

**PINS 1983 - 1998 AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF AN  
ALTERNATIVE DISCOURSE: TEXT AND PSYCHOLOGY IN  
SOUTH(ERN) AFRICA  
FROM APARTHEID TO LIBERATION.**

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## ABSTRACT

This study analyses the journal *Psychology in society* for the period 1983 to 1998. It does so with a view to determining whether collectively the contributors fulfilled the editors' call for the construction of discourses alternative to those of mainstream psychology, both during apartheid and after liberation. In other words, it seeks to assess whether PINS constitutes a local critical psychology in print. Mainstream discourse is chiefly understood in terms of formulations in PINS and only indirectly from my readings of mainstream publications.

Analyses suggest that, from 1983 to 1990, contributors to PINS aligned themselves with the editors' brief to challenge "mainstream conformist" psychology in "apartheid capitalist" South Africa. More than half of the articles have a critical Marxist thrust with the others given over to liberal humanist or progressive positions. Almost all the domains of psychology are represented. Black writers and women appear but in small numbers compared to their white, male colleagues. With the socio-political shifts of around 1990, a significant decline is evident in Marxist-orientated discourses and an increase in those from liberal humanist, post-Marxist, feminist and psychoanalytic sources. Africanisation also becomes an urgent issue. The dominant DA themes for the journal of "relevance", "critique", "oppression" and "indigenous" remain consistently in focus. While individual contributors cannot be said to have constructed an alternative discourse, they drew collectively on discourses mostly at odds with, or marginalised by, mainstream psychology. Some tried to include indigenous approaches to mental distress.

Although the approach adopted is critical Marxist Discourse Analysis (DA), I have incorporated "deconstruction" theory. The difficulties posed by a combination of Marxism and post-structuralism are eased by employing Bhaskar's "critical realism". This allows for the analyst to "discover" patterns of discursive features, to understand that these are also a "construction" based on assumptions and theoretical preferences, and to anchor the process in the historical contingencies of economics, power and language. The critical Marxism driving the analysis is located in the tradition of the Frankfurt School and active today in the work of social psychologists such as Ian Parker (1992, 1993, 1996). In testing my assumptions about PINS, I followed modified versions of Parker's theoretical stance and the methodological framework provided by Potter and Wetherell (1987, 1988, 1995).

## PREFACE

The whole thesis, except where specifically indicated in the text,  
is my own original work.

Signed: Mark

Date: 23 MARCH 2000

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Aims and scope of the study

In this study I analyse the discourses employed in *Psychology in society* (PINS) from the inception of the journal in September 1983 to December 1998. The overall aim is to find out whether collectively the articles/texts construct an alternative to the discourses of mainstream psychology in South(ern) Africa and constitute a local tradition of critical psychology in print. Mainstream discourse is not formulated in terms of direct comparison with texts from mainstream publications. Rather it is the constructions of the editors and contributors to PINS that are considered, as read through my own theoretical filters and commitments to a critical Marxist tradition in psychology.

From the outset, the editors argued that local psychology, in all its domains, was “conservative and conformist” and had ignored the socio-political circumstances of the country (PINS 1, 1983, p. 1). They also proposed that debate was the path to forging a more “relevant” psychology, a theoretically informed practice more suited to the majority of South Africans, with women regarded as an important part of this group. As I shall indicate more fully, “relevance” was highlighted in editorials and articles as a central concern of the journal. The editors also sought to give voice to marginalised and silenced discourses: for example, the opportunity to publish in the field was itself seen as bound to the inequitable power structures of apartheid, capitalism, and patriarchy. In consequence, this study will assess whether the constructions of “relevance” in the journal, correspond in significant ways to changes in the socio-political terrain of South(ern) Africa. I refer to “South(ern)” Africa because after 1990 tentative attempts were made by PINS to see this country in the context of the subcontinent, a trend reflecting larger moves to undo years of isolation. The quest to construct critical alternatives in local psychology, then, has to be seen as a search for “relevance” unfolding over time and in historical context.

## 1.2. Existing literature

Texts that address PINS are few and brief. Eleven issues of the journal from 1983 to 1988 received attention from Seedat (Nicholas & Cooper, 1990, pp. 22-49) in the form of a thematically organised comparison with the *South African journal of psychology* (SAJP). The aim was “an examination of the communicentric..., political, racial, gender, conceptual and methodological biases that characterised psychology” in the 1980s (p. 23). Content Analysis was the approach used. By contrast, the present study looks at twenty-four issues of the journal and adopts Discourse Analysis as its approach. The categories used by Seedat for analysis are based on broad thematic descriptions, whereas mine are based on one-word DA themes, and domain and discourse types. No direct comparison is made with the SAJP in the present study. Seedat was interested in methodological biases; this study examines discursive constructions of “relevance”. PINS like the SAJP, however, was criticised by Seedat for continuing to serve a predominantly white, male academic fraternity, a criticism that will be examined in this study.

In 1997, Durrheim and Mokeki content analysed the *South African Journal of Psychology* (1970 to 1995) with a view to establishing “the changing ways in which race issues” were dealt with by the journal (SAJP, 27 (4), pp.206-213). “Relevance” is raised as a central challenge for local psychology. In the notes to the article, however, comment is offered that “a lack of political conscience [as evidenced in the SAJP] during the early 1980s led to the publication of an alternative journal in South Africa, *Psychology in Society*, which explicitly adopted a critical perspective on psychology within the context of capitalism and apartheid” (p.212). While the article only mentions PINS in an end note, it provided valuable analyses of the chief organ of mainstream psychology for the period under review. Inter-textually, then, my readings of the constructions of mainstream discourse in PINS were filtered via these analyses.

Brief mention of PINS (1983-1994) is also made by Levett and Kottler in Deconstructing Feminist Psychology (Burman, 1998, pp. 189-190). In particular, the writers note that women number fewer amongst contributors, and that there are few articles of a feminist persuasion. They say, however, that the “national liberation movements regarded sexism as a potentially divisive issue....” and that gender or women studies and feminism per se have not flourished in

this country. This study will extend these observations by analysing articles that draw on feminist discourses.

### 1.3. Selection of texts

Given that 120 articles make up the bulk of the 24 issues of PINS under review, choosing a sample for a short study required difficult decisions. Although Discourse Analysis (DA from this point), does not give importance to sample size, the nature of my research question required that I make generalisations from an adequately representative sample. Following the DA practice of identifying recurrent **themes** in texts, I decided that “relevance” was central and, in varying degrees, allied to it, “critique”, “oppression” and “indigenous”. Where possible, then, I tried to choose texts representing these themes and to embrace as wide a formulation of “relevance” as space would allow. Moreover, to justify saying that PINS constructed alternatives to mainstream discourses, I have had to show that this applied across the **domains**. The social focus of PINS meant ready contributions from social, industrial and community psychologies. Submissions were also encouraged, however, from clinical, educational, child and counselling psychologies and psychometrics. In most cases, how far the individual was contextualised constituted the “alternative” discourse of the articles. The **inter-disciplinary openness** of PINS meant that views on psychology from other disciplines were included and needed to be represented. The journal was also open to **student contributors**. Lastly, not only had I to consider date of publication, theme, domain and type of contributor, but also the various **discourses** of the journal. Critical Marxist and liberal humanist discourses were clearly evident and dominant, but among those also in use were post-structuralist, psychoanalytic, feminist, post-marxist and populist discourses.

#### 1.3.1. Types of texts chosen

Extracts from a limited number of **articles** rather than extracts from a wider number of texts were decided upon. Arguments about alternatives in psychology can only be adequately deconstructed if the interpretive repertoires (i.e. terms, metaphors, tropes, categories) employed are contextualised in the larger rhetorical structures of discourse. One or two extracts may show

how meanings for “relevance” are constructed while not allowing for the demonstration of their larger purpose in an argument. DA is interested in “function” because it regards discourse as language in social action. Several extracts also provide evidence of variability within texts and better allow the validation process, which Potter and Wetherell refer to as, “confirmation by exception”(1987, p. 170). Exceptions do not emerge until enough material is covered to suggest breaks in regularity. Moreover, consistency and variability, central features sought by DA, emerge both within an extract and over the course of a writer’s argument. The post-structuralist view that no single reading has authority has also meant providing sufficient text to allow readers of the study to decide whether other readings are possible. On occasion, I have offered a multi-reading of texts in order to illustrate this point while introducing inter-textual comment. The “briefings” in PINS allowed counter-responses to articles, and I have included one or two of these “dialogical” texts, to use a term from Bhaktin (Holoquist, 1990).

#### **1.4. Discourse Analysis rather than Content Analysis**

Given that DA is the primary analytic tool of the study, the methodology is predominantly qualitative. The categorisation of texts across time, theme domain and discourse, resembles content analysis only to the extent that results are presented in numerical tables (see Research Methodology). No attempt at inter-rater reliability was made because decisions were based on subjective and qualitative DA principles and not quantitative countings of recurrent terms. While one could count how often features of an interpretive repertoire such as metaphor and trope (e.g. irony) appear in a text, DA also takes into account contextual modifiers and markers. This type of textual sensitivity in reading varies according to the theoretical filters of understanding and experience of the reader. For example, what one reader may construe as an expression of irony another may see as description. Post-structuralist theory suggests that a high or low inter-rater score might simply reflect the similarity or difference in the readers, but not necessarily in the texts.

### 1.5. Theoretical framework

Potter and Wetherell (e.g. 1987, 1988) provided guidance with DA but, as they indicate, this approach has none of the rule-based regularity of quantitative research and allows room for creativity of method. Thus a modified version of their ten-stage approach to DA is used in the study, the details of which are to be found in Section 3. The theoretical rationale for their methods appears in Section 2. The work of Parker and his colleagues (e.g. 1992, 1996), in particular, also contributed to my understandings of the theoretical underpinnings of DA. Questions about social phenomena - such as discourse - need explanations that hold good from a philosophical point of view as much as they provide socially emancipatory understandings. As the challenge by DA to Content Analysis suggests, discourse - the focus of this study - tends to elude tidy quantification. Qualitative research values the richness and contradictions of data rather than wanting to isolate, control and count variables in the interests of statistical neatness of answer and prediction. Ironically, the philosophy underpinning much of DA, namely post-structuralism, finds parallels in science itself. Post-structuralism's undermining of positivism's conviction that social science offers data untrammelled by subjective and social interests, draws its arguments from a solid tradition of phenomenology, philosophical scepticism and Wittgensteinian linguistics. A similar challenge, however, comes directly from Einsteinian relativity and Heisenberg's Uncertainty Principle. Nevertheless, western critical Marxism is my choice of overarching theory for the study and determines the extent and use to which I put post-structuralist deconstructive theory. I believe critical Marxism to be strong both in explanatory power, and ethical and socio-political thrust. Where it has been inadequate is in not sufficiently importing Soviet theories of language and discourse. In the west, in critical social psychology, the rise of deconstructive theory served to fill the gap. The awkward marriage of post-structuralism and critical Marxism was achieved largely by drawing on Bhaskar's "critical realism". The rationale for, and application of, what I have called a "Marxist critical realist DA" forms the substance of Section 2.. The non-indigenous nature of my theoretical framework will be discussed as a difficulty rather than a contradiction.

### 1.5.1. Interpretive foci and the contributors to PINS as “writers”

I have imposed my own interpretive foci on extracts by regularly bold printed phrases and terms to assist the reader in following my argument. I have not done this with all of the extracts because the highlighting tends to impose my view on the reader. Where I deviate from post-structuralist DA orthodoxy is in the position given to the writers of texts. Unlike many post-structuralists, I refuse to decentre the writer from the texts s/he has produced. I do not presume to arrive at authorial intention and I understand that discourse is not an individually driven entity. I wish to avoid, however, the “objectification” of individuals as mere token users of collective discourse. The “author” as creator may have disappeared but the “writer” as a type of labourer and agent in particular social worlds has not. Moreover, Marx valued creative productivity and saw it as the antithesis of the alienation that occurs in societies where a worker is divorced from the products of her or his labour (1979, p.25). Lastly, knowing the demographics of a writer inevitably colours constructions of meaning for individually reproduced discourses.

### 1.6. Presentation

Respectively, Sections 2. and 3. constitute the Theoretical Framework and Method sections. Given that in a discursively orientated study, consideration of sources is a central activity not confined to one section but presented in an ongoing way, the traditional literature review of quantitative studies has been adapted. Thus, discussion of a theoretical framework for the study is also an exposition of source texts. The articles chosen for analysis, and which make up the study proper, are explored chronologically according to the idea that the meanings attached to concepts such as “relevance” shifted in a changing socio-political context. Section 4. presents articles for the period 1983 to 1989, and Section 5. for the period 1990 to 1998. The watershed year of 1990 was chosen as a cutoff date. This had as much to do with the release of Mandela from imprisonment as to do with events in psychology, such as the Maputo Conference on Health and discernible changes in discourse within PINS. Other historical markers appear in the masthead of the journal but represent micro-shifts of editorial thinking in response to historical circumstances. Criteria for choosing texts are presented in Section 3., the Method section, prior to the detailed analyses offered in subsequent sections. The “Concluding Remarks” offer

comment regarding the “fruitfulness” of the study, more particularly of a Marxist critical realist DA in the analysis of PINS. Limitations, lacunae and possibilities for further research are also considered. Lastly, analyses of texts in the chapters entail much cross-referencing. Thus, to ease the flow of reading, full citation details will occur only once, on first reference. Similarly, the names of the writers will also be fully referenced only on first citation.

## 2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND “LITERATURE REVIEW”

### 2.1. Introduction

Although the main framework for the methodology of the study is Discourse Analysis, there are several versions depending on the theoretical sources drawn upon and the purposes served by the analysis. The version favoured by Parker is largely derived from two overarching theoretical frameworks, namely “critical Marxism” and post-structuralism and, as I indicated earlier, it is to this version that I choose to subscribe. Many of the editors and contributors to PINS also draw on one or both frameworks: so this outlining of the sources from which my assumptions and arguments are derived, serves a double purpose. Like several other texts by local academics, however, PINS was a resource for the study. It served to contextualise applications of Euro-American theory and to question uncritical importation. Theoretical discourses also abound in jargon specific to their frames of reference. In honouring post-structuralist “polysemy”, or the plenitude of the meaning of words, though, Billig, Condor, Edwards et al. (1988) suggest that terms should be allowed to develop in use rather than clarified in simple “map references” (p. 8). Nevertheless, I have chosen to offer a number of working definitions, definitions that are not absolute but hold good in particular contexts of usage. Quotation marks will be dispensed with once a concept has been introduced.

### 2.2. What is discourse?

“Discourse” as the central “object” of the study seems an appropriate initial focus. The term has been variously defined but the following map reference seems useful i.e. “discourse” is language in social practice exhibiting a recognisable vocabulary and set of categories, tropes and metaphors, partially constructing reality with a social purpose and consequences, and only making sense as inter-subjective communication (Potter & Wetherell, 1988; Parker, 1992; Ricouer, 1991). The sources for this amalgam also inform the study itself, and are best presented first from the perspective of DA and social psychology, and then from a wider ambit.



### **2.2.1. Discourse from the perspective of social psychology**

The “crisis” in western social psychology in the 1970s appears to have been around the methodological foundations of the discipline and a gradual turn to qualitative investigations. Potter and Wetherell (1987, p. 2) list the work of Harré and Secord (1972), Israel and Tajfel (1972), Gergen (1973) and McGuire (1973) as examples of this shift. They also write that their work on DA in the late 1980s represents an attempt at systemisation. It is only recently, however, that DA, qualitative methods, and discourse-based theories have gained a foothold in local social psychology. Social constructionism, in particular, seems to have attracted followers.

### **2.2.2. Discourse from the view of Potter and Wetherell**

While avoiding a definition as such, and drawing on a foundation of “speech act theory, ethnomethodology and semiotics”, Potter and Wetherell identify discourse with language in practice, and attempt in their analyses to see “how discourse is constructed to perform social actions” (1987, p.81). Very briefly, Austin’s “speech act theory” stresses the “performance” dimension of language. Thus “utterance”, spoken and written, is seen as a form of acting on the world. For instance, people argue, promise, warn, ask, claim, command and demand, inviting a response or change (Fairclough, 1989, p. 9). Ethnomethodology, in the hands of sociologists such as Garfinkel, has understood discourse to be “irremediably indexical” i.e. communication is always bound to context (Parker, 1989, p. 112). Semiotics most importantly insisted on the arbitrary nature of language’s labels and references and drew attention to the oppositions in which power hierarchies are embedded (Sturrock, 1979, p. 8). For example, the dichotomies male/female, white/black, subject/object, I/Other, science/ hermeneutics, are all often presented as privileging the first of the terms and thus producing/ reproducing discrimination.

Post-structuralist revisions of semiotics also pay attention to the “wider unintended consequences” of discourse, and Potter and Wetherell argue that this insight should supplement performance theory (Antaki et al, 1988, p. 169). They offer, as example, the way a discourse may have an “ideological effect in the sense of legitimating the power of one group over another”(ibid). Some of this legitimating power resides in the way discourse delimits thought

by means of distinctive “interpretive repertoires”, or “choices of terminology”, or “restricted ranges of terms”, or “patterns” of consistently used words, metaphors, tropes or figures of speech” (ibid, p. 172). An “interpretive repertoire is a lexicon or register of terms and metaphors drawn upon to characterise and evaluate actions and events” (Potter and Wetherell, 1987, p. 138). If the only discourses available to a group embed, say, racist and sexist values in their interpretive repertoires, it will take the formation of counter-discourses to undermine those that are dominant. In the case of PINS, it was felt necessary to produce an alternative to what it termed oppressive, “conservative conformist” discourse in South(ern) African psychology (PINS 1, 1983, p.1).

### **2.2.3. Interpretive repertoire/discourse vs social representation**

Potter and Wetherell also suggest that the concept of an interpretive repertoire functions something like Moscovici’s (1976) “social representation” (1987, p.138). That is, “it looks systematically at the organisation of phenomena which social psychologists have traditionally understood in terms of attitudes, beliefs and attributions” (ibid, p. 146). They write that “social representations are seen as mental schemata or images which people use to make sense of the world and to communicate with each other.... [they also] provide a principled criterion for distinguishing the members of different social groups” (ibid, p. 138). In other words, people share ways of thinking about, and communicating, experience. The idea is that people have opinions based on their own concepts and images of things. Their representations, however, are fundamentally social because they emerge through communication and are thus collective representations. Representation, however, assumes a cognitive level of operationalisation but, as Potter and Wetherell point out, research is “inevitably faced with discourse”, or an externalisation of cognition. Moscovici’s theory is said inadequately to account for this dimension (1987, p. 140).

### **2.2.4. Variability**

Potter and Wetherell highlight as an important feature of discourse something they have termed “variability”. The idea is that speakers and writers consciously and unconsciously vary their

discourses depending on the function or purpose of their speech or writing. Moreover, because “pre-existing linguistic resources” are drawn upon to “manufacture” their “texts” and these resources have “properties of their own” (1987, p. 171), variability is also a condition of language. Although Derrida is not mentioned, this last notion has a suggestion of Derridean “*différance*”. Discourses, in terms of “*différance*”, may be thought of as variable because they contain and construct contradictions or inconsistencies by virtue of meaning’s fundamental elusiveness and unintended effects. The categories, metaphors, tropes and terms of an “interpretive repertoire” within a discourse may be used with a recognisably consistent frequency amongst users of a similar discourse, but the meanings of each word, category, trope in particular combinations and juxtapositions are said to yield considerable variation of meaning. This is especially the case when deconstructed or understood through the interpretive repertoires of a listener or reader not sympathetic to the discourse. For example, my Marxist sympathies may prompt me to be less receptive to liberal humanist discourse, and construe meanings with a particular prejudice. Discourse is also by definition inter-subjective in process and consequence, with each interaction aimed at understanding but under conditions which frustrate it. But this is something best discussed with “deconstruction” theory.

#### **2.2.5. Parker’s challenge to Potter and Wetherell**

Parker, although also cautious of definition, describes discourse as “a system of statements which constructs an object” (1992, p.5). He derives this formulation primarily from Foucault’s post-structuralist definition of discourse as “practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak” (ibid, p.4). In his explanations, however, he criticises Potter and Wetherell for distinguishing between an interpretive repertoire and a discourse. He argues that an interpretive repertoire as “a limited range of terms feeds the positivist fantasy for an ultimate picture of a particular system, a totality of meanings” (p.11). The social sciences are conceived as open systems by qualitative, post-structurally orientated researchers as opposed to the artificially closed systems assumed by the natural sciences (Outhwaite, 1996, p.92). Thus, while I see Parker’s point, I think the distinction between an interpretive repertoire and a discourse is a valid one. A repertoire is a unit of discourse, as I understand it. In post-structuralist terms, discourse is more than a set of terms, categories, metaphors and tropes; it embraces the

contextual qualifiers of these repertoires, rhetorical features and structures. By Parker's own admission discourse is a "system", and amongst his "ten criteria" for "recognising discourse at work" he writes "a discourse is a coherent system of meanings" (1992, p.10). Thus however "open" we would like to think discourse, analysts are especially dependent in practice on the relative "closure" and regularity of interpretive repertoires, in order to make claims at all about "recognisable" discourses. Parker is also too dismissive of Potter and Wetherell's concern with "grammatical constructions" in DA (ibid, p. 11). His descriptions of such constructions as "inappropriate" and likely to get DA "bogged down in formalism at the expense of content" seem to ignore one of the primary insights of post-structuralism that content does not emerge from words alone, but importantly, from grammatical and relational context. Lastly, Parker and Burman (1993, p.167) warn that stressing variability in discourse, as Potter and Wetherell do, can undermine the adversarial potential of the "formal" discourses such as Marxism and feminism. As I shall show, however, in analysing PINS, my perception of variability is that it occurred predominantly in liberal humanist and post-marxist texts. So perhaps it depends on the significance constructed for variability as to the effects it has in DA. While I draw heavily on Parker, then, I do not do so without qualification.

### **2.3. Post-structuralist discourse theory and a critical Marxist DA**

Although Foucault and Derrida are primary sources for Parker, his several books make clear his allegiance to Marxism. What is valuable in this seeming paradox is his grappling with the difficulties posed by an attempt to reconcile a post-structuralist, discourse-focused theoretical framework, which is idealist in assumption, and a tradition whose philosophical foundation is naturalism. In my view, his "ten criteria" (1992, pp.5-22) represent, in summarised form, his efforts to consolidate on the strengths of both positions. He arrives at what might be thought of, in colloquial terms, as ideology critique with a reflexive linguistic twist. He acknowledges his indebtedness to Bhaskar, however, in achieving a working dialogue between critical Marxism and post-structuralism (1992, pp.28-29). The bridge is provided by Bhaskar's version of "critical realism". My own struggles to reconcile what seemed to be contradictory positions were significantly eased by this philosophical framework. I would like, therefore, briefly to present my understandings of the framework, before addressing Parker's adaptation and my usage.

### 2.3.1. Bhaskar's "critical realism" vs a post-structuralist "sceptical idealism"

In very simplified form, what Bhaskar (1979, 1989) seems to mean by "critical realism" is a view of reality which accepts that individuals are faced with structures or realities which are mostly pre-existent to themselves, have an impact upon them, and are relatively independent of their consciousness. This is the "realist" dimension of his theory and shares much with the formulations of Marx (Bhaskar, 1979, p. 10) and critical Marxists such as Adorno (Morrow, 1994, p. 138). Within this framework, discourse resides in the epistemological realm while dependent on the generative, ontologically real structures of language. For example, language pre-exists the individual speaker and shapes possibilities of communication. Once in social use as discourse, language continues to reside in collective use and convention rather than in individual performance. A "generative" function for pre-existing natural and social structures, such as language, thus underpins Bhaskar's perspective. Some of the structures confronting individuals can be "transformed"; most, however, are simply "reproduced" and the process relies on political and moral imperatives and interests. Knowledge of the generative structures, however, is to be acquired under conditions of uncertainty, fallibility and critical reflexivity. Bhaskar writes that his theory is, "ontologically, rather than epistemologically, geared; [while] unafraid of recognising epistemically relativist implications" (1989, p. 154). It seems, then, that he accepts a measure of post-structuralist relativism and uncertainty in epistemological terms, but insists on realism in the ontological realm. This signals his interest in grounding knowledge production in socio-historical structures, processes and struggles. Bhaskar, like Parker, declares his position as a socialist social scientist. This sort of "warranting" in the social sciences, then, seems to me to be not so much about arriving at "truth", as at knowledge that has morally and ethically defensible consequences for the majority of people. It is this key emphasis - on the social and ethical - that, as I have said, governs my own theoretical and pragmatic concern.

The "critical" part of "critical realism" assumes that individuals can achieve a reflexive distance between themselves and the structures confronting them. This reflexivity helps in attempts to change rather than simply reproduce pre-existing social structures and relations. This critical distance, however, is not the "disinterested" distance of classical philosophy and positivistic science that assumes an interest-free position. It is a motivated distance aimed at destabilising

or deconstructing unjust systems. The critical distancing of PINS from dominant views of psychology can be seen in these terms. The subject-object distance argued for by critical Marxists and “critical realism”, then, is not simply a philosophical nicety, or an “hypostatisation of separation”, to use a phrase from Adorno (Arato & Gebhardt, 1978, p.498). It is to suggest agency and the possibility of change. Hence, my insistence on the writer as intellectual labourer and agent, however bound he or she may be by conditions of uncertainty and language.

This view is opposed by hard-line “sceptical idealism”, especially Foucault’s, which argues that if direct knowledge of independent and pre-existing realities is not possible, then reference to them must be only in terms of their construction in discourse (White, 1979, p.82). The ontological idealism of this position, with its assumed subject-object identity, paradoxically celebrates the capacity of human consciousness to reflect on itself (“reflexivity”), but it allows no space for testing the process against material conditions of moral and political choice. Palmer suggests that Foucault’s “political-moral genealogies” merely “counter myth with myth” (1990, p. 26). As pointed out, the relativism of meaning and significance, means that one product of consciousness cannot be deemed more “true” than another, leaving choice, as Baudrillard observed, fairly arbitrary and unconnected to realities such as poverty and oppression (Luke, 1995, p.21). The warranting of Foucauldian knowledge often seems to reside only in its anarchistic protest against any “order of things”.

### 2.3.2. Critical realism and “texts”

As I understand Parker, the key to translating “critical realism” into an explanatory model for DA, is in being clear about what is meant by a “text”. One of his “ten criteria” claims that “discourse is realised in texts” (1992, p.7). In typically post-structuralist terms he describes texts as “delimited tissues of meaning reproduced in any form that can be given an interpretive gloss”(1992, p.6). This suggests that once an aspect of reality is given meaning, it becomes textual. PINS is conventionally textual, but a painting or cookery demonstration could also be deemed so. Discourse as a “system of statements” used to construct meaning, thus, also constructs texts/objects. Parker argues, however, that Marxists need not accept an ontological absence of a reality beyond texts, as post-structuralists do. But, once “the process of

interpretation and reflection has been started, we can adopt the post-structuralist maxim that ‘there is nothing outside of the text’ (Derrida, 1976, p. 158)” (ibid, p.7). This appears, however, to be something of a philosophical sleight of hand in the interests of retaining a Marxist ontological realism while according an idealist view of discourse and texts epistemological validity. Bhaskar’s critical realism, though, provides considerable substance for holding that there is a material world where people starve, do not have shelter and are oppressed, while at the same time accepting that the meanings constructed for these realities as texts vary and are relative to the discourses available as well as the social and economic power attending them.

### 2.3.3. “Interpretation” and “analysis” vs “deconstruction”

Having established the epistemological status of texts, I realised the “uncritical” realist assumptions of referring to reading as “interpretation” and “analysis”. As a result, other options in post-structuralist “deconstruction” theory seemed worthy of examination.

### 2.3.4. “Deconstruction”

Not unexpectedly, if discourse constructs reality in post-structuralist terms, making sense of discourse requires something that Derrida has termed “deconstruction”. Attempts at definition have included: “[it] ...undertakes a double reading: describing the ways in which lines of an argument in the texts it is analysing call their premises into question, and using the system of concepts within which a text works to produce constructs, such as *différance* and *supplement*, which challenges the consistency of that system” (Culler, 1979, p.172). It must be noted that Derrida chose to override what he called a “metaphysics of presence” in thinking about language. “Phonocentrism” is a privileging of speech over writing because speech is deemed more immediate, where meanings are considered to be “present” or co-extensive with the speaker’s thoughts. Using a metaphor from Freud (the “mystic writing pad” and memory), however, Derrida suggested that even speech is constantly “under erasure”, or is an absence with only a trace. Each utterance makes the previous one partially absent and anticipates the next one until there is very little that is “present” and directly connected to thought as we tend to

assume (ibid, p. 158). Written texts are under similar conditions of erasure and something Derrida termed “differance”.

The neologism, “differance” is explained as a play on the French verb “differer”, which means both to differ and to defer (Culler, p. 165). In Derrida’s terms, with any sign “half of it is always ‘not there’ and the other half always ‘not that’”, and hence it is always a structure of difference (1974, p. xix). Words, according to Derrida, are not “signs” as de Saussure had theorised; they are not simply “repeatable” as isolated units of language but are embedded and relational. The “spacing” or “espacement” around words, to which he refers, suggests something like the ground or “negative space” against which a figure appears or is composed in a visual image. Any juxtapositions or shifts of position within that ground changes the entire image and the meanings generated for it. “Differer” as “an act of deferring” is to delay or postpone. One understanding of Derridean postponement is that reading requires a constant suspension of meaning or sense of “presence”, as one adjusts to phrases before and after the piece of text under one’s immediate gaze. The “logic of supplementarity” at work here means that there can be “no closure on interpretation because no term or text is the bearer of a self-evident meaning. This meaning must be instituted through a further term or text, and the meaning of this in turn by a further term or text” (Dews, 1987, p. 30).

### **2.3.5. Derrida’s “play of differance”**

Jefferson writes that a deconstructive reading “tries to bring out the logic of the text’s language as opposed to the logic of its... [writer’s] claims. It will tease out the text’s implied presuppositions and point out the (inevitable) contradictions in them” (1982, p. 110). In other words, a little like the psychoanalyst, a reader attempts to make sense of the “gaps and silences” of a text, the ellipses, the things not said but alluded to, the avoided, the repressed, the contradictory, the aspects of meaning that s/he tries consciously and unconsciously to complete, construct, retrieve or compensate for. In traditional hermeneutical interpretation, the aim was to discover the author’s original intention and meanings by a careful scrutiny of a text. In Derridean terms this is a pointless attempt at “presence”, at coherence or a unified meaning. A deconstructive reading, in contrast to “interpretation”, seeks to find “the systematic



incoherences within a text” (Dews, p. 10 ) and to accept the open-endedness and frustrations of meaning and the possibility of multi-readings. Hence, Derrida suggested that all language is subject to a “play of differences, a proliferation of traces and repetitions which, under conditions that can be described but never exhaustively specified, give rise to effects of meaning” (ibid, p.172). Foucault suggests that this linguistic phenomenon reminds us that language does not “double” reality. It is not correlational or reflective but offers relatively independent “equivalence” (White, 1979, p.87).

#### **2.4. Discourse and power**

Critics of post-structuralism mostly challenge Derrida and Foucault on the grounds that linguistic relativism translates too easily into political fence-sitting. Although Foucault’s “genealogies of knowledge”, for example, centrally posit a discourse/power nexus, Palmer suggests that the Nietzschean underpinnings result in an anarchistic nihilism rather than a constructive alternative to what is criticised (1990, p. 27). In my own view, Foucault’s fierce criticisms have served to hone debate amongst contemporary critical Marxists. Nevertheless, I think Parker gets to the crux of what is anomalous about Foucault’s formulations of discourse and power. Parker writes that if discourse is entirely equated with power, as Foucault argues, and that discourse is everywhere as he says it is, then power is everywhere and thus nowhere, and resistance becomes pointless (1992, p. 18). Inequitable systems such as racial capitalism and patriarchy suggest this is not the case. Foucault also underestimated the “spaces” in discourse for resistance and the aggregation of power. Although “protest” is primarily the point of his texts, he has argued that his philosophical stance in idealism prohibits his finally taking a political position (Sheridan, 1980, p. 4). Why relativism did not also make a philosophical position in idealism indefensible, is never articulated.

In countering such a position, Parker in a sense cites Derrida against himself in the notion of “coercive texts” (1989, p. 122). While emphasising the non-referentiality of texts, Parker writes “this does not mean that what lies beyond the text does not affect what can be said. What is ‘pre-text’ insinuates itself into the contours of the text” (ibid). He quotes Derrida as saying, “ military or economic violence is in structural solidarity with ‘linguistic’ violence” (ibid). He then offers

a lengthy argument for not seeing a Derridean “play of difference” as a licence for “an endless and infinite variety” of meanings to be constructed for a text (p.123). He writes: “The relationship between the reader and the text, and the constellation of texts available at a particular time, result in an intertextual matrix which constrains and constructs what can be produced” (ibid). Further, he says that Derrida has not claimed to be a pluralist. Certainly, Derrida’s article “Racism’s last word” (1985) presents an unambiguous position on racial oppression. Parker also quotes Derrida as writing, “Deconstruction is not neutral. It intervenes” (1981, p.93).

## **2.5. Adversarial discourse: deconstruction and ideology critique**

Parker suggests that in DA, “deconstruction....[can be] used to tease apart the dominant concepts” in the discourses of a society, or even a sub-structure of an institution such as an academic discipline, and “it is tactically useful as a way of disrupting theories, [and] opening up conflicts” (1992, pp. 66-67). This does not sound very different, however, from what “ideology critique” has traditionally attempted to do, with the primary conflict being “class struggle” and the target of disruption, bourgeois ideology. Although definitions of “ideology” are “many, equivocal and elusive”, Larrain writes, “ideology arises from a ‘limited material mode of activity’ which produces both contradictory relations and, as a consequence, distorted representations about them” (1979, p.46). “Representation” itself as a concept has been questioned by post-structuralism, but to substitute the concept “discourses” would still retain the idea that ideology serves to disguise contradiction. Part of the strategy of deconstructive criticism, as Eagleton indicates, “is to show how texts come to embarrass their own ruling systems of logic” (1983, p.133). In other words, contradiction may be identified not only in a choice of vocabulary or concept but in linguistic device and form, something to which ideology critique in the west had not paid sufficient attention (1983, p.133). A deconstructive reading allows access to these aspects of discourse. To separate content from form, is to miss the possibilities and frustration of meaning embedded in the syntactical juxtapositionings of communication. Part of western Marxism’s self-reflection has been to recognise a gap in its theorising about ideology and power in terms of language and discourse. Soviet writers on language and ideology including Bhaktin (1968) and Volosinov (1973), have not always been

readily in print, in the west. It has to be acknowledged, as well, that “deconstruction” disrupted dominant discourses of liberal- humanist positivism and modernism in academe in ways that Marxism was not able to.

Unlike deconstruction, “ideology critique” is premised on the notion of a necessary “distancing” or separation between subject and object. Adorno’s work in the Frankfurt School on the subject-object relationship, however, introduces an interesting paradox into this assumption and into the contrasting stance adopted by idealist positions such as post-structuralism. A fundamental concept in early Marxism is that humankind is part of nature, a synergistic but heterogeneous whole. Adorno explains the way socialisation induces a forceful separation of “subjects” from the whole: no sooner is an illusion of domination of subjects over objects achieved, than individuals forget the forced separation and their own subjectivity, a state of partial domination by nature and one another in society (Adorno, 1969, in Arato & Gebhardt, 1978, pp. 488-490). “Ideology”, then, is also that which disguises the process. Ironically, present-day Foucauldian idealism seems to suffer from a similar sort of amnesia, but it goes beyond narcissistically imagining that reality is singularly a construct of the human “subject”, to a disownment or denial of subjectivity and a projection of power onto discourse and language - perhaps a more pathological estrangement of subject and object.

Finally, an odd twist to the “ideological” occurs in the non-Marxist writings of Billig, Condor, Edwards et al. (1988). They argue that all thought and argument is inherently based on thinking through contradiction and impasse. They write of the “dilemmatic aspects of ideology” to acknowledge that it is “comprised of contrary themes” (p.9). This contrariness, however, is said to be a virtue because it prompts thought! For example, “liberalism...contains opposing themes, whose oppositions enable endless debate and argument” (ibid). Despite turning Marxism upside down, however, Billig’s reanimation of “rhetoric”, or classical theories of argumentation, has been a valuable addition to DA. In Kantian academic traditions “rhetoric” was thought to be expunged from intellectual writings by the writer’s assuming a “disinterested” position.

### 2.5.1. Retaining “ideology” as a category in DA

Foucault writes that he finds ideology a difficult concept in that “it always stands in virtual opposition to something else which is supposed to count as truth”. He suggests that it would be preferable to see “historically how effects of truth are produced within discourses which in themselves are neither true nor false” (1984, p.60). Parker cites this challenge as responsible for the decline of ideology as a category in DA. He argues for continued usage, but adds two provisos. One is that all discourses must not be seen as ideological or “distorted”, or simply as “belief systems”. This would be to say that ideology is everywhere and nowhere, making the term redundant. It also implies that those discourses which challenge the dominant and discriminatory are also ideological and compromised. Opposition then becomes a matter of individual moral choice rather than something rooted in collective purpose and consequence. He goes on to say that the mistake is to treat “ideology” as though it is a “thing” rather than seeing it as “a description of relationships and effects” in historical context (1994, p.20). DA, then, becomes a matter of examining how ideology operates in discourse to prevent or enable groups “to tell their narratives about the past in order to justify the present” (ibid). Foucault’s words here find their way into Parker’s adapted view of ideology. In South Africa, however, where - as PINS argues - many voices have been marginalised or silenced, this view seems most apt. Morrow writes of the “partisan” nature of critique to suggest that academics take sides in what narratives are given voice or silenced (1994, p. 30). Moreover, Fairclough writes of the “naturalisation” of discourse, where unquestioned usage means that people stop recognising the political interests served by different narratives (1989, p. 92). In my own view, holding on to the concept of “ideology” helps undermine the tendency to treat what is said or written as part of a natural order of things.

### 2.6. Baudrillard: the delusion and moral ellipses of post-structuralism

Palmer quotes Marx and Engels as saying of idealism: “The problem of descending from the world of thoughts to the actual world is turned into the problem of descending from language to life” (1990, frontispiece). Similarly, Baudrillard denounces as deluded the idea that the world should be viewed simply as a text. He suggests, for example, that discourse and “texts” have

been transformed by electronic or technological imagery and models into “simulacra” or the simulations of reality of a post-industrial and information age. The dynamics of simulation is to “turn all representations into simulacra, reducing the sign to a valueless free radical capable of bonding virtually anywhere in any exchange” (Luke, 1991, p. 5). Simulation thus triggers an implosion of meaning. Baudrillard points to the danger of substituting “signs of the real for the real” as a symptom of a larger technological shift that has resulted in an internationally homogenised and opportunistic (“ductile”) culture: a culture “floating above” the “vicissitudes” of a world of referentials such as poverty, hunger, oppression, in the hyperspace of the electronic mass media (ibid, p.1). As one of the most evocative writers on postmodernity, Baudrillard says ultimately that “hyperreality and simulation are deterrents of every principle and of every objective...for, finally it was capital which was first to feed throughout its history on the destruction of every referral, of every human goal, which shattered every ideal distinction between true and false, good and evil, in order to establish a radical law of equivalence and exchange, the iron law of its power” (ibid, p. 21). Perhaps the combination of capitalism and apartheid in South Africa has made it less easy to lapse into the postmodernist illusion that violence and poverty are singularly discursive formations.

## **2.7. Post-marxism**

Post-structuralist “deconstruction” has aptly been dubbed a “hermeneutics of suspicion” (Ricoeur, 1986). The “suspicion” thrown on to the concept of ideology itself, for example, has had all manner of consequences for Marxists and necessitated a rethinking of the notion of workers’ unwitting “internalisation” of bourgeois values and thought (Larrain, 1979). Post-structuralism has unsettled “truth claims” to such an extent that ideology critique is considered redundant in many quarters, and the sophistication of workers in an information age, has undermined earlier assumptions about their being “dupes” of the bourgeoisie. As contributors to Psychology and society: Radical theory and practice (Parker & Spears, 1996) have pointed out, the impact of these realisations has meant the defection of many Marxists to so-called post-Marxism and New-Age individualistic, micro-resistances. In two books, one entitled Critical theory now (Wexler, 1991) and the other After postmodernism: Reconstructing ideology critique (Simons & Billig, 1994), several essays deal with what have been termed the “post-

marxism” of the 1990s and the “post-industrial information age”. Luke, for example, examines whether “critical theory” can survive when “conventional codes of power, ideology and resistance” have changed in ways that are “unclear, contradictory and incomplete” (1991, p. 1). Overwhelmed by images of defeat for the sort of mass resistance envisaged by Marx, many Marxists have joined the ranks of those who have no confidence in either capitalism or Marxism, and become post-marxists. This breed of intellectual has much in common with what Cloud (1994) has suggested are New Age micro-resisters. She writes that post-marxism represents a shift to a politics of “consumption, identity and everyday life” and “refuses participation in the struggles of the working class” (ibid, p. 223).

In giving historical context to the central formulators of a post-marxist ethos (as described by Laclau and Mouffe, 1985), Geras - like Parker and Stearns (1996) - comments that the generation radicalised and “won for” by Marxism in the 1960s, no sooner gained intellectual space than that same generation were roundly defeated by the events of 1968 (1987, pp. 40-82). To summarise his argument, he suggests that Marxists’ efforts increasingly became abstract theorising until the intellectual ground itself had shifted under the impact of post-structuralism in the eighties. A world of Reagan and Thatcher, Foucault and Derrida, proved a fatal combination. He suggests that a shift to a post-marxist position has been the result of intellectuals wanting to be up-to-date but not wishing to abandon all socially directed, left-of-centre authority. The term “post-marxism” has a “nicer ring”, he suggests, than “ex-Marxist” and it “evokes an idea of a forward movement rather than a change of colours” (ibid, p. 43). He also says that it is based on “a theoretical and normative void” and “all decked out in the finery of discourse theory”. The implications of a post-marxist shift for PINS will be explored in detail in Section 5. My own position remains that of a critical Marxist but one mindful of challenges to the framework. Besides, as Lyotard comments, discourse, as the “little narratives” of everyday life has superseded “grand narratives” such as Marxism in producing/reproducing culture and knowledge, with the result that the repression of the latter means they are now part of our unconscious way of thinking about the world (1984, p. xiv).

## 2.8. Implications of theory for the DA of PINS

A Marxist critical realism requires that I treat the discourses of PINS as historically located epistemological phenomena. Unlike hard-line post-structuralists, then, I do not give ontological status to discourse as wholly constructive of reality. But while I believe that discourse itself is generated by pre-existing structures of language, economics and socio-political organisation, I recognise that the meanings and significances ascribed to these structures are formulated in discourse and feed back into the larger system. Like Derrida, I tend to think of the texts in which discourse is realised as “coercive”, as participating in struggles for socio-economic dominance. Certainly the professional discourses of mainstream psychology serve to constrain what is deemed an acceptable intervention in society. PINS challenged what it called a “conservative and conformist” mainstream, but also operated within certain formal discourses with their particular traditions of assumption and warranting. Thus, Foucault’s insistence on a “genealogical” approach to discourse makes sense. To know the source of a discourse, is usually to know the broad socio-political position of the user. As one of the competing discourses in PINS, critical Marxism, warrants its inscriptions of meaning and significance against material conditions and moral and ethical consequences. As a critical realist Marxist aware of post-structuralist critique, I argue why this is not a positivistic striving for “absolute truth”. For the Marxists of PINS, then, the “crisis of relevance” faced by local psychology was as much about access to a social resource for the majority of people, as it was about the middle-class origins of psychology’s conceptual framework. As an analyst of PINS, I intervene in arguments as to what is “more relevant”, “accessible” and less ideologically compromised amongst the various positions taken against mainstream psychology. I retain the concept of ideology, I take sides. I hold that “ideas serve as weapons for social interests” (Prilleltensky, 1994, p. 33). As part of my own “relevance”, however, I also ask whether a challenge to a deeply western construct like psychology is not better launched from more Africanist-orientated discourses.

What a “critical realism” means in the actual analysis/deconstruction of texts, at a micro-level of engaging with textual “reality”, is that initially, as a “realist”, I “analyse” or “find” the patterns of terminology, category, metaphor, and rhetorical device “in” the texts of PINS. As a “critical” realist influenced by deconstruction theory, however, I am aware that the construct

of meaning and significance I place on my “discoveries” are the result of a positioned and subjective stance in discourse. The implications of this “duality” are continually explored during the analyses of actual texts. I also offer multi- and inter-textual readings to suggest the diverse, contingent and derivative nature of discourses and the positions they embody. I also attempt to tease out the “logic of the text’s language as opposed to the logic of its ... [writer’s] claims”, in order to establish “systematic incoherences” and contradictions (Jefferson, 1982, p.110). As I said previously, it is a matter of making sense of “gaps and silences”, the ellipses of a text, the things not said but alluded to, the avoided, the repressed, the aspects that readers consciously and unconsciously compensate for or complete, construct and retrieve.

## **2.9. Theory/practice**

It must be emphasised at this point that exploration of the theoretical underpinnings of the DA I employ, is not confined to Sections 2. and 3. As I proceed to analyse texts, greater depth and example will be given to the theories mentioned in this chapter. Following Marxist traditions I see theory and practice as inseparable. Or to quote Marx: “Practice... guides theory towards understanding. Simultaneously, theory guides practice towards liberation” (Solomon, 1979, p. 17).



### 3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The work of Edwards and Potter (1992), Fairclough (1989), Parker (1992), Parker and Burman (1993), Parker and Spears (1996), Potter (1996), Potter, Stringer and Wetherell (1984) and Potter and Wetherell (1987, 1988, 1992, 1995), provides guidelines for Discourse Analysis that allow a political dimension but give no hard and fast “rules” for procedure, as is the case in “scientifically” oriented research. Potter and Wetherell (1987), for example, provide what they refer to as the “ten stages” of DA, but my choice of written texts means that the stages dealing with interviews and transcription from oral accounts do not apply. Of the stages, I found the discussion of “sample selection”, “analysis” and “validation” to be the most helpful, but also to be the most problematic. As Parker rightly points out, despite the systemisation offered, a great deal of “intuition” remains to be exercised in tackling “the stages” (1992, p. 5). The following account of the process and procedures adopted in analysing PINS, adopts with modification the overall “stage” presentation as formulated by Potter and Wetherell (1987, pp.158).

Potter and Wetherell (1987) make “coding” stage six but I would suggest that this occurs first, at stage two prior to “sampling”, and recurs several times until a manageable “body of instances” has been arrived at. For example, in deciding that PINS represented an “alternative” set of discourses to those of mainstream psychology, I was initially guided by what the authors call “themes” (in Smith et al, 1995, p. 87), or concerns, that seem to repeat themselves more than others amongst the texts. These I identified as “relevance”, “critique”, “oppression” and “indigenous”. It is recommended that the analyst be as “inclusive as possible” in collecting instances from texts (1987, p. 167). Having done this large sweep, however, I found myself with far too many and diverse pieces of text for detailed analysis. As I explained in the Introduction, selection had to follow even more specific criteria.

#### 3.1. Selection of texts

With 120 articles across 24 issues of PINS, a careful selection of articles and extracts was required. Book reviews were excluded. What PINS termed “briefings” were included because

some were responses to articles. Particular interlocutors or addressees rather than assumed ones allowed what Bhaktin called the “dialogical” aspects of discourse to be explored (Holoquist, 1990). The briefings also contextualised other texts because of the information they provide about conferences and events at the time. Selection is the most controversial aspect of method in DA. Sample size appears not to be critical. Potter and Wetherell (1987) refer to “sample selection” as “stage two” in DA, with “stage one”, the formulation of the research question. They write,

There is a danger of getting bogged down in too much data and not being able to let the linguistic detail emerge from the mountains of text. If one is interested in discursive forms, ten interviews might provide as much valid information as several hundred responses to a structured opinion poll....For discourse analysts the **success** of a study is **not in the least dependent on sample size**....the value or **generalizability** of results depends on the reader assessing the importance and interest of the effect described and deciding whether it has vital consequences for the area of social life from which it emerges and possibly for other diverse areas...The **crucial determinant** of sample size...must be...the specific **research question**....It is [also] simply a case of giving a clear and detailed description of the nature of the material one is analysing and its origins (pp. 161-2).

The research question posed by this study is whether PINS constructed “alternative discourses” to those of mainstream South African psychology and, in the process, forged a local “critical psychology”. The journal has been open to all domains of psychology. To say that “alternatives” had been offered would be to suggest that the full spectrum was represented in PINS. The research question demands, then, that it be established whether PINS provides this coverage and, if it does, that texts from each domain be selected. The first of these tasks was not difficult, based as it was on the “number crunching” generally eschewed by qualitative research. I identified the domain from within which a writer seemed to be operating, allocated articles accordingly, and counted the instances of each domain. What is valuable about the table that follows, is how apparent are the near absences of certain domains, despite specific editorial calls. Educational Psychology, Family Psychology and Psychometrics are clearly under-represented.

Table. 1. No. of articles in each domain/division of psychology

Domain	Division	No. of articles - pre-1990	No. of articles - post-1990	% of total	
Clinical	General	5	6	8	10
	Child	6	2	10	3.5
	Cognitive	1	0	1.5	0
	Family	0	1	0	1.5
	Psychoanalytic	1	12	1.5	21.5
Counselling	General	1	0	1.5	0
Community	General	8	9	13	15.5
	Cross-cultural	1	1	1.5	1.5
Social		11	13	18	22.5
Educational		1	0	1.5	0
Industrial		8	0	13	0
Psychometric		2	1	3	1.5
Research	Philosophical	17	13	27.5	22.5
TOTALS		62	58	100%	

Categorisation to facilitate “generalisation” has also been used to identify how many articles draw upon certain broad, politically- driven, theoretical frameworks and discourses. If claims are to be made about PINS as an intellectual force and resource in psychology, it seems necessary to establish whether the majority of articles adopt clear-cut adversarial discourses. DA argues that texts draw on existing resources, some of which a Marxist would say are “ideological” in nature. Academic texts are virtually defined by the activity of demonstrating a knowledge and use of recognised canons of thought and discourse. DA also argues, however, that numerical analysis is reductive and “restricts” inconsistencies and contradictions through “gross categorisation” and the search for consistency (Potter & Wetherell, 1987, p.41). One of DA’s virtues is its emphasis on variability and difference in discourse rather than on seamless coherence. Parker, however, lists “coherence” as a criterion for recognising discourse, by which

I understand “relative” systemisation (1992, p. 11). The following table offers the results of categorisation across discourse.

Table 2. No. of articles per discourse/theoretical perspective

		No. of art. - pre-1990		No. of art. - post-1990	
		Explicit	Implicit	Explicit	Implicit
Critical Theory	Africanist	1	0	0	1
	Foucauldian	2	1	4	0
	Marxist	20	13	5	2
	Post-marxist	0	0	0	7
Liberal humanist	General	0	21	0	29
Feminist	Marxist	1	0	0	0
	Liberal humanist	0	1	7	0
Conservative		0	2	0	3
Total No. Articles		24	+ 38 = 62	16	+ 42 = 58

The criteria for determining the allocation across discourse have meant that where interpretive repertoires and reference lists did not point to specific affiliations but had an overall tenor of left or progressive argumentation, then an implicit Marxist or liberal humanist perspective would be respectively ascribed. Explicit positions are always signalled unambiguously. Where categorisation became difficult was when a feminist discourse was clearly evident but a larger political alignment only indirectly discernible. In such cases an “implicit liberal feminism” became the best compromise category. A similar issue arose with an Africanist determination. In the end, the relative weighting of Africanist and other commitments had to be adjudged. By Africanist, it was taken to mean a position where the writer ascribed African values and tradition as the measure of appropriateness. Many writers wrote of “relevance” but tended to suggest a modification of western theory and practice rather than a forging of something utterly African. In such cases, either an implicit Africanist category was assigned or a liberal humanist or Marxist or Foucauldian one, depending on the dominant interpretive repertoires.

As the table suggests, then, in the pre-1990 period explicit Marxism predominated in the discourses of 33% of the contributors to PINS with another 56% split between two-thirds implicit liberal humanist and a third implicit Marxist discourses. Africanist, Foucauldian and conservative voices about equally share the remaining 11% of the 62 articles. In the post-1990 period, a major shift is evident with implicit liberal humanist discourses representing 49% of the 57 articles, implicit liberal feminism another 17.5%, and Marxist discourses (now mostly implicit “left” and post-marxist) representing 24.5%. The greater share of the remaining 9% represents what I would deem an implicitly conservative voice mostly in negative response to more radical articles. There is one article from an implicit Africanist perspective and four from explicit Foucauldian perspectives. How far some of the implicitly “left” articles may be termed post-marxist, and on two occasions populist, is debatable, but these issues are teased out in the analyses of actual articles.

### **3.3. Analysis of texts: content and linguistic construction**

Under “stage seven” Potter and Wetherell write of identifying the organisational features of texts and that this takes much reading and re-reading (1987, p. 168). They advise first searching for patterns in the data in the form of variability and consistency, and then forming hypotheses about the functions and effects of the patterns. The line by line coding of texts is said to assist decisions about the way meanings and argument are constructed. Although social psychologists tend to downplay details of linguistic construction in their focus on content, in practice they pay attention to the sort of syntactical issues outlined by linguists such as Fairclough (1989). He supplies clues to the workings of discourse which allow an analyst to identify implicit “positionings” when the obvious markers are not readily discernible. Extensive guidelines are offered for recognising how “features of vocabulary, grammar and punctuation....contribute to our understanding of power relations and ideological processes in discourse” (p. 109). As I argued in Section 2., not paying attention to a choice of syntactical “feature” is to suggest that form and content are separable. In addition, Eagleton stresses that meaning is “over-determined” in a text (1983, p. 129).

### 3.4. Validation

Four main analytic principles are outlined by Potter and Wetherell for validating an analyst's readings, namely, "coherence", "participant's orientation", "new problems", and "fruitfulness". Under "coherence" the writers explain that a "set of analytic claims should give coherence to a body of discourse" (1987, p. 170). Analysis should also "let us see how discourse fits together and how discursive structure produces effects and functions. If there are loose ends, features of the discourse evident in the data base which do not fit the explanation we are less likely to regard the analysis as complete and trustworthy" (ibid). Both broad patterns and "micro-sequences" should be accounted for. Exceptions are especially important in the assessment of coherence, and the writers refer to what they have termed "confirmation through exception". By this they suggest that if regularities appear and a special purpose is hypothesised for them, then it is necessary to see whether there are any exceptions to the pattern or regularity. They argue that if this is done, the "explanatory scope of a scheme" might be confirmed. In other words, if I hypothesise that the texts I select from PINS treat, say, "critical theory" from a similar perspective, but that I find one text in which this is not the case and no unique feature to account for the difference, then my schema may have to be revised.

The validating principle of "participant's orientation" requires that the analyst examine phenomena which have "genuine consequences for people's social lives" (ibid, p.170). Potter and Wetherell assume that the analyst has recourse to the producers of texts and that questions may be asked of them to "warrant" conclusions that are drawn. This poses something of a problem for validating my analyses of PINS because there are so many writers involved. The principle entitled "new problems" is explained in rather vague terms, but I gather that the resources drawn upon by the contributors to the journal may not only "solve" certain conceptual difficulties, but may also suggest new issues or problems. It seems that if I find this to be the case in my hypotheses then I am on the right track about the identity of the resources used. In other words, consistency may be found in the problems posed by the application of certain theoretical resources in the texts under scrutiny.

The last of the four principles, “fruitfulness” is less vaguely explained: “This refers to the scope of an analytic scheme to make sense of new kinds of discourse and to generate novel explanations” (1987, p.171). I believe that my analysis of PINS will yield fresh insight, and create new ways, via published interventions and debate, of thinking about local psychology in print. Perhaps validation also depends on the degree of reflexivity exercised in analysis, in which case Parker and Burman’s Discourse analytic research (1993, pp. 155-172) with its chapter on what they term the “thirty-two problems with DA”, has proved particularly useful for the study. I have mentioned their cautioning against a DA which is divorced from a moral/political purpose, that offers too much self-disclosure at the expense of giving space to analysis of actual texts, and that permits “variability” to fragment a discourse to such an extent that its adversarial import is undermined.

### 3.5. Summary

In short, I have selected eight articles from the period 1983-1989 and nine from the period 1990-1998. I shall subject to deconstructive discourse analysis a number of extracts from within the articles concerned with the themes of “relevance”, “critique”, “oppression” and “indigenous”. Each article is marked by its representativeness in terms of date of publication, domain and discourse. In addition to experienced academic contributors, I have included two student contributors. Contributions from three academics in disciplines other than psychology have also been given attention. Appendix C. tabulates the contributors’ names against the dimensions of date, theme domain and discourse. Details of the texts I have chosen for analysis are provided near the beginning of the following two sections of the study.

#### 4. PINS 1983-1989

##### 4.1. Constructing a critical psychology in the context of apartheid South Africa.

Talk of “relevant psychology” and “the crisis in psychology” is increasing in psychological circles in this country. The editors would like to see this new journal contributing to serious debate and understanding of a psychology which is clearly at a cross roads. Discontent with mainstream psychology - or to use Russel Jacoby’s telling polemical phrase, “conformist psychology” - is something which is becoming ever more apparent in the hallowed corridors of South African psychology departments (Editorial, PINS 1, Sept. 1983, p.1).

These are the opening lines of the first editorial of PINS and typify the “fighting talk” of the first six years of the journal. What are mapped are some of the targets of the “serious debate” and “discontent” that the editors indicate will be the focus of the articles or texts to follow. The main target is identified as “mainstream ...conformist psychology...in the hallowed corridors of South African psychology departments”. Jacoby’s “polemical” use of language is both noted and emulated, and what is clear is the desire to provoke opposition or to rally travellers to the cause. The Concise Oxford Dictionary (1983, p.793 ) indicates that the Greek root of polemic means war! Already, then, an adversarial stance and type of discourse is initiated by the editors. When “crisis” is declared, moreover, it generally points to a situation that has been recognised by many as unacceptable or problematic.

##### 4.1.2. Events signalling crisis

In 1983, in the same year that PINS was inaugurated, the Psychological Association of South Africa (PASA) was formed out of the two bodies that were dissolved in 1982: namely, the South African Psychological Association (SAPA) and the Psychological Institute of the Republic of South Africa (PIRSA) (Raubenheimer, 1993, p. 170). As Louw suggests, however, “one can only speculate why this occurred. Perhaps it became increasingly difficult for the profession to negotiate with other professional bodies from a divided position” (1987, p. 349). He adds that “reform” was becoming part of government rhetoric and the exclusion of black psychologists from the associations would be an anomaly. To complicate matters, however, and pointing to an earlier part of local psychology’s history, Foster, Nicholas and Dawes write that, “PIRSA



was founded specifically in 1962 as a breakaway body from SAPA [a united association] in order to exclude black membership. In other words, PIRSA was formed to provide support for apartheid” (1993, p. 173). With this sort of legacy, it is not surprising that, apart from the formation of PASA in 1983, the Organisation of Appropriate Social Services in South Africa (OASSSA) was established as a cross-disciplinary forum for “progressive psychologists, psychiatrists, social workers and other individuals interested in relevant social and health services” (Vogelman, 1987, p.24). While PASA apparently regarded “crisis” as disunity amongst psychologists, it was also seen by 1990 as siding with the apartheid regime and silent about widespread abuse (Foster, Nicholas & Dawes, p.173). At the same time, OASSSA found itself challenged by the mostly black Psychologists against Apartheid grouping formed in 1989, for “marginalising black male and female professionals” (Nicholas & Cooper, 1990, p. 38).

#### **4.1.3. The challenge formulated as a crisis of “relevance”**

As to what the “crisis in psychology” might mean for progressive mental health workers is to be found in the opening statement of PINS, cited earlier. “Crisis” is linked to “relevance” and then to “hallowed” university corridors. By late 1983 - coincidental with the first issue of PINS - some academics were prepared to examine the thinking fostered by training institutions. Questions about a “relevant psychology” regularly appear in the journal, often noted in titles, and signalling a preoccupation of dissatisfied psychologists. The formation of OASSSA was the most obvious sign of the need for action as well as words. In 1983 the Natal Industrial Psychology Group (NIPG) was formed because of a burgeoning interest shown in industrial psychology (Nzimande, 1985, p. 97). It seems that five institutes were set up by PASA to represent the fields of “research and methodology, industrial psychology, counselling and community psychology, clinical psychology, educational psychology, private practising and forensic psychology”. These, however, dealt mainly with policy matters (Raubenheimer, p. 170). The NIPG, by contrast, was a regional group keen to encourage grassroots discussion, to “focus on relevant issues”, and “to recognise and accommodate the wider social determinants of people’s behaviour, outlook, attitudes and experience within an organisational setting” (Nzimande, pp. 98-99). This was in reaction to the tendency of “mainstream industrial psychology” to be “asocial” in its approach. As noted earlier, the title of PINS (*Psychology in*

*Society*) is significant because it locates psychological phenomena in the social and challenges “asocial” formulations. One might also add “apolitical” and “scientistic” judging by articles by people such as Biesheuvel (1987) who is described by Foster and Dawes as the “doyen of South African psychology” (1993,p.174) and hence a leading spokesperson for mainstream psychology.

#### **4.2. The central themes of PINS and the contributors who address them**

Discussion in the study will be mostly anchored to “relevance” and “critique”. “Critical theory” referred to, and favoured, in editorials of PINS, will be examined under the theme of “critique”, specifically in the analysis of the articles by critical Marxists Ivey and Dawes. As was shown in Table 2. in the Research Methodology section, the weighting of discourses for the pre-1990 period, shows a 60% Marxist or left orientation, with the rest split between liberal humanist, Africanist, Foucauldian, feminist, and conservative positions. Possible reasons for this distribution will be explored when specific texts are analysed.

Moreover, as the editors write, the “crisis of relevance” was a consequence of South Africa’s “crippling apartheid society”, and of the failure of mainstream psychology adequately to oppose the “oppression” of the country’s black majority. Thus, as a corrective, many articles attend to matters such as the effects of political and state “oppression” of children, conscripts, detainees, women and workers. For a large number of the contributors, prior to 1990, state violence was closely allied with capitalist exploitation. The articles by Nzimande, Dawes, Ivey and Anonymous argue for this view. For a smaller number, for example, Levett, these forces were linked with patriarchy and seen particularly to oppress women and children. In questioning what a broader South Africa might want from psychology, several writers, such as Dawes, also challenged the efficacy of psychologies forged outside of local contexts and cultural formations. The pressures to “indigenise” and problems with “Africanisation”, however, are described more than explored in the period under review. Thus, along with focusing on “relevance” and “critique”, the sub-themes of “oppression” and “indigenous” are also examined.

In an attempt also to analyse texts representative across time, domain and contributor type, I have also included Savage, a sociologist, who discusses the “relevance” of research and

“critique” under apartheid within “radical” liberal discourse. Coldwell provides a challenge to Nzimande’s Lukacsian critique of mainstream industrial psychometrics, and does so from what I describe as a “conservative” position. Anonymous is a counselling psychology student and introduces certain “populist” interpretive repertoires into an otherwise Marxist discourse. Ivey’s article represents canonical critical Marxist discourse, and the Frankfurt tradition of opposing mainstream clinical psychology with a combination of psychoanalytic models and critical theory. Levett’s text represents implicit liberal, feminist discourse, child psychology and a Foucauldian social constructionism. Lastly, Perkel’s article represents attempts to make clinical practice more relevant to communities other than a white, middle class. I also argue, however, that his article is useful in that it displays considerable variability, with a Marxist interpretive repertoire awkwardly appropriated into liberal humanist discourse. In other words, I have tried to include texts that tap the major preoccupations and challenges of the pre-1990 period.

### **4.3. THE EXTRACTS**

#### **4.3.1. Liberal humanist discourse: “relevance” and “critique” in psychology from a sociologist - the restraints on research in apartheid South Africa**

While I laud PINS for its inter-disciplinary openness, I was surprised to find as the first article of the journal a lengthy text by sociologist Michael Savage of the University of Cape Town, entitled “Constraints on research in sociology and psychology in South Africa” (September 1983, pp. 21-58). The boldness, however, of having an outside opinion from the start seems in keeping with the provocative style of the first editorial. And, in the spirit of the sort of dialogue hoped for by the editors, Grahame Hayes responded in the “briefings” section of PINS 2 (January, 1985). Savage basically argues that “in South Africa the authoritarian political system and a deeply divided social structure have interacted with one another to create a climate which is inhospitable to free-ranging social enquiry [and] critique”(p. 21).

He identifies as part of the problem the “de-emphasis” of theory in courses of sociology, for example, or the teaching of a “conservative brand” of it. He adds, however, that while Marxist analyses would have been valuable, censorship prevented access to relevant texts and inhibited “bold and innovative” teaching. An interpretive repertoire celebrating a particular type of

discourse but cautious in the face of political pressure, presents confusion of expectation. It also provides, however, a clue as to what might predominate as a discourse. As numerous articles in PINS testify, Marxists generally are not intimidated by external pressures, and Savage himself indicates that courses in Marxism continued at certain universities. His article is useful, then, not only from a DA perspective but also as an historical placing of the attempts by the editors of PINS to open a space for radical or Marxist discourse in a climate unconducive to such efforts. Although the eighties witnessed some of the most united attempts at confrontation with the apartheid regime, the backlash was harsh repression, culminating in 1985 in the first “state of emergency” and further laws to enforce silence and submission (Foster, PINS 6, May 1986, p. 50). The “reformist” moves represented by the establishment of the tricameral parliament in 1983 were seen by radicals as a holding position against black majority rule. Reform soon flagged in the face of widespread protest and confrontation. Savage goes on to write:

A growing battery of **informal and legal restraints** have emerged to circumscribe **freedom of enquiry** and are ensuring that certain topics remain ‘**off-limits**’ to all but the **boldest or most foolhardy** of researchers. The **restraints** that the society has placed on academic research and analysis are **severe** and frequently make it easier for **free-ranging analysis and research** into South African society to occur outside of the country, where **access** to books and periodicals is not limited by **censorship** and where **open debate from all viewpoints** is possible. Yet in what follows it will not be claimed that severe internal restraints alone are responsible for the **apparent reluctance** on the part of most researchers to take on analysis, in their writing and teaching, of many of the **most socially relevant and historically significant** questions about South African society. Social scientists, like other members of this society, are limited and restricted by **norms, values and socially determined perceptions** of the South African social structure, with the result that such questions often do not even occur to them. **Too few** of them are able, or have been **trained, to stand ‘outside’ their own linguistic or ethnic setting** to examine the **causes** of the development and underdevelopment of their own **society**, its inner tendencies and the forces within it that may lead to its **transformation**. In short, constraints on social research in South Africa spring from the **authoritarian nature**

of society and from the 'trained incapacity and professional psychosis'  
of many social scientists working within South Africa (pp. 21-22).

Thus, while Marxism is praised just prior to this extract, there is little in the interpretive repertoires here that is even implicitly Marxist. And, this holds for most of the article. There is certainly no use of canonical concepts and terms, for the time, such as "ideology", "hegemony", "economic forces and relations", "false consciousness", "contradiction" and "dialectical". This is not to say that jargon-filled texts are more persuasive of a "radical" position. Perhaps Savage has adopted a measure of self-censorship in order to deter external constraint in the manner recognised by Foucault's panopticon analogy (1984, p. 206). Whatever the case, in addition to an absence of a Marxist interpretive repertoire, regular references to South Africa as an "authoritarian" society, although evocative of the Frankfurt School's famous studies, are not followed up by direct comment to this effect. Savage's respect for "bold and foolhardy" Marxists, however, does rule out labelling the discourse used as "conservative". Nevertheless, there is evidence in the extract of another type of interpretive repertoire and discourse. Phrases like "freedom of enquiry", "free-ranging analysis", "open debate", "stand 'outside' their own linguistic and ethnic setting", all suggest the influence of liberal humanism. Marxists and conservatives alike are highly sceptical of the sort of "freedom" that liberals cite so often but seldom analyse in the context of the "unfreedoms" of the majority of people under capitalism.

In isolation, phrases such as "freedom of enquiry", "open debate" and so on, could also be part of Marxist or feminist interpretive repertoires. Put together, however, and in the context of the text's larger argument, they signal another source. Academic liberal humanist discourse aimed at social critique invariably constructs meanings around the principle of "freedom", and holds to the idea that there is such a thing as a "disinterested" view that can take a researcher "outside" of his or her "linguistic or ethnic setting". In contrast, Marxists adopt a critical distance but do not assume an interest-free position. The point is, though, that these sentiments coupled with Savage's larger arguments, shift the text's interpretive repertoire firmly into the context of liberal discourse.

In response to Savage, Hayes (PINS 2, 1985) writes that while the text is focused on arguments about the social structures and agencies which impose restraints on academic research, relevance

and debate, and logs up historical information in support of its claims, there are few analyses that “include the social relations which sustain the particular effects of that kind of society [i.e. apartheid capitalist society]” (1985, p. 92). He also says that Savage “presents apartheid primarily as ideology, rather than in the materiality of its social relations” (p.93), and that there is “the implication in his article that if the constraints of apartheid on social research are removed all will be well in the social sciences” (p. 94). Hayes sees this type of view as a “fundamentally idealist notion of the relationship between science and society” (ibid). He argues that in emphasising the censorship, bannings and restrictions, Savage is emphasising the “external constraints” of “racial capitalism” and failing to examine “the (internal) social relations of the scientific production process”. Savage is seen to be suggesting that individuals would leap to a relevant research were societal restraint to ease, and to be failing to show how deeply individuals are enmeshed in a collectively and materially produced and reproduced system. Sociology and psychology also seen as discrete, whatever Savage’s claims to the contrary, and the society/individual dualism of liberal scholarship is left unquestioned.

In performing DA, then, it is not enough to locate overt and positive references to a particular discourse, or even to find a few signs of an interpretive repertoire. Eagleton stressed that “meaning” is “over-determined” in a text (1983, p. 12). It is thus necessary - as Hayes demonstrated - to permit the deconstructive approach to suggest what is implicit, left unsaid, is assumed, or rests on a logic in contradiction with an apparent allegiance. Hayes’ text also provided an example of inter-textual “dialogue” in PINS and a reading other than my own.

#### **4.3.2. Marxist discourse: “Relevance”, “critique” and “indigenous” and an “alternative psychology” - an industrial psychologist on psychometrics**

Bonginkosi Nzimande, who in 1985 was attached to the University of Natal, Durban, entitled his article, “Industrial psychology and the study of black workers in South Africa: A review and critique” (PINS 2, 1985, pp. 54-91). It looks mainly at the significance of the psychometric testing of black workers. The article is of interest not only because the writer entertains the notion of creating an “alternative industrial psychology” (p. 55), but also because he presents a voice mostly silenced in South Africa of the mid-1980s. Moreover, while there are articles in PINS directed at a critique of psychometrics in this country (e.g. Tyghe, 1985; Bedford &

Cassidy, 1985), they represent only about 1% of the total contributions. Sehlapelo and Terre Blanche (PINS 21, 1996, p. 50) indicate that, since the 1960s, psychometrics has not featured much in mainstream journals. Yet, “the HSRC sells more than 105 000 answer sheets annually...in the 1970s as many as 10 000 workers were tested monthly in the mining industry alone...and 91.7% of large companies...use psychometric tests to select artisans”. They add that “psychology touches the lives of more South Africans through testing than in any other way”. Thus, the need of a “critical discourse” directed at psychometrics remains of considerable importance. Psychometrists have their own association and conferences, but seem to have only recently started to ask questions about “relevance” (ibid). As Nzimande says, before an “alternative” can be constructed, critique is necessary to clear the way. Given that “no critical evaluation” of studies on black workers had been done at the time of his writing, what the alternative might be, he suggests, could only be tentatively offered.

He opens his text with a statement about having “painfully watched how industrial psychology in South Africa has over the years, avoided or deliberately ignored some of the critical areas relating to the study and understanding of black workers” (1985, p.54). He adds that when this group has been addressed, studies have been “biased in favour of management”, have been “simplistic” in their conclusions about black workers’ experiences, and have been mostly conducted by white academics thus giving the impression that “whites are ‘experts’ on blacks” (ibid). From the outset, then, Nzimande’s critique is framed in terms of the black/white divide and the “irrelevance” of existing studies on black labour. His path through this critique is to examine the studies he calls into question, first in terms of “methodology” and then “findings”. Nzimande launches his criticism within the framework of identifying the shortcomings of positivistic and quantitative psychology. He says that this type of psychology “restricts and excludes sensitive information”, but then leaves it to the reader to gather what this means from the cumulative argument of his text. An extract which is fairly typical in discourse, follows:

The laboratory experiment is one of the **most dangerous techniques** ever to be used in studies of black workers by industrial psychology. First of all why should the psychologist worry about setting up a **simulated work organisation**, when **real organisations**, where production takes place are there, and have been with us for so many years? Is it not a **waste of time** to try and do the **impossible**, ‘creating’ a work organisation that

can never reflect all the social processes of production inherent in real industrial organisations? The laboratory experiment is so **artificial** and **useless** that it is a positive sign to observe this technique is **on the decline** in industrial psychological studies of black workers in this country. For instance, the way the experimenter structures the simulated factory has a **definite influence** on the type of results produced. Factors included, or rather excluded, in the simulated environment will also **result in** particular behaviours manifested. The result of the experiment will therefore be **nothing more than a reflection** of how far the experimenter's **imagination** could stretch (pp. 59-60).

Polemical statements such as “the most dangerous techniques ever to be used” are not supported. Rather, a dichotomy is set up between the “real” and the “artificial”, and the dominance of experimenter over the worker subject. A discourse of “absolutes” such as “most dangerous”, “never reflect all”, “impossible”, “waste of time”, “so artificial”, “useless” and “nothing more than”, cumulatively serve to denounce positivistic testing, and is at variance with traditional academic expectations of “neutrality” and the rational moderation of emotion. This type of discourse, usually found in colloquial use, nevertheless, succeeded in provoking responses to the article. Discourses, as DA emphasises, are performative or do things (Antaki et al, 1988, pp. 168-171).

#### 4.3.2.1. A Lukacsian discourse of “reflection” and the “mirror” in constructing “relevance”

Although a Marxist interpretive repertoire is not overtly drawn upon, a Lukacsian view (Callinicos, 1983, pp. 70-80) that the material products of thought should “reflect” or “mirror” the world informs Nzimande’s vocabulary and assumptions. And, as a reader, I invoke a form of inter-textuality in summoning up associations elicited by the writer’s opposition of the “mirror” to the “simulation”. There is an echo for me of Baudrillard’s distaste for postmodern simulated realities. Ironically, long before his notion of the simulacra, positivism - so much part of a “modern” research- had relied heavily on simulation in the name of scientific objectivity and control. The virtue made of excluding certain variables, however, is seen by Nzimande as the cause for the failure of assessments to capture the complexity of black workers’ experience. Baudrillard also lamented the loss of “depth” in a world where “models” and formulae are



mistaken for reality. Nzimande looks at statistical techniques, and says they lack efficacy and offer a “biased and shallow understanding of a person’s **total** work experience” (my emphasis links the comment back to Lukacs) (ibid, p. 59). He remarks that these forms of testing rely on methods and terminology that “prestructure” subjects’ responses and depend on the “discretion of the researcher to deduce why some factors are ranked lower or higher than others” (ibid, p.61). He adds that “although the methods as such may be useful scientific tools, they may be used in a manner that excludes contentious information” (ibid, p. 62). He then supports his views by offering as an example the damaging way psychometrics has supported white prejudice on issues such as “low productivity amongst black workers”. He writes:

These theories are now based on the concept of **traditional African culture or values as the determining variable in black worker behaviour**. For instance, Moerdyk and Coldwell (1981) argue that the main ‘**problem**’ facing black employees is their **African world view** which is fundamentally **different** from the Western world view.... Their analysis completely ignores the **social, economic and ideological relations** in the broader South African **political context**. The assumption is that there is a common underlying **African world-view found in all Africans** irrespective of their **economic and political location** in the broader society. An interesting feature of these **culturally based studies** is the fact that psychology has played a more[sic] prominent role in developing such arguments e.g. Nasser’s adaptation of McClelland’s **need for achievement theory**. According to Nasser (1981) blacks have a low need for achievement because **black culture** displays a high **need for affiliation** ...traditional African culture does not exist in the manner we are made to believe. Instead there are **different cultures that are emerging** which almost oppose one another i.e. working class culture and **black petty bourgeoisie** culture. It is **absurd** that in present day South Africa we can talk of a traditional African world view in the face of such **glaring structural changes**, brought about by **industrialisation** and the **gradual destruction of black peasant life**....The other problem with the cultural approach is that it has a **static view of black workers**. It **fails dismally** to understand a very simple fact: the situation of black workers is **continually changing** and therefore their behaviour pattern is always changing...the **major failure** of industrial studies of black workers, is that of developing tools of analysis which are sensitive to

these cultural changes....[A culturally based] approach...has been used in creating a **monster** in South African industrial psychology, some form of 'Ethnopsychology'... (pp. 80-82).

From a DA point of view and the construction of “relevance” for local psychology, it is instructive to see how an African academic, and hence “middle class” in terms of his education, theorises black worker experience. It is also of interest to consider the type of discourse against which he sets his writing. The latter is important given that a number of texts by white contributors - an example is analysed in Section 5. - pitch their constructions of relevance and an alternative discourse in terms of a cross-cultural perspective.

#### 4.3.2.2. “Cross-cultural” discourse and “ethnopsychology” as impediments to “relevance”

To quote from the extract, Nzimande uses the phrases “it completely ignores”, “it is absurd”, “it fails dismally”, “creates a monster” to undercut the discourse he challenges. The discourse in question seems to be a variation on the dominant “separate culture”, “blacks are all the same”, “black equals rural”, “black is inferior” discourse of apartheid. Nzimande, then, is suggesting that a conservative and oppressive discourse has entered industrial psychology and psychometrics while masquerading as a neutral scientific voice of reason. My telegraphic phrases aimed at characterising some of apartheid’s interpretive repertoires are readings of Nzimande’s references to white researchers seeing black culture as a “problem” in the workplace. I am sympathetic to his perceptions and tend to want to parody a discourse that we both find “absurd”. But this is an easy option. Nzimande’s register, by contrast, while emotionally charged, argues persuasively for an alternative view, a view common in PINS, that counteracts racial and cultural analysis with class analysis. In reflecting on my response, Ricouer’s views come to mind of discourse as inter-subjective exchange, and reading as an embodiment of a dialectic between the “distanciation of the text” (its polysemy and “otherness”) and an “appropriation” by the reader (Valdes, 1991, p. 8).

Nzimande’s corrective to “conservative conformist” industrial psychology’s “ethnopsychology” and subservience to managerial interests is to suggest that black workers’ experience is more adequately understood within a class framework than a cultural one. He recommends that

“history” be injected into analyses and that the “repository of objectivity and truth is history itself” (p.87). Again, then, Lukacsian discourse is apparent and operates within a type of realism untouched by post-modernist deconstructions of grand narratives and “truth claims”.

#### **4.3.2.3. The conservative discourse of mainstream industrial psychology - a reply to Nzimande**

Nzimande does not go unchallenged. In the briefings section of PINS 3 (September, 1985, pp. 43-48), Coldwell writes that he:

... uses the time worn strategy of moving from “common knowledge” to inaccurate, and on occasion, highly emotive criticisms of, in this case, mainstream industrial psychology in order to build up a monstrous straw man, tailored to meet the requirements of his own ideological persuasion, which he then hastily proceeds to ignite without I might add, too much concern for what else he burns down in doing so (p. 43).

Apart from the sentence’s length, it is notable as an example of how a discourse type can be identified even within a sentence. This is not so much by obvious markers of an interpretive repertoire as to what is alluded, what targets are set up, and what choice of metaphor is made. Although possibly unintended, the evocation of things being burned, seems inappropriate when the country was literally burning. 1985 was about the time of the first necklacings, and a revival of 1976 in the burning of things associated with the apartheid regime. Whatever the case, Coldwell clearly sees Nzimande’s arguments as irresponsible, emotional and flimsy. It is implied also, that anything “emotive” in an academic essay must be irrational and questionable. Ironically, Coldwell does not seem to find his own metaphor at all highly charged. The imagery of “tailoring a straw man” is - like Nzimande’s polemic - intended to be provocative.

According to Coldwell, the goad that prompted his response was “misrepresentation”. He argues that bringing indigenous culture into studies of African workers was intended as a “movement away from the current white cultural hegemony in industry where the Western managerial paradigm rides roughshod over the indigenous African culture.... [The] dominant Western paradigm in industry must be adapted and transformed in order to meet the requirements of Africans” (p. 46). But, adaptation using African norms, as Nzimande argues, is to ignore the

industrial and urban context of workers. When I began Nzimande's article, I thought an Africanist perspective might be forthcoming. What I failed to keep in mind, is that at the height of apartheid, Africanism had been distorted in the hands of white academics, to mean some sort of cultural essentialism, locking African people into a time warp of the rural past and viewing them as an homogenous group. Whatever Coldwell's good intentions, he tends to reinforce a Western/African dichotomy.

#### **4.3.4. Marxist discourse: "Relevance", "critique" and "indigenous" - a clinical psychologist on African pragmatism**

Dawes' article, a year after Nzimande's, entitled "Notions of a relevant psychology with particular reference to Africanist pragmatic initiatives" (PINS 5, May 1986, pp. 28-47) assumes particular interest because it addresses the paradoxical struggles that ensue when searching for a "relevant" and "indigenous" psychology. Dawes is a psychologist academic at the University of Cape Town, an institution traditionally associated with liberal scholarship. He writes that the purpose of his article is twofold: to examine what "relevance" might mean in South Africa and in the context of "greater Africa and abroad"; and, "to examine some notions of relevance which have grown out of the colonial and post-independence periods in Africa as they pertain to the practice of psychology" (pp. 28-29). The article was written as the first State of Emergency of the 1980s was declared, prompting many academics to take a political stand.

##### **4.3.4.1. Constructions of "relevance": "Relevance" as national and regional priority**

Dawes explores the ways that psychology across the ideological spectrum has constructed "notions of relevance". He identifies five different constructions. The first, he sees as "embodying the idea of service to society in the sense of working to solve problems of national or regional priority.... used thus the discipline is employed by statutory or community agencies and...questions as to the ideological elements of the project do not necessarily emerge"(p. 29). Already, the reader is alerted to a possible discourse at work. "Ideological", the word is a discursive marker for critical Marxism. "Relevance" is invoked, Dawes goes on to suggest, by research bodies such as the National Institute for Personnel Research (NIPR) and the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) in justifying, for example, their work on test batteries for

industry and studies of intergroup relations (ibid). “This then is applied uncritical (in the Marxian sense) relevant research” (p. 30). He writes that organisations of industry and capital “incorporate” notions of relevance as a gloss of legitimation. The purpose is to make the wheels of the “industrial sector turn more smoothly, with black advancement as a spin-off reducing friction further” (p. 31). Dawes, like Nzimande, then, is critical of psychologists who unthinkingly place their skills at the service of industry.

#### 4.3.4.2. “Relevance” as humanistic individual psychology and community psychology

The second use of relevance that Dawes identifies

is exemplified in the rise of the theoretical and applied schools of humanistic psychology during the 1960s and 1970s. While there are varieties of this tradition, they all tend to reflect a common concern born in the idealistic turmoil of the period of their emergence. It stresses the need for academic psychology to be relevant to the personal qualities of the person in opposition to the mechanistic qualities of behaviouristic approaches. Various spokespersons in this vogue such as Maslow (1970) and Bugental (1967) pointed to the alienation (in the existential sense) of modern humanity and called for a re-affirmation of and recognition of such things as self-actualisation and respect for the individual. They generated theories of personal functioning in the spirit of liberal humanism..... The key notions as Jacoby (1977) points out, stressed the development of psychologies and practices which were relevant to enabling the modern (albeit middle class) Westerner to discover hidden potentials and through a process of inner ‘development’ transcend the limitations of their humdrum existence. A new order could be founded on the principles of mutual respect and sharing, but, and here in lies the rub, individual advancement (pp. 31-32).

Apart from forwarding Dawes’s argument, this extract presents rich possibilities for a critical realist Marxist DA. In this passage, Dawes has managed to capture an interpretive repertoire and discourse, in western psychology, on the concept of “relevant psychology” which he himself terms “liberal humanist”. The vocabulary of individualism and voluntarism is everywhere stated: “personal qualities”, “existential alienation”, “self-actualisation”, “hidden potentials”, “inner development”, “transcend limitations”, “mutual respect”, “individual advancement”.

“Relevance”, then, is constructed for humanistic psychologies to mean therapy which enhances the meaning and purpose of an individual life. Marxists are probably well able to invoke recognitions of liberal humanism because ideology critique was premised on sensitivity to a particular vocabulary before DA became established. What is especially interesting about the extract, however, is how critique is built into an otherwise descriptive piece of writing. Virtually three phrases and a reference perform this work: “vogue”, “albeit middle class”, “humdrum existence” and “Jacoby”. Each is loaded with implication and meaning - but largely for a reader who shares a discourse with that which is dominant in the article as a whole, i.e. a critical Marxist discourse. I doubt that a liberal humanist or conservative writer would think of humanist psychologies as a “vogue” or passing fashion. Nor, I think would a writer from any persuasion other than Marxist, or perhaps feminist, refer to middle-class life as a “humdrum existence”. And, while I am sure non-Marxists and non-dissenters in psychology read Jacoby, I am not sure how many of them would draw on this theorist with unchallenged affirmation. Even in the collectively-orientated humanistic psychologies developed in the States, Dawes sees the impact of a liberal ethos on their notions of relevance. American community psychology, he writes, “certainly gives rise to political pressuring and calls for a ‘better deal’ for disadvantaged sections of the citizenry,[but] it does this within an unchanged liberal capitalist framework”(ibid). The discourse drawn upon by Dawes is unmistakably critical Marxist.

#### 4.3.4.3. “Relevance” as “hermeneutical enquiry” and a challenge to positivism in psychology

Dawes writes approvingly of two further constructions of the term “relevance” in psychology, both emerging either in Britain or Europe as opposed to the USA. One is constituted by philosopher Harré’s attempts to challenge positivistic discourse and practice in the social sciences, and the other, Dawes suggests, is “Marxian” and “exemplified”, to quote, “by Foucault (1970), Seve (1978), Althusser (1971) and others” (p. 33-34). Today Foucault is usually regarded as non-Marxist. Nevertheless “relevance”, in both instances, was achieved by locating the individual firmly in a social context. The impact of Harré’s formulations, Dawes argues, was to shift psychology towards “hermeneutical models of enquiry”. His approval of this shift supports the idea that this is a form of critical rather than scientific Marxist discourse.

#### 4.3.4.4. “Relevance” from a South African liberal “human rights perspective”

Dawes writes - again I stress the agency of the writer - that the need for relevance in South Africa has arisen out of psychologists’ having “to provide critiques of the dehumanising consequences of apartheid in the variety of ways they manifest themselves” (p. 34). He also says, however, that “this work does not address itself in any developed sense to class issues and is founded on more of a liberal human rights perspective” (ibid). He then assesses attempts in Africa to make psychology more relevant to local needs and to Africanise psychology.

#### 4.3.4.5. “Relevance”, “oppression” and “indigenous” as themes in African psychology

Drawing upon key writers, in the area of psychology and psychiatry in Africa, such as Abdi (1979), Bulhan (1981), Jahoda (1973, 1982), Dawes suggests that on this continent psychology has not fared well in terms of relevance. He identifies post-independence countries such as Tanzania where psychology is not taught at all at universities, and countries such as those that were former British colonies where it is taught but where the staff often have overseas post-graduate degrees. In other words, psychology has not been deemed adaptable to local circumstances, or it has been derived in unmodified ways from Euro-American models. He also cites Jahoda as saying that where foreign psychologists have come to Africa to conduct research, it has been framed in cross-cultural terms, and has tended to elicit distrust from the people studied. While cross-cultural psychology is not condemned per se, it is argued that the results have not had direct benefit to the subject groups. It is also argued that this type of research should not pretend to a liberal academic tradition of “pure” research. To do so, would be to fail to ask the sorts of questions that could result in findings being marshalled to prop up unacceptable government policies.

#### 4.3.4.6. “Relevance” and “African pragmatism”

Dawes writes:

...in newly independent states such as Ghana and Nigeria sophisticated test batteries have been developed which function as in the colonial era, to maximise productivity in the mining and oil industries. What this

indicates clearly is that independence does not necessarily imply the shift of applied psychological research towards its employment in **working class interests**. Indeed in the struggle to develop stable post-colonial economies the position of the working person may well be as oppressed with the assistance of **psychological technology** as it was in the colonial era...The **democratic answer** would seem to lie in the degree to which the **working people** have a high degree of control over the **means of production** and its design. While such a notion might seem overly **idealistic** it should remain a goal whose even partial realisation would place psychological technology more clearly in a position to be accepted or rejected by those who would be subject to its utilisation and design (p. 38).

A Marxist or “democratic” redistribution of power over production would only be supported, Dawes implies, by psychologists who refuse to assist companies that do not allow workers into decision-making processes, and to participate in the design and use of test results. Psychology is constructed in terms of western “technology” and capitalism: “sophisticated test batteries”, “maximise productivity”, “psychological technology”. Parker’s observation that “a discourse reflects on its own way of speaking” (1992, p.16) is exemplified in the clause “while such a notion might seem overly idealistic”. The writer anticipates a challenge from pragmatists. Opting for Africanist pragmatic approaches, without a democratic programme of action, can easily oppress the very people the approach was intended to assist. Dawes also admits to difficulty in “pronouncing” how things should be in local psychology and invites others to address issues of this kind.

#### **4.3.5. Critical Marxist discourse: A clinical psychologist on “critical theory” and psychoanalysis - the Frankfurt School inheritance**

Although contributors to PINS, for the period 1983 to 1989, chose to examine what “critique” might mean for South African psychology, only one or two chose to do so from the combined perspective of “critical theory” and psychoanalysis. Furthermore, while they engaged in “critique” and indirectly in formulating a “critical psychology”, only one or two made these the direct object of their concern (e.g. Miller, PINS 12, 1989). In 1986, Gavin Ivey, who was at Rhodes University (RU) at the time, chose to examine what Euro-American critical psychologies



have done within the tradition of psychoanalysis. His article is entitled “Elements of a critical psychology” (PINS 5, May 1986, pp.4-27). He also briefly ties his account to possibilities within South African psychology.

The text defines critical psychology as “the attempt to establish a substantive alternate approach based on a critique of the ideologically distorted consciousness and experience of people whose false consciousness is a precondition for their systematic domination by an exploitative social formation” (p. 4). It is hard to miss the source discourse from which this piece draws its interpretative repertoire. The phrases “substantive alternate approach”, “ideologically distorted consciousness”, “false consciousness” and “exploitative social formation”, are all canonical, pre-1990s “critical Marxist” ways of describing social phenomena. What is notable is that in the mid-eighties Ivey retained the early critical Marxist idea that the oppressed have a “distorted consciousness” and that it is to this that critical psychologists should address their efforts. This perception has changed in the 1990s, with greater recognition given to oppressed people being aware of bourgeois distortions.

Ivey’s text as a whole utilises a range of sources that are seminal to a critical Marxist discourse. He locates “critique”, a critical psychology and “critical theory” in a history that includes the Frankfurt School, particularly Marcuse and Habermas. He also looks at the relationship of “critical theory” to psychoanalysis and examines the writings of Jacoby and Lasch in terms of an American inheritance of the Frankfurt tradition. Unfortunately, he only briefly directs his attention to what all of this might mean for South African psychology. He writes, however, that while “critical social theory is an established tradition, critical psychology, although adopting the goals and philosophy of the latter, does not yet exist as a substantive alternative psychological paradigm”(p. 4). He adds that the purpose of his text is to offer a “propaedeutic to a thorough formulation in the field” and to expose “the strategies and structures of interpersonal domination” (ibid). Towards the end of the article, Ivey writes:

Needless to say, the hoary positivist concern with value neutrality is not an issue here. Critical psychology cannot be value neutral for it is necessarily guided by the eschatology of discourse free of interpersonal constraint or systematically distorted communication. Critical

psychology anticipates the **just life** and the critical moment is precisely the tension between the present fact of domination and future possibility of liberation. **Value freedom cannot be a consideration when freedom is our ultimate value.** Critical psychology is a **partisan of reason against dogma and dissemblance** but this fact **does certainly not commit it to a particular course of political action** further than the promotion of **enlightenment**. Although critical psychology condemns the **psychic mutilation** of the **individual** by the **capitalist system** it cannot embrace a blueprint for **revolutionary transformation of society** based on another ideology. The **critical psychologist is not a revolutionary**, his/her task is to **free the individual** for new possibilities of thought and political action - not to **dictate** what form that action should take. Critical psychology is partisan because **truth cannot be tolerant**, but nor can it be allowed to congeal into **dogma** of any sort (p. 24).

To reiterate, the dominant discourse of the extract is unmistakably critical Marxist. What is of interest, though, is that “critical psychology” is presented as inextricably derived from this type of discourse and that it is “a partisan of reason against dogma and dissemblance”. One might contend from the argument that both Marxism (of the unself-critical kind) and bourgeois ideology are equally eschewed. In the process of opposing these, Ivey argues, it is not political action that would be required of the critical psychologist, but the “promotion of enlightenment”. The heritage of his assertion, then, is clearly the Frankfurt School. This is especially the case, when his reasoning is based on a fear of succumbing to yet another ideology, presumably the hardline Soviet brand of Marxism also scorned by the School. Moreover, the emphasis on “freeing the individual” rather than “dictating” to him or her, resonates with critical Marxism’s respect for agency and the importance of changing consciousness in order to produce social change. The partisanship of a critical psychology, according to Ivey, will not “tolerate” what is ideologically compromised. Implied is that a liberal mainstream psychology will not go unchallenged. In holding up “truth” - or the non-ideological - as an absolute value, Ivey aligns himself with a Marxism untouched by post-structuralist scepticism or critique.

#### 4.3. 5. 1. The function of the discursive strategies in Ivey's constructions of "critique"

A look at the discursive strategies employed in the extract just quoted reveals a number of distinctive features. On the one hand, there is the absence of first-person reference thus producing a degree of detachment between the writer and his words, a distancing usually associated with traditional academic writing. On the other hand, there are the emotive or evocative phrases such as "hoary positivist concern", "psychic mutilation", "just life", "freedom as the ultimate value" and "congeal into dogma". These are phrases loaded with graphic descriptiveness and judgment and, in every way, fulfil DA's belief that discourse performs "functions". In this case, it is provocation, condemnation and the promotion of a cause. The personification of "truth" ("truth is not tolerant") in the last sentence reminds me not only that Freud is one of Ivey's sources, but of nineteenth-century revolutionary posters which have a statuesque woman representing "truth and justice". Language is often evocative of the visual and rhetorical devices of metaphor and personification. What is more persuasive than eliciting a multi-sensory response in a reader? Critique, as it is constructed by Ivey, need not conceal emotional engagement in a position, as a pretence at intellectual detachment or liberal disinterestedness. It is intended as a goad or rallying cry to thought and to change.

#### 4.3.5.2. Critical psychology and psychoanalysis

Ivey goes on to describe what a critical psychology might be from a psychoanalytic perspective:

Richards et al (1984) have extended, developed and revised Lasch's seminal ideas and the scene is now set for the emergence of a **new generation of critical theory**, deeply - though dialectically - indebted to psychoanalysis. Lasch has disclosed the **narcissistic mutilation** of selfhood in **bourgeois culture**. The **task of critical psychology** is to uncover and subject such **ideologically distorted character structures** to a critique that not only initiates self-reflection but **traces the personality deformation to its origin in those oppressive social relations** whose irrationality demands the cloak of ideological concealment (p. 22).

The social nature of personality de/formation, as invoked by Ivey, is something quite at odds with mainstream, liberal humanist psychologies of the time, and with an article by Perkel

published two years later in 1988 and analysed towards the end of this section. What is also interesting, is that the metaphor of a “cloak” used by Ivey recurs as a central choice of trope in Perkel’s text. Concealment and playing roles seem to be associated with bourgeois society and psychology. “Distortion”, “mutilation”, “deformation”, “irrationality” are all in need of “disclosure”, according to Ivey. Most critical Marxists would agree. Whatever the richness, some might say hyperbole, of the language, the point that Ivey makes about a complete rethinking of the fundamental categories of psychology is an important part of a critical psychology’s task. What is valuable about Ivey’s contribution, then, is twofold. He represents local psychologists who agree with overseas radicals that the edifices of clinical psychology and psychoanalysis need to be realigned with an “alternative tradition”. And, his article is a contribution towards a radical shift in conceptualising individuals whose lives have been damaged by “apartheid capitalist society”. His views were not original - as he openly acknowledges - but he provided a voice not often heard in South African psychology. The editors of PINS, perhaps in consequence, made a special effort after 1990 to give space to a radical psychoanalytic discourse. Ivey, for his part, sees object relations theory as a welcome development in psychoanalytic psychology and stresses the “relational” emphasis of this body of theory (pp. 21-22). He especially endorses the way Lasch (1960) and Richards et al (1984) attempted to integrate this theory into a Frankfurt School tradition. He writes of their work as contributing to a “psychopathology of culture” (p.21).

#### **4.3.6. Marxist and populist discourses: A student of counselling psychology on “relevance”, “oppression” and “indigenous”**

The next text attempts to move beyond critique and to offer suggestions for making local psychology more responsive to indigenous needs and perceptions. Entitled “Some thoughts on a more relevant or indigenous counselling psychology in South Africa: Discovering the socio-political context of the oppressed”, the article appeared in PINS 5 in May 1986 (pp. 81-89). Although the writer has chosen to remain anonymous, the University of the Western Cape is given as the institution to which she or he was affiliated. This information is important because of the historical placing of UWC in the struggle politics of the eighties. Writing anonymously, however, prompts speculation about fear of reprisal, or the sort of heroic denunciation of individuality that occurred frequently in the seventies amongst radical groups in Europe and the

United States. Certainly, post-structuralism's decentring of the subject implies the next step should be the elimination of the individual's name as "author" of a text. Nevertheless, prior to the next extract the writer declares that what follows will be "personal", perhaps preparing the reader for what "scientific" psychology might term "subjective opinion":

An important criterion for the relevantizing [sic] of psychology in South Africa would be the degree to which the behaviour of especially the **majority** is studied within the **context of racial capitalism**. For example, to discover the impact of political oppression and exploitation on development and functioning and how to go about **changing rather than adapting** to the oppressive structures. The psychologist does not function within a social vacuum, neither can he claim to be **strictly a scientist** who is not interested in political issues. Oppressive political conditions in South Africa are highly likely to influence the mental health of the oppressed adversely (W.H.O. 1983). (The concept "**oppressed**" as used here refers to the black working-class as well as that section of the middle-class that desires **radical changes**). Being a mental health **expert**, the South African psychologist is duty bound to examine those factors which will promote social change of a kind that will **ameliorate** the present suffering of the oppressed. This will require the South African psychologist to venture out of the **cosy precinct** of his counselling room and **speak out loudly and clearly**, indicating to the authorities and to the public the effects of state policies and legislation have on the mental health of the oppressed. Their **silence** at a time when serious erosion of **human rights** and mental health takes place can easily be interpreted as **condonation** [sic] of and **connivance** with the system, or even worse, as a sign of **apathy**. No matter what inference is made, all are **indictments** against the psychologist, in the view of the **ethical codes** which he is supposed to uphold. **Eurocentric theories** of human behaviour can never be fully relevant to this society as human reality is not the same all over the world - and particularly in South Africa where the majority is still concerned with **bread and land issues** (pp. 82-83).

Perhaps, I should get out of the way the discourse that uses the terms "he" and "his" when referring to psychologists as a group. Thus far, the articles quoted from PINS have not manifested this sort of unintended "sexism". I say "unintended" because the text under review

is redolent with protest against oppression, and as Levett and Kottler have noted sexism as an issue was for several decades subordinated to larger social struggles in this country (1998, p.188). Nevertheless, the discourse cannot go unremarked in a text otherwise directed at critique.

The other most obvious discourse at work, is a Marxist one. “Racial capitalism”, “structures that maintain the system”, “working class”, “change rather than adapt”, “radical change”, “bread and land issues” - the interpretive repertoire cannot be mistaken. In terms of psychology, much of liberal humanist therapy is aimed at adapting people to their circumstances vaguely in the name of evolutionary theory - those that adapt survive. Another discourse at work is a human rights and legalistic discourse. “Human rights”, “condoning”, “indictment”, “ethical codes” , all suggest a discourse of justice and accountability. Where a measure of contradiction may be observed lies in words like “ameliorate” and “expert”. The first of these, “ameliorate”, is usually to be found in a liberal discourse aimed at softening the impact of, but not fundamentally changing, conditions of oppression. The second, “expert”, is generally found in scientific discourse and is thus somewhat surprisingly at work in a text that takes the “scientific” to task. Community psychology theorists like Rappoport (1977) have looked at the negative implications of communities viewing mental health workers as “experts”. This is also something Nzimande suggested has happened here, where white researchers assume to be “experts” on black experience. The anti-Eurocentric or Africanist discourse briefly caught in the extract (“Eurocentric theories... can never be fully relevant to this society”) is explored in terms that suggest South Africa “has different priorities” from those of the countries from which most theories of psychology emanate. It is recommended, however, that “ the traditional ingredients of Freud, Jung and Rogers, to name but a few in South African university syllabi, need to be augmented at least with the works of Lambley (1980, 1973), Biko (1978), Fanon (1968, 1977, 1979), Freire (1979) and the World Health Organisation (1983)” (p. 84). And, contrary to the secondary role given to activism by clinical psychologists such as Perkel whose text will be analysed shortly, Anonymous writes:

...the psychologist needs to work on empowering the client to use his inner resources - to change his external situation. By joining a trade union, a migrant labourer will have more support from fellow workers - therefore, his counsellor should awaken the worker to the advantages of

joining the union.... in dealing with the oppressed, the psychologist should not hesitate to be practical, directive and to encourage participation in collective action towards social change. Psychologists have to help facilitate or join progressive organisations and help awaken the oppressed to their inner strengths by allowing them to draw on their mutual power and energy....When working with the oppressed, it is very essential that the counsellor stress the praxis of life. The oppressed has to act!! (p. 86).

Neither counselling nor clinical psychologies traditionally teach practitioners to be “directive” and “advice giving”. Several studies referred to in PINS (e.g. Turton, 1986; Lazarus & Burger, 1987; Vogelmann, 1987), however, found that community recipients of mental health services expected this type of interaction. Moreover, an individual’s “inner resources” are not conceptualised as being developed by solitary activity, but by a sharing of “power and energy”. The psychologist becomes a motivator and facilitator encouraging the individual to remember mutuality and to keep the person active in finding collective solutions. Later in the text, it is added that “counselling has historically served the function of a ‘repair shop’ for capitalist society” (p. 87), and that with suitable therapy, “Clients ...will then be ready for the most important life task: unite in action towards liberation from capitalism” (p. 88). While populist undertones are discernible in the text, the dominant discourse is unmistakably Marxist.

#### **4.3.7. Liberal feminist and social constructionist discourses: “relevance” and “oppression” - child psychology on the discourse of sexual abuse**

An article from Ann Levett of the University of Cape Town (PINS 8, September 1987, pp. 79-102) addresses gender oppression, but focuses on the sexual abuse of children. Prior to 1990 contributions to PINS from the domain of child psychology constituted 10% of the total articles, on a par in number with articles from clinical and industrial psychology, and indicative of the importance accorded this domain at the time. Entitled “Childhood sexual abuse: Event, fact or structure”, the article signals from the outset the possible discourses drawn upon. Each term in the subtitle “Event, fact or structure”, for example, points respectively to discourse theory, positivistic science, and radical theory. “Structure”, however, could equally mean a liberal discourse from sociology. The constructions of meaning become clearer from actual extracts of text. Levett commences her article as follows:

In attempting to **develop a different approach** to understanding various areas of human life psychologists have been commenting on the **range of discourses, many contradictory**, which dominate social practices (e.g. Gergen, 1985, Harre, 1984, Moscovici, 1984, Sampson, 1986). These processes contribute to the production of each human subject, to the **construction of individual identity and emotional life**, and **construct the meanings imputed to interpersonal exchanges**, including relations between men and women and between adults and children. In order to make sense of the complexities of human behaviour, we need to **take apart both the commonplace notions and the dominant, accepted explanations of cause-effect relationships**. In any particular discourse, because of dominant sociocultural forms of understanding, attention tends to focus on certain specifics with a noticeable lack of attention to attendant phenomena. Where perceptible, the **gaps are likely to be a fruitful locus for the study of contradictions**. In a **social constructionist view**, where any discussion about the world is seen as 'an artefact of communal exchange' (Gergen, 1986, p. 266), psychological inquiry itself may be evaluated. This... forces us to **re-examine dominant systems of thought and to reflect on widespread conceptions of knowledge**, which leads to insights concerning the purposes of knowledge, and how it is transformed (pp. 79-80).

Contrary to the expectations raised by the subtitle, the most obvious of the discourses at work in this abstract is a social constructionist discourse. The writer refers to a key exponent of the discourse, namely, Gergen, and writes affirmatively of his approach. This discourse, it is argued, allows for "psychological inquiry itself to be evaluated", "forces us to re-examine...to reflect...[and] leads to insights". In other words, social constructionist discourse is so persuasive and illuminating that a critical reassessment of "dominant systems of thought and knowledge" seems the only reasonable response. This is quite a magnanimous claim, especially as Marxists like Parker - whose view I share - see social constructionism as basically liberal humanist and idealist in its assumptions, and hence aligned with dominant discourses in crucial ways. I say this because social constructionism rests on a view, as Levett writes, that "the world is an artefact of communal exchange" and, hence, predominantly discursive rather than material in exchange. Nevertheless, signs of other discourses are also to be found in the extract, for example, in phrases such as "gaps", "contradiction", "construct the meanings". Social



constructionism was derived from a number of sources, but a chief source is undoubtedly post-structuralism (Spears & Parker, 1996, p. 13). Whether Levett's fragments of a post-structuralist interpretive repertoire are direct or via constructionism cannot be conclusively established, but given the rest of her text I would say they are mediated by the latter. DA theory suggests that this is how discourses become part of common currency. One discourse might appropriate parts of another and generate something partially new. Parker stresses that while discourses are recognisable as such, they are not closed systems and are amenable to modification, incorporation and creation. The following extract shows where Levett takes the idea of "the world as an artefact of communal exchange":

[Traditional non-discursive] studies adopt a convention of **epistemology** which seeks particular **effects** following certain events. Very little attention is focused on the **context** within which the experiences occur, although it is the social context which **lumbers** these phenomena with the **meanings and feelings** which shape the subjective experience. In the case of sexual molestation of children, all concerned can be seen to be caught up in **adversarial problems** because of **dominant social constructions** of **sexuality, childhood and trauma**. In the **discourse of trauma**, a **victim identity** is created for the child (usually female), and **assailant** identity for the man, **rescuer** identities for the health professionals, and **crusader** roles for the **media**. Each leads to its own set of **distortions**. The discourse contributes to the structuring of significant aspects of experience. The discourse of the 'victim' is particularly problematic in a situation where... the **helping institutions** set up to intervene can be seen as part of the problem; they offer **no really effective remedies** but perpetuate notions of **damage** and practices of **protection**.... the 'remedies' may have been devised and fought for by those who are 'victims', redefined as **active agents** (pp. 85-86).

The "artefact" constructed by what Levett terms a "discourse of trauma", for example, is a set of social roles which she claims represent "distortions" of some kind. She implies that there are also dominant discourses which distort notions of sexuality and childhood. The sub-discourse that is produced from the trauma discourse constructs a "victim" identity for the child, "usually female", who is subject to molestation. The health professionals that intervene, furthermore, assume the role of "rescuer" and "perpetuate notions of damage and practices of protection".

Although I can follow the argument to this point, I find the last sentence of the extract confusing. I assume that despite being constructed as victims by society and the media, there are some children who “devise and fight for” their own solutions and move beyond victimhood to “active agency”. Later in the article, Levett writes of those children as “resilient” and that research insufficiently studies the factors that produce this quality.

What is analytically interesting about the construction of this argument, is that there are concepts that one might well associate with a critical Marxist discourse. “Social context... shaping subjective experience”, “distortion” - these are primary to a discourse which challenges liberal humanist notions of individual intrapsychic events as determining subjective experience, and presents them as ideological distortions. And, yet there are no other markers, thus far, of a typical Marxist interpretive repertoire. Other indicators which suggest why this should be the case, are located in the clause, “although it is the social context which lumbers these phenomena [molestation] with meanings and feelings”. Social constructionism, although conceding a “practical sphere”, stresses that a “social context” is predominantly a meaning-generating, discursive entity. Spears and Parker describe social constructionism as a “major” alternative to mainstream positivistic psychologies, but that it remains liberal in ethos (1996, p. 12). Discursive formations are elevated above material conditions in shaping social and intrapsychic phenomena. The implication is that if society modifies its dominant discourses, oppression, poverty and other social ills such as sexual molestation will more or less disappear. The contribution of Levett to an alternative discourse on sexual abuse resides largely in her reconstructing meanings around “victimhood” as produced by mainstream discourse.

#### **4.3.8. “Variability” in discourse: A clinical psychologist on the “relevance” of therapeutic skill and “psychopathology”**

Thus far, industrial psychology, psychometrics, philosophically oriented articles, counselling, community and child psychologies have been represented in the analysis. Unexpectedly, a contrasting argument on relevance and community psychology is provided by Perkel’s article entitled “Towards a model for a South African clinical psychology” (PINS 10, 1988, pp. 53-75). Whether he offers a view at all different from mainstream perspectives, of course, is central to the research question of this study. His article begins :

Apartheid and mental ill-health are inextricably linked in South Africa (Vogelman, 1986). A radical transformation at the structural level remains a prerequisite for appropriate change. In this context neutrality by psychologists is a myth and the choosing of sides an inherent necessity (Dawes, 1985).... Two issues[ thus] arise: 1. Are clinical skills useless in embarking on a 'community psychology' path - how do we make ourselves clinically relevant to the community we serve? 2. Can any activist not do the task of the 'community psychologist' with equal efficiency?...the community psychologist takes on the cloak of social activism and begins to disrobe the clinical persona of professional skill (pp. 54-55).

What is distinctive about this extract, apart from setting out the “problematic” posed by the writer, are the more subtle indicators of a particular type of discourse at work. Along with looking for obvious markers, that is, the terms, metaphors, tropes and categories of an interpretive repertoire, one is obliged to shift to a deconstructive reading in order to establish the position being adopted. Throughout the article, I had an uneasy sense that a primary discourse was being undercut by a sub-discourse. The theatrical metaphor, for example, of the psychologist donning “a cloak” of the community activist and shedding a “persona of professional clinical skill”, tends to call into question other notions in the extract. For instance, there is the suggestion of regret that something valuable may be lost in this ritual. “Professionalism” and “expertise” are generally prized by mainstream clinical psychology and questioned by community psychology. And yet, following Dawes, Perkel “takes sides” against the “myth of neutrality” which, he implies, dominates mainstream notions of psychology in this country. The reader is left, then, to assume that this myth resides in the “asocial” “apolitical” and “scientistic” brand of psychology against which many PINS contributors made protest, rather than in the discourse of the “professional” and “expert”. A further clue to a possible position or dominant discourse, however, is presented in the phrase, “a radical transformation at the structural level”. This recurs like a leitmotif amongst Marxist-orientated texts, and prompts speculation about whether Perkel’s text as a whole will follow a Marxist direction. Given an interpretive resource in Dawes’s argument that American community psychology is liberal humanist and not directed at “radical transformation”, I began to consider where Perkel might have been heading with his questioning of community psychology as a model for clinical

psychology. I also started to consider how “professional expertise” was going to be contained within a radical discourse. DA’s concept of variability within discourses, however, remained uppermost in my mind.

As Parker suggests, discourses “support institutions”, “reproduce power relations” and are “historically located” (1992, p. 17). Discourses, in other words, are almost by definition about “positions” or “taking sides” as Perkel puts it. But while there are obvious indicators in his text of a “progressive” clinical psychology discourse that challenges the discourses of both mainstream and liberal community psychologies, indirect, confirmatory evidence needs to be found. In this regard, it is useful to remember another of Parker’s criteria for recognising a discourse at work: that “discourses refer to other discourses”. In referring affirmatively to both Vogelmann and Dawes, both of whom draw on critical Marxist discourse, the reader may assume that perhaps a similar discourse will dominate Perkel’s text. He develops his argument:

Clinical psychology, as it stands, has been broadly constructed within the parameters of white, western, **middle class values** and infused with the **ideology** of this backdrop. If we accept that middle class western society, of which white South Africans generally form a part, is **individualist, competitive, isolated and non-social in character**, then a helping science such as clinical psychology constructed to serve the ‘composite’ of this system, is in effect **serving a community....** ‘So when I say there is nothing wrong with therapy, in some senses I am saying that **bourgeois therapy** for bourgeois individuals is okay! We might not like it, but it certainly has a **class consistency** to it’ (Hayes, 1986: 2). **Community psychology**, however, is **constructed to serve the needs of some other community**, a community construed as **needing of rescue and empowerment**. **Working class** problems are conceptualised as **social problems** which are **unamenable to therapy** and this conceiving of working class psychological problems as social ones operates at a subtle and complex level which arises from the ‘**contradiction of bourgeois ideology**’ (Hayes, 1986).... To create a division within ...(the) mainstream from the framework of a **middle class liberal humanistic discipline** aimed at addressing the needs of a working class community is, therefore, an **ideologically loaded venture** which obscures the fact that psychology as a whole serves the community (albeit a western

middle class one).... At the bottom of this argument lies the notion that attempting to **construct a socially progressive psychology from the framework of a socially reactive psychology is inherently problematic**. It is not so much the clinical skill that needs redirection - it is rather the **ideological foundation that instructs to whom, and how these skills are applied** that requires attention (pp. 57-58).

At this point, doubts about the type of discourses at work seem about to be dispelled. Tracking the phrases I have highlighted, canonical critical Marxism appears clearly evident: “middle-class values”, “ideology”, “bourgeois therapy”, “class consistency”, “ideologically loaded venture”, “contradiction of bourgeois ideology”, and so on. The discourse targeted for critique is even named, that is, the discourse of the “middle class liberal humanist discipline” of psychology. And it is characterised as “individualistic”, “competitive”, “isolated” and “non-social”. These descriptive categories find echo in the other texts analysed. Drawing on another Marxist source, Hayes, Perkel develops a twist to the usual argument about the nature of community psychology. It is argued that clinical psychology was originally designed to meet the needs of a middle-class community, and hence cannot be faulted within its own logic and practice. What I find very confusing, though, is that Perkel finally seems to suggest that the “ideological foundations” of bourgeois psychology only need to be questioned in terms of “who” is to receive intervention and “how” skills are to be applied. Where, one wonders, does the conceptual base of the skills enter this process of modification?

Perkel goes on to say, however, that the “skills base” to which he refers and which he sees threatened by the “social activism” model of community psychology, is the range of skills associated with treating “psychopathology”. His view is that psychopathology is mostly “non-social” in nature, by which I assume he means that it is biologically- and personality-driven. If he does, he goes against the grain of a critical Marxist heritage - and of discursive and social constructionist theories available at the time. Certainly, Marxists such as Timpanaro stressed the biological factors at the interface between individual psychical functioning and the social. Vygotsky, Luria, Reich and the Frankfurt School, however, all stressed the pervasively social nature of the psychological mediated primarily through language. Perkel sees community interventions which “socialise treatment” as “a reductionism of necessary symptomatic

treatment to partly structural causes". Here we have the sort of either/or structural versus post-structuralist antagonism questioned by Bhaskar's critical realism and by recent forms of critical Marxism. In other words, Perkel seems to hold the orthodox view of clinical psychology that under difficult social circumstances only certain individuals will become symptomatic. The emphasis falls on the individual. He addresses this issue, however, by looking at what he calls the "myth of individual intervention":

An additional component to this process involves a reconceptualisation of the **myth of individual intervention** reinforcing a 'bourgeois' therapeutic practice. Many **community** psychologists, such as **Rappaport (1977)** have argued for the necessity of dealing with **groups** of people in the community rather than with individuals. This argument involves, in part, a **naive reductionism**. It does so because it **conflates the concepts of individualism versus working with individuals** (Hayes, 1986).... What...[Dawes] suggests is a **change from a view of the person's problem** which emphasises the notion of the individual 'locked into a psychic dilemma, to a person whose **dilemma** is understood in the **context** within which it occurs' (p. 34).... **Group therapy** is **relevant** where people coming together have a **common denominator** that informs their psychological problem (for example, released **detainees** or **rape victims**). However, the **individual** may often remain the **primary focus of clinical intervention** (p. 64).

To refer to others' views as "myths", and hence in some sense "fictional", is a common rhetorical device used in adversarial discourse. From a post-structuralist view, however, it invokes another "myth" - that of opposing "myth" to something else more "factually" based or "true". From a Marxist perspective of "distorted communication", Perkel would need to offer an idea that is not distorted by bourgeois ideology. He would need to offer more than the "naive reductionism" he apportions to Rappaport who, he says, advocates group rather than individual therapy as the preferred mode of treatment with working-class communities.

In the first extract, therefore, a case is made for understanding psychopathology in "non-social" terms and, in the second for not conflating individual treatment with individualism. Oddly, Perkel supports the idea that individual treatment can be redeemed from individualism by a

simple manoeuvre of contextualising the individual's difficulties. What is the point of socially contextualising something that is defined as largely "non-social"? If a symptom is conceived as mostly personality- or biologically-derived (as psychiatry proposes) how will knowing the person is from, say, a strife-torn shack settlement significantly alter the effect of treatment. One would have to motivate for long-term psychoanalytically orientated therapy to affect personality in any significant way, or to opt for medication if the biological is deemed to be determinative. All of the studies quoted by Perkel for empirical support tend to emphasise the very short-term nature of interventions possible with black communities, at that point in history. Surely one has to see symptom and personality as deeply social for contextual information to have an impact on treatment and outcome. Also, to propose that group work is best for people who have experienced, say, detention and rape - the instances he quotes - because these are problems based on "common denominators" seems an equally "naïve reductionism". Other problems, one assumes, such as depression, anxiety and loss are thought not to provide commonality of experience. As I understand Rappaport's comments about individual therapy, he simply cautioned that this type of intervention could result in individuals assuming that they, and their thinking, are inevitably the problem rather than seeing a systemic context for their difficulties (1985, pp. 15-21). Deconstructive and critical Marxist readings of texts search out the "gaps and silences" and the contradictions in texts and, in terms of my readings thus far, Perkel's arguments hinges on several of these. The next extract confirms my doubts.

The structural transformation of apartheid remains a prerequisite for such a modification which in turn depends on the broader socio-political and economic struggle being waged in the country and psychologists may participate in this struggle as activists. In so doing, they may not be doing so under the umbrella of their profession. Whilst psychologists (as psychologists) can have a role to play in pressurising the state to symptomatically part remedy the situation by providing better services, this remains a peripheral, though important part of the clinical psychologists function. **Organisational participation** in bodies such as OASSA, or **pressurisation** from other professional bodies may go some way towards this task. But what of **clinical skill and psychopathology**? Berger and Lazarus (1987) in their study of the views of **community organisers** on the **relevance** of psychological practice in South Africa, found that such dimensions as political consciousness,

attachment to a trusted organisation, collective use of resources, counteracting public wariness of psychological services, dissemination of skills, establishment of trust, credibility and accountability, and alignment with, and support of other progressive organisations within the democratic movement were considered **necessary** components of a **relevant** psychological practice. **Nowhere** is the application of **trained clinical skill negated**. Nowhere is the psychologist expected to **throw off the tools of expertise** that psychologists of **necessity** are equipped with (pp. 60-61).

Potter and Wetherell suggest that the analysis of discourse should be both at micro- and macro-levels (1992, p.105). The extract just quoted is particularly interesting in terms of its linguistic constructions and variability. For example, Fairclough (1989), in his recommendations for identifying the linguistic features that “contribute to our understanding of power relations and ideological processes in discourse”, points to something he calls “rewording and overwording” (p. 109). Perkel’s rhetoric is relatively muted until he reaches the issue that seems to represent something of an emotive challenge to him. “Trained clinical skill”, “tools of expertise”, “necessary”, “necessity” - these phrases pile up in the last three sentences with great declarative force. Also, agency is unclear in the expectation mentioned that psychologists “throw off” the tools of their trade, and “nowhere”, nowhere” is repeated instead. Pressure (“pressurising” and “pressurisation” occur earlier) to assert an alternative is everywhere evident. For example, he several times warrants his argument by letting other researchers’ ideas support his own. While this is a standard practice in academic writing and discourse, here one has a sense that this is done because a position is deemed threatened or against the grain of accepted progressive discourse. Although premised on different philosophical assumptions, deconstructive readings have been likened to psychoanalysis, in the sense that they look for what is not directly given in a text but alluded to or omitted or defended against. Adversarial discourses do not always openly identify opposing discourses or the addressees with whom they are in opposition, but these emerge in rhetorical forms where a position is overly defended by rewordings, overwording and verbal redundancy. Although repetition is often used for rhetorical force, it can equally connote feelings of not being heard or understood.



#### 4.4. Integration of argument

Prior to 1990, texts in PINS mostly took the form of critique with tentative offerings towards an alternative to mainstream discourse. I have tried to illustrate this by representative arguments about industrial psychology and psychometrics, social, community, clinical, counselling and child psychologies. The absence in PINS of articles from educational psychology could be for any number of reasons. One possibility is that like education itself, educational psychology felt pervasively constrained by apartheid. Industrial psychology was seen to be tainted in this way, but also complicit with capital in exploiting black workers. Nzimande's article points to the psychometric assessment of workers as a key instrument in this process. He suggests alternatives in more qualitatively directed approaches that include in analyses class rather than culture. Dawes advocates a strong infusion of radical social theory into African pragmatism as a way to forestall continued abuse of workers in a South Africa struggling for liberation. He suggests that psychologists refuse testing workers unless the latter are part of decisions regarding tests and results. Ivey offers ways that a local critical clinical psychology could learn from the Frankfurt tradition of fusing critical theory with psychoanalytic models. He seems to argue, though, that if one takes the individual psyche as primarily a social construct, then the majority of South Africans require an entirely indigenous psychology. Anonymous introduces overtones of populist discourse into a broadly Marxist framework. He or she overturns notions of "boundaries" in counselling psychology. Therapy becomes a form of activism, where individuals are encouraged to seek communal solutions to distress. The writings of Biko and Fanon are seen as a path to a more indigenous psychology. Levett represents child psychology. I questioned her social constructionist assumption, however, that discourse predominantly determines social formations such as child and women abuse. Finally, Perkel's challenge to community psychology, in forging more relevant clinical modalities, provided particular grist for a deconstructive DA. A critical Marxist interpretive repertoire appears to be appropriated into liberal humanist discourse of the psyche as predominantly "non-social" in formation and deformation. Despite presenting psychology as "bourgeois" in origin and clientele, he ends up arguing against community psychology's emphasis on group therapy in communities where access to individual therapy is economically denied. An incapacity to imagine therapy as activism also bedevils his argument.

## 5. PINS 1990-1998

### 5.1. Constructing a critical psychology in post-liberation South Africa

This issue of *Psychology in society* focuses on the psychology of repression. There might be some surprise from our readers about our carrying these articles when it seems that the 'season for repression' is over since the F.W. de Klerk speech in early February this year. We need to remind ourselves that there have been no changes in security legislation and the current State of Emergency is still in operation. Furthermore there are well over a 100 people being held in detention under the emergency regulations, and a handful of Security Act detainees. While it is true that the State has eased up on the use of formal repression, it is equally true that a complex web of repression - both formal and informal - still exists.... (Editorial, PINS 13, 1990, p. 1).

In the light of this editorial, it might seem perverse to make 1990 rather than 1994 the watershed year for liberation in South Africa. Nevertheless, the release of Mandela from Pollsmoor prison in February 1990, was a major symbolic step towards a new order (Mandela, 1994, p. 684). Hindsight gives one a perspective not available to the editors at the time. Also, it was the second issue of PINS (14) in 1990 that included the Maputo Declaration on Health and the Maputo Statement on HIV/AIDS. The Maputo international conference, held in April of that year, brought "together for the first time health and social welfare workers, anti-apartheid activists, organisations representing more than 54 000 health workers from within South Africa, and their counterparts and comrades from the ANC, Mozambique and all of the frontline states". The aim was to "formulate specific proposals, strategies and policies for the structure, organisation, financing and development of health and welfare services for a truly democratic South Africa" (PINS 14, p. 63). I doubt that this initiative occurred without knowledge of the behind-the-scenes negotiations between the ANC leadership and the ruling National Party government (Mandela, 1994). The attention given HIV/AIDS, also signals a new era for health workers in southern Africa. As the document indicates, the disease was already considered "an established epidemic" that required urgent action (PINS 14, p. 68). Despite the editors' justifiable concerns, then, 1990 represents a milestone towards positive change. What is significant, though, is their

comment that while formal repression by the State had “eased up”, “a complex web of repression... still exists in South Africa”. Marxists would reconceptualise the web in terms of ideology, something that does not change overnight.

## 5.2. The contributors

Determination to forge a local psychology “indigenous in structure and content”, to quote Ivey (PINS 5, 1986, p.25) gathered momentum but came mostly from white contributors. Articles from black academics remained low in number, even after 1994. In 1990, Seedat suggested that the reason lay in the distribution of the journal mainly to white liberal universities. An alternative view came from Shefer, Van Niekerk and Duncan (PINS 22, 1997, p.38), who suggested that scepticism about white liberal initiatives, inexperience and a lack of confidence in publishing might better explain the absence. Whatever the case, in reinforcing my choice of watershed year, Cooper, Nicholas, Seedat and Statman wrote that in “March 1989, a meeting was convened at the University of the Western Cape (UWC) in Bellville, South Africa. For the first time, black South Africans had organised a national psychology conference at which they were the majority in attendance, the keynote speakers, the framers and formulators of the agenda” (1990, p.1). In other words, marginalisation, so long a part of black psychologists’ experience, was gaining attention. The book Psychology and apartheid edited by Nicholas and Cooper was published in 1990 and presents a selection of the conference proceedings.

## 5.3. Changes of discourse around “relevance”, “critique”, “oppression” and “indigenous”

The themes highlighted in Section 4. continued to preoccupy contributors after 1990 but are constructed in terms of a shifting range of discourses and socio-political context. Although Seedat stressed that both black and women psychologist academics had not been adequately heard in PINS up to 1988, after 1990 women’s issues and feminist discourses become more regularly featured. The number of women contributors also rose from a third to about a half. The article by Jackson and van Vlaenderen on “male stream”, “scientific” research in psychology constructs a picture of the pervasive oppression of women even by academics. By contrast, the article by Louw, suggests the struggle of “male stream”, conservative, “scientific”

discourse to forge a perspective more “relevant” to contemporary South Africa. Juxtaposed with these articles, however, is a critique by a male academic, Perkel, dealing with the growing concern amongst men of the implications for masculinity of feminism. Questions of “relevance” in these terms, then, becomes as much a matter of psychology serving the majority of people as ensuring that women are seen to be the greater part of this group. While feminist discourse is given greater voice, however, Marxist discourses rapidly declined as a discourse of critique. This development is not surprising given the collapse, in about 1989, of communist regimes in the USSR and the eastern bloc countries. The resurrection of “race” - renamed “culture” - as a respectable and primary category of social analysis amongst certain academics and African nationalists in this country, also tended to make class a lesser consideration. As a result, Foucauldian type post-structuralist critique and liberal humanist discourses gained in dominance. The articles by Kottler, Isemonger and van Zyl are considered within this changed framework.

The theoretical context for critique after 1990 may be termed “post-marxist” because of the residue of “left” discourse found in many of the articles. Psychoanalytically orientated texts, however, started to feature strongly. In several instances, they further the Frankfurt School tradition of fusing psychoanalytic theory with critical theory. But they do so with a substantial infusion of post-structuralist and discourse theory. The article by van Wyk and Voice is valuable as illustration. “Relevance” while still tied to “critique”, “oppression” and “indigenous” starts to be constructed in relativist rather than the absolute terms of pre-1990 critical Marxist discourse. One or two contributors, like Nell, continue to evidence an uncompromising assault on “conformist psychologies” but with “populist” overtones shifting the challenge into post-marxist, “citizen-charter” type protest.

## **5.4. THE EXTRACTS**

### **5.4.1. Liberal feminist discourse: A clinical psychologist on “relevance” and African healing and medicine**

Amanda Kottler’s article “South Africa: Psychology’s dilemma of multiple discourses” (PINS 13, 1990, pp. 27-36) clearly announces discourse as a critical focus. In the course of the article, the “relevance” of the discourses identified is assessed in terms of a dialogue between western

and African medicine and healing. As was the case in Section 3., I stress the agency and demographics of the writer in framing ideas within particular discourses. Kottler is an academic from the University of Cape Town, and since the publication of a chapter with Levett in Burman's Deconstructing feminist discourse (1998), has come to be associated for me, with feminist discourse. This is how inter-textuality works, with reading being as much a focus on the text of immediate consideration, as a constant backwards and forwards referencing over time/history in one's mind, of other texts and knowledge. The "multiple discourses" to which she refers are what she names the "differences" and "similarity" discourses centred around the professionalisation of African healers. Feminist issues are not directly raised but Kottler occasionally uses "her" when referring to researchers in general, and draws on a black female anthropologist rather than a male to provide support for her arguments. Having mapped out the main arguments of the two discourses, she then comments as follows:

The **similarities discourse**, apparently informed by notions of political economy (e.g. Sharp, 1980) and critical theory, actively attempts to **unveil** and **debunk** beliefs, looking not only to analyse the surface but the deeper structures as well. The aim of critical theory is to reflect upon the systems of **constraints** produced by humans and 'in these terms **purports** to be guided by emancipatory interests'. It has a political reference in that it is concerned with power relationships and does not **merely** involve **disinterested observation** (Foster, 1983, p. 52). The similarities discourse is extremely **persuasive** but **disappoints** because whilst it focuses on **material social factors** it **fails** to consider the **intra-psychic structures and processes**. The **differences discourse** does not involve disinterested observation either. Seated within a **humanist** framework, such researchers aim at promoting human **development**. Their research looks at **innovative concepts** and aims for **maximum co-operation** between researcher and researched. The researcher is **free to admit** and know **her biases**, may be highly personal, speculative and holistic....

This extract offers rich opportunity for DA and for speculating about the sort of discourses that will be excluded as "irrelevant" to the professionalisation of African healers. Within the first few sentences, for example, there is evidence of rhetorical strategies being used in one discourse

to undermine another. I am always struck by the power of a single word subtly to undercut “seemingly” positive comment. The word “apparently”, like “seemingly”, performs the function of turning the claim that “similarities discourse” is “informed by notions of political economy...and critical theory” into a form of pseudo authority or legitimation. It is as if the claim is only hearsay, and not to be believed. The next clause, “actively attempts to unveil and debunk beliefs”, also suggests that perhaps the similarities discourse is a little grandiose and judgmental. Added to this, is yet another qualifier serving to diminish the credibility of the discourse and damn it with bad faith. The similarities discourse, it is said, “purports” to be “guided by emancipatory interests”. Certainly, the contrast with descriptions of the “differences discourse” as “speculative”, “holistic” and as looking at “innovative concepts”, aiming for “maximum co-operation” and allowing the researcher “to be free to admit and know her biases”, is such that little deconstructive reading is needed to conclude what sort of discourse will dominate the article. After all, while the similarities discourse is “extremely persuasive” it “disappoints” because it “focuses on material social factors” and “fails to consider intra-psychic structures and processes”. Cumulatively, then, the interpretive repertoire becomes one which contains and endorses terms and categories such as “innovation”, “co-operation”, “freedom”, “speculation”, “holistic”, “intra-psychic” and “human development”. Coupled to a basic scorn for the claims of the similarities discourse and its emphasis on “material social factors” and, it seems fair to say, the repertoire belongs to a liberal humanist discourse.

What is disturbing, however, is that Kottler goes on to lend legitimacy to the differences discourse by drawing on the work of Ngubane, a female African anthropologist. For decades, the differences discourse propped up apartheid views of race and a belief that traditional African practices were inferior. It seems exploitative to cite a black academic to support this type of discourse. It is as if “blackness” in itself, is somehow a warrant of soundness. To quote from Kottler’s 1988 article, the differences discourse:

can either lead to a **romanticised** view of African medicine (e.g. Buhrmann, 1980) or one in which it is seen as **inferior, ignorant** and based on a belief in the supernatural (in Wilson, 1980). Discounting evidence of this in their own society (in e.g. Comaroff, n/d), supporters of this essentially Western position would argue that within African medicine (and only African medicine) explanations are given in terms

which are **magical, primitive and irrational**. Such a dichotomy is a product of Western thought (p. 5).

This extract, from an earlier article, gives substance to the concepts of inter-textuality and variability. It contains an explanation of a discourse favoured by the writer but which, by her own admission, either romanticises African medicine or sees it as “inferior, ignorant” and “magical, primitive and irrational”. Perhaps her drawing support from Ngubane belongs to the “romanticising” aspect of the discourse. Yet, in the context of the transition from an apartheid to a liberatory ethos, this sort of choice was, I think, typical of the time. For years, many progressive academics had assiduously avoided race and difference in an effort to distance themselves from anything hinting at “separate but equal” ideology. In about 1990, however, many African people with nationalist aspirations, seemed to resurrect race in the form of cultural pride. Difference thus became, again, an occasion of resistance to white cultural and political hegemony. The first instance of this kind of position had been the Black Consciousness Movement in the seventies. Ultimately, though, Kottler does not go beyond identifying the “multiple discourses” to saying what sort of discourse would take psychology or “African medicine” (her use of term) forward. The value of her article, then, resides in its presentation of the debate between two fiercely contested discourses.

#### **5.4. 2. Liberal humanist “discourse discourse” on community psychology from a post-graduate student**

The question of indigenous healing in dialogue with western practice was only in an early stage of formulation by 1990. The “relevance” debate mostly centred on how clinical and counselling services to communities, other than a white, privileged minority, could best be reconceptualised. Community psychology, as Dawes pointed out in the previous chapter, does not necessarily mean a complete break with a liberal humanist ethos. While a shift from individualism was lauded, the failure to challenge the dominant capitalist system, was argued to be a major shortcoming. An article by Ian Isemonger adds yet another dimension to the debate. Entitled “A postmodernist critique of community psychology” (PINS 13, 1990, pp. 37-41), the text constructs a “mental constructivist” view of the “relevance” of the term “community” in psychology. Community psychology as it stands, Isemonger suggests, in moving from the

individual to the community in focus, has yet adequately to define its object i.e. “community”. He agrees, though, that individualism tends to obscure the social dimensions of individual behaviour. As an example, he cites the “alienation and delinquency amongst the coloured youth” as “reflecting a shortcoming in the community at large”, and hence requiring a community intervention (p. 37). Nevertheless, he writes:

I would also like to pursue the idea that the targeting of an existing community for intervention, will in itself lead to the **importation** into the programme of the **ideological and historical** precedents to its alienation, and that the more productive means of **limiting alienation** is the formation of **new communities**....My intuition is that because we assume that there are objectively existing communities and we only have to have the right method at our disposal we could discover them. More than this however it is because we assume that if we do not discover them our intervention will be the poorer. These assumptions are to my mind fundamentally **misguided** and serve only to confound intervention effectiveness rather than promote it.... **Anderson (1983)**, in his book ‘Imagined Communities - Reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism’ has pursued ideas which are particularly helpful in this respect.... [He] talks of the **imagined community**, the community as **mental construct** rather than **objective phenomenon**.... The direction of my argument thus far is that it is misguided to preoccupy oneself with rigorously and objectively **defining a community** since the **nature** of the community is in conflict with this endeavour (pp. 37- 38).

Identifying the types of discourses at work here, seems to require that one first clarify the discourses against which the writer appears to be pitching his “mental constructivist” argument of the “imagined community”. The most obvious target discourse is that of community psychology in a neo-realist form, one which “rigorously and objectively defines” a community. According to Kurpius and Fuqua (1993), however, among the basic principles of community intervention is consultation inviting a target community to question the preliminary assumptions and information of an intervention. Extreme resistance would be encountered were a community not free to define who should be earmarked for empowerment. Isemonger, himself, has a target community defined in terms of an “alienated and delinquent coloured youth” but this is something he appears to take as given.



Another discourse with which the “mental constructivist” discourse is juxtaposed, speaks of “objective practices”. Isemonger does not give examples of what this might mean but one presumes work would be one of them. He also writes of the “ideological and historical precedents to communities” and “alienated communities” so perhaps a fragment of critical Marxist discourse is also drawn upon. Marx argued that people make their own history but not under circumstances of their own choosing (McLellan, 1980, p.137). According to Isemonger, however, despite an inheritance from the past, “a community is contingent upon perceptions of itself” and does not have to see itself in terms of that inheritance. The efficacy of the Black Consciousness Movement in the seventies suggests this argument has some substance. Whatever the material deprivations to which black people were subjected, with the reshaping of their consciousness, they were better able to confront apartheid ideology. Perhaps it is in the renaming of consciousness as mental constructs that I have difficulty, although it usefully describes the active nature of consciousness to bring things into being.

As an example of how a shift in “imagining” community has had positive effect, Isemonger describes a BBC documentary entitled “We are so poor” set in India (1980):

The aggregation of self-employed women did not prior to the project constitute a community, the women did not clearly perceive themselves as part of a women’s community until they were bound by the SEWA (Self Employed Women’s Association) organisation. Furthermore it was the emergence of their self perception as a group that was particularly therapeutic in instilling a sense of autonomy and assertiveness in each one of their personal lives, as evidenced in their interaction and bargaining with customers and suppliers. The importance of this observation is that the provision of structures (e.g. building, common meeting place, common explicit agenda, an informed co-ordinator, and criteria for membership) created the members’ self perception as a functioning community that was in itself therapeutic (pp. 38-39).

In reading the extract, I must own to thinking that collective bargaining and organisation have long been cornerstones of Marxist practices of empowerment. The women’s alienation and distortions in their thinking about themselves, could be viewed as a result of an ideological process in a profoundly hierarchical society. How, I found myself wondering, is Isemonger’s

chosen discourse different in explanation and idea for tackling these issues? His arguments look like old ideas in new linguistic clothing, except for the primacy he gives to mental constructs shaping the world. This is cognitivism or post-structuralist idealism. The portion of sentence I have highlighted, however, suggests that it was not only in creating a mental construct called SEWA that empowered the women and gave them a sense of community. It was, to quote, in the “provision of structures” such as a building where the women could meet and the organisational support of an “informed co-ordinator”. This implies ontological priority to material and societal structures, a far cry from a cognitivist “world as mental construct” position. Perhaps the mental construct of note was encouraging the women to collectivise and, as I said earlier, that is not a new idea. Moreover, another term for the activity of “creating communities in the minds of targeted individuals”, is conscientisation, also not a new concept. But to be fair to Isemonger, as a student tentatively finding his way through ideas, it is important to see where he takes his argument. He goes on to write that:

... the **identity and existence of a group albeit imagined** is a function of a range of power relationships (power relationships that are more than likely the **source** of the communities **alienation**) with other groups; more simply, there is **no identity outside of a power differential**. These relationships are **historical** and **ideologically** grounded and often well entrenched in practice, thus when we target a community we cannot but help **importing** all these relationships and associations.... I do not want to advance the negative point that operating within **existing groups** precludes the alteration of the distribution of power across those groups, I would only like to suggest the positive point that it is **more productive** to actively create **new groups** with **new identities**, which will successfully **spoil** the profile and identity of the communities that the **power distribution** assumes. In doing this we **curb alienation** not so much by empowering a target community as by **forcing power to redistribute itself** across a different profile of communities (pp. 39-40).

What is suggested then is that while the “identity and existence” of a group are “imagined constructs”, they are also about “historically and ideologically grounded” “power relationships”, the “likely source” of “alienation”. No mention is made of material forces and relations, and the term “historical” is left unspecified. The absence of the term “discourse” itself in the text rules out Foucauldian or social constructionist discourses as dominant points of reference.

Fragments of a critical Marxist repertoire, then, float amongst a cognitive constructivist discourse in ways that produce mostly incompletely realised and contradictory explanation and argument. The reader seems to have to take it on trust that the psychologist's helping in the formation of "new groups" and "new identities", will have the influence to "force power to redistribute itself". This sounds like Foucault's idea of power being everywhere distributed in discourse and hence nowhere, as Parker pointed out. This particular extract, moreover, contains a vocabulary of "break down", "preclude", "alter", "create", "spoil", "curb" and "force" to describe the activities of the psychologist. I personally do not associate community interventions with such aggressiveness. Foucault's idea of psychology and psychiatry "policing" a community comes to mind. Thus, while I agree entirely with the idea of psychologists helping communities redefine themselves, the only reason I can see for changing from a discourse of ideology into a discourse of mental constructs, is to make the idea acceptable to psychologists who have difficulties with Marxism. The greatest danger in this post-marxist switch is to forget the material practices and socio-political contexts that define communities.

#### **5.4.3. Psychoanalytic discourses: A clinical psychologist on "relevance" and clinical skill**

It may seem a leap from struggling communities to the privileged world of psychoanalysis. The following article, however, addresses questions of the role of the clinician in a society where the majority of people are subjected to a wide range of extreme socio-political and economic stressors over and above the difficulties of everyday relationships and living. It also represents "critique" within the discourse of psychoanalysis. The article is by Susan van Zyl of the University of the Witwatersrand and, like Isemonger's, is concerned with defining a category which is often used but too seldom specified. Entitled, "Freud and a political role for psychology" (PINS 14, 1990, pp. 4-16), the text attempts to "delimit" the work of the clinician. Some thought-provoking arguments are made concerning who should be the recipients of clinical intervention and what constitutes "psychopathology". Many of the comments seem directed at a particular type of addressee, one who argues that people in strife-torn communities who present themselves for help are manifesting "psychopathology", or who sees South Africa as "a pathogenic society". Van Zyl writes (again I stress agency), as part of her preamble, "The range and extent of human suffering which confronts everyone and the wish to turn anything

practical in psychology to good use is almost overwhelming, so that the cautious self-examination which would direct and focus this activity seems literally an instance of intellectual fiddling while the country burns" (p. 4). She, nevertheless, proceeds to say:

In addition to the general requirement that any discipline **delimit its objects**, a diagnostic discipline must also **formulate, and clearly express**, the way in which it can **distinguish the normal from the pathological** (that is diagnose) and on this basis practises a **rationally defensible** form of intervention, be it prevention or cure. The task confronting the clinical psychologist is especially difficult in these terms. It often takes **all of human experience**, be it thought or action, as its **legitimate object** and **confuses** the concept of **pathology** with the more secure and measurable one of **abnormality**. It then sets out to remedy or prevent that which is not **clearly established** as **warranting** a cure at all. The result is that neither the objects nor states which call for intervention nor the method by which it is undertaken can be **rationally defended**. In other words unless the individuals or the society which calls for **committed action** can **appropriately** be described as pathological, it is not the **expertise** of a psychologist that is called for and it is therefore not as psychologist that this commitment is acted upon. In order to be **assured** of a political function at all, clinical psychologists generally assume that South Africa is a **pathogenic society** and that the **incontrovertible human misery** it produces amounts to psychopathology. In this **apparently commonsensical** assumption, much that is of **crucial importance** lies. In fact, the possibility of a **uniquely appropriate** psychological intervention turns upon the **validity** of this position and the way it is explained (pp. 4-5).

The first thing that struck me upon reading this extract, is the stark contrast of the discourse style with the impassioned presentation of many of the articles in the pre-1990 period. Perhaps the sobriety of style is in keeping with a discourse which repeats that clinical practices must be "rationally defensible" and "rationally defended", should "clearly express" and "clearly establish" its objects, and arrive at what is "appropriately described" and "uniquely appropriate" for intervention. This is a discourse which presents ideas in terms of "status", "legitimacy" "expertise", "warranting" and "validity". It is the discourse of the academic professional or

expert. It is from someone with the special skills of psychological “diagnosis” and who ought to know where presenting difficulties are on the scale from “incontrovertible human misery” and “pathology” to “secure and measurable” “abnormality”. This is, in other words, mainstream psychology discourse. Van Zyl also gives an often-rehearsed history of how Freud created a domain of expertise separate from psychiatry. One of the linchpins of her argument is that Freud highlighted that many ailments thought to be of the body were rather a “disorder of signification, an event in the wrong language as it were” and yet this is not a concept she sustains in her explanations (p.6). She then says:

...while Freud does allow for a **purely external cause of neurosis**, he has, in differentiating hysteria (a **psychoneurosis**) from an **actual neurosis**, excluded one form of pathology from psychoanalytic intervention. In this, he has **limited psychoanalytic practice** to those **conditions** which **implicate interagency conflict**. The world alone may cause neurosis but, if so, it alone may cure it. In fact, in strict terms an **actual neurosis** is not a neurosis at all. It is a **form of extraordinary human unhappiness**, one which if an expert were called upon to produce a cure that expertise would have to be one directed at **changing the world** not people, that of the politician or social worker not of the psychologist. In making this important distinction Freud gains insight in to the problem but also adds to the already difficult task of formulating a concept of **psychopathology** (pp. 6-7).

It seems that the type of neurosis which Freud believed required psychoanalytic intervention is, in Van Zyl’s terms, where “interagency conflict” is “implicated”. The reader is given the idea, in an earlier passage, that “interagency conflict” means the unconscious struggle between “libido and superego”. In contrast, there is an “actual neurosis”, which is not a neurosis at all but “extraordinary human unhappiness” caused it seems by the world and, therefore, to be “cured” by the world not the psychologist. In German, “aktuell” translates both as “actual “ and “real” and “aktuelle-frage” is said to mean “present-day questions” (Cassell’s German-English Dictionary, 1978, p. 24). An “actual neurosis” would, then, be in response to immediate difficulties in the world, rather than some sort of inherent condition. Thus it seems there is misery justified by external circumstances and there is misery stemming largely from intrapsychic difficulties. The clinician’s work, then, is with those who have neuroses of the

“inherent” kind, and it is up to politicians and social workers to look after the event-directed neuroses. A traditional division of labour is thus endorsed.

It is only to the extent that an **action** does not **comply** with the **structural and formal requirements** for the definition of action (that is, has a **reason** which determines its form, and therefore, acts as its **cause**) or the structural requirements of a **communicative event**, (that is the form of an **intelligible and grammatical utterance**) which determines whether we are dealing with pathology or not. Neither events in the world, then, nor particular forms of human action or thought are pathological but crucially the **psychic apparatus is inherently pathogenic**. It, and this is Freud's genius, represents both **pathology and normality's pre-conditions....** South Africa generates an unusually high amount of both **ordinary and extraordinary human unhappiness neither of these can be equated with neurosis** and are therefore **not the legitimate province of the psychologist**. And it is also clear that where neurosis does occur, it does for reasons **not wholly attributable to the social** (p. 12).

Again what is so marked in this discourse of psychoanalytic diagnosis is its measured rationality. What sort of opposing discourse could counter the concisely defined concepts, the authority of Freud's “genius”, the neatly layered arguments? It is only in the last sentence that the logic of the text seems to unravel. First it is argued, following Freud, that the human psyche is inherently predisposed to pathology. It is implied that only certain individuals will succumb to this built-in condition. Then it is suggested that they will do so for “reasons not wholly attributable to the social”. Thus, individuals whose misery is neither “ordinary or extraordinary unhappiness” but neurosis, are in this position for reasons which are largely attributable to the social. “Not wholly attributable” implies “mostly” and contradicts the distinction Van Zyl has been at such pains to delineate between unhappiness caused by external events and neurosis as unmanageable intrapsychic conflict. One phrase, in other words, in an otherwise tightly argued passage begs the question as to how this contradiction will be resolved.

The gist of her subsequent arguments is that the social circumstances in which most black families find themselves are such that it is “statistically more likely” that individuals from these families will not have the intrapsychic resources to withstand the rigours of extreme socio-

political and economic stressors. Examined deconstructively, however, this sort of explanatory discourse is only coherent within conventional Freudian psychoanalytic and liberal humanist frameworks, and does not constitute “critique” because it nowhere reflects upon its own assumptions and categories. For example, it assumes the centrality of the Oedipal conflict, and does not question that this may not hold good for the majority of South Africans whose families are not based on the nuclear family system. This is not an original insight, this is a frequently proffered criticism (Burman, 1994, p. 66-7). Empirical research is sorely needed in this area to counter or support the applicability of psychoanalytic theory to people in this country.

It was not surprising, then, that the editors of PINS saw a need to invite contributions from psychologists working within a psychoanalytic framework. Nor was it unexpected to see a briefing from Gavin Ivey eight years later in PINS 23 (1998, pp. 52-57) indicating the fierce dissension that had occurred at the first international psychoanalytic conference in Africa held in Cape Town in April 1998. It seems that people such as Leslie Swartz suggested, to quote, “that the importation of conventional psychoanalysis would make the South African situation worse” and that psychoanalytic training is a “form of enculturation” which Ivey goes on to say “makes it more difficult for psychoanalysts to move from their individualist and elitist situations into the community, where mental health workers are desperately needed” (ibid, p. 54). PINS offered a forum for the full spectrum of opinion in psychology. Van Zyl’s text, then, represents the struggle of mainstream psychology in becoming more relevant to communities other than the middle class for which it was originally created. It also presents a valuable clarification of terms.

#### **5.4.4. Psychoanalytical discourse: Reformulated in post-structuralist terms by academics in Afrikaans and philosophy with a focus on “Afrikaner identity”**

In 1990, Johan van Wyk was in the Afrikaans department at the University of Durban -Westville (UDW) and Paul Voice in the philosophy department of the University of South Africa (UNISA). Their article is entitled “Afrikaans as symptom-formation: A Freudian reading of ‘Afrikaner history’” (PINS 14, 1990, pp. 17-27). Since post-structuralism gained currency in the 1980s psychology has drawn on linguistics and philosophy in ways reminiscent of scholarship before specialisation set in around the 1940s. It seems appropriate, therefore, to have

academics from language and philosophy departments making psychoanalysis a resource. The article is provocative and hence written in a spirit encouraged by PINS. As someone who believes that psychoanalytic theory offers an enormous legacy of untapped and unquestioned possibilities, I own to finding the article especially valuable.

#### 5.4.4.1. Afrikaner discourse of identity and “multiple discourses”

Our discussion is premised on the idea that the term ‘Afrikaner’ has a **shifting denotation** and the study of it should entail a careful analysis of the **different discursive contexts** of which it is a part. The **meaning** of the term, like any other, is conditioned by changes which take place at the level of the **economic and the ideological**. In this sense the Afrikaner is a **discursive and ideological construct**. In another sense, as we will show, the **fabrication of a collective identity**, beginning with the activities of the GRA (Genootskap van Regte Afrikaanders; The Association of Real Afrikaanders) in the late 1800s, **fashioned a past** which relates to an original **lawlessness and omnipotence**. We briefly trace the way in which this lawlessness was threatened with the arrival of the **British** at the Cape in 1795. We contrast the **lawless, father-orientated** perspective of the **colonists** with the **modern** recognition of the **world as object** which is **determined by natural laws**. Here we employ a number of **Freudian** concepts whose use suggests that the preoccupation with the Afrikaans **language**, with **race** and **nation** can be read as a **symptom-formation** which relates to the Afrikaner nationalist’s **melancholia** - a longing for a lost omnipotence (pp. 17-18).

It does not take much of an incisive DA to identify the three obvious discourses working in tandem in this opening passage of the article. Within the first few lines, an interpretive repertoire of phrases such as “shifting denotation”, “different discursive contexts”, “meaning”, “fabricated an identity” and “fashioned a past”, signals a “discourse discourse”. These phrases are followed by terminology which presents the Afrikaner as a discursive and ideological “construct” and whose preoccupations are to be “read” as symptom formations, and thus embodies canonical post-structuralist discourse. Interwoven is a discourse which couches “change” in terms of the “economic and ideological”. And, a number of lines later, an interpretive repertoire of “omnipotence”, “father-orientated”, “symptom-formation” and



“melancholia” is to be found. It seems fair to say, then, that crucial fragments from post-structuralist, critical Marxist and Freudian psychoanalytic discourses are at work here. Later in the article, a discourse is drawn upon which writes in terms of a “fabricated identity” and “fashioned past”. A source in Foucauldian theory is suggested, in which the “discontinuities” and “fictional” nature of history and group identity formation are powerfully argued for. The writers include The order of things (1970) in their reference list. I have suggested a “critical” Marxist orientation, however, because of the slightly greater emphasis given to the ideological over the material in explanations of the forces at work in shaping Afrikaner behaviour and perceptions.

The struggle for wording in DA, is where one uses a realist language of “discovery” and where a post-structuralist discourse of “construction”. I am aware, for example, that another analyst might “construct” different foci for attention and construe the text from a theoretical framework different from my own Marxist critical realist form of DA. But, at the same time, DA theory is presented in terms which suggest one ought to allow themes and features “to emerge” from a text, as though they are simply there to be found or recognised (Potter and Wetherell, 1987, p. 161). In the case of this text, however, the writers clearly signal or even name some of the discourses upon which they draw. Central to post-modernist academic discourse are self-reflexivity and overt statements of theoretical heritage, and Van Wyk and Voice are generally eminently reflexive. The inter-weaving of modern and postmodern discourses suggested by the particular interpretative repertoires used by them is, nevertheless, a major challenge for DA.

Before pursuing detailed analyses, however, perhaps a little “gist” reading of the extract has to be done. Two key ideas seem to dominate. One is that the meaning of the term “Afrikaaner” tends to change with shifts in “discursive”, “economic and ideological” contexts and was, originally, a “fabrication of a collective identity” by the Genootskap vir Regte Afrikaners (GRA). The other is to be found in the last sentence. It is proposed that the “preoccupation” of Afrikaners with “language, race and nation” can be “read” as a “symptom-formation” of a state of “melancholia” or a “longing for a lost omnipotence”. In short, then, it can be confidently argued that the writers are going to offer a psychoanalytically and discursively framed alternative to existing constructions of the term Afrikaner which takes into account material and ideological contexts - an ambitious project. In shifting to a micro level of DA, however, the word

“preoccupation” seem to hold my attention. I found myself thinking it too mild a term and that “obsessed” might be more accurate. Initially, it also seemed out of register with descriptions of a people as “lawless” and “omnipotent”. I say this with hesitation because I started to wonder whether the writers would, in an obliquely Rousseauian way, romanticise the Afrikaner as a “wild being” or “innocent child” untouched by the over-civilising laws of the British. Freud himself seemed to suggest that the repressions of “civilisation” were a regrettable but necessary evil curbing “instinctual man” or humankind. But, this is jumping ahead.

The British, and essentially capitalist, ethics - represented by the liberalism and humanism of the missionaries - challenged the brutal colonisation of the continent by Dutch-descended colonists. The colonists responded to this foreign ethic by emphasising a father-orientated conception of the world. A world of predestination in which they acted on behalf and in the name of the father (God) and in which they adopted the omnipotent father’s role towards their environment and those who inhabited it. This conception elides the facticity of an objective world and places the world within the domain of the will. Where the world came to be seen by science as an object which is determined by experimentally tested physical laws, the colonists instead saw the world as an expression of the omnipotent father’s will. Where imperialism, and its capitalist dynamic, represented a movement to an integrated world economy, the GRA emphasised a national and racial difference. In Freudian terms the early Dutch-descended colonists and their nationalists offspring can be seen as a force which stood against the civilising activities of Eros: ‘Civilisation is a process in the service of Eros, whose purpose is to combine single human individuals, and after that families, then races, peoples and nations, into one great unity, the unity of mankind’ (Freud, 1985, p. 313) (pp. 22-23).

A discourse which favourably sets the “British” with a amalgam of concepts such as “capitalist”, “ethics”, liberalism”, “humanism”, “missionaries”, “imperialism”, “civilising” and “Eros” against “Dutch-descended” and a vocabulary of the “brutal”, “predestination”, “father’s will”, “God” and “national and racial difference”, can only be described as bold in the extreme, and prompted me to wonder how such an argument could possibly be sustained. Recent historians have offered a very different interpretation of British missionary activity, “imperialism” and the

“capitalist dynamic”, one which points to an exploitation of the indigenous inhabitants every bit as “brutal” and discriminatory as that exercised by Afrikaners (e.g. Motlhabi, 1984). Also, Marxist economists write of the stranglehold of monopolies in a globalising economy. The fragments of critical Marxist discourse detected in the earlier extract, then, start to dwindle in significance as a discourse of liberal humanism suggests itself in this later passage. I am arguing for inconsistency or variability here and too neat a dichotomy between one category and another. More textual material needs to be presented, though, to allow for validation and “confirmation by exception”. With the last paragraphs of the article, decisions about the dominant discourse are easier to make.

To the **descendants** of the early colonists, in whose minds the **memories** of early **freedom** came to **dominate**, the world was an expression of the **Same**; everything was **drenched** in the **Father’s omnipotent** presence: everything was **predestined** by the **Father**. This ties up with the special emphasis the GRA placed on the **ancestral fathers**. The **ancestral fathers** are nothing but expressions of **lost omnipotence**. Further, **God** as the **Primal Father** related to their own **omnipotence** in so far as they saw it as **his will** that they should **dominate** (p. 24).

With the highlighting of words and phrases, the forceful repetition of the words “Father/father” “dominate”, “omnipotent” immediately becomes apparent. Although Freud saw religion as delusional myth-making, a certain biblical dimension is perhaps present in the concept of the “Primal Father”, the ancestor of all ancestors. The writers’ reference to the Same, it is said in an endnote, comes from Foucault. And, as I indicated in the Theoretical Framework, most of the French and German thinkers who have written of “difference”, also refer to some original “sameness” or “oneness” before everything began. Freud wrote of human longings for death and the cessation of pain as a wish to return to a blissful “oceanic oneness” before birth. An inversion is implied here, especially in the highly evocative phrase “drenched in the Father’s omnipotent presence”. As I have previously noted, the power of rhetoric often resides in eliciting a vivid, multi-sensory response in a reader. It is the “loss” of feeling all powerful, of being drenched in God, and the commencement of pain that the writers say the Afrikaner has had to face. They develop their argument, however, with an unexpected twist on Freud’s ideas:

...the link that Freud drew between the **internalisation** of the **father figure** and the development of personal **conscience** becomes questionable. The father is not necessarily an indicator of the development of personal conscience, but of **power above the law**, of **omnipotence** and of **lawlessness**. The **erasure** of the omnipotent father which accompanies the **modern world view** fills the Afrikaner nationalists of the previous century, and of today, with **remorse**. They sense in this a nearing **apocalypse** (Ostow, 1986, pp. 278-284). This leads to **self-destructive** and **irrational rituals** of **self-purification**: the demand for **sacrifices** in **war** and the imposition of **censorship**. Censorship specifically, implies a **silencing** of the **reality principle**, of the personal and questioning conscience, in so far as censorship represses investigations into **social reality**. Further, when censorship is directed at **repressing sexual depictions** in art and literature, it implies the **denial** of a **libido**. The silencing of the libido is revealing in so far as the libido refers to a relation with **difference**, energy directed towards objects outside of the self. This is in contrast to **incest** which refers to the direction of sexual energy towards the **Same**, and which found expression in the **laws** which Afrikaner nationalists enacted after they came to power in 1948 which **prescribed** that only people of the **same race** may have sexual relations (pp. 24-25).

Again the discourse is entirely Freudian - even the term appropriated by post-structuralism, namely, "erasure" comes from Freud's "mystic writing pad" analogy. There is hardly a word or phrase that does not come from the source discourse. The shift of thinking that occurs from within this discourse, then, is all the more surprising. The writers argue that the internalisation of the father figure does not mean the path to "personal conscience". They suggest, instead, that with the Afrikaner it has meant the internalisation of "power above the law", "omnipotence" and "lawlessness". And, presumably this has occurred because in place of a human father has been erected a godly Father. The logic seems to be that the Afrikaner has stayed so regressed that differentiation from a father figure has not occurred. Even censorship and race are seen as a fixation in "sameness". In object relations terms all of this would add up to a state of psychotic narcissism. The writers are at pains to qualify Afrikaner, several times, by the epithet "nationalist", leaving presumably some Afrikaners untainted by regressive psychosis. One of the writers, after all, is Afrikaans. Finally, then, while elements of a critical Marxist discourse are

evident early in the text, the discourses that ultimately dominate are psychoanalytic and post-structuralist. The “relevance” to local psychology, however, of the “alternative” view presented seems uncontested. As the TRC hearings have pressed home, although much work has been done in the area of group pathology, important questions still remain.

#### 5.4.5. Conservative discourse: “Relevance”, “scientific psychology” and “organisational concerns”

The late 1990s have been overshadowed by the revelations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The Afrikaner, in particular, has come under scrutiny. It is, therefore, interesting from the point of asking whether PINS has constructed an alternative discourse or constitutes a critical psychology in this country, to see that Gabriel Louw from the University of Potchefstroom, a traditional stronghold of Afrikanerdom, chose to submit an article to the journal in 1992. It is written in Afrikaans. Entitled “Vernuwe die psigologie: Doen dit net wetenskaplik” (PINS 16, 1992, pp. 61-77), the article presents a case for renewing local psychology within a scientific framework. I shall quote directly from the text and then comment in English. After providing a historically framed preamble about the profession of psychology in this country, its legal status and so on, Louw writes:

Dit is belangrik om daarop te let dat die psigologie, om **terminaliteit** te ontsnap, in a **wedloop** teen die tyd is. Veral die huidige Suid-Afrikaanse **sosio-ekonomiese en politieke milieu** vra ingryping en verandering. Die psigoloie is in 'n **krisis** en sal moet **verander**. Die Suid-Afrikaanse psigologie het hoogstens **twee jaar** om sy professionele situasie in oenskou te neem en **verbeteringe** daar te stel. Dit beteken geesins dat alles in die tydperk glad verloop nie. **Spaaninge, terugslae**, opkortings, dooiepunte, oor begin, opbou, konsensus en nuwe besluitneming en **konflik** is alles deel van 'n proses van **ontwikkeling**. Die gebeure is egter sekonder en **tydelik**. Vernader bly die belangrikste en die uiteindelijke **doelstelling**. 'n Ware **beroepswederbehoorte** van die Suid Afrikaanse psigologie is egter net moontlik indien die psigologie-professie sy huidige beroeps **dilemma** en **-nood** insien en die toekoms met **gerigtheid, dinamiek en verantwoordlikheid** aanpak. Die psigologie word bevoordeel deurdat 'n **wereldwye begeerte** bestaan om die huidige modelle van die algemene gesondheidsorgbeoefenaars sowel as die

geestesgesondheidsorgbeoefenaars te verander. Verandering is dus veel makliker as wat baie maal beseft word omdat **eksterne kragte** momentum aan die psigoloog se wedersgeboorte gee. Die psigoloog self moet oortuig word dat sy/hy kan and moet verander. 'n **Kritiese perspektief** van sy **beroeps model** en **-kurrikulum** is dus noodsaaklik en onvermydelik. In so 'n proses is duidelike **kollektiewe riglyne**, **doelwitte** en **organiseerde insette** deur al die Suid-Afrikaanse psigoloe te alle tye 'n absolute vereiste (p. 64).

Useful as historical context, the editors of PINS 16 wrote that “many psychologists... have become estranged from the officially recognised organisation of psychologists PASA. Broadly speaking, but not necessarily accurately, PASA has tended to side with the status quo of apartheid South Africa, and has not seriously challenged the imbalances of power and privilege” (1992, p. 1). Louw is also described as offering “critique from ‘inside’ PASA”. His words, then, about South African psychology being in a race against time take on additional significance. The time frame he proffers is notable because it was two years later that the first democratic elections took place. The discourse, though, is still one of crisis, and the editors agree in the sense that they write of ten years having passed without progressive organisations and thinking being able to “penetrate the reactionary hegemony” of mainstream psychology. Louw writes in terms of “terminaliteit”, “wedloop teen tyd”, “nood”, “dilemma”, “dinamiek”, “spanninge”, “terugslae”, “opskortings”, “dooie punte”, “oorbegin” and “konflik”, that is, an interpretive repertoire of difficulty, process and change. The editors also added that PINS would attempt to stimulate debate about organisational concerns, especially as this had not before been encouraged. Clearly the idea seemed to be that collective action was needed to break the hold of political conservatives on psychology. And, this is what Louw seems to be suggesting in writing of the necessity of all psychologists to be involved in the process of rethinking local psychology. Thus the discourse of crisis he employs has an organisational dimension and direction. The interpretive repertoire just outlined suggests negotiation and exchange. When followed by terms such as “gerigtheid”, “verantwoordelikheid”, “beroepsmodel”, “kurrikulum”, “riglyne”, “doelwitte” and “insette”, the negotiations are formulated in terms of justice, responsibility, models, guidelines, goals and stakes. The political slant of this type of discourse, however, remains to be determined. There are minor clues in words such as “verbetering” or improvement, and the writer suggesting the need for individual psychologists to be persuaded

of the necessity for change and to adopt a “kritiese perspektief”. Mention of the “sosio-ekonomiese en politieke milieu” demanding change, confuses the picture somewhat. Again more text may be needed to establish the dominant discourses of the text.

Wat die psigologie model betref...Vier determinante of **bepalers** by **evaluasie**, almal in interaksie en interafhanklik van mekaar, is identifiseerbaar, te wete die **gebruiker, die beoefenaar, die Staat, en die opleier**....Dit is belangrik om daarop te let dat in Suid-Afrika **in die verlede** by die instelling en ontwikkeling van professionele beroepsmodelle... uitsluitlik by die **manneskragaanvraag** daarvoor berus is. In die geval is daar **ekslusief** van die **mening** van die **beoefenaar** gemaak. Behalwe dat die gebruiker van die diens misken is, is die **koste** van die **opleiding** en die instandhouding van so ‘n profesie totaal geignoreer of bloot afgemaak as die **plig** of probleem van die **Staat** (Dreijmans, 1988; Psacharopolous, 1987). Daar word **vandag** besef dat die **koste-aspek primer** gestel moet word.... Daar moet besef word dat beskikbare bronne beperk is. Suid-Afrika is ‘n Derde Wereldland.... Die land is in dieselfde ekonomiese klas as Joego-Slawie, Mexiko, Maleisie, Portugal, Uruguay, Chili and Brasilië. Tans word Amerikaanse opleidingsmodelle nagestreef sonder dat oor die land se rykdom beskik word.... (p. 69).

Louw highlights two issues that need consideration in any “rebirth” of local psychology. One, is that wider consultation is necessary where recipients of treatment are important to the process of determining what psychology ought to be doing, and two, is that South Africa’s third-world status has to be recognised and first-world models of training not strived for. The organisational discourse identified earlier, therefore, takes on something of a community cast, and perhaps a politically progressive underpinning. It seems, however, that Nell (1989), later quoted in the article, had already stressed the importance of getting away from an entrenched authoritarian, top-down decision-making style within organised psychology to a “democratic” approach. Where Louw adds something to the debate is in accepting a third-world status for South Africa. Thus, his ideas take a very pragmatic direction. He suggests that to secure funding, departments of psychology must seriously consider in which faculties they should be located, and advises the natural and medical science faculties as proper options. In this way psychology would benefit from both State and private-sector funding. He does not, however, describe what would be

expected of psychology to earn its place in these faculties. Given that he suggests a “scientific basis” for research, I concluded that the path would be “scientific” projects with industry and the State. Seven years later, however, with humanities faculties shrinking and subsidies to universities being cut to the point where self-funding has become a reality for departments, Louw’s suggestion takes on a dismal wisdom. Dawes’ article on the question of relevance and African pragmatism, though, offered the caveat that without a “radical social theory” driving pragmatism, the people who are meant to benefit will not be served. Programmes are likely to be designed to maximise the private sector’s gains. I would add that science without insights from say philosophy, history and linguistics would set psychology back a century. It would mean a return to the standardised, universal models of positivistic science. Thus, while Louw writes in liberal discourse of democracy and consultation, he clings to a conservative mainstream fetishisation of science. The trust in the rigour and objectivity of abstract numbers and formulae over words and experienced insight seems utterly contrary to the rationale of psychology as a practice. What is thrust on individuals in therapy is not good enough as a research approach.

#### **5.4.6. Feminist discourse: “Participatory research” as a challenge to the “oppression” of “male-stream” scientific discourse**

The article by Carey Ann Jackson and Hilda van Vlaenderen entitled “Participatory research: A feminist critique” (PINS 18, 1994, pp. 3-20) has as one of its sub-headings “the traditional ‘male stream’ paradigm of scientific knowledge” and serves as a valuable inter-textual juxtaposition with Louw’s argument. The two academics respectively from the universities of Natal and Rhodes, also provide a voice only minimally represented thus far in this study.

##### **5.4.6.1. “Feminist discourse” in the historical context of post-liberation South Africa**

By 1994, reticence about feminist discourse seems to have gone in South African psychology. With racial and political priorities partly settled in the victory of liberation, perhaps debating women’s issues was felt, at last, to have a legitimate space. In the editorial prefacing the article, Graham Hayes writes that “reconstruction and development” had become the buzz words of the moment and that a commitment to critical thinking “has never been more crucial” (PINS 18, 1994, p.1). He also mentions the recent formation of two organisations, one, the Psychological



Society of South Africa (PsySSA) and, the other, Psychology Politics Resistance (PPR) in Britain which he says share similar aims and objectives. Most interesting, though, in the context of the article I am about to analyse, is that a black woman, Rachel Prinsloo, from an historically black university had been elected first president of PsySSA in January 1994. She is recorded as having described herself as “a maverick activist” (PINS 19, 1994, p. 45). These developments in local psychology lend additional weight to Hayes quoting from the PPR that psychologists should remember that before “psychology can be accepted as part of the solution it must first show itself willing to address and reverse the ways it has been part of the problem” (PINS 18, 1994, pp.1-2). Perhaps according a black woman to high office in psychology’s organisational politics was an important gesture in this direction.

#### 5.4.6.2. A challenge to a “male stream” scientific discourse of “absolutes” and “oppression”

After asserting the inherently political nature of all research and that “white, middle-class, male researchers” have tended to use “what is considered to be scientific knowledge....to preserve the rights of their own group”, the writers go on to say the following:

The view of society adhered to by the **dominant**, also called **traditional**, **orthodox**, **mainstream** or **male stream** paradigm of scientific knowledge is one of maintaining **social order**, **cohesion** and **consensus**. ... Traditional research is grounded in **positivism**.... The main **virtues** of scientific research lies in its method of hypothesis testing and not in **philosophical** and **political** arguments regarding the **worth** or **implications** of such research for society (Harding, 1987: 183). Male stream methodology requires a **distancing** of the researcher from the research object (Harding (1987). This distance is vital to male stream scientific thought as an **invisible anonymous voice of authority**, with the **power** to **discredit** and **suppress** the views of the ‘researched’ (Weed, 1989). The researcher has **complete control** over the research process and with it the power to **determine unilaterally** the focus, method, interpretation and the use of the research. There is **no dialogue** between researcher and ‘researched’ on these matters and there is **no accountability** (Ellis, 1983: 6). Traditional social science researchers constitute a predominantly **male intellectual elite**, which applies its **own language (jargon) and methods**. Most importantly they have

access to, and are in **control** of a body of **knowledge** which gives them **power** over 'those ordinary people', the subjects of their research. **Male stream psychology** dictates that women **objectify** themselves, **devalue** their emotional lives and **displace** their motivation for furthering knowledge claims about **women** (pp 5-6).

Most striking here is the language of absolutes and absolute condemnation of orthodox, male-dominated scientific psychology. A vocabulary of hesitation and compromise is nowhere to be found. Qualifiers such as "perhaps", "generally", "might be", "tends to" are notable by their absence. This, then, is an adversarial discourse of provocation and opposition with the lines unambiguously drawn between male and female ways of being in the world. This is especially clear in the latter part of the abstract where male researchers of the scientific persuasion are said to "distance" themselves as an "invisible, anonymous voice of authority" which seeks "complete control" and exercises "power" unilaterally, with "no dialogue", "no accountability". Moreover "male stream" psychology "dictates", "objectifies" and "devalues" women.

#### 5.4.6.3. Feminist discourse as "multi-vocal" and amenable to "participatory research"

By contrast, feminist discourse is presented as multivocal and drawing on other established discourses concerned with oppression. The writers describe the "different strands" of feminist research: "black feminism, socialist feminism, liberal feminism, individualistic feminism, postmodern feminism, anti-racist feminism, marxist feminism and feminist relativism" (p. 5). They then outline the central tenets of each of the strands, and examine the participatory research model from the perspective of a feminist critique. Finally, they write:

In **Participatory Research** the research question is identified by the **community** and relates predominantly to **material living conditions**. It is the task of the participatory researcher to **translate** this question into a **socio-economic issue** that relates power dynamics to society. The type of **research questions** open to the participatory researcher are therefore limited to more practical issues and **exclude** a range of **research issues** that oppressed communities **fail** to or **ignore to raise**. **Feminist research** covers a much **broadier range** of potential research questions and researcher as well as research participants identify research topics. In

order for Feminist research to adopt a Participatory Research approach it would need to **adapt its methodology** to enable the inclusion of a range of research questions **beyond** those related to “**bread and butter**” issues (p. 17).

An initial reading suggests that a discourse of the material, socio-economic conditions of power in communities is going to assume dominance, and that the unfolding discourse might be radical or Marxist Feminist in orientation. A deconstructive reading, though, is alert to observations such as “issues that oppressed communities fail to or ignore to raise” and “questions beyond those related to ‘bread and butter’ issues”. The writers do not specify what these might be. I began to wonder if they are the preoccupations with self-actualisation, interpersonal growth, and career frustrations that trouble middle-class women. There also seems to be the assumption that while men cannot shed their prejudices and chauvinism, academic women are able to set aside their middle-class mind set. This is especially when dealing with multiply oppressed communities who prioritise their class or “bread and butter” issues. The writers quote Burman (1990) and Hendriques et al (1984) as emphasising the multi-positioning of people across, for example, class, gender and race categories. They indicate that women must not be mistaken as an homogenous group but they struggle to honour the different priorities of working-class women. Women who rise to positions of power and affluence have very little in common with their economically impoverished sisters unless one resorts to biology for similarities. Generally, then, the larger socio-political context focused upon by Participatory Research seems lost in the formulations of the two writers. In PINS (23, 1998, p.83) Jackson writes of “fascination with the work of Valerie Walkerdine and her quirky working-class hang-ups as well as the negative dialectic and general grumpiness of Theodor Adorno”(p. 83). Whatever is appropriated from these writers, then, the overall discourse that emerges is liberal humanist. Thus the contribution of the writers to a “relevant” psychology is in the challenge offered to “male-stream”, scientific psychology rather than in contesting the social system that supports this type of psychology.

#### **5.4.7. “Deconstructing the patriarchal myth”:The “relevance” of feminist discourse from Jungian and “masculinist” perspectives**

The suggestion that only women should research women made by the two previous writers takes a twist in an article by Adrian Perkel, published a few months later in PINS. Entitled

“Deconstructing the patriarchal myth” (PINS 19, 1994, pp. 3-17), it argues that feminist attributions of women’s oppression to patriarchy need deconstructing and that “a more nuanced exploration of the developmental processes that contribute to gender identity” should be offered (p. 3). Since the mid-nineties in South Africa, some men have heeded the call from Americans such as Robert Bly positively to reassert their masculinity and to forge an identity free of the taint of chauvinism lodged against them by feminists. Perkel’s text seems to be in this spirit. The inclusion of “deconstruction” in the title, however, alerts one to a likely critical discourse. In Section 4., I characterised the range of discourses used by Perkel as critical Marxist undercut by liberal humanist assumptions about the nature of psychopathology, so the choice to analyse another of his articles has a double purpose. DA makes a strong case for variability of discourse within texts, but it also suggests that this feature is strongly to be found amongst texts by the same writer. I hope to test this claim, as well as examine whether Perkel has anything novel or alternative to offer from mainstream views of gender-identity formation and women’s oppression. The “relevance” of feminism and masculinism in South Africa is also considered.

#### 5.4.7.1. “Victim discourse”, “oppression”, and the “male/female” dichotomy

Amongst his opening statements Perkel writes that “the image of downtrodden victims grinding away unrecognised by a male-dominated world may be defeating of its own purpose. It is generated from within that culture and remains blinkered to the hegemonic stance from which certain assumptions derive” (p. 3). Thus, there is some similarity with Levett’s position, outlined in Section 4., that a “victim discourse” amongst and about females needs to be replaced because it perpetuates conditions of oppression rather than helps empower women. After mapping out some of the dichotomies set up by feminist discourse between male and female ways of thinking and being in the world, Perkel writes:

Such **dichotomy** implies that **masculinity** and **femininity** can be separated, and that men and women occupy inherently separate psychological spaces. In challenging this view, I wish to lean on **Jung** in arguing that masculinity and femininity cannot be posited as absolute or dichotomous but should be viewed as ranging on a **continuum**, within both sexes. Jung made use of the concepts of **animus** and **anima** in providing a **fluid view** of psychological functioning, representing the

masculine parts of women and the feminine parts of men respectively. Hence **gender** is not simply determined **genetically** or **biologically**, but also according to **psychological functions** that operate within both men and women. **Common experiences** of power relations and social positioning contribute to expositions that view **social effects** as **primary** in **determining individual consciousness** (Marx, 1977). Whilst significant, this theoretical vantage may remain **inadequate** in understanding the specifics of **psychological attributes** that assert *their* effects on constructions of society. Part of the task of **constructing a discourse of gender**, therefore, rests on moving from a linear exposition that sees society as shaping individuals to an understanding of how individuals shape society within a **dialectic of mutual effect**. Society, ideology, social power, and so on, are, after all, dependent on human relations for their existence, despite **relative autonomy** in functioning beyond the influence of any one individual (p. 4).

What is foregrounded for me as a Marxist, is Perkel's reproduction of a source and his juxtaposition of Jung's ideas with those of Marx. Marx is many things to many people but even in his later phase, after Das Kapital, he stressed the mutuality of influence between individual process and social forces. Moreover, this was the whole point of the Frankfurt School's position against scientific Marxism's deformation of this dialectical relationship. Writing that "common experiences of power relations and social positioning" contribute to "expositions" such as Marx's does not salvage matters. I wondered whether a Marxist interpretive repertoire was being used paradoxically to undermine a Marxist position. The inversion of use of the phrase "relative autonomy" to explain social functioning "beyond the influence of any one individual" is a case in point. In Marxist terms it is the individual who has "relative autonomy" from the social. An important reversal of priority hangs on this inversion and connotes not simply a desire to give more space to agency but to reassert individualism in a disguised form.

The other central idea offered by Perkel is Jung's notion of the anima/animus duality within every person, and I think this is a worthwhile corrective to feminist absolutes. Gender is presented not "simply" as the result of genetics, biology or socialisation but as a "psychological function" in Jung's terms. Perkel also draws upon a range of feminist writers to expand this view - a strategy presumably to suggest that his ideas are not singular to a male perspective:

According to Elshtain (1984, in Hekman, 1990), social constructionism needs to be challenged in its attempts to socialise all dimensions of human existence. Rather, she argues that it is important to preserve a notion of human beings as agents, individuals who are not determined wholly by social forces of the society in which we live. She argues for the essential dialogue of inner and outer selves in the establishment of identity. To put this differently, it can be argued that although ideology may be constructed through the various filters of power relations found in society, it derives ultimately from characteristics *potentiated* by the human psyche and sometimes perpetuated by attempts at understanding and deconstructing it (p. 4).

Here, however, ideology, another cornerstone of critical Marxism, is revised as something that “derives ultimately from characteristics *potentiated* by the human psyche and sometimes by attempts at understanding and deconstructing it”. Also, judging by the rest of the article, ideology is used as interchangeable with theoretical and political belief, rather than as bourgeois distortion. Moreover, the notion that ideology derives “ultimately” from “characteristics *potentiated* by the human psyche” takes debate into post-structuralist idealist positions. Critical Marxists argue that ideology cannot be separated from material practices. What these “characteristics” are, is nowhere explained making the last part of the extract somewhat meaningless. Instead, Perkel goes on to say that some feminists such as Bem (1981, 1983) have argued for “an end to emphasising gender difference” in research, while others such as Sayers (1992) have insisted that the campaign continue “to maintain and extend society’s obligations to meet women’s needs” (p. 5 ). He then writes:

... we need to be **cautious** in how this is pursued. At a more **subtle level** it may implicitly reinforce **oppressiveness** to women by implying that women should have their needs met (which is obviously desirable), but perhaps also *what their needs should be*. It **psychologises** the women’s world in a manner that may maintain the notion of a **faltered realisation** of ‘true’ psychological **potential**. It places certain values as per se essential for the achievement of **worth**, and premises itself on an assumption that holding **qualities** associated with women is **insufficient**. Such acceptance may serve the purpose of inculcating a sense of **inferiority** and failed **actualisation**, perhaps **unconsciously constructing**

a **social version** of the Freudian metaphor of **penis envy**. Seldom is the psychology of *men* adequately addressed and the **real values** of respective masculine and feminine qualities weighed. Is **male culture** really the ultimate status-quo? How much of this world is really **worth aspiring** toward?... Elshtain has asserted that rather than society pressurising women to join the **public world** as men's **political equals** (with its associated values), the values of woman's (what she calls) '**private sphere**', must be brought into the male public world. Her argument is that women should **not adapt themselves** to the male values of the public world, but rather, should **transform that world** through the **feminine values** of the private sphere (p. 5).

What is most striking about this extract, is that it embodies a discourse of privilege. Women suffering from "a faltered realisation of their true potential", "failed actualisation", women not being "pressurised" into joining men in the "public sphere" or being their "political equals" - this sort of framework of thought becomes laughable in a country like South Africa. The idea of taking women's values into the public sphere, however, has merit and several black female politicians exemplify what this could mean. Frene Ginwala, for example, the Speaker in parliament 1994-1999 seems guided by knowledge of public life as well as a sense of her own being as a woman. But as Perkel suggests, it remains unclear as to the respective qualities to be associated with the feminine and masculine. Not unexpectedly, he enters the contentious area in gender debate of emotions and affect:

It is often a long and **agonising struggle for men** in therapy to **access** and express their underlying **feelings**, and this sometimes becomes an **obstacle** to their own **growth**, or in their families, to the growth of those around them. In this context, emotional **withdrawal** is often noted, with the woman and their children in these situations experiencing emotional **frustration**. The **generic questions** then arise: **Who has the problem?** And more importantly, in which direction should the challenge to male hegemony go?(p. 8).

A twist of conventional argument has occurred with men presented as the "victims" of gender perceptions and mothering styles. I believe this shift to be a valid one, but Perkel has yet to persuade that it is something other than socialisation that has produced the situation. He aptly

describes the pervasive impact on families and spouses of men being conditioned into emotional inarticulacy. But again one is left wondering where the “characteristics *potentiated* by the human psyche” have a decisive influence - this was the whole thrust of his opening argument. Instead, following Kaplan (1983), he looks at a number of DSM-III diagnostic categories which are described as “commonly noted in women” such as “Dependent” and “Histrionic” personality disorders. He explores the double bind of these categories and of women being encouraged to be certain things that subsequently get pathologised. Perkel also quotes Kaplan in outlining what “Independent Personality Disorder” and “Restricted Personality Disorder” might mean as possible categories of pathology in men. He goes on to examine the social processes in which women are encouraged to “imbibe” male values, and pursue activities associated with success in a male-orientated world. Finally, he turns to the ideas of Jung with which he opened his text:

...I would like to refer to Jung's (1960) construction of the psyche into ‘**functions**’, and his consideration of the essential notion of **equivalence and entropy** in psychic functioning. In this formulation he viewed conscious and outward behaviour and attitude often as a **compensation** for underlying **unconscious** part of self that were **unable** to find fully integrated **expression** in a person. **Macho** behaviour may, for example, be viewed as compensatory for underlying feelings of **vulnerability** or **inadequacy**. Chodorow (1989) corroborates this position, arguing that on a psychological level, male dominance may be viewed as a **masculine defence** which often carries a major psychic cost to men. It is built, says Chodorow, on **fears and insecurity**, and **should not be over socialised**. Male dominance is not, she argues, straightforward **power**, something which some trends in **radical feminist discourse** argue are central (Millet, 1977; Firestone, 1979, cited in Ramazanoglu, 1990). Hence, whilst **social constructions** of power and culture enable women, these dimensions should **not** be viewed as **causal**, solely responsible for, or **even as central** - their **psychic roots** need to be considered as well. The outward directionality of men, and the prized values that are placed on **conquest, attainment, prowess**, and of course the **subjugation of women** (and their converse **avoidance** of emotional experiences and demands which are often experienced as engulfing and threatening), may **benefit** from an (albeit) **inadequate** and somewhat **broad interpretation**.... It will be argued here that the goal-orientated, object-orientated manifestations of the male psyche **derive from a social system** that



pushes boys out of the cradle before they are ready to walk, and from Day One tends towards depriving them of a stable affectional foundation from which they can develop a true sense of security and emotional connectedness (pp. 13-14).

I have quoted at length to show, from a macro level of DA, the odd leap of logic that recurs in Perkel's arguments from suggesting that socialisation is not wholly determinative of male behaviour and that Jungian intrapsychic "functions" are the issue, and then back to social determination. It may be argued, however, that this ambivalence is the result of a central dilemma facing psychology. To give too much weight to the social is to render irrelevant many of the skills that are the clinician's particular area of expertise and *raison d'être*. Van Zyl argued that many difficulties were not of the order of psychopathology or neurosis and should be remedied by society not psychology. If the male personality disorders Kaplan suggested are taken into this frame, then most men should be in long-term psychoanalysis or considered beyond help. Seen as socially determined problems, though, as Perkel finally argues, and perhaps the psychologist would be obliged to pursue community interventions with men and the families whose lives they affect. After all, he poses the question whether men's "underlying sense of inadequacy, fear of losing control or abandonment... is the consequence of a distorted social norm". And, answers by saying that "the goal-orientated, object-orientated manifestations of the male psyche derive from a social system". The individual treatment advocated by his earlier article would, by this logic, be offering band-aid and simply helping men to adapt to a distorted system. Far from Jungian "functions" or "characteristics potentiated by the psyche" explaining the subjugation of women and victimisation of men, then, it is a "disturbed system" that is responsible. And, it is not a system of patriarchy or unequal power but something of which women are an "integral part".

In terms of DA and variability, then, Perkel has proved consistent in employing a largely liberal humanist discourse despite smatterings of a critical Marxist interpretive repertoire and engaging with certain radical feminist discourses. A case could be made for seeing this variability as symptomatic of a post-marxist ambiguity of stance. Reluctant to be tarred with the obsolescence of grand narratives but unable to relinquish certain useful phrases and concepts from Marxism, post-marxists hover in discursive space. Although willing to challenge certain feminist

orthodoxies, Perkel does not adequately challenge the larger societal structures that hold patriarchy in place. From a critical Marxist perspective, material forces and relations are as much at work in gendered power imbalances as ideological and discursive formations (Mitchell, 1986, p.38). Nevertheless, in weighing up whether Perkel offers an alternative to mainstream views of gender-identity formation, the answer is affirmative. He presents men as “victims” of certain mothering styles and societal norms, and women as co-creators of patriarchy.

#### 5.4.8. Populist, Marxist or post-marxist discourses in forging a local “critical psychology”

Also in PINS 19 (1994, pp. 31-44), an article by Victor Nell of the Health Psychology Research Unit of the University of South Africa appeared, entitled “Critical psychology and the problem of mental health”. Graham Hayes, as editor, praised the article as “engaging and impassioned” and as an attempt to “resocialise mental health and human distress”(p.1). This comment served inter-textually to create receptivity for me as a reader, especially as Hayes generally writes from a critical Marxist perspective. Having also read an article by Yogan Pillay and Melvyn Freeman in PINS 21 (1996, pp. 60-71), however, I gathered that Nell’s is not a popular position in the medically dominated health sector. This second article, then, will be used as a foil to the first. What the two articles also do, is further anchor debate in post-liberation issues of “relevance, critique, oppression and the indigenous”. As has already been said about other contributors to PINS, Nell opens his text by adopting an unambiguously adversarial stance in delineating his targets. He also chooses as an opening gambit and major rhetorical artillery to cite an internationally acclaimed authority in linguistics cum social commentator, Chomsky, and a leading anthropologist, Scheper-Hughes. He writes:

The Commission distinguishes between two kinds of intellectual. On the one hand there are **‘the technocratic and policy-orientated intellectuals, responsible, serious, and constructive’**, and on the other **‘the value-orientated intellectuals, a sinister grouping who pose a serious danger to democracy as they devote themselves to the derogation of leadership, the challenging of authority, and the unmasking and delegitimation of established institutions...while sowing confusion and stirring dissatisfaction in the minds of the populace’** (Chomsky, 1988: 13, citing *The crisis of democracy*). In the perspective of thirty more

years of **postmodernism**, this sombre warning against '**sinister intellectuals** might be better read as an injunction that defines what intellectuals ought to be doing, prefiguring, for example, the anthropologist, Nancy Scheper-Hughes (1990), who calls on critical medical anthropologists to play the **court jester** in order to achieve a 'carnavalesque turning of medicine inside out' (p. 191), 'for the **tumbling of received wisdoms and of privileged epistemologies!**' (p. 195) (p.31).

The reader, then, is presented with two types of intellectuals: the "responsible" intellectual who is a "technocrat" and "policy formulator", and the "court jester" or "sinister intellectual" whose task it is to "tumble received wisdoms and privileged epistemologies". The latter is said to be a "danger to democracy". It is clear, however, that Nell following Chomsky finds this type of intellectual preferable to the "serious and constructive" upholder of authority. This is the sort of provocation to "mainstream conservative conformist psychology" that the editors of PINS tended to encourage. But, by 1994, mainstream psychology, as represented by the newly-formed PsySSA, was being led by a self-confessed "maverick activist", black academic Rachel Prinsloo. The ground of contest had significantly shifted. By Prinsloo's estimation, however, the majority of practitioners (60%) were not affiliated to the new organisation. Only 20% of this group "were involved in alternative, progressive organisation" (PINS 19, 1994, p. 47) which leaves a good proportion who may be described as "unconvinced" about "progressive" forms of psychology or the need for organisation. Also, given the newness of democracy and PsySSA, it cannot be assumed that the mainstream had been converted or that progressive thinkers do not need "a tumbling of received wisdoms".

This seems to be the position Nell adopts, although I am inclined to remember the warning by Simons and Billig about postmodernist "critique running rampant without political direction"(1994, p. 6). Also, despite suggestions from Billig to the contrary (1991, pp. 185-191), I believe that few people in the extreme ends of the political spectrum hold their "strong views" lightly or that their discourses will show great variability. PINS by 1994, though, had become a forum for debate for progressives from a predominantly liberal humanist or post-marxist perspective, with a small percentage of contributors holding to a critical Marxist position. Thus far, all a reader can be certain about in Nell's position is that it aligns itself with "the value-orientated", "sinister intellectuals", a somewhat anarchistic group by Chomsky's description.

Nell goes on to say, however, that “the complicity of South African psychologists in supporting apartheid capitalism is well known”. Perhaps his critique, then, will be amongst the few articles that still sees capitalism as deeply implicated in South Africa’s difficulties. He then writes:

These are the heterodox and **discomforting thoughts** at this time of **redemptive politics** and high hopes for a **new South Africa**. Is continued **guardedness** an **appropriate stance** for the **progressive** psychologists who supported the Organisation for Appropriate Social Services in South Africa (OASSSA), many of whom are now members of the African National Congress, and have contributed through regional debate to the formulation of a national mental health component of the recently published **ANC health policy document** (ANC, 1994)? Or would it on the contrary be **more fitting** to become ‘**responsible**’ intellectuals who **ally** themselves with the process of **reconstruction**, accept the **reality constraints** demanded by this process, and deliberately **refrain** from the initiation of a new and **disputational polemics**? There is **no choice**. Governments may change, but the **critical imperative** to tumble received wisdoms and privileged epistemologies remains. It is necessary to ask **whose interests** are served by the **mobilisation** of progressive psychologists to **formulate a ‘mental health policy’**. Is it the **cause of well being**, or will critical examination show that it is the **medical profession** or the **state** itself that is better served by this policy than the **recipients** of these services? And, if so, should the critics feel well satisfied that their **critique is cogent**, or would they be obliged, in terms of the **high principles** of human service they **espouse**, to become practical, **like politicians**, and propose an **action prospectus**? (p. 32).

This passage provides rich opportunities for a critical Marxist deconstructive DA. Here Nell directly challenges the “responsible” intellectuals who “ally” themselves with the “process of reconstruction” and, hence, indirectly with the medical profession and the state. His rhetorical style, however, is to pose a series of questions or “discomforting thoughts” as though presenting the dilemmatic process through which he finally arrived at his “no choice” stance. In so doing, however, he also manages an ironic inversion of positive terms such as “responsible”, “ally” and “reconstruction”, words resonant with meaning in the “new” South Africa. Juxtaposed, on either side of his questions, the phrases “redemptive politics”, “high principles” and “espoused” serve to make “responsible” intellectuals, medical professionals and “politicians” alike, seem to be

delusionally and dubiously high-minded pragmatists - who in the end will serve themselves rather than the recipients of services. This sort of cynicism is carried over from previous passages of text where it is argued that governments and ideologies “come and go” and that the “high hopes” for South Africa are in the league of other claims in history of a “dawning Paradise-on-earth” or utopia. Also, Samuelson (1994, p. 6) is quoted as saying that “part of the process of co-option is that the most vigorous and best-informed critics of the old order become the intelligentsia of the new; in the process, yesterday’s patriotism becomes today’s treachery” (p 32). In Nell’s terms, then, becoming the intelligentsia of a new order seems to entail thinking within the “constraints of reality”, “formulating policy” and producing an “action prospectus”. He seems to believe this utterly inimical to the “tumbling of received wisdoms and privileged epistemologies”, and resembling a Foucauldian intellectual anarchism. To be sceptical before a new order has hardly gained its feet, can serve a reactionary cause rather than keep critical thought alive. Extreme cynicism is like Kleinian envy, to spoil what others have because it is unattainable for oneself. Clearly Nell has not been “co-opted” by the new order, so what does he offer in place of an “action prospectus”? He has, after all, aroused fairly high expectations. On a macro level of DA, it has to be said that a very persuasive set of arguments then followed.

He first presents a summary of ideas from what he calls “one of the most revolutionary manifestoes of recent times”, the proceedings from a gathering, in 1978, at Alma-Ata in the then Kazakh Socialist Soviet Republic. He writes that the chapter from the World Health Organisation contains recommendations from George Albee, the founder of the Primary Prevention of Psychopathology movement. Albee, he says, identified four fundamental causes of psychopathology, namely, “emotionally damaging infant and childhood experiences; poverty and degrading life experiences; powerlessness and low self-esteem; loneliness, social isolation and social marginality”. Albee is also quoted as saying that the public health focus of “‘mental health’ initiatives has led to the overstatement of genetic and pharmacological factors, and a narrow clinic-based approach to mental health rather than attending ‘to the truly massive and widespread emotional damage’ produced by these four factors” (1994, p. 33). Kamin (1993), in the United States, is then quoted as having made “a call ‘to resocialise and de-medicalise psychopathology: The solutions, if such there be, lie in the social, economic and political realms’” (ibid). Nell goes on to write:

Once **powerful groups** in a society have accepted that **social justice** is attainable goal....The quest must be prefaced by the realisation, as Noam Chomsky puts it, that there is **no such thing** as a **good government**. In consequence, the United Nations and its agencies, including the World Health Organisation, whose members are governments, can **never be the agent** of the **social revolution** that will **produce social justice**. **Ordinary people** are the agent. But **populist agency** is **subverted** by the worldwide tendency of governments to **depoliticise** health care, using the powerful **medical profession** to co-opt and subordinate the smaller, **nonmedical health care** professions. Moreover, as Navarro (1984) has argued, the **class determinants** of the **distribution of resources** are ignored and an '**atheoretical pragmatism**' is instead proposed as a solution to the problem of health. In this way, **suffering caused by social injustice** is **medicalised** and health, which, if it is to be attained, must be a **site of struggle**, is contained within professional power structures which can be readily manipulated by a **ruling elite** (p. 34).

The character of the discourse here is fairly explicit in the sense that Nell provides certain key terms of his position such as "social revolution" and "populist agency", both very Chomskyian in conception (Chomsky, 1978). An interpretive repertoire of Marxist discourse is also to be found, however, in his drawing upon Navarro who argues for the recognition of "the class determinants of the distribution of resources" and against an "atheoretical pragmatism". Nell's choice of discourse, then, seems to be Marxist in inspiration but populist in substance. He frames the challenge to "responsible intellectuals", politicians and the medical profession in terms of "social justice", "revolution", "sites of struggle" and "ordinary people", and he sets this discourse against social systems and governments which "depoliticise" health care and co-opt the medical profession into medicalising "suffering caused by social injustice". Attempts by the medical profession to "subordinate the smaller, nonmedical health care professions" is seen as something which "ruling elites" can manipulate to their own ends. It is also suggested that the only purpose of government in health care, is to ensure that "social circumstances" are such that Albee's four factors causing psychopathology do not prevail and "complete wellbeing" becomes attainable. The connection between government and popular agency, however, is not yet articulated, and this is something Nell attempts to do in what he calls his "three propositions for

resocialising illness” and an “action prospectus for demedicalising human services”. I must own at this point, that I still had reservations about Nell’s position as a “sinister intellectual”.

Nevertheless, he proceeds to draw the first three propositions from Scheper-Hughes work, the source for his idea of “tumbling received wisdoms and privileged epistemologies”. The first proposition is “to reduce rather than expand the parameters of medical efficacy, a call for a more humble model of doctoring as ‘plumbing, simple ‘body work’ that would leave social ills and social healing to political activists, and psychological/spiritual ills and other forms of existential malaise to ethnomedical and spiritual healers” (1994, p. 35). The second is to develop “non-medical forms of healing in terms of their own meaning centred emic frames of reference” and “in any case they continue to hold out for an explanation and a theory capable of linking their symptoms with their experience of their lives” (ibid). Finally in Nell’s words, “the third and most revolutionary of Scheper-Hughes’ propositions is for a radicalisation of medical knowledge and practice, using hospitals and clinics as “a locus of social ferment, of revolution...that begins by linking the suffering, marginality, and exclusion that goes within the hospital with that which goes on outside in the family, the community, the society at large....Many illnesses that enter the clinic represent tragic experiences of the world” (ibid). Apart from outlining the argument presented by Nell for resocialising human distress and illness, I hope to demonstrate the reproduction of reproductions that occurs in discourse. This is the source of creativity within fairly bounded discourses, where certain central ideas and terminology take on further meanings and applications. It is interesting, moreover, that it is a woman whom Nell cites for a no-holds barred critique of the medical profession.

Prefacing what Nell calls “an action prospectus: demedicalising human services” in mock emulation presumably of the “prospectuses” drawn up by “co-opted responsible intellectuals”, he writes that he has set out his “propositions” in order: “to counter the observation made by a critic of sceptical postmodernism who pointed out how easy it is to adopt a “systemic” view that allows one to drive a horse and car through an opponent’s position without the inconvenience of taking up a position of one’s own (1994, p. 36). The “critic” is Eagleton (1983) but I would like to add that whether or not one openly declares a position, an implicit stance is always at work. Even “sceptical postmodernism” rides on a position, be it anarchistic or nihilistic in the Nietzschean and Foucauldian mould, or radical liberalism following a Derridean anti-racist cast

of post-structuralism. What seems clear, though, is that Nell sees himself as a “sceptical postmodernist” in need of declaring a position in anticipation of criticism. It becomes interesting, then, to see the type of discourse in which his “three propositions” is constructed, and what it means for “individuals and families to assume responsibility for their own welfare”. Nell titles his three propositions “resocialising distress”, “institutional autonomy for the human sciences” and “to remain a sinister intellectual”. Under the first proposition he writes as conclusion:

The contribution of South African non-government organisations to addressing the **fundamental problem** of the **perceived impotence** of **civil society** to bring about **beneficial change** in local living standards has by and large been counterproductive. The establishment of a shelter for abused women or a youth club, however successful it might be, does not address the **underlying problems** that arise from the **lack of social assertiveness** and **local government accountability**. The task of the **human services** is to demonstrate through successful local programmes that individual projects can be rooted within a **system of ‘circles of power’** that create working accountability mechanisms through which local people, informed by **citizen charters**, can demand and achieve high-quality local government, including **community-driven policing** (for details of accountability and community safety proposals, see Nell, 1993; Nell, Seedat and Williamson, 1993; Nell and Seedat, 1993).

Given the internationally denounced levels of crime, and violence against women and children in South Africa of 1999, Nell’s proposition seems prescient with the association he makes between community safety and “wellbeing”. His discourse, here, is part of the “civil society debate/discourse” that was so strong immediately before and after the 1994 elections - “civil society”, “citizen charters”, “local government”, “community driven”, “circles of power”, this is the interpretive repertoire of the text. “Perceived impotence” and “lack of social assertiveness” are identified as the “fundamental or underlying problems” affecting the majority of South Africans. The “task” of the human services, moreover, in tackling these problems is to show that “local programmes” fit into networks of power which are answerable to ordinary citizens - the “agents of revolution”. Nell later argues that the resocialising of mental health hinges on recognising the institutional nature of the changes required, and shifting from a



fixation with disease as in the medical model to defining mental difficulties as distress. He writes: “The problematics of mental health of which critical psychologists must be aware thus arise not from the discipline’s potential to address distress, but rather from the assignment to the health sector and its consequence vulnerability to individualising, medicalisation and desocialisation” (p. 37).

In Section 3. I discussed a post-marxist form of “micro-resistance” or activism. Whether the “civil society” discourse adopted by Nell fits into this category is open to debate. The populism he espouses is not ongoingly interspersed with Marxist “workerist” analysis. Material considerations, moreover, seem secondary to individual agency and a “citizen charter”. Additionally, the sceptical postmodernism of which he writes might be mistaken for an anarchistic form of Foucauldian “protest” were it not for his clear endorsement of Scheper-Hughes’ radical activism. The idea of intellectual “autonomy” argued for by Nell, and made a first principle of intellectual endeavour at liberal universities, thus takes on further significance. If someone like Nell, who has clearly honed his critical faculties, were to “refrain” from comment when things go horribly wrong, he would probably be accused of “irresponsibility” by his more pragmatic colleagues. “Sinister intellectuals” produce discomfort in any community.

#### 5.4.9. A “relevant” mental health policy for South Africa

In 1996, Melvyn Freeman and Yogan Pillay, provided an overview of the history and recent circumstances surrounding a mental health policy for South Africa (PINS 21, pp.60-71). Particularly pertinent in relation to Nell’s propositions, though, is the following passage:

...it is implied that mental **health services** will become **integrated** into primary **health care**....This may imply that separate funding for mental health care at primary health care level may cease which in turn may mean that mental health will have to **struggle** like all other disciplines for a slice of the **financial pie**.... this scenario is usually viewed as a **problem** by mental health professionals..... Mental health professionals have to be more creative about **lobbying** for more **resources**. If, as we suspect it is, the route to more funding is to show cost **effectiveness**, then

some of the time of the PHC mental health team should be spent on undertaking such studies (p. 68).

The contrast with Nell's suggestions is stark, then, and hinges on "the financial pie" and effective lobbying for resources. Ironically, the latter is usually undertaken by the "responsible intellectuals" he takes to task for their pragmatism, especially when their efforts get them appointed as government office holders. Freeman was appointed Director General of Mental Health in 1994. As a result, perhaps the question to ask, is whether Nell is correct to assume that power "inevitably" corrupts and means intellectual constraint rather than liberation. He says "hope" drives revolution. It might be worth holding onto hope and faith in people like Freeman, while being responsible "citizens" and making him accountable. This would follow the logic of Nell's overall arguments for community wellbeing. For a Marxist, of course, there is a grim satisfaction in seeing the "financial pie and resources" being cited as major determinants of what is possible for mental health services in this country.

#### 5.4.10. Editorial comment from PINS 23, December 1998

Finally, as Hayes remarks in the editorial prefacing the December 1998 issue of PINS:

The debate about "psychology *in* Africa" is just beginning and PINS would like to encourage contributions on this topical and important issue. It is worth reminding ourselves that the discussions about psychology in Africa, or psychology in the **African renaissance**, isn't only about 'Africanisation', however understood, but should also take into account the relatively neglected axes of gender and class. It is not that Eurocentric ideas have been problematic in their African settings, but that **bourgeois** (psychological) theories have always struggled to offer much to **working class communities** (even in Europe and America) (PINS 23, 1998, pp. 1-2).

With these words, Hayes sums up where PINS had arrived by 1998. Class, like gender, had become a "neglected axis" for analysis and understanding in local psychology in print. In PINS 24 (1998), however, it is notable that academics thought of as mainstream seek publication in the journal and are accepted. Perhaps their concern with the topic of HIV/AIDS, and the call by

the editors for the particular focus, elicited the response. Whatever the case, the strongly social “reading” of the topic made publication appropriate. In same issue of the journal, the last for 1998, the editors made another call, this time for articles on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Over sixteen years, then, PINS has seldom missed “relevant” events and issues in local psychology, making it likely that its status as a “critical psychology” in print will continue.

### **5.5. Integration of argument**

I have argued that with the approach of liberation in 1990, there was a change in what PINS targeted for challenge and in the discourses drawn upon in constructing the themes of “relevance”, “critique”, “oppression” and “indigenous”. Most striking was the decline in Marxist critique and the rise of liberal, post-structuralist and post-marxist critical discourses. Moreover, the formation of PsySSA in 1994 as the flagship of a “new mainstream” in local psychology attracted membership from only 40% of psychologists, suggesting perhaps a majority unpersuaded by progressive discourses. Away from class analyses and racial oppression, “relevance”, became largely tied to a dialogue between western and indigenous traditions of healing, to women’s issues and to fine-tuning debate around organisation, policy, and practice. Psychoanalytic traditions received particular attention but with infusions of post-structuralist and Foucauldian theory. Around 1990, however, the old and new tussled for dominance. Kottler’s article supporting a “differences discourse” in debate about traditional African healing, rests on post-structuralist discourse theory, and implicit liberal feminism and explicit liberal humanism. Furthermore, she damns Marxists’ preference for a “similarities discourse” writing that it only “purports” to be driven by “emancipatory interest”, and finally saying that Marxism “over socialises” the psychological. Although by her own admission a “differences discourse” romanticises, and even denigrates, African culture, she suggested that it is more holistic and intrapsychic in emphasis. In debating the “relevance” of the two discourses, however, she ultimately failed to offer a viable alternative. The question of over socialising the psychological is something taken up in my analyses of Van Zyl’s and Perkel’s texts, and addressed more fully in my Concluding Remarks. In examining the “relevance” of the term “community” in psychology, Isemonger also straddled discourses. The resulting variability shifted his overall position into post-marxism, something that I argue also applies to the texts of Van Wyk and

Voice, Perkel and Nell. Isemonger drew on Marxist interpretive repertoires only to override them with cognitivist discourse. I suggested that assisting the disempowered to “reimagine” themselves as communities different from those imposed upon them, is simply an old practice in new linguistic clothing. A discourse of ideology is replaced by a discourse of mental constructs, insufficiently grounded in material forces and relations. Van Zyl’s attempt to clarify the object at which clinical skill should be directed in South Africa, also suggests a struggle between the old and the new, this time in psychoanalytic theory. The nub of the difficulty seems to rest on teasing out what is social and non-social about the psychological and establishing professional boundaries between psychologists, social workers and activists. As I argued, the exercise only leads to contradiction and impasse. It also highlights the relative strength of the Frankfurt strand of the psychoanalytic tradition, with its clear articulation of the psychological as a social construct. Van Wyk and Voice’s text, with its mixture of critical Marxist, Foucauldian and psychoanalytic discourses, tends towards a post-marxist appropriation of Marxism but it holds to the Frankfurt psychoanalytic heritage of seeing the psychological as pervasively social. It also offers provocation within that tradition with its twist on Freud’s view of the formation of social conscience. The juxtapositioning of texts by Louw, Jackson and Van Vlaenderen, Perkel and Nell was aimed at suggesting the micro-resistances to mainstream psychology that merged after 1990. Louw’s text illustrates an attempt within the mainstream to rethink “relevance” in terms of pragmatic and scientific discourses. Willing to shed aspirations to first-world status for local psychology, Louw nevertheless argued that survival for the discipline would best be achieved by an alignment with the medical and natural sciences. However problematic Nell’s radically populist and post-structuralist text, arguing for the resocialising and demedicalising of psychology, it provided solid argument for not going this route. No longer attacked primarily for its complicity with apartheid, scientific psychology came under fire in PINS for other forms of oppression. Liberal feminists Jackson and Van Vlaenderen argue that every facet of this type of psychology is underpinned by patriarchal dominances. Their suggestion, however, that the alternative option in participatory research should go beyond the “bread and land issues” identified by working-class women, betrays an inability to shed middle-class assumption. Perkel’s masculinist challenge to feminist orthodoxies, is couched in an uneasy mixture of Marxist, post-structuralist, Jungian and liberal humanist discourses. He also seesaws between giving priority of determination for psychological phenomena to the social and non-social.

## 6. CONCLUDING REMARKS

In proposing that the texts analysed in the study generally represent the “alternatives” offered by PINS to mainstream discourse, a brief overview of what I believe are the arguments of the texts seems necessary. The changes in the discourses drawn upon to construct the themes of “relevance”, “critique”, “oppression” and “indigenous” are also a central concern. Additionally, I have argued that a critical realist Marxist DA is a particularly fruitful approach to the journal, so some final illustration of this value will be offered here. Moreover, while the same range of DA skills were employed across the texts, each text brought to the fore slightly different issues that are also worth last comment. In the Introduction, I described the two brief texts that examine PINS. At the close of the study, it seems appropriate to suggest what the present study adds to the literature and where gaps possibly remain. And, finally, the shortcomings in my approach that are evident, in retrospect, need brief discussion.

I have suggested that 1990 represents a watershed not only in political terms, but also in what the editors and contributors of PINS thought should be targeted for debate in psychology. PINS charted a course of critique aimed first at a “conservative and conformist” psychology (PINS 1, 1983, p.1.) tainted by the oppressions of “apartheid and capitalism”, and largely “irrelevant” to the majority of South Africans. Then, in the face of liberation, it shifted to a fine tuning of “relevance” and what might be called micro-resistances in the name of remaining a critical force. What stays constant, however, and what I argue most constitutes the “alternativeness” of PINS, is its insistence on socialising psychological phenomena away from approaches that dehistoricise and depoliticise them in the name of a “value-free” and “objective” science.

Signalled by the title, *Psychology in society*, the psychological is generally presented in the journal as pervasively social both as a construct and in its formation and deformation. The articles by Nzimande, Dawes, Anonymous, Ivey, Isemonger, Van Wyk and Voice, Levett and Nell, all argue this view, albeit in various discourses. By contrast, the articles of Van Zyl and Perkel illustrate the contradictions that arise when attempts are made to distill the psychological from the biological and the social. As far back as the 1930s, Soviet theorists Vygotsky and Luria, and the Frankfurt School argued that the psychological is a function of both biology and

socialisation, with language as the interface between the two. Social constructionism, as I argued when analysing Levett's text, also sees the psychological as a social construct, a construct of discourse. From a Marxist perspective, however, the philosophical idealism underpinning this view means that the biological and material structures shaping discourse are insufficiently accounted for. Prior to 1990, the mainstream is generally presented by PINS as being characterised by its failure to socialise the psychological and psychology, and by its tendency to make a fetish of science and of boundaries between psychologists, social workers and activists. Thus, I see the insistence of PINS, at this time, on grounding psychology in social and material contexts as primarily justifying its status as a critical psychology in print. After 1990, the mainstream constructed by PINS became psychology too divorced from indigenous frameworks of healing, or too attached to first-world norms of practice and inadequately pragmatic, or too dominated by "male stream" scientism and values, or too trapped in notions of women, rather women and men, being the victims of socialisation and patriarchy. Towards 1998, "official" psychology (policy makers) became targeted as a mainstream which had allowed mental health services to be subordinated to the medical profession and a medicalised rather than socialised view of health. Contributors to PINS, then, continued through the 1990s to ground the psychological firmly in the particulars of a local social context. They also continued collectively to represent marginalised or insufficiently explored discourses and to see themselves offering alternatives to mainstream psychology.

While the "grand narratives" of Marxism and, to a lesser extent, liberalism dominated critique prior to 1990, around this date they made way for a proliferation of post-marxist, populist, liberal feminist, liberal Africanist, social constructionist and post-structuralist discourses. They were all, however, as derivative of Euro-American sources as the mainstream they challenged. In constructing alternatives, then, it was from fragments of derived discourses whose foreign origins only became highlighted by difficulties in local application. The struggle for "relevance", then, ongoingly occurred, in PINS, against realisations of how deeply western, psychology and most meta-discourses are as constructs. My own use of imported theory must be seen in these terms. Nevertheless, as a run through some of the arguments of the texts make clear, PINS initially established its "alternativeness" by drawing on marginalised traditions in psychology, and then by giving voice to silenced and under-explored discourses.

For example, when the mainstream was thought compromised by both apartheid and capitalism, the Frankfurt tradition provided a rich source towards a local critical psychology. The texts of Dawes, Ivey and Anonymous, all draw theoretical sustenance from a tradition which pre-eminently sees the individual psyche as a social construct. Qualitative research is also argued an alternative to what Adorno described as the “reification” and “alienation” represented by the standardising procedures of science (Adorno et al, 1950, p. 749). Although I ascribe Nzimande’s discourse to a largely Lukacsian source, he argues this point about mainstream industrial psychometrics and the assessment of black workers. He also proposed that the Africanism of the Black Consciousness Movement had become distorted in the hands of whites, making class, rather than culture, a useful category for resistance and relevance. Dawes, by contrast, advocates a heavy infusion of radical theory into African macro-economic pragmatism to forestall the continued abuse of workers after liberation. A “relevant” industrial psychometrics, then, refuses to test workers unless they are part of decisions about testing and results. Ivey points out, however, that if a basic premise is that the psyche is predominantly social in formation and deformation, then the social circumstances of the majority of South Africans demand an entirely indigenous psychology.

Perkel, following Hayes, writes of the “bourgeois” origins of psychology, and that within its own logic it is eminently relevant to middle-class communities. But, as Dawes and Anonymous argue following Marcuse, psychology should not be the “repair shop of capitalism”, helping people adapt to an inequitable social dispensation. Dawes suggests this view is radically alternative to a mainstream’s sense of its own rationale. Even American community psychology with its more democratic underpinnings is said to fall short of questioning the social structures that produce communities with inadequate access to resources, including psychology. Anonymous, within a counselling ambit, equates therapy with activism and suggests that drawing on the writings of Biko and Fanon, for example, would help indigenise local psychology. “Relevance”, then, from within largely Marxist discourses is generally warranted against the moral and material consequences of psychology for the majority of people in South Africa, most of whom were black and poor. Levett, whose text appeared towards 1990, would add “and female”. Writing about child and women abuse within a social constructionist discourse, her text represents a voice mostly silenced not only by patriarchy but by the preoccupation of academics with racial

and class oppression. Her text also represents a liberal oppositional stance which resocialises psychology in terms of the then-new “discursive turn” of social constructionism.

As a glance at Appendix A. will indicate, my readings of articles from the pre-1990 period, suggest a large proportion of the writers employed discourses that are either explicitly (43%) or implicitly Marxist (20%) in origin. Hence my selection of predominantly Marxist orientated texts. The value of a critical realist Marxist DA in deconstructing them, then, rests I think not only on a familiarity with the Frankfurt tradition and other critical Marxist sources, in terms of reference and discourse. It is also in arguing for a critique that is not based on positivist notions of objectivity or disinterestedness. Critique infers distance, but a critical realist Marxist critique allows me to take sides with PINS against mainstream psychology, in a way that Foucauldian post-structuralism would not countenance on the basis of subject-object identity and relativism in sense-making. Liberal academic traditions would also inhibit this stance, in the name of fair play to mainstream views. Marxists, however, generally see academic endeavour as vested activity against established dominances. In other words, at a macro-level of DA, the larger arguments of the texts are deconstructed for consistency and variability as “texts” but also against critical realist Marxist norms of warranting.

However partisan my position, though, I have tried not simply to be an apologist. A measure of critical distance, and the deconstructive dimensions of DA, served to highlight the “non-reflexive” type of critical Marxism employed in PINS prior to 1990. With infusions of deconstructive theory into a Marxist DA, notions of worker “false consciousness” and “the non-ideological” as Marxist “truth”, for instance, as presented by Nzimande and Ivey, do not go unchallenged. I was also able to see that the ostensible critical Marxism of Perkel’s interpretive repertoires had been appropriated into a larger liberal humanist discourse. And, I could tease out where Levett’s social constructionism left the “practical sphere” of social determination for the discursive. Liberalism usually appropriates oppositional theory to neutralise it. Here, Marxism appropriates deconstruction to lend political edge to a set of linguistic skills aimed at seeking out the contradictions between the logic of a text and the writer’s claims. Or, in Parker’s view of the ideological, to find where socially dominant discourses silence other voices and positions or subtly undermine them.



A critical realist Marxist DA shows equal fruitfulness, I believe, with texts from the post-1990 period. In Section 2. I discussed Marxist objections to post-marxist and unmodified post-structuralism. Critique of articles drawing on these frameworks thus became a matter of identifying what was constructed by the writers as targets for challenge and, from a Marxist point of view, where they lapsed into mainstream liberal humanist discourse or post-marxist ambiguity. Kottler's text, for example, represents the difficulties of bringing into dialogue the discourses of psychology and traditional healing. A deconstructive reading, with critical realist underpinnings, suggested a contradiction between the writer's progressive arguments about a "differences discourse" and a romanticising of African culture which Kottler herself identified as regressive. While "evidence" for my conclusions was to be found "in" the text itself, it was the inter-textual reading of this text with an earlier one by the writer that highlighted discrepancies. Moreover, from a critical Marxist perspective, some of the aspects of the "differences discourse" that were praised (intrapsychic emphasis, "freedom to admit one's own biases", "promotes human development") seen in the context of the larger arguments of the text, signalled liberal humanist discourse. Arguments that a "similarities discourse" was mostly used by Marxists and "over-socialised" the psychological, simply lent support to my conclusion. In other words, a deconstructive reading would have pinpointed contradictions and suggested that multiple readings of Kottler's text are possible. A critical realist Marxist DA, however, identifies the type of socio-philosophical discourse that would lead to particular kinds of contradiction in particular contexts. In this case, a dubiously liberal endorsement of the sort of ethnicity that emerged around 1990 in South Africa, and a misrepresentation of critical Marxism as a theory without an account of "intrapsychic structures and processes".

Nevertheless, the discourse-based approach of Kottler's text indicated a break with mainstream quantitative psychology, a break that became increasingly subscribed to by contributors to PINS. Given the discursive emphasis of my own analyses, the issue became one of drawing the line between liberal post-structuralist and postmodern approaches and those driven by radical theory. Isemonger's "postmodern" reformulation of the category "community" as an "imagined construct" does not refer to discourse. From a Marxist deconstructive perspective, however, he inadequately articulated the interplay between the role of "mental constructs" and the structural determinants of a "sense of community". In other words, the basic cognitivism of argument is

as idealist in assumption as any liberal discourse-based approach. Micro-analysis of Isemonger's choice of terms, moreover, suggested an oddly aggressive role for the psychologist, one that "breaks down", "forces", "curbs", "precludes" and "spoils". Spread over a number of paragraphs, these terms might not have significance in a non-deconstructive reading. Read with a DA eye alert to patterns and perhaps to an unconscious mind set, the phrases suggest what Foucault saw as an implicit "policing" role for psychiatry and psychology in society.

A critical realist Marxist DA also proved fruitful in deconstructing the polished prose of Van Zyl's text. Couched in terms of the academic professional, the text focuses on clarifying the "object" towards which clinical skill "ought" to be directed. A careful argument is woven about neurosis which is social in nature and best addressed by social workers and activists, and that which is "not wholly attributable to the social" and the province of the clinician. It fails, I argue, with this last phrase, which means "mostly social". One is left to presume that that which is not social must be psychological or biological, or both. Van Zyl's argument, like Perkel's, however, seems to hinge on the premises that the social can be filtered out leaving as a residue the psychological, and that the psychological itself is not a social construct. As I indicated earlier, although a critical Marxist psychology does not agree with social constructionist notions of the psychological as entirely a construct of discourse, it does not countenance a separation of the social, the biological and the psychological in the formation, deformation, and healing of the human psyche. Van Zyl also unreflexively applies the oedipal complex to individuals from largely extended families, where western triadic relationships are not necessarily the norm. Whatever the variability of the psychoanalytically orientated text of Van Wyk and Louw about formulations of Afrikaner identity, there are few lapses into mainstream thinking of the kind identified in Van Zyl's text. Although critical Marxist interpretive repertoires get entangled with liberal notions of the British imposing "law and order" or social boundaries on Afrikaner desires for untrammelled freedom, the psychological is framed in social terms. For example, the argument that certain Afrikaners failed to acquire a "personal conscience" as the result of their collectively replacing earthly fathers with an omnipotent Father is a novel but singularly social explanation for the "baaskap" mentality of apartheid. The eloquent prose of the text, moreover, elicited the sort of multi-sensory response that perhaps only a writer from the language disciplines could achieve in dealing with matters of psychology. I had to be alert, as an analyst,

however, not to be seduced by aesthetic effect and to note where argument slipped into a postmodern enjoyment of elusiveness and paradox.

Louw's text in Afrikaans, I argue, represents an attempt by mainstream psychology to rethink itself, but suggests a "scientific" and pragmatic path to reinvention, the kind that the liberal feminist text by Jackson and Van Vlaenderen vehemently attacked as a form of "male-stream" oppression. I allocated a "liberal" tag to their position because they betrayed an incapacity to reflect on their own middle-class assumptions about participatory research. Another deliberate juxtaposition on my part, was Perkel's text, with its masculinist arguments that men are victims of "mothering styles" and that women are implicated in male strivings for dominance. As was the case with his earlier text, however, I propose that considerable variability of discourse occurs, and likely the result of contradictory positions on whether the psyche is predominantly a social construct or not. Neutralisation of Marxist terms such as ideology into "belief systems" and odd inversions of Marxist views of the relationship between the individual to society, also have the markings of post-marxist discourse.

Against the texts just mentioned, Nell's populist discourse with its "sinister intellectual" challenge to the "responsible intellectuals" who have taken office under an ANC government, seems "radical" in an anarchistic sense. His use of discourse also has the energy and vividness of metaphor more typical of the pre-1990 texts. The primary trope used, however, is irony, a rhetorical device which Foucault described as the distinctive trope of a postmodern episteme (White, 1979, p. 92). I likened, the cynicism that underlies this usage to Kleinian envy, and to the spoiling of what cannot be made one's own. Despite smatterings of Marxist interpretive repertoire, then, Nell's populist and postmodernist text falls into the category of post-marxist critique. The targeted "mainstream" is "official psychology" as opposed to what PINS generally presents as the unself-critical liberal humanist and conservative traditions of psychology. Nevertheless, the position of "therapy as activism" as advocated, and a call for the "resocialising and de-medicalising of psychopathology" along the lines of the Alma-Ata manifesto, entirely captured my Marxist imagination. I was also interested to see the "responsible intellectuals", Freeman and Pillay, write of "lobbying for resources" and the economic determinants in a mental health policy for a liberated South Africa. Ultimately, though, I found myself agreeing

with Hayes that in the nineties “class” had become like “gender”, an under-utilised category for critique. I also agreed that Africanisation had yet to be adequately addressed in PINS. Moreover, where industrial psychology and child psychology had featured strongly prior to 1990, along with social, community, counselling and clinical psychologies, after 1990, a shift occurred to an emphasis on psychoanalytically directed articles, philosophical texts, as well as an examination of social, clinical and community psychologies. Despite specific editorial calls, educational psychology featured only incidentally as mention in texts with other priorities.

I have argued that the selection of texts I analyse represents all of the domains addressed in PINS. I also believe that I have shown that a challenge to mainstream discourses holds across these domains. In 1990, however, Seedat accused PINS of under representing black and women academics. In 1998, Levett and Kottler noted that up to 1994 only six-percent of the articles focused on feminist issues with only four articles by women. Tabulations in this study suggest that numbers changed marginally. An increase in the ratio of female to male contributors went from a third to a half after 1990. Clearly, these factors influence the claims I can make about PINS constructing an alternative to mainstream psychology. While aiming to correct perceived imbalances, then, the journal continued to present a mostly white, middle-class, male voice in psychology. Editorials frequently appealed for more inclusiveness, but for reasons that can only be speculated upon, the call was not heeded. Levett and Kottler cite the moral imperatives of addressing racial rather than gender oppression during apartheid, but this sort of prioritisation shifted after 1994.

In terms of what this study offers over the other studies mentioned, I think both the scale of the project and its predominantly qualitative approach make it a substantial addition. Moreover, as I indicated in the Introduction, the aims, the foci, the time frame covered, the categories of analysis, and the approach, all are different. Where there is agreement, is that while PINS has aligned itself with radical and progressive positions in the country, it also reflects the struggle worldwide for publishing to be more inclusive of women and black people. As “information technology” (IT) gathers momentum as a global force, who has access to publishing opportunity is an increasingly obvious political contest. Sadly, access to the formal discourses upon which the contributors to PINS and I have drawn, also participates in larger discriminations of

metropole against local imperatives. To challenge psychology in the South African context means either to jettison it completely or to know its discourses. For the foreseeable future the former is not an option. Perhaps future research needs to be directed at the reception of journals such as PINS. In other words, a study of the impact or lack of impact of psychology in print on theory and practice in this country needs to be undertaken. Information about the demographics of editors and contributors, and the financing, publishing practices and distribution of local journals of psychology, might go some way to changing imbalances.

Finally, amongst the shortcomings of the study, I have several times noted the difficulties of giving agency to writers in a discursively orientated study. Parker and Burman's "thirty-two problems of DA" (1993, pp.155-172) suggest that DA struggles between "intentional agents manipulating, or engaging in, discursive strategies" and a "lapsing into mechanistic explanation" where there is "no room for agency". I have motivated my choice for erring towards the former option. Nevertheless, my Marxist accommodation of agency brought with it suggestions of authorial intention in phrases such as "the writer suggests/ argues/constructs". Additions of reflexive phrases like "it seems" or "it may be argued" only marginally redeems the situation from a strictly post-structuralist perspective, where discourse constructs meanings elusive to authorial control or consciousness. I have also suggested that the claims I make about the texts analysed, can be generalised to the rest of the articles in PINS. Given the small sample (15%) and DA's recognition of the difficulties this poses, I have tried to do as Potter and Wetherell recommend. I have given as clear a description as I can of the material from which I have drawn the sample, and of the procedures followed in selection (1987, p.162). I also hope that I have argued sufficiently that the contest for meaning and "relevance" in PINS has social significance. And, that however small the sample focused upon, I have "intervened" on the side of a position that warrants its arguments against the moral, ethical and material consequences of psychology for people other than the white, privileged few traditionally served by the profession.

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## 8. APPENDIX: A

**Table 3. Categories for analysis PINS 1983-1989**

<b>PINS Date</b>	<b>Article/ Writer</b>	<b>Theme</b>	<b>Domain</b>	<b>Discourse/ Perspective</b>
1.Sept. 1983	1. Savage 2. Moll	relevance relevance	philosophical philosophical	liberal humanist liberal humanist
2. Jan. 1985	3. Hayes 4. Hountondji 5. Hayes 6. Nzimande 7. Hayes 8. Nzimande	indigenous indigenous critique relevance critique relevance	philosophical philosophical social industrial philosophical industrial	Marxist Africanist marxist Marxist Marxist Marxist Marxist
3.Sept. 1985	9. Tyghe 10. Freeman 11. Muller 12. Coldwell 13. Cross	relevance critique critique - -	psychometrics industrial philosophical industrial industrial?	Marxist implicit Marxist Marxist conservative liberal humanist
4. Dec. 1985	14. Hayes 15. Sitas 16. Irvine 17. Basckin 18. Bedford/ Cassidy 19. Gould 20. Basckin	- oppression oppression - oppression critique relevance	industrial industrial social community psychometrics clinical social	Marxist Marxist Marxist liberal humanist implicit Marxist feminist-Marxist liberal humanist
5. May 1986	21. Ivey 22. Dawes  23. Foster 24. Feinstein et al 25. Anon. - UWC 26. Couve 27. Swartz et al 28. Swartz	critique relevance  - relevance relevance critique oppression relevance	psychoanalysis social/philos- ophical philosophical social counselling clinical clinical clinical	Marxist Marxist  implicit Marxist liberal humanist Marxist Marxist implicit Marxist Foucauldian?
6.Sept. 1986	29. JHB ed. Gp 30. Cleste et al 31. Louw 32. Fullager /Paizis 33. Turton	- critique relevance relevance relevance relevance	philosophical philosophical social industrial community community	implicit Marxist Foucauldian liberal humanist implicit Marxist Marxist Marxist

7. Apr. 1987	34. Lazarus/ Burger	relevance	community	liberal humanist
	35. Vogelmann	relevance	community	implicit Marxist?
	36. Flisher	-	social	liberal
	37. Townsend	relevance	education	conservative
	38. Hayes		industrial	Marxist
8. Sept. 1987	39. Gibson	critique	child	liberal humanist
	40. Dawes	oppression	child	implicit Marxist
	41. Straker et al	relevance	clinical	liberal humanist
	42. Levett	oppression	child	liberal humanist
	43. Louw- Potgieter	oppression	social	Implicit liberal
9. Feb. 1988	44. Straker et al	-	child	liberal humanist
	45. Dawes	oppression	child	implicit Marxist
	46. Freeman	-	community	implicit Marxist
	47. Cloete/ Pillay	critique	philosophical	Marxist
	48. Louw	critique	philosophical	liberal humanist
10. May 1988	49. Leon/Lea	oppression	social	liberal humanist
	50. Schefer/ Hofmeyer	oppression	social	liberal humanist
	51. Eichhorn	critique	social	Marxist
	52. Perkel	relevance	clinical/comm- unity	liberal humanist
	53. Vogelmann	-	community	implicit Marxist
11. Dec. 1988	54. Kottler	critique	philosophical	liberal feminist
	55. Solomons	-	psychoanalytic	liberal humanist
	56. Schefer	-	community	implicit Marxist
	57. Seedat et al	critique	community	Marxist
12. 1989	58. Miller	critique	philosophical	liberal humanist
	59. Levett	oppression	child	liberal humanist
	60. Dawes/ Tredoux	oppression	child	liberal humanist
	61. Edwards	-	philosophical	liberal humanist
	62. Solomons	-	philosophical	liberal humanist

**APPENDIX B.:**

**Table.4. Categories for analysis. PINS 1990-1998**

Date	Article/Writer	Theme	Domain	Perspective
13. 1990	63. Perkel 64. Spitz et al 65. Kottler 66. Isemonger	oppression oppression critique critique	philosophical clinical social community	liberal humanist liberal humanist Foucauldian post-marxist
14. 1990	67. Van Zyl 68. Van Wyk/Voice 69. Hayes 70. Korber	critique critique critique indigenous	psychoanalysis psychoanalysis psychoanalysis social	liberal humanist post-marxist Marxist liberal humanist
15. 1991	71. Bloom 72. Young 73. Harper/ Tomlison 74. Chisholm 75. Nell	relevance - critique  oppression critique	psychoanalysis psychoanalysis family  child community	liberal humanist implicit Marxist post-marxist  implicit Marxist Foucauldian
16. 1992	76. Haysom et al 77. Korber 78. Louw, J. 79. Louw, G.	critique oppression critique critique	community social philosophical philosophical	liberal humanist liberal humanist conservative conservative
17. 1993	80. Young 81. Reeler 82. Petersen/ Ramsay 83. Bhana/Pillay	oppression - relevance  -  -	psychoanalysis clinical community  social	liberal liberal humanist liberal feminist  liberal humanist
18. 1994	84. Jackson/Van Vlaenderm 85. Isemonger 86. Pillay 87. Michelson 88. Rock 89. PPR	relevance  critique relevance oppression relevance -	philosophical  philosophical community clinical philosophical philosophical	liberal feminist  post-marxist liberal humanist liberal humanist liberal humanist Marxist
19. 1994	90. Perkel 91. Brown	critique critique	social psychoanalysis	liberal feminist liberal humanist
20. 1995	92. Nell 93. Parker 94. Levett 95. Wood/Foster	critique - oppression -	philosophical social child social	liberal humanist Marxist liberal humanist liberal humanist
	96. Van Wyk 97. Van Zyl 98. Terre Blanche	relevance - -	psychoanalysis psychoanalysis philosophical	Marxist liberal humanist post-marxist

21. 1996	99. Young 100. Wilbraham 101. Schlapelo/ Terre Blanche 102. Pillay/ Freeman 103. Pillay 104. Terre Blanche	- - critique  relevance  relevance  -	psychoanalysis clinical psychometrics  social  social philosophical	liberal humanist Foucauldian/feminist liberal humanist  liberal humanist liberal humanist post-marxist post-marxist
22. 1997	105. Lachenicht 106. Campbell 107. Shefer et al 108. Dollar 109. Kottler	- - critique oppression -	philosophical clinical social social psychoanalysis	liberal humanist liberal humanist liberal humanist liberal humanist liberal feminist
23. 1998	110. Dawes 111. Naidoo 112. Favell 113. Ivey 114. Lubbe 115. Du Preez 116. Parker	relevance oppression oppression critique critique critique critique	philosophical clinical clinical psychanalysis philosophical philosophical philosophical	Africanist? Liberal feminist Foucauldian post-marxist liberal humanist conservative Marxist
24. 1998	117. Lindegger/ Strebel 118. Joffe 119. Richter/ Griesel 120. Campbell/ Williams	relevance  relevance relevance  relevance	clinical  social child  community	liberal feminist  liberal humanist libral humanist  liberal humanist

## APPENDIX C.:

**Table 5. Table of articles analysed**

Article: Date	Writer	Theme	Domain	Discourse/s
PINS 1. 1983	Savage	relevance	philosophical/ sociology	liberal humanist
PINS 2. 1985	Nzimande	relevance	industrial psychology	Marxist -Lukacsian
PINS 3. 1985	Coldwell	relevance	industrial psychology	conservative
PINS 5. 1986	Dawes	relevance critique indigenous	social/ philosophical	Critical Marxist
PINS 5. 1986	Anonymous	relevance oppression indigenous	counselling psychology	Marxist/populist
PINS 5. 1986	Ivey	critique	psychoanalysis	Critical Marxist
PINS 8. 1987	Levett	relevance oppression	child psychology	liberal humanist feminist social constructionist
PINS 10.1988	Perkel	relevance	clinical/ community	liberal humanist
PINS 13.1990	Kottler	relevance	social psychology	Foucauldian liberal feminist
PINS 13.1990	Isemonger	relevance	community psychology	post-marxist? post-structuralist
PINS 14.1990	Van Zyl	relevance	psychoanalysis	liberal humanist
PINS 14.1990	Van Wyk & Voice	relevance critique	psychoanalysis	post-marxist? post-structuralist
PINS 16.1992	Louw	relevance	philosophical	conservative
PINS 18.1994	Jackson & Van Vlaenderen	oppression	philosophical	liberal feminist
PINS 19.1994	Perkel	relevance oppression	social psychology	post-marxist? masculinist
PINS 19.1994	Nell	relevance	philosophical	populist post-marxist
PINS 21.1996	Freeman & Pillay	relevance	social psychology	liberal humanist
PINS 23.1998	Hayes	relevance	editorial comment	Critical Marxist

