Middle Road¹³ continues to provide a lucid analysis of the political violence characterising South Africa's 'colonialism of a special type' in which, under apartheid, colonisers and colonised lived side by side within the borders of the country. 'Internal colonialism' appears to have produced the most brutal forms of sustained political violence. It appears that the brunt of this violence was borne by the youth, who either participated in armed resistance through the liberation armies of the Congress Alliance, Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK), the PAC, the Azanian People's Liberation Army (APLA); or became the 'young warriors'¹⁴, who were all born into political violence and many of whom died through political violence in the self-defence units (SDUs) of South Africa's townships.

¹⁰ In Africa Information Service (1973). Return to the Source: Selected Speeches by Amilcar Cabral. Monthly Review Press: New York.

¹¹ Bernard Magubane (1989). The Ties that Bind. Africa World Press: Trenton, NJ.

¹² Abiola Irele, 'Literature and Ideology in Martinique: René Maran, Aimé Césaire, Frantz Fanon', in Abiola Irele (1981) The African Experience in Literature and Ideology. Indiana University Press: Bloomington.

¹³ In Basil Davidson, Joe Slovo and Anthony R Wilkinson (1976), Southern Africa: The New Politics of Revolution. Edited by Ronald Segal. Pelican: Harmondsworth.

¹⁴ See Monique Marks (2001).

A further influence for me has been the ongoing research by David Bruce, a senior researcher at the Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation (CSVR). His research into the transformation of the South African Police Service has mapped how the violent assumptions of a post-apartheid police force stem from the fact that there had *never* been an enquiry into the way police officers killed civilians and children in the apartheid years until the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC)¹⁵. *How* the TRC acted upon its finding that the police had used “excessive force” at Sharpeville in 1960, or answered stones with bullets in Soweto in 1976¹⁶ is the topic of another violence, namely dialogic violence.

In African Literature several writers have looked at the way apartheid first forced people to leave their homes in the countryside, in order to come and work in the mines. Then, when the regime realised that having black people in the cities meant that the cities would no longer be white enclaves, they changed their minds and created migrant labour laws and what they called ‘influx control’ measures¹⁷. Black people were now supposed to live according to their perceived ‘tribal’ location of origin, which were initially known as the Reserves. Can Themba captures the moment:

Of course, some semblance of tribal integrity remained in the Reserves, but the migrant labour system made a pretty delinquent bastard out of it. Men came to the mines for a spell, lived in compounds and soured the city only in hectic excursions, then went back to awe their home-keeping brethren, or to dismay their chiefs and elders with their outlandish ways.

¹⁵ See David Bruce, ‘Killing and the Constitution: arrest and the use of lethal force’ at www.csvr.org.za/papers/papbruc8.htm. This article was originally published in the South African Journal of Human Rights, Vol. 19, Part 3 (2003).

¹⁶ See the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa (2003), Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa, Vol 3:536-560. Macmillan Reference UK: Cape Town.

¹⁷ The legislation that proclaimed all urban areas subject to influx control was The Native Laws Amendment Act of 1952.

But tribalism was crumbling all over and the Africans were fast becoming a race of city-dwellers, with snatched visits to the Reserves. Hard economic and social laws dictated that these people would seek to adjust themselves into some form of permanence and security, and in the process, demand the conditions that would facilitate such adjustment.

Somewhere near this point, the authorities decided that the whole process of African urbanization should be repudiated as a policy if not altogether as a fact, let the skies crack! (Themba 1982:115)¹⁸.

Under the migrant labour laws, black people who worked in the cities were made to carry passes. The state authorities thought nothing of shutting down entire suburbs, forcibly removing people from their homes in the city, relocating them to where they believed they should rather live. Mongane Serote's narrator, Tsi Molopo, in To Every Birth its Blood was a small boy when the skies cracked:

About Sophiatown. The police had been there, guns, dogs, Saracens, trucks, bulldozers, everything that spelled the defeat of all those people, who after they realised that Sophiatown was the only choice they had to build a home, raise children and come to when they were weary, set to build it with all their strength. The bulldozers had come, and wiped their homes off the face of the earth. I was small then...Many townships have gone down and many people have gone down with them. Sophiatown, Lady Selbourne, and many others. All went, and with all of them all sorts of methods were used to destroy them. We even terminated Sharpeville. I remember how, every night, after Sharpeville, we used to sit, my brothers, my father, my mother, all of us reading what had happened in Sharpeville, and looking, wanting to know if we could recognise names from the long list of the dead and the injured. Every night we did that (Serote 1981: 60-61)¹⁹.

¹⁸ In Can Themba (1982). The Will to Die. Writings selected by Donald Stuart and Roy Holland. Africasouth Paperbacks, David Philip: Cape Town.

¹⁹ In Mongane Serote (1981). To Every Birth Its Blood. Ravan Press: Johannesburg.

The consequences of bulldozing areas in which communities enjoyed living and forcing people who were compelled to work in the city into the infamous matchbox homes of townships like Soweto meant that people growing up in townships would always experience a divide between city and township that was like night and day. Here, Mongane Serote describes Johannesburg as the 'Golden City' and Alexandra as the 'Dark City':

From the centre of the Golden City to the centre of the Dark City is a mere nine miles. Where one starts the other ends, and where one ends, the other begins. The difference between the two is like day and night. Everything that says anything about the progress of man, the distance which man has made in terms of technology, efficiency and comfort: the Golden City says it well; the Dark City, by contrast, is dirty and deathly. The Golden City belongs to the white people of South Africa, and the Dark City to the black people...

...Alexandra is a creation of schizophrenics like Jan Smuts; it is a makeshift place of abode, a township—that is, black people live here. Live here only if the whims of the Verwoerds are still stable to that end...In those days there were brand new houses, in all sorts of shapes, popping out of the ground like mushrooms; but then, also there were the frightening houses, of mud, of corrugated zinc; there were pipes in which other people chose to live, or broken cars where some of my friends lived and which they called home (Serote 1981:30).

The experience of living between two worlds, one of the 'Golden City' and one of the 'Dark City' is something close to what Teboho Mahlatsi has described as being his own experience, but which has also been witnessed by Angus Gibson and Desiree Markgraaff and brought to Yizo Yizo. Yizo Yizo 3, in which the characters have finished school and go to live in the city, deals with this

experience. Episode 1, in particular, constantly navigates the divide between city and township.

Yizo Yizo makes no claims to tell the story of what N. Chabani Manganyi calls

...the decades of statutory degradation, oppression, social and political exclusion and systematic harassment of the country's black majority in pursuit of a fascist and racist ideology...Political violence as described above was the dominant form of victimisation before the watershed political changes of April 1994 (Manganyi 2004:41).

As mentioned earlier, it instead tackles the *consequences* of such political violence. On a formal level, Yizo Yizo tackles the consequences of Bantu Education²⁰. In Yizo Yizo 2, the city-township divide and post-apartheid memory of Bantu Education is navigated through the teacher Maggie Peterson, a teacher who previously taught at an elite school. She is appalled at life in the township but still does not encourage pupils to develop 'expectations' about their chances after school.

In YY2, Episode 6, Maggie addresses the class. "Yesterday we spoke about goals and interest, now we are going to discuss careers". Sticks says, "I want to work at Nandos so I can eat lots of meat". Nomsa says, "I want to be a doctor". Maggie replies, "You mustn't have unrealistic expectations". Nomsa makes an aside about "this coloured witch" and there is an argument. "We don't need a teacher like you who puts us down," Nomsa says. Where Sticks' choice of career is informed by his own frequent hunger, Nomsa sees Maggie's words about 'unrealistic expectations' as being informed by racism, hence a blast from the past. But in both the engagement with Sticks and Nomsa, Maggie wakes up to the fact that the past still exists as a reality in the present for these learners. One

²⁰ The Bantu Education Act (No. 47 of 1953) introduced an inferior education system so that black people were formally trained into thinking of themselves as less important than white people.

learner is hungry, another learner wants to overcome the prejudices that stand in the way of her realising her ambitions. Later, in the staff room, the principal Grace Letsatsi explains to Maggie that the kids are sensitive about being discriminated against. She does not say, “Maggie, you are discriminating against these kids by using terms like ‘unrealistic expectations’”. The township scholars’ sensitivity is also shown in their response in discussions with ‘Model Cs’—their counterparts at private and exclusive schools in the city—whom they refer to as ‘coconuts’ (black outside, white inside). They respond well to teachers like Zoe Cele who persuade them to pit their minds against those of scholars from the city.

Apartheid memory is always a blink away in YY. Many people in the township in which Yizo Yizo 1 and 2 are set still live in shacks, although we see these shacks more in YY2 than in YY1. There is the homeless man Scavenger who appears intermittently throughout YY1 and YY2, Aids orphans like Bobo and children selling meat to provide for their families like the small boy Mandla wearing the Thabo Mbeki mask in YY2. The flashbacks of both Papa Action and his cellmate in prison in YY2 give an insight into the poverty-stricken backgrounds from which both criminals came and insight into their desperation. Sticks’ and Bobo’s complaints of hunger are a constant reminder of the diseases of poverty—malnutrition, like kwashiorkor—that went hand-in-glove with apartheid. Community resistance to resettlement and passes and learners’ resistance to Bantu Education is remembered, in no half-hearted way, through the scenes of schoolchildren meeting, organising themselves and marching against the new evils they face in their society. Their props are frequently billboards and graffiti containing examples of mendacious intertextuality, like ‘Winnie Mandela on Aids’.

The relations of abuse

When a people have been continuously brutalized, when the language of rulers is recognised only in the snarl of marauding beasts of prey and scavengers, the people begin to question, mistrust, and then shed their

own humanity and, for sheer survival, themselves become predators on their own kind. (This was the deduction that the Martiniquan psychiatrist, Frantz Fanon, also made from his studies in Algeria under a brutal French colonialism...) (Soyinka 1999:80)²¹.

While Fanon is remembered for his multi-faceted study of the relations of abuse, his structural analysis of the way in which racism rears its head²² as one element of systematised oppression informs, to a large extent, this category of violence. Fanon looks at the way racism is used for the purposes of “shameless exploitation of one group of men by another” (1967:47), and pinpoints the way in which every encounter the colonised has with the coloniser is abusive and declares that ‘every colonialist group is a racist’ (op cit: 50).

But in trying to understand why, when the coloniser is not in the picture, there are still abusive relations between people from the same community, and a reproduction of the abusive relations characterising the colony, it has been useful to read Mbembe who describes the conviviality of the relations of abuse through signs, signals and rituals between dominant and dominated in the postcolony (Mbembe 2001: 110) ²³. Following on from Hannah Arendt’s thoughts about the “banality of evil” (Arendt 1951: 473) ²⁴, Mbembe has analysed the way in which the departing coloniser handed over the reins of power to the native “commandement”, who then undertook to mimic and reproduce the excesses of the coloniser in a grotesque performance of power (op cit). Mbembe describes the postcolonial stage on which one person tortures or humiliates another as an expression of power, “the world of de Sade” (Mbembe 2001:127). Coercive power thus compels its subjects to “confer grandeur” on that power.

²¹ See Wole Soyinka (1999). The Burden of Memory, the Muse of Forgiveness. Oxford University Press: Oxford.

²² In Frantz Fanon (1967), ‘Racism and Culture’ in Towards the African Revolution.

²³ See ‘The Aesthetics of Vulgarly’ in Achille Mbembe (2001) On the Postcolony (2001). University of California: Berkeley.

²⁴ See ‘On the nature of totalitarianism’ in Hannah Arendt (1951), The Origins of Totalitarianism, New York: Harcourt Brace.

Where De Sade's sadist would take pleasure inflicting pain and humiliation on another, in the postcolony abused and abuser co-exist and collude in a sado-masochistic co-dependency²⁵.

For Njabulo S. Ndebele "part of the colonial project was to break the spirit of the colonised and shatter their identity. In this way they became depersonalised tools in the hands of the colonist". But the oppressed must take responsibility too, he argues. "When oppressed black men abuse their women and children, there is a limit to which they can blame oppression for their cruelty. Even the oppressed have to learn to accept responsibility for their actions. That is where their freedom begins"²⁶.

In Can Themba's Nude Pass Parade²⁷ we witness the way in which people working within the apartheid system participate in soul-destroying actions created by the oppressive state apparatus. Themba describes the humiliating strip search process that black men working in a white city had to go through to get a 'pass' to become legal:

You want a pass. Right. You go into a structure that looks like a public convenience. It is on the corner of Albert and Polly Streets. You find a blackjack – one of those black-uniformed municipal policemen – sitting on a high stool. He barks at you that you should not be an idiot: can't you join the queue? You join the queue of hundreds of other Africans, and you get counted off.

If you are in the batch that is to see the doctor for a medical certificate, you get a little ticket that permits you to enter the eastern gate

²⁵ See Achille Mbembe interview in 'Dreaming of a new kind of freedom' by Muff Andersson, in Mail & Guardian, 30 April-6 May 2004:16. However, as pointed out by Aryan Kaganof in correspondence with me in 2004, the term "masochism" does not derive from the Marquis de Sade at all but from Leopold von Sacher-Masoch, the author of Venus in Furs (originally published in 1870).

²⁶ See Njabulo S. Ndebele interview in 'Dreaming of a new kind of freedom' by Muff Andersson, in Mail & Guardian, 30 April-6 May 2004:16.

²⁷ In Can Themba (1982), The Will to Die.

to the great building of the city's Non-European Affairs Department. You join another queue that goes in and out of iron railings and right into the building.

Inside you meet white-coated clerks and medical aids who yell you into removing your top clothing, yell you into joining a queue that leads to a green-curtained room, and yell others off from this sacrosanct queue.

In due course you get your turn to step up to the X-ray machine, hug it according to instructions, and your chest gets X-rayed. Then you pass into an inner room and [are] told to drop your trousers, all of you in a row (Themba 1982:78).

Themba's blackjack "barks", the clerks and medical aids "yell". They have "shed their own humanity and, for sheer survival, themselves become "predators of their own kind" as per Soyinka's quote above (Soyinka 1999:80).

In Yizo Yizo, we have no reason to believe anything less than that being subjected to systematic dehumanizing apartheid routines has brutalized certain characters. The villains of YY1, Papa Action and Chester are spectacularly abusive and strive to humiliate the pupils, as do several of the adult characters—like the principal Mthembu. The pupils absorb and reproduce this behaviour. Playful but abusive interactions and joking at the expense of another's dignity could be argued to be part of youth culture in general.

It can also be seen as 'acting out' in the case of Javas, who has grown up on the receiving end of his father's beatings. In YY1, Episode 4, Javas gets S'Botho, 'Scavenger', a street person who seems to have lost his marbles, to sing outside the shop. Javas says, "You're good, I'll hook you up with Bra Hugh Masekela". Hugh Masekela is one of South Africa's most acclaimed jazz musicians. But the intertextual reference to this celebrity seems to suggest that the 'out-of-it' street person has a substance abuse problem. In the late 1990s, Masekela managed to get himself off cocaine and alcohol and started a rehabilitation programme for

young addicts. Besides his 'good' singing, Javas could refer him to Masekela's drug addiction programme. Although it's a funny scene, it is clear that the way Javas speaks to S'Botho is determined by class relations and is slightly abusive. In the same episode, Javas follows Nomsa and Dudu into the shop. He takes Nomsa's bag in his ongoing torment of her and gives it to Scavenger, telling him to keep it, not to give it to anyone, or they will fight. Nomsa struggles to get her bag back, while Javas watches, laughing. Principal Mthembu drives past, shouts at Javas to ring the bell. Of course, Mthembu is later furious with the zestful way Javas is ringing. Mthembu beats Nomsa—who is late for school because of the bag incident—and we start to understand that Javas is behaving like a jester because he feels like a humiliated fool.

Besides this view of a headmaster overturning the boundaries of trust by beating and humiliating scholars, we see how the relations of abuse work at other levels, and how they are frequently built around consumption. Teachers and older men prey on schoolgirls, promising to buy them clothes and food. Some of the teachers, who prey on schoolgirls, are situated themselves at the lower end of a chain of abusive relationships.

The local drug-lord, Bra Gibb, while in the shebeen, tells Ken Mokwena, who owes him money but can't pay it, "There are other ways you can pay me back" in YY1, Episode 4. Bra Gibb wants Ken to become principal of the school, since Mthembu is on his way out. This will give Bra Gibb a foothold in the school. Ken watches bug eyed in the shebeen as Bra Gibb gives the go-ahead to Chester and his stooges to 'deal with' someone else who has not paid what he owes Bra Gibb. Chester's bullies shove the guy in the boot of the car, leaving no question in the mind of the audience as to what will happen if Ken fails to do what Bra Gibb wants.

Sexual violence

Feminist writings such as Germaine Greer's The Female Eunuch (1970)²⁸ suggest that patriarchy ensures that women remain permanent children. Juliet Mitchell, Sheila Rowbotham, Angela Davis and others read women's oppression as part of the bigger picture of socio-economic violence upon which capitalism thrives. However, whether one understands gendered relations of abuse as springing from a patriarchal or a capitalist system is not so much the issue here as is the outcome of the relations of abuse. The outcome dealt with here is sexual violence, the reproduced child of 'the relations of abuse' stemming from race-based and gender-based violence. The non-governmental organisation (NGO) CIET Africa, which conducted a social audit of 27 000 youth in southern Johannesburg, argues that one of the long-term consequences of apartheid is sexual violence²⁹. The evidence, says CIET Africa, is that younger and younger people are starting to sexually abuse each other in South Africa. Even small children sexually abuse each other in a process known as 'survivor sex'. According to CIET Africa:

a generation of young people is growing up in the belief that sexual coercion is a normal part of life. There seems to be social pressure, especially on males, to engage in sexual violence (CIET Africa 1998)³⁰.

CIET Africa's study of southern Johannesburg, including Soweto, Lenasia, Eldorado Park and the inner city, found that one in every 20 schoolgirls aged

²⁸ Germaine Greer (1970). The Female Eunuch. Paladin: Los Angeles.

²⁹ See Andersson, N, Mhatre, S, Naidoo, S, Mayet, N, Mqotsi, N, Penderis, M, Onishi, J, Myburg, M and Merhi, S (2000). Beyond Victims and Villains: the Culture of Sexual Violence in South Johannesburg. CIET Africa/Southern Metropolitan Local Council: Johannesburg. The full report is at www.cietinternational.org. Although CIET Africa blames apartheid for the high sexual violence statistics, it distances itself from ideas that men are "genetically" programmed to rape and that men are more likely to be the perpetrators of sexual violence, and women the victims. See www.crimeprevention.csir.co.za/documents/CIETSexualviolence_summ.PDF.

³⁰ Johannesburg Child Welfare Advocacy Coordinator Jackie Loffell's response to the CIET Africa report at www.childrenfirst.org.za states that it is impossible for child welfare organisations to meet children's demands to be removed from abusers in the absence of state resources.

between 15-18 had been raped, that one in three had suffered sexual harassment and that female and male youth learners faced almost the same risk of “unwanted sexual touching or verbal abuse”.

Epidemiologist Neil Andersson of CIET refers to a “dangerous and destructive culture of violence revealed in the opinions expressed by children” where eight out of every 10 male school children said women were responsible for sexual violence, while schoolgirls had internalised the daily risk of sexual violence. More than half felt *they* were responsible. One out of ten said they were drawn to sexually violent men. More than half said that forcing sex with someone you know is not sexual violence.

Johannesburg Child Welfare’s Jackie Loffell, in response to the CIET report, shows no great surprise. For her, sexual violence experienced by children cannot be separated from poverty, which is a “driver of abuse and neglect”. Possibly she means “factor in abuse”, not “driver of abuse” since the latter term condemns poor people to be abusers (in the same way men are condemned as abusers, whereas not all men rape) and does not account for the fact that rich people also abuse their own and poor people’s children. Loffell links unemployment and demoralisation with child sexual abuse and says it is impossible to address the problem without state resources (op.cit). The CIET Africa survey also shows that only one in 16 reported complaints of sexual assault of females aged 12 and older was registered as “a case” by police. This finding contradicted popular assumptions that “women don’t report rape”. It shows instead that although girls and women report rape, it is not considered serious enough for a charge to be drawn up and “a case” made against the offender.

Ronai argues that child sex abuse “establishes relations between the victim and society”³¹. Enforcing laws against child sex abuse involves serious consequences such as breaking up the family, whereas:

Social interaction flows more smoothly when child sex abuse is not discussed because it is easier not to take action. Few want to talk about child sex abuse, thus a limited vocabulary exists for it...Existing discourse dictates to the children that they have been violated and that, as such, they are deviant—pariahs. They have no alternative to be other in the eyes of society; the status is ascribed to them (Ronai 1995: 417-8).

However, Ronai points out, “child sex abuse survivors can be both active and reactive in their ability to control the definitions and conditions contributing to their self-identities” (op cit).

South African literature has many references to children being on the receiving end of sexual violence. Can Themba, in Kwashiorkor (Themba 1982:14-26)³², links the death of a baby through kwashiorkor to the incidence of sexual violence towards the child’s mother, who becomes sexually active as a 14-year-old domestic worker. Njabulo Ndebele’s novella Fools explores the rape of a schoolgirl by the teacher Zamani (Ndebele 1983)³³. AK Thembeka’s narrator Laduma describes having sex with his mother (Thembeka 2004:2).

In Yizo Yizo Hazel is raped by the taxi driver Sonnyboy, and Dudu is raped by Papa Action and Chester. Besides those rapes, several schoolgirls, including KK, are seduced by the teacher, Elliot Khubeka, who is ‘R. Kelly’ to the learners. There is a sense that this sort of behaviour is a continuation of what went before. Snowey’s son was sired by Ken Mokwena, acting principal at the school.

³¹ Ronai, Carol Rambo, ‘Multiple Reflections of Child Sex Abuse: An argument for a layered account’ in *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, Vol 3, No 4, 1995:395-426.

³² In Can Themba (1982), The Will to Die.

³³ In Njabulo S Ndebele (1983). Fools and other stories. Ravan Press: Johannesburg.

A large part of the drama in YY1 comes in the learners' actions to remove Ken Mokwena from the school because he has sex with schoolgirls, whereas in YY2 the drama comes through Dudu's brave decision to push on with the court case that will see Papa Action and Chester convicted of rape. These scenes show clearly how difficult it is to get adult and official buy-in against the practice of forcing children into sex.

One reason why sexual violence is not acted upon is that it is only part of a bigger whole that is not acknowledged and acted upon. Where popular culture advances noisily, uses brash terms to identify it, makes rhymes about it, there is an ever-growing silence about sexual violence.

Violence silence

N. Chabani Manganyi, nearly three decades after formulating his theory about the 'violent reverie' in unconscious memory of people living under apartheid³⁴, has been trying to find out:

what happened to those who have been defeated? The question of poor people: It is not like there was a deliberate attempt by government not to worry about the poor. But what has happened to them? The question of impunity is a big issue. There's a psychological hurdle where people are supposed to move on in terms of change. On a superficial level, it's working. But there's a grim silence in society about what each one of us is really going through³⁵.

³⁴ In N. Chabani Manganyi (1977). *Mashangu's Reverie*. Ravan Press: Johannesburg.

³⁵ Interview with N. Chabani Manganyi in Johannesburg, 3 April 2004. See N. Chabani Manganyi interview in 'Dreaming of a new kind of freedom' by Muff Andersson, in Mail & Guardian, 30 April-6 May 2004:16.

Manganyi holds responsible for this silence not just a dumbstruck nation, that in the excitement of independence in 1994 possessed a “sense of miracle and wonder” but also the spirit of “triumphalism” that heralded the birth of the rainbow nation. “Archbishop Tutu...together with Nelson Mandela...these were the two parents, superintending the whole business. Psychologically they gave us a sense of comfort, enough room to free the apartheid regime from certain levels of accountability”³⁶.

Manganyi says the “violent reverie” is “in retreat”. He does not know if this retreating violence can be transformed:

As a mental health professional I like to believe it’s one of those things we could work around. My biggest headache is the denial of racism in the country—‘racism’ in its broadest possible sense, not only white against black but black prejudice. It’s so big that it is pushed under the carpet. It’s ‘the family secret’. We keep it under the closet. We had an opportunity but didn’t take it. We talked about violations of human rights in the Act that established the Human Rights Commission. But racism was not a violation according to the TRC legislation. Racism was excluded. It was not part of the narrative supposed to lead us to liberation³⁷.

Not being able to discuss violations that occurred as a result of racism has meant that the biggest burden South Africans have had to bear for the better part of a century—a longer historical period than the world has had to come to terms with the genocide of Jews, socialists and other minorities by the Nazis in the World War II era—is unrecognized, unsettled, concealed. As such, there can be no closure. Richard Werbner draws a distinction between “unsettled memory”—where the unknown prevents closure, as would be experienced by

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid.

families of disappeared people, or the “displaced dead” (Werbner 1998:3)³⁸—and “memory which the people themselves work to suppress, conceal or deliberately avoid in their usual public practices” (Werbner 1998:9). The people suppress this memory because it is in conflict with state discourse, but it continues to exist as what he calls “anti-memory” (ibid).

In YY, violence silence is mostly explored through the representation of a society not used to speaking out against sexual and criminal violence.

In YY2, Episode 4, Dudu’s father’s apparent reluctance to have his daughter testify against her rapists strengthens the suggestion that he might somehow be involved with the gangsters. “Are you sure you want to testify”, he asks her. “Those dogs are in jail...you sure you want to carry on with this? I can see you’re in so much pain. It’ll be difficult testifying before so many people”.

Zakes’ gangster lifestyle is similarly only commented upon within the family, in exchanges between Gogo and Thiza in YY1, Episode 1, and later between Gogo and Zakes. In Episode 6, when Gogo tries to get a depressed Thiza out of bed to go to school, he answers back rudely. She calls Zakes to help her because, “In my house, no child will tell me anything”. But Zakes is instructing a man to “put the goods in my room”. Because he is obviously referring to stolen goods, Gogo shouts at Zakes, “It’s unbelievable, the devil has never entered my house...you and your devil’s work,” says Gogo. But beyond expressing her actual views to her two grandsons, Gogo can be depended upon to keep the family secret.

Dialogic violence

Taking this idea forward, though I prefer to talk about suppressed or silenced public memory rather than ‘anti-memory’ in the same way as one would imagine

³⁸ Richard Werbner (1988), Editor. Memory and the postcolony: African Anthropology and the Critique of Power. Zed Books: London.

active but powerless audiences rather than inactive ones, I suggest a further category of 'dialogic violence'.

The movement between popular memory and official memory is so out of synch, so unbalanced, so discordant, so volatile, so dependent on who has power, so overturning of what constitutes trust, so developed on the relations of abuse, and so apparent in representation in a drama like Yizo Yizo that it stands out as a violence of its own, because it is constantly having to withstand a battle, whereby official memories are constructed to overwrite what popular memory knows, what it has seen. The concept of the dialogic comes from Bakhtin, who explained in 'Discourse in the Novel' that the 'author' and the 'narrator' are not one and the same person, they are two voices in dialogue and are frequently not in agreement³⁹. Behind the narrator, Bakhtin writes:

We read a second story, the author's story; he is the one who tells us how the narrator tells stories, and also tells us about the narrator himself (Bakhtin 1981: 314).

Dialogic violence is the process and experience of the event described in Chapter 1, the anxiety and terror created by the knowledge that the man who pins the medal on the chest of the other man is the man who fought for freedom, while the man receiving the medal is the man who was fighting against it. So why is he getting a medal if he fought against freedom, and why is he getting a medal from Gebhuza, the former MK chief of staff. And why does not the picture even mention Gebhuza's name, since he is now the head of the national defence force? And where in the story is MK?

In describing how the category of political violence was arrived at, I referred to the youths who had to position themselves in relation to death during South

³⁹ In Mikhail Mikhailovich Bakhtin (1981). The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays. Edited by Michael Holquist. Translated by Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist. The University of Texas Press: Austin.

Africa's struggle years. During the apartheid era, those youths would have been well attuned to reading a narrative of struggle within a narrative of state rhetoric, because they had not just been born into violence but had been forced to work with dialogic violence.

Come post-apartheid, the dialogic violence continues, only now one must know how to read death in the story of life residing in a condom and one must try to imagine a politics of liberation despite state rhetoric. Positioning oneself in relation to death remains the only surety for youth, who were teenagers in 1985, or those who are teenagers in 2005. And what are the consequences of having to forge your own path without trusting that someone loves you and will take care of you, and will tell you the truth?

Various characters in YY appear to be struggling with dialogic violence. There is Gunman, struggling through oral narratives to get the truth about why his brother was killed by a Self-Defence Unit (SDU). This is explored fully in Chapter 5. Eventually Gunman will find the truth within a Truth and Reconciliation (TRC) document—yet as an audience we know that the TRC depended to a large extent on oral narratives. So the question being posed here, if Gunman's story is read as a reversal, is whether the TRC could begin to deal with truth, let alone reconciliation.

KK has a particularly terrible and virtually schizophrenic experience with her teacher Elliot in Episode 5 and 6 of YY2, narrated in detail in Chapter 4. After Elliot has sex with KK, the incident is reported by Sika. Elliot then forces KK to deny what happened to her mother and to the principal Grace Letsatsi, he then breaks up with KK, while expecting her to continue to flirt with him. Viewers in this instance can be expected to sympathise with KK. Viewers have witnessed, shortly after he has sex with KK and drops her home, Elliot celebrating his school victory—not being dismissed despite his shoddy work—over drinks with other teachers. Meanwhile KK cuddles up with a teddy bear and shuts her mother out

of her room. In Episode 5, the other schoolgirls want to know from KK what happened with Elliot the previous evening. “Nothing”, she says, and prepares to write the comprehension test being given out by Elliot. In Episode 6, after they both deny that Elliot slept with her and he’s told KK the affair is over, Elliot says to KK: “Hi Babe”. Apparently empowered by other events in this episode, in which Nomsa took on Maggie, KK appears to be regaining her self-respect when she responds, “My name is Kekeletso, teacher. If only you knew, you’re nothing”.

Violence towards the self

Frantz Fanon in Towards the African Revolution⁴⁰ looks at the way identity (‘the self’) is constructed by ‘the other’, at the way colonialism is absorbed and reproduced by the colonised and the way racism is internalised. Using Freudian methodology, he describes the patient who hurts ‘all over’ and suffers feelings of inadequacy because he suffers ‘a daily death’ from the violence of colonialism. Fanon breaks down the violence to its component parts.

On the one level the colonised person is worn down because of the structural violence of colonialism, as Fanon writes in ‘Racism and Culture’:

Exploitation, tortures, raids, racism, collective liquidations, rational oppression take turns at different levels in order literally to make of the native an object in the hands of the occupying nation. This object man, without means of existing, without a *raison d’être*, is broken in the very depth of his substance. The desire to live, to continue, becomes more and more indecisive, more and more phantom-like (Fanon 1967:45).

But beyond the damage done to this colonised man by structural violence, there is another set of damage, which he inflicts upon himself because he buys in to

⁴⁰ Specifically, the chapters ‘The ‘North African Syndrome’ and ‘Racism and Culture’ in Frantz Fanon (1967), Towards the African Revolution.

the coloniser's expressed view that he is worthless. He becomes alienated, he is always seeking work, he is unable to create intimate bonds, he is stressed, insecure and under threat at every level of his existence. All this, Fanon writes in 'The North African Syndrome' turns the North African into "a sick man". He says:

Without a family, without love, without human relations, without communion with the group, the first encounter with himself will occur in a neurotic mode, in a pathological mode; he will feel himself emptied, without life, in a bodily struggle with death, a death on this side of death, a death in life...(Fanon 1970:23).

In an interview with Nicky Blumenfeld on Kaya fm in 2004, legendary South African musician Hugh Masekela described the self-hatred and death-like life that led to his addiction to cocaine and alcohol in the 1990s. Following his own experiences and in discussion with young addicts he has subsequently tried to help turn over a new leaf, he understands what lies at the base of such self-destructive behaviour, he said (Sunday 7 2004, Nicky Blumenfeld). Alcoholism and drug addiction is about "feeling small", Masekela said, and "feeling small" in relation to others strips an individual of identity and of motivation. Without motivation a person does not feel like going on with life. He feels as if he is dying.

The observations Fanon made about self-esteem and colonised people in Algeria in 1964 and by Hugh Masekela in 2004 interestingly accord with the theories of a psychologist working in another part of the world, who was unlinked to the work of liberation or redemption. Abraham H. Maslow was one of the American founders of "humanist psychology". An existentialist who would have been witnessing the impact of a world in the midst of the Second World War, Maslow modelled his ideas on neither Pavlovian behavioural therapy nor Freudian psychotherapy models. He devised "The Need Hierarchy Model" in the

1940s⁴¹. Although Maslow has been criticised for among other things, medicalising the existential and talking about the deprivation of spiritual life, his ideas about sick people being the product of a sick culture are pertinent. Maslow argued in *Psychological Review* (op cit) that individuals had to have their needs met at every rung of a ladder in order to achieve “self-actualisation”—which included, for him, being able to perceive events and people accurately, self-satisfaction and a high degree of creativity.

At Maslow’s first tier are the needs for food, drink, shelter and relief from pain. At the second tier are the needs for safety and security, freedom from threat, from threatening events and surroundings. The third tier of needs relate to “belongingness”. These concern social structures and love, the need for friendship, affiliation, interaction and love. The fourth tier of needs concern the need for “self esteem and esteem from others”. The fifth tier is self-actualisation—the need to fulfil oneself by maximising the use of abilities, skills and potential. In Maslow’s view, “self-actualisation” was frequently not possible, often because of what he referred to as “poor environmental conditions” (Maslow 1943:370-396).

Yizo Yizo 2 (YY2) deals simultaneously with at least six inter-connected stories of characters killing themselves through self-hatred and self-doubt, telling them, in some cases, against classic narratives. Throughout YY2, the former soccer striker Zakes, struggling with alcoholism and self-loathing after the shooting which has left him in a wheelchair, is Orpheus. Thiza and Hazel are the tragic boy-meets-girl, boy-loses-girl, boy-finds-girl, girl-wants-to-die, boy-wants-to-die lovers, in the Romeo and Juliet mould. Hazel is also, along with Sticks and Bobo, Cinderella. They are the children of the cinders, who cannot go to the ball or the soccer match except in their imaginations, until fairy godmothers wave wands and produce the motivation to wash and dress smartly.

⁴¹ In Abraham H. Maslow, ‘A Theory of Human Motivation’ in *Psychological Review*, July 1943:370-96.

The six stories dealing with self-esteem and violence towards the self are the arcs in this series dealing with Mantwa, Zakes, Bobo, Sika and Hazel. In YY2, Episode 2, Mantwa cries in the toilet and calls her English teacher Zoe “a bitch” for humiliating her by making her read aloud in class. She interprets her bad feelings as having been brought upon her by Zoe, whom Mantwa regards as having undermined her. Later, when Zoe comes home to discuss what she thinks the *real* problem is—that Mantwa can’t read—Mantwa snaps at Lily, who appears to Mantwa to be siding with Zoe: “How would you know if I am reading right if you can’t even read your name?” Mantwa then goes into denial, and instead of trying to read she slumps in front of cartoon programmes on TV. It is only when Lily shares with Mantwa her own shame at having grown up *pretending* to read that Mantwa is able to shake off her negative attitude and start to grapple with the young adult readers Zoe gives her.

YY2, Episode 1 shows Thiza and Javas walking. Thiza explains what a knock Zakes’s self-esteem has taken—he shat in his pants in the wheelchair. “When I tried to clean him up, he swore at me,” Thiza says. Javas asks: “Will he walk again?” Thiza says, “Yes, but he should exercise. I must help him”. The camera then shifts to Zakes, sitting with his lumpen mates and drinking beer in his wheelchair. Episode 5 shows them at the car works, drinking and smoking it up, talking about the good old days when Zakes was a soccer pro. These are tall stories. Zakes sends his sidekicks away, saying he wants to be alone. They protest but go, greeting Gogo on the way out. Zakes is depressed. The silliness of Zakes’s friends highlights his own misery.

Where Mantwa’s lack of self-esteem makes her deny herself and Zakes turns to drink, Bobo becomes a drug addict. Although the story of his drug addiction can be told in terms of his lack of self-esteem, I am looking at it instead as an example of consumption and proffering the Bobo arc as an example of lifestyle violence in representation.

Meanwhile Sika's poor sense of self-esteem drives him to a violent course of action. Humiliated by the girls, after he pinched KK's bum, and by Elliot and KK who deny his story about them having sex, he offers to sell drugs for the dealers inside the school, saying that he's Papa Action's cousin. He writes "Son of Papa Action"—for the producers this is a type of intertextuality known as auto-citation because it refers to their creation, Papa Action—on his chest and tries to bully Bobo into starting drugs again after his rehabilitation. Sika's self-esteem is so low he even tries to play off two sides of the drugs syndicate against each other.

Hazel, alienated in the aftermath of being raped by Sonnyboy, humiliated because Rebecca—Sonnyboy's new girlfriend—will not hear her advice and unable to bear being touched by Thiza, cuts her wrists in YY2 Episode 4. From her hospital bed after the suicide attempt she tells her friend Dudu, "I'm so sorry, I didn't have enough strength". To Thiza she says, "I'm so tired...something inside is bothering me". What is "bothering" her is the fact that she has been raped and is unable to respond in a natural way to touch and love. Her self-esteem has been shattered, and she feels as if she is dying anyway.

Traumatic violence, revisited

I suggest 'Traumatic violence, revisited' as a category of its own because as we will see, the YY characters Hazel, Dudu, Thiza and Thulani are shown to be haunted by memories in which they either suffered sexual violence, or witnessed acts of savagery through sexual and political violence. In Thulani's case the panic attacks refer to the deaths of many people in a struggle that has all but lost meaning in official memory. For Richard Werbner there have been shifts between the way in which the mass dead were remembered through memorials since the First World War, to the way in which postcolonial nations remember, or cease to remember, liberation war violence (Werbner 1998: 71-76). He writes that,

For many if not most people, the memory of sacrifice, self-sacrifice no less than collective sacrifice, is haunting, and it comes back with immediate, painful force at least for the first postcolonial decades of the nation *virtually* born from the barrel of the gun. I say *virtually* to allow for the ballot as well as the gun barrel, to allow for the making of the nation in everyday negotiations. What I am arguing is that the trace of violence does not merely adhere to the violent or the actual survivors of violation, such as those scarred and traumatised by the brutalities of guerrilla war, or even their heirs. It is the relatively few who feel untouched by that wounding trace (Werbner 1998: 77).

N. Chabani Manganyi questions the way in which the telling of painful and traumatic experiences by witnesses to the TRC was viewed as cathartic and healing. For the benefit of the public health needs of communities in transition, he writes,

the assumptions we make about the value of memory work and the liberating value of encounters with painful truths need to be made more explicit...What victims and perpetrators of trauma are often unable to talk about in their testimony is what the experiences have done to them; how they have affected their mental health and their experiences of selfhood. Psychological work on the memory of traumatic experiences cannot be properly handled within normal truth commission structures and processes since it is a specialised activity that should ideally be handled by professionals (Manganyi 2004:50).

In my study of the cyclical structure of soap opera and how it interacts with painful memory cycles, I suggest that when the past has been so traumatic it might have disappeared from conscious memory, especially within a society that pressures one to forget and overwrites existing memory. This makes personal narrative impossible. However, traumatic memory still exists in the unconscious.

Memory comes from a process of active restructuring. It works through concepts, not through the storing of data.

Thus memory is simultaneously capable of silences and amnesia, on the one hand, and of rigorous and creative engagement with other memory concepts on the other. It has the ability to regurgitate information learnt by rote in one era and to toss it *in disguise* into a new era. Fragments of an apartheid past might flutter into consciousness, presenting themselves as evidence of new mythologies in a post-apartheid present. What is difficult, as Fentress and Wickham point out so well, is to determine “the relation between memory as internal representation and memory as articulated representation” (Andersson 2002:5)⁴².

In representation in YY, the reliving of traumatic violence can only be brought to an end by action. For Thulani, to whom traumatic violence returns memories of an apartheid past, there is a need to put an end to the violence in the present to which he is witness.

For Thiza, who is haunted by the killing of the shopkeeper in YY1, there can only be an end to traumatic violence revisiting him when he takes the decision to become a state witness and agrees to work in the shop for the shopkeeper’s widow. His presence there will be a constant reminder to the widow and her daughter KK of their murdered husband and father respectively. But when Thiza, who thinks of the incident every time he lays eyes on the widow or KK, says he’ll work for whatever the widow can afford to pay him, the widow says: “Don’t be a slave”.

Hazel’s traumatic returning memories of rape create within her such rage and withdrawal that she eventually tries to commit suicide. We first see how angry

⁴² F.B. Andersson, Isidingo: Between memory box and healing couch, unpublished MA research report, University of the Witwatersrand, 2001: 5.

Hazel is in Zoe's classroom, when Sticks talks about getting mixed messages from girls. There's a discussion about mini skirts. Zoe says just because someone is wearing a mini skirt, it does not mean she's looking for sex. There's a heated debate about love, sex and respect. "Even when girls say, I can't do this, I can't do that, the truth is, they want it," Sticks declares. Hazel, who is fiercely scribbling something, retorts: "He does not have to rape her". She also relives her trauma whenever she sees Rebecca with Sonnyboy. Hazel tries to talk to Rebecca about being raped by Sonnyboy. Rebecca does not believe her, and says she loves Sonnyboy.

Meanwhile Thiza overhears KK and her friends in the shop discussing Rebecca's conversation with Hazel. They feel Hazel loved sex, did it with Sonnyboy then spread rumours about him. Overhearing gossip is a device used in melodramatic genres like soap opera and is appropriated here as a mechanism to allow a male character to experience and display emotion. Here, Thiza's response is jealousy. A common defence by rapists is that their victim encouraged or enjoyed the experience.

Thiza talks to Hazel, asking what's going on. "Every time I touch you, your body becomes cold," he says. For many abuse survivors, intimacy is difficult because they carry their wounds inside and find it hard to allow others to touch them. The only places Hazel feels safe enough to discuss her experience is at home with her sister Snowey and within the rape survivors' group. Her reaction to Thiza is one of increasing chilliness. "These days, you have a lot of problems," Thiza tells Hazel on Valentine's Day.

Several of the characters who are going through the aftermath of trauma don't want to wake up. In YY1, Episode 2, Snowey doesn't want to wake up—just like Bobo didn't want to in Episode 1—on face value because of her consumption of alcohol the previous night but also possibly because she has never had counselling for the trauma she has faced in life. In other instances Hazel and

Thiza do not want to wake up. Possibly they do not want to face another 'daily death'.

Lifestyle violence

Chinua Achebe, writing in relation to post-independent expectations in Nigeria, says that a common manifestation of under-development is:

a tendency among the ruling elite to live in a world of make-believe and unrealistic expectations. This is the *cargo cult* mentality that anthropologists sometimes speak about—a belief by backward people that someday, without any exertion whatsoever on their own part, a fair ship will dock in their harbour laden with every goody (sic) they have always dreamed of possessing (Achebe 1983:9).

'Lifestyle violence' as I imagine it is partly caused by defining the gap between expectations of a grand lifestyle and fulfillment as existing because of factors over which an individual has no control. These factors exist, according to whoever argues them, because *I'm a white woman*, or because *I come from an historically disadvantaged background* or because *I come from a dysfunctional family with a history of alcoholism*. Because of x *I will never have nice things unless I repossess or pick up the things that fall off the back of a lorry*. Because of x *I need someone to look after me unless I make someone serve me*. Because of x *I cannot compete in the world unless I make others fear me*.

The sense of a gap between desire for fine things and fulfillment of that desire becomes the first component of lifestyle violence. On its own, there is no harm in having a desire for goods. If desire exists as fantasy it can provide a retreat for an individual and need not be enacted. It can even be de-linked from the other components of lifestyle violence.

However, the motivation to close the gap by getting part of the cargo of goodies that one desires through violence, is a second component of lifestyle violence. Here, the action of engaging with violence may be as simple as buying a cellphone for R50 without giving too much thought about the way in which that cellphone was acquired—in exchange for drugs possibly—or about what happened to the original owner of the cellphone. It matters not if the argument for the action of buying the cellphone is couched in political or social terms. What matters is that it is a cellphone, and that in order to possess it, the consumer is prepared to use violence or hide behind the violence of another.

The compulsion driving consumption and the production of an attendant set of behaviours—as an addict, a gambler, a fan, a sex or violence addict, a kleptomaniac, a shopaholic—is the third component of lifestyle violence, not necessarily affecting every player but certainly many in a chain of lifestyle violence.

The fourth and arguably most controversial component of this category of lifestyle violence is that the behaviours, in relation to addiction and other forms of compulsive consumption, are conscious⁴³. Compulsive—as opposed to impulsive—forms of consumer behaviour are developed by way of interplay between self-control, desire and willpower, according to Hock and Loewenstein (1991:492-507)⁴⁴. I would add to their list, self-esteem.

⁴³ See Elizabeth C. Hirschman, 'The Consciousness of Addiction: Towards a General Theory of Compulsive Consumption' in *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol 19, Sept 1992:155-179. Hirschman's views about conscious addiction, to which I subscribe, differ from various theories in psychology, sociology and medicine which define addiction in terms of disease, or sociocultural theory which suggests particular ethnic groupings are more at risk to addiction. She does, however, recognise an addictive-compulsive personality subtype typically originating in dysfunctional families. Such families are characterised by emotional conflict, alcohol/drug abuse or physical violence and often an absent parent. Children growing up in such an environment, she writes, might be "anxious, emotionally detached or unable to deal with feelings of anger and fear" (ibid).

⁴⁴ Stephen J Hoch and George F. Loewenstein, 'Time-inconsistent Preferences and Consumer Self-Control' in *Journal of Consumer Research*, 17, March 1991:492-507.

As Yizo Yizo viewers we know that what drives Papa Action and Chester is their own addiction to a range of substances and thrills. They are bullies who appear to get pleasure humiliating others. Economically what enables them to be in a position to wield their power is the large network of addicts to whom they sell drugs on behalf of Bra Gibb. All those addicts whom they sell to compulsively buy and take drugs, and they do it consciously. Papa Action and Chester are seen to be getting richer and richer, they engage in violence compulsively and they do this consciously, because the spectacle serves a particular purpose in terms of messages to those who witness it. Chester drives a BMW and wears Versace. For those who desire fine things, the display cannot be any better unless one drove that car or wore that outfit oneself. Papa Action and Chester are respected, feared and hated by characters engaged in other forms of compulsive consumption like Louise, who misses school rather than “missing a sale” (YY1, Episode 12) or like Ken, in debt to Bra Gibb, who sends Sticks in school hours to buy him brandy (YY1, Episode 6).

People are either in the loop of lifestyle violence, like Zakes, or they are completely out of it, like Edwin. There cannot be any sitting on the fence. You cannot keep quiet about lifestyle violence and turn a blind eye because that means you are consciously supportive of it.

O’Guinn and Faber, also writing for a marketing journal, define compulsive consumption in relation to a range of activities, including drug abuse and compulsive working, as:

A response to an uncontrollable drive or desire to obtain, use, or experience a feeling, substance, or activity that leads an individual to repetitively engage in a behaviour that will ultimately cause harm to the individual and/or others (O’Guinn and Faber, 1998:147)⁴⁵.

⁴⁵ See Thomas C. O’Guinn and Ronald J. Faber, ‘Compulsive Buying: A Phenomenological Exploration’ in *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol 16, September 1989:147-157.

Now look at Bobo's slide-into-lifestyle-violence arc as told over seven episodes of YY2. In Episode 3 he tells the class how people (read 'girls') laugh at him because he's a hobo. "I want to build a robot with bedroom eyes, beautiful breasts, curves and legs to stay with me in my shack". He thinks he is too poor to get a girl. Within his humorous comments, is the suggestion that he is lonely in the world and hence he fantasises about an unreal Stepford Wives concept of women—a robot who will not reject him. Within this episode he scores Mandrax from the drug dealers. His sense of alienation and lack of power makes him try to rectify the situation.

Later, at the Valentine's Day bash, Bobo smokes his buttons in the shed, glaring at a cow or else having a hallucination about a cow. The cow motif is a cruel mimic of Bobo's fantasy about a robot with nice eyes who looks at him—and presumably does not answer back.

YY2, Episode 7 finds Bobo eating alone in the dwelling he shares with Sticks. He finishes off a can of food, drops it where he stands. He has so little self-esteem that he litters his own dwelling. He walks slowly through the flat, picks up a plastic bag of groceries, leaves to trade it for money for drugs.

After Bobo's drug taking and dealing nearly costs Sticks his life—Sticks goes into a coma after a beating by vigilantes who think he is to blame for the death of Connie Shai, whereas two of Bobo's customers are responsible—Bobo visits the township dealers again. He says he's "in trouble at school" in Episode 8. In the absence of having his buddy Sticks around, Bobo tells his problems to the very people who are creating his dependency on drugs.

He is arrested by cops, who bring a sniffer dog to the school later in this episode, just as he manages to hide his stash in the school shed. After being released, he lies to Sticks about why he is late, because he has already been told that

learners, including Bobo, were picked up for drugs. "I didn't have drugs, I didn't smoke, the dog just sniffed me," Bobo protests, to which Sticks says: "I don't believe you anymore". In the school office, Maggie, Edwin and Grace question Bobo. "Why were the dogs sniffing you?" Grace wants to know. Bobo responds, "maybe they were lost".

Grace threatens him with expulsion, but Bobo's habit is so big he cannot stop. Later the same day, while a meeting of the Community Policing Forum is going on in the school hall, Bobo slips off to smoke his white pipe and is sitting eating a sweet when Edwin and Sticks find him. "Forgive me, Sticks my friend," Bobo slurs. "Sir, it had to happen," he says to Edwin. Bobo tries to walk away. Sticks reminds him he's got to go to Grace's office.

"You go and tell me what Grace and them are barking about", Bobo says. Grace asks him why "you do this rubbish at school, with police present". She quizzes him about his family. Bobo says, "My father's not dead, he just left us. He didn't even come to my mother's funeral because my mother had Aids. I found Sticks while she was alive. I never told people she had Aids. She died in my arms".

Maggie takes them back to the township. When Bobo takes a button out of his shoes Sticks is furious. Bobo throws the button away and says he is burning it. "You burn it today and buy another one tomorrow. I'll never trust you. I don't trust you. Voetsek," Sticks says.

But ultimately Bobo, because he recognises the amount of effort the school and Sticks have put into him and acknowledges the violence of his actions, decides to change his behaviour and signs a contract with the school. He wants Zakes and Sticks to keep an eye on him after school hours. "They can watch me anytime," says Bobo. He agrees to clean the boys' toilets for the rest of the year if he slips and says the school must take him to the police if they find drugs on him. Bobo's

decision to detox and get off drugs is overseen by Sticks and Zakes. He gets severe stomach cramps, cannot breathe and thinks he's dying.

Often, as is the case with other characters in YY, an acceptance of 'lifestyle violence' means not physically engaging in acts of violence oneself, but being tacitly involved in its spoils.

Criminal violence

Criminal violence, looked at in comparison to lifestyle violence, is fairly simple because it can almost be defined by a single component (the second) of lifestyle violence. It is the illegal use of violence 'to get' or steal something which is desired or needed (for example, the cellphone, the wallet or the car) or to 'end' that which is not desired (the murder).

In the absence of consumption and addiction patterns described within lifestyle violence, criminal violence seems to whittle down to, firstly an environment that allows it because of unemployment and poverty and secondly, individuals who do it either out of economic necessity (sociopaths and hooligans notwithstanding) or for a range of other reasons that include revenge and possibly all of the seven deadly sins.

The point is not to dismiss criminal violence as a trope in representation but to begin to see it as distinct from the other violences although related to them in several ways. It is often argued that criminal violence is a consequence of the legacy of violence from the colonial era. This, however, does not explain why it *feels safe* to walk with one's briefcase or handbag in some post-colonial countries like India but it *seems dangerous* doing so in others, like parts of Johannesburg in South Africa. Both countries were originally colonised by the British before South Africa went into the mode of internal colonialism. Whether a feeling of safety or danger has to do with first-hand knowledge of a place, the

evidence of levels of crime, the political memory of the violence played out on those streets over several decades, or is simply perception, based on the circulation of prejudices, is hard to say.

Yizo Yizo presents some fascinating ideas about criminal violence in representation.

In YY2, Episode 12, Bra Gibb is determined to test Zakes' loyalty by trying to get him first to punch someone who has been consuming drugs but not paying for them, then later, to kill someone. Although this is clearly an example of lifestyle violence, the mechanisms deployed by Zakes to disassociate from his actions seem to me to be the same steps a person undertaking a criminal murder might have to undergo to do such a violent act.

Bra Gibb says to Zakes, "You said you were my man, so do one thing. This will mean a lot to me". He shows Zakes a guy who is kneeling, looking terrified, and gives Zakes a sharp knife. He wants Zakes to cut his head off. Zakes flashes in imagination to the white plastic, eyeless and hairless head of a mannequin, separated from its body, that he saw in the shop window in The Zone in Rosebank earlier. He concentrates on the model head, disconnected from a body and imagines this as the head he is going to chop off. He swings, growls, is about to take off the kneeling guy's head when Bra G stops him: "You're a dog!"

Zakes' ability to disassociate shows a common mechanism that a fully conscious mind can create to cope with a traumatic event. But the dream world is unconscious and cannot be controlled. As viewers, we start to ask ourselves interesting questions about the scary 'reality' of Zakes, or of any nameless person who commits murder in the name of crime. It seems, following this representation, that trauma might be a prerequisite to disassociation. And then one asks: what type of trauma might lead to disassociation? And we end up back at the top of the list of violences, starting with political violence, the relations of

abuse and sexual violence, and acknowledging the trauma that might create disassociation within each one.

In telling of criminal violence, Yizo Yizo also goes a long way to challenge the way criminal stereotypes are created. In YY2, Episode 4, we are taken on a visual journey that starts with a gramophone record playing jazz, to wedding photographs of a couple on the wall. An old man in Florsheims carefully picks up a black fedora hat, sporting a feather, and comes to stand outside house 713. Dudu, his daughter, is in the bedroom. She does not want breakfast. “It’s too early for jazz, Papa,” she tells the man with the hat. Some of the images viewers see, have been described by director Teboho Mahlatsi on his ‘influential’ list. Dudu draws on the mist on the car, surely a universal memory, while her father cleans the inside window. As the man rubs the windscreen we see he’s wearing flashy gold rings on his fingers. He questions whether his daughter is doing the correct thing in testifying against Papa Action and Chester. It occurs to the viewer—this man must have had a violent past. He is dressed like a gangster from Sophiatown...he does not want her to testify because he is in some way connected to the lifestyle violence.

But after the court case, Dudu’s father tells his daughter, “you were right, I was thinking of myself and not you. I was worried I could not protect my own daughter”. She smiles at him and asks what every viewer wants to know: “Where did you get these glamorous rings, I always wanted to ask you”. “It’s a long story,” he replies. “When I first met your mother, I wanted to impress her, I didn’t know how. I bought these, I’ve been wearing them ever since”.

In this way the director set up Mantwa’s father to look like someone who must have a gangster past by virtue of the flashy rings he wears, not to mention the fedora and shoes, when he’s actually just a shy guy who wanted to impress his sweetheart years ago by donning gangster gear.

Retributive/restorative violence

Fanon prescribes, as the antidote to the 'daily death' suffered by the colonised, a dollop of revolutionary violence. "We must, all of us together, dig the grave in which colonialism will finally be entombed!" (Fanon 1967: 129)⁴⁶. Many of Fanon's ideas about revolutionary violence, as both the route to self-determination of African nations, and self-awareness by the individual, were echoed by Marcus Garvey, Elijah Muhammad and Malcolm X in the early 1960s. Malcolm X, in particular, engaged with Fanon's theory of reactionary psychosis in his writings about the need to remove self-loathing inflicted by white supremacist thinking. These ideas about 'black power' were reiterated and embellished a little later in the 1960s by Huey Newton and Bobby Seale, giving rise to the Black Panther movement in the US. Steve Biko in I Write What I Like (Harper & Row, San Francisco:1978) in the 1970s, continues with the theme of black consciousness as does Bob Marley in Redemption Songs (1980). Marley writes: "Emancipate yourself from mental slavery, none but ourselves shall free our minds".

Arising out of these narratives is the idea of redemptive violence, which has the features of retribution (against the oppressors) and restoration (in the creation of a new order). Beyond the many political theorists who dealt with these ideas in terms of liberation theories, Soyinka's thoughts about the functions of Ogun, taken from the essay "The ritual archetype" (Soyinka 1976:1-36)⁴⁷, have been useful here because within YY this concept can be similarly explored via an archetype of redemptive violence.

Soyinka describes how the Ogun figure is used to express the destructive-creative principle within Yoruba belief systems. Plays and Egungun rituals see the replaying of Ogun's self-sacrifice, death and rebirth on behalf of the affected community. Ogun shows, not unlike Jesus Christ in Christianity, that he is

⁴⁶ Frantz Fanon (1967), 'Letter to the Youth of Africa' in Towards the African Revolution.

⁴⁷ In Wole Soyinka (1976), Myth, Literature and the African World, Cambridge University Press: Guernsey.

prepared to die by violence to put an end to the violence people have been subjected to and to bring about a reconciliation between the divine forces in the Yoruba cosmology and the struggling mortals.

At a later stage, Soyinka slightly recasts his thoughts about retribution.

In The Burden of Memory and the Muse of Forgiveness, Soyinka (1999:59) talks about “collective racial trauma”, the “echoes” and the “inadequacy of words” African-Americans experience when taking pilgrimages to the isle of Goree, the forts and slave monuments of Accra, Cape Coast, Dar es Salaam and Zanzibar. He suggests that rather than trying to seek reparations or retribution for slavery, it is necessary to liberate the slave within. This, outside of representing the amputations and deathscapes seen by Mbembe, is what Biko said too and might indeed be the point Rampolokeng makes with his verbal reproduction of images of children sucking yoghurt and blood mentioned in Chapter 1.

As mentioned earlier, YY is drama, so there is no character too bruised or angry to deny the process of redemption. Gunman becomes the archetype of political redemption. Papa Action becomes the wounded healer. Zakes goes ‘inside’ lifestyle violence, James Bond style, to restore his community. But are these images sufficient? We shall see if they are as we progress through the textual analysis of violent tropes in YY, and through its treatment of archetypes and approach to lifestyle violence. As we progress, we’ll remember N. Chabani Manganyi’s words of caution, that:

...we need to come to terms with the fact that the past is still with us in all its ugliness. This is so because, despite superficial appearance to the contrary, racism is still deep seated and difficult to eradicate. There continues to be widespread race-based structural inequality and opportunity differentials economically and in the delivery of public goods and services. What is more, the reported continued existence of racial

prejudice is increasingly manifested in brutal and vulgar expressions of racial intolerance, which are reported with monotonous regularity in the media. Interracial crime and crimes against women, children and the elderly are often gruesome in both brutality and vulgarity (Manganyi 2004:48).

Possibly because of the violence that is still with us, the colour of blood informs the treatment of YY1.

Adding texture to the 'dialogue of violence(s)' represented in YY1 is the producers' technique of 'reddening' of the set and the use, during some of the more disturbing scenes, of a hand-held camera to bring a real feeling of 'shakiness' and hence a sense of physical uneasiness to the viewer. These adaptations of the visuals are among several generic conventions used by the producers.

Yizo Yizo 1 and 2 is read as 'a dialogue of violence(s), (in red and green)' both because it was arguably the first TV text to depict the violence affecting the majority of people in South Africa but also because it engages with the legacy of violence from apartheid South Africa. Besides the obvious race violence, apartheid was also the umbrella system for the hierarchy of violences explained above. Where Yizo Yizo 1 uses a lot of the colour red, Yizo Yizo 2 uses green to indicate re-growth and regeneration.

The producers happily engaged in a round table discussion about their methodology and intentions. They explained what 'red' meant for them in contrast to how it was 'read' intertextually by me. For Angus Gibson, 'red' is the language of fascism, whereas for me it represents socialist ideals. Gibson says, in hindsight, that socialism, or rather 'communism', means to him exactly what

fascism means⁴⁸. For Teboho Mahlatsi and Angus Gibson, red is the colour of violence and of blood (ibid). Hence Daveyton Secondary School, the school used for Supatsela High, was painted red for the filming of YY1 to “reflect both the authoritarianism and chaos of the first series”⁴⁹, the lighting has been ‘reddened’ and at times all colour except red has been drained from the camera’s eye.

The producers also provided evidence that although they had not consciously thought about different violences, they were most fascinated by the second type (‘the relations of abuse’). Gibson was horrified by my early readings. “Surely there is more to Yizo Yizo than simply violence?” he asked. Of course there is, he was reassured. There is humour, there is a lot concerning class, and identity. There is an exploration of education issues and the simultaneous exploration of adolescent sexuality and youth culture. However, the frequency with which themes, motifs and intertextual references pop up determines how they would fit into the hierarchy of issues tackled on this programme, and violence is number one, and number two, and number three... .

A second trope under scrutiny is ‘discipline’, which arises, firstly, out of the debate around sadomasochism’s rituals surrounding ‘discipline’; and secondly, out of the setting of YY1 in a school, and a community where its youth are struggling to find stability. ‘Discipline’ exists somewhere on the minefield laid by apartheid fascism and in YY1 is sought by an abusive principal, by the drug lords, by vigilantes in the township and by students themselves—in each case, ‘discipline’ means something different, but the meaning is always coloured by South Africa’s past. Harriet Perlman, YY’s head of research, says the discussion about discipline arose in the context of the outlawing of corporal punishment in South African schools shortly after independence in 1994. There was a lot of discussion about alternatives to the rod, she says, and YY1 “takes this on” in the course of telling the story about the struggle for education—and particularly for a

⁴⁸ Interview with Angus Gibson, Teboho Mahlatsi, Desiree Markgraaff and Harriet Perlman on 1 April 2003, Johannesburg.

⁴⁹ The Bomb. Unpublished notes dated 6 March 2004, written by Desiree Markgraaff.

new type of education—in a township school. Closely linked to the trope of discipline is that of respect—the struggle of characters to gain the respect of their peers, family members, teachers (or pupils), in an environment where abusive behaviour has become the tool of the powerful.

The textual analysis in the following chapter will also take on board the critical categories of race, class, gender and generic conventions and will draw attention, among other categories, to intertextual references. I have tried to find a way to map Genette's categories as well as normally unmapped instances of political memory and the tension arising from the meeting of traditional values with new, democratic approaches to teaching and parenting. I have also tried to include 'producerly intertextual concerns' such as references to patriarchy and homoeroticism, favourite films and books, as well as to the motifs they seem to enjoy using (which for this viewer were chickens, apples, guns, cars, dogs and China balm).

Chapter 4

A dialogue of violence/s in red and green, or black and white

This chapter looks at the way intertextuality is used to highlight political memory against certain race, class and gender triggers in the reddened sets of YY1; the greened frames of YY2; and in the colour-drained sequences depicting lifestyle violence. Because Chapter 5 examines the transitional characters, or archetypes, that represent the different forms of violence used in YY1 and YY2 and Chapter 6 speaks to youth culture, consumption and lifestyle violence, all these references have been removed from the textual analysis below.

The text is mapped as follows: class **C**; discipline **D**; dialogic violence **DV**; gender **G**; generic conventions **GC**; negotiations about a different type of education **NE**; patriarchy **P**; political memory **PM**; political violence **PV**; race **R**; retributive/restorative violence **RV**; the relations of abuse **SMV**; sexual violence **SV**; violence towards the self **SEV**; sexism **SX**; traditional values **TV** traumatic violence, revisited, **TVR**; violence silence **VS**.

Intertextual references are marked **I**, with frequently an additional symbol after a colon to indicate the type of intertextuality. These symbols appear as follows: Mendacious **I:m**, intratextuality **I:i**, allusion **I:a**, quotation **I:q**, reference **I:r**, auto-citation **I:ac**, classic storyline **I:cs**, celebrity **I:c**, intertextual reference to political memory **I: to PM**. Motifs are marked **M** and indicate guns **M:g**, apples **M:a**, chickens **M:c** and dogs **M:d**. In addition, the categories **PI** and **CM** have been marked to indicate producer issue and childhood memory.

YY1 and YY2 scrutinize the trope of 'discipline' itself—firstly, to establish its meaning in the school, in the community, and for the youth who struggle to find stability; and secondly, in the choice of collusion between abuser and abused in the bondage rituals of sado-masochism.

The ongoing tensions in both texts arise out of clashes between those who have bought into the values—which can usually only be sustained through violence—of an earlier order, and those who present a challenge to what these values represent. The school principal, Mthembu, and the patriarch, Nyembe, in standing for ‘order’, ‘discipline’ and ‘traditional values’, are confronted not only by learners who resist the heavy-handedness of the elders, but also by other teachers. The new wave of politically astute teachers is led in representation by young dynamic women (Zoe Cele and Grace Letsatsi) who are intent on bringing a culture of learning to the battle-scarred township school.

Highlighted in the clash between the patriarchs and these fresh thinkers is the way the latter use the classroom to bring formal attention to the prickly contradictions and less-tended shrub ground of South Africa’s human rights culture. One such issue is self-esteem. Where Mthembu used apartheid techniques to break people’s spirits and reduce them to numbers, and where Louise humiliates and mocks her students and Ken hits on girl learners, Vuyani, Zoe, Edwin and Grace force learners to examine their sense of self-worth in different ways.

Grace effortlessly teaches self-esteem through respectful communication with learners. From their comments about him, it seems as if Vuyani slightly bores the students—except Thiza—with his endless references to the past, the mental attitudes associated with oppression, and the reasons why thinkers like Steve Biko are important. Vuyani’s refusal to take on learners’ social problems makes him less important to them than Zoe, who is for some of them a combined parent, psychologist and ‘fixer’. She constantly finds ways to position a group supportively around a traumatised individual. She sets up a support group for raped learners and finds creative ways to make guy learners speak about their ‘violent reveries’¹, drug usage or attitude to girls. Edwin’s method is to get learners to build their self-esteem while they

¹ N Chabani Manganyi’s term, from *Mashangu’s Reverie* (1977).

assemble robots and go-carts. He urges them to enter science competitions against the dreaded, elite Model C schools.

The second area of tension is around the struggle between those who simply wish to live regular lives, free of both political and criminal violence, and those who have invested in, or become damaged by violence. Just as there is a negotiation about education, so too is there an ongoing discussion about whether or not one can get by, or survive, without getting involved in, or deriving benefit from, violent actions. This negotiation foregrounds a more complex debate about race, class and gender: How to be a proud young township adult and set your own goals in a world where violence pecks and pecks at the window like the peacock in Gibson's youth. Such topics ripple constantly through the discussions and activities of the learners, working, for drama purposes, in a similar fashion to the Greek chorus.

The third area of tension concerns the relations of abuse that exist between those who perceive they have power—derived through a position at the school, in the community, in the gang world, as an adult, or as a man—and those who perceive themselves to be powerless.

The summaries of the thirteen episodes of YY1 and YY2 are explanations of relevant parts of the visual text **stripped** of messages relating to criminal violence, since most violence is simply understood as 'criminal', (as explained in Chapter 3). As a result, other violences are often not seen. Hopefully, this analysis will allow readers to give a thought to political violence, the relations of abuse, the violences meted out on account of class, race and gender, violence that turns inwards, violence suffered through trauma and the reliving of that trauma, and dialogic violence.

Because intertextuality is a tool through which audiences construct meaning, I have not used the producers' written scripts at this point to 'explain' the text, but have instead asked the producers to respond to questions arising from *my* reading of the visual text. Where relevant, the producers' comments have been inserted in the explanatory notes. Holes in my own reading and

contradictions between my own interpretations and the producers' meanings are reflected as they surface.

YY1, Episode 1, 13 January, the first day of school

Chapter 1²: The principal asks the night watchman about the graffiti on the school walls—it says 'no school' and 'more sex'. **1, D.** *The opening shot of the 'old order' principal looking at the graffiti sets up the conflict with the 'new world'. Angus Gibson says the producers deliberately used all the conventions of classical film-making, a tripod and 'wides' and 'tights' (camera angles) to convey the sense of discipline and order that the principal understands, and which is now under threat.*

Javas, Bobo and Sticks sleep. Javas's father waits outside. **2, I, D.** *Father Nyembe, viewers soon discover, is also a traditionalist. For him too, to spare the rod is to spoil the child.*

Thiza needs R20 for books. His granny takes out a hanky from her bra and counts the money. **3, C.** *For Mahlatsi, the keeping of money in one's bra is what any working class woman in a township would do. She does not have enough. Thiza says he'll get it elsewhere. Later he tells his big brother Zakes that he wants to be a writer. Zakes has offered to pay for his fees if he studies to be a lawyer: "Being a writer is a waste of a good brain...it's not about what YOU want, it's about all of us."* **4, I:c, PM.** *Celebrity intertextuality and political memory are invoked here. Although the discussion between Zakes and Thiza seems to arise from brotherly concern, it is a reference to a bigger South African issue playing itself out at the time YY1 was filmed: the trial and imprisonment of 'The People's Poet' Mzwake Mbuli³. Mahlatsi confirms in the Directors' Commentary that Mbuli's trial has directly informed the scenes in*

² Chapters are demarcated on the DVD of YY1. At the time of writing, YY1 was available in DVD and video format while YY2 and YY3 were only available in video format and were not arranged in chapters. However, there was a plan to convert YY2 and YY3 to DVD format in late 2004.

³ Credited with popularising poetry among black youth—although his oratory style differs from the hugely popular spoken word genre depicted in YY3—Mbuli served six years in Leeuwkop Maximum Security prison between 1997-2003 for armed robbery.

which Zakes asks Thiza: “How are books going to help you?” In saying, “This is not only about YOU”, Zakes informs Thiza that Zakes himself might need legal protection at a later stage. He appeals to Thiza’s sense of family, and community, in much the way a Mafioso might (so there is an additional intertextual reference, when the Godfather ancestor texts weave into the narrative at a later point). This reverberates within the trope of ‘ubuntu’ for a (black) South African audience, thus providing an additional reference to political memory.

While the Shai family has breakfast, Nomsa looks at herself in the mirror. Her skirt is too short; she feels her legs are exposed. **5, G.** *Nomsa has ‘grown’ in a way youth culture will not accept: she is plump. This is the first indicator of the body issues that plague her throughout the series. In Episode 1, Chapter 2, a schoolboy will comment on Nomsa’s thighs, saying he wants to put chilli on them and thus suggesting she is plump and tasty, like a chicken, and ‘hot’.*

Pupils queue to pay money owed for books before they register. **6, PM, C.** *Again, a ‘township’ memory delivered by Mahlatsi. Students from poor homes often had a problem paying for their books. The schools insisted the books they had taken in the previous school year be paid for before they registered for the new year.*

“I have met such types before, straight from university, new ideas...they want to change everything. You will learn that the real world is different,” the principal says about the new teacher Zoe Cele. **7, D, C, TV, PM, resistance to NE, G.** *For Mthembu, Zoe is threatening on a number of levels. By challenging his ideas about discipline, she questions the way in which he has positioned himself in society, and the way he has reproduced apartheid methodology in his school.*

Chapter 2: Papa Action and the gang punish Bobo for not paying up for drugs. They push Bobo’s head into the shit in the loo. They chant ritualistically, “In the name of the father, the son and the spirit of Satan. Eat you dog.” **8, SMV, D, PI, I** *“The ritual of the ducking was put together by the actors,” says Gibson. “The chain was brought in by Ronnie [Nyakale, Papa*

Action in YY1], it was not in the script. The whole idea was entirely theirs.” Mahlatsi adds: “We had established through the research that toilets were often no-go areas in schools. But the elegance of the scene came from the way elements like water, the baptism idea, were used to express violence.” Mahlatsi talks of the ‘elegance’ rather than the violence of this scene, which is constructed, in terms of camera angles, from the point of view of the perpetrator. It does not attempt to capture the confusion or fear of the victim—although it could be argued that despite this, parts of the audience may **feel** the victim’s fear and not necessarily relate to the triumph of the bullies. It is possible that Mahlatsi’s enjoyment of the scene has to do with the rituals of Catholicism he spoke about in the interview. Danny Boyle’s Trainspotting (1996) had been on circuit, so this might be an additional, though unmentioned, reference as it also contains a violent toilet scene.

In the staff room the shallow teacher Louise makes catty comments to Zoe about her dreads, “Are those still in fashion?” **9, G/C**. Louise relates to Zoe as a threat (another pretty woman who might gobble up some of the ‘space’ Louise enjoys with the men at the school). There is no sisterly interaction. By saying Zoe has an old-fashioned hairstyle, Louise suggests she does not have the wallet to pay for new fashions. Later she asks Zoe if she is married, or if she has a boyfriend. **10, G** Besides the way in which she is judging Zoe—in relation to whether or not she ‘has a man’—Louise tries to steer Zoe towards Edwin. She does not want competition when it comes to the flirtatious bachelor, Ken. She tells Zoe Edwin is a widower with two daughters—hence ‘instant family’ for Zoe.

Later the gangster, Chester, will challenge Principal Mthembu, who has him thrown out of school. **11, D, TV**. Mthembu is most comfortable with ‘old order’ tactics—he must destroy what he cannot control.

Chapter 3: Thulani, a 23-year-old ex-combatant, compulsively draws pictures depicting political violence. **12, PM, TVR**. His drawings make an intertextual

link with the memory of the freedom struggle, and the sacrifices, including that of education, of township youth. In the course of this episode Thulani has a panic attack in the toilet. Political memory here is represented as recurring traumatic memory. 13, PM, I:m, R,G. Abuse in terms of race is linked to abuse in terms of gender, through a Sowetan billboard saying 'Girl raped, teacher held'. One does not know if this is mendacious intertextuality or a real billboard. It is a reference, however, to the memory of the rape pandemic sweeping South Africa, particularly of babies, toddlers and young girls. 'Sex with a virgin cures Aids' was supposedly the rapists' rationale. How widespread this belief was, or who held it, was never established with any degree of certainty in the media. However, the mass circulation of stories of the rape of infants and schoolgirls predated by several years the rape of nine-month-old Baby Tshepang by 23-year-old David Potse at Louisvale, near Uppington in October 2001. Lara Foot Newton's play's Tshepang, the story of the baby's mother, got a standing ovation when it opened at the Grahamstown festival in 2004.

Principal Mthembu tells the teachers in the staff room to implement his three rules: smart dress, cleanliness and discipline. "Habit must win over their minds," he tells the staff, and he indicates that he wants them to use the rod. Zoe questions whether corporal punishment is allowed by law. **14, D, NE, SMV, TV.** *It is not allowed.*

The girls clean the toilets and discuss how such work prepares them for marriage. **15, G.** *There is an acceptance among these teenage girls that when they get married, they will be responsible for the domestic work in the family.* Nomsa is a little rude to Hazel. "At your previous school, did not you clean toilets?" she wants to know. **16, C** *Nomsa suggests that Hazel went to a fancier school—hence, she comes from a richer family where other people are paid to clean the toilets.*

Bobo to Sticks and Javas (about the new girl at school, Hazel): "If I had a girl like that, I wouldn't let her out. I would keep her as my love slave". **16, G, SMV.** *An ongoing fantasy, for some of the adolescents in YY, is to 'own' a*

beautiful girl who will give them sex on demand. Because it is clear that only the guys with money seem to be getting girls on this basis, the link between getting sex and having money (which you can only have through a gangster lifestyle) is tightened. However, the fantasy of a 'love slave' is also part of the S&M repertoire, so refers to collusion as an element of the relations of abuse. The episode ends with Chester's hijacking of a Department of Education van at gunpoint and making the driver crawl on the ground. 17, M:g, SMV. I suggest SMV violence here, as opposed to CV, because of the way Chester chooses to humiliate the driver.

Episode 2: 19 January, 2nd week begins.

Chapter 4: "Live for today," Sonnyboy tells Hazel on the way to school. "Who knows, you might not see tomorrow". 1, PM. Sonnyboy, like many other township youth, does not believe that he or Hazel will have long lives. Crime or Aids, reads the subtext, might take them.

School assembly. The principal introduces Zoe Cele. Papa Action jokes loudly about the 'Rasta baby', presumably because of her hairstyle—she wears short dreadlocks. The principal spots Sticks's dreads, dismisses the students, and starts whipping and humiliating Sticks. The principal obviously regards dreadlocks, like Rastas, as subversive and undermining of 'discipline'. He cannot take a new teacher aside and challenge her hairstyle. Instead, he beats the living daylight out of a learner sporting a slightly wilder version of Zoe's hairstyle. 2, SMV posing as D.

Kids in Zoe's class watch Sticks being made to do press-ups. They laugh about "Umkhonto" and say Sticks is in the army now. 3, PM and I. A reference to *Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK)*, the armed wing of the revolutionary alliance comprising the ANC, the South African Communist Party (SACP) and the South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU). "In the army now" refers both to the levels of fitness required of MK members, but also to the Daniel Petrie movie *In the Army Now* (1994) and the Status Quo song of 1986. The

learners remind Zoe she has to watch out for Mthembu the headmaster: “You also got dreadlocks, Ma’am”.

Chapter 5: Ken gives an essay assignment which can be entered into a national competition: “In order to understand the present and foresee the future, you have to understand the past. Discuss”. He asks Mantwa to clean the blackboard and then comments on her “dress code”. **4, PM, G.** *Ken wants the class to discuss how the apartheid past has affected them, but at the same time, in displaying predatory behaviour towards his pupil, he reproduces his own oppression.*

Zoe wants to teach the play Sophiatown, as a set work. **5, I to PM, PI:** *Zoe’s wish to set up a drama group to act it invokes thoughts about the workshopping methods of Barney Simon of the Market Theatre and of Sophiatown’s director Malcolm Purkey of Junction Avenue (and thoughts about the way Yizo Yizo was workshopped). Gibson, in his interview named Purkey as a major influence.* Outside, the Principal Mthembu makes Sticks cut off his braids. **6, SMV in the name of D.**

Ken asks the class: “Who was Hottentot Eva, what was her real name?” He asks Hazel, who does not know. Thiza knows the answer. **7, I to PM, SMV cycle of abuse.** *In another episode, Snowey will describe how, after a class on the Khoi people, she and Ken became lovers. She fell pregnant and had his baby. Ken now appears to be repeating the exercise (child abuse, beginning of a new cycle of abuse, involving the sister and triggered by the same signifier, ‘the Khoi’). Whether, for Ken, Snowey’s light complexion reminds him of ‘the Khoi’ we do not know, but he remembers Snowey in association with the discussion on the Khoi, and now appears to be interested in Snowey’s younger sister Hazel. “How many languages could Sol Plaatje speak?” Ken asks. His roving eyes rest on Hazel. He asks her about her sister Snowey.* **8, I to PM going on simultaneously with SMV, G. SX.**

“Is Steve Biko’s I Write What I Like relevant to the essay topic?” Thiza asks. Ken responds that “Ken Mokwena’s Stop Bugging Me is more relevant”.

Mthembu parades Sticks through the various classes, and makes him apologise for showing the school a lack of respect **9, SMV, D**. *This public humiliation of Sticks mirrors, in more grotesque relief, exactly what is going on in Ken's classroom, in his behaviour towards Thiza, Hazel and Mantwa.*

Zoe, in the staff-room, expresses how appalled she was by the way Principal Mthembu humiliated Sticks. "This display of prehistoric savagery, just because of a hairstyle, please". **10, NE, TV**. *Zoe does not buy into the relations of abuse and speaks her mind fearlessly.* Louise thinks it is fitting treatment for the "scum in the school". Edwin thinks if corporal punishment is taken away, it should be replaced by "something else". **11, C, G, SX**. *Louise often talks in an 'us' and 'them' way. Ken agrees with Zoe for his own reasons. He uses her language, 'respect' and 'democracy', but clearly wants a removal of Mthembu's style of discipline because it is hard work. Also, he is trying to chat up Zoe.*

Episode 3: 16th February, one month later

Chapter 7: (Everything is red) The assembly sings Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrica. **1, D, PM, DV**. *The singing of Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrica situates the series within the post-apartheid era, but the form of discipline imposed by the principal suggests an apartheid mentality. Two sets of memory are dialogically juxtaposed for the rest of this chapter. Javas is late and can not get into school. He makes a hole in the fence, watched by Mr Moloi, the night watchman. The principal announces 'the rules' for the electing of the Learners' Representative Council (a formation that emerged out of the student unrest of 1976 and 1981). Cele's class nominates Bobo as a candidate. Bobo: "I promise you all liberation, down with oppression". **2, I to PM**. *Bobo uses struggle terminology, reinforcing the memory of student resistance to apartheid.**

Chapter 8: Ken's class. He announces the names of the class representatives and takes the chance to touch Hazel. **3, SMV**. *This suggests*

Ken will act upon his sexual impulses. Zoe's class: she announces that the representatives are Nomsa and Javas.

Watchman Moloi comes to fetch Javas, the headmaster wants to see him. Javas cowers, terrified. He offers to clean Moloi's shoes, says he will give him the sheep's head he has for lunch. Principal Mthembu says he will tell Javas's father that Javas has violated the school's property. "If you want to be treated like a child, you'll do child's work. From now on you'll ring the bell," he tells Javas. **4, SMV.** *The threat of actual violence does not materialise. However, the accompanying humiliation does.*

Louise's class. Papa Action sends her a paper plane with the words, "I want you for breakfast, lunch and supper." **5, SMV, G, PM.** *This is the mirror image of Ken's response to his girl pupils. Louise, as someone who considers herself to be of a better class than the students, frequently talks disrespectfully to them. She says now, "Some filthy ghetto rat is dreaming. I say to you, you better wake up, go to the toilet and relieve yourself." Papa Action stands up. Louise: "Hey you hobo, where you going?" Papa Action: "I'm going to the toilet...to relieve myself". **6, C, SMV.** Every comment pumps up the level of violent expectation here. The use of the term 'relieve' directly points to sexual activity as a way of releasing pent-up violent energy.*

Zoe's class. Lesego proposes that Nomsa chair the SRC session. **7, G, PM.** *Positioning oneself as a leader, in the face of so many threats, shows the mettle required of girl learners and for that matter of women who want to get ahead in society. Zoe goes to the principal's office to get the netball kit for the match. Principal Mthembu warns her not to continue with the drama in the afternoons, the pupils have too many extramural activities. Zoe says she wants to consult the governing body about this. Principal Mthembu points out that Zoe is a temporary teacher. **8, NE, D, PM.** Although this is a continuation of the clash between Principal Mthembu and Zoe ('the old and the new'), political memory of the democratic institutions that the students of the 1970s and 1980s fought for is invoked by Zoe's saying she would like to consult the governing body.*

Chapter 9: Principal Mthembu nearly hits the roof when he finds the science students crawling around in a gravity and friction experiment. He goes into the SRC meeting, wanting to know who is president. It is Lesego. Principal Mthembu sets the 'ground rules' for discipline. "You'll be my eyes and my ears," he tells them. Nomsa points out that SRCs are supposed to be part of the officially recognised governance structure.

While Hazel and the girls play netball, they have an audience. Chester eats an apple as he watches Hazel and asks: "Who's that young beauty?"

"That's Hazel, beauty of the earth, the morning star. She is yours, take her," Papa Action responds. Chester tries to do exactly that, but Sonnyboy steps in with a gun and pulls Hazel into the taxi. Thiza, Javas and Sticks come up. "They're jackrolling our women," they say. **9, M:a. M:g, SMV, PM.** *The apple and gun motifs are generally invoked wherever the viewer must expect sexual violence to follow. 'Jackrolling' is the term for gang rape that takes the form of groups of men coming in vehicles to the school grounds and abducting schoolgirls.*

Episode 4: 17 March, a day later

Chapter 11: Various students, including Gunman and Nomsa, are locked out of school. The district education officer (DEO), a Mr Mahlatsi (*autocitation because of Teboho Mahlatsi*) comes to see the teachers. Assembly is interrupted so he can speak to Principal Mthembu about why certain pupils have been refused permission to attend school. Mthembu tells him: "I do not have honours from Cape Town but I do know my community...the system that I use has never failed". **1, NE, plus R, C and D.** *For Principal Mthembu, the educational opportunities he has been denied show that he is a man sprung from a certain community (read, township) which expects him to uphold discipline, unlike Mahlatsi who has nothing—no background, no experience but an education 'from Cape Town' (read, bastion of apartheid in the present).* Mthembu tells DEO Mahlatsi he wants to get rid of Zoe Cele—she is a "disruptive force". The students who were late are taken by night watchman

Moloi to a room to wait for Principal Mthembu; they are lined up facing the wall. Nomsa follows Mthembu, saying it's unfair. **2, D, NE, G questioning SMV**. Nomsa, in questioning the Principal's methods, gets a beating in turn, until Mthembu is stopped by Zoe Cele and Edwin Thapela. "You, I want you out of my school" Principal Mthembu tells Zoe. Ken gets all the gawping students to go "back to the torture chambers". Later Nomsa's mother and the DEO visit Principal Mthembu's office to lodge a complaint and the DEO promises an investigation.

Chapter 12: Principal Mthembu tenders his resignation, hands over his keys to the night watchman, possibly the only person who understands his methods.

Episode 5: 25 March, a week later

Chapter 13: Javas goes outside to fetch water and his father beats him. "Where did you sleep last night?" He wants to know why Javas has not gone to his granny's place in the country. Javas says he is not going there, he wants to go to school in the township. **1, D. Nomsa may have won the last round of debate with Mthembu, about what constitutes appropriate discipline at the school, but Javas has got a long way to go with his father.**

Chapter 14: Zaza is worried about Mthembu's resignation. "But this is not fair, people, after eight years as a principal, because you simply caned a student," she says. Teachers discuss candidates for acting principal. Louise bets on her new Versace dress that it will be Ken. Zoe and Edwin think that would be a disaster. **2, NE. At issue: how does an institution transform itself?** Graffiti on the classroom wall says 'Freedom at Last'. **3, I to PM. The reference is simultaneously to Martin Luther King and to the struggle. Principal Mthembu's resignation spells 'freedom'.** When Mr Nyembe, Javas's father, pitches up to remove Javas from the school, Zoe Cele attempts to reason with him. Her arguments fall on deaf ears.

Chapter 15: Ken Mokwena is announced the acting principal.

Edwin talks to Mr Nyembe, tries to reason with him about sending Javas away. Javas's father eventually relents: "I'm leaving him with you, to teach him respect". **4, D, TV**. *Something in Edwin's manner reaches Nyembe. Also, he listens to Edwin because he is a man, when he did not listen to Zoe.*

Episode 6: 1st April, last day of first term.

Chapter 16: Ken, currying favour from learners, by making statements such as "get in line for the slaughter" as they file into assembly, announces an end-of-term bash to cheers from Papa Action.

Later in the day Thiza questions the mark he has been given for his work; Ken shoos him away, saying he is "busy".

The SRC must raise funds and define its duties for the bash. Nomsa and Javas must go shopping. Javas ignores everyone, he is reading Isaac Asimov (I).

Chapter 17: Chester persuades Ken to admit him to school even though he does not have "results", testimonials or any documentation. Chester is, however, wearing a pistol. **5:M:g**. Thiza finds that the school test papers have not been marked and confronts Ken. In the same way that Nomsa challenged Mthembu and Javas challenged his father, Thiza challenges Ken's abuse of power. Ken does not like Thiza "challenging my authority" and writes 52% on the paper. Edwin quizzes Ken about why he let Chester, a known gangster, into the school.

Chapter 18: Ken talks on the phone when Edwin enters his office to confront Ken about the arrangements for locking up the school over the break. **1, NE, D**. *Where previously the kids challenged the adults about abuse of power, Edwin is now taking this on.*

Outside, the bash is in full swing. Sonnyboy takes Hazel away from the bash to "somewhere quiet". **2, G as C**. *In this, and all previous encounters between*

Sonnyboy and Hazel, gender plays itself out as class. Sonnyboy, as the more monied of the two, expects Hazel to cooperate with him even when what he wants—sex—is likely to be rough. Hazel says she does not have condoms. 3, SV to A. The greater fear for the victim of sexual violence is not pregnancy but Aids. Sonnyboy responds: “It’s not raining, is it? What is the need of a raincoat?” The first rape of the series takes place, confirming that the build up of violence was not simply happening in the viewer’s imagination.

Episode 7: 15 April, the first day of the second term

Chapter 19: Kids look at the mess in the aftermath of the bash. “How come this (mess) never happened with Mthembu?” Nomsa asks.

Hazel does not want to get up. She tells Snowey her period is late. Snowey suggests that Hazel arranges an abortion: “You do not have to have a baby with that arsehole”. Hazel feels guilty about leading Sonnyboy on, but she knows that she said, ‘no’ to sex.

Edwin confronts Ken Mokwena about the damage—he has counted 70 metres of fencing missing, seven doors that must be replaced and 35 broken windows—and for not checking on the school during the holidays.

Chapter 20: Snowey tells Hazel that Ken Mokwena is her son Themba’s father. They had to write an essay on the Khoisan and Ken said she was his best student. He has never given her a cent for Themba. 1, **SMV cycle**. *Instead of seeing a return to what is regular, the nightmarish cycles of abuse continue.*

LRC meets about cleaning up school. Graffiti on the wall behind them says, ‘Hitler has fallen’ 2, **I**. *Incongruous since there are other ‘Hitlers’ in the school.* Nomsa & Javas confront Chester, who is eating an apple (**M:a**), about not letting students use the toilet. Nomsa: “I’m sorry Comrade...” Chester: “Comrade? You’re making me dizzy”. He touches Javas’s jacket and makes a movement with his hand, to flick him away like a pest. 3, **PM**. *The use of the term ‘comrade’ recalls the days when broader political goals united the students. Chester’s rejection of the word does not bode well.*

Snowey and Hazel confront Ken about Snowey's baby. Ken insults Snowey: "You've let yourself go. You're a township girl. Now that some taxi driver has dumped you, you come to me because we spent one night together". **4, SMV, G, C and I:i.** *This intratextual reference to Sonnyboy shows that in Ken's mind, the sisters are much of a muchness. As young women of the 'township' they shouldn't have any expectations.* Snowey threatens to go to the governing body. Ken tells her to get out, and that the governing body will not believe her. **5, DV and VS.** *Not being believed against an 'official' version is what forces violence upon many abuse victims.*

Chapter 21: Nomsa finds Hazel sleeping on her desk, persuades her to have a pregnancy test. **6, G, AS.**

Nomsa's mother tells Hazel to lay a charge against Sonnyboy. **7, G, resistance to SV, SMV and VS.**

Governing body meeting. Ken does not appear. **8, Resistance to NE, resistance to having his collusion with CV and SV questioned.** Louise: "Now that my job is done here, I'm going to think about my demands at the gym".

Zoe Cele goes to see Javas's father. She wants parents to help fix up the school. **9, NE, PM.** *She is appealing to his sense of responsibility and community.*

While discussions take place to rebuild the school, Chester does another hijacking and Thiza drives Chester's car back to the township.

Episode 8, 12 June, two months later

Chapter 22: Nomsa & Javas running, talking about Ken's being the father of Snowey's kid and not pitching up for the governing body meeting. "The principal, it's a disgrace," says Nomsa. **1, GC.** *This scene is simply a generic convention to get new audience members up to speed with the key*

issues—that the youths’ demands to overturn the relations of abuse in the school have been taken up at a higher level—so that the narrative can proceed at a quicker pace.

Edwin and Zoe talk to the District Education Officer (DEO) about the situation at the school. Drug dealers operate from the toilets, teachers sleep all day in the staff room. The DEO says he will be able to come to the school the following Thursday.

Java’s father (Mr Nyembe) is fixing up the school. Java to Thiza, “Mr Smooth, the girls are all over you”. Thiza comments about how hard Mr Nyembe is working. Java: “He is McGyver, he does everything”. **2, 1. McGyver, the macho TV private investigator.**

Thiza overhears Nomsa telling Java she is worried about Hazel, who did not come to school today. Nomsa is upset about all the older men who have been seducing schoolgirls: “First it was Sonnyboy (raping Hazel), now her (Hazel’s sister Snowey)”. Thiza wants to know what’s going on. “We’re not talking to you,” says Nomsa. **3, TVR, overturning SMV.** *Thiza, viewed as having sided with the enemy, must piece together a picture from disturbing fragments he has overheard.*

The kids start a discussion about why they are playing instead of being taught history by Ken, “because he is busy with schoolgirls. Let’s ask Miss [Zoe] Cele to teach us history,” one says. **3, GC.** *Here is the chorus, reminding us about the teacher who has sex with schoolgirls.*

Thiza goes to see Hazel, who is looking after her sister Snowey’s baby. “When there was no meeting yesterday, Snowey fell apart and went drinking. She did not come home last night”. But Hazel does not blame her. “After waiting for two weeks for the governing body, they did not even bother to come. We sat waiting like fools”. **4, TVR.** *Everything experienced by Hazel, since being raped by Sonnyboy, is adding to her feeling of alienation. The system on which she depends for support is dysfunctional. There is a sense of trust being eroded.*

Nomsa and a group of friends go to fetch Louise, who is playing Scrabble in the staff-room, asking her to teach, because the kids are going wild. Louise: “What do you want me to do? The school has turned into a zoo. Do I look like a zookeeper? Go, you’re disturbing me”. **5, SMV.** *Louise’s betrayal of her pupils provides the viewer with firsthand evidence of the overturning of trust.*

Chapter 23: Louise’s classroom. Papa Action to schoolmate: “This woman is boring. She is violating our rights. You know what son, let’s change things around like a peacock”. **6, I to PM of the Constitution, I:a, M:c/PI.** *Papa Action uses constitutional speak about ‘rights’. ‘Son’ refers to the trinity that the actors have brought into the series which is in line with Mahlatsi’s childhood memories of a Catholic upbringing, while the reference to ‘peacock’ reminds us of Gibson’s memories of peacocks pecking on the glass—and the blood he expects will follow.*

Papa Action gets up on a desk and tries to make the class sing, then tries to take a girl to the toilet for sex. Louise shouts: “Hey, you animal”. Papa responds: “Relax, I’m safe...You also want this?” (he first pulls at a condom in a shooting motion, then waggles it at her). **7, a revisiting of issues in Episode 3, points 5 and 6.** Later in this episode, violence escalates to the point where Edwin is shot and taken to hospital and Thulani takes Ken hostage. The incidents are dealt with in Chapter 4.

Chapter 24: Zoe and Nomsa watch through the window as a nurse in the ICU tries to help Edwin.

Episode 9, The day after the hostage drama

Chapter 25: Javas shaves his father’s head. Nyembe is pleased about the events at the school the previous day, because ‘order’ is returning. But he’d like to see Principal Mthembu back. “He is a man amongst men”. **1, DV and TV,** *a reminder of one of the central themes of YY1.*

The kids complain about Ken sleeping with school kids. **2, SMV.** *Even though the Yizo Yizo characters are frequently confused about whether or not they can and should resist crime and abusive relationships, they are clear about the boundaries when it comes to a teacher having sex with a student. They clearly understand the abuse of power, as well as the sexual abuse. They instantly lose respect for Ken.*

As Javas arrives, there's an angry babble. The schoolgirl Mantwa's doing most of the talking. The kids are furious because there's no enquiry into Ken, Edwin was shot and 'Thulas' (Thulani) is in jail. **3, PM.** *The feeling that the previous day brought no changes, no progress, makes them question themselves: what do we stand for, are we going to put up with this terrible situation, what can we do to change things? The memory evoked here is of kids of an earlier era also being forced to take matters into their own hands.*

Chap 26. Frenetic meeting of school body. Nomsa says the SRC must give the students direction. Someone agrees: "Otherwise there'll be chaos". **4, D.** *The kids are desperately looking for leadership. But Javas resists taking charge: "What will we tell students? They'll think I'm responsible for false promises. And Ken is still in the school". Though Javas empathises with the students, he does not want to mislead them and lose their respect.*

Papa Action and Chester rape Dudu in the chicken run. **5, SV, SMV, M:c, PI and I:r.** *Gibson got the idea for the chicken run rape when he saw the space at the back of the house. "I grew up on a chicken farm with a memory of the sight of chicken heads and the sound of chickens". The idea of mimicking the chickens' sound came from the actors, he says. "Let her die for her sins" was a line developed on set by the actors, says Gibson. The idea of having Dudu raped on her stomach (raising the possibility that this is sodomy) was Dewalt Aukema's idea. The rape, with the chickens flapping about, directly relates to Njabulo Ndebele's Fools and the Ramadan Suleman/Bhekizizwe Peterson film of the same name. Chester crows. **6, reinforcement of M:c.***

Staff room. Zaza hears from Zoe that Edwin is still alive. There is noise outside. Zaza says students are gathered and “when people are in groups, they behave like animals”. **7, PM.** *Possibly she is remembering earlier instances of mob ‘justice’ and the so-called ‘kangaroo courts’ during the transitional era. These took a number of forms, from the ‘necklacing’ and ‘people’s courts’ that took place during the apartheid years, to the forums where traditional justice is meted out. In the year 2004, there are still vigilante courts in some townships.* Zoe borrows Zaza’s cellphone, makes a call to the education department. Nomsa asks Zoe to help. Students are singing. A gunman is on the roof pointing a gun (**M:g**). Students shout about their problems and Javas tries to compile a list of their demands. **8, all D and NE issues; but clearly PM to PV and M:g.**

Tempers rise even further when it emerges that Dudu’s been raped. This is dealt with further in Chapter 4.

Hazel talks to Thiza about Snowey’s pregnancy and rape. “Only after what Sonnyboy did to me I started to understand” (what Snowey had been through). “What did Sonnyboy do?” Thiza wants to know. “I’m not ready to talk about it,” Hazel says. **9, TVR.** *Telling and retelling of the trauma.*

Chapter 27: Papa Action and his cronies: they are all vrot, very high. One teacher arrives to give a warning, Chester and Papa Action are rude to him: “Have you eaten hot meat?” The teenagers march, almost toi toying, guns in air to Bra Gibb’s house. **10, PM to images of student uprisings.** *In all these scenes, there is a constant referencing to the student uprisings of the mid-1970s and the early 1980s. Now, post apartheid, there is a struggle for a new and democratic education with teachers who can be trusted not to be abusers and functionaries of the old order. The images of the students singing, meeting, debating, marching and taking action dovetail with actual documentary footage of student activism in the earlier period mentioned. These learners are enraged about the sexual violence they have to deal with—the rape issue.* Javas tries to get them to go back to the school saying, “look, there’s no one here”. Gunman, however, is after the drug dealers. Zoe:

“The issue here is rape. The cops will be here in a minute. Please”. The learners shout, “All of them must be burned”. **11, PM.** *The reference to ‘burning’ is a chilly reminder of the ‘necklacing’ of suspected informer Maki Skosana in Duduza in 1985.*

The cops and DEO Mahlatsi come. Mahlatsi speaks to the learners on a loud hailer. Everyone tries different tactics to remind the students that they have to behave in a disciplined way, but what the students actually want is action.

Dudu goes for an examination by Nomsa’s mother. She tells Mantwa about the rape, how they pulled off her skirt. “Please do not cry,” Mantwa tells her, “Papa Action is cruel”.

DEO Mahlatsi says he understands why students are angry. He says Thulas is being released and Ken Mokwena will not be principal any longer. He asks if they’re prepared to work with teachers and parents to restore a culture of learning and teaching in the school.

Zoe visits Edwin in hospital, carefully helps him to sit up. She says he’ll be asked to step in as principal. He says he is a teacher, not an administrator and wants to recommend his friend Grace, the vice-principal of Lesedi School.

PTA meeting. A parent says, “We all agree as parents this school must not fall apart”. **12, 1:q, NE.** *The intertextual quotation: ‘this school must not fall apart’, a reminder both of Chinua Achebe’s breakthrough novel Things Fall Apart (1958) in which he ‘wrote back’ to colonialism and of the words from the poet WB Yeats that inspired his title.*

Java’s father still wants the original old school principal, Mr Mthembu, back. “He served this school for 30 years”.

DEO Mahlatsi says Principal Mthembu resigned, the education department did not ask him to leave.

Episode 10, The first day of the 3rd term

Chapter 28: DEO Mahlatsi announces the results of the enquiry to the governing body: It was “gross negligence of the part of the ex-deputy principal”. Thulani, he says, is undergoing counselling. **1, NE.** *Finally pupils are able to experience a flavour of the new democratic and participatory approach to education. In the past, things would be done and not necessarily explained.*

Grace Letsatsi meets Mrs Muriel Jordan in the shop. Jordan: “What are you doing here?” Jordan’s response says to Grace: “You are too good for this place. The education is no good and kids are rude. Teach at a Model C”. Her own kids go to a decent school in town, she says. Grace Letsatsi: “I’m hoping to change that”. **2, C.** *Class again rears its head.*

Edwin, Mr Nyembe and scholars fiddle with a chain. **3, TV vs NE, I:ac.** *Symbolically, the chain links the die-hard Nyembe with the new democratic approach to education, but is also a reminder of the chain used by Papa Action in the sequence in which Bobo’s head was dunked.*

Zoe welcomes Dudu back in class. Dudu worries about seeing Papa Action. Nomsa wants her to go to the cops. Dudu is scared Papa Action will rape or kill her. **4, SV and TVR.** *For the victim of sexual violence, there is always the possibility that it will recur .*

Chapter 29: The history class that used to be taught by Ken is going wild. Someone says: “Did not you play enough as a child, or did not you play at all?” **5, PM.** *Although said in jest, it is possibly true that kids who are 17 years old in 1999/2000 **did not play at all** because they would have been toddlers during the 1980s when apartheid repression was at its height and townships were occupied by the military.*

Grace Letsatsi addresses the class about history lessons. She’ll teach it next day.

Zoe's class discusses career choices, with Grace looking on, when Chester and company drive into the school grounds, shoot into the air and frighten the students. *This is described more fully in the next chapter.*

Grace convenes a meeting of the governing body. She wants to consult the students, ask them what should be done. Louise: "All this extra work. We're expected to perform miracles". Grace: "When I feel that way I think I as a teacher can make a difference to someone's life".

"The classrooms are like Beirut," one teacher says. **6, PM.** *Intertextual reference to a time (the 1980s) when schools became sites of resistance against the forces of apartheid. Many commentators actually referred to townships like Soweto, which had been turned into war zones, as 'Beirut'. See, for example, Monique Marks' Young Warriors (2000).*

Louise says she is too scared to turn her back to write on the board.

Thiza is abducted.

Chapter 30: PTA meeting. Hazel is on her own. She asks Javas where Thiza is.

Grace addresses the PTA. A parent asks where the original principal, Mthembu, is, why a woman is now in charge. **7, D, G, NE, TV.** *These scenes are interspersed with scenes showing the brutal murder of the shopkeeper who is shot with an apple on his head, in a reference to William Tell. These are written about in Chapter 5.*

At the PTA, Javas's father has done some sort of turnaround. He says, "I'm in charge of fixing things" and asks the parents to help. Grace: "We all know why we send our children to school. They are our hope for a better world. If we work as a community, we can make it". **8, note about irony.** *As with the message in the Michael Jackson song about children being the future (because of the controversy about Jackson himself), Grace's words,*

juxtaposed as they are with the violent images of Chester and his cronies killing the bottle store managers, have an ominous ring.

One of the last images in this scene is a poster of Winnie Mandela with the words, "Winnie Mandela on Aids". **9, DV.** *The controversial leader, formerly the wife of Nelson Mandela, who famously cared about the struggles faced by her community and infamously was implicated in the death of a child, Stompie Seipei.*

Episode 11, 12 August, 3 weeks later.

Chapter 31: At school, Nomsa complains about Bobo's takkies (plimsolls). "But they do not smell," Bobo protests. Lesego intervenes: "This is not a uniform". **1, D, NE.** *The SRC is implementing the rules now.*

"Please understand, I'm poor", Bobo says. **2,C, PM.** *Post-apartheid memory of poverty and the continuing class struggle. As SRC representatives, Lesego and Nomsa are trying to get their fellow students to be more disciplined and to look good when they come to school. But their approach is middle class. They forget that not everyone has parents who earn enough to pay for each item of the uniform. Bobo does not have anyone looking after him who can buy him shoes. Shoes, to expand upon the political memory reference, were always an indicator of a family's level of poverty. Frequently, during apartheid, children simply did not attend school because their families were too poor to buy shoes.*

Lesego: "What's poverty got to do with it?" **3, I** to Tina Turner song, *What's love got to do with it?*

Later Lesego locks kids out for being late. Those locked out include Sticks. Grace tells the school about the prelims.

Chapter 32: Louise and Zaza walk. Louise: "Tell me, why does the principal call a meeting during lunch?" Zaza: "We can't interrupt school time". Louise: "What's happening to you?" **4, NE.** *She senses she is losing her allies. Louise*

is irritated that Zaza is buying into Grace Letsatsi's approach to teaching. Previously, Zaza could be depended upon to uphold the status quo, even if this meant participating in, or turning a blind eye towards, the culture of violence that has taken root in the school.

Grace in a staff meeting raises issues of sexism and gossip, says she is not having an affair with either the inspector or Edwin. She demands respect and privacy. One teacher complains about being locked out. Edwin suggests keeping the keys in the staff room so late teachers can be let in. Grace agrees, though she says they must show the students they are serious. Louise does not like Grace snooping around the classes. **5, Her shabby teaching will be exposed if she is 'watched'.**

The SRC discusses harassment. Lesego: "Learners have the right to a safe environment. That's conducive to our education". They decide on a code of conduct, which includes a clause about rape, that girls must be safe. **6, PM.** *Again, this invokes the Bill of Rights.* Nomsa raises other issues of harassment. One boy says, "We do not harass girls, we protect them". Hazel ticks him off for his attitude. "Women are not your property," she says, "you whistle at us and pass remarks". **7, SMV, SV.** The girl learners want the guys to rethink their attitudes in relationships, since there is a violent content to remarks such as, "we protect girls".

Grace's office. Zoe's read in the newspaper about temporary teachers being retrenched. Grace says not to worry.

Chapter 33: Grace tells the governing body that the shop is a base for the drug lords. **7, NE.**

Episode 12, 5 weeks later, last day of exams.

Chapter 34:

The shopkeeper finds Chester et al introducing kids to drugs and shouts at them. **1, D.** *The shopkeeper, although she had previously told Grace she*

fears for her life and will not interfere with Chester and company if they sell drugs outside the shop, now finds them doing this on the premises. It's interesting that they immediately do what she demands, and disperse.

Grace talks about the bash, planned for the following day. She invites Hazel to read the SRC's draft code of conduct for the bash.

In the staff room, Zoe gets one month's notification from the Department of Education.

Chapter 35: Grace gives Louise a written warning for being late because she went to a sale. Zoe tells the pupils she is leaving. Bobo expresses disapproval. "How can you leave us?" Javas and Nomsa discuss raising funds for her salary

Grace tells the District Education Co-ordinator it's unfair that Zoe has to go while Grace can't get rid of Louise. **2, NE.** *New rules aren't always in everyone's interests.*

Grace driving home. The thugs wait for her. They throw a bottle into her windscreen. The shopkeeper soothes her but says she cannot stay. Grace is very upset, Gunman wants to go after the thugs. The shopkeeper goes to fetch Mr Nyembe, Javas's father. **3, PM.** *The shopkeeper, still watching her back, realises the situation is getting out of control. She seeks help from someone she respects: not the police, whom she considers ineffectual, but the vigilante leader.*

Nomsa and Mantwa talk in the loo about Dudu. Nomsa wants Hazel to go for counselling.

Chapter 36: The shopkeeper talks to Javas's dad about the drug dealers. In other scenes, Zakes is shot. *This is dealt with in the following chapter.*

Episode 13: Next day. Last day of the third term.

Chapter 37: Zakes in hospital. Thiza has a gun in his belt (**M:g**). Shai's family eats breakfast. Captain Shai's going away. Thiza and Javas talking on hospital bench. Javas plans to stay with Thiza for support.

Grace tells student assembly about the drive-by shooting of Zakes. Hazel looks shocked. Sticks: "You see now, first they shoot Edwin and now Zakes, it's too much". Grace: "As a result of this, the governing body's going to take very strong security measures at the bash this afternoon. We've already asked some of your fathers to provide security, but we're also going to call on the police".

Chapter 38: Hazel joins Thiza at the hospital. "One bullet went into his spinal cord, one went into his lungs," he tells her.

Zoe's farewell. She has baked a cake. **1, G.** *Women, traditionally, bake cakes while men buy them, or have women bake them for them. Zoe, for all her progressive thinking in relation to education, constantly shows (and usually in interactions when she knows Edwin will be present) how much in touch with her own femininity she is.*

Javas's father says there is money for her to stay till the end of the year. Police station scene. Dudu, with Mantwa, lays a rape charge against Papa Action.

Thiza tells Hazel that Zakes will never walk again. Thiza thinks it is his fault, because the thugs wanted him, not Zakes.

Chapter 39: Gun-toting Gunman brings a red, painted Chester to the school and puts a gun into Thiza's hand to shoot Chester. Thiza tells Gunman to take Chester to the police. **2, PM.** *An incident in Hillbrow, when youths painted a thug and made him parade through the streets, inspired this scene, says*

Gibson. I have also marked it **PM** because in the late 1990s there were several publicised cases of human rights violations when black farm workers were painted by white farmers as punishment for alleged wrong doing. We cannot assume that youth viewers would make a connection to these incidents unless they were avidly watching TV news, reading newspapers and listening to radio commentary—as their parents and teachers would likely be doing—during the period they watched YY. The texts—newspapers, radio and TV, telling of these atrocities—form the intertextual linkages in these instances to political memory. In the absence of their having knowledge about these other texts (for it is true that many people in the audience are ‘episodic’, rather than ‘regular’ viewers) it is difficult to imagine how viewers derive meaning from the painting of Chester unless they believe he has received his ‘just deserts’. In other words, it they view his painting as a legitimate punishment for the way he has previously humiliated others.

Granny talks to Zakes, who is still on a life-support system. **3, PM**. In a normal society, it would be the older person who is on the life support system, and the younger person urging them to hold on, to come home, where they will be looked after. The reversal here makes a statement about South African society, where for decades youth have died before elders (first, because of political violence in the apartheid era; second because of Aids and crime in the post-apartheid era). Granny strokes his hand and tells him: “We’ll be together at home”. She will cook him pumpkin and his favourite foods, she says.

Chester is driven off in a police van. The community watches and applauds. At the bash, Javas announces that enough money has been raised to keep on Zoe Cele. Zoe: “I really did not expect this. I love you all and I’m staying”.

Bra Gibb comes to the school to present a cheque, which Grace declines, saying he does not have a child at the school, he is not welcome and please would he go. **4, resistance to SMV, statement about NE**. The bash is in full swing. Even Edwin and Zoe are dancing. Bobo and Sticks walk out. “I’m tired of this life, we must find something new,” says Sticks.

Bobo offers his services to Bra Gibb as a drug dealer. **5, GC, promise of continuation of SMV, cycle of abuse.** *Bobo's wish to continue a cycle of abuse that might otherwise have ended here is a narrative device, promising viewers that the story will be continued.*

Bra Gibb says Bobo must first wash, he smells. **6, P, C.** *Bobo is poor, which means he has limited access to water, soap and deodorant. The violent lifestyle he aspires to, on the other hand, requires its henchmen to look and smell like dandies.*

Yizo Yizo 2 (YY2)

Note: there are no chapters or timelines written at the beginning of episodes and at the time of writing (2004) there was no DVD, the format used for viewing YY1.

Episode 1

Flashback to William Tell scene. Chester makes the shopkeeper put an apple on his head and shoots him. **1, RT, l:cs, M:a, TVR,** *Intertextual reference to the story William Tell and the apple, but also a way of showing how traumatic violence replays itself in memory.* Close-up of a face. An eye opens. Thiza has been dreaming. He is on his bed. He hits his shoe against the wall to kill a spider. **2, l:cs.** *The classic storyline is 'The spider and the fly'. Thiza is feeling trapped.*

Gogo feeds the chickens. **3, CM/PM, M:c, PI.** *All the producers have some sort of childhood memory of chickens.*

Thiza: "I do not know why we feed them, we should eat them". Gogo: "Those eggs are keeping you alive...wake up that brother of yours".

Thiza enters Zakes' very blue, but dark room and wakes him up. Zakes is in a belligerent mood. Thiza finds an old viewmaster, through which you look at

pictures and click to make the image change. He looks through it—at mountains, a ship—smiling and clicking. **4, CM/PM.** *The childhood memory of the viewmaster reminds one how a child might believe that a click is all it takes to change the world. In terms of political memory, the images captured are inappropriate to the township reality and remind one how children in townships did not have access to toys that spoke about a world they knew. It is rather a toy for the children of colonisers.* Then Thiza helps Zakes, who still cannot walk after the shooting, to get into his wheelchair. Thiza wants a lift to see the prosecutor. While he is being driven there in Zakes' car and while describing the incident to the woman prosecutor, he has flashbacks. **5, TVR.** *Thiza wants redemption but must replay the trauma endlessly to get it.*

"Exactly how many times did Chester shoot? You must get the story right," the prosecutor says, "see you in court on Wednesday". As Thiza leaves, he passes the widow of the shot shopkeeper Jacob Lentswe, who is also waiting to see the prosecutor.

Javas returns from the countryside. Bobo and Sticks joke about how 'black' he has become. Bobo says he thought "I'd see you with torn-off pants like those rural boys crossing the Crocodile River with bags on their heads". They are disparaging about "that country smell". **6, R, C, PM, almost X.** *This discussion alludes to the class divide between (poor) people in townships and 'rural' people, and has ethnophobic and xenophobic connotations. The reference to poorer people as smelly and 'black' seems to be a suggestion that apartheid practices have reformulated themselves in a new era.*

Lily, looking serious, is going to speak to Grace Letsatsi about her recommendation that Mantwa be kept back a year. Mantwa: "Ask them about those who failed and were promoted and what about me? And Mama, tell them this year I'm prepared to work hard". **7, NE and PM.** *This reflects the debates going on in the educational sector circa 2000, about how to level the educational playing fields so that those who had suffered under Bantu Education could have a chance to catch up.*

Jail cells: the voice over intercom is looking for 'Ben Makeena'. **8, PM.** *The white voice mispronouncing the name is a reminder of the way most South African whites never learnt or bothered to teach themselves to say African names correctly.*

Prisoners in blue overalls hoe and plant in a garden. **9, PM.** *Who is a criminal? And who is a political prisoner? This shot makes one think about prisoners under apartheid.*

Grace and Edwin show Thiza they support him for taking the stand as a state witness against Chester (for hijacking) and killing the shopkeeper.

Guys ask Zakes, in a wheelchair, if he can still 'get it up'. **10, G (masculinity) told through H.** *The crude suggestion here is that a man without legs is somehow emasculated. Zakes says he gets more action in a wheelchair than they get. There is a joke about China balm. 11, M:Cb. Tiger or China balm can be used to 'inflamm' sex.*

Zoe meets Maggie Peterson, the new guidance teacher, who has lost her job at an elite school because of staff cuts and has to come to work at Supatsela against her will. **12, C and Re.** *Maggie's fears are class based, that she will suffer loss of respect for teaching at a township school. Grace says she'll have a problem adjusting, and mentions there is another new teacher coming as well who has such good qualifications he could easily have been a principal.*

Lily talks to Edwin about Mantwa. Edwin says Mantwa is not working. They have a row. **13, TV vs. NE.** *Because Lily is older, she expects the younger Edwin to treat her with respect; but for Edwin the bigger issue is how the new education system should be interpreted.*

There is a Parent Teachers' Association discussion in the staff room about "pushing up" learners who are lagging behind. Everybody feels strongly about it, one way or another. **14, I:ac, D, NE, PM and affirmative action.** *Although this refers to educational debates in both YY1 and YY2, it also links to a broader political debate in post-apartheid society about affirmative action.*

Women clean the church. Gogo puts holy water in a bottle. **15, PI, I:cs.** *The rituals with the holy water, from Teboho's memory, form an important part of Thiza's 'cleansing'; they simultaneously refer to rituals relating to Jesus Christ and refer intertextually to Ndebele's 'The Prophetess', who would lay her hands on a bottle of water to make it have curing powers⁵.*

Thiza watching, holds Hazel's photograph. Zakes is on his bed, drinking. He looks through the viewmaster, imagines getting up from wheelchair, kicking ball. He gets angry when he realises it's a fantasy and throws down the viewmaster. **16, G, masculinity.** *He feels deballed. Although he joked earlier about a good sex life with no legs, the truth is that Zakes is worried that his masculinity is suffering.*

Mantwa and Lily and later the PTA discuss the high matric failure rate.

Police come for Thiza while the family, plus Hazel, are eating. They speak about the hijacking charges. Gogo asks if Thiza can eat first. Hazel: "Do you think Thiza was right to testify?" **17, TV, G.** *Gogo, the traditional matriarch, insists on food first. Hazel, the girlfriend, reveals her own fears by asking the question.*

Episode 2

Scenes of Chester and Papa Action getting sentenced to 18 years. They are taken to Leeuwkop Maximum prison. Chester's hair is shaved off. **1, PM.** *Again, the overwhelming memory is of the treatment of black detainees under apartheid. As viewers we will shortly witness a serious violation of human rights when it comes to the rape of Chester within prison. Before we experience it, it is necessary to consider whether with regard to the notions of crime and punishment in YY, there has been sufficient information provided thus far in YY2 to remind viewers of the specific acts of violence Papa Action and Chester have committed.*

⁵ In Njabulo S. Ndebele (1983), Fools and other stories.

There's a reference to Teboho's clipboard with his name on it. **2, I:i** *There's an intratextual reference to the filming process and a reminder that there are different directors on board for this project.*

Mr Nyembe tells Javas he does not want him to see Thiza or have him in the house. "I decide what happens in this house," he says. Mrs Nyembe sits in the bedroom, listening to this discussion. "But father, he is my best friend," Javas protests. "He is a car hijacker, a drug addict and furthermore, I do not want him to go back to the school," Nyembe says. **3, P, D, TV, G.** *For the patriarch, Thiza's arrest is proof that traditional values have broken down, that things are falling apart and that discipline must be restored. The shot of the mother, helplessly listening in the bedroom, makes a statement about the gender relations in this household.*

Kekeletso (KK) and her mom talk to Grace. KK's mom cannot afford boarding school after the murder of KK's Dad. Grace says she understands, tells Kekeletso her door is always open. **4, G, NE.** *Another statement about gender—female dependency on males—but Grace, showing her commitment to working not just with students but with entire communities, is trying to offer moral support as another adult figure available to KK.*

Assembly underneath a tree. **5, PM.** *Education under colonialism and education under apartheid often took place not in classrooms but in the open, under trees. The use of the outdoors here is a reminder of the legacy of Bantu Education.*

Kids singing. Grace greets them. She reports to them on the dire results from last year, says pushing students up to the next grade does not help. **6, RI, NE.** *In 'real time' South Africa was dealing at this point with Kadar Asmal's ideas about 'Outcomes-Based' education. Grace's stance reflects the huge debate that took place in the educational sector about this very issue.*

Guys talks in front of Zakes about a "bourgeois girl from a multiracial school". Zakes says: "the township is messing with your minds". **7, G, C, H, PM.**

Although funny in a crude way, the banter reflects the national obsession with race and class, and the origin of this obsession.

Zoe tells the assembly about Thiza testifying. **8, NE, Re.** *As a new style teacher, Zoe is determined to treat the learners with respect and praise them when they do brave things.*

Gunman tries to get R5 each from kids to pay Thiza's bail. "Thiza is the main man, we can't let him rot in jail". **9, PM.** *The memory recalled here is of community involvement with prisoners and detainees, such as the Detainee Parents' Support Committee.* Sticks is of the opinion they should 'buy' the docket from Madlebe the cop. **10, PM.** *Corruption, clearly, did not die out in the apartheid era.*

Teachers' room. Grace announces she is going to introduce homework hour. Vuyani Novuka objects, saying teachers should be consulted first, Resolution 7 says they are only supposed to work seven hours. Edwin: "Teaching is a vocation". Vuyani: "Funny how the department always uses the word 'vocation' when it is about to exploit us". **11, NE, RI, PM.** *Vuyani's use of the word 'exploitation' is a reminder of race exploitation.*

Vuyani introduces himself to the class. "I promise this is going to be (history) different from the way you have been taught before. You are going to reflect on your own pasts". Sticks: "Please, not the deep stuff". **12, PM, H.** *The humour lies in the reality factor—that many post-apartheid youths do find endless discussion on apartheid boring, even though the point being made here is that the past clearly affects the present.*

Zoe and Edwin discuss Vuyani Novuka. Edwin: "I do not like Novuka's attitude. He is a bit of a troublemaker. You seem to like him, I see you talking to the guy a lot". Zoe says: "You refuse to commit to me because of some dream your wife will come back to you, then get jealous when I talk to another man." **13, G, SX.** *Zoe is busting Edwin for having double standards.*

Zoe in class introduces the topic of the Learner Representative Council elections, saying students must vote for a class rep. **14, NE.** *The new educational approach also roped in learners and parents as stakeholders. ‘Gunman Marumo Farrakan’ is keen to be elected “because of the role I played in the struggle”. 15, PM, I:c. The reference to the African American Louis Farrakan recalls the million man march and the historical role in the US human rights movement played by the Black Panthers; Gunman’s statement also links to the struggles of the Diaspora—“the ties that bind” Africa, the Caribbean and African Americans⁶.*

In Elliot’s class, there’s a discussion going on about soccer. Minky asks about the LRC. Elliot says he nominates her, she will make a stunning princess. Minky giggles. **16, SMV, G, SX.** *Minky is so used to being caught up in a cycle of abuse and being at the receiving end of inappropriate behaviour that she is flattered by Elliot’s comments. Had Elliot said the same thing to Nomsa, she would have immediately objected and reported the teacher.*

In Vuyani Novuka’s class, the kids vote for Thiza.

Zoe’s class—discussion on DH Lawrence, which some of the kids call “white man’s poison. Why not Malcolm X?” **17, I linked to AS.** *Many of DH Lawrence’s texts are read at that school-going age when learners are simultaneously discovering their sexuality. But these learners would like to read the words of someone to whom they can relate politically. “How do you feel on a Friday?” Zoe asks. “Free at last,” they reply. 18, I:q, PM. Using Martin Luther King’s words at this point, reinforces 17.*

Thiza returns to school. Vuyani’s class is still discussing resistance to apartheid. Thiza asks if he can do research on political movements, particularly black consciousness. **19, PM.** His experience in jail makes him want to engage. George in the Stone Land was a political prisoner, Thiza tells Zoe. He read the book in two days. It made him want to write about his own life. Zoe gives him Mda’s Ways of Dying and explains that it’s about a man

⁶ See Bernard Magubane (1989). The Ties that Bind. Africa World Press: Trenton, NJ.

who goes to funerals and wants to teach people about mourning. **20, I, PM.** *The intertextual links here are not only to another famous African Literature text, but to South Africa's growing 'funeral culture,' made possible because of the numbers of people dying through Aids.*

One of the main storylines in this episode concerns Mantwa's reading problems, but is analysed in Chapter 5. It emerges that Lily cannot read and write. She had to work in a factory. She buys the newspaper, she confesses, and pretends to read to hide her shame. **21, PM.** *The bulk of black people of Lily's generation were never educated.*

Lily tells Mantwa: "By not going back to school you are spitting in my face". **22, SMV as TVR.** *It's a constant revisiting of the original humiliation.*

Thiza is moodily watching the flames of a fire made by someone for warmth. He watches KK and her mother opening the garage. Dudu, Mantwa and Hazel discuss KK. It's unfair of her to come to school as her presence will always remind Thiza of *his* presence at her father's murder by Chester. KK should leave, not Thiza. What school, Hazel asks the others, is going to accept an awaiting trial hi-jacker?

Zoe calls Mantwa, says she missed Mantwa in class, offers to help. Hazel and Dudu watch. Mantwa resists Zoe's offer.

Thiza writes on glass: "All I'm asking for is a chance..." **23, GC.** *The repeating of these scenes, and interspersing the Thiza and Mantwa arcs is a soap-opera technique designed to make the viewer identify simultaneously with the dilemmas of both learners.*

PTA meeting. Mr Nyembe talks about Thiza's involvement in the hijack. Thiza: "When you are young you have many goals in life. I realised only people with money succeed. The girl I loved turned me down because I was poor. The previous principal lost our papers". **24, C, R, PM, Co, NE.** *Here Thiza gives a socio-economic explanation about why he became involved in*

crime. And by involving himself with the victim, he wants to achieve the sort of reconciliation that is playing itself out on the broader South African stage. The story has gone full circle.

Thiza: “I was frustrated, did not care, then Chester came along. My brother warned me I was in a river. I was sinking, unable to pull. In my family we live on my grandmother’s pension. All I ask is a chance...to finish my matric”.

Prison: Chester and Papa Action have a cold shower. They are yelling. **25, D, SMV** and a quick reminder for the viewer of how Thiza’s life will turn out if he is not given a chance.

Thiza: apologises to widow of shopkeeper who was killed, asks if he can do anything. She wants him to help with the shop. He agrees. **26, PM.** *There is something of a TRC-type reconciliation going on here.*

Episode 3

Youth thugs mug a schoolboy. They make off with his necklace and bag. **1, PM, CM.** *An ordinary day, an ordinary mugging.*

Thug boys trouble Dudu. Snowey intervenes. Dudu tells Hazel about it. She is worried about the rape court case and having to deal with Chester and Papa Action in court. Hazel says she knows how Dudu feels, tells her about her own rape by Sonnyboy, explains how hard it is to come to school, how very tired she is. **2, G, CV, TVR.** *An ordinary day, an ordinary instance of violence against women—which triggers traumatic memory for a friend.*

Thiza goes to the prosecutor’s office.

Grace announces that the charges against Thiza have been dropped and there has been a request for a Valentine’s Day bash by the LRC.

Maggie comments: “We did not have bashes or hijackings at my last school”.

Javas on stage begs cooperation. The event will be run by the LRC. There will be no incidents as there have been at other bashes. There will be no alcohol, no drugs. Only couples will be allowed. Bobo tries to shut him up. **3, I:a, I:ac, NE.** *The Valentine's Bash brings to mind Bakhtin's banquet—the coming together of the family for the ceremonial feast. At the same time, Javas's words are a reminder of what happened at the school bash in YY1, while Maggie draws attention to the different type of education going on here.*

Banter with pupils. Learners are sent back to class.

Pupils dancing. “Look, here's coconut” they say when the Model C boy comes by. **4, C, PM.** *Coconut refers to a black person who is perceived to be ‘black on the outside, white on the inside’, a reference to kids who go to posh schools or speak with ‘white’ accents. Elliot kisses some girls in the classroom.*

Edwin enters. “What is this? I'd like to see you outside!”

“What is this?” Elliot mimics him to the laughing girls. **5, D, Re, SMV, SX.** *Elliot is guilty of abuse and breach of discipline on so many levels; but he is also confident his job is so secure he can afford to mock Edwin in front of the girls.*

Edwin tells Elliot his behaviour is unacceptable. He can smell liquor on his breath. He must come to the office for his first letter of warning. This must not happen again. **6, NE.** *A strong sign that Elliot's nonsense will not be tolerated.* Staff rooms. Elliot shows Zoe, Vuyani and another teacher the letter from Edwin.

Vuyani: “Vote for me as a union rep. I'm going to make sure they treat us as professionals”. **7, NE.** *The debate about teachers' rights goes on.* Learners are dancing. Sonnyboy goes to fetch Rebecca, shouts to her from the fence. She is upset he is shouting, does not want to go because she is enjoying the event. There's an argument. He wants her to come out now. **8, G, SX.** *The*

loving 'sugar daddy' is starting to show he is not so loving when he does not get his way.

Sonnyboy and Rebecca continue their argument at the car.

Sonnyboy hits Rebecca. Hazel watches from a distance, starts to scream. Thiza comes up and Hazel imagines she is seeing Sonnyboy's face. **9, TVR.** *It is like a hallucination.* But Thiza races to the taxi into which Sonnyboy is forcing Rebecca. He beats up Sonnyboy. Javas breaks it up: "Do not act like Baby Jake," he says. **10, G, CV, SMV, TVR, I:c.** *'Sugar daddy' becomes violent, creating a panic attack for Hazel as she relives her own assault. Baby Jakes is a famous South African welterweight boxer. What is really being negotiated here is manhood and violence.*

Rebecca and Hazel have a moment at the fence. They stand on either side of it, looking through the wire at each other. Rebecca: "I'm sorry, Hazel". Hazel turns away. **11,** *Earlier Rebecca did not believe Hazel's story about Sonnyboy. Now trust is being restored.*

Episode 4:

Vuyani's class. He has a picture of Mandela from pre-prison days and starts talking about African Literature titles—Down 2nd Avenue, I Write what I Like, The Wretched of the Earth. The apartheid regime, powerful as it seemed to be, was frightened of books, of new ideas, he says **1, PM, I.** *Vuyani is still trying to make the learners question why the ideas of Mandela, Biko and Fanon so terrified the apartheid regime.* He picks on Hazel for not working hard enough. She is holding her sore hand. **2, NE, G.** Though he might understand race issues, he is not sensitive enough as a teacher to understand some of the battles the learners are facing today.

Hazel is cool towards Thiza and walks off. Dudu runs after her while Nomsa tries to reassure Thiza. Hazel tells Dudu she cannot concentrate, but does not know what is wrong. Dudu says it was the same till she went for counselling.

Dudu strokes Hazel's hand. **3, RI, TVR.** *This is the only type of touch Hazel can presently tolerate.*

Scenes of a stormy staff meeting about cutbacks are juxtaposed with prison scenes. In the cells, the prisoners are cleaning the floors. "Get on the bike," someone says to Chester, "do you think this is a Holiday Inn?" He mounts Chester. "You're the horse and I'm the jockey. What's wrong with this horse?" He rides Chester. "In this cell you obey my rules". **4, SMV, M:d.** *Masculine dominance is played out in the simulation of the way dogs assert their power.*

Hazel, with Dudu in the hair salon, loses her cool just as Thiza comes in, saying to the others they should not interfere in her business. Thiza tries to talk to her outside but she rejects him. **5, TVR.** *A reinforcement of the point in 3.*

Dudu does not know how she will face Papa Action and Chester in court. She tells the hospital counsellor she fears what the other students think, the way they look at her. On the wall in the room is a poster saying, "Speak out against abuse". **6, PM, I:m, DV.** *On the one hand there is a national campaign asking abused people to break the silence, on the other hand we are seeing that talking might cost people their lives. The real cannot be separated from mendacious intertextuality.*

Prison courtyard, prisoners eating. Cargo calls Chester, who is walking with his plate and cup, with Papa Action. Chester goes to the other side to sit with another gang leader. "Who called you here, go—he chases away Papa Action. He gives Chester his plate of food. He tells Chester how hard prison is, but says "if you find someone like me, everything will be all right. What do you say?" **7, PM, SMV.** *The way Cargo divides up Chester and Papa Action in order to rule Chester is a tactic we are familiar with in the political arena. The drama builds.*

Edwin and Zoe at table. Edwin's two kids kiss Zoe goodnight. Edwin: "That man (Elliot) should not be allowed to teach". **8, SMV, RV.** *Edwin knows that*

unless he breaks the cycle of violence, his kids will suffer under lechers like Elliot.

Hazel's having nightmares, not sleeping, keeps seeing Sonnyboy. **9, TVR, M:d.** *Post-traumatic hallucinations.* A dog's barking.

School bell. Vuyani Novuka talks to Hazel about her bad work. She picks up her bag and walks out. She keeps hallucinating about Sonnyboy. Zoe offers to talk to Hazel, says, "come and see me at 3 after school".

There's another war-like meeting in the staff room. Edwin growls like a dog. **10, I:a, M:d.** *A cross-reference to 4.*

Hazel waits for Zoe. In the staff room there is a discussion about how people feel the decision (to remove Elliot) is personal. Eventually Hazel leaves, since Zoe has not come. Hazel seems alienated, she walks through the school ground, people melt away. The corridors are empty. Grace and Zoe discuss the need for a full time counsellor.

Thiza finds Snowey smoking a dagga cigarette (zol). Snowey says Hazel also fights with her all the time, maybe Thiza will find Hazel at home. **11, Hazel's sense of alienation is apparent to everyone who is close to her especially to Zoe.**

In prison there is singing. Cargo tries to get them to sing louder, says it is not a funeral. He has a blanket and there are blankets hanging up, Chester can see something is going on behind them. Guy comes out covered with blood and carrying a roll of money. "He'll shit if he does not use his brains". Chester puts on the blanket. He has bandages on his head to stop the bleeding from when his head was shaved earlier **12, SMV.** The drama that has been building up has reached its climax; *Chester is now aware what he is up against if he does not co-operate.*

Thiza and Hazel break up.

Scene opens with someone having sex with Chester, in the one prison bed **13, SMV, SV, G**. *This is the scene that created a call by certain MPs to have Yizo Yizo banned as it shows sexual violence and sodomy involving a **man**. The critical issue that needs to be addressed here is whether, from the point of view of the producers or the audience, Chester is seen to be getting his come-uppance. In other words, has this scene been cast in terms of retributive violence for what Chester has previously done (if so, this is a reactionary way of dealing with the notion of retributive violence). Or is it simply a description of the type of sexual violence prevalent in prisons? Unfortunately, the comments of the directors at a later stage will suggest that this is punishment for Chester's past actions. This again speaks of 'an-eye-for-an-eye' violence that is not justice but rather, a human rights abuse.*

Hazel still has nightmares in blue about Sonnyboy. The clock shows it is 2.45. She slits her wrists in water. **14, SE**, *Violence towards the self is manifested in a suicide attempt.*

Prison. Chester looks at the man who has had sex with him. The guy tells Chester to bath and make him a cup of tea. Chester wraps himself up and walks through the prisoners, who jeer, "he is dancing the twalatsa jive". Guys clap and jeer. Chester sees the body of the dead guy. Someone says, "clean up this dog". **15, SMV, LV, M:d**. *Now the wheels have turned and Chester is truly on the receiving end of the violence. The dog reference crops up seconds before the shot of the dog in the next scene.*

Snowey running with baby, calls Bra Slash. *Shot of skinny brown dog (though this one is on a chain) echoes the cover of JM Coetzee's Booker-prize winning novel Disgrace (2000).*

Hazel needs to go to hospital. **16, I, SMV**. *The implication is that both Hazel and Chester are victims of this system. Chester smokes a crack pipe and allows himself to be tattooed. Again, Chester (and at a later stage Papa*

Action) are being used to illustrate that crime does not pay, in the most violent way.

Snowey interrupts a staff discussion to say Hazel tried to commit suicide **(16)**.

Episode 5

KK crying in bedroom. She is curt with her mom in the kitchen. Thiza, cleaning floors, tells her to stop irritating him. She holds her fingers as if she is shooting away at his head. **1, M:g, TVR, RI.** *KK, still traumatised by her father's death, is displaying abusive behaviour herself .*

Vuyani advises the teachers about consulting the union. Zoe comes in: "Morning," she says. The other teachers are frosty with her. One makes a bitchy comment: Now she has got a mop on her head, like Grace. **2, PM.** *There is suddenly a divide between "the union" and "management". Zoe is viewed as a pawn of Principal Grace, to such an extent that she is even wearing the same hairstyle—braids.*

KK and girls talk to Elliot in class. He says he is not prepared to teach. KK wants to know if he is staying. "Why?" he asks. She giggles. He asks: "Do not you want me to teach?" "I want you to teach. For sure. Good luck Sir". She rushes out, breathless. **3, SMV.**

Elliot will not teach soccer either. The learners go to Grace to ask for a coach. **4, SMV.** *On the one hand Elliot's being a perfect 'union' man, arguing for his rights. On the other, he is preparing to break the School's Act, which makes it unlawful for a teacher to have sexual relations with students—it is particularly terrible for him to be taking advantage of KK, who is grieving for her father.*

Grace talks to the inspector about the principles of redeployment and Edwin and Elliot have a screaming match. The inspector explains the rules of 'last in, first out'. Elliot is off the excess list while Zoe is on it.

The guys kick a soccer ball outside. The Model C kid, Sika Fakude, pinches KK's bum. Sika goes into the washroom. When he comes out, KK smiles seductively. He follows KK, she lures him into the classroom where all the girls are waiting. "How's it feel?" Minky yells. It gets violent, humiliating, a Lord of the Flies or even Thelma and Louise moment. They strip him down, even strip off his underpants. He is terrified, standing in a corner, when Elliot comes in, grins, asks what's happening. "This pig groped KK," Minky says.

"Where do you come from?" Elliot asks Sika. He tells Sika: "Girls get proposed to. These are township girls. Ask and you shall receive". Sika's still undressed, while Elliot starts hitting on KK; he says he wants to see her after school to talk about her essay. **5, SMV, 1:a.** *Everybody is engaged in abusive behaviour, to such an extent that there seems to be simultaneous allusion to several texts—including Animal Farm—in which the formerly downtrodden tackle their immediate enemy in the same way or in an even worse way than the enemy previously treated them.*

KK meets Elliot. He says her essay is very good. He tells her he is off the excess list, she must be happy. He tells her he had wanted to do international finance but because of apartheid and Bantu education, his marks were not good. She says her father was an embarrassed shopkeeper who wanted to be an engineer. He asks how she is feeling about his death. "I'm trying to accept it," she says. "If you think about him, he is still here with you, KK," Elliot says. "I want to cry," she says. He kisses her. She gets up, says, "I'm sorry, Sir, goodbye". **6, PM.** *The most striking thing about this exchange is not only the statements revealing the way apartheid prevented two men from realising their dreams, but the reversal taking place here, as the child becomes the one taking responsibility for the inappropriate touching by the adult.*

Hazel tells Zoe that flowers and music used to make her happy but do not mean anything to her anymore. Zoe invites her to join a rape survivors' group. The widow asks KK why she is late, was she with a boy? KK asks why her mother hired this boy who killed her father. **7, TVR.** *Thiza's very presence*

traumatises KK, who has been transferring her separation anxiety from her father on to Elliot.

Zakes tells Thiza how to tackle and dribble from his wheelchair. Gogo comes to take his alcohol away. Zakes says: “You’re a witch, you’re Satan!” She pours it away. “You know I’m useless,” Zakes says, “I should kill myself”. **8, PM and also G, P, SX and SMV.** *Again, a role reversal as the granny—who should be looked after by her grandson—tries to deal with his self-loathing by throwing away the booze. At the same time, Zakes’ use of the term ‘witch’ suggests a particular fear and loathing toward women who do not do things his way.*

KK tells the girls about Elliot’s kiss. “His eyes were soft and sensitive,” she says. “You must be careful,” says Rebecca. KK pooh-poohs her. Minky says she knows how it feels: “I love you so much right now”.

Elliot’s class. He makes a reference to Mr Fakude (*Sika*) “who thinks my class is the Garden of Eden”. Sika Fakude winks at Elliot, and claps long after the others when KK gets a high mark. **9, SMV; I:cs, DV.** *The dialogic violence lies in the way the teacher forces the reversals from his students. They must be adults and he must be a child. One must engage with him sexually, one must keep an eye on his adolescent hi-jinx. This overturning of boundaries seems to be central to the subsequent breakdowns of both KK and Fakude. Before sin, Adam and Eve went about naked in the Garden of Eden. Sika Fakude, who was stripped naked and who, having witnessed Elliot’s pass at KK knows that in biblical terms there has subsequently been sin—over-responds to Elliot’s comment.*

Zoe confronts Edwin about not giving her enough support, not ‘being there’.
10, G

Hazel tells the rape survivors’ group: “I just wanted to be believed and understood”. All she wants is a friendship with Thiza, and that he must believe

her **11, RI, G**. The research findings engage with the exchange between Edwin and Zoe in **10**, hence creating a much deeper statement about gender.

Women come in to Zakes's room to say a prayer. Zakes screams at them—"get out you witches". He drinks from a bottle. Edwin comes to see him. "If it's about coaching, I'm not interested," says Zakes. **12, Masculinity/G, P, SX and SMV**.

Edwin uses a psychological approach. "I see you still have your boots. You went from zero to hero: I was there. Why do you live like this, bottles everywhere? Look at yourself, Zakes. My brother, the sun has set. Go outside. There are children on the streets and they need people like me and you who have talents to share with them. You are not crippled. Stand up and be an example to the community". **13, PM. I**. *Edwin talks to Zakes in a language he will be able to relate to—he must 'be a role-model'—which is the predominant political and media message in the period.*

Elliot and KK in his home. She is scared, it is her first time. He is saying, "rather a first time with me than in the bush or toilet or car. Trust me, I'll make you my queen". **14, SMV, SV, G**. *The fact that KK is a virgin highlights the way Elliot has violated her trust and abused his position as a teacher.*

Soccer field. Guys playing. Zakes comes on crutches in car. He cannot walk properly on the crutches. Javas wants to help him. Zakes shouts at the guys, tells them to get on to the field. **15, PM, SE**. *The call from Edwin has had a response from Zakes. Possibly it has awakened a memory of a time when Zakes, as a soccer hero, was a role model in his community.*

Bed. KK's alone, there's a cigarette burning in an ashtray on the other side of the bed. Elliot wants her to get up so they can go. He is dressing. "Why did you get up so quickly?" she asks. "I went to flush the condom. Do not be frightened, the bleeding is normal. You are hot". He starts saying lousy things about Grace and the 'little lamb' Edwin who follows her everywhere. KK gets her clothes, struggles to put them on under the bedding. **16, SMV, SV, G**.

KK's 'first time' experience clearly lacks the romance and warmth KK was looking for. Elliot's childishness shows itself again as he makes disparaging remarks about Grace.

When KK is driven home by Elliot, watched by Fakude, she locks herself in her room rather than answer her mother's questions. **17, AS, SMV.** *Although KK behaves like many teenagers would, under the circumstances, she is also shutting out her mother at the very time she needs her. Her inability to trust her mother comes directly from the emotional betrayal she has experienced with Elliot.*

Sika Fakude takes the mike from Javas at school and announces: "Elliot sleeps with female learners and then gives them high marks. Right now he is sleeping with Kekeletso Ralentswe (KK)". Elliot wants to kill Sika and tells KK to deny everything. Grace, KK's mom, Elliot, KK and Sika are brought together. "I saw him take KK to his house," says Sika.

"He had a crush on KK and she is not interested," Elliot says, about Sika. "Is what Sika is saying true, KK?" Grace asks. "No ma'am, " KK says, "he (Elliot) was just helping me with my homework". Sika: "You're lying KK". When they all leave, the widow says, "I want my daughter out of that man's class". KK's mother just walks away. **18, DV.** *Although it appears as if Elliot's had the last word, all trust has broken down and KK's mother has an intuitive sense of what is happening.*

KK goes to Elliot's house. "I want to talk to you. Why do not you phone?" she asks. He brings her inside, kisses her but says: "What we started, we have to break it. People are watching us. We're talking about my job". No, no, she screams. He has to restrain her. "Maybe you should leave now". She gets her bag. "I'm sorry," he says. He rubs his head. **19. SMV, DV.** *Having forced KK to take his side, Elliot now abandons her.* Later as she walks through the veld, Thiza runs after KK to say her mother is worried. "I hate you, I hate Elliot, that dog Sika. I hate my father, he died and left me," KK cries. **20,** *She feels abandoned by the men in her life.*

Episode 6

Maggie, after being hijacked and mugged, says she does not want to teach anymore and the vigilantes set out on the trail of the hijackers.

The hijackers are smoking a white pipe when the door bursts open to reveal the vigilantes and the car dealer. The vigilantes beat up the hijackers, even though they are both out of their minds, to the point where one faints. One of the vigilantes pockets the money lying there. **1, SMV:** *The action of the vigilante who pockets the money draws attention to the cycle of abuse and violence in which the entire community is trapped.*

The vigilantes return the car to Maggie, who rushes to meet them. She hugs Mr Nyembe. He predicts 'trouble' when he spots Shai, who has come to get a statement from Maggie. Shai wants to know why they did not bring the hijackers to the police station. "Because they'll get freed," Nyembe says. **2, PM, PV.** *What is accessed here is a regular post-apartheid memory of things not changing the way they are expected to in a new democracy. These scenes are interspersed with those of the thugs who are bruised, have no money and pills, and cut to Sticks, fainting on the soccer field from hunger.*

Zakes: "Take off his takkies". Maggie rushes over. She drives Sticks and Zakes home. She is appalled at Sticks' living conditions. **3, PM.** *Part of 'the regular' in post-apartheid society is the reality of poverty.*

The thugs discuss what to do. They want to go to the township where no one will expose them.

They collect a pistol, learn how to cock it. They hold it at each other's heads and say, "You're chicken" ("he is chicken") **4, M:c, M:g and LV.**

Mr Nyembe, parents, coming for governing body meeting. **5. PM and TV.** *The coming together of the adults for a discussion recalls an earlier political era of community co-operation.*

The thugs drink, they are exuberant. They say, “we’ve got a gun, we’ve got a German Hauser, we’ll show them”. **6, M:g.** *Every time the gun motif is repeated, it makes a statement about a society where guns are so prevalent.*

The meeting is in an uproar. Mr Nyembe says the police are corrupt and useless. **7, making the same point as 2.**

Thugs are on a road, looking at cars, thus providing an expectation of violence.

Maggie gets up to speak at the meeting. She wants to feel safe coming here. She is grateful to get the car back, but would feel better if those youth were in a cell somewhere. “We’ve got a problem of crime in this community. It makes no sense not to work together to solve the problem,” she says. **8, NE/PV.** *The route to solving violence in the community is being linked in some way to the school.*

“Those youth” are picking up rocks, preparing for another hijacking. **9, See 8.** *It seems that what’s on offer is a choice: either a community works together to battle the problems of crime and poverty, or it’s held ransom by members of the community who have nothing to lose.*

The thugs have put stones across the road. Nomsa’s mother drives up, sees the rocks and starts turning around. The thugs shoot at her car. **10, See 6, M:g.**

Nomsa hears a noise. “Ma?”

Shai (Nomsa’s father) is slumped on the floor: “Your mother is dead”.

Episode 7

Shai stares through the lounge window. Nomsa asks him to look at Mama before they close the coffin, all the relatives are waiting. He has a splinter in his finger, which Nomsa carefully removes with a needle. Shai: “When did you

get the nerve to speak to me like that?" Nomsa: "I'm just telling you what you're supposed to do." **1, TV.** *Nomsa has transformed herself into 'the Mom', helping her father to get through this difficult occasion.*

Grace finds out what is going on in the school and the way the learners are drawn into gangs. She says the children are her responsibility. The violence must stop. She announces there will be a meeting about starting a Community Policing Forum. **2, Overturning TV and SMV.** *Grace is firmly of the view that the only way to break the cycle of violence is to involve the community.*

Mr Nyembe says Grace does not respect "us men". Javas totally disapproves of his father's actions. There are words between father and son. **3, G, P, TV, SX.** *How to be a man, what values should guide us...these issues are constantly contested between father and son and are highlighted when Javas addresses the school about Connie Shai's murder. Javas has a different way of showing leadership skills and exploring his masculinity from his father.*

Later Javas is at a desk. He is talking to Minky and Gunman and others on the Learners Representative Council (LRC) about the fact that Nomsa's mother lost her life for a tape deck. **4, Masculinity. Motif:g, G.** In Gunman's head there is a link between being masculine and being tough. He finds Mr Nyembe and tells him: Nomsa's mother died for a tape deck.

Suspected hijackers' home. Cops run in. Afrikaans rap is playing. Actual thug is watching and sees that the cops leave empty handed. "You failed, voetsek," says watching thug. **5, I: to PM, H.** *This has to do with reversals. The cops, in the past, would have been Afrikaans speaking. The subversive music would certainly not be Afrikaans, which was seen as the language of the oppressor, though the appropriation of Afrikaans in tsotsi taal would have been the same.*

Nomsa, ironing. Javas says, "Babe, leave it till tomorrow". He calls Shai "Pa". Shai tells Javas to look after Nomsa. **6, G, TV, LV.** *Nomsa and Javas have*

transformed themselves into adults, each performing his or her expected role. Shai believes he might die, so his words to Javas take on additional meaning.

Shack. A guy looks out. He goes out, to another shack where the cops are waiting. They nab him. Sticks is in a shack, eating. He says he feels strong like Thabo Mbeki. Bobo wants a pill to smoke: “Then everything would be perfect”. **7, H, I:c, I:PM.** *This is an amusing way of simultaneously communicating to viewers that although there is much to be proud of in post-apartheid South Africa, there are also some problems, especially when it comes to the youth.*

The hijackers are being fed by Fierce’s mom. Nimrod’s friend describes him as ‘a Doberman’. They leave after finishing their food. One sees a cop car, shouts to the other in warning. Shai and the other cop catch them. Mom, watching, is freaked out. **8, PI, PM.** *The constant references to ‘the mother’ or ‘the father’ in YY texts reflect the producers’ thoughts about themselves as children, or as parents, but also make a statement about the importance they place on community and the fact that gangsters have families.*

Episode 8

Sticks is in hospital in a coma.

Kids are coming to school. Grace announces the first meeting of the Community Policing Forum on Friday. Vuyani Novuka: “It seems our school has become some sort of NGO. I’m trying to remember when last we spoke about teaching issues”. Maggie accuses him of being callous. “Maybe”, says Vuyani, “but the welfare of students is not my concern”. **1, PM, NE.** *Grace and Vuyani’s differing views speak to a debate in the offices behind the classrooms—to what extent is the government, and to what extent is the community, responsible for learners, many of whom do not have caregivers at home either because of the inequities of apartheid, or because of Aids? Grace takes on the challenge. Vuyani is prepared to teach students about the*

apartheid past, he is prepared to talk about how the past personally affected him, but in the 'new' South Africa, learners' welfare is someone else's job.

Hospital. Gunman, Bobo and Javas wait around sipping coffee. Javas is irritated with Gunman for taking the law into his own hands. Bobo is very quiet. **2, PM, G.** *This is partly to do with masculinity but also links to the debate about how much responsibility, supposedly vested in the agencies of the state, should be taken up by the youth.* Later Shai tells Mr Nyembe it is up to Sticks whether he wants to press charges, and Nyembe apologises to Sticks.

Teachers have a debate about expulsion, whether it will sort out the problem or whether the kids should be helped. **3, See 1.**

Zakes' car wash is opened with drum majorettes; it's a bit of an event. Maggie's at his side. **4, PM.** In the township ceremony is big.

Javas comes out of his room. His father tells him Sticks is not pressing charges. "Your mother wants to know when you are coming home". Javas: "I have no home". **5, P, G.** *It is not just his father who so irritates Javas. He is furious with the whole system.*

Episode 9

Zoe goes into a new school for a job interview. She talks to a woman who is carefully annunciating her words. "I do think it makes a lot of sense to have a Zulu person teaching Zulu. The last Zulu teacher was Indian," the woman says. **1, PM, R.** *The discussion reveals white attitudes to African languages. Zoe is Sotho speaking and is applying for the English post.* "I'm not surprised you want to leave (the township)," the woman says. **2, PM, C.** *Again the assumption that 'township' is something a teacher (read, educated and 'civilised') wants to escape from.* "Actually I love it, Zoe says, "even if we might not have the resources but we have the opportunity to do everything there". Dan Morgan, the principal, shows Zoe around the school, built in 1912.

She explains how difficult it is to decide whether or not to get close to the kids, how betrayed they feel if you leave. They discuss setting up a debate between the two schools. **3, PM, C, R, DV.** *The discussions between the teachers and the school's long history—1912 was also the year the ANC was formed—highlights two different standards formulated for black and white schools. The two clashing dialogues will be at the heart of the drama of the subsequent debate itself.*

The debate. Thandeka, visiting from the private school, is introduced to Javas and Thiza. Javas: "Hi, hi! Welcome to Bosnia, please follow me". **4, PM and H** *through comparison to another war zone.* Pleased at the response to his humour, he later opens the debate with his Madiba imitation, "Ladies and Gentlemen..." which brings the house down.

Supatsela loses the debate after Mantwa is overcome by nerves.

Bobo: "I'm not surprised you Model C's think we're not equal, you look down on us".

"We do not. We also come from the township. Just because we speak in different accents," one of the guys starts. Gunman: "You're a coconut". Thiza asks for a rematch—at the other school. The student head from Hillside High says, "The coconuts accept".

5, PM, C, SMV. *Underlying the light-hearted abusive banter is an undercurrent that a new type of apartheid is in place, based on class rather than race.*

Thiza's in love with Thandeka and goes to tell Hazel he has found another girlfriend. Hazel asks if she has visited the township, because "Model Cs do not come to the township".

After Hazel and Thiza break up, she tells the rape survivors' group she does not know how she'll handle it. Zoe says: "You'll meet someone else". "What if I treat him like I treated Thiza?" Hazel asks. **6, TVR, RI.** *Hazel's battling not just with the knowledge that the rape experience has damaged her relationship with Thiza but the fear that she will never be normal. Hazel reflects the typical rape survivor's fear of intimacy.*

Thiza, feeling rejected by Hazel, prematurely imagines intimacy with Thandeka.

Shai with Nomsa and her sister. Nomsa's in bed, eating peri-peri chicken livers cooked by Shai. Nomsa says her mom would have enjoyed them. Shai is quiet. Nomsa says when her father goes quiet like that, it is as if her mom has died all over again. **7, TVR.** *She is asking for a discussion so they can all work through the trauma, instinctively she knows the repressed memory will cause more harm.*

Episode 10

Edwin at Assembly announces prelims, the pre-matric exams. Says they must start studying now, it's "all up to you. The future is in your hands. What decision you make now can affect the rest of your life".

Maggie in class asks if applications for bursaries are in. Those who want to go to university or technikon must apply before the end of August. **1, PM.** *Despite what we know about the conditions under which they must study, these learners have to prove themselves if they are to have a future. The past might exist in their present, but now their future exists alongside it.*

Edwin and Javas work on the go-cart. Edwin says he must get going, there is only a week left for the competition. He asks if Javas wants to be a teacher. Javas says he wants to 'achieve' in his life.

Scenes of a triangle between Zoe, Edwin and Edwin's former wife fall between scenes of a discussion between Snowey and Nomsa about a triangle between Nomsa, Javas and Thandeka: Snowey says, "I wouldn't waste time on a man, specially a playboy". Someone else, maybe Hazel, says: "In the past he has always come back to you. Give him another chance". **2, G.** Both scenes in terms of these triangles reflect women's concerns about the extent

to which they can trust men. Edwin's wife is returning and wants to meet. Zoe says she will not wait for him.

Javas goes to see Thandeka at school, he jumps over the fence.

The 'Model Cs' are filming on closed-circuit TV. Engine's running smooth, like a Ferrari, Javas says on his 'interview' about his go-cart. One kid does a search for Javas over Google. Javas taps on the computer excitedly. "Haven't you ever used a computer before?" a kid says bitchily. "I have, but never like this," says Javas. **3, C.** *These are reminders of the way education serves the cultural economy of a middle-class South Africa.*

Sticks to Thiza: "Your fight with Javas irritates me". Bobo thrusts a sheep's head at Thiza. "Look what they've done with your girlfriend". A kid dressed in a Thabo Mbeki mask takes it and moves off. "That kid worries me, he has not been to school for two years. He started in the meat business by selling tripe". **4, PM, I:c.** *Beside the reference to the president and possibly Stanley Kubrick's A Clockwork Orange (1971) with the mask, the sheep's head ('your girlfriend') could well have its origins in Francis Ford Coppola's The Godfather (1972), which features a bloody scene with a horse's head, or Jonathan Demme's The Silence of the Lambs (1991).*

Model C kids eat ice-cream and drink cold drinks. According to a white girl, "township kids who make it to university are majorly smart". Thandeka says, "Javas is majorly bright, is going to make it in a big way".

Javas kisses Thandeka. Javas: "Things aren't the way they were. Everything has changed". They speak about change as part of South Africa. **5, PM.** *In other words, they speak about post-colonial optimism when we know about the post-apartheid realities that affect them.*

Maggie and Javas in class having private discussion. Maggie: "You do not have to go to university to do engineering". Javas: "I want to go to university. I want to become an inventor". Maggie: "If your marks improve you might be

able to go. A lot of inventors went to Technikon". **5, PM, C.** *Maggie's still harping on about kids not having expectations that exceed the possibilities 'allowed' by their class.*

Javas tells Nomsa that Miss Peterson (Maggie) does not think his marks are good enough to go to university. He moans about how those people (Model Cs) have it nice. Elliot is reading to the class: "in spite of all the ...(he can't say the word 'fastidiousness')..." Javas corrects him. Elliot gets angry, says "piss off", even though Javas is his pupil.

Javas: "You've lost it. We're about to write exams and you've come here drunk". Elliot says, "Get out of my classroom". He pushes Javas away, saying, "Satan is testing me". **6, SMV, DV.** *Here the adolescent and the adult have exchanged roles.*

Learners go in to Grace. They say they are sick of being taught by a drunk. They want Miss Cele to teach them. "How can you let her go and keep this useless man?" **7, SMV.** *The pupils are fed up with the way they're forced to engage with an abusive man.*

Grace says, "go to the library till I've sorted this out. Elliot gives sweets to a girl kid, sits on her desk when Grace comes in to ask him for a word". **8, SMV, and breaking trust.**

Elliot's not prepared to take the kids back unless they apologise.

Grace; "have you been drinking?" "I'm not prepared to answer that," Elliot responds. "Come to my office" she says.

Kids toi-toying. Javas leads discussions about Elliot. Javas tells standards 9, 8, 7, 6 to boycott classes. **9, PM** *of Soweto uprisings which were sparked over the type and content of the teaching.*

Edwin chases the learners back to class. Javas and he have words. Javas asks why must they accept second best? Edwin tells Javas to come to his office: "Why are you saying second best when you are bringing each and

everybody down?" **10, PM.** *Edwin, as someone who has lived through the consequences of 1976, knows exactly what is at stake when classes are suspended.*

Nomsa's crying, talking to her sister.

Model Cs are saying to Javas that he will not be laughed at if he enters his go-kart. One girl is arrogant. Javas says: "You treat me like shit and you do not even know me". Bobo and Gunman tell Javas to apologise to Thiza for kissing Thandeka.

Edwin's wife urges him to send their kids to another school, get another job and more money. "I'm back now".

Edwin discussing with his wife's friends, business people. Teboho's character, a businessman, has a position available. **11, G.** *This reflects gender expectations—that someone can just move in and out of another's life, and on the basis of having borne the children, be allowed to call the shots.*

Javas draws something. The rolling gate made him think of it. He goes back to the laboratory after a walk. Enter Edwin's wife. Javas tells her the technology here is "backward, from the time of Jan van Riebeeck". She tells him she knows what he means, that Edwin was offered a top job three years ago and turned it down. "But all that's going to change now," she says. **12, See 11.**

Thiza asks the kid in the Thabo Mbeki mask why he does not go to school. The kid tries to give him a book. Thiza will not take it till the kid takes off his mask. He is Mandla. His mother died. He lives with his sister and brother with an unemployed aunt. He uses his 'connections' to sell meat. **13, PM.** *This seems to be a comment about Aids orphans, unemployment and children having to be adults because otherwise they are not cared for in the era of Thabo Mbeki.*

Model Cs with Javas and their robot. “You did not really make anything, you just followed the instructions,” Javas comments critically. He has an argument with a girl. “You think nothing better comes from a township. We are dirty and smelly. You are a snob,” he tells the girl. **14, PM, C.**

Edwin goes home. His wife is in a dressing gown, in seduction mode. “And how was your day?” she asks. “We came 2nd. When I looked at Nyembe getting the trophy I thought of a boy at the back of class who was always in trouble. That was why I became a teacher”. She kisses him. **15, PM, C.** *He is recalling the battles of his own youth but is also making a statement about ideology. In a later scene, he will go to visit Zoe.*

Thiza reads aloud from The Test telling about a boy watching a match, who wants to play but is too scared until one day he just does it. **16, Like Edwin, like Zakes, Zoe, Maggie, Grace, Thiza has taken upon himself the training of the youth.**

Episode 11

Soccer game. Zakes coaching, later gets an award at school assembly. Later Shai tries to engage him to spy on Bra Gibb, whose gangsters killed Shai’s wife. Also because of Shai, Zakes’s family is in trouble. “Sorry, I can’t help you Captain,” says Zakes. **1, LV rules.** *There is honour among thieves.*

Sika has Papa tattooed on his chest. He shows the kids: “Son of Papa is here,” he boasts. **2, TVR, I:ac, I:i.** *Autocitation because Papa Action is an ‘own’ creation; intratextuality because ‘Son of...’ and ‘The Return of...’ are self-preservation tactics for particular genres. This also says something about the cycle of violence and the way those traumatised by abuse can become abusive themselves.*

Vuyani talks to the class. “Leaders are important but the struggle was also won by ordinary people. Who knows about the struggle?” Sika says, “You’re polluting our minds with ancient stuff, you’re boring us”. The kids laugh. Minky

says, "Talk about the future". **3, PM, SMV.** *The school kids are anxious for a future, they do not care much about the past even though their lives are so affected by the past. Sika's comments echo Chester's earlier response to the word, 'comrade'. The avoidance of discussing the past in the present suggests some of it is still a troubling factor for these students.*

Sticks and Bobo watch other guys run a race, Zakes counts down for them. "You see what unemployment does? People run races". Kane and Abel have found a new person to sell drugs at our school, the guys tell Zakes. **4, PM, DV.** *The subtext is that unemployment either makes people run races or sell drugs, linking two parallel 'truths' of youth at risk. Running races is a positive response to unemployment; selling drugs is a negative one.*

Zakes digs into the earth, gets out his revolver. **5, M:g.** *The use of the motif suggests a build-up towards violence.* Later Zakes will offer Bra Gibb some cocaine at a good price but says he does not want it sold at the school that Thiza attends, by 'dogs'. Kane and Abel come in. "Hey, who are you calling dogs?" Zakes hits one of them. **6, M:d, PM.** *The logic is that it is okay to sell cocaine but only 'dogs' would sell it to schoolchildren, who through studying will set right in the society what the previous generation could not.*

Shai gives Zakes the cocaine he must get Bra Gibb to accept. When Zakes sees him, Bra Gibb asks, "Have you listened to those CDs I gave you? I'm suspicious of a black man who does not appreciate jazz". Zakes treats it lightly and gives Bra G the drugs asking if the dealers are still the same guys. Bra G's not going to comment. **7, PM, CV.** *Bra Gibb works with stereotypes. Zakes is "a black man who does not like jazz..." hence anything might happen. Because as audience members we know that Zakes is planning something, the tension increases. Just as Bra Gibb can read a black man who does not like jazz, so he will read the writing on the wall if a dealer who is named to the police is not arrested.*

Kane and Abel say to Sika, as they give him crack to sell. "This can make people who use it see things, or Mandela doing kwasa-kwasa". **8, l:c, l:ac, H, PM.** *Kane and Abel's reference to Mandela returns to audiences one of the*

happy post-apartheid memories and the joy and surprise of audiences to see Mandela dancing with the masses. The juxtaposition of the shadow and hero moments (drug dealers or struggle hero) invokes the two extreme stereotypes dominating most South African texts.

Sika tries to sell drugs to Bobo and tries to dip Bobo's head into the toilet. He says he knows Papa Action used to do that to Bobo. **9, I:ac, Pl.** *Sika, trying so hard to be 'the son of Papa Action', resorts to the abusive ways of his anti-hero, but reminds audiences about Mahlatsi's love of dark religious ritual.*

After Sika's attempted sale to Bobo, Sika is arrested and names Kane and Abel to the police, who in turn name Zakes, who is then arrested.

Episode 12

Dudu's father is at the police station, asking if she wants to continue with the action against her rapists. She does. Dudu makes a statement to a cop who asks if both Papa Action and Chester raped her? "Are you sure", he asks. He is a bit mean to her, says they cannot find a witness to corroborate her story. Dudu's father chides her for spending so much time at support groups instead of studying. **1, RI, SV.** *Through the rape survivors' focus group, the researchers have discovered a lot about the secondary violence inherent to reporting rape.*

[The other narratives in this episode about Bobo giving up drugs and the backstories of Chester and Papa Action are dealt with in the next two chapters].

Dudu at a survivors' group. "I want to continue with this trial. I want the law to take action. If Papa Action and Chester are set free then the pain I've caused my family will be for nothing," she says.

Teachers are talking. One says, "Dudu does not stand a chance in court". She tells a story about a cousin in a similar situation.

Elliot makes a comment about “these girls with their mini-skirts and G-strings. They must think about us, because we also get excited”. **2, SX, SV, SMV.** *He holds the girls responsible for creating sexually violent behaviour by men.*

Bra Gibb and Zakes. Brenda Fassie’s Weekend Special plays in the background. Gibb: “If you so much as touch my girls, I’ll kill you”. “C’mon, I’m like your son, I’d never do it,” Zakes says. Bra Gibb says there’s a big consignment of Mandrax coming in and he wants Zakes to go with him to get it. “Where will we be?” Zakes wants to know. “Hillbrow? I have to drop something off there”. “Newlands”, says Bra Gibb. **3, I:c, I:cs, G, masculinity, LV rules.** *The ‘classic storyline’ is actually a proverb: There is honour among thieves. Bra Gibb is aware that Zakes is crossing all sorts of boundaries (for example, asking him about the area they are going to) but is determined Zakes should not make a play for his adolescent daughters. The choice of Brenda Fassie’s Weekend Special is interesting here since Fassie was nineteen when she originally recorded that song—which is probably refers to a ‘sugar daddy’, an older man who does not want to see his girlfriend during the week, but on weekends only.*

Dudu wakes up screaming. Her father says, “It’s me, it’s only a dream”. He puts her back to sleep. **4, TVR.** *The violence revisits her in her sleep even though she has the support of her family and friends.*

At the court, Maggie and Zoe are there and tell Dudu, “You have no idea how proud we all are of you”. The father, in his hat, watches her. Papa Action and Chester come to court, charges are read to them, they plead not guilty. **5, TVR.**

Shai finds Zakes in the boxing gym. “Imagine what would have happened (if dealers hadn’t been arrested?)” Zakes: “Why do you meet me here?” Shai: “It’s not an obvious place”. He gets out the wiring equipment, says over the mike: “Malik Yoba here” then wires Zakes.

Bra Gibb is suspicious that Zakes is late and asks, "Why have you kept me waiting? I've been here for 10 minutes". Zakes claims to have been visiting his grandmother because she has got flu. **6, TVR, GC**. In order to remove the nightmarish quality of their lives, both Zakes and Dudu are becoming heroes of their own narratives.

In court Dudu is struggling to explain what happened. Papa Action and Chester were playing soccer with a tennis ball. Papa Action tripped her up, they took her in their car. "They were pulling me and then Papa Action pulled my hands. They held me down in the car. What I heard was the sound of chickens. Papa Action tore my panties and raped me". **7, TVR, SV**. *The telling is almost as traumatic as the actual event.*

The Defence asks Dudu: "It was winter, why did you want to buy a cooldrink?" And later, "what colour were my client's shoes?" When Dudu says, "white", he says, "earlier you said black". He tries to confuse her in this fashion: "...you said the weather was hot in the middle of winter". And there could not have been chickens, he says, because they were "all sold out". **8, TVR, SMV, VS**. *He is not only being unsympathetic, but he is playing around with Dudu's memory. He suggests that if she thinks something was 'white' when it was black, and she heard chickens when they had been sold, then she must be lying about the other issues. 9, TVR, PM. But regular viewers will know she is telling the truth about the chickens because they would have seen them in the rape scene, and that if she got the colour of the shoes wrong there must be a reasonable explanation for it. For example, she could be remembering a mirror image (where black becomes white and vice versa) or she could be remembering something one of her attackers wore on an earlier occasion. The reversals taking place force viewers to replay the rape scene and to try to remember who was doing and wearing what. It becomes impossible. The sound of the chickens is key to the memory of the scene but the Defence disputes the existence of the chickens.*

Nomsa tells her story to the court. "Dudu came to school with her clothes torn. Mantwa and I took her to the clinic. My mother helped organise an

examination.” Defence: “Is it not true that the students were attacking my clients even before Ms Nkosi came with torn clothes?” Nomsa: “I thought Papa Action and Chester were corrupting the school with drugs”. **10, TVR.** The occasion is also traumatic for Nomsa, for in narrating Dudu’s story, *Nomsa must talk about the role her dearly loved and murdered mother played. It is something that is not discussed in her father’s house. Nomsa, as living witness of this event, is simultaneously becoming the healer her mother was, as well as the parent.*

Nomsa says she believed the drugs they were selling belonged to Bra Gibb. The Defence asks Chester: “Did not you tell her you were going to raise her yourself? Did not you drive past the school on the day of the rape?” Chester: “Me and tennis balls do not mix. I grew up playing video games, computers”. “What were you doing at Bra Gibb?” “We were watching Ally McBeal. NO, we were watching Scarface”. **11, GC, I:m, PM, I:i, DV.** *Following the scene witnessed by the viewer showing Bra Gibb’s drugs being sold, the viewer becomes aware of the ‘dialogic violence’ to which these teenagers are subjected. Nomsa’s testimony that she suspected drugs were being sold highlights what these teenagers are taking on when they decide to (a) tell about the rape and (b) draw attention to the terrible things they are subjected to in their day-to-day school lives and they are not believed. Chester’s trying to suggest the girls are inventing the whole thing—hence the reference to Ally McBeal, a US show about a whacky lawyer living in her imagination and a prime-time hit at the time for viewers whose ratings, like those of Yizo Yizo, were very high in South Africa. Similarly, the reference to Scarface is Chester’s way of giving YY audiences information about the ancestor texts guiding his character. Gibson, Mahlatsi and Barry Berks, Mahlatsi’s co-director in YY2 would have, in the course of their careers, watched both the 1932 Howard Hawks version of Scarface and the 1983 Brian de Palma version.*

The Defence questions Papa Action. He admits he did rape Dudu Nkosi. Defence: “Did Mr Chester Serote also rape her?” “I can’t answer that question. Chester is a man, let him speak for himself,” **12, G, masculinity.**

Papa Action is not prepared to sell out his buddy. Instead, he appeals to Chester's manhood (masculinity) and asks Chester to tell the truth, 'as a man'.

Chester knocks and taps on the inside of the transport back to jail, providing a rhythmical background of a rap song.

The magistrate rules that Papa Action's admission corroborates Nkosi's evidence. He rejects Chester's story. **13, GC, I:i.** *The generic conventions being referred to here are the court-room drama with elements of the 'unreal' which refer to Chester's earlier comment about Ally McBeal and the 'unreality' of the James Bond-type spy versus the 'reality' of some prison narratives and gangster movies. Chester's reversals—he dismisses the girls' real-life testimonies as being colourful stories from prime-time TV while he identifies more with old black and white movies—relates directly to the way the film makers have chosen to tell some of the more graphic and violent YY scenes in black and white. The episode returns to Chester dressed up as a woman, a 'bride' for another prisoner. It reminds the viewer of Kiss of the Spider Woman, Hector Babenco's 1985 story about the meeting in a South American prison of reality and fantasy.*

Episode 13

Vuyani says to the class: "Let the healing begin". Minky has got 30%, Mantwa 35%.

The two girls complain about their marks and about how difficult and awful Vuyani is. Grace tells the teachers there were higher pass rates in more subjects than could be expected. **1, GC, NE, PM.** *"Let the healing begin" reminds us immediately of the events in the previous episode, which showed that the healing has in fact begun for youths facing terrible odds with no proper role models. The focus on the poor marks, and how these should be viewed, takes us to the main theme of this series—a negotiation about a 'different' type of education from what existed under apartheid.*

Vuyani gives extra lessons to Mantwa and Minky about Stalin and the USA, the Cold War. He gives them a map—they must analyse it; it shouldn't be hard to do. **2, NE, PM.** *Vuyani is set up as 'bad guy' in the good-cop bad-cop game playing itself out now in the story, because he is trying to get the learners to look at something they perceive as very remote—the Cold War—but which is essential to an understanding of globalisation in the current era.*

Elliot invites Minky for a drink. Vuyani is freaking her out. Strange things are happening at Supatsela. **3, NE, SMV, GC, I:cs.** *Elliot is set up as a 'good guy' as far as some of the schoolgirls are concerned because he is charming. But actually, he is simply playing out the eternal Lolita narrative.*

Elliot asks Vuyani, who is photocopying, what Vuyani as a union member thinks about the fact that Grace wants to get rid of Elliot. Vuyani suggests that he does his work. **4, NE, SMV, SE.** *All the issues—from the extent of protection a teacher should enjoy, to the consequences of dissolving the boundaries between teachers and pupils—are being pushed towards resolution.*

Grace tells Vuyani about the leaked paper. "A student brought this to me, it was found in the toilet the day before the test". Vuyani: "The papers were locked in my cupboard except for a short time after I copied them". Elliot says: "There's a saying in Xhosa that habits overpower the brain. Cheating is like cigarettes, it can be addictive".

Mantwa tells Lily, "They're falsely accusing me. I did not take the papers". Vuyani tells Zoe he does not think Mantwa took the paper. Mantwa insists on rewriting the test to prove she knew the information. Vuyani makes everyone rewrite. Mantwa does even better than last time. Elliot says Vuyani "must confess to the TRC who took the papers. Vuyani is getting old". He sings Teddy Pendergrass' In My Time. Vuyani walks up, hears him.

Vuyani at the school gate. Dudu comes up with Minky. “We’re the ones who stole the paper and we’re not the only ones,” says Minky. She names Mr Khubeka. **5. I;cs.** *The resolution. Good has triumphed over evil.*

Chapter 5

Transitional twins, violent archetypes and action heroes

All three series of Yizo Yizo (YY) tell their story, not just with plot, but also through the use of characters who represent universal archetypes, even though they have been painted with a culturally specific brush (Newell 2000:101) ¹.

Discussions with the YY producers and many hours of working with them have persuaded me that they do not consciously map these archetypes according to, for example, Joseph Campbell's methods designed around Carl G. Jung's thinking³. Instead they build their characters intuitively, from 'types' they know in real life or have spotted in other movies and books. This intuition is what simultaneously makes YY's characters so realistic but at the same time provides a curious design flaw⁴.

Often because the archetypes are unmapped, they appear in the text in an unplanned way as a 'pair'. The functions of an archetype are delivered by one character for part of a series, and are then taken up by another character later on. This works in the same way in three generations of characters—the 'adult' characters, the teenage youth and the young adults, who are somewhere in between adulthood and youth.

The first adult 'pair' we notice is the patriarchs. Javas's father Mr Nyembe and Mr Mthembu, the school principal in YY1, both represent patriarchy and

¹ "Culturally specific" is a term used in her discussion about regional literary adaptations to stereotypes in by Stephanie Newell (2000). Ghanaian Popular Fiction. 'Thrilling Discoveries in Conjugal Life' and other tales. James Currey: Oxford.

² Not just on Yizo Yizo but on a soap opera scheduled for flighting in 2005, Zone 14.

³ Campbell's eight archetypes representing facets of 'the hero' are the higher self, the shadow, the mentor, the trickster, the herald, the shapeshifter, allies and threshold guardians. See Joseph Campbell (1993). The Hero with a Thousand Faces. Fontana: London.

⁴ It only became apparent to me in June 2004 when I helped the Bomb Shelter with a structural design for Zone 14, which they were writing to create roles for all the actors from YY who were out of work. Gibson, Mahlatsi and Markgraaff all kept creating new characters with

traditional values. Both men believe in discipline and favour the use of 'the rod'. But the principal, Mthembu, is written out of the series in Episode 4 (to make room for acting principal Ken, who will allow the school to degenerate into chaos before Grace Letsatsi is appointed to restore order). Mr Nyembe has to take over all the functions of patriarch and threshold guardian of traditional values at the point where Mthembu exits. Without much fuss and without any apparent awareness on the part of the producers, the storyline has been adjusted to allow for this. Grace Letsatsi urges Mr Nyembe to get involved with security at the school. This ensures his presence at the centre of the action so that he is around to make his demands about the need for discipline in order to ensure that things will not fall apart or disintegrate into anarchy. For the remainder of YY1 and YY2 Nyembe frequently invokes the memory of the former principal Mthembu, "a man amongst men" at the PTA meetings. Nyembe's archetypal function ends in YY2 and is not continued into YY3.

Working directly to threaten the traditional values of the patriarchal pair are Zoe Cele, the English teacher, who makes her appearance from YY1, Episode 1, and Grace Letsatsi, the principal who replaces Ken Mokwena in YY1, Episode 10. Both Zoe and Grace represent new democratic values. They have similar hairdos and personalities (Zoe might be a tad more fun), they both command respect, will not tolerate relationships with men in which they are treated shabbily, get involved in the learners' problems and get up the patriarch's noses. Zoe initially represents everything that Principal Mthembu hates. Grace, when she starts at the school, finds she must answer to Mr Nyembe at every PTA meeting. Like Mthembu, Nyembe is not crazy about having a woman as principal. Why are two women performing exactly the same archetypal function? The answer seems to lie partly in the romance between Zoe and Edwin that needs a little time and space to develop and partly in the sheer scale of what has to be taken on. It would be practically impossible for one archetype (representing 'new democratic values') to successfully take on the challenges of a violent male world peopled by

the traits of characters who were already in the story. When I questioned this, Mahlatsi instantly got the point, and suggested collapsing eight of the characters into three.

patriarchs and gangsters on the one hand and a mass of insecure, fumbling school kids without too many role models or much hope on the other. As the series goes on, we see that this archetype—the good woman who represents justice, respect and constitutional human rights values—reproduces itself first through Nomsa’s mother, then Nomsa, then KK’s mother, then Lily. Eventually most of the adult women and quite a few of the schoolgirls respond to this particular model and reproduce themselves accordingly.

Edwin Thapela, described earlier as the incarnation of Rudyard Kipling’s If—the man who can keep his head when all around people are losing theirs—is similarly very close in personality to Vuyani Novuka. They are both reserved, ‘no nonsense’ men, and ‘strong, silent types’. The difference between them is the way they work their masculinity. Edwin has been forced to become nurturing because he has raised his kids when their mother walked out and is able to connect to his emotions when she unexpectedly returns to his life and he is faced with losing Zoe. Viewers witness him hugging his kids and having romantic moments with Zoe. Like Zoe, he is an appealing figure for the students because he believes in the concept of ‘vocation’ for a teacher. He is able to inspire his charges with a vision of their futures—if they take charge of their own destinies (just as he has to take charge of deciding on Zoe as partner rather than re-uniting with his wife).

Vuyani, on the other hand, is a closed book emotionally and wants his learners to get to grips with their pasts in order to position themselves for the future. He is like Edwin in that he represents a commitment to educational change that has come from ‘own experience’. He knows that if the scholars blow their chances they will never get another chance to catch up. However, he is slightly cynical and self-protective. He does not trust ‘new brooms’. While he is prepared to help his learners, he is not idealistic. He is from a generation of teachers who have been unionised and ensures his own personal rights as a teacher are met.

Ken Mokwena and Elliot Khubeka (‘EK’) are the next ‘pair’ who represent weak male teachers who have lost their dignity through apartheid and their

souls through their level of collusion within a system of violence and abuse offered by the patronage of their Dr Faustus, Bra Gibb. When Ken is fired in YY1, his archetypal functions continue to be performed by Elliot. They are both immature, have sex with schoolgirls and try to 'get ahead' materialistically by throwing in their lot with what they understand as representing real power. With the Barbie doll teacher Louise and her sidekick Zaza, they operate as superficial, shallow beings, with Ken/Elliot simply being Louise/Zaza's male counterparts. They are dealt with in more detail in the analysis of consumerism and lifestyle violence in Chapter 5. Out of the four, the only one who responds in a small way to Grace Letsatsi's appeals for commitment to the learners is Zaza, although we know this from snippets of conversation only and her part is minor in comparison to the others.

Much of the drama created out of the political memory and the tension arising out of the different educational visions of Mthembu, Nyembe, Zoe, Grace, Edwin, Vuyani, Ken, Louise, Elliot and Zaza has been described in the textual analysis in Chapter 4.

When it comes to the learners, there are fewer pairs of archetypes but quite a lot of repetition in storyline. As we have seen in Chapter 3 of this research, in YY1 Hazel is subjected to unwelcome sex by Sonnyboy and is put off enjoying romantic love with Thiza. It emerges that Ken is a father as a result of an affair with Hazel's sister Snowey when she was at school. Dudu is raped by Chester and Papa Action. In YY2, exactly the same storylines are played out by the same archetypes almost as a consequence of not absorbing the lessons of the past. Rebecca is on the receiving end of Sonnyboy's sexual violence, Elliot begins an affair first with KK, and then he makes a play for Mantwa, while Dudu has to relive the rape trauma in the courtroom ordeal with Chester and Papa Action.

All the girls who are sexually violated seem to come from families in which there is a parent missing, usually a father (the exception is Dudu). Frequently they irrationally latch on to a 'sugar daddy' who will use and discard them. This was the case with Snowey, Hazel, KK and Rebecca. Critical to the way

they view themselves and solve their problems is the question of self-esteem, dealt with in Chapter 6 of this research.

Although Thiza and Javas are best friends, their characters are different. Thiza is a dreamer who has a brush with crime. He is the 'outsider' even though he is often at the centre of the action with Javas and the other male learners. He wants to be a writer and will come out as a gay man after he gets involved in the Jozi spoken word poetry culture in YY3, whereas Javas will continue in much the same way he started out in YY1 and YY2. Javas's archetypal twin is actually his girlfriend Nomsa. With Nomsa and Javas we find a girl and a boy who are determined to rise above their circumstances simply by working hard and trying to do the right thing. They are prepared to turn themselves into adults in a world where they have realised they cannot depend on adults. Both come from homes where their fathers pursue criminals. Nomsa's father is a police officer, while Javas's dad is the vigilante Nyembe. Nomsa's mother is murdered, Javas's mother is so frightened of her husband she seems dead. Although they have their issues, which continue well into YY3—Javas's deep-seated desire to be seen as 'cool' is often at odds with his wish to be a scientist and computer buff, while Nomsa has on-going problems with her body—they both represent determination and show leadership qualities. They are obviously both youths who will overcome the limitations of their education. Although Nomsa appears to have a head start because her father has the money to send her on to university, Javas is smart enough to win a scholarship to Technikon. The self-esteem issues affecting both Nomsa and Javas will also be dealt with in Chapter 5. Both Nomsa and Javas formulate critiques of the class restraints that appear to be preventing their desire to 'shine'. They take on injustice wherever it raises its head and strive to live in a dignified way.

With Bobo and Sticks we find two youths without families who latch on to each other in a co-dependent way. Both take turns in developing dependencies on drugs and crime. In YY1 and YY2, Sticks helps to get Bobo off drugs, while in YY3, it is the other way round. They bond over dreams about eating Nandos,

scoring goals and 'chicks'. These 'buddy' moments are dealt with at more length in Chapter 6,

In two instances, the archetypal 'pairs' written by the YY team are made up of people who have made different choices in the same circumstances. Capt. Shai and Bra Gibb are pitted against each other as the hero and shadow sides of the strong male personality. Shai represents the grim reality of ethical choice and Bra Gibb the flamboyant villain held in awe by township youth. Similarly Zakes and his younger brother Thiza represent two highly talented people on journeys that see them first collude with a cycle of violence and then fight against it—at different points of the narrative—in order to become heroes or action heroes of their own stories.

However, the most haunting pairs of characters are those who represent the 'in-between'. These are not just characters representing transition between adolescence and manhood but archetypes who stand between two worlds, the world of apartheid past and the post-apartheid world. They straddle a world where criminal and political violence meet. Either they work, as Papa Action and Chester do, *within* the relations of abuse at that juncture, or they try to restore collective dignity wherever they see it has been infringed, as Thulani and Gunman do.

There are plenty of examples in western and African literature, in book and film texts, about split masculinity being shown in mirror images of what Modleski has called 'super male' and 'shadow male' (1982:79)⁵. Both 'super' and 'shadow' male are constructions of masculinity—variations of 'the peacock in its natural environment'—to prove to audiences at the lek⁶ that this particular cock is a 'risk taker' (read high libido)⁷. The hero and the coward, the upright and the lowlife, the fighter of tyranny and the bully...but always the

⁵ Tania Modleski (1982). Loving with a Vengeance. Mass-produced Fantasies for Women. Routledge: New York.

⁶ Place of meeting for birds during breeding season where males display their attributes.

⁷ This view that women are drawn to 'risk taking men' who behave at the 'lek' like peacocks before other men was expressed by generational theorist Grahame Codrington on the Jenny Crwys-Williams show on Radio 702, aired from 13:06 on 8 March 2001.

drinker, always spilling semen rather than tears and always preparing to face death.

In literature, the novelist most remembered for his obsession with ways of facing death is Ernest Hemingway. In For Whom the Bell Tolls⁸ his protagonist Robert Jordan opts for martyrdom as political change agent, while the antagonist Pablo pops an ugly yellow bellow before redeeming himself. Although Jordan is an American and Pablo a Spanish partisan, both men have plenty in common. Both hero and coward are drinkers. Both are engaged in a 'to-the-death' struggle against fascism. Both love women. Both are leaders, Jordan of the mission that takes place in the three-day time scale of the book, and Pablo of the guerrilla band. Both have a history of bravery. The big difference between them lies in how they respond to oppression. One becomes a hero for the liberation cause, although he is painted as an anti-hero. The other becomes brutalised and ultimately a bully *within* the struggle. Doubtless this distinguishing feature could be reversed if the action was described from Pablo's point of view (POV). Imagine the American as the would-be goodnik, who from Pablo's POV, is actually an intruding bully, mucking around in someone else's national struggle. The flaws that distinguish anti-hero from thug are so slight that it *is* possible to envision a narrative that works in another direction.

Knowing what we do now, that Hemingway was a heavy drinker who eventually shot himself, it is also interesting, as an exercise, to consider that Jordan and Pablo might represent a struggle with masculinity for the author himself. In American popular culture most of the super heroes have their shadow: The X-men and Magneto; Superman and Lex Luther and Batman and his 'others', The Riddler, The Joker, Scarface and The Penguin. In the recent rewritings of these stories, the super heroes are given an anti-hero edge and the villains are often described through comedy and melodrama, doubtless by popular demand.

⁸ Ernest Hemingway (1940). For Whom the Bell Tolls. Scribner's Publishing: New York.

To trace the origins of the archetypes against which Papa Action and Chester versus Thulani and Gunman are drawn, it's necessary to dip into South African literature where the archetype of 'super male', in the form of 'comrade', appears throughout the years of apartheid struggle and in the transition period. The emergence of this 'super male' figure can doubtless be tracked to both apartheid and the 'crisis of masculinity'⁹. As Campbell points out,

Violence and masculinity are closely intertwined in the macho culture of resistance. The comrades characterise themselves as hard, ruthless and disciplined with no time to rest and no time for pleasure, as living under the constant threat of death and prepared to sacrifice their very lives for the struggle if need be (Campbell, 1992:624).

In a similar vein we can pick out 'shadow males' in a number of South African literary texts and for that matter, in the daily headlines. These 'shadow men' face the same threats as do the comrades—but they respond differently. We have seen, in South African literature, examples of both the alienated black 'intellectual tsotsi', in the words of Lewis Nkosi, as well as the 'comtsotsi'. Struggle is the setting, the bottle is the leitmotif.

An example in South African literature of the 'intellectual tsotsi' is Can Themba's typical narrator, a complex, uniquely urban creation from the way he speaks to the way he expresses his allergies to all forms of authority. Themba's narrator invests his own character with the qualities of both gentleman and thug. Relentlessly, he produces the image of the bottle as substitute for a crushed and dying spirit. Themba writes in The Bottom of the Bottle:

I think the rest of African society looked upon us as excrescence. We were not the calm dignified Africans that the church so admires... not

⁹ C. Campbell's term and definition is applied here, from C. Campbell (1992), 'Learning to Kill? Masculinity, the Family and Violence in Natal'. *Journal of Southern African Studies* 18 (3).

the unspoiled African the Government so admires...Neither were we *tsotsis* in the classical sense of the term, though the *tsotsis* saw us as cousins (1982:110)¹⁰.

Themba's narrator has no expectations of life under apartheid and little sense that resistance to apartheid can succeed. He recounts being visited by two ANC officials who declare they want Themba's 'nice-time boys' to make a commitment to the struggle. Themba barks the nationalist salute, 'Afrika!' and the ANC men respond, 'Mayibuuuye!'

"So you are with us?" asked the big man as they prepared to go.

"Sure," I said, "sure," hugging my beloved bottle (Ibid:112).

But though the ANC officials in his text might see him as a 'nice-time boy', Themba proves to the reader that he understands that the struggle against apartheid is a life-or-death struggle. He does, ultimately, choose to capture the moments of awakening to political consciousness in carefully crafted language that evokes more vivid understanding of the memory of his era than any single political action might have done. Nat Nakasa, in the 1960s continued in this vein, as did Vusi Khumalo of *Pace* magazine during the 1970s. Like Hemingway, Themba, Nakasa and Khumalo had such unhealthy relationships with alcohol that it is immaterial which two of them also officially committed suicide.

In the 1970s and 1980s the texts from which we see movement between 'intellectual tsotsi' and 'comrade' and 'comtsotsi' and 'tsotsi' are Mongane Wally Serote's To Every Birth Its Blood (*Birth*) and Oliver Schmitz and Thomas Mogotlane's film and screenplay Mapantsula (1991)¹¹. It could be argued that both utilise similar techniques, in writing the same man into different roles, as Hemingway did. It will also be argued that both continue to develop and hone the street-sharp and virile yet drunk male, we first met in Themba's work, into a more easily recognisable 'shadow male' archetype.

¹⁰ In Can Themba (1982). The Will to Die.

¹¹ Oliver Schmitz and Thomas Mogotlane (1991). Mapantsula. COSAW: Fordsburg.

‘Comrade’ and ‘Comtsotsi’ appear to be mirror images of male archetypes that ache to be reunited with each other in ways that could be described as subconscious homosocial fantasy. The realisation of this fantasy is a human account of the lekking process in which the cock tries to impress not just the hen but also the other cocks at the lek.

In Birth, we find the divided self in the hard-drinking Tsi Molope, who is mirrored in Part 2 of Serote’s book by a host of others, particularly the daring Oupa. Serote does not show the reader the exact way in which the shadow male, Tsi, with all his problems, disappears and is re-manifested as a host of super males. Serote’s super males are debating what appears to be the ANC’s Strategy and Tactics document and preparing, like Soyinka’s Ogun, to sacrifice themselves, so that the lives of ordinary people can improve. In Mapantsula Panic Mzolo (the shadow) morphs into Duma (the hero) through a series of unlikely coincidences and quite a lot of artistic licence. Two interspersed stories show Panic outside of prison and Panic inside of prison. The swapping of clothes between Panic and Duma represents the swapping of fates. Panic has to endure torture while Duma gets to survive on the street a little longer. Their lives before death are similar to Serote’s Tsi and Oupa. Like For Whom the Bell Tolls, these two narratives are set in a mini universe engaged in a struggle against fascism. Tsi is an ‘intellectual tsotsi’ who walks “into crowds” never “with crowds” (Serote 1981:5) while Panic, like Gunman in Yizo Yizo, is a ‘comtsotsi’, who follows the political crowd. The term ‘comtsotsi’ arrived in political jargon in the 1980s, but the phenomenon is captured in the literary memory of the works we are looking at here. According to Monique Marks:

...the comtsotsis (were) youth who claimed membership of organisations, and hence certain legitimacy; but who in fact were involved in unambiguously criminal activities, or in random ‘political’ activities of dubious pedigree (Marks 1993: 205).

So ‘comtsotsi’ is the element that rides the political train, often as a masquerade to cover criminal activity (and in some instance, to gain access to

weapons). More a gangster than a comrade, the 'comtsotsi' is usually considered a product of the same environment as that of both gangsters and comrades, while also having an understanding of the need for 'discipline'.

The turning point in both stories is when security police suggest to Tsi and Panic that if they do not co-operate they can expect to 'fall' to their death from the 'famous window' (Serote 1981:154; Schmitz & Mogotlane 1991: 121). In Mapantsula's final scenes, Panic is shown a video of himself walking in a demonstration with Duma shortly after denying having much knowledge of Duma. He sees himself raising a fist of defiance.

And finally, comes the choice: the easy way out or the hard option? Panic does what Duma would have done and what his own image on the screen before him is doing. He defies. He says 'No'. He will not denounce Duma.

'No'. In a word the 'comtsotsi' becomes part of the masses he is part of anyway, puts aside the bottle and the 'gangsta' slang, leads the crowd instead of walking into them or behind them.

Is Panic a martyr? Is he a saviour figure, sacrificing his own life for the good of the masses? Or is he simply a rationalist who knows he is going to die anyway, so chooses the most dignified mask to wear as he does so. In Chapter 3, we see a list of the violences Panic faces on an everyday level. He is a professional survivor, so will know when his time is up. He now must choose to die (1) at the hands of the police, if he does not sell out; (2) at the hands of comrades, if he sells out; (3) at the hands of comrades because it is assumed that he sold out even if he did not; (4) at the hands of the gangsters on whom he has already been discovered spying; (5) in a random street or club brawl; (6) through alcohol abuse; or (7) by his own hand.

Panic's seven choices of death are assembled because of his 'comtsotsi' lifestyle and the apartheid violence that turned him into that in the first place. They do not include the possibility of being murdered in a hijacking, or dying of Aids because there are many other possible deaths for Panic. The point is

that Panic—like Chester, Papa Action, Thulani and Gunman—has very little chance of survival *anyway*. But he decides to go out fighting on behalf of his community rather than for himself. By doing so he tells audiences that the particular system of oppression (apartheid) against which he positions himself is not monolithic. It can be destroyed. Thulani and Gunman make similar choices to Panic's. By the end of Yizo Yizo 2, Papa Action would also do the same. Moving from 'shadow male' to 'super male' is about putting aside the bottle or the white pipe, understanding why you took them up in the first place, believing in a cause and using one's energies for revolutionary instead of criminal violence.

Like Panic, Chester and Papa Action are not usually sober. And why should they be? The most polite term by which they will be known is 'tsotsi' or 'thug'. Mostly they are referred to as 'dogs', or as Peterson expresses it, 'dawgs'. Unlike Panic, Chester and Papa Action are unspeakably cruel. But then as John Mortimer, quoting Filson Young, points out:

"Most of the interest and part of the terror of crime", wrote Filson Young in his introduction to the Crippen trial, "are not due to what is abnormal but to what is normal in it; what we have in common with the criminal, rather than that subtle insanity which differentiates him from us, is what makes us view with so lively an interest a fellow being who has wondered into these tragic and fatal fields..." (Mortimer 1992:ix)¹².

Gangsters like Papa Action and Chester *necessitate* action by comrades like Thulani and 'comtsotsis' like Gunman. There is *more* drama if the baddies create unmanageable tensions. Gibson and Mahlatsi explain that when creating their criminally violent archetypes, they planned to give Chester the bigger part. Papa Action was going to be his satellite. But the satellite came to life during filming and ended up becoming more important for audiences. Papa Action ultimately represented the face of Yizo Yizo as will be seen in the chapter on audiences. Precisely because of the feedback to YY1, reported in

¹² John Mortimer (1992). The Oxford Book of Villains. Oxford University Press: London.

that chapter, and the negative responses from adults about the way violence was made to look 'cool' because of the way they had fashioned Chester, the producers then had to take hard decisions when it came to YY2. Here Chester becomes a victim of the very sexual violence and relations of abuse he represented in YY1. He becomes the 'wife' of another prisoner in YY2. Papa Action, criminal violence incarnate, becomes something of a 'born again' and transformed character in YY2, when he tries to seek redemption and reconciliation with his mother. He is made to become the wounded healer who will talk through the pitfalls of a violent lifestyle to youth at risk. Because Chester and Papa Action are in jail throughout YY2, the pair who carry out the tasks they would otherwise have performed on the instructions of Bra Gibb are Kane and Abel, while Sika 'Son of Papa Action' Fakude, shows the potential for reproducing the criminal archetype.

Thulani and Gunman are the pair who match criminal violence with retributive or restorative violence, according to the definitions in Chapter 2 of this research. Thulani and Gunman are outsiders in that they are both 'older' students who lost the chance to complete their studies because of their activities in 'the struggle'. Viewers are told this information by both characters but somehow we believe Thulani more, as Gunman initially seems too much of a clown to have been involved in serious struggle activities. Their age is significant because it enables Thulani and Gunman to possess the political memory that is inaccessible to the younger characters. They are able to make the other learners understand what happened before the actions of the late 1990s into 2004 depicted in YY1,2 and 3.

Gunman in particular represents a type that is neither 'comrade' nor 'tsotsi' but rather 'comtsotsi' as defined above. Though older than the others, he is very much a 'youth' in his absorption of youth culture, his love of rap and his references. Yizo Yizo seems to be the second filmic instance (the first was Mapantsula) where the type has evolved into an action figure who cares enough about his society to implement radical solutions even though he is personally doomed. In YY1 Gunman begins to stand up against criminal violence because he has the memory of political violence. In YY3 Gunman

has to stand up against violence silence as the character who discovers he is HIV positive.

Criminal violence in representation: Chester and Papa Action

Major gangster Chester Serote makes an appearance in YY1, (Episode 1, Chapter 2) shortly after Papa Action is seen pushing Bobo's head into the shit in the toilet. Papa Action—his name and what he does—suggest that he is the one who gets his hands dirty, whereas Chester has the appearance of a pampered dandy. The girls flutter when they see Chester. "He's a rotten apple," says one. "If he's rotten, I want a bite," says another. "Chester, you're killing me softly..." This intertextual reference to Roberta Flack's Killing Me Softly (With His Song) is used to mean, 'turning me on'. Partly what is killing the schoolgirl softly is the way Chester looks. He is 'styled' to represent criminal violence, Gibson says. He wears expensive leathers, fancy jewellery, branded Gucci and Versace gear that an ordinary person could never afford. With his bleached blond hair, he makes a statement that immediately becomes associated with his actions. He is usually pictured eating an apple. When he co-opts someone, he gives them a bite of his apple. Chester and the apple motif is, Gibson confirms, an intertextual reference to William Keighley's The Street with No Name, a crime thriller popular with Soweto audiences in the 1950s. Richard Woodmark, as the flamboyant gangster Styles, ate apples and used a Benzedrine inhaler. And of course the apple is also associated with the Garden of Eden, and original sin.

Where Papa Action's speech is peppered with religious symbolism and mythology—"in the name of the father, the son and the spirit of Satan" (Episode 1, Chapter 2)—Chester's vocabulary comes from US action, cop and gangster movies. When the school principal, Mthembu, throws him out of the school, Chester calls Mthembu and the teacher accompanying him, 'Lethal Weapon 1 and 2' while fiddling with an AK bullet. The reference to Lethal Weapon simultaneously informs viewers that YY characters understand, and are engaging with, the gangster genre, and it refers to one of the few cop sequels featuring a black cop (Danny Glover, who is paired with

Mel Gibson as drug busters). The story line in Lethal Weapon 2 has the pair up against a South African drug dealer.

There are occasions when all the characters in a particular scene use gangster terminology. In Episode 12, Chapter 34, everyone's engaging in 'gangster speak' and there is an additional play on the word 'dirty'. Chester refers to a group of teachers as 'The Dirty Dozen' (naming a 1967 movie featuring Lee Marvin, Charles Bronson and Telly Savalas about a group of former convicts), to Thulani as 'Jean-Claude van Damme' (the 'Muscles from Brussels' who starred in fighting movies like Kickboxer and Street Fighter). Papa Action quotes Dirty Harry when he says, as he points a gun at Edwin: "I'm Clint Eastwood now, make my day, Edwin". Zakes tells Chester: "Your balls are getting hard. You're not in a movie, you're not Rambo. You are a dirty street thug. Go." Chester responds: "If I'm dirty, what are you?"

We know from YY1's first episode that both Papa Action and Chester are virtually sociopath. They do not seem to care about the damage they cause. Episode 1 ends with Chester eating an apple and asking a girl for a kiss. The Department of Education van comes up. He hijacks it at gunpoint and makes the driver crawl on the ground. This display of cruelty and the humiliation that comes with it—marked elsewhere with the letters **SMV** to indicate an abusive way of relating to others—is Chester's forte. And as will emerge later, it is a representation that had meaning for millions of young viewers who had personal experiences of being bullied or humiliated.

In Episode 2, Chapter 4, Thiza's brother Zakes is seen buying a vehicle from Chester, thus establishing the criminal link between them and Chester's street power within the community. This power is confirmed whenever Chester offers someone he is trying to coerce to have a bite of his apple.

In one sequence Chester kisses Mantwa and offers her a bite of apple, which she accepts. He says to Mantwa about Dudu: "Who is this little beauty? I'm going to grow you up myself and keep wolves and little boys away from you". Mantwa says: "She's not your type" (YY1, Episode 6, Chapter 17).

In Episode 9, Chapter 25-26, while Chester and Papa Action take turns raping Dudu, Papa Action's language is typically churchy. "Let her die for her sins" he shouts as he rapes her, face down, while Chester crows, very much the cock of the roost.

It is hard to imagine how unarmed youths could possibly withstand Chester and Papa Action. In Episode 4, Chapter 15, Chester calls Thiza over and asks him about Ken Mokwena, the acting principal. Thiza says he does not care much for him. Papa Action scoffs: "Best turkey in the cage, I know your type" and taunts Thiza, saying he's a 'coward', they will make him 'a man'. Manhood is seen as a state of fearlessness. In Episode 6, Chapter 17, Papa Action gives Thiza a bottle of vodka. "Here, get rid of fear. Become a man".

By Episode 7, Chapter 19, Thiza has begun to move around with the gang. Thiza watches Papa Action torment a chubby youth who wants to use the toilet: "Are you having periods? Are the robots red?" Thiza looks embarrassed but does not say anything. Later, Thiza has to witness his friends Sticks and Bobo being humiliated. Papa pours wine down Sticks' throat. Chester pisses in Bobo's pocket. "Now I want this car washed," Chester says afterwards. Then he gives Thiza a bite of his apple.

And after having taken that bite, Thiza is lost. In Episode 10, Chapter 29 the gangsters sweep past the school. Chester's driving with his gun out of the window, Papa Action is perched at the opening of the car's sun-roof, taunting kids on other side of fence. "You are all slaves", while Chester says: "I'll come and set you free. I'm teddy bear, I'll make you dance", 'Teddy bear' is an intertextual reference to a DJ called 'The Teddy Bear', Glen Lewis. They drive off, amid lots of shooting in air.

Chester becomes furious that Thiza will not sell drugs for him. In YY1, Episode 10, Chapter 29, he arranges Thiza's abduction. "No one joins me and

then leaves,” he says. “From now on, I’ll tell you how to live, when to eat and when to shit”. The baddies take Thiza to Bra Gibb. “Here’s the new recruit, I want pills to feed the nation,” Chester says. Bra Gibb is irritated that Chester is attempting to do business in front of his daughter and warns Chester to lie low, he has already got rid of Chester’s rape case. “One more mistake and you’re out”.

This rattles Chester disproportionately. As he drives, he tells Thiza it’s time Bra G retires. He (Chester) is “number 2”, the implication being that if Bra Gibb retires he will be number one.

“He’s a target,” he says, as they see the bottle-store manager on the balcony. In the version that was flighted on SABC, Chester and Papa Action are seen in the shop, ending a game on a machine. They shout at the shop owner. Then viewers see that the shopkeeper has been shot dead but they are not told how. It is clear the shop owner was the victim of the gangsters.

On the DVD, however, there is an alternate scene, which viewers can access. It shows the following scene: Chester shouts at the shopkeeper: “You turned our bottle store into a fish and chips shop. You piss me off”. He puts an apple on the shopkeeper’s head in a reference to William Tell. “Save his life, shoot the apple in half,” he tells Thiza. He tries to make Thiza take the gun, but when Thiza does not, he shoots the shopkeeper himself. The DVD scene is unmistakably told from the perspective of the disturbed criminal Chester Serote. It is violence as voyeuristic spectacle whose aesthetic value is artistically raised through the insertion of the William Tell reference.

Gibson insists it was the writers who wanted the scene removed because they feared copycat behaviour if it was screened.

The trouble Thiza gets into for being involved in the incident—even though it was Chester who pulls the trigger—forces Zakes to start taking on the boss—Bra Gibb himself. He takes Thiza to make a statement at the police station. A cop sounds a warning about how big an opponent Thiza might be

taking on in becoming a state witness when he says, “We’ve been trying to get Chester. No one wants to testify”. Zakes responds, “I don’t care who he is. Nobody will touch my brother”.

The police station scenes are juxtaposed with Papa Action in the hairdressing salon, having a stoned, narcissistic moment. “This boy is beautiful, there’s no shaven head like me, not even 2Pac” (Episode 12, Chapter 35-6). He dozes, gets up to do a drug deal, nods off again. When the vigilantes arrive he tries to escape but cannot. He winds up behind bars. Throughout YY2 he and Chester are behind bars. They are eventually separated. The ‘buddy’ moments come to an end and Chester winds up being another prisoner’s wife.

But Papa Action, forced to undergo cold turkey since he cannot get Mandrax, hallucinates. First he sees cockroaches, then his mother as he hears ‘Thula Mama’ in the singing of the other prisoners in YY2, Episode 11. He starts talking about his mother in a confessional mode to the chaplain-like figure, who seems to appear from nowhere to sit listening to and share stories with Papa Action about his own mother. In fact, he is another maximum-security prisoner. He says: “She used to come and visit me and then she realised my life was consumed by drugs and I told her not to come. She stopped coming, she lost her job, she was starving”. There are visuals of a woman trying to pick up garbage. “After I stopped taking drugs, I told myself that I’d get out and look after her”. There’s a picture of a woman lying next to the garbage can. She looks dead.

Capt Shai does a deal with Papa Action to reduce his sentence. As the audience, we are not sure what it involves, although there is mention about getting transport to bring Papa Action’s mother to the jail.

But Papa Action is not finished examining his own motives for his recent criminal behaviour and here’s when we discover the deal Shai is after. Papa Action’s motive seems to be examining his own sense of low self-esteem although he’s also telling Shai about a problem between Zakes and Chester: “Bra Gibb, once I saw him looking in a mirror. He didn’t know we were

watching. He just saw dogs. He told us to hang out with Thiza, to give him lots of drugs. Zakes is very connected but he and Chester were enemies for a long time. Chester tried to kill Zakes. During the trial I was ordered to kill Chester, but we are like brothers. I refused”.

“That is why you need witness protection,” Shai tells Papa Action.

When Papa Action’s mother comes to the jail, she tells him he has disappointed her. Papa Action says he never wanted her to see him like this and asks who’s looking after her. “Your brother, and he’s still unemployed,” she says.

The other prisoner also adds to the story about low self-esteem at the root of his criminal activities. “I was the clever child at home. My mother wanted me to study but I never did”. He reminisces about robberies, murders and heists. A train chugs by, and there are visuals of a truck and of guys with AK rifles. “The guys didn’t work, they were always angry. They felt betrayed”. This story in Episode 11 leads directly to Gunman’s story to the class about the self defence unit (SDU) and the killing of his big brother.

Later Papa Action lectures and hectors the young crooks Kane and Abel on the risks for teenagers, or young men with low self-esteem, or a sense of humiliation, or feeling of betrayal. There is a strong sense that a lot of this is research-driven and insisted upon by the broadcaster, so that Yizo Yizo will not be seen to be putting out a message that crime pays. However, there is such a gap between the various violences undertaken by Papa Action and Chester in YY1 and these sequences in YY2. It is questionable whether even regular viewers could find closure with the distance between actions, consequences and the repentance scenes.

But even as Papa Action turns his own deeds to ashes, we witness his recreation and re-emergence in the person of Sika, the self-proclaimed “Son of Papa Action”. His humiliation by the girls and by Elliot in earlier episodes in YY2 have pushed him to prove himself on the drug-dealing circuit and he is going to do things the way Papa Action would have done them. He calls

Bobo, “Bobo the hobo” and tries to dunk him in the toilet just as Papa Action did in YY1, Episode 1.

The Sika arc has the effect of telling about both the cycles of violence and the possibilities, when working with archetypes, of being able to recreate another whenever the original one is indisposed.

Transitional twins: Thulani and Gunman

Thulani, a 23-year-old ex-combatant, is introduced to viewers in YY1, Episode 3. He is shown compulsively drawing pictures depicting political violence. In the course of this episode he has a panic attack in the toilet. Javas and Bobo, who watch through the window, think he is masturbating and spray cold water over him.

Thulani is so well built that he makes Chester think of Jean-Claude van Damme. There is something incongruous about such a big man being neatly dressed in a school uniform. The viewer is aware that with all those muscles he may *look* placid, but whenever he sees instances of injustice his response will be to fight to the death. The panic attacks explain to viewers that he suffers from a post-traumatic stress disorder. His drawings, depicting incidents of political violence, represent ‘political memory’ as they make an intertextual link with the freedom struggle, and the sacrifices (including that of education) of township youth.

Gunman comes to viewers’ attention in Episode 4, when he and Nomsa are locked out of school on the instructions of the strict principal Mthembu, when they get there late. He is small and stunted, someone who did not grow properly because he never had enough to eat as a child. Although his banter is lively—Gunman particularly enjoys sharp exchanges with girls—he’s obviously opting, consciously or unconsciously, for playing the jester, because clown is an easier role to play than victim.

In YY1 Episode 5 the sound of a helicopter overhead, during one of Edwin's classes, triggers a panic attack for Thulani, which allows an interaction between Gunman and Thulani. During Thulani's panic attack, Gunman tells Thulani, "Don't let the past haunt you" and then explains to the class that Thulani is disturbed because of what he has lived through.

This sets up Gunman as the person who can convey a 'hidden narrative' to the other pupils. In Episode 6, Gunman is still positioned as Thulani's interpreter. He looks at Thulani's drawings: a person defending himself with a dustbin lid in one hand and a petrol bomb in the other, against an armed soldier; someone being necklaced with people watching; kids climbing a security fence and a headless man. Gunman attempts an analysis of these drawings. He says about the picture of the headless man: "You know who this is. He's your father. He did this after discovering you're his son". Gunman's take of a picture of a baby crying is, "Look at this baby. Do you know why it's crying? Its mother was killed in a war..."

Thulani—also called Thulas—comes in while the learners stand around Gunman scrutinising his pictures. The learners scuttle off, Thulani sits down. Gunman plays with a pair of handcuffs and watches Thulani closely. Teacher, Zoe Cele, tells everyone to sit down, they will design their own adverts today. Gunman scoots across and attaches the handcuffs to the leg of a desk. Papa Action enters the classroom: "Why are you in class, you rubbish, don't you know it's Independence Day?" (Teboho says this is not a reference to the movie Independence Day. Neither he nor others from the producer team had seen or heard of it when filming. Papa Action uses liberation terminology on the day of the bash because he has plans to take over the school).

Zoe respectfully asks Papa Action to "please leave". Papa Action leaves but returns shortly with a gang of thugs. While he is out of the room, Gunman jumps up and quickly handcuffs Thulani's hand so that when Papa Action and his gangsters re-enter, Thulani is chained to the desk. Thulani's anger grows because he is unable to take action against Papa Action's bullying tactics. He picks up a book and hurls it. He also knocks his desk against the wall. Edwin,

hearing the commotion, enters the classroom and threatens to keep the whole class away from the bash unless they tell him who handcuffed Thulani to the desk. One of the girls tells him it was Gunman. Gunman's excuse is, "I was just testing his mind, Sir". It is clear that Gunman thinks Thulani is crazy but he recognises what it is that made him like that.

By the next episode, Episode 7, the first day of the second term after a wild and destructive bash during which Hazel is raped by Sonnyboy, Gunman returns to school sporting an AK tattoo on the back of his head. In interviews with the producers, it emerged that Teboho came up with the name, 'Gunman' and it was Angus's idea to tattoo the AK on the back of his head.

Something has happened after the bash to make Gunman reposition himself as an agent of retributive violence. It has to do with the way the gangsters have taken over at school. When he and Nomsa stare at the mess, chaos and graffiti in the school grounds, he comments to Nomsa: "We must get these people". He is no longer Thulani's 'interpreter' but rather someone who will begin to function in a similar way to Thulani, even though he certainly does not have Thulani's powerful physique and we have yet to see if he has any particular skills to take on a band of thugs.

Meanwhile Thulani is getting angrier. While the students are milling about aimlessly and the teachers are assessing the damage to the school, Zoe Cele sets up class under a tree. A stoned kid disrupts the class. "Sorry madam...a baybee" he slurs. The term 'madam' rather than 'ma'am' instantly references the terms of address established under apartheid. This youth fancies a 'babe', one of the girl learners, but he says the word 'baby'. He starts to harass the girls and pulls out a knife when he is challenged by Thulani. Thulani takes the knife from him and swiftly beats him up. Gunman watches from a safe distance and mostly keeps out of the fray but once the matter is settled, berates the stoned kid and calls him, "You dagga tree".

Later in the same episode Thulani is cornered in the toilet by two of Papa Action and Chester's crowd, after hearing from the stoned kid in the previous

scene that Thulani beat him up. “You’re a jackal, you think you’re wise,” the stoned kid says to Thulani. Edwin has to break up a major fight. A swirl of images and background voices provide flash evidence of the confusing world Thulani has hailed from and arrived in. Someone’s voice mentions that Thulani’s SDU (self-defence unit) was in Thokoza. We know historically from our own flashbulb memory that the transitional violence in the then ‘PWV townships’ (Pretoria-Witwatersrand-Vaal), particularly Katsieng and Thokoza, was extreme in the run-up to and during the first democratic elections. Armed attacks on civilians by apartheid-state backed Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) hostel dwellers forced ordinary people including schoolchildren to take up arms so they could defend themselves. Members of the National Peacekeeping Force (NPKF) sent in to quell the violence were engaged in combat with the IFP. Edwin picks up a plastic bag of mandrax tabs. The statement that seems to be being made here is that, where Thulani’s childhood was spent fighting warlords who would not let a community live without violence, he has now returned to school where drug lords will not let a community live without violence.

Tension continues to build in Episode 8, Thulani fights with Papa Action when he tries to take a girl at knifepoint to the toilet for sex. Once again Edwin has to break it up. Papa Action surrenders his knife and Edwin lashes him.

Bra Gibb does not like the fact that his dealer Papa Action was punished. He sends his henchmen Kane and Abel to the school. They tell Ken: “You’re unable to get discipline in this school. We’ll do the job, very simple”.

Thulani watches the interaction between Kane and Abel and Ken from a distance, sees them eat food, cock their pistols, enter Edwin’s classroom while Edwin is talking to Javas and shoot Edwin twice, point a pistol menacingly at Javas, then walk out calmly. He snaps at the very moment that Ken is dazed into inaction. Javas, urges Ken, “Sir, do something”. But Ken just sits there and Javas has to be the adult and get on the phone to the police himself, while his father and Zoe take Edwin to hospital.

In YY1, Episode 8, Chapter 24, the kids are watching something through the fence. Bobo shouts: "Shoot him" while Louise comments, "I knew that hooligan was too old to be going to school". Thulani has taken Ken hostage in his office with his own firearm. Thulani says to Ken: "All this corruption is coming to an end today". Javas enters the office while Thulani is talking.

Thulani: "Without discipline you're dead. I used to have soldiers. As commander of my own unit I had to keep control". While it is unlikely that in real life a character like Thulani would say a sentence like this to someone like Ken, this is TV drama and Thulani represents the archetype of political memory. This is his moment. He therefore says, "There are things I did in the SDU that still haunt me". Ken listens, terrified.

"I remember once," Thulani continues, "there was a boy in our township. He was a spy. We caught him, put him on his knees" (he holds his pistol dramatically to his own head). "I shot him. The others told me that without discipline, you're dead. Even God knows he had to die". Javas, who a few episodes ago was turning a blind eye to the violence around him, now interjects with the same sort of words the public broadcaster might script: "It's not the way to solve things".

"It feels as if the whole world is pressing down on me," Thulani says. He looks out the window, sees military personnel running round. He makes Ken lie down on the ground and says he wants to talk to Mahlatsi (the District Education Officer, who is also outside) alone. Javas goes out and asks for everyone to leave before Thulani goes crazy. The cops ask DEO Mahlatsi: "You sure you're safe?" "Perfectly," Mahlatsi says.

He goes to the office and tells Thulani he's from the Education department to hear Thulani's demands...but they cannot talk unless Thulani hands over the gun.

Thulani: "You're mad".

Javas enters the office with the warning, "I'm coming in, don't shoot". Ken uses the moment to barter. If Thulani lets him go, he will leave the school. Javas urges Thulani to speak to Mahlatsi, he knows what is going on at the

school because he has been talking to Zoe Cele and Edwin Thapelo. He says the police have gone away, no one is outside. Thulani lets Ken go and gives Javas the gun. Thulani and Mahlatsi talk. Mahlatsi promises an enquiry into Thulani's allegation that Ken lets drugs and thugs into school. He cannot guarantee Ken will resign as he promised to do, but if the allegations are correct, he will be fired. He asks Thulani to promise there will not be a recurrence of the incident. When Thulani goes outside, he is hailed as a hero.

The kids want justice in Episode 9, the day after the hostage drama, when they discover Thulani has been arrested and there appears to be no enquiry taking place into the excesses at the school. Gunman now takes over the work of Thulani and heads up the 'retributive justice' lobby: "Do something. Are we going to let Ken get away with it? He slept with a schoolgirl and we did nothing," Gunman yells. "Do you see that dog?" he says as Ken drives up. Gunman tells Ken to go. "You get out of here. Leave the school grounds. Stop harassing school kids". Lesego tries to reason with the kids and Gunman threatens to shoot him (Lesego). Gunman gets worked up, jumps on the school roof with a gun, yelling "Don't make me mad. Someone must die today". Javas tries to talk sense to the students in the broadcaster concern voice, "violence will not solve anything" but the shot that Gunman fires speaks loudly to the kids. They raise their fingers as if they are guns.

But then Dudu comes to school and as she sobs on Mantwa's chest they all realise what's happened. Gunman: "These thugs have raped her".

Gunman is the avenging angel. "Let's burn down Bra Gibbs's house". ("Sure, sure" say the kids).

Gunman starts leading a march but first he jumps on Ken's car. Bobo helps him pour petrol on it and makes the kids stand back. Louise exits, Ken watches in a stupor. The students petrol bomb his car.

The teenagers march, almost toy toying, guns in air to Bra Gibb's house. They are enraged about the rape issue although Gunman is clearly more interested in getting the drug dealers.

On the first day of the 3rd term (YY1, Episode 10, Chapter 28), Mahlatsi announces the results of the enquiry to the governing body, which found “gross negligence of the part of the ex-deputy principal”. Thulani, he says, “is undergoing counselling”.

Later in this episode, Nomsa tells Thulani his drawings are good. He must have an exhibition and they must do something about the ugly walls. But with the exception of one more incident in which Thulani intervenes when Chester and Papa Action fight with Edwin at the school (Episode 12), Thulani more or less fades out of YY altogether now—presumably to do his therapy and find artistic release from his demons through drawing--while Gunman’s star rises. Gunman too will follow up the SDU story from his own perspective and it appears that Thulani could easily have killed Gunman’s brother, believing he was a spy. Gunman pairs up with Mr Nyembe, Javas’s father to capture Chester after a sequence of violent events starting with the murder of the shopkeeper (YY1, Episode 10) and the smashing of Grace Letsatsi’s windscreen and the shooting of Zakes (YY1, Episode 12).

In Episode 13 Gunman, with Sticks and Bobo at his side, looks for Chester at Bra Gibb’s. Bra Gibb asks why they are not at school. Gunman says he can do his vowels, “a...e...i...o...u, uzzu”. According to Mahlatsi, this idea was subsequently used in a song by the group Trompies.

Gunman to Bra Gibb: “Where’s your rat Chester?”

Bra G: “So you’re a ghetto terminator” (Intertextual reference here to James Cameron’s The Terminator movies, featuring Arnold Schwarzenegger as a programmed killing machine). “Do you know how to use this?” He indicates the weapon Gunman is holding. Gunman shows him with a few deft movements that he does know how to use his AK.

Bra G offers him the job of his bodyguard, but Gunman declines saying he wants to know Chester’s whereabouts.

Gunman finds Chester later, smoking Mandrax. Bobo is also there, completely out of it. “It give me power,” Bobo slurs. Gunman and his friends spray red paint all over Chester and take him to the school. Gunman puts a gun into Thiza’s hand to shoot Chester, but he cannot. Gunman has the gun in Chester’s mouth and is ready to pull the trigger, but Thiza objects. He tells Gunman to take Chester to the police. Although this would be a chance at retributive justice, Thiza does not respond well to the way Chester is being humiliated and rejects the offer of giving Chester his comeuppance. Thiza’s response could be linked to his witnessing of the killing of the bottle-store manager, or it could be because he has agreed with Zakes to deal with Chester through the police.

In YY2, when Thiza is being held on hijacking charges after telling the prosecutor about the killing of the shopkeeper, Gunman tries to get R5 each from the kids to pay Thiza’s bail. “Thiza is the main man, we cannot let him rot in jail”. It is almost as if Thiza is a political prisoner.

Zoe in class introduces the topic of the LRC elections, saying students must vote for a class rep. Gunman wants to be voted for “because of the role I played in the struggle”. He gave up his studies because of the struggle and that is why he’s still here, he says. Although he is a laugh a minute, Gunman tells a truth in that many over-age learners *were* involved in struggle activities, usually through self-defence groups or support activities for political people in their areas. ‘Gunman Marumo Farrakan’ he calls himself, recalling the African American Muslim, Louis Farrakan, the million-man march and the historical role in the US human rights movement played by the Black Panthers.

Javas says jokingly to Gunman: “What did your parents do with you when you were young, did they drop you on your head?” (the suggestion is that Gunman is thick-skulled, not so bright but this perception probably relates to his age and to his volatile nature).

When Thiza’s released there’s a scene of schoolboys singing his praises. Having Thiza back makes Gunman, like some of the other pupils, question the

presence of KK at the school, which reminds them of her murdered father and Thiza's involvement. They feel it's unfair that he is accountable on some level for those events. Gunman blames KK for 'coming with corruption' (YY2, Episode 2). Gunman blames KK for bringing trouble with the authorities, recalling the way youth activists in the struggle era stood together.

In YY2, Episode 3, Gunman, dressed in black, grey and white camouflage gear is in charge of security for the Valentine's bash. He uses the platform as if he is at a political rally, "Yizo Yizo...Amandla!" When the learners roar back, he says: "what I'm saying reminds me of the underground movement". Maggie comments to the other teachers: "You would think we were preparing for war". Gunman *is* preparing for war. Randomly, he picks fights with people he sees as foes. For Gunman, violence is strength and part of masculinity.

Later when Sonnyboy hits Rebecca, Gunman and Javas's Dad beat him up. Sonnyboy, driven off in a police car, shouts insults about "Kojak and your tokoloshi" referring to Mr Nyembe and Gunman. Kojak was a bald cop in a TV series in the 1980s. A tokoloshi is a small, feared spirit figure in South African traditional belief.

This view of Gunman—as a volatile, vigilante type, to whom physical violence is the best way of speaking to thuggery—is countered by the lighter image of him in Episode 5 doing a rap with Mantwa of Maya Angelou's And Still I Rise. But, by Episode 7, after the killing of Nomsa's mother for a tape deck, Gunman is back in vigilante mode.

Gunman joins Mr Nyembe and the vigilantes in looking for the hijackers. When Javas says he believes they should not get involved in police work, there's a row. Gunman produces a pistol and holds it at Javas's head. "I'll make you touch heaven," he says. The kids manage to disarm him. Later the vigilantes beat Sticks to a pulp, and Gunman is unable to stop them. The vigilantes chase Gunman away. In Episode 8, while the guys wait for Sticks to come out of his coma, Gunman says: "I tried stopping them. They were...like jackals. Men tore him apart. Javas, your father is rather stubborn". Javas

responds: “You took the law into your own hands. You are my father’s friend, don’t try winning me over”.

The learners, led by Gunman, toyi-toyi in Episode 10 because they want something to be done about Elliot. Vuyani asks, “Why is that madman always leading the discussions?” Elliot: “Sterkfontein (reference to a mental hospital) is obviously full”.

In Episode 11, Vuyani tells his class that leaders were important, but the struggle was also won by ordinary people. “Who knows about the struggle?” he asks. The kids make comments about being bored. Gunman jumps up in defence of the memory of those who were in the struggle. Vuyani encourages Gunman to talk about the SDUs. Later we see Gunman telling the class about his big brother getting killed. Vuyani tells him later, that story is important, “we need to know that sort of story”. Gunman begins to research the story. As he talks to old combatants, Thulani’s panic attacks start to make more sense. One ex-combatant tells Gunman: “Then, we knew what we were fighting. We were fighting together. Now it’s each man for himself”.

“Tell me about my brother,” Gunman says, “Who killed him and why?”

“I heard it was those guys from the hostel,” one ex-combatant says. “It was a long time ago,” the other one says.

Vuyani asks how the research is going. Gunman complains that his brother’s friends tell him about the SDUs, but when they mention his brother’s name they stop talking.

Gunman asks another group about his brother Marumo. Someone says: “He was a sell-out. His friends and I were at the TRC, we know everything”.

Gunman struggles with this until Vuyani tells him that the truth is always the first casualty of war. And it is true that the false ‘naming’ of spies for opportunistic reasons is one of the most tragic aspects of the South African

struggle¹⁴. “We’ll check the TRC records,” Vuyani says. Later Vuyani produces some files from the TRC.

Vuyani: “This is David Mbatha’s testimony to the TRC”. Gunman: “I know him, he was a comrade”.

Vuyani: “Mbatha was working for the security police. They admit they killed your brother. They admit they spread false rumours that comrades were spies. Your brother was one of those they lied about”.

Gunman looks very upset. He goes to talk to the mother figure in his life and asks her to wash the AK off his head. Suddenly the symbol of the gun does not represent freedom at all, but victimisation. In this episode the political ‘sell-out’ is compared to the criminal ‘sell-out’ at a time when students are about to speak out against ‘heroes’ like Papa Action and Chester. Everybody has a family.

¹⁴ An example of this is the sensational ‘apartheid spy’ allegations against Public Protector Bulelani Ngcuka made by Mo Shaik and Mac Maharaj in 2003, after Ngcuka had nailed former struggle hero Maharaj for corruption. The allegations against Ngcuka were found to be untrue by the Hefer Commission. However, after months of defending himself, Ngcuka resigned, stating publically that the case had damaged his spirit and his family life.

Chapter 6

‘You’ve got a fast car, I want a ticket to get out of here’¹: consumption, lifestyle violence and youth

(Amu’s voice)

Yo ish, shut up man

Just listen to me man

See those kids over there with them nice cars

Should I just go and jack them man you know

Like I want those cars too man you know

I think I’m a get into the life of crime

(Amu, in debate with E’Smile in The Good, the Bad, recorded for Yizo Yizo)

Cars are the most obvious motifs used throughout Yizo Yizo to explore youth obsession with brands and the desire to show wealth through what one consumes. Cars are part of many represented discussions and of the music that also describes youth preoccupations with what Bhekizizwe Peterson describes as the “rags-to-riches stories” afforded by kwaito in Yizo Yizo. Fast cars, like kwaito, are the imagined routes through which youths can get out of the township—even if the car has not been bought in a usual way. When it comes to kwaito, it is not clear to what extent the knowledge that Mandoza, who seized youth imagination when he performed in Yizo Yizo, was also admired as an understandable rogue because he had served time for hijacking cars in real time. Yizo Yizo’s Papa Action Zola (who performs Ghetto Fabulous), also brought an edgy, violent ‘gangsta’ edge to the music associated with the desire for a faster lifestyle, a faster beat.

Locations are central to the scenes exploring the links between youth culture, consumption and violence as a lifestyle in Yizo Yizo. Besides the classrooms, staff room and playground at school, the interiors of homes, the hospital, the courtroom and the prison, there are a few other Yizo Yizo locations that allow

¹ From Tracy Chapman’s Fast Car (1987), on the album Tracy Chapman, Elektra.

for this sort of link. The ones that stand out are the shop in which Thiza works, the carwash and the hairdressing salon. The exterior of the shop provides the space for comment, playing games like table soccer and hanging out; the interior is a place for gossip, observations about the cost of living, the occasional bit of shoplifting and even a murder. The carwash is even more symbolic. It provides a predominantly male place for meeting, for braaing, for drug dealing and for constant engagement with cars as representatives of the wealth the characters would like to acquire for themselves. The fact that one sees the drug dealers in action directly links lifestyle violence to the desire to show power through driving smart cars. In the majority of scenes featuring Zakes and his friends, there are references to cars because he represents the person who has adopted lifestyle violence. The hairdressing salon allows for 'girls' talk'. The 'bash' and its aftermath becomes event-as-location, the vehicle by which to showcase the progress or lack thereof of the characters. The opening sequences of YY1 instantly map three themes the series will explore in relation to youth culture. The first is youth culture and consumption. The second is adolescent sexuality in a world where children have grown up with assumptions that sex is a commodity whose value is determined by the power of the trader. The third is how youth understand their own worth, or suffer the reverse—lack of self-esteem—in terms of how the society around them operates. All the characters have to decide how to meet their needs for food, shelter, security and love and who they are in relation to alcohol, drugs, fashion, commodities, sex, violence and crime. The male characters in particular appear to be positioned at different points on an alcohol, drugs, violence and crime arc. Papa Action determines the scale of this arc in his whole-sale addiction to drugs and violence in YY1 and his retreat from them in his redemption song² in YY2. Many of the young male characters in YY go through exactly the same processes but in a more modest way. Javas realizes that he must take a position on lifestyle violence, when he sees that not taking a position actually means he is a participant. Thiza has to face hi-jacking charges and take responsibility for his actions. Bobo has to give up crime and drugs in YY1, and Sticks has to do the same in

² Papa Action's reformation is realised as an emancipation from mental slavery, so Bob Marley is the appropriate reference here.

YY3. Zakes, if he is to save the soul of his younger brother Thiza, has to transform himself from being a drug dealer to being a drug buster.

The main themes are mapped as they were earlier³.

In YY1, Episode 1, the beer bottles outside the door where Javas, Bobo and Sticks are sleeping off a heavy night immediately draw attention to a facet of youth culture that has become a national problem—over-consumption of alcohol, in this case by school-going youths. **(YC)**. They awake with a sense of dread because ‘Isaac Hayes’ (the intertextual reference by which Sticks refers to Javas’s father because he is bald, like the musician) is outside, waiting to punish Javas. Bobo does not want to wake up because his dream world is more pleasant than his reality **(AS)**: ‘I was busy with the Boom Shaka girl’ **(YC, I, H)**. Boom Shaka, a hugely popular South African kwaito band, were at their height during the writing of YY1. Bobo was probably fantasising about the pretty Thembi Seete, whose management as a solo artist, coincidentally, had been taken over by The Bomb Shelter. The intertextual reference here is a form of autocitation. Bobo, through his reference to Boom Shaka, also establishes himself as a fan. Chapter 8 of this research deals with audiences and fans but it’s important to note that within Yizo Yizo most of the youth characters and several of the adult ones are part of the very audiences YY is hoping to reach. They are youth who, like Thembi Seete and Boom Shaka, will immediately pay closer attention to Bobo and identify with his problems.

‘More sex’, the graffiti on the walls, is the first reference we find to one of the themes explored in YY1, adolescent sexuality in an increasingly violent and stressful world. Bobo’s fantasies of ‘The Boom Shaka girl’ are the second.

In a third reference to adolescent sexuality, Sticks says to Bobo, ‘Stop masturbating’ **(AS)**.

³ Intertextual references are marked **I**, with frequently an additional symbol after a colon to indicate the type of intertextuality. These symbols appear as follows: Mendacious **I:m**, intratextuality **I:i**, allusion **I:a**, quotation **I:q**, reference **I:r**, auto-citation **I:ac**, classic storyline **I:cs**, celebrity **I:c**, intertextual reference to political memory **I: to PM**. Motifs are marked **M** and indicate guns **M:g**, apples **M:a**, chickens **M:c** and dogs **M:d**.

Louise, a teacher who is just as caught up in the cycles of consumption as the bulk of those she teaches, watches her male counterpart Ken arrive in a BMW (Episode 1, Chapter 2). Later she greets him as ‘a member of Bra Gibb’s BMW club, out of poverty at last’ (**LV, Co**), suggesting that Ken is working with the township mafia don Bra Gibb—an *intratextual* reference to a don also called ‘Bra G’ in Isidingo and Backstage. Louise, clearly a fan of the Bra Gibb BMW club, wants a ride. He wants one too, in a sexual sense. “Only in a Pajero”, Louise teases (**LV**); possibly also a pun on the word ‘Pajero’ which is a Spanish word for masturbation, so the meaning for Spanish-speaking audiences, if Yizo Yizo were to break into that market, would be different. A Spanish audience might think Louise is telling Ken she would not have full sex with him.

The theme of masturbation is continued in Episode 1, Chapter 3: Through a window Javas and Bobo, watch Thulani in the throws of a panic attack and think he is masturbating (**AS**). They spray cold water over him. Immediately after this, Sticks tries to sell Thulani some Tiger Balm. Tiger Balm is a Chinese herbal ‘rub’ sold in a small red tin. It is used in a similar fashion to wintergreen, as a muscle rub, but is being touted here as a sexual stimulant for the genital area.

Crime as repossession

The hung-over trio of Javas, Sticks and Bobo are in a queue. Edwin, the science HoD, examines the queue (Episode 1, Chapter 1). At one end of the queue, Bobo argues about a book that it appears he has stolen. “In this economy, people are forced to take other people’s things,” he protests (**LV, C, Co**). This opens the debate about the difficulties for youth of growing up in a materialistic culture where those who do not possess ‘things’ have to figure out ways, often unethical, of getting them. The theme is continued in Episode 2, Chapter 2. Here, a group of schoolboys discuss theft, redefining it as

'repossession'. In Chapter 15 as the kids file into class, Sticks pops into the principal's office and takes the bell. "I'll sell it to the Zionist Church" he says **(LV, Co)**. Bobo comments: "Ask them to give you healing water, you're sick" **(H)**.

These debates have two major forums. They are opened up formally in Zoe Cele's class. In YY1 Episode 8, Chapter 23: Zoe asks Javas to read aloud from a newspaper: The article contains an interview with a leader of the 39 gang who is serving a life sentence for his criminal actions, which are not specified. Javas reads: "In 1995, I was released from jail but it was not long before I started stealing again. My mother had lost her job, my sister was hungry, what could I do? I saw people younger than me driving BMWs. I wanted the nice life too. What's wrong with that? Life today is too short so you must make the best of it while you can". Zoe leads a discussion about theft. Dudu, Bobo and Javas think the prisoner had no choice but to steal **(LV)**. Nomsa disputes this. "He could have got a job", she says **(D, questioning of LV)**. Bobo argues that there are too few jobs. The ones that are available do not give one enough to support a family. "Crime pays," he concludes. Nomsa points out that he (Daniel/Dennis) is in jail for 10 years. "That's his payment," she says. Zoe: "We always have a choice".

Later in Chapter 29 of the same episode when the class is discussing careers, Bobo says: "I do not think I'll be employed. To me it does not matter. Most of us here won't find any work. The only job you can be sure of is crime" **(LV, H)**.

Informally, a lot of the discussions between the schoolboys, that take place around crime as 'repossession', happen with a group of boys that stands together in the schoolyard at break and between classes, or else outside the shop. Boys come and go from these groups, but the discussion on the theme continues throughout the series. In Episode 2, Chapter 2, Sticks says he does not like the way black people have to ask for everything, he'd rather do crime than beg, he says. "Doggie, doggie, hausa..." chants one of the youths **(LV, Co, C, R, I, YC,)**.

Consumption

A group of schoolgirls standing in a separate group discuss seeing Men in Black and 'handsome Will Smith' (**YC, I**) during the holidays (YY1, Episode 1, Chapter 2). The intertextual reference to Men in Black is about the movie popular among youth at that time, although coming from one of the girls it could also reflect an unconscious reference to the 'alien' gangster menace. Nomsa has bought the CD Rapture by Anita Baker. (**YC, I, G**). Nomsa's discussion about an R&B artist suggests a gendered division among youth audiences (the preferred 'male' music being kwaito and rap, as suggested by the guys' 'doggie, doggie' chant, a local derivative of Who let the dogs out). In another discussion, the girls joke about Sticks's spiky dreads as if they are a cereal (**YC**): "They're like Kelloggs. I'll put milk on them and have them for breakfast" (**I to a brand**). (YY1, Episode 2, Chapter 4) Later on, Principal Mthembu cuts off Sticks's spikes. This hairstyle has been as short-lived and disposable, it turns out, as Kelloggs breakfast cereal. Another brand to which students refer is Felicia, TV hostess Felicia Mabuza-Suttle during the first ten years of 'democratic' airwaves in South Africa. In Episode 10, Chapter 28, Letsatsi tells the school assembly, "I am very proud to be joining this school. I will listen to you but you must also listen to me. If you want to be heard you must also listen," she says (**NE, Respect**). "Look how beautiful she is," Sticks and Bobo say to each other (**AS**). "Thank you Felicia," Bobo says.

In YY2, Episode 1 Nomsa, Hazel, Mantwa watch Mandoza (**I;c; I:ac**) on TV and question the dress style of the "hunks on TV" and whether dressing like a gangster is okay (**LV**). Mandoza is a huge youth celebrity, but interestingly he became that through his appearance in YY1, so once again there is the idea that the youth characters in YY are also part of the audience. The discussion on gangster style has been an enduring one for black youth over many generations and makes an intertextual allusion to the gangster writings and fashions of the Sophiatown era. At the same time, it references the text Sophiatown, which the characters are reading with Zoe in the English class. Mantwa says, "This is the new style". (**YC**). The guys are playing table football (**YC**), joking that they must "take chances,

make millions”, the Lotto slogan **(Co, PM, I)**. They are also discussing ‘style’. The Lotto reference alludes both to the national obsession with risk and the cargo cult mentality.

A political slogan reflected in the graffiti on the classroom wall, ‘Freedom at Last’ **(I to PM)** in Chapter 14, informs the language of consumerism when Zoe’s class discusses the language of advertisements. ‘Freedom’ is used in a cigarette advert **(I:ac, Co)**. Nomsa complains that “Javas is watching naked women, as usual” **(G, AS)**. What he is drooling over is an advert for razors in *Thandi* magazine that features an artistically posed naked woman showing miles of smooth leg. Zoe asks about the ad. Bobo naively reflects the absurdity of the measures to which women are expected to conform to standards of beauty dreamed up by the glamour industries when he says, “It’s an advert of a girl brushing her legs” **(G,C,R)**. It seemed to me, reading Bobo’s comment against one made by Sticks, also in relation to razors, a little later on, that the resistance of the ‘white left’ first to western ideas of femininity (shaved legs) and then to ‘male women’ and fascism, had entered the township at that moment. In Episode 8, Chapter 22 a kid insults Sticks: “What about your mother, you must tie her to a pole [*because she is a witch, goes the subtext*]. I hear she nearly killed somebody”. Sticks responds: “Do not get too used to me. You must buy razors for your mother. She shaves her moustache like Hitler” **(H, YC)**. So according to Bobo, women do not need to shave their legs to be feminine and beautiful, but according to Sticks, they had better not have facial hair because it means too much testosterone and possibly a violent and insane disposition. Shortly after the reference to “brushing legs”, Bobo also analyses a car advert for the class. “It’s saying if you do not have a smart car, you’re useless. It’s true if you do not have a car, you won’t have a girl” **(LV, Co)**. Nomsa responds, “I’m a girl and I’m not after wealth, I want respect” **(G, Co)**. From this comment, it seems Nomsa is unaffected by the consumerist dreams of her classmates. However, this is not the case. In Episode 6, Chapter 20 Nomsa tells Javas she feels bad because people think “I’m better” (they think she thinks she’s better than them) Javas tells her about a movie where a guy, when he feels bad runs till he sweats, so there is no more water for tears. He offers to run with her and sweat it out.

The light-hearted references to adolescent sexuality and consumption are positioned within a telling and in dialogue with other stories about a battle for education and the question of how the bills are paid. As a reference to the thinking that violence is the only way out of poverty, we have witnessed in the very first episode that Zakes, Thiza's big brother, sleeps with a pistol under his pillow. His lightning reflexes reveal everything the viewer needs to know about his lifestyle.

Generally, it seems the guys are not happy when anyone tries to highlight the way in which many of them buy into lifestyle violence. When Nomsa (YY1, Episode 2, Chapter 5) mentions that the truck carrying the books has been hijacked (**CV**), Javas sticks a notice saying 'I am a big mouth' on Nomsa's back. He also says Nomsa could take a man's role in the play Sophiatown, which Zoe wants them to perform (**G and AS**). Although the exchange contains the usual adolescent banter, at the same time it shows the way Javas links Nomsa's failure to observe 'violence silence' with her gender. Shortly after this (YY1, Episode 2, Chapter 5) in Edwin's science class, someone has put potassium into the lithium bottle. It explodes violently (**YC**), thus linking the idea of explosive consequence to adolescent hi-jinks.

In YY2, Episode 6 shows how consumption linked to drug abuse becomes very explosive and ugly. Bobo, a drug user himself, who buys his stash from Bra Gibb's street dealers Kane and Abel, is also a dealer for people who have even less than him and who resort to hi-jacking to get money. This is allowed by dramatic licence, as pointed out by Bheki Peterson⁴, since hijacking is usually done by sophisticated syndicates. Within YY, hijackings would more likely be done by Chester, Papa Action and Kane and Abel than the low-life thugs we see in action in this episode. The thug named alternately Nimrod and Fierce is filmed upside down. He's looking under the bed for a Mandrax tablet to smoke. He can only find ash. He goes with his tsotsi 'twin' in search of Bobo. Sticks and Bobo are sleeping, still under their duvets. When they

⁴ See Bhekizizwe Peterson (2001), 'Yizo Yizo: reading the swagger in Soweto youth culture'.

hear the knocking Sticks says to Bobo: “Tell them this is not a 24 hour”—a reference to the increasing number of all-night Shell and BP garages and 7-11 stores carrying food and emergency provisions. The thugs scream: “Give”. Bobo complains: “You woke me up for this shit. You have nothing!” He sends them away empty-handed because they have no money. The thugs are desperate and it’s clear they are looking for something they can steal and sell to buy money for drugs. Later they hijack Maggie Peterson. Nyembe’s vigilantes catch up with them, beat them up and take back the car. “Now we’re bruised, we’ve got no money and no pills,” Fierce says. They are fighting between themselves. They collect a German Hauser pistol. It is with this pistol they shoot and kill Nomsa’s mother.

In Episode 7 the hijackers discuss where to take the car. Another back-room car dealer says he does not want it, because it is covered in blood. They say it can be washed with Omo. The dealer says he would not buy the car if they were charging two cents. He does not want other people’s blood. This dealer is saying no to the violence, and is breaking the cycle on one level, but on another level other people like Bobo have become immersed in it.

The hijackers abandon the car and take out the sound system. They knock on Bobo’s door. He tells them they are irritating. “I was about to dream about the last Lotto number,” Bobo says. He will not give them a pill on credit, instead he swops pills for the sound system from Nomsa’s mother’s car. The reference to the Lotto in Episode 7, so shortly after trading a sound system, for which someone lost her life for a pill, relates immediately to the consumerist culture that is the religion of the YY characters.

Bhekizizwe Peterson suggests that scenes presented from the point of view of the perpetrator rather than from the experience of the victim romanticise violence (op cit). He sees a link between representations of violence in township film and kwaito music with the rags-to-riches stories of actors and musicians involved in such productions—who ultimately leave the township because their success means a change in class and status. Peterson writes that he is never sure how to interpret,

The single-mindedness with which films and music videos restrict youth identities and aspirations to various forms of consumption; be it flashy cars, 'babes' or who, 'justifiably', had to feel the 'wrath-of-your-anger'. Any cursory appraisal of films, music, pop videos, fashion, advertisements, and so on, should startle in its revelations of signs, postures and down-right blatant celebratory images of 'thug-life' and misogyny that are circulated (op cit).

However I cannot find an instance where Yizo Yizo tells a story from the perspective of the perpetrator of violence only, even if this point of view is initially privileged for drama purposes. It would be argued by Peterson that privileging the perpetrator's point of view serves to aestheticise the violence (Peterson 2001:10). However, the YY producers would be quick to respond that wherever there is violence, there is consequence; and consequence, as mentioned in Chapter 3, becomes the way in which most of YY is told.

In this case we see the grief-stricken victim's family (Capt Shai, Nomsa and her sister) preparing for the funeral and listen to several discussions between Connie Shai's friends and colleagues. We follow Bobo's downslide into addiction and witness Sticks's brutal beating by the vigilantes as a consequence. We see the thugs having lunch with Fierce's mom and we watch with one of them, as he watches a cop looking for him in the shack settlement. The cops enter a suspected hijackers' home but leave without making any arrests. The hijackers are ultimately arrested and interrogated but cannot explain to Shai why they killed his wife.

"Why? You could've taken the car and spared her life". Shai puts the pistol to Fierce's head.

"Because this stupid bitch..." Fierce begins. Having seen Fierce a little while earlier with his own mother, the idea here need not be a romanticisation of violence but rather that these thugs, who are working against their own community, know what it means to have a mother, yet they have killed someone else's mother. Rene Smith has a theory about social maladjustment being directly related to absentee parents in representation—yet it is hard to

imagine how a local drama with four main characters (Javas, Thiza, Hazel and Nomsa) could afford to show the parents of all the transitional and minor characters (Smith 2000:51). YY has shown the family members of other characters as and when their stories move from minor to major arc. Smith states that audiences of Yizo Yizo never meet the parent/s of Chester and Papa Action, Dudu and Mantwa⁵. It is true we never meet Chester's family. We do meet Mantwa's mother Lily and Dudu's father from the formation of the Parent Teachers' Association in YY1, Episode 9 and then again through Mantwa and Dudu's respective trials—Mantwa's reading problem and Dudu's appearance in court to convict Papa Action and Chester of her rape—in YY2. Papa Action's mother comes to visit him in jail and watches the rape case in YY2. But it must be acknowledged that Smith wrote her MA report nearly a year before YY2 was filmed.

Consumption gobbles up almost every character's imagination in YY. Even in the prison cells in which he is locked up while being charged as an accomplice for hijacking, Thiza finds himself sitting next to a guy wearing a red nose who takes the book Thiza is reading and boasts that he makes "five gees a day" (**Co.**). Thiza is supposed to be impressed that this stranger is able to make big bucks, hence buy nice things. Thiza asks for his book back. (**SE**) By listening to him, Thiza gives Red Nose sufficient respect to enable him to be more receptive to returning the book he had earlier confiscated.

Consuming women

In YY1, Episode 2, Chapter 5, we see Thiza writing the word 'Hazel' over and over in his notebook (**AS**), showing a universal way in which youth express being lovesick. This image provides a link to Zoe's class, which discusses a love poem later in the episode. The students eagerly discuss relationships, with the girls protesting about the way the boys cheat on them (**AS, G**). The discussion shows the way young women perceive that they are considered to

⁵ In Rene Smith (2000), Yizo Yizo: This is it? Representations and receptions of violence and gender relations.

be accessories, discardable, by the young men with whom they become involved.

In Episode 2, it emerges that the teenage girls buy into and define this type of relationship with guys. They are consumers themselves, mostly of cars, branded hotel chains; I have not identified the speakers in the excerpts below because I wish to draw attention to what is being said.

The girls are talking: "I only go out with Rs to Zs because they can afford me" **(7. G, C, I to PM)**. This is a reference to a car licensing system in which older cars contained the letters A-Q on the number plates and newer models of cars have got number plates from R to Z.

The response is: "The boys you know are the ones you shake hands with in church" **(G, C)**, hence as poor as church mice.

"You're also an SS," the discussion continues. **(G, C, I to PM)** This appears to be a reference to a model of Audi. In Episode 7, Chapter 19, the girls talk about the holidays. Mantwa spent the night with an older guy named Bushy in the Holiday Inn. He was so good to her, the room cost R350 **(Co)**. "It was bump and grind the whole night" **(AS, LV, G as C)**. One of the girls asks her about Aids **(A)**. "I'm not stupid, I tell them to wear condoms," Mantwa says.

"You must also get down with Javas," she advises Nomsa, "I know you love him" **(AS, YC)**. Nomsa looks down her nose a bit, says she is waiting for Mr Right. "What if you die before you find Mr Right?" asks Mantwa (recalling for some audience members Sonnyboy's earlier comment about dying young).

YY2 Episode 1, most of the girls in Snowey's hair salon listening to Brenda Fassie's Weekend Special (remix) evoking Brenda Fassie's enormous presence in popular culture in South Africa **(I:A Grease, I:c, C, YC, G)**. There is a Grease-like atmosphere. The guys are doing one set of things, girls another.

"Girls, here come your 16Vs," **(AS; M;ca)**. The guys, once again, are compared to strong-engined cars. In walk Javas and Thiza. Javas kisses Nomsa.

Many of the adults are caught up in cycles of consumption too.

In YY1, Episode 6, Chapter 17 Zaza gives out her wedding invites in the staff room, Louise comments: “Why so pink? Do you also buy from those Indian shops?” **(C)** The suggestion is that the envelopes look a little cheap. The ‘Indian shops’ are usually much cheaper than anywhere else.

Zoe says, a little tantalisingly perhaps, since Edwin is glowering at her: “The wedding’s six months away and I do not even know if I’ll have a boyfriend then”. Zaza says there’s someone she’ll get for Zoe, who “drives the latest Golf”. Exit Edwin, who is probably both jealous at the idea of Zoe going with another man and rejects the idea of a man’s being judged in terms of the car he drives.

In Episode 12, Chapter 34, Letsatsi goes in to see what the commotion is about in Louise’s classroom because students are writing next door and need silence. Louise is late, the students have been waiting 45 minutes. She could not miss that ‘sale’, Louise tells Grace when she arrives **(Co, D, respect)**.

A few girls go past Zakes’ smart car. One comments, “I desire him” **(G, LV)**. Again, the car seems to feature in defining the man.

With exceptions like Grace, Edwin and Zoe, often the adult teachers are not only consumers like the youth but are also trapped in lifestyle violence. In Episode 7, Chapter 20, Edwin tells Ken to call the police **(NE)** because gangsters like Chester are swarming all over the school. Ken tells Chester to “cool it, people are complaining” **(collusion with CV)**. “It’ll never happen again,” Chester slurs, waving Ken away as if he is a fly. The guys, who have been smoking a “9625, a special train for guys only⁶” have all passed out in the car while Chester convinces Thiza to behave like Dr Faustus: “You have me, you have Satan’s dog...”

“...if you get a GTI, a GTI you sell for...(he’s talking him into hijacking) ...and do not even mention a dolphin, that fish with no bones”⁷.

⁶ ‘White pipe’ with Mandrax mixed with marijuana.

⁷ GTI and ‘dolphin’ are references to smart cars.

“What’s the most money you’ve ever had?”
“R200”, Thiza says **(All LV)**.

Similarly in YY1, Episode 6, Chapter 18 Ken comments on the phone: “Do you remember Teddy? He’s been promoted. He’s driving a BM 5 series”—again a reference to a smart car **(Co)**.

Youth as adults, adults as youths

In YY2, Episode 2 Sticks shows Javas and the girls a container of Tiger Balm **(M:Cb, H)**. The balm, as explained earlier, will guarantee ‘hot sex’. Sticks explains how it will heat up the sex life. “I’m powerful, I can sustain,” Javas boasts, suggesting he does not need it to be a stud **(G)**. Although he’s just a teenager, Javas already has stereotypical notions of what constitutes manhood. Nomsa is listening. “Not with me, who are you sustaining with, Javas?” **(AS)** For Nomsa, this comment is uncalled for. She knows she is not sleeping with Javas, so his boast, as it stands, suggests he might be cheating.

But besides the way he teases her, Javas believes Nomsa is ‘his’. In Episode 11, Chapter 32, he watches Nomsa being walked home by Lesego **(YC)**. This is a universal dating ritual: boy walks girl to the shop, home, wherever. Javas is jealous **(AS)**. He’s standing with Sticks and Bobo.

Sticks: “Playing number 5 with Nomsa, you stopped other people from scoring” **(8)**. This is a reference to soccer. Number 5 is a defender, hence a friend. Number 9 is a striker, a lover.

Although the schoolboys imagine their prowess with schoolgirls in this fashion, they get furious when they hear about Dudu’s rape and the fathering of Snowey’s child by Ken. The guys become involved in a campaign against the sexual harassment of schoolgirls as a political issue, even though they harass girls themselves. But when it comes to teachers harassing girls, it is another thing altogether. It makes them angry.

“This is 2 much” is Bobo’s comment in this regard.

“Yeah, it’s 3 much”, Sticks responds. **(H)**

In the SRC meeting when one of the guys argues, “We protect girls,” Hazel points out that the guys’ comments are violent in that they objectify girls and damage their self-esteem (Episode 11, Chapter 32).

Another example of the guys’ attitude to female students is shown when Sticks tries to get Thiza to put aside his research into the 1976 uprisings in order to watch the netball game because Hazel’s playing: “When did you last see panties except in a magazine?” he asks. At another point Bobo suggests cloning Hazel: “You could make lots of Hazels and lock them up in your shack” (Episode 5).

Thiza is furious that Hazel should be objectified in this way because he clearly feels proprietorial towards her and besides, she is his muse. She makes “things out of nowhere visit him”, according to Mantwa, in discussion with Hazel in Episode 4, Chapter 10. Hence Hazel is something of a goddess who should not be ogled **(AS, respect)**. But Thiza’s poetry is dismissed by everyone, including Hazel. In Episode 4, Chapter 10, when Zakes reads over Thiza’s shoulder as he writes, “You are the fire” **(AS)**, he laughingly advises his brother: “Do not let the girls think you are soft” **(G)**. The pranksters Sticks and Bobo give Thiza a line of a Mariah Carey song. They wrap it up to look as if it’s Hazel’s poem to Thiza, in response to his “You are the fire” poem. They tell Thiza to “prove she’s yours” **(AS, G as C and SMV)**. Thiza asks Hazel about his poem to her. She says she liked it. He comments that they are both “in love” (referring to what he thought was the poetry exchange proving this) **(AS)**. She is astounded, says she is “with Sonnyboy”. Sonnyboy cares for her, he is good looking and gives her money, she says **(G as C, Co)**⁸. Thiza is humiliated **(AS)**. As he walks back to the guys, they sing: “You’ll always be my baby”, the Mariah Carey song not recognised by Thiza when it purportedly came from Hazel **(H, YC, AS, respect)**. Thiza punches Bobo: “I thought you were my friends. I do not want to hang around with you anymore”. He

⁸ However, in Episode 8 Chapter 23 when Thiza’s been trying to get rich by hanging out with the criminals Papa Action and Chester, Hazel changes her tune. “When did you start to care about money?” she asks Thiza.

becomes depressed and does not want to go to school. Zakes tries to talk to Thiza and asks if Thiza's angst is something to do with "the girl and the poem". Thiza says no. "I told you not to mix with girls, they've now turned you into a hobo," says Zakes (Episode 6, Chapter 12).

Snowey finds Hazel does not want to get up **(SE)** after the bash and rape. Hazel tells Snowey her periods are late. Snowey suggests Hazel arrange an abortion: "You do not have to have a baby with that arsehole," she says. Hazel is feeling guilty about leading Sonnyboy on, but she knows that she said, 'no' to sex.

There are so few role models in the YY world that when a teacher like Zoe or the new principal Grace Letsatsi shows the students respect, there is an immediate response. When Grace catches Bobo and Sticks smoking on one occasion, she blows the smoke away but does not bust them. Having the respect of a powerful figure makes a huge difference to them.

Similarly, when teachers deal with the 'ordinary' they get a good response from the learners. In YY1, Episode 11, Chapter 32 Zaza reads to class about love, "...the smell of his shirt, the warmth of his skin" and discusses relationships. She asks them to write down what he or she thinks makes a good or a bad relationship **(AS)**.

In the course of the lesson about love, Bobo passes out, foams at the mouth. Sticks pours water over him and everyone laughs **(H, SE)**. But the moment is really very sad. Bobo's self-esteem has been overturned through the very drugs he took to boost it.

The kids tell Zaza that Bobo smoked drugs he got from Papa Action **(YC, LV)**. Zaza wants his jacket and shoes removed. "It won't help," says one kid. "He's in China" **(H)**. In other words, he's far away, drugged (Episode 11, Chapter 32).

It is partly because of the damage done to Bobo by drugs and partly because he is witnessing Thiza's descent into crime that Javas comments to Nomsa, (Episode 13, Chapter 39) "I want to pull myself together but I do not know where to start" (**H**).

As if being a teenager were not enough of a problem, in YY viewers are constantly exposed to an upside-down world where, besides adult men trying to pick up school girls, schoolgirls often display behaviour not appropriate for their age group. There is an instance when Nomsa shows the girls a fluffy monkey bought for her by Javas (YY2, Episode 2, AS, G). Mantwa is rude about how artificial it is (**Co**). A gift of a fluffy toy is universally a kitch but recognisable symbol of young love, so why should Mantwa be dismissive of it? The word 'artificial' suggests it could have been better quality, it could be something more grown up, it could have a monetary value. Dudu points out, to a miffed Nomsa, that Mantwa is angry because the school wants her to repeat Grade 11 (**RI, SE**). Throughout the three YY series, there is this sort of messaging. Where a character 'acts out' or behaves in a strange way, it will always be explained that there is another, deeper reason for this, such as a character's loss of self-esteem.

Self-esteem

To look 'expensive' means dressing well and looking slim. Not even emotionally secure schoolgirls are immune to the demands their society places on them to look and be perceived in a particular way. In YY1, Episode 3, Nomsa and her family discuss her weight and why she did not eat her breakfast (**G, YC**). At school, Nomsa and her friends discuss the play their teacher Zoe Cele wants them to perform. Nomsa says she would like to play the princess (**G**). Nomsa, despite her frequent feminist outbursts, still has a contradictory fantasy about being viewed as the 'princess', traditionally the pretty heroine of fairy tales. This fantasy, plus her decision to diet in order to make her body more acceptable in terms of youth standards of beauty, suggests she is buying in to convention much more than she lets on. As

Sonnyboy drives up and lets Hazel out of his car, Mantwa expresses her desire: “The loving couple, I wish it was me” **(AS, G, LV, Co)**.

In YY1, Chapter 8 when the girls are getting ready for netball, Mantwa asks Hazel why she is taking it so slowly with Sonnyboy. “Taxi drivers have money”, she says **(LV, Co)**. Moneyed men, for Dudu, are the dominant ruling class. Nomsa on the other hand tries not to buy in to this type of thinking and tries to win respect for her brains and leadership qualities. However, when she is nominated to the executive of the learners’ representative body, Javas makes some sexist comments about women not being fit to rule **(G)**. “We do not want a gorilla executive,” he says. Nomsa returns the language of abuse when she tells him: “Go back to the cave, you ape” **(Both AS, but also the relations of abuse SMV)**. Javas immediately nominates Hazel to the executive and says she will win the ‘Miss SRC’ competition. This is a reference not only to Hazel’s prettiness but to the popularity of beauty competitions within township culture. **(all G, AS, PM)**. Nomsa protests, “Do not choose people because they look like models” **(G)**.

In Chapter 8, Nomsa’s jealousy backfires as Zoe decides which students should read which parts from Sophiatown. Zoe suggests Hazel reads the part of the princess and that Nomsa reads the grandmother **(G)**. Later Javas continues to taunt Nomsa when he puts on his Nelson Mandela accent, saying: “I do not want ugly girls to rule my school” **(PM, I, G, H)**. This intertextual reference is an instance of the memory of a celebrity. What makes it amusing is the inside knowledge, gleaned from moments on TV and the other media, that Madiba *does* respond well to pretty women. He is personal friends with, among others, the model Naomi Campbell. So why, if South Africa’s top leadership is so gracious towards models, should things be any different for schoolchildren?

Part of Nomsa’s problem is that Javas does not take her seriously and this adds to her complex about her weight. Nomsa complains about her tight netball skirt. One of the girls says to Nomsa, “What are you hiding, Dolly Parton?” **(I, G)**. The suggestion is that underneath the fat body, there’s a thin

woman struggling to get out since the country singer Dolly Parton transformed overnight from a plump and buxom woman to a skinny one. In YY1, Episode 12, Chapter 36, Nomsa wants to call her date Lesego and cancel, when she tries on clothes and nothing fits.

Sika Fakude, the former Model C boy in Elliot's class, is reading aloud enunciating beautifully. "A clear drop of water..." The pupils laugh. Minky bitchily mimics him, "*A cleah drop...*" then apologises. The class breaks up (**SE, SMV**). The fat boy's humiliation, set up now, will later provide him with the motivation to 'get his own back'.

First love and adolescent sexuality

Mantwa, cuddling a fluffy pink toy, reads a book as she lies on her bed (**AS, G, GC**). The story has gone full circle. The soft, fluffy toy Mantwa scoffed at earlier represents that which gives her comfort in private (YY2, Episode 2).

YY2, Episode 3, opens with early morning shots of the township. Snowey is in the garden, digging something up, watched by her neighbour. It seems to be a message in a bottle, usually promising in terms of romance in folk tales. She goes inside. Hazel is washing dishes, Themba, Snowey's baby, sits in a soapy tub. Snowey talks about her first love: "I was only 12 years old when I started dating. The family moved before I had my first kiss". She explains how her first love called her by her surname. "I loved him like you love Thiza," (**AS, I:cs x 2**). Although Snowey's discovery enabled her to discuss first love with Hazel, this scene also sets up two classic story lines—Romeo and Juliet, where boy meets girl and boy loses girl, and Cinderella, where the virtuous young girl is forced to do the menial work while the older and less responsible family member has fun.

The scene also enables Snowey to get the discussion on to Hazel and Thiza. "Thiza is a good guy," she tells Hazel. But Hazel can't stop thinking about the awful taxi driver Sonnyboy (**AS vs. TVR**). Is pure, young love between Thiza and Hazel possible when one is as traumatised as Hazel? Thiza and Hazel

struggle emotionally on Valentine's Day. He reads her card: "You are the one I live for, even through all the pain". Thiza gives her a poetry book, he wants her to be lost in the world of poetry.

Later in the episode Javas finds Thiza on a school bench reading. Javas says, "You are dreaming about your woman". Thiza reads a juicy bit aloud to Javas. Thiza: "It's Another Country, one of James Baldwin's best books," he says. **(AS, PI, I:ac, CM)**. This directly relates to Teboho's own recollection about his youth and how he responded to this particular text. Thiza: "How are things between you and Nomsa?" Javas: "It makes me angry when she gets jealous". Thiza says Hazel is getting "cold", she does not appear to want him. "It's got something to do with Sonnyboy," he says. "The book is getting to you," says Javas, laughing, and he takes it himself to read.

Javas and Nomsa try out his go-cart, the wheel falls off **(YC, AS)**.

Javas is pushing Nomsa in a go-cart: "Michael Schumaker would get rid of you," he says **(I:c, R, AS)**. He asks her if he can come in, her father is not at home. Next thing they are kissing, and start undressing each other. They are under the sheets when Nomsa's mother comes in—she hastily chases Javas away, makes Nomsa come out to the car, where her father is waiting. Why so long, he asks? "I had to give Javas a good talking to," says Mrs Shai. "Is that true?" Capt Shai asks Nomsa. "The kids were just playing," her mother says. She's trying to protect them. Later, she straightens out Nomsa's tie. "Do not look at me like that," Nomsa begs her. They start to laugh. She asks Nomsa if they are planning to have sex. "If so, I want to be the first to know because you will need condoms, there is HIV". Nomsa hugs her mother, who is getting ready to go for a meeting of the governing board. As her mother leaves, she puts a drop of her mother's perfume on herself.

In YY2, Episode 9, Thiza and Javas watch some smart girls in tight pants walking a dog. As they walk past, guys from the carwash say things they hope will impress the girls, like "For R2 I'll wash you and your dog". "I'll braai your dog". Thiza serves the girls, who buy sweets and want Red Bull, which the shop, being an average township store, does not have. They walk off, bums

wiggling (**H, YC, SX, M:d, l:g**). The slightly crude but light-hearted banter is reminiscent of Bakhtin's marketplace.

Meanwhile Thiza is smitten with Thandeka from Hillside school, which is visiting Supatsela for a debate. Nomsa says, "go talk to her". Thiza takes the visiting scholars on a tour to see Javas's robot but it does not work. Thiza: "I was thinking you spoke very well today". Thandeka: "You also spoke well. And Nomsa. I think the other two are the ones who let you down"—in other words, Gunman, who shouted slogans, and Mantwa, who lost her nerve. In the library the adjudicator explains to Supatsela they cannot just make passionate accusations. Javas and Thiza lie in bed discussing Thandeka. Javas is of the opinion that a model C girl will be "high maintenance". Thiza claims he does not only want her for her looks but because he is after someone intelligent. He does not know when to phone her. Javas thinks he should "make her wait". Thiza says Javas embarrassed himself with the go-cart (**G and C** are still being negotiated).

Thiza phones Thandeka. She's forgotten him. "What if we get together?" he asks. She invites him for lunch on Saturday and gives him her address in the suburbs. When they meet, Thandeka talks about her ex-boyfriend who "got jealous. Now we're just friends". She gives Thiza the books he is interested in and asks about Javas. "Me and Javas, we're good friends". He thanks her for the books, and says he'll bring them back. She says no one reads those books.

Later Thiza finds himself asking Javas, "Do you think you'll ever break up with Nomsa?" "I do not know," Javas says. "Would you cheat on her?" Thiza persists. "No". "You love her?" Thiza can't stop himself (**AS, C, Co**). Even though Thiza is the one who has had lunch with Thandeka, something in her attitude has alerted him to the fact that she's interested in Javas. He's checking up that Javas *is* actually unavailable. Her comments about the books reveal Thandeka's superficiality.

The Model C girls sit on the bed. “I can’t get him out of my mind,” Thandeka says’ (We do not believe for a second she can have picked so easy a target as Thiza). In the second debate, at Hillside High, Gunman shows the room pictures of slim women and asks, “Where do you find people like this on our streets?” Mantwa adds to this: “We are not robots, we have minds of our own. We do not all want to look like people in magazines”. But of course, men often do want women to look as if they come from magazines. When Thandeka asks them to go clubbing, Javas declines but Thiza talks him into it. It’s an evening that will break his bankbook—a round of four Red Bulls sets him back R80—as well as his heart. He watches Javas touch Thandeka on the dance floor. Jealously, Thiza pulls him away. “What do you think you’re doing? I love her!” he cries.

“Tell her, not me,” Javas says.

Later Javas and Thandeka vanish into the chill room. Thiza finds them kissing and punches Javas, who had been pointing out to Thandeka that there could not be anything beyond a kiss because he has a girlfriend.

Although Javas declines Thandeka’s offer for him to sleep over, he has to walk back to the township because he missed the taxi.

Thiza is awake when he arrives back. “There’s nothing I want to say to you. Please leave,” Thiza says to Javas. **(AS, YC)**

Nomsa and Javas fight. Nomsa is armed with information from Thiza. “Thiza saw you kissing. Why did you not come home in the taxi?” Javas says, “You do not trust me”. Nomsa throws him out.

The guys have a discussion about Thandeka’s ‘juicy lips’ but Javas says he’s “Thinking about my Xhosa girl”. He goes to see Thandeka and tells her, “Things are not the way they were. Everything has changed”. He makes a comment about “change as part of South Africa”.

For the remainder of this episode he makes several attempts to see Nomsa, even taking her flowers, but she refuses to see him. Nomsa’s sister plays the go-between, saying she will only call Nomsa if Javas calls her, ‘baby’. **(G, AS, AS)**. Little sister wants to know what it feels like to be the girlfriend in the midst of this melodrama.

Eventually Nomsa sees Javas. “I told Thandeka I want to be with you”.

"I do not have time for games. I'm in matric now," Nomsa replies.

"I'm nothing without you," Javas says.

Nomsa always keeps an eye open to who is flirting with Javas. On Valentine's Day Minky had told Javas, in front of Nomsa, "If you were not with Nomsa, you'd be my valentine" **(AS)**. But of course he would not be because Minky, like many of the other girls, is only really interested in the older man with the means to buy her things.

The 'sugar daddy'

The sugar daddy first makes an appearance in YY1. In YY1, Episode 4, Chapter 12, Hazel and Sonnyboy are parked outside the 'Chicken Villages' **(M:c and I)** and discuss Nomsa's beating by Mthembu **(D, NE, G as C)**. Although the chicken motif appears to have entered the series because of the producers' childhood memory of chickens, they profess no conscious intent in the reference to Chicken Villages and Nandos, grilled chicken franchises in South Africa. I suggest that Chicken Villages, like Nandos, pops up as a category of luxury consumption. Sticks dreams of Nandos; Zakes takes Thiza and Javas for Nandos to show his largesse, and sugar daddies take their little girls there. In Episode 5, we see how a protector is supposed to treat his protectee. Hazel is running a little late. Outside Sonnyboy hoots. "What are you waiting for, Miss South Africa? **(PM** to the love of pageantry in township culture) Your sugar daddy is waiting" **(G as C)**.

Later the same day, Sonnyboy fetches Hazel, tells her he is going to take her to buy clothes. He loves her, she must look nice **(G as C, Co)**. Some snippets from Anorue's Nigerian market pamphlet, How to Become Rich & Avoid Poverty come to mind in these sugar daddy scenes—"Money maketh a man!" "Dresses maketh a woman!", "A woman cannot love you without money" and so on (Anorue 962: 11)⁹.

⁹ J.C. Anorue (exact date unknown but estimated 1962). How to Become Rich and Avoid Poverty. J.C. Brothers Bookshop: Onitsha. Reproduced in Stephanie Newell (2002). Editor, Readings in African Popular Fiction. James Currey: Bloomington.

After Hazel's rape by Sonnyboy, she steers clear of him and watches Rebecca make the same mistake with him that she did. However, there is a much bigger player on the scene—the teacher Elliot (EK) Khubeka.

Elliot discusses soccer with the class in YY2, Episode 2. When Minky asks about the LRC, he says he nominates her, "You will make a stunning princess" (**SMV, G, SX**). Minky giggles. Minky—whose name sparks an intertextual reference to Minky in Serote's To Every Birth its blood—is so used to being caught up in a cycle of abuse and being at the receiving end of inappropriate behaviour that she is flattered by Elliot's comments. Had the same thing been said to Nomsa, she would have immediately objected and reported the teacher.

In YY2, Episode 3 a group of girls tease Rebecca about Sonnyboy, the taxi driver, and get out of KK that she fancies the sleazy teacher Elliot 'R Kelly'. She says she likes guys who are 'mature and charming'. Minky reckons teachers do not get paid much (**AS, I:c, Co**). Within this girl talk, we discover that the preferred guy is the 'sugar daddy'—both Sonnyboy and Elliot are older men—who will be sure to buy the girls nice things as part of the trade for sex.

The girls tease KK, asking if she gives Elliot 'bump and grind'.

They ask KK, "Are not you scared of catching Aids?" (**PM, SX**). It is the time of Aids, and an older man, who is known to be sexually promiscuous and a sexual predator, is not a good bet as a sexual partner. They walk past Elliot. Minky to Elliot: "You are looking nice as usual". Elliot: "You know I'm a stylish guy". (**Co**) This is not just banter, but the beginning of a transaction that establishes what Elliot is when he defines himself as someone who knows the importance of buying power for schoolgirls.

Minky to Elliot: "Who is going to be your valentine?"

Elliot: "Why, do you want to be?"

Minky: "I know someone who does." Elliot is holding her: "Do not be so hungry" she tells Elliot (YY2, Episode 3).

In YY2, Episode 13. Mantwa is watching Elliot Khubeka with Minky. Elliot is inviting Minky for a drink. It turns out that only Mantwa is having the extra lesson. All the issues—from the extent of protection a learner should enjoy, to the consequences of dissolving the boundaries between teachers and pupils—are being pushed towards resolution. Novuka is freaking her out. Novuka is set up as the ‘bad guy’ in the good-cop bad-cop game playing itself out now in the story, because he is trying to get the learners to look at something they perceive as very remote—the Cold War—but which is essential to an understanding of globalisation in the current era. Elliot is set up as a ‘good guy’ because he is charming. But actually, he is simply playing out the eternal Lolita narrative. (NE, SMV, GC, I:cs).

Reversal: twist in the tail and reclaiming community

Big changes take place from the time of Maggie’s hijacking in YY2, Episode 6. On that day the drama was quickly absorbed into part of the backdrop of the ordinariness of everyday violence. But in the final episodes of YY2, many of the story lines opened up earlier are resolved. Dudu’s father turns out not to be a gangster (see Chapter 3). One of the classic story lines across cultures is the coming together of the family that has been apart, the restoration of trust and of a sense of security, and a reconciliation between those who have been at war, or between youths and elders.

All it takes in representation to bring all these narrative strands together is a change of behaviour in **one** character the youth admire to start motivating them. The way goodness rises and crushes evil is one of the seven original story lines. The way it is played out in YY2 is much too slick to be convincing. In Episode 7 Zakes enters, telling Sticks he must wear boots and not takkies. Sticks says, “I do not have boots” but Zakes is the fairy godmother to Sticks’s Cinderella and says: “You do”, and gives him his own pair. Sticks is thrilled that he can play proper soccer. Zakes is now taking on super-hero dimensions, the Toby Maguire character whose own low self-esteem has made him turn into Superman. Zakes, viewers know, is getting into the mode

of retributive violence, preparing to send Bra Gibb to jail despite engaging him on the topic of drug turf. He wants to nail Bra Gibb because he has seen, with Thiza's quick dip into crime and Bobo's drug addiction, that these kids lack motivation. He urges them to play soccer and run races. He knows that they need motivation as much as they will need employment when they finish school. Running races is a positive response to unemployment; selling drugs is a negative one.

Almost as soon as Zakes turns over a new leaf, he's rewarded with the love of Maggie Peterson. Being in love with Zakes suddenly makes her get over all her prejudices against the township and the township kids. She starts doing good turns, like giving people lifts to dangerous places at night and buying Sticks a bag of groceries after he faints from hunger. After the debate with Hillside, Maggie and Zoe discuss how good Thiza and Nomsa were. Zoe is amazed at how loyal to Supatsela Maggie is now. Maggie says she's "settling in, she realises everything at the old school wasn't perfect". Zoe asks about her and Zakes. Maggie says "whatever it is, I'm having fun".

The next part of the healing narrative occurs in Episode 8 when Zakes oversees Bobo's rehabilitation from drugs after Bobo flogs the groceries Maggie gave Sticks, and accepts a 'hot' sound system from Nomsa's mother's car in exchange for drugs. Sticks, found carrying this system, was beaten to within an inch of his life by the vigilantes, who assumed he was responsible for the death of Mrs Shai.

The widow similarly decides to get involved in the community after having previously had a hands-off policy. She goes to see Grace and tells her about the drug dealers outside her shop who have been selling to school kids. This creates the momentum for the meeting of the Community Policing Forum at the school, during which Bobo's button smoking becomes his undoing.

By Episode 9, Bobo is as good as new, chasing a football through the dusty township roads with Sticks, and Zakes asks his friend at the car wash, "Can you see the change in these boys?" Thiza and others at the car wash watch

Maggie and Zakes trying chicken that Zakes marinated, chuckling that “Miss Peterson’s eating township meat!” (**H, I**. There’s a Rabelaisian earthiness to the double entendre, ‘township meat’).

Over in prison, Papa Action’s in do-gooder mode too and is trying to reform the hijackers and murderers of Mrs Shai. He has conducted his own self-analysis with the surety and expertise of a Freudian analyst with seven years of training. He has understood his past with all its problems, and identified the point at which he “felt betrayed”.

Episode 10 finds Bobo, sporting a new hairstyle, consulting Maggie about what to do after school. “How can I get a bursary with a nice car and money? That’s the only way to get a girlfriend” (**Co, SE, YC, H**). Anyway, it’s the way Bobo knows.

Maggie: “What would you like to study?” Bobo would like to be a hairdresser “so I can make all the girls beautiful, even the ugly girls”. This does not go down with Dudu, who points out that Bobo can not even comb his own hair.

Self-esteem is quickly being restored for all the characters. Javas’s go-cart is entered into the competition and wins second place, after Javas is inspired by a comment Edwin makes about Model C’s projects being “about joining the dots”. Even Javas’s notoriously prickly father, Mr Nyembe, gets enthusiastic about the project and helps Javas.

But there are undercurrents of evil recreating itself. We know this because Episode 11 starts with Zakes in bed with Maggie. “You’ve made me so happy, I never thought it would happen again,” he tells her. This scene, so near the beginning of the episode, informs us that if the laws of narrative are to be observed, there are likely to be problems for this couple.

The ‘Son of Papa Action’ is born (**I:i and I:a**) an *intratextual* reference to the way movies are made into sequels. ‘Son of...’ and ‘The Return of...’ are self-

preservation tactics for particular genres. It is also auto-citation because Papa Action is an 'own' creation.

Drug scenes. Sika Fakude, the former Model C 'Son of Papa Action', is with the dealers, they are eating chips, complaining about these ones compared to the chips they used to get from the other shop before Zakes threw them out. Zakes comes up and talks to the dealers about why they are selling at the school. "We do not sell them *crack*," they say. "I do not want you messing with that school," Zakes says, "I'm asking you nicely". When he leaves, they say: "He's like Godzilla". **(YC, LV rules, I)** Rating fast food is a universal youth phenomenon. Mandrax, yes; cocaine, yes; heroin, yes. But: 'not *crack*'. This, if one watches The Sopranos and the Godfather movies, seems to be a universal cut-off point for dealers targeting school kids. Godzilla? Possibly the dealers regard Zakes as a large, ruthless creature who crushes everyone who gets in his way.

"Bobo the hobo," Fatso says, remembering the way Bobo described himself in Episode 8. "I've got something to make you forget your hunger. Something nice, not your usual stuff, it will make you forget all your problems". Bobo replies, "The thing is, I do not have money now, but I need that stuff. Do not disappear". Bobo whispers something in Minky's ear—she shouts at him **(AS)**. The dealers are sniffing the cleanly washed clothes hanging on the line. They ask Sika why he's so nervous. "This music is freaking me out. This music is for tycoons". Black people's liking jazz is a stereotypical idea, never questioned, while classical music is "for tycoons". Teboho Mahlatsi, who remembers enjoying certain white bands, challenges the stereotype, suggesting that the music Sika responds to so badly is music he might easily hear in his own middle-class home. Sika runs off. The dealers laugh. "This is going to burn off his fat," they say.

Jail. Kane and Abel, Papa Action's men, comment on a white guy in jail. "White people do not have style, look at his shoes," they say, continuing the stereotyping. When questioned by Shai about who their connection is, Kane and Abel name names. "Zakes Nonyane," they say **(I:cs and PM)**.

Shai later tells Zakes: “Kane and Abel implicate you. If I do not arrest you, Bra Gibb will know” (**LV rules**). Just as Bra Gibb can ‘read’ a black man who does not like jazz, so he will read the writing on the wall when a dealer who is named to the police is not arrested.

Sticks and Bobo and Zakes at the carwash. Kane and Abel come in the cop car, they point out Zakes who is very aggressively arrested. Maggie looks horrified—confirming the suspicion that something would go wrong when the couple was cosy in the first scene.

Zakes is in jail. “Where’s your coloured girlfriend, she’s giving it to you”. Kane and Abel banter crudely, while Zakes glares at them.

Bra Gibb gets bail for Zakes, gets him bail at the same time that Maggie and Thiza arrive to tell Shai they have no bail money. When Maggie sees Zakes coming out the prison with Bra Gibb, she walks off. Thiza tells Zakes, “Listen here, do not come back home”. He, Sticks and Bobo are playing football when Bra Gibb and Zakes drive past in a sports car in Episode 12. Thiza looks devastated (**LV**). The lightness of being Bobo experiences as a drug-free being evaporates, as he expresses his disappointment with Zakes for working with Bra Gibb.

Thiza walking. He sees police outside his house. Capt. Shai is with Zakes. Thiza clicks his tongue, he wants to walk out, but Shai calls him back (**YC, LV**) and explains ‘the sting’ by which Zakes helped snare Bra Gibb. Several short scenes—Chester rapping, the classroom, Thiza clicking his tongue at Zakes—are reminders that our characters are school-going youth, who are often growing up without proper role models. For Thiza, Zakes has totally succumbed to the allure of a gangster lifestyle. That’s until he hears how Zakes spilt his drink on purpose so that he could put the microphone into his jacket and be clean when Bra Gibb insisted he be searched.

“James Bond,” says Bobo (**GC, I:q**). The generic conventions being referred to here are (a) The court-room drama played out (not described here though) with elements of the ‘unreal’—this refers to Chester’s earlier comment about

Ally McBeal; (b) The unreality of prison narrative films like Kiss of the Spiderwoman, which is becoming Chester's reality and (c) The unreality of the James Bond-type spy. Zakes's panic about Bra Gibb's lack of trust is given thriller treatment. There is a Hitchcockian element to the scenes where he goes to the toilet, comes back and is confronted by Bra Gibb about the call to Capt Shai.

The bash

The drama throughout Yizo Yizo is set up through individual strands of narrative, which build, peak and are resolved at different points. These narratives fit into an overall three-act structure into which each 13-part season of Yizo Yizo is moulded. Act 1 invariably sees order overturned by chaos, Act 2 a battle to the finish between order and chaos, and Act 3 the restoration of a new—better, more progressive and democratic—type of order.

Similarly, the bashes have been written in three acts across Yizo Yizo 1 and 2.

The first bash is on 'Independence Day', in Papa Action's words (YY1, Episode 6) It has been organised by the learners' committee. It begins calmly enough. Lesego, Nomsa and SRC serve food. Learners dance. Suddenly it becomes clear the bash is getting wild. All colour except for red has been drained out of camera, which is now hand-held and documents the activities (**GC**). Thiza drinks from a bottle (**YC and SV**), kids smoke bottlenecks (**YC and SV**), spray graffiti (**YC**), break down doors, light fires, burn a desk (all these actions are **CV and LV**). Papa Action, wearing a gas mask, leads the destructive activities. This is when Hazel's rape by Sonnyboy takes place.

In Episode 7, Chapter 19, we see the aftermath of the bash. Teachers assess the damage. The graffiti in this shot says things like "...is here", "Rasta", "2 Pac", "east side..." (some of it looks like 'imported' graffiti, Mahlatsi agrees), "Makhaveli" (a reference to a rapper), "They have taken the chains off our feet

and have put them on our brains” and “Viva Papa Action”. The graffiti is a combination of autocitation, a play on political memory and references to aspects of youth culture.

Next comes the Valentine’s Day bash (YY2, Episode 3). It allows for lots of preparation. Mantwa paints her nails and chooses the colour she will wear on Valentine’s Day. Valentine’s gifts are exchanged. Sonnyboy gives Rebecca red and white balloons. Javas decides which music he should play. Thiza gives Hazel a book. People kiss. The first idea that we have of the chaos that is bound to descend is the sight of Bobo smoking buttons (Mandrax). When he is high, he tries to interfere with the sound, says he wants to mix like Phat Joe, a famous Yfm DJ and TV chat show host. Thiza and Javas try to make him go away. “I’m a real teddy bear of the ghetto,” Bobo protests. The intertextual reference is to two DJs—Phat Joe and ‘Teddy Bear’, Glen Lewis.

“You smell bad, these drugs are messing with you,” they say, referring again to their resistance to poverty and destitution at the moment they are embarking upon their Valentine adventure.

Besides Bobo’s behaviour, nothing tense seems to be happening until Nomsa starts giving jealous looks to Minky for the way she is dancing with Javas (**AS**). And suddenly Sonnyboy is at the gate, jealously summoning Rebecca, whom he proceeds to hit, until Gunman decides to beat him up.

The matric dance in YY2, Episode 13 is the third and ‘resolving’ bash.

Nomsa tries to take Hazel’s mind off her post-rape trauma and depression: “Let’s talk about more important things, like matric dance dresses”, she says. Hazel responds: “There’s no point, I do not have a dress or a partner”.

Nomsa tries to cheer her up. “A hundred guys probably want to take you to the dance”.

“I’m not interested in a hundred guys,” Hazel says.

“If someone handsome and nice comes along...” Dudu chips in.

The matric dance is, across class in South Africa, an event comparable in status for matriculants, to the Oscar awards for film stars. How one travels to the dance, what one wears, who one is going to the dance with...the matric dance, and Hazel's response to it here, is every teenager's story. The prospect of not having a date for the matric dance is every teenager's worst nightmare since the matric dance is the most looked-forward to coming-of-age ritual.

Sticks is going to church to find a girlfriend. The guys joke he will only find Jesus at church, not a girlfriend. Bobo ponders: "Sometimes I feel I live on my own plot, as if I'm going to wake up into a good life". He natters on about the Boom Shaka girls and the lottery (**I:c and Co**). This is the poor and lonely teenage boys' response to the matric dance—one will enter the Church (he is experiencing forced celibacy) and one, like Peter Pan and millions of South Africans, enjoys a Never-Never land with the elusive Boom Shaka girls and money won from the Lotto.

Thiza walks up to the guys. Bobo and Thiza wonder aloud: "Who would Hazel like to take to the matric dance, Thiza?" Thiza drinks water, mirroring Hazel's actions. She's drinking from the other side of the fountain, in another Romeo and Juliet moment (**I:cs**).

Thiza tells Javas that fighting over girls is a waste of time. "Anyway, we're square now. I kissed Nomsa" (**AS**). Javas looks alarmed. "Just joking," Thiza says. Javas suggests Thiza takes Thandeka's sister to the dance (separately, the girls suggest that Hazel goes with Christopher from Hillside).

Gunman jokes about the girls sucking the guys dry. The scenes of boys talking about girls and vice versa are reminiscent of the youth movies like Grease. Gunman's comment refers to expectations by young women that men should look after them.

There are visuals of a record turning on the turntable. Nomsa and Javas rub ice over each other as they match-make. "I wish Sticks and Bobo had

partners,” Nomsa says. Nomsa and Javas have each other, and they want their friends to be similarly happy.

KK asks Bobo who his date for the matric dance will be. He says Thembi, from Boom Shaka. “Next thing you’ll be talking about Abashante,” KK responds, referring to the public rivalry between Boom Shaka and the women rappers of Abashante in 1997 **(l:c x 2 and PM)**.

Thiza and Hazel, looking through fence.

Who are you taking?” Hazel asks Thiza. “Thandeka’s sister,” he replies. “That’s nice”.

Preparations for the dance continue. Everyone’s trying on clothes. Bobo says to Sticks, “Just have the courage to ask that girl. Role play. I’ll be Dudu, you be Sticks”. Bobo’s advice to Sticks is that when he talks to a girl, he must imagine, “must dream of a big house, with a pool. You wake up to Kelloggs, you have Nandos” **(l:to brand x 2; M:c)**.

Sticks approaches Dudu. “Sometimes you feel hungry but there’s nothing to eat and you close your eyes and think about...” Sticks can’t describe what he thinks about because he is hungry. The matric dance is going on, learners are buying clothes for it and Sticks is hungry. These discrepancies—high levels of consumption when people are starving—are very much a feature of the ‘new’ South Africa where at every interface with the public—the media, the funeral, the event—the superficial, the Never-Never land, is privileged over the real.

Music, marquee preparations are in progress, Hazel tries on a dress. Sticks and Bobo are being dressed by Maggie and Zakes. Sticks is in a suit. Sticks has a date for the matric dance.

He tells Bobo, “If you do not have a date, I can organise one.”

Bobo is on his own with a doll. Hazel is in a hairdressing salon. Thiza comes in. “You look wonderful,” he says.

"I wonder if he'll like me?" Hazel replies.

"Like you? Then he has no idea what beauty is. I wish we were going together," Thiza says.

Bobo is dressing up. Sticks, in sunglasses, arrives with Dudu. Bobo kisses his Thembi Seete picture on the wall. At the bash Thiza is sitting waiting on one side, Hazel on another. KK comes looking for Bobo, all dressed up. The band plays, the dance starts for Sticks and Dudu, Edwin and Zoe, Bobo and KK, Mantwa and Gunman, Hazel and Thiza.

The words of Cinderella's fairy godmother have come true for everyone: "And now you *shall* go to the ball!" (**I:cs**).

Chapter 7

Risking the city (in yellow¹)

Background

In late 2001, urbanophiles Angus Gibson and the late Peter Esterhuysen approached me to collaborate on a feature movie about the city. Esterhuysen was a writer who had worked on a range of popular cultural projects, from political comics to books. He had been on the writing team of both Yizo Yizo 1 and 2. I was a writer and student of African Literature with a research interest in popular culture (mainly youth culture) and memory. By January 2002, money for the film had not materialised but SABC was interested in a third series of Yizo Yizo. Gibson asked me to work on Yizo Yizo 3 as a researcher. This would be an entirely new Yizo Yizo because it would be set in the city.

In Yizo Yizo 2 the Daveyton students at Supatsela High had celebrated the end of matric. If the same characters were to be used, they could not be at school. The way to proceed, Gibson, Mahlatsi and Markgraaff were convinced, was to set the third series in the city. They said to me: "The students have finished school and drift towards the city...what do they find there? How do they live? What harms and hazards do they encounter in the city? What charms and gems do they stumble upon? How do they survive without known structures?"

The research process² for Yizo Yizo created by Harriet Perlman—who was unavailable to do the initial research on YY3 because of commitments to another of SABC's educational series Soul City—has the following components:

1. Literature review and documentation (compiling secondary resources).
2. Expert consultation.
3. Target audience research—focus groups, in-depth interviews.

¹ Where the theme colour of YY1 was red and YY2 was green, YY3 was yellow to represent gold since the series is set in Johannesburg.

² Information taken from Bomb Yizo Yizo 3 research process document. 14 March 2002.

4. Finalising themes and designing messages.
5. Testing treatments (with target audiences and key consultants).

Nearly a quarter of a million rand is set aside for the research process of each Yizo Yizo series. The bulk of this money is used up in focus groups, getting expert testimonials, and testing treatments.

After the writing of the literature review and finding of supporting documentation, arc development and storyline development takes place. Between target audience research and testing treatments, episode development takes place. The Bomb budgets for a writing process that will take ten weeks to get to a first draft, and eleven weeks to a second draft. It looks at another eight weeks to do a dialogue edit, get to a final script and do final testings³.

I was dispatched to do a literature review and to establish the top ten issues for city youth. But it was clear from the outset that a listing of the top ten issues would not necessarily be arrived at through a scientific process. Indeed, the producers' own interests were put on the table up front. Gibson insisted that one of the issues *had* to be boxing, because he had always wanted to explore the world of boxing, and besides, had a memory of a downtown gym.

Mahlatsi, always interested in religion and ritual, had a suspicion the 'born again' and Pentecostal scene in the inner city might prove interesting, and asked for that to be put on the list of ten. Because the newspaper that particular week had also been carrying stories about white heroin addicts in Pretoria, who were implicated in a murder, he asked for information on "Afrikaans kids who are sticking needles up their arms—that fascinates me".

In Markgraaff's view, however, Yizo Yizo 1 and 2 research had focussed on drug usage at schools, "so we know everything about it". I was to ignore drug

³ According to The Bomb Yizo Yizo 3 budgeting document (undated).

culture even if this emerged as one of the issues affecting youth. The Bomb did not need to spend more money researching drug culture as that research already existed and could be re-used. If a specific drug issue arose which had not previously been researched, it could be dealt with during the writing process (this did happen to the character Candy who has a crack addiction).

Gibson was interested in getting a literature review and a list of existing resources that existed for youth in the city. A starting point on this list had to be the institutions which had previously aided The Bomb team with research. From the list I produced, the Bomb would pick several experts to brief writers as they were developing story lines and designing messages. Where a great deal of detail was needed, focus groups would be set up; in-depth interviews would be conducted and the information coming out of these would be tested against target audience groups and key consultants.

My January 2002 literature review and preliminary research report to the Bomb Shelter, Youth in the City, details ten focus areas (including the ones prescribed by the producers) described below in brief outline. Besides having three of the 'Top Ten issues for youth' decided upon by the Bomb Shelter, the literature review and preliminary research report was similarly skewed. The producers wanted me to concentrate on organisations already in a working relationship with the Yizo Yizo project and to get the names from the head of research for Yizo Yizo 1 & 2, Harriet Perlman.

The literature review and research reports were followed up with numerous interviews with a range of informants (both one-on-one interviews between myself and the informant, or broader ones including the writers' group). These included interviews with budding entrepreneurs, students, residents of abandoned buildings, tenants' associations, developers, academics, boxing coaches and so on. In a separate process, there were also focus groups, run by Joy Pele, with out-of-school (employed and unemployed) youth.

A range of research methods were used, described in Annexure 1⁴. After submitting the research and discussing it with first the Yizo Yizo producers, then with the SABC Education Unit and the writing team, I spent another month working with The Bomb. During this time I set up in-depth discussions with the ‘experts’ and oversaw the writing of questions Joy would seek to establish from the focus groups. I then withdrew completely from the project⁵, except to brief the producers and writers about the theme of this research, explain the categories of intertextuality I was working with, and identify some of the examples of intertextuality I had spotted in Yizo Yizo 1 and Yizo Yizo 2.

My findings are explained below under sub-headings, Issues 1-10. Boxed, under each of these research issues, is a suggestion of the way The Bomb engaged with these issues, and the specific messages that were developed by the writing team⁶.

Issue 1: Identity and Support in the City

How this became a research issue: The obvious starting point in making a study into post-school youth is that while at school youth have a structured existence. After school, if they go to the city, they will need to find structures to replace those they had at school as well as within their families and communities. What support structures would they need, and what would they find?

Key findings: Many post-school youth find themselves alone in the city, sometimes as Aids orphans. The combination of the apartheid legacy and

⁴ The Bomb, ‘Yizo Yizo 3: Universe, Themes and Messages as at 12/4/02’.

⁵ It became clear that if I was feeding Yizo Yizo 3 with research possibilities, and then engaging with the writers’ team on a daily basis, the likelihood of being in a position to ‘objectively’ read the Yizo Yizo 3 text as I had done with Yizo Yizo 1 & 2 was remote.

⁶ But where indicated these observations do not come from me, but rather from Gibson, Mahlatsi, Markgraaff or Perlman in response to queries from me, or contained within the copy prepared for *Drum* magazine I wrote and Markgraaff edited. During the flighting of Yizo Yizo 3, *Drum* ran four pages of colour copy on the programme every week for thirteen weeks. These are on the YY3 website—www.sabceducation.co.za/yizoyizo3/drum_inserts.html

neo-liberal policies regarding city resources spells gloom for youths from poor backgrounds in need of support, shelter and health care. Nowhere are the contradictions for a 'global city' so stark as in Johannesburg, whose poorer residents—particularly those not in formal housing settlements—have no greater access to basic services than people in underdeveloped regions of the country. There is very little by way of risk management and health insurance for the indigent. For example, many of the city's health services, previously delivered by state structures at provincial or local level, are falling away or have been taken over by private institutions, churches and NGOs⁷. Academic institutions like the University of the Witwatersrand are increasingly driving the research aspects of projects started by the city council, but these institutions obviously do not have the resources to cater for the scale required. Institutions are changing the names of their projects⁸ in order to lose the stigma associated with, for example, Aids (buzz words now are 'community health' and for abortion 'reproductive health') in order to be able to continue to attract and serve youth. They advertise discreetly or by word of mouth. Although local government had no specific programmes for youth at the time, in 2002 there was a plan to start a 'youth hour' at city-wide clinics so that youths wanting STI/Aids/abortion information 'don't have to bump into aunts, uncles and family friends'⁹. Besides four listed hospitals which had Aids units and provided treatment including anti-retrovirals¹⁰, many of the institutions providing Aids programmes and home-based care were private or run by religious organisations, sometimes in partnership with a government body¹¹. Religious organisations also funded and ran the bulk of shelters in the city, although social workers from local government did 'service' some of these shelters, particularly if they catered for children. The social service departments attached to all the Johannesburg 'regions' appeared to have programmes committing their human resources to giving care and support to Aids orphans or abandoned babies, usually linked to already functioning faith-

⁷ Interview Luyanda Mavuya, Reproductive Health Research Unit (Jan 2002).

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Interview Bernice Memoniat, Region 8: Social Services (Jan 2002).

¹⁰ Interview Jabu Tshabalala, Community Health Centre, Hillbrow (Jan 2002).

¹¹ Examples are Rhema Church's inner-city hospice, Emseni Chronic Care; The Church of the Province of SA's 'Social Responsibility Programme' and a joint programme focussing on diet

based projects¹². Local government took full responsibility for providing inner-city sports and recreation centres.

I took the writing team to meet with a project that works with ‘children at risk’, called the Joint Enrichment Project (JEP)¹³. The writers met with its core team and director Neville Naidoo, who explained the process of JEP’s ‘diversionary’ programmes, including a focus group to establish the requirement for technical training and entrepreneurship skills, depending on the individual interests of the youth. Because so many youth had to become caregivers of others who were dying of Aids, most youth opted for technical training in occupational therapy, which gave them access to an occupational therapy degree. A key message Naidoo and the JEP instilled in the writing team is, “Learning to take care of others seems to have the spin-off of making them want to take care of themselves too”¹⁴.

Engagement by YY producers: The very concept of YY3 concerns youth who are on their own in the city—like Sticks and Bobo—struggling not only to make ends meet, but to find structure and meaning. The city often lets them down. New family bonds form—an abandoned old woman in the building starts to take care of a young woman whose family has let her down. Bobo makes a difference to a glue-sniffing street child. There is a lot of entrepreneurial activity. Zakes opens a boxing gym. Snowey sets up a hairdressing salon. Sticks finds out how to add value at the car wash. Bobo dresses as a chicken and sells spicy chicken meals. The messages regarding identity and support are strong. YY3’s characters find trusted adults and friends to talk to. The series tackles the issue of low self-esteem in many ways. It creates moments of pride for individuals and moments of joy for newly formed communities.

and run by St John Ambulance, the Union of Jewish Women and the Gauteng Health Department.

¹² At Ethembeni Babies’ Home in Doornfontein, for example, each of the 45 babies has his/her own fully trained or trainee social worker from the City. Interview Sharon van der Westhuizen (Jan 2002).

¹³ Again, there was no scientific process involved in identifying this group. It had already been identified at an earlier stage by Harriet Perlman, and had helped The Bomb team with information in the making of YY1 and YY2.

¹⁴ Interview with Neville Naidoo, Joint Enrichment Project Director, Khotso House, Marshall Street, Johannesburg (8 February 2002).

Issue 2: Tertiary Institutions

How this became a research issue: Because Yizo Yizo is an educational drama series, the options for post-school youth in Johannesburg became an important focus.

Key findings: I spoke to every formal tertiary institution in Johannesburg and a number of informal ones. The findings were not promising. Tertiary education is under-budgeted and under-provided. Spaces at tertiary institutions are limited (only 7-14% of matriculants continue with tertiary education¹⁵); there are delays registering first-years and two key life skills needed in terms of 'lifelong learning'¹⁶—IT and communications—are generally *under* taught at schools¹⁷, which can again be traced to the apartheid legacy. This means learners coming out of school usually have to get 'bridging training' if they are to be among the 5% of school leavers to get a job. The research focuses on the institutions, some bogus, offering 'bridging training' and computer programmes, as well as on the entrance requirements for technical colleges and universities. I suggested placing a Yizo Yizo character in the University of the Witwatersrand's African Literature department (in representation) in order to find a mechanism to highlight many contemporary post-colonial African Literature themes; and another character in a technical college, studying IT related subjects. Also, if possible, finding a way to have another character doing bridging training after school and before university.

¹⁵ The figure of 7% was claimed by Stephen Lowry, former principal at Sacred Heart in an address to parents (23 January 2002); the more conservative estimate of 14% is from the *Saturday Star* (1 November 1997), 'Experts urge change in syllabus to foster small business skills'.

¹⁶ Motala (1999) in her literature review for Yizo Yizo 2 refers to the Department of Labour's 'National Skills Development Strategy', which stresses lifelong learning and the need for workplace-linked education.

¹⁷ See *Financial Mail*, 26 January 2001 and report by Prof A Kritzing (UWC) at www.commerce.uct.ac.za/informationssystem/staff/PersonalPages/vbelle/work/buseconreport88.htm

Producer engagement with research: Thiza and Nomsa were placed at Wits University. Thiza did a course in African Literature, which raised a debate about language and why African Literature is frequently written in English. In the story Nomsa's father, Capt Shai, has paid for her to study medicine, Zakes has paid for Thiza to do a BA (law) programme, which includes a course in African Literature. Javas has won a bursary to study IT at the Technikon (he is taught by the real-life lecturer—not an actor playing a part). Javas initially struggled with the technology.

Issue 3: Employment possibilities

How this became a research issue: Arising from the research into support in the city (Issue 1), the type of work available to matriculants became an obvious area for research.

Key findings: There are no new jobs coming up in the formal sector except in the IT and communication sectors¹⁸. In 1999 there were 5.9 million unemployed people¹⁹. With only 5% of school leavers having the chance of formal employment, it became necessary to look at entrepreneurship, distance education, informal employment and strategies for unemployment (including youth projects in the city aimed at diverting youth from criminal activities or upgrading their life skills) because it became obvious that post-school youth would have to employ themselves. The two top paid jobs currently available informally to youth are (1) working within the sex and 'escort' industry, the business that has grown most extensively in the inner-city since the mid-1980s²⁰ and (2) working as a health-care giver (primarily

¹⁸ Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) (1998). SA Labour Market Trends and Future Workshop needs 1998-2003. HSRC: Pretoria. HSRC (1998) Skills Needs of the SA Labour Market 1998-2003. Condensed Report. Labour Market Analysis. HSRC: Pretoria. Note: the two HSRC reports are projections into future trends, hence the discrepancies in publication dates and dates in the titles.

¹⁹ Statistics South Africa (1999). South Africa in Transition. October Household Survey and Report.

²⁰ See Alan Morris (1999:258-9). Bleakness and Light: Inner-City Transition in Hillbrow, Johannesburg. Witwatersrand University Press: Johannesburg.
www.worldsexguide.org/johannesburg.txt.html and www.sex.co.za

Aids counsellor) following a period of training²¹. Other informal city jobs include anything from working in a shop, hair or beauty salon, waiting tables, delivering goods, modelling, getting on to the edge of one of the glamour industries as a trainee dancer and/or technician, or working as a DJ at city public and private functions. I proposed that YY3 explore what happens when characters have to do manual work. I suggested the team look at the coal workers at McPhail of 'McPhail Won't Fail You'. Imagined mechanisms of making money, such as pyramid schemes and the Lotto culture, are also looked at—the former was researched in some detail.

I arranged for Lynne Cawood, Director of Childline, and Captain Annamarie Potgieter of the Child Protection Unit, to meet the writing team and answer questions about the extent of youth prostitution, and the links between prostitution and earlier abuse or poverty experienced by the child who went on to become a prostitute. The message from both of them was that without intervention, abused children are likely to become abusers in what is known as “survivor sex” or to “use their sexuality as a control mechanism”²². High proportions of prostitutes—and this especially applied to gay people, according to Potgieter—were sexually abused as children²³.

Engagement by YY team. Entrepreneurship is explored through Sticks's adventures, Snowey's hair salon and Zakes' gym. We follow Sticks and Bobo through different job interviews. There are problems because they have no CV, reference, or job experience. Bobo gives up his dream of being a kwaito star to become a coal worker. YY3 takes a strong position on the need to put pride away when it comes to finding work, and emphasises that manual work is an option. The sex trade is explored through the stripper Nbulungu, and through Candy, who trades sex for drugs. There is a pyramid scheme, which has dire consequences for those who join it.

²¹ Although it is hard to find statistics to support it, this claim emerged in every interview conducted with health, social and youth workers. Natalya Dinat from Baragwanath's Palliative Care Unit subsequently told Andersson that because of the devastation caused by AIDS, huge numbers of young people in the city are forced to be care-givers anyway, and enrolling for training at any one of many institutions provides both recognition for their work, and pay.

²² Lynne Cawood, interview with YY3 team, 15 March 2002.

²³ Annamarie Potgieter, interview with YY3 team, 15 March 2002.

Issue 4: Lifestyle and Culture

How this became a research issue: In the course of researching the educational institutions and picking up leaflets at each institution's open day and in student unions advertising gigs and youth programmes, and through engaging directly with post-school youth at various performances, listening to youth music and following youth media, I decided to incorporate this as one of the ten issues.

Key findings: The majority of people living in central inner-city Johannesburg (largely Region 8, for Yizo Yizo's purposes) are young, under the age of 40²⁴. The risk of Aids, the focus by the glamour industry on sex, and the Constitutional approach to gay rights, make identification of sexuality a focus area. Most of the information for this theme is primary research specifically for Yizo Yizo 3. In terms of culture, the research explores urban youth culture and picks up on the most popular music stations, venues (like nightclubs) and genres for post-school youth. 'Slam poetry' and the spoken word is suggested as an emerging genre (which had become hugely popular by the time YY3 went into production two years later) to be explored. I proposed that YY3 needed a character or characters who were in 'the spoken word' culture that has sprung up in Johannesburg. I invited the producers and writing team to an evening of slam poetry at the Bassline in Melville to witness the phenomenon for themselves²⁵.

This section of the research also looks at consumerism, mall culture (and similar in the cheaper flea markets and hawkers' stalls). Although there is a growing anti-consumerist youth movement that has arisen in response to globalisation, it is not without its own contradictions. I noted that it is not unusual to hear someone at 'the spoken word' events complain about the 'CNNing of the world', or of the 'MTVing of culture', on the one hand, while fiddling with the latest Samsung or Nokia cellphone, on the other. I asked what happens to unemployed and penniless youth facing a barrage of

²⁴ See Morris 1999:243.

²⁵ The performances were organised by spoken word artist Rashid Nzimande.

advertising for designer labels and cellphones? The world of 'fong kong' (fake designer goods) and trade in stolen goods is also suggested as a site for exploration. I tried to identify how youths with no spending power spent their time, how they socialised, what they danced to, and where, or how they managed to be 'cool'.

The YY directors took on board virtually all of my suggestions. In YY3, Thiza and Thabang became involved in the spoken word scene and Javas regularly attended the sessions. One of the poems performed by Thabang, written in representation by Thiza, was penned by Kgafela Oa Magogodi²⁶. Gay issues were explored through the Thiza coming-out arc. There was a consumerism arc around Diesel jeans (not affordable to Thiza, so he bought them on the parallel market). Javas thought about buying a Cortina, but decided it was not posh enough; Manto's sugar daddy gave her money for a cellphone and fancy food in restaurants. The music on YY3 was entirely brought to the table by the producers' team. It features a new singer Simphiwe Dana, singing Zandisile, as well as a new Yizo Yizo theme, Ilitye. The oldest 'youth' on the soundtrack (Ori wa a Dara) is 78-year-old Fatai Rolling Dollar, a Nigerian high-life singer to whom Fela Kuti was apprenticed for a while. Ndrebele Civilisation, a four-guy band from Daveyton, home of the fictitious YY characters, make their debut with a rude mixture of kwaito and punk. Their number on the album, Korobela, was produced by Philip Miller (who wrote the previous YY theme) and art school student Thokozani Mahlangu. Mahlangu also worked with The Bomb's driver, Tumi Mohapi, for the track Plaza Funk.

In YY3 Thiza feels like an outsider when he is in the company of hip Model C kids with their cool clothes, posh accents and lots of money to spend. Javas, over at the Technikon, decides to become a hip DJ and party animal because he wants the in-crowd to like him. Thiza just watches, and feels he belongs to a different world.

²⁶ Kgafela Oa Magogodi (2003). She Left the Tap Open. On Yizo Yizo 3, Original Soundtrack. The bomb.

'First sex' is dealt with—Nomsa wants sex to be 'just perfect' with Javas, but it is not. The representation of lousy sex from a woman's viewpoint is daring, and it created some havoc with the SABC (see Chapter 8). The YY3 film makers take a strong stand that sex is not just physical, but that it involves emotions and feelings, that if it is not entered into honestly it can be the cause of anxiety; and that it is everyone's right to say if something sexual is disagreeable, uncomfortable or painful.

Nomsa's roommate, Naledi, seems to have everything—especially a fabulous body. But she is caught stealing and the terrible problem that she has kept secret is revealed. She is bulimic. The series deals with young women and body issues and the origins of low self-esteem.

The culture of young girls and sugar daddies is also a major arc. The YY treatment of sugar daddies makes it clear that relationships of this sort involve a trade: the young woman's body for 'things' that make her feel she has more worth. YY strongly challenges the culture of consumption that so preoccupies youth.

Issue 5: Buildings and Dwellers

How this became a research issue: In trying to identify youth issues in the city, I looked to first, cultural studies into youth audiences and second, sociological studies into new social movements. From both sides (audience studies and Sociology), the Built Environment (and hence, 'the building') emerged as important issues. Gibson and Mahlatsi were also keen on locating an interesting and beautiful building for aesthetic purposes.

Key findings: My research into popular TV drama revealed the importance of a single building for school-going youth viewers. Hodge and Tripp (1986)²⁷ conducted research into the popularity among schoolchildren of the Australian

²⁷ R.Hodge and D.Tripp (1986). Children and Television. Polity Press: Cambridge.

series Prisoner²⁸. They found the series was so popular because pupils experienced similarities between the lives of prisoners and their own—both were ‘shut in’, both were separated from their families, both experienced victimisation, gangs, leaders and ‘silly rules’²⁹. My research similarly showed tensions between residents of abandoned buildings and the landlords and their rent collectors. The search began first for a building, and then for an understanding of the world of abandoned buildings in Johannesburg. The Johannesburg Development Agency’s (JDA) PRO, Tshepo Nkosi, threw himself enthusiastically into helping the team look at interesting buildings³⁰.

For the JDA, it was important that the treasures of the inner city were represented in popular youth culture because this ensured interest and investment in the city’s economy. The primary research here was into absentee landlords and the taking over of an abandoned building by homeless people. It looked at the organisation (frequently criminal) of payment from tenants to committees and gangsters running flats and buildings that had been abandoned by landlords; the way in which people existed in buildings in which services had been cut because no one was paying levies. What happens in such circumstances to garbage, to sewage, how do people get water, what is the quality of life, what are the risks? These were some of the questions to which I had to find answers. Interviews and focus groups were set up with tenant committees, individual residents, city service managers, city property developers and bystanders.

One of the experts I brought to meet the writing team was Clive Cope of the Seven Buildings Project. Cope provided background on the inner-city chaos and the breakdown of buildings. He also spoke about NGO and civil society attempts to get the area redeveloped and provided an overview of Metro Council policy to date. According to Cope, the inner city went to rack and ruin

²⁸ Shown in SA, UK and USA as Prisoner: Cell Block H.

²⁹ Quoted in John Fiske (1987:67-8), Television Culture. Routledge: London.

³⁰ Nkosi took the writers and Gibson to view the facades of a number of interesting buildings as well as the interior of an empty building next to the JDA offices in Market Street on 8 February 2002. He met the writers for a second time on 7 March to tell the writers stories about some of the inner-city characters he knows (for example, Stephen Khoza, poet and eccentric scientist) to help give the writers a sense of the richness of the inner city.

before the local government elections of 1995. NGO efforts now appear to be influencing ANC thinking at local level. Redevelopment is possible in co-operation with the powerful tenants' associations³¹. He introduced the group to a Zimbabwean man calling himself simply, Pressage, who worked with the tenants' associations and brought writers into contact with these groups. Newtown architect, Ant Philbrick, took the writers on a downtown tour, including a visit to some squats³².

Engagement by the YY team: The directors carefully chose the building that became 'San Jose' in the series because it had a basement (used for tenants' meetings and prayer gatherings, parking, and the free-for-all shootings of Episode 10), shops (used as the hair salon) and a roof with a view. It was, according to Gibson, "a beautiful building. We were shooting winter-for-summer so did not want trees outside. We met a member of the body corporate who knew the history of the building and loved it. There was community buy-in, so we were able to use the community as extras including Snowey's kid". The building in YY3 almost has a sinister character of its own. The electrocution of Candy's kid while stealing electric wires happens here. There is a scene where services break down, where electricity is cut off, and an episode where many guns emerge from many doors. But in the building—which has a life of its own—there are also moving moments and unusual relationships between the residents of the building. Similarly, in the space between buildings, in the city's streets, the directors allowed their characters to enjoy the city, walk through the street markets, drink in the sounds, smells and colours. There is reference to the city art (murals, including the Cell C art-on-old-buildings campaign).

Issue 6: Religion

How this became a research issue: Teboho Mahlatsi wanted this researched.

³¹ Clive Cope to YY3 writers' group, 8 March 2002.

³² For writers who went on Philbrick's tour on 13 March 2002, the major problem with doing this sort of close-up research was that they felt they were intruding on, or being voyeur's of, people's living spaces.

Key findings: The research tried to explore both (1) the types of religion that are popular and to understand (2) why a particular form is popular. The finding of the existing literature is that religion is big, often because it provides a social life for flat residents, many of whom are immigrants from other parts of Africa (Morris 1999:232-4). The main finding of my research, based on original interviews for Yizo Yizo 3, was that religion provides support, food and often shelter. For children, churches provide food (there are regular soup kitchens attached to some); frequently job programmes and counselling and often a route to shelter. Christian fundamentalism is huge in the inner city but there is also increasing interest, among the black community, in Islam. Christian organisations do the most work in the prisons and in terms of rehabilitating youth offenders. Often long-term relationships build up between these organisations and individual youths, in the absence of other support structures³³.

Visuals and commentary from YY Directors: While religion never features directly, the villains are draped in religious icons, light is used in a specific way (Mahlatsi agrees these are “devil-like moments”), the tenants have prayer meetings, the boxer reads the Bible before he fights, and there is an altercation in the basement. The Zulus want to dance while others want a service. (Subsequently the filmed scene was cut out of what was screened on SABC). Religion still appears in the form of ritual.

Issue 7: Criminals and Victims

How this became a research issue: Again, I combined research in the field of popular culture and literature, on the one hand, and the ethnographic accounts I had gleaned directly from individual narratives of JEP’s ‘youth at risk’ (see Issue 1). My own research into YY1 and YY2, which looked into the underbelly of the villains Papa Action and Chester (see Chapter 5) had convinced me that The Bomb producers were working with hero-shadow archetypes (perhaps not consciously), but without, except for Mahlatsi, having

³³ Youth for Christ, for example, targets youths awaiting trial. It retains links with youth who serve time and helps them to find their feet when they come out of prison. It has also

read Joseph Campbell. Later, the research had to take on board police statistics, which I interpreted within the political context of international eventing in the city. Would high crime statistics not affect the decision about whether the city could host the All-Africa Games, the World Summit on Sustainable Development and so on?

Key findings: Metro policing's high visibility model³⁴ appears to come directly from Rudi Giuliani's 'zero tolerance' approach—but typically it is about removing 'illegals' and diverting crime to other areas. There are plenty of urban legends about corrupt cops asking for bribes (so a sense of reversals about who the criminals are). The situation with under 18-year-olds is difficult. During the time research was done for YY3, it appeared that the Metro Police were using information selectively, possibly for the benefit of the World Summit on Sustainable Development. Wayne Minnaar of the Metro Police claimed there had been only one under 18-year-old involved in a highjacking in the previous year (and it was a girl)³⁵. "Post-matric crime, teenage crime" is not an issue in the city, Minnaar claimed. Later the research revealed that in fact ALL under 18s are passed on to the Child Protection Unit³⁶, so the statistics would not show up on the books of the Metro Police at all, but instead on those of the SAPS and bodies like the National Youth Commission.

Contrary to Minnaar's soothing words, the actual picture is hair-raising. The statistics are a little out of date. In 1998, the age of the average perpetrator of crime was 17³⁷. A recent SAPS survey quoted by Dunlap shows that 45% of South African youth are 'at risk' for doing crime (ibid). Furthermore, children under 18 without identity documents—which require the taking of fingerprints—are frequently used by hijacking syndicates. They often conduct their own defences in hijacking cases and spend many hours doing their research at the Hillbrow Magistrate's Court. This section of my research also

established the agency Amakhaya which houses about three dozen street kids, and has established a job creation programme called Zakheni.

³⁴ *Sunday Times Metro*, 13 January 2002.

³⁵ Interview Minnaar (January 2002).

³⁶ According to Capt. Annamarie Potgieter, in workshop with Yizo Yizo 3 team (Feb 2002).

³⁷ Kamika Dunlap (2000). 'Guiding the Lost Generation'. Report on the National Youth Commission at <http://journalism.berkeley.edu/projects/safrica/facing/juvecrime.html>

suggests that the series should move away from the trend in representation to portray black males as brutal rapists and murderers. It quotes bell hooks:

No one urges mass boycott of films portraying black males as brutal rapists and murderers. No one acts as though the black actors who eagerly take roles that depict black people as being irrational, immoral and lacking in basic intelligence are perpetuating white supremacy. Yet these images not only teach black folks and everyone else, especially young children who lack critical skills, that black people are hateful and unworthy of love, they teach white folks to fear black aggression (hooks 2001:65)³⁸.

Directors' engagement: In YY3 there is a robbery in a house, co-ordinated by Angel and his cohorts. Sticks, reluctantly, is involved. It is a Clockwork Orange type of robbery in that the robbers are wearing the masks of beasts. Thiza, after buying some Soviet jeans, becomes the victim of a mugging, a guy on the pavement gets mugged and Marlin is the victim of the block—he gets killed. There are no brutal black rapists and murderers, which I saw as a victory. Sticks' constant flirtation with crime (drug dealing)—through necessity—is a hard and relentless theme whose message is: There is no such thing as easy money. And Zakes, who previously sold out Bra Gibb to the cops, has to watch his back. Dangerous gunmen stalk him. They do not want him to testify against Bra Gibb. The messages that YY3 pumps out are: take responsibility for your actions, your life and your body; be careful with money: investments that sound quick and easy are probably shady; avoid behaviour that puts your own or anyone else's life at risk. Thus there is no such thing as a cheap cellphone. YY3 goes into what turns youth into criminals: poverty, hunger, lack of opportunity, lack of role models, peer pressure, the belief that a gang is glamorous, a pattern (or cycle of violence) that is hard to break, the fast way to close the gap between what is desired and what can be afforded. There is no crime without consequences.

³⁸ bell hooks (2001). salvation. The Women's Press: London.

Bad guys like Angel and Slovas appear to be powerful, but they feel very small inside. The message YY3 clearly gives is that insecurity, the feeling of being without substance, makes people behave like bullies and thugs. The only way to be big (or to feel big) is to scare other people. Former car hijacker Mandoza, who rose to prominence as a rapper on the earlier YY seasons, adds value to this message with his lyrics:

Be humble like a dove

Be clever like a cat

Don't be afraid to take chances

Respect yourself, so we can respect you (Mandoza 2003)³⁹.

Issue 8: Politics

Key issues: poverty, unemployment, globalisation & HIV/Aids

How this became a research issue: This emerged out of the research into the built environment (Issue 5, above) and from my own observations.

Key findings:

The report I wrote for The Bomb suggests that a major psychological issue for youth living away from their family and community structures, and having to fend for themselves, is abandonment. I propose that there is frustration experienced by a gap between post-apartheid expectations and the fulfilment of these expectations. However, gradually youth are realising the need to do things for themselves. There are plenty of civil society issues to engage youth; possibly disenchantment will make way for another phase that will see the mobilisation of entire urban communities around global urban issues. These differ greatly from the organisational/party political activities of, for example, the Youth Leagues and Congress-aligned student bodies of the 1980s and early 1990s. Instead there is evidence of youth involvement in issues that immediately involve them and their living spaces. These might include involvement against disrepair of essential services (like street lights, as dark places lend themselves to attacks), lack of policing in public parks, or the lack

³⁹ Mandoza (2003). Respect Life. On Yizo Yizo 3, Original Soundtrack. The Bomb.

of places from which residents can get quick responses to their queries and problems. They might be focused around thugs running a particular building. They might concern the absence of facilities for phoning, faxing or emailing authorities, or the querying of government promises regarding free and clean water, or unemployment, Aids activism, anti-corruption activities (and insistence upon clean leadership) awareness of globalisation and anti-US imperialism activities (increasingly focussed around US institutions following 9-11). We have seen action and demands around more resources for reading and relaxation, civics, teacher unions and parent groupings, the anti-xenophobia campaign, gay rights groupings, student bodies, and the Treatment Action Campaign. Youth in the City suggested that because the action in Yizo Yizo 3 would revolve around a building, it might be possible to portray the characters as being united and showing resistance to the built environment (as opposed to being united purely on race or class issues). It was argued that it would be possible to develop a framework for the new series within a political process model of new social movement theory, particularly since the various characters had much in common (age, nationality, class, status, hobbies, environment, structural conditions, aspirations and so on). The producers felt they did not formally want to follow this suggestion although the series *might* explore some collective action by the characters, either politically, socially or culturally. Depression suffered by marginalised city youth is also identified as an issue.

Visuals and comments from Directors: There is political discussion on campus about race and language, specifically within the African Literature debates. Despite directorial resistance to representation of social movement theory, the directors have portrayed the youth in the building going to the city council to find information on their building. They also report a corrupt councillor who is taking a cut of the rent money from the building. Zakes and Lily mobilise within the building. Gunman is infected with HIV (in representation) and must come to terms with it. Before he finds a way to live positively, he is a very depressed youth. Thiza also suffers from huge depression and anxiety about his sexuality, until he realises that sexual

confusion is normal. Angel is the stereotype of youth, depersonalised-to-the-point of psychosis. In terms of the era—post-apartheid—the YY team have taken a strong stand on corruption. A major storyline in the last six episodes concerns the way Zakes and Lily discover a corrupt councillor, and courageously organise the community to negotiate for their rights, confront their opponent and resolve the conflict. Having neutralised their corrupt landlady, Ria, as well as the corrupt councillor, they start bringing into their building a new politics—the politics of care. Characters play with street kids who have lost their mothers and fathers, Nobelungu and Snowey take dramatic measures to save Candy's life (they clearly care for her much more than her own family does), find ways to co-operate with difficult people in the building and service providers outside the building, and find ways of moving forward in a socially and environmentally conscious way.

Issue 9: Xenophobia

Why this became a research issue: Yizo Yizo is a post-apartheid text. The obvious political question that post-apartheid research throws up, is what has happened to apartheid? Has it been destroyed, and if it has not, in what form does it exist?

Findings: Racism continues to exist and to disguise itself in new ways, as Fanon predicted it would in his essay 'Racism and Culture'. Xenophobia, as one of the other faces of racism, is rampant. The savagery displayed when the SAPS use three undocumented Mocambicans as human bait, as shown on Special Assignment's 'Dog Unit' documentary in November 2000, becomes, for South Africans, a flashbulb memory of the xenophobia rampant in our country. This section of the research traces the way in which 'foreigners' are no longer 'migrant workers' as they were frequently under apartheid, but refugees (who are seeking asylum), and undocumented migrants, who wish to work in South Africa temporarily. South Africa is seen as a choice destination partly because of its commitment to human rights, and

partly because it is perceived as a place of opportunity, a 'new world'. But for many foreigners, particularly those from other African countries, the actual experience of the 'new world' is often one of harassment, institutional discrimination, verbal abuse, public hostility and violence. Foreigners, scathingly referred to as 'makwerekwere', find themselves blamed for crime (particularly if they are Nigerians; they are blamed for drug-related crimes) despite the high crime rate, and particularly rape statistics, which show that South Africans, without the help of 'foreigners', manage to achieve among the highest violent crime levels in the world.

Bronwyn Harris of the Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation (CSV) has made a study on foreigners and their abuse by official agencies, and specifically on trains⁴⁰. The Roll Back Xenophobia Campaign, which started in 1999, concentrated on talking to former SA exiles about their experiences in other countries⁴¹. Without exception the informants talked about how Africans in other countries had been welcoming to South Africans during the liberation struggle era. Why are South Africans now being so hostile to other Africans? The answer comes from the past. Under apartheid, the ruling ideology sanctioned various forms of abuse through political violence, which included systematic white-on-black violence. Today the dominant ideology urges white and black reconciliation. Through xenophobia non South Africans become post-apartheid's new 'other' to the 're-united' nation. It constantly reminds us both of the traumatic memory of apartheid and of the many forms apartheid took. Tribalism, as one example, was invoked constantly by the state for its own purposes. Xenophobia is closely linked to 'tribalism', an apartheid trope which suggested that black South Africans who spoke different languages actually *hated* each other and wanted to kill each other in 'Black-on-black violence' (another apartheid trope). But multi-language township lingo and political organisation across ethnic lines always proved the lie in the apartheid claims.

⁴⁰ Bronwyn Harris (2001). *A Foreign Experience: Violence, Crime and Xenophobia During South Africa's Transition*. CSV's Violence and Transition Series, Vol 5, August 2001.

Available online at <http://groups.msn.com/crimebustersofsouthafrica/xenophobia1.msnw>

⁴¹ See the online information on the Roll Back Xenophobia Campaign at www.sahrc.org.za

Visuals and directors' commentary: A Nigerian character becomes a victim of xenophobia (two attacks). But also: Snowey confronts and overcomes her own deep-seated prejudice about foreigners. There is a love relationship that ends in a marriage between Ade and Snowey, and Nigerian culture is embraced through meals, music and discussions between them, which completely challenge the tenets of xenophobia.

Xenophobia is paralleled to racism and homophobia in the treatment the Yizo Yizo directors have given it. It is identified and interpreted as another form of bias towards the 'other' and viewers are forced to examine the way they treat people differently because they look different, come from another place or dress differently. The usual response to foreigners is based on the fear of the unknown. Many people fear that 'they are taking our jobs'. This is captured in YY.

Issue 10: Boxing

How this became a research issue: It was on the directors' request list. Gibson was keen to do something that showed the 'honour' of boxing.

Findings: The YY writers, not the producers, had imagined that an illegal form of boxing might exist in South Africa. The research showed the reverse held true—that boxing is a revered and respected sport. Boxing institutions are formal and have integrity. However, there is *illegal* betting on matches.

Experts I brought in included boxing promoter Rodney Berman ('Golden Gloves') who met the writing team and provided a colourful account of the boxing life. Berman literally lives and breathes anecdotes about famous South African boxers. His key message to the team was: *Boxing is the only activity that requires no core ability, except determination, to create a rags-to-riches outcome.* In addition, I researched illegal fighting, women boxers and the rules of the regular boxing fraternity. The Boxing (Ruling) Commission standards

dictate a ring of a certain size, an ambulance on standby, hospital alert and so on. I examined the Amateur Association rules to establish (1) whether amateurs need HIV tests, rules about amateurs wearing boxing gloves, psyching out of boxers etc. I put the writers in touch with the owner of a boxing gym, Nick Durant (this is possibly the gym Angus Gibson remembered from his student days). Durant, radio journalist John Perlman, and the producer of *The Summit* gave input on boxing. Writers were given Gavin Evans' Boxing Shoes is Dead as a compulsory reading text.

Visuals and directors' comments: Boxing, through Zakes' gym, is a major arc. Zakes has a vision to become the number 1 black boxing promoter and is determined to make the gym at San Jose a success. He relentlessly pursues Tsetse, a fallen champion, to get back into the ring. The gym is also used indirectly as a way in which Thiza and Thabang 'couple' as per Alan Bates and Oliver Reed in Ken Russell's Women in Love (1970).

Besides the city research, there was additional research from popular audience studies. One idea I suggested, based on my research into the 'villainess' in African popular fiction, and embraced by the filmmakers, was to make use of a 'villainess' in the form of Ria, the landlady.

Chapter 8

Audiences have their say

So far we have looked at two parts of the producer-text-audience triangle required for mapping the intertextual relations of Yizo Yizo (YY) as defined in Chapter 1. The producers have explained their approach to making YY: what they were trying to achieve and who might have influenced them. I have described the post-apartheid world from which the producers come as being one defined by the relations of violence; and suggested a framework in which to read violence within YY, in relation to the violences in the broader society. This framework is called the 'hierarchy of violences'.

The text has been subjected to several analyses in order to understand the second corner of the producer-text-audience triangle. Every frame has been analysed in terms of the intertextual category list in Chapter 2. The textual analysis of YY1 and YY2 in Chapter 4 has had all intertextual references to criminal and lifestyle violence, consumption and redemptive violence removed, or lifted, from it. The purpose of removing these components of violence from the rest of the textual analysis is to highlight non-criminal violences in the text that would normally be read simply as criminal violence. The way in which criminal violence and redemptive violence has been represented by archetypes within YY, and the patterns the film makers instinctively fall into, in working with these archetypes, is the subject matter of Chapter 5. Representations of ties between lifestyle violence and youth culture have been explored in Chapter 6.

It is now time to explore the third corner of the triangle—audiences. This is tackled in several different ways.

The way fans interpret and activate texts is my starting point. I have given ten examples of the way 'fan narratives' work, based on Henry Jenkins's case

studies from Textual Poachers (1992). Into each example I have suggested the way these might have worked in relation to external fans and YY1, 2 and 3. This part of the research gauges the meaning and pleasures for audiences, explores the cultural capital that fans invest in the text, and identifies their expectations of the text. It also looks at how interested parties, who are both fans and non-fans, become involved in production activities by these 'rewritings'.

Finally, I have tried to look at YY's readings beyond fans. Audiences, besides fans, are also comprised of worried parents, teachers, media commentators, parliamentarians, academics and researchers whose views have mostly been ascertained here through the way they have fed their views into the media, and into the various SABC research and focus groups. I have incorporated critical debate from audience and popular culture specialists like Ien Ang, John Fiske and John Storey into this discussion on audiences. They raise questions about the power of active audiences, the pitfalls of participation, and thoughts about the aestheticisation of violence, among other pertinent issues. This part of the research also looks at the way the producers engaged with, or ignored, the feedback they received from YY1 and how this influenced the making of YY2 and then, following the same process, YY3. Where possible, I have built non-fan responses into the section about fan rewritings. In some cases the fans have been silent and more critical audiences have undertaken rewritings of YY.

How fans rewrite texts

Henry Jenkins's study in Textual Poachers (1992) follows the response to several 'cult' TV programmes, which have generated their own fan-written stories, songs, videos comics and fanzines ('zines') that continue to be circulated decades after the official TV show has finished its run. He explores the way fans have responded to programmes, including Star Trek, Miami Vice, The Beauty and the Beast, Blake's 7 and Twin Peaks. He explains that fans' response involves not just adoration but also frustration and antagonism (op cit:23) over

the “refusal/inability of producers to tell the kinds of stories viewers want to see” (op cit:162). What makes these responses by fans so fascinating is that the fan rewrites add a new set of intertextual categories that could be added to Genette’s list, reproduced above. There are 10 ways in which fans rewrite television shows and become involved in textual production, says Jenkins. These are recontextualisation; expanding the series timeline; refocalisation; moral realignment; genre shifting; crossovers; character dislocation; personalisation; emotional intensification and eroticisation. Jenkins’ ideas are in the italicised segments alongside the headings below (and where possible I have made suggestions about the way in which Yizo Yizo might lend itself to similar interpretations):

Recontextualisation. *Fans write/produce ‘missing scenes’ and explain why a character acts in a certain way on-screen* (Jenkins 1992:162). He gives the example of the series Beauty and the Beast. After this finished its run with the main character, Catherine, dead, fans suggested through their own texts that Catherine was only pretending to be dead in order to protect a witness. YY3 in ‘cutting out’ certain controversial characters like Papa Action and Chester seems to have set itself up for recontextualisation by fans, some of whom were irritated by the way Papa Action and Chester appear to have been silenced in YY2. One viewer emailed the producers in March 2001 to complain about the sanitizing of the programme and even of making scenes vanish. The letter says:

I would like to remark on the complete and utter disdain with which the YY producers hold the nation by cleaning up the series surreptitiously after the outcry over the sodomy scene [in YY2]. The two subsequent episodes had no jail scenes and I challenge the producers to state that suddenly the fortunes of Papa Action and Chester are meaningless to the story—when it is the declared intention to show that prison is no fun and crime does not pay. Behind the scenes decisions must have been taken to dupe the nation...The hypocrisy is worrying and the assumption that they can

prescribe viewer trends with shock tactics while providing thrills from sexual abuse and violence, with the added cheek of doing this in everybody's lounge and sitting room. Collusion of [sic] officials at the public broadcaster is a troubling possible scenario. (Ivanoff Tlhabanelo, itlholwe@nepa.org.za).

Tlhabanelo's fury is motivated by his belief that the real story has been tampered with somehow—"I challenge the producers to state that suddenly the fortunes of Papa Action and Chester are meaningless to the story". It is as if, *beyond* and *despite* the producers, there is a story that the producers are refusing to tell because they are colluding with "officials at the public broadcaster".

In a second example of fans rewriting a missing narrative, fan focus groups working with YY3 Perception and Receptivity Study for SABC (YY3 Study) before the flighting of YY3 told researchers that they would like to see Lily's role becoming more active "as a leader with a view to acknowledging women as capable leaders". They were disappointed with her diminishing leadership role in the pilots they watched, especially at the height of the strike by tenants against Ria (YY3 Study 2004: 17-36).

The same focus groups also managed to effect several changes to the sex scenes between Javas and Nomsa in YY3, Episode 3. They managed to get the first sex scene toned down after they complained about "the visuals and the sounds" to the researchers. They also had a lot to say about the second sex scene, which the researchers recommended should be edited because it underestimated the media literacy of viewers. "Participants were in fact annoyed by the second sex scene between Javas and Nomsa, especially as it reflected the artificial nature of acting, namely that Nomsa was shown with underwear on, while Javas did not show if he did use a condom this time around" (YY3 Study: 3). The producers made changes to the scene several times.

Expanding the Series Timeline. *Taking hints from the primary texts, fans write/produce about what came before the series* (Jenkins 1992: 163). The ‘prequel’, the technique used in the second Star Wars trilogy is an official example of the way in which the series timeline can be extended. But in other instances, audience members do not feel the producers are clever enough about the amount of story they put in each episode. The Pace Community deputy principal, Clifford Mlati, blames Yizo Yizo 1 for destroying the learning culture in Soweto schools *because* of timing and a sequence of events (Chester’s arrest and sentencing) being spread over two episodes. “...[T]here shouldn’t have been a break between the two episodes [the end of YY1 and beginning of YY2]. Chester...should have been punished immediately”. Mlati goes so far as to say that because of this timing problem, young viewers who did not realise punishment would follow the crime and who had emulated Chester, “are either dead or in jail. Look at the case where pupils hijacked a principal and others murdered another principal”. He made these claims to journalist, Thembisile Makgalamele, of the *Saturday Star* in an article called ‘Gangs derail education’ in March 2001.

The YY3 Perception and Receptivity Study (YY3 Study) for SABC (Systems Approach 2004)¹ also identifies the question what ‘happened’ to Papa Action and Chester as a continuity problem. The study reported: “Participants [of a 16-19-year-old female focus group from urban Gauteng] were concerned about the absence of both Papa Action and Chester in this series, especially as they believed in their ability to pull audiences to the series. In particular, they would have loved to see both these characters reach their final destinations in life, either paying big time for their criminal activities or repenting and becoming role models just like Zakes does” (YY3 Study 2004:20). It is curious that these fans appear to have forgotten that Papa Action *did* repent, in a major way, in YY2.

¹ The Systems Approach (2004) YY3 Perception and Receptivity Study was conducted on behalf of the SABC. Researchers included Thomas Ditlhoiso, Sphiwe Mabizela, Sam Mahhubu, Mpho Masite, Nelisiwe Mazibuko, Nazrana Vawda and Shamima Vawda. They conducted 19 focus groups across the provinces of Gauteng, KwaZulu Natal and Limpopo.

However, for these fans who miss Papa Action, there is a problem with the timeline. They believe the story should have been continued beyond YY2.

Refocalisation. *This concerns shifting focus from main characters to secondary ones, ‘often women and minorities, who receive limited screen time’* (Jenkins 1992: 165). Where in YY1 the most popular characters, in terms of SABC audience surveys, were the main characters Zoe, Nomsa and Javas; in YY2 they were the secondary characters Sticks and Bobo. Surprising, in YY3, we find audiences once again ‘refocalising’ around secondary characters, according to the YY3 Study by Systems Approach:

- Zakes is voted hero of the series. Lily and Thabang get credit for their leadership and for doing the right thing.
- Sticks is applauded for being conscientious and turning his life around.
- Bobo is respected for perseverance in sticking to his job (as chicken man) and sense of humour.
- Nomsa is appreciated for encouraging open dialogue in a relationship.
- Javas is liked for repentance and bravery.
- Thabang is liked for his self-respect, confidence and his pride in being gay. Respondents also liked the fact that he fought against xenophobia (YY3 Study 2004: 17-36).

Moral Realignment. *‘Perhaps the most extreme form of refocalisation, some fan stories invert or question the moral universe of the primary text, taking the villains and transforming them into the protagonists of their own narratives’* (Jenkins 1992: 168). This means that sometimes “the programme bad guys may in fact be fighting on the morally superior side”. Papa Action and Chester in YY1 particularly, shot into national youth consciousness in this way. Sibusiso Bubesi of the *Sunday Times* reports an instance of moral realignment on 21 February 1999: “Dlame Mndaweni brandishes a knife, smiles and swears he would make a better tough guy than Papa Action, the bully boy of the hit television series YY. This week when Mndaweni, a 20-year-old Vosloorus high school pupil, flushed a

fellow schoolmate's head in a toilet, he was taking on the hard guy role of the series which, after only three weeks, has 14 million viewers and is rated the most popular show on TV. 'If I was called to play the role of Papa Action, I would do it better. I imagine holding that gun and bossing everybody in the school' said Mndaweni, proudly admitting he had copied the head-in-the-toilet scene from the first episode of YY1." Bubesi, in the same article, reports on the "baptising" of 12-year-old Prince Masuku "in the name of Satan and Yizo Yizo" by a boy one year older, Patrick Mngomezulu at a primary school in Daveyton, where YY1 and YY2 were filmed. Mngomezulu told Bubesi he "liked the bullying in the series because it showed how boys should behave" (Bubesi: 1999)². Michelle Abrahams, principal of Sparrow School in Johannesburg, found many instances where violence in the schoolyard was justified by young teenage perpetrators claiming to have been inspired by these characters³.

According to Thembisile Makgalemele of the *Saturday Star* of 23 August 2003, a gang calling itself the West had been terrorising teachers and pupils at Northview High, a Johannesburg northern suburb school. "Pupils say the school resembles the lawless high school in the violent TV drama, Yizo Yizo," the report says. A similar incident was reported by the Matshiliso Secondary School in Zone 4, Meadowlands, Makgalemele says. Likewise, the *Sowetan Sunday World* of 25 March 2001 carries a letter from K Ntlhane suggesting Yizo Yizo is responsible for abhorrent crime by youths who admire the style of the gangsters: "I felt apprehensive for the safety of the youth. Recently we heard about a case of alleged bestiality in Meadowlands, Soweto; now there is sodomy in Yizo Yizo...I think Yizo Yizo must be banned now". Although Ntlhane is trying to claim that if they see something abhorrent in YY, youth will copy it because they admire the YY characters, his letter contradicts this viewpoint since it cites sequentially, "bestiality in Meadowlands" and then "sodomy in Yizo Yizo". Ntlhane does not distinguish between bestiality and sodomy.

² Sibusiso Bubesi, 'TV Horrors come to life at schools' in *Sunday Times*, 21 February 1999.

³ Michelle Abrahams (2002), in discussion with Andersson.

John Gultig's Yizo Yizo 1 and 2: A synthesis of the evaluation reports (2002) for SABC Education notes that while most focus group participants in the Yizo Yizo 2 research sympathised with the trauma of rape victims, they were "sometimes impatient with the depiction of the character's grief. Boys, in particular, did not like the extent of talking about their grief, or understand Hazel's rejection of Thiza as a logical but painful product of her traumatic experience. Instead, they wanted the girls to 'get over it' and sympathised with Thiza: he became the victim" (Gultig 2002:11).

Genre Shifting. *'Fans often choose to read the series within alternative generic traditions'.* In wanting to answer the question, 'Who killed Laura Palmer' in Twin Peaks, fans—male fans in particular—looked for clues in other works by David Lynch. "Lynch's reliance upon intertextual reference led the group to search beyond the city limits of Twin Peaks for a master text that might provide the key for deciphering the programme: *Crack the code and solve the crime*. Their search encompassed other narratives associated with Lynch...As they gained mastery over the text, fans' pleasure increased. There was the widespread belief that they were writing their own show and a fear that *Lynch might not be fully in control*" (Jenkins 1992: 110-111, emphasis added). In South Africa there was evidence of genre shifting when talk show host Felicia Mabuza Suttle brought sitcom characters Gwen Anderson and Eve Sisulu from Madam and Eve onto her show, and then played herself in a special 'Madam and Maids show' in February 2002. This show was advertised thus by e-tv: "Not only do they work together, but they are best friends". Because the historic, and often current, relationship between white and black women is one of 'madams and maids' and because of the cartoon strip Madam and Eve which draws its laughs from post-apartheid contradictions, and because 'Felicia' represented a powerful 'madam', the possibilities of intertextual reading were limitless.

When it comes to YY, there have been plenty of fan responses that discuss the programme in relation to another programme on TV. The people behind these letters or comments try to make their audiences understand a point about YY in comparison to another programme, as in this letter by LB Mohapi of Vosloorus to the *Sowetan Sunday World* on 25 March 2001: “I say long live Yizo Yizo and down with our parents. I am sick and tired of parents who are sending their children to bed or switching off TV because of Yizo Yizo...Stop attacking Yizo Yizo. I did not hear anyone attacking Soul City when Thabang was abusing Matlakala. Why? Is it because it is right to beat your wife because you paid lobola for her?” (Mohapi 2001). Mohapi simply assumes in her references to Soul City—also a product of SABC Education, but entirely different from Yizo Yizo in the presentation of its carefully designed research and its characters Thabang and Matlakala, that readers of her letter will know exactly what she is referring to.

Dumisani Dlamini, who plays Chester in YY2 similarly tells Eddie Mokoena of *Sowetan* on 30 March 2001 that Chester is similar to Crocodile. Crocodile, writes Mokoena, is a character that Dlamini “played with much honesty and conviction in Sarafina”. Sarafina is a musical, set in the apartheid era, yet presumably Dlamini knows Mokoena’s readers will crack the code. Two other articles, appearing in *City Press* and *Sowetan* also use intertextual references, and political memory in one case, to express what they want to about Yizo Yizo. The first, appearing in a column called ‘Women’s Corner’ by Mmabatho Ramagoshi on 25 March 2001, rather obscurely compares the prison sodomy scene in YY2 with a specific episode of the Jerry Springer Show.

another stupid show that should have received the same attention as Yizo Yizo. The episode on the Jerry Springer Show entitled I seduced your lover left me with serious questions about the credibility of the show and the planet it is made for (Ramagoshi 2001).

Ramagoshi's point, in comparing scenes from a South African TV drama with a US talk show turns out to be about the portrayal of people (she is talking about black people, though she never uses the word 'black') as violent and abusive. It might be a bewildering article for a non-*City Press* reader to follow, but her readers will undoubtedly 'get it'. In the *Sowetan* article appearing on 23 March 2001, Saint Molakeng does his share of genre hopping in an article headlined, 'Yizo Yizo portrays life as it is, warts and all':

It's pleasing to have television programmes that relate to us, instead of some crap as has happened with white people making alien sounds for black dramas. That's why there are funky CDs of Yizo Yizo 1 and Yizo Yizo 2.

One hopes that Yizo Yizo tells former president Nelson Mandela that, when we've had Brenda Fassie performing Black President in his honour, it's a national betrayal to have some Indian assigned to the soundtrack for Mandela's biographical movie (Molakeng, 2001).

Similarly, in explaining why they liked Yizo Yizo, "there was consensus amongst participants [of focus groups] that Yizo Yizo is 'unique' and there is no series currently on television that is similar or compares to it. Many of the respondents made reference to Gaz'lam and Tsha Tsha as weak copies of Yizo Yizo" (Yizo 3 Study 2004:13).

Cross Overs. *'Cross-over' stories blur the boundaries between different texts. Anthologies of Miami Vice poetry exist, called Miami Verse (Jenkins 1992: 156). In The Simpsons (episode shown in South Africa on MNet, Thursday 23 May 2002), one of the characters is dumping 'She Hulk' comics. "Worst cross over ever," he mumbles (acknowledging this intertextual trend). In Isidingo⁵ Steve Stehakis enters Pop Stars and sings to its real South African host Ed Jordan, 'I Believe I Can Fly', hence upping the 'reality' factor of the soapie. The use of*

⁵ Episode shown on SABC TV1 on 13 May 2002.

performers like Mandoza and Brenda Seete in YY has been a tremendous plus in audience evaluations. Crossing over these musicians into a youth text with 'songs for teenagers' has created a world in which music is related to the visual text. But in addition, the YY producers have used a highly loved gangster movie tradition to portray an SABC education series depicting life in a township that has made an enormous difference to viewers. As we have seen in the chapters of this research analysing YY's text, there are constant references to the Godfather series as well as to gangster movies featuring Clint Eastwood, Jean Claude van Damme and Sylvester Stallone. This is because, as Mahlatsi tells Suzy Bell of *Independent on Saturday* on 27 February 1999: "In reality gangsters are glamorous. In a township where there is lots of poverty and unemployment, the gangsters rule and have beautiful girlfriends and flashy cars⁶". The idea of crossing over into dialogue from other genres to tell a story about learners in a township school is very much part of its success, as Fikile-Ntsikelelo Moya points out in *The Star* on 9 March 1999, for the simple reason that "Gangsterism is fascinating to youths". Moya doesn't say *why* gangsterism is fascinating to youths, but presumably it is because youths see the bullying, unfair, irrational and frightening conduct of the gangsters as being relevant to their own lives.

A letter written by Lucky Dhlamini to the *Sowetan*, on 9 February 1999, claims that he was a pupil at Emadwaleni High School in Mzimhlophe, Soweto, during the era of Makabasa (a group of thugs) between 1985 and 1986. "The Les MaAddas and the Taras used to come to our school, spin cars, fire shots in the air and take our girls. What I saw in the first episode of Yizo Yizo is what I have seen happen in reality". In similar vein, TV columnist Mojalefa Mashego of *Sowetan*, 24 February 1999, penning his thoughts about Yizo Yizo comments: "A colleague pointed out at the weekend that he first saw a gun in high school. And it dawned on me that he is, indeed, right. Some of us first chased skirts and earned our first kisses and more in high school; we were involved in serious butt-

⁶ 'Highest ratings for Yizo Yizo' by Suzy Bell, *Independent on Saturday*, 27 February 1999.

kicking (it went both ways) there and were politicised in the institutions” (Mashego 1999)⁷.

Character Dislocation. *Characters are removed from their original situations and given alternative names and identities in other genres* (Jenkins 1992:171). However, fans hardly even need to bother to do this because there is so much character dislocation on TV anyway. Possibly fans, rather than taking a character out of YY and creating another narrative with that character, would be wondering why characters they know and love can look so different *on the same day*. One of Yizo Yizo’s hero figures, Meshack Mavuso, who plays Javas Nyembe in YY, is also geologist Vusi Moletsane in the soap opera Isidingo. Viewers watching YY3’s opening episode on 8 April 2004 surprisingly did not ask or write in to papers to ask why Javas looks so slim at 9pm, when he was obviously about seven kilograms heavier at 6pm in Isidingo. The answer lies in the insider knowledge that Isidingo films most of its episodes eight months early, and that The Bomb producers insisted that Mavuso diet and exercise in order to lose the jowley look he had acquired as the older Moletsane in Isidingo.

A villain common to both the drama Yizo Yizo and the soapie Isidingo is (actor) Dumisani Dlamini who appears as Chester in YY2 and as Wat Wat in Isidingo. There was character dislocation adjustment for South African fans when Papa Action, Hazel and Chester were replaced with new faces in YY2 and when Nomsa changed in YY3. Papa Action, played by Ronny Nyakale, who won an Avante award for best actor in 1999 in YY1, was played by Bonginkosi Dlamini. Chester, formerly played by Ernest Msibi, was played by Dumisani Dlamini of Sarafina! and Isidingo fame. Boom Shaka’s Thembi Seete replaced Nomonde Gongxeka as Hazel. Yizo Yizo’s project manager Siven Maslamoney told *The Star* on 24 January 2001 that most of these replacements were to do with financial factors, while others ‘opted for soapies’. Other famous ‘dislocated’ actors include Patrick Shai from Fools and Cry, the Beloved Country who plays

⁷ Mojalefa Mashego, ‘Yizo’s just fine as it is’ in *Sowetan*, 24 February 1999.

Vuyani Novuka in YY, and comedy actor Sechaba Morojele from Panic Mechanic and Joburg Blues who plays the District Education Officer Mahlatsi in YY.

Personalisation. *This process closes the gap between the character's fictional world and the reality of the viewer's own experience, effectively allowing the viewer to explore the genre of autobiography in reworking TV narrative* (Jenkins 1992: 173). LB Mohapi from Vosloorus has written a letter to the *Sowetan Sunday World* of 25 March 2001. He points out that long before Yizo Yizo, there was a teacher in his school like Elliot who did not teach but who hit on girls. "Is Yizo Yizo really causing all the trouble in our townships? Did it cause a mother and her boyfriend to murder a child? What about the children as young as eight and the adult man in Bloemfontein who was found abusing dogs? And what about the man who sliced a little girl in front of the little boys? I bet they learnt that from Yizo Yizo" (Mohapi 2001)⁸.

Similarly, *Sowetan* of 22 March 2001 interviews two high school girl learners and several teachers about how common teacher-learner sexual relationships are. The implication is that any viewer who knows about a single instance of this widespread practice would personalise the story line. Mbali Ntuli, who plays KK Ralentswe in YY2, says she has heard of cases of teachers like Elliot Khubeka seducing schoolgirls. "A friend of mine once told me of a girl who had a relationship with a teacher and they were extremely discreet. Being mature, he also showed her some TLC. But the relationship ended soon and in a cold way. The girl was left heartbroken. The guy had simply had his way," Ntuli told *Sunday World's* Vicky Somniso on 25 March 2001. Somniso might have had cause to do a double take at Ntuli's admission, within this interview, that she and Menzi Ngubane, who plays Elliot Khubeka, "have a special chemistry on and off the set" which made her part easier.

⁸ L.B. Mohapi from Vosloorus. Letter to the *Sowetan Sunday World*, 25 March 2001.

In other instances of personalisation, youth audiences feeding back to the YY3 Perception and Receptivity Study for SABC (YY3 Study) felt that YY3 reflected all the issues with which the respondents were concerned—life after school, the need for friendships and guidance, to resist peer pressure, to condomise and to stay positive. As pointed out by Patrick Phosa of the *Cape Argus* in ‘This is it’, on 31 January 1999, “even the soundtrack, which has been created by kwaito stars TKZee, Skeem, E’smile, Kylles, Ghetto Luv and O’Da Meesta, adds to the realism of the story.”⁹

Dumisane Dlamini, Chester in YY2, went into hiding after the sodomy scene because he feared reprisals from irate viewers, according to Eddie Mokoena in the *Sowetan* on 30 March 2001. Mokoena writes: “He also said he was relieved that his 19-year-old son had understood that this was merely acting. Many people could not make the distinction between a television character and the individual who portrayed that character.”

Angus Gibson recalls that Ronnie Nyakale, Papa Action from YY1, had started to be mobbed by fans wherever he went but then pulled out because he wanted more money for the role. “Zola (Bonginkosi Dlamini) stepped into his shoes and changed his life. Ronnie allowed the role to catapult him...we had written a redemptive arc, we felt personally he needed to play that out. Ronnie called me on the day (we were shooting) and said, ‘I’ll do it’ and I said ‘I have cast this guy and there’s no way I can drop him’.” While Ronnie Nyakale went off to play a sangoma in a Polish movie about Africa, Zola’s stint in YY2 earned him superstardom as a performing artist and host of his own TV show, Zola 7.

Emotional Intensification. *Hurt-comfort stories, where “characters respond in a caring fashion to the psychological problems, professional turning points, personality conflicts and physical hurts of other major characters”* (Jenkins 1992: 174) *are enormously popular with fans.* These moments are typical of cop and

⁹ Patrick Phosa, ‘This is it’ in the *Cape Argus* in ‘This is it’, 31 January 1999.

spy stories about work ‘partners’ like Starsky and Hutch and The Man from UNCLE.

It is likely that the way Bobo looks after Sticks when he has been hospitalised, and Sticks’s concern for Bobo, because of the way he is abusing drugs, would appeal to YY fans. Bobo says to Sticks: “Since you’ve been hit, I’ve been alone in the township,” and, when he realises his friend is not dead, “Sweet my ancestors, sweet, you’re back” (YY2: Episode 8). Sticks, when he gets out of hospital, helps Bobo to break his drug addiction.

John Gultig quotes the Yizo Yizo 2 Impact Study on this in his Yizo Yizo 1 and 2: A synthesis of the evaluation reports (2002). “[L]earners were moved by the role that friends and schools played in supporting a drug user’s rehabilitation. In other words, they saw a role they could play. While some learners expressed a little cynicism at the ease with which Bobo’s rehabilitation was portrayed—a fact that speaks to the ubiquity of drugs in our communities—many were inspired with the idea that they could make a difference in this regard” (Gultig 2002:87).

In YY3 Bobo pays back the favour since it is Sticks going off the rails and doing drugs. The focus groups in the SABC audience survey praised Bobo for his ‘maikemisetso’ and ‘zama zama’ (YY3 Study 2004). He stands his ground, keeps his sense of humour and plods on determinedly even though he has to move from one humiliating job to another. The focus groups enjoyed Snowey, Hazel’s sister and Nobelungu the stripper because they were so committed to their friend, the drug addict Candy whose child dies in the series. Nobelungu, though her role is a small one, is also “viewed as a hero” for caring and helping Sticks make a decision. The focus groups would know that Nobelungu is played by Sindi Khambule, a former lover of the late Brenda Fassie. The fact that Fassie had a history of drug abuse (and in fact died a drug-related death during the flighting of YY3) might have played a part in fans’ identification of her lover as a caring person. The SABC focus groups also applauded Zakes for being

‘supportive and caring’ to a range of younger characters (YY3 Study 2004). Earlier focus groups organised by a research partnership¹⁰ for YY1 had identified Zoe as one of their three favourite characters (the other two being Nomsa and Javas) because she cared about the learners and tried to help them with their social problems.

Eroticisation. *Fan literatures frequently “explore the erotic dimensions of characters’ lives. Their stories transform the relatively chaste, though often suggestive, world of popular television into an erogenous zone of sexual experimentation”* (Jenkins 1992: 175). Fans watch Star Trek with the sound off and rewrite Kirk and Spock in ‘slash’ fan comics and literature expressing homoerotic passion. YY might throw up this sort of content if fans were to watch YY2 Episode 9 (with the sound off) where Thiza and Javas share a bed while they discuss Thiza’s new heartthrob Thandeka. Interestingly, Teboho Mahlatsi directed this episode as well as the erotic scenes in the represented gay romance between Thiza and Tebogo in YY3. In YY3 viewers seem to have enjoyed Nomsa’s practical approach to the erotic. But, as mentioned under the headline of ‘Recontextualisation’, focus group participants scoffed at the love scene between Nomsa and Javas in YY3, Episode 3, because they felt it was artificial.

The evidence from Jenkins shows that fans engage as writers and as producers of text and not just as audiences. Quoting Cassandra Amesley (1989), Jenkins suggests there is a process of ‘double viewing’ going on:

The characters are understood as ‘real’ people with psychologies and histories that can be explored and as fictional constructions whose shortcomings may be attributed to bad writing or the suspect motivations

¹⁰ The YY1 evaluation was conducted for SABC Education TV by The Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation, Co-ordinated Management Consulting, Helene Perold & Associates and The South African institute for Distance Education.

of the producers. One reading privileges the fictional universe, the other the extratextual information the viewer has acquired (Jenkins 1992: 66).

In fleshing out the intertextual mesh it is necessary to understand the contribution from fans as it provides the links that a mere textual analysis or interview with producers might miss, and for this reason the literature review has been extended to include reception theory in relation to intertextuality.

To speak as a fan is to accept what has been labeled a subordinated position within the cultural hierarchy, to accept an identity constantly belittled or criticized by institutional authorities. Yet it is also to speak from a position of collective identity, to forge an alliance with a community of others in defense of tastes which, as a result, cannot be read as totally aberrant or idiosyncratic (Jenkins 1992:23).

Fans have to be viewed not as mere recipients of text but as people involved in the production of texts. Fiske suggests three types of production in which fans participate: semiotic productivity, enunciative productivity and textual productivity. The first explains the way in which audiences make their own internal meanings (not necessarily those intended by the producers) from the text. It makes them feel empowered, able to recognise a problem, denied or affirmed. The second refers to the way in which audiences articulate these responses: either talking about the characters of a soap opera as if they were part of their lives, modelling their clothes or hair style on that of a 'star' or challenging convention. The third area, textual productivity, involves the fans taking the text beyond the boundaries of what has been allowed in the producers' texts (Fiske 1992: 37-39). Henry Jenkins¹¹ has made an extensive study of the practices of 'filking' (production and performance of songs based on TV series like Star Trek) and slash comics (rewriting the dialogue and building homoerotic content into the discussions of,

¹¹ See Henry Jenkins (1992) Textual Poachers as well as Henry Jenkins, 'Strangers No More, We Sing: Filking and the Social Construction of the Science Fiction Fan Community' in Linda A. Lewis (1992). The Adoring Audience: Fan Culture and Popular Media. Routledge:London.

for example, the characters Kirk and Spock from the same series). The songs, videos, comics and even full-length novels produced and circulated by fans, often in massive quantities, extend the story lines of the original texts and include what fans themselves would have liked to see and the messages they felt the producers had failed to deliver. Generally, as Fiske (op cit) points out, the textual production by audiences is not well received by the original producers of text. However, there have been exceptions. Fiske cites a competition run by MTV in association with Madonna, which allowed fans to submit their own videos to promote her song True Blue. The MTV studios were swamped with the response and devoted 24 hours to playing a selection of these.

Lisa A Lewis, editor of The Adoring Audience (1992) has devoted several chapters to analysing why there are fans and why women are more attracted to fandom. However, there is an entire section of the book devoted to production by fans and another looking at the relationship between fans and the TV industry.

An example of the way in which fans have rewritten meaning can be seen in the way actor Bonginkosi Dlamini (Papa Action in YY2) became a smash hit with audiences—to such an extent that he was voted, by the 2001 Duku Duku Awards, the Most Talked About Celebrity and Sexiest Male Celebrity.

The interactivity between producers, text and fans seems to take on a living dimension, highlighting dialogic processes and presenting further possibilities—perhaps even more categories—for research into intertextuality. The way YY focus groups reject certain narratives because they are not real (they are ‘artificial’) and embrace characters like Nobelungu and Zakes because they ‘care’ suggests that viewers attribute certain therapeutic qualities to TV drama and are able to appropriate exactly what speaks to their reality from sophisticated narratives. Enjoyment becomes very closely related to representations of their own lives.

Understanding the way meaning and pleasure circulates between the producers and the fans around the text of Yizo Yizo suggests to me the process described by John Storey as the 'Gramscian model' in an interplay between structure and agency. Storey writes:

According to cultural studies, now informed by hegemony theory, popular culture is neither an 'authentic' working-class culture nor a culture imposed by the culture industries, but what Gramsci would call a 'compromise equilibrium' between the two; a contradictory mix of forces from both 'below' and 'above'; both 'commercial' and 'authentic', marked by both 'resistance' and 'incorporation', 'structure' and 'agency'. Looking at popular culture as a 'compromise equilibrium', what has always interested cultural studies is not so much the cultural commodities provided by the culture industries, but the way these cultural commodities are appropriated and *made* meaningful in acts of cultural consumption; often in ways not intended or even envisaged by their producers (Storey 1996:150)¹².

Both Fiske and Storey have described the way in which they themselves transform as viewers, depending on what programme they are watching. For Fiske, "there is no such thing as 'the television audience' defined as an empirically accessible object". People constitute themselves differently, at different times. He says:

I am a different television 'audience' when watching my football team from when watching *The A-Team* with my son or *Days of our Lives* with my wife. Categories focus our thinking on similarities: people watching

¹² John Storey (1996), 'Gramscian Cultural Studies, Popular Culture and Cultural Consumption' in Cultural Consumption and Everyday Life. Oxford University Press: Oxford.

television are best modelled according to a multitude of differences (Fiske 1989:56)¹³.

Storey, quoting Daniel Miller's ideas about the relationship between cultural consumption and the making of culture, looks at the way the subject 'externalises' and 'internalises' in recontextualising cultural production. Storey writes:

For example, if I write a poem it is in my consumption of the poem that I recognise my *self* as a poet. It is the poem that makes me a poet. But to know this I must first consume the poem. Without this externalisation, this objectification, followed by a process of sublation, I would not know myself as poet. Similarly, to know myself as a supporter of Manchester United, I must first externalise (or at least recognise externally) Manchester United, and by consuming (internalising) what I have objectified, I become a supporter and thus enter into a social relationship (collective or antagonistic) with other supporters (Storey 1996: 161).

Ways audiences return their messages to Yizo Yizo

The YY examples cited under Jenkins's categories of recontextualisation, moral realignment and so on were in some cases taken from SABC's studies commissioned into audience responses to Yizo Yizo, including focus groups involving students, parents and teachers and interviews with a range of specialists.

Following YY's success in getting the highest ARs, with 2,1 million people, watching it, SABC commissioned an evaluation report. Research into audiences for YY1 was conducted for SABC Education Television by a research partnership

¹³ John Fiske, 'Moments of television: Neither the text nor the audience' in Ellen Seiter, Hans Borchers, Gabrielle Keutznier and Eva-Maria Warth (1989) (eds.), Remote Control and Television Audiences and Cultural Power. Routledge: London.

comprising The Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation, Coordinated Management Consulting, Helene Perold & Associates and The South African Institute for Distance Education. The first phase of this research, conducted between May and August 1999, entailed interviews and focus groups with respondents who had watched more than three episodes of Yizo Yizo. The researchers conducted ten in-depth interviews with COLTS campaign¹⁴ and SABC Education stakeholders as well as focus group discussions with ten learner groups, six teacher groups, six parent groups, two principal groups and two school governing body groups, in Gauteng and the Western Cape.

The second phase solicited the views of 2076 youths, parents, teachers and principals who had watched YY1 in Gauteng, the Western Cape, KwaZulu-Natal and the Eastern Cape. According to Janet Smith, it found:

- The weakest messages were found to be those reflecting an abhorrence of rape, anti-violence (gun culture), communication with parents and teachers and an end to corporal punishment.
- Javas, Nomsa and Zoe were the fans' favourites because they stood up for themselves and fought corruption at school. Papa Action, Chester and Bra Gibbs were the least favourite, though they were seen as glamorous by some viewers.
- 55% of learners who were respondents watched all the episodes. Some 32% said they watched six or more episodes. 45% watched because they wanted to know 'what happens next', 35% found it 'educational' and 30% found it entertaining.
- 78% of those polled discussed the series with friends, parents and teachers.
- The majority of pupils polled understood the key messages were 'crime doesn't pay', 'say no to drugs', 'education is important to your future'.

¹⁴ The Department of Education's Culture of Learning and Teaching in Schools (COLTS) campaign, referred to in Chapter 1.

- Only 13% of people polled said they ‘did things differently’ after watching the series. (Janet Smith, ‘Figure it Out’ in *The Star*, 26 January 2001).

The second evaluation report, Yizo Yizo 2—The Impact Study, was also based on a phased study. A total of 1200 learners and 750 parents filled in structured questionnaires, 105 teachers, principals and parents were interviewed, 30 focus groups were held and six in-depth school observations took place. In addition 36 learners and teachers were asked to keep diaries about Yizo Yizo as they watched each episode. Unlike the YY1 study, the YY2 evaluation did not require respondents to have already watched YY in order to participate in the survey. Also, whereas the YY1 study was only conducted among black learners and teachers, the YY2 study targeted other population groups as well.

The YY2 evaluation slammed YY2 for being ‘too explicit’, according to Teboho Mahlatsi. Speaking to Patrick Phosa of the *Saturday Star* on 24 March 2001, Mahlatsi said YY1 was branded “as glamorising gangsterism, with the rogues generally getting off scot-free”, something YY2 tried to address. “In the first series we were criticised for not showing the consequences of some of the actions of the gangsters, but now we’re being criticised for showing too much of the consequences. Think about it. Now the bad guys are suffering and it’s said we’re explicit.” The suggestion seems to be that the baddies deserve to forfeit their human rights—to suffer rape even, as Chester does in prison in YY2—because of their past actions.

However, the YY2 evaluation report also praised YY2 for developing some story lines over several episodes, reporting that focus groups felt especially drawn in by the story of Javas’s success with his go-kart in a technology competition, and Mantwa’s struggle to learn to read.

The main findings of the reports into Yizo Yizo 1 and Yizo Yizo 2 were pulled together into the Yizo Yizo Synthesis Report, written by John Gultig for SABC Education. Gultig's findings of this research are a starting point for the 'audience' corner of the triangle, in combination with an analysis of Yizo Yizo's audience reception as gleaned from the media.

The Yizo Yizo synthesis report looks at two evaluations of YY1 and YY2:

Both evaluations report that viewers had demonstrated 'surprisingly' high levels of general media literacy...The Yizo Yizo 2 report suggests that younger viewers read the messages better than their parents...Both evaluations suggest that learners were more likely to recall social context messages—like those relating to **crime and drugs** than school-based messages. Significantly, youth most often reported the messages as being *don't do drugs* or *don't do crime* while adults often simply reported that Yizo Yizo was *about* drugs, or crime, or, in Yizo Yizo 2's case, about sex (Gultig 2002:8).

Similarly, teachers watched the programme but “did not regard it as having any messages for them...they were not able to take ownership of the problems represented, or see themselves as agents of a different future” (Gultig op cit: 10). In some cases, Gultig says, adults felt the kwaito and rap music used in YY was the signal that this programme was not directed at them but at youth audiences.

Gultig says that to focus research on how media messages are read (rather than on the social attitudes of viewers) “more use needs to be made of research modes like content and semiotic analysis, modes that seek to find out how viewers read and understand dramatic conventions and story arcs used in the series” (2002:21):

Certain important messages—particularly around rape, teacher-learner relationships, guns and violence, and vigilantism—do not seem to be having as strong an impact as the Yizo Yizo producers desired, or as some other messages have had. These messages have been *heard*, but don't seem to have been *accepted* as enthusiastically as messages around crime, drug-abuse and dialogue. The evaluations imply that this may be due because [sic] of the strongly entrenched contextual beliefs and, possibly, the way in which certain characters (Gunman, and girl learners like Hazel) have been represented (Gultig 2002:23).

Gultig's warnings about the gap between conceived and received messages bring the corner of the triangle reserved for 'the viewer' to life. It becomes possible to experience the viewer as active in the same way the producer and the text are active. Gultig explains how television messages are "mediated by the context in which they are read, and the beliefs of those reading them" (Gultig 2002:99). In the South African context, this seems to entail a reading of violence/s such as I have suggested in Chapter 3. Gultig writes:

Viewers believed that the criminal ("bad") violence of the gangsters was most effectively stopped by Gunman's use of "good" violence. As such, it was right for Gunman to carry a weapon and that he should not be arrested. This, argues the report, reflects viewers own deeply held beliefs around violence. The research report also reflects viewer distrust in police efficiency. They also felt that Yizo Yizo provided no "convincing" non-violent alternatives to Gunman's activities. The idea raised in Yizo Yizo through Javas's appeal to talk was bound to fail. The SRC, also, was interpreted as ineffectual (Gultig 2002:99).

By the time audience testing was being done for YY3, a range of sophisticated approaches were used by Systems Approach to test three episodes. The Perception and Receptivity Study Presentation (8 April 2004) used 16 focus

groups of 16 to 24-year-old viewers in Gauteng, KwaZulu Natal and Limpopo and three think tanks, two in Gauteng and one in KZN. Learners said they enjoyed YY because it “contains facts”, “the characters evolve”. It was better than other programmes. “Gaz’lam is a copy of YY...it gets boring after a while”.

They felt it was suitable for everyone except children, and found it uncomfortable to watch explicit sex scenes with their parents and younger siblings.

YY3 messages in Episodes 3, 4 and 10, for these focus groups, were read as:

- Do not take people for granted
- Violence, crime (or greed) does not pay. Don’t even buy stolen goods. (it’s good to be honest) BUT everyone should be given a second chance. It’s never too late to change your lifestyle.
- Drugs condemn people’s lives
- Peer pressure is a powerful force (don’t give in). Choose friends carefully.
- Being xenophobic is being racist
- Communities have rights. Solidarity and caring for others—ubuntu—are worth striving for. Communities working together can solve problems.
- Take full responsibility for your actions—there are always consequences to actions. (Young people need guidance and need to be proactive in life)
- Preparation is critical in seeking employment; and hard work and perseverance are the ingredients for success.
- Believe in yourself and be tolerant.
- Take informed decisions
- Condomise; respect your partner and have an open relationship with your partner.

Nevertheless the recommendations again propose that the series be rated in terms of age, nudity, violence and parental guidance.

Hypotext and Hypertext: texts generated on and about Yizo Yizo

Yizo Yizo was conceived as a multi-media project. During the making of YY1 and YY2, half a million youth booklets (described as magazines in The Bomb's document 6/3/4, prepared by DNM) were distributed throughout the country. "The magazine is built around the characters and stories of the TV series and is aimed at encouraging youth to read [presumably youth who watched and loved YY would then be encouraged to read print media dealing with the same topic] The soundtrack CD launched in March has sold double platinum and in May, the Yizo Yizo roadshow theatre tours kicked off" (opcit).

The in-house publications, some would call them propaganda, were fast to tell readers just how popular YY had become. "The first episode of Yizo Yizo surpassed all expectations by becoming the highest rated programme across all SABC channels. It shared this top spot with Generations (14 ARs). But amongst Nguni/Sotho viewers, Yizo Yizo was by far the most popular of all programmes (26.1 ARs) compared with Generations (24.9). Amongst Nguni/Sotho children, again Yizo Yizo had the highest ratings (23.6)."¹⁵

During the period YY3 was flighted, *Drum* magazine carried four full-colour pages about YY to reinforce the YY3 message and take the issues into print media form¹⁶.

But possibly more important than the in-house 'propaganda' written and published by The Bomb, Yizo Yizo (all three seasons) received unprecedented attention from the media, parliamentarians, politicians and public commentators. Everybody with a public profile had something to say about Yizo Yizo. For example, the national media secretary of the ANC Youth League, Blessing Manale, wrote a piece on the Opinion page of *Sowetan Sunday World* to praise

¹⁵ Quoted by The Bomb, on a YY1 & YY2 Fact Sheet, put out as a press release on 17 February 1999 by Timbull Rorich Neville Marketing and Advertising.

¹⁶ The YY3 Drum inserts can be read at the YY3 website at www.sabceducation.co.za/yizoyiza3.

Yizo Yizo for showing “real life uncut” and to make a dig at the “custodians of morality” who don’t have real solutions¹⁷. A few of the other comments are quoted below.

The Star

[Yizo Yizo]...presents a frank and uncompromising insight into the volatile and dysfunctional nature of many previously disadvantaged South African schools. It marks a dramatic change in direction for local television in its direct and unswerving treatment of a number of issues traditionally regarded as controversial or taboo, such as poverty, sexuality, gender discrimination, drug abuse and administrative corruption. (*Star Tonight*, February 1999).

Yizo Yizo...was “child pornography”, MPs heard yesterday. MPs on parliament’s home affairs committee who watched a 20-minute clip of the series were told that the Films and Publications Board may well have banned YY, but that body did not have jurisdiction over television shows...(Advocate for the board, Ivor) Chetty said that he would have classified YY as “XX”, meaning it was child pornography because it showed sex scenes of children in school uniform, implying they were below 18. Board CEO Nana Makaula said she would have classified it 16VNSL (violence, nudity, sex and language)...The series has come under heavy fire from members of the public and ANC MPs who complained about a same-sex prison-sex scene shown two weeks ago, and called for the SABC to scrap the show. Since then, however, it has been defended by Education Minister Kader Asmal and education MECs on the grounds that it got people talking about issues affecting the youth...Thandi Modise, a senior ANC MP, said the series negatively influenced children who watched

¹⁷ Blessing monale, ‘The Truth Hurts’ in *Sowetan Sunday World*, 25 March 2001.

it and violated the culture, standards and dignity of black South Africans...IFP MP Prince Nhlanhla Zulu found it offensive that only blacks were shown as doing “ugly things”. “Why were there no white children?” he asked. (‘Yizo is child porn, censor tells MPs’, by Charles Phahlane. *The Star*, Thursday March 29 2001).

“Sometimes shock therapy works—and in the case of Yizo Yizo it has, for the programme has the nation talking to itself,” says Gauteng poet Don Mattera...Reacting to the [Film and Publications Board] FPB comments, Mattera said: “We should look at everything from a moralistic point of view and never take away the right of society to be indignant about something, especially if they feel the moral thread of the country is at stake. However, there must be a balance and to find a balance you have to juxtapose the issue of morality against the issue people face in their lives. Those rape and sex scenes take place every day.” (‘Yizo has nation talking to itself’ by Gaynor Kast and Charles Phahlane. *The Star*, Thursday March 29 2001).

Education Minister Kader Asmal yesterday reaffirmed his support for the high-action drama YY because it confronted “the evils that continued to plague the education system. I am pleased that YY1 has contributed to breaking the cycle of ignorance and denial among parents and that it provided a critical platform for young black South Africans to have their daily life experiences reflected and addressed,” Asmal said. (‘Asmal reaffirms his support for controversial Yizo Yizo’ by Moshoeshoe Monare, *The Star*, 7 December 2001).

Saturday Star

The phenomenon which is Yizo Yizo is the most popular series in the history of South African television. It has overtaken regular top rankers such as Generations, and is the most popular programme

with both adults and children. SABC audience research manager Mr Daan van Vuuren, who has been analysing television ratings for more than 15 years, says: "Yizo Yizo is a phenomenon. We have never seen anything like it before. There have been one-off programmes, such as the opening of the Olympics, which scored more on a single day, but no series has achieved so many viewers on a regular basis. Yizo Yizo is a milestone in South African television." (*Saturday Star*, 21 April 2001).

Sowetan

Having fuelled fiery debates and survived scathing attacks for its depiction of violence and use of foul language, the highly controversial but nevertheless popular SABC1 drama series will go on record as one of the most exciting on South African television. (*Sowetan*, 28 April 1999).

...*Sowetan* was inundated yesterday with calls from 'disgusted and disgraced' viewers, some of whom called for the series...to be banned' ('Yizo Yizo rape outrage' by Mojalefa Mashego, *Sowetan*, 15 March 2001).

...The outbursts (against YY) are pathetically shocking, a South African tendency to rubbish works of art produced by compatriots...Anyway, what is amiss about television portraying what happens in our society? There is nothing wrong, of course, unless we don't want television to show our lives as they are, warts and all. When people bellyache about YY, they don't mention its goodness. Hats should be doffed to the young team for their compelling acting, brilliant directing, nifty producing, sartorial dash and mesmerising

bearings. ('Yizo Yizo portrays life as it is, warts and all', by Saint Molakeng, *Sowetan*, 23 March 2001).

Sowetan Sunday World

I just want to say that Yizo Yizo can only serve as a belated wake up call to all of us as South Africans...we must realise that culture changes and that most of those cultural changes, all over the world, are fostered by young people. (Lucky Mazibuko's column First Time Lucky, *Sowetan Sunday World*, 25 March 2001).

Convent-schooled Mbali Ntuli, the pretty actress who played (KK) the schoolgirl seduced by a lecherous teacher in YY2 on Tuesday night had just one reservation about her role: what would her mom say when she saw the episode...Ntuli says she relied heavily on a *Special Assignment* documentary on students involved with teachers. She and Menzi Ngubane, her partner Elliot Khubeka in the episode, "have a special chemistry on and off the set". That's made her part easier, she says. (Vicky Somniso, 'Yizo actress frets over mom', *Sowetan Sunday World*, 25 March 2001).

City Press

...The fact that they depict what we experience (is) daily as a nation is immaterial. Are these violent experiences really worth being repeated? Is it worth making the victims of those crimes relive the trauma while glorifying these barbaric tendencies? Whatever the intention, what happens in real life is that people copy what they see in their environment and TV is part of that environment...As a country we should promote images that help us to reverse the sense of hopelessness and fear that we are all exposed to. There are good

things happening in our communities, even in the midst of the violence. We need to depict and emphasise those good deeds, as this is what we aspire to. Why are we prophets of doom, always recreating this violent society? Whether we like it or not, what we think as a nation, we BECOME. ('We don't need negative reinforcement on TV' by Mmabatho Ramagoshi in Women's Corner, *City Press*, 25 March 2001.)

Ramagoshi's views about the recreation of a violent society within YY are in direct contrast to those of many of the actors who participated in the series. The newspaper quoting Mbali Ntuli (KK) above, *Sowetan Sunday World* of 25 March 2001, also quotes Thembi Seete (Hazel) explaining that her YY character would "show victims how to deal with post-rape trauma". The pride Seete demonstrates in being in a position to impart very important messages to the youth about ways to deal with particular violences to which they might be exposed is echoed by several other actors in the series. Dumisani Dlamini (Chester), who was forced to go into hiding after the prison rape scene in YY2, defends it, in an interview with *Sowetan* journalist Eddie Mokoena on 30 March 2001, for "portraying a crucial message" since sexual violence in male prisons is a reality. Similarly, Patrick Shai (teacher Edwin Thapelo) tells *The Teacher* in February 1999, that "there can never be a better mirror for South Africa...I'm sure that it will change our mindsets." Where Ramagoshi of *City Press* believes violence in representation in YY cannot "reverse the sense of hopelessness and fear we're all exposed to," Shai suggests it will "change our mindsets," a view similar to that expressed by Fernando Meirelles in relation to City of God (see footnote 8 in Chapter 3). These strong differences, arguably between a non-fan and a fan (and YY insider) show how difficult the terrain for a series like YY has been to navigate. One cannot help wondering why Ramagoshi, who is a women's columnist, is silent about the strong women like Zoe Cele and Grace Letsatsi in YY and chooses instead to write off the series altogether. It is almost as if she was so appalled at the way communities were being portrayed that she didn't see Zoe Cele and Grace

Letsatsi. Nambitha Mpulwana (principal Grace Letsatsi) says of her role to *The Teacher* in February 1999: “It’s a very strong role. It’s progressive and this woman is a trailblazer”. Finally, it would come as a surprise to an audience member like Ramagoshi to find that even the villains in YY welcomed the furious debates caused by YY and respected the views of elder viewers who found YY such difficult viewing. As Bonginkosi Dlamini (Papa Action) comments to the *Sowetan*:

The youth are in desperate need of parental involvement. We know that we cannot be smarter than people who have already been down the road we are travelling¹⁸.

The furore and excitement generated by Yizo Yizo force critical observers to ask a lot of questions. Firstly, to what extent the various SABC audience studies framed questions to focus groups in a way that ended up supporting perspectives in the SABC Education TV division that served as a re-inscription of the status quo. I ask because a particular language consultant to SABC TV had expressed her reservations about the Nomsa-Javas sex scene in YY2 to the producers. “This is not part of our culture,” she said. I was listening and argued with her about the silences in ‘our culture’ about youth sexuality, which I felt restricted the environment in which HIV/Aids issues might be debated. It was decided to put the matter to focus groups. When the YY focus groups were asked specifically about YY3, Episode 3, and they asked for it to be toned down, I suspected that somehow the language consultant’s views had found their way into the brief to the research team conducting the survey on behalf of SABC. This was because the same focus group asked why there were no male strippers in the club where Nobulungu worked. The responses seemed inconsistent. Why would a focus group want a toning down of a sex scene (coincidentally as per recommendation of the SABC consultant) but ask to see a male stripper in action? My suspicions

¹⁸ Bonginkosi Dlamini in ‘Sex Education is part of our culture’ by Alessandra Newton and Graeme Reid, *Sowetan*, 28 March 2001.

would be impossible to prove in the absence of being able to recreate the same focus group and being given the chance to pose a set of questions of my own.

Secondly, the audience case studies have to be understood as exercises in both democracy and co-option. Yizo Yizo's official mandate was to look at the way Government is trying to democratise schools but Government is notorious for abdicating its central responsibility and handing all decision-making over to a commission or a committee. Well and good if that is reflected in representation through the Learners' Representative Council, the Parent-Teachers Association and later the Community Policing Forum where everything must be decided by committee. But beyond representation, how do these committees make decisions about critical issues? What does the group of governing bodies and teacher-parent committees interviewed by the SABC researchers often *in advance* of the screenings of episodes bring to the table? And how progressive are such bodies? How is it possible to allow that the sexual violence Chester experiences in prison is justice, or a form of retributive violence, as suggested by Mahlatsi in his interview with Patrick Phosa of the *Saturday Star*, cited above, and to be critical of the scene only because it is "explicit". Had the educational bodies talking to the researchers insisted that the scene should *not* be told as a message that crime does not pay and to make it *more* explicit by including a perspective of the victim, albeit a former perpetrator, how different might the audience responses to this scene have been. Under the guise of popular participation, the interests of the status quo are frequently upheld. We have seen a failed attempt at public participation in the Great South Africans TV debacle in 2004. As a concept it was fraught with problems. South Africa is a country where under apartheid, history was taught in a way that served the interests of the ruling elite. In post-apartheid South Africa where memory is being rewritten in the interests of reconciliation, as theorised in Chapter 3, it is still hard to imagine how the mass of people can possibly remember their history—or if they remember it, have the confidence to state it. Does a 'great' South African historical figure whose memory might have been removed from apartheid literature and

broadcasting have a chance against a 'known' (read approved) South African, shown again and again on TV and radio? In the absence of seeing images of South Africans like Albert Luthuli regularly on TV it is understandable that a large number of voters might remember a person in more recent TV memory, and vote for, by way of example, a discredited cricket hero like Hansie Cronje. As we continue to witness in South Africa with public participation exercises in programmes like Big Brother and Idols, the bulk of viewers who phone in are white or middle-class black viewers, suggesting that participation depends on accessibility to telephones and affordability of the cost of calls to a broadcaster. In this sense, the audiences can be used by the broadcasting structures for a wide range of interests. The mainstreaming of public participation can simply be a way to colonise viewers. This is not necessarily the case with the bulk of the carefully conducted focus groups for the YY project, but it is a factor that needs to be borne in mind.

Finally, there is a need to examine the relationship between marginal cinema, popular culture and the mainstream. Yizo Yizo exists as a cultural product that managed to reach popular audiences at an unprecedented level, yet in part it ultimately reinforces the status quo. The producers, although inspired by auteurs, nevertheless show themselves to be amenable to changing their vision when the broadcaster, backed by enough focus group voices, asks for changes. The producers, while deeply attuned to the violences within South African society, have nevertheless from time to time opted for a telling of violence in a way that appears to come out of mainstream cinema. It is almost as if this is an intertextual engagement with intellectuals and other directors than to audiences. The obvious example to cite is the William Tell-style killing of the shopkeeper in YY1, Episode 10. Although TV audiences did not see Chester shooting the shopkeeper with the apple on his head, DVD audiences did. This raises questions about the politics of the DVD. The stylised violence is not there (on TV) but it is there on DVD. Which audiences are supposed to enjoy the DVD version? And which audiences would understand the reference to William Tell?

Although Yizo Yizo in world terms would be seen as having come out of the cracks and margins of popular culture, within a South African context it has provided the definition of mainstream youth TV. In what appeared to be the workings of the strategy of containment, much of what dealt with youth culture post-Yizo Yizo seemed to be developed on a YY formula. This can be seen in particular in other youth TV programmes like Gaz'lam and Tsha Tsha Tsha, through to a range of mainstream advertisements, youth fashions and publications. It is clear that Yizo Yizo *did* break ground. In poet and cultural activist Don Mattera's words quoted earlier, it got "the nation talking to itself." And it got the nation speaking the unspeakable. It expressed itself in the street language of the township. It used humour. It reinvented townships by showing ghettos as places of pain *and* pleasure. It challenged taboos like homosexuality to the point that taboos became the new paradigm for youth drama, often different versions of the same taboos. It set the template for modern South African youth drama in telling about violence, about gratuitous sex, usually conducted with minimal reference—silence practically, until YY3—with regard to HIV. Although it could not be held responsible for the Gaz'lam and Tsha Tsha Tsha clones that were to follow, these programmes clearly revalourise the impact of Yizo Yizo's early images.

Chapter 9

Conclusions

This research set out to establish how intertextuality worked in Yizo Yizo, and what purposes it served. It also attempted to explore the way in which political memory entered the narratives of the present, primarily through the use of intertextuality. The triangle of producer-text-audience was identified in Chapter 1 as the structure in which Yizo Yizo would be mapped.

A problem, in conceptualising this research, arose out of the fact that Yizo Yizo is a visual text. It was necessary to create a methodology that could simultaneously interpret the images and language. The method chosen included the use of symbols to indicate different types of intertextual and critical references within the text as they emerged from different sources.

The starting point was the literary approaches to intertextuality, as per Genette's model (explained in Chapter 1), which Stam has already shown can also be used to map visual texts. Stam's categories are as follows (the symbol in bold is the short form I used to map the text): intertextuality **I**, quotation **I:q**, allusion **I:a**, celebrity intertextuality **I:c**, auto-citation **I:ac**, genetic intertextuality **I:g**, *intratextuality* **I:I**, mendacious intertextuality **I:m**. To these categories, I added one of my own: intertextuality to political memory in the form of texts, posters, images we have seen before on TV, heard on the radio or read in newspapers **I:pm**.

The next step was to interview the producers. In retrospect, it seems that there are several producerly interests that have made it into the text. Gibson's fascination with The Great Gatsby and new wealth seems to have informed the indulgences of characters like Chester. Gibson, Markgraaf and Mahlatsi were all youth achievers—and in Yizo Yizo we find youth leaders in Nomsa and Javas, who against all odds succeeds with his go-kart in getting second prize in a major technology competition. The beatings Gibson witnessed, Mahlatsi experienced and Markgraaff managed to escape are told within the

beatings of Sticks and Nomsa by Principal Mthembu and Javas by his father Mr Nyembe. Markgraaff's experiences with a drunken father could easily have helped inspire the drunken characters of care givers like Zakes and Snowey. Markgraaff's stated fascination with a gangster in her youth years appears to have been reproduced in several of the girl learner characters, while the gangsters themselves seem to have been drawn both from gangster films cited by Mahlatsi and Gibson and by individuals known to these directors. The self-esteem arcs of several characters in YY2 appear to have been informed by the knock to Mahlatsi's self esteem following the criticism he received after the production of Yizo Yizo 1. The 'tortured heroes' he talks about in Chapter 2 seem to have inspired characters like Thulani and Gunman. Similarly, his own descriptions as a shy young poet could easily have been fed into Thiza, while Javas as aspiring DJ also seems to be taken from his own life experience.

After interviewing the core team of producers in Chapter 2 and establishing their concerns, influences and references—including the 'mandate' from Government and SABC, and issues thrown up by research—I was able to extend the list of intertextual categories above to include intertextual framework and structure told within a classic storyline, folk tale or legend **I:cs**, and generic convention **GC**. The last category differs from intratextuality in that these are not simply verbal or visual references to a known genre but represent points at which Yizo Yizo undergoes changes in generic structure. Based on what I heard from the producers, I then added more categories. These are: broadcaster issue **BI**, childhood memory **CM**, negotiations about a different type of education **NE**, traditional values **TV**, patriarchy **P**, discipline **D**, producer issue **PI**, research issue **RI**, race **R**, class **C** and gender **G** as well as xenophobia **X**. Although these are not strictly intertextual references they were mapped for the purposes of providing a broader textual analysis.

I then attempt to find a framework within which to explain the broader universe within which the producers had formed their ideas around, for example, race, class and gender issues that also explained the world they were representing. Because at the time I was also seeing, within the text, that Yizo Yizo

contained so many references to violence, I tried to understand how it could come about that a 'reality' text could contain so much violence. The 'hierarchy of violences', in Chapter 3, attempts to analyse the language of violence in Yizo Yizo against a broader socio-political backdrop of violences present in current-day South Africa. The key factors here are the way violences reproduce themselves, work in cycles that link the past to the present, and take on new and increasingly complex forms. The hierarchy of violences I examine, and the symbols used to indicate where they have been spotted in the text are: political violence **PV**; the relations of abuse **SMV** and **Re** (to indicate 'respect'), sexual violence **SV** and also sexism **SX**, violence silence **VS**, dialogic violence **DV**, violence that is directed towards the self **SEV**, traumatic violence, revisited **TVR**, lifestyle violence', which links to consumption **LV** and **Co**, criminal violence **CV** and finally redemptive, retributive or restorative violence **RV**. Issues of self-esteem, not necessarily represented as violence but usually building towards violence towards the self, are identified as **SE**.

For the textual analysis in Chapter 4, I added indicators for adolescent sexuality **AS**, Aids **A**, humour **H**, identity **ID**, and youth culture **YC**, as well indicators for several motifs I saw recurring in the text. These are motifs for apples **M:a**, guns **M:g**, chickens **M:c**, dogs **M:g**, and Tiger or China balm **M:cb**.

The visual texts of Yizo Yizo 1 and Yizo Yizo 2 were then mapped, using these indicators. The focus was primarily on the images shown in the text—in order to register the messages being visually conveyed—in relation to the soundtrack and the interaction of these images with the spoken dialogue and sung or rapped music. Yizo Yizo's dialogue is delivered in a mixture of languages, mostly in relatively easy to follow street slang composed of elements of mainly Zulu and Sotho with words in English and Afrikaans but also incorporating more formal usage by adult characters. The use of short English subtitles makes it possible to follow parts of the dialogue that are beyond the reach of one's own language knowledge. It is clear that an approach that looked first at script and then at treatment might have rendered

different results. However, the project was always intended to explore, among other things, the way viewers construct meaning for themselves, as no text could possibly speak to two audience members in exactly the same way. This was the way I constructed meaning from the text.

In the initial mapping (not shown in this research because of its length), all the intertextual and critical categories were marked. Here is a short example taken randomly from YY1, Episode 3, Chapter 9, of what the text looked like after being mapped and how I arrived at those categories:

EXAMPLE

The schoolgirls get ready to play netball. Mantwa asks Hazel why she's so slow with Sonnyboy. "Taxi drivers have money", she says **(LV, Co, G as C)**. *Mantwa buys into the idea of having a male protector, or sugar daddy, with money to buy one 'things' even if he is known to be a person involved in lifestyle violence. 'G as C' refers to the way gender is negotiated as class. The man with money has a higher class status.* Nomsa complains about her tight skirt and is teased about being like Dolly Parton **(I:c, G)**. *Beyond the reference to once-chubby country singer Dolly Parton, there's an implicit understanding here that it is not acceptable for a girl to be overweight.* Although there's tension between Nomsa and Hazel, Hazel congratulates her on the way she spoke to Mthembu **(RI, NE, Re, I:PM, PI)**. *Challenging an abusive principal about the way he relates to his pupils appears to be part of the series' formal research mandate on educational issues. But Hazel admires Nomsa because Nomsa was forcing Mthembu to treat her with respect. The I:PM refers to the name 'Hazel' which also refers to a gang in the 1970s and was mentioned by Angus Gibson.* Thiza reads up on the Soweto uprising of 1976. We see a picture of Hector Peterson. **(I to both PM and PV)**. *This immediately links the abuse Nomsa challenged in the previous scene to the memory of earlier abuse when children challenged the system and lost their lives in the process.* Sticks tries to get Thiza interested in watching the netball game because Hazel's playing: "When did you last see a panty except in a magazine?" he asks. Thiza is furious **(AS vs SX, G, I: SX in magazines)**.

Sticks' comments sound like adolescent banter but at the heart of them is deep-seated sexism. Thiza doesn't objectify Hazel in this way. The intertextual reference is to the sexism contained within much advertising about women. Chester eats an apple (CV, M:a). Chester is the criminal archetype. His symbol is the apple. He notices Hazel. "Who's that young beauty?" he asks Papa Action. "That's Hazel, beauty of the earth, the morning star. She's yours, take her," Papa Action responds (SMV, G). Papa Action sees girls as objects who can simply be taken. The words 'she's yours, take her' underscore the relations of abuse that are for him the norm. Chester tries to take Hazel, but Sonnyboy steps in with a gun (LV, G, M:g). Sonnyboy is also involved with lifestyle violence and has the weapon to show it. He takes on Chester because he regards Hazel as his property. "Hey you shitty wise guy, take your dirty paws off my woman," he says (I:g as well as GC, M:d and G). "Shitty wise guy" refers to mob movies but at the same time we are witnessing township mobsters and the form of the scene works with the generic conventions of mob movies. "Dirty paws" suggests a dog, "my woman" references ownership in terms of gender. Chester in turn reaches for his gun (LV, M:g as with Sonnyboy above) as Sonnyboy pushes Hazel into the taxi. Thiza, Javas and Sticks come up. "They're jackrolling our women", they say (G, PM to SV). Jackrolling is a term for abducting schoolgirls to be gang-raped, a form of sexual violence prevalent in South Africa. "Our women" is a gendered statement implying ownership.

Because such an analysis was too bulky and detailed to contain within this research, it was divided into themes. Chapter 4 contains an analysis of YY in which references to criminal and lifestyle violence and consumption have been removed. This is in order to highlight the other violences that often come hand-in-hand with criminal violence or else go undetected because the eye has only been trained to see criminal violence¹.

¹ As evidence of the way we often see criminal violence before we see anything else, I refer once again to Mmabatho Ramagoshi's *City Press* column engaged with in the last pages of Chapter 8.

Chapter 5 uses all the references to criminal violence and redemptive violence and looks at the way archetypes make their appearance in YY. The idea here is to show archetypes as intertextual device and also to point to the patterns that have emerged in my analysis of the text. There is a play, throughout this chapter, on the term ‘transitional’ as meaning both a character who does not have a leading part and ‘transitional’ in the sense of moving from an apartheid to post-apartheid state.

Chapter 6 looks at the implications for youth culture of lifestyle violence and consumption in terms of representations in Yizo Yizo,

Finally, the markers (**AS**, **PM** and so on) were totted up and I counted the violences, memories, jokes, motifs intertextual references². These were sorted into lists, and then analysed. The findings follow.

Differences between YY1 and YY2

The lists clearly show a difference in approach to representing the subject matter of Yizo Yizo 1 and Yizo Yizo 2. It is obvious that this should happen since Angus Gibson was the main director on Yizo Yizo 1, while Teboho Mahlatsi (with Barry Berk a guest director for some of the episodes) was the main director on Yizo Yizo 2. The most obvious difference is that for Gibson, who came to prominence as a documentary film maker, the research theme, in other words *what this is about* (education) is primary—even though he stated in the interview that “the notion of education in TV doesn’t interest me”. Nevertheless, if one looks at the evidence, Gibson is the director who worked more systematically with the research mandate. It could be argued that Mahlatsi’s style of film making is a more popular one, since YY2 had nearly double the audiences of YY1, but then the engagement with educational issues is much less sustained. Mahlatsi’s preferred medium is fiction (the written word and feature movie), the primary issue is *how to tell the story in a way viewers will understand* (hence, the privileging of intertextual reference).

² See article on ‘The Man Who Counts the Killings’, www.theatlantic.com/issues/97/may/gerbner.htm

However, despite Mahlatsi's not taking on the educational issues as rigorously as Gibson, YY2 was considered more "solution-oriented" and "positive" than YY1, according to the YY2 evaluation reports. Furthermore, YY2 did not "glamourise" crime as did YY1 (Gultig 2002:87).

The following table—of the categories that were on the top 10 of the list of indicators once they were added up—should illustrate the differences in approach between YY1 and YY2 more clearly. The numbers in brackets in this table indicate the number of times the categories came up.

An analysis of the list, explaining the way in which some categories were grouped, and giving a further break down of these, follows the table.

Order/number of references	Yizo Yizo 1	Order/number of references	Yizo Yizo 2
1 (159)	Negotiations about a new type of education. NE, RI	1. (129)	Intertextual references including intertextual references to political memory. I refs including I:PM.
2. (133)	Traumatic memory revisited as well as dialogic violence and violence silence. TVR, VS, DV.	2. (105)	Lifestyle & criminal violence, sexual violence committed by LV characters and the relations of abuse. LV, CV, SV, SMV.
3. (116)	Lifestyle & criminal violence,	3. (96)	Traumatic memory revisited

	sexual violence committed by LV characters and the relations of abuse. LV, CV, SV, SMV.		as well as dialogic violence and violence silence TVR, VS, DV
4. (115)	Critical signifiers-class, race and gender. C, R, G.	4. (91)	Critical signifiers-class, race and gender. C, R, G.
5. (80)	Issues of self-esteem, respect, and violence towards the self. SE, Re, SEV.	5. (90)	Issues of self-esteem, respect including violence towards the self. SE, Re, SEV.
6. (72)	All intertextual references including those to political memory. I refs including those to I:PM.	6. (79)	Political memory including the memory of political violence not accessed by intertextuality. PM, PV.
7. (70)	Youth culture vs traditional values of 'the elders'. YC, TV, P.	7. (72)	Negotiations about a new type of education. NE, RI.
8. (67)	Political memory including the memory of political violence not accessed through intertextuality. PM, PV.	8. (63)	Consumption unlinked to images of violence. Co.

9. (56)	Adolescent sexuality. AS.	9. (53)	Youth culture vs. traditional values of 'the elders'. YC, TV, P.
10. (42)	Consumption unlinked to images of violence. Co.	10. (47)	Redemption themes. RV.

Some explanation is needed of the grouping of these categories (which enter YY3 too—although if YY3 were mapped it would probably include additional indicators about taking responsibility, being entrepreneurial and regaining self and community respect). To arrive at the figures of 159 'Negotiations about a new type of education' markers for YY1 and 79 markers for YY2, I added up the references not only for **NE** but also those that involved debates about discipline **D** within the context of the school and the research issues that seemed to speak from the text **RI**. At all times, these debates about education in the post-apartheid era must be read against the memory of the struggle against Bantu Education by not just learners but the broader community during the apartheid era.

The category of 'traumatic memory' is arrived at through the combinations of the number of times YY characters think back about a shooting they witnessed, or a rape or mugging of which they were the victim (**TVR**). This category also takes on board a few instances of violence silence and dialogic violence contained in each text. Another way of defining 'traumatic memory' is 'remembered abuse', and as such one has to again consider current wisdom that without intervention, the abused has to deal with recurring violent memory which, if it were to be acted out, might show its shape in an enactment of violence in some form. This presupposes that the characters who are the abusers in these programmes (for example, Elliot Khubeka, the teacher who has affairs with schoolgirls including KK, and the baddies Papa Action and Chester) have themselves suffered abuse in the past. In the case of Khubeka,

we witness him talking about the way he couldn't achieve his ambitions under apartheid. From Papa Action, we have memories of a neglected and poverty-driven childhood. We see Chester adapting to being 'the abused' in prison so easily in YY2 that it becomes clear this is not the first time he has had to position himself in this way in the abuse cycle.

'Criminal lifestyle' is calculated by combining the markers depicting first-hand criminal violence for the viewers **CV** with reference to the illegal actions of various characters in their quest to have the 'nice things', the clothes and cars, that the gangsters have. Accordingly, **LV** takes into account the representation of learners who offer to sell drugs (in order to gain a foothold into a world that appears more glamorous than their own). The category of **LV** also takes on board the comments by girl learners about how sexy and powerful the gangsters are, since these suggest these girl learners are prepared to trade sex in exchange for 'things' and protection from violence. Added to this are the instances of sexual violence by people involved in lifestyle violence.

'Critical signifiers', the fourth most important set of markers in both YY1 and YY2 combine the categories of class (**C**), race (**R**) and gender (**G**). It is useful here to break these categories down even further. In YY1 there are 42 class references, four race references and 69 gender references (of which 13 deal with negotiations about masculinity, and 56 with female identity or gender bias towards women). In YY2 there are 28 class references, ten race references and 53 gender references (of which 30 concern masculinity and 23 female identity or gender bias towards women). The implication is that for both Gibson and Mahlatsi the questions of sexuality—how one constructs oneself as a man, or how one constructs oneself as a woman—are worthy of deeper reflection than class or race issues. Because Mahlatsi has focussed more on the construction of male identity than female, it is pertinent to suggest that he is looking into the phenomenon of large-scale rape of women (a research issue for both YY1 and YY2) in a different way. Instead of looking simply at the way women are raped, and the traumatic consequences of rape, he has also tackled sodomy and appears to be putting forward ideas about why men

rape, how masculinity is linked alternatively to alienation and expressions of violence, and so on.

After gender, both Gibson and Mahlatsi clearly think class in post-apartheid South Africa is a bigger issue than race. The major 'class' arc comes through the dealings Supatsela has with a Model C school, first through debates, then through competing in a science competition, and finally through a love triangle between Javas, Thandeka (a snobbish Model C schoolgirl) and Thiza.

The fifth most important set of markers for both YY1 and YY2 deal with the category 'respect' (**Re**), self-esteem (**SE**) and violence towards the self. These markers have been placed into the analyses contained in Chapters 4 and 5 wherever characters demand respect (often through the barrel of a gun) or accuse others of undermining them. A large part of what constitutes 'respect' comes from the way pupils complain to each other about the way certain teachers speak to them—and teachers, in turn, complain about the way pupils speak to them. It comes up in the way figures of authority speak to ordinary people, the way gangster bosses speak to their minions, the way vigilante leaders speak to those they are accusing. The issues of self-esteem arise in similar situations, but also after incidents of severe trauma or abuse. They are given airings in discussions with older people, counsellors, the rape survivors' group or through the comments of boy learners about how small they feel in comparison to others (often because of their poverty). It was interesting for me to note that where both Gibson and Mahlatsi have made so little reference to race (**R**), they have made such a big deal about respect (**Re**) and self-esteem (**SE**). It occurred to me that **Re** and **SE** could be a telling of master-slave relationships and as such operate allegorically within Yizo Yizo as a substitute for the telling of the continued existence of racism, or the practices of racism, in all-black communities in post-apartheid South Africa. Looking at virtually every instance of **Re** and **SE**, one can trace the origins of this behaviour back to experiences related to **R** even if the **R** narratives are being jumped over. Why are they being jumped over? Because this is supposed to be a 'post-apartheid' drama, commissioned by the then Education Minister Kader Asmal, whose determination to bring a rainbow nation sensibility to the

terrain of education was every bit as vigorous as the efforts of Mandela on the broader reconciliation stage? It is hard to say.

As mentioned in the table above, YY2 depends much more heavily on intertextuality to tell its story than does YY1. Besides the use of archetypal characters (described in Chapter 5) the most frequent type of intertextuality used in YY2 is the naming of a celebrity (29 occasions), the allusion to a fictional character, mostly from the gangster genre (16), auto-citation (nine instances) or the reference to or use of a classic storyline or proverb (14 occasions). The assumption here is that the producers and directors of YY2 are depending upon these intertextual references to help viewers locate the context of the action and visuals in YY2. The use of intertextuality to cross-reference political memory texts is also used far more extensively in YY2.

Political memory (and not simply political memory texts accessed through regular intertextual referencing)—issue number 8 for YY1 and number 6 for YY2—is a huge issue for both seasons of Yizo Yizo. Like practically every one of the top ten categories that have emerged on the table above, it concerns the way in which the past remains in the present through constant reference to the way life under apartheid has affected certain characters, the way it has determined where and how they live, the way school issues are tackled in the post-apartheid era compared to how they were under apartheid, the on-going and relentless poverty to which the majority of the population are still exposed, and so on. There are numerous references to the 1976 and 1981 uprisings, to armed resistance, to self-defence units, to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) and to the climate of mistrust prevailing in the democratic era about ideology and loyalty in people's pasts. The Yizo Yizo text, in having characters say to, for example, the teacher Vuyani Novuka, 'don't bore us', 'don't depress us', suggests that the youth characters in representation are wanting to embrace a future without looking at what has been in their past. Yet we know from psychologists like N. Chabani Manganyi and from holocaust memory that it is not possible to move on without tackling the issues that caused the problems in the beginning. I will return to this point after completing an explanation of the top ten issues in YY1 and YY2.

It follows that the category of youth culture (vs. traditional values) dialectically pits as its thesis youth desire to have comfortable lives against the antithesis, different and harsher moral standards of their elders. The synthesis being offered appears to be the need for an acceptance of the lessons of political memory in the present.

Although adolescent sexuality is an evergreen issue, in YY it cannot escape from abusive dealings, mainly in men's relationships with women. Snowey, in telling Hazel about her first love, is also trying to confront her own past and the circumstances of the birth of her own baby through a relationship with a teacher. Thiza's teenage dreams about Hazel turn into rejection by her because she cannot incorporate intimacy into her life after her rape ordeal. Bobo fantasises about robot girls who can't speak because he is so poor and insecure he cannot imagine his love being reciprocated by anyone. KK, missing a father figure in her life, turns to an adult man who betrays her trust. Surprisingly, Aids—probably the greatest factor for youth sexuality in the past decade—does not make a big appearance until YY3, when Gunman discovers he has Aids and has to take the decision to 'live positively'. In YY1 there are a mere 10 references to it, while in YY2 there are only seven. Most of these come in the form of references to Bobo's mother dying of Aids (and hence providing backstory for his drug problem) or to the use of condoms.

Consumption statistics have been arrived at through combining the figures of the markers **Co**, which refer to the world of designer goods, cellphones, cars and things one needs money to buy, or if you are a girl learner, which a sugar daddy will buy for you. It includes references to drug or alcohol use, the food and rags-to-riches fantasies of Sticks and Bobo, and references to the Lotto, to indicate the only economy (luck) that will ever bring most of these characters face to face with what they desire. YY3 goes further with some of these ideas, spelling out in detail the nature of the trade required to put characters in touch with their dreams. All three seasons of Yizo Yizo make a clear link between consumption and celebrity culture.

The topic of ‘redemption’ on the Top Ten list of YY2 is interesting in that, although it is the major research issue (following the storm that followed YY1 for allowing a break and not showing the punishment and sentencing of the villains), it comes last on the list in terms of the number of times the indicators **RV, Red and RT** have come up. This is because Mahlatsi and Berks have used thriller techniques in telling the redemption stories. Papa Action’s redemption is twinned with Zakes’ decision to work with the cops to bring Bra Gibb to justice. The bravery of Mantwa and Nomsa in speaking out in court—at considerable personal odds—against Mantwa’s rape by Papa Action and Chester is twinned with the sodomy of Chester in prison.

Motifs (apples, guns, chickens, dogs, Tiger balm, cars) have been left out of the top ten table above. This is because while they help alert us to something going on in the text, they don’t easily fit into neat categories. While the 28 images of guns (or the use of fingers to indicate the pointing of a gun) in YY1 and the 11 references in YY2 should obviously be linked to the images of criminal violence and be counted in that fashion, they haven’t been. This is because they usually appear in combination with lifestyle violence or criminal violence, so to add them in would be to skew already counted references. The other motifs are more problematic. Tiger balm could be linked to sex or humour or both. Cockroaches could represent an abusive term and a real pest faced by people in overcrowded spaces, in which case it has a political reference point. Apples and chickens are by themselves representative of food, but used intertextually here they become terrifying reminders of, in the first case, the sinister twisting of the classic William Tell storyline, and in the second case, a link across several treatments in African Literature of schoolgirl rape. Nandos/Chicken Licken/Chicken Villages becomes the food the sugar daddy will buy the schoolgirl before he rapes her, or the food the schoolboys will sell drugs to get the money to buy. Cars are also complicated, because though my instinct would be to link them to **Co** (Consumption), at the same time they have something to do with adolescent male sexuality and seem in certain instances to be the preferred and silent partner for men. Dogs are a term of abuse, mostly used to describe or address gangsters.

My feeling is that the motifs should simply be read as additional indicators or signifiers for watching audiences. They often depend upon sounds (chicken, dogs), brands (grilled chickens, cars) or tastes and smells (apples, Tiger/China balm) which are easily understood by viewers.

Motifs also provide references that work in different ways for different audiences. Gibson has explained that Styles, in the 1950s movie that became a hit in Soweto, ate apples. This reference would be accessible to current learners' grandparents (in some cases parents) and older people with a memory of this movie, and simultaneously to movie buffs who watch old movies. The William Tell killing could be understood by anyone with a knowledge of the legend. Apples also refer to the Garden of Eden and original sin, so viewers brought up on that myth would get the reference too. Whatever way the apple is read, it can often be returned to innocence confronting unfair obstacles like temptation.

The way the apple is used as intertextual visual device is exactly the way all intertextuality is used within YY. It increases the possibility for viewer enjoyment by creating links with examples of music, food, brands and events known to sections of the viewer public.

Apparently the section of the viewer public YY reached with greater success was youth viewers. The fact that youth respondents in focus groups showed that they had understood the series was 'about the consequences of doing drugs and crime' is a major achievement. This is particularly so when the parents and teachers of those viewers often felt the programme was 'about drugs' and 'about crime', as reported earlier.

What is missing in Gultig's synthesis report is the suggestion that message reading appears to disintegrate at two ends of the youth market. Where older viewers often 'don't get it', nor can pre-teen viewers—and even some young adults, it seems—clearly distinguish between the descriptive and prescriptive aspects in representation of, for example, bullying. As we have seen from Sibusiso Bubesi's report on moral realignment based on re-enactment of

behaviour seen performed by Papa Action—like the ‘baptism in the name of Satan and Yizo Yizo’ by an 11-year old scholar—there can be problems if viewers translate a programme like this too literally.

Gultig, like several other commentators, suggested that SABC Education investigate Yizo Yizo ‘copycat’ behaviour more closely. Although Mahlatsi has passionately defended some of Yizo Yizo’s most controversial scenes, saying that such incidents informed the research for Yizo Yizo, the examples of moral realignment suggest that such extremes of violence are read differently by less visually evolved and younger viewers.

Yizo Yizo’s ‘producerly’ success must be looked at in terms of the way fan viewers spontaneously became producers themselves. We have seen, in Chapter 8, letters from fans suggesting that the producers have deviated from the storyline (CF Tlhabanelo, this research: 203). From the focus groups, we have heard how youth viewers wanted to see things that weren’t in the story—they wanted Lily to be a stronger woman, they wanted to see the condom Javas used.

Lotman (1990) cited in Chapter 1 has reminded us that no matter how real it looks, life in representation is always a construct. The uproar caused by Yizo Yizo detractors—particularly after the sodomy scene in YY2—read in combination with demands from fans to see the condom suggests that for viewers this *is* real, or in any case, it contains enough elements of the real to make viewers, and fans particular, feel that they have enough of a stake in the programme to make certain demands of their own. Gultig’s report (2002) even explains that focus group respondents preferred to watch story arcs that developed over several episodes like Mantwa’s reading struggle and the building of Javas’s go-kart, and they were quick to point out which storylines had not been resolved. They felt, for example, that Elliot’s affair with KK had not been satisfactorily dealt with. Although the affair was over and KK appeared to have learnt from her mistake, Elliot seemed to go unpunished for his behaviour.

Gibson has explained how the audience, at a public launch of Yizo Yizo, “just went crazy. Tebo came up to me and said: ‘Angus, we have made a monster.’ My friends who were present were completely disturbed by the event. For a long time they were saying: ‘Angus, take your excesses to other places, you cannot do this on educational TV.’ There was a sense of being irresponsible. But it was a first: catering for the lowest common denominator, going for the cheap thrill.” Gibson noted a difference in white and black audience response. He says:

There was particularly a kickback by black intellectuals. Tebo had become an outcast. Carlo Matabani invited him (Teboho Mahlatsi) home to his house when YY was on. He consciously didn’t mention it. [Director] Zola Maseko, quoted in the media, went on radio (slagging it off); Lebo [from SABC Education] talked about aberrant TV, not what we want black people to be. Tebo was seen as a frontman for a white conspiracy of a black image. There was an argument: that we were not showing white schools that were also dysfunctional. After all of this (criticism) Tebo didn’t have the heart to go on with Streetbash (Gibson 2002).

Mahlatsi, in Chapter 2, has expressed the way he dealt with the furious criticism he received from working on YY. When Portrait of a Young Man Drowning came out the *Sunday World* ran a big colour picture saying, ‘is this man Drowning?’ It called Portrait ‘hopeless’—until Mahlatsi won a Silver Lion award at Venice for the movie. Then *Sunday World* was singing his praises.

It could be suggested that Mahlatsi, who succeeded despite the hostility and jealousy he experienced from other members of the artistic community, was the one best poised, within the YY2 to write and tell the narratives of superheroes emerging from a poisonous environment, like Zakes, to save it.

In Chapters 1 and 3 I raised certain debates about Third Cinema and said I would return to them here. It seems that the major reason Mahlatsi and Gibson would not readily cite Third Cinema theory as an influence has to do

with historicity. Third Cinema theory is time-specific and needs to be expanded and transcended in the way recent film making, particularly from South Africa, has shown is possible. Nearly two decades ago, Julianne Burton detected “a pause, a plateau” in “both the film movements of the Third World and the theoretical-critical articulations of the developed sector” (Burton 1985:6)³. In 2005, it seems—if Yizo Yizo is an example of the sophisticated fare on offer—that the film movement in South Africa is advancing in leaps and bounds while marginal cinema theory is not. In further examples to illustrate this statement, I cite the success of Darrel Roodt’s Yesterday (2004) and Rehad Desai’s Born into Struggle (2004). Yesterday, a low-budget Zulu film produced by Anant Singh and Helena Spring is about Aids and women in the rural areas where waiting is an enforced way of life. It has picked up the Human Rights Award at the Venice Film Festival and is now South Africa’s official entry in the foreign film category for the 2005 Oscar ceremony. Born into Struggle, a feature-length documentary looking at the painful personal costs to the family of activist Barney Desai of the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) and executive produced by Bhekizizwe Peterson has won the award for the audience vote from three international film festivals.

In a critique of Teshome Gabriel’s Third Cinema in the Third World: The Aesthetics of Liberation (1982), Burton argues that the failure to explore the potential applications of mainstream critical theory to the oppositional cinemas of the Third World effectively creates a defensive attitude on the part of marginal cinema producers as well as the containment of criticism within a liberal discourse by Third Cinema advocates. I quote her at some length because her views are pertinent to the debate opened in Chapter 1 not only about Yizo Yizo but much of African popular culture. Burton writes:

Promotion and defence of Third World film practice in the dominant sector has generally been undertaken in terms of traditionally hegemonic critical discourse (liberal humanism) rather than in terms of what were initially more marginal, oppositional critical discourses (film-

³ Julianne Burton, ‘Marginal Cinemas’ in *Screen*, Vol 26, Part 3-4, May-August 1985.

as-ideology and cine-semiotics). Critics of Third World cinema who operate in a First World context have been motivated by a contradictory impulse to win recognition for their object of study within the very institutions which also serve to endorse and perpetuate dominant, colonising, hierarchical cinematic discourses...

The question of ideological identifications and allegiances also figures prominently here. A sense of solidarity with movements promoting greater political and cultural autonomy in the Third World has restrained many critics from undertaking a rigorous examination of the ideological contradictions lodged in the films and movements for which they seek recognition (Burton 1985:5).

My understanding of the term 'Third Cinema' is that it exists in opposition to First Cinema—the dominant, mainstream film industry—and to Second Cinema—the privileged independent avant-garde movement—as historical necessity. Neither the slick formulaic film makers of Hollywood nor the bourgeois makers of "art" movies can be expected to understand, let alone represent, the realities of the developing world. Yet the bulk of the world *is* the developing world. However, Burton's argument that marginal cinema—she cautiously refers to 'Third World cinema' rather than Third Cinema and says this is because the *event* of Third World cinema preceded the *term* Third Cinema by many years—should not be treated with kid gloves is valid. She correctly criticises the way in which theory about cinema from the developing world has to emanate from "the properly sensitised viewer" with specific views about "ideological transparency" and "unity of meaning" (Burton 1985:7-8). She writes at length about the way "the contradictions within the texts themselves and within and between the film movements which produce these texts" are overlooked by zealous advocates of Third Cinema (Burton 1985: 9).

There would have been many who would have dismissed Burton's comments in 1985 as reactionary. This is because they were delivered within a period in which Third Cinema was still defining itself. Yet in 2005, her comments are appropriate and read objectively, seem to be ahead of their day. How is this possible? The answer lies in remembering the past. What was, what was

suppressed or silenced, what was needed to break the silence so that the disallowed could speak and develop. A parallel could be drawn with the hotly debated practice of affirmative action for black people, disabled people, and women in South Africa, parts of the developing world and certain institutions in the developed world. Without affirmative action in a country like South Africa, there would be a continuation of white domination in a post-apartheid country. Even with affirmative action this is the case, in terms of the real economy of the country. But at which point affirmative action starts to re-create the very damage it was intended to eradicate is hard to gauge. Should it be phased out after fifteen years or fifty? At a particular point, *if* all things are equal—if there is equal access to education and opportunity—affirmative action should cease to have meaning in a country like South Africa. Beyond the point where there is equal access for all races, both genders and able-bodied and disabled people, affirmative action could be seen to be on a footing with apartheid legislation known as Job Reservation that granted jobs and training opportunities to white workers rather than blacks. However, *until* the time the barriers to learning and training have been entirely broken down, there is a need to ensure that anyone who has been historically disadvantaged by apartheid can access education and jobs. And at the same time, it is necessary to ensure that whatever transpires in the name of learning and training is based on best practices. Achievement, brilliance, is not suspended because a country is simultaneously implementing affirmative action policies. The rest of the world might be holding its breath waiting to see if South Africa turns itself around, after apartheid. This does not mean that in the meantime individual South Africans should not be achieving extraordinary things by the standards of both the developed and the developing world.

There were doubtless similar historic reasons for the careful handling of the theorisation of Third Cinema, notwithstanding the fact that it might well have been a hot potato for liberal academics as suggested by Burton. How could—how can?—Third Cinema hope to compete against the technology, resources and budgets of the developed world? Where it could compete, and often has, is in its ability to bring a new way of seeing to the screen.

And a two-decade “plateau” with regard to theory does not mean that Third Cinema has not developed its own shining stars, regardless of whether they are tested against the standards of First, Second or Third Cinema. Furthermore, in a project such as Yizo Yizo there has been so much dialogue with all three that it is understandable the producers do not identify their product as Third Cinema. Possibly just as the elite genres in Africa decide on what their “fourth” phase will be, we are witnessing the birth of a synthesistic fourth cinema. This is not to say the synthesis perfectly settles every aspect of the contradictory debates it comes to represent. For example, after noting that Yizo Yizo depicts first the perpetrator’s point of view and then that of the victim in certain violent scenes of violence, I recognise there might be a better way of telling these stories in a way that privileges neither the perpetrator nor the victim. For example, in the rape of Dudu by Chester and Papa Action, how would the tension of the scene have been affected if both the viewpoint of the rapists and Dudu’s viewpoint were presented simultaneously? Similarly, in the scene where Papa Action and his henchmen duck Bobo’s head into the toilet, would the scene have lost the “elegance” described earlier by Mahlatsi if it had incorporated Bobo’s sense of fear? Possibly asking for the sense of synthesis to be developed further is quibbling, when a project has attempted to bring on board so much.

In the case of Yizo Yizo, the film makers have used intertextuality to work with the socio-economic reality and fragmented memory of post-apartheid (and the African post-colonial world). They have used the “already said” to tell violence in a hard-hitting way; taken on both local research and narrative device used in the dominant Hollywood industry *and* filmic techniques from the auteur-driven movement of independent cinema. And they have managed to do this within the language, humour and style of the core audience bringing simultaneously, a fresh perspective to developmental cinema while engaging seriously with dominant cinema forms.

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Films

(arranged alphabetically by title rather than by director since films are more frequently known by their titles than by their directors).

The American Friend (1977). Director: Wim Wenders.
American History X (1998) Director: Tony Kaye.
Annie Hall (1977). Director: Woody Allen.
Apocalypse Now (1979). Director: Francis Ford Coppola.
Ashes of Time (1994). Director: Wong Kar-Wai.
The Bad and the Beautiful (1952). Director: Vincente Minnelli.
Before Night Falls (2000). Director: Julian Schnabel.
The Blair Witch Project (1999). Directors: Daniel Myrick and Eduardo Sánchez
Blazing Saddles (1974). Director: Mel Brooks.
Blue Velvet (1986). Director: David Lynch.
Born into Struggle (2004). Director: Rehad Desai.
Bridget Jones's Diary (2001). Director: Sharon Maguire.
Cabaret (1972). Director: Bob Fosse.
Chinatown (1974). Director: Roman Polanski.
Chungking Express (1994). Director: Wong Kar-Wai
Cosi (1996). Director: Mark Joffe.
Close Encounters of the Third Kind (1977). Director: Steven Spielberg.
The Conformist (1971). Director: Bernardo Bertolucci.
The Cradle Will Rock (1999). Director: Tim Robbins.
The Criminal Code (1931). Director: Howard Hawks.
Dead Men Don't Wear Plaid (1982). Director: Carl Reiner.
Deliverance (1972). Director: John Boorman.
E.T. The Extra-Terrestrial (1982). Director: Steven Spielberg.
Fools (1997). Director: Ramadan Suleman.
Gentlemen Prefer Blondes (1953). Director: Howard Hawks.
Ghetto Diaries (1996). Director: Teboho Mahlatsi.
Godzilla (1998). Director: Roland Emmerich.
The Godfather (1972). Director: Francis Ford Coppola.
Grease (1978). Director: Randal Kleiser.
Happy Together (1997). Director: Wong Kar-Wai.
La Haine (The Hate) (1995). Director: Matthew Kassovitz.
High Anxiety (1977). Director: Mel Brooks.
The Killing Fields (1984). Director: Roland Joffe.
King Lear (1987). Director: Jean-Luc Godard.
The Kiss of the Spider Woman (1984). Director: Hector Babenco.
Three Colours: Blue (1993) Director: Krzysztof Kieslowski.
Throne of Blood (1957). Director: Akira Kurosawa.
Two Weeks in Another Town (1962). Director: Vincente Minnelli.
Looking for Richard (1996). Director: Al Pacino.
Macbeth (1971). Director: Roman Polanski.

The Magic Flute (1974). Director: Ingmar Bergman.
Mapantsula (1991). Director: Oliver Schmitz.
The Man Who Knew Too Much (1934 & remake 1956). Director: Alfred Hitchcock.
Mandela: Son of Africa, Father of a Nation. Directors: Angus Gibson, Joe Menel.
Manhattan (1979). Director: Woody Allen.
A Married Woman (1965). Director: Jean-Luc Godard.
The Matrix (1999). Directors: Andy Wachowski and Larry Wachowski.
My Uncle the American (1980, *Mon Oncle d'Amerique*). Director: Alain Resnais.
Nashville (1975). Director: Robert Altman. Also see www.selu.edu/kslu/nashville.html
Night and Fog (1955) *Nuit et Brouillard*). Director: Alain Resnais.
The Player (1992). Director: Robert Altman.
Portrait of a Young Man Drowning (1998) Director: Teboho Mahlatsi.
Prospero's Books (1991). Director: Peter Greenaway
Schindler's List (1993) Director: Steven Spielberg
The Silence of the Lambs (1991). Director: Jonathan Demme.
Silent Movie (1976). Director: Mel Brooks.
The Tailor of Panama (2001). Director: John Boorman.
Targets (1968). Director: Peter Bogdanovich.
Thelma and Louise (1991). Director: Ridley Scott.
Throne of Blood (1957). Director: Akira Kurosawa.
Titanic (1997). Director: James Cameron.
Two Weeks in Another Town (1962). Director: Vincente Minnelli.
Vanya on 42nd Street (1994). Director: Louis Malle.
Women in Love (1970). Director: Ken Russell
The World of Apu (1959). Director: Satyajit Ray.
Yesterday (2004). Director: Darrel Roodt.
Young Frankenstein (1974). Director: Mel Brooks.
Zelig (1983). Director: Woody Allen.

TV Series

(Arranged by title and creators rather than directors since directors change from season to season on the long-running series).

Ally McBeal (1997). Created by David E Kelley.
Backstage (2001). Created by Mfundi Vundla.
Big Brother (2001) and Big Brother Africa (2003). Mnet, adapted rights.
The Bold and the Beautiful (1987). Created by William J. Bell and Lee Phillip Bell.
The Beauty and the Beast (1991). Created by Gary Trousdale and Kirk Wise
Blake's 7 (1977). Created by Terry Nation.
Brookside (1982). Created by Phil Redmond.
Buffy the Vampire Slayer (1997). Created by Joss Wheldon.
Cagney and Lacey (1982). Created by Barbara Corday and Barbara Avedon.
Charlie's Angels (1976). Created by Ivan Goff and Ben Roberts.

Cheers (1982). Created by Glen Charles, James Burrows and Les Charles.
Coronation Street (1960). Created by Tony Warren.
Days of our Lives (1965). Created by Betty and Ted Corday.
EGoli (1991). Created by Franz Marx.
The Ellen Show (2003). Created by Ellen Degeneres.
Felicia (1992). Created by Felicia Mabuza-Suttle.
Fraggle Rock (1983). Created by Jim Henson Productions.
Ga'zlam (2003). Created by Barry Berk and Ochre Productions.
The Geena Davis Show (2000). Created by Terry Minsky.
Generations (1993). Created by Mfundi Vundla.
Great South Africans (2004). Adapted from the BBC.
Hill Street Blues (1981). Created by Steven Bocho and Michael Kozoll.
Homicide, Life on the Streets (1993). Created by Paul Attanasio
Idols (2002). Mnet, adapted from ITV's Pop Idol created by Simon Fuller.
Isidingo (1998). Created by Gray Hofmeyr.
Kojak (1973). Created by Abby Mann
Madam and Eve (2000). Based on the comic strip created by S Francis, H Dugmore and Rico, directed by Mark Graham.
MacMillan and Wife (1971). Created by Steven Bocho.
Magnum, PI (1980). Created by Donald P. Bellisario and Glen A. Larsons.
The Man from UNCLE (1964). Created by Norman Felton.
Miami Vice (1984). Created by Anthony Yerkovich.
Next of Kin (1995). Created by Mark Lewisohn.
Northern Exposure (1990). Created by Joshua Brand and John Falsey.
NYPD Blue (1993). Created by Steven Bocho and David Milch.
Oprah (1986). Created by Oprah Winfrey.
Phat Joe Live (2000). Created by Joe Khambule.
Popstars (2003). SABC-TV adapted from ITV's Pop Stars
Prisoner: Cell Block H (). Created by
The Professionals (1977). Created by Brian Clemens.
Quantum Leap (1989). Created by Donald P. Bellisario.
Profiler (1996). Created by Cynthia Saunders.
The Rockford Files (1974). Created by Stephen J. Cannell.
Scarecrow and Mrs King (1983). Created by Brad Buckner and Eugenie Ross-Leming.
Sesame Street (1969). Created by Jim Henson.
The Simpsons (1987). Created by Matt Groening.
The Sopranos (1999). Created by David Chase.
Star Trek (1966). Created by Gene Roddenberry.
Starsky and Hutch (1975). Created by William Blinn.
Tsha Tsha Tsha (2003). Created by David Jammy and Harriet Gavshon of Curious Pictures.
Twin Peaks (1990). Created by Mark Frost.
Whose Line is it Anyway? (1998). Created by Dan Patterson and Mark Leveson.

Music, Performance and the Spoken Word: Records, CDs & Videos

Carey, Mariah (1995) You'll Always Be My Baby from the album Daydream, Columbia Records.

Chapman, Tracy (1987). Fast Car, from the album Tracy Chapman, Elektra Records.

Fassie, Brenda (1983, rerecorded 2004) Weekend Special from the album Brenda Fassie Greatest Hits, Virgin Records.

Flack, Roberta (1973) Killing Me Softly (With His Song). From the album Killing Me Softly, Atlantic Records.

Madonna (1984) Material Girl, from the album Like a Virgin, Warner Brothers Records.

_____ (1986) the album True Blue, Sire Records.

Marley, Bob (1980). Redemption Songs from the album Uprising, Island Records.

Talking Heads (1985). Road to Nowhere, from the album Little Creatures, Warner Brothers.

Music quoted from the Yizo Yizo original soundtracks (all titles produced by CCP/EMI/The Bomb)

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Appendix 1

Yizo Yizo 3

Universe, Themes and Messages as at 12/4/02

The setting for Yizo 3 will not be Supatsela High. **The story will follow our central characters on their journey – after matric as they step out into the world.**

The new series will represent post-school youth who have moved to the city and are struggling with a 'wider' world. Our characters leave school, home, their families and the familiar world of the township to face new adventures in the city. The institutions of the school and prison have been replaced with a building in the city to which our characters gravitate. The building draws our characters together in the same way as the school provided a focal point for the community of Supatsela.

Yizo 3 will be written episodically to focus on a character/s, their journeys, dilemmas, crisis and resolution, but will have a 3-act structure. The 3 acts will be:

1. Leaving the township
2. Conflict in the building
3. Resolution of crisis

The story of the move to the building mirrors the journey of our characters own lives. It is a key moment for them as they drift away from the world they know into the unknown. A group of people starting out in search of a place to live, meaningful careers and a way to earn enough to survive. This journey is also a personal one as they move from their teenage years into adulthood. Being adrift, far from parental eyes is both daunting and exciting.

It is a coming-of-age story, of transition and change as our characters move from being teenagers to adulthood in search of meaning, identity, security, love, adventure and purpose in their lives.

Yizo Yizo uses powerful and dramatic stories to draw audiences in—to watch, think, feel, debate, talk and reflect on their own humanity, actions and behaviour. Authentic and complex characters reflect the real issues and challenges that young people face and model new ways to solve problems and effect social change.



*“ The evaluation suggests that Yizo Yizo 2 succeeded in evoking the world and dilemmas of young people very powerfully and that young people who watched the series demonstrated a sophisticated reading of its messages”
(Yizo Yizo 2: The Evaluation of its impact on Viewers. SABC Education 2002.pg 19)*

Themes and messages

1. Leaving school

1. After school it is important to take responsibility for your life and develop lifeskills.
2. Self-affirmation is the most important recognition to seek. Believe in yourself and you can overcome obstacles.
3. A loss of structure and coping with new challenges is not always easy. Draw on support from adults and friends.

2. Sexuality and identity

1. No one has the right to abuse or hurt women and children
2. It takes courage to come out and tell people you are gay. Gay and lesbian people deserve to be treated just like everyone else.
3. It is normal to be confused and unsure about your sexuality when you are 18. You have a right to enjoy your sexual life.

3. Work and further education

1. Education does not stop after school.
2. Unemployment has devastating social and personal consequences. Young people need to create their own opportunities.
3. Success is not only about material gain. It is also about personal growth and fulfillment.

4. Crime

1. There is a moral grey area around right and wrong. The desire for material goods never justifies crime.
2. If you stand together it is easier to break the silence on crime.

5. Community renewal and support

1. Co-operation provides better solutions for solving problems than conflict.
2. It's hard to survive alone in the city. Working together can improve the quality of life.



3. Xenophobia and racism is wrong. We may not share the beliefs and values of other communities, but we must respect their views and ideas.
4. Culturally diverse communities provide rich opportunities for growth.

RESEARCH BACKGROUND

Our themes and messages have been arrived at through an initial research phase. To date we have:

- Done a pre research scan & literature review (Youth in the City)
- Consulted with experts (approximately 11)
- Conducted in-depth interviews with 36 key informants
- Been on site visits and engaged in participant observations

Key organisations that we have already consulted include:

Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation
Childline
Child Protection Unit
cietAfrica
Community Health Centre
Dance Factory
Johannesburg Development Association
Joint Enrichment Project
Reproductive Health Research Unit
Roll Back Xenophobia Campaign

1. Leaving school

Background research

According to our literature review only 5% of matriculants will get jobs. The remaining 95% face enormous challenges in terms of sheer survival because they will not find formal employment. Life skills (learning to cope with aspects of life, from opening a bank account, writing a CV, learning to operate a computer and so on) are as essential to coping in the world as is the belief in oneself.



The Joint Enrichment Project (JEP) has been one of the important organisations we have consulted with. We conducted interviews with key members of the organisation and had a focused discussion with 10 youth involved in one of their programmes. JEP's intervention programme targets school leavers 'at risk' and provides them with training in their areas of interest as well as in lifeskills.

Additional qualitative research currently being set up includes:

1. Two focus groups, one with young men who have been out of school for one year, and one with young women. These research groups will investigate the challenges faced by school leavers and ways in which problems have been overcome.
2. In addition we are considering a one-day interactive online discussion with matriculants, school leavers and first-year students about the gap between expectation and actual experience. This would be set up through schools, universities, technikons and internet cafes.

2. Sexuality and identity

Research background on abuse. The prevalence of abuse of women and children, many of whom will go on to become abusers themselves, has been identified in a number of key research studies, e.g. cietAfrica, CSVr and Soul City. Two key informants who provided important insights include:

- (a) Childline Director Lynn Cawood, whose offices receive 3 000 calls a day from abused children.
- (b) The Child Protection Unit's Cpt Annamarie Potgieter who deals with both abuse of children and child (i.e. under 18) prostitutes. According to Potgieter, prostitution is an enormous issue in the city and it cuts through all races equally.

Further research currently being set up includes:



1. Focus groups with young people to research dominant values, attitudes and behaviour around sexuality among the 18 – 22 target group.

2. Set up through Cpt Potgieter a focus group with young prostitutes. In addition, we will be meeting with key organisations like POWA.

Gay issues. We are in the process of identifying experts to consult and are undertaking a review of the literature. A key organisation identified so far is Gasa (Gay and Lesbian Association of South Africa).

Living positively... There are a number of organisations as well as an extensive body of research around care and support of people living with AIDS. We are currently collecting all available literature. A key organisation in terms of inner-city support for youth living with HIV/Aids, which we have identified, is the Community Health Centre in Hillbrow. Meetings with Jabu Tshabalala as well as site visits and participant observations are being planned.

Safe abortions. Initial research indicates that this is a crucial moral issue facing young women. We have met with Luyanda Mavuya of the Reproductive Health Research Unit, in Hillbrow. We are planning a follow-up meeting with inner-city midwives to look into the issue further.

3. Work and further education

Education. Our initial research shows that between 7-14% of school leavers will continue with some form of tertiary education, which is under-budgeted and under-provided. Our message, 'Education does not stop when you leave school' will be explored through tertiary education itself as well as with the need for 'bridging classes' and 'entrepreneurship'. The former straddles the gap separating the youth from tertiary education; the latter is the way 95% will earn a living.

'Big-picture' research has been conducted into both bridging classes and entrepreneurship and the team is now seeking more in-depth information. The first round of interviews with 10 child entrepreneurs linked to JEP and with three interns and one graduate of the Dance Factory in Newtown have already taken place.

Further research: In-depth interviews with members of the Academic Support Programme and Star Schools will be conducted about bridging programmes;



there will be visits to some bridging projects; a focus group of first-year students will be established to research issues which students at tertiary institutions face. .

Unemployment. According to Statistics South Africa (1999) there were 5.9 million unemployed people in South Africa and those mainly affected were black youths aged 15-29. Entrepreneurship (see the paragraph above) is one of the solutions Yizo Yizo 3 will explore.

Further research on unemployment (including focus groups with unemployed youth) needs to be conducted.

Personal growth. Not simply being attached to a 'piece of paper'—the certificate to say one has completed a course or a degree—but enjoying learning because it expands one's world is a concept Yizo Yizo 3 will strive to convey. Explorations of the cultural quests, the spaces, noises, silences and dialogues of inner-city communities will be central to this aspect of the theme.

4. Crime

Part of the difficulty of taking a stance against crime is identifying the ways it creeps up: buying the stolen cellphone for R50 is one example. A second difficulty is the perception that the police themselves are rotten and corrupt.

It is envisaged that Yizo Yizo 3 will work closely with the Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation (CSVR), which is running several projects dealing with youth and crime and on police corruption. The key players at CSVR here include:

Youth

- Bheki Zulu and Dorothy Mdluli of the 40 Schools Project
- Yvette Geyer, who is embarking upon a study of youth and crime.

Corruption

- Gareth Newham, who has made a study on the police in Hillbrow;
- David Bruce, who has made a study on forms police corruption takes.

In addition, we will work closely with a policeman Willem de Villiers, with whom we worked in Yizo 2. He has a million tales of the ugly underbelly of the city.

5. Community renewal and support



Background to issues in the inner city and attempts to redevelop the area have been provided by Clive Cope, who previously worked on the 7-Buildings Project. Two site visits and participant observations to various buildings and inner-city squats and a Hillbrow boxing gym have already been conducted.

In addition we have identified a number of other key people involved in inner city development to consult including

- Urbanist Lindsey Bremner, who has been involved with inner-city developments both as a former ANC city councilor responsible for the inner city and later as an academic (Dean of Architecture, Wits University) focusing on urban renewal;
- Sociologists Taffy Adler and Georgina Jaffee who have both worked with tenants' associations;
- Office bearers and members of inner-city tenants' associations engaged in attempts to resist evictions, raids and so on. We have found two groups of tenants in an abandoned building to interview, to explore the issues confronting people living in abandoned city buildings:
 - a. Sipco Ntuli, an active member of a tenants' association, has convened the group in Hillbrow, representing blocks of flats in Twist, Peterson and Van der Merwe streets.
 - b. The groups in downtown Johannesburg and Joubert Park will be convened by Isaac Marapane and Edmond Moagi, who have been engaged with tenants in a battle against a corrupt absentee landlord in a block called Windsor Gardens.

Individuals from the two groups will be convened into a single focus group to provide evidence regarding issues affecting flat dwellers in the inner city.

We have also met with:

- Tshepo Nkosi, PRO of Johannesburg Development Agency chief Graeme Reid.
- Anthony Philbrick, an architect based in Newtown.

Xenophobia and racism, intolerance of 'otherness' are ugly city realities that we need to tackle. The Racism conference highlighted much of the available



research. In the next phase of research we will conduct focus groups around this issue and work with organisations like the Roll Back Xenophobia Campaign.