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Perceptions of cross-racial adoption in South Africa

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A research report submitted to the Faculty of Humanities, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in Community based Counselling Psychology

Johannesburg, 2010

DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis is my own unaided work. It is submitted for the Degree of Master of Arts in Community based Counselling Psychology at the University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any other degree or examination at any other university.

Victoria Ann Hall

3rd June 2010

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to explore possible ways in which racist ideology and counter positions to this ideology are played out in discourses about cross-racial adoption (CRA) in the current post-apartheid context of South Africa. Three focus group interviews were conducted with 18 psychology students at the University of the Witwatersrand. The study adopted a social constructionist approach to knowledge and transcripts from the focus groups were analyzed using discourse analysis that combined techniques from Braun and Clarke (2006) and Parker (1992, 1999). Analysis revealed that students' discussion focused mainly on the extent to which they thought black children raised by white parents should (or should not) be exposed to black culture. The discourses underlying these opinions appeared to gain social legitimacy for their speakers through three overarching repertoires, all of which tended to be used to divert attention away from the political ramifications of arguments. Firstly, participants claimed that their arguments were made with "*the best interests of the child*" at heart. Secondly, participants constructed particular meanings of the relationship between 'race' and identity by framing these meanings as central to "*knowing who you are*". Thirdly, participants distanced themselves from accountability for their opinions by framing them as reflections of "***other** South Africans' attitudes"* towards 'race' and CRA. Overall, the analysis revealed that processes of racialisation show strong persistence in both black and white people's discourses about CRA, but tend to be overtly expressed as a value and tolerance of different cultures and ethnicities. However, counter voices to these discourses did emerge in prominent challenges to the idea that 'race', ethnicity and culture are intrinsic and immutable features of people. Less prominent were the occasional counter voices that suggested these constructs are nevertheless pertinent, because of the ways in which they may be used to either challenge 'racially'-derived inequalities between groups, or to fuel the prominence of racist ideology in society.

KEYWORDS

Cross-racial, adoption, South Africa, race, racism, ethnicity, culture, identity, discourses, ideology

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REPORT

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides an introduction to the current research by providing a brief description of the background of the study in the context of post-apartheid South Africa, and a rationale for why a study about 'race' discourses is relevant, based on the ramifications of South Africa's history of 'race'-relations and CRA in the country. These descriptions explain how the aims of the study with respect to racist ideology are then derived, followed by an account of its scope and significance. Finally a description of how the report's chapters have been organized is provided.

1.1 Definitional Issues

This research recognises the scientifically arbitrary nature of the assignment of *colour* to a person to describe his/her 'race' and thus acknowledges that the terms "black" and "white" are derivatives of the 'race' construct and are therefore neither intrinsic entities, nor are they interpreted in consistent ways in society. The use of the words black and white is therefore used in the research to refer to the *societal configurations* that were and are formed in South Africa around the idea of 'race'. In the broad sense then, "black people" refers to those groups of people who were/would be systematically disadvantaged by the system of apartheid, and "white people" refers to those groups of people who did and would receive a privileged position by its principles (Stevens, Swart and Franchi, 2006). Similarly, this research acknowledges that the ideological appropriateness or 'political correctness' of the term **cross-racial adoption** (which will be abbreviated to the acronym form: **CRA**) may be challenged by some. However, it will be used in the research in a descriptive sense to refer to the joining of 'racially' different parents and children together in family through adoption (Vonk, 2001). In South Africa, this almost always involves 'white' parents adopting 'black' children (Moos and Mwaba, 2007), so where not otherwise specified, this scenario is what the term CRA will refer to.

1.2 Background

In the Foucaultian genealogical tradition that emphasizes the importance of an historical critique of power dynamics in unearthing the origins of knowledge or occurrences that have come to be thought of as ahistorical, natural or universal, Hook (2004) considers the point in time when a 'race'-based organization of society first became prominent, and how this coincides with the political practice of European colonization in Africa (Hook[a], 2004).

In colonial Africa the category of 'race', emerged as a necessary construct for European validation of racist ideology. Racist ideology emerged as a meaning-making system that sought to rationalise the extortion of resources from, and exploitation of native Africans by colonists. That is, the motive for constructing 'race' was to socially construct native Africans in such a way as to make them different and inferior to colonists, such that colonists' gain of structural advantage could be 'justified'. As such, the African person became a *black* object in need of *white* people's control, and Africans' resources and their derivative profits (from bodies, labour, land, and natural resources) went towards serving the structural interests of colonists and their mother-countries (Hook, 2004). Practices of control over the African subject shifted from the so-called healing of the 'African body' and 'soul' of missionary conversions in the 17th and 18th centuries, to the supposed containment of disease of the mining industry in the 20th century where black labourers' bodies were treated as economic commodities. Here, 'modern' medicine was used as a more sophisticated form of disciplinary control, and public health discourse enabled the objectification of black bodies, by constructing them as containers of disease that were in need of monitoring and restriction (Hook[a], 2004).

However, with the increase in urbanization in the 20th century, such literal containment of bodies was no longer possible and the non-feasibility of surveillance and governance of intimate activities (e.g. sex, hygiene, diets) meant that the 'African body', as a physical-somatic entity, became a less useful site for control. The 'African mind' therefore became an object of knowledge constructed against European norms, with differences in social understandings, behaviour and practices (i.e. cultural differences) subsequently constructed as innate abnormalities, evaluated as inherently inferior, qualified as deviant and to be subordinated, and *"the literature on madness in colonial*

Africa … more concerned with a definition of 'Africanness' than with a definition of madness" (Vaughan, 1991, cited in Hook[a], 2004, p219). In addition, the use of generalized understandings of all colonial African subjects, and the construction of this collective group as abnormal and inferior to colonial Europeans, meant that forms of subjugation and discipline that would be applied to individual delinquent subjects of the colonial Europeans, were applied to the African population as a whole (Hook[a], 2004).

MacDonald (2006) illustrates how the subjugation of such a vast population of people in South Africa in particular, required a complex system of surveillance and oppression in order for white privilege to be able to persist for as long as it did. Jan Smuts (1930) first attempted to justify segregation of 'race' groups by discursively constructing blacks as primitive and child-like and whites as acting in their (blacks') best interests as "trustees", by presiding over them. While such a discourse sought to justify white supremacy, another was needed to justify the segregation of whites and blacks and ensure that blacks could not "mature" into self-directing adults (through education or acculturation), negating the 'need' for white control (MacDonald, 2006).

The separate development Acts of apartheid (stemming from the group areas Act of 1950 proposed by the white National Party in power at the time), really sought to formalise and further entrench the segregation practices of the earlier twentieth century. *"Segregation ordained blacks to be **inferior** to whites; apartheid cast them as indelibly **different**"* (MacDonald, 2006, p11). In 1961, Hendrik Verwoerd, the then leader of the National Party (NP), enforced the separate development Act and declared South Africa a republic. By nationalising 'race', apartheid defined the South African nation as consisting of white people only, therefore making black people's claims to equal rights in South Africa null and void by definition. Racialist arguments were used in that, relative to European (or Western) norms, African culture was constructed as an indelibly different and immutable feature of all black people, such that to allow black and white 'race' groups to co-exist, was to encourage conflict akin to warring nations. As such the preservation of 'pure' black cultures (even though viewed as inferior), and prevention of conflict due to incompatibility, were used as arguments for keeping blacks separate from whites. This was further discursively defended by apartheid's supporters using quasi-multiculturalist arguments that constructed separation as being in the best interests of

black people themselves who, by nature, belonged with and could only achieve intimacy and self-contentment with 'their own kind' (MacDonald, 2006).

All blacks were classified within black ethnic groups so that they could be bound by obedience to tribal chiefs who were subject to the authority of the white-run state, thus indirectly subordinating all blacks, regardless of individual aspirations or cultural orientations, to white rule. Historically then, culture and ethnicity became important constructs used in discursive rationalization of white exclusivity, and for preventing black people from unifying under the common experience of racial discrimination, to challenge the state's oppressive systems (MacDonald, 2006). As MacDonald succinctly explains:

> *"…separate development appreciated that cultures are permeable, are susceptible to mixing, amalgamation, and contamination. In response, separate development* ***particularized*** *the cultures of Africans, then* ***nationalized*** *them. Once differentiated into nations and encased in states (real states for whites, fictional ones for Africans), cultures became less permeable. "Blacks" could not become "white" by changing cultures (the fear of all white supremacists) nor could they transcend ethnic divisions (the fear of separate development). Africans were mired in and inseparable from ethnicity, that is, they were tribal"*
>
> (MacDonald, 2006, p16).

However, with genetic research's disqualification of 'race' as a useful biological tool for differentiating between groups of people, and changes in ideological, intellectual and social thinking that promoted egalitarianism and morally condemned practices of overt discrimination, skin-colour became a less legitimate marker of group difference or tool for exploitation of blacks (Malik, 1996). Building on these ideological shifts in thinking, apartheid became less and less easy to provide justification for. In the 1970's and 80's, international condemnation and sanctioning of South Africa increased, as did local political unrest with the rise of protests and resistance movements against apartheid. In 1990, F.W. de Klerk, president and leader of the NP at the time, unbanned liberation movements and allowed for the release of political prisoners. The 90's saw a great deal of political change in South Africa, with constitutional amendments seeking to ensure equal citizenship for black people in South Africa, abolishing apartheid policies of separate

development (including the 1991 changes to the Child Care Amendment Act which lifted prohibitions upon CRA in South Africa (Zaal, 1992)), and introducing policies of redress and affirmative action to political and economic realms. The first democratic elections in 1994 resulted in Nelson Mandela, head of the African National Congress, taking the place of first black president of a democratic South African republic and brought South Africans into the era of *post-apartheid South Africa* (MacDonald, 2006).

Whilst this post-apartheid era has included improvements in many black people's quality of life, it has also involved a great deal of disillusionment for those black people who have failed to reap the benefits of democratization in their everyday lives in any tangible way. In addition, affirmative action policies have been met with resistance and resentment by many white South Africans attempting to secure for themselves a 'comfortable' life in the 'new' South Africa (Ansell, 2004). Much research conducted by social psychologists has focussed on patterns of inter-group contact and segregation between 'race' groups in post-apartheid South Africa, most of which have concluded that, although inter-'race' contact has improved to some extent, patterns of segregation are still overwhelmingly prominent (Dixon and Durrheim, 2003; Holtman, Louw, Tredoux and Carney, 2005; Finchilescu, 2005; Dixon, Tredoux and Clark, 2005; Finchilescu, Tredoux, Mynhardt, Pillay, and Muianga, 2007). HIV and its high (and growing) prevalence in the country also creates much concern for the economic stability of South Africa due to the prospects of a diminished workforce and an increased population of orphans who are reliant upon government for sustenance (Roby and Shaw, 2006).

Within this backdrop of an apartheid past, a competitive and still relatively racially-segregated present, and a somewhat uncertain and worrisome economic future then, the following study attempts to look at how South Africans use and are used by discourses of 'race' in talk about CRA, to discursively secure for themselves a relative sense of social legitimacy and security.

1.3 Rationale

Many steps have been taken to address the effects of racism in post-apartheid South Africa and to build a society that promotes equal status for black and white people. However a relative failure to question if the idea that a non-racialised integration of all

South Africans is possible or to challenge it as a desirable goal of transformation, has also resulted in a tendency to gloss over the implications of apartheid in discourse, a legacy that in many ways has resulted in continuing disparities between black and white 'races' (Bangura, 2002). These lingering effects limit the extent to which non-racialised policies can be legitimately endorsed, as a need for socio-economic redistribution in favour of blacks is still apparent (Bangura, 2002). It has been suggested that that a failure to acknowledge and address these persistent disparities could result in further regression into a crisis of racialisation in South African society (Stevens, Swart and Franchi, 2006).

The current study acknowledges that discourses of inclusiveness and nation-building often have the potential to construct society in an idyllic way in which black and white groups live together harmoniously and in equality. Although an ideal, such discourses are often used in the social domain as a justification for diverting emphasis away from existing 'racial' divides, inequalities and racist practices (Bangura, 2002). As such, Bangura suggests that there is still a need for researcher's within the social sciences, to study issues of 'race' and racism (Bangura, 2002).

This research recognises that knowledge is both constitutive and productive (Foucault, 1977) and that discussions about differences between 'race' groups in research may constitute a re-inscription of processes of racialisation. Whilst this may be an effect of such research, it does not negate the objective to concurrently provide better understandings of the ways in which racist ideology is played out in people's discourses. As such, research into discourses of 'race' and racism hopes to identify points of oppression and stereotyping that exist so as to challenge them, and to promote alternative meaning-making systems that deracialise society without ignoring the structural inequalities within it (Stevens, Swart and Franchi, 2006). Although a great many studies have been conducted in South Africa to elicit the forms of racialisation and racism that exist and are emerging in discourse, the vast multitudes of domains and contexts in which they occur remain under-explored, and provide potential for further work to be done in identifying existent discourses on 'race' and challenging those that re-enforce racist ideology and practice (Stevens, Swart and Franchi, 2006).

Although the social deconstruction of discourses of 'race' could be applied in any number of areas, this research proposes that the subject of CRA is a particularly useful

one for a number of reasons. The family unit itself may be regarded as a socially constructed category by which people define themselves and others, and that the sense of pride, belongingness, safety and loyalty that accompany a person's membership of this group may in fact elicit stronger emotional responses and identifications than broader social categories (Freud, 2001). Common to all societies is the aim that people emerge from childhood to become "happy" and "productive" adults, and that parents or parental figures within a family system play the most significant role in socialising children into what this means and how to achieve it (Matsumoto and Juang, 2004). Mkhize (2004) describes the family as the most fundamental social unit or group whereby discourses, culture and worldviews become socialised in people. As such it is considered to have a very strong influence on how people come to make sense and meaning of the world and what practices come to be valued or devalued (Mkhize, 2004).

Historically, marked distinctions have been drawn between African and Euro-American (or Western) views of family. Traditionally, an African meaning-making system is seen to conceptualise of the family unit as inclusive of extended family members with the elders afforded a great deal of respect and contributing significantly to guidance and decision-making. A strong value is seen to be placed on bringing up children to consider the needs of the whole over their own personal desires in order to maintain harmony and continuity within the family or community which continues to provide for the individual in return (Mkhize, 2004). A Western system traditionally sees the unit to be comprised of a nuclear family or immediate family members (mother, father and children) with the parents having the most influence and ultimate responsibility for decisions made in the family and what children are taught. Value tends to be placed on individualism in that children are raised in such a way as to prepare them to ultimately become independent of their parents and encouraged to aspire to individual achievement and personal fulfilment (Mkhize, 2004).

Typically, family formations are based on biological connections (Frasch and Brooks, 2003), and, as described in more detail in the literature review, it is the perception of common ancestry or biological kinship that allows for the formation of ethnic groups. Whilst the more 'accurate' markers of ethnic commonality are shared *social* characteristics such as language, religion, names, histories, localities and other

cultural practices and beliefs, externally visible anatomical features are the only immediately available characteristics that can be used in attempting to gauge *biological* connections or similarities. As such, skin-colour still holds significant social importance as a marker for supposed ethnic, and by association, *familial* inclusion or exclusion. In this way, 'race' comes to socially signify both ethnicity and family (Stevens, Duncan and Bowman, 2006), and racialisation and ethnicisation processes suggest that black people - by "nature" or "kinship" - should be raised within families that adhere to traditionally African cultures and meanings of family, and white people should correspondingly be raised in families that adhere to traditionally Western cultures and meanings of family. When one then considers families in which both black and white 'races' exist, the amalgamation of these 'races' within the family unit may bring about confusion as to how to perceive, categorize or understand that family, and may even pose a threat to people's beliefs about ethnic configurations and about how family '*should*' be for different 'races'. Carmen and Allan (1999) suggest that, although interactive with broader ideologies and state policies around 'race' and other forms 'difference', *localised* power relations between dominant and oppressed groups determine the discourses predominantly manifest in people's everyday lived experience. The family unit is such a local site, and CRA families may be reflective of the broader society's attempts to integrate and transform itself in post-apartheid South Africa (Carmen and Allan, 1999). Such families have the effect of destabilizing and rearranging family practices that might otherwise be considered predictable and normalized in the context of families of a unitary 'race' group (Carmen and Allan, 1999).

Because constructs of 'race' and family coincide in discussion about CRA, the topic creates a site for talk that is likely to elicit attitudes and beliefs about 'race' at a more intimate level of social engagement (i.e. the family unit), than at other levels of social engagement that have less 'personal' implications for speaker. People's stances on child rearing and family structuring tend to be fundamentally formed ones, vehemently defended, instinctive and less censored in conversation (Stevens, Duncan and Bowman, 2006). Carmen and Allan (1999) explain how people's perceptions of CRA families reveal a great deal about meanings made of 'race' and the politics around it because:

> *"…Interracial families are local moments in the politics of identity and they add a new and complex challenge for social enquiry…identities, relations of power, cultural practices, and intergenerational continuities are reconstructed and reframed in historically grounded but unprecedented ways…"*
>
> (Carmen and Allan, 1999, p223).

In addition, the topic of CRA is still a relatively novel and sufficiently specific one, that tends to arise less in most people's everyday talk than more generic discussions about 'race', so that responses are likely to be less "shop-worn" and less representative of rehearsed social responses of 'political correctness' (Carmen and Allan, 1999).

1.4 Aims

This research aims to explore possible ways in which racist ideology and resistance to this ideology are played out in discourses about CRA in the current post-apartheid context of South Africa. The study involves identifying discourses that arise in black psychology students' talk about CRA and white psychology students' talk about CRA, and looking at how these discourses may be used by speakers to construct different representations of 'race' in South Africa. It then involves examining the ideological effects of using these discourses in the contexts in which they arise in group discussion in relation to 'race' politics. As such, the research is interested in identifying discourses and discursive strategies used to legitimate or support the results of racist ideology in South Africa, as well as in identifying discourses and discursive strategies that challenge this.

1.5 Scope and Significance of the Study

This study looks at the perceptions about CRA of black and white third year and honours psychology students at the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg. This is a very particular group such that results cannot be assumed to represent the views of other populations. These other populations, for example, may have less formal education, may have had less exposure to different 'races' or incidences of CRA, may consist of

generally older populations than students (who are generally in their twenties), and may study in fields outside of the social sciences or psychology. They may also be located in very different milieus, such as areas historically associated with greater racial segregation, in more rural areas, or in universities with less affluent populations.

Whilst the potential for generalization of results is therefore limited, the identification of these discourses may still be considered a significant contribution to research within the social sciences. This is because the research attempts to contribute to a broader body of knowledge about discourses of 'race' in post-apartheid South Africa, by providing an in-depth critical analysis of *some* of the discourses that may arise when people talk about issues that pertain to 'race'. The use of the topic of CRA to elicit discourses of 'race' is particularly important, in that it provides a window into how people may use constructs such as family, identity, culture and ethnicity to talk about 'race' in indirect ways in contemporary South Africa. In addition, Duncan (2001) suggests that paying attention to the discourses of 'race' used by psychologists is important because of the strong social and political influence they claim in society (Duncan, 2001). As such, psychology students' perceptions of CRA may be particularly pertinent for anticipating future 'race' and racism-related discourses that may influence society.

1.6 Chapter Organization

The chapters which follow in the report are organized in the following manner. In chapter two, the literature review begins by looking at literature about 'race' and racism. This involves firstly looking at social constructionist definitions of 'race', racism and related constructs, contemporary manifestations of racism, meanings made by blacks of blackness, meanings made by whites of whiteness, and various counter-positions to racism. This is followed by an account of social psychology's research into 'race'-related discourses in post-apartheid South Africa. Finally the review looks at literature and research in the field of CRA, by considering the dominant discursive trends in CRA literature and research, locating CRA in the context of South Africa, looking at how the CRA child becomes a political object in discourse, and finally looking at research conducted into people's perceptions of CRA.

In chapter three, the methods section first looks at the research aims followed by the research questions. The study's paradigm and design are then discussed, followed by an account of the research procedures followed in the study, the participants who took part in the study, the data collection tools and the method of analysis of the data. Ethical considerations taken in the study are then discussed and finally the methods section looks at researcher reflexivity throughout the research process.

Chapter four provides the report section of the study. Here the discourses identified in the analysis are presented and discussed within the three encapsulating repertoires that emerged from the data, namely "The best interests of the child", "Knowing who you are" and "*Other* South Africans' attitudes".

In chapter five, the conclusions section of the report begins by drawing conclusions about the ideological effects of discourses identified in the previous chapter and what this says about how black and white South Africans talk about 'race'. It then compares the study's findings to those of previous research, after which the implications and limitations of the current research as well as suggestions for further research in the field are discussed. Finally the report concludes with a brief summary of the study.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter explores relevant literature and research about 'race', racism and CRA in South Africa.

2.1 Theoretical understandings of 'race' and racism

2.1.1 Social constructionism and 'race'

As does much of the recent literature within social psychology (Robus and McLeod, 2006), the current research adopts a social constructionist stance to understanding the meaning and implications of the concept of 'race'.

In Berger and Luckmann's (1966) 'The Social Construction of Reality', a seminal text in the development of the theoretical framework of **social constructionism,** three "moments" are suggested as the means by which social reality is constructed. Firstly *externalization* is described, whereby different social groups attempt to explain or derive meaning from experience and thereby bring into existence, the very knowledge or institutions and constructs that they use to make sense of the world. *Objectification* describes the processes whereby these constructs and institutions that were created become perceived as essentialised, real, natural entities that pre-existed 'out there' and were simply discovered (as opposed to socially created). Finally *internalization* explains that subjects are socialized and enculturated to become familiar with this objectified socially constructed world and take it on as their own understanding of reality (Berger and Luckmann, 1966). Stainton Rogers and Stainton Rogers (2001) suggest that these 'moments' resonate with Foucault's ideas about *subjugation* or the control of human subjects through the construction of knowledge about human beings. (Stainton Rogers and Stainton Rogers, 2001).

For Foucault (1977) this control is achieved through objectification in which generalised ways of understanding certain categories of people are constructed, and subjectification in which understandings of individuals become based on this generalised knowledge and such understandings are taken up by the individuals they describe. As such, this knowledge is able to be so effective in directing and controlling people's

thinking and behaviour because it comes to be taken on as ‘real’, ‘natural’ or ‘true’ by the very subjects its creation aims to manage (Foucault, 1977).

The social construction of categories and identification of subjects with these categories proves an effective form of social control as it provides the knowledge and information that people can use to understand themselves and others. As such perceptions of “self” or “identity” are constructed within the parameters of discourses allowed by the various socially constructed collective or group identities with which people identify or are identified in society (Freud, 2001). **Categorization** of people describes the classification of society into social groups as an attempt to make sense of the world, and it arises in order to achieve some social purpose (Freud, 2001). Social constructionism would argue that this purpose is always political, and therefore understanding such categories as descriptive of essentialised characteristics of a defined group, rather than as public creations to serve a social agenda, is problematic. Sophie Freud (2001) points out the non-essentialised nature of the parameters that define categories, in suggesting that these parameters are often fluid and fuzzy, that it is not always possible to define legitimate boundaries, and that, as socio-historical and -political contexts change, so too do the defining characteristics of categories (Freud, 2001).

With this in mind, the category of ‘race’ is given particular attention. Genetic research has, for many decades, discredited the scientific validity of organizing humans into racial categories since greater variation is found within rather than between groups of different skin pigmentation and associated anatomical features. This evidence, however, has not been fully translated into the domain of social interaction, and ‘race’ – aesthetically prescribed by external anatomical features – remains an area of classification utilized both formally and, arguably more informally in recent times, for organizing society.

For this research, **‘race’** is considered a *social* construct with dynamic parameters and open to a multitude of interpretations, but regarded as ‘real’ insofar as it impacts on societal configurations and the way in which individuals and groups view themselves and position themselves in relation to others (Bangura, 2002). **Racialisation** then describes the discursive processes that objectify a particular ‘race’. Through racialisation meaning is attributed to the defining of different ‘racial’ categories, thus

bringing into being 'race' itself. Additionally, socially constructed characteristics or supposed descriptions of different 'race' groups (such as 'athletic', 'lazy', 'clever', 'primitive', 'musical') become perceived as real, predetermined and even innate properties of all members of the group they describe (Miles, 1989).

It is also important to consider some of the emerging discursive repertoires and constructs that essentially still perform the function of racialisation, but that operate in a more surreptitious manner in contexts where explicit 'racial' discourse grounded in biology has become less socially acceptable. The constructs of culture and ethnicity have come to be used interchangeably at times as substitutes for 'race' in everyday talk (Stevens, Duncan and Bowman, 2006).

As with the construct of 'race', **ethnicity** is also understood here to be a socially constructed entity as those elements defining ethnicities are social (as opposed to biological) ones. Socially derived characteristics such as language, religion, customs, traditions and history within a particular social group (Stevens, Duncan and Bowman, 2006), as well as cultures, names and attachments to particular areas (Smith, 1986) all contribute to defining the unique identity of an ethnic group. Smith (1986) suggests that although ethnic groups are defined by *social* elements, and although science has dis-proven that shared biological features are a characteristic of any particular ethnic group, beliefs that an ethnic group's members share a common *ancestry* and therefore are more closely related than outsiders in the way of kin, persist (Smith, 1986). Similarly, Horowitz (1985) explains that while these social elements – one of which he suggests may be skin colour - are used to *identify* ethnicity, it is this perception of common decent and kinship that actually *defines* ethnicity (Horowitz, 1985). For Horowitz then, it is not the accuracy of this belief that denotes ethnicity's impact on a society, but the strong sense of duty that ethnic group members feel they owe to one another for:

> *"… the idea, if not the fact, of common ancestry makes it possible for ethnic groups to think in terms of family resemblances – traits held in common, on a supposedly genetic basis, or cultural features acquired in childhood – and to bring into play for a much wider circle those concepts of mutual obligation and antipathy to outsiders that are applicable to family relations"* (Horowitz, 1985, p.57).

Parker (1999) suggests that *familial discourses* which hold the family unit (however this is understood to be comprised) as sacred and essential for the well-being and proper socialisation of its members, are prominent in most societies (Parker, 1999). As such, the belief of familial affiliations within ethnic groups, provides a strong sense of loyalty and duty to the group, so that members will seek to preserve and attain its security, resources and other forms of social power with a vehemence that forces other groups to fight for this power in response (Horowitz, 1985).

Viewing ethnicity as an expression of group culture, Thornton (1988) describes **culture** as the social information required for human interaction. This social information may be considered the common discourse and discursive practices of a group that are used to make meaning of the world and make sense of experience in such a way that its members are able to communicate about it with shared understanding. Thornton also suggests that social conditions (political, economic, historical) may either improve or limit the availability of such information (Stevens, Duncan and Bowman, 2006). As such, ever-changing socio-political conditions have far-reaching effects on the dynamic constructions of 'cultures' and, as indicated above, for the subsequent constructions of ethnicities or "*ethnogenesis*" (Bloul, 1999). In social psychology then, ethnicities and cultures cannot be understood independent of the political history of the context in which they form and:

> *" Analyses of ethnogenesis focus on the politics of collective identity, and often stress changes as much as continuity, whether in the form of the transformation of the historical content of the said collective identity over time, or (and very often as well as) through highlighting the plasticity, creolisation, hybridity, ambivalence, etc. of such cultural contents"*
>
> (Bloul, 1999, 9-10).

As such, culture and ethnicity cannot be viewed as fixed, natural entities as they are dependent on diverse levels of access to social discourses, competing prevalent social ideologies and bounded by the particular material and political conditions within society at that time. In South Africa, the constructs of ethnicity and culture are frequently used interchangeably to construct socially derived attributes (such as language and traditions)

as essentialised or innate forms of difference between people of different ethnic or culturalised groups. In this way ethnicity and culture come to objectify the ethnicised or culturalised subject of which they speak respectively, in the same way that 'race' objectifies the racialised subject (Stevens, Duncan and Bowman, 2006). Furthermore, ethnicity and culture may be used as replacement terms for 'race' in labelling groups' collective identities, imbuing already racialised groups with additional stereotypes that now essentialise and generalize about their social behaviour on top of their nature, particularly when differences in physical traits coincide with cultural, linguistic and religious variations (Bangura, 2002). As such the terms are particularly accessible to processes of racialisation, making them potentially useful terms for the justification of racist ideology and practices (Stevens, Duncan and Bowman, 2006).

In keeping with the thinking of social constructionist theorist Michel Foucault, the statements and practices of social discourse (such as racialisation) actually bring into being the objects (the construct of 'race' and knowledge about 'races') of which they are speaking, and direct subjects in such a way as to re-inscribe power-relations and ideological effects (Wilbraham, 2004). **Ideology** here is used in a 'critical' sense in that it concerns itself with social power-dynamics and its definition is derived from Marxist origins as a *"set of social practices, ideas and meanings that conceal or obscure social contradictions"* (Hayes, 2004, 172). These 'social contradictions' are elaborated on by Foster (2004) who defines ideology as the broader system of meaning that attempts to justify power relations of domination and maintain social inequalities between different groups of people. It is through discourse and, subsequently its implicated social practices, that ideology is deployed in society, prescribing subject-positions for people as dominant or dominated (Foster, 2004).

The current study's approach to racist ideology is based on this social constructionist understanding of ideology. **Racist ideology,** or more colloquially, **racism**, describes the broad meaning-system that attempts to justify and maintain forms of social inequality and domination of one 'race' group over another/others (Duncan, Stevens and Bowman, 2004). **Racism** has people of one 'race', usually white, dominating over people of another 'race', usually black, for *"material or expressive reasons"* (MacDonald, 2006, p6). The dominant 'race' group asserts that its members are better than those people of a

different 'race' and that they (the dominant 'race') are thus justified in claiming their supremacy. That is,*"…racists do not regard power as the source of their superiority, but superiority as the source of their power"*, and subsequently racists would argue that:

> "*… whites are more powerful because they are superior, because nature or culture has made them better and more worthy; moreover, whites are superior even when they are not more powerful. It is the putative inferiority of blacks that justifies the subordination of blacks"*
>
> (MacDonald, 2006, p6).

Racialism, on the other hand, asserts that members of different 'race' groups are inherently *different*, but do not necessarily claim that one group is better than another. The argument that different standards and expectations should be put in place for white and black people because they are different and that these groups should thus be kept separate and distinct, is frequently based on this racialist regard for 'race' as the cornerstone of identity with identity being viewed as central to political organization processes (Mac Donald, 2006). MacDonald does, however, point to the fragility of this distinction as discourses of racialism are frequently employed to justify racist practices in lived experience and perceived differences between 'races' have historically come to result in the structuring of society such that blacks and whites have been kept separate, but not equal (MacDonald, 2006).

2.1.2 Contemporary manifestations of racism

Ideologies resist changes in the socio-political context that challenge their dominance, and therefore generate new forms of discourse to maintain their prescribed social asymmetries (Stevens, Duncan and Bowman, 2006). The civil rights movement of the 1960's in the United States and the democratization of South Africa in the 1990's, for example, appeared to have been followed by societal discursive shifts from what Essed (1991, 2002) has described as biological to *social* and *cultural* rationalizations for discrimination, with the latter two sometimes being described as "new" or "modern" racism (Essed, 1991, 2002).

Sears and Kinder (1971) first introduced the term **symbolic racism** to describe the abstract moralistic reasoning whites use to defend what are essentially anti-black

sentiments, with childhood socialization processes engendering in whites the fusion of a strong value for equality and democracy and, at the same time, learnt stereotypes about races that bring about prejudice (Durrheim, 2003). Gaertner and Dovidio (1986) used the term **aversive racism** to explain white people's avoidance of black people as an attempt to maintain a sense of themselves as liberal and non-prejudiced. This avoidance is deemed necessary by whites who value fairness and equality but harbour unacknowledged negative feelings towards and stereotypes about blacks (Essed, 1991; Finchilescu, 2005). Balibar (1991) refers to **differential racism** to explain how characteristics of groups that are ostensibly acceptable to use in describing difference in supposedly non-racial contexts, provide a more 'politically-correct' means of dividing society along what are essentially still 'racial' lines. As such, categories such as ethnicity, culture, language and religion are used in rhetoric to defend the separation of 'race' groups (and arguably inevitably the hierarchical organization of these groups) by arguing that their life-styles and traditions are incompatible and a negotiation of their ethnic or cultural differences is impossible (Painter and Baldwin, 2004).

These approaches to racism have a common focus on the contradictory attitudes of white individuals who hold varying degrees of value for equality in a democratic society, yet concurrently express some form of resistance to the policies and personal changes that would be required for such equality to be realized. Essed (1991) suggests that these descriptions of contemporary forms of racism, reflect various individually-oriented aspects of the broader-scale discursive shift in focus that racist ideology has come to adopt following socio-political rejection of 'race'-based discrimination. Essed describes this shift as one from biological- to cultural-determinism in what he terms the **"culturalisation of racism"**, where the *"…discourse of Black inferiority is increasingly reformulated as cultural deficiency, social inadequacy, and technological underdevelopment"* (Essed, 1991, p14). Essed uses the terms culture and ethnicity somewhat interchangeably in asserting – in a similar vein to Balibar (1991) – that cultural or ethnic "pluralism", or multiculturalism, comes to replace the ideal of racial-integration, resulting in more subtle discursive spaces being created for the legitimization of racism (Essed, 1991).

For Essed, a comprehensive understanding of contemporary racism includes an account of *ideology, structure* and *process*. Ideologically, 'race' and ethnicity are always seen to be constructed with a particular group's interests in mind. Structurally, patterns of dominance and subordination of these groups are carried out at a systemic level in regulation and resource allocation. Finally racism is process because everyday lived experiences and practices of 'racial' prejudice and discrimination – what Essed terms **everyday racism –** act as expressions of racist ideology and structuring and concurrently reproducing these power relations in ever-changing socio-political contexts (Essed, 1991, 2002). Everyday racism therefore describes an *"…active and cumulative process of daily, familiar and repetitive practices that reproduce racial domination in interpersonal and institutional encounters"* (Robus and McLeod, 2006, p468).

This understanding is particularly pertinent to the current research for two reasons. Firstly, it attempts to bridge the "individual-society" or "agent-structure" divide by emphasizing the reciprocal relationship between "micro" structures of individual experiences of racism and "macro" structures of societal configurations and philosophies about 'race'. Secondly, the use of language in everyday talk (or discourse) can be seen as a significant means of exemplifying racist ideology, making *discourse* a useful site on which to focus attentions when attempting to identify forms of everyday racism (Robus and McLeod, 2006).

Therborn (1988) suggests that discourse effectively enables its underlying ideology to maintain power in society by creating a sense of *inevitability, deference* and *resignation* in its subjects. Inevitability describes how discourse 'informs' people of how things are such that its constructions are understood as natural and inevitable. Deference describes how discourse dictates what is 'good' and 'bad' such that social legitimacy and morality can only be obtained through submission to what the discourse suggests is 'right'. Finally Resignation describes how discourse decides what is possible and impossible such that alternative meanings and opportunities are made to seem out of the question (Foster, 2004). A sense of inevitability, deference and resignation with regards to *racist* ideology in particular, allows white domination and privilege to persist in society unchallenged. Thompson's (1984) ideological strategies of meaning mobilisation commonly used by dominant groups to maintain their dominance, reveal the three

fundamental ways in which discourse is used to protect, justify and perpetuate speakers' privileged positions. *Legitimisation* includes discourses that attempt to justify unequal power relations by constructing people and processes in ways that portray inequality as rational and 'right'. *Dissimulation* includes discourses that attempt to hide, deny or disguise patterns of domination so that if they are not identified, they cannot be challenged. Finally, *reification* includes discourses that attempt to naturalize unequal power relations and imply their permanence, by removing situations from the historical and political contexts in which they were formed (Wale and Foster, 2007).

Essed's (1991, 2002) account of everyday racism provides a comprehensive account of how contemporary forms of racism operate to achieve the protection, justification and perpetuation of white privilege by **marginalising, problematising** and **containing** black people, first through discourse, and secondly through structures organised around these discourses.

Marginalising discourses relegate blacks to the position of the very different, and therefore separate, 'other'. By racialising structural and social aspects of society such as technology, resources, modernity and culture, and then constructing white norms as the standard against which all people should be measured, blacks are effectively excluded from equal social or structural participation in contemporary society.

Problematising discourses effectively construct blacks as not only very different to whites, but inevitably as inferior to whites, by focussing disproportionate attention onto social problems within black communities and reproducing negative stereotypes about black people. These discourses fail to account for socio-political and socio-economic histories of inequality between white and black communities such that 'black problems' are blamed on black people, due to the 'problematic nature of blacks'. *Containing* discourses attempt to limit the extent to which black people can rhetorically justify their opposition to racism or challenge the privileged position of whites. This is done through denial, dismissal, minimising or reframing of racism such that anti-racist efforts are portrayed as unnecessary or hostile, and through the construction of redress and affirmative action processes as 'reverse-racism' (Essed, 1991, 2002).

2.1.3 Meanings of blackness for blacks

The above accounts of racism attempt to illustrate its manifestations in terms of white people's objectification of and discrimination against black people. It is equally important to consider ways in which black people as subjects of racist objectification respond to this racism.

Arguably some of the most influential work on 'race' in the social sciences is that of Frantz Fanon. Of particular interest to the current research is Fanon's description of how "racial identity" (an understanding of 'self' derived from one's membership within a racialised group), comes to be formed by colonial African subjects (or, in his terms, the "black man") under the oppression of colonial European subjects (the "white man"). For Fanon, what makes 'race' such a powerful category for oppression, is that it speaks for its subjects before they are even able to speak for it, or any other discourse, that might better reflect their felt identifications. It cannot be hidden, or not be noticed, but is immediately visible, making the *blackness* of the "black man" the first and, certainly in colonial contexts, *only* identifying label used to understand him (Fanon, 1986).

Fanon draws on the Marxist concept of alienation which relates the experience of the personal to the prevailing social and political contexts, to illustrate how racist ideology comes to be manifest in the psychological experience of the colonized or politically oppressed "black man". Without dismissing the significance of the Marxist conceptualization of alienation (which focuses on the effects of capitalism), Fanon focuses on the effects of racialisation and racism and emphasises the disconnection of the colonized subject from his humanness, his body, and even the social groups in which he lives due to his estrangement from his own values, meanings, and self-understandings (Hook[b], 2004). As such:

> *"…To know myself in the oppressor's terms is to be continually at the risk of using racist formulations as a way of understanding self – of unintentionally objectifying oneself in terms of these racist values"*
>
> (Hook[b], 2004, p97).

In this way Fanon illustrates how a pathological sense of inferiority relative to the "white man" may come to constitute the perceived identity that the "black man" has of himself, and indeed of other black subjects whom he also comes to objectify. In addition

the construction of cultural differences as not only inferior but also essentialised, means that any kind of ambition the "black man" has to change or improve his condition (psychologically, socially, materially, politically) may be counteracted by a sense of resignation to the supposed inherent nature of his blackness and the negative identity characteristics it comes to imply (Hook[b], 2004). In this way black people may come to identify with racist stereotypes of blacks and position themselves and other blacks as deserving of little voice, esteem, individual-recognition or power.

It has been argued that illustrating only black people's internalisation of negative stereotypes about themselves and other blacks has the effect of constructing all blacks as complacent victims of racism and indirectly blaming them for the perpetuation of racism (Hook[b],2004). As such, it is also important to consider alternative understandings of 'racial identity' formed by black people and how these come to offer strong forms of resistance to racist ideology and practice, particularly in contexts such as South Africa which have experienced institutionalised racial oppression and transformation. Bulhan's (1980) **dialectical theory of reactive identification /cultural in-betweenity** considers the psychosocial processes that may occur in historically oppressed 'race' groups exposed to Western (or Euro-American) systems of education, as they interact with and confront the forces of oppression. Bulhan (1980) identifies three main patterns of identification that describe how black people in such contexts have responded to the socio-political demands of competing meaning-making systems to which they are exposed. Firstly (although not necessarily in order of occurrence), *capitulation* describes a black person's assimilation into the dominant (often described as 'Western') culture and indirect adoption of it's ideologies, which is accompanied by a rejection of his/her 'indigenous' culture (in this case longstanding traditional 'African' beliefs and practices), and esteem is perceived to be attained by adopting 'Western' ways-of-life. *Revitalization*, in contrast, describes the idealisation of the 'indigenous' culture accompanied by a renouncement of 'Western' ideals and practices, and the black person may value only a "pure", static and romanticised form of 'indigenous' ways-of-life that rejects all forms of 'Western' influence. Finally, *radicalization* describes a pattern of identification wherein a black person feels comfortable with his/her 'race' as a biological feature and, as such feels adequate and justified utilising meaning systems and practices of dominant as well

as ‘indigenous’ cultures to which he/she has been exposed and can objectively evaluate both the merits and shortcomings of each. Of importance, is the ‘radicalized’ person’s ability to recognise the injustice of racism and to identify with other black people in a common struggle against systems of racial oppression (Moosa, Moonsamy & Fridjhon, 1997).

This last identification pattern resonates with Steve Biko’s conception of what it means to be black, in the **Black Consciousness Movement** that developed in the late 60’s and early 70’s in South Africa. For both, the point of identification with blackness is not ‘race’ (either ascribed by nature, culture or ethnicity), but the *common experience of racial oppression* and a *resistance or fight against this oppression*. Biko’s black identity then, can be accessed by any ‘non-white’ person as it does not require them to be ‘African’, and blackness does not exist as an inert entity but rather as a mental attitude that must be adopted and achieved. Black Consciousness aimed to infuse into black people a sense of pride and dignity, such that white attack on black integrity and exploitation of their bodies and resources, would be viewed as unjustifiable and intolerable. This black identity therefore had significant political ramifications in that, to identify with it, was *not* to identify with racist constructions of blacks and, conversely, was to fight against racial oppression - a necessary attitude to bring about black emancipation and a vital discourse that created space for alternative meanings of and, subsequently implications for black existence in South Africa (MacDonald, 2006).

2.1.4 Meanings of whiteness for whites

Steyn (2007) suggests that a dominant focus on blackness and black identity in academic literature, has had the discursive effect of deflecting probing and indeed problematisation of whiteness away from power-imbued white groups and onto already marginalised black groups (Steyn, 2007). While understandings of whiteness as a skin colour were historically validated through apartheid classification policies, the reproduction of whiteness persists in post-apartheid South Africa through a variety of discourses (Green, Sonn and Matsebula, 2007). Broadly speaking, two dominant groups (sometimes considered ethnicities) of white people are identified in literature on whiteness in South Africa, namely Afrikaans-speakers (or white Afrikaners) and white English-speaking

South Africans (or WESSA's). Whilst neither mutually exclusive nor comprehensive, this distinction is helpful in identifying ways in which white South Africans construct whiteness in post-apartheid South Africa (Steyn, 2004; Salusbury and Foster, 2004).

Steyn (2004), for example suggests that white Afrikaners may attempt to re-secure Afrikaner whiteness by isolating a pure, fixed and bounded prototypical 'white' or 'boer' identity, and *repatriotising whiteness* by aligning "Afrikanerness" with its earliest European stock such that emigration can be framed as exile back to a 'safe' (i.e. white-run) country in the face of 'political persecution' in a black-run South Africa. Alternatively they may assume a 'natural' alignment with all white South Africans (increase white numbers) or construct an Afrikaans-speaking alignment with Afrikaans-speaking "coloureds" in South Africa, to create a stronger white front in the face of black political power. A tightly knit (white) Afrikaner identity that can fight for its own ethnic group interests has also been proposed, and this allows for its subtle positioning as champion of all South African ethnic groups, to ensure that Westernisation does not come to homogenize what 'should be' distinct ethnic identities in South Africa. Finally new constructions of Afrikaner identity as an African identity may be used to both acknowledgement Afrikaans people's role in South Africa's racist history and seek forms of reconcilliation, but may also be used to negate accountability and secure a position of power in the new dispensation through the affiliation of African-ness with blackness (Steyn, 2004).

Salusbury and Foster (2004) suggest that WESSA's perpetuate the social hegemony of WESSA ways of life through *cultural evasion*, in a failure to recognize their own culture-based perspectives, thereby constructing these as 'simply normal', 'devoid' of 'race'/ethnic-based cultural assumptions. They also suggest that *WESSA economics* are used in discourse to construct the economic privileges of whites as ordinary, 'normal' entitlements, such that white figures are allowed to remain blissfully unaware of their own racialisation which has unjustly provided these advantages. Finally constructions of *globalization and language* may be used by WESSA's to construct their own whiteness as the 'universal' norm by associating it with globalization and modernization, and concurrently defend their South African patriotism by disassociating

themselves from ‘other’ white South Africans and constructing these ‘other’ white South Africans as racist (e.g. Afrikaans-speakers) (Salusbury and Foster, 2004).

2.1.5 Counter-positions to racism

In further exploring the implications of ‘race’ in post-apartheid South Africa, it is important to consider discourses that attempt to compete with and oppose racist ideology and practice. Bloul (1999) suggests that ethnic identity politics in literature have tended to acknowledge only hostile, competitive motives in analyses, such that the identification of discourses reflective of solidarity between ‘race’ or ethnic groupings has been limited by a failure to acknowledge the possibility that such discourses may exist. She suggests that a relative dismissal of the role that empathy can play in allowing subjects partial/multiple identifications with ‘others’ of different ‘races’ and ethnicities, has tended to exclude before considering the possibility that ‘race’ may not be the primary signifier for social identification and belonging, and that social researchers need to address this in their research (Bloul, 1999).

Where racialisation attempts to ascribe socially constructed attributes (including culture and ethnicity) to ‘races’ and to construct these as essentialised, **deracialisation** refers to the processes by which constructs of racialisation and the political purposes they serve are revealed and challenged. As such it involves:

> *“…uncoupling binaries of group categorization and hierarchisation, and searching for possibilities, ruptures and discontinuities in which these forms of pre-determination do not act as the primary schema for social relating”*
>
> (Stevens, Swart and Franchi, 2006, p17).

Such discourse therefore attempts to rearrange information about ‘self’ and ‘other’ at social and individual levels so that ‘identity’ and its corresponding social mobility is not constrained by ‘race’ (Stevens, Swart and Franchi, 2006). Such attempts to ‘de-essentialise’ and ‘de-objectify’ people based on ‘race’, ethnicity or culture may indeed be used in support of anti-racist efforts. However, different notions of what constitutes anti-racist efforts compete in South African society.

The very defining of anti-racist discourse becomes a complex and difficult task, one that involves debate about the meaning and usefulness of sometimes competing

notions of group politics and individualism, of social construction and essentialism, and of materiality and idealism.

Taking no account of 'race' or adopting a "colour-blind" approach to 'race' is often used with the overt intention to oppose racism. This opposition is based on the idea that differentiating between 'races' or 'race' groups constitutes processes of re-racialisation that further entrench the perception that white and black people are intrinsically different, that objectify racialised bodies by stereotyping white and black people, and that ultimately lead to prejudice based on these stereotypes (Ansell, 2004). Ansell suggests that this second argument frequently makes use of an 'idealistic' construction of racism that:

> *"…relies more on abstract, universalistic themes in defining racism as any and all unfair treatment based on skin colour, irrespective of whether the colour is white or black…(and racism is seen as) not a structural problem in need of redress but a psychological condition…"*
>
> (Ansell, 2004, 12).

In adopting this conceptualisation of racism, Ansell suggests that while its universal practice may be vehemently condemned, it ultimately benefits whites when used as an argument against redress and affirmative action campaigns that seek to empower blacks. Indeed it may be used to ignore the historical effects of racism and discursively construct such transformation processes as racist against whites or "reverse-apartheid", and subsequently justifies the perpetuation of existing structural inequalities between white and black groups in South Africa (Ansell, 2004).

While an overt differentiation between black and white people can therefore be conceptualised as anti-racist when it is necessary for purposes of reform, Carrim (1998) identifies two particularly adverse effects that this re-inscription has brought about. Firstly, a bipolarity between whites and blacks is maintained such that intra-black conflicts and discrepancies (e.g. rural vs. urban, wealthy vs. poor, English/Afrikaans-speaking vs. African-language-speaking), and their subsequent inequalities, are inadequately addressed (Carrim, 1998).

Secondly, the constructs of ethnicity and culture have become re-inscribed as essentialised features of 'race', particularly for black people, such that they have become

prominent discursive tools for racialisation, often framed within an overarching discourse of multiculturalism. **Multiculturalism** – or cultural and ethnic pluralism - as an *ideal*, promotes inclusivity of and respect for diverse cultural practices whilst confronting power inequalities between ethnic and 'race' groups adopting different cultural practices, and in this way may sometimes be used to oppose racism that discriminates against groups based on social beliefs and practices. However, Carrim (1998) suggests that multiculturalism has tended to be used to perpetuate racial stereotyping and make generalized assumptions about black people's social behaviour in post-apartheid South Africa. These assumptions include static expectations about black people's ethnicity and cultural practices that do not allow spaces for overlap in modernity and traditionalism, mixed cultural and ethnic heritages, diverse levels of value for them, and the uniqueness of individuals' experiences and contextual backgrounds (Carrim, 1998). Aside from objectifying black people, Malik (1996) suggests that cultural and ethnic pluralist arguments stem from colonial policies that sought to *"mummify 'native' culture as a form frozen in time"* (Malik, 1996, p172). In this way pluralism was used for discursively containing the extent to which black people's cultures could change with time, justifying the closing off of opportunities for development and technological accessibility within black populations, denying the effects of 'race' politics on lifestyle, and ignoring the dynamic interaction between Western and African cultures (Malik, 1996).

Malik (1996) adds a further criticism to discourses of multiculturalism in suggesting that they are used to argue for an alternative to racial equality. For Malik, ethnic and cultural pluralism, replaces a striving for equality with a tolerance of difference, such that economic, social and technological inequalities between 'race' groups are constructed as *cultural* variations and tolerating such discrepancies can be framed as an appreciation for cultural diversity (Malik, 1996).

Carrim argues that a *"critical anti-racism"* needs to both maintain a focus on macro socio-economic and socio-political factors (desegregation and redress), but also needs to translate such processes of equality at meso- and micro-levels of social interaction (deracialisation). Equality at these smaller scale levels of social interaction implies that blacks do not become identified by 'race' as a primary means of understanding individuals and that stereotyped and antiquated constructions of ethnicity and culture are

not assumed all-encompassing or even relevant for those black people who nevertheless describe themselves in terms of a particular ethnic group or culture. For Carrim, it is also important that blacks not be spoken to and spoken of with the assumption that they are all the same in terms of economic standing, social status, cultural values and practices, because of a common skin colour (Carrim, 1998).

Thorne suggests that it is less important to identify which narrative is being utilized in discourse than it is to ask *"why particular speakers choose to invoke or resist particular narratives"* (Thorne, 2004, 364). Painter and Baldwin (2004) reiterate this point by suggesting that the same group labels (such as 'race', ethnicity, language, religion) may be similarly constructed and used in discourse to exclude and discriminate (that is for racist purposes), or to acknowledge, oppose and address the effects of racism (Painter and Baldwin, 2004). What is important to consider then is the possible *motive* (and indeed multiplicity of possible motives) for why people do and do not make use of racialisation processes in discourse, and what the effect of their talk is in a particular context.

2.2 Social psychology and 'race' discourse research

This section of the literature review looks at 'race'-related research studies in discursive social psychology, conducted in South Africa after 1994. Some of these studies attempt to identify the ideological systems at play (racist or opposing racism) in discursive constructions of 'race', and others look at how people use these and a number of other social constructs to position themselves relative to other 'race' groups and to construct these groups in ways that serve political agendas.

Duncan (2001) suggests that social scientists like psychologists tend to be regarded as 'experts' on inter-group relations so that the discourses of 'race' and racism produced by them should be given significant attention due to them having such strong social and political influence. This is illustrated in Duncan's (2001) analysis of 48 racism-related articles by South African psychologists in 22 South African journals from their inception up until the late 80's. Duncan concludes that, intentionally or not, most of the articles had the effect of bolstering the dominance of racist ideology by diverting attention away from the concerns and interests of blacks experiencing racism in South

Africa, and instead emphasising an understanding of racism as prejudiced attitudes, and by constructing black people as the problematic 'other'. The representations of the 'black other' emerging from the articles were caricatured and discursively destructive in that they were strikingly similar to images of blacks constructed within explicit apartheid /racist political discourse. Overtly racist constructions of blacks as *the "Inferior" Other* relative to whites tended to be replaced by those of *the "Culturally Different" Other* in the latter half of the century with the apparent shift from crude biological stereotypes to more subtle cultural stereotypes making it easier to discursively legitimate the subjugation of blacks by framing it as "social differentiation". Representations of 'blacks' as *the "Victims"* of apartheid, at first glance acknowledges the detrimental consequences of racism to the psychological integrity, social relations and material conditions of black people, but negatively constructs blacks as problem-filled, helpless and power-less victims of apartheid when black responses to racism – such as resistance and opposition to apartheid – are not equally accounted for in discourse. Duncan also observes that the 'race' labels (e.g. "Africans", "Coloureds", "Indians", "Asians") specified by apartheid policies for the stratification of black society, persisted with some variety, little questioning and no criticism in psychological discourse, such that the construction of blacks as *the "Racially" Divided/ "Fragmented" Other* became taken for granted as a description of natural distinctions as opposed to a way to express lived social realities. Another representation of blacks as *the "Threatening" Other* emerged from texts to portray the black population as not simply large in number but as dangerous to social stability, through the association of blacks' numbers with images of war and conflict, such that their oppression was construed as a legitimate and understandable means of protecting (white) society. Finally Duncan suggests that psychologists' discourses include portrayals of blacks as not belonging to a "South African" community – a nation reserved for whites. As such they are relegated to "their homelands" and "their own areas", constructing blacks as *the "Alien" Other* who can therefore not make claims on the citizenship and rights that white people can in the country.

Motsemme (2002) looked at black women's experiences of their blackness in post-apartheid South Africa and suggests that the meanings made of blackness can never be understood in isolation as they are strongly dependent on the degree to which

blackness can be utilised by individuals in a particular context to improve their social standing relative to those around them. Whilst blackness is still a significant construct utilized by black participants to describe their identity and to position themselves relative to white people and other black people, the fluidity and instability of its meaning - and indeed its value - was evident, and was used in very diverse ways to discursively promote the political, economic or social power and legitimacy of the individual and/or her black group (Motsemme, 2002).

Moosa and Fridjhon (1997) attempted to determine identification patterns of black South African university students according to Bulhan's (1980) 'dialectical theory of reactive identification/cultural in-betweenity'. Moosa and Fridjhon's (1997) research indicated that most black students favoured a radicalization pattern of identification and, to a smaller extent, one of revitalization, suggesting more positive evaluations of black groups and a sense of mutuality amongst black students derived from a common desire for greater emancipation of black people (Moosa and Fridjhon, 1997).

Stevens (1998) attempted to consider the complexity of racialisation discourse *within* black populations in post-apartheid South Africa by considering the perceptions of 'racial' threat that those black people differentiated as 'coloured' (from the time of apartheid categorisation) held of those black people differentiated as 'African'. The research indicated processes of Othering occurring within this black population and was considered a defensive manoeuvre by 'coloureds' in response to continued high levels of competition for resources. Although the discourses were interpreted as prejudiced due to 'Africans' being constructed as threatening to economic, physical and socio-political security of 'coloureds', Stevens highlights that such discourses are not indicative of racism as the 'coloured' group does not possess the power (social, economic or political) to control or oppress 'Africans'. Instead he suggests that these discourses of racialisation may reflect how some 'coloured' people resorted to Bulhan's (1985) identification pattern of capitulation – an assimilation into the dominant (white) racist culture- as a means of discursively attempting to secure for themselves some kind of social power through white identification, in the face of their experience of redress and redistribution as inadequate (Stevens, 1998).

In a similar vein, Sonn and Fisher (2003) interviewed 23 'coloured' people who had immigrated to Australia from South Africa and found that participants tended to use their experiences and "cultural scripts" from South Africa as reasons for emigration as well as resources for adaptation to settlement in Australia. In particular Sonn and Fisher suggest that 'coloured' emigrants discuss 'coloured' South Africans in terms of ways of responding to a status of "in-betweenity" in South Africa. Participants' talk revealed a belief that 'coloureds' *grow used to imposed labels*, such that they come to use the same apartheid-derived terminology to identify themselves and their communities, that some 'coloureds' do in fact *hold on* to the racist-derived meanings that hierarchically positioned whites above 'coloureds' and 'coloureds' above 'Africans', in order to access social power and maintain some kind of social privilege when faced with feelings of exclusion from 'African' groups that have subsequently gained political power. Finally participants' talk also revealed discursive challenges to the racist meanings underlying these labels and that therefore imply a move towards *socio-political change* developing amongst 'coloured' people, one that appears to be accompanied by a strong tendency to identify themselves as "South African" in terms of a national rather than 'race' category (Sonn and Fisher, 2003).

Goldschmidt (2003) conducted research with students at a South African university to ascertain the labels that were predominantly used by the students to describe their 'identities'. It was found that those students claiming a mother-tongue in an African language (classified as black in apartheid) wished to maintain an "African" identity and identified South Africa as an "African"-ruled nation in an "African" continent, with a newfound prestige associated with being "African". Those students of Indian, English and Afrikaans language mother-tongues (classified as 'Indian' and 'coloured' and white in apartheid) indicated a change in their choice of identity labels from ethnicity to 'nationality' in an attempt to be described in terms of a new, inclusive "South African" identity. Overall, patterns reflected that the importance of labels or categories for identification were consistently tied to one's native language, followed by 'race', ethnicity, religion, socioeconomic status and gender (Goldschmidt, 2003).

Stevens, Franchi and Swart (2006), attempted to bring to light the multitude of ways in which racialisation is realised through the use of group identity labels such as the

aforementioned. A number of studies were conducted by these and other researchers attempting to identify contemporary and more covert forms of discourse that effectively justify and perpetuate 'racial' prejudice, segregation and inequality in South Africa. It was deduced that the construct of ethnicity and the social practices that describe it (which include for example culture, language and religion) are commonly used to replace the construct of 'race' in discourse, such that contemporary forms of racialisation are realised in discursive processes of *ethnicisation* (Stevens, Franchi and Swart, 2006).

Gray, Delany and Durrheim (2005) suggest that a discursive dilemma exists for South Africans attempting to express dissatisfaction with contemporary South African society and systems, based on the idea that:

> *"…In contemporary South Africa, nationalism is generally equated with racial tolerance and support for the new democracy, while anything that is anti-nationalistic is seen as tantamount to racism"*
>
> (Gray et al., 2005, p135).

As such, Gray et al. suggest that black and white people that are seriously contemplating emigration from South Africa, struggle to justify their preference for another country without feeling positioned as either 'abandoning', 'running away' from or being racist towards blacks and black power in South Africa. They suggest that participants manage this dilemma through shifting identification and dis-identification with the national category, adopting a *liberal ethic of individual freedom* to distance themselves from this category, and utilising three apparent discursive strategies to do this. Firstly participants shift their focus *from the collective to the personal*, such that individual roles (e.g. as a parent or a professional) take on greater importance and enable speakers to deny accountability to a collective or national community. Secondly interviewees *splinter the nation* into different 'races' and cultures to suggest that South Africa is merely a collection of separate and different 'race', ethnic or cultural groupings such that a whole South African nationalism is irrelevant. Building on this idea, participants' third strategy for distancing themselves from the national category is to *refute the collective* and suggest that a South African nation as a unified whole does not exist, such that a 'call for national loyalty' to South Africa is effectively negated and the discursive dilemma resolved (Gray et al., 2005).

Collier (2005) considered how changes in the socio-political landscape of South Africa from 1992 to 1999 affect patterns in discourses about cultural identifications and levels of privilege utilised by self-identified black and 'white Afrikaner' people. Collier suggests that black participants' discourses shifted over this time, from reflecting little individual agency or engagement with issues pertaining to whites and whiteness, to overtly voicing critiques of white privilege and the dominance of what Collier calls 'whiteness ideology' (understood to refer to the idea that 'Western'/'Eurocentric' social standards and values should dictate the hegemonic culture to which people aspire) and engaging in discussion about this with white friends. black discourses revealed a great deal more agency assumed by black speakers in 1999 in *positioning themselves in opposition to this 'whiteness ideology'* through a strong *identification with other blacks* by virtue of their 'race', and a *vehement disapproval of blacks who identify with white standards and values* by suggesting that they perpetuate racist ideology by doing so. Collier suggests that 'white Afrikaner' participants' discourses tended to reveal both persistence and changes, in that overt affirmations of 'whiteness ideology' in 1992 seemed to shift to ambivalence-laden and qualifier-laden talk that still effectively *promotes 'whiteness ideology'* in 1999 through *individualism-oriented discourses* and *positive and negative constructions of 'us' (whites) and 'them'(blacks)* respectively (Collier, 2005).

Ansell (2004) noted an "ideological bifurcation" in how black and white people talk about 'race' and 'racism' in post-apartheid South Africa and shows that, in viewing this from a structural perspective, such discourses reflect both these social groups' strivings for economic improvement and better resources. Ansell suggests that discourses that either *denounce the recognition of 'race',* or that *promote multiculturalism*, are frequently used by white South Africans to dismiss historically-derived inequalities between 'race' groups and thereby discredit redress and redistribution, whilst claiming the moral high-ground. Conversely, black South Africans' *re-inscription of 'race'* as a tool for social categorization is frequently used to *draw attention to 'racial' disparities* and to voice their dissatisfaction with inadequacies in the advancement of transformative processes of redress (Ansell, 2004).

Durrheim (2005) considered how desegregation is experienced differently for white and black people in post-apartheid South Africa and how their different discursive representations of socio-spatial changes with regard to 'race' reveal how *"…places are used, racially, in interaction, to preserve patterns of exclusion and hierarchy"* (Durrheim, 2005, p446). black constructions of 'desegregation' suggest that with black entry into previously segregated spaces, whites exit these spaces in an attempt to run away from black people and abandon blacks to themselves. White constructions of 'desegregation' suggest that whites are displaced by blacks, and that 'their' space has been invaded by black people attempting to take it away from them and push them out. As such, Durrheim suggests that white people utilising this discourse effectively stereotype blacks as *"pushing themselves in, aggressive and unmannerly"* (p457) and blacks utilising the aforementioned discourse effectively stereotype whites as *racist* (Durrheim, 2005).

Sennet and Foster (1996) compared the extent to which white English-speaking South Africans utilized 'race' and culture to construct their social identities in 1975 and 1994, and found a shift from little investment in group identities in 1975, to increased investment in constructs of 'nationality' and ethnicity (meant here to include cultural background, 'race' and 'class') to define identity in general, as well as greater ethnic identification with other white, English-speaking South Africans than their predecessors. It was suggested that 'nationality' and ethnicity were perceived as more positive and legitimate group distinguishers in 1994 as they were less likely to be attached to understandings of whites as oppressive, morally inept and racist, than in 1975 (Sennet and Foster, 1996). As such the authors suggested that further research attempt to scrutinize:

> *"… the ways in which elites in general, … have negotiated the complex burden of ambivalence, disaffection and estrangement arising out of the undesirability of belonging to a high status group under conditions of perceived illegitimacy"*
>
> (Sennet and Foster, 1996, 211).

Painter and Baldwin (2004) suggest that the entity of language can be a useful construct for identifying power dynamics between racialised groups of people in South

Africa. By making "language diversity" the object of discussion amongst learners at a South African high school in 2001, the researchers were able to elicit discourses that reveal how racist agendas can be veiled in a liberal rhetoric of 'choice'. The research not only illustrates how the use of liberal ideas in talk enables speakers to distance themselves from apartheid, construct redress processes as 'reverse'-racism and subsequently reproduce patterns of white superiority, but also highlights how easily discussions on language come to overlap with discussions on 'race' and racism. Painter and Baldwin suggest that white English-speaking participants in particular justify the standing of their own first language (and subsequently their social group standards) as dominant and hegemonic, by *universalising English*. Firstly this involves constructing it as a part of the public domain (spoken everywhere) both globally and nationally, and that it is the only language that can be considered a unifying agent for all 'races' in South Africa. Secondly this is done by distancing white English-speakers from apartheid and responsibility or racism by implying that Afrikaans both as language and culture is the identifier of white racism (and subsequently only white Afrikaans-speakers were and are racist). Conversely these participants *racialise isiXhosa*, relegating it to the private domain (spoken in a particular household or exclusively Xhosa community), and construct it as divisive, excluding of others, even racist, such that its social relevance is devalued, its prominence silenced, and its speakers – the vast majority of whom are black – discursively cornered into adopting English as their primary medium for communication (Painter and Baldwin, 2004).

Robus and Macleod (2006) analysed discourses of staff and students in 2002 and 2003 from particular historically white and black universities in South Africa that were amalgamating at the time. Robus and Macleod highlight the complex interaction of macro-level processes (structural changes to universities) with everyday discourses on 'race' by suggesting that there is persistence in the attribution of racialised identities to institutional spaces and that a subsequent discourse of *'white excellence/black failure'* ensues. As such, racialised white institutions are constructed as objects of desire and choice that achieve excellence in higher education, and racialised black institutions as objects of avoidance or last resorts that achieve relative failure in higher education in comparison to their white counterpart. The implications of this discourse provide a

myriad of ways in which to bolster what is ultimately racist ideology because the attainment of competence for both individuals and institutions is equated with 'being white', and whiteness is concurrently associated with having access to urban modern spaces. As such black institutions are discursively constructed as reliant upon a movement into white urban spaces or an inclusion of white students in order to overcome 'black failure', and black individuals (staff or students) are constructed as reliant upon a movement to a white institution, along with excessive hard work and a renouncement of black identity in order to overcome personal 'black failure'. Effectively then, not only is whiteness constructed as superior to blackness, but an aspiration to whiteness as the only means of rescue from 'black failure' through which black people and institutions can hope to achieve competence and success (Robus and MacLeod, 2006).

Leibowitz, Rohleder, Bozalek, Carolissen and Swartz (2007) looked at online interactions between fourth year psychology and social work university students from diverse racialised and classed backgrounds in South Africa, and identified ways that these students referred to group differences in discourse. Some black and white students frequently referred to *place* and *privilege/ lack of privilege* to describe how segregation is lived out in spatial patterning as well as disparities in social and economic status. An apparent intentional silence about the relationship between 'race' and these variables is seen as an attempt to adopt a neutral tone so as not to appear challenging, and to avoid describing difference in emotive and political ways. While the *'us /them'* discourse was seldom observed in the study, the researchers suggest that use of the personal pronoun and personal adjective in discourse are pervasive means of Othering used by white speakers that enables them to homogenise and distance themselves from black people and from responsibility for their well-being. The use of inverted commas and the term *'so-called'* was sometimes used to reveal an awareness of the discursively constructed nature of 'race', and was used by black more than white students, as were *direct references made to 'race' and apartheid*, suggesting that white students feel uncomfortable and avoid discussion about South Africa's racist history. Leibowitz et al. also observed a number of discursive strategies used by students to negotiate these differences. Denial of difference (and of the current implications of an apartheid past) is seen to operate through 'colour-blind' approaches to 'race' which are sometimes used to defend anti-affirmative

action sentiments. Expressing appreciation of the strengths of marginalised people may be used to validate their power, but also to patronise or to dismiss their complaints about wrongs done to them. Some students' attempted to acknowledge the past and, when not met with resistance (form of denial), responses ranged from defensive positioning to empathic relating with a resigned and helpless sense of guilt, and occasionally to empathic relating with a sense of agency and joint responsibility for change (Leibowitz et al., 2007).

Wale and Foster (2007) looked at ways in which wealthy white South Africans utilise discourse to protect, justify and perpetuate white, and subsequently their own, privileged positions. Firstly Wale and Foster suggest that interviewees focus their attentions on *defending white privilege* in South Africa. This is done through the discourse of *denial* -that ignores the ways in which apartheid-derived systems continue to structure society along 'racial' lines – and the discourse of *a just world* – that suggests people get what they deserve in life, such that participants enjoy upper class living *"…because they possess traits valued by the protestant work ethic"* (Wale and Foster, 2007, p56), and that poor black people are to blame for their poverty due to individual or cultural features that they posses. Secondly participants resist the re-distribution of power and subsequently wealth in South Africa by *de-legitimising black power*. This recognises the idea that:

> *"Where white South Africans continue to hold race privilege in the economic and cultural realms, they have lost their privilege in the political realm…Politics represents a realm where black South Africans have gained power, and economics represents a realm where they are attempting to gain power"*
>
> (Wale and Foster, 2007, p57).

As such, participants de-legitimise black power through the discourse of *the undeserving ANC*. This uses constructions of the current political regime as corrupt, greedy and incompetent to diminish the legitimacy of the change in status quo that brought blacks into political power. The discourse of *business over politics* is also used to devalue the political realm of government (and by implication black government) by illustrating how it fails to address issues of poverty, and arguing that the economic realm

(and by implication wealthy whites) should be given greater power to influence the country's policies. Thirdly participants protect white privilege through the deterring of its construction as racist and the subsequent deterring of structural transformation, by *championing individualism*. This is done through the discourse of *the good white Samaritan* which allows participants to distance their wealth from the poverty of other people by ignoring the role of the systems that have benefited them at the expense of others. Instead whites are imbued with a natural superiority and power by being constructed as advanced and rich in binary opposition to backward, poor and helpless blacks, who are reliant upon the benevolence of white people to 'rescue' them from themselves. Championing individualism also uses the discourse of *'''reverse-racism''' vs. non-racialism* to locate racism within discriminatory attitudes of any individual (black or white) and devoid of context. It ignores structural and economic inequalities between 'race' groups that are derived from apartheid, so that users' structural advantage and economic privilege is protected (Wale and Foster, 2007).

2.3 Literature and Research into CRA

This section of the literature review looks at literature and research in the field of CRA, by considering the dominant discursive trends in CRA literature and research, locating CRA in the context of South Africa, and finally by looking at how discourses of CRA construct the CRA child as a political object.

2.3.1 Dominant discursive trends in CRA literature

Most of the writings about CRA approaches the subject from the perspective of considering the 'best interests of the child'. Social scientists have tended to focus their concerns on the psychosocial development and adjustment of cross-racially adopted children, with various measures of these areas (e.g. self-esteem, self-concept, educational attainment, peer relationships and behaviour problems) generally being used to argue for or against the practice of CRA, or with the intent to develop supposed ideal practices for families that have adopted cross-racially. Multiple reviews of empirical investigations predominantly based on adoptions of "African American" children by white parents in the United States, concur that most of these studies concluded that CRA is a viable means

of providing homes for orphaned children in that cross-racially adopted children presented with psychosocial adjustment and overall well-being achieved as successfully as that for children in same-race families (Cooperstein, 1998; Vonk, 2001; Bradley and Hawkins-Leon, 2002; Frasch and Brooks, 2003; Roby and Shaw, 2006).

However, many of these studies have been criticised for containing marked methodological flaws, being outdated and for their limited exploration of and significance attributed to concepts of 'racial –', 'ethnic –' and 'cultural identity' in psychosocial development and adjustment. This may account for why results about how these properties exist in cross-racially adopted children and how they affect their overall well-being have been relatively inconsistent (Frasch and Brooks, 2003; Roby and Shaw, 2006). The lack of clarification on what is meant by 'racial –', 'ethnic – ' and 'cultural identity' and how to 'measure' them is a prominent feature of much of the literature and reviews of CRA studies, many of which utilise, but fail to define these and their base terms of 'race', ethnicity and culture. Instead they appear to be used somewhat ambiguously, and even where some attempts are made to define these terms, with no critical evaluation of their validity and meanings. As such, concepts of *"ethnocultural heritage and identity"* (Vonk, 2001, p3), *"ethnoracial identities"* (Frasch and Brooks, 2003), *"racial identity and cultural identity"* (Bradley and Hawkins-Leon, 2002; Roby and Shaw, 2006),and *"ethnic identity"* (Hollingsworth, 1999), are frequently used interchangeably, portrayed as essentialised entities of 'race', and the term ethnic often used as a direct substitution for 'race'.

In general, these studies and reviews suggest that cross-racially adopted children tend to adopt Eurocentric cultural beliefs and practices and prefer spending their time interacting with people of similar cultural orientation, most of whom are white. Some researchers suggest that this results in a greater possibility of adjustment problems due to difficulty establishing a secure and/or positive sense of 'racial –'and 'cultural identity', particularly when cross-racially adopted children experience shame or discomfort about being black (Cooperstein, 1998; Vonk, 2001; Bradley and Hawkins-Leon, 2002; Frasch and Brooks, 2003; Roby and Shaw, 2006).

These studies have led to various theoretical formulations about what constitutes the "best interests" of black children who are orphaned. Liberal (as opposed to overtly

racist) arguments opposing and criticising CRA originated in 1972 when America's National Association of Black Social Workers (NABSW) suggested that black children should only be placed in black families. They proposed that:

> *"Black children belong physically, and psychologically and culturally in black families in order that they receive the total sense of themselves and develop a sound projection of their future… Black children in white homes are cut off from the healthy development of themselves as black people"*
>
> (cited in Hollingsworth, 1999, p2).

This proposition, although lacking in empirical support, is based on the assumptions that society is racist towards black people; that there is a black culture that is distinctly different to that of white people, especially in that it provides knowledge that is essential to surviving in a racist society; that a black person cannot develop a healthy, positive psychosocial identity without enculturation into this way of life; and that only black families can socialise children into this culture (Hollingsworth, 1999; Bradley and Hawkens-Leon, 2002), due to them being *"similar in their African heritage and in their experience with racism and oppression"* (Hollingsworth, 1999, p3).

In response, literature that supports CRA as a suitable means of placing orphaned children, has tended to focus potential challenges to this particular argument on the latter two assumptions (Frasch and Brooks, 2003; Bradley and Hawkins-Leon, 2002; Vonk, 2001). These challenges do not dispute that the concurrent social assignment of a black 'racial –', 'ethnic –' and 'cultural identity' to cross-racially adopted children is "proper" and "natural" practice, and instead the equating and essentialist construction of 'race', culture and ethnicity in both academic and legislative literature on CRA appear to be taken-for-granted as real and right in South African and international discourses, whether or not they advocate for CRA (Szabo and Ritchken, 2002).

Instead these challenges question the *supremacy* of 'race' as a determinant of identity and suggest that 'ethnoracial identity' is not a unitary fixed ending point (Frasch and Brooks, 2003). Instead it is suggested that one should, *"… not assume that a strong Black-focused identity is the desired goal or most positive outcome, or that Black identity is a single trait"* (Frasch and Brooks, 2003, p4).

Vroegh's (1997) longitudinal research conducted on cross-racial adoptees in America, found that most had developed a sense of identity for themselves, that 88% of them chose to identify themselves as black or of 'mixed race' in almost equal proportions to same-race black adoptees (90%), and that they were as equally well adjusted in terms of self esteem (Vroegh, 1997). As such, the general trend in literature about CRA is to suggest that white parents can help their black children to achieve a positive and healthy black identity and to adequately prepare to negotiate racism, and proposes that this is done by parents committing themselves to psycho education about black people's histories and cultures, and to practices that confront issues of 'race' (Vonk, 2001; Bradley and Hawkins-Leon, 2002).

2.3.2 CRA in the South African context

Very little research exists that attempts to consider the more broad-scale structural influences on and implications of CRA, specifically in South Africa. In order to contextualise South Africans' perceptions about CRA, it is necessary to consider the localised social conditions that have resulted in situations whereby black children become available for adoption by white parents. In South Africa, these conditions cannot be understood independently of ubiquitous 'racial' disparities between blacks and whites in economic standing, resource availability and the prevalence of HIV/AIDS. UNAIDS, UNICEF and USAID (2004) findings indicate that civil war, poverty and disease in sub-Saharan Africa have led to an escalation in orphaned children with numbers projected to rise to 18,4 million by 2010 (Roby and Shaw, 2006). In South Africa AIDS is the leading cause of death accounting for an estimated 30% of all deaths, and HIV prevalence is though to be increasing with an estimated 18.8% of adults (15-49 years) being HIV positive (Schroeder and Nichola, 2006). Schroeder and Nichola (2006) suggest that the death of young adults:

> *"…not only destroys human capital but also deprives children of parental care, knowledge and the capacity to finance their education, i.e. their requirements to become economically productive"*
>
> (Schroeder and Nichola, 2006, 174).

The risk of HIV is found to be highest among black South Africans (understood here in apartheid classification terms), and poverty, which is much higher in black communities, has also been found to increase risk for exposure to HIV. Therefore, the above effects impact most on poor black communities so that the vast majority of children made orphans by the HIV/AIDS pandemic are black from under-resourced environments (Schroeder and Nichola, 2006; Roby and Shaw, 2006). Traditional 'African/indigenous' norms have approached the dilemma of orphaned children by incorporating them into extended family systems, and indeed the vast majority of such children in African counties are believed to be cared for within these systems without the need for formal adoption procedures (Freeman and Nkomo, 2006). Freeman and Nkomo (2006) conducted research on a sample of South African adults from historically predominantly black urban and rural areas of three provinces that were noted for having high HIV infection rates. They found that the vast majority (about 90%) of parents or parental figures with children in their care believed that another family member (i.e. other parent, grandparents, uncle or aunt, older sibling or other family member) would take care of their children if they died and, indeed would prefer it to be so (Freeman and Nkomo, 2006). However, the large and increasing numbers of black orphans in Southern Africa has resulted in many extended family members, a lot of whom live below the poverty line already, being unable to support additional children. This is due to constraints of already overstretched resources (especially financial, although also social and emotional) and due to the depletion of family networks with modern migration, Westernisation and AIDS (Freeman and Nkomo, 2006; Roby and Shaw, 2006).

In South Africa there are also large numbers of babies who are abandoned every year, and although accurate national statistics on these figures are not available (Luhanga, 2008), the numbers are believed to be both high and increasing (Luhanga, 2008; van Schalkwyk, 2008), and is also believed to be strongly related to growing economic stress placed on already poor populations of mothers who feel they will be incapable of providing for the needs of their infant (Mbuyazi, 2008). The Western Cape Provincial department of Social Development estimated about 480 babies under the age of 3 being abandoned in the district in 2007, and around 430 in the first six months of 2008 alone. The Johannesburg Child Welfare Service reported dealing with 926 cases of abandoned

newborn babies in Gauteng in 2007 alone (Luhanga, 2008). The overwhelming majority of these abandoned infants are black and relatively few people from black populations apply to adopt abandoned babies/children that find their way into the care of these institutions. Conversely, few white babies are available for adoption and a waiting lists of white parents to adopt white babies is long (Szabo and Ritchken, 2002).As such the number of black infants available for adoption in South Africa far outweighs the number of white infants available for adoption.

Although under-researched, this difference between black and white populations applying to adopt abandoned babies is possibly related to historically-derived black disadvantage. Limitations of monetary security and family network structures may cause hesitancy from black families to take on the additional economic and social responsibilities of raising an extra child, particularly when these economic and social resources are already strained because of the added demands placed on family systems due to the effects of the HIV/AIDS pandemic, which are worse in black communities (Freeman and Nkomo, 2006). In some cases, where ethnic labels are significantly valued, the unidentifiable descendency of abandoned babies (most of whom are black in South Africa) may defer families from perceiving them as potential kin, thus decreasing their chances of adoption.

As such, although various attempts have been made at national, organizational and community levels to address the orphan issue, a great deal more financial and material resources, as well as ongoing commitment, is needed to do so sufficiently. Some may argue that the institutionalization of black orphaned children with children of their own ‘race’ is preferable to CRA as a means of ensuring or improving black children’s sense of ‘racial –’, cultural – and ‘ethnic identity’ when no black adoptive parents are available. However, this view has been strongly challenged on the grounds that increased mental health problems, posttraumatic stress, developmental delays and inadequate preparation for adulthood have been strongly associated with institutionalization (Roby and Shaw, 2006). Although this may, at least to some extent, be due to a lack of funding and resources in such institutions (Zaal, 1992; Roby and Shaw, 2006), both international and local social work organisations appear to predominantly adopt the position that, where ‘same-race’ placements are not possible, CRA placements are preferable to

institutionalisation since the benefits of growing up in a family are seen to outweigh the benefits of 'same-race' enculturation (Szabo and Ritchken, 2002). With this in mind, from a structural perspective, it has been suggested that CRA provides a viable alternative to the depleted resources black children are likely to grow up with in institutions that must accommodate ever-increasing numbers of black orphans. Not only are demands made on governmental resources for support decreased, but the access of black children to more stable upbringings and economic advantage than they would otherwise be likely to have, is concurrently increased (Roby and Shaw, 2006).

2.3.3 The CRA child as a political object

Competing notions of racism and anti-racism are also found in literature and research into CRA, and Dubinsky (2007) identifies two predominant narratives within CRA discourse that use the topic of CRA as a vehicle for the discursive realization of 'race'-related political agendas. The narratives of "**rescue**" and "**kidnap**" have tended to be polarised, discursively set up in binary opposition to one another such that the actual children, biological and adoptive parents' involved, disappear behind symbolic representations of CRA. Dubinsky (2007) suggests that social fears are most ardently expressed in discourses about *children*, whose young bodies have come to embody what society deems natural and pure (i.e. "right" and valuable) and what society deems most vulnerable (i.e. in greatest need of protection). As such, children are symbolic carriers of the beliefs, rights and resources that are most important to people and concurrent carriers of the social anxieties about threats to these beliefs, rights and resources. Social groupings vary in the entities they choose to make most important depending on socio-historical and socio-political milieus. A group will therefore invoke discourses about children that represent the aspects of their group identity or group well-being that they feel are most vulnerable to social attack, so that such discourses increase the social power they can claim to assist in protecting the group's interests (Dubinsky, 2007).

Although she draws on the example of international adoptions within Canada in the 1950's to illustrate her point, Dubinsky (2007) names discourses of the "rescue" narrative that may be utilised in talk about CRA for political agenda in any context where egalitarian values that include 'racial' equality and integration pervade.

> *"When… a liberal, integrationist discourse of interracial adoption developed in Canada in the late 1950's, which positioned interracially adopted black children as innocent bearers of racial reconciliation, Canadians looked through the…baby and saw, vicariously, a hopeful sign of cross racial tolerance, an unfortunate to be rescued by tender white care, or a measure of the superior social values of Canadians"*
>
> (Dubinsky, 2007, p143).

In "rescue" discourses, black orphans attain socio-political value due to their *child-ness* and *blackness* being sources of political legitimacy for whites, and therefore sources of power in democratic societies. Child-ness makes cross-racial adoptees representatives of white people's supposed nobility in "rescuing" the vulnerable and needy orphan (inadvertently constructing whites as capable and blacks as helpless), and "blackness" makes cross-racial adoptees miniature icons of white society's anti-racism and attempts to racially integrate (allowing whites to immunise themselves from responsibility for racism). In addition, Dubinsky (2007) calls attention to the way in which such discourses allow white speakers to gloss over or ignore the 'racial' disparities existent in society that contributed to their birth-parents being unable to care for them (Dubinsky, 2007).

The opposing dominant narrative of CRA suggested by Dubinsky (2007) is that of "kidnap", where black children adopted by whites are constructed as stolen and damaged, to their own detriment and to the detriment of the 'race' group to which they supposedly belong. In the National Association of Black Social Worker's (NABSW) resolution of 1972, the concept of "*cultural genocide*" was introduced to describe CRA of black children by white parents as a means of cultural oppression that is racist in that it effectively dis-empowers black groups by disconnecting black people from each other and from "black culture" (Hollingworth, 1999). The meaning of black culture here takes on a political tone as it is used as means of fighting white domination. In the NABSW's (1972) resolution orphaned, adoptable black children cease to be neutral individuals and become valuable political bodies that can be 'kept' by blacks to strengthen their causes as a social group, or 'lost' to whites by assimilation into Euro-American/Western culture, inadvertently strengthening the dominance of white populations. Indeed the NABSW (1972) quite patently constructs black orphans as sources of political capacity in a

polarised society of black and white "nations", and presupposes black society's entitlement to them by stating that their position to oppose CRA is based on *"…the need of **our** young ones to begin at birth to identify with Black people in a Black community …(and)the philosophy that **we** need **our own** to build a **strong nation**"* (cited in Hollingsworth, 1999, p444, emphasis added).

The idea that 'racial', cultural and ethnic social groups have greater, more legitimated claims on children whose skin colour has historically been associated with such groups, appears to have somewhat ambiguously infiltrated the South African Child Care Acts of 1991, 1996 and 2005, which require that 'same-race' adoptions be given preference over CRA where the option is available, and that cultural/ethnic properties of the child (supposedly identified by birth parent affiliations) be given consideration (Ferreira, 2006). Zaal (1992) questions the legitimacy of such preference and consideration, citing a clause about adoption from section 40 of the 1991 Child Care Act that attempts to outline procedures for matching adopters and adoptees:

> *"(In the) determination of custody of children …regard shall be had to the religious and cultural background of the child concerned and of his parents as against that of the person into whose custody he is to be placed or transferred"*
>
> (cited in Zaal, 1992, p372).

Zaal (1992) however argues that, in a country that has been segregated by 'race', the most salient divides are likely to be associated with the previously 'racial' ones. As such, notions of culture and religion are constructed as innate properties of a child predetermined by his/her pigmentation. Zaal suggests that boundaries to CRA are increased due to the myriad of interpretations of these constructs and categories, resulting in continuously more refined classifications and smaller opportunities for complimentary groupings of adopters and adoptees. Thus, with relatively few black parents applying to adopt in South Africa (Szabo and Ritchken, 2002), 'cultural –' or 'ethnic – matching' has been framed as a form of 'racial' discrimination in that it decreases orphaned black children's opportunities for access to the economic, educational and emotional advantages of belonging to a family unit, based on their 'race' (Zaal, 1992). In addition, 'racial' matching in adoption has been criticised for making black orphans in particular

carry the responsibility of upholding some black groups' political agendas, to their own developmental disadvantage (Hollingsworth, 1999).

The literature on CRA therefore suggests that a tension exist between an *ethics of humanity* which transcends 'race' and an *ethics of 'race'* which transcends humanity. In contrast to the latter system, the former meaning-making system suggests that belonging in a family is of much greater importance to belonging in a 'race'/ethnic group, and emphasis on supposed universal developmental needs are valued over supposed 'racially' specific ones. In a similar vein, but not always analogous, a tension exists between individual and collective interests. *Individual-rights stances* prioritise individuals' access to equality and freedom from discrimination above the socio-political interests of social groups, and an *equal-rights stance for 'racial'/ethnic groups* value the empowerment of previously disadvantaged 'race' groups above the personal empowerment of individuals even within these groups. These ethical positions and human-rights stances all hold some social legitimacy and therefore may be used in various discourses about CRA to claim a social/moral high-ground for the speaker.

2.3.4 Research into perceptions of CRA

Of interest to the current research then, are the ways in which both black and white people take on the aforementioned positions and stances by utilising, contesting or ignoring various arguments around CRA in South Africa, to position themselves as individuals, as representatives of 'races' and as members of other social groups in the current post-apartheid milieu. Research into perceptions of CRA held by populations not specifically linked to its practice have been minimal, as most CRA studies have focussed on the opinions and experiences of social workers, parents and children directly involved in CRA (Frasch and Brooks, 2003) or on the socio-economic contexts in which it occurs (Roby and Shaw, 2006). However, some studies have attempted to quantify beliefs about and attitudes toward CRA and to make inferences from these.

Whatley, Jahangardi, Ross and Knox (2003) looked at American students' attitudes towards CRA, and results were seen to reflect overwhelmingly positive attitudes towards CRA, such that it was suggested that current-day university students tend to have liberal views about the acceptance of people from 'races' different to their own. In

particular, women's attitudes were found to be more positive than men's, and people who were open to adoption in general, people open to interracial dating and people who had experienced interracial dating, were found to be more willing to adopt cross-racially themselves (Whatley, Jahangardi, Ross and Knox, 2003).

In South Africa, Freeman and Nkomo (2006) considered the perspectives of 1400 adults (both current and prospective caregivers to children) from areas in the Free State, Gauteng and Kwa-Zulu Natal noted for being historically predominantly black areas. Although not specific to CRA, when asked how they would feel about their child being adopted either within or outside of South Africa if they and their family and friends could not take care of the child, the majority of the sample was extremely unhappy about the prospect. It was however found that the people with secondary and tertiary education qualifications (minority of the sample) were significantly more open to accepting the prospect of adoption than those with little or no schooling (Freeman and Nkomo, 2006). Moos and Mwaba (2007) looked at the beliefs and attitudes about CRA held by a sample of mostly black psychology students at a South African university. A scale was developed for the study, which took into account the contentious issues of 'racial' and 'ethnic identity' as well as the socio-political context of a racially segregated history. They found that the vast majority of the sample approved of CRA and did not believe it was emotionally harmful for the child. Not only did almost all of the participants indicate a belief that black children adopted by white parents would not lose "their culture", but most of them also believed that CRA could help to promote "racial and cultural tolerance" in South Africa. Moos and Mwaba suggested that their findings indicated the possibility that black South Africans viewed CRA as evidence of white people's rejection of racism and of changing race relations in the country (Moos and Mwaba, 2007).

Although research into CRA reflects themes around 'race' and racialisation, these have tended not to be critically analysed in terms of underlying ideologies and power dynamics. The way in which discourses of family and 'identity' might reflect racialisation and/or deracialisation processes has not been sufficiently deconstructed and this is manifest in the lack of clarity in many arguments for or against CRA which make use of constructs such as 'race', culture and ethnicity and their respective "identities", without defining the parameters of such terms or specifying them as being perceived to

be socially constructed or innate. Aside from a need for more critical engagement with the topic, the vast majority of the research generated on CRA stems from European and American contexts, and relatively little information has been obtained in South African settings. Thus it may be considered important to critically analyse themes emerging from discussion around CRA in South Africa, in order to gain a better sense of the underlying ideologies about ‘race’ that are competing for power in the post-apartheid milieu, and of how these are currently acted out in discourse.

CHAPTER 3: METHODS

This chapter looks at the methods, procedures and guiding theoretical principals used by the researcher to conduct the study. It includes an account of research aims, research questions, study paradigm and design, research procedures, participants, data collection and analysis, ethical considerations taken into account, and e section on the researcher's reflexivity.

3.1 Research Aims

The aim of the research is to identify possible ways in which racist ideology and counter voices to this ideology are played out in discourses about CRA in the current post-apartheid context of South Africa.

3.2 Research Questions

McLeod (2004) suggests that research's theoretical and ideological stances are reflected in the ways that research questions are posed, such that social constructionist endeavours should attempt to ask questions that explore socio-political processes and ideological issues affecting the topic at hand (McLeod, 2004). With this in mind, the research attempts to achieve its aforementioned aims, by attempting to answer the following research questions:

- What racialised discourses arise in black psychology students' talk about CRA?
- What racialised discourses arise in white psychology students' talk about CRA?
- What are the ideological and social effects and functions of these discourses?

3.3 Study Paradigm and Design

As indicated in the research's introduction and literature review, the current research adopts a *social constructionist* epistemological position with regard to knowledge generated about 'race' and racism. While this follows postmodernism in asserting that this knowledge as absolute, or universal 'truth' independent of a social system, cannot be attained, social constructionist schools of thought find the relativism of postmodernism

problematic in that it detracts from the political agenda of knowledge (Stainton Rogers and Stainton Rogers, 2001) and underestimates the very real implications that contextual factors such as materiality and history have on its generation (Foster, 2004). As such, social constructionist approaches to knowledge are more concerned with the *purposes* underlying the making, maintenance and utilization of knowledge, and the ways in which such knowledge might empower or subjugate certain groups of people (Hook, 2004). Burr (1995) identifies four assumptions that should be used when approaching knowledge from a social constructionist perspective. This include acknowledging the Firstl, a *'critical' stance* is taken towards knowledge, because in accepting that it is socially constructed, one then acknowledges that it must serve a social function and that it can therefore be utilized strategically to set up, maintain or challenge certain power-relations in society (Burr, 1995). Indeed Foucault (1977) insisted that knowledge and its political implications (or power-dynamics) cannot be understood independently of one another, that:

> *"…power produces knowledge…power and knowledge directly imply one another;… there is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations"*
>
> (Foucault, 1977, 27).

Secondly, social constructionism recognizes that *knowledge implicates action* in that its consequences are played out in people's lives in very real ways, stipulating laws, norms, standards; providing opportunities for some, preventing access to ways of being, to resources and to influence for others (Burr, 1995). With the above two assumptions in mind, the current research presupposes that the information people provide to explain their perceptions of or validate their arguments around CRA in South Africa, is not merely descriptive or politically neutral. Instead this information is considered to ultimately reflect the politics of 'race' being played out from macro- to micro-levels of South African society.

Thirdly, social constructionists view knowledge as being both *created and sustained by social processes* such that it is considered to be "discoursed into being" and sustained through "discursive labour" (Stainton Rogers and Stainton Rogers, 2001) These

discourses are the systems of meaning that inform how our lived experiences are interpreted and understood and include extensive patterns of talk and groups of ideas that lie beneath what people say or communicate. “Discourse” is frequently used interchangeably with “language” in social constructionist analyses and Collins (2004) asserts that the languages our cultures utilize to provide interpretations of the world may be broadly understood to include not only words, but all symbols, myths, customs, rituals and other meaning-making systems that are collectively understood by a group of people (Collins, 2004). For the current research then, it is not the individual participants that are the focus of study, but the societal structures and power relations that the participants’ discourses reflect. As such, knowledge gained about students perceptions of CRA is viewed as a reflection of the coherent systems of social meanings that underlie their use of language and communication in discourse (Terre Blanche and Durrheim, 1999).

Finally, Burr (1995) suggests that social constructionists view knowledge as *history-, culture- and domain-specific*, or in other words, as being meaningful and socially useful only within the context in which it is generated and upheld (Burr, 1995). With this in mind, the current research emphasizes the importance of considering both immediate and broader social contexts when interpreting discourses. This would take into account ‘same-race’ or ‘mixed-race’ interactions of students with tertiary level education in the field of psychology (that is, the immediate context), and the broader historical, political, economic and social context of living in post-apartheid South Africa 15 years into democracy.

With these four assumptions about knowledge in mind, participants’ talk about CRA in South Africa is viewed as context-bound, fluid, value-laden and subjective. As such, the ‘knowledge’ generated from their discussions (in the form of discourses, their meanings and their ideological purposes) are interpreted within the context of the interviews conducted, rather than viewed as universally true for all black and white people, or used for generalizations, predictions or control through quantification. Such an approach to knowledge therefore lends itself more to *qualitative* methods of research. Qualitative methods of research generally focus on the process as opposed to the outcome, with the researcher acting as a human analytical instrument. This means that the validity and reliability of the research cannot be quantified (both in terms of what is

selected as important for analysis, and how data is interpreted). Indeed the content of the research is more descriptive than predictive and emphasis is placed on the meanings and understanding of the 'data' collected (Bhana and Kanjee, 2001).

Parker (1999) suggests that using qualitative methods of research are particularly important when attempting to gain insight into the social significance of discourses. This is because *meaning* is not fixed or self-contained within words or phrases that can be quantified (for example through content analysis). Nor do the constructions of similar ideas hold the same meanings or fulfil the same purposes for speakers in different contexts. As such Parker suggests that the *"…activity of construction and assessment is a profoundly* ***qualitative*** *issue"* (Parker, 1999, p2). As such, the gathering and analysis of discourses about CRA and their social constructionist interpretation with regard to racist ideology, appeared to be best suited to a research design that adopts qualitative methods.

3.4 Research Procedures

The researcher initially asked permission from heads of schools within faculties of Science, Humanities and Commerce at the University of the Witwatersrand to approach students about participating in the research (Appendix C). Some refused this permission due to other research being conducted with their students, others failed to respond timeously, and only the school of Human and Community Development approved access to students within the psychology department as requested. As such, time limitations necessitated that the researcher approach only psychology students after having gained permission from the relevant lecturers to do so. The researcher explained to these classes that the she wanted to conduct focus group interviews to explore students' perceptions of CRA in South Africa and asked that students interested in participating provide their names, contact details and (optionally) their 'racial' category.

Following these initial requests, the researcher attempted to plan focus groups around times that were suitable for participants and that allowed for the organization of these participants into a black focus group, a white focus group and a black and white focus group according to the 'racial' categories students had written down with their contact details. These three focus group interviews were then conducted in the

Emthonjeni centre at the University of the Witwatersrand, where participants received information sheets about the research (Appendix D) and were given time to read through these before signing informed consent forms (Appendix E), the details of which are discussed in the section on ethical considerations below.

Before commencing with the group discussion, participants received three short vignettes pertaining to CRA-related issues to read through, after which tape-recording of the focus group discussion commenced and interviews lasted between 1 and 1 ½ hours. Once the interviews were complete, they were transcribed verbatim by the researcher and transcripts were analysed using the data analysis methods discussed below.

3.5 Participants

Participants were comprised of 18 third year and honours psychology students at the University of the Witwatersrand. Although this is a very particular group such that results cannot be generalized to other populations, the aim of the research to explore discourses that exist (rather than quantify these discourses or predict their usage) allows for information derived from the sample to be considered useful.

To a large extent, these participants were gained via convenience sampling which is a non-random sample that is chosen for practical reasons (McBurney, 2001). This was because the researcher is a student at the same university and therefore has easier access to its population, the final participants drawn from the list of interested students was determined by student availability to meet at the proposed times for interviews, and time constraints around data gathering influenced the researcher's choice to limit the sample to students from the psychology department only (discussed in the section on research procedures above). To some extent the sampling was also purposeful (a non-random sample chosen for a trait it possesses) (McBurney, 2001), because the researcher felt that third year and honours students may be more invested in contributing to academic research than first and second year students. Whilst the allocation of participants to black or white focus groups was obviously constrained by 'race', within these 'racial' categories, the allocation of participants to either a 'same-race' or 'mixed-race' focus group was done randomly.

Whilst admittedly contentious, the decision to separate the sample into ‘same-race’ and ‘mixed-race’ focus groups was based on the idea that black and white people may talk about issues pertaining to ‘race’ and racism very differently in ‘same-race’ groups than they may in ‘mixed-race’ groups. It was felt that significant discourses may be censored or fail to arise if the study was limited to only ‘same-race’ or only ‘mixed-race’ groups. As such, the use of both ‘same-race’ and ‘mixed-race’ groups hoped to create more diverse scenarios for identification and dis-identification both between ‘race’ groups and within them.

The three focus groups were comprised of equal amounts of black and white students, both male and female, all of whom were in their early to mid-twenties, save one participant (in the late forties/ early fifties). These students attend an historically white university in urban Johannesburg that, relative to many universities in the country, is comprised of an affluent to middle-class population.

3.6 Data Collection

For this research focus group interviews following a semi-structured interview guide and using CRA-related vignettes were used to generate data.

In qualitative research, interviews are usually open-ended, loosely or semi-structured interactions between interviewer and interviewees that allow participants considerable room to talk about a topic. This provides access to understandings, attitudes and values that quantitative methods find difficult to measure and therefore allow for a greater level of depth and complexity in data (Byrne, 2004). More specifically, interviews conducted in a focus group setting (rather than one-on-one) allow individuals to interact at will, and should a participant not wish to share a perspective they are given the opportunity to remain silent and let others speak. As such participants may be less likely to produce false accounts that they think will be socially pleasing than they would in a one-on-one interview where they may feel pressurized to speak (Byrne, 2004). This is particularly important for the current study because the topic of CRA invokes discourses about ‘race’, children and family which may be considered areas of sensitivity, and which people may feel compelled to produce politically correct views on when expected to respond to each question as is custom in a one-on-one interview.

Focus group interviews are also suitable to the current research because people articulate and justify their thoughts in relation to others. Social and cultural processes that influence people's talk and shape their opinions in everyday natural social settings, are more likely to be reflected in data generated from a group interaction (Tonkiss, 2004). This is especially important for the current study, because the research is interested in 'raced' discourses that arise in everyday *social* conversation (rather than private thoughts and attitudes), and how 'race'-related ideologies and power dynamics are played out in social interactions.

In semi-structured interviews, the researcher provides participants with a degree of direction as to what to discuss so that data will address the research questions. However this direction is minimal so that participants can generate their own conversation, questions for each other and ideas for discussion, a process which also allows the researcher to observe the dynamics of interviewees' interactions with each other (Byrne, 2004). As such the focus groups conducted for this research utilized two kinds of 'structuring' or 'directing' tools to focus conversation around CRA, but allowed participants a relatively large amount of freedom to move conversation where they wanted within this area. Firstly 3 vignettes about CRA-related issues (Appendix A) were given to participants to read at the start of the interviews as a means of priming participants so as to focus their 'raced' thought in the field of CRA, and to provide participants with a means of entering into conversation with greater ease and comfort by being able to distance themselves somewhat from the possibly contentious subject of CRA by commenting on *other* people's perspectives. Secondly the researcher had a semi-structured interview guide at hand (Appendix B) with fairly open-ended questions about CRA-related issues. This was utilized differently between groups depending upon the direction discussions took and whether or not the researcher felt that a group had not addressed a particular area of interest sufficiently.

3.7 Data Analysis

In attempting to answer the aforementioned research questions a pragmatic approach was used in data analysis that combined Braun and Clarke's (2006) *thematic discourse*

analysis and Parker's (1992, 1999) recommendations for a *critical discourse analysis*, in analyzing transcripts from the focus groups.

Braun and Clarke (2006) suggest that a thematic analysis attempts to capture important themes or clusters of coherent meanings from a data set, that can be related back to the research questions, and it is these sets of meaning that come to form the 'discourses' described by thematic analysis with a focus on identifying discourses. Thematic analysis of this kind tends to be *theoretically* driven – where the researcher's specific theoretical interest areas focus his/her analysis on eliciting themes that relate to these particular areas, and it tends to be concerned with identifying *latent* themes – where analysis does not just attempt to describe themes as they appear on the surface of the data, but to examine possible underlying meanings, assumptions, strategies and ideologies at play (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Operating from a social constructionist position, thematic analysis used to identify discourses:

> *"…does not seek to focus on motivation or individual psychologies, but instead seeks to theorize the sociocultural contexts, and structural conditions, that enable the individual accounts that are given"*
>
> (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p85).

These descriptions are pertinent for the current research which is concerned with identifying latent themes (or discourses) in talk about CRA, and illustrating how these relate to racist ideology in particular which has been theorized from a social constructionist perspective.

Parker (1992) proposes 20 'steps' involved in discourse analysis that make up 10 criteria for identifying discourses. These criteria are that a discourse "is realized in texts", "is about objects", "contains subjects", "is a coherent system of meanings", "refers to other discourses", "reflects its own way of speaking", "is historically located", and that discourses "support institutions", "reproduce power relations" and "have ideological effects" (Parker, 1999). However, when viewed in relation to Parker's (1999) relation of three levels of discourse analysis comprised of *contradiction*, *construction* and *practice* (Parker, 1999), the researcher felt that for purposes of this research, Parker's (1992) 10 criteria (and 20 'steps') for identifying discourses were more succinctly accounted for within the descriptions of these three levels of analysis.

'Contradiction' looks at *what* discourses are used. As such it involves the identification of meanings within texts that attempt to portray the world in particular ways, and how these meanings contradict other significations of the world. As such the researcher is required to identify both dominant meanings that form part of the "cultural myth" or ideology, as well as subordinate meanings that resist this ideology and compete with it for discursive expression. 'Construction' looks at *how* discourses are used. It involves considering the ways in which meanings have been socially constructed in texts to make "sense" to people utilizing and understanding it. As such it requires that the researcher take nothing for granted and shelve all accounts of what is 'real', in order to identify discursive strategies and techniques at play and how these are used to bolster particular discourses. Finally, 'practice' looks at *why* discourses are used. It involves the researcher considering the ideological effects of discourses and identifying what the contradictory meaning-making systems are doing in relation to ideologies. As such, an account of issues of power are central to this level of analysis and the researcher's observations should open up spaces for agency, to reveal where people can and/or do resist dominant meanings to construct alternative ones (Parker, 1999).

Therefore, keeping Parker's (1992) 10 criteria (and 20 steps) in mind, the researcher attempted to analyse transcripts at levels of contradiction, construction and practice. Braun and Clarke's 'phases of thematic analysis' (Braun and Clarke, 2006) was used to assist in the identification *what* discourses were at play in talk about CRA, and thus formed part of the discourse analysis which also attempted to identify *how* participants used discursive strategies and techniques to bolster these discourses, as well as *why* participants might be using these discourses to offer support for or resistance to racist ideology. Although discourse analysis is most suited to the study at hand due to the research's social constructionist theoretical stance, it is important to acknowledge that this form of analysis is limited in the degree of 'accuracy' it can guarantee, of the representation of participants' talk. This is because analysis is entirely dependent upon the skill of the researcher, on the researcher's theoretical orientation and his/her subjective interpretation. As such, the researcher received insight and guidance from a supervisor regarding this process in the hopes that this would ensure that results depicted portray a reasonable reflection of the data gathered.

3.8 Ethical Considerations

[Ethical Protocol Number: MACC/07/002 IH]

In an attempt to conduct research that is respectful of the confidentiality and well-being of its participants, the following ethical considerations were taken.

Students were asked to participate in the study and were informed that this was of a voluntary nature, that doing so (or not doing so) would in no impact upon their academic progress within the psychology department and that they could freely withdraw from participation at any point of the study. On arrival for the focus groups, participants received an information sheet about the research (Appendix D), and having read this were asked to sign three informed consent forms (Appendix E) if they still wanted to take part in the interviews.

The first consent form aimed to ensure that participants understood that participation was voluntary, that they may withdraw at any time or refuse to answer any questions they did not want to, and that there were no direct risks or benefits to partaking. It also sought to ensure that participants knew that they may be directly quoted in the report, but that no identifying details would accompany these quotes or any other part of the report such that the researcher would uphold participant confidentiality throughout the report. Finally this consent form made it clear that the researcher could not guarantee complete confidentiality due to this being reliant on fellow group participants upholding it. As such, the second consent form sought to make participants aware of their mutual obligation to one another not to divulge any personal information emerging in the group to anyone else at any time after the interview.

The third consent form aimed to ensure that participants understood that interviews would be tape-recorded, and that all recordings and transcripts would be kept in a secure location in the researcher's home, with access to them made possible only for the researcher and her supervisor. It also made it clear that recordings would be destroyed upon the researcher's qualification, that no identifying details of participants would be present in the transcript or research report, and that any direct quotes from these texts would not include identifying details. In the focus groups, the researcher also provided participants with a reference to the Counselling and Careers Development Unit at the

University of the Witwatersrand, should the topic prove sensitive and any problems arise from its discussion for which they wanted counselling.

The researcher was also aware of the fact that participants may be studying under her supervisor within the psychology department and that this may result in a relative censorship by participants around what they said, due to a concern that this might influence the supervisor's dealings with them. As such, it was made known to the participants that no identifying details would be made known to anyone except herself, and the researcher made sure not to inform her supervisor of who took part in the study or of who the speaker was when discussing quotations.

Finally the researcher provided an email address at which participants could contact her to request a one page feedback form on completion of the research, and they were also informed that a formal research report would be made available from the test library in the psychology department of the University of the Witwatersrand should they wish access it.

3.9 Researcher Reflexivity

In attempting to gauge the extent to which the researcher may have impacted upon the data collected, the results reported, and the effects created by the research, the following concerns were noted.

Firstly, 'race' may still be considered a contentious, awkward and even conflict-inducing social issue. As such, the presence of the researcher as a white person in a what may have been perceived as a position of authority (as the focus group facilitator), may have impacted upon the extent to which black participants in particular felt comfortable or even safe to share their perspectives freely.

Secondly, the researcher is cognizant of the fact that the nature of the analysis means that results are highly dependent upon the researcher's subjective interpretation. As such, the researcher attempted to identify those personal features and experiences that may be likely to bias her analysis (that is, being a white South African; having immediate family members who are cross-racially adopted), and to reflect upon emotive responses to the data in an attempt to separate these responses from how the data is reported.

This was particularly difficult for the researcher in two ways. Firstly, when participants' talk about CRA challenged the motives behind white South Africans adopting black children, the immediate response was to interpret these discourses as an attack on the integrity of both the researcher and her parents. Secondly, when participants' talk construed black CRA children as somehow abnormal, incomplete or deviant from what they 'should' be, the immediate response was to interpret these discourses as an attack on the personhood of her black siblings. Both these responses invoked a reflexive desire to either counter-argue or dismiss the relevance of these discourses, and therefore required a great deal of self reflection on the part of the researcher in order to look beyond her personal situation and identify the social effects and political purposes underlying these discourses. In addition, the presence of a research supervisor to review this analysis is likely to provide some degree of objectivity that lessens the chance of researcher bias and that directs analysis in ways that provide a reasonably 'accurate' account of the data.

Thirdly, the researcher is highly aware of how the very conduction of the research, provides a means of contradicting itself. This is because much of the research involves highlighting processes of racialisation that effectively support a racist ideology, in order to challenge them. However, achieving this overarching objective involves re-inscriptions of 'race' that continue to separate out society and distinguish between groups along lines of skin-colour. This is evident the researcher's choice to conduct focus groups organized by 'race', and throughout the research report in what may be thought of as the researcher's *own* discourses about CRA, 'race' and racism.

Having explained the methods adopted in the research, the report section will now look at the results found and provide a concurrent discussion of these results.

CHAPTER 4: THE REPORT SECTION

This chapter presents an analysis and discussion of transcripts from the white and black (group1), all white(group2), and all black (group3) focus group interviews. The analysis of these interviews revealed that no participants expressed overt disapproval for CRA, and instead the underlying question that appeared to pervade conversation in all three groups was: ***How important is it that a black child be raised in a black culture?*** This question also highlights the fact that participants' assumptions about CRA in South Africa almost always included the supposition that this involves the adoption of black children by white parents. This assumption may by logically grounded in popular knowledge that CRA in South Africa is nearly always constituted in this way (Moos and Mwaba, 2007) and reinforced by the vignettes presented to participants in the interviews (Appendix A). However, it is important to acknowledge from the outset that this assumption has the stand alone effect of focussing attention towards blacks in positions of relative vulnerability (i.e. as children and as orphans), and whites in positions of relative power (i.e. as parents and adopters). As such the very topic of CRA may both re-inscribe and reveal dominant discourses of whites being more powerful than blacks.

Three overarching repertoires appeared to emerge from the data as participants attempted to answer and justify their answers to the underlying question of whether or not it is important that black children be exposed to black culture. Firstly the repertoire of **"The best interests of the child"** looks at participants' child-centred discourses of 'race' and adoption. Secondly the repertoire of **"Knowing who you are"** looks at participants' essentialising and non-essentialising discourses of 'raced' identity. Thirdly the repertoire of **"*Other* South Africans' attitudes"** looks at the discourses participants use in reflecting upon discourses that they think *other* people use when thinking about CRA. In this way CRA becomes a discursive object through which participants represent their perceptions of South African society. As such, discourses elicited from the interviews will be presented and discussed according to the predominant repertoire of the three from which they operate, although this does not imply that these are mutually exclusive, and discourses may indeed utilise more than one approach and call on discourses from other approaches to bolster their impact.

4.1 " The best interests of the child":
Child-centred discourses of 'race' and adoption

Discourses operating within a repertoire of "the best interests of the child" were identified by their primarily individualistic concern with the well-being and integrity of the CRA black child. By suggesting that their arguments for or against exposing black CRA children to black culture were based upon a desire to concurrently defend the child's best interests, participants were able to position themselves and their subsequent opinions as socially legitimate. This allowed participants 'safe' space to express what may be socio-political opinions about 'race', without having to acknowledge the socio-political motivations that may underlie these opinions, or to justify their possible discursive effects of racialisation or the bolstering of racist discourses.

4.1.1 Exposure offers choice

The discourse of "exposure offers choice" was a very prominent one, particularly for some white participants in groups 1 and 2. Participants utilizing this discourse suggested that in CRA, white parents should **expose their black child to black culture**, and explained that doing so provides the child with the **option to choose the culture he/she wants to follow** rather than forces the child to adopt a 'white culture'.

Grp1:

P1: "So as parents you have to decide, "Ok I am going to learn about this culture so that I can give my child the knowledge or expose them enough so that they can make a decision personally"

P3: "…you're getting a mixed, a more sort of broad overview of things. I think in that way you can still say, ok well, then it's more of a choice than a live-with-what you're-growing-up-with … like, um, "this is the way we're growing up, and if you would like to see how other people live then…(interrupted)"

Grp2:

P1: "Just by, you know, allowing them to "go to the mountain" and have their own practices. You know, don't say that they have to pick. Give them both, maybe they must integrate both things … Ya raise them as both, give them a choice. Get them exposed, you know"

Such discourse uses a ***liberal rhetoric of 'choice'***, also used by white English-speaking learners in Painter and Baldwin's research (2004), so that speakers can position themselves as not only respectful of an individual's constitutional right to choose the cultural beliefs and practices he/she wishes to follow, but concurrently implies that speakers are attempting to adopt a non-marginalising approach towards black culture itself. It therefore also draws on a broader discourse of ***multiculturalism*** that Ansell (2004) suggests is popular amongst white South Africans in particular in post-apartheid South Africa, and is indeed most popular amongst white participants in the study. While the intention of this may be to provide said speakers with political legitimacy by their 'inclusive' approach towards black culture, there is a noticeable absence of discourse suggesting white children should be exposed to this same black culture to offer them the same choice. This sets up a contradiction in that the only individuals whose rights are seemingly under consideration are black ones and, as such, 'race' already comes to signify what culture one 'should be' exposed to. This has an essentialising effect in that it constructs the CRA child as a racialised object, imbuing in him/her an inborn affinity for black culture that is determined by his/her blackness.

An indication of the underlying contradiction inherent in this discourse, shows itself up in a relative silence, a vagueness and a lack of consensus about what it actually means for white parents to expose their black child to black culture. In attempting to explain this, speakers utilizing the discourse of "exposure offers choice" appeared to ultimately become reliant on **equating exposure with knowledge acquisition and black culture with specific languages and social customs**.

Grp2

P3: "It's also family sort of duty, even if it's not to promote a culture, to say, "Listen you are a different culture – well technically to society you're viewed differently – so you must be really prepared for this." And that will really help them accept their culture I think; saying, "Ok I'm not perfectly white, I'm born in a white culture, people will treat me differently." And it's their choice in future if they wanna follow their culture. The family should be open, "If you wanna go learn Zulu, you wanna go do this, that's fine. You wanna go to the mountain, if you want." Um, they should really promote, well they shouldn't hold them back…"

P2: "…let's say you've got a black boy-child, what about initiation? I mean that's a big thing. I know these days boys are sometimes saying they don't want it, but then they go back later and say no they do want it. You know things like that it's very hard for a white family to organize…Mmm, and marriage for that child. Let's say he finds a nice black girl he wants to marry, now he's gotta come up with labola, or nowadays its cash, but I mean this what they're taking on if they do adopt a child that is from a different culture"

The use of participant 3's term "**their** culture" (researcher emphasis added) further entrenches the notion that a black culture is an inborn characteristic of black people, one that cannot belong to the "perfectly white" parents because of indelible differences between blacks and whites. It therefore draws on the discourse of "identity, family and culture are immutable" discussed in section 4.2.1. In addition white is inadvertently constructed as the standard of perfection and anything else (i.e. 'blackness) as less than perfect, and therefore feeds into Robus and MacLeod's (2006) proposed discourse of *white excellence/black failure* which constructs white as desirable and black as undesirable. Similarly the phrases "in future if they wanna follow their culture" and "they go back later" suggest that black people have a propensity to seek out rituals and practices and, indeed intimate relationships with people (such as a "nice black girl"), of this same supposed culture. Again, although couched in the rhetoric of being in the best interests of the black CRA child that he/she is exposed to black culture, the failure to problematise a lack of such exposure for white children, results in the **re-construction of black and white people as essentially different** – only now it is framed as **different by *culture*,** reminiscent of Essed's (1992) culturalisation of 'race'.

The discourse of "exposure offers choice" supports Dubinsky's (2007) observation that the CRA child sometimes becomes a **safe discursive object of political positioning for white speakers**, who use a "…*liberal, integrationist discourse of interracial adoption…"*to claim social morality and legitimacy (Dubinsky, 2007, p143). In this discourse the CRA black child comes to represent the non-threatening enactment of white liberalism and multiculturalism by "bridging the gap" between 'races' in a way that does not challenge the social dominance of 'white culture'.

Some speakers utilising the discourse relied more heavily on the multicultural suggestion that exposure to more cultures not only provides one with choice, but may indeed be in the best interests of the black CRA child as it makes him/her more "multi-faceted" and provides a "wider range in life".

Grp2:

P4: "But on that point, I know a coloured guy, in Cape Town, and he was adopted by a Jewish family. They very Jewish. But he was adopted during apartheid so he wasn't allowed to go to the white school, because of the time. So he went to school in the coloured community and enculturated with the coloureds there, and he went home and he got enculturated with the Jews, and he lived himself in both arenas, and he's quite comfortable with that cos then he, if he feels like being Jewish and he wants to go to Roshashana, he knows what's going on and he partakes and he wears his yami and everything, and he had a Barmi, everything. But when he wants to go to the coloured part of the world he goes there and he's coloured and he speaks like a coloured – well he speaks like a coloured either way (laughing) – and he goes there and he's part of everything and he doesn't feel like being adopted into a white family is bad for him. He sees it as a huge advantage because he can go home to a loving family and he's got all this extra stuff that his coloured friends didn't get. That stuff not being material, but …

P2: Extra social

P4: And ya. It's so something different because he could see what was happening at school and could be a part of it. And he could beat people up if he wanted to, get beaten up if he wanted to, whatever, he was all into that school. But when he went home, he had a different life and he was comfortable in both

P2: So what you're saying is it made him more multi-faceted

P4: Ya. I guess it can give you a wider range in life."

Although the above example uses a liberal notion of *multiculturalism* in an attempt to paint a picture of the CRA child as an object of 'racial' and cultural integration in South Africa, its unintended effect of highlighting the social and structural gulfs between black and white communities in Cape Town is striking. A stark distinction is drawn between "couloured" and "Jewish" communities and although the black ("coloured") group is referred to in terms of historically-based 'race' classification systems, the white group is referred to in terms of religious classification ("Jewish"). This is significant because the

speaker constructs the differences between these groups as being *culture*-based. By describing the white family culture in terms of Jewish practices (e.g. Roshashana, having a Barmitsva), the material privilege and security gained by living in a white community are evaded, and indeed intentionally evaded by both participants 4 and 2 in saying *"…That stuff not being material, but… extra social"*.

However, the revealing contradiction lies in the speaker being unable to describe equivalent 'cultural' distinctions unique to the "coloured" group. Instead the only distinct 'social differences' identified, are that "coloured" people speak in a particular way and that going to school in the "coloured" community includes beating people up or getting beaten up. By attempting to use humour to portray what she means by "coloured" the speaker is tries to avoid accusations of racist stereotyping. In addition, by constructing these 'social attributes' as cultural features of "coloureds", the compounding psycho-social effects (e.g. linguistic adaptations, higher levels of community violence) of 'race'-based forced poverty and social marginalization at the hands of whites, are avoided.

In this way white speakers in particular are able to compare black and white communities, without acknowledgement of the politics underlying what are essentially 'racial' divisions between the two – implying that social differences exist naturally due to inherent cultural differences rather than having been formed around years of segregation and structural inequality. This offers further support for the idea that discourses of *multiculturalism* and *denial* of the effects of racism and apartheid, are used by white speakers in ways that effectively protect white privilege (Ansell, 2004; Leibowitz et al., 2007; Wale and Foster, 2007).

It is the *child's* choice, the *child's* responsibility to learn about black culture, the *child's* best interests to integrate and negotiate these separate black and white "worlds". As participant 4 above says, *"…when he wants to go to the coloured part of the world,* ***he*** *goes there and* ***he's*** *coloured"* (emphasis added by researcher). As such it is *not* white society's responsibility to account for or change the differences between 'races' and *not* white society's responsibility to integrate and negotiate the black "world". Instead "integration" means whites *allow* black people to 'keep' 'their' black culture (i.e. don't force 'white culture' on them), and *allow* black people access to white "worlds",

provided black culture does not take from/ interfere with the privilege of whites or require social adaptations from whites.

By couching the essentialisation of 'race' within a liberal rhetoric of choice and drawing from the broader social discourse of multiculturalism, as well as strategically positioning oneself as speaking on behalf of the 'best interests of the CRA child', the discourse of "exposure offers choice" allows its speakers to deflect accusations of racist remark. It enables them to avoid confrontation with past and current political and structural inequalities between 'race-groups', by framing 'race' differences as *cultural* differences, which is possibly why it appears to appeal more to 'white' speakers, whose moral integrity, and subsequently material security, may be felt to by under threat were this to be acknowledged.

4.1.2 Black seeks out black

The discourse of "black seeks out black" was another very prominent discourse that was occasionally used by white speakers in groups 1 and 2, but predominantly utilized by black speakers in group 3. While similar to the discourse of "exposure offers choice" in that it argues that **black CRA children should be exposed to black culture**, the motivation for this argument differs in "'black seeks out black". Here speakers suggest that **a black CRA child will naturally identify with and seek out the company of other black people** by virtue of their same 'race', and that they will feel left out, excluded or ostracized by these "other black people" unless they interact with them in a manner consistent with black culture.

Grp2:

P2: "…underlying the façade of Westernisation, there is still a black culture … which is one thing you need to be very aware of in cross-racial adoption

P6: But why? Like I don't think (interrupted)

P2: Because, if the child's with other black kids, you know, they'll come up with something of black culture that the child might not – I'm surmising here – might not know. And they'll laugh at them for being stupid, like, "Don't you know that?! You're black!""

Grp3:

P6: "…When you are brought up in a certain way, or when a black baby - or a white baby is brought up in a black family - they will not lose, but they won't be given a certain thing. I don't know if that makes sense.

P1: Ya. Ya you know as a black child, you know those little things you get taught –like don't sit in the middle of a door, address your elders in a certain way, it's those kind of cultural differences that are so essential. They are very very small, but are quite essential if you live in a black community. When you raised in a white community, you, I don't know, you divert from that, you don't know what that is. Interaction becomes a bit difficult"

The above quotations suggest that a fundamental digression occurs when black children are not taught *"something of black culture"* or *"those kind of cultural differences that are so essential"*. The idea that CRA black children *"won't be given a certain thing"* brings with it the intimation that that "certain thing" is something they're supposed to have by virtue of their 'race'. Although ambiguously labelled above, for purposes of discussion the term black culture is used in an attempt to be inclusive concerning the "something", the "differences" and the "certain thing" that speakers struggled to pinpoint. As such **black culture is concurrently constructed as an essential feature of 'race'**, as the use of the word *"divert"* to describe a black CRA child's lack of knowledge about black culture in a white community reveals, as it suggests a change in 'cultural' direction from an original point of black cultural origin.

The contradiction here lies in speakers' reluctance to openly construct black CRA children as somehow abnormal, pathological, deprived or incomplete, which is what they discursively become when compared with the 'natural' order of 'race' pre-determining culture. As such, speakers attempt to justify their argument that black children are *supposed* to have black culture by saying that this is because black society will *expect* it of them, and that black society will respond negatively if their expectations of black people are not met, an observation that corresponds with Collier's (2005) suggestion that black people *disapprove of blacks who identify with white standards and values*. Aside from needing to construct black society as somewhat hostile to 'outsiders' and intolerant of cultural differences or divergences among blacks in order to make this argument, it also relies heavily of the assumption that black people – regardless of whether or not they

were raised by white parents in white communities – will always end up interacting with black people or living in black communities.

'Race' politics (as opposed to neutral consideration for the best interests of the child) may underlie the great extent to which some black participants invest in ensuring that the notion that blacks will universally desire to be with blacks in spite of being raised by whites, is upheld. A great *desire* to be with, belong with, to seek out and to positively identify with black people in "black settings" is suggestive of great ***social desirability* of blacks as a 'race'-group**. Conversely, to have no desire to be with blacks may be seen as threatening to the 'race'-group's social status as it (intentionally or unintentionally) may effectively construct black society as undesirable. This idea draws on Group Psychology concepts from Social Identity Theory in suggesting that if the identity of a group is perceived as 'desirable' then it (and by default each member assuming the social identity of the group) gains improved esteem, better social status and subsequently greater social power in relation to other groups (Stets and Burke, 2000). In response to challenges to this discourse, participants using the discourse of "black seeks to be with black" tended to position themselves as speaking on the CRA child's behalf by saying it is important to the 'best interests of the child' that he/she meet black society's expectations of blacks, because he/she will naturally desire to be included and participate in this black society.

Grp3:

P1: "…the child starts being ostracized by the same black communities that he should be identifying with or maybe even learning these black values from … Trust me, a black child raised in a community that does not identify with her, if I was raised by her parents and then I come here and there's a whole lot of black people, I would love to interact with people who are like me. I want that comfort, I want to be part of it

…

P3: I don't know. I don't know so much. I'll say this, my sister's friend's raised by white people but by default because she, she grew up - her mother worked for the white people. She, according to her, is quite comfortable and happy with the fact that she doesn't have very many friends – one friend, my sister – who are black. But the rest of her other friends are white. I don't see her essentially always seeking out that black world

…

P1: Ok, but just listen, seriously, on a serious level. Black children who were raised in a white family, most of them feel they would love to be in that black setting

…

P6: Maybe that black girl doesn't have black friends because she doesn't know how to relate

P3: But do you think she *wants* to have black friends?

P6: I honestly and personally, I think she will. And I think I speak on behalf of all the girls when I say that."

Participants 1 and 6 in the above conversation pieces suggest that it is not only black culture that is an essential feature of being black, but also a desire to be with and a feeling of greater comfort with blacks and in a "black setting" that black people universally experience. Participant 1 does *allude* to political processes that may cause black CRA children to prefer the company of black people when she refers to a white community being *"a community that does not identify with her"* ("her" being the black CRA child).

This coincides with Collier's (2005) findings that *blacks identify strongly with other blacks* in order to position themselves in opposition to "whiteness ideology" (Collier, 2005). However, rather than acknowledging the anticipation of 'racial' exclusion from whites as reason enough for a black person to seek inclusion in black society, the speaker appears to require more (or perhaps *other*) than political motives for explaining why black people *"want that comfort, want to be part of it"* – i.e. to be with black people. As such she constructs 'race' as a central and essential determinant of where one belongs by referring to black people as *"people who are like me"*. This speaking in the first person ("me" as opposed to "her") seems to be a strategy for bolstering support for the argument participant 1 proposes. She positions herself as speaking on behalf of the CRA black child, revealing the child's 'true' desires, with the speaker's blackness seeming to be the common feature that that she feels entitles her to do so. As such the discourse is used to support suggestions that *multicultural planning* (Vonk, 2001) that ensures black children are exposed to black culture is in the 'best interest of the black CRA child (Hollingsworth, 1999; Vonk, 2001).

However, when another black speaker – participant 3 - challenges the argument, participant 6 reverts to speaking *"on behalf of all the girls"* to dismiss the challenges of participant 3 - the only male in the group - and to thereby use an internal group

positioning strategy to silence the counter-voice, suggesting some possible anxiety about the discourse's ability to provide a stand-alone concrete explanation for it's argument. This is significant when one considers the ideological effects of utilizing the discourse of "black seeks to be with black" as it suggests that some black speakers invest a great deal in upholding the discursive *desirability* of blackness.

It is possibly important for black participants in particular to defend black 'race'-group desirability because of a history of being constructed negatively as the 'undesired' or 'less desirable' 'race'-group by whites (Duncan, 2001; Collier, 2005; Durrheim, 2005; Robus and MacLeod, 2006; Wale and Foster, 2007) – constructions that attempted to use the 'natural superiority' of whites as justification for white privilege and for control over material resources as well as black society in South Africa.

4.1.3 White family trumps black culture

This discourse of "white family trumps black culture" proposes that a black child having a family, even when that family means being raised by **white parents** in a 'white culture' (i.e. a white family), **is always better for the child than having no family at all**. As such, the 'resources' a black child can access in a white family are more important for the child than raising him/her in a black culture. As such it supports discourses within CRA literature that suggest that the benefits of family outweigh the benefits of 'same-race' enculturation when the two cannot coincide (Szabo and Ritchken, 2002; Roby and Shaw, 2006). This discourse was used predominantly by white participants from both groups 1 and 2, although black participants from groups 1 and 3 did use it to a much lesser extent, and even then with different emphases.

Grp2:

P5: "… like can't you really weigh out like putting a child in an orphanage for the rest of their lives or letting them be adopted. So like isn't losing their culture worth them actually having, you know, like parents who care for them. That's just what I think.

P1: Building on from that. The end can kind of sort of justify the means. They not really; leaving your culture; everyone to a certain degree, um, mixes with other cultures, you know, yes it effects your identity but its also maybe too much of, it's not such a good thing that we're all so focused on our culture and our identity, its just "I'm a white

> person, I'm a black person". Um, you know as long as people are getting loving homes and that, I think that's far more important"

No direct counter-discourses arose in opposition to the idea that having white parents and belonging to a family is better for a black child than growing up in an orphanage, which is perhaps a comment on participants' negative perceptions of orphanages in South Africa, but more importantly for the current research, a comment on the high regard held by all participants for the role that 'family' (even with its varying meanings) plays in a child's life. The strategy used to bolster the discourse is to compare family inclusion to a 'dreaded' alternative – an orphanage or complete absence of parental figures – which draws on a pervasive ***familial discourse*** (Parker, 1999) that holds the family unit as sacred and vital for the well-being and psychosocial development of its children, above any other social group.

Perhaps what is more important than agreement or disagreement with this argument then, are the varying ways in which participants approach the second part of the discourse which compares white family resources to black culture. Although the above extracts focus on promoting the idea that the 'resource' of having parents is more important/ advantageous than having black culture for any one particular child, there is a possible simultaneous ideological effect that comes from this discourse. The discourse intimates **a relative dismissal of the importance/ advantage of black culture for society** in general, which correlates to Collier's (2005) observation that *black social norms were constructed negatively by whites* in discourse. This suggests that the white speakers of the comments above have little invested in maintaining the construct of black culture as either an important entity or a distinct culture in South Africa (The idea that whites are less concerned with constructing a distinct and socially significant black culture than blacks are, is discussed in more detail in section 4.2.3).

Another apparent difference between white and black speakers comparing white family resources and black culture, appears to be the ways in which they construct *what* these resources are. For white speakers, a few direct references were made to the improved structural and material advantages a CRA black child may acquire through adoption, but this was infrequent and generally made in comparison to living in an

orphanage without reference to 'race'. Instead whites tended to focus more on how the CRA child's access to family brings with it access to **relationship-related resources**.

Grp1:

P4: "I'd like to look at it at more of a very basic level and say that I think it's a very very good thing. Because you're taking orphans off the street and you're providing them with things that all kids need at the end of the day, which is love and positive regard, safety and security. And that, in itself will change society. So instead of having a generation of kids who have none of that, better to have kids who have what they need"

Grp2:

P5: "Well it's different I think between them if they were in an orphanage or in a home, I think, because then you get like the adult-child ratio is considerably better. Say like two parents to one child, whereas if you go to like an orphanage – like I just went to one in Dobsonville, there were four volunteers and sixty children. So there's no like individual attention there. You have to like do group activities. So there the child would get more attention. Another affect would be, you know, better socio-economic conditions, the child would be healthier. And like parental affections, ya I think that would be a big factor. So I think the children at the end of the day would be much better off"

There appears to be trend for white speakers using this discourse to describe resources as the relationship-based advantages of belonging to a family – that is as *"…love and positive regard, safety and security"* and *"individual attention.…(and) parental affection"*. Although it seems that speakers are suggesting that it is the *family unit* as opposed to the *'white race'* that provides these relational resources, some apparent avoidance of (and possible discomfort with) talk about the financial/material advantages of family membership may indicate an underlying awareness of the fact that *family unit* is likely to be thought of as a *'white* family unit' in the context of discussion on CRA. When this underlying association is taken into account, the discursive effect is to construct white parents in a positive light as attentive, nurturing and indeed as rescuers of a whole *"generation of kids who have none of that"*. By the same association, these "kids" are more likely to be envisioned as *black* children in the context of discussion, who are subsequently constructed as socially depraved and helpless without the

assistance of white adopters. Indeed this " black-child- deprivation and white-rescue" discursive effect is extended to broader society at the suggestion that providing these relational resources will *"…in itself…change society"*.

Firstly it draws on what Dubinsky (2007) calls the *"rescue" narrative* of CRA so that white parents tend to be portrayed as the benevolent and all- powerful saviours of the helpless black children they adopt – a discourse which constructs whites positively and blacks negatively in the same way that the discourses of *blacks as "Victims"* (Duncan, 2001), *white excellence/black failure* (Robus and MacLeod, 2006), and *the good white Samaritan* (Wale and Foster, 2007) do.

Secondly, white speakers' relative quietness about the financial/material resources that a child may gain through adoption suggests a degree of avoidance from white participants when it comes to speaking about socio-economic factors and 'race'. This may be a strategic maneuver akin to *denial* that previous studies suggest detracts from socio-economic disadvantages of blacks and/or advantages of whites that were illegitimately derived from a racist system, and thereby protects the social integrity and economic privilege of whites (Ansell, 2004; Leibowitz et al., 2007; Wale and Foster, 2007).

By emphasizing relationship-oriented resources based on psychologies of individualism, this discourse results in a relative devaluing of black culture, a positive construction of 'whites' as rescuers, and a detraction from the structural/material inequalities that have afforded 'whites' the privileges than enable them to be in an economic position to adopt.

In contrast, on the few occasions when black participants did use this discourse of "white family trumps black culture", they tended to focus more particularly on perceived 'racial' disparities in **economic-based entities**, when considering the advantages of resources gained by the black child in a white family.

Grp3:

P6: "…they not missing out on anything per say. They probably would have grown up better in a white family in the sense of like better education and stuff like that you know. But

what I'm saying is, do they lose a sense of; you know like sometimes in um, you find a child, um" (interrupted)

(at another point in the interview)

P1: "I saw a show, I was watching a documentary, it was two homosexual men, two white homosexuals who adopted two twin girls who were black. And everyone there from where they had come from were just supporting the whole thing because the mother could not take care of them. The mother was involved in the girls' lives. The men made sure the mother was there and the girls knew who the mother was and the girls were exposed to the fact that they were Xhosa and they came from that. And the whole society around the girls and the extended family and that were supportive 'cause they knew the kind of situation the girls would have been in should they have been raised by that mother. So I think it probably differs from various societies depending on how they see things. Some people may just accept it because of financial constraints, you know. They might have reservations with the whole culture thing and what-not…"

These black speakers seemed less concerned with venerating or devaluing resources gained in a white family, than with upholding the importance of black culture, even when they felt that CRA is better for a black child than not being adopted. In addition, they reveal a much greater comfort with acknowledging socio-economic discrepancies between white families that adopt and black communities *"…from where they* (i.e. the black children) *had come from…"*, since acknowledging this is not threatening to black entitlement to improved socio-economic conditions in South Africa. This supports Ansell's (2004) observation that black people tend to *re-inscribe 'race'* to draw attention to persistent structural disadvantages of blacks that require redress.

While it may have the effect of discursively constructing black communities as helpless and dependent on whites to rescue black orphans, this "helplessness" is suggested to be financially/materially based when participant 1 says *"…the mother could not take care of them"*, and later indicates that this is due to *"financial constraints"*. Similarly "rescue" appears to be demarcated to the form of structural provision (such as education), which is seen as advantageous and possibly even more important for the black CRA child than growing up in a black community, but not as *negating* the advantages and importance of *"the whole culture thing"*. Participant 6 begins to draw on

essentialist constructions of black culture in alluding to the idea that, in spite of having *"…grown up better in a white family…"* in terms of financial/material provisions, there is something other than this (i.e. by exclusion social/relational resources) that is "lost" to the black CRA child that makes it *less* "better". Similarly participant 1 is careful to include in her account of black people's approval for a case of CRA, the points that the girls "*knew who the mother was…and were exposed to the fact that they were Xhosa…*".

As such, it appears that black participants using this discourse settled for a position of resignation (rather than an approval) regarding CRA, where white families may be providers of necessary socio-economic factors to black adoptees, but not as providers of necessary social/relational resources that only a black culture can provide to make their upbringing 'ideal'. As discussed in section 4.1.2 above and in more detail in sections 4.2.1 and 4.2.3, this suggests a greater need for black speakers to endorse the distinctiveness, significance and exclusivity of black culture as means of social power, than white speakers need to for 'white culture'. In addition, this distinction between black and white speakers of the discourse reveals a greater ease with which black participants referred to the material advantages of whites over blacks – an acknowledgement that serves black group interests of resource-redistribution.

4.1.4 The CRA child is an individual not a 'race'

The discourse of "The CRA child is an individual not a 'race'" was used by a minority of participants in each of the three groups and challenged the above two discourses in a number of ways. Overall, it suggests that, in CRA, **'race' should *not* be the determinant for what culture a child is raised in** or exposed to, and parents should consider their children's individual needs rather than prioritize attempts to expose them to black culture. Firstly a few participants challenged the essentialism of 'race' by questioning the idea that children who are adopted 'cross-racially' should be treated any differently to children of 'same-race' adoptions.

Grp2:

P6: "I've always sort of thought it was maybe healthier not to divulge too much about the birth parents. Like adoption facilities, agencies, often keep their identity a secret. Am I

right? And so I mean, I'm sure there's sort of lots of adoptions where that, that, I mean if you think of each family has it's own culture, where it's important for the development of the child that the birth is kept, that the characteristics or just identity of the birth parents are kept secret. So, when you think about cross-racial adoption, um, does that change all of a sudden? Do we want to now tell the child as much as possible about their cul- or their birth parents' culture? I find that interesting that it would be different, if it is."

The above speaker's self correction in saying *"…their cul- or their birth parents' culture"* reflects the ease with which culture is constructed as intrinsic in discourse even with people who are acutely aware of it being a product of socialization. The speaker's correction also highlights her emphasis on the fact that she differentiates between the culture of an adopted child's biological parents and that of the child him/herself. As such, this aspect of the discourse of "the CRA child is an individual not a 'race'", suggests that there is **no innate property of a person that predetermines their particular culture**, and that the CRA black child should therefore not be viewed as a object of black culture because of his/her 'race'. Stemming from this idea, participant 3 (group 3) below challenges the idea that there is something innate in black people that will ultimately result in them "returning" to black communities and finding comfort and a sense of commonality with black people when older.

Grp3:

P3: … I'm just asking then, you know, will then they always be necessarily interacting with, or at the end of the day assumed that they gonna go back to the black culture and that's where the problem's gonna come… I feel like that thing that the black people will reject a black kid raised by a white family is first of all, the black kid might not even want that acceptance or seek it"

(later in the same conversation)

P3: …So the reason you'd revert to her and speak in your own language 'cause then she'll understand you, don't forget that that child's language is the same as other white people. So therefore firstly, if she was to try to speak to you in her language, she might feel that white people understand her more. And secondly, if we look at what makes friends. It's people that share commonality and interests and whatever the case may be. If she was

raised exclusively, exclusively by white people, do you not think that she will find more comfort in relating to another white person because it's that white person that's gonna share

(at another point in the conversation)

P3: …the point that I was trying to make is that; I'm dispelling the assumption that as a black person brought up in a white family, you will have this innate thing of wanting to go with blacks"

This aspect of the discourse challenges the discourse of "black seeks out black" by suggesting that the social groups people identify with and seek to socialise with are predominantly determined by the ways in which people are socialised. As such it suggests that the social norms and cultural practices instilled in black children growing up with white parents will not be overridden by an *"…innate thing of wanting to go with blacks"* at a later stage, because no such "innate thing" exists.

Based on the idea that culture is not an essential property of 'race', some participants suggested that exposing a CRA black child to black culture effectively objectifies and racialises the child, and that white parents should focus on addressing their child's individual and unique concerns as thy arise, rather than pre-supposing these because of the child's blackness.

Grp1:

P4: "For me what I would be aware of if I was adopting multi-racially, is just take it day by day. And see what comes up. So rather than pinning these assumptions on my child, to just say, "you know what, I'm gonna love them", and when they say they require knowledge, and philosophy and understanding, I would be willing to provide it for them. And I think these questions, whether I have my own baby, or a black baby or whatever, these questions are going to arise…

P6: Ya, I think you're right. By telling them from when they're little that "you are different, let me teach you about your culture" we then immediately putting in something, that "you are different, and I'm bringing you up, you are different to me"

P4: For me it would be about highlighting the similarities, and that is that we are both people, and we both have feelings and we operate in the same way, and when you bring questions, I will answer"

The above quotations reveal how some participants utilize the discourse of "the CRA child is an individual not a 'race'" to suggest that white parents should not only *not* attempt to expose their CRA child to a black culture, but that no account should be taken of 'race' when considering how to raise their child, except for occasions when the child him/herself presents with particular questions around it. This use of the discourse operates from a 'colour-blind' approach to 'race' with the intention being to de-objectify and deracialise the CRA black child and to challenge discourses that construct people of different 'races' as essentially different. It does however mean that a focus on the *intrinsic* 'sameness' of people - or what Ansell (2004) calls a *denouncement of 'race'* - discursively detracts from the broader scale *social* and *structural* differences between 'race' groups derived from a history of racism in the country.

As such, it is important to note that some participants did attempt to acknowledge how 'race' may have significant social implications that are unique to CRA black individuals (that are different to children in 'same-race' families) because of the meanings society makes of 'race'.

Grp2:

P5: "Well, if you consider the fact that it might cause problems, like at some stage. Like at school where they might say, ok, "why do you have white parents?" and whatever. They must consider that and what you can do, do it. Like, whether it's like debriefing your child before they start school, being supportive when they come home from school and are like "look we don't really understand this, why am I black and you're white?" and then, sort of like if need be, send them for therapy or install a sense of pride so that it doesn't bug them

(and later)

P3: … do we teach them that, "ok, you have to be prepared to be attacked by white people because of you colour" or something like that?

A few participants then, utilized the discourse of "the CRA child is an individual not a 'race'", to intimate that part of addressing the CRA black child's individual needs includes addressing their very particular experience of being a black person with white

parents in a highly racialised society, and their experience of being a black person in a racist society. This discourse is supported in literature about CRA which suggests that "*racial socialization"* is necessary for black CRA children to form positive internalizations of blackness and to be adequately prepared for dealing with racism (Bradley and Hawkins-Leon, 2002; Frasch and Brooks, 2003).

It may be argued that participant 5's suggestions about how white CRA parents can address these concerns (*"what you can do, do it…send them for therapy or install a sense of pride…"*) and participant 3's portrayal of what these concerns are (*"…be prepared to be attacked by white people…"*), are somewhat simplistic. This is revealing about the limited extent to which many white people, even those willing to acknowledge problematic 'race'-relations, have had to think about what it means to be black in a racialised society or to face racism at the hands of whites in everyday experiences.

Finally it is interesting to note how very few participants considered possible differences in what constitutes 'the best interests of the child' when a CRA black child is adopted in infancy and when he/she is adopted later in childhood. Those that did, suggested that culture and language *should* be taken into account by white parents adopting a black child, when the child is older and has been raised in a culture or with a language different to his/her adoptive parents.

Grp1:

P3: "I think um, if the child is older it's more difficult. So especially if they've grown up with a different language. I think it does lie on the adoptive family to try and learn a little bit of that child's language, just to help them sort of integrate more sort of easily into their new family and surroundings"

Grp2:

P2: "…Are we talking adoption from birth or are we talking at any age? 'Cause if you adopt a child that's older, obviously their culture does come with them"

This idea still operates within the discourse of "the CRA child is an individual not a 'race'", as it suggests that it is not the 'race' of the CRA black child that makes it important for their adoptive parents to account for 'difference', but the child's individual experience of having been socialized with a language and/or cultural norms and

expectations that are different to his/her adoptive parents. As such, the suggestion supports the notion that black culture is not an innate feature of blackness, but argues that it is significant for those raised within a black culture, such that white parents adopting an older black child that has been raised within a black culture, should not dismiss its relevance and should attempt to introduce it into their lifestyle as a means of assisting the child with integration into the family.

As such, most speakers utilizing the discourse of "the CRA child is an individual not a 'race'" attempted to impart the idea that, in CRA, 'race' should not be the determinant for what culture a child is raised in or exposed to. These arguments effectively de-racialise blackness by uncoupling it with black culture. Instead they suggest that parents should consider their children's individual needs (which, for some, included addressing the social implications of being a CRA 'black' child living in a racialised and racist society) rather than prioritize attempts to expose them to black culture. Whilst this discourse may be used to debunk racialisation processes that objectify the black CRA child, its association with a sometimes supreme regard for individualism can have the discursive effect of dismissing 'race' as a socially relevant entity. Used in this way, speakers can therefore discursively dismiss the prevalence of racism (discussed in more detail in section 4.3.1) and subsequently negate the need for anti-racist discourses or policies of affirmative action.

4.2 "Knowing who you are": Essentialising and non-essentialising discourses of 'race' identity

Discourses operating within a repertoire of "knowing who you are" were identified by their attempts to construe the **'true nature' of 'race', culture, family and subsequently identity**, to justify positions on the importance of exposing black CRA child to black culture. As such, most participants attempted to detract from the socio-political origins and purposes of various constructions of 'race' group differences, and from their ideological effects, by portraying them as simply existing naturally in these ways.

It is important to emphasize the inconsistency in how the term ***black culture*** is used, and uncertainty about its meaning, particularly within discourses operating from the repertoire of "knowing who you are". This ambiguity suggested that the construct of black culture cannot be spoken of independently, as it always draws on other constructs of group identity to describe itself. This observation therefore concurrently suggests that these other constructs of group identity are also used with inconsistency in and uncertainty about their meaning. As such, and confirming observations of Stevens, Franchi and Swart (2006), terms such as "race", "culture", "ethnicity", "language" and others, are frequently used to refer to one another in discourses that address issues of 'race'. This is reflected in the following excerpt in which the researcher has highlighted some of these terms.

Grp1:

P6: There's a serious difference I think between **race** and **culture**…and I think that's what the whole American thing is. They may be multi-, I mean, South Africa's **multi-racial** and **multi-cultural** whereas America, I think, like their cultures are closer together than here. And I don't think they've got as much of a (peters off) I mean we've got, what, I think nine official **languages**. I, they, ya

P2: You'll find in South Africa, among the different **tribes** they have, um, different **behaviours and customs** etc etc. In America most, most people are **modern** and (inaudible) and less of a **vernacular difference**

P1: I think you've gotta draw a distinction between say **culture, religion, ethnicity**, you know. These words with a lot of different connotations. So when you make claims like this you gotta look at what it actually means"

However, participants tended not to take up participant 1's suggestion to *"…look at what it actually means…"*, and for this reason, the following discussion does not attempt to isolate a meaning for black culture other than to identify it as a social construct. Instead it will allow for some ambiguity in definitive meaning, in a similar way to how speakers tend to use it, with the assumption that its meaning *includes* the above constructs, but at times will discuss the more specific meanings that individual speakers attribute to it.

4.2.1 Identity, family and culture are immutable

The discourse of "identity, family and culture are immutable" was utilized by both black and white participants in all three groups, but seemed to be more prominently used by black speakers. In relation to CRA, this discourse tries to justify arguments for exposing CRA black children to black culture, by attempting to construct the 'true nature' of identity, family and culture such that this exposure is merely in alignment with the 'natural order' of things. The terms "identity" and "culture" tended to be used somewhat ambiguously and interchangeably at times to denote "who and what" a person is, but the pervasive meaning behind the discourse more clearly portrayed by considering it in two parts.

Firstly this discourse suggests that **one's 'true' *identity* and 'real' *family* are defined by one's 'race'** (in terms of skin colour and associated biological features) and/or blood-line (biological ancestry), such that how one understands oneself and whom one identifies with should be determined by these characteristics. Secondly this discourse suggests that people have a **'natural' affiliation for practicing a particular *culture* and that this too is predetermined by their 'race' and/or blood-line**, such that what one believes, practices, knows and values should ideally also be determined by these characteristics.

In effect, the discourse of "identity, family and culture are immutable" constructs adoption as deviant from how families 'should' ideally be composed (i.e. of the 'same blood') and CRA as additionally deviant in that parents and child share neither the 'same blood' nor the same 'race'. While this deviance is accepted as tolerable in comparison to the alternative of not having parents, 'same-race' and 'same-blood' families are constructed as superior to and better off than 'mixed-race' families.

Grp1:

P1: "I think it's ok if you adopt someone with different races, I mean it's better to have parents than to not have parents. I don't think that, I mean, of course it would be better if people of the same race adopt children that are the same race, um, ya…"

This reference to sameness of 'race' being a better option for family construction draws

on puritan ideas in suggesting that 'ideal' families would not be 'racially-mixed' families. The phrase *"**of course** it would be better…"* (researcher emphasis added) indicates the speaker's assumption that her statement cannot be contested, that it is somehow fundamentally or *naturally* true that 'better' families have a single or 'pure-race' constellation, and as such 'same-race' is constructed as an essentialised feature of family. In the conversations below, participant 6 suggests that the implication of this for the black child adopted by white parents is an estrangement from his/her 'true' identity (*"…who and what you are"*) and an estrangement from the people with whom he/she 'truly' belongs (*"…my fellow black…"*) which she suggests can only be attained by growing up in a 'same-race' family.

Grp3:

P6: "I don't; I honestly don't think that if you grow up with people – I won't say "race" – people of the same *kind* as you, you grow up differently … I don't think you grow up knowing who and what you are if you grow up in a different racial family background"

(and later)

P3: "So do you think this person would then really feel like, "oh my word, this world that I'm living in, I'm lost!"?

P6: I think that living in that body you would. You would have that feeling of "I'm not identifying with any of my fellow black students!" You would"

In attempting to manoeuvre around the social taboo of directly constructing black and white people as essentially different by stating that she *"won't say "race"…"*, the speaker effectively highlights how she does indeed *mean* same 'race' when she refers to *"…people of the same **kind**"* . For participant 6 then, "who" and "what" a person is, is primarily determined by his/her 'race', and 'race' is the determinant for 'sameness' even before family group membership. This has two prominent ideological effects. Firstly personal identity is fused with a 'common race group identity' such that black is used to describe a person before anything else. Secondly, 'race' is considered as innate in that *difference* between black and white people is constructed as a natural (rather than socio-political) occurrence, that includes differences in psychological and psychosocial

attributes. As such the discourse suggests that Goldschmidt's (1996) observation that the label of **'race' is prominently used to express identity** by South Africans persists.

The discourse of "identity, family and culture are immutable" entrenches the notion that black and white people are essentially and immutably different by emphasizing 'differences' without accounting for their origins.

Grp3:

P5: But I think that, don't you think to a certain extent that's assuming that as a human being you are your colour…I'm not sure if that makes sense, but it's like saying you are your race

P6: But realistically speaking we are different, we are different

P5: No no no of course

P6: We do behave differently in certain ways in certain areas of life. You have to get that, you have to understand that

P5: Well not necessarily. That also depends on, well where were you raised in the world. You can't say that the black people in Africa, or the black people in South Africa are are the same as black people in the Congo or Egypt or in America or in Sri Lanka

P6: Exactly so if you can't compare a black person to another black person in Africa, now take that and try and compare me to a white person here in South Africa

The above account of 'difference' between black and white people locates this within a rather ambiguous behavioural domain. This ambiguity allows the speaker to make the sweeping statement of *"…realistically speaking we are different…"* , as failure to specify what behaviour it is exactly that is different means that listeners cannot refute that *any* behaviours are *ever* different between *any* white and black groups. In addition, the ambiguity makes it difficult to identify a cause or origin for difference, with the result that it is portrayed as naturally existing that way. For participant 6 in fact, white and black are considered such polar opposites that they form the identifiers of sameness and difference before even context or nationality. That is, black and white people are *so* different that it is difficult to even find similar categorical markers with which to compare them.

The discourse of "identity, family and culture are immutable" constructs

further‘innate differences’ between black and white people by equating identity with culture.

Grp2:

P1: “I was just thinking about um, effects on identity might actually be affected, but if I can remember Franz Fanon wrote ‘Black Skin, White Mask’, and how you those (interrupted)

P2: how you sort of become ‘cocoa-nuts’

P1: Ya (interrupted)

P2: Sort of dark on the outside light on the inside. You know ‘cos we talk about us being urbanized and all sort of having a similar culture but still my black friends are different to me. For example they don’t think twice about shooting a red light. If I’m going through a red light, even late at night, I think “oh my God, I hope nobody sees me”, I wait ‘til there’s no other cars around. You know and just little things. Like a lot of black families still do the labola thing. We don’t – well our labola’s a big diamond ring on our finger – but they still do it. And underlying the façade of Westernisation, there is still a black culture. I saw a very well dressed yuppie black couple at Sandton City and she was breast feeding the baby quite openly. Whereas white women tend to like hide behind blankets and things like that. And those are just superficial cultural differences, what about the deeper cultural differences?

(and at another time)

P6: …Is there something innate in you because of the colour of your skin? You know, are you born with a culture or is your culture instilled in you by your parents?

P2: Well if you believe in Jung you’re born with a culture”

Although participant 1 attempts to introduce the political relationship between ‘race’ and identity to the discussion by referring to Fanon’s writings on the subject, participant 2 manages to sidestep the conversation by shifting from the term “identity” to that of “culture”. Rather than viewing differences between black and white people as historically located in the politics of division and inequality – a view that inevitably highlights an unjust domination of white over black people – participant 2 detracts from this and the implications of this for a black CRA child’s identity, by constructing particular behaviours (from *“shooting a red light”* to *“breastfeeding the baby quite openly”*) as cultural practices that just *are* different for white and black people.

This indicates a persistence in discourse that constructs blacks as what Duncan (2001) termed *the "Culturally Different" Other* whereby a 'black race' comes to signify a black culture that is inherently different to that of whites. This supports suggestions such as those of Essed (1991, 2002) and Stevens, Franchi and Swart (2006), that the term "culture" has indeed become a proxy for the term "race" in more current discourses around 'race', as it is less likely to be met with accusations of racism than direct reference to 'races' as being innately different.

While the intention is to suggest that black culture is still very prominent and has not been replaced or over-powered by 'white culture' – thereby protecting the social integrity of whites – the effect is to construct 'white culture' as the bearer of "westernization" and "being urbanized" and a genuine black culture as devoid of these properties, implying that they somehow *belong* naturally to white people. The phrase, *"underlying the façade of Westernisation, there is still a black culture"*, pre-empts the same speaker's later 'Jung-bolstered' position that *"…you're born with a culture"*, by suggesting that black people who are "urbanized" or "westernized" are simply putting on a front, presenting an outward image of culture that is incongruent with the inborn black culture that is "still" inside of them. This construction is reminiscent of Robus and MacLeod's (2006) discourse of *white excellence/black failure* which includes the construction of things *modern* and *urban* as belonging in white spaces.

The discourse of "identity, family and culture are immutable" was used in a way that encompasses all three constructs ('identity', 'family' and culture) in primarily black participants' discussions on *lineage*.

Grp1:

P1: Like if the child is born a Zulu, or their birth parents are Zulu, and you adopt the child, you have to take the personal initiative to say, "am I going to learn about this culture?" so that when the child grows up and starts to question that, "ok, I am black, I see people who are like this, I see different black cultures, what am I?", 'cause at some point the individual is going to question, "what am I?"…

Grp3:

P1: "I think exposure. Expose the child to black, you know, variables and society. Make sure that they know, "yes these black people do this, and my black people do this" and just make them aware

F: *My* black people? Tell me more

P1: Like, make them aware that "I'm Xhosa, I was born Xhosa. My mother or my father was Xhosa", make them aware that, "my lineage is Xhosa. I may be in a white family but my lineage is Xhosa"

F: Ok, thanks. So tell me why now, why is that so important?

P1: It's important – exposure – because it means that you can actually identify and be able to tap into society and know, "you know I'm from here. My parents are white and I grew up in a white family, but I know who I am. And I can interact with her when she starts telling me her clan animal is a leopard I can tell her that mine is a lion. And it boosts my self esteem 'cause I know who I am"

(and later)

P3: "What makes you Zulu?

P1: What makes me Zulu is that I know that I'm Zulu. And my blood is Zulu. And my history. And my ancestors

P3: Ok so say a Xhosa person was taken to Madagascar, grew up there and grew up in the Madagascan culture and he knew nothing about being Xhosa, he didn't even know it existed. Are they still Xhosa?

P2: No

P1: Yes. I think so. 'cause the fact that your ancestors are Xhosa

P6: You know why she says that. 'cause even if you didn't know what your ancestors were, just one – if you had to actually trace back where he came from – it will lead to Xhosa land…"

Although the term "ethnicity" is not directly used by participants in the above quotations, the social categorizations of "Xhosa" and "Zulu", by definition (Horowitz, 1985; McDonald, 2006) refer to ethnic groupings. Using ethnic labels, speakers of the discourse argue that a CRA child's biological lineage necessitates that they be exposed to cultural practices and knowledge of the ethnicity to which their genetic ancestors subscribed.

As suggested by Hollingsworth (1985), speakers consider ethnicity to be partially described in terms of a group's shared *social* experiences, "history", location and practices (e.g. "Xhosaland", "culture" and knowing "clan animals"). However, the underlying 'sameness' that determines these social associations is seen to stem from a shared *biological* component that people of the 'same' ethnic group possess. There appears to be an understanding that a genetic kinship, however remote, is included in the meaning of an ethnic category as indicated by participant 1's response in group 3, to the question about what makes her Zulu, that is *"…my blood is Zulu…and my ancestors"*. As such ethnicity is constructed as an innate property, and because it *also* describes social properties, the construct forms a discursive bridge between biology and social features, such that social experiences, history, locations and practices of an ethnic group essentially belong to all its 'descendents'.

This enables speakers to justify their hierarchical organization of ethnicity above whom-one-grows-up-with as a marker of 'true' identity, 'real' family and 'correct' culture for CRA children. The CRA child's 'true' identity is suggested to be ethnic for example, when participant 1 (group 3) speaking as if she were a CRA child says, *"… I'm Xhosa, I was born Xhosa … my parents are white and I grew up in a white family,* ***but*** *I know who I am"* (researcher emphasis added). The choice of the word "but" instead of "and" indicates the mutual exclusivity of 'Xhosa-ness' and 'white-family-ness' for the speaker. "Knowing who one is" does not only *include* identifying oneself as "Xhosa", it involves *excluding* oneself from the category of white – the CRA black child should know his/her ethnic identity *in spite* of his/her white family rather than in addition to it. Similarly, one's 'real' family is suggested to be determined by the ethnic group of one's ancestors when she suggests that *"…****my*** *black people"* (researcher emphasis added) are identified by the fact that *"…my mother or my father was Xhosa"*. Lastly the CRA child is considered to be practicing culture 'correctly' when cultural practices correspond to those of the ancestry-defined ethnic group that he/she 'belongs' to, and when he/she has social knowledge about this group, as indicated by the suggestion to, *"…Make sure that they know, "yes these black people do this, and my black people do this" …"* .

Ethnic labels appear to be used to distance speakers from traditionally racist constructions of black and white groups as biologically different, by focusing on genetic

ancestry rather than on *'race'* as the indicator of group 'sameness' and 'difference'. However, the overlap, if not replacement of 'race' with ethnicity in constructing identities, families and cultures is reflected in how and when speakers use ethnic labels. Ethnic concepts appeared to be **discussed predominantly in relation to black people** and the only 'ethnic groupings' brought up in discussion about lineage were those historically-categorized black ethnic groups. The discursive effect is to construct ethnicity as a *property* of black people such that, by virtue of their 'race', blacks are ethnicised more than whites. This correlates with the findings of Painter and Baldwin (2004) which suggest that the language *isiXhosa* – a characteristic of an historically black ethnicity – *is racialised in discourse*, whereas the language of English – a characteristic of an historically white ethnicity – is universalised.

Whilst such this effective ethnicisation of blacks may be used by white groups as a more socially sanctioned form of racialisation, the more prominent use of the discourse by black speakers is possibly due to the construct of ethnicity being a discursively viable means of bolstering the construct of black identity (discussed in more detail in section 4.2.2). So black CRA children come to be constructed as biological holders of black identity and black culture by virtue of their 'race', and as biological holders of a more specific ethnic identity and culture by virtue of their 'ethnic genetic-lineage', which is ultimately constructed as a property of their 'race'. In this way, Stevens, Franchi and Swart's (2006) observation that racialisation comes to be realized through ethnicisation in contemporary discourse, is confirmed in discourses about CRA. Similarly it appears that Goldschmidt's (2003) finding that ethnicity is a prominent label for describing identity, persists in contemporary discourses on CRA.

4.2.2 Distinct black/ethnic cultures can be identified in South Africa

The discourse of "distinct black/ethnic cultures can be identified in South Africa" was used by many black and white participants in all groups but more prominently utilized by black speakers as with the previous discourse. However, here the emphasis is shifted from the individual as a 'carrier' of culture, to the social parameters that distinguish cultures, and in particular that identify black culture and black/ethnic cultures – (Note: the term black/ethnic cultures will be used to refer to either or both of these).

This discourse proposes that in contemporary South Africa, one can isolate **distinct black/ethnic cultures that are currently practiced and subsequently socially relevant**, and that it is therefore important that these be 'preserved' in the sense that they continue to be practiced/known by black people from one generation to the next.

Grp1:

P3: "I think, ya, I agree with that, I do. But then I also think of like the Khoi San culture, and how that's disappearing and how sad that is. And then you think, ok shouldn't we be telling people about where they come from or is that not important anymore?"

Because this discourse draws heavily on the previous discourse in that it relies on the construction of black and white cultures as being consistently and essentially different for black and white people, it is used in conjunction with "identity, family and culture are immutable", to argue that CRA black children are **jointly responsible, by virtue of their blackness, for being 'co-preservers' of black/ethnic culture**.

As previously mentioned repertoire 4.2.1 a lack of clarity or consensus about how to identify black/ethnic culture was observed in all three groups and even alluded to by some participants. However, speakers using the discourse continued to attempt to construct it as a distinct entity using different strategies. Firstly, speakers seem to rely upon ***traditional*** **customs** passed on from previous generations within black or black ethnic groups to describe black/ethnic culture. However, when confronted with the suggestion that modernity and multiple cultural influences have *changed* these customs or the significance of them for many black people, black participants in particular using the discourse, seemed to negotiate these changes in a ways that discursively 'preserve' the distinctiveness and relevance of black/ethnic culture for present-day black people.

Grp1:

P1: "But you don't have to draw the line between those two, seeing it as not changing or changing. I mean I'm very glad that I come from a fairly, how can I say, culturally stable background, that within my family my mother has sort of passed on all cultural traditions, the meanings of what we do, how we do it. I'm one of the few people I know that go to temple on a weekly basis, I mean I don't know any of my friends who do it. So to me I'm

glad that my mother has taught me that cult-, that that's part of me, is static and that doesn't change and I choose to do it and follow it. But it's also in my culture, I mean I'm an Indian girl who's allowed to go to university, I mean I'm independent, and that, that changes within the two different cultures

Grp3:

P3: "…And I think it's, at the best of times us African people, sometimes we like to take both sides of the fence. We don't want to be sidelined as, you know "we're back in the day and non-modern",

P5: Ya, ya

P3: but we also just want some of the benefits of what used to happen back in the day. So we kind of take certain elements of "well we still traditional, but we're not archaic"

P5: But I think like that's more a recognition that culture does change

P1: It does change with time

P3: Ya, and then what is this (pointing to vignette one) based on? Which one? Today's culture? Is this based on today's culture, ne'?

P1: It's just based on culture, every culture that exists. I mean culture adapts with time. Let's take for example the process of getting a wife

P3: Sure

P1: In African culture. Remember in those days with cows and, you know, chickens, now the guy pays labola and still, the meaning behind thanking the parents for raising this daughter is still there. The meaning is kept

P5: The meaning doesn't change

…

P6: I think that maybe it's the ethics that stays the same. Things may change, like from culture, urbanization, what-not, but ethics doesn't…"

In group 1 participant 1 preserves the distinctiveness of her 'Hindu culture' (which she identified at a previous point in the discussion) by constructing it as a *separate* entity that is detached from her concurrent 'cultural practices' of "going to university" and "being independent". She makes of herself a 'holder' of *"two different cultures"* from which she draws on – one 'traditional' and one 'contemporary' – rather than an integrator of the two, and thus keeps the traditional 'pure' by compartmentalizing it, saying *"… that's part of me, is static and that doesn't change"*. As such, 'Hindu culture' itself is

constructed as an unchanging immutable object, distinct from 'contemporary' social practices. In group 3 participants negotiate change from 'traditional' black/ethnic cultures slightly differently by suggesting that although some 'black/ethnic' traditional customs may not be practiced in the ways they used to be (e.g. "labola"), the *"…meaning doesn't change"* and *"…it's the ethics that stays the same"*. By reverting to more generic constructs such as "meaning" and "ethics", speakers effectively make it difficult for others to challenge the current relevance or prominence of traditional customs/beliefs/practices, as these are discursively given a more *abstract* continuity.

When considering why the construction of a continuous and significant black/ethnic culture is important for many black speakers, Social Identity Theory (SIT) provides useful conceptualizations of group dynamics that reveal the possible politics of such constructions. SIT posits that stronger identification with each other amongst in-group members, and dis-identification with out-groups, ultimately promotes a more fervent defence of the in-group and support for its interests (Stets and Burke, 2000). Steve Biko proposed that the real **identifying feature of a black group is the common experience of racism** and its effects and a desire to resist this (i.e. that a consistent 'black group identity' can only be defined in terms of *political* processes) (MacDonald, 2006). However some black participants seem to feel that a purely *political* base of 'racial difference' does not create sufficient grounds for potent black group identification.

This may be due to the current context of post-apartheid South Africa where it has been suggested that blacks have greater political (in terms of legislature and policy) power, increasing but still less economic power, and still less social power and esteem than whites (Wale and Foster, 2007). In addition, current forms of racism and marginalization of blacks tend to be far less overt than they were prior to democratization. As such, the experience of racism and its effects may be less tangible and therefore less prominent an 'identifier' for blacks than it was during apartheid, and the opportunities for resistance to inequality are less necessary in terms of *political* power, and may be very differently prioritized for different black people with regards to *socio-economic* context. It is possible then that black participants utilizing the discourse reflect current concerns with **equalizing the *social* status of blacks** in South African society, and that doing so involves discursively establishing a '*cultural* group identity'

that is unique to black people. This supports previous findings that black people *re-inscribe 'race'* in discourse in order to draw attention to 'racial' disparities that they wish to challenge (Ansell, 2004).

The persistence amongst black participants in constructing black/ethnic cultures in terms of *traditional* customs, indicates a possible **dilemma for black people living modern lifestyles**, one that participant 3 (group 3) alludes to when he says, *"we don't wanna be sidelined…"* and *"…So we kind of take certain elements of "well we still traditional but we're not archaic"*. What the speaker fails to address are the possible socio-political reasons for black people to retain a 'traditional identity' whilst striving for mastery in the contemporary modern world. Because 'black group identity' is established here through a black/ethnic culture described by *traditional* customs, 'preserving' these traditions may be perceived as the means through which current black people show solidarity with past and present black society struggling for equality. There appears to be a sense of "loyalty-to-black-causes" attached to the 'preservation' of traditional customs, as it represents resistance to forced assimilation into the dominant white culture – a culture that both black and white speakers tend to associate with modernity. As such, the 'preservation' of that which is traditional for blacks, is equated with opposition to how whites have, through racism, come to define the hegemonic culture for South African society (as discussed in more detail in section 4,2,3). Thus the polarized construction of black culture as traditional and white culture as modern may be more problematic and difficult to negotiate for black people who wish to be resistant to racism and loyal to black society, but whose lifestyles involve contemporary social practices and beliefs and who enjoy access to modern structures.

Grp3:

P1: "…I mean I'm not much of a traditional person, I'm not very traditional, but should it happen; you know some people believe that you get callings from ancestors and certain things …So you need to know these things. I need to know. I may not believe in it – I don't believe in it, I think it's just a way that people keep order in society, or the way people identify – but, it does happen. And I acknowledge that usually a person gets sick, a person starts experiencing certain hallucinations and you go somewhere to consult and

> they say your ancestors are calling you to be a sangoma… I think it happens, I believe that it does happen

It appears that for the study's group of black "intelligentsia" in particular – that is, these black university students – negotiating the sometimes contradictory meaning-making systems of traditional black/ethnic culture and dominant paradigms within their schools of tertiary education, becomes a complex task. Consistent with Moosa and Fridjhon's (1997) findings, the discourses of black students in this study suggest that they predominantly use Bulhan's (1980) identification patterns of *revitalisation* and/or *radicalization* whilst negotiating what it means to be black in contemporary South Africa.

Of importance to the current discourse is the relationship between black and ethnic culture, as many speakers appear to choose ethnic labels (e.g. "Xhosa") to illustrate what they mean by black culture, and thus effectively construct 'ethnic culture' as an *aspect* of black culture such that its meaning is assumed to imply a specifically *black* ethnic culture (as discussed in section 4.2.1).

Grp3:

P4: "… we didn't get to stay with my father's family in the village and all of that. And now as I've grown up I'm now realizing that there's a lot of things that I missed out on. For instance as Xhosas, I know that um, your clan names are very important, and at the moment, I've suddenly realized that actually I don't even know my clan name 'cos actually I wasn't raised up like that. And I'm finding that now I'm at a stage where I'm relating with people who are Xhosa, and you have to know your clan name and it's difficult. And I'm trying now to actually learn that…"

Keeping in mind the socio-political motives for constructing a distinct black identity described by culture (discussed in section 4.2.2 of the report), the construction of black ethnic cultures may be considered a necessary process when black groups are discursively confronted with *change* in current South African contexts. Speakers seem to struggle to define a contemporary black culture as it is possibly too diverse and diffuse amongst black people, and cannot be consistently distinguished from contemporary cultural practices of whites, as both involve practices of modern living, technology, urbanization, westernization, western derived systems of politics, economy, education, media and popular culture. As discussed in section 4.2.3, it is indeed probable that many

whites and blacks may have more in common than many blacks and blacks. As such, subscription and loyalty to a black group can alternatively be attained through subscription and loyalty to 'one's' black ethnic group through value for a black ethnic culture. This ethnic culture can be more distinctly defined than a general black culture because it allows speakers to draw on assumed biological kinship, history, locality and language, as well as to refer to identifiable *traditional* beliefs and practices that are historically different to those of white groups, to describe it.

The implications of this discourse of "distinct black/ethnic cultures can be identified in South Africa" for CRA are inadvertently addressed by the following black speaker's statement:

Grp3:

P4: "…I think, ok this black child is raised by white um people, but then as they grow up they not gonna be interacting, um, only with white people, they gonna be interacting with black people as well. And as they grow up there is gonna be that distance between them. Um, so there is a difference between being raised by a black family or a white family. And I think there's values there that are different…"

The speaker implies that this black/ethnic culture that is the responsibility of all black people to uphold for the benefit of black society, can only truly be instilled by other black people, because in a white family, *"… there's values there that are different."* When considering the 'race' politics underlying the construction of a distinct black/ethnic culture, it appears that doubts exist about white parents' ability or even desire to instil in a black child a black/ethnic culture, as doing so is seen as a uniquely black agenda aimed at improving the social status of black groups. As such, the CRA black child discursively becomes a 'vessel' of ***"cultural genocide"*** which supports the NABSW's (1972) fear that CRA is a means through which white society operates to 'dilute' black group identity by instilling in the child a white culture (Hollingsworth, 1999).

The discourse supports Dubinsky's (2007) suggestion that CRA black children become political objects in discourse because, for some, his/her body represents a weakened political body in black society's struggle for cultural – and subsequently social

– equality. In a similar way, it is possible that CRA black children in white families may represent many contemporary black people negotiating modern lifestyles (constructed as white lifestyles), such that these children come to be discursive carriers of black peoples **fears of disloyalty** to black society or assimilation into a white culture.

White speakers portraying black culture, although sometimes also relying on traditional customs and ethnic labels to construct it, seemed to use **references to socio-economic factors** much more than black speakers as additional markers of what is and what isn't supposed black culture. This effectively constructs wealth as the natural property of whites, and poverty as the natural property of blacks, by failing to account for the unjust racist history that did not allow blacks access to the resources whites enjoyed.

Grp2:

P5: "…I know black people who are like "ah, look at that 'f'-ing, "'f'-ing" black", and its like, they've chosen to be more "white", and they go to Rodene, and they all like, sort of like upper class. So I mean you could lose your culture like that in any case…

(and later)

P3: I think just also on your point (participant 1), our perspective on what's 'poor' and what black people's perspectives on what's 'poor'… 'Cause I mean if we, our perspective would be, "oh I can't buy bread today", but our children might be important that you go to school no matter what. But that may also be an important view for a black person. But just thinking about it now, I would probably, I wouldn't be surprised if a black man might say "listen you can't go to school, it's cool, don't worry about it, you can still help around the house", but they won't give it up just because he won't have an education. Because they, you know, like poor to us would mean you can't afford to, you can't get an education. Poor to them would mean you can't eat for a month. So it's also expected of what is 'poor' in being unable to support your child"

Such use of socio-economic status as an identifier that is *additional* or *secondary* to 'race' in discourse, inadvertently offers support for the notion that black culture and 'white culture' exist naturally and independently of economic structures in South Africa and independently of past and current political circumstances that organized such

structures. Instead a distinct black culture is constructed as one that is devoid of capitalist aspirations or privileges of the upper-class , and the 'norm' to be that black people inevitably, even 'naturally', belong to a lower socio-economic class than white people.

This is illustrated in participant 5's suggestion that you *"…lose your culture…"* (assumed to be a black/ethnic culture) by being "upper class", and participant 3's comment that "poverty" may be identified at completely differently levels of resources depending on if you're black or white. Conversely then, wealth, formal education, modernity and success within a capitalist system are silently assumed to be the 'normal' domains of whites. This alludes to similar constructions of white institutions being the spaces for urban, modern entities and educational success in the discourse of *white excellence/black failure* (Robus and MacLeod, 2006), and reveals how difference between 'races' continues to be referred to in terms of *privilege/lack of privilege* as found by Leibowitz et al. (2007).

Such constructions ultimately confine the parameters for black participation in the social and economic domains: one may either have a black culture *or* have access to wealth and modernity. These supposed options are portrayed as distinctly different identities even. As such, black people's attempts to occupy these spaces simultaneously are subtly constructed as somehow being fraudulent, exploitative even of the current improved political esteem of being black, and/or constructed as being disloyal to 'one's own' 'race', ethnic group, or even family, by aspiring to the advantages of the upper class (e.g. "Rhodene" private school education).

The powerful positioning effects on black people derived from the discursive equation of black culture with a low socio-economic status, are well exposed in the hesitations, confusion and ultimate contradiction of one black participant who indicates that her family is "well off". The speaker seems to feel that she has to defend her "well off" status in order to retain her 'Indian-ness', that if socio-economic status determines identity or culture, then being "wealthy" involves losing her 'black-Indian identity' or '-culture', implying that the two cannot co-exist as complimentary entities. This constructs 'Indian identity' and 'Indian culture' as 'naturally' *excluding* the possibility of being "wealthy" or having access to "opportunities" like "university", as initially indicated by her use of the word "but" rather than "and" in the third line:

Grp1:

P1: "…I think that's saying that your economic status determines your identity. Is that what you're saying?... I don't think so. I mean I know some Indian people who are very well off, but they are still very culturally in tact. They still have all their values and norms. They still go to temple. They still, you know, respect their parents, and with that respect, well I know, well to me it's a big deal with respect and to this family it's a big deal, so I don't think that your economic status determines you identity. I think it does play a part to a greater extent, because the more well off you are the more you're exposed to, um, how do I put it? If you well off you more exposed to different scenarios, like if I was a very poor Indian girl and I was expected to sit at home, and to marry someone and, like you're not; what would happen is I would be expected to sit at home and my parents would find someone to marry, whereas if I was well off, I would be given the opportunities like I have now, to go to university, to make my own life decisions. And in that way, because you're allowed to make your own decisions, you sort of lose your values, no, I don't know – I sort of lost the plot there!"

4.2.3 Difference is socially constructed

The discourse of "difference is socially constructed" emerged in general opposition to 4.2.1 and 4.2.2 above, and was used in diverse ways by many participants – both black and white. Many participants utilized the discourse inconsistently, overtly agreeing that biologically significant differences between different 'race' groups do not exist, but then utilizing contradicting discourses that construct identity, culture and group-identification as essentially different for black and white people and/or as being innately defined by 'race' for the individual. A few participants, however, drew on the discourse throughout their interviews to suggest that a person's identity, culture and group identification are **products of experience**, that the parameters defining 'difference' between 'race' groups are **fluid and dependent on social contexts**, and that real difference between groups results from socio-economic divides stemming from **political processes**. As such, "difference is socially constructed" supports the argument that CRA children do not have any *genetic characteristics of 'race'* that make them inherently dissimilar to their

adoptive parents by way of identity, culture or predisposition for a particular group identification.

Grp3:

P3: I just feel like we're assuming that a person is born into a particular race. When a black child, when a black child is born, there's an assumption here that he's born into a race. When you are born I don't think you have any way of knowing, or predisposition to any kind of racial construction. Because race in my opinion is a social construction. We socially construct race. Therefore, this means, therefore this idea that because you're born a particular race, if you're not raised within that, you know, initial race, then there will be an incongruence or discomfort or dissonance in some way as you're growing up (interrupted)"

(and later)

P1: "I think you seek comfort as a human being

P3: Ya and where does that comfort come from? Where does that relation come from?

P1: and your identity is black

P3: Your identity, now don't forget identity is a socially constructed thing. If you were brought up in a white family, your identity is white. And therefore you wanna identify with white people. How would you want to identify with something that you don't know?

Grp2:

P6: "I, I'd also be interested in the second vignette. What kind of research is it that concludes that.

F: Mhmm, what do you think about it?

P6: Um (pause) Well I think it just sort of relates to what I said before about your, your identity being shaped by your family environment. And sort of what's the difference between identity and culture maybe. And why is it necessarily healthy for your identity development if it coincides with your sort of 'racial group'. Why is that healthy development? I don't see it as that"

(and at another point in the interview)

P6: "I'm interested in the idea that you are born within a culture. I mean isn't culture just possibly how you develop, and what home you're in. isn't that what becomes your culture?"

The above quotes illustrate the speakers' disapproval of *essential* constructions of 'race' and subsequent racialisation of identity, culture and group identification for CRA individuals. Participant 3 (group 3) focuses on how meanings of "race" and "black/white identity" are **objects of social construction**, and participant 6 (group 2) focuses on "culture" as an experientially-derived entity in development and through family environment. The primary effect is to challenge the racialisation of black people that imbues in them black identity or black culture and, secondly, by de-essentialising 'race', identity and culture, the door is opened to consideration for how 'difference' really *is* constructed between black and white groups – that is, to consideration for socio-political motives underlying it. In addition, participant 6 alludes to the equating of the terms "'race'", "identity" and "culture" and how she finds this problematic, when she says, "… *what's the difference between identity and culture maybe. And why is it necessarily healthy for your identity development if it coincides with your sort of 'racial group'*".
This question highlights the discursive persistence of what Frasch and Brooks (2003) identified as a problem with literature on CRA, namely that various 'identities' (e.g. 'racial identity', 'cultural identity' and 'ethnic identity') have been poorly and inconsistently defined as have the ways in which they are measured.

As such, using the terms interchangeably in discourse has a circular effect that makes it difficult to isolate a point for interjection to challenge essentialising effects: *Because a person is black, he/she has a black identity and so should automatically have a black culture which is what gives a person a black identity which is what makes him/her black.*

Although most participants appeared to use the terms "culture" and "identity" uncritically in interviews and with an apparent assumption that the meanings they attributed to these constructs would be known and shared by their fellow participants, some attempted to unpack the meaning of "culture", and to subsequently question whether a particular culture ever remains a fixed entity over time, and to question its usefulness in describing a person's identity.

Grp1:

P4: "I think for me what's coming up at the moment is, how culture is seen, and for me culture is salient and transient. That culture is forever changing. My culture is gonna be different to my kids' culture, regardless of where they come from, purely because we have a generation gap. I'm not in the same culture as my parents were in, and that's the nature of all culture

P6: Ya and there's so many other factors influencing that culture and change

P3: So I guess what we're saying is it depends on if you see culture as changing and moving or as a static object in time

Grp1:

P5: "…Self-identity I think is something that I construct as a person, ya, so whether growing up in black or white family, I don't think it has any influence, 'cause now, ya I'm a black person but my identity as a person, its different from the identity of my parents and my siblings … And sometimes, even my parents and even my siblings, they don't understand me. And even the community where I grew up, people in that community, they don't understand me because my identity is different. Even though we share cultural identity. So cultural identity and self-identity are different. Ya

P2: So you're saying, um, you belong to more than one social category…'cause it's the same thing with me. Like I don't identify myself as only a black person or Congolese, Congolese, um, I'm very versatile. Most of the time I don't just take one thing into consideration. Like, if somebody asks me who I am, I'm not going to just have one answer for them…

The above conversations do not directly refer to culture or identity being products of social construction, but rather allude to this through their suggestions that both are ***mutable***. Culture is constructed as a '*social* construction' when portrayed as *"…salient and transient"*, as it is then considered a social reflection of what is most important to a society/group at a certain time, that it serves a temporary purpose and will therefore change as the needs of the society/group change. This **'changeable-ness' of culture** has the concurrent effect of discounting 'black/white cultures' as reflections of biological predispositions of different 'races' for 'their race's culture', as the parameters of any and all cultures are considered by speakers to be inconsistent even over a single "generation".

Similarly, identity is constructed as a '*social* construction' as it can be defined in different ways depending on the social reference point. Participant 5 suggests that he may share "cultural identity" with people from the community where he grew up, but that this is not an encompassing or consistent representation of how he sees or understands himself or what he calls his "self identity". Building on this, participant 2 suggests that he cannot describe his identity only in terms of one or even two social categories ("black or Congolese"), but that he is "versatile" with many answers to questions about who he is. Both speakers allude to social constructionist notions of ***multiple positioning*** to suggest that identity is not a fixed, consistent or unitary entity that is wired into their biological make-up in accordance with their 'race', but a way of describing oneself relative to other people in a particular social context. This correlates with Motsemme's (2002) observation that the *meaning of being black is fluid, inconsistent and has differing levels of importance* for black people depending on the contexts in which they find themselves. Similarly it supports *challenges to the supremacy of 'race'* as a determinant of identity (Frasch and Brooks, 2003).

Building on an understanding of cultures as social constructions and that any particular culture is therefore mutable, a few participants applied this to the concept of black culture to suggest that its meaning is neither universal for all black people over time and place, nor practiced in a homogenous fashion by all black people.

Grp2:

P6: "I think that what I'm thinking about now is actually; um, we've been talking about a black culture as if there's one culture and that's not true. I mean there's countless hundreds of cultures and each sort of tribe or each line and each *family* has its own traditions, its own customs."

Grp3:

P3: "I think one thing, what you guys are saying I'm not necessarily opposing, especially when you say it's traditional culture. It's traditional yes, but one has to understand that we taking today and today's society, no? And as one of my supervisors actually spoke about a, a lot of assumptions are thought to be static…I think also if we look at issues such as social immigration, like in migrants, people coming to work in, work in urban

areas, um that has to be factored in, in the sense that, well, perhaps then nucleic family or that "traditional" family no longer exists any more to take people in, you know…

(and later in the same conversation)

P3: …do we live in a village?

ALL: No

P3: So we cannot assume that our interactions are based on this Western concept of a village …I'm not disputing the fact that villages exist. I'm not disputing the fact that black people live in villages. What I'm disputing is that the assumptions that by the world and, at times, by us, that we are governed by village rules when we don't even live there"

Participant 6 (group 2) attempts to illustrate how the argument for exposing a black CRA child to black culture is problematic in that it relies on the assumption that a single collective black culture exists for all black people that can be identified and 'taught' to black CRA children. By highlighting how multiple social groupings *within* black populations – right down "each *family*" unit as a group – bring with them as many different "traditions" and "customs" as there are social groupings, the speaker also effectively challenges the notion that black culture is a biological characteristic of blackness, as a consistent culture is not shared by all black people.

In a similar vein, participant 3 (group 3) challenges the idea that a "traditional culture" is shared and practiced by all black people such that black orphaned children are always taken in by their extended family. While the speaker does not dispute the suggestion that traditional 'African' cultural practices may be identified and may describe a dominant way of life for certain groups, he does challenge the idea that migration patterns, modernity and urbanization have not influenced the cultural practices of current black people and their family formations. For participant 3, constructing culture as dynamic and changed from 'traditional culture' for many black people, appears to serve a strong political purpose. This purpose is to challenge the idea that contemporary black people, regardless of their contexts, are *"…governed by village rules when (they) don't even live there"* and that the meanings made of the 'traditional culture' that dictates these rules are based on a *"…Western concept of a village"*.

Together these phrases allude to how "Western" (or white or 'colonial') constructions of 'traditional African culture' as a bounded and static entity, and black

people as inherently disposed to this universal ‘traditional African culture’, have historically been used by whites to marginalize blacks (Malik, 1996). The exclusion of black populations from structures such as capitalist commerce, democratic politics, formal education and access to technology, has been justified by constructing these things as “Western” and therefore *belonging* to whites and conversely constructing black people as bound by a black culture that is primitive, antiquated and incongruent with these aspects of ‘modernity’ (Malik, 1996).As such, participant 3 draws on the discourse of “‘difference’ is socially constructed” to discursively unhinge black people from marginalizing constructions of a ‘traditional culture’ that exclude them from current social structures and advantages.

Apart from suggesting that a current distinct black culture cannot be defined, some participants proposed that this in itself, along with dwindling knowledge and practice of distinct ‘ethnic cultures’, could be seen as an accurate social reflection of the biological “truth”, *“…that fundamentally we are the same”*.

Grp1:

P5: “I wanted to say, you know, I as a black person and a South African, there’s a fragmentation about, you know, the history of black people. Like the norms and values of black people are scattered, so, like as a Pedi person, I don’t know like all the Pedi things. Even like the people in Limpopo, they don’t know about all the Pedi history. And even in books, so its only like a short story about like the Pedi culture. So like, even in the black community, this thing of culture, it’s no longer there. And I’m thinking, it’s all because of right now we are coming close to the truth. The truth that fundamentally we are the same

P2: Ya, we’re supposed to be the same

P3: Ya I think it comes down to, like how important is culture for our society. Is it important. Is it important to stay close to your roots or are we leaning towards, um, sort of a general culture of humanity where

P6: Ya, I agree with that. Sort of like a general culture where we’re all like capitalist

P4: Ya I think, you know, homogeneity”

This discussion suggests that if the formation and evolution of cultures follows a social recognition of "fundamental truth", then the social construction of cultures will ultimately result in one *"…general culture of humanity"* as more people come to realize that humans are essentially "the same". This notion that a homogenous and universal culture transcends 'race' and ethnicity supports the proposal that 'difference' is not 'real' but only socially constructed, but by adopting a *colour-blind* approach to 'race', its very 'real' social implications are ignored. However, participant 2's comment that *"…we're **supposed** to be the same"* (researcher emphasis added) highlights that although all people are *supposed* to be the same in terms of general *biological* make-up, the *structural* make-up of society reveals that this is *not* the case.

Some participants suggested that 'real' differences between groups of people are determined by socio-economic status as opposed to innate 'race' or ethnic characteristics.

Grp1:

P4: "…I don't think it's so much the race thing anymore as for me socio-economic cul-, um, status…That's more of a determinant of who or what they are than what colour skin they are"

(and at another point)

P5: "…I'm thinking that fundamentally, uh, identities are all the same. The only difference is socio-economic status, and culture, culture is nothing, it only brings people particular things in a particular place… for example, middle class and high class people are the same. Taking like a high class black woman, at the same time, a white woman, the only difference is colour"

While these participants challenged the essentialism of 'race' 'differences' and cultural 'differences' between 'races' by suggesting that socio-economic status is in fact the most salient indicator of group differences, it was seldom acknowledged that socio-economic differences have historically been formed around 'race' with whites being more privileged than 'blacks. This supports previous findings that suggest a '*colour-blind*' approach diverts discussion away from the unjust historical and cumulative *economic* and *structural* advantages of white populations (Ansell, 2004). It also detracts from *social* differences – such as different values and priorities – that some call 'cultural differences'

between black and white populations, that may have developed due to differing economic/structural demands placed on the two populations.

Some participants challenged the essentialism of 'race' and cultural 'differences' by suggesting that socio-economic standings are better indicators of differences between groups of people. However, such arguments seldom acknowledged that these group formations (historical and present) occur in accordance with racial distinctions. Only one novel voice directly referred to the **historical relationship between race and socio-economic status** and eloquently portrayed how the politics of race, resulting in structural inequality between whites and blacks, may really underlie what people now consider 'natural' cultural differences between 'races'.

Grp2:

P2: "…coming back to the first vignette, well if you can't take care of your child someone else will. I think it sounds harsh to say it, but they seem to be more pragmatic about these things. The child must be taken care of. Education is paramount. Go without in order to give your child an education. You know, it's a different set of values around culture. We can't understand, 'cause it's not sort of big time, we've got a few black friends, sort of wow we're inter-racial. But we don't really understand that whole sort of culture

P1: There could also be a socio-economic dimension around that as well. Because structurally blacks were discriminated against in South Africa and socio-economically, what you're probably also going to see is maybe people that are poor from black society and people that are poor from white society and you'd probably get that same effect, that value for education. You know that pragmatism might actually be a response to socio-economic stress more than an actual just black or white culture"

Participant 1 above de-essentialises "pragmatism" as a natural cultural feature of black people by highlighting a politically-based reason why black people may *need* to be pragmatic. That is, different levels of pragmatism between black and white populations may exist, but if they do, they are not natural differences but adaptive responses to the snowballing effects of longstanding structural and economic inequalities between the 'races' (e.g. in terms of differences in location, education, employment, access to technology, security, health, and the psychosocial effects of being wealthy/poor).

In addition to this singular voice highlighting the politics underlying supposed 'cultural differences' between 'races', another novel voice (participant 6) attempted to highlight how **politics**, again, **underlies the difference in emphasis that different 'races' place on culture**.

Grp2:

P1: "Sorry, it could almost be like white people sort of have no single set of culture. We are so diverse, there's America filtering in there in South Africa, it's like: what is your culture? You can't say I'm Zulu or I'm Sotho. Culture is not as big a thing for us white people as it would be for like (interrupted)

P6: I think that's because it's the hegemonic, the dominant. We're not the minority so we're allowed to be (interrupted)

P1: Ya there's sort of lots of lots of constant fear and, um, of protecting a sort of minority identity, a minority culture… I mean like I think the continuation and non-marginalisation of different cultures is important, but for, for any one particular child, um, I don't know if it would be that important"

Participant 6 above introduces to the discussion the idea that black and white people may value the construction of distinct racial/ethnic cultures differently because of the longstanding power dynamics between the 'races'. Her response is to participant 1's observations that *"…white people sort of have no single set of culture…"* , and that *"…culture is not as big a thing for us white people…"*. She suggests that white people do not need to uphold or protect the distinctiveness of their beliefs, values or ways of making meaning of society, due to their cultural norms and standards having pervaded South African society and become *"…the hegemonic, the dominant…"* through a history of white political, economic and social control (Hook, 2004). This discursive highlights *why* black people may value the construction of distinct black/ethnic culture more than whites – that is, they are *"…protecting a sort of minority identity, a minority culture…"*- rather than portraying this value for culture as a natural 'race' difference by omitting political motives. As discussed in section 4.2.2 in more detail, a distinct 'black/ethnic' group identity (which may be described by black/ethnic culture) allows black people to

locate 'their' group relative to whites, and to therefore make claims on resources and power for 'their' group.

Participant 1 also reveals how this becomes a discursive moral dilemma when put in the context of CRA. It may be legitimate for black society as a collective to fight for black interests through the *"…continuation and non-marginalisation…"* of distinct black/ethnic culture. However, enforcing that black/ethnic culture is upheld by black CRA children as 'part of this collective', makes of the black CRA child and his/her white parents, political objects that represent black people's concerns about being re-subjugated by whites through assimilation into the dominant 'Western' or 'white culture'. Doing so places "the best interests of black society" (**an ethics of 'race'**) ahead of the best interests of *"…any one particular child"* (**an ethics of humanity**). When placed in binary opposition to each other like this, speakers hesitate and reveal uncertainty -*"…**um, I don't know** if it would be that important"* (researcher emphasis added) - as positioning oneself as either 'for the individual's interests' or 'for the group's interests' involves *not* positioning oneself in the opposing camp, thereby opening oneself up to attack for being either racist or not caring about the interests of individual children.

4.3 "*Other* South Africans' attitudes": Discourses about discourses of CRA in South Africa

Discourses operating within a repertoire of "*Other* South Africans' attitudes" were identified by participants' attempts to distance themselves somewhat from actively taking up stances on the extent to which black culture is important for CRA children. This was done by *reflecting* upon possible discourses of CRA that either arose in the group, or that they believed were prominent in South African society. Within this repertoire, **CRA** becomes the **discursive object** through which representations of 'race'-related power dynamics can be expressed. Concurrently then, the CRA child and his/her parents become politicized objects for constructing 'race'-relations in South Africa in ways that serve speaker's 'raced' agendas. As such these discourses use the topic of CRA in South Africa to either detract from or highlight 'race' politics, and to construct black and white

South Africans in purposeful ways whilst maintaining a degree of distance from responsibility for these constructions.

4.3.1 CRA is not contentious because 'race' is not contentious

The discourse of "CRA is not contentious because 'race' is not contentious" was less prominent than the following discourse (4.3.2 "CRA is contentious because 'race' is still contentious"), with those utilizing it being almost exclusively white participants with one exception. The discourse suggests that CRA is not socially problematic or received as threatening to any groups in South Africa, because **differences between 'races' are minor or insignificant**, and because racialised thinking and racism are **attitudes that are merely the responsibility of those individuals** adopting them. Speakers of the discourse appeared to use the topic of CRA to divert discussion away from 'race'-relations as contentious, and direct it towards 'race'-relations as 'transformed' and 'harmonious', drawing on an overarching discourse of *multiculturalism* to explain 'race'-differences or *integrationism* to dismiss cultural concerns.

Grp1:

P1: "I think it's only a problem because we make it a problem… 'Cause like listening to what everyone's saying, it's like, 'cause we place so much emphasis on race and difference it becomes a problem that everything is different"

Participant 1's suggestion that 'race' is only problematic when people *"…place so much emphasis on race and difference…"* implies that problematic differences between 'race' groups are only created through *talking* about 'races' as different. Aside from setting up a discursive contradiction that reveals the speaker's own acknowledgement that *"… everything **is** different"* (researcher emphasis added), suggesting that differences are only problematic because of what people *say*, effectively **negates the possibility of identifying real forms of *structural* difference** between 'races' as a problem of inequality.

As the only black participant to use the discourse, it may be significant to note that participant 1 (group1) suggested she belonged to a "well off" family and that she

appeared to have difficulty negotiating this socio-economic status with a 'black Indian identity' (discussed in section 4.2.2). As such, an acknowledgement of structural differences in South Africa as problematic, may have been felt to be threatening by creating openings for discursive attack on the speaker's wealth and/or social group alliances.

In a similar vein, some participants attempt to construct 'race' and 'difference' as unproblematic through illustrations of their own positive experiences with people who have adopted cross-racially or are *"…involved in this kind of issue…"*:

Grp1:

P4: "…I au pair for a family and their domestic worker's son, he's very much involved in this kind of issue because he's being raised by the white family and by the black family at the same time. And so straddling two worlds. And at his school, if I go and take him, most people are so comfortable with him … and it's very interesting because in his school there are many many people doing multiracial adoption. And they're actually fine with it. And the general pervasive sense is that, this is the norm, and that, you know if you got a white mom or a black mom, you just, it's just the way life is"

By providing a *particularized* exemplar as backup for her argument that CRA is "*the norm*", is not contentious and is *"…just the way life is"*, participant 4 is able to avoid contradiction from other group members, and furthermore to discursively manoeuvre to construct this as a more generalized conclusion through phrases such as *"…the general pervasive sense…"*. As such it appears that it is not enough for the speaker that the single family she works for or just the CRA families at the school are *"fine with it"*, but that this sense of comfort and normalcy with CRA should be constructed as pervasive so as to dismiss the possibility of contradictory evidence before it arises.

In addition to constructing 'racial'-differences and CRA as unproblematic or non-contentious, some participants attempted to dismiss discursive fears about a "*cultural genocide*" of black/ethnic culture occurring in CRA, by suggesting that black nannies have provided a similar means of 'cross-racial enculturation' through their care of white children in South Africa.

Grp1:

P4: "What about nannies though? Cos that would be, you know, where does that intersection come in? There you've got white children essentially being brought up by what is an African nanny

P2: But *in* the white house

P4: Well it's the domestic worker… I know it's not exactly what you're getting at but I think that that is where everybody *is* exposed to the African culture in a way. Well not everybody, but people in that situation

P5: Ya, ok, I think that during apartheid we had local black maids in white families, ok, but still if we look at children who grew up during that time, seventies, eighties and early nineties, most of them they still have that perception "I'm white, and they are black" because they looked at the black nanny as 'just a nanny'

P3: Ya

P1: I disagree. I, we had a domestic worker who worked for us for something like twenty-five odd years. She left about five years ago and she basically brought my brother, my sister and I up. And everything, I mean I could tell the difference, she was starting to teach me Zulu and things

P4: Mmm

P1: I could tell the difference between a Zulu person and a Sotho person. She would take me places. She would, she was actually like another member of our family and I don't think that my parents; when she left our entire family basically cried for a week … because, you know, I don't think our family looked at her as just a domestic worker. She even lived; she had a room in our house that she lived in. And she would eat at the table with us on some days. So, ya"

In the above conversation participants 4 suggests that whites are exposed to "African culture" through black nannies and that this can be equated to CRA adoption. When the difference in power dynamics between a black nanny working for white people and white parents raising a black child is highlighted, participants 4 and 1 attempt to dismiss this power differential as significant by reframing the racial stratification of society into different classes as a means of multicultural exposure similar to how discourses of *multiculturalism* are used by whites to detract from 'racial' inequalities (Ansell, 2004).

Apartheid-based structuring of ‘races’ is used to inadvertently highlight how many if not most of the working-class positions (e.g. “nannies”, “maid”, “domestic”) in South Africa, are still reserved for ‘African black’ people in particular. However those participants benefiting from these structures relative to ‘African black’ people (such as the above white and ‘Indian’ speakers), may construct this societal organization as positive for ‘African blacks’ by drawing on an overarching discourse of multiculturalism to suggest that it allows ‘African black/ethnic culture’ to be ‘integrated’ into white, and in this case ‘Indian’ households. In addition, speakers of the discourse overlook how the employer/employee relationship limits the nanny/domestic’s freedom to “raise” her employer’s children in any way she sees fit, how she too is exposed to the culture of the ‘white/Indian family’ for whom she works only she is in a position of less social power to challenge it, and how the job may be necessary for income but limit her availability to her *own* family and children. As such, speakers’ constructions and omissions negate the racist-based structures that created these power differentials and therefore discursively protect their privileged economic status that allows them the convenience of a live-in nanny or domestic worker. The use of the discourse by a ‘black Indian’ participant in particular, suggests that Bulhan’s (1980) identification pattern of *capitulation* is still used by some black speakers who were attributed greater privilege than ‘African blacks’ in apartheid, to hold on to racist-derived meanings of ‘racial’ classification in order to secure a degree of social power relative to ‘African blacks’ (Stevens, 1998; Sonn and Fisher, 2003).

When confronted with the idea that ‘racial’ differences are prominent and that ‘race’-relations involve conflict in South Africa, some participants attempted to dismiss these comments by portraying ‘race’-relations in a ‘positive’ light only.

Grp2:

P5: “I think it’s safe to assume though that South Africa is a boiling pot of like racial tension and cross-culturalism and (interrupted)

P2: I think that we’re one of the most liberal nations in the world! We really are

P1: You, you’re using Wits as an example, and that’s not (interrupted)

P2: No, I’ve been to UJ as well, and I know what’s around

P1: Like I think it’s quite different, like Oranje

P2: Oranje, that's an extreme… I have a friend who's recently immigrated from India, and his is a thriving Indian community… here they're still steeped in tradition. It's a very traditional Indian community. So yes there may be some Western influence but it's still very traditional, and I think we all adapt a bit of black culture, like we all say "Yebo" when we answer the phone"

For participant 2 above constructing **'good' 'race'-relations** necessitates a reference to South Africa as a "liberal nation" such that a liberal constitution may be used to negate the fact that this may not be enacted or followed through to people's everyday lives. In addition the speaker draws on an overarching discourse of multiculturalism to suggest that "Western influence" has not overpowered the prominence of tradition in black communities, and conversely to argue that *"…we all* (referring to whites) *adapt a bit of black culture…"*. Although the speaker's portrayal of a 'good' South Africa – as involving blacks being *"…steeped in tradition…"* and whites saying "*Yebo"* – may be considered confining and patronizing towards blacks, framing these constructions as part of a "liberal nation" strategically directs their interpretation to being a positive one. As such, the moral-social status of whites is discursively protected through the construction of whites as non-racist (supposedly non-imposing of 'Western culture') and as agents of transformation (supposedly adopting black culture).

Some participants appeared to direct conversation about 'race'-relations and 'racism' towards a **focus on *attitudes* held by *individuals*** such that racialised thinking and 'racism' are constructed as the responsibility of only the person adopting them.

Grp1:

P4: "… even if for instance say I don't adopt a black child, I still wanna change perceptions, or make sure that my children are raised understanding that it's ok.

(and at another point in the interview)

P3: "But when somebody looks at us, the first things they notice is, "ok what race is he from?" Then what gender you are, then (interrupted)

P4: Maybe you should own that and say that's the first thing that *you* notice

P3: I do, I

P4: ‘cause that’s not true for me… I’ve been brought up my whole life that race is this big taboo, that for me has been sort of eradicated. Like I know, and I’ve been taught personally, that I must accept people for who they are… And so race is *not* important for me when I look at the kid. And when I look at the people here

(and later)

P2: “But like is it more or less the majority that like accept that stereotype?

P3: Are we talking about individuals or are we talking about general society?

P4: Well I think general society’s made up of individuals, so let’s say that, I think multiracial adoption kids are gonna be interacting with individuals more than a group, so I think let’s talk about individuals”

(silence)

Participants 3 and 2 above suggest that in South African society, ‘race’ is still used as a prominent identifier of people, and that many people still operate according to racialised and ethnicised stereotypes of blacks and whites. Participant 4 however, repeatedly discredits these suggestions that racialised thinking is a joint-societal problem that needs addressing at a structural (rather than simply individual attitudinal) level. She does so by firstly attacking the social-moral integrity of participant 3 to discredit her (“*… maybe you should own that and say it’s the first thing that* ***you*** *notice…*”). Secondly, she implies that non-racism is simply constituted in an acceptance of people using a ‘*colour-blind*’ approach to ‘race’, such that speakers adopting a ‘colour-cognizant’ approach, are constructed as ‘racist’ (“*I’ve been taught personally, that I must accept people for who they are…so race is not important for me when I look at the kid…*”). Thirdly, she decides for the group that discussion should only focus on the individual as the object of interest regarding ‘race’ and CRA (“*…general society’s made up of individuals…multiracial adoption kids are gonna be interacting with individuals more than a group, so I think let’s talk about individuals…*”). It is noteworthy that participant 4’s decision to talk only about individuals is followed by a silence in the group. Ultimately such a focus effectively silences voices that would like to reveal and acknowledge those race differences and inequalities that do exist.

Locating problems of ‘race’ within individuals’ attitudes negates the significance of inequality between ‘races’ in political and economic structures as well as social

discourse, and allows speakers to refuse responsibility for inequality or for transformation in society by constructing their own personal attitude as 'non prejudiced'. This confirms that *a liberal ethic of individual freedom* (Gray et al., 2005), or discourses that *champion individualism* (Collier, 2005; Wale and Foster, 2007) that protect the status quo of white dominance, persist in discourses about CRA, and ultimately serve to bolster the power of racist ideology.

4.3.2 CRA is contentious because 'race' is still contentious

The discourse of "CRA is contentious because 'race' is still contentious" was fairly prominent in the talk of both black and white participants in all three groups. This discourse suggests that racialisation and racism are still prominent in South Africa such that society continues to view **white and black people as 'different'** and that **racist ideals and occurrences persist**. As such, it suggests that CRA causes strong reactions from people regarding 'race' because it confronts these persistent fissions, and reveals the fears of black and white groups in a supposedly transforming and integrating post-apartheid South Africa.

The first main way in which participants appeared to construct 'race' as contentious in South Africa was to refer to what may be thought of as "discourses of difference" to illustrate how South Africans still think dichotomously about 'race'.

Grp1:

P3: "…well take for example my sister; she's got coloured children and I know its quite hard for them, at school, often people like say to them, "that can't be your mother".

(and at another point in the interview)

P3: "...Um, so lets consider this: if we're talking about a white family adopting black children we still using those old terms, you know, white, black. That just shows that we're still thinking in terms of colour

P2: Subconsciously, black/white economy, poor rich"

Grp2:

P5: "But also like, it's interesting that they said, um, by adopting a black child shows that we are changing, we not just like an apartheid country anymore. But like, in so many ways people are still like, you know, "that's a black thing to do, that's a white thing to say,

that's like a black shop to shop at, that's a white person's shop". Like I catch taxis and from black and white people, they're like "Are you crazy?!" or like "Why do you do that?" So like why do we have to be like so marg-, so like separate?"

Grp1:

P5: Um, maar the majority of white people are still segregated and the majority of black people are still segregated. And Indians, like in Kagiso, there is a section called like Ennerdale …And only Indian peoples stays there. And then Kagiso the other section, black people stay there. Segregation. So still segregation of black, white, Indian.

The above speakers portray the country as starkly racialised, with people's expectations as to what constitutes 'normal' South African society being thought of as separate for black and white people, as well as being separated further along the lines of apartheid-based 'race' classifications. Participants suggest that these expectations of separateness pervade many areas of society, including family structures (*"…often people like say to them, "that can't be your mother""*), ways of classifying people (*"…we still using those old terms, you know, white, black…"*), economic statuses (*"…black/white economy, poor/rich"*), general way of life (*"…people are still like, you know, "that's a black thing to do, that's a white thing to say…"*) and 'normal' spaces to occupy (*"…that's like a black shop to shop at, that's a white person's shop"* and *"…So still segregation of black, white, Indian"*). This shows how people continue to refer to difference in terms of *place, privilege/lack of privilege,* and *'race'* (Leibowitz et al., 2007) and how the social group label of 'race' continues to be prominent in discourse (Goldschmidt, 2003).

While not absolute, there did appear to be a pattern of white participants using this discourse to focus on these "discourses of difference" more than they did on "discourses of racism" which were mainly alluded to by black participants. While many white speakers are willing to acknowledge that South African society is still divided along 'racial' lines, they may be loathe to highlight ways in which *racism* persists. This again highlights a pattern of *denial* of the effects of racism identified in white discourse (Leibowitz et al., 2007; Wale and Foster, 2007) which suggests that they fear being positioned as joint perpetrators of racism through such an acknowledgement.

The second main way in which predominantly black participants construct 'race' as contentious in South Africa then, is to illustrate ways in which racism persists and to

suggest that white discourses of racism and black discourses of disassociation with white in response to racism, have been passed on to current generations from their predecessors.

Grp3:

P5: "…I'd like to go back to your point you know, about racial construction, the construction of race and that sort of thing. And say that, it's true, the only reason that these things are important is because we've been raised in a world where, you know, race is a very important thing. So the truth of the matter is, so even if, you know, even if the child is very comfortable with white people and so on, they still live in a world that will see them as black, whether they think of themselves as black or not. Race will definitely come in to play, even in their interactions with people, superficial or not. Because even superficial interactions with people, you know carry some assumptions and what-not. I mean for instance, I know having worked in a book store, a lot of white people who approach me would assume that I wouldn't be able to help them or would assume that I'm stupid or I speak to them and they, you know they sort of respond in a very, what, patronizing way or that sort of thing. So your race definitely carries, you know the colour of your skin

P1: It carries a lot"

Grp1:

P3: "Ya, and we are getting better, I think, especially looking at children now. But we have still got to consider that the parents of those children who've still got, you know that way of looking at things, to consider that parents are still teaching their children those views. And yes, it's up to the child whether they accept it or not, but it's still getting said"

Grp3:

P4: "um, I was gonna say that a lot of the ideas that we have about blackness, about, and on the other end about white people, come from my family. And I was thinking about our apartheid past. A whole lot of us were not even born, or when we were small little children at that time, but we still have this inbred that a white person is, ag, you don't relate to that person the same way as a black person, because those ideas from the past I carry through from generation to generation. I think, I mean I was reading a book, it's um, white people have been in a superior position to black people from decades, a whole lot of years! And black people the opposite from a whole lot of years. And that has been carried through in the family generation and generation and generation. And I mean that's

> why right now, I mean I'm sure it's difficult for white people as well to sort of think as themselves as equal. I'm sure there is that thing that somehow "I'm better""

Participant 5 (group 3) suggests that although 'race' may be a social construction (as opposed to a biological entity), racialised thinking pervades society to such an extent that the individual cannot evade the meanings and preconceptions that others will assign to them because of their skin colour as *"…they still live in a world that will see them as black, whether they think of themselves as black or not"*. As such, the speaker highlights the power of 'race' discourses to position black people, regardless of whether or not they identify with such a position, as illustrated by the speaker's experience of being 'placed' in a position of inferiority by white customers acting on racist constructions of blacks as "stupid" or unlearned in literature.

In a similar vein, participant 3 (group 1) and participant 4 (group3) highlight the power of *family* to entrench beliefs about 'race' and attitudes towards different 'races' through intergenerational discourse. They suggest that, in spite of current younger generations being less influenced by *"our apartheid past"* than previous generations, South Africa's history of racist division and the subsequent organization of South Africans into rivaling black and white groups, continues to influence how children think about their 'own' and 'other' 'race' groups through what their parents teach them about 'race'. More specifically, it is suggested that racism towards blacks has resulted in black children being taught that they will be able to relate to other black people better than to white people, and in white children being taught to think of themselves as being better than black people.

Drawing on constructions of South Africa as still racially divided and still fraught with racist ideals and practices, participants attempted to explain **why CRA is therefore contentious** for many South Africans as it is viewed as a *political 'racial' event* that confronts the fears of white and black groups in four prominent ways, supporting Dubinsky's (2007) suggestion that CRA 'black children' become political objects in discourse.

Firstly, participants suggested that CRA may be viewed as **a political statement by white liberals** wishing to gain for themselves a social moral high-ground with regards to 'race' in post-apartheid South Africa.

Grp2:

P6: I just find it quite interesting, like how you say, "is it a '*good thing*'?". Like there's a kind of, a kind of moral judgement attached to it, good or bad. I mean like when a couple is desperate for a child, they want a child and they adopt non-cross-racially, it's not seen as a 'good thing', well I don't think as much. Like an Angelina Jolie thing saving the world. And it's interesting that there are those kind of morals"

Grp3:

P3: I think another thing that may come across as, as a, a romanticisation of " oh well, I'm white. And if I adopt a black kid I'm all for the rainbow nation", you know
(little laugh)

P4: Ya. Points!

P1: Points to me!

P3: Let me take them shopping and put them there. That's just one other social thing that may come across

P1: Like trying to be nice. In society, in society to be looked at as a Samaritan

P3: Like a liberal type of, "eh, check it out! Black people, I've got black babies too!"

P1: Yeah, like "I've got black friends!"

P3: Like, "I'm not like those white people! I'm better"

Participant 5 (group 2) addresses how discourse about CRA often has *"…a kind of moral judgement attached to it, good or bad…"* in comparison to discourse about same-'race' adoption which seems to be approached in a more morally neutral way. This comparison suggests that it is the inclusion of the 'race' parameter with adoption in CRA that provokes people to take an approving or disapproving stance towards it, and highlights how CRA then becomes a vehicle through which the politics of 'race' acts to construct white and black people in various ways.

The above two extracts consider how CRA may be perceived as a way for white people to construct themselves in a positive light regarding 'race'-relations in South Africa. Participant 5 (group 2) alludes to one part of this 'positive' construction being

"…Like an Angelina Jolie thing saving the world…", whereby white adopters of black children are portrayed as the children's saviours, alluding to an awareness of the *"rescue" narrative* in CRA discourse (Dubinsky, 2007). This *"rescue" narrative* effectively makes of CRA a white *humanitarian* effort, and black orphans are constructed as helpless and hopeless without the rescue of a noble and caring white adopter to 'step-in' and help with this 'black problem' (as discussed in more detail in section 4.3.3).

In group 3, participants suggest that white people's motives for CRA of a black child may also include a desire to be socially perceived as progressive in terms of 'race'-relations in South Africa, such that they wish to receive social applaud for 'integrating' with another 'race'. Participants suggest that these 'positive' constructions of CRA white parents may be used by them (and by extension may be used by all whites approving of CRA), as what Moos and Mwaba (2007) suggest is *evidence of whites rejecting racism*. Many of the current participants challenged this construction as an accurate portrayal of whites motives, and suggested that whites may adopt 'cross-racially' (or approve of CRA) to set themselves apart from other whites in South Africa – *"...Like, "I'm not like those white people! I'm better""*. This effectively allows them to disassociate themselves from responsibility or accountability for racism. Gaining the moral high-ground over other whites and discursively aligning oneself with politically powerful blacks in these ways, may be a means by which white people in post-apartheid South Africa address their social fears of assailment by black people as retribution for white people's oppression of black society.

Secondly, it was suggested that some black people may object to CRA for reasons of jealousy or resentment.

Grp3:

P1: "Ya I think most black people that I have encountered, the outlook that they have of a child that's been raised by a white family is that they have an unfair advantage, like in economical background and backing that they have had, and most black children have not had. It's, "why should this specific black child be chosen to have the advantages, while there're so many dying, and so many that are living in the streets of Jo'burg? Why does this specific one get all these advantages?" And that's when the child starts being ostracized by the same black communities that he should be identifying with…"

Although seldom brought up by participants in the interviews, it was occasionally suggested that some black people may feel that CRA black children have an "unfair advantage" in terms of economic advantages made accessible to them, over other orphaned black children. Although it was suggested that this discourse compares black CRA children to black orphans, when considered in the light of current structural contexts in South Africa, it is possible that the discourse ultimately **points to the *unfairness* of socio-economic patterns of inequality between wealthy and poor black groups** in South Africa. When this is taken into account, the discourse may highlight the difficulty that the majority of black South Africans have experienced in trying to access economic advantages for themselves (Ansell, 2004).

As such, it alludes to possible black fears of being left out of or left behind processes of redress and black economic upliftment, as many of these processes are perceived to have provided what were historically white advantages to only a minority of black people – people who are no more "special" or deserving of them than other black people in South Africa. In a similar way, CRA black children may be seen to be given access to advantages through being adopted into 'white families' when they are no more deserving of them or more "special" than other black children. This politicization of CRA by equating CRA black children with wealthy black society, and black orphans with the majority of the black population who lack economic advantage, is illustrated in the speaker's last line where she points out that it is not the *orphans* who ostracize the CRA black child, but the black community as a whole, who are concurrently constructed as the same and therefore as equally deserving of advantage, by suggesting that the CRA black child should be *identifying* with them.

Thirdly, participants suggested that some white and black South Africans perceive CRA as strange or threatening to what they consider a 'normal', 'natural' and 'correct' way of life, according to an understanding that **'race' and culture are essentially different** for whites and blacks.

Grp1:

P4: "…it's the same thing with adoption. It's like all very good and well, but people do get offended for some very bizarre reason. 'cause like "why would you wanna go and do that?". That's the response that a lot of people get when they say "oh we're adopting a black kid", "but why?", "like can't you have your own?"

P2: "Have you put requests in at the white orphanage?""

(and at another point in the interview)

P3: "…you do get those, kind of right- wing white people, you know, who wanna beat up any black person they see. They might be even more threatened by a black child in a white family, so they might, I mean this black child might get beaten up. I mean it's not just a case of, "oh you have a black mother, ag shame", now it's "you threatening our lifestyles! You intervening in our, our culture, how could you?!" and get beaten up and all that. And also from the other side, black people could say, "no you the wrong culture!"…

Grp3:

P5: "To the extent though that I would even say that, uh, black kids will at times be rejected by black people, if they've been raised in white homes. They'll be rejected you know by black people 'cause they're sort of seen as having … sort of these white values and not as, like respecting their elders, you know they've been raised in a culture you know very different to a culture that a black child, you know, should have been raised in"

In group 1 participants 4 and 2 suggest that some white people consider CRA to b a last resort for white parents who want to adopt a child or who cannot give birth themselves. This suggests that a discourse of CRA exists that constructs a black child as something less than a 'perfect' or 'ideal' son or daughter for white parents and that something must be 'wrong' (such as an inability to conceive or that white orphans are not available for adoption) for whites to 'settle' for a black child. Participant 3 (group 1) and participant 5 (group 3) suggest that social discourses of CRA exist that construct it as deviant or going against the natural order of things such that people may feel that the 'proper' ways of living for black and white people (that is, as separately and/or with different cultures) are disturbed when CRA takes place. These discourses draw upon constructions of identity, family and culture being defined by biology (discussed in section 4.2.1) and imply that many South Africans may fear that their 'own' 'race' group or racialised perception of

culture (both black and white) is somehow tainted or infringed upon when black children are raised by white parents.

This third fear pre-empts the final fear participants referred to when discussing South Africans' discourses of CRA, but is more specifically a fear held by black groups, that CRA results in a ***"cultural genocide"* of black culture**.

Grp3:

P2: "…And a lot of people are against – ok not a lot of people – some people are against that because they're like "oh, just 'cause they're white they think they can just flash their money and just come to Africa and take the black kids!", or, "why are they taking them?", like they kind of don't agree"

Grp2:

P1: "I think as well like we have take cognizance of the context, like of a certain racial group. Like what would it look like if we were cross-racially experiencing that kind of adoption. From the vignette it says white people adopting black, so; you know you have to put yourself in their shoes. You know, sometimes it's quite, you feel like you feel like you maybe being assimilated into a dominant culture and how would it feel for us, like let's say, China comes over and starts changing our languages and starts adopting children and you start feeling you're losing your sense of self, your identity"

Grp3:

P2: "Ya, wouldn't you say that this is a pressure, like social pressure, that being expected like, 'cause you're a Zulu, to know this and this and that… Therefore if you're raised up by a white family, nobody in that family knew about those things to begin with so nobody taught you those things… I just feel it's fear, it's more like fear of losing the blackness

P5: Mmm, ya

P2: of the South African people's blackness. When they see a child with like white parents, they think, "oh my goodness! Now, like minus one in the black!"

P5: Exactly"

(and later)

P4: Ok, the one thing that I've realized about black South Africans is that thing that, it's fighting against being Westernised. This whole thing of, we're losing our culture, our African culture, and we now have this thing that Western culture is better than African

> culture. And um I think that in society there will be that notion that our culture is being distilled now because of cross-racial adoption. So I feel like society, especially on the side of black South Africans, um they feel that our culture is just being taken away from us, you know. Everything is just being Westernised and this idea that Western is better than African, and people actually wanting to go back and say, "actually that's not the case"

The above extracts illustrate participants perceptions that some black South Africans disapprove of CRA because of a view that it is a means through which the dominance of "Western culture" over "African culture" is perpetuated by raising black children in a 'white culture', suggesting that concerns about "*cultural genocide*" mentioned in the literature about CRA (Hollingsworth, 1999), may infiltrate black South Africans' discourses about CRA too. Participants suggest that some black people see black children as 'belonging to Africa' or to black communities or to black society as a whole 'race', such that CRA is constructed as a political assault on these groups and their endeavours for equality through the "taking away" of 'black bodies' from them. This discourse of CRA reveals black fears that black/ethnic culture will be overpowered by Westernisation as black people come to adopt modern ways of life and that whites may use their historically-based discursive association with 'Western culture' and modernity, to dismiss any differing values of black groups or to dismiss any claims that they may make on structural resources as a distinct group (discussed in more detail in section 4.2.2 and 4.2.3).

4.3.3 The black response is big but the problem is bigger

The discourse of "the black response is big but the problem is bigger" was used almost exclusively by black participants, with one exception, to suggest that **black people do, and have responded** to a great extent, to the needs of orphaned black children in South Africa. However, this discourse also suggests that the immense number of children becoming orphaned – sometimes referred to as the "orphan crisis" (Roby and Shaw, 2006) in South Africa – confounded by structural changes to black communities and

family networks, has come to result in these **needs far outweighing the resources** available to these communities and networks, with which to assist them.

This discourse presupposes an underlying discourse of CRA that was only once alluded to in the three interviews through questions posed in the group of white participants only.

Grp2:

P2: "…it's interesting what you say when black people see white couples adopting black children; if they've got a problem with that, why don't *they* adopt more black children, why are black orphanages so full then?"

The discourse of "the black response is big but the problem is bigger" is therefore a **response to this anticipated question which constructs blacks as perpetrators of the "orphan crisis"** in South Africa. The responses to this anticipated 'accusation' involved a discursive *defence* of black populations in the face of the "orphan crisis". Whilst this was predominantly achieved through the *re*-construction of black people's roles in this issue that emphasized the great extent to which black orphans have been incorporated into the households of their extended families, it was also done by highlighting the minimal extent to which whites have in fact adopted cross-'racially'.

Grp1:

P5: "Um, ok, maar I see with segregation and adoption, what is happening is only *one* white family goes out and takes only *one* black child (*gore), amoungst ten families only one family adopted a black child, so that thing with segregation is still there. Unlike if it was like seven families out of ten and it was like two black children, ya, that would be different"

Although the above speaker's immediate intention is to emphasize how little CRA has impacted upon patterns of segregation between black and white people in South Africa, it concurrently highlights the fact that very *few* white people have addressed South Africa's "orphan crisis" by adopting black children.

By reconsidering the definition of adoption to include non-formalized ways of taking-in or taking care of children, participants highlight the ways in which *many* black orphans have in fact been supported by black communities or their extended black family in a variety of ways.

Grp2:

P6: "I was like thinking… About sort of formal adoption and sort of an idea of adoption, and the first thing is, there's traditionally, in, in African cultures, almost like a fluid kind of natural adoption process that takes place. Not sort of, doesn't go through social services. A child who's in need of looking after and food and, has a next door neighbour, would go over there. So it would be interesting to, sort of when we talk about sort of formal adoption, how do South Africans understand adoption?..."

Grp3:

P6: "Back at home, thank you, you find that children are being taken in. you don't call it adoption or the orphan, there's no such in traditional African culture. If you lose a mother, 'cause I'm your sister or I'm your aunt, I will take you in, and that's how it's been working long ago and now and now

P5: Ya I mean definitely I think I agree with you. I think that this first part (vignette one) does have a point to make. Um, I'd even say that a lot of black people still to this day don't believe in adoption. I mean just speaking to my own parents,, they'll tell you that um, we, I mean, as black people you know that if something happens to your brother, or to your sister or whoever else, then you, then you will take care of their kids anyway. Or even if, you know, even if the parents are already there as is the situation in a lot of homes where, maybe the parents are unemployed or either, you know, that sort of thing, parents usually will take, you know, are already taking care of sort of the extended family members and children anyway. So, ya

P1: It's almost like automatic

P5: Exactly, it is automatic. It's not something that you have to think about

P1: You don't think about, just do it

…

P5: I think that's the problem right now, right. And I think that's the point that they're trying to make here (vignette one). That it seems that it's not really possible anymore. People are still doing it, but I think it's not possible to a greater degree because so many adults

are dying. That's why then, that's why we have so many orphans, what? 6 million? I think 11 million AIDS orphans? You know, so

P3: I think that then that, that's the crux of the matter, that as you're saying, perhaps it's not happening today. In such cases

P5: Well it's still happening but not to as great

P6: Not to the extent of the needs

…

P6: …You sometimes find that, um, children who run households and what-not, fine there may be no adults in the house, but the community as a whole, maybe the next door neighbour, will be the one looking over the household and will come themselves over to the house sometimes or something like that

P1: There is some kind of support

P6: So they may not be taken in like they come live under my house or my roof, but there is a community as a whole of sorts, and the neighbour or the aunt who lives in the next township will always come every weekend and check on them. 'cause sometimes you find that in one house

P3: It's too much to take in

…

P1: There's absolutely no way that you'll find that in a black community, children heading a household and no-one actually helping out. That's impossible

P3: I just wonder then why so many children of child headed households then are forced to work and quit school, as is the current state

P6: You have to look at it realistically. Just because I'm your aunt or I'm your neighbour and I'm helping out, doesn't mean I'm rich or I've got enough money to help everyone in the household

Although speakers tend to refer to 'traditional African culture' to describe how black populations have managed the care of orphaned children in a **non-formalized way**, the immediate intention is not to focus on whether or not 'traditional African culture' is prevalent or relevant in modern or urbanized contexts (as was the concern of participant 3 group 3 discussed in section 4.2.3), but to illustrate how black populations *have* historically and *continue to* address the needs of orphaned black children to a great extent, even if this has not been called "adoption".

These illustrations refute constructions of black people as disinterested in and unsympathetic to the needs of black orphans, and of black orphans as reliant upon the 'humanitarian' efforts of white people to have their needs met. This is done by illustrating ways in which black people *do* take care of black children without parents, such as participant 5's comment, *"… as black people you know that if something happens to your brother, or to your sister or whoever else, then you, then you will take care of their kids anyway…"* and participant 6's comment, *"… children who run households and what-not, fine there may be no adults in the house, but the community as a whole, maybe the next door neighbour, will be the one looking over the household and will come themselves over to the house sometimes or something like that"*.

These examples portray black people taking action to help when others are faced with adversity such that black families and communities are constructed as having a strong sense of social responsibility for one another. It does however appear that a possible distinction is drawn between the action taken to assist fellow orphaned or struggling community members and the action taken to assist orphaned or struggling relatives. This distinction is created by participants suggestion that, *"…If you lose a mother, 'cause I'm your sister or I'm your aunt, I will take you in …"*, whereas the same is not assumed to be an "automatic" process for orphans who are not a part of the extended family. That is, neighbours and the community as a whole may assist "child-headed households", but they are not automatically expected to be taken in or held responsible for their care, as an *"…aunt in a neighbouring village…"* might be. This suggests that a **belief of biological relatedness** (reminiscent of the value for common ancestry discussed in section 4.2.1) **may still be an important marker** of who may be understood as a part of a *family* unit.

In addition to constructing black society as actively addressing the needs of black orphans, this discourse also addressed the unavoidable fact that the number of black orphans in South Africa has steadily grown to a great amount over the last few decades.

In contrast to participant 2 (group 2) who implied that this amount may be a *result* of black people not adopting black orphans, this discourse suggests that the "orphan crisis" persists *in spite* of black people's attempts to address it. As such the discourse effectively directs blame away from black people for the large numbers of orphans and

considers how **broader social problems and structures** (such as HIV/AIDS, poverty and the effects of social migration and urbanization) have come to result in a depletion of available extended family networks to absorb orphaned black children into, as well as a limited amount of resources with which to provide for these orphans. These observations allude to the idea that it is ultimately *poverty* that diminishes the ability of black families to take in their orphaned relatives, as suggested by the joint discursive effect of the following two statements: *"…People are still doing it, but I think it's not possible to a greater degree because so many adults are dying…"* and *"… Just because I'm your aunt or I'm your neighbour and I'm helping out, doesn't mean I'm rich or I've got enough money to help everyone in the household"*. These constructions of the "orphan crisis" in South Africa therefore suggest a discursive awareness of findings by Schroeder and Nichola (2006) and Roby and Shaw (2006) which reveal that poor black communities are most adversely affected by HIV/AIDS such that more of their adults die from it than in wealthy and/or white communities. Not only does this result in more orphans arising in poor black communities, but it also means that those communities and extended family around them are likely to be poor as well, and to therefore have the least amount of resources at hand for their care. In this way the "orphan crisis" is *re*-constructed as a result of the cumulative effects of socio-economic deficit that have most adversely affected black communities due to apartheid and its repercussions, rather than as a result of callous attitudes held by black people towards orphans.

As such the discourse provides a novel voice amongst other discourses about CRA, through which black speakers **demonstrate opposition to negative constructions of blacks**, by countering them with constructions of blacks that are positive and that imbue them with power. As such it reveals how blacks respond to racist ideology through the strategy of *agency* that is also identified by Collier (2005) and Leibowitz et al. (2007).

This chapter on results and discussion has presented the findings from the analysis of the three focus group discussions on CRA. In the following chapter conclusions will be drawn about these findings in relation to the research aims.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS

This chapter begins with presenting the conclusions drawn from the results and discussion chapter about the ideological effects of discourses found, followed by a description of how these conclusions can be clustered and compared with those drawn from other research discussed in the literature. The implications, limitations and suggestions of the research are then discussed, after which a concluding summary is provided.

5.1 Conclusions drawn from Report

In order to draw conclusions about what the discourses identified in chapter 4 may reveal about South African society, this section highlights the main ideological implications of these discourses with regards to 'race' and racism.

Firstly the prominent use of the repertoire of "*the best interests of the child*" by both black and white participants indicates a pervasive construction of childhood as valuable and vulnerable, such that 'good' or 'socially legitimate' people will prioritise the needs of children above other social concerns. Speaking on behalf of the CRA child therefore seems to be frequently used to negate the implications that a speaker's opinion may have regarding 'race'-relations and racist ideology in the country, because (on the surface at least) **childhood is given greater social significance than 'race'**. This makes of the CRA child a useful discursive object through which 'race' can surreptitiously be commented upon.

White South Africans in particular appear to choose to couch an **essentialisation of 'race' within a liberal rhetoric of choice** that draws on ***multiculturalist*** discourses. In this way white speakers may use the discourse of "exposure offers choice" to deflect accusations of racism by constructing themselves as having a high regard for cultural diversity. They also appear to rely upon an **emphasis on white families' *relationship*-oriented resources that are based on psychologies of individualism**, to defend the discourse of "white family trumps black culture". This selective emphasis results in a relative devaluing of black culture, a positive construction of whites as rescuers of blacks,

and a detraction from the structural/material inequalities that have afforded whites the privileges that enable them to be in an economic position to adopt.

Black South Africans also appear to use the repertoire of "the best interests of the child" to construct culture as an essentialised feature of 'race' and detract from 'race'-based agendas, but the discourse of "black seeks out black" seems to serve a very different purpose to that of "exposure offers choice". Instead black speakers appear to be much more concerned with **upholding the social desirability of blackness** to maintain social power. In this way **reconstructing black as *not* inferior to white** concurrently implies that blacks are deserving of equal power and status in South Africa.

Of significance within the repertoire of "the best interests of the child", were the presence of counter voices that emerged in response and opposition to the aforementioned discourses. These appear to be used by a minority of South Africans – both black and white – to suggest that **'race' should not be the determinant for what culture a child is raised in** or exposed to and therefore **effectively to de-racialise and de-culturalise blackness**.

Secondly, participants used the repertoire of "*knowing who you are*" to construct particular meanings of personal identity in relation to 'race' and of its role in an individual's sense of well-being. By presenting these meanings of identity as representations of how identities 'naturally' exist, and placing an abstract moral responsibility on parents to make sure their children *know* this, speakers are able to detract from the racialised histories and political agendas that may underlie how they choose to view identity.

The discourse of "identity, family and culture are immutable" was used to justify arguments for exposing CRA black children to black culture by **constructing the 'true nature' of identity, family and culture as products of 'race' and ethnicity**. It is possible that the topic at hand (CRA) made it difficult to distinguish discourses of essentialising and non-essentialising from discourses of identity, and in fact it is possibly both that are explored in discussion. The discourse appears to be used less by white speakers who may be more hyper-vigilant about not suggesting that black and white groups are biologically different in any regard, as this can easily invite accusations of racism. However, some white participants' may use it to construct **white and black**

***social* ‘differences’ as naturally rather than politically derived**, allowing them to sidestep accountability for the marginalization of blacks based on culture. It also discursively excludes blacks from current economic and social structures that may have originated with Westernisation, by intimating that these are incongruent with black people’s culture.

The noticeably more prominent use of the discourse by black participants suggests that constructing identity, family and culture as innate properties of ‘race’ and/or ethnicity, may serve a politically-motivated black group agenda. With the construct of family being revered in all societies, it is possible that the **supposed *familial* relationships of ethnic groups, allows such groups access to greater legitimacy, loyalty and subsequently greater social power, than the category of ‘race’** which has lost legitimacy as a biological marker of group identity. By constructing black and white people as *essentially* different through ethnic heritage, a more compelling **black identity is defined in order to unite black people into a black group – that is, personal identity becomes defined by the social identity of ‘race’**. This black identity may be used by black South Africans to position themselves as a strong and united force relative to whites, in order to argue for equal social (and ultimately economic) status. Similarly, the discourse of “distinct black/ethnic cultures can be identified in South Africa” may attempt to preserve this politically powerful construct of a black identity by describing it in terms of black culture. This appears to be done by **describing black culture in terms of *traditional* customs that are historically located in black communities**, thereby resisting assimilation into Western culture associated with white oppression. White speakers on the other hand, appear to **describe black culture in terms of lower socio-economic status**, with the possible political agenda for doing so including a desire to protect white privilege by constructing black poverty as a natural, inevitable consequence of black culture, and ultimately of blackness.

Within this second repertoire, however, a strong resistance to essentialsed constructions of ‘raced’-identity and ‘raced’-culture appear to be present in counter voices suggesting that “difference’ is socially constructed”. These counter voices may operate in a variety of ways. Firstly, individual **identity and culture may be seen as products of *experience* and *social* engagement** such that they are *not* biological

characteristics of skin-colour or family-genetics. Secondly, they suggest that, because culture is socially constructed, its parameters change with contextual changes such that **different cultures in South Africa are neither static nor absolutely distinct from one another**. And thirdly, (although far less frequently), they suggest that salient 'differences' between black and white populations *do* exist, but are due to the cumulative effects of racism in socio-political and socio-economic inequalities, such that **supposed 'cultural differences' between 'races' may really reflect adaptive responses to their differing political, social and economic statuses**.

In the third prominent repertoire, participants appeared to attempt to distance themselves from accountability for the social and ideological effects of their 'race'-based opinions, by framing them as reflections of "***other*** *South Africans' attitudes"* towards 'race' and CRA. In the discourse of "CRA is not contentious because 'race' is not contentious" for example, predominantly white speakers (or speakers from historically more privileged group than black 'African' South Africans e.g. 'Indian') may **construct race-relations as much improved and positive in South Africa**. As such, 'race'-differences and 'race'-group concerns are insignificant, and **racialisation and racism are attitudinal problems of only the individuals adopting them**. In such a society, the status quo need not be challenged, and whites need not be called upon to contribute to any structural transformation/ integration, so long as they show an attitude of "colour-blind" acceptance towards people of all 'races'. Similarly, by constructing society as comfortable with CRA, 'race' is dismissed as being important to South Africans, such that 'race'-differences are discursively evaded and white privilege remains out-of-the-radar as a target for change.

Conversely, the discourse of "CRA is contentious because 'race' is still contentious" provided counter voices to those constructing 'race'-relations as innocuous. Participants using it constructed **South Africa as a country that is still divided along lines of 'race' in many aspects of life**. Black participants in particular placed a greater emphasis on constructing it as fraught with racist ideals, hostility between 'races' and occurrences of racism, revealing a relative silence amongst whites on the topic. By operating through the repertoire of "*other* South Africans' attitudes" towards CRA,

speakers are effectively able to have what may be some of their own fears and concerns expressed in discourse.

Based on these impressions, participants referred to four major ways in which CRA is therefore contentious for black and white South Africans, each of which revealed an underlying fear or concern about the plight of one or both of these 'race' groups in the current post-apartheid context. Firstly it was suggested that 'liberal' whites may approve of CRA as an 'humanitarian' and 'racially-progressive' act, in order to **distance themselves from 'other' whites who are considered racist, and thereby protect themselves from being held accountable for the implications of a racist history**. Secondly it was suggested that some blacks may object to CRA due to their resentment of the CRA black child's 'unfair' economic advantage over other black orphans, and possibly alluding to the way in which **redress and black economic upliftment have only markedly benefited a minority of black people**, such that the majority are still at an 'unfair' economic disadvantage. Thirdly it was suggested that some people from both black and white groups in South Africa persist in their understandings of 'race' and culture as essentially different for black and white people, such that they **perceive CRA as an aberration of sorts, one that threatens the 'natural' order of how families should be constituted and children should be raised** with regards to 'race'. Finally it was suggested that black people in particular may disapprove of CRA when it is perceived as a form of **"cultural genocide"** in that black/ethnic culture loses social prominence when black CRA children are raised in a white or Western culture, **revealing blacks' fears that they will concurrently lose social esteem and power as a distinct group in South African society**.

Finally, the discourse of " the black response is big but the problem is bigger", appears to provide a novel counter voice to the ways in which discourses of CRA constructe whites as powerful and benevolent, and blacks as helpless and callous, regarding black orphans. Black South Africans may have far more invested in using this discourse at it effectively **responds to an anticipated discursive attack on black society for 'not adopting' enough black children**. This discourse was used to **reconstruct black people as socially responsible, responsive and compassionate in the face of South Africa's "orphan crisis"** by showing how they have responded (to a

much greater extent than white society) to the needs of black orphans. In addition it was used to **deflect blame away from black society** for the large amount of black orphans in the country, by highlighting how the "orphan crisis" may be seen as a result of the cumulative effects of poverty which persists in being most prominent in black communities.

When one views the different discourses (within their dominant repertoires) in relation to the pervading question of *how important it is that a 'black' child be raised in a 'black culture'*, the following conclusions may be drawn. There appear to be two overarching "camps" of discourse, with most speakers oscillating somewhere between the two with varying effects on the bolstering or challenging of racist ideology, depending how they are used. These camps are based on *ideals* in that they reflect primary ideological thinking in what people may consider a "natural" world or way to be. The one camp suggests that ultimately, 'race' is a feature that delineates intrinsic, vital and even sacred differences between whites and blacks, and the other camp suggests that the only meaning 'race' has is through it's social construction. Whilst this second camp was certainly prominent in a variety of the more specific critical discourses that participants engaged with, it's weighting was significantly less in comparison to the multitude of discourses that seem to continue to present 'race' as essentialised.

5.2 Findings in relation to Existing Research

This section of the conclusion organizes the conclusions drawn from the results and discussion into patterns of discursive and ideological effect, and relates the discourses, discursive strategies and ideological effects identified in perceptions about CRA, to findings from social psychology's previous research into 'race'-related discourses in post-apartheid South Africa.

Firstly the current research correlates with previous findings that suggest whites (and occasionally those blacks constructed as superior to 'African blacks' by apartheid classification systems) continue to use discourse in surreptitious (and even self-unacknowledged ways) to promote constructions of whites as liberal, avoid accusations of racism or the illegitimacy of white privilege, and to subsequently protect a privileged white status. The current research identified the discursive use of *multiculturalism*

(Ansell, 2004), *liberal rhetorics of 'choice'* (Painter and Baldwin, 2004), promoting *individualistic* ideals (Collier, 2005; Wale and Foster, 2007), *denouncement of 'race' recognition* (Ansell, 2004), *avoidance/denial* of the effects of racism and apartheid (Leibowitz et al., 2007; Wale and Foster, 2007) and *"rescue" narratives* (Robus and MacLeod, 2006; Dubinsky, 2007; Wale and Foster, 2007) and thus indicating their perpetuated prominence in discourses about CRA.

Secondly the current research supports previous findings that suggest blacks are concerned with protecting a 'black group identity' in order to oppose racism, and promote the improvement of black standing in social and structural realms. This study found that many black discourses suggested a *strong identification with other blacks* accompanied by *disapproval of blacks who identify with white standards and values*, were used by blacks in discourse to reveal *black agency* in operation to oppose "whiteness ideologies" (Collier, 2005). It also found that black students appear to adopt Bulhan's (1980) patterns of *revitalization* and *radicalization* (Moosa and Frijhon, 1997) in attempts to negotiate what it means to adopt modern, urban spaces and positive features of 'Western culture' without being assimilated into it as the dominant culture. Regarding discourses utilized by blacks to construct the meaning of being black, the current research also observed how Mmotsemme's (2002) findings that *the meaning of blackness is fluid, inconsistently defined and motivated by its social usefulness in particular contexts*. It should however be noted that some black participants resisted this idea in an attempt construct black culture and 'identity' as consistent so that they may be used for group organization relative to whites. The current research also suggests that the racist meanings attached to 'different' black groups in apartheid, may be used by participants an attempt to secure for themselves some kind of social power through an *association with whites* (Stevens, 1998).

Thirdly the current research correlates with previous findings that suggest that discourses of racialisation persist in contemporary South African society, and that a great deal of these are now realized through the *ethnicisation and culturalisation of 'race'*. This suggests that social characteristics that define ethnic groups and the social norms, beliefs and behaviours that define particular cultures, have become significant markers of 'identity' that come to replace the term "race" in discourse (Essed, 1991; Stevens,

Franchi and Swart, 2006; Painter and Baldwin, 2004; Durrheim, 2005; Goldschmidt, 2003; Robus and MacLeod, 2006; Duncan, 2001).

Finally the arguments and points of interest prevalent within the literature about CRA, correlate with the prevalent discourses about CRA in South Africa that were identified in the current study. Similarities are revealed in an emphasis on the well-being and psycho-social development of the CRA 'child' and which make arguments *'in the best interests of the child.* As with the current research these arguments tend to centre around the importance of black culture for the black CRA child, with similar variations in constructions of identity relative to 'race', as well as similar inconsistencies in the meanings made of 'group identities' being noticeable (Cooperstein, 1998; Vonk, 2001; Bradley and Hawkins-Leon, 2002; Frasch and Brooks, 2003; Roby and Shaw, 2006). Similarities are also revealed in discussions emphasizing the socio-economic conditions underlying the prevalence of black orphans in Africa/South Africa (Roby and Shaw, 2006; Freeman and Nkomo, 2006; Schroeder and Nichola, 2006). However the current research's emphasis on socio-economic conditions to explain the social phenomenon of CRA was predominantly used by black participants, correlating with Ansell's (2004) finding that black speakers' highlight structural inequalities more than whites (Ansell, 2004).

Similarities between literature on CRA and findings of the current research are also found in the ways that the CRA black child becomes a socio-political object that reveals black and white social fears and aspirations (Dubinsky, 2007). Most prominently, both identify CRA narratives of "rescue" that construct white parents as the saviours of their black children (Dubinsky, 2007), and CRA narratives of "kidnap" that construct CRA as a form of 'cultural genocide' that 'steals' black bodies from black groups (Dubinsky, 2007; Hollingsworth, 1999).

The current research, however, diverges somewhat from previous research into people's attitudes towards CRA which suggested that blacks with higher education are more accepting of the prospect of adoption by people outside of their extended family (Freeman and Nkomo, 2006), that university students revealed overwhelmingly positive responses to CRA (Whatley, et al., 2003; Moos and Mwaba, 2007), and that black South Africans view 'CRA' as white people's rejection of racism and as 'race'-relations being

positively transformed in South Africa (Moos and Mwaba, 2007). Discourses identified in the current research suggest that, although positive attitudes towards CRA may exist for both black and white students, this pattern is in no way overwhelming as many discourses reveal a problematisation of CRA and how its practice reveals ways in which whites and blacks are still divided in society.

Another noticeable divergence (rather than contradiction) of the current research relative to previous research, is that the current study attempts to place a great deal more emphasis on identifying possible counter voices and novel counter voices to prominent discourses that racialise or support racist ideology. As such it highlights how discourses of deracialisation, non-essentialism, acknowledging the politics and economics of 'race' and culture, acknowledging the persistence of segregation and racism, and reconstructing blacks as bearers of social responsibility and agency, are also present in current discourses of 'race' and 'race'-relations, even if not as prominent.

5.3 Implications, Limitations and Suggestions

The current research therefore allows for the identification of discourses, discursive strategies and their subsequent social and ideological effects relative to 'racist ideology, that are prominent in South African student's talk about CRA. It reveals that processes of racialisation appear to persist in both black and white South Africans' talk about CRA and that both groups utilise constructs of **culture and ethnicity** to do this.

White people appear to be more preoccupied with multiculturalism and constructions of whites as 'liberal', to position themselves as non-racist. However they continue to enforce racist ideology primarily through discourses that detract from the structural inequalities between 'race' groups, and that allow them to sidestep accountability for the prevalence of racism or the consequences of apartheid. Black people on the other hand, appear more preoccupied with constructing blackness as socially desirable, positive, and in no way inferior to whiteness, as indicated by a greater attachment to constructs of black culture and identity that seem to be useful discursive tools in a political striving for equality. Significant counter voices to these discourses did emerge in prominent challenges to the idea that 'race', ethnicity and culture are intrinsic

and immutable features of people. Less prominent were the occasional counter voices that suggested these constructs are nevertheless pertinent, because of the ways in which they may be used to either challenge 'racially'-derived inequalities between groups, or to fuel the prominence of racist ideology in society.

As such, the findings unmask some of the surreptitious ways in which racist discourses operate in society to re-inscribe racialisation and/or protect patterns of inequality between whites and 'blacks. By also highlighting the counter voices that exist which *deracialise* and *oppose* 'racist' ideology, the research also points to discursive spaces in which both black and white people can find agency for resistance to racism, rather than be confined to roles of 'victim' and 'perpetrator' respectively.

Whilst the research does attempt to provide an in-depth and comprehensive account of meanings the three focus groups of psychology students made of 'race', racism and CRA, the extent to which these meanings or their patterns of organization may be viewed as a reflection of discourses in general society, is limited. This is because the group of psychology students who participated in the study represent a very distinct 'group' with exposure to tertiary education as well as well as principles of psychology – both of which may affect the discourses used by speakers. In addition, (and as discussed in more detail in section 3.9 on researcher reflexivity), the findings and conclusions presented in this report are limited by the specific interests of the researcher and the way in which they were organised. Issues of language, religion, education, urban versus rural upbringing, and xenophobia for example were perhaps more prominent in the discussions than was able to be accounted for in the current report. As such, the current research does not adequately address the myriad of ways in which these constructs and conditions intersect with issues of 'race', identity, racism and CRA in South Africa.

As such, it is suggested that future research into 'race' and 'race'-relations should focus their attentions in the direction of other South African contexts by including participants from other disciplines, with different levels of education and from less urbanised areas. It is also suggested that these attentions focus on patterns of racialisation, ethnicisation and culturalisation outside of the topic of CRA, so that social scientists may continue to identify (and subsequently challenge or re-enforce) how these are used by people to protect white privilege or promote the improvement of blacks'

social and structural conditions. Such research might also attempt to account for the ways in which the aforementioned constructs (e.g. language, religion, education) intersect with South Africans' understandings about self, identity, family and 'race'. In particular this research would also benefit from a greater exploration of the ways in which black and white people make meanings of the concept of "family" in relation to the concept of "ethnicity" in South Africa, and what the implications of these meanings are for 'race'-relations in the country, as well as for relations between different ethnic groups in South Africa. Finally it is suggested that further research into CRA needs to be conducted in South Africa as the current literature on CRA is strongly based on European and American contexts and therefore cannot account for the unique historical and structural conditions that underly CRA in South Africa.

5.4 Concluding Summary

In conclusion then, this study aimed to explore possible ways in which racist ideology and counter voices to this ideology are played out in discourses about CRA in the current post-apartheid context of South Africa where, it was explained, racialisation and racism persist. Understandings about 'race' and family were explained from social constructionist perspective in the literature review, followed by an account of the progression of discourses about 'race' over time in the country, as well as of research into these discourses in South Africa after apartheid. The literature then discussed the individual-, economic-, and socio-politically-oriented discourses about CRA that are prominent in literature as well as some of the research done into perceptions of CRA. Following social constructionism as an epistemological position, the next section on methods looked at how qualitative methods and techniques of focus group interviews and discourse analysis were used to collect and analyse data respectively, from black and white psychology students and following what the researcher considered to be ethically sound procedures. The results of this analysis were presented in the report section and centred on the pervasive question about the importance of black culture for a black CRA child that was found to be underlying most of the groups' discussions. These discourses tended to be formed within three overarching repertoires: arguing for the "best interests

of the child", "knowing who you are" based on various meanings of 'raced' identity, and commenting on "*other* South Africans' attitudes" towards CRA and 'race' in South Africa. The analysis revealed that while discourses of racialisation persist in the ethnicisation and culturalisation of 'race' by both black and white students, counter voices to these emerge in prominent challenges to the essentialism and immutability of 'race', ethnicity and culture, and in occasional acknowledgements of the political purpose and utility of these constructs. Finally conclusions about the social and ideological effects of these discourses were drawn, revealing how whites appear more preoccupied with appearing non-racist and with detracting from accounts of racism, and how blacks appear more preoccupied with constructing a distinct and socially desirable black identity that allows them position themselves against whites in strivings for equality. The researcher then attempted to compare these conclusions to previous studies' findings, followed by a discussion on the implications and limitations of the research, as well as suggestions as to what directions future research in the field might take.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: Vignettes

Vignettes:

(1) (Roby and Shaw, 2006)

In traditional African culture there were “no orphans”, as parentless children were cared for within kin systems. Throughout sub-Saharan Africa today, extended families are caring for more than 90 percent of orphaned children. However, with the death of so many adults, few can afford to support extra children, and those who take in orphans face worse poverty and challenges in meeting even basic needs. The once seemingly limitless network of extended family... is depleting because of migration, Westernisation, demographic changes and AIDS.

(2) (Hollingsworth, 1999)

The NABSW indicated that African American children could receive a total sense of themselves and develop a sound projection of their future only in African American families. The organisation also asserted that because human beings are products of their environment and develop their sense of values, attitudes, and self-concepts within their own family structure... black children in white homes would be cut off from the healthy development of themselves as black people... If the individual is to develop an African American self-identity, it is necessary that it be acquired in a family in which African Americans are present.
(Hollingsworth, 1999)

(3) (Moos and Mwaba, 2007)

The argument that black children adopted by white families may be at risk of losing their culture was rejected by the majority of participants. It may well be that, for most black South Africans, who until recently suffered the humiliation of racial discrimination, transracial adoption represents rejection of painful racist practices among whites. The adoption of a black child by a white person may be seen by black South Africans as the most convincing evidence of change regarding race relations in the country.

APPENDIX B: Interview Guide

Proposed questions to be asked of participants in focus groups:

- Do you have any thoughts or opinions about the extracts just read?
- What do think are the upsides and downsides of CRA in South Africa now?
    - Effects on individual development
    - Effects on identity
    - Effects on socialization
    - Effects on family systems
    - Effects on various communities
    - Effects on culture
    - Effects on society / economics
- What should parents who have adopted cross-racially consider when raising their child? Are there any particular things they should take into consideration? If yes, what and why? If not why not?
- How important are 'race', 'culture', 'ethnicity' in CRA? Do they play a role? If so what role? If not why not?
- If a person was in a position where he/she had to consider adopting cross-racially: What do you think he/she might worry about or might make him/her hesitate/reconsider? What do you think might make the idea more appealing to him/her?
- How do you think a person might feel if a family member of his/hers had a baby that they could not keep for some reason and wanted to have the baby cross-racially adopted? What might be difficult for the family? What might be comforting for them?

APPENDIX C: Head of School Permission Request

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, JOHANNESBURG

School of Human and Community Development
Private Bag 3, Wits 2050, Johannesburg, South Africa
Tel: (011) 717-4500 Fax: (011) 717-4559
Email: 018lucy@muse.wits.ac.za

Dear Head of School,

My name is Victoria Hall, and I am conducting research for the purposes of obtaining a psychology Masters degree at the University of the Witwatersrand.

My study hopes to address a need for more research into race and racialisation in post-apartheid South Africa. I am interested in understanding some of the perceptions students have towards cross-racial adoption in the country and I would like to do this by looking at opinions of students from groups that were disadvantaged by apartheid and those that were privileged by it. I will be looking at what people think about cross racial adoption in general, how they think this impacts on society, and what implications they think it may have for 'identity'.

I am requesting your permission to invite students from your school to participate in this study. Although I would prefer to approach third year or post graduate classes, I am also willing to accept access to first or second year classes should the higher ones not be possible. Participation in my research will entail being interviewed in a focus group of 6 to 10 students of the university by myself, at a time and place that is convenient for the student and the other group members. The interview will last for no more than two hours. With their permission this interview will be recorded in order to ensure accuracy. Participation is voluntary, and there are no direct risks or benefits to participating in the study. Similarly no one will be advantaged or disadvantaged by choosing not to. Students may refuse to answer any questions they would prefer not to, and may choose to withdraw from the study at any point without consequence. It is not anticipated that they will experience any distress as a result of the interview, but participants will nevertheless be debriefed at the end and referred to the CCDU for free counseling if necessary.

Because the interview involves group discussion, participants cannot remain anonymous. I will, however commit to keeping their responses confidential, and no information that could identify them will be included in the research report. Because confidentiality is also reliant on the members of the focus group upholding it, participants will be required to sign a form before the interview agreeing to not divulge any personal information shared. The interview material (tapes and transcripts) will not be seen or heard by any person at any time other than myself and my supervisor, and will be kept in a secure location in my home, to be destroyed upon my qualification.

The results of the research will be reported in a research report, which will be given to my research supervisor. Should participants require feedback on the outcomes of the research, my email address will be provided to request this and I will provide feedback to interested participants when the research is complete in the form of a one-page summary. A formal report on the research and its outcomes will also be available from the test library in the psychology department of the University of the Witwatersrand.

Please feel free to contact my supervisor or me should you have any further enquiries. Your permission to address students in your school and the names of the relevant course coordinators I should contact should this be given would be greatly appreciated.

Kind Regards,

Victoria Hall
hallv@science.pg.wits.ac.za

072 229 1302

Supervised by: Garth Stevens
Senior Lecturer – Psychology Department
University of the Witwatersrand
(011) 717-4535
Garth.Stevens@wits.ac.za

APPENDIX D: Participant Information Sheet

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, JOHANNESBURG

School of Human and Community Development
Private Bag 3, Wits 2050, Johannesburg, South Africa
Tel: (011) 717-4500 Fax: (011) 717-4559
Email: 018lucy@muse.wits.ac.za

Hello,
My name is Victoria Hall, and I am conducting research for the purposes of obtaining a psychology Masters degree at the University of the Witwatersrand.

My study hopes to address a need for more research into race and racialisation in post-apartheid South Africa. I am interested in understanding some of the perceptions students have towards cross-racial adoption in the country and I would like to do this by looking at opinions of students from groups that were disadvantaged by apartheid and those that were privileged by it. I will be looking at what people think about cross racial adoption in general, how they think this impacts on society, and what implications they think it may have for 'identity'.

I would like to invite you to participate in this study. This will entail being interviewed in a focus group of 6 to 10 students of the university by myself, at a time and place that is convenient for you and the other group members. The interview will last for no more than two hours. With your permission this interview will be recorded in order to ensure accuracy. Participation is voluntary, and there are no direct risks or benefits to participating in the study. Similarly no one will be advantaged or disadvantaged by choosing not to. You may refuse to answer any questions you would prefer not to, and you may choose to withdraw from the study at any point without consequence. It is not anticipated that you will experience any distress as a result of the interview, but participants will nevertheless be debriefed at the end and referred to the CCDU for free counseling if necessary.

Because the interview involves group discussion, participants cannot remain anonymous. I will, however commit to keeping your responses confidential, and no information that could identify you will be included in the research report. Because confidentiality is also reliant on the members of the focus group upholding it, participants will be required to sign a form before the interview agreeing to not divulge any personal information shared. The interview material (tapes and transcripts) will not be seen or heard by any person at any time other than myself and my supervisor, and will be kept in a secure location in my home, to be destroyed upon my qualification.

The results of the research will be reported in a research report, which will be given to my research supervisor. Should you require feedback on the outcomes of the research, my email address has been provided to request this and I will provide feedback to interested participants when the research is complete in the form of a one-page summary. A formal report on the research and its outcomes will also be available from the test library in the psychology department of the University of the Witwatersrand.

If you choose to participate in the study please contact me via e-mail at **hallv@science.pg.wits.ac.za**. You can also leave me your contact details and I will contact you if you have further enquiries. Your participation in this study would be greatly appreciated.

Kind Regards,

Victoria Hall
hallv@science.pg.wits.ac.za

Supervised by: Garth Stevens
Senior Lecturer – Psychology Department
University of the Witwatersrand
(011) 717-4535
Garth.Stevens@wits.ac.za

APPENDIX E: Informed Consent Forms

Focus Group Consent Form

(Interview)

I _____ consent to participating in a focus group interview with fellow wits students conducted by Victoria Hall for her study on 'perceptions of cross-racial adoption in South Africa'.

I understand that:

- There are no direct risks or benefits to partaking in this study
- Participation in this interview is voluntary.
- That I may refuse to answer any questions I would prefer not to.
- I may withdraw from the study at any time.
- No information that may identify me will be included in the transcripts or research report, and my responses will remain confidential.
- Direct quotes from the focus group may be used in the research report but that these will not include identifying details.
- The researcher cannot guarantee complete confidentiality due to this being reliant on fellow group members upholding it.

Signed _____

Focus Group Consent Form

(Recording)

I _____ consent to the focus group interview with Victoria Hall for her study on 'perceptions of cross-racial adoption in South Africa' being tape-recorded. I understand that:

- The tapes and transcripts will be kept in a secure location in the researcher's home and will only be heard and seen by the researcher and supervisor, and not by any other person at any time.
- All tape recordings will be destroyed upon qualification of the researcher.
- No identifying information will be used in the transcripts or the research report.
- Any direct quotes from the focus group material will not include identifying details.

Signed _____

Focus Group Consent Form

(Participant Confidentiality)

I _____ agree to uphold the participant confidentiality expected of me regarding the focus group interview with Victoria Hall for her study on 'perceptions of cross-racial adoption in South Africa'. I understand that:

- I will not divulge any personal information emerging in the group interview to anyone else at any time after the interview.

Signed _____