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#FeesMustFall at Wits: A discourse analysis of the #FeesMustFall movement at the University of the Witwatersrand in October 2015

By

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A Master's Research Essay submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Arts (Masters) in Linguistics

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this research is my own unsupported work that is being submitted to the degree of Master of Arts at The University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been previously submitted, whole or in part, for any degree or examination at any other university.

_____

(Signature of Candidate)

_____ day of _____ (year)_____

_____

ABSTRACT

This paper applies a Critical Discourse Analysis to texts that were produced in October 2015 during the #FeesMustFall protests against rising University tuition fees; in particular, documentation produced by or about the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits). The data consisted of a sample corpus of mainstream South African newspapers, email statements sent out by Wits Management during the course of the protest, the Wits Workers Solidarity Committee (WWSC) blog, a pamphlet from protesters and author-taken photographs of the campus during its occupation, which were considered from the perspective of Geosemiotics research into space, place and ideology. The analysis of discourse, ideology and identity revealed both intersections and diversions between these different texts, and presented the protest as an untenable conflict between the protesters, the university, and the government. Media coverage tended to adopt the tropes of 'War Journalism' as a reporting style (Galtung, 2000; Lynch & Galtung, 2010; Duncan, 2014; Rodny-Gumede, 2016), though the marginalising effect of this style was mitigated by offering a more significant voice to protesters in the discourse – contrasting with previous examples of South African media's reporting on working-class protests, namely the Marikana Massacre (Duncan, 2014). Official bodies such as Wits and the Government deflected accountability and managed their public images by signalling sympathy for the protesters. The #FeesMustFall narrative also drew from a pool of discourses rooted in South African history, especially anti-Apartheid activism, indicating a desire by protesters to follow in a 'legacy' of social change, especially in order to decolonise Higher Education and challenge 'Rainbowist' ideology in South Africa.

Key words: *CDA, MDA, geosemiotics, protest, higher education, media, South Africa, #FeesMustFall*

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

After the official fall of Apartheid in 1994, the 'New South Africa' enjoyed the spit-shine of a brand new democracy. A new generation of people were born in a free, desegregated society that now sported one of the most progressive Constitutions in the world – many were hopeful that these 'born-frees' would both build and enjoy a transformed society and a future that was vastly different from the strife of their predecessors' past. Instead, the born-frees have come to hoist the banners of protest once again, and begun to purposefully uncover long-buried causes of unrest in South Africa: endemic poverty, slow racial transformation in education and the workplace, and insidious forms of white supremacy that remain rooted in the systems that govern society at large. In the wake of the University of Cape Town's iconoclastic #RhodesMustFall movement – one that called for, and succeeded in, the removal of a statue of colonial figure Cecil John Rhodes - South African university students turned a critical eye to the tertiary education sector as a whole. The spirit of decolonisation present among protesters in Cape Town manifested itself once again on the 14th of October 2015, when students of the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits) shut down the university in protest of annual tuition fee increases. This launched a nationwide protest dubbed #FeesMustFall (henceforth #FMF) that continued well into February of 2016. The most significant victory for the protesters was the proposed 10.5% fee increase being whittled down to 0% - this being announced by the president of South Africa on the 23rd of October 2015, after the movement culminated in students from various universities amassing in front of the parliamentary buildings in Pretoria. The #FMF protest, spanning several tumultuous weeks, was a prominent talking point in the media and on social networks. The scale and

duration of the protest was unprecedented in South Africa's higher education sector, and though its primary goal was to lower tuition fees, the protest intersected with several other issues; this includes the outsourcing of workers at universities, the lack of accessibility of universities to poor students, the hierarchical nature of university management, and curriculums founded in colonial thought and knowledge systems. As such, #FMF spotlighted several concerns plaguing university-going South Africans that had been obscured under the persistent rhetoric of "The Rainbow Nation" – an ideal that imagined a multiracial, multicultural society that had transcended the inequalities of the past. This is not a unique phenomenon and certainly not new in the African context, where many issues resulting from colonization have remained unresolved; other student protests across south Africa have shown "Universities [become] the sites where broader socio-political grievances were projected and transferred into more precise localized calls for transformation of educational institutions" (Hewlett, Mukadah, Kouakou & Zandamela, 2016, p. 155). At Wits, the first act of defiance was the occupation of the administration building at Wits, and a complete shut-down of the University's activities – lectures were disrupted and students and staff were blocked from exiting or entering the main campus. As the protests continued, protest practices such as occupations, mass meetings, marches and the singing of protest songs began to characterize the movement as well. This paper looks at the #FMF movement at Wits, from the first occupation of the university's administration building, Senate House[1], to the gathering at the Union Buildings on the 23rd of October, where a zero percent fee increase was announced. I analyse the protesters' semiotic practices, as well as representations of the

[1] The 2015 protests succeeded in getting Senate House renamed to Solomon Mahlangu House, after an anti-Apartheid activist who was sentenced to death by the Apartheid government for treason.

protests by media outlets and the university's higher management. From this, one can better understand what ideologies informed the actors involved, and how their actions were perceived by and represented in various forms of documentation. In addition to examining what discourses and ideologies are present in texts produced during a student protest, this paper also asks, from a Geosemiotic perspective, how protesters transform a familiar site into an arena for protest. The microcosmic nature of large university campuses allow room for multiple ideologies, identities and discourses to be layered during any given social gathering, with these identities hinging around factors such as age, race, class and cultural context. This paper draws from the fields of Critical Discourse Analysis and Geosemiotics to explore the identity, development and representation of #FMF at Wits, through the analysis of various types of texts: written, photographic and spatial from a variety of publically-available sources and the author's personal photographs - this will be elaborated on in further detail in Chapter Three. From this, this paper aims to contribute to an understanding of what discursive resources are accessed in order to assert or challenge the identities and representations that came out of #FeesMustFall 2015.

Protest in South Africa – Historical Background

More than two decades on from the end of Apartheid, South African governance continues to grapple with social ills left unresolved in the 'New South Africa': although racial segregation was formally abolished and the constitution rewritten to enshrine values of social and economy equality, the *de facto* societal conditions continue to spawn unrest in the public. Protests, strikes and demonstrations have become affixed to the social landscape of South Africa, with contemporary protest practices even mirroring those of the Apartheid era

(Stroud, 2016). From the 1960s onwards, protests against the Apartheid regime became more frequent and more deadly – in particular, the Soweto Uprising on June 16th, 1976, saw hundreds of Black high school students killed and injured by police during a protest against the Bantu Education system[2]. The young age of those killed places a particular weight on this moment in history and was likely the reason it returned to the forefront of youth consciousness during #FMF. Despite student protests having been around since 1994, they did not receive the spotlight in national reporting that #FMF did; this is likely due to factors such as size and scope of those protests, as well as the prestige of the Universities involved. Wits, the University of Cape Town (UCT) and Rhodes University are considered to be the country's 'elite' universities, with greater resources and enrolment numbers – this, however, can be attributed to their status as historically white institutions. Prior to the decline of Apartheid, most of South Africa's oldest-established universities greatly restricted enrolment from non-white students; since then, access has been opened and certain

[2] The Afrikaans Medium Decree of 1974, which fell under the Bantu Education Act, required that all Black schools enforce exclusively English and Afrikaans as media of instruction.

transformation measures have been implemented to redress the resulting racial imbalance, such as race quotas in enrolment and higher grades required from white applicants. Even with these measures in place, however, the underlying economic conditions that entrenched Black poverty were not so easily overhauled, as the post-Apartheid government did not apply the same transformative rigor to the country's economy (Duncan, 2014). In order to ensure economic stability and growth after a drastic political change, major corporations owned mainly by white business were allowed to continue their operations largely unaffected. This resulted in neoliberalism becoming the dominant ideology behind South Africa's economy, and socio-economic inequality remaining unaddressed in the decades that followed 1994. Poverty, unemployment, poor service delivery and sub-par primary and secondary education are not being efficiently alleviated and the cycle of poverty continues



Figure A: Photo taken at the University of Cape Town's 2015 protests. Credit: Imraan Christian

for large swaths of the population - in spite of the country's famously progressive Constitution and countless strikes and service delivery protests that have sprung from these problems.

All these factors underlie the outrage against the above-inflation tuition fee increases announced in 2015. Before #FMF, however, the Marikana Miner's Strike of 2012, also known as the Marikana Massacre, was another protest extensively covered by the South African media. Workers at the Lonmin platinum mine in the town of Marikana decided to strike for higher wages on the 16th of August 2012; a strike now known for its violence and deaths, most at the hands of the South African Police Service (SAPS). After 34 miners were killed and 78 more wounded on the day of 16th, with additional deaths and injuries of police, security guards and other miners from the 12th to the 18th, the strike has gone down as one of the deadliest protests in South Africa's history. Given how recent the events of Marikana were by the time #FMF began, its memory informed protester sentiment towards police presence during their gatherings – unlike the short-lived student protests pre-2015 (which span all the way back to the 1990s), the reality of lethal force by police was now fresh in the minds of protesters as they held their so-called 'unsanctioned' gatherings. Out of this sprung an insistence by student activists that violence was not to be their *modus operandi*, lest they relive the Uprising of 1976 or the even more recent killings at Lonmin Mine in Marikana.

Although not the first university protest to be seen by South African higher education, #FMF was the first to become a 'movement' that crossed South Africa's provincial borders and gained enough momentum to disrupt the normal functioning of several of the most prestigious universities. Earlier in 2015, however, the #RhodesMustFall (#RMF) movement

lay down much of the ideological groundwork of the tuition fee protests and even provided the naming framework of 'X Must Fall' - something which several groups and businesses have since also re-semiotised for their own purposes, such as a #ZumaMustFall campaign about dissatisfaction with president Jacob Zuma, or #DataMustFall about exorbitant prices of cell phone data. #RMF's primary goal was the removal of a statue of Cecil John Rhodes – a figure of colonial power in both Zimbabwe and South Africa - on a UCT campus. Those who participated in both #RFM and #FMF, or ascribe to the ideology of decolonizing higher education, are referred to as "Fallists". This ideology is extensively outlined in the Rhodes Must Fall mission statement that was drawn up by Fallists at the UCT on the 25th of March 2015, and explains the demands of #RMF beyond just their iconoclastic goal:

> We are an independent collective of students, workers and staff who have come together to end institutionalised racism and patriarchy at UCT. […] We want to be clear that this movement is not just concerned with the removal of a statue. The statue has great symbolic power; it glorifies a mass-murderer who exploited black labour and stole land from indigenous people. Its presence erases black history and is an act of violence against black students, workers and staff – by "black" we refer to all people of colour [...] Its removal will not mark the end but the beginning of the long overdue process of decolonising this university. In our belief, the experiences seeking to be addressed by this movement are not unique to an elite institution such as UCT, but rather reflect broader dynamics of a racist and patriarchal society that has remained unchanged since the end of formal apartheid. (Johannesburg Workshop in Theory and Criticism, 2015)

The statement goes on to list additional goals of the movement, including but not limited to: removal of other monuments and references to white colonialism, curriculum reform to include non-Western knowledge systems, cessation of outsourcing practices at the university, and improvement of academic and financial accessibility to UCT for Black people. Although this statement was written with the transformation of UCT in mind, the ideals have been easily embraced by activists at other institutions in South Africa – especially elite, historically white ones like Wits. Like the removal of the Rhodes statue, the issue of tuition fee increases was only a springboard to addressing deeply-rooted societal issues that democracy has not fixed. For this reason, the re-semiotisation of UCT's Fallism by #FeesMustFall was not only an 'aesthetic' choice to use the '#X Must Fall' shorthand, but also a re-semiotisation of the core ideology behind decolonization and social justice activism in African higher education.

The intertwining legacies of the Soweto Uprising, the Marikana miner's strike, and #RMF served as the political and cultural context of #FMF, a cause with wide enough scope to have snowballed into a national movement. The striking similarity of Marikana to Apartheid-era police brutality – in a democratic society, no less – has impacted the South African consciousness and informed the protester relationship with police going forward. In the meantime, the efforts of UCT's Fallists have collated then-unaddressed issues of systemic racial violence, patriarchy, and other harmful hegemonies that were borne out of colonialism. #FMF has been a pioneering movement in its own right, having highlighted a growing funding crisis in higher education and demonstrating the collective power of university students – however, it is also the product of a long and violent legacy of protests in South Africa, many of which hardly reached the media spotlight at all, much less to the

degree that #FMF did. Structural issues of racism, neoliberalism and colonization underpin the #FMF movement and will continue to underpin every movement in South Africa hereafter – hopefully to the benefit and transformation of powerful institutions.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Protests are fundamentally a social event – they involve human participants with a collective desire to communicate an issue and have their message be received by those who can execute change. A single protest event is capable of producing a myriad of texts, text types, signs and meanings, and those texts themselves shift and change indefinitely until a protest ends. The interaction between protesters, their protest targets and with the media that reports on them arises from unique and specific circumstances dictated by historical and cultural context. While different protests might share similar goals or methods, elements that are unique to a protest's demographic, location and time period will dictate how those protests are received by the public. Scholars of civil resistance have covered many different types of protests and the way these events become mythologized in history, the processes that create meaning and symbols, and the ways in which society reflects upon protests as they happen. Yet, the field of protest studies continues to grow as every new civil resistance movement brings with it an entirely new set of questions.

Protests produce texts in many forms: everything from a demonstrator's placard to a press release statement from an offending corporation or government contribute the discourse around a protest. These discourses point to overarching ideologies that affect how people think and act, and thus sociolinguists can examine these texts to gauge the factors that underlie the practices associated with social unrest: factors that are rooted in history,

economics and culture, and which are not always obvious at a superficial level. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is a field of research that aims specifically to interpret, as well as explain, the meanings of a text (Kress, 1990; Hodge & Kress, 1993; Fairclough, 1995; Wodak, 1996; Fairclough, 2003), and make "transparent the connections between discourse practices, social practices, and social structures, connections that might be opaque to the layperson" (Sheyholislami, 2001). A theory of language called Systemic Functional Linguistics, conceived by Halliday (1994) served as a basis for the emerging field of Critical Linguistics (Fowler, Hodge, Kress, & Trew, 1979) wherein researchers hoped to critically analyse linguistic features of a text and glean the ideological processes behind it. In the decades that have passed since this methodology was introduced, it has evolved into the broad field now known as CDA. Although the basic tenets of CDA can be agreed upon by various discourse analysts, there is no singular framework to work with and analysts can rely on a variety of methods to analyse texts. In this way, CDA refers to a multitude of different approaches with a common aim and can be applied to almost any event wherein language can be considered a social act (Halliday, 1994). CDA assumes that creators of texts make choices that are informed by their personal experiences, ideologies, goals and interests, even if the choices are not conscious or deliberate (Sheyholislami, 2001). In turn, those on the receiving ends of these texts filter the given information through their own minds. Much of what underpins an interpretation of a text is rooted not only the explicit linguistic elements (vocabulary choice, sentence structure, register etc.), but also in the broader socio-cognitive context that an individual finds themselves in: the power relations in their society, the historical and political context, or their own personal ideologies (Van Dijk, 1988b; van Dijk, 1997)

The Media and Protest

Ever since the advent of journalism, it has been the looking glass through which the general public could view the world outside one's immediate experience. In the modern day, journalists have a range of duties – from observing and reporting, to researching and investigating, and then presenting their findings to a wide audience. Ultimately, the practice of journalism is an exercise in language and ideology. Research on the media and news (Van Dijk, 1988a; 1988b) have identified trends, structures and practices that point to journalism as being a *subjective* language practice, despite any claims by publishers to the contrary. News publishers such as newspapers or news channels rely on their audiences believing that they are trustworthy and informed – in fact, this sense of trust gives the media a great deal of power and influence. With the knowledge that thousands – or even millions – of people are dependent on media publications to keep them informed, news media houses will tend to push the image that what they publish are well-researched or free from propaganda and misinformation. Alternatively, other news publications will emphasise different qualities such as entertainment value or the novelty of their subject matter. As far as readership goes, there is a tendency for democratic, 'liberal' societies to favour newspapers/news channels that seem to approximate neutrality and objectivity – the kind of journalism that covers global and local major events, politics, business and entertainment, without obvious sensationalism or biases.

In South Africa in particular, apartheid-era censorship laws have long since been lifted and the media is no longer stifled by government control of how certain events or public figures

are covered. However, the absence of censorship has not guaranteed quality, comprehensive or socially conscious reporting by default. Jane Duncan (2014) describes how

> South Africa has a complex media landscape, which has changed markedly since apartheid. Undoubtedly, the media are more representative of the society in which they operate now, and also are largely free to broadcast or publish as they see fit as most censorship laws have been repealed. However, these changes have been premised largely on the commercial media model where market forces have been allowed to shape the media system, with limited public funding being provided for public service content.

Essentially, the lack of economic transformation after apartheid and the subsequent gravitation towards free-market capitalism (or neoliberalism) has permeated throughout the news media sphere. Most news outlets – even public services such as the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) – have had to subsidise themselves wholly or partially through commercial endeavours. As a result of the transition to democracy being socio-political more so than economic, the ideology of neoliberalism has trickled into many facets of South African society, media included. The incentive for profit, and the pressures this puts on journalists to create content within deadline restrictions, affects the quality and accessibility of news in South Africa. The survival of print media especially – in the age of television broadcasting, the internet, and economic crises – hinges on the ability to appeal to the most profitable advertising demographics. This has made it harder for a wide variety of news publishers to exist sustainably in South Africa, or for lower-to-working-class citizens to access a diversity of news voices (Duncan, 2014).

Despite the growth of alternative media in recent years, made possible by easier access to the internet, mainstream media sources continue to dominate the field of information dissemination (Lee, 2014). While it is generally common knowledge that news media is rarely ideologically pure, contemporary coverage of politically charged events has tended towards more complexity and nuance. Protests by marginalised groups in particular are vulnerable to the media's power, as the participants will often lack alternative resources to address problems, air grievances to the authorities and enact policy change – thus, the need to demonstrate against the powerful institutions that possess these resources. Therefore, negative or imbalanced mainstream reporting on such protests can lead to further marginalisation of the participants. According to Lee, given this potential of the media to influence public image, a protest's reputation and outcome can very well hinge on whether the media legitimises it or not. While alternative media can mitigate the damage done by negative mainstream reporting, their comparative lack of influence means that they are more useful to protesters as beacons for more mainstream media attention, rather than sufficient coverage in their own right (Lester & Hutchins, 2009 Lee, 2014). Larger news sites with broader reach are instruments of control – they are able to determine the success or failure of a protest precisely because the media both gauges *and* influences society's values, and what institutions are most powerful (Chan & Lee, 1984). This control over the discourse manifests in the "how" of news reporting – what information is included or excluded, where it is placed in the text, and how it is framed and contextualised.

Van Dijk (1988a; 1988b) looks at how news reports are structured, both at a macrostructural and a microstructural level. He draws attention to the syntactic structure of sentences, vocabulary choices, the use of direct and indirect reporting, among others (microstructure);

as well as how stories are organised on a broader level, such as the order of information provided in a news report (macrostructure). He notes that what news writers deem as "important" information is placed first, with less important (or interesting) information following on after that. In addition to how information is ordered in a story, mainstream news media has had a great deal of control over the kinds of *framing* devices used to talk about particular types of events, such as protests or natural disasters. These frames are eventually internalised by the public as they become adopted and routinized over time (Rodny-Gumede, 2015). The framing devices typically associated with protest are those relating to conflict; this comes with disproportionate focus or sensationalising of violent events, a lack of contextualisation, and pitting groups against each other as opposed to comparing common goals. These features comprise a style of reporting known as "war journalism" (Galtung, 2000; Lynch & Galtung, 2010; Rodny-Gumede, 2015) which has had an observably detrimental effect on coverage of protests where marginalised groups were involved. Early coverage of the Marikana miner's strike strongly displayed features of war journalism – the violence was foregrounded, working class or "grassroots" sources were disregarded by journalists in favour of "official" sources, and the underlying causes of the strike were rarely elaborated on in order to properly contextualise the strike for the public (Duncan, 2014).

The participants in a protest – from the protesters themselves, to their targets, to any other adjacent parties involved – undergo certain classifications when they are talked about in the media. These classifications reveal how a participant has been categorised, evaluated and positioned in relation to other participants or within society. In order to perform an analysis of these categories, these participants are referred to as 'social actors' (Van Leeuwen, 2008)

who are involved in the rituals and tropes associated with certain social practices – of which protest is one. When the media report on a practice such as a protest, the inter-relationships between the different social actors (such as the protester, the student leader, the police, among others) can be evaluated and presented in certain ways, depending on the media outlet's agenda. Van Dijk (1988b) proposes five features of a text to be examined in order to distinguish what sort of ideologies underlie how events and social actors are represented – namely, awareness of context, power relations, presupposed knowledge from the reader, and the actual formal structure of a text. Additionally, he highlights the pervasive creation of an "Us versus Them" dichotomy: when positioning oneself in a narrative where there is conflict, negative sentiment is generally given to "Them", while positive sentiment is given to "Us". The deictic "Us" is usually the assumed positionality of the media outlet's target audience. In a protest, social actors can be vilified or praised, depending on the agenda of the person or institution reporting on them, and to different degrees. How would a mainstream national newspaper report on a university protest, where the readership is widespread? How would an official statement from a university differ from this, where university officials possess an "authoritative voice" and have a closer relationship to the protesters that decry them? Wodak and Ludwig (1999) note that every discursive event sits firmly in the grip of history and inevitably involves power relations between groups of people. Depending on the individual, how these factors contribute to the interpretation of an event can yield very different views of the same event. Although there can never be a "right" or "true" interpretation of a text, according to Wodak (1996; 1999), practitioners of Critical Discourse Analysis use their analytical tools to better understand the "how" and the "why" of a text – reasons which may remain otherwise hidden if not observed with a critical eye. Studies of

media coverage of protests in particular should pinpoint which voices are sought out and prioritised, and how this can inadvertently marginalise groups instead of empower them; this analysis must also consider how the commercial media model enforces journalistic practices that prioritise voices that are 'official' or 'authoritative' as a way of claiming authenticity or trustworthiness.

To assist a critical discourse analysis of media, it is helpful to familiarise oneself with the concept of the *protest paradigm*, which was first described by McLeod & Hertog in their work on the media and social control (1998). Lee described the paradigm as (2014, p. 2727)

> …a pattern of coverage that focuses on the violent and disruptive aspects of the protest actions, describes protests using the script of crime news, highlights the protesters' (strange) appearance and/or ignorance, portrays protests as ineffective, focuses on the theatrical aspects of the protests and neglects the substantive issues, invokes public opinion against the protesters, and privileges sources from or supporting the government…

Essentially, this paradigm chronicles the tendency of the media to paint protests as negative and protesters as enemies of public interest or safety. While Lee cites "the script of crime news", research done by Duncan (2014) and Rodny-Gumede (2015) help to construct that argument that the language of war and conflict comprise this script as well. The inverse of this script would be 'peace journalism', an under-utilised style that focuses instead on conflict resolution. The war/peace journalism dichotomy also argues that the government need not be a social actor in coverage of protest, as commercial strikes or tuition fee protests will involve different actors (such as large corporations) who are also subject to prioritisation by the media due to their authority. As most societies have become more

progressive and democratic, however, this paradigm has become less obvious – the frequent occurrences of civil resistance across the globe has normalised the phenomenon, and contemporary media outlets are now likely to remain more or less ideologically "neutral" when reporting on current events. However, the adoption of war journalism as the default by journalists worldwide has ensured that the protest paradigm remains a fixture of social conflict coverage. It is, therefore, the job of CDA to de-naturalise the language used by the media and challenge the accepted framing devices provided when reporting on protests. Although the protest paradigm might be more difficult to identify in modern news coverage, this indicates variations within it that have occurred over time, rather than a complete disappearance thereof. Peace journalism has also been proposed as a solution to the potential stigmatisation that can arise from current journalistic practices, and CDA can assist in identifying where and how this transition to conflict-resolution reporting (as opposed to conflict-sensationalising) reporting can occur.

Lee uses the Hong Kong Umbrella Movement to explore these variations in the protest paradigm and propose a set of factors that may trigger this phenomenon in the news. According to Lee, the paradigm is easily identifiable in news outlets (in this case, newspapers) when its coverage contains the following features:

1) An emphasis on violence or disruption
2) Exclusion or negative portrayal of protester's voices
3) Quotations from 3rd parties or external sources that explicitly criticise the protest

By looking at a news articles discourse around violence, the opinions of the protesters and the opinions of others – particularly government officials, the targets of protests or experts in a field – one can somewhat accurately measure the news outlet's attitudes, and by extension the attitudes of the general public. Some of the triggers for manifesting the protest paradigm include: radical protest actions by protesters; whether or not the response of a protest target (e.g. a business, a municipal office, a tertiary institution) is included; the type of news outlet and its ideological agenda; and satisfaction/dissatisfaction levels of the general public towards its government. However, there is a dialogical relationship between mainstream media and those who consume it that is affected by the previously mentioned framing that the media uses to talk about certain types of events. If mainstream news were to adopt different styles of reporting that offer alternative framing of conflict and social unrest – for example, by lessening the degree to which violence, disaster or negativity is implied – this could trickle down to the public readership and overall re-shape how society understands protest.

Rodny-Gumede (2015) uses the Marikana coverage as a case study in why the alternative of peace journalism should be adopted when reporting on strikes, protests or other social conflict phenomena. This style essentially does the opposite of war journalism and emphasises conflict resolution, both within the conflict itself and by providing the public with a range of appropriately balanced perspectives in order to combat marginalisation of certain groups. There is also an avoidance of polarisation, victory/defeat dynamics or sensationalist coverage of violence (Lynch & Galtung, 2010; Rodny-Gumede, 2015). In line with criticism of the protest paradigm, peace journalism would also mitigate the

disapprobation of protesters and related groups by fully contextualising their grievances. A variety of sources within one article does not guarantee a "balanced" account of the events or perspectives, and an over-emphasis of official sources can inadvertently inflate their credibility – and likewise make grassroots sources seem less informed or valuable (Duncan, 2014; Rodny-Gumede, 2015). Despite protesters being one of the most important social actors in this type of event – as without them, a protest would not exist - , the script of war journalism puts them in danger of being backgrounded in favour of more easily "authenticated" sources, such as government officials, corporate press statements or experts in a particular field. Peace journalism can combat this erasure of certain social actors by valuing grassroots sources as being alternative narratives to ones put out by those more socio-economically powerful. This would certainly lessen public readiness to criminalise protesters or glorify the government (Lee, 2014). Having said this, it must also be acknowledged that the commercial media model is an obstacle to the routinisation of peace journalism, as ingrained reporting practices are not easily challenged if left up to individual journalists. "Pack journalism" has become fairly widespread due to commercial media pressures and is especially prevalent in times of conflict (Matusitz & Breen, 2007;Duncan, 2014; Rodny-Gumede, 2015) – a phenomenon whereby a number of different journalists will rely on the same previously verified sources, resulting in journalism having "a sameness that reduces a diversity of voices" (Duncan, 2014:17). It also results in marginalised voices being de-prioritised because there is no official method or body through which to authenticate their contributions.

Protest and Space

Chouliaraki and Fairclough (1999) describe CDA as being a field where the interests of the social science and linguistics fields are brought together under a shared analytical framework. The flexibility of CDA allows analysts to explore the relationships between discourse and ideology from under numerous circumstances and diverse standpoints. While a protest's relationship to the media is indeed a rich source of discursive material to explore, there are more unconventional texts available to sociolinguistics as well; namely, the very space our bodies occupy. Goutsos and Polymeneas (2014) have explored how ideology can become entrenched in space as well as in written or spoken language during protests in Syntagma Square. The protests outside the Greek parliamentary buildings in 2011 saw protesters gathering in an area that is not only a place of political power, but is also significant as a symbol of Greek culture and society. The choice of this site follows a pattern present in protests of recent years where protesters reclaim a site in order to reassert their power and agency as civilians (Rojo, 2014). Rojo goes on to say that that acts of occupation, which turn a public space into a "site of resistance", are the public's way of collating ideas and making the political discourse more accessible. The geographical centrality and cultural importance of Syntagma Square contribute to the visibility of any social unrest that happens there, and thus drew the eye of politicians and mainstream media, allowing the protest message to be acknowledged and disseminated more easily.

Goutsos and Polymeneas utilise the work of Fairclough (1993) to understand what types of texts were created by participants in the protests, as well as to understand how social practices in the Greek context shaped the protester's view of themselves, namely, their "identity". Using Van Dijk's socio-cognitive model, they took into account the subjectivity of

participants (themselves included) into their analysis, since social actors supplement their own experiences, memories and worldviews when presented with any kind of ideology. Drawing upon the works of Lefebvre (1991) as well as Deleuze and Guattari (1988; 1994), Goutsos and Polymeneas assert that space is "socially produced…by human activity", and therefore the concept of space is not interchangeable with "place". While a place can be a geographical location, it becomes a "space" once humans occupy it – not only physically but mentally as well. In other words, a space is not defined by virtue of itself, that is, its physical properties, but by how social actors perceive and interact with it. In this way, the meanings attached to a space can be shifted and re-appropriated by humans that inhabit it. The protesters at Syntagma Square occupied the space in an effort to wrestle political decision-making power into their own hands, by choosing a location that is symbolically tied to politics in Greece. The horizontal, transparent structure of the protests were a reaction to the perceived hierarchical nature of politics in the country – the hierarchy that disenfranchised civilians in the first place. The physical structure of Syntagma Square, which has an upper and lower square, resulted in the gathering of human bodies to be arranged in a particular way – inexperienced protesters practised conventional or "traditional" protest practices in the upper square, closer to the parliament buildings, while middle-class, experienced protesters conducted general assemblies and community activities on the lower square. The staircase leading up to the parliamentary building acted as a physical and ideological buffer between politician and civilian.

Goutsos and Polymeneas noted that the occupation of space is in itself a protest practice that reinforces the discursive element of deixis. This aspect was noted to a degree by Van Dijk in his observation of the "Us versus Them" dynamic – this dialectic relationship is rarely absent

from a typical protest, and Syntagma Square case was no exception. The deictic pronouns "we/us" and "they" correlate ideologically with the deictic terms for location: "here" and "there" respectively. In other words, "we" is generally associated with being "here" in the in-group, while "they" will comprise the out-group. The analysis of Syntagma Square's produced texts, such as slogans and transcripts of General Assembly meetings, show a clear division between the protester ("*we*, who are *here*") and the Greek politicians ("*them*, who are *there*"). This reveals the discursive importance of physical space interacting with ideology in an instance of occupation. The mass gathering of protesters in a single space made it possible to collectivise the wants of the participants and make political discourse available to the public. Rojo likewise talks about Lefebvre's (1991) concept of *counter-space,* that "is developed wherever the rule of capital is being fought" – this means that spaces can be reclaimed by occupiers to perform functions that are different from the original intention. A university administration building can become a protester meeting area and makeshift classroom, for example, or a central square in town can become a temporary habitation for occupiers. Again, the choice of space is directly linked to its significance in a cultural context, and where protesters can visibly and physically defy an authority that has wronged them by challenging or inverting the purposes of certain publically or privately owned spaces.

One of the most astoundingly successful examples of civil resistance in recent years is the January 25 Egyptian Revolution. Holmes's (2012) account of the factors involved in the revolution's swift success mentions both the role of media, as well as the role of space. Despite ordering a shut-down of internet and telecommunications in the whole of Egypt, as well as pushing propaganda campaigns in the news media of the country, the catalyst of the revolution was a result of space being aggressively *reclaimed* by the citizens of Egypt. Since

the Egyptian Revolution was championed wholly by the working and middle classes– and not substantially prompted nor facilitated by the politics of the elite or military force – it can be argued that the protesters bodies in place were vitally important in shifting the balance of power in the state. On January 28, when protesters overcame physical barricades around Tahrir Square, they proved to an authoritarian regime that they could not "be cowed by state violence" (Holmes, 2012, p. 391)

The choice of location to occupy and the ensuing violence culminated in what was described by Mariam Aboelezz (2014) as a "battle to regain the square" – the forced removal of protesters from the square speaks to the reluctance from the authorities to allow the existence of a counter-space – particularly if this space challenges the autonomy of the state (Holmes, 2012). Geosemiotics is a field concerned with the language in our physical world, taking into account how human beings are surrounded by signs, constructs and everyday material practices which have the same potential to create meaning as traditional text types (Scollon & Scollon, 2003). Geosemiotics can be successfully combined with CDA in that both methodologies pay attention to context of a semiotic event; the former simply argues the material world is considered just as pertinent to revealing discourse as signs, symbols and cultural context are. Aboelezz noted the centrality of Tahrir Square, its past as a site of previous protests before the January 25 Revolution, as well as its symbolic value as a "hub" of Egyptian culture and society. In fact, these factors provided the news media with a convenient narrative structure for their reporting on the protests, and their focus remained fixed on Tahrir Square despite there being protests in other parts of Egypt. The centrality of Tahrir Square especially allowed for idealistic, metaphorical language from the media, as

they referred to it as "the epicentre of the protests" and the "symbolic heart of the Egyptian revolution". The protesters themselves were acutely aware of the fact that their protests were symbolic, and that they would be documented photographically by both local and international media – this self-awareness became evident in their signage. Signs held up by the protesters appeared in several languages, such as Arabic (both standard Arabic and the more colloquial Egyptian Arabic), English and even French. Since English is not an official language of Egypt, these signs were included for the benefit of international viewers, in order to disseminate sentiments from the Egyptian Revolution. Tahrir Square itself strongly embodied the culture of Egyptian society, as protesters transformed the otherwise neutral square into a "festive" – albeit still political – environment, which reflected a perception that Egyptians have of themselves as being humorous, wry and satirical. However, not only were the protests characterised by dark humour and parody, but also by strong religious themes – many intertextual references were made to the holy text of the Quran in the form of placards or graffiti. According to Aboelezz, the protests at Tahrir Square "[looked] inward and outward" (2014:612), as certain aspects of the protests were directed to the international world, but other aspects required a nuanced, native understanding of Egyptian culture in order to be understood. In this way, the Egyptian Revolution illuminated the way in which globalisation – and its by-products such as the news, the internet and social media – affect the way in which protesters view their collective identities, and how these identities run parallel to their respective, space-situated cultures.

Yet another occupation in the name of protest happened in Los Angeles in 2011 known as the LA Occupy Movement. Social media once again facilitated a protest, this time in an

organisational capacity, as well as a means to disseminate a message. City Hall Park, a government building, was chosen as the site of occupation by protesters, who coordinated the protest through online platforms. The otherwise quiet, sparsely populated site was deliberately chosen as a statement against corporate greed, and the goal was to create a living space out of a park that was decorative and unused (Chun, 2014). Much like what occurred at Syntagma Square, City Hall Park became *inhabited*, with protesters setting up public facilities such as libraries and schools, as well as hosting workshops and speeches. This creation of a miniature "society" arose from a need to counter the society that the government of Los Angeles had provided for its citizens – a society grounded in inequality and unethical capitalist practices. This makeshift, anti-capitalist and pro-democracy society closely resembles the Hong Kong Umbrella Movement of 2014 (Lou & Jaworski, 2016) and the patterns of re-semiotisation are shared by both movements.

The Umbrella Movement – so named after a protester's iconic use of an umbrella to deter pepper spray and tear gas – was not strictly an Occupy movement in the same vein as Occupy LA. While the protest practices were generally the same and both movements were ideologically similar, the protesters of the Umbrella Movement sought universal suffrage and fully intended to be a nonviolent civil disobedience campaign. Just like protesters of Occupy LA, those involved in the Umbrella movement occupied city streets and moulded their adopted environment to suit their needs – streets and buildings were informally re-named and re-labelled; temporary institutions such as health services, schools, libraries and shrines were set up; and protesters lived in tents in the occupied areas. This "Occupy City" formed

what Lou and Jaworski (2016) call a *living utopia*, due to the culture of courtesy and co-operation that arose from this arrangement.

The production and distribution of signs, slogans, and symbols across various mediums is a prominent feature of both Occupy LA and the Umbrella movement. The occupied spaces were transformed physically and discursively and contributed greatly to the "emplacement" of the movement in the city and in the consciousness of the public. In Hong Kong, multilingual signage and frequent references to Western pop culture icons such as John Lennon contributed to the easy mediatisation of the movement (Lou & Jaworski, 2016); similar to the Egyptian Revolution, awareness of local as well as global audiences influenced the sign-making practices of the protesters. In this case, signs and material objects were essential to completely re-branding Civic Square, the space occupied by the Umbrella Movement – the symbol of the Umbrella attained symbolic value through its re-semiotisation during the protests, starting out as a defence against police crowd control measures and ending up as a symbol of solidarity and community.

In the case of Occupy LA, the "Monopoly Guy", the mascot of the board game Monopoly, came to symbolise corporate greed – a pop cultural symbol that relies on a particular "system of knowledge" (Lefebvre, 1991) in its viewers. Intertextual references arise in an instance where a collective wants to criticise authority, and have these criticisms be understood in culturally meaningful way. The Monopoly Guy carries with it the meanings of a game where accrual of money and property is paramount, regardless of the negative effects of your success on your fellow players. The meanings of this classic character were re-negotiated to

suit the branding strategy of Occupy LA. The commercialisation of Los Angeles and the colossal wealth gap prevalent in the United States – and the political and economic consequences thereof – was the crux of the LA Occupy movement, and protesters rallied against a societal dichotomy of the "99% versus the 1%". Naturally, the "one percent" stands for the wealthy upper class, who the ninety-nine percent, or the middle-to-lower-class population, believe control the political and economic landscape of the country. A term frequently spotted in the signage of the Occupy protesters was "class warfare", which in itself is layered with discourses of economics, politics and even state-sanctioned violence. Chun goes on to observe how the mobility of the movement was given momentum by social media – more specifically, by how social actors "mediate" the discourses of the protest by posting pictures and videos onto the internet. In the Umbrella Movement, social media (and how it was used to respond to content created by mainstream media) was vitally important to the processes of re-semiotisation and to the "mythologizing" of the movement (Lou & Jaworski, 2016). A myth is a system of meaning created by signs and symbols circulating through a community (Barthes, 1993; 2014) – in this case, the community would be the protesters. The iconification of the umbrella was not the only thing that contributed to myth creation in the movement; parodies of authority figures, the public image of the protesters as courteous and well-behaved, and the widespread and repetitive occurrence of a particular slogan also played a part in forming the symbolic narrative of the movement.

The slogan in particular underwent a large number of re-semiotisations and re-emplacements. In its first iteration, a yellow banner with: "I want true universal suffrage" was hung on the side of Lion Rock Mountain and was visible from a great distance. Despite being swiftly taken down by authorities, it had been up long enough to be seen and

photographed by the news media and by protesters. Thereafter, the sign was reproduced in various different ways, including drawings, sculptures and stickers, and a banner of the news photo put up in the tent city. Some protesters also created smaller version of the banner and wore them somewhere on their person, which made the signs mobile as well. Kress (1990) describes this process of meaning moving across modes or materialities as *transduction*.

Naturally, a phenomenon such as transduction relies on human interaction with texts – especially if the texts are vulnerable to physical impermanence such as an illegally placed banner or an unauthorised occupation. Scollon (2008) describes the relationship between any number of given texts as being indirect and reliant on how they are "mediated" by social actors – for example, a sign at the protest may have a particular meaning in that particular time and place, however the way someone perceives that sign can differ from person to person, or from platform to platform, or from time period to time period. Chun (2014) describes mobility of protest as manifesting in two ways: firstly, in the way signs are physically carried and moved by bodies; and secondly, in the way photos and videos of signage is uploaded to various internet platforms, and thus undergoes slight discursive shifts as the scope of the original message begins to encompass wider, more diverse audiences. In the digital age, proximity to a protest site and immediacy of viewing a message is no longer vital to a protest's vitality. Social media can help to spread discourses that those in revolutionary spaces, or counter-spaces, wish to make known.

It is evident that "Occupy" movements have remained popular – and often effective – in recent years, as they involve physical and material participation of the masses. Public places, ironically, need to be made public again. It is in the interest of protesters to claim figurative ownership of a politically powerful place in order to reclaim literal ownership over what

should be theirs in the first place – the right to make collective decisions about their communities.

Protest in South Africa

Though most mass protest movements may entail occupation of a space by default, not all of them require this in order to preserve their momentum – for example, ownership of constitutional rights can be reclaimed using other practices as well. South African history is populated with numerous protests against the apartheid regime, and to this day, protest action remains ubiquitous in the socio-political landscape of the country. Despite the effects of neoliberalism on living conditions of the poorest in South Africa, service delivery protests for electricity, running water and housing from the government have largely kept focus on those individual issues and "have not coalesced into a national movement with an explicitly anti-neoliberal politics" (Duncan, 2014). Before #FeesMustFall took advantage of the decolonisation discourse of #RhodesMustFall – which inherently challenges the current hegemonies of race, class and gender – and revitalised the discussion in the South African consciousness, service delivery protests were more concerned with the immediate failings of the ANC government to provide these necessities. Even the Marikana miner's strike, while not explicitly concerned with government, remained a wage dispute and did not necessarily transcend the realm of unions and private corporations. Research by Duncan (2014) and Rodny-Gumede (2015) have shown that journalists over the years have also failed to make connections between neoliberalism, class and race as being underlying causes for these constant protests.

Nevertheless, service delivery protesters have offered a wealth of insights into what the contemporary South African protest looks like, beyond apartheid but still within a socio-economically unequal system (Stroud, 2016; Kitis & Jegels, 2018). Stroud in particular examines service delivery protests in South Africa and how discourses, identities and protest practices can shift and change to form a unique and ever-changing dynamism. He named this "turbulence", and noted that the dynamic nature of the protests – or, its *mobility* – were central to its significance, as mobility served "as a central trope for organizing experiences and narratives". Although Chun (2014) and Stroud (2016) use the terms "mobility" in different ways, both usages are arguably related: both terms refer to the way discourses travel, and likely transform, across time and space. In a similar vein to the study by Goutsos and Polymeneas, Stroud highlights the discursive relationship between bodies and place in a "performance" of protest, as this relationship forms a part of the semiotic landscape. These protests, too, turned into an Occupy movement when protesters marched into an affluent, predominately white-inhabited area demanding better housing and condemning unfair rent prices. Research into the aforementioned Occupy movements show that bodies – and particular configurations of bodies – in a space are a mobile "linguistic landscape" (Landry & Bourhis, 1997) where discourses can develop, as well as ebb and flow.

Another notable feature of the South African service delivery protests were the context-specific, 'throwback' protest practices themselves; in particular, protesters burned their rent arrears papers, which resembled the public burning of apartheid passbooks associated with the Sharpeville Massacre in 1960. Stroud describes this act as being "chronotopical" because it is an event specific to a particular time and place, and holds historical significance. Because

of these qualities, the act is used to legitimise the current protest by evoking emotional associations and imagery of the past. According to Stroud, this discursive shift points to a greater narrative in contemporary South Africa, wherein racialisation of seemingly non-racial issues is evidence of an unresolved apartheid legacy. The social, cultural and economic divisions of the apartheid era "[continue] to inform the present day politics of the ordinary". It is self-evident that cultural and historical context shape the practices and discourses present in a protest; however, in a country that calls itself "the rainbow nation", how far back into the past does the collective consciousness reach? To what extent do the post-apartheid generation of university students, despite not having experience life under apartheid law, draw discursively from this era when protesting tuition fee increases in the modern day?

What Stroud did not explicitly touch on in his analysis of these protests was the notion of *decolonisation*. This has been a buzzword in South Africa ever since the #FeesMustFall protests took hold of the universities, and is a central – albeit lesser-known – objective of the movement. Despite conversations on news media as well as social media focusing on the tuition-fee aspect of the protests, student activists have from the get-go explicitly demanded the decolonisation of the South African university curriculum, which has led to a national discussion of what this would entail. The predecessor movement to #FeesMustFall was #RhodesMustFall (RMF) – the name being the obvious connection – which was successful in its objective to remove the statue of Cecil John Rhodes from the University of Cape Town (UCT) campus. Not only did the protesters achieve this primary goal, but also brought to the forefront a long-ignored problem in South Africa: the issues of race and class and the legacy

of colonialism. The UCT Rhodes Must Fall (RMF) Facebook page[3] released a mission statement on the 25 March 2015 during the height of the campaign. It was later compiled into a PDF document that is now freely available online.[4] The mission statement goes into detail about the philosophy and action plan of RMF, mentioning decolonisation numerous times throughout:

> We have recognised that what is needed […] is the radical decolonisation of this institution, which is necessarily linked to the black condition both nationally and internationally. Our existence as black people is defined by a violent system of power. The university's processes and language naturalises that colonial system. Therefore, if we wish to get rid of that system of power, we have to destroy the processes altogether. Decolonisation is this very destruction.

While RMF was not about tuition fees or financial access to higher education, the themes it tackled and brought to the fore to the South African public's consciousness resonated with the student activism movements that followed it later in the year. Chabot and Vinthagen (2015) comment on Western scholars of civil resistance and their bias towards non-violent resistance, which is unconsciously a bias towards a colonial logic – a logic that is reliant on institutions monopolising violence in system forms. Chabot and Vinthagen urge scholars of civil resistance to decolonise research itself and eliminate Eurocentric assumptions about

[3] https://www.facebook.com/RhodesMustFall/posts/1559394444336048

[4] http://jwtc.org.za/resources/docs/salon-volume-9/RMF_Combined.pdf

resistance; namely, the assumption that all resistance movements seek to assimilate into Western systems of governance, education or economics.

They look at the cases of two decolonising thinkers – Gandhi and Fanon – and two decolonising civil resistance groups that all share a single basic motivation: to live outside of a neoliberal (i.e. colonial) system that does not respect their dignity or autonomy. The two groups in question were the Zapatistas of Mexico and the Abahlali baseMjondolo in South Africa. The latter were a community formed after residents of Kennedy Road, an informal settlement in Durban, blocked government-sent bulldozers from destroying their shack homes. Having long since been frustrated with the lack of service delivery from the ruling party, and suffering tear-gassing and dog attacks when standing up to them, the residents decided to form the Abahlali baseMjondolo ("the people who stay in shacks"). In addition to planned, legal marches on government buildings, the Abahlali function rather autonomously as a community: they elect local leaders that facilitate meetings with all the residents present, in order to identify what problems are present in the community and how they can be fixed. There is no reliance on – or interest in – help from the national ruling party, as the Abahlali do not feel as if the African National Congress (ANC) has the interests of the poorest in mind. In order to counter the anti-poor, neoliberal policy of the ANC, the Abahlali encourage 'Living Politics' (Chabot & Vinthagen, 2015) – a politics that is rooted in the everyday life and problems of residents and that focuses on realities of poverty and oppression. Since 2006, this community has made a point of not celebrating Freedom Day, the national public holiday that commemorates South Africa's first truly democratic election. Instead, it is celebrated as 'Unfreedom Day' – a commentary on the failures of the ANC to improve the lives of Black people who were economically oppressed during the apartheid

era. Everything that the Abahlali do is in defiance of the system currently in place in the country, and by extension, defiance of a neoliberal logic that stems from the domination and anti-Blackness of colonialism. The creation of this community can be considered a radical tactic – despite not being a violent or disruptive one – because of how it challenges and undermines the status quo. In line with Chabot and Vinthagen, there is much that can be gleaned from taking a de-colonising stance to protests, as well as to the research of said protests, in the context of South African tertiary education and a younger generation of activists.

Occupy movements and protests that are inextricably linked to space/place may offer an insight into how the collective consciousness of a protest is informed, and what characteristics are indeed unique to the new South African context. Thus far, research into the interplay of space, language and linguistic ideology has been relatively scarce. The field of linguistic landscapes (Landry & Bourhis, 1997) and semiotics have been evolving alongside CDA and researchers continue to draw from these converging fields in order to develop analytical tools for language and ideology in space. The unique social phenomenon that is protest continually evolves as well, and shifts according to its historical context, cultural context and purpose; protest is further influenced by the technological age, wherein mobile devices and social media create another dimension through which ideas can be shared and discussed (Rojo, 2014). The accessibility of information makes it easier to bridge the gap between the media and the public – protesters are now more in control of how their experiences and identities are perceived because they can share photographs, video footage and writings online and on their own terms. The media is no longer the public's sole source – however, class stratification does dictate what kind of access different demographics will

have to technology and the internet, and this will affect the relative power that different marginalised have to create alternative narratives. For critical discourse analysts, this opens up an entirely new realm of research; we can now more effectively compare and contrast the identity creation involved in protest by observing the differences between media reporting and informal reporting done by participants, and where the two realms might overlap or diverge. Furthermore, the introduction of space and place as a factor in the dynamics of a protest facilitates a more complete analysis. It bears asking whether South African media coverage has shown a shift in consciousness by changing how they report on protests, given both the history of apartheid and the more recent tragedy at Marikana. Have they come to prioritise marginalised voices in the wake of Marikana, or do factors relating to race, class, and commercial incentives in the media continue to affect how news is framed?

CHAPTER THREE: THEORY AND METHODOLOGY

Humans are aggressively social creatures and rely on language to be our vehicle for communication. Since society cannot be disentangled from language, facets of the former will be embedded in the latter: its traditions, inequalities and contradictions. Hierarchical power structures colour human language just as they colour human language, and linguistic studies have generated specialised fields and methodologies to try understand how these power relations exist in language. One such field is CDA - as already mentioned, CDA is both a theoretical framework as well as a set of tools or resources that analysts have devised to perceive and understand ideology, discourse and power in texts. Within this framework, language is regarded as a set of resources (Machin & Mayr, 2012) that humans draw from in order to create and understand any type of communication., and thus our understandings of

power relations are embedded in our language use as well; moreover, the use of language in a particular way can either perpetuate or subvert existing power relations in society. The linguistic relationship between ideology and power is a focal point of CDA and by pointing out the connections, analysts hope to "de-naturalize" the ideological information perpetuated through language and that people take for granted. Many forms, expressions and grammatical structures inconspicuously normalize certain views – in particular, the way something is expressed linguistically can perpetuate *hegemonies* (Gramsci, 1971). This refers to the dominance of one group or ideology over others, and how society consents to this dominance by being socialized within it. Even banal texts can contain ideologies, and this is the reason CDA hopes to illuminate how ideology is expressed in even the smallest ways. Even ideologically-charged events such as protests provide a wealth of discursive information – some of which may appear obvious, while the rest can be obscured unless critically examined. This paper in particular, drawing on the works of Fairclough (Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999; Fairclough, 1995), investigates what discourses and ideologies are revealed in media representations of #WitsFeesMustFall, while remaining mindful of the cultural and historical factors that inform this event. Protest is a communicative act that is deeply social, since it takes a group to make an impactful protest, as well as highly influenced by the historical context in which it takes place. Chouliaraki and Fairclough (1999:113) state that "CDA of a communicative interaction sets out to show that the semiotic and linguistic features of the interaction are systematically connected with what is going on socially, and what is going on socially is indeed going on partly or wholly semiotically or linguistically." Here, it is important to note that language (the linguistic aspect) is not the only tool that humans have to constitute meaning: in the field of semiotics,

or meaning-making, an analyst must consider images and symbols – which protests tend to have in abundance as well.

In Kress and Van Leeuwen's (1996) *Grammar of Visual Design*, they systematize the reading of images, taking into account factors such as colour, composition and framing, among many others. Multi-Modal Critical Discourse analysis takes into account how these other elements can affect meaning. Images can foreground ideologies – and therefore power relations – through the way they utilize cultural symbols, either overtly or covertly. In a newspaper article, for example, only one or two images can accompany it, and journalists or editors tend to consciously choose images that are the most impactful on a potential reader. If an image is of people, one can look at what the people are doing (are they performing an action or being passive?), their facial expressions, where their gaze is directed, and so forth. Objects are also important – they can be concrete or abstract, and may symbolize other meanings besides its denotative one. The salience of certain features in a text are in themselves telling – the size, focus, colour, foregrounding or backgrounding of elements draw our attention in particular ways (Machin & Mayr, 2012). This practice of paying attention to discourse in images is called Multi-modal Critical Discourse Analysis (MDA). Although images alone can indeed represent a great deal, their analysis is usually most complete when done in conjunction with its accompanying written text.

An image can evoke a certain emotional response in the reader before they get the chance to read the article it is attached to, thereby unconsciously colouring the reader's perceptions early on – alternatively, a sensationalist newspaper headline will have a different effect on the viewer's mind compared to a more neutral headline, and it may affect how we interpret

the photograph underneath that headline. No written piece, even one that is meant to be "objective" or perform an informative function, is entirely free of ideological inclinations. In CDA, word choices and grammatical forms are scrutinized in order to see how they promote ideas or representations of people. For example, "he claimed" has a very different meaning than "he stated", and a journalist's choice to use either word reflects their opinion on the individual who spoke – in discourse analysis, such quoting verbs are known as *metapropositional* verbs (Caldas-Coulthard & Coulthard, 1996). Other quoting verbs exist as well, which all have specific functions: to evaluate, describe, or signify development in the speaker's thoughts, among others. The verb that a writer uses can portray a speaker as either more or less powerful, credible or even likeable. The numerous synonyms for the word "said" each carry a very particular nuance that may go unnoticed by the non-critical reader. However, it is not only quoting verbs that carry discourse and promote views about a person or group – verbs play an important function in sentences because of *transitivity:* no verb can exist without at least a subject (whatever is performing the verb) or an object (whatever is undergoing the action of the verb). To look at the transitivity of a verb is to look at "who does what to whom, and how" (Machin & Mayr, 2012:104). Thus, the agency – or individual will and freedom to act - of a group or individual can be analysed. Occasionally, the absence of agency is in itself an ideological marker – an example would be the use of passive voice. The two hypothetical sentences "a building was burned down during protests" and "protesters burned down a building" paint different pictures of the same event. Although one might infer from the first sentence that protesters had something to do with the fire, it is not stated outright, and agency is removed completely – no-one is directly being blamed for it. However, the second sentence is more certain and authoritative, suggesting that the writer

is sure of the facts. The protesters are more openly accused or vilified, whereas interpretation of the first sentence may depend on a reader's preconceived opinion about protesters. Another way to remove agency in a statement is through nominalization – the changing of a verb into a noun form. In the example provided by Machin & Mayr (2012:141) in *How To Do Critical Discourse Analysis*, one can see how nominalization operates:

> "A demonstration against increased tuition fees took place in front of the main building caused disruption to classes."

The phrase "a demonstration" could have been written as "students demonstrating". Instead, it was phrased in such a way that no agent is required. In addition to a deflection of responsibility for an action, nominalization can also result in simplification of an event or an unclear representation of when it took place or for how long.

Even in a case where all chosen verbs in a written piece are as neutral as possible, there are multiple ways to represent the people or groups involved in an event in ideologically significant ways. These people or groups are referred to in CDA as *social actors*, and they can be classified according to their inclusion, exclusion, or representation in a text (Van Leeuwen, 2008; Bernard, 2016). An example of social actors in a strike like the one at Marikana would be the protesters, the police and the institution that is targeted by the protest, and how these different groups are represented can shape one's understanding of their agency or importance in a text. *Representational strategies* refer to the terms that identify and describe these techniques for representing identity, of which the following are utilized in this paper's analysis: personalisation and impersonalisation, wherein a social actor can be presented as an individual or an institution; individualisation and

collectivisation, where a person can be named or referred to as part of a collective; and nomination and functionalisation, in which an individual can be presented as who they are or as what they do e.g. “John Smith” versus “a lawyer”. These ways of classifying and describing people can occur in as few words as a headline, and this is arguably where these representations are most important, since headlines are the most prominent texts on a page of a newspaper. Finally, the salience and importance of individuals or groups can be expressed with the use of honorifics or titles, anonymization, suppression or erasure, objectivation (e.g. “a beauty” when referring to a woman). The use of these techniques all point to the creation or erasure of a social actor’s legitimacy, which Critical Discourse Analysts can extrapolate to an understanding of how these groups are perceived in society at large, and not only in that particular text However, the use of these representational strategies is not only reserved to those who are talking about others, but can apply to an individual or group’s self-identification. Even in instances where two different groups are seemingly opposed – such as protesters and their target – both might draw upon the same pool of discourses and representational strategies to position themselves and the other, resulting in overlaps in their ‘ways of seeing’ the same event (Bernard, 2016). Analysis of phenomena such as this can reveal how these ways of seeing become disseminated by the most powerful voices in society - government, media, corporations and other institutions – as well as how they are either adopted or subverted by less powerful groups.

Although sensationalist media or outwardly biased institutions might use provocative and thus easily-identifiable agendas, it is much more difficult to pinpoint ideologies in texts that claim to be unbiased or “neutral”. It is also common to discover discourses that one never initially sought out – in an article about university protest, for example, it is possible that the

language use may uphold patriarchal ideals that go unnoticed due to its being normalized in society; or that the language racializes a protest that is not overtly about race. This can apply to a range of issues and end up revealing discursive connections between social issues that are not immediately apparent. In this paper, I hope that I have illuminated some of these possible connections that I have observed during #WitsFeesMustFall – for example, parallels between Apartheid-era protests and contemporary student protests; the concern about outsourced labour at the university; and race relations between the youth of South Africa.

Data

To perform this study, the paper critically analyses newspaper articles from major South African newspapers, university management statements emailed out to Wits' mailing list between 14th and 24th of October, the blog of the Wits Workers Solidarity Committee, and a pamphlet handed out by protesters with details of the first meeting on the 14th of October 2015. Additionally, self-taken photographs of protest spaces were taken and selected for analysis based on their capacity to best illustrate the interactions between protesters and their physical space. These photos include photographs of the protesters themselves and of the buildings on Wits main campus. I will supplement my own photographs with images uploaded to twitter within a few days of the aforementioned time frame, under the hashtag #WitsFeesMustFall. A corpus of newspapers was compiled and downloaded using the LexisNexis database, using the search terms '#WitsFeesMustFall', #FeesMustFall together with 'Wits', 'Solomon House', 'Wits University' and 'University of the Witwatersrand'. Select images were taken from the websites of the papers to be analysed alongside the texts based on their availability outside of the text-only corpus, as well as their relevance to the most

prominent themes identified in the overall textual analysis of the corpus. All news articles are dated from 14 October 2015 to 24 October 2015, as the focus of the analysis will be on news coverage during the occupation of Senate House and until one day after the 0% fee increase announcement.

The corpus of newspaper articles comprised of 110 unique articles, downloaded from the online database. The specific search terms were selected to find as many articles as possible that pertained to coverage of protests at the University of the Witwatersrand. While this method worked well enough to gather a large and varied corpus of articles across several major print newspapers, one of the problems encountered was the sometimes transient nature of the articles – in the time between gathering the data and the analysis of it, some newspapers were subsumed by others (such as the *Weekend Post* being archived and taken over *The Herald*), and particular articles were not archived online by the newspapers themselves. This resulted in some articles no longer being available outside of the LexisNexis database, and other articles undergoing minor edits when they got posted online (these edits were often made to the Headlines only, or had minor differences in word count). Since print articles are uploaded to Lexis Nexis within two weeks of publication, this paper will look only at the pre-edited articles that are available on the database – in other words, the analysis will cover the articles as they appeared during the #FeesMustFall protests in October 2015.

CHAPTER FOUR: DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

University Management Statements

Since October 2015, the Wits University campus has been everything from a neutral meeting ground, to a temporary and self-sufficient protester commune, to a highly-policed war zone. Although violence and heavy police presences have come to characterize the 2016 protests, the gatherings at Wits during 2015 managed to avoid such escalation – instead, where students and university management seemed to clash the most was the actual mode of engagement. The administrative building of Senate House was occupied for almost the entire duration of the protest, with occupying students insisting that management "come down" from their offices to speak to the protesters in person. Instead, the university management's preferred mode of communication was the sending of mass emails to the university mailing list, comprised mainly of enrolled students, staff and parents. A total of 22 emails from Wits University Management were sent to the student and staff body from the 14th of October to the 3rd of November 2015, and an additional three were sent by the Wits Student Representative Council (SRC). The focus of this paper's analysis is on the emails sent between the 14th and the 23rd of October (see Appendix), from day one of the protests to the day a zero percent fee increase was announced.

The very first email sent from management on the 14th of October encapsulates most of the recurring themes of following emails, and many phrases are repeated verbatim multiple times over the course of protest. Some of these recurring discourses include, but are not limited to: adherence to rules and policy; minority versus majority; safety and security; and the prestige of the 'Academic Project'. The stance of the University is firmly laid down in this

first communication, and seems to be addressed to members of the Wits community (staff, students, parents and others) who were *not* involved in the disruption – in fact, management is emphatic from the get-go that they perceived the protest as being the whims of a minority group. The subsequent emphasis on the 'minority' status of the protesters operated in tandem with numerous descriptions of the gatherings as "unofficial", "unsanctioned", and "[violating] the protest policy" – this framing served as a de-legitimization strategy that underplay the scale and the validity of the protest. In the following paragraph from the first statement (see Appendix, email 1), one can observe this strategy being used to underpin Management's disapproving stance on the protests:

> The majority of our 32 500 students and 5 000 staff want to continue teaching, learning and preparing for the upcoming examinations. It is unacceptable for the majority of our staff and students to be held ransom by a minority. We will take the necessary action in line with our policies and procedures to create an environment that allows teaching and learning to continue.

The use of quantification ("32 500 students and 5 000 staff") can serve two primary functions: firstly, to underscore the general size of the university body and, implicitly, the prowess of the institution; and secondly, to assert the subsequent claim that the protesters are a minority – specifically, a minority that is illegitimate in their show of dissent. Throughout many of the statements, the perceived majority status of non-protesters is utilized as leverage against the actions of the protesters, with the implication that the wishes of a minority group – regardless of what those wishes may be – by default cannot warrant any disruption to an institution's functioning. Machin and Mayr (2012:37) describe the

discursive phenomenon of *overlexicalisation*, wherein there is an abundance of words and phrases present in a text that describe a singular concept or subject as a way of emphasizing it. This is a strategy of repetition without actually repeating the same word too many times, and serves a particular ideological function – such as pinpointing something unconventional, or highlighting ideological differences. In the case of the excerpt above, one can see that Management utilizes a statistically-oriented approach, hoping that the quoted number will be reassuring to concerned students, staff and parents. If the readers of the email can be convinced that the protesters – earlier in the statement vaguely referred to as "groups of students" – make up a minority, then Management can paint the university as being undaunted and capable of functioning as normal.

This emphasis on continued functioning is also subject to heavy repetition, even in just this first statement. In a relatively short email (362 words), there are eight occasions where attention is drawn to the disruption or desired continuation of "teaching and learning" or "the academic programme" (see Appendix, Email 1):

1. …they have also disrupted teaching and other academic activities from occurring.
2. …in which lectures were again disrupted and had to be cancelled.
3. …there has been an overall disruption to the academic programme of the University.
4. It is an orchestrated attempt to prevent the University from functioning…
5. …this cannot happen at the expense of the rights of students and staff members to learn and work…

6. The majority […] want to continue teaching, learning and preparing for the upcoming examinations…
7. …to create an environment that allows teaching and learning to continue.
8. …to create a free and safe environment in which we can continue our academic programme.

Extracts (4) and (5) get repeated in Email 2 as well (see Appendix). It is clear that the Management has identified smooth functioning of the university as one if its highest priorities, and explicitly refers to the disruption thereof as a constitutional rights violation. This position is strengthened by de-legitimization elsewhere in the statement:

> The protest violates the protest policy of the University and our student rules. It is an orchestrated attempt to prevent the University from functioning, and it contravenes our agreements with student leaders and other stakeholders over the years. It is also a clear violation of South Africa's Constitution and Bill of Rights. We recognise that students have a right to protest, but this cannot happen at the expense of the rights of students and staff members to learn and work in a safe environment.

The first sentence states that the protest is in violation of the university's protest policy. Since no link to this policy - or any document where it can be found - is provided, this statement is expected to be taken as a given. A link to "1) the Principles and Values Regarding Protest, 2) the change in the Student Code of Conduct and 3) the Guidelines for Student Protest that have been endorsed by Senate and Council" is eventually provided in a later statement on the 15th of October, a day after the protests began (see Appendix, email 7).

If university policy was not enough of an authority, Management goes on to wield the legal power of "South Africa's Constitution and Bill of Rights". The explicit mention of *which* country's Constitution and Bill of Rights is an odd clarification. If just "*the* constitution" had been written, a reader would easily have inferred the nation in question. Nevertheless, its inclusion is not simply trivial – it is an invocation of a powerful and non-negotiable legal force; that of a country that takes pride in its post-Apartheid constitution. Both the Constitution and the Bill of Rights have been lauded as progressive compared to those of other modern countries. Interestingly, Management goes on to acknowledge that students also have the right to protest – however, a distinction has been drawn about which right takes priority in this instance. In this case, that is the right to "learn and work". So far, management has taken up a pragmatic stance that prioritizes the functioning of the university, which later on evolves into a concern about the quality and reputation of the institution. As for the protest itself, it is addressed in this first statement in only the most minimal sense. It is only the second statement (see Appendix, email 2) that Management provides a more detailed – even somewhat sympathetic – acknowledgement of the protest's purpose. Their first communication with the public, however, give the initial impression that the protests are illegitimate, inconvenient and even criminal:

> It is unacceptable for the majority of our staff and students to be held ransom by a minority.

The associations of holding something "ransom" are unequivocally negative – the implication being made my Management here is that the protesters have taken threatening action toward the university in order to get what they want. Arguably, this the very point of most

protest action. As the history of resistance seems to suggest, governments and similarly powerful institutions are rarely swayed by anything less than a direct threat to their continued functioning. This is the reason that occupations, boycotts, sanctions and even violence are hallmarks of almost all influential protest movements – if the target of the movement is not somehow hamstringed by the protests, then there is little incentive to meet any demands. Management's choice to compare the protester's actions to the crime of holding something ransom is another way of de-legitimizing them - despite not being a media outlet, one can argue that Wits management is invoking the protest paradigm by using script of crime to describe the protester's actions. This also calls attention to the protest's unplanned and disruptive nature – which, in some minds, is an inappropriate way of highlighting the issue of fee increases. The choice of comparison to a "ransom" also potentially comes from the initial strategy employed by the protesters to prevent access into and out of the university for the entire day – protesters blocked vehicle boom gates and certain pedestrian entrances with their bodies; some electing to lie in front of vehicles or gates to prevent passage. Many non-protesters, including student and staff members, reported harassment and verbal abuse from protesters when they attempted to leave. This strategy started the movement off to a rather contentious start – which is clearly reflected in Management's initial attitude – and responses to the protests on social media were extremely varied. Having been a student at the time, with many of my social media connections being fellow university-going peers, I recall the days of #FeesMustFall as being extremely divisive. While many people I followed on platforms such as Facebook and Twitter were in support of the protests, many others were extremely vocal about their distaste for them – in most instances, these echoed the sentiments of the statement released by

Management, in that concerns over the functioning of the university and the education of non-protesting students came up frequently in debates. For those opposed to the #FMF protesters, disruption and violence were considered impulsive and short-sighted, and students not involved with the protests lamented the cancellation of classes and postponement of crucial end-of-year exams. Much of these criticisms were also hedged with a disclaimer of "support" for the message of the protest – that fees should indeed be more accessible – however, the actual protest methods of #FMF could not be accepted by those whose education was being disrupted by the shutdowns.

To close off the first email statement, there is a marked pronoun shift in the opening sentence of the final paragraph:

> I trust that we have your support and that you will work with us to create a free and safe environment in which we can continue our academic programme. We will continue to keep you updated during the course of the day.

This sentence is the one and only instance of 'I' appearing in any of the statements; elsewhere, the pronoun 'we' was used instead – including in statements that are signed as 'Adam Habib, Vice-Chancellor and Principal' instead of as 'Executive Management'. It is possible that the urgency of releasing the statement resulted in a minor pronoun slip on the part of author – which is presumably Adam Habib – however, it still serves to interpolate the reader in more personal way. Generally, the use of "we"/"our" pronouns when speaking on behalf of an institution serves as a way of positioning the university as an amicable, responsible and "thinking/feeling" entity (Bernard, 2016). Here, management is entreating the reader to join its 'side'; that is, the side of a university that values education, safety and

the continuation of academic programme. These are positive values that a reasonable person would be hard-pressed to reject, and this is precisely why Management weaves this into their closing words. The reader is made to feel like they are morally (and even legally) correct in their support of the university, as the university only wants what is best for the majority. The repeated assurances of safety and security, which is in later statements reinforced with the threat of police presence, carry with them the implication that the possibility of violence is a given during protest time (Godsell, Lepere, Mafoko & Nase, 2016:115). There is no explicit mention that student protesters were violent or even plan to be, but Management nevertheless ensures that their first statement acts as a preventative measure against panic. The condemnation of violence is a running theme during the 2015 #FMF and served as an additional de-legitimization strategy.

Along with the de-legitimization strategies already discussed, one sentence stands out in the first paragraph (see Appendix, Email 1):

> Some lecture theatres were also vandalised overnight.

This follows a summary of events the previous night, where a smaller protest had begun on another campus. Until this point, Management comfortably used the active voice to describe the protesters' blockading of the main campus – however, the above statement is written in the passive voice. There is no agent in this sentence; rather, the agency is implied without making a direct accusation. Since there was no way of proving a connection between the vandalism and the protesters, Management elected to insert this information for the target audience to draw their own conclusions – and this fits into the broader 'Safety-and-Security' narrative that any violations of campus rules and policy would be inexcusable. Overall, this

first statement by Wits management lay down a thematic foundation for all statements that followed it: the prioritization of rules, policy and order; the smooth continuation of the academic programme; and the questioning of the protest's legitimacy. These are repeated or expanded upon over the course of the emails and appear alongside Management's shifting opinion on the movement over time.

The second statement sent out on the 14th of October was a lot more robust (see Appendix, email 2). While certain points were repeated – some paragraphs verbatim - Management also elaborated on their own positionality on the issue of tuition fee increases; in particular, they address the more subjective motivations of the student protesters, and this is reflected in the choice of words:

> We are very mindful of the burden that the fee increases place on students and their families, and the distress and outrage that this causes. However, we are forced to implement these increases because of the above inflation increases in costs related to infrastructure; utilities, including lights and water; and the falling rand-dollar exchange rate, which has resulted in a substantial increase in the amount of money that we pay for all library books, journals, electronic resources and research equipment. At the same time, we have received a below inflation increase in subsidy from government. All of this information has been made available to the SRC in our consultations over the last six months.

While the first sentence references the subjective experiences and emotional toll of financial difficulty – as indicated by the use of "burden", "distress" and "outrage" – the remainder of the paragraph reverts immediately to a much more clinical tone. As Management segues into

describing the practical fiscal problems that an institution faces, the register changes to fit this. Notably, the paragraph provides a rather lengthy list of expenditure and explanations for lack of funding (the accountability of which is foisted onto the government) and highlights the financial responsibilities of a University. A few lines later, it goes on to say:

> …we are confronted with the costs, and if we do not make the required increases, then the quality of our educational offerings is likely to be severely compromised.

With that, it is implied that the calibre of the institution is at risk, and not only the education of those enrolled. Management does not budge on this position, even in the late stages of the protest. On the 19th of October, Management circulated an email that reported back on a day-long meeting between University Council members (see Appendix, Email 11). Here, there is an attempt to reconcile the wishes of the university to retain high-quality functioning, and the wishes of the protesters to make tertiary education more financially accessible:

> Council recognises the absolute priority of the academic project and the international stature that the University, as an African university, enjoys. It is especially important for Wits to retain its premier academic status given the fact that we have a large number of poor students who are entitled, as are all others, to receive quality education. Council does, however, agree with students that the large fee increases are now a barrier to access for talented but financially stressed students who are prevented from realising their ambitions.

The aforementioned preoccupation with the university's reputation is made much clearer in the above extract – in fact, the academic project is now explicitly referred to as an "absolute priority". Beyond that, the statement introduces a new discourse into its self-appraisal: that

of the 'African University' and the identity that this implies. Not only does the university take pride in its "international stature", but it also highlights its African identity. A look at the university's website reveals that Wits wants to craft an identity as a leading educational institution on the continent of Africa, as well as being prestigious enough to be relevant globally. The 'About Wits' section of the website uses terms such as "global" or "international" very liberally, while also highlighting its relationships to other African institutions, alliances and projects ("About Wits University", n.d.). Such a strong identification with Africa does, however, come at the risk of being challenged by critics of the university – in this case, Fallists – as it should follow that a proudly African university should be accessible to the people it claims kinship to. This is possibly what management attempts to address in the above paragraph, by sympathetically addressing the financial exclusion faced by many students in the country. Here, Management moves to bridge the gap that had formed between the students and institution, which up until this point had been manifesting as an antagonistic relationship. Unfortunately, this was not so easily alleviated, as protests and shut-downs continued on campus even after the zero percent fee increase was announced days later.

The student protesters' frustration with the management stemmed partly from the university council's reluctance to meet with them in person on the ground floor of Senate House. The following extract was taken from the aforementioned circular that came with the following disclaimer, just before the report began:

> Our response was developed at a full day Council meeting on Sunday, 18 October 2015. However, given the storming of Senate House, which runs contrary to the spirit

> of the agreement and our engagement, Council is regrettably no longer in a position to report in person.

Here, the occupation of Senate House is described by Management as a "storming", meaning they perceived it as sudden and aggressive, and the word holds strong connotations with battle or war. In Email 6 (see Appendix), management wrote that it was "confident that the students will stand down from the main gates" – where the act of 'standing down' is commonly associated with armies and battles as well. This way of framing the situation is comparable to the War Journalism habits of the media and indicates a negative evaluation of the protesters – however, some efforts were made by management to indicate compromise and understanding. In Email 11, management included statements that acknowledged protester grievances and pointed to processes of conflict resolution:

> 9. It is especially important for Wits to retain its premier academic status given the fact that we have a large number of poor students who are entitled, as are all others, to receive quality education. Council does, however, agree with students that the large fee increases are now a barrier to access for talented but financially stressed students who are prevented from realising their ambitions.
> 10. Heard from Council Exco, as agreed, who advanced the position put forward by students, regarding the hardships that will be created by an above inflation increase in student fees and their demand for a 0% increase.
> 11. Recognised the rationale for a 0% increase, given the position put forward by students that an above inflation increase is extremely onerous on students and their families in the current economic climate.

12. Recognised that above inflation increases over a number of years have created a burden of higher education costs that is becoming increasingly difficult for students and their families to sustain.

Management negotiates the University's position in relation to the new strides made by the #FMF protests. At this point in the movement, the possibility for protester demands actually being met was becoming much more plausible – nationwide shut downs, marches and arrests in the name of the movement had put significant pressure on both universities and the government. It was at this point that the statements from Wits management began to take on a tone that tried to balance its rational, authoritative voice with a voice that more closely resembled that of the students. The above extracts show an effort to humanize and validate the students – they have families, burdens, hardships and ambitions – as well as indicate a successful negotiation between them and the university's Council, where demands and concerns were acknowledged.

These adjustments to management's narrative of the protests reflect the dynamism of protester-target interactions over the course of a prolonged protest movement. Over time, as the protests cemented themselves as a persistent national movement, the management statements began to reflect more sympathetic views towards the demands of #FMF, while still committing to discursive strategies that presented Wits as a reliable, rational authority concerned with safety and academics. Certain points were re-iterated throughout, such as the emphasis on protocol, the preservation of the academic programme or disapproval of gatherings inside Senate House; but after several days of occupation and disruption to University functioning, management began to weave discourses that were common among protesters into their statements. Certain elements remained consistent as other discourses

and attitudes were introduced, and there have been attempted reconciliations between the more emotionally-driven motives of the protesters, and the business-minded rationale of Wits Council. These statements paint only a small part of the picture of #FeesMustFall, but offer the perspective of a protest target – or one of them, at least. While the responsibility of tuition fee decreases is understandably beyond the scope of just one university, the protesters were aware of how Wits self-identifies: a "remarkable university that is internationally distinguished for its excellent research, high academic standards and commitment to social justice" ("About Wits University", n.d.). To pressure an institution of high calibre, that prides itself on its African-ness, would be to pressure a much broader audience as well, including a government that handles funding to the universities. If social justice is indeed on the agenda of Wits University, then the demands of #WitsFeesMustFall carry even greater weight and influence when they are made to the university's most powerful members. The way university management handles a protest arguably holds as much sway as the actions of the protesters themselves, and an imbalance in the dialogue can result in chaos, stalemates or tarnished reputations – as opposed to fostering reconciliation and resolution.

Documents from the protesters

14 October Pamphlet

The protesters of #FeesMustFall (#FMF) were largely comprised of enrolled students and university staff, including professors and workers. Aside from the resources of the Student

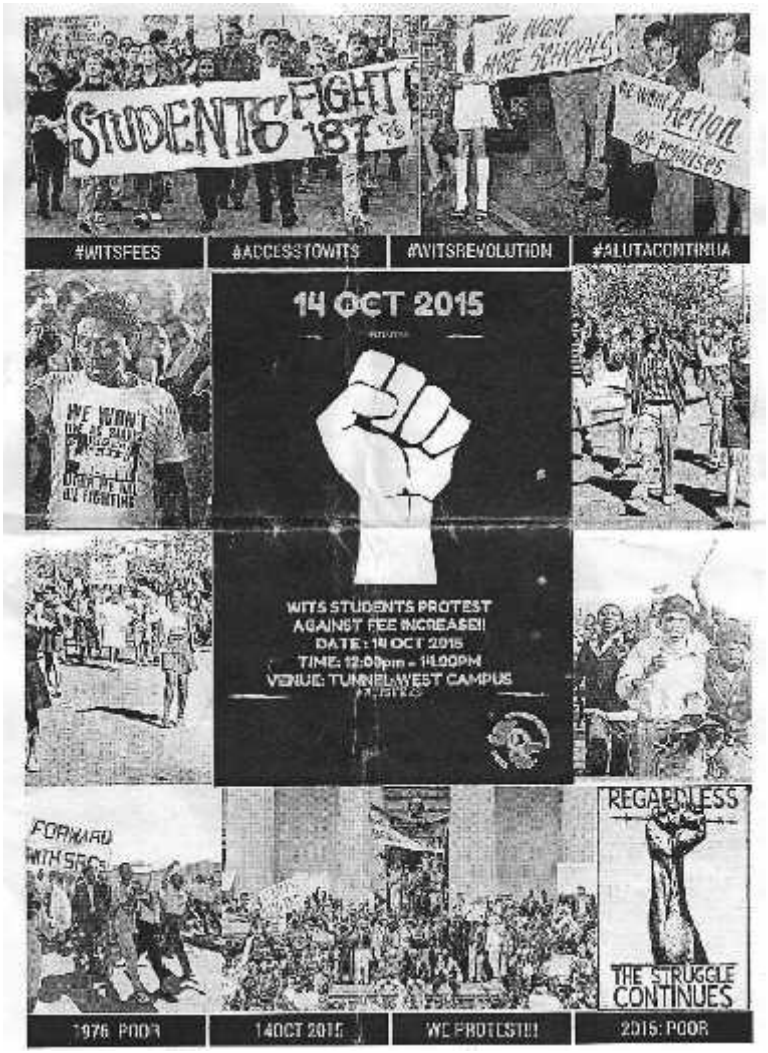


Figure B: Pamphlet (front)

Representative Council (SRC), the protesters had few resources was not a spontaneous protest – organisers at Wits had planned a date, time and venue for the first demonstrations to take place. Shortly before the 14th of October 2015, a pamphlet began to circulate detailing the intention and logistical details of a 'WITS STUDENT PROTEST AGAINST FEE INCREASE!!' The front of the pamphlet is comprised of a collage of images from various protest

movements around the world, and from different time periods; the back of the pamphlet is text with information about the protest's purpose, statistics about tuition fees, and where/when the protests were scheduled to take place.

The front of the pamphlet is a multi-modal plethora of discourses and ideas. It is laid out such that centre of the page is a black rectangle, with white text and a graphic of a raised fist – a symbol commonly taken on by oppressed groups to signal defiance or revolution. The text provides a date, time and venue, and an interpolation to readers: "WITS STUDENTS PROTEST AGAINST FEE INCREASE!!'. In the bottom right corner of this block is the logo of the Wits SRC, indicating an 'official' endorsement of this demonstration. Other small black rectangles frame the top and bottom rows of images. The top row consists of several hashtags associated with the protest – or rather, the hashtags that the protesters or pamphlet designers *intended* for the protest. These are: #WitsFees, #AccessToWits, #WitsRevolution and #AlutaContinua. None of these hashtags ever seemed to reach the mainstream especially once the 'X Must Fall' format became recontextualised and came into common usage. The bottom row reads: "1976: POOR", "14Oct 2015", "WE PROTEST!!!" and "2015: POOR". The blocks that reference the years 1976 and 2015 seek to draw a comparison between the tuition fee protests and the Soweto Uprising of 1976, where Black high school children demonstrated against an oppressive Apartheid education policy. This is further highlighted with the immediately surrounding images, four of which are from this uprising. Moving away from the centre, the images at the top and bottom rows are not from the June 16th uprising but are instead from various other protests, both local and international: student protests against Proposition 187 in California, USA in 1994; the Southall Youth Movement in London in the 1960s and 70s; the rent boycotts in South African townships in

the 1980s; and the City University protests against tuition fee increases in New York, in 1989. Finally, in the bottom right corner is an image of a poster from around 1977 that circulated in anti-Apartheid activist circles. The artist of this poster is unknown, but the South African Democracy Education Trust (SADET) website ("SADET Gallery", n.d.) speculates that it is a lithograph made by the SRC of the University of Cape Town.

The poster is in English, and bears the phrase "Regardless/ The struggle continues", with an illustration of another raised fist clutching barbed wire. The English phrase is a translation of 'A Luta Continua' – the hashtag of which appears at the top of the pamphlet – which was a Portuguese rallying cry used in the Mozambican war of independence from Portuguese colonial powers. South African struggle activists adopted this phrase for their own anti-Apartheid movement, and the phrase continues to be used by contemporary South African activists, including those of #FeesMustFall. Although 'A luta continua' was re-semiotised by different protest movements since the 1970s, it has retained the central discursive thread of de-colonisation across anti-Apartheid activism and #FeesMustFall – furthermore, #FMF's predecessor, #RhodesMustFall, was a protest chiefly concerned with the de-colonisation of physical space by removing a statue of Cecil John Rhodes from UCT's campus. The inclusion of a photo from South African rent boycotts of the 1980s also runs along the thread of anti-Apartheid activism that connects these contemporary youth protests with South Africa's protest legacy. So far, this pamphlet has drawn upon discourses of de-colonisation without explicitly mentioning it, and has positioned the #WitsFees movement (as it was then known) as being a spiritual successor to the struggle against Apartheid.

There is also an apparent awareness of how this movement is driven by and for the "youth" – particularly, young people who have decided to stand against the jeopardising of their education by an oppressive system. The other protest movements referenced in the photos are all concerned in some way with that broader theme: the protest against Proposition 187 was taken up by university students who opposed – among other things - the exclusion of undocumented immigrants in public higher education, which would have resulted from the Proposition passing in government. The Southall Youth Movement of the 1960s and 70s comprised of young Indian people speaking out against racism against their communities. The 1989 City University protests in New York bear a striking resemblance to #FMF – students demonstrating against a $200 tuition fee increase blocked traffic, occupied several administration buildings of their university, and even stayed on campus overnight. In another parallel to #FMF at Wits, a target of student frustration (in this case, New York's then-Governor Mario M. Cuomo) was unwilling to meet students inside an occupied university building, here reported on by the New York Times:

> ''We don't want to meet with Mario Cuomo so he can give flowery speeches,'' Mark Torres, a student leader at City College, said at an afternoon news conference. ''We want to negotiate the budget.''
>
> Governor Cuomo said at a news conference in Albany yesterday that he was willing to meet with students but not in the buildings they had seized.
>
> ''We can't encourage violation of the law,'' the Governor said. ''We cannot do it in a way that makes illegal acts effective.'' (McKinley, 1989)

The main takeaways from the above passage are that 1) student protesters do not trust the authority to be transparent, and 2) the authority figure in question refuses to meet protesters in an occupied building, while also calling the occupation illegal. As we have seen in the analysis of the university management statements, emphasis on the unsanctioned nature of the protests was utilized by Wits Council members as well. Unlike in the American example, protests are never referred to as illegal, but they are described as unsanctioned or unofficial. Additionally, a similar theme is seen in South African newspaper article (Nkosi, 2015) of this relationship between the University and the #FMF protesters:

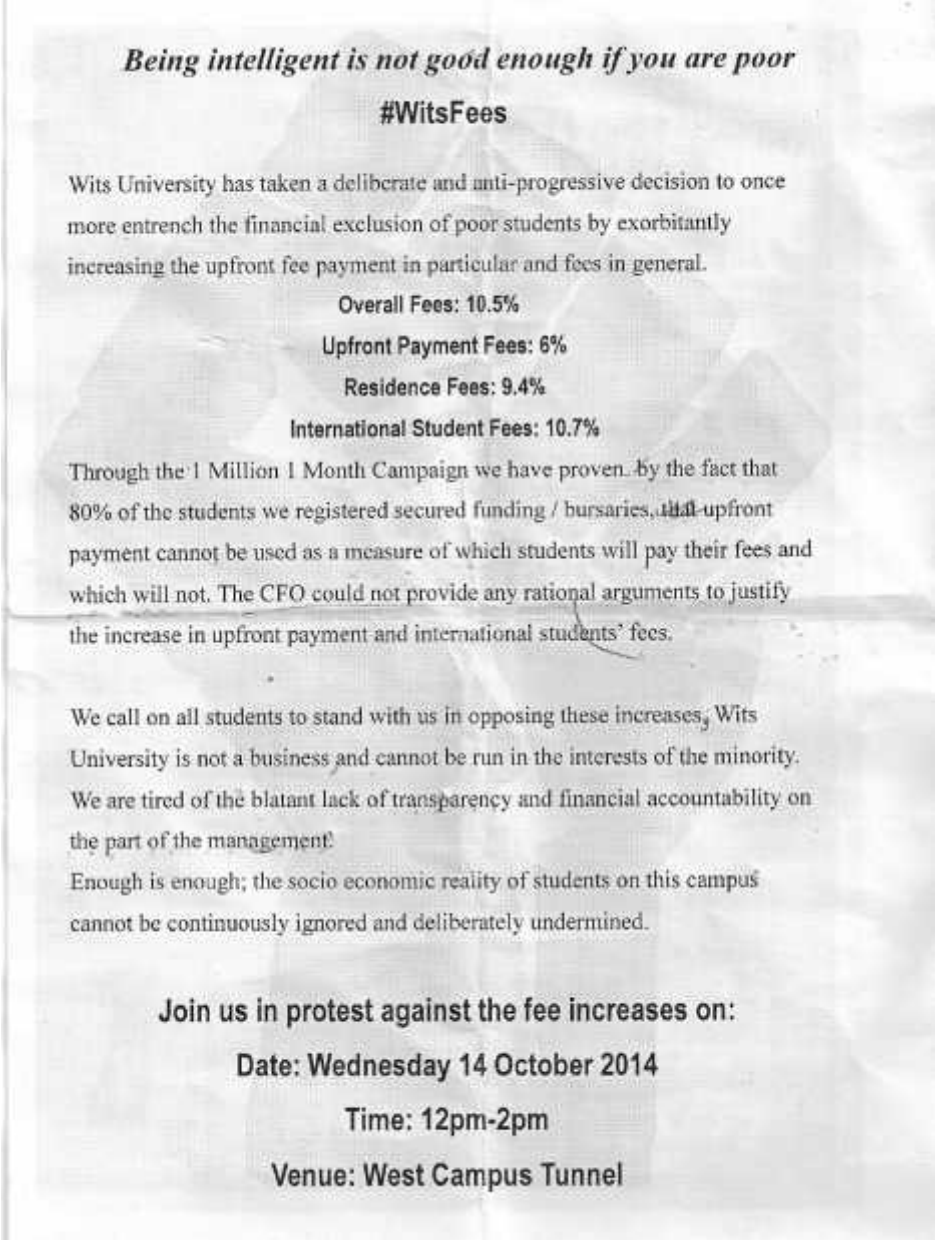
13. The Witwatersrand University's council indicated yesterday (Monday) it would not meet with protesting students inside Senate House.

    Once on campus, students proceeded to occupy the concourse of Senate House, Wits' administrative mega building that also houses vice-chancellor Adam Habib's office. Student leader Vuyani Pambo of the Economic Freedom Fighters Student Command told the Mail & Guardian the protest was continuing because Wits management and council have still not indicated they would meet students in the Senate House concourse. "We're waiting for management. We don't know what they are saying, they haven't communicated to us. We're still standing on the position that we want 0% [fee increases]," Pambo said."[Higher education and training minister] Blade Nzimande is saying he'll cap [the 2016 varsity increases] to 6%, we're saying 0%. "We don't know how he confuses 6% with 0%. We want 0%," Pambo said, referring to Nzimande's recommendation to vice-chancellors at a meeting with them in Cape Town on Wednesday.

14. "The reality of the matter is that [university vice-chancellor] Adam Habib doesn't address us as students, but rather he addresses the media and the public. So what we wanted is the public to see and hear our cries. That's the point of demonstrating just outside the university…"

In both instances, protesters are presented as expressing disdain for figures like Marco Cuomo, Blade Nzimande and Adam Habib – people in positions of power that protesters perceive to be complicit in, or apathetic to, the problems in question. Mcebo Dlamini, a student leader of #FMF and former president of the Wits SRC, critiques the engagement that Adam Habib has with protesters, claiming that "he addresses the media and the public" instead of addressing the protesters "as students". Here, Dlamini creates a distinction between the students and the public to highlight that Habib is less concerned with fruitful discussion and more with the image of the University – that is, "flowery speeches" that students will not find productive or validating of their struggles. The ANC's finance minister, Blade Nzimande, receives similar treatment in the quote by Wits' EFF leader Vuyani Pambo, who wonders how Nzimande "confuses" the demands stipulated by students by offering a compromise of a 6% increase instead of zero percent. Dlamini and Pambo each single out an individual to represent "the opposition" – Nzimande and Habib act as figureheads for complex, far-reaching systems of governance that are barriers to a zero percent increase in fees. This theme is repeated several times over the course of the reporting, and is discussed in a later chapter.

The identification of antagonists in the protest narrative is evident in the pamphlet as well. The back page is pure text that outlines the reason behind the gathering. The text is set on



Being intelligent is not good enough if you are poor

#WitsFees

Wits University has taken a deliberate and anti-progressive decision to once more entrench the financial exclusion of poor students by exorbitantly increasing the upfront fee payment in particular and fees in general.

Overall Fees: 10.5%

Upfront Payment Fees: 6%

Residence Fees: 9.4%

International Student Fees: 10.7%

Through the 1 Million 1 Month Campaign we have proven by the fact that 80% of the students we registered secured funding / bursaries, that upfront payment cannot be used as a measure of which students will pay their fees and which will not. The CFO could not provide any rational arguments to justify the increase in upfront payment and international students' fees.

We call on all students to stand with us in opposing these increases, Wits University is not a business and cannot be run in the interests of the minority. We are tired of the blatant lack of transparency and financial accountability on the part of the management!

Enough is enough; the socio economic reality of students on this campus cannot be continuously ignored and deliberately undermined.

Join us in protest against the fee increases on:

Date: Wednesday 14 October 2014

Time: 12pm-2pm

Venue: West Campus Tunnel

Figure C: Pamphlet (back)

faint background of the same raised fist symbol that appeared on the front.

The first line, in larger text than the main body, reads "Being intelligent is not good enough if you are poor". This immediately sets up the main argument of the rest of the pamphlet,

which concerns the exclusionary nature of high tuition fees. 'Wits University' is immediately identified as the antagonist that took "a deliberate and anti-progressive decision" by raising the fees by 10.5%. This first paragraph demonstrates a level of overlexicalisation in order to convince the reader that the University deserves to be challenged for their practices: the decision to raise fees is "deliberate", the increase is "exorbitant", and it leads to the "financial exclusion of poor students". There is a great deal of emphasis on how poorer students are disadvantaged by inflation and the decision is solely attributed to the University – as opposed to other institutions, such as the government and world finance. Other fee increases are cited below the first paragraph, re-enforcing the point that tuition will become more expensive for all students, which hopefully can recruit more people to the cause of the protest and strengthen the movement, thereby increasing the chances of results.

The author(s) of the pamphlet make use of the pronoun "we" later on the text, echoing the 'WE PROTEST!!!' in the front. In this instance, it says that "we have proven…that upfront payment cannot be used as a measure…", though the "we" in question is not specified anywhere. It could refer to the protest organisers, the Student Representative Council that spearheaded the 1 Million 1 Month campaign, or to the student body in general as a way of including the reader in the cause. The aforementioned campaign was an initiative by Wits' SRC to raise funds for students that could not afford tuition. The campaign was highly successful and raised two million Rand, and this success is being used here as a self-legitimisation strategy from the protesters. This author(s) also quote a figure of '80% of the students we registered' having been successful in getting funding for their studies after receiving assistance with the upfront registration fee – however, there is no specification of how many students comprises this eighty percent. The use of *aggregation* here encourages

approval from the reader without having to cite any precise numbers. Furthermore, the fee increases are again criticised as being contrary to the interests of the university; they are not "rational" and cannot be justified by the nameless CFO (Chief Financial Officer) mentioned in the text, leading one to believe that the protesters are the ones offering rational action during the funding crisis. However, the "arguments" of the CFO are suppressed in the text, so the reader cannot evaluate the rationality of the argument themselves.

The third paragraph interpellates the reader and asks them to "stand with" the protesters against the business-like practices of Wits University. It is notable that the flyer refers to the "interests of the minority" – the minority versus majority argument is one that was utilized by Wits management in their initial statements, where they claimed that the *protesters* were the antagonistic minority. By contrast, the pamphlet avoids specifying who the 'minority' actually is, but it does align this minority with those who run the university like a "business". From the protester's perspective, business interests are incompatible with the purpose of Universities – the implication here being that Wits currently runs on a for-profit model, rather than on a model that prioritises accessible education. Wits is also accused of not being honest or accountable for their financial decisions: "We are tired of the blatant lack of transparency and financial accountability". Throughout this pamphlet, the university is being represented as a distant, autonomous, profit-driven business entity that is disconnected from the needs of the people and cannot – or will not – provide adequate explanation for its operational choices. In other words, the pamphlet critiques the practices

of an institution that *should* be public, but instead runs more like a private business that disprivileges poorer students who are "ignored and undermined".

In general, the language on the pamphlet tends toward a more academic tone that draws upon concepts and vocabulary found in fields like politics, economics and sociology; terms like "anti-progressive", "financial accountability" and "socio economic reality" signal that the author(s) of the text want to appeal to the very specific university demographic: young, tertiary-educated students with progressive politics. While it is interwoven with these academic concepts, it is not entirely opaque, and the most important "recruiting" points are either highlighted or written plainly:

- "Being intelligent is not good enough if you are poor"
- "We call on students to stand with us in opposing these increases…"
- "Enough is enough…"
- "Join us in protest against the fee increases"

The first and last points above appear at the top and bottom of the page respectively, and are written in a larger, bolder text. This would ensure that those people who are interested in protesting the main point of the protest – fee increases – can quickly and easily understand the gist and logistical details of the protest on the given date. The back page is more of a supplement to the pamphlet than its main focus – this is relegated to a picture-heavy and more eye-catching front page that uses Apartheid and general protest imagery to illicit an emotional response from readers. The intended target of this pamphlet's distribution is Wits

students, who are likely to have any or all of the following identities: Black, South African, a student, progressive, or poor.

Wits Workers Solidarity Committee blog

One of the most prominent issues on the agenda of #FeesMustFall was that of outsourcing. Prior to the 14th of October, a national demonstration was held on the 6th that specifically spoke out against how outsourcing practices were being used by Wits, and that they should be ceased in the interests of worker protection – this issue had been pursued by staff, students and workers at the university for years prior to October 6th, with the Wits Workers Solidarity Committee (WWSC) forming in 2011 and thereafter spearheading the efforts to end outsourcing, as well as other problems faced by workers such as racism and low wages. The success of #FeesMustFall in addressing it led to change in the institution's employment policy. Before these changes, the majority of workers involved in repairs, maintenance, cleaning and gardening were not directly employed by Wits and such services were usually outsourced to external commercial companies. This practice is not unique to Wits, and has been in effect since the 1990s at several prestigious universities around South Africa. The switch from Black labour under Apartheid to contractual labour provided by private companies seemed a natural progression in the 'corporatisation' of South African's economy during this time (Duncan, 2014). In addition to the lack of employment benefits such as healthcare or pension, contractual work with commercial businesses does not allow the children of university workers to receive free education at that institution. This was the strongest tie-in between the movement against outsourcing and the later movement against tuition fee increases (which ultimately calls for free education in South Africa as an end-

goal): neoliberal practices of worker exploitation and lack of financial access to higher education.

The WWSC was formed at Wits as a "coalition of workers, staff and students" who are "concerned about the continuing and intensifying injustices against outsourced workers at the university…" and posted semi-regularly on its blog[5] about its campaigns and protests from 2011 until April 2012. Until 2015, the blog did not post at all until May of that year, when it published a post entitled 'MJL Occupation of Wits 11th Floor' (WWSC, 2015). This was the media statement provided by the WWSC regarding an occupation of the 11th floor of offices of the university's Senate House, in protest against the treatment of outsourced workers from MJL, a (now-liquidated) electrical maintenance company. MJL had stopped paying workers their full wages since January 2015, and the university ended their contract with the company – to the detriment of the workers employed there, who had few protections without the University's intervention. This occupation lasted three days and was voluntarily ended by occupiers – however, an interdict was granted to Wits several days later in order to prevent further occupation of the Vice-Chancellor's offices. The WWSC and the United Front (UF), a socialist political party, both decried this interdict and called for its lifting.

No further developments in addressing outsourcing at the university were documented by the WWSC blog until the 14th of October when tuition fee protesters began to disrupt activity at the University – on this day, the blog published several posts including a message of Solidarity from the National Education, Health and Allied Workers' Union (NEHAWU) and

[5] http://witsworkerssolidaritycommittee.blogspot.co.za/

the University Worker's Charter which was presented to university management on the 6th of October. The posts thereafter were related to the fees protests, including a post entitled "Protest Agaist [sic] Fees and Outsourcing" (WWSC, 2015) which contained purely photos from the protests. From this, one can argue that #FMF was a catalyst for revitalising the work being done by the WWSC and provided a greater platform for worker struggles at Wits, since both the #EndOutsourcing movement and #FMF were ultimately rooted in anti-neoliberal ideologies.

The group's charter, which was was posted to the site on the day that #FMF began (WWSC, 2015) is written in such a way that the WWSC's anti-neoliberal politics are clearly expressed. The use of language contrasts the policies of the university against the values of the WWSC – namely, that the committee is an implicitly socialist group that rejects the capitalist tendencies of higher education:

15. The hands of workers built the buildings, laid the roads and produced all the goods in this society
16. The University of Cape Town was the first to retrench and outsource workers, and run the university like a business.
17. Treating workers like human beings is not possible in a university run like a capitalist business. […] The university is part of the public sector. The public sector must be about what people need. The public sector today can be like seeds

> of a different future – a future where everything is collectively owned and organised under workers and community control according to what people need.

Terms and expressions relating to labour, production, workers, and business all come from a pool of discursive resources in the domain of political and economic ideology, especially that of socialism and communism. Non-hierarchical, collectively-owned resources are central tenets of the WWSC's vision and current outsourcing practices are presented as contrary to this goal. The comparison to Wits being run "like a business" is mirrored in the pamphlet distributed by protesters, indicating an intersectional perspective: capitalist



Figure D: Photo (author-taken) of banner overhanging the concourse of Senate House, saying 'We are students not customers".

business practices in what should be a "public sector" service have had far-reaching socio-economic effects on both the employees and the students - or "customers", as some students put it. These *functionalisations* of the social actors on the part of WWSC serves to both differentiate and validate the category of people known as "workers":

18. The workers of today and the mothers and fathers who were the workers of yesterday make society possible.
19. There are cleaners, teachers, caterers, maintenance workers, technicians, administrative workers, gardeners and more.

In (18), not only are they workers, but also mothers and fathers – this prompts a more familiar, sympathetic evaluation of the workers and allows the reader to humanise them; a discursive strategy that is later buttressed by explicit reference to "human beings" in extract (17). Comparisons and references to familial roles – mothers, fathers, brothers, and children – are not uncommon in texts where the creation of solidarity and sympathy is the focus, and the idea of the "Black child" was also utilised by protesters during #FMF for similar purposes:

20. "My bursary can't pay so much money. I have to pay R30 000. Most of us, especially black children, are the first to come to university and having to go home and face

the family - it's very sad. We must chant and study at the same time." (Morrissey, Mkhwanazi & Bega, 2015)

21. "It is painful to be a black child in South Africa, it is worse if you are poor and are from the rural areas," said Dlamini. (Morrissey, Mkhwanazi & Bega, 2015):
22. "This is the liberation of a black child, the honeymoon of 1994, where we were told we're free, is now over," she said. ("Protest 'Threat to poll', 2015)
23. Dlamini said: "Comrades, the honeymoon is over. We are demanding the dignity of the black child…"

Extract (19) moves away from familial terms and functionalises the workers through more specific jobs and roles. By listing these roles and highlighting their importance – since "without them there would be no university" – functionalisation is used here to apply dignity to the listed jobs and combat the lack of visibility and respect faced by workers in these fields. It also serves to legitimise the occupations and by extension, legitimise the grievances put forward by workers during protests (Machin & Mayr, 2012:81-82). Rhetorical devices are peppered into the Charter as well, which interpellate the reader into considering how employment conditions impact more than just the individual employee, but are connected to workers' families and livelihoods:

24. Workers will never be able to send their children to the university that they maintain. It is a life of worrying if you will be able to feed and clothe and school

> your children. […] What will happen to you and your family if your [sic] lose your job?

In particular, the use of a rhetorical question aims to foster personal investment from the reader by appealing to hypothetical desires, fears and a sense of responsibility towards one's family – this raises the stakes of the outsourcing problem, thus raising concern for it. Overall, the appeal to emotion in addition to legitimisation of the jobs/workers in question work together to strengthen the arguments of the WWSC.

Other more specific references to the South African context are also made, which cement this charter's anti-neoliberal position. Both Apartheid and the Marikana strike are used as reference points:

> 25. At Wits, for example, workers were forced to use separate entrances, toilet facilities and banned from using open spaces. Workers are also subjected to racism and verbal abuse.
> 26. Outsourcing continues to reproduce apartheid in universities today.
> 27. In solidarity with the struggle of Marikana workers, we support the demand for a living wage of R12, 500.

The separation of facilities and prohibition from using certain spaces described in (25) echo the well-known segregation laws enforced during Apartheid, where Black citizens were not allowed to use the same facilities as whites. No agent is specified in this extract and the passive voice is used, so no specific person or group is blamed for having "forced" the segregation, nor for verbally abusing the workers – in this way, the point instead tries to re-inforce the pervasive, systematic nature of these poor working conditions at Wits.

Victimisation without direct accusation against any particular individual or group leaves room for the reader to come to their own conclusions, especially about the integrity of Wits as a reputable institution. If particular culprits are anonymized while victims are humanized and foregrounded, the reader is likelier to assume that there is a fundamental flaw in how the University governs itself – and thus threatens the image of Wits, hopefully to the point where these issues are addressed.

Furthermore, (26) openly draws parallels between labour conditions under Apartheid and current outsourcing practices. As discussed in previous chapters, Apartheid is a commonly drawn-upon theme among social justice activists, protest groups, and other progressives who need to provide a frame a reference for racialized violence (whether physical or systemic) - #EndOutsourcing and #FeesMustFall have been no different. The inclusion of Marikana in (27) also shows that it has begun to enter the South African consciousness as well, if not to the same extent as Apartheid quite yet. As Duncan (2014) has observed about the Marikana incident, the more time that progresses after the tragedy, the more people are able to process, contextualize, and eventually re-contextualise for ideological purposes. Working class solidarity underlies the reason for Marikana being mentioned in this charter, and the miner's strike is also occasionally brought up in the sample data of newspapers as a point of reference or discussion – however, it is mentioned somewhat obliquely and rarely elaborated on. It is possible that it is too recent an event to be fully understood as a symptom of broader societal problems associated with neoliberalism, poverty, classism and racism, which are all issues that the miner's strike had in common with #RhodesMustFall, #FeesMustFall, and every service delivery protest in between. Ultimately, these intersections of race and class as they affect accessibility, wages and social marginalization

come down to what the WWSC refer to as "white monopoly capital" (WWSC, 2015) – and that these structures need to 'fall' as well.

Another blog post, published on the 16th of October, outlines the demands of WWSC that align with those of #FMF, and specifically call for Wits to endeavour towards decolonization. It also prefaces the seven-point list of demands with the following:

> We demand the impossible simply because the university has been impossible to us. The time for reasonable demands has lapsed. The impossible is possible! (WWSC, 2015)

What constitutes as "reasonable demands" is not made clear; the reader must presuppose that the demands being made were at some point accused of being unreasonable and impossible – implicitly by the University. Due to this lack of clarification, a structural opposition is created here: some entity must have deemed the demands "impossible", which is why the post needs to invert this claim and re-enforce the stance of the protesters. There is no instance in the university management statements themselves that directly refer to the student demands as impossible or unreasonable, up to and including the 16th of October. However, it is nevertheless implied here student demands arose from how "impossible" the university has been to its constituents which is indicated by "we" and "us", and the post is signed only as "Students United in struggle". Since the WWSC is partly made up of students – at least one of whom is ostensibly a member of the Wits SRC – the personal pronouns likely refer to them in particular. They also position themselves as social actors in confrontation

with the University, but also with the Vice-Chancellor as well. Points 2 and 5 in their list of demands reflect an antagonism towards Adam Habib himself:

> 2. Adam Habib must resign.
>
> […]
>
> 5. There will be no negotiations with Habib over fees.

Demand number 2 in particular was not strongly taken up by #FMF movement as a whole, despite a dislike of Habib being evident on some placards, social media and some quotes given in newspapers. He is individualized and presented as being the sole person responsible for fees negotiation, despite the bureaucracy of the universities involving several stakeholders in the decision-making process. Statements issued by management primarily used the "we/us" pronoun set, even in statements signed by Adam Habib himself, indicating that both groups – the university and protesters – emphasise the collective nature of their respective positions in the discourse. By personalizing and individualizing Adam Habib, this is effect is counteracted and results in simplification of the leadership structure of Wits. The choice to position one's own collective ("the protesters") against a singular, usually authoritative figure ("Habib"), helps to create a sense of strength in numbers; the masses going up against an easily-identifiable antagonist instead of a large institution.

The strategy of aggregation plays into this dynamic as well – the university management statements have already been seen to have used aggregation to cement a position as 'the majority' with its "32 500 students and 5 000 staff". The WWSC blog shows a similar usage of aggregation through another post added on the 16th of October: a statement of solidarity written up by the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (NUMSA), which happens

to be the trade union aligned with the previously-mentioned UF. The statement immediately begins with providing a numerical figure:

> The National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa, on behalf of its 365 000 members, fully backs the ongoing class struggle by Wits University students. (WWSC, 2015)

Giving the figure of 365 000 members supports the idea that protests tend to be validated through their size, and that large numbers can overcome the relative power and influence associated with institutions like corporations, universities or the government. The statement also individualizes figures like Finance Minister Nhlanhla Nene, Adam Habib, and former president Thabo Mbeki, accusing them of failing or refusing to address the problems arising from neoliberalism. Reference to "class struggle" again draws from discourse related to socialist philosophy, wherein the people are urged to govern as a collective and reject authoritarianism, capitalism, and other forces deemed oppressive. Similarly to other posts by WWSC, the statement draws from the vocabulary of socialist politics numerous times ("commodification", "imperialist", "working class", "neoliberal" and "shopfloor") and uses Apartheid as a reference point ("colonial", "former Bantustan areas", and even "Freedom Charter"). It's important to note, however, that this statement by NUMSA does not shy away from promoting its own party-political views:

> The lack of political will by the governing ANC/SACP to roll-out free education, as promised in successive elections, should be a wake-up call to the working-class youth

> to forge a Youth-Worker Alliance within the emerging United Front, in order to force the State to concede to their demands and aspirations.

After levelling criticism against Nhlanhla Nene and Thabo Mbeki from the ANC earlier in the statement, NUMSA goes on to position itself as something of a "solution" to the apathy of current government – which, in this statement, consists of both the ANC and the South African Communist Party (SACP), due to SACP's political alliance with the ruling ANC. Being a party offshoot of NUMSA, the United Front is being offered up as an option to those looking to "forge a Youth-Worker Alliance", a concept that would very pertinent during a youth protest against outsourcing (among other issues) – and therefore, an ideal opportunity for like-minded political parties to recruit and grow through the use of platforms like WWSC and its blog. The UF is certainly not the only party to have taken an interest in the political opportunities presented by #FMF; as EFF and DA politicians were also known to have reached out to student protesters.

So far, certain themes have been rather evident in the types of documents created by Wits students and workers who have been involved with or shown sympathy for the tuition fee protests: discourses of socialism and economic policy have served as a framework for protesters to describe the movement and argue against neoliberal institutions, while references to Apartheid and other protests throughout history are used as ideological reference points to convey particular emotions and associations. All in all, these strategies are employed as a "call to action" for readers, interpellating potential allies to the movement

as well as those with the institutional power to enact change – this as opposed to the placating, damage controlling strategies utilized by the Wits Management statements.

CHAPTER FIVE: NEWSPAPER ANALYSIS

Introduction to Corpus

In an earlier chapter, I mentioned that word choices and sentence structure in journalistic publications are just as ideologically significant as emotionally laden expressions and adjectives. Newspapers that tend towards a neutral, unbiased reporting of events may avoid strategies such as sensationalism, colloquial expressions and open praise/criticism – however, ideological markers can still be found in minor details of the text. Details and quotes that are included or excluded in an article contribute to a particular stance on the part of the newspaper, or provide a case that readers can draw their own conclusions from. For example, the national newspaper *The Mail & Guardian*, displayed rather varied articles regarding the student protests – there were shifting levels of condemnation, support, use of emotional language and coverage of opinions from a variety of sources. With some publications, it can be difficult to say exactly where it stands as a whole, since its individual journalists or contributors will take different approaches to a particular issue. Nevertheless, the ideological work done by articles on protest not to be overlooked, as they can speak to a shared knowledge or perception that is taken for granted. In this paper's analysis of newspaper articles, several broader themes were observed that most newspapers seemed to cover at some point in the protest's lifetime: violence; central figures; and government and institutional power. Since this paper focuses on a qualitative, thematic analysis rather than a quantitative one, the percentage values in the following chart are approximate and

calculated only according to the corpus. From the chart, we see that discussion of important figures or characters from the protest, like politicians or student leaders, were most common in the coverage; this followed by Government, then acts of violence.

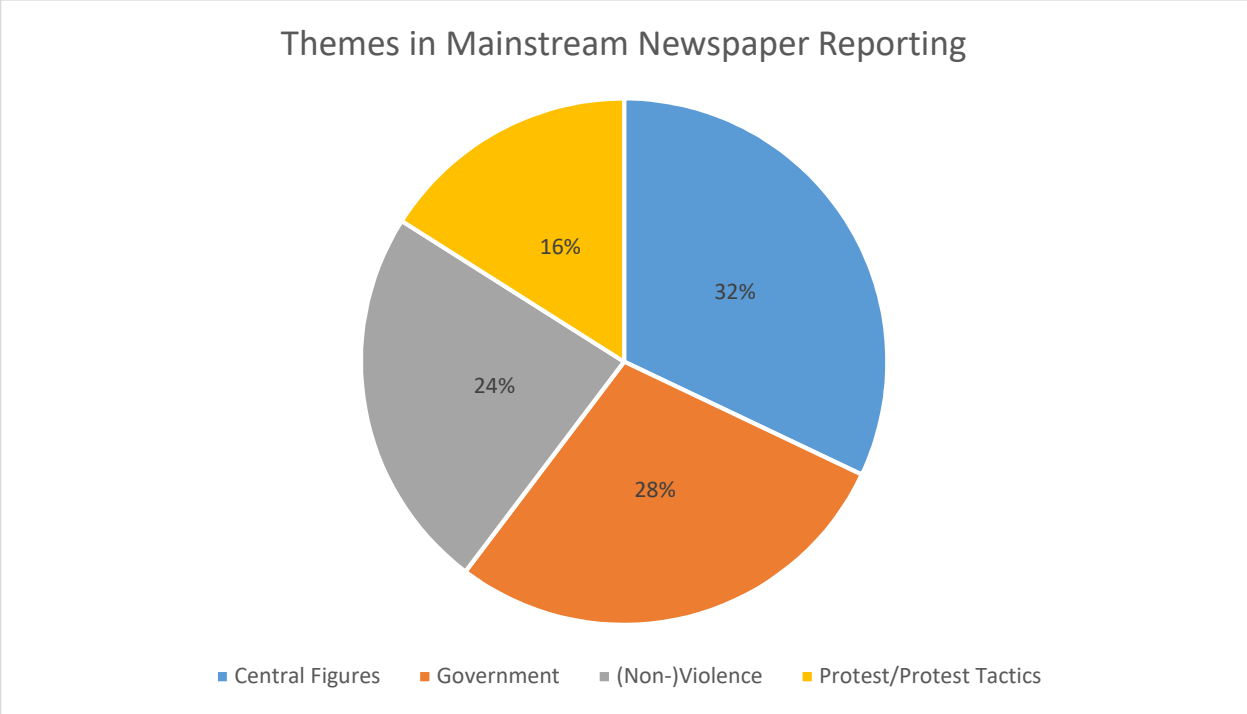


Figure E: Chart showing the approximate distribution of the most prominent themes in the corpus.

The corpus contained articles from sixteen different South African newspapers, both national and regional dailies and weeklies. Nine of these newspapers fall under Independent Media, and their online versions fall under Independent Media's digital domain, IOL.co.za: *Weekend Post, Daily News, Cape Argus, Independent on Saturday, The Mercury, The Star, Sunday Tribune* and *Pretoria News.* Six of the other newspapers form part of the Tiso Blackstar group: *Sowetan* and its tabloid counterpart *Sunday World, Business Day, Daily*

Dispatch, The Herald and *The Times*. The final newspaper is the *Mail & Guardian*, a national weekly paper.

All content uploaded and created for papers under the Independent Media/IOL banner are posted to the IOL website, which shares a singular 'about' page describing the parent company. Articles come from several sources, one of them being the African News Agency newswire, with a minority of content being written by IOL staff members. Newspapers that belong to the Tiso Blackstar group, however, each have a unique biography of their paper available on the online sites. Out of these six papers, two of them make direct of mention of their role during the Apartheid era: *Sowetan*, which puts its origins down as "a liberation struggle publication" that began in 1981; and the *Daily Dispatch*, which claims to have "always been at the forefront of exposing injustice in its region and advocating fair treatment for all South Africans", and has an extensive 'History' tab available on it site. However, the actual Tiso Blackstar Group's website has an 'About Us' page that strongly evokes the corporate language associated with branding, entrepreneurship and entertainment:

> Tiso Blackstar Group is a global company with its roots in Africa, operating market-leading media, broadcast and retail marketing properties. The group has strong exposure to the rapidly growing digital, broadcast and mobile markets, with a leading position in South Africa and a broad footprint across Kenya, Ghana and Nigeria.
>
> The company is South Africa's largest national English publishing group, the second largest digital publisher […] We are also the proud custodians of iconic brands that include the Sunday Times, Sowetan, Financial Mail, The Herald, Gallo Music and Uniprint.

> The Tiso Blackstar Group business model is underpinned by a unique network of assets, dedication to excellence and a strong entrepreneurial focus. We are committed to providing quality content and services to our varied audiences and customers and value to our investors. (Tiso Blackstar Group "About Us", n.d.)

Discourses of globalization, digital media, and commercialization permeate their identity as described in their About page. The newspapers featured therein are referred to as "brands" – a feature of the marketing domain rather than the news domain – and there is an explicit mention of investors being a driving force in the content creation of the group and its subsidiaries. Since Tiso Blackstar is the parent group for five of the newspapers featured in the data, this speaks to the aforementioned background of commercial interests in the South African media industry. The *Sowetan* newspaper's self-identification as a 'liberation struggle publication' seems to highlight the delineation between its political and economic spheres – the history of anti-establishment struggle is being balanced against the neoliberalism of a privately-owned company.

The *Mail & Guardian* joins the aforementioned newspapers in foregrounding its place in Apartheid media censorship history. In fact, it's 'About' page has this to say about its coverage of protests during the era, when the paper still went by the name *The Weekly Mail*:

> It would report news that the South African public was technically not allowed to know, particularly the news of township "unrest" and police repression that was restricted under the State of Emergency laws promulgated by then-president PW Botha in 1985. ("*Mail & Guardian* About Us", n.d.)

Nowadays, the paper considers itself to be a "leading investigative publication, a forum for debate about the country and its politics, and a provider of the top arts and culture coverage". The *Mail & Guardian* yielded 18 unique articles concerning #FMF based on the search terms, which makes it the most frequent newspaper to appear in the data.

While some South African publications might pride themselves on always being on the right side of history, even going so far as to claim that they *advocate* for justice, the journalistic practices that have become routine in news reporting might be contrary to these goals: It is worth questioning how closely newspapers stick to their proposed ideals (if they have any), how much these papers reflect the protest paradigm, and what sources are drawn upon to maintain the much-valued quality of "journalistic objectivity". Objectivity is considered by news media to be a basic requirement in order to be reputable and trustworthy – published pieces need to be rigorously fact-checked, separated from opinion, balanced in whose voices are represented and validated by "official" sources (Duncan, 2014). However, as discussed in an earlier chapter, these conventions need to be challenged lest they only perpetuate the marginalization of certain less powerful voices in society. The rise of alternative sources of news, particularly digital newspapers such as The Daily Maverick and The Daily Vox – which now has a tab on its site specifically for 'Fees Must Fall'-related articles - or even informal social media sites like Twitter, may be a balm to the problems and hegemonies of traditional news media (Rodny-Gumede, 2015). The removal of factors such as a printing costs, parent company demands and other pressures faced by print media can facilitate a diversity of narratives that more accurately reflect the interests and voices of South Africans – and not just those who have social, financial and political power.

(Non-)Violence

The contentious nature of large-scale protests poses a unique problem for South African journalists, particularly those from newspapers that tend towards a critical, neutral identity as a news source, and to those that underscore their progressiveness throughout history. Apartheid's suppression of free speech had a vice grip on journalists of the time - reporting on protest action and civil disobedience ran the risk of highlighting anti-government



Figure F: Front page of Sowetan, 20th October 2015

sentiment, the consequences of which included closure of the publication or the exile of certain journalists. In contemporary South Africa, there is no such restriction on criticism of authority, and as such protests are not as openly condemned by the media. However, South African society – and by extension, South African media - continues to have a complicated relationship with protests that involve some form of violent or disruptive action. While



Figure G: Front page of The Star, 20th October 2015

violence is generally considered to be negative, regardless of who performs and for what reasons, it can be considered acceptable under particular conditions – for example, violent actions by police forces or the military can be considered "justified"; however, violence by civilian protesters in any form is treated with reproach by the general public. The perception

of violence as a social 'aberration' is predicated on the fact that people don't consider it an inevitable result of neoliberalism (Duncan, 2014), and institutionalized violence attains a level of banality that it becomes difficult to recognize or pin down without a full understanding of how oppressive hegemonies interact and intersect. It is not yet generally understood or accepted that physical violence can often be a deliberate politically-motivated tool to challenge larger systems or institutions that have the means to enact institutional violence. The media is most likely to reflect the sentiments of the general public and be more neglectful of the most marginalized groups – however, analysis of the media nevertheless illuminates what ideologies around society, protest, violence and justice are dominant at any given time period.

In this paper's corpus of newspaper 110 articles, almost 31% of them make mention of violence – or sometimes specifically *non*-violence. This comes as no surprise, as violence is valuable content for journalists and almost guarantees reader interest due to its status as an aberration in society. In the newspaper the *Mail & Guardian*, an opinion piece was published by a Wits Sociology lecturer, Dr Prishani Naidoo. In this piece, she expresses this dichotomy surrounding violence, as well as draws attention to what actions – or inactions – constitute the definition of 'violence':

> It is a common error of thought that violence is only what you can see. Condemnation arrives in record time when a tyre is burned, a building torched or windows broken; however, silence arrives just as quickly when students speak of the violence committed against them daily. It is violence when an institution shuts its doors to a student because their parents don't share in the wealth of this country. It is violence when examinations become a privilege only the rich can afford and it is violence when

> universities pay parents of these students R2 700 a month and expect them to fork out R10 000 in January, just to register. Somehow, in the psychology of the elite, that violence is normal. (Naidoo, 2015)

This excerpt reflects a common perception that violence must involve direct and immediate physical harm to an object or person – other manifestations of violence that happen on a psychological, financial or institutional level. Even in light of reports of police having used "brute force" (Mtyala, 2015) and "violence and brutality" (Mantje, 2015), Naidoo does not mention this type of violence. Rather, she highlights that alternative ways that harm can come to students and their families when education is financially inaccessible. She cites three particular instances of readily-condemned violence in the context of protest: tyre-burning, arson, and breaking of windows. These three examples reflect some of the most reported incidences of violence and vandalism that happened in proximity to the protests – often, this information is accompanied by strategies of *abstraction*, *suppression* or *euphemism*. Specific information is deliberately left absent or vague and the agents of a certain action might be deleted through the use of passive voice. An article in the *Mail & Guardian* steps over any accusations of violence and brutality by writing the following:

> While protests have been mostly peaceful, police have been accused of being heavy handed in dealing with students." (Hunter, 2015)

Describing someone's actions as "heavy-handed" might imply a certain level of incompetence or forcefulness that is perhaps unwarranted, but not necessarily brutal. Combining this with the passive voice that does not specify *who* has made the accusations relieves the writer of

the article from making any definitive statements about the police officers' actions – only that there is some controversy around them.

When police *are* directly attributed to actions that involve violence – such as firing from weapons or physically grappling with protesters – these actions are never assigned emotional descriptors. While protesters and their actions might be preceded by words like "angrily" or "enraged", police actions never possess these types of qualifiers. In some instances, their actions are presented purely as reactions to protester behaviour. The following excerpts from an article in *The Star* (Mokati & Makheta, 2015) displays liberal usage of emotional language and adjectives/adverbs:

28. …the long wait seemed to irritate a handful of students who released their frustration by burning a tyre and then turning over portable toilets.
29. …some students who were inside the Union Buildings gardens flew into a rage. Some hurled rocks and bricks at the police."
30. Seconds later tear gas canisters from the police flew like missiles into the crowd causing the students to scatter in all directions.
31. During the clash students became enraged and attacked police officers, throwing rocks and sticks at them. Police then responded with more stun grenades and tear gas as well as by firing rubber bullets.

These are but a few examples from this singular article, which seemed to focus the most on the chaos of the march to the Union Buildings on that day. Almost all violent action on the part of students is attributed in the active voice and attributed to rage or frustration. This description of events creates an ideological pathway down which readers can go, where the

mob violence and looting that is mentioned a few paragraphs later is implicitly attributed to student protesters (without directly stating that students or protesters were responsible for looting or break-ins) – this can work to implicate the student protesters themselves, or simply blame the nature of the protest itself as being prone to inciting violence in others. In contrast to this, the police officers are offered as discursively neutral solutions to the violence that is being described: even though rubber bullets and tear gas have the potential to cause injury, the firing of these types of ammunition is not generally considered a violent act – rather, these are actions that are meant to mitigate violence done by non-police forces. In the case of this article, it is the students to do the attacking, and any subsequent actions by police are only considered to be responses. The distinction between actions and reactions in a conflict between two persons or groups tends to favour the "in-group", or the side of the conflict that is presupposed to be the 'good' and 'moral' one (Machin and Mayr, 2012:107-109; Van Leeuwen, 2008) – in other words, the "in-group" tends to react to the actions of the "out-group". In the case of police or other forces that exist to maintain order or enforce rules, these reactions are most often material or mental processes that relate to subduing threats or protecting civilians.

The following quote featured in an article by *The Star* on the 24th of October provides a different evaluation of emotion that frames it as beneficial – or even necessary – for protest, rather than a factor that can cause instability or irrational violence:

> Luzuko Buku, general secretary of the ANC-aligned SA Students' Congress, agreed that trouble had been brewing on campuses for a long time about access to university. […]

> "The fee increases are the trigger that have opened up so much student anger and outrage that has been isolated on campuses around the country for some time...That anger has been politically channelled into activism." (Thakali, 2015)

The words 'anger' and 'outrage' feature here as well, but are not juxtaposed with descriptions of violence or chaos; rather, they are simply given as valid responses to years of build-up to a funding crisis. Buku draws a connection between anger and activism, where the latter is dependent on the former as long as this emotion undergoes a process of politicization. However, it is not clear hear exactly how emotion and activism interact, or whether violence arising from high emotion is justified in Buku's view. Given that this was written at the end of the first protest cycle of #FMF, after the zero percent fee increase announcement, it is possible that the article benefits from the more nuanced reporting that comes with later coverage an event – early coverage of protests, by contrast, tend to favour War Journalism techniques to a greater extent by delineating oppositions, focusing on violence and disruption, and conferring with more official sources. Late coverage of Marikana, for example, tended towards a plurality of voices and a more carefully contextualized presentation of circumstances.

Police reactions were given a different treatment by journalists – one that erased any indicators of emotion. The following examples of police-protester interactions taken from various articles and newspapers present it as a series of reactions or responses, with some serving as implicit explanations or justifications for the actions of each party:

> 32. Soon before 7pm, the police officers asked them to disperse and when they refused, they were pepper-sprayed. (Monama, 2015)

33. Police pushed back the students into the CBD in a bid to clear the grounds. (Mokati and Makheta, 2015)
34. According Dzunani Mdluli, a law student at Unisa, the violence erupted when those that were at the front started to push the police officers who were attempting to restore order. (Mokati and Makheta, 2015)
35. Some students who were inside the Union Buildings gardens flew into a rage. Some hurled rocks and bricks at the police. Seconds later tear gas canisters from the police flew like missiles into the crowd, causing the students to scatter in all directions. (Mokati and Makheta, 2015)
36. During the clash students became enraged and attacked police officers, throwing rocks and sticks at them. Police then responded with more stun grenades and tear gas as well as by firing rubber bullets. (Mokati and Makheta, 2015)
37. An impatient driver had the windscreen of his car smashed after he drove through the seated students. When police forced the driver from his car, his head was bleeding. While they were putting him in the back of a police car, a few students decided to flip his car. When police pulled their guns, the students retreated. (Morrissey, Nkosi & Kalipa, 2015)
38. The arrival of police saw students regrouping and marching back into campus. (African News Agency, 2015)
39. The students managed to march to Luthuli House after police had prevented them earlier, saying they were not “allowed” to go to Luthuli House (Macupe, 2015)

These descriptions set up an antagonistic relationship between police and protester – or students, as they are most commonly referred to by reporters. In these examples, scenes of

violence are in particular are phrased in ways that somewhat obscure or minimize police response, particularly if the response involved the firing of weapons such as a stun grenades or guns. In lieu of the active voice or using verbs typically associated with the firing of these weapons, *The Star*'s articles in particular hedge these actions background the agency of the police or leave the details vague: the students were only pepper-sprayed (by police) after refusal to comply; the police "pushed back", but there is no description as to what methods were used to do this; police "pulled their guns" but this is not elaborated on (e.g. whether they aimed at any students or not); and tear-gas canisters are given the role of subject in a sentence (they "flew like missiles" instead of being shot) despite being inanimate objects.

The following passage reporting on the events at the Union Buildings on the 23rd of October, taken from the *Independent on Saturday*, serves to illustrate many of the points that have been touched on regarding police-protester action and reaction. It includes interesting *behavioural* processes, as well as mental and material ones:

> With Madiba's giant image watching over the altercation, police responded by throwing stun grenades. This had little impact on the students, who stood their ground. Most remained calm, even after police retaliated, firing rubber bullets and turning on a cannon, which sent litres of water into crowd. The students hit back by pelting the trucks with rocks. (African News Agency, 2015)

The Union Buildings are where the offices of South African government – including that of the President – are situated, and at the top of central stairway leading up to the buildings is a large statue of a smiling Nelson Mandela, arms up and outstretched. A fence separates the stairs from the large garden expanse in the front of the buildings, and it was behind this fence

that the protest masses gathered. The orientation of the space, with Mandela's statue up at the top of the stairs overlooking the gardens, likely prompted the author's personification of the effigy. According to Machin & Mayr (2012:109), describing the statue as "watching over" the altercation is a behavioural process: actions that can be transitive or intransitive, but that that do not indicate a goal nor affirm the subject's agency. In combining this process with personification, the author offers a more poetic interpretation of events that incorporates discourses commonly associated with Nelson Mandela: Apartheid, non-violence, and a fond, 'fatherly' admiration of him. To cement this, the statue is not referred as being of Nelson Mandela – instead, it is referred to by the respectful and affectionate 'Madiba', a title that stems from Xhosa culture and that was widely used as he began to acquire iconic status. By providing this statue as a backdrop, the description of the violence that follows ends up being layered with the reader's personal understanding of violence and protest in South Africa, both in history and in contemporary society. One is called back to violent protests between police and anti-Apartheid activists which only came to end once Mandela's release from prison – and subsequent peaceful negotiations with government – ushered in a democratic South Africa.

The above passage is listed in the data as having been published by *The Independent on Saturday*, a weekly newspaper from KwaZulu-Natal province and also a part of the IOL news network. This article is no longer available in the archives of this paper; instead, similar ones appear in other IOL publications: *The Star, Pretoria News*, the IOL website itself under the 'Crime and Courts' section of site, among others. These other versions share several passages that are repeated almost verbatim across the papers or websites, with some additions or omissions. The general structure or focus of the articles are usually similar, but in other

cases, only particular paragraphs – such as the one above about Madiba – are the only aspects being shared by all or most of them. These additions, omissions and structural changes all underscore deliberate ideological positions, which can be attributed to factors like readership, medium (print or online), or its position in the paper (front page or elsewhere). Here is a similar excerpt which appeared in the front page story of *Pretoria News* (Makheta, 2015):

> With Madiba's giant image watching over the altercation, police responded by throwing stun grenades. This had little impact on the students, who stood their ground. The crowd did not disperse, but instead became angrier. Most in the crowd remained calm, even after police retaliated and confronted them, firing rubber bullets. At that time, police turned on a cannon, which sent bursts of water into crowd. The students pelted the trucks with rocks.

The excerpts are the same up until the third sentence in the paragraph. *The Pretoria News* version provides the following sentence as an addition: "The crowd did not disperse, but instead became angrier". This follows a recurring thematic element of emotion in this article, where the anger of the protesters is emphasized. This is seen in the headline as well as the body of the article several times:

40. Protesters furious over JZ's failure to address them over zero percent hike
41. It was not immediately clear what drove the students into a fit of rage.
42. The students became enraged and attacked police officers, throwing rocks and sticks at them.
43. Roads in the vicinity of the Union Buildings were flooded with angry students…

In conjunction with the photo accompanying this article, there is a strong sense of chaos and highly emotionally-driven violence. The imagery of fire and its destructive effects is strongly foregrounded in the article both in the written text and in the images, with the author going so far as to use synecdoche: although only some things were set alight during the march, such as vehicles or portable toilets, the entire march is said to have been 'in flames' in order to play up the scale of the violence. There is also the choice here to type this caption in a bold, black font with a white outline, and accent the inlet image and additional text with red. These colours evoke a sense of danger, urgency and a sombre tone. The photograph, taken at a long distance and depicting a mass of people surrounding a thick smoke cloud, distances the reader from the action and removes them from the experiences of the protesters themselves. The inlet depicts a burning police car, which the caption claims was "torched by students". The overall effect of this imagery paints an unflattering picture of the protesters and primes the reader to think of the police as being overwhelmed by violent, destructive masses that went into a "fit of rage" – the connotations of which suggest that the students were out of control and acting on primal emotions. To support this, much of the article is concerned with describing this confrontation and giving a play-by-play of the "clash", providing emotional insights for students ("became angrier", "remained calm") but none for the police officers. Instead, the actions of police are given without an emotional evaluation of their material and

mental processes: they "responded", "retaliated and confronted", and employed the use of riot control weapons.

As opposed to the story-like narrative treatment that the students get by being described as having "stood their ground" and who "pelt[ed]" the police van with rocks, the actions of police use a more clinical verbiage: they fired rubber bullets, threw stun grenades and turned on a water cannon, in addition to reacting to whatever protesters were doing. There is less



Figure H: Image on Pretoria News front page on 24 October 2015. Retrieved from: https://www.pressreader.com/south-africa/pretoria-news-weekend/20151024/281479275270057

of an empathetic connection to the police officers who seem to be acting reactively or even automatically to their circumstances – in fact, the distinction between police-action and protester-action can also be found in the inclusion (or exclusion) of an explicit goal or beneficiary (Machin & Mayr, 2012:106). The police officers are indeed the actors in these

sentences, but their actions are seemingly devoid of a specific target. At no point are they firing rubber bullets *at* protesters or *into* the crowd; however, the protesters "[pelt] the trucks with rocks" and later on "attacked police officers, throwing rocks and sticks at them". The description of the water cannon in particular has an interesting effect on the distance between the police and their actions. They are given agency enough to have deliberately activated it in response to the protesters, but are then removed from the results of this action:

44. Most remained calm, even after police retaliated, firing rubber bullets and turning on a cannon, which sent litres of water into the crowd.
45. At that time, police turned on a cannon, which sent bursts of water into crowd.

Although phrased differently in each iteration, both of them elect to have the inanimate object become the de facto "subject" in the act of shooting water at the crowd. Despite a water cannon being an instrument that requires operation by a police officer, in this case, the police only activate the cannon and are thus absolved of intent to aim at any target in particular. The verb "sent" also mitigates potential negative connotations of harm or danger; the author of the text could have considered other appropriate verbs such as "shot" or "sprayed". However, these connotations are better preserved in the second example, where "bursts of water" are sent into the crowd, conveying a sense of forcefulness. Generally, there is a clearer show of intent on the part of the protesters that is absent in the depiction of the police in this confrontation.

Another common thread in these articles across the different newspapers is the inclusion of injured students assisting each other after the confrontation with police, which helps repair the image of the protesters by showing them as being compassionate or helpful:

46. It was unknown by last night how many students were injured in the upheaval. But throughout the violence, some who had sustained injuries were being carried by their peers. Apparently, a number were taken to various hospitals within the city. (Mokati & Makheta for *The Star*, 2015)
47. It was unknown by on Friday night how many students were injured. Some of the injured were being carried by their peers. Apparently a number were taken to various hospitals within the city. (Mokati & Makheta for the IOL website, Crime and Courts section, 2015)
48. It was unknown by last night how many students were injured in the upheaval. But throughout the violence, some students were carrying their injured peers to various hospitals in the city. (Mokati & Makheta for *Pretoria News Weekend*, 2015)

The article in the *Independent on Saturday* in the corpus did not include a segment like the ones above, despite reporting on the violence. The above excerpts show that each newspaper offered a very similar account, but with minor differences in sentence structure and the ordering of information in the article as a whole. In terms of the micro-differences, the different newspapers chose to use either the active or passive voice when describing the carrying of injured protesters by their peers: only Pretoria News chose to use the active voice to describe this process, stating that "some students were carrying their injured peers…" This paper is also the only one that does not hedge the statement that injured protesters

were being taken to hospitals, unlike the other articles that use "apparently" to soften this claim. *The Star*'s version chooses to place this segment in between two sections that describe an outbreak of violence, while the *Pretoria News* article pushes this segment to the end of the article after the confrontation had been fully described.

The preoccupation with violence and danger were also observed in the statements released by Wits University Management (see Appendix):

49. Some lecture theatres were also vandalised overnight. (Email 1)
50. "We have been trying for two days to negotiate with the groups of students who have staged a protest on our campuses, disrupted lectures, vandalised infrastructure and vehicles and intimidated members of the Wits community… (Email 5)

Additionally, attached to extract (50) was a document outlining the Trespass Act (see Appendix, Email 5). The attached document consists only of black text on a white background, with some lines and headings in red, underlined and/or fully capitalized. In following the theories of Multimodal Discourse Analysis (G. R. Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996), the visual choices here are to be weighted alongside the actual content of the written text. Statements pertaining to direct instructions or legal repercussions are typed in red while the other information is in black. A bright red colour, especially when used to highlight a word such as "Attention", evokes commonly understood associations with urgency, authority and even danger. The text itself directly interpolates the reader – that is, the reader that would be inclined to protest disruptively – by ending off the document with the forceful, "YOU ARE REQUIRED TO IMMEDIATELY CEASE AND DESIST…". In order to buffer the sense of

authority being imparted, the rest of the document wields discourses of legality and ownership. By stating that the University is "exercising its rights as the owner and lawful occupier of the University's property", it affirms its position as an authoritative body that has the right to control activities on its grounds. In explicitly stating what activities have been deemed impermissible by the University, it has now fortified all requests made in previous emails – in particular, the request that normal functioning of the University be preserved. The consequences of violation are left vague in this particular document, but the accompanying email does state the following:

> …we are thus left with no option but to seek assistance from the South African Police Services to clear our entry and exit points, so that our staff and students can leave our campuses safely. (See Appendix, Email 5)

The University carefully refers to the proposed intervention from police as "assistance" in the name of safety. Furthermore, the attached document only alludes to "necessary action" being taken, should the Trespass Act be violated. There is a level of *ideological squaring* present here and throughout the management statements, whereby an implicit violence is weaved into the protest action and that the University is adamant to prevent the seemingly inevitable destruction that will come with unmonitored protesting. In others words, siding with University management would be siding with safety and order; whereas supporting the protesters would be inviting violence and unlawfulness. It also worth noting that the email accompanying this Trespass Act document is the first one that *directly* attributes instances of violence to the protesters, as opposed to merely implying it through conjecture, like in the preceding emails.

Where violence is mentioned in the articles analysed for this paper, it is rarely done with positive connotations – whether this be a comment on the part of the journalist, or in quotes said by interviewees or leaders in their public statements. Despite frequent usage of the word "fight" by students to describe their efforts to lower tuition fees, leaders of the protest have generally rejected labels by the media that paint them as violent or recklessly disruptive. Even at the height of the violence – the march to the Union Buildings in Pretoria - certain journalists represented the student voice through quotations which rejected violence as a deliberate strategy, likely to foster a more positive image of the students – at least, of Wits and University of Johannesburg students:

51. Even though students from Wits University and the University of Johannesburg called for no violence and said not in the name of the #Feesmustfall campaign, the violence escalated. (Mokati & Maketha, 2015)
52. Joseph Tewson, who is studying towards a Master's degree in anatomy at Wits, said he felt ashamed of how they conducted themselves as students. […] "The small percentage of students who were being violent did not represent the majority of us who heeded the call for peace," he said. (Mokati & Maketha, 2015)

Extract (52) in particular uses a quote from a student whose credentials as a Master's student are mentioned alongside his words. This lends some legitimacy to him and, by proxy, to the student protesters, particularly since he aims to speak on behalf of the apparent non-violent majority. In the same vein as the university management statements, a peaceful majority/belligerent minority narrative is used to distance oneself from violence and negativity. In another article in the *Mail & Guardian*, which focused specifically on the

incoming Student Representative Council (SRC) president Nompendulo Mkatshwa, she is quoted as saying:

> "They said we held people hostage, that we attacked people […] they are painting us as violent and as hooligans. We are beginning to ask who owns the media. Don't delegitimise our protest because you have ulterior motives." (Zwane, 2015)

This article also reported that she regarded the media as biased against the protesters in an effort to "rob this protest of its legitimacy". There is an obvious connection being drawn here between non-violence and legitimacy; namely that protest movements are at risk of being quashed if the media elects to present them in a negative light. It is worth noting that I was hard-pressed to find any newspaper in the sample data that directly stated that the protesters held anyone hostage or attacked anyone in those specific words – thus, one can only assume that Mkatshwa was paraphrasing or essentialising a general discourse put out by the media. However, the statements released by Management did indeed initially compare the protests to a hostage situation (see Appendix, Email 1); this is possibly a source for Mkatshwa's particular wording. In general, newspapers were varied in their positioning of protesters, police and other actors, with any of these groups being characterized as aggressors or receivers of aggression. Compare the following two paragraphs from *The Star* and the *Cape Times* respectively:

> 53. An impatient driver had the windscreen of his car smashed after he drove through the seated students. When police forced the driver from his car, his head was bleeding. While they were putting him in the back of a police car, a few students

decided to flip his car. When police pulled their guns, the students retreated." (Morrissey, Nkosi & Kalipa, 2015)

54. [The protesters] took to the streets and blockaded Empire Road, where a vehicle was pelted with stones after the driver refused to stop. The vehicle was overturned after it tried driving over the students. The arrival of police saw students regrouping and marching back into campus. (African News Agency, 2015)

The three constants in these two extracts are the police, the students and the driver. While the report from *The Star* starts with a sentence in the passive voice, with no agent specified, it goes on to make the students the agents in their actions - 'decided to flip', 'retreated'. The damage done to the driver's vehicle is not so directly attributed to the students in the second paragraph and all actions are instead written in an agent-less passive voice. The two articles took different approaches to describing the actions of the police as well – overall, the police in first excerpt are positioned as armed and more aggressive. The fact that police "pulled their guns" a non-factor in the second excerpt, where it is reported that the mere presence of the police was enough to deter students.

The salience of violence in our culture is not limited to the news and is seen in many different forms including cinema, literature and even children's games. As a result, is has always been valuable subject matter for the journalist – regardless of a publication's stance, any inklings of aggression, confrontation or property damage that occur at an event are unavoidably reported on. #FMF addresses the idea of violence as both a physical act and as systems of behaviour that indirectly cause psychological and financial harm to entire populations.

Violence in the context of protests remains a complicated issue and is almost universally frowned upon unless a justification can be found for the violent acts. Police behaviour is generally considered justified by default, and the level of violence performed by police officers have to exceed a certain threshold of brutality in order to be condemned. In contrast, violent acts by citizens i.e. protesters are rarely deemed acceptable unless proven otherwise. However, even these categorisations are murky at best, and #FMF has complicated the issue of violence, emotion and relationship of these factors within activism. Despite emphasis on non-violence by the media and student leaders that are quoted in these articles, acts of violence continue to emerge in reaction to apathy or attempts to control what protesters can do or say during protests. The narrative of neoliberalism perpetuates and protects institutional and somewhat 'intangible' forms of violence, in that systems will favour certain groups based on race, class, and gender; conversely, these systems will make it difficult for others to access basic amenities such as healthcare or education. The lack of institutional power by marginalized groups leaves few alternatives – and physical violence is often the only tool that protesters have when they are ignored. The romantic, Ghandi-esque view of non-violent protest has yet to fade from the collective consciousness – however, it is no longer beyond critique. Now, there is space for activism to discuss violence as a tool or method, rather than an unfortunate consequence of uncontrolled protest action. Leaders and certain supporters of #FeesMustFall, such as Nompendulo Mkatshwa and Prishani Naidoo – among others – use the media to voice their understandings of violence and its place in protest, and which bodies can be considered 'justified' in their use of violence.

Space and Place

The bulk of the protest action at Wits University happened on its main campus, with other protests being sprinkled across other campuses, the University of Johannesburg, and locations in Johannesburg. In terms of mainstream media coverage, the idea of protesters situated in space or place was not a frequent theme – however, certain events of #FMF did inspire certain journalists to take note of how the students occupied and interacted with not just their cultural context, but their physical context as well. From a linguistic perspective, there are many spatially-oriented expressions in the English language that have been naturalized to the point where their ideological implications are taken for granted. Protest studies situated in the field of geosemiotics have looked at how bodies relate to and contest the spaces they occupy or move through. One of the key spaces of #FeesMustFall at Wits was its main administrative building, then known as Senate House. As direct result of the protest, it has since been officially renamed Solomon Mahlangu House, after an Apartheid freedom fighter.

Student occupied Senate House in the early stages of the protest, gathering in a central area on the ground floor called the concourse. The upper floors of Senate House housed offices related to University administration, including offices belonging to higher management and the Vice-Chancellor. In time, the concourse area became the central meeting point for the protesters, wherein they held mass meetings, handed out food and drink that was donated to the cause, and even spent the night. By the late stages of #FMF in October, the concourse was equipped with a crude stage, a projector and screen and a first-aid table manned by Wits medical students or alumni. When not situated inside Senate House, students marched

around the University campus and held brief meetings or performed protest songs outside the Great Hall steps.

In the spirit of occupation, the space of Senate House was claimed by the protesters as a territory for them to discuss, strategize and demand the attention of management on the upper floors. The layout of Senate House concourse, with its empty central area surrounded by indoor balconies, allowed those gathered there to occupy the space on multiple physical levels – the bulk of protesters tended to fill up the ground floor of the concourse, and masses spilled upward onto the first floor staircase and the surrounding balconies on the first, second and third floors. During the biggest mass meetings, one could look in any direction to see people and makeshift signage, with phrases such as "WE ARE STUDENTS NOT CUSTOMERS" (photo in addendum), "FEED THE REVOLUTION/ KEEP THE MOMENTUM", and "WHY MAKE US WAIT? #COUNCILCOMEDOWN". The latter hashtag, #CouncilComeDown, came about on the 19th of October when university management was



Figure I: Photo by Azra Karim | Retrieved from The Daily Vox: http://www.thedailyvox.co.za/update-witsfeesmustfall-protest-continues/wits-fees-protest-azra-karim-2/

due to deliver a report on a Council meeting held the previous day. The pivotal nature of this meeting meant that its outcome was much anticipated by protesters and the public alike – many were hopeful that Council would finally agree on a zero percent fee increase, and provide positive feedback on other matters pertaining to the protests.

However, the report back became marred by frustration and disappointment from protesters who awaited council members to report to them in person – although it had been agreed that Council would provide their report at noon on the 19th, the report was instead sent out via email at 13:45 that day. This prompted the social media hashtag #CouncilComeDown, first posted by the @WitsSRC twitter account, which referenced the spatial arrangement of council offices to the territory claimed by protesters: the main offices of most university management and administration are located on the upper floors of Senate House. Asking the council to "come down" describes the relationship between the upper and lower spaces. The metaphor of the "Ivory Tower" can also be applied here to explore how spatial factors relate to how we understand power relations in this protest – protesters gathering at the base of the Senate House "tower", the top of which occupied by what they perceive as an uninterested management, is a strategy that aims to pressurize those at the top to acknowledge their demands. While the individuals that comprise management remain out of sight in the upper floors, their identities become synonymous with institutions – the vice-chancellor, for example, bore the brunt of Wits Fallist's criticism, despite insistence from his end that he is limited in his individual capacity to enact systemic change.

The reclamation of Senate House was cemented by its renaming to Solomon Mahlangu House. Initially an informal renaming, this became integral enough to the protester's

relationship to the space that it was later demanded that it be formally recognized. Solomon Mahlangu was an anti-apartheid activist who was part of the African National Congress' militant wing, *Umkhonto we Sizwe.* Mahlangu was arrested by police and executed for murder in 1979, at the age of 22. His young age and dedication to activism was something Black #FMF activists could relate to, and one of the most popular protest songs adopted by the protesters was '*Iyho Solomon'*, a song devised by the ANC in Mahlangu's memory. In time, buildings around campus, including Senate House itself, sported graffiti of Mahlangu's visage and his famous last words: "My blood will nourish the tree that will bear the fruits of freedom. Tell my people that I love them. They must continue the fight." In an article in *The Star* newspaper (Thakali, 2015), published on the 24th of October, one can observe an attempt to describe the interrelationships between space, protester and Solomon Mahlangu's legacy:

> 55. A large group of restive students lined the floor of Wits University's Senate House, where a giant banner inked with Solomon Mahlangu's name covered part of the terrace overlooking the arena, defiantly renaming the hall.
> 56. Below Mahlangu's banner, up stepped petite Shaeera Kalla, one of the leaders of a new generation of dissenters and radicals behind the revolt against university fee increases…
> 57. At the one end of the floor at Wits, where the arena was filling up, Nompendulo Mkatshwa, the feisty and towering incoming president of the Student Representative Council (SRC), was giving the students a rousing speech, striding back and forth before breaking into a song.

58. [Quote by Nompendulo Mkatshwa] "We are running a revolution here. We stripped the vice-chancellors of their power, every one of them in the country is sitting on the floor," she said, to rapturous applause and whistling."
59. "They drew courage from Mahlangu and the youth of 1976."

The concourse of the building is referred to in this article as an "arena". The word choice would imply that the concourse has become area where public events or debates are to be observed by an audience, and while Senate House was not originally designed around this purpose, the description becomes rather apt in the context of its occupation. At all mass meetings held here, protest leaders and anyone else who wished to address the masses would do so on the ground floor concourse – a bench or chair might be used for elevation, but the stairway or terraces surrounding the area were never used for this purpose. It became very clear on 19th of October that equity between speakers could only be upheld if it happened on the ground floor.



Figure J: Photo (author-taken) of banner saying "Solomon House" overlooking the concourse

Any address that come from a disembodied source, such as an email, was considered by the protesters to be an affront to their attempt at reducing heirarchical structuring of the space. In addition, the frustration with upper management's handling of the crisis resulted in protesters doling out a 'punishment' to the Vice-Chancellor and Deputy Vice-Chancellor when they arrived in person to address the protesters on the 16th of October: both were ordered to sit on the floor among the students, after Vice-Chancellor Adam Habib's address atop a platform was negatively received. While it was not unusual for students themselves to seat themselves on the floor during gatherings, the fact that the Vice-Chancellor was being made to do so spoke to an acnkowledgement – and reassembling – of power.



Figure K: Photo (author-taken) of sign saying: "FOR YOUR INTEGRITY STUDENT ASSEMBLY WILL BE HELD AT SENATE HOUSE CONCOURSE (SOLOMON'S HOUSE)

Habib had to be shown on level lower than the standing students as a show of humility. This provides an explanation for incoming SRC president at the time, Nompendulo Mkatshwa's later statement that they had "stripped the vice-chancellors of their power". The positioning of bodies in the space was used a tool by the protesters to be seen as valid stakeholders in the interaction, having 'levelled the playing field' by creating an arena out of an administrative building, and bringing figureheads of upper management down to a level – literally and figuratively – that handicaps their institutional power.



Figure L: Photo: Paballo Thekiso. Retrieved from: https://www.iol.co.za/news/south-africa/gauteng/habib-held-hostage-by-students-1931589

The photograph in Figure L accompanied an article in *The Star* titled "Habib held hostage by Students" (Morrissey, Mkhwanazi & Bega, 2015). Here, a suited Habib is pictured kneeling on the floor surrounded by standing protesters, some wearing T-Shirts associated with campus political groups. The faces of the protesters are mostly hidden, and Habib is looking at up at one of them seemingly in the middle of speaking. The oblique angle of the photograph creates an effect of looking down at Habib and a power imbalance in favour of the viewer, whose perspective is effectively "standing alongside" the protesters. This presentation of Habib has a two-fold effect of reducing his power in the interaction between himself and the protesters, as well as eliciting sympathy from the viewer who might view him as being trapped or threatened by a mob – this latter interpretation has some textual support from the body of the article:

60. "'Baby, I'm going to be late tonight" - it's what angry Wits University students instructed the institution's vice-chancellor to tell his wife when they allowed him a second phone call, after surrounding and prohibiting him from leaving Senate House last night."
61. As he arrived the students encircled him, separating him from university security that had accompanied him into Senate House.

Describing the students as "angry" and following this up with active-voice verbs like "instructed", "allowed", "surrounding" and "prohibiting" very clearly positions the students as being in control of the situation and the space, and as being forceful and threatening. Their actions are deliberate and, as they are described in this article, seem to suggest a pack mentality – an unspecified number of students seem to act as one and work to surround him and separate him from security, as if Habib were subject to a hunt. The authority of the students over Habib is re-enforced again later in the article:

> The students were not there to negotiate. A chant of "Fire Habib!" rose from the crowd before they summoned Habib and seated him on the floor in the middle of the sea of students.

Again, Habib is presented as having very little agency in this interaction, consistently acting at the behest of an impassioned and demanding crowd. The metaphorical usage of "sea of students" adds to the sense of Habib having been overwhelmed by protesters inside Senate House.

A similar situation is described in an article *The Mail & Guardian* on the 23rd of October; this time, the demand to sit was directed the ANC's secretary general, Minister Gwede Mantashe.

The article in question has to do with a march to the union buildings by protesters seeking to deliver a memorandum – there, the protesters once again showed dissatisfaction with the arrangement of the gathering, and called for the politicians present at the meeting to "come down" from their elevated platform:

> Initially, the crowd demanded that Mantashe and other leaders come to them from the ANC stage truck they first stood on. After some resistance, Mantashe went down to the student leaders. Subsequently, some elements of the crowd chanted for Mantashe to sit down like the rest of the masses of students. He refused […] Cosatu President Sdumo Dlamini said Mantashe said the demand for them to sit was one to humiliate them. (Hunter, 2015)

The quote by the COSATU president describes being made to sit as humiliating. In this context, the men seemed to recognize that the relationship of their bodies in the space – namely, physically lowering themselves to be among the masses – had some relevance to their social standing in the interaction. However, levelling the social playing field is not the only reason that sitting was adopted in their marches and occupations. The choice to practice this may stem from the need to perform "non-violence" as much as possible: in order to mitigate the implicit violence that an anti-Black society associated with Black bodies gathered *en masse*, student leaders often called for calm, non-violence, and composure before entering or exiting buildings.

The article in *The Star* (Thakali 2015) uses literal and figurative spatial descriptors to link the #FMF protesters to the legacy of revolt that came before them; namely, their link to Solomon Mahlangu. The banner of Solomon Mahlangu's name is described as "defiantly

renaming" the building - phrasing that matches the spirit of protest being evoked in this article. This metaphorical usage of the banner is *metonymy* – substituting a term with another that is related to it (Machin & Mayr, 2012:171) – as, in reality, it was the student protesters that renamed the hall. The banner is acting a symbol for the movement at this University, and represents the impact of the protests on the space. The outgoing SRC president of the time, Shaeera Kalla, is then described as stepping "up" from "below Solomon Mahlangu's banner", creating a metaphorical convergence of two legacies – Mahlangu's legacy "overlooking" the one being created by the student protests. This sentiment is backed up by the sentence that follows it, describing Kalla as being a leader of "*a new generation of dissenters and radicals…"* (Thakali, 2015). In analysis of journalistic writing, *presupposition* refers to instances where meanings are conveyed through reader assumption, especially when they are presented with non-specific elements (Fairclough, 1995a; Machin & Mayr, 2012:153-162). In this case, we are presented with connections between the space (the banner, Senate House) and the protesters (Shaeera Kalla, Nompendulo Mkatshwa, the 'restive students'), and are eventually led to conclude that this movement is directly following the legacy of anti-Apartheid activism. Solomon Mahlangu was - as presupposed by the text – part of the *old* generation of dissenters and radicals, and #FeesMustFall has created an environment for a new generation to emerge, despite Mahlangu and #FeesMustFall having different reasons for their activism. The article emphasizes this ideological connection a final time when it states that the protesters "*drew courage from Mahlangu and the youth of 1976"* (Thakali, 2015). Not only are they connected to Mahlangu this time, but also to the Soweto Uprising of 1976, wherein Black high school students protested Apartheid education laws. Many schoolchildren were killed or injured by police during this uprising,

and the historical weight of this protest means that #FeesMustFall is being considered impactful enough to warrant comparison.

Central Figures

The student movement of 2015 had several public faces, made up of politicians, student leaders, and vice-chancellors. Over 40% of the articles in the corpus of 110 reported on at least one prominent figure that was involved in the #FeesMustFall media discussion. This high frequency of recurring individuals in news reports results in the creation of 'characters' in the news narrative of #FMF – by the end of the protest's news cycle, readers will have been familiarized with a selection of notable figures which, ideally, reflect a variety of voices. However, for journalists, this pool of voices is usually limited to those already in positions of power or leadership, since politicians or student leaders have more credible, verifiable positions in society. In order to create these 'characters', the key players in the #FeesMustFall saga are very seldom *anonymized* or *impersonalized* (Machin & Mayr, 2012:79-83); instead they are named and given their appropriate titles or roles, such as "SRC President", "Higher Education and Training Minister", or "Vice-Chancellor". This way, readers can quickly gauge which sides of a protest are relevant, and can more easily digest their respective arguments when they are represented by a human face.

Mcebo Dlamini was by far the most frequently mentioned student leader in the corpus. He was SRC president from the end of 2014 to the 4th of May 2015, at which point he was removed from the position after disciplinary action against him in February of that year. Because of this, Dlamini had become a known-name in the Wits community because of controversies surrounding an assault charge and an infamous comment made on social

media: in the context of a Facebook post and subsequent comment thread about Nazism, Israel and whiteness, Dlamini expressed admiration for Adolf Hitler's leadership abilities and claimed that "[in] every white person there's an element of Adolf Hitler". This comment went public, and eventually, after an unresolved appeal regarding the disciplinary hearing, Adam Habib released a detailed statement declaring and explaining Dlamini's removal from office[6]. While he found Dlamini's controversial Facebook comments in violation of the university's 'values', Habib made sure to clarify that his dismissal was a result of the ongoing Disciplinary hearing.

Dlamini's radical politics regarding race are not unique, but he faced criticism throughout his SRC career from those who felt such views to be offensive. Despite this, his charisma and dedication to activism ensured that he remain a popular figure among politically-active students at Wits, especially those within the Progressive Youth Alliance (PYA), an ANC-aligned campus political party. Even though Dlamini's sentiments towards Hitler did not spread to the movement, he was nevertheless at the forefront of almost every march and meeting and become synonymous with the protest. His controversies from earlier in the year seemed largely forgotten by newspaper reporters – out of 21 appearances in the corpus, his position was most often described as "former" SRC president or went unmentioned completely, being referred to only as a student or "student leader". An article in the *Mail & Guardian* refers to him only as "a catalytic figure of the #FeesMustFall campaign" (Hunter & Mataboge, 2015).

[6] This statement can no longer be found on the Wits University website proper, but is available to read on the Wits University Press section of 'Books Live': http://witspress.bookslive.co.za/blog/2015/04/28/racist-and-offensive-adam-habib-releases-a-statement-on-mcebo-dlaminis-comments-about-hitler/

However, some descriptors allude to his ousting from the SRC and hold varying degrees of negative connotation:

62. Mcebo Freedom Dlamini, who earlier this year was removed from the post of Wits SRC president… (Zwane, 2015)
63. …reporters have persisted […] in giving airtime to discredited male figures such as former president Mcebo Dlamini. (Thurman, 2015)
64. …student Mcebo Freedom Dlamini, who was axed earlier this year as president of the student representative council (SRC)… (Sithole, 2015)
65. …former Wits SRC president Mcebo Dlamini, ardent admirer of Adolf Hitler and noted anti-Semitic. (Donaldson, 2015)
66. Former Wits student representative council president Mcebo Dlamini, who was unseated for misconduct and had professed his admiration for German dictator Adolf Hitler… (Mashego & Hyman, 2015)

Describing Dlamini as a "student leader" legitimizes his position as an influential figure in the movement. Backgrounding the controversies that dominated media – social or otherwise – works in Dlamini's favour and offers the readers a chance to evaluate him purely on his role in the protests – or, rather, how the media portrays this role.

In CDA, the use of honorifics generally suggests an attempt to make the figure in question appear authoritative, legitimate and respectable (Machin & Mayr, 2012:82). In the case of Mcebo Dlamini, who is most commonly referred to "former SRC president" in the corpus, he reaps the benefits of *suppression:* with the exception of the five excerpts above, the reason for the 'former' modifier is always left without explanation. Should one be unfamiliar with

Dlamini's past history in the media, there is no way of gleaning that his status as the former SRC president is mired in controversy and came about as a result of removal by the Vice-Chancellor. In a few instances, he was even erroneously referred to as the "outgoing SRC president" (Macupe, 2015; Goba, Jamal, Mabuza, Eggington & Nair, 2015) – this role actually belonging to Shaeera Kalla, the deputy-SRC president that took over from him in May 2015. As for the instances where his axing is indeed foregrounded, it presents an entirely different evaluation of Dlamini. Even without mentioning precise details, phrases like "axed" or "was removed" work to undo the generally positive ideological connotations of honorifics. The authority or respectability of the figure is now called into question, and thus colours the reader's perception of any subsequent quotes or reported events related to them – in this case, Dlamini is presented as a 'failed leader', now leading one of the most significant protest movements of recent years. Other articles are less subtle: labelling him as an admirer of Adolf Hitler or "noted anti-Semitic" is a deliberate de-legitimization tactic, predicated on the assumption that the majority of readers will find such politics/alignments abhorrent. It is presupposed that, in contemporary South African society, Adolf Hitler and his actions during his lifetime would be universally reviled – and by extension, anyone showing admiration for such a figure should be reviled as well.

A negative presentation of a protest leader can extend to one's perception of the movement as a whole. By connecting protest leaders to unfavourable behaviours or events, the reader might assume that such values are shared by all protesters. The articles from where the four excerpts above were taken, connect Dlamini to concepts like violence, patriarchy and anti-Semitism. However, there is occasionally an attempt to mitigate this negative portrayal #FeesMustFall's leaders: the incoming SRC President, Nompendulo Mkatshwa, received

much more favourable treatment in the media – despite being mentioned in the corpus only half as much as Dlamini is. Like Mcebo Dlamini, she is most frequently referred to with a functional honorific such as "student leader", "incoming SRC president" or "SRC president-elect", thus providing readers with basic information about her role and why she is relevant. *Un*-like Dlamini, however, she was not involved in or adjacent to any personal scandals that journalists could latch on to – rather, she is represented rather positively overall. On occasion, certain newspapers will provide more detail about what she does, play up her leadership ability and charisma, or foreground her gender:

67. …Nompendulo Mkatshwa, the feisty and towering incoming president of the Student Representative Council (SRC), was giving the students a rousing speech, striding back and forth before breaking into a song. (Thakali, 2015)
68. The clean-up crew's sense of community and team spirit has been a part of the protest since it began, cultivated especially by two bold female leaders, Shaeera Kalla and Nompendulo Mkatshwa. (Morrissey, 2015)
69. In the eye of the storm at Wits is SRC leader Nompendulo Mkatshwa, who is giving her voice, vision and valour to students and protesters. (Zwane, 2015)
70. A third-year BSc geography student, she is one of the leaders of the #FeesMustFall movement that started at Wits University last Wednesday… (Zwane, 2015)
71. One is a discourse that hinges on race and class but ignores, and thus perpetuates, patriarchal preferment. […] At Wits, the Students Representative Council charge has been led by female students such as Shaeera Kalla and Nompendulo Mkatshwa; reporters have persisted, however, in giving airtime to discredited male figures such as former president Mcebo Dlamini. (Thurman, 2015)

These excerpts above are effectively the only ones that refer to Mkatshwa in any way that helps contextualize her beyond simply being the incoming SRC president. The emphasis on her gender seems to be an acknowledgement of gender roles being subverted in some way. The articles overlexicalise her role as a 'female' leader because this "signals a deviation from social convention or expectation" (Machin & Mayr, 2012:37) – in other words, some level of over-explanation and emphasis is used to show the rarity of woman leaders. Mcebo Dlamini's maleness is never marked unless it is being specifically critiqued, as seen in the *Business Day* article. The author of that piece (which, interestingly, was a review of an unrelated art exhibition and not about #FMF specifically) sought to highlight the sexism apparent in the #FeesMustFall movement and its coverage. The data in this paper seems to support this idea that coverage of protest leaders disproportionately favour the male leaders: Mcebo Dlamini and then-Chairperson of the Wits Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) Vuyani Pambo totalled around thirty appearances altogether, while Mkatshwa and Kalla only totalled seventeen. However, quantity is not the only factor that affects how the reader perceives these women – specific lexical choices also play a crucial role. *The Star* elects to describe Mkatshwa as "feisty and towering" – 'feisty' being especially associated with feminine heroines and fictional characters who have courage and energy. While this descriptor can be positive, there is a tendency for "feisty" to sound condescending towards women who do not follow 'typical' feminine behaviours, such as politeness or submissiveness. To describe a male figure as "feisty" would be unusual in common parlance, unless one was highlighting his youth, boyishness, or uncooperativeness. 'Towering' likely references her height, but goes hand-in-hand with playing up Mkatshwa's portrayal as a strong and formidable (female) leader. In addition, an effort is made to make her seem

charismatic, brave and compassionate – she strides across stages, rouses crowds of protesters and inspires a sense of community. According to the above newspapers, Mkatshwa's leadership is both admirable and multi-faceted; she leads the "charge", but with assertiveness and compassion, which is more palatable to the general public than aggression. Mcebo Dlamini does not seem to get quite the same treatment, and is instead more closely correlated with violence. In an article by the *Mail & Guardian* from the 23rd of October, the focus is on Mkatshwa's persona and perspective as a student leader; however, Mcebo Dlamini is mentioned therein:

> Mkatshwa tells the M&G that security guards fired pepper spray into Senate House, which the students now call Solomon Mahlangu House. University spokesperson Shirona Patel said that the pepper spray had been fired by an external security guard who had "felt threatened" while escorting council members from their cars to Senate House. Some students panicked and fled but others retaliated by throwing water bottles and brandishing sticks and chairs. At this point, the students seemed to be led by student Mcebo Freedom Dlamini, who earlier this year was removed from the post of Wits SRC president, and Wits Economic Freedom Fighters chairperson Vuyani Pambo. (Zwane, 2015)

Here, a scene of violence is described as a result of conflict between student protesters and a private security guard hired by Wits University to control the protests. We see that paraphrased perspectives are offered by Mkatshwa and the spokesperson for Wits, Shirona Patel: Mkatshwa "tells the M&G that security guards fired pepper spray", while Patel's statement is given in the passive voice, and supplemented with a justification in quotes ("felt

threatened"). The material process – or process of "doing" an action with "material result or consequence" (Machin & Mayr, 2012:106) - of firing the pepper spray is mentioned twice here. Although the security guard is erased as the agent of the action, even in the passive voice, his action is instead de-emphasised in the second instance. By providing a lengthy follow-up to the action of firing pepper spray, and erasing the target or "goal" of the material process, the focus is pulled toward the reason for the guard's action – namely, protecting council members ostensibly being accosted by students. In fact, an insight is provided for the security guards mental process of *feeling* threatened, and thus it creates a more sympathetic view of him. Mkatshwa's statement provides Senate House as a clear goal for the security guard's action but not a reasoning, since the reasoning may implicate the students that she leads. The author of the article has formulated this passage to reflect the opposition between protester and University, and how both sides would interpret and recount the same event. The difference in focus on particular actors, actions, and justifications reflects the sympathies and agenda of each side, and each side essentially does the damage control necessary to assert their position in the conflict.

The line following this, illustrates a combination of mental and material processes being used to describe the actions of the students after the pepper spray was fired. They "panicked", a sympathetic emotion, and then "fled", a material process that ultimately presents some of the students as understandably, and urgently, removing themselves from a threatening situation. The next clause in this sentence continues with the conjunction "but", which primes the reader with the presupposition than the next actions are going to be a deviation. The group of protesters that flee and the group that retaliates are treated as separate entities; two sides of the same coin, but not a hive mind. Next, this second group "retaliated

by throwing water bottles and brandishing sticks and chairs". By using the word "retaliate" to describe the actions of the protesters, focus is brought back slightly to the security guard and *his* instigating action – if the students are reacting then it follows that they are not the provokers. Although this may seem favourable for the students, the article goes on to specify *how* they retaliated – in this case, by "brandishing" improved weapons. The violence implicit in this clause starts to complicate the reader's feelings on the protesters and illustrates a playing field where neither security nor protesters are the heroes. Finally, it is the male leaders that are attributed to this tone shift, where students are reacting to provocation with aggression: "At this point, the students seemed to be led by student Mcebo Freedom Dlamini, who earlier this year was removed from the post of Wits SRC president, and Wits Economic Freedom Fighters chairperson Vuyani Pambo." By juxtaposing these two ideas, it is implied that Dlamini and Pambo are at the helm of the protests when they take a less-than-peaceful turn.

It is worth noting that all the extracts in this chapter come from only three newspapers: The *Star*, The *Mail & Guardian* and *Business Day*, none of which are Independent Media publications. Those papers that do fall under Independent Media reverted to titles such as "student leader" or "SRC president" to describe these students, with little to no evaluation of their histories or character. This may speak to a lack of space for Independent Media newspapers to be 'political', and basic presentations of facts are prioritized over a contextualization and political evaluation of those facts. With the exception of the *Cape Argus*, which published an opinion piece of Dlamini, the excerpts that gave some sort of evaluation of Mkatshwa and Dlamini as *people* came chiefly from the *Mail & Guardian, The Star* and *Business Day*.

Although the students were arguably at the centre of #FMF, it was Minister of Higher Education and Training, Blade Nzimande that was by far the most frequently mentioned in the corpus of 110 unique articles – at about forty-five instances. Adam Habib followed behind at thirty. Nzimande, who at one point controversially claimed that the protests were not indicative of a funding 'crisis', received arguably the most backlash from students out of all public figures – this was especially rife after he was filmed saying that if the students did not agree to a 6% cap on increases, they would "start [their] own movement: Students Must Fall" (eNCA, 2015). In addition to what students perceived as a dismissal of their protest (which was derisively re-semiotised from the 'X Must Fall' format), Nzimande's position as a Minister in charge of tertiary education matters naturally pulled him into the public eye during this time. By the 23rd of October, he had lost favour with the student protesters due to these comments and began to draw criticism for both his inaction and the eventual announcement that his department would cap the fee increases at 6%. Despite the original pamphlet handed out before the 14th, which singled out the university as the sole arbiters of financial decisions, student derision eventually shifted towards Blade Nzimande and occasionally other public figures. Placards held by the students reflected these sentiments, touting phrases such as "PHANSI NGO-BLADE" ("DOWN WITH BLADE"), "BLADE MUST FALL", and "BLUNT BLADE / NOT SHARP ENOUGH". Despite Universities being systematically shut down all over the country, Nzimande was reluctant to label the situation a 'crisis' in a media briefing on the 22nd of October:



Figure M: M&G Front page cover photo: retrieved from https://mg.co.za/article/2015-10-22-nzim 1 - 'Blade Withheld 'free varsity' report', Mail & Guardian, 23 Oct 2015

As the protests escalated and the #FeesMustFall campaign gained momentum yesterday, Higher Education Minister Blade Nzimande dismissed statements that the wave of protests constituted a national crisis.

"Yes, it is a challenge, but I would not call it a crisis because we have ways and means to discuss the matter," he said at a media briefing in Pretoria to address the issue of fee increases at universities.

He, however, conceded that higher education was expensive. "I am very sympathetic to them (students). We are aware that university education is expensive and something needs to be done about it, especially in developing countries." (Morrissey, Nkosi & Kalipa, 2015)



Figure N: Photo (author-taken): Luthuli House: Sign held by protester saying "Asiwuvumi u-6% Blade! #FeesMustFall" ("We do not approve of 6%, Blade!")

The use of the verb "dismissed" to describe Nzimande's response implies a level of doubt or scepticism on the part of Nzimande and suggests that statements are an overreaction. However, when contextualized in the article, this word usage seems to be more an indictment of Nzimande's reaction rather than the claim that there is a crisis – prior to providing the quote from the Higher Education Minister, the journalist describes various scenes of chaos, violence and high emotion, describing Stellenbosch university as "troubled" and stating that Wits students "reacted with all the fury of a jilted lover". Instances of protester hospitalization, property damage and widespread cancellation of classes are used

to preface Nzimande's quote, thus adding a sense of irony to his dismissal of an apparent crisis. The later usage of "conceded" to indicate a compromise on his part also suggests that he has thus far been presented as stubborn or even out-of-touch. When positioned in relation to other figures or groups involved in the protests, such as the protesters or vice-chancellors of universities, his role in the narrative starts to be shaped around his accountability in the fees crisis – he is framed as a spokesperson for Higher Education in South Africa as a whole, and by extension the main character representing the government's voice in the matter. This is covered in more detail in a forthcoming section.

After Blade Nzimande, Adam Habib received the most attention in the sample data as an individual public figure. As the Vice-Chancellor of the University of the Witwatersrand (still in office as of this paper's completion), his portrayal in the sample data has oscillated between being a reliable, official source for Wits' perspective, and a target of criticism by both government figures and student leaders. In preparation for the 14th of October, students on social media sites such as Twitter began sharing edited images or caricatures of Habib under the hashtags #WitsFeesMustFall and #Oct14. This included edits of his head on the body of Marie Antoinette, with the caption "Let them eat cake!", and photos of him with added captions like "We will milk them dry!" It seemed that build-up to the protest involved negative sentiment toward Adam Habib in social media circles, setting him up as an antagonist early on in the development of #FMF. Mainstream media tended to support this oppositional narrative in their reporting as well, either through direct quotations from

people or by highlighting feelings of frustration or distrust for him. The following are some extracts from various newspapers that directly name Habib and imply negative sentiment:

72. One cleaner said she earns R2 700. "How can I afford the fees at Wits with that much? When we ask Adam Habib (Wits vice-chancellor and principal) for a (pay) rise, he says we must study and teach at Wits so we can afford the fees. How can I afford to study when I can't even pay for my child's fees?" the cleaner asked. (Monama, 2015)
73. Wits vice-chancellor Adam Habib reportedly said, after Tuesday's announcement



Figure O: Photo by DAYLIN PAUL, originally captioned: "HEATED TALKS: Wits University vice-chancellor Adam Habib in an exchange with a student as Wits EFF chairman Vuyani Pambo, in red, and former SRC president Mcebo Dlamini, in yellow, look on. Retrieved from https://www.pressreader.com/south-africa/sunday-times/20151018/281633894081341

that there would be a 6 percent cap on fee hikes, that he would try to negotiate with the students. Yesterday, students made it clear in a statement that they do

not trust him or the council. They also rejected the 6 percent fee cap. (Monama & Morrissey, 2015)

74. "If you look around you there are workers, the cleaners," he said, referring to outsourced workers who marched alongside the students. "This must tell you that the university under [vice-chancellor] Adam Habib has been and is still anti-black. As much as we're fighting [against] fee increases, we're fighting a system that is brutal." 'This institution belongs to us' – quote by Mcebo Dlamini (Nkosi, 2015)
75. Some students carried placards that declared: "Dear Adam Habib. Application for dictatorship successful." Others described the VC as "Adolf Habib" and expressed: "Blade Nzimande. Adam Habib. Homo Naledi. No difference." (Morrissey, Mkhwanazi & Bega, 2015)

Generally, the most negative portrayals of Habib in the media were framed as his being in opposition to a large, usually faceless group of people – usually students but occasionally workers as seen in (72) and (74). Despite the Council of Wits being the main decision-making body of the university, it was not brought up as often as Habib himself, whose position as Vice-Chancellor primed him to become a figurehead for the broader systemic problems targeted by the protesters. As observed in the posts on the WWSC blog, individualisation is used here by protesters as a contrast to genericisation or functionalization of their own roles – “student”, “cleaner” – in order to re-inforce the idea of “class action” as an effective solution, legitimizing their own professions while also vilifying the actions (or inaction) of Habib. Comparisons to dictators like Adolf Hitler and famous fossils like Homo Naledi also bring up negative connotations about the intentions and abilities of the vice-chancellor. However, unlike in posts by the WWSC, student voices in the media did not seem to reflect any calls for

him to resign – only for him to co-operate and hold himself accountable as the mouthpiece of Wits to the government.

Government, University and Accountability

Although Universities and Vice-Chancellors were considered to be the primary targets for the protests, the issue of funding for tertiary education – and the eventual goal of free education for all – was a problem for the South African government to solve as well. While some were of the opinion that anger at the Universities was misdirected or counter-productive, the protests nevertheless drew the attention of government after protests did not abate and Universities began to shut down operations. In the pamphlet handed out by #FeesMustFall organisers prior to the first demonstration, Wits University was singled out as having been solely responsible for the fee increase decision. The writers of the pamphlet go so far as to accuse the university of having made the decision with the intent to exclude poor students from higher education. However, the statements released by management during the protests attributed the fee increase to factors out of the control of the university's Council, which the highest decision-making body of the institution. The second statement released by management, on the first day of protests, cites a list of rising expenses due to inflation and decreasing government subsidies as the reason that they are "forced to implement" higher tuition and enrolment fees. The statement goes on to mention apparent co-operation between Wits and the government to address the problem of funding:

> It is precisely because of this that we have intensively lobbied the South African government, from the President to the Minister of Education. These efforts have resulted in the establishment of a task team which includes the Vice-Chancellor. In

> the meantime, we are confronted with the costs, and if we do not make the required increases, then the quality of our educational offerings is likely to be severely compromised. (See Appendix, Email 2)

Although the statement optimistically supplies that a task-team involving the government and the Vice-Chancellor has been established, no further details are provided as to the make-up of the team, how long it has been in commission, and what its precise goals are – it has to be presumed by the reader that the team and aforementioned lobbying to everyone "from the President to the Minister of Education" has been in the interest of decreasing fees. The statement also avoids naming the President, Minister of Education or Vice-Chancellor, despite all of them being public figures. According to Machin & Mayr (2012:81), this functionalization *of* the figures involved falls more in line with the highly formal, official register of the statements, and places the focus on the positions or responsibilities of these figures rather than on who they are as people – possibly to avoid personal evaluations of Jacob Zuma, Blade Nzimande and Adam Habib colouring the reader's perception of the government and task team's effectiveness.

The issue of who exactly is to blame for the fees crisis, and likewise who is responsible for resolving it, was heavily disputed. The greatest point of tension seemed to be between the government and the councils that operate tertiary institutions – while government officials, such as Blade Nzimande, would claim that Universities possess enough "autonomy" to dictate their tuition fees and ensure that they are manageable, Universities would cite subpar government funding as the root of the fees crisis. In the corpus of this paper, the government is brought up in approximately 28% of the articles, this being the second most frequent

subject covered – or at least mentioned – in newspaper reporting of #FMF. Blade Nzimande, in his capacity as Minster of Higher Education and Training, was most often quoted to provide a perspective from the government and help to elucidate what they were doing to lower fees. In the *Cape Times*, we see one example of how responsibility is shifted away from the government, as well as how this is challenged by the Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu):

> Urging institutions to negotiate, and students to allow the negotiations to run their course, Nzimande said he was "very sympathetic" to the students, but his office was not the first port of call as universities were autonomous.
>
> Coming out in support of the student protests yesterday, labour federation Cosatu dismissed government's argument that universities were autonomous.
>
> "Cosatu strongly believes that education should be treated as a societal issue, largely located in the hands of government. The whole concept of institutional autonomy of universities does not work because it disconnects these institutions from the reality of our society," said Cosatu. (Merten, 2015)

Cosatu is collectivized in this article and the quotes are presented to have been 'spoken' by the congress as a whole, rather than by an individual spokesperson – in this case, the statement from which this excerpt is taken was released by Sizwe Pamla, national spokesperson of Cosatu. In contrast, the national spokesperson of the ANC, Zizi Kodwa, was individualized in this same article. Whether intentional or not on the part of the author, the concept of a collective voice in the criticism of Nzimande adds to its strength as an argument – something clearly seen in previous chapters. Even if an individual is speaking on behalf of

an organization, referring to the organization as a whole can come across as more unified and authoritative.

As for Nzimande's response, the author utilizes some idiomatic language to describe it. Here, Nzimande is said to have "urged institutions to negotiate", but that students should "allow the negotiations to run their course". Normally, negotiations require active participation from two or more parties – in this case, institutions and students – but the phrasing here implies that students would take on a more passive role. Instead of actively negotiating, they would be "allowing" them to happen and come to a natural, inevitable conclusion; for something to "run its course", it must be left to continue without interference. There is also the implication here that students were not *willing* to negotiate nor allow negotiations to happen at that point, so it bore prompting from the Minister. Another idiom drawn from the metaphorical domain of marine travel (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980), "the first port of call", is used to describe Nzimande's role in these discussions – namely, that the figurative 'journey' to fee decreases should not involve Nzimande until a later stage. A different paper, *The Star,* provides a direct speech version of this quote – which actually quotes him as saying "*point* of call" - which further clarifies that he is distancing himself and his department from the matter at hand:

> Nzimande denied allegations that he had been too quiet about the protests.
>
> "Up to this point, the issue of fees was not a matter of the department. It is a matter of the institutions. It is unfair that I will be the first point of call. I am not the first point of call. When people say I am quiet, I don't agree with that," he said. (Morrissey, Nkosi & Kalipa, 2015)

The journalist elects to use the verb "denied" in reference to Nzimande's rejection of the allegations, which connotes the "possibility of guilt" (Machin & Mayr, 2012:69). Despite offering Nzimande space in the article to explain his actions, there is room for doubt and scepticism of the quote that follows. Neither the journalist nor Nzimande specifically name those making these allegations, and Nzimande vaguely refers to them as "people", which does not allow their allegations to have the legitimacy associated with official sources. Nzimande rejects the claims in order to validate his own responses as well as divert responsibility to the universities, claiming that they were (and still are) responsible for the tuition fee problem "up to this point".

The responsibility here is not outright rejected by Nzimande or other government figures, but re-directed towards "autonomous" institutions for the time being. This is in interesting stance for Nzimande to take, since his position in government is contingent on the monitoring and regulating of Universities, such that higher education can develop in South Africa. If universities are too autonomous to be his immediate concern, then it would contradict the purpose of the governmental department – or metonymically, the "office" - that he heads. The website of the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) provides a brief overview of its mandate, vision, mission and value statement – common features of a company, organization or institution's information pages online.[7] Like many documents of this kind, the DHET's 'About' page uses language that avoids detail or concrete statements about its functions, and rather highlights positive values and draws from a 'business' rhetoric, even if the organization is not a for-profit corporate one. (Machin & Mayr,

[7] http://www.dhet.gov.za/SitePages/AboutUsNew.aspx

2012:33-37). The 'mission' of the department is shows a similar opacity of concrete issues, solutions or methods:

> DHET Mission
>
> It is the mission of the Department of Higher Education and Training to develop capable, well-educated and skilled citizens who are able to compete in a sustainable, diversified and knowledge-intensive international economy, which meets the development goals of our country. ("About Us", n.d.)

Appropriate to the domain of a government department, reference is made to citizen and country, the former playing a role in furthering the development of South Africa through their participation in the economy; specifically, a "sustainable, diversified and knowledge-intensive international" economy. Despite the use of three descriptors in succession to describe the international economy, it remains unclear what exactly this entails or how it is relevant to the growth of people seeking higher education – what kind of "diversity" or "knowledge" is left unspecified. However, the saturation of adjectives evokes positive associations with the Department and presents its goals as ambitious, valuable to the economy, and in the same league as other, potentially more powerful countries. The verb "compete" here is also in-line with the aforementioned business rhetoric. This rhetoric frames employment, education and general participation in the economy as arenas of competition where skills and education are necessary paths to "victory" – in this case, victory would be contribution to unspecified "development goals" for the country. Acquiring skills and gainful employment is presented as a contribution to a collective rather than an individual need in order to live comfortably. This prioritisation of creating graduates, and

the danger that the protests posed to the Academic Programme (and consequently the job economy), is not critiqued, even in opinion pieces in newspapers which usually have more room to grapple with nuanced political issues. The business/capitalist-oriented reporting culture (Duncan, 2014) implicitly agrees that tertiary education is necessary without questioning why it is considered the *only* gateway to financial stability, and perpetuates the idea that unskilled labour is inherently less valuable due to the lack of qualifications required to perform it – even when such labour may be more in-demand. The adjacent protest against outsourcing and the inadequate salaries and lack of benefits that come with it filled this gap in the discourse. It pushed for better working conditions and compensation for those who are unwilling or unable to seek higher education, or whose jobs do not require tertiary qualification, such as cleaners, janitors or other employees involved in maintenance of campus grounds.

In order to achieve the goals of the DHET's mission, the second part of it offers a list of issues that the DHET aims to address:

> The Department will undertake this mission by reducing the skills bottlenecks, especially in priority and scarce skills areas, improving low participation rates in the post-school system , correcting distributions in the shape, size and distribution of access to post-school education and training and improving the quality and efficiency in the system, its sub-systems and institutions. ("About Us", n.d.)

Several problems are presented, with some of them being alluded to rather than directly named. While "low participation rates" is fairly straightforward, other problems such as poor quality administration or lack of access to skills training that certain demographics have are

more obscured, or framed as areas needing “improvement” or “correction.” The structural reasons behind these issues are also left out, particularly in the instance of “distributions of access to post-school education”: an understanding of South Africa’s socio-economic situation would show that the racial distribution of students in Higher Education do not proportionately reflect the racial distribution of the general population. While fee increases were at the forefront of the protest and served as its flagship issue, student protesters also addressed the lack of access for Black students due to generational poverty. Since #FeesMustFall is essentially about improving post-school participation through creating financial accessibility, it should be in line with the goals of the DHET – if University autonomy is indeed an obstacle to this, there is no indication of addressing this specific problem in the DHET’s mission statement.

Like Nzimande, The ANC’s secretary-general at the time, Gwede Mantashe, also buttressed his position on university autonomy by expressing support for the student protesters:

> Mantashe said the problem was that the government was expected to subsidise students while universities abused their autonomy to set fees. "The consequence is that fewer students will access higher education. This is a function of a hybrid system where the state is expected to fund higher education while at the same time universities are autonomous."
>
> Mantashe singled out Wits vice-chancellor Adam Habib for criticism. "He, like all vice-chancellors, must take responsibility."
>
> Mantashe added the ANC condemned "unilateral decision-making by some institutions" to raise fees for the next academic year.

> "The ANC affirms its opposition to any exclusionary policies by institutions of higher learning, especially if those who bear the brunt of such marginalization (are) children of the poor and the working class." (Makhafola & Ferreira, 2015)

Mantashe's statement took a stronger stance on the accountability of universities and even echoes the accusations made by student protesters in their pamphlet – that universities deliberately enforce exclusionary practices and make "unilateral" decisions independent of government interference. The article writes that Mantashe accuses universities of having "abused" this autonomy, indicating a relationship between government and higher education institutions that is based in a tenuous co-operation rather than in regulation or management. This particular article does not include any offers from Mantashe in the way of explanation, justification or compromise, and instead only contains statements that reflect a "blame-shifting" from government to universities. Vice-Chancellor Adam Habib is also named and individualized by Mantashe as someone who needs to accept accountability for the crisis. When discussing his own party's stance, however, he falls back on collectivization as a strategy to present a unified voice in solidarity with students against exclusionary practices.

One article from the *Mail & Guardian* asks for input from the Director of The Centre of Higher Education Transformation, Nico Cloete. He takes a stance that is more sympathetic to universities and critique's the government for "critically underfunding" institutions of higher education. However, he also explains that universities are complicit in the fees crisis as well. He is quoted in the article as saying:

> It was a ticking time bomb that "exploded right next to Parliament", academic Nico Cloete quips about the student fees protests that spilled on to the streets of Cape Town this week. […] “It's been ticking and who's been sleeping on it? Both the government and university vice-chancellors have been sitting on it," he told the *Mail & Guardian*. "The vice-chancellors have been sleeping on it because they don't want to antagonise government on [the] one hand and because they are divided on the other hand.”
>
> "There are such divisions in higher education in South Africa - between the advantaged and the disadvantaged universities, and between the universities of technology and the traditional universities." (Nkosi, 2015)

Cloete describes inaction on the part of both government and the vice-chancellors in addressing rising tuition fees, with Universities being unwilling to “antagonize” government by engaging with them. This lack of action is described as “sleeping” or “sitting”, implying a lack of energetic engagement with the issue – the comparison of the fees crisis to an exploded bomb contrasts this metaphor starkly, and adds a layer of derision for both government and institutions for neglecting a potentially destructive problem. There are two factors here that Cloete claims hinder Universities’ ability to address funding problems: 1) Universities risk losing favour with government if they challenge or engage them for solutions, and 2) that this ability is weakened due to divisions among higher education institutions in the country based on historical or competitive factors. Disadvantaged universities would be those that are not “historically white” – Wits, UCT, and Rhodes qualify as historically white universities

and likewise have some of the highest fees in the country, while also being privilege to "prestige" status due to their long histories of successful alumni and research.

Newspapers did include quotations from students (usually student leaders) that reflected a similar view that universities and government should share the responsibility of solving the funding crisis. In the following extracts, there is a general feeling given that protesters no longer accept excuses, condescension or blame-shifting, and are aware of the power-dynamic between universities and government:

76. Student leader Vuyani Pambo told the M&G: "We know that the university is sitting pretty. There's no need for them to raise fees." But the university's chief financial officer, Linda Jarvis, said Wits "does not have any reserve operational funds". Inadequate state subsidies had informed the university council's decision to increase fees by 10.5%, said Jarvis. "In recent years, the government has not been able to provide inflation-linked increases in funding - and expenditure, which is not within our control, is escalating at rates higher than inflation. (Nkosi, 2015)
77. "As students we have tried to engage institutions, but they don't want to listen. If we close all campuses, then (Higher Education and Training Minister) Blade (Nzimande) will notice and take our demands seriously," said Brian Kamanzi, of #FeesMustFall and #EndOutSourcing. (Monama, 2015)
78. Wits SRC general secretary Fasiha Hassan said: "We have done all we could do at the university level and now we are determined to take this protest action to the government." ("Protest threat to poll", 2015)

In extract (76), Pambo's quote challenges the assertion commonly given by university spokespeople for the press, and in their management statements to the student body: that they do not have reserves of money that can cover expenses in lieu of raising fees. Inclusion of this quote does indeed show an attempt by the journalist to include an alternative, challenging narrative to the one provided by official sources – however, the effect of Pambo's claim is mitigated by what follows it. The use of "but" as a presuppositional trigger (Levinson, 1983; Machin & Mayr, 2012: 82), meaning that the reader is quickly primed to doubt the veracity or importance of whatever idea precedes it. In this case, the reader knows that Pambo's short and colloquially-phrased quotation is about to be countered by "the university's chief financial officer, Linda Jarvis". The fact that Jarvis is functionalized before she is named puts her title in spotlight, and thus foregrounds the 'authority' of her voice as a source. Even though Pambo undergoes the same functionalization, the title of "student leader" does not hold the same weight as it is not a profession or position of influence that way that a CFO is. Furthermore, Jarvis' quote is much lengthier and uses financial jargon to fully substantiate her standpoint. Once again, the government is scapegoated for its inadequate funding, and Jarvis' states that the expenditure of the University *"is not within [their] control".* The question of who, then, is in control of expenditure is suppressed and left unanswered, perhaps to imply that it cannot be controlled at all. Despite the newspaper having included voices from different sides of the protest, the lack of authority of the student leader's voice ends up lowering his credibility in the debate about university funds.

Extracts (77) and (78) both make the claim that Universities were indeed the first 'port of call' for protesters, as opposed to Blade Nzimande's claim that negotiations with universities were bypassed. Generally, across the sample data, views given by students do not seem to

disfavour one over the other – both universities and government are given approximately equal weight in the responsibility to solve the tuition fee crisis. Adam Habib and Blade Nzimande often get individualized by student spokespeople as "antagonists" to the #FMF movement, which was reflected in their being the most frequently mentioned public figures in the data. This individualization is likely a reflection of student frustration with who they believe have the most ability to enact change, as well as a direct call-to-action for the two men. Being named is more likely to create a distinct pressure on the individual to act. Secretary-General Gwede Mantashe, in line with his public face of support for the students, was also scathing of Adam Habib in particular, with *Cape Argus* newspaper quoting him as saying: "If I was earning what Habib earned I would also increase the fees to make my salary higher." In some ways, this could be a deliberate strategy on the part of Mantashe to avoid the rejection by student protesters that Habib faced throughout #FMF – scapegoating Habib could be seen as a method of deflecting criticism against Mantashe, Blade Nzimande, and the entire ANC government. Mantashe's plying of student frustration did have its limit when the march to Luthuli house saw him reject their demands to sit down – a demand that, conversely, Adam Habib did *not* deny when it was asked of him.

Despite any attempts by Mantashe or any other political figure to deflect attention away from the ruling party, party politics nevertheless became a talking point in South African media. Protesters in the #FeesMustFall campaign itself asserted that the movement was categorically non-partisan, and mainstream media took an interest in this aspect of the movement. Opinions and evaluations by media contributors strongly suggested that this unity among youths under #FMF was stirring up a certain status quo in South African party politics. Although certain student leaders who were personally aligned with certain parties

did emerge, there was conscious attempt to keep the movement as lateral as possible, and prevent hierarchies and alliances from emerging that could destabilize it. A few political parties were accused of trying to "hijack" the movement and claims of solidarity from high-profile political leaders, such as Mmusi Maimane from the Democratic Alliance (DA) and Floyd Shivambu from the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF), were dismissed as being transparent, or of insincere bandwagoning to collect voters. An opinion piece by political editor Natasha Marrian published in *Business Day* outlines her view on how and why a non-partisan strategy has been embraced:

> The strategic rejection of political parties is aimed at preserving the fragile unity the students have managed to form. African National Congress (ANC)-aligned student movements, the DA Students Organisation and the EFF student command have put their differences aside to grapple with an issue that miners grappled with in Marikana in 2012 - inequality. It is at the heart of the protests and, for students, never before have the differences between the haves and the have-nots been starker. (Marrian, 2015)

The unity between the #FMF protests has been presented as "fragile", which plays up the large role that party-affiliations seem to play in the life of the progressive, activist student. Inequality has been identified as a unifying cause – one that not only brings the #FMF protesters together, but also ties them to what is now known as the Marikana Massacre. Despite being two very different protests – with Marikana having been a mining strike where miners were killed by police - the author connects them in order to foreground the discourse of unresolved socio-economic problems being a common thread among contemporary

protests. In fact, the issue of inequality is metaphorically described as being at the "heart" of #FeesMustFall, underlying all of the more specific issues such as tuition fees, decolonization and outsourcing. The tragedy of Marikana is contrasted against the idealistic spirit of co-operation to frame the #FMF protests as having transcended the politics that implicitly threaten disunity and possible violence.

Several newspaper articles, including the above article from *Business Day*, describe instances of students rejecting or criticizing attempts by party-politicians to hold a platform for themselves at protest gatherings. Mmusi Maimane of the DA was "chased" from speaking to them, along with EFF leader Floyd Shivambu. The rejection of these figures – who are older, established politicians – is commented on by Marrian; she claims that it reflects not only a non-partisan approach, but also a disconnect between the youth and those currently in power:

> But a preliminary analysis of the situation shows that parties across the political platform can unite towards a common cause. It shows that the political parties dominating our discourse are hopelessly out of touch with our young people. Significantly, it shows that if our elders are afraid to take forward a radical transformation agenda, the youth certainly are not. (Marrian, 2015)

It is suggested here that non-partisan, radical politics are the younger generation's response to the methods of those older individuals currently holding power in government – that is, methods that are more in line with the neoliberalism ushered in after 1994.

79. These issues have been brewing for quite some time (coming to a head in the Rhodes statue removal at UCT), but speak to much deeper issues bubbling up in

the "born-free" generation of particularly black youth about rejecting multi-racialism and rainbow society visions of the Mandela presidency in favour of a firmer agenda of racial transformation, black consciousness and (black) Africanism. (Montalto, 2015)

80. "We are not a lost generation - we have found what to fight for" a student leader said. (RDM Newswire, 2015)
81. Dlamini said: "Comrades, the honeymoon is over. We are demanding the dignity of the black child. "We don't want an arrogant ANC. When they say we are born free, what are we free from? Are we free from poverty? Do we have land?" (Monama, 2015)

#FMF protesters have been known to take issue with romanticizing the transition into democracy, pointing out that many socio-economic problems caused by Apartheid have gone unaddressed or outright ignored. This “honeymoon” mentioned in (81) is an ironic nod to the ‘rainbow nation’ or Ubuntu mentality that pervaded post-Apartheid South African consciousness. Extract (79), a piece written by Peter Attard Montalto, a director and strategist at an international bank, talks about the rejection of these “rainbow society visions” and explicitly mentions that Black youth are the ones most vocally rejecting these attitudes. “Brewing” and “bubbling” being used to metaphorically describe the build-up to #FMF connote a slow, but steadily escalating amalgamation of problems. At the cost of a relatively stable transition to democracy, meaningful transformation has been neglected, resulting in a similar lack of access to basic public services, education, employment and social change. Although the descriptor of ‘born-free’ has been applied to South African youths, the

#FMF movement became a platform for this demographic to air their critiques of this concept – in extract (81), Dlamini poses these central questions. The meanings of "freedom" are no longer limited to constitutional rights and de-segregation; instead, freedom must also financial and informed by the pursuit of equity and transformation. The question "do we have land?" continues to be topical even after #FMF, with 'land' referring both to its literal meaning, and the concept of Black-owned capital – something that was unheard before Apartheid and stills struggles to be realized by much of the Black population in the new South Africa. Within this discussion of Black youth being at the forefront of addressing these issues, there is the implication that older generations have neglected their activism and allowed higher education to become more and more inaccessible over time – something that the "lost generation" (80) has taken over as their fight, just as previous generations took up anti-Apartheid activism as their fight. In sum, although #FMF (and its predecessor, #RMF) was not the first movement to tackle transformation and decolonization, it popularized these discourses and activated a youth movement that has come to reject the idealism and neoliberalism being fostered by democracy.

While government and universities maneuvered through the media landscape with the purpose of shifting accountability, the representation of student voices in the media offered insights into the underlying reasons behind #FeesMustFall – reasons rooted in race, class, and 'rainbow-ism'. The latter in particular reveals an understanding on the part of South Africa's university-going youth that the country's largest institutions are lacking in radical transformative politics, preferring to grapple with inequality within an inherently unequal, neoliberal system. Wits University, both in its own statements and in the media representations of it, fell back on discourses related to economics to justify the inability to

lower (or do away with) fees, while also shifting the majority of the blame to government under-spending on higher education. Government representatives mirrored this view and shirked accountability as well, this time in favour of presenting universities as autonomous – and therefore beyond the strict regulation of government. From the perspective of students, initially targeting universities was a gateway to addressing the ANC and its government, acknowledging the role that both the ruling party and higher education institutions have in addressing the problem. Well-known figures such as Blade Nzimande and Adam Habib bore the brunt of student criticism as the respective figureheads of government and university, while Nzimande joined in this criticism of Habib in order to deflect attention away from himself and his department. As such, the South African media presented a triangular conflict between three groups: the government versus the universities versus the students. Representation of the additional complexities involved in the tuition fee crisis were chiefly relegated to quotes supplied by students and protest leaders, which – unlike in reporting of Marikana – made the protesters the most central voice in explaining the long-developing underlying causes that led to #FMF.

While early coverage of Marikana suffered from a lack of plurality in representing all those involved, especially by prioritizing more 'official' sources over those of the miners, coverage of #FMF seemed to have improved upon this reporting trend in some ways. However, the demographic of people involved in the tuition fee protests were quite different from the miners - #FMF comprised of millennials across multiple races, genders and classes, who were wholly or partly university-educated, granting a perceived level of social prestige over mine workers. This discrepancy in class is a factor in considering how the media, government and police responded to their demonstrations, and how easily the protest

paradigm could be applied to them. Nevertheless, #FMF coverage was not free of the practices associated with war journalism, with conflicts and violence becoming foregrounded whenever they occurred. Students had access to social media as a resource (which media outlets used in some articles), which miners did not.

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION

Along with its status as a prestigious African university, Wits has now become known as ground zero for a nationwide phenomenon that came to hold the South African consciousness firmly in its grip for ten days. #FeesMustFall - the ideological successor to #RhodesMustFall in Cape Town and the anti-Apartheid activism of previous generations - used the proposed tuition fee increases announced in October 2015 as kindling for the largest student movement South Africa has seen since Apartheid – one that not only addressed the financial inaccessibility of higher education, but also acknowledged the intersections of race, class, and systemic inequality that underlie this inaccessibility. Despite many participants in #FeesMustFall being too young to have experienced Apartheid first-hand – in other words, the 'Born-Free' generation – these young, educated protesters challenged the complacency of a post-Apartheid society that, to this day, was slow in redressing the socio-economic inequality that was entrenched by centuries of colonialism. The size, scope and successes of this youth movement captured the attention of the South African media, and Wits in particular lay at the epicentre the nationwide campaign.

Throughout the texts produced by the #FeesMustFall campaign, especially those about or from within Wits University, a common connector was that of conflict – namely, the positioning of different actors in relation or opposition to each other. The students and staff

who sought a 0% fee increase and an end to outsourcing practices identified antagonists in the form of Wits University's Council and the ruling government of South Africa. The latter parties shifted accountability away from themselves, with Wits blaming the government for underfunding, and the government blaming Wits (and Universities in general) for dictating their own expenses and tuition fees. Wits University management utilised its mass-email system to communicate with university staff, students and other related mailing list contacts, wielding a rational, authoritative voice and drawing upon discourses of safety, protocol and academic productivity. Behaviour from protesters that could be deemed deviant – such as violence, lecture disruptions, and occupations of administration buildings – were condemned as part of the authoritative stance of the University. In order to challenge the rigid rules and hierarchies of Wits, protesters physically reclaimed its main administrative building, and turned into a bastion of Fallism at the institution – the 'ivory tower' of university council was forced to face the masses of students at its base, thus attempting to erase the literal and figurative vertical structures that disprivilege the poor and protect the wealthy.

The country's news media latched onto conflict and aided in the creation of a narrative, with 'characters' included: student leaders like Mcebo Dlamini and Nompendulo Mkatshwa as foils to each other's personal ideals of 'good' or 'effective' protest; Vice-Chancellor Adam Habib as the mouthpiece of not only Wits but South African universities in general; and Minister Blade Nzimande as a 'hands-off' politician. On a more sensationalist note, violent behaviour became a recurring theme in media coverage as well, despite Wits protesters attempting to abstain from violence as far as possible. Although protesters seemed to prefer occupations and marches as protest tactics, incidences of violence during a protracted

protest became inevitable. The news media zeroed in on incidences of violence to report on – falling in line with journalistic tropes from war journalism and the protest paradigm. The analysis of violent police interaction with protesters supports Duncan's (2014) remarks that the (re)actions of police officers/security forces are almost always contextualized as defensive, and framed as "neutral", order-keeping violence – compared to protester violence, which is evaluated through emotions such as anger or frustration. Furthermore, protester behaviour is not contextualized as reflecting discomfort with armed guards and police, an understandable caution in the wake of the extreme police brutality against protesting Black bodies at Marikana. University management implied protester propensity for violence while decontextualizing their actions from the factors that lead to an unsanctioned protest, such as years of inaction from authority figures such as Wits or the government, student homelessness due to lack of fees to pay for residence, and frequent academic exclusion due to financial difficulty – all of this, in addition to systemic racism and classism that is present in historically white universities.

The resources of university management, such as access to mass-email technology and the social status of being an official, reliable institution make it easier to assert their position to the public and keep the university community informed - on the university's own terms, no less. Protesters, on the other hand, must rely chiefly on the media to represent the events and voices of the movement. Because of this – and especially in the wake of Marikana – journalists hold a great deal of control over whether protesters are better understood or further marginalized. Peace journalism, critical analyses of media language and social justice-minded reporting have the potential to ward off the negative effects of the protest paradigm and un-do the naturalization of certain hegemonies in society and language: white

supremacy, classism, neoliberalism, among many others. Research into media ethics and practices, protest studies and linguistics, and how these fields interact, can be valuable in understanding social conflict, as well as investigate alternatives to violence, perpetuation of problems, and further marginalization of society's most vulnerable. War journalism, the protest paradigm, and other journalistic routines that do not endeavour to foster conflict resolution and social justice can be mitigated by applying close textual analyses to the framing devices that mainstream media and influential institutions use to supply the public with information.

The #FeesMustFall movement is the culmination of multiple overlapping issues that have moved in and out of the media's eye since the end of Apartheid. Unresolved race relations, the cycle of poverty, and lack of employment and education for Black South Africans have remained a staple of society and the injustices of colonialism and Apartheid have continued to linger well into 2018. Protests that arose over the years in reaction to pervading neoliberalism – which is maintained precisely because, as a system, it obscures inequality and hierarchies – made few meaningful strides in truly addressing institutional inequality. #FeesMustFall, however, tackled these issues explicitly: what began at #RhodesMustFall in Cape Town was adopted and built upon by protesters against tuition fee increases and outsourcing, leading to #FeesMustFall and finally coalescing into a de-colonial, progressive ideology known as "Fallism"- an antidote to the complacency of "Rainbowism", the idealistic notion of a both multiracial *and* somehow non-racial society that has triumphed over inequality. This student movement has left an imprint on the kinds of conversations that not only Universities are having, but also conversations that society has been afraid for broach

for decades, lest the illusion of a Rainbow Nation be broken – exposing the sometimes uncomfortable reality of a shifting, growing, and maturing New South Africa.

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APPENDIX

Email 1:

Sent: 14 October 2015

Dear Students

ALL LECTURES AND ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES HAVE BEEN CANCELLED FOR 14 OCTOBER 2015

Groups of students gathered at the entrances of the University this morning protesting against the fee increases for 2016. The students prevented access and egress to the University earlier in the day. In some cases, they have also disrupted teaching and other academic activities from occurring. This is an unofficial protest that follows one at the Wits Business School last night in which lectures were again disrupted and had to be cancelled. Some lecture theatres were also vandalised overnight.

Although events have now stabilised with students agreeing to allow traffic to flow through our entrances, there has been an overall disruption to the academic programme of the University. After consultation between Professor Andrew Crouch and the Deans, we are cancelling all lectures and other academic activities for the day. We think that this is the most prudent route to manage the situation and to ensure the safety and security of all staff and students.

The protest violates the protest policy of the University and our student rules. It is an orchestrated attempt to prevent the University from functioning, and it contravenes our agreements with student leaders and other stakeholders over the years. It is also a clear violation of South Africażs Constitution and Bill of Rights. We recognise that students have a right to protest, but this cannot happen at the expense of the rights of students and staff members to learn and work in a safe environment.

The majority of our 32 500 students and 5 000 staff want to continue teaching, learning and preparing for the upcoming examinations. It is unacceptable for the majority of our staff and students to be held ransom by a minority. We will take the necessary action in line with our policies and procedures to create an environment that allows teaching and learning to continue.

I trust that we have your support and that you will work with us to create a free and safe environment in which we can continue our academic programme. We will continue to keep you updated during the course of the day.

Executive Management
Wits University

Email 2

Sent: 14 October 2015

Dear Students

You will by now have received a general circular informing you of the developments at the University today. Essentially, groups of students gathered in an unsanctioned protest against the student increases for 2016. In some cases, they prevented access and egress to the University, and disrupted teaching and other academic

activities. This resulted in a decision to cancel lectures and other academic activities for the day to ensure the safety and security of staff and students.

We are very mindful of the burden that the fee increases place on students and their families, and the distress and outrage that this causes. However, we are forced to implement these increases because of the above inflation increases in costs related to infrastructure; utilities, including lights and water; and the falling rand-dollar exchange rate, which has resulted in a substantial increase in the amount of money that we pay for all library books, journals, electronic resources and research equipment. At the same time, we have received a below inflation increase in subsidy from government. All of this information has been made available to the SRC in our consultations over the last six months.

It is precisely because of this that we have intensively lobbied the South African government, from the President to the Minister of Education. These efforts have resulted in the establishment of a task team which includes the Vice-Chancellor. In the meantime, we are confronted with the costs, and if we do not make the required increases, then the quality of our educational offerings is likely to be severely compromised.

The protest violates the protest policy of the University and our student rules. It is an orchestrated attempt to prevent the University from functioning, and it contravenes our agreements with student leaders and other stakeholders over the years. It is also a clear violation of South Africa's Constitution and Bill of Rights. We recognise that students have a right to protest, but this cannot happen at the expense of the rights of students and staff members to learn and work in a safe environment.

Essentially, at this stage, we have a situation where 100 to 200 students are preventing 32 500 students and 5 000 staff members from continuing their learning and teaching activities. This is an untenable situation and it cannot be allowed to continue. We have therefore received support from an overwhelming number of respondents from the Senate and the Council to implement the following measures:

1. Students will be provided with designated areas in which to protest so that this does not disrupt the normal functioning of the University.

2. Any students who are involved in the future prevention of access and egress to the University, the disruption of lectures and tests, and preventing the free flow of persons into any operational parts of campus may be refused access to the University until such time as their disciplinary hearings are concluded.

3. All other students who have been involved in preventing access to the University and violating other protest rules will be subject to disciplinary hearings as per our normal procedures.

4. As far as possible, we will implement all safety protocols with Campus Control and our own security staff. However, should there be violence and/or the destruction of infrastructure, the police may be called in to assist with stabilising the situation. Permission for this must be granted by both the Vice-Chancellor and the Chair of Council.

5. We remain open to engaging the students and their leadership in addressing their concerns.

We are currently running an examination schedule. It is now time that that we protect the interests of the vast majority of our students. For those who want to study, we are going to put in place the necessary measures to protect you and to enable you to exercise your right to prepare for your examinations.

Executive Management
University of the Witwatersrand

Email 3

Sent: 14 October 2015

MESSAGE FROM PROFESSOR ANDREW CROUCH, VICE-PRINCIPAL AND DEPUTY VICE-CHANCELLOR: ACADEMIC

14 October 2015 - 21:00

Dear Students

The University will continue its academic activities as usual on Thursday, 15 October 2015.

If the student protest continues, additional security will be deployed and the South African Police Services will be on standby to ensure that staff and students will have access to our campuses. Additional security will be put in place at all campus entry and exit points.

Should there be any change to this arrangement, the University will alert staff and students via email, via the web at www.wits.ac.za, via the media and via SMS where possible.

We apologise for the disruption and any stress and strain caused to our staff and students during this period.

Prof. Andrew Crouch
Vice-Principal and Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Academic
Wits University

Email 4

Sent: 15 October 2015

MESSAGE FROM THE ACTING VICE-CHANCELLOR AND PRINCIPAL, PROFESSOR ANDREW CROUCH

Dear Colleagues and Students

The student protest continues this morning on our campuses and many entrances and exits have been blocked. We again apologise for any inconvenience caused.

We are working on clearing these entrances as quickly as we can, and if needs be with the assistance of the South African Police Services (SAPS). We have consulted with SAPS on our respective roles and the SAPS has agreed to manage the parameter security. They will assist the University in allowing students, staff and visitors to move freely on and off our campuses. We will inform you as soon as these gates are open.

The academic programme will continue as planned and any disruptions will be managed on a case by case basis. Should any disruption occur, please remain calm, allow students to leave the venue and report the incident to Campus Control on (011) 717-4444 or (011) 717-6666 as well as to your relevant Head of Department, Dean or Head of School. Please also consult with your relevant Head of Department or School if you need to suspend or postpone any academic activities.

We are also open to talking to the students and other groups who are protesting in order to find an amicable solution to this matter. This offer has been made to the students.

Please note that the Vice-Chancellor and Principal, Professor Adam Habib is in Durban for the remainder of this week attending the Summit on Higher Education where he is working towards finding lasting solutions to resolve the student funding issues in the higher education sector.

We will keep you posted as things progress throughout the day. Please visit www.wits.ac.za for the latest

update or follow @Wits_News and @Wits_University for regular information. Also check your Wits inbox for emails from the University.

Thank you

Prof. Andrew Crouch
Acting Vice-Chancellor and Principal
Wits University
15 October 2015

Email 5

Sent: 15 October 2015

MESSAGE FROM THE ACTING VICE-CHANCELLOR AND PRINCIPAL

Dear Students

We have been trying for two days to negotiate with the groups of students who have staged a protest on our campuses, disrupted lectures, vandalised infrastructure and vehicles and intimidated members of the Wits community. Our staff and students are still being prevented from accessing and leaving our campuses. To this end, we draw your attention to the attached notice which is circulated in hard copy and electronic form, which stipulates that no one is allowed to block access and egress points, stairwells etc.

The Dean of Students, Dr Pamela Dube and I have just addressed the group of students at some of the entrances and the protestors are still refusing to budge. In keeping with our obligation to ensure the safety and security of our staff and students, we are thus left with no option but to seek assistance from the South African Police Services to clear our entry and exit points, so that our staff and students can leave our campuses safely.

Thank you

Professor Andrew Crouch

Attachment (Microsoft Word document):

ATTENTION

We draw your attention to Section 1 of the Trespass Act of 1959.

The University, exercising its rights as the owner and lawful occupier of the University's property, hereby revokes its permission for any person who:-

a) blockades entrances and exits to the University;

b) blocks lifts and stairwells;

c) otherwise prevents the proper functioning of the University; or

d) engages in any activity of a similar nature

to enter or be present on the University's property.

Anybody engaged in the activities identified above does so contrary to the express instructions of the University and acts without the permission of the University.

Access to or continued presence on the University's property without permission is an offence in terms of the Act.

The University reserves the right to report these incidents to the South African National Prosecuting Authority.

YOU ARE REQUIRED TO IMMEDIATELY CEASE AND DESIST FROM ENGAGING IN THE CONDUCT REFERRED TO ABOVE. IF THIS CONDUCT PERSISTS THE UNIVERSITY WILL TAKE THE NECESSARY ACTION.

Email 6

Sent: 15 October 2015

MESSAGE FROM THE ACTING VICE-CHANCELLOR AND PRINCIPAL

University activities suspended for Friday, 16 October 2015

Dear Students

We are doing all that we can to diffuse the current situation on campus. We are making another attempt to engage with the students at the main gates on the Braamfontein campuses now and we are confident that the students will stand down from the main gates shortly.

We have also taken a decision to postpone all University activities on all our campuses tomorrow, except for the Medical School Campus. The Dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences will communicate directly with staff and students regarding the activities planned for the Faculty tomorrow.

Thank you for your patience in this matter. We will keep you updated.

Professor Andrew Crouch
Acting Vice-Chancellor and Principal
Wits University
15 October 2015

Email 7

Sent: 15 October 2015

Dear Students

In light of the unfolding student protest, the Senate Academic Freedom Committee believes that it is crucial that all concerned refer to 1) the Principles and Values Regarding Protest, 2) the change in the Student Code of Conduct and 3) the Guidelines for Student Protest that have been endorsed by Senate and Council.

They can be accessed via this link - http://www.wits.ac.za/students.

Kind Regards

Nicoleen Potgieter (Ms)
Acting Registrar

Email 8

Sent: 17 October 2015

Dear Students

WITS COUNCIL EXCO AND STUDENTS SIGN AGREEMENT ON WAY FORWARD

Following an intense and protracted engagement between protesting students and members of the Executive Committee of Council, it was agreed that:

1. The University will suspend the decision on all fee increments made for 2016. There will be no fee increments until negotiations reach an agreement.
2. The negotiations pertaining to fee increments will resume anew.
3. In the eventuality of negotiations breaking down, the University will not revert to its initial decision.
4. A new framework for negotiations will be jointly agreed upon in which any final decision of Council on this matter will be presented to a University Assembly.
5. There will be no disciplinary action taken against students or workers who participated in the protest, and no worker will face dismissal as a result of their participation in the protest.
6. The Exco of Council will advance the position of the students for a no fee increase at Council.

The University will officially be closed on Monday, 19 October 2015, to allow Council to report to a University Assembly. This includes the suspension of all University activities including lectures, examinations, assessments, practicals, etc and will affect all students and staff on all campuses including the Medical School and affiliated hospitals.

The agreement was signed by the Chairperson of the Wits Council, Dr Randall Carolissen and Ms Shaeera Kalla, the outgoing SRC President.

A full Council meeting will be called tomorrow, Sunday, 18 October 2015 to deliberate on these matters. Council will report to students at noon on Monday, 19 October 2015.

Email 9

Sent: 18 October 2015

Dear Students

As part of the agreement signed between the Exco of Council and student representatives on Saturday, 17 October 2015, the University will officially be closed on Monday, 19 October 2015. Council will report to students on the issue of fees following a meeting held today. You will be kept updated.

Email 10

Dear Students

The University remains closed tomorrow, Monday, 19 October 2015. However, for those attending the reporting session from Council tomorrow, please note that it takes place at noon. The venue has been changed to the Piazza outside the Great Hall.

Thank you

Email 11

Sent: 19 October 2015

STATEMENT FROM THE COUNCIL OF THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND AT 13:45 ON 19 OCTOBER 2015

Dear Students

Representatives of Council were ready to address students today at noon as per the agreement that was reached on Saturday morning. The condition was that representatives would have a fair chance to report. In

anticipation of large numbers of students, and for health and safety reasons, we informed the SRC that this would happen on the piazza outside the Great Hall.

Our response was developed at a full day Council meeting on Sunday, 18 October 2015. However, given the storming of Senate House, which runs contrary to the spirit of the agreement and our engagement, Council is regrettably no longer in a position to report in person.

We therefore share with you the response from Council electronically. The statement follows below. We can ensure you that Council and executive management remain committed to resolving the fee issue and to getting the academic project on track as soon as possible. This can only happen under safe conditions that are conducive to the academic project.
We will keep you updated.

Thank you

Council of the University of the Witwatersrand
19 October 2015

COUNCIL STATEMENT: RESPONSE FROM THE COUNCIL OF THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND ON THE AGREEMENT REACHED BETWEEN COUNCIL EXCO AND STUDENTS ON 17 OCTOBER 2015

A special meeting of Council was convened on Sunday, 18 October 2015, to consider the agreement that was reached on Saturday, 17 October 2015, between the Executive Committee of Council and students. This agreement was prompted by developments at the University over the past few days and the concerns raised by students.

Council understands and appreciates the extremely difficult circumstances under which this agreement was reached. Council further appreciates the willingness of the student leadership to engage in a transparent process of renegotiating student fees for 2016.

Council recognises the absolute priority of the academic project and the international stature that the University, as an African university, enjoys. It is especially important for Wits to retain its premier academic status given the fact that we have a large number of poor students who are entitled, as are all others, to receive quality education. Council does, however, agree with students that the large fee increases are now a barrier to access for talented but financially stressed students who are prevented from realising their ambitions.

Council affirms the general principles reached in the agreement, including that the current proposal on fee increases be suspended and that a transparent process of negotiation, between the University and the students, be implemented as a matter of urgency.

Cognisant of the spirit and the conditions under which the agreement was reached, Council:

1. Heard from Council Exco, as agreed, who advanced the position put forward by students, regarding the hardships that will be created by an above inflation increase in student fees and their demand for a 0% increase.

2. Recognised the rationale for a 0% increase, given the position put forward by students that an above inflation increase is extremely onerous on students and their families in the current economic climate.

3. Recognised that above inflation increases over a number of years have created a burden of higher education costs that is becoming increasingly difficult for students and their families to sustain.

4. Deliberated on the conditions that have forced fee increases over the years. These include the decline in state subsidy. This is made worse by above inflation increases in the costs related to infrastructure, utilities,

including lights and water, and the falling rand-dollar exchange rate, which have resulted in a substantial increase in the cost of all library books, journals, electronic resources and research equipment.
In recognition of the issues that were advanced by students, Council has considered a number of substantive ideas and options to address the fee increase challenge. These possible mechanisms include:

1. Austerity measures to ensure that the University's financial resources are biased towards the academic project and improved access. All non-essential expenditure will be interrogated.

2. Discounts for NSFAS and financially stressed students, and the sourcing of additional funding from external sources.

3. Waiving the upfront fee for not just NSFAS students, that is already a practice at Wits, but for all qualifying students.

4. The Vice-Chancellor and Principal, Professor Adam Habib, has committed that, given the context, any performance bonus that is due to him for 2015 will go towards access for deserving students.

5. Continued engagement with government with regards to addressing the identified shortfall in funding for higher education.

In keeping with both parties' commitment to negotiations, Council agrees that these options must be considered through a deliberative process and concrete negotiations, in line with the University's governance procedures. Council has established a team and is requesting the student community and the Wits Student Representative Council (SRC) to establish a similar team to partner with Council on resolving this issue as anticipated in the agreement. A process will also be established that will enable all financial and other information to be made available to all parties.
The outcome of these negotiations will be presented to Council as soon as possible, or by the latest, at the next Council meeting.

The University will resume academic operations on Tuesday, 20 October 2015 to enable students to conclude their studies and prepare for examinations.

Council of the University of the Witwatersrand
19 October 2015

Email 12

Dear Students

UPDATE ON STUDENT PROTEST: NOTICE TO STUDENTS ON MONDAY, 19 OCTOBER 2015, AT 16:00

Due to the ongoing protests, and concerns for the health and safety of our staff and students, it has been decided that the academic project will be suspended for Tuesday, 20 October 2015. The suspension will be reviewed depending on further developments.

We will continue to communicate with staff and students, and we will issue a notification regarding the resumption of the academic project as soon as circumstances allow.

Council and management remain committed to finding an amicable resolution and are willing to engage student leadership to facilitate this. However, students are urged not to congregate in the Senate House Concourse, for health and safety reasons.

Thank you.