

Environmental Justice in the context of
Sustainable Urban Renewal/ Regeneration:
The case for Heritage at *Constitution Hill*

Clinton David van der Merwe

A research report submitted to the School of Geography, Archaeology and Environmental Studies; in the Faculty of Science; of the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa; in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science

JOHANNESBURG, 2004

DECLARATION

I declare that this research report is my own, unaided work. It is being submitted for the Degree of Master of Science in the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other University.

(Signature of candidate)

_____ day of _____ 2004.

Revised on 30th March 2005.

ABSTRACT

*Since the birth of democracy in South Africa, Urban Geography has experienced many paradigmatic and epistemological shifts; within Human Geography 'planning' faces various challenges in the new Millennium. Environmental management, in light of the emphasis on sustainable development, sees many urban planners and politicians strive to reconcile environmentalism with development that is equitable. The emergence of the environmental justice discourse is significant, since inter-generational justice (as enshrined in sustainable development) is a key issue, this research report used **heritage** as a lens to explore this complex relationship in regard to urban regeneration. Using a case study approach this report shows the nature and context of postmodern urban environmental management. Special reference to the significance and impact of environmental justice on the cityscape of Johannesburg is made, as this report suggests that environmental justice is a useful conceptual framework to give depth and meaning to sustainable development, in urban regeneration as a policy objective. The use of Constitution Hill as a case study placed the project in a post-apartheid South African context.*

For Cheryl
1973 - 2003

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my supervisor, Dr Zarina Patel for her great help, enduring support and steadfast, constructive feedback. My grateful thanks go to all the people and members of the public who participated in this research — my hope is that this research will, at the very least, inform and enhance our practices of urban environmental management.

I would not have completed this research were it not for the inspiration and challenge of my beloved friend; the late Cheryl-Lee Mc Intosh. Seeing this research project through was possible with the support and encouragement of Lex, Adrienne and my other friends, who persevered with me. I really appreciate it. Special thanks to Kevin and Helen for their ‘sounding board’ advice and assistance with reading of the project. To my family — Mom, Dad and siblings — thank you! Craig, your ‘running around’ assisted enormously.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CONTENTS	Page
DECLARATION	ii
ABSTRACT	iii
DEDICATION.....	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS	vi
LIST OF FIGURES	viii
LIST OF PLATES	ix

CHAPTER ONE — INTRODUCTION

1.1	General Introduction.....	1
1.2	Sustainable development vs. Environmental justice.....	3
1.3	Policy and practice?	6
1.4	Urban regeneration in Johannesburg.....	8
1.5	The use of heritage.....	10
1.6	Aims and Rationale	11
1.7	Constitution Hill — renewed urban space	13
1.8	Structure of the research report.....	15
1.9	Summary	17

CHAPTER TWO — THEORETICAL DEBATES: Literature Review

2.1	Introduction.....	18
2.2	Changing focus in South African Geography and Urban Studies	19
2.3	Urban Environmental Management; Policy; and Sustainable Development: compatible partners?	24
2.4	Environmental Justice — a new buzzword?	36
2.5	The use of heritage as a lens for environmental justice	41
2.6	Why a postmodern perspective?.....	48
2.7	Summary	52

CHAPTER THREE — METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction..... 53
3.2 Methodological approach 53
3.3 Data Generation and Collection 55
3.4 Public Surveys 57
3.4.1 Informal conversational interviews 58
3.4.2 Structured visitor interviews 59
3.4.3 Structured stakeholder questionnaires 61
3.5 Sampling..... 63
3.6 Analysis of Policy Documents..... 64
3.7 The Media; significant events and Internet Research..... 65
3.8 Summary 67

CHAPTER FOUR — RESULTS: THE PLACE OF HERITAGE AT CONSTITUTION HILL

4.1 Introduction..... 68
4.2 Blue IQ; the JDA and Constitution Hill 70
4.3 The case for heritage at Constitution Hill 77
4.4 Analysis of other data 80
4.4.1 Urban renewal/ Regeneration 84
4.4.2 Heritage 87
4.4.3 Environmental Justice 89
4.5 Constitution Hill precinct — place of heritage 92
4.6 Summary 104

CHAPTER FIVE — CONCLUSION

5.1 Introduction..... 105
5.2 Key themes explored in this research report..... 106
5.3 Strengths and shortcomings of this research framework..... 111
5.4 Conclusions and recommendations..... 112

APPENDIX 114

REFERENCES 128

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1.1	General Map showing the location of <i>Constitution Hill</i>	13
Figure 2.2	The ‘triangle of conflicting goals’ for planning and the associated problems	33
Figure 3.5	Race distribution per age group of entire sample	63
Figure 4.2	Proposed development of <i>Constitution Hill</i>	74
Figure 4.3	The <i>Constitution Hill</i> precinct as at October 2004	78
Figure 4.4 (a)	Residents of local area around <i>Constitution Hill</i> per age group	81
Figure 4.4 (b)	Visitors of the precinct at <i>Constitution Hill</i> per age group	82
Figure 4.4 (c)	Gender distribution of respondents per age group.....	83
Figure 4.4 (d)	Profession distribution of respondents per age group.....	83
Figure 4.4 (e)	Nationality distribution of respondents per age group	84
Figure 4.4.1	People’s perceptions of urban renewal	86
Figure 4.4.2	People’s understanding(s) of heritage	87
Figure 4.4.3	Most common environmental issues identified in Johannesburg.....	90
Figure 4.4.4	Environmental justice and conceptions of environmental problems	92

LIST OF PLATES

Plate 1.7:	Aerial photo of <i>Constitution Hill</i> (Pre-development, 1997).	14
Plate 3.3:	Oblique aerial photo of <i>Constitution Hill</i> from the North...	56
Plate 4.5.1	Front of the Constitutional Court of South Africa.....	94
Plate 4.5.2	Constitution Square and people-on-the-plaza	94
Plate 4.5.3	Constitution Court Chambers	95
Plate 4.5.4	Foyer of the Constitutional Court of South Africa.....	95
Plate 4.5.5	Art Gallery within the Constitutional Court Building	96
Plate 4.5.6	Entrance to the Constitutional Law Library	97
Plate 4.5.7	Doors to the outside of the Constitutional Court.....	97
Plate 4.5.8	Human rights inscribed on the roof of the entrance to the Constitutional Court.....	98
Plate 4.5.9	Remnants of Section 4 Awaiting Trial Block, now stairwells on the Constitutional Square	98
Plate 4.5.10	Temporary exhibition outlining features of the Women's Prison, opened as a Museum on Women's Day, 2004.....	99
Plate 4.5.11	View of Northern JHB, as seen from the Ramparts, Section 4 immediately in the foreground	100
Plate 4.5.12	The Old Fort Complex as seen from the Ramparts, looking South.....	100
Plate 4.5.13	Inside entrance of the Old Fort.....	100
Plate 4.5.14	Front entrance of the Old Fort	101
Plate 4.5.15	The Great African Stairs.....	101

Plate 4.5.16 Great African Stairs from the top, looking North	102
Plate 4.5.17 Entrance to Section 4 and 5: the African Men's Prison....	102
Plate 4.5.18 Courtyard of Section 4 and 5	103
Plate 4.5.19 Solitary Confinement in Section 4 and 5	103