



SELLING THE WAR, SURVIVING THE WAR: THE USE OF MUSIC DURING THE BORDER WAR

**Catherine Anne Morrow
203501823**

**A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts (Music)**

**School of Music
Faculty of Humanities, Development and Social Sciences**

Supervisor: Professor Christopher Ballantine

December 2009

Dedicated in endless gratitude to my mother, Rose Morrow
And to the memory of my father, Keith Morrow

Declaration

Candidate

I, Catherine Anne Morrow, declare that:

- (i) The research reported in this dissertation, except where otherwise indicated, is my original research.
- (ii) This dissertation has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university.
- (iii) This dissertation does not contain other persons' data, pictures, graphs or other information, unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from other persons.
- (iv) This dissertation does not contain other persons' writing, unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from other researchers. Where other written sources have been quoted, then:
 - a) their words have been re-written but the general information attributed to them has been referenced:
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- (v) This dissertation does not contain text, graphics or tables copied and pasted from the Internet, unless specifically acknowledged, and the source being detailed in the dissertation and in the References sections.

Signature:



Catherine Anne Morrow

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my supervisor and mentor, Professor Christopher Ballantine, for his patience, intellect, wisdom and encouragement throughout this journey. Your support has been invaluable Chris, and I am grateful for the experience of having been educated by you.

The National Research Foundation provided me with a two-year research grant; as such I am deeply grateful and indebted to the Foundation.

Much of the information that was gathered hinged on the co-operation of a number of ex-soldiers. I would particularly like to thank Tony Fernandes and Danie van der Spuy in this regard. Both of these men are gentlemen of the highest order, and displayed enthusiasm and passion for this project which went above and beyond what I was hoping for. Furthermore, Dave Marks, 3rd Ear and the HYMAP archives have been valuable sources of information, and for this I am deeply grateful.

To my family: Fiona, Devlin, Siobhan, Sarah, Chris, Juliette and Rachel. I am so grateful for your presence in, and influence upon, my life. I have been shaped by each of you. Mom, you have been the one constant throughout this journey. You have displayed exceptional courage in life and I have been blessed to have had a parent such as you. Thank you.

With my most sincere gratitude and love,
Catherine

Abstract

This dissertation examines some of the numerous ways in which music can be put to use during times of war. Using South Africa's border war (1966 – 1989) as a case study, the dissertation first looks at the ways in which music was used by certain radio stations, on behalf of the SABC and the South African government, as an aesthetic device to inculcate trust in conscripted soldiers that the war was legitimate. Secondly, it investigates the ways in which soldiers used music to respond to the government's efforts in this regard, as well as the ways in which they used music (accessed through radio music and dedication programmes, recordings and live) to negotiate their experiences of the border war.

The main argument of this work stems from a broader notion that individuals and groups of people use music in everyday life for its ability to act as a cultural vehicle that operates multi-dimensionally over space and time. This means that music can evoke memory; restore familiarity, security and continuity; elicit desired modes of behaviour; and create a sense of control over the environment. Data recovered from archives and interviews have been qualitatively analysed, and the dissertation argues that music played an integral role in the government's, the SABC's and radio's efforts to sell the war on the one side, and the soldiers' efforts to survive it on the other.

This dissertation contributes in several ways to our understanding of the experience of war and the ways in which people frame and respond to it using music. It challenges the notion of music as spiritual resistance based on the presumption of solidarity amongst soldiers in their resistance. This widespread, one dimensional representation of resistance is replaced with a nuanced and multilayered investigation of the numerous ways in which soldiers responded to their circumstances.

Table of Contents

Title Page	i
Dedication	ii
Declaration	iii
Acknowledgements	iv
Abstract	v
 Chapter One	
Introduction	1
Unfolding of Events	2
Timeline	7
 Chapter Two	
Selling the War	14
 Chapter Three	
Surviving the War	50
Setting the Scene	54
Responding to the Scene	59
 Chapter Four	
Conclusion	91
 Bibliography	98
Appendix 1 Questionnaire	103
Appendix 2 List of Songs	108
Appendix 3 Compact Disc 1 and 2	

Chapter 1: Introduction

“The meaning of the Border War is not fixed; it has had to be constantly renegotiated during the country’s transition. Ex-SADF national servicemen believe that they have not been acknowledged for their duties and sacrifices on behalf of their country and that the time is right for a re-evaluation of their roles in the conflict. Some wish to rid themselves of the shame of being regarded as vanquished soldiers. Others have embraced victimhood to disassociate themselves from being seen as complicit in an oppressive system. Whatever we make of the wish of veterans to reaffirm their contribution to creating the new South Africa, there can be little doubt that neither silence nor ignorance is conducive to coming to terms with the Border War.”

~ Professor Gary Baines ~

Unfolding of Events

The South African border war, also referred to as the Namibian War of Independence, took place between 1966 and 1989 in the north of, what was then known as, South-West Africa (now Namibia), and the southern territories of Angola. The conflict was fought by South Africa and her allies (mainly UNITA¹) on the one side, and SWAPO², the Angolan government, and their allies (the Soviet Union and Cuba) on the other. This war was not one of convention: insurgency, counter-insurgency, guerrilla warfare and terrorism were but a few tactics adopted by both sides as methods for overwhelming the other (Stiff 2004). The circumstances surrounding how the war ended remain a topic of great contention between factions within both sides. This highlights the fact that there are many versions of the truth regarding the border war, and that each one must be explored and given attention. ‘Versions of the truth’ is a major theme that runs throughout this project, a project which does not purport to provide a comprehensive account of the war, but rather a nuanced, textured account built upon testimonials and individuals’ beliefs about how the war was sold and survived. Nevertheless, a broad outline of the unfolding of events throughout the 20th century, leading up to the outbreak of the South African border war, supplies a historical understanding of why both sides found it was necessary to embark upon what became one of the longest wars waged on the African continent.

The seeds of inevitable conflict were planted in 1915 during World War I, when South Africa invaded the German colony of South-West Africa on behalf of the Allied Forces. For five years this country was under South African military rule until

¹ National Union for the Total Independence of Angola, which was partially financially backed by the USA.

² South-West Africa People’s Organisation

the League of Nations officially granted the territory to South Africa as a mandate in 1920. When World War II came to an end in 1945, and the League of Nations dissolved the following year, it was the hope of South Africa that she would be given leave by the United Nations Organisation to incorporate the territory as a fifth province. This was refused, however, on the basis that the indigenous people of South-West Africa had not been consulted, and that South Africa's role up until 1946 had been merely to oversee the running of the country until it was fit for self-governance. The seeds of conflict began to germinate and take root when South Africa, in response, refused to acknowledge the right of the United Nations to stand in replacement of the League of Nations as supervisor of the territory. For 20 years thereafter this conflict continued between South Africa and the United Nations with very little action being taken by the latter to finally resolve it (Stiff 2004).

Finally, in 1966, the mandate to South Africa was irrevocably terminated by the General Assembly of the United Nations when the International Court of Justice ruled that South Africa could not unilaterally alter the international status of the territory, and as such, had to abide by the terms of the mandate and hand over rule of the country to the citizens who lived within its borders. In 1971, South Africa having still not done so, the International Court of Justice termed South Africa's rule of South-West Africa as illegal. Still South Africa stood firm, and implemented the policies of apartheid in South-West Africa, giving only the white minority representation in its Parliament (Cock 1991).

Meanwhile, the stirring of African nationalism across the continent was gaining momentum. Since the end of World War II many colonial territories had been handed

over to the indigenous inhabitants for self-rule, and others were teetering on the brink of independence. In South Africa's back yard, low intensity wars of independence were being waged in Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe), Mozambique and Angola with the aim of ousting white colonial governments, and replacing them with those that were black-ruled. With the increasing pressure and demands from the ANC³ in South Africa in response to the policies of apartheid, the country was surrounded by the call for black rule and freedom from the shackles of colonialism and apartheid (Cock 1991).

Within South-West Africa, the OPO⁴, led by Sam Nujoma, and formed with the aim of abolishing the *odolate* (a law which restricted the movement and work prospects of the Owambo people to Owamboland only), adopted a more nationally political stance, and dissolved to reconstitute as SWAPO in 1960. SWAPO called for national unity and self-reliance, and its aim was to struggle for an independent, black-ruled state. South Africa's refusal to withdraw from South-West Africa, and acknowledge the country as an independent Namibia, fuelled the formation of SWAPO's military wing, PLAN⁵ in 1962, which set the stage for armed conflict (Stiff 2004).

Until 1966 the South African Police (SAP) were responsible for maintaining order, arresting and interrogating insurgents, and preventing guerrilla infiltrations and activities in South-West Africa. Between 1965 and 1966 there had been several light skirmishes between police and insurgents, but the first major clash occurred on 26 August 1966, and this is generally regarded as the official date of the beginning of what became the South African border war. By 1967 the South African Defence

³ African National Congress

⁴ Owambo People's Organisation

⁵ People's Liberation Army of Namibia

Force (SADF) was officially involved in the war, and by 1974, when South African forces crossed the Angolan border, the police had been entirely removed from the operational area and the SADF became solely responsible for fighting the war (Frederikse 1986).



Map of Namibia⁶

⁶ Oddens' Bookmarks: *The Fascinating World of Maps and Mapping*, accessed 2 December 2009, <http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/africa/namibia.gif>

The operational area of the border war stretched north- and eastwards of the town of Grootfontein. It included the Grootfontein, Tsumeb, Owambo and Kavango provinces in Namibia, and much of the southern territories of Angola.

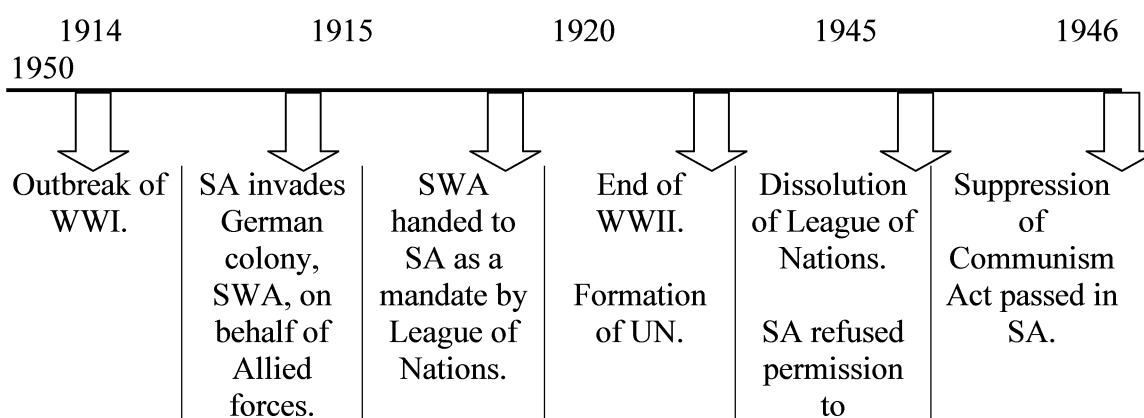
Within South African borders there was considerable political unrest by the 1970s due to the governing policies and laws of apartheid. These had, since 1948, segregated groups of people on the basis of 'race', classifying the population into whites and 'non-whites'. The government segregated education, medical care and other public services, and provided 'non-whites' with services inferior to those of whites (*South Africa Under Apartheid* 2009, accessed 19 November 2009 http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/South_Africa_under_apartheid). One of the main aims of apartheid was to maintain white minority rule by suppressing all other 'race' groups to varying degrees. The regime was successful in creating a chasm that was both deep and wide between what the state designated as the different 'race' groups.

As unrest spread and became more violent, state organizations responded with increasing repression and state-sponsored violence. In addition, numerous laws which severely restricted interaction between people from different 'race' groups became increasingly strict and comprehensive as apartheid gathered momentum: the enforcement thereof ensured that the regime's agendas became fundamentally entrenched in society. When necessary, laws were amended and multiplied exponentially to perpetuate the ideologies of the state, and their effects were stringently enforced, deeply felt, and obediently practiced in the daily lives of many South Africans. The Suppression of Communism Act of 1950, with its many subsequent amendments (and later superseded by the Internal Security Act of 1982),

defined communism and the objects of communism very broadly and ruled against “any activity allegedly promoting disturbances or disorder; promoting industrial, social, political, or economic change in South Africa; and encouraging hostility between whites and ‘nonwhites’ so as to promote change or revolution” (*Beacon for Freedom of Expression* 2009, accessed 17 November 2009, www.beaconforfreedom.org/about_database/south%20africa.html). The main organizations banned under these laws were the Communist Party of South Africa, the ANC and the PAC⁷.

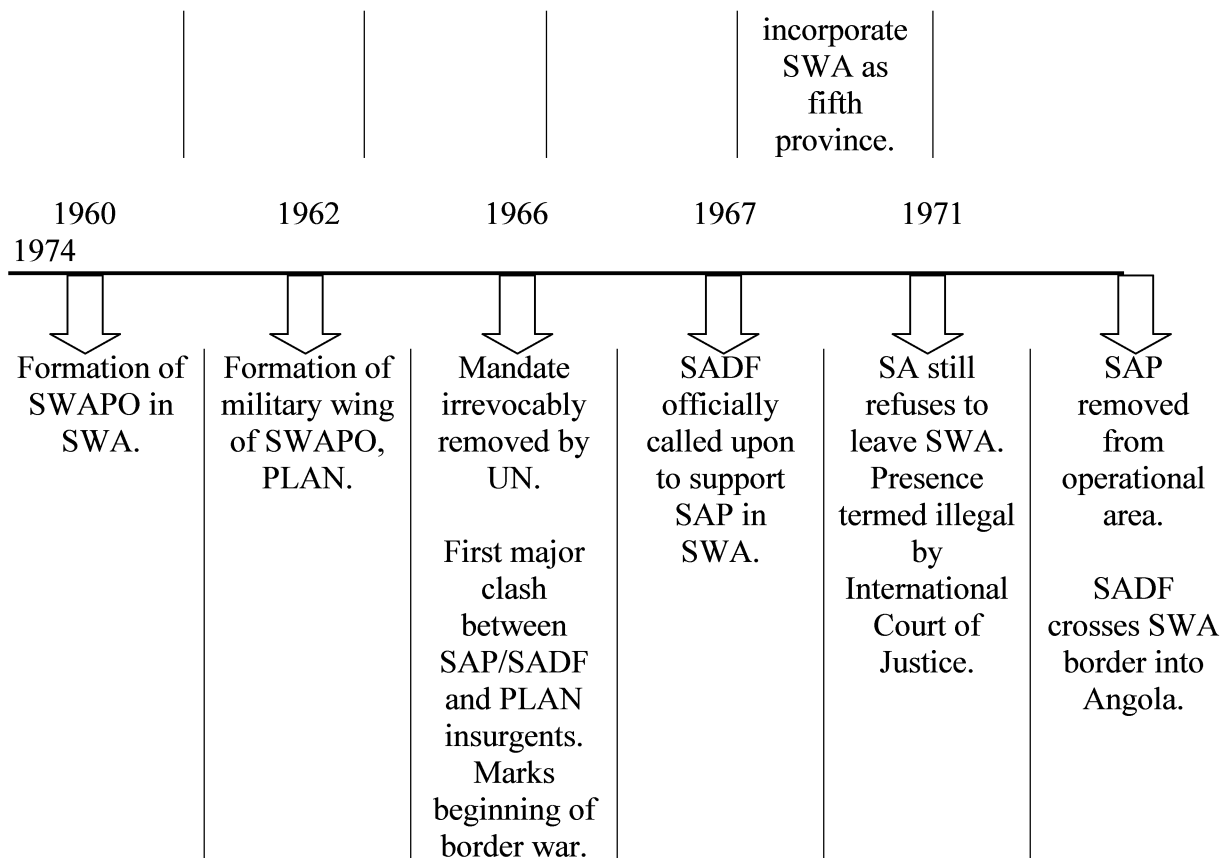
The core impact of this act is particularly relevant to this project, as its implementation was not only disastrous for opposition groups, but framed the ways many white South Africans perceived the opposition within and without the country, and the government’s response to these entities. Fear of what the government loosely termed as ‘communism’ and the *swart en rooi gevaar*⁸, played a substantial role in ensuring that the white minority became complicit in the enforcement of apartheid, and the border war.

Timeline of events leading up to the outbreak, and first eight years, of the South African border war:



⁷ Pan-African Congress

⁸ Literally the ‘black’ (as a racial group) and ‘red’ (as communists) danger.



It became clear to the South African government that, with African nationalism and the call for black-ruled states gaining momentum and urgency within South Africa and in countries bordering to the north, the threat to white minority rule within the country had increased considerably by the 1970s. As a result, it became imperative that the government put a series of comprehensive strategies in motion which aimed at ensuring its complete and lasting control. The chapter which follows explores what some of these strategies were, and how they materialised and came to fruition through the medium of radio and, more specifically, the music-and-dedication programmes, that were broadcast countrywide and accessed by soldiers conscripted into the SADF during the border war.

Archival material from private collections as well as from the SABC enabled me to develop an understanding of the style of the radio programmes, their ideological content, and their music. Chapter two makes use of this material, in conjunction with

Anthony Giddens' (1991) theory of trust in expert systems, as a means of exploring the extent to which the expert system of government used music as an aesthetic device, via the radio, to instil trust in white soldiers that the war was legitimate and necessary. In order to contextualise the extent to which music was used for this purpose, I took the decision to broaden the chapter's analysis from that of music-and-dedication programmes only, to other aesthetic devices. These include content, tone of voice, vocabulary, and gender politics (used in conjunction with music) found in news bulletins, *Ride Safe* advertisements⁹ and music-and-dedication programmes. These analyses are included in chapter two, making possible a richer, multidimensional view of the ways in which the government attempted to use music in the interests of selling the war to soldiers.

Furthermore, it came to light in interviews with ex-soldiers that the ways in which they negotiated the government's smear campaigns of the *swart en rooi gevaar*, had a substantial impact upon the ways in which they assessed the legitimacy of the border war, and their involvement in it. Nevertheless, very few of those who were interviewed as ex-soldiers admitted to buying entirely into the legitimacy of the war at the time of their conscription: in fact, only two out of twenty interviewees were, at the time of their interviews, still unequivocally convinced that the war was completely necessary under the circumstances. At the time of conscription, most men had accepted the fact that part of being a white, South African male involved (what eventually became) a two-year conscription and likely border duty, and that the reason for this was that South Africa was under threat from 'communists' who wanted to oust the white government and replace it with a black one. In addition, for many,

⁹ These were advertisements broadcast to encourage citizens to give soldiers, who were returning home from the camps or border, a lift.

conscription was viewed as an inconvenience, but an opportunity to leave home and encounter something entirely different to what they had experienced previously. As a result, many actually looked forward to the experience while still at school.

Interestingly, many ex-soldiers interviewed for this project occupied a grey zone during conscription, in which their opinions and perceptions of the war, and their involvement in it, fluctuated according to their emotional states, physical well-being and daily experiences of the army. The ways they negotiated their variable perspectives and experiences of the war and being in the army were often influenced by external discourses, such as music. The government needed a committed army and therefore used music and other aesthetic devices, broadcast via the radio, for their assumed abilities to transfer the government's ideologies, support its policies and underpin its agendas. The assumption was made that soldiers would respond to these tactics in a manner which created a view of the border war as being legitimate, and the government as worthy of their trust.

The outcomes of this section of the research project shed light on the numerous ways in which music, used in conjunction with other aesthetic devices, can be put to use by expert systems such as governments and broadcasting corporations to instil trust, frame perceptions, steer behavioural patterns and encourage specific opinions amongst large groups of the population. The reasons for this are that genres and individual pieces of music accumulate meanings and associations over time in conjunction with numerous social and historical settings. This, alongside myriad personal significances individuals assign to, and create with, music, means that when heard, it is not experienced in isolation in the present circumstances, but rather in

terms of previous associations already woven into its fabric. This is discussed in more detail in chapter two.

This, however, is not the full story. One of the ways of ascertaining the extent to which the government's use of music and other aesthetic devices to instil trust was effective in selling the war, was to go directly to those whom the campaign was targeting: the soldiers. The extent to which soldiers negotiated their experiences of the war using music, and the ways in which they interacted musically and extra-musically with radio broadcasts – in particular, radio music-and-dedication programmes – during their conscription period, is of particular interest to chapter three. The information in this chapter is based almost entirely on material gleaned from personal communications had with twenty ex-soldiers, and it is used to explore the ways in which music was used by soldiers as a tool to survive the war and the experiences they had while in the army and at war.

Reporting upon this section of the project was challenging, as the ways in which soldiers negotiated the government's efforts in selling the war, as well as their own experiences of the army and war, could not be portrayed as uniform. Furthermore, the reflexive manner in which the material had to be dissected and related demanded that the notion of spiritual resistance, as Gilbert (2005) calls it, where soldiers were portrayed essentially as wholly victims or evil conspirators of an oppressive regime, had to be avoided. The reason for this is that framing wartime experiences in unambiguous moral terms by focussing only on the raw suffering, atrocity and bloodshed, unquestionably outweighs other aspects of the story. Averting such essentialist approaches necessarily means that the responses of each soldier to the

border war had to be recognised as unique, complex and intricate, and that their personal agendas and agencies had to be acknowledged and taken into account.

It is important to note here that although each man, in becoming a soldier, negotiated his environment and experiences of the army in differing ways, there were also many instances where parallels could be drawn between soldiers' uses of music. It is because overlaps occur that specific ways in which music is used by individuals and groups of people to negotiate environments and experiences can be identified. My project is particularly interested in these overlaps, and seeks to identify them. I have thus sought to provide a textured and nuanced account of the many creative ways in which music was used by soldiers to negotiate the varied challenges and experiences of conscription. The chapter uses DeNora's (2000) theory that people use music in their everyday lives to negotiate the environments they occupy, and the experiences they have within them. The implication and nature of such a multilayered investigation is that the outcomes do not neatly tally up; rather, they are dependent upon who was doing the negotiation, and under what circumstances. The outcomes are sometimes contradictory, but taken together they reveal a great deal about the transient nature of human agencies.

At the outset of this research project, my expectations of the outcomes were naïve and one-dimensional. I anticipated that all soldiers had collectively resisted and resented conscription and the government's insistence upon the necessity for the border war. Further, I assumed that these united soldiers would have listened to, and made use of, music which blatantly articulated (both musically and through the lyrics) their resistance to, and resentment of, their circumstances. Resistance was certainly one

way in which some soldiers negotiated and survived the war; however, it is important to bear in mind that resistance was only possible for some, and only under particular circumstances. In addition, there were very often other complex agendas at play, both intra- and interpersonally, in the camps and on the border. As the interview process got underway, and each man relayed his experiences of, and responses to, the border war, it became clear that if an honest portrayal of music's role in the border war was to be presented, the stories had to be dealt with carefully.

The nature of being a soldier in the SADF during the border war meant that men had to complete three months of basic training, as well as serve as soldiers for prolonged periods, away from familiar environments. The issues that these circumstances brought to the fore often meant that for many men, resistance through music was not the only priority. Their need to familiarise the space they occupied as soldiers, and create an environment which was safe and secure, meant that music was often used to facilitate those needs. Music was useful because previous associations and significances attached to specific songs, bands and genres enabled music to evoke memories in soldiers. This allowed them to restore a degree of familiarity and security in their lives in the camps and on the border. Further, it provided them with the opportunity to establish a sense of continuity between their lives as soldiers on the one hand, and as men inhabiting the outside world on the other. In doing so, music provided many soldiers with a link between their two worlds where an exchange between semiotic networks – both musical and extra-musical – could be established. The ability of music to act in this manner was useful to the soldiers, as it changed the ways they engaged with their environment, and thus shifted their agencies. It further

assisted them in negotiating the efforts of the government to sell the war, and their experiences of the SADF and the border war.

This project is largely concerned with what music, as a cultural material, achieves in practice, and how it is capable of enabling and constraining its users within the contexts of their lives. In the context of the border war, I thought it important to interrogate what people did to music, and what music did to people, both in real time and as replayed in memory. The ways in which music was appropriated to suit the agendas and requirements of its users is central to the body of this work. The case studies that follow are intended to shed light not only on the ways in which music was used by the government, via the SABC and radio stations, to sell the war, and by the soldiers to survive it, but also on the ways in which music might be used by other expert systems and the people that operate within them. Music was a medium through which narratives of, and responses to, the border war were constructed. Studying the ways in which this was done allows for a rich understanding of the diverse and challenging ways in which people used music during the border war, both to sell it, and to survive it.

Chapter 2:

Selling the War

“Man is the only animal that deals in that atrocity of atrocities, War. He is the only one that gathers his brethren about him and goes forth in cold blood and calm pulse to exterminate his kind. He is the only animal that for sordid wages will march out and help to slaughter strangers of his own species who have done him no harm and with whom he has no quarrel... And in the intervals between campaigns he washes the blood off his hands and works for ‘the universal brotherhood of man’ - with his mouth.”

~ Mark Twain ~

Anthony Giddens' (1990) theory of trust and faith in expert systems throws into relief the fact that across time and cultures, aesthetic materials – including music – have been, and continue to be used, to inculcate trust. It is for this, and many other reasons, that the way people use music has become a major research concern for those in musicology, because the outcomes highlights human agency. Nevertheless, up until now, the ways in which music can be put to use has been a largely neglected area of study in the social sciences and humanities despite music's deeply-rooted presence in the daily lives of people. The reason for this neglect stems from a general lack of attention to the aesthetic dimension of human agency (DeNora 2000). The fact that music pervades shopping centres, airports, flights, advertisements, television programmes, movies and myriad other soundscapes of individuals and groups of people, implies that the power of music is felt, and to some extent acknowledged; however, due to the effects of its power being intangible and difficult to specify empirically, it does not enjoy official acknowledgement.

It is important to pause here for a moment to explain Giddens' theory introduced above. He states that an expert system must rely on a number of groups of people for it to function efficiently and consistently for a prolonged period. In addition, and in the interests of positive risk assessment on the part of those who use it, expert systems need to be portrayed as fully functional, trustworthy and safe, such that the chance of a malfunction occurring within the system appears to be highly unlikely. To fulfil the above criteria, these systems require firstly, what Giddens calls, "faceless" individuals who are specialists in their field, to design and establish the theory and principles upon which the execution of the system will be based. To illustrate this point, DeNora uses the example of air travel as an expert system in her book *Music in*

Everyday Life (2005: 9 – 10). In this case, the specialists would take the form of scientists who design aircrafts based on scientific theories and historical statistics, as well as the engineers who build them.

Secondly, the expert system requires a larger group of people who represent both the specialists and the system itself. These representatives do not necessarily need to fully grasp the theoretical and scientific jargon within which the system operates. Rather, their role is to serve as the “face” of the system rather than the intelligence behind it. In DeNora’s example, this group of people would take the form of smiling and welcoming cabin crew, the efficient ticket operators and security officers, and the firm but friendly (usually male) voice on the safety video played before take-off. These representatives act on behalf of the system, and the specialists who create it, as translators and buffers for the third group of people, but do not necessarily understand the science or mechanics of air travel.

The third group is made up of people within societies – the users of the expert system – in this case, passengers on flights who make use of the expert system on a daily basis. Users must be able to trust the expert system for it to carry out its purpose; however, they cannot under normal circumstances, understand fully the science and theory supporting the expert system. The expert system must garner the trust of the users such that they will make use of the system despite the fact that they are largely ignorant about how the system actually functions. Furthermore, users must trust the system to such an extent that, even when an element of risk is possible, they believe that the system is trustworthy and continue to use it.

The expert system must make use of external regulatory criteria (such as accredited standards bureaus in the case of DeNora's example of air travel), and employ security measures that, along with the representatives of the system, enhance its image of safety and unquestionable reliability and trustworthiness. In other words, by associating itself with, and gaining the approval of these external regulatory criteria, the expert system portrays itself as one that mostly does not fail. With constant affirmation of this information through words and actions, most people who make use of air travel will trust the system despite their lack of access to specialist jargon and scientific knowledge used in the design and execution of the system. They will conclude that a) the expert system meets the external regulatory criteria, and must therefore be safe and trustworthy, b) the science behind, and the implementation of, air travel mostly does not fail, and therefore, c) based on previous experience, the expert system will continue to function in this manner. For DeNora, it is the connection between 'most' experiences of the expert system and 'this' particular one that is crucial for the maintenance of trust: if the passenger's experience of 'this' flight is consistent with his or her perception of 'most' flights, he or she is likely to permanently trust all flights. For an expert system to consistently carry out its tasks efficiently, and reach its goals without hindrance, it must garner and sustain the trust of people over a prolonged period, with little or no negative incidents hampering the process.

No expert system is, however, entirely indestructible: planes crash, governments fail, nuclear power plants explode, stock exchanges collapse and people die in wars. In order to sustain trust in spite of possible failure, DeNora states that expert systems make use of aesthetic materials such as music to intensify their powers of persuasion

and ability to sustain trust. Although people do, for example, trust the safety of air travel in general (notwithstanding the fact that most passengers do not have access to the knowledge of how the plane lifts from the ground, do not know for sure that the technicians were entirely alert when performing security and mechanical checks prior to the aeroplane leaving the ground, and do not know whether the pilot is fully concentrating on what needs to be done in-flight), DeNora highlights that the possibility of failure (i.e. a mechanical problem discovered prior to take-off) could shift passengers' attitudes about the particular flight they are on from trust to doubt and fear. She therefore explores how music is employed as a technical device to manipulate the in-flight experience, such that passengers display 'preferred' forms of behaviour, such as order and obedience, despite the fact that the potential danger of air travel could create an atmosphere of confusion, panic and the ultimate breakdown of trust on the particular flight (2005: 11).

DeNora notes that in the case of a flight she was on, the in-flight experience was clearly broken up into two distinct episodes through the use of music. Episode one – boarding the plane – which in many cases can be an irritating and chaotic time for passengers, was underpinned by an ambient music video in which visual imagery of glaciers and lakes were accompanied by slow, low-pitched melodies and whale song. The muted blues, greens and greys, as well as the broad and soothing music worked alongside the confident, calm and cheerful cabin crew to avoid what could quite easily have become a chaotic and stressful experience for passengers. Once people settled into their allocated seats and the flight was ready for take-off, the music changed substantially to introduce episode two. A fanfare with authoritative trumpet heraldry and commanding brass accompanied the safety video. DeNora states here that the use

of trumpets and other brass as a key feature of the fanfare genre all contributed to the reliable, trustworthy, dependable, respectable, solid image of air travel. (ibid).

By using music in this manner to convey instructions about what to do in an emergency, the effects that the possibility of a “sudden loss of cabin pressure” might have on the psyche and confidence of the passengers aboard the aircraft are counteracted. Considering the fact that an aircraft plummeting out the sky means almost certain death for all of its passengers, the music plays an important role in tipping the scale of safety versus danger in the favour of the former. In other words, the nature of the music suggests that the system is in control and fully functional, and that the danger of air travel is minimal.

Music, and in the case of the second episode of the in-flight experience, the fanfare, is able to perform the function of enhancing and sustaining trust in the expert system of air travel effectively because over time the genre of the fanfare has enjoyed links, due to its historical and social use, to scenarios involving the military, royalty, victory and ceremony. Fanfares are written to announce the arrival of royalty, punctuate ostentatious events, and can be used to display superiority, knowledge, power and importance. As such, the fanfare, which over time has accrued specific meanings and inspired particular behaviours in its listeners, is used in the context of air travel to help passengers make sense of, or plug into, the ongoing circumstances. The airline relies on the associations passengers have made previously with the genre of fanfare so that they might associate the power, knowledge and superiority of the military and royalty – suggested by the use of fanfare – with the pilot and the cabin crew, and therefore, more broadly, trust the safety of the aircraft and the ability of the specialists of the

expert system to do their jobs impeccably. A further aim is for the passengers to take note of what is said in the safety video, and by the pilot and cabin crew, and consider it to be a matter of great import (DeNora 2000).

In episode two, music's role is twofold. Firstly, the airline draws on a public stock of knowledge and understanding associated with the genre and instrumentation of a fanfare. The use of the fanfare imparts an understanding of a scenario which, in many ways, is different to the original use for which it was intended, but which requires the same or similar behaviours and emotional responses from the passengers that they would display when hearing the fanfare in one of its initially intended contexts. The music therefore shapes, and to some extent restricts, the behaviour of the passengers so that the expert system of air travel can function properly. Secondly, because the music implies discipline and power associated with the military, importance associated with ostentatious occasions, and success associated with victory marches, by aligning itself with those perceptions the airline itself appears disciplined, powerful, important, successful, victorious, and ultimately trustworthy.

Giddens' theory is hinged upon the premise that expert systems make use of aesthetic devices in order to inculcate and subsequently magnify the trust of their users. DeNora expounds upon this theory by stating that experiences in the here-and-now can affect the users' perception of the expert system's reliability in general. She states that to avoid a loss of trust in the expert system, consistent reinforcement of the reliability and trustworthiness of the expert system needs to be carried out, and, to this end, music can be used. The prior associations and conventional formulations people

have made with the music are powerful tools which expert systems make use of in order to inculcate in their users a sense of trust.

The investigations done by Giddens and DeNora do not exhaust the ways music can be used by expert systems. This chapter takes a further look at the extent to which expert systems use music as an aesthetic device to inculcate trust in their users, thereby making them feel safe in their charge. When trust is established, and a feeling of safety is created, users display preferred modes of behaviour. This chapter will bring to light the fact that news bulletins (broadcast by Springbok Radio and the English Service of Radio South Africa), the *Ride Safe* advertisements, and radio music programmes (specifically *Forces Favourites* and *Springbok Rendezvous*) were shaped in particular ways, and used specific aesthetic devices, including music, to a) inculcate and sustain trust in the legitimacy of the war effort and the government's stance on communism and the war, and b) frame behavioural patterns and opinions in people, including soldiers (despite the here-and-now of fighting on the border and training in the camps).

The above points are ones which must be explored and documented; however, it would be misleading if this chapter were to portray people, including soldiers, as passive, malleable, accepting and unquestioning zombies, incapable of the ability to think independently by forming their own opinions about the legitimacy of apartheid's policies, the war effort, their involvement in it and the realities of being at war. A deeply interesting factor about this research project is the many grey zones that exist in a) the ways soldiers negotiated the tension which existed between external pressures applied by various expert systems within the government at the

time and their personal belief systems; b) the ways in which they interacted with one another within the camps and on the borders; c) the ways the notion of being a soldier was framed in society, how they interacted with it, and the degree to which they felt responsible for upholding it; and d) a number of other issues. In addition, for many soldiers, there was a point at which no matter how many times the communist threat was mentioned on the radio and by their superiors in the military; or how they were told they had to protect the country from complete annihilation; or how many times they heard about a soldier's heroism in the instrumental version of the song "The Longest Day" [track 1] as it played at the beginning of *Forces Favourites*; the physical and emotional exhaustion many felt, did, at some point, compromise the trust they had at in the legitimacy of the purpose of the war, and the government's stance on communism. Therefore, whilst it is accurate to say that in most cases Giddens' theory is valid, and that DeNora's expansion of it holds fast, it is also important to acknowledge that if the expert system can no longer prove with almost certainty that it is not flawed, and if it becomes clear that the chance of malfunction is far greater than initially implied or suggested, the users of the system will begin to doubt its reliability, and trust will therefore be lost. The extent to which this occurred is explored in chapter three.

What follows is an investigation into the extent to which news bulletins (broadcast specifically by the English Service of Radio South Africa and Springbok Radio¹), the *Ride Safe* advertisements, and radio music programmes (specifically *Forces Favourites* and *Springbok Rendezvous*) were used by the SABC (as an arm of the

¹ These radio stations were broadcast nationwide, and thus were available to soldiers in camps all over South Africa. In addition, if they had access to a long aerial and/or a hopper (which was the radio found in armoured vehicles used by the soldiers on active duty), these stations could be accessed in certain areas of the border.

South African government) in the interests of inculcating trust in their listeners, particularly the soldiers. There is a severe deficiency of information regarding the social role that radio played in South Africa during the era of apartheid. This chapter, and research project in general, aims to unpack the social role of radio during the war years; however, further research by those in the field of popular music studies, and indeed the broader social sciences, must be conducted to yield a deep and meaningful understanding of the social history of radio in South Africa. This is imperative and long overdue. Despite a lack of information in this area, there is a plethora of information that deals with the laws of the apartheid government, and the degree to which they affected the lives of South Africans. Through careful consideration of the implications of these laws, a meaningful understanding of the role of radio in the lives people, particularly soldiers conscripted into the SADF during the border war, was made possible.

During the time of apartheid, public broadcasting was owned by the SABC, and, being a government institution, the corporation was biased in favour of the government. The content of what was publicly broadcast via the radio (and later, television) was thus severely restricted for the purposes of controlling and framing public knowledge. In the interests of separate development, separate radio stations catered for the different classified groups within the population, broadly named at whites and non-whites. No radio station could play music recorded and/or performed by a multiracial band; neither could it broadcast any material which contained communist rhetoric, or which could negatively impact the state, its ideologies, or its actions. Naturally, the terms upon which such laws were based were loosely defined, providing the state and the SABC with much room to censure or even ban material

which they deemed inappropriate for listeners. For the purposes of this chapter, only Springbok Radio and the English Service of Radio South Africa will be considered.

According to almost all the ex-soldiers who were interviewed for this project, radio played a vital role in the lives of those on the border and in the camps, as well as the lives of families, friends and partners who were left behind when men were called up for their national service. It aimed to, and did, serve as a link between the soldiers and their loved ones. It became clear through analysing numerous news bulletins, as well as the *Ride Safe* advertisements, and various radio music programmes, that radio did not aim to play an overtly challenging role in society; rather, it sought to provide a measure of entertainment and relaxation to its listeners. There were several radio music programmes which were developed specifically with the soldiers in the camps and on the border in mind, and in the interests of connecting them with home and the outside world. Despite the general upbeat nature of many of the programmes, listening to these programmes – some of them – 30 years later, highlights the numerous seemingly unofficial, or sometimes, brazen attempts at steering white public attitude in a very specific direction.

The information gleaned from personal communications conducted with ex-soldiers, as well as other sources, has brought to the fore the importance of considering that the prohibitive regime of the apartheid government (the expert system) and its policies dramatically influenced the SABC in its appointment of radio boards, programmers and producers (the “faceless” specialists), as well as presenters (the “face” or representative of the expert system) to steer, rather than force, the content and style (the aesthetic devices) of broadcasting. The result was that specific audio contexts

could be created whereby listeners not only heard the music and the programmes, but processed them in specific ways.

Although it would be easier to simply study and comment on the musical play lists from various radio music programmes, a far richer debate arises when a contextual analysis of other content of some radio stations is conducted. It is for this reason then that not only radio music programmes, but some radio news bulletins, as well as the *Ride Safe* advertisements broadcast at the time of the border war, will be explored in this chapter. Their relevance adds nuance to how and why the radio music programmes were received by soldiers in a number of specific ways.

On 20 July 1969, the English Service of Radio South Africa and Springbok Radio broadcast a number of news bulletins regarding the Apollo 11 mission to the moon. Studying these help provide an understanding of the specific contexts some radio stations appeared to create through which their listeners would hear music. Before studying the verbal content of the extracts that formed part of a plethora of coverage on the Apollo 11 mission's achievements, it is interesting to note that a military march [track 2] is used as an aesthetic device to introduce and conclude the English Service of Radio South Africa's bulletin.

Marches are written for military bands. Soldiers playing in them are usually fully trained infantrymen, as well as musicians. (Certainly, in the case of the SADF, all members of the band had to complete the three-month basic training programme as infantrymen before they joined the band.) The music written for these types of bands is generally played for entertainment purposes at ceremonies and processions, as well

as drill and martial events, and during these events bands are required to perform military field music, national anthems and patriotic songs in the interests of supporting the morale of the soldiers. Stationary or moving straight-line formations were generally used during performance.

During the 16th century, it was found that if marches were performed at multiples of normal heartbeat, the music could have a hypnotic effect on the marching soldiers and bring them into a trance-like state. The music genre of the march was subsequently employed throughout the 16th and 17th centuries as a tool for leading soldiers in closed ranks against enemy fire during the wars of that time (*Military Music*, Wikipedia, 2009, accessed 19 November 2009, [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/March_\(music\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/March_(music))). In light of such procedure, it would be accurate to say that military bands have been used over time to enhance the commitment of the soldier. Although, due to the nature of the border war, which was largely a war of insurgency, the military bands were not used during combat, they were certainly used during processions, ceremonies and official awards presentations; some of these were open functions where parents, friends and girlfriends could attend. An ex-soldier, who preferred to remain anonymous, mentioned during a personal communication the role that military marches played at a public martial event in which he was required to participate:

Anonymous: Mom and Dad were there. We were all marching in full uniform. Chests out (laughs). We marched past all the civilians to the music. It felt good. The music kind of made it better, you know? It made me proud. No matter what I'd been through, I could be proud of my achievements in the army. [The civilians] would never know about that. We were told to keep it quiet on Civvies

Street. But the music, it was there, you know? It really did it for me. (pers. comm., 17 June, 2008)

The interviewee is uncommonly aware of the effects the music had on his emotional state on the day he mentions. He is candid about the way that the music the band played made him feel good. It made him feel proud to be a soldier and of what he had achieved in that role, despite what he had experienced during his national service. He says that “the music...really did it for me”: whilst he marched past the civilians, including his mother and father, the music enhanced his sense in pride of being a soldier, and his nationalistic commitment to the army, and therefore, by association, to the state.

The kind of music this anonymous interviewee would have heard from the military band at the martial event would have had a strong, regular rhythm with a steady, percussive beat. The speed at which most military marches are played is approximately 120 beats per minute. The form of a march is made up of a number of strains or sections which are usually repeated, and are either 16 or 32 bars in length. Marches do not generally make use of the full range of the instruments playing them: generally the pitch range remains within the octave. Interpretive characteristics such as variations in tempi (through the use of *rubato* and *accelerando*) and dynamics are not generally employed. For the purposes of marching, it is important that the music remains steady within the beat, and therefore there is logistically very little room for such musical expression.

The association of the genre of the march with the military shapes the ways in which people make meaning from the music. The military is known for its ideals of

discipline, bravery and power. The degree of command placed in the hands of those who control the army is of colossal proportion, where orders might be given which affect the lives of thousands of people. Furthermore, the official nature of behaviour and dress in the army lends itself to a formal perception of the military. These associations affect the way people perceive the music: where formality of rhythm and form is required for ordered and symmetrical marching, the rigidity of these musical aspects is linked by listeners, not to the musical requirements of a number of men marching in formation, but rather to the characteristics of the army. Therefore, when a march is heard, these meanings are conjured up in the minds of many listeners. Historically and socially therefore, the march has strong links to the military and the ideals it represents.

In light of this information, the genre of the musical excerpt used for the news bulletin of the English Service of Radio South Africa lends an air of formality, power, knowledge and discipline to the broadcast before its contents are even heard by the listener. The excerpt displays all the characteristics of the march: the trumpets and trombones carry the melody, whilst the piccolo plays it two octaves higher; percussion punctuates the endings of phrases and the strong beats of the bar; a very rigid beat and steady rhythm frames the entire excerpt; and all of it is played at a *forte* dynamic. Upon hearing this excerpt, listeners will associate qualities of the military with those of the news bulletin.

Further, an exploration of the news content must be conducted. The English Service of Radio South Africa and Springbok Radio news bulletins tell of the achievements of the mission, as well as the potential marring of the West's celebrations due to a

Russian space programme which launched a craft, named Lunar 15, to the moon at the same time as the Apollo 11 mission. The aims of the Russian programme and the Russian government, due to their association with the communism, were seen to be ulterior and clandestine, and were therefore viewed with suspicion by the stations' news bulletins.

As the astronauts prepared to leave the moon, the British Jodrell Bank Observatory announced that the mystery Russian moon ship, Lunar 15, had landed 500 miles away from The Eagle. The director of Jodrell Bank, Sir Bernard Lovell, was asked an hour ago what he thought the Russians were up to: "I should guess that this was what they hoped they were doing, but the signal ceased at 4:50 this evening and [the Russians] have not yet returned [...]" [...] (News broadcast. 1969. English Service of Radio South Africa. Monday 21 July.) [track 3]

And:

Ever since Lunar 15 began its mysterious mission on Sunday, space experts have forecast that it would land briefly, scoop up a sample of lunar soil and return with it to Earth in an effort to steal the Apollo 11 mission's limelight. [...] Russian news media have not given the event great prominence and the Voice of America commentary on the moon walk beamed to the Soviet Union was jammed after a few moments by a cultural talk broadcast on the same wavelength. Communist China has completely ignored the epic moon landing events, otherwise watched closely by an estimated 600 million television viewers all over the world. About 700 million Chinese still do not know today that a dream as old as man has been realized. Western observers in Peking said the Chinese people would hardly understand the immense consequences of the first moon landing even if they were informed about it. [...] (News broadcast. 1969. Springbok Radio. Monday 21 July.) [track 4]

Note how, in both of these extracts, a number of similar dynamics come into play which work in favour of building trust in the expert system. It is important to bear in mind that the music used to introduce the bulletin has already contextualised the broadcast. The aesthetic device of the male voices that deliver both the bulletins

contributes to the perception of the reports being objective and factual. The male voices play a role in creating and circulating a gender-based stereotype of male domination, and a gendered metaphor of the “strict father” or “alpha male”, where the male voice is perceived as one of power, reason and the conservative disciplinarian ruling according to one set of rules to which society must adhere (Lakoff 1996). Trustworthiness, gravity and significance of the content are implied by the maleness of the voice (McClary 1991; Whiteley 1997). Due to the authoritarian perception of the male voice, there is very little room provided for the listener to question the validity of the content. He or she will, due to historical and social constructions and projections of what it means to be male, assume that there is no possibility that the details of the reports could be incorrect. To challenge the details would be breaking the rules and incomprehensible, and must therefore not be done. The legitimacy of the news broadcasts rely on the premise that the male voice will not be challenged, will be taken seriously, that it is trusted, and therefore taken to embody the truth.

A further aesthetic device used is the tone of voice in which both the extracts from the bulletins are delivered. The news readers both adopt an accent which is geographically specific to Britain. Their voices are low and commanding. The confidence and precision with which the bulletins are delivered provides very little room for questioning. The information is delivered calmly and in a knowledgeable fashion which gives the illusion that the readers, and the content of the bulletins, are objective. In the English Service’s bulletin, the director of Jodrell Bank Observatory further assists in enhancing the general tone of the bulletin. Sir Bernard Lovell’s tone, although serious, has condescending undercurrents with regard to the communist countries of Russia and China. He does not display any trace of being

threatened by the Russian mission, despite the fact that he is uncertain of its objectives, or indeed where it is. Further, he adopts a disparaging and disdainful attitude similar to that of an aloof father reprimanding his mischievous son regarding the inconvenience (rather than the threat) the Russian space programme poses to that of the United States. The tail end of the English Service's bulletin refers to the "mystery Russian moon ship" as being something of which to be suspicious, whilst the ignorance of the Chinese people is brushed off in the Springbok Radio bulletin in a manner which suggests a general lack of concern, albeit a slight irritation, with their assumed inability to grasp the significance of landing a man on the moon.

In light of South Africa's policies regarding the suppression of communism, the stance of the news bulletins, and therefore by association, the radio stations, as well as the SABC and government is clear. Portrayals of communism, and countries who subscribed to that system of governance (in this case, China and Russia), are constructed here through the careful use of vocabulary. The bulletins imply that Russia, their space missions, and communism by association, are something clandestine, sneaky, and something to be viewed with suspicion, fear and doubt. Phrases such as "the mystery Russian moon ship", "what the Russians were up to", "mysterious mission" and "steal the Apollo 11 mission's limelight" all contribute to a perception of Russians and communists in general as being immoral, secretive, deceptive, surreptitious and underhanded people who would like to see the Western world fail and their own countries prosper. The Russian space mission is shrouded in intrigue and obscurity, and thus communism, by association, is cloaked in the same manner. Furthermore, the communist Chinese are portrayed as being ignorant and, in a way, laughable, because they are thought not to recognise the significance of the

first landing of a man on the moon. Phrases such as “700 million Chinese do not know today that a dream as old as man has been realised”, and “Western observers in Peking said the Chinese people would hardly understand the immense consequences of the first moon landing even if they were informed about it” further participate in framing a conservative worldview in which the Chinese and communists in general could be perceived by those listening to the news.

These kinds of news broadcasts, and the music used to introduce and conclude them, were important for the state because they played the role of aesthetic devices used to inculcate trust, and added fuel to the government driven, anti-communist fire. As mentioned in chapter one, the Suppression of Communism Act of 1950 had seen most members of anti-apartheid movements and agitators labelled as communists by the 1960s, regardless of the fact that the charge had little to do with communism as it is commonly known. Furthermore, liberation movements across southern Africa were tarred with the same brush. The fear of the apartheid government was that, once the communists had crossed South African borders and infiltrated the communities, these movements would spread the radical notions of revolution like a disease, and would eventually bring about the downfall of apartheid and white minority rule. It was for this reason that the government wanted to block the tide of these movements by maintaining control of the border between Angola and the then South West Africa, instilling a fear of communism in the hearts of white South Africans, and inculcating and maintaining their trust in the apartheid system and the legitimacy of the border war. These bulletins highlight that in order for the government (as the expert system) to instil and maintain trust in white South Africans that the cause of the war was legitimate, and that the threat of communism was real, it had to instil a deep fear of,

and hatred for, communism and all southern African liberation movements. Aesthetic devices were certainly useful in this regard.

Such news bulletins, juxtaposed against military march music, deeply influenced the ways in which listeners perceived communism, the South African government's policies in reaction to it, and, by association, the state's employment of apartheid policies and its involvement in the border war. A crucial point which must be made is that the excerpt of music used to introduce and conclude the news bulletins on the English Service of Radio South Africa was written in the genre of the military march, and vital in framing the news as official and something of which to take note. In order to understand the effects such music would have had on the listener, as well as the possible impact the content of the news bulletin would have had on the listener due to music's use, it is important to explore how such music would already have been contextualised, as well as the process through which meaning would have been made prior to hearing the excerpt introducing the news bulletins of the English Service of Radio South Africa.

In summary then, Giddens' theory of trust in expert systems, and DeNora's expansion thereof, is very helpful in understanding how the government of South Africa maintained the trust of its white population for such a prolonged period. As the expert system, the government needed "faceless" specialists (embodied by the SABC) to ensure that the radio stations adhered to the laws of the state and supported its ideologies of separate development and anti-communism. The SABC, as an arm of the government, appointed experts in programming, broadcasting and censorship, who chose what could and could not be broadcast to the listeners. Further, it

employed representatives of the system and the radio stations, who would serve as the “face” of the expert system. These people were the presenters whose voices the listeners would hear. The presenter’s job was to develop a relationship with his or her listening public. In other words, the role of the presenter was to embody the notion of a friend and advisor to each listener, such that the listener began to trust the presenter as if he or she knew the presenter personally. Presenters had to adopt a conservative, trustworthy, dependable and respectable image, to which the listener would look for advice, information, comfort, entertainment and relaxation.

Aesthetic devices were employed to further enhance the image of the presenters, and by association, the radio station, SABC and government. Gendered voices, tones of voice, clever use of vocabulary to frame perceptions of communism and those who subscribed to it, and a military march to introduce and conclude the news, all contributed to inculcating trust in the ideologies of apartheid and the legitimacy of the war. Further, these devices perpetuated and circulated gendered, social, political and economic stereotypes and world views, and did not develop by chance; rather, they were strategic and necessary for inculcating trust in the white population.

A series of advertisements which were prevalent on Springbok Radio over the course of the border war were the *Ride Safe* commercials. Below is a transcription of such an advertisement [track 5]:

Hello there! I’m Esme Euvrard, and I’d like to talk to you about something very close to my heart: *Ride Safe*. Every weekend, thousands of servicemen try to get home. They can’t hitch, and they can’t afford to fly. Many will spend most of their precious weekend on the road unless you give them a lift. Those boys are keeping you safe in your home. Is it asking too much to ask you to give them a safe ride to theirs? Please

pick up when you see the *Ride Safe* sign, and help
Johnny come marching home. (*Ride Safe* Commercial.
Springbok Radio 1977)

Once again, with the government playing the role of expert system, the music used to introduce and conclude the commercial, the person presenting the *Ride Safe* commercial and the choice of vocabulary, are all used as aesthetic devices to inculcate trust. When juxtaposed against other programmes and information broadcast by Springbok Radio (such as the news bulletin discussed above), one can begin to appreciate the numerous aesthetic devices with which listeners were bombarded in order to inculcate and maintain trust in the expert system of government and its ideologies and policies.

The advertisement is introduced and concluded by a song written in the style of a military march called “When Johnny Comes Marching Home”. It was written in circa 1863 by Patrick Sarsfield Gilmore who was a band leader and composer and served in the Union Army during the American Civil War. He wrote the lyrics to the song, but there is lack of clarity as to whether he borrowed the tune from the Irish anti-war folk song “Johnny I Hardly Knew Ye”, or wrote it himself. Nevertheless, it is a well-known composition, and one which, due to the use of the march genre, has similar implications for the advertisement in question, to those pertaining to the news bulletin of the English Service of Radio South Africa. As explained previously, the use of the march inspires and enhances nationalistic feelings of commitment and pride, boosts morale and lends an air of formality to the context in which it is used. Although the lyrics of the song are not included in the introduction, the employment of the military march for eight seconds before Euvrard’s speech begins sets a context which dips into a stock of public knowledge regarding links between the march genre

and the military. By association, specific implications, such as bravery, obedience, knowledge, discipline and pride, are conjured up about what it means to be a soldier. The spoken word which is then heard as the music gradually fades out, ties in closely with the context already created by the music in the introduction. The conclusion of the advertisement is the only section where the lyrics are used alongside the music. As the music swells in volume, high soprano voices enter, supported by forceful brass and percussion, and sing the words “and we’ll all be glad when Johnny comes marching home”. The ending of the advertisement is aggressive and powerful: the music ends abruptly and persuasively, such that it would be expected by Springbok Radio that listeners will feel suddenly very patriotic and eager to help the soldiers where they can.

The voice in the advertisement belongs to Esmé Euvrard, who was a very popular presenter on Springbok Radio. She was especially well-liked by the troops as she presented a music programme dedicated to them called *Force’s Favourites*. The programme involved reading out messages from loved ones to soldiers on the border and in the camps, as well as playing requested songs. She also frequently visited the border to boost the morale of the soldiers. It is for this reason that they, and other listeners, affectionately referred to her as *Tannie Esmé*². Euvrard enjoyed a lengthy career as a radio presenter on L.M. Radio, and later, Springbok Radio and was a household name for many white South Africans. The sound of her voice was certainly no foreign one. It was a voice most white people who listened to either one of those stations would have immediately recognised as someone with whom they were familiar, or felt they knew. Her greeting in the advertisement is colloquial: one

² Aunty Esmé

which one might offer somebody one knew personally. By greeting the listener with “hello there”, he or she will immediately feel personally addressed by someone who cares about them, and knows them well. The point is that Euvrard has drawn the attention of the listener, and immediately made her or him feel important with the personal, familiar greeting.

Further, she continues with the advertisement by stating that this subject is “very close to my heart”. First, the listener is drawn in by the familiar greeting by a person with whom they feel comfortable, and then she speaks of something which holds significance for her. The intention is for the listener to develop a similar attitude toward what she is about to speak of. In addition, the curiosity of the listener is stimulated, and he or she is further drawn in, as Euvrard has not yet revealed what is close to her heart or what the advertisement is about.

Throughout, Euvrard appeals to the good nature of the listener. The soldiers are depicted as men who have one desire: to get home for the weekend so that they can see their families. It is suggested that, despite the fact that they only have two days to get home, spend time with their families, and return to camp, they are willing to spend a lengthy period on the road for the pleasure of just a few hours of time with their families. The image produced is one of a soldier who is a family man, a hero and a hard worker who is willing to work for little money to defend his country and family. One could say that the listener is manipulated into thinking that without the protection of these men, she or he would not be safe. In short, the listener is told that if he or she gives the soldiers a safe ride home or back to camp, the soldier will be able to see his family, recuperate, and return to their posts ready to defend the country

and keep it safe. Precisely whom the soldiers are protecting the listener from is not clear in this advertisement specifically; however, it is important to bear in mind that this advertisement would have been heard in a broader anti-communist, pro-government context specifically designed and nurtured by the station programmers, producers, on behalf of the SABC and the government. Therefore, the assumption will be made by the listener that there is a reason why they need to be kept safe, and that there are people ‘out there’ who pose a threat to their safety.

Once again, Giddens’ theory of expert systems, and DeNora’s expansion thereof, plays a vital role in developing an understanding of how the government ruled the country and fought the border war. The representative of the system – in this case, Euvrard – is a trusted one due to a number of years’ relationship with the listeners. Her position in many households was one of familiarity, and as such, she held the trust of many. In this case, she speaks on behalf of travelling soldiers all over the country by creating awareness in listeners of their plight. It stands to reason then, that the platform which she enjoyed as a figure that much of the white listening public trusted played an integral role in motivating them to help the soldiers, purely because they believed what she said to be the truth.

Music, used as an aesthetic device here, is important in assisting this process as it helped the listener plug into, or make sense of, the ongoing circumstances. As mentioned previously, the white minority was continually informed through mass media of the looming communist threat, and what the implications thereof meant for them as individuals and families. Communism was portrayed as a personal problem for each white person and family, rather than a problem that stopped at government

level. For this reason, many whites lived in fear of communists (as defined loosely by the apartheid government and its laws) who were reportedly trying to infiltrate South Africa and cause the downfall of white minority rule. By stating emphatically that the soldiers keep “you” safe in “your” home, and highlighting the bravery of the military through music written in the march genre, the advertisement brings the communist issue to the fore once again by portraying it as a very real, very personal threat. Music helps the listeners tap into the ongoing circumstances by juxtaposing the soldiers against the communists. The associations already attributed to the march and its links to the military are exploited here by applying it to this particular context. Listeners would be likely to take note of the message of the advertisement because the march sets up a hierarchy, where the voice of Euvrard (and by association, the station, the SABC and the government), is in a position of power, and the listener, because he or she trusts the person the voice represents, will obey it. In this way, the music, used as an aesthetic device by the expert system, helps to bring about desired patterns of behaviour: by appealing for assistance on their behalf, Springbok Radio and the government expected the listener to graciously and enthusiastically acquiesce their request.

The final aspect of radio broadcasting that must be discussed here is the use of music as an aesthetic device in the music-and-dedication programmes broadcast via SABC. In order to illustrate how Giddens’ theory is useful in analysing the material, *Forces Favourites* and *Springbok Rendezvous* – music-and-dedication programmes broadcast by the English Service and Springbok Radio respectively – will be considered. These programmes were broadcast in the interests of connecting soldiers in the camps and on the border with their loved ones at home. Once again, a contextual framework

needs to be built such that a broader understanding of the social and emotional milieu in which the soldiers found themselves can be achieved. To do this, two excerpts from Thompson's *An Unpopular War: From Afkak to Bosbefok* (2006) will be used. The information upon which this book is based was collected by means of personal communications with several ex-servicemen who were conscripted into the SADF during the border war. In the chapter that deals with propaganda and subversion, two men are quoted as saying the following:

Chris: Part of our re-training was a deeper level of indoctrination. I remember being shown two pictures. The first was of a beautiful African woman in tribal dress. At 17 years old and in an all-male environment, any bare breasts were enough to make you fall in love. The second photograph was of the same woman, except now she had no breasts – just two bloody cavities and her face grimaced in pain. The horror was nauseating. Of course, 'they' – the enemy – had done this to her. It was our duty to make sure this didn't and couldn't happen again, and it was our duty to make sure the enemy did not get to Johannesburg to do the same thing to our girlfriends and mothers. (p. 63)

Stof: Two Com Ops³ officers were attached to a company, and they had two slots a week to put across the political message of the day. It was meant to be Communications, but it was really just political indoctrination. They talked to us about the Red Threat – die Rooi Gevaar – gave history lessons on Communism in Angola, and told us how Africa was falling apart and what the threat was to South Africa. It was to justify why we were in the army. [...] They used the TV to show us footage of trouble in the townships, necklacings and that sort of thing. They told us it was not the SADF doing those terrible things, it was the township people themselves doing it to one another: Xhosa versus Zulus and hostel dwellers versus the township residents. We saw quite a lot of

³ Communications Operations

videos justifying why the SADF presence was required in the townships. (p. 63 – 4)

The above quotations illustrate clearly and concisely the level of indoctrination that was aimed at the soldiers on a daily basis whilst they were in the SADF. Shock tactics were often used as aesthetic devices to instil beliefs in the soldiers that the role the SADF was essential for order to reign. Propagandist messages aimed at the soldiers always entailed hypothetical notions of South Africa at the hands of evil communists. Hearing and seeing such things increased the determination and urgency with which the soldiers wished to prevent the possibility thereof. The threat of what the government termed as communism, and possible civil war amongst the black people of South Africa, was constantly hurled at the soldiers, such that many eventually believed wholeheartedly that the threats were real, and their role as soldiers was vital to the survival of their families, country and state. Andrew, in his book *Buried in the Sky* (2001), documents a scenario on the border where, as a soldier, he questioned the value of the presence of the SADF in Ovamboland⁴ to a fellow soldier, whose response was quick and apocalyptic:

“Are you fucken mad? Are you going to wait until you are standing with your back to South Beach before you realise that the communists plan to take over your country? This is the thin edge of the wedge, pally⁵. If we lose the war up here, we’ll be overrun. The blacks will take over... and that will be that.” (p. 73)

The SADF and the government placed a substantial burden squarely on the shoulders of many soldiers. As mentioned previously, mass media as well as other institutions, including the army, portrayed the enemies of South Africa as personally threatening

⁴ The area of land encompassing the whole of northern Namibia.

⁵ Buddy.

to each individual and family. Soldiers were constantly informed that it was their duty to obstruct the infiltration of the 'communists' into South Africa, and maintain white minority rule. The possibility of a breakdown of this rule necessarily meant that the safety of each soldier's family would be compromised. This, in conjunction with how the notion of the heroic, brave, disciplined and dependable soldier had long been established in society, assisted the government in its efforts to create a committed army of men, whose inspiration and single-mindedness of protecting his country would not be compromised. Naturally there were some men who recognised the indoctrination for what it was, and thus did not buy into the ideologies and policies of the government; however, many ex-servicemen who were interviewed for this project expressed shock at how deeply they had been entrenched in the system and its ideologies.

Here, the application of Giddens' theory to this scenario is more complex. The reality of war is that there is always a risk of substantial loss of life on both sides of the battlefield. For many soldiers, as the risk of death changed from a possibility to a reality, it became even more important than it had been, for the government to make drastic use of aesthetic devices to sustain trust. What follows below will suggest that because in times of war the risk of loss of life becomes a glaring reality, trust in the expert system can, and does, weaken. It is important, in the case of the border war, to explore the extent to which a) the government and the SABC used aesthetic devices to sustain trust despite the risk; b) what these devices were, and c) the extent to which this was successful, bearing in mind the possibility that when the circumstances become entirely unsafe, no aesthetic device has the ability to sustain trust.

As stated previously in this chapter, radio stations aimed at whites in South Africa during the war years did not aim to play a challenging role in society. Their purpose was to provide a diversion to their listeners, where light entertainment, carefully selected information, and music could be accessed. The government had a particular agenda based on separate development where race, communism and the war were contextualised and framed by the “faceless” specialists of the programming boards and producers, the “faces” or representatives of the expert system, and the aesthetic materials such as music, vocabulary, tone of voice, and gender. Thus, the SABC, as an arm of the government, ensured that the government’s agenda was put into action by what was played via radio stations countrywide. In a personal communication with Dave Marks, a prominent KwaZulu-Natal musician and archivist, it came to light that the government itself did not ban or censor a great deal of music during the border war. Naturally, there were some musicians and recordings which the government banned or censored, but on the whole, the SABC, in the interests of government policy, was tasked with the responsibility of strategically appointing programming boards that would decide what was acceptable, in accordance with the policies of apartheid, for radio stations to broadcast. Dave states:

The government did claim that certain music was a communist plot or the devil’s music, and that the musicians were just Rock ’n’ Roll, long-haired communists and agitators. It instilled fear in listeners. So they [the government] employed the right people for the job. The people in charge were just as corrupt as them. Programmers and producers like Thunis Esterhuizen on *Radio Sonder Grense*⁶, Wouter de Wet – they were the censors. [...] Guys would get their jobs because they knew they’d do the job. There was no need to gazette or censor the records. The way the SABC influenced people – we [as musicians who submitted records to the programmers for consideration to be played on the radio] ended up self-censoring.

⁶ Meaning ‘Radio Without Borders’

Censoring was an easy way to stop the music from being played, but the irony is that we did it ourselves. Radio 5 banned the Police and the Rolling Stones because the head of Radio 5 said the name of the band was disrespectful to the police and that the Rolling Stones were a bunch of thugs. (pers. comm., 14 May, 2009)

And much later in the personal communication Dave goes on to speak further about why certain music was simply not played, rather than censored, by the programming boards:

They believed they were protecting them [the listeners] for their own good. Programmers weren't being mean because they were freaks. [...] Music was a threat to the state. It told stories that South Africa shouldn't hear. Music would cause a revolution. They were genuinely scared that people would turn. So that's why they had this internal censoring by the SABC. Tracks would be scratched so that they wouldn't accidentally get played. They would have board meetings and decide what would be allowed to be played. (ibid).

In light of this information, it is clear that the SABC, on behalf of the expert system of the government, employed specialists who would decide what was appropriate material to be played on radio, and what was not. These decisions were portrayed as being made in the best interests of the listeners. In actual fact, the decisions were made to strengthen the position of the government, and in the interests of not destabilising the trust of listeners, which these specialists assumed would have been the case had listeners been exposed to music and bands that were “disrespectful to the police” and “a bunch of thugs” for example.

The aims and actions of the government and the SABC, which came to fruition in broadcasts such as *Forces Favourites* on the English Service, and *Springbok Rendezvous* on Springbok Radio, can be unpacked by using Giddens' theory once more. These programmes were hosted by Patricia Kerr and Esmé Euvrard

respectively, and had a large listenership amongst the soldiers. Chapter three explores soldiers' responses to these and other discourses in music; however this section of chapter two brings to light what was broadcast to them, and what the possible intentions thereof were.

Consider the following extract from *Forces Favourites* in 1985:

To rifleman Johan 'Klippie' van der Merwe of the No. 1 Parachute Battalion somewhere on the border. Hope you're fine. Missing you stacks. Keeping the beers on ice for your return. Only forty days to go now. Enjoy your forty-day celebrations. Love you forever. Please write. *Vasbyt. Mindae.*⁷ Your girlfriend that adores you, Chantelle. To corporal Adri 'P.J.' Koppel from the first Transvaal Scottish Regiment somewhere on the border. Happy birthday for the 17th October. Lots of love, tons of kisses, hoping and praying for your safe return. Miss you *stukkend*.⁸ Look after yourself. *Vasbyt. Mindae.* Your gorgeous fiancé, Michelle. To second Lieutenant José 'Maluco' Ferreira of 52nd Battalion somewhere on the border. We now have a beautiful baby girl who I gave birth to today. Have named her Nikita after the song by Elton John that you like so much. I can't wait for your return. Miss you lots. *Vasbyt. Mindae.* All my love and God bless, your ever-loving wife, Angela. You're tuned to *Forces Favourites* on the English Service. This is Pat Kerr with all your dedications. Stand at ease. *Staan en rus.* The time is now quarter past five. And by special request, here is Elton John with his latest song "Nikita", followed by "Forty Days" by Cliff Richard. Enjoy! (Fernandes, T. 2004. *Forty Days*. Unpublished manuscript.)

The interest of both *Forces Favourites* and *Springbok Rendezvous*, amongst others, was to develop an understanding of the tastes of the people who listened to the programmes. Kerr stated, when asked in 1971 to compile a list of the popular songs requested on *Forces Favourites* on behalf of Brigadier Records, that

⁷ Hold on. Not long to go.

⁸ Meaning 'broken' in Afrikaans. In this context it would mean 'miss you madly'.

...the top tune has always been 'Soldier Boy'. [...] Ricky Nelson's hit of some years back, 'I Need You', has also had a very good innings, and so has the Flames recording of 'For Your Precious Love'. Once the Bee Gees came on the record scene, so many of their lovely songs were requested, that it hasn't been easy to pinpoint the most popular, but I think that 'Don't Forget to Remember' must take pride place over 'Gotta get a message to you'. (Louw 2003)

The point that this quotation seeks to make in this context is that the dedication programmes broadcast by the English Service and Springbok Radio, amongst others, only played well-known, popular songs that featured on the hit parades of the day. Naturally, due to the time that lapsed from the beginning to the end of the border war, which was in total 23 years, the songs that were played changed greatly over time as the pop charts changed. The only constant was that the songs were always popular ones, and therefore appealed to a large cross section of the SADF's population. According to Gilbert (2005), music can be used by people to restore a sense of familiarity (dealt with further in chapter three), and as such can assist in creating a space where memories and experiences can be relived alongside the music. If this is the case, as Gilbert suggests, then it is likely that music-and-dedication programmes were structured by the station and the SABC with this in mind, such that, when hearing music that was familiar, rather than challenging or unfamiliar, the soldiers could experience a 'spatial shift', where they were transported from the difficulties of daily life in the camps and on the border, to a familiar space. This state of mind into which the soldiers could move was a positive one, and consequently benefited the army, and by association, the government, as it made the soldiers' circumstances more assimilable and easier to bear. Resistance towards the daily experiences of national service would be minimised such that the government had access to a committed and obedient army. Thus the watchful eye of the programming boards

and producers of the radio broadcasts, and the careful use of aesthetic devices such as music and dedications, helped facilitate a more obedient and committed army. The music served as a distraction from daily life, and provided a familiar spacial setting for the soldiers. New experiences confronted in the public realm were minimised and soldiers could stay focussed on the task at hand.

In conjunction with the dedication messages which were sent from listeners to the radio stations, the presenters often addressed the soldiers both directly and indirectly. National servicemen were commonly referred to on Springbok Radio and the English Service as “our boys on the border”. Referring to the soldiers as “ours”, and using the term “boys” instead of “men”, created a relationship between the radio stations and the soldiers which resembled that of a mother and son. Although the term “boys” could have been demeaning to the soldiers by denying them the acknowledgement of being men, in this case the meaning was more of a maternal one, where the station, and by association, the government, was portrayed as being a caring one: it remembered the men, and thus gave the soldiers a measure of importance and affirmation for being brave and heroic. Creating the impression that, although the soldiers were far from home, they were not forgotten, aimed at boosting morale because it showed that the soldiers’ loyalty was repaid by that of the station, the government, and of course, the listeners.

As mentioned, the songs that were commonly requested were usually those that were popular on the hit parades at the time. Very little music from South Africa was played on the radio, and so the hit parades followed closely those from the United States and the United Kingdom. The lyrics of popular music often dealt with the

theme of love, and what it meant to love someone: the difficulties, the joys and the sadness of missing or losing someone. Many interviewees said they thought songs which spoke of such things expressed the sentiments of the listeners who sent dedications, but also spoke to those soldiers who received them. Songs that dealt with being loyal and staying faithful were also requested frequently, and songs whose lyrics dealt with the bonds of friendship were endlessly popular.

Although the songs were chiefly requested on the basis of the message carried by the lyrics, it is important not to underestimate the influence of the music supporting the lyrics. The genre of music requested was consistent with the kinds of genres with which the soldiers would have interacted in the outside world, prior to conscription, i.e. pop and rock 'n' roll. The musical lines would have been laden with meaning and would have, alongside the lyrics, evoked memories and emotions linked to spatial and experiential specificity. To demonstrate how the music may have been meaningful in this context, and therefore used as an effective aesthetic device, a brief analysis of the music of "For Your Precious Love" (2007) [track 6] will be given.

The introduction of the song is characterised by an arpeggiated *ostinato* line in the guitar. This is continued throughout the song and evokes a mournful or sombre atmosphere. The chord progression used throughout this piece is the common I – iv – IV – V, which alongside the stubborn *ostinato* certainly lends a subdued atmosphere to this song in particular. The spoken voice over the music is low and intense, which enhances the poignancy of the introduction. When the singing begins, long sustained notes are held by the keyboard and brass. The drum patterns are fairly simple and do not draw the listener's attention, although they do punctuate the ends of phrases with

a roll on the snare, which builds the tension and then dispels it, as the music falls back into chord I again to begin the progression once more. This effect is reminiscent of a sigh: the phrase breathes in deeply towards the end, but dejectedly expels the air as it flops into the next one. The quality of the voice is fairly strained as the entire song is sung at the edge of the singer's range. This lends a desperate, wailing quality to the music which enhances the mood further.

Consider how, alongside the lyrics of the introduction, this song would have been meaningful for a soldier to hear as a dedication from a loved one:

Into each life a little rain must fall
But a tear of joy
I'd like to take a little time
To dedicate this song
To everyone who's in the presence of my voice
Especially to those who have loved ones
Far, far away

Maybe she's across the sea
Or maybe she's just in another time
I can imagine when you're all alone
In the wee, wee hour of the night
You just might decide to write
Knowing all the time
That you just might not find the words to say

You can't say "darling, for your precious love
I'd give you the world on a silver cloud"
But you know as well as I that that would be a lie
Now if you'll just take these few lines from me
The letter you're trying to write would be
Such a comfort to your loved one
Now listen:

For your precious love, I'd climb the highest mountain
I'd even go out as far as trying to swim the deepest sea
Now listen, and maybe Blondie will give you a better understanding
Of what I'm trying to say...

Chapter three elaborates on this concept further; however, it is important to note that the radio stations provided the soldiers with songs that came to them in the form of dedication programmes specially designed on their behalf. The familiarity of the tune and lyrics helped to create a familiar environment which was softer and more welcoming than the environment of the army. In doing so, the radio stations expected the soldiers to be, in some way, placated, and as such, more likely to perform their duties to a high standard.

This chapter does not exhaust the numerous ways in which the government attempted to instil trust in the white people of South Africa during apartheid, and more specifically, the soldiers in the SADF during the border war. One of the many reasons why apartheid, and indeed the border war, could continue for an agonisingly long time was that the government had comprehensive methods of exerting control and manipulating perception. There were two states of being with which the government toyed during the years of apartheid, or, in this case, the border war: those of knowledge and ignorance. The degree to which members of the white population had access to each of these states was largely dependent on what the government was willing to provide. The power and blanket rule of the government meant that numerous state departments and corporations could act on behalf of the government and its policies to ensure that its agenda was brought to fruition within every aspect of daily life.

Living as a citizen of post-apartheid South Africa, the same question arises amongst groups of people: how was apartheid allowed to happen, and even more importantly, how was it allowed to continue for so long with very little resistance on the part of

white South Africans? The guilt that many white South Africans carry is steeped in the answers to these questions. And there are many answers. An academic response to these questions could potentially be met with a fair amount of resistance and criticism for its lack of emotion. Nevertheless, in order to gain an understanding of why and how apartheid was allowed to continue for 46 years, Giddens' theory is useful. It explains that an expert system, such as the apartheid government, makes use of a three-tier process which enables it to instil trust in a select group, that its policies, agendas and ideologies are honourable and safe. There is no doubt that the government of South Africa managed to secure the trust of a large group of white people for a prolonged period of time, despite the fact that much of its ideologies and many of its policies were clearly abhorrent. To do this, it made use of specialists who worked within a theoretical and scientific framework to design the blueprints upon which the system would be based. Furthermore, it employed representatives to bring the policies home to the white population. Aesthetic devices were put in place which would further enhance the government's image of trustworthiness.

There were many varying ways in which the government developed the trust of the white community, and these discourses need to be investigated. For the purposes of this project, it was news bulletins, advertisements and music-and-dedication programmes broadcast via Springbok Radio and the English Service of Radio South Africa. The "faceless" specialists of the programming boards and producers, as well as the "faces", or representatives of the expert system, are very clearly identifiable, as are the aesthetic devices used by radio broadcasts to project a particular image of the government. Music played a very important role as an aesthetic device, to support government agenda. It was used alongside perspectives on communism, and the

threat of black domination, with the intention to frame contexts, obtain attention, structure behavioural patterns and restrict the expression of new experience, in the interests of acquiring a trusting white population, and an obedient and responsive army.

The chapter which follows discusses the extent to which soldiers in the SADF responded to this process, and how they gave voice to their experiences of being representatives of the South African government as soldiers in the army, living away from familiar environments. It explores the extent to which music was used as a tool used for transportation, vocalising experience, claiming control of space, evoking memories, restoring familiarity, security and continuity, as well as a method of authoring space and negotiating identity.

Chapter 3:

Surviving the War

“When you play a song, I can’t really describe what it is. It’s like...maybe it’s like going for a walk, a walk that you love: certain paths and fragrances and trees. When you get into that song and you sing the lyrics and you’re playing the chords...it makes it feel right. We used to just do a lot of that.”

~ Rick Andrew ~

“Music in many ways was our magic, our ju-ju, something we could use against the government. Music was the one thing that saved us. Music was the one thing that gave us the motivation. Music was never a racial thing. Music was always a harmonious thing. Music was a positive thing.”

~ Rick Andrew ~

Sheila Whiteley, in her introduction to the book *Music, Space and Place: Popular Music and Cultural Identity*, argues that specific meanings and significances are attached to particular geographic places due to the ways people exert themselves on place, thereby creating for themselves personal space. Music, she says, plays an important role in the ways people author and lay claim to space, and she argues the matter further by saying that because there is not merely one person exerting her/himself on space, but a community, competing narratives of space arise (2000: 3). Furthermore, according to Tia DeNora (2000), people negotiate place on a daily basis. In her book *Music in Everyday Life*, she states that it is not necessarily the places themselves, but the ways in which people negotiate them, that are important. Like Whiteley, DeNora asserts that spaces are constructed and maintained on a daily basis through the use of music, but she notes that music is an unstable signifier: what it signifies is necessarily dependent on who the interpreter is. As a result, spaces can repeatedly be reworked through the use of music. Therefore, the conclusion can be drawn that:

- a) individual people use music in their everyday lives to author space;
and that
- b) people can author space differently, and therefore, at that moment,
conflicting authorisations of space can, and do, occur.

Studying the specific musics used, and the ways in which they are used, can reveal much about the intentions and situatedness of individuals and/or groups of people. In her book, DeNora gives myriad examples of the ways in which people use music to negotiate everyday life. Although my own examples are different to those of DeNora,

her theory is useful to my own work, as it gives shape to this project's proposition, which is that soldiers used music in the camps and on the border to claim ownership over the space, to create a sense of security, as a medium of social relation, organise themselves in real time, as a cultural vehicle, as a method of transportation through the evocation of memory, and as a building material of social consciousness. These are all concepts with which DeNora grapples in her own work.

Shirli Gilbert, in her book *Music in the Holocaust: Confronting Life in the Nazi Ghettos and Camps*, develops a theory upon which I have managed the analysis of my interview material. Gilbert states that previously the ways in which research has been conducted into music and the roles it plays in the lives of people living in violent and extenuating circumstances, has been one dimensional. She writes that there has been an assumption of 'spiritual resistance', where music is defined "as not only a channel through which [...] victims derived emotional comfort and support, but also as a life-affirming survival mechanism through which they asserted solidarity in the face of persecution, the will to live and the power of the human spirit." (2005: 2)

Gilbert's book highlights the fact that researchers have neglected the individualism of people occupying these violent environments, and by extension, the varied ways in which they might be using music to negotiate them. She asserts that rather than dealing with some of the more complicated issues that acknowledging individualism presents, the outcomes of this type of research have been crude, unsophisticated narratives, and unrealistic depictions of possible realities. Gilbert advocates that, as

researchers, we need to accept the fact that, there are many different individuals, occupying the same geographic place who are experiencing the unfolding of day-to-day events in different ways according to their own individual capacities, and using music not just to spiritually resist the circumstances but to negotiate them in further revealing ways.

Through my dealings with a number of ex-servicemen, it became clear that there were a number of ways that the men used music to negotiate their experience of being in the army. There were 1) those who didn't resist conscription actively; rather, they accepted it, and bought into the implication by the government that the war was legitimate; 2) those who didn't buy into this concept at all, but who resisted it as much as possible; and finally, 3) those who inhabited a grey area – one in which the act of buying into the war was in constant flux. Most of the men who were interviewed occupied this grey area. Although resistance was undoubtedly part of what sometimes motivated soldiers to participate in musical activity, it is not the whole story. This chapter will consider under what circumstances, and for whom, resistance was a possibility, and will explore the myriad functions that music could play under the circumstances. Following Gilbert, I hope that my research will seek to provide a nuanced, textured, and colourful discussion, as opposed to a uniform outcome that portrays circumstances as one dimensional, and the ways that people use music to negotiate experiences as homogeneous.

Setting the Scene

The aim of military training is to minimize individualism and maximize conformity. Every attempt is made to take over as many aspects of the soldier's life as possible by colonizing his thoughts, actions and interactions with other soldiers. All contact with the outside world, including correspondence with family and friends, as well as access to public media, is censored and restricted. The army relentlessly prunes the identity of the man, with the hope that finally he will fit, as closely as possible, the mould of the 'ideal soldier': a man who follows orders to the letter regardless of what his personal morals or values dictate. The success of any army is dependent upon the proportion of 'ideal soldiers' it produces.

Danie van der Spuy entered the army at age 25 after he had completed his studies in architecture. His three-month basic training began at Palaborwa, but he was soon transferred to Kroonstad. Junior Leaders was at Bossiespruit – known as the Siberia of South Africa – for three months in 1984. In 1985 he was transferred to Candidate Officers in Pretoria for six months, and then to the border for the latter half of the year. In March 1986 he spent an additional five months on the border, after which he was discharged from the army. What follows below is an account which Danie wrote to digest his experiences – both good and bad – and share with his friends. Although it is only a small part of the story of one soldier, all the men that were interviewed relayed similar stories of their first 3 months in the army, called basic training:

Inspection. Now, this little procedure could make or break your day. But preparing a neat inspection is not a guarantee of survival. Preparation for inspection would start the night before, and the bungalow was a frenzy of

spitting-and-polishing of boots, cleaning of rifles, squaring of webbing. At the time, two of the popular songs amongst the youngsters were 'I Want to Break Free' (1984) [track 1] and 'Girls Just Wanna Have Fun' (1983) [track 2]. So we woke every bloody morning at 04h00 to the sound of either Freddie or Cindy¹. Brother...

'Kaserne, kaserne, aaaanDAG!'² That meant that a person of rank had entered the bungalow. Everybody had to jump to attention. This was also the call when the corporal arrived for inspection. The 'bungalow bill', or troop leader for that particular day, would give the warning, and shout: 'Oscar³ troep reg en gereed vir inspeksie, korporaal!'⁴ The start of the inspection... It normally took the bastard only 30 seconds to find a microscopic speck of dust somewhere. So all the hard work was to no avail: '...hierdie vloer lyk sif, 10; die wasbakke lyk kak, 10; die toilette lyk sif, 10...'⁵ and eventually: '...trommel teen die kas, voete op die trommel, hande op die staaldak, voor steun posisie af, almal op posisie, toe, toe, toe, komaan julle konte.....1, 2, 3, 4, 4 vir skutter Dry wat nie wil saamwerk nie, 4, 5, 6, 6, vir skutter Marais wat sê fok sy maaitjies, ja, hy's 'n maaitjie-naaier, 6, 7...'⁶ Yes, bloody push-ups. The sweat would start to drip from your face onto your hands and onto the *staaldak*⁷ and onto the vinyl floor and the whole bloody lot would soon become impossibly slippery. And the 30 push-ups quickly became 50, then 75. On most days, the meek little: 'Oscar troep reg en gereed vir inspeksie, korporaal!' would immediately be answered by the corporal with: 'MOENIE FOKKEN KAK PRAAT NIE! JULLE'S NIE FOKKEN GEREED NIE! TREE NET FOKKEN AAN!'⁸ (sic.) (Van der Spuy, D. 2004. *Army Daze*. Unpublished manuscript.)

¹ Freddie Mercury and Cindy Lauper.

² Barracks, barracks, atteeeeenTION!

³ The names Oscar, Golf etc were given to the barracks in which the soldiers slept.

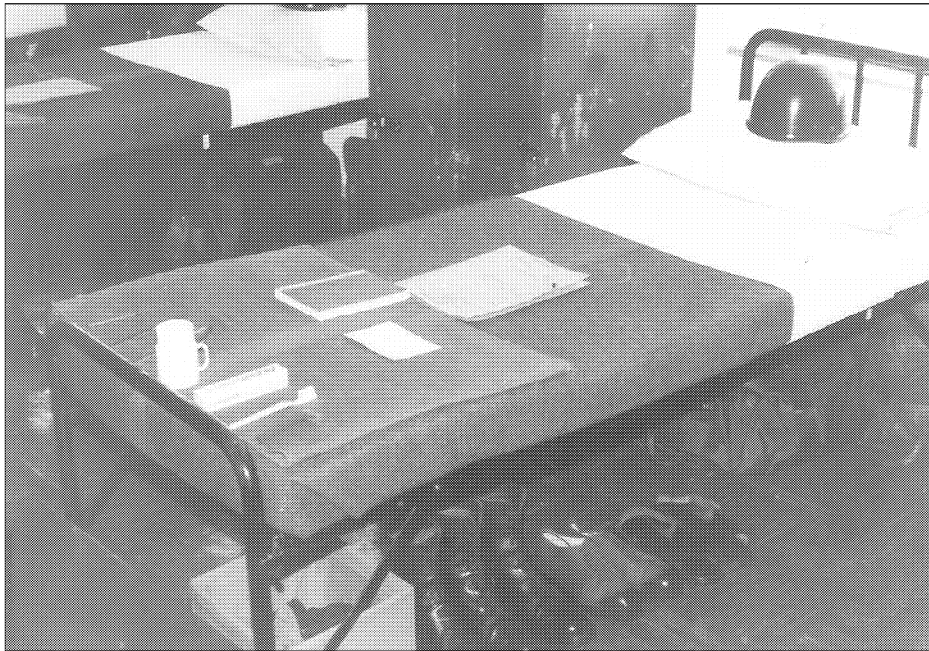
⁴ Oscar troop up and ready for inspection, Corporal!

⁵ This floor looks disgusting, ten [pushups]; the basins look shit, ten; the toilets look disgusting, ten.

⁶ Trunk against the cupboard, feet on the trunk, hands on your helmet, lean forward, everyone in position, come on, come on, you cunts, one, two, three, four, four for rifleman Dry who doesn't want to work together, four, five, six, six, for rifleman Marais who says 'fuck my friends', yes, he's a friend fucker, six, seven...

⁷ Helmet

⁸ Don't fucking talk shit! You aren't fucking ready! Just fucking line up!



What the bungalow had to look like for inspection⁹



Otherwise this would happen

⁹ All the photographs and illustrations used in this dissertation were taken by Danie van der Spuy. They are used with his permission.

On one fateful day we were instructed to hitch full kit, staaldak and grootjas¹⁰, and to grab a tyre. We were led to the waghokkie¹¹, and told to do the infamous, notorious ‘Bossies 500’. It works like this: you put the bloody tyre on the bloody ground in front of you, flat, and then you push the bloody thing along the bloody dirt road for the 500 bloody metres to the bloody Lindley road, turn around, and push the bloody thing bloody-well back again. During this time your knees may not touch the ground. And to make things worse, the grootjas, perched on top of the rucksack, pushed your staaldak over your eyes. So you push the bloody tyre over all the bloody stones, not able to see where you are bloody-well going, and as you pick up a good rhythm, you hit the bloody boots of the bloody guy in front of you. At one stage I decided to rest, and sat down on top of the tyre. Big mistake. The corporals were all over me in a flash. Coetzer asked me who the hell I thought I was. I replied: “Sappeur van der Spuy, Korporaal!”¹² Then he asked what I did in civvies street. When I told him I was an architect, he screamed: “JY MOET HEEL FOKKEN VOOR WEES, JOU FOKKEN KONT!”¹³ I was then ordered to do sprints, which meant pushing the tyre against the traffic, for ten metres, in a certain time. Of course, that time was never achieved, so you carry on, at the same time losing precious yards, and energy. The Bossies 500 was by far the shittiest opfok¹⁴. Luckily we only did it twice while at Bossies. All this resulted in, at one stage, 14 out of the 36 Golf troops were booked off on ‘light duty’. That means no running, no ‘oppies’¹⁵. But it did not stop the corporals: when marching, the ‘sick, lame and lazies’ had to chant “peeee-paw, peeee-paw”, imitating an ambulance siren. And while we were running between waghokkies, they stood clutching a full fire bucket, at arms length. And dare they spill a drop! (sic.) (Van der Spuy, D. 2004. *Army Daze*. Unpublished manuscript.)

¹⁰ Overall.

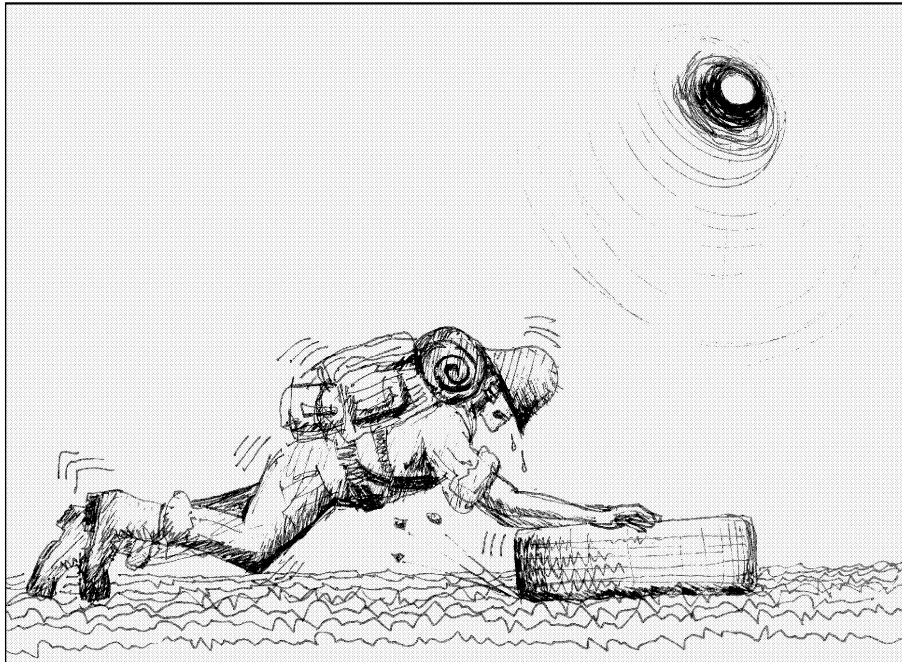
¹¹ Guard’s hut.

¹² Sapper van der Spuy, Corporal! (A sapper is a military engineer who lays or detects and disarms mines.)

¹³ You should be right up in the fucking front, you fucking cunt!

¹⁴ Fuck-up. This was the phrase used to refer to these kinds of exercises the soldiers had to do. Corporals needed very little reason to order an opvok. Another one was called ‘Rol-en-kots’, meaning roll-and-vomit. The soldiers were ordered to drink as much water as they could stomach and roll along the ground for hundreds of meters. They continued to do this until they vomited. An entire platoon engaging in this opvok meant not only that the soldiers vomited, but that they rolled through other soldiers’ vomit.

¹⁵ Fuck-ups.



An illustration of the “Bossies 500” by Danie

These were the types of experiences thousands of men had during their basic training. As stated above, the army was intent on (what many interviewees refer to as) breaking the men down before they built them up again as soldiers. Numerous similar methods of treatment were employed throughout basic training.

Responding to the Scene

Having undergone military training, essentially what each soldier was left with were very few tools to negotiate and make sense of his experiences, to imprint himself on the environment by claiming personal space, and to control that space. Free time, called Rest and Recreation (in the evenings and at weekends), gave soldiers in the SADF an opportunity to create and control a space in which they could interact with themselves, other soldiers around them, and the outside world. It is quite clear that music was one of the media through which much interaction occurred. There were very few other media at the disposal of the soldiers with which they could interact to this degree, and no other environment that they were able to structure on their own terms as much as they could in times such as Rest and Recreation. This chapter sets out to explain how music was used:

1. as a cultural vehicle to connect listeners with their lives and people from the outside world;
2. to author and control spaces wherein they could identify, express and process their experiences of being in the SADF; and,
3. to organise the soldiers in real time, whereby time could be experienced differently

As such, music was used for its ability to shift agencies, such that, in its use, soldiers were able to alter the way they experienced, and acted upon, the environment in which they were.

Used as a cultural vehicle, music transported soldiers emotionally from the culturally arid space of the camps and the border to familiar spaces associated with home and

the outside world, and which signified safety and security. Music, delivered in the form of radio music programmes, tapes, and a few soldiers playing musical instruments, provided continuity in the lives of the soldiers by creating a link between themselves and the outside world. Music was therefore the trigger which catapulted the soldiers from the reality of being a soldier in the camps and on the border, to another dimension modelled on memories and experiences of their lives in the outside world. As such agency could shift. Gilbert, in her book *Music in the Holocaust: Confronting Life in the Nazi Ghettos and Camps* (2005) says after the Warsaw ghetto was sealed, extensive programmes of organized cultural activity began:

The revival of established institutions and practices, which began almost immediately, helped to bring back something of the familiar environment of pre-war life. It also strengthened the sense that the community was still intact, and that its most important values and objectives could still be pursued. [...] The emphasis was on continuity: working through the challenges that presented themselves in anticipation that the occupation [of Poland by the Nazis] would eventually come to an end and things would return to normal. (2005: 36)

Agency is the act of making decisions and then imposing these upon the world. Therefore, music – with its prior associations and meanings attached by the soldiers – helped them to shift agencies, or change the ways they exerted themselves on the space, such that it became more familiar and secure, because music helped them connect to the outside world. In other words, the soldiers' experience of the camps changed when music was used. The way they exerted themselves on the space of the camps was different after having listened, or whilst listening to music. Music, in this context, is the catalyst in shifting agency, not the agency itself. This is made possible through (amongst others) the evocation of memory already associated with the music

in order to restore familiarity when they find themselves in environments which are unfamiliar and unsafe.

Music was used to evoke memory and restore familiarity, security and continuity. Its ability to act as a cultural vehicle, by connecting listeners with environments which exist beyond the boundaries of those in which they now find themselves, helped soldiers create a sense of continuity and security in an environment which was unfamiliar and insecure on numerous levels. DeNora states that music has the ability to evoke memory because it operates multi-dimensionally over space and time (2000: 8). In becoming soldiers, people are displaced from environments that are familiar to them and which have been constructed, amongst others, in terms of musical experiences. By listening to music through which familiar environments were partly defined and constructed, in unfamiliar and (in this case) unsafe environments, memories can be evoked and act as a source of comfort and positivity to the soldiers.

The outcomes of my research project aim to demonstrate how music was used by the soldiers conscripted into the SADF during the border war as a tool to rework reality and to shift modes of agency, which Gilbert says is an activity in which “human beings engage not necessarily for dishonest purposes but as a way of making certain situations more assimilable and easier to bear” (2005: 1). Music provided the soldiers with the means of expressing, and then diffusing, interludes of intense negative feelings, and punctuating these with moments of pleasure and self-discovery. As with Gilbert’s case of prisoners in the ghettos and camps during the Nazi occupation of Poland, for these soldiers the emphasis was on continuity: they used music to cope

with the various facets of being at war, in anticipation that the war would eventually come to an end and the life they lived in the outside world would resume.

Music can therefore assist its users to author and control space, evoke memories, and restore familiarity, continuity and security. Further, the ways people use music, can shift agencies: their experiences of the environment, and the ways they therefore exert themselves upon it, can change. What this means then, is that although this project deals specifically with the way soldiers used music during the border war, the outcomes have wider implications for the study of the way people use music in their everyday lives: they show that people use music in creative, effective and revealing ways (whether consciously or not) to make sense of and negotiate the terrain of their everyday lives, in various contexts. In the case of soldiers on the border and in the camps, however, there were very specific kinds of music that could be of use to them in this regard. It needed it to be familiar, and as such, involved music that featured on hit parades on South African radio stations. It appears that many men were largely uninterested in original music. This came to light during an interview with Rick Andrew.

In 1965 Rick Andrew completed nine months of military training when the ballot system of call-up for all white, school-leaving males in South Africa was still in practice. Following training he completed two out of three, three-week camps, but when called up for the third and final camp, his employer could not spare him, and managed to postpone the call-up. Ten years later, in December 1975, Rick resigned from his teaching job, and left Pietermaritzburg with his wife and daughter heading south on tour. They were musicians, and played in pubs and clubs along the coastline

of South Africa from Durban to Cape Town. By April of the following year, they had settled in the suburb of Claremont in Cape Town. In his book *Buried in the Sky* (2001) he writes:

It was a good time and a bad time. There was a sense of excitement in the air. We were young. We met many like-minded people who came to hear our music at the Hard Rock. The big round table in front of the band would fill up with interesting looking people, sipping wine and smoking. Many were varsity students or people who were working but who needed to connect with others – to live out some kind of culture ... find some kind of community. Music was at the core of it somehow.

As a group, we couldn't get a grip on any kind of national or political identity. We couldn't associate ourselves with the politics of the 'white' government but, as 'whites', felt ourselves to be an involuntary collusion. (2001: 5 – 6)

It was in this atmosphere that Rick was called up yet again: he received his manila government call-up papers which stated that he must report to the headquarters of the Durban Light Infantry on the 22 May 1976, at 08h00. In order to make up for the third and final three-week camp which his employer postponed because he could not be spared, he had to complete a three-month camp on the border.

Being a musician, Rick took his guitar with him to the border, and in the evenings he would play the instrument and sing. There was, according to Rick, no other music available to the men on the border at the time of his three-month camp, and so these musical happenings became a significant part of their lives during this time. Men from his platoon would often sit together at night smoking, listening, singing along, drumming the beat on their thighs and talking about the music. Of these memories he comments: "...I mean, 'culture' is attractive, especially in a place as aridly unpoetic as the army" (2001: 18). In his personal communication (31 May 2008), and in his

book *Buried in the Sky*, Rick notes that it was in these evening musical exchanges that the men from his platoon would make song requests. Rather than requesting songs that Rick had himself composed, the men in the platoon would request songs that were popular at the time and with which they had grown familiar by listening to records and music radio stations of the time, such as Springbok Radio, Radio Highveld, LM Radio, Radio 5 and the English and Afrikaans Service of the SABC, amongst others:

People wanted to hear music that sounded like the radio. I recall one guy asking with a straight face, as I sat with a nylon-stringed acoustic guitar in my hands, ‘Can you play *Dark Side of the Moon* by Pink Floyd?’

I mean, think about it.

Eventually [I] aired a few of [my] own songs. Held them up like unfashionable underwear. It was difficult to play them with the same conviction that [I] projected into the songs that had had air time, and that the others knew – the songs that had taught us to sing.

[...] I could see the OC¹⁶ and some of his acolytes peering over in our direction. Like us, they were mere chattels of the military at that moment, and were forced to bed down in the dust with the rest of us. The only difference was that they were standing outside the music. (Andrew 2001: 36 – 37)

Popular artists and songs of the day were regularly requested by the men. According to Rick, he played guitar every night:

“I was the only guy who had a guitar and we used to sing in the Officers’ Mess. Stuff like *One, Two, Three, Four, What Are We Fighting For* (sic.) by Country Joe¹⁷, Woodstock stuff, Dylan, and sometimes originals. But people didn’t really ask if you could play original stuff. They rather wanted stuff like Pink Floyd, Led Zeppelin, *Yummy Yummy, Yummy, House of the Rising Sun, Autumn Leaves*. There wasn’t really a

¹⁶ Officer Commanding

¹⁷ Country Joe McDonald and the Fish

culture of [original] music in South Africa at the time”.
(ibid).

Not only did popular, well-known music help the soldiers restore a sense of stability and familiarity by evoking memories of life in the outside world, but it found new meaning in the fundamentally changed social space of the training camps and the border, which it helped simultaneously to define and articulate. As a creative process, music was the catalyst which changed the ways soldiers experienced being in the army, as it shifted them into different modes of agency. Music helped them process what they witnessed and felt, and gave them an opportunity to vary the ways in which they dealt with the experience. It is important to note here, that it was music which was familiar to them, and with which they had interacted in the outside world, that facilitated this process. As Rick observes, original music was inappropriate for facilitating the process in which the men participated, because they were not familiar with it, and because meanings and experiences of the outside world had not been attached to the music. In many ways, this was the reason for familiar music’s usefulness: memories of the outside world could be evoked, and as such, could provide comfort, familiarity and stability to soldiers.

Music’s ability does not only stop at being able to give expression to feeling – it can also identify feeling. What this means then, is that music not only helps people recognise how they are feeling, but that music can help people distinguish, or give a name to, the feeling. These white, South African males had grown up in a culture where it was inappropriate for men to meaningfully and emotionally engage with their

feelings. In addition, their daily experiences in the camps and on the border were completely alien in comparison to those had in the outside world. As such, their frames of reference were severely limited in terms of their ability to identify the feelings they had about what they were experiencing. Therefore, they were sometimes unable to identify their feelings about national service and all it entailed. In many circumstances on the border and in the camps (and indeed in the personal communications I had with several ex-soldiers), men were not able to clearly identify and articulate their emotional states verbally. It is therefore suggested that music was a useful tool for this process. This presents another reason why music that was not known by soldiers would not have been welcomed in the evenings to which Rick refers: it did not facilitate the need of the soldiers to identify, and then express, emotional states, because meanings had not yet been attached. Its relevance and value in the circumstances would therefore have been diminished and it is for this reason that requests for familiar and more popular songs were made.

Many interviewees commented on how the lyrics of the songs took on a different meaning when they were in the army and removed from the outside world. During his personal communication, Rick's attention was drawn to the fact that as this study was about music, and that the music 'itself' therefore needed to be discussed as much as the lyrics, he explained that the music enhanced the meaning of the lyrics. He thought that "lyrics without the music can often be bad poetry. It doesn't work as poetry. But when you put the music to it, the mind just opens up real big. It's a strange thing. It's rhythm as well; more than melody. I love melody. But rhythm..." (pers. comm., 31 May, 2008). Love songs became songs of longing which gave

expression to how soldiers missed their girlfriends and families. Songs about resistance to war were immediately meaningful in ways they would not have been, had they been listened to in the outside world. Consider how the experiences of the soldiers on the border increased the poetic resonance of the lyrics of ‘Knocking on heaven’s’ door (1973) [track 3] – a song frequently requested by fellow soldiers in Rick’s platoon:

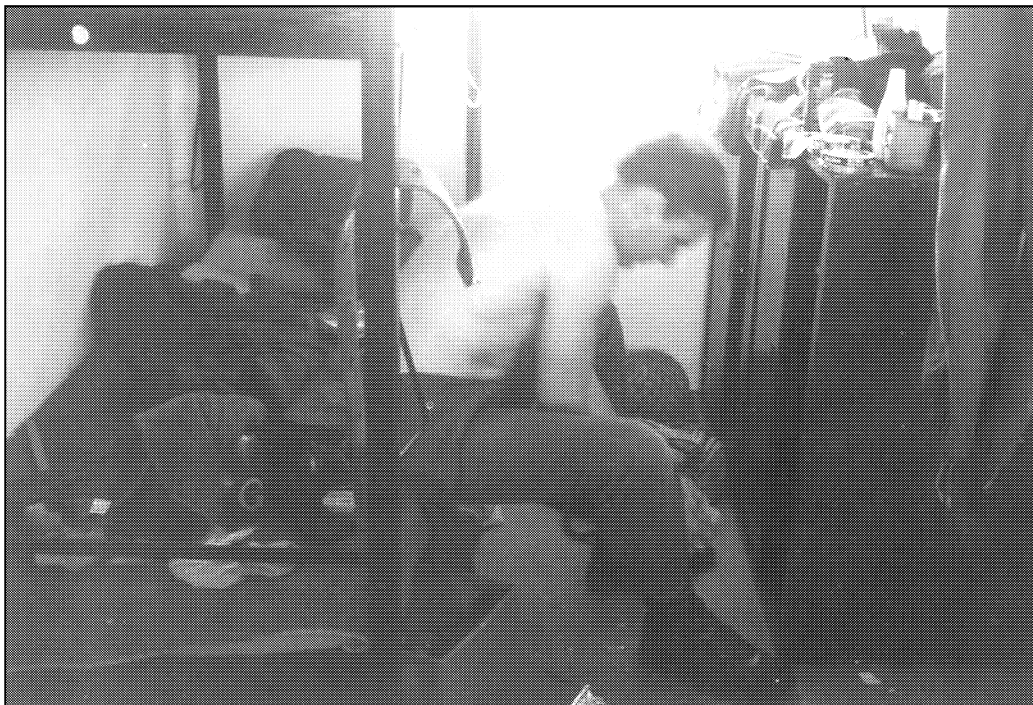
Mama put my guns in the ground
I can’t shoot them anymore
There’s a long black cloud

And it’s coming down
I feel like I’m knocking on heaven’s door

Time for entertainment was generally very limited whilst soldiers were in the army. There was, however, time set aside on most evenings where soldiers could structure their own time and recreation. Soldiers would head off to the pub or canteen in the evening to enjoy a beer and some music, after which, due to limited funds and limitations as to how much they could drink, they were found in the bungalow attending to tasks in preparation for the next morning’s inspection, or alternatively recovering from the sheer exhaustion of the day. Due to the affordability of a small radio, entertainment and relaxation was defined by the sound of a music programme playing in the background, whilst some of the soldiers worked on cleaning rifles, others wrote letters to family and friends, and others fell off to sleep.



Preparing for inspection the next day



The small space which had to be shared by two soldiers



A sleeping soldier: meant to be preparing for inspection

Although the choice of station was limited as not all radio stations had good signals to all parts of South Africa, there were several radio stations that broadcast music dedication programmes designed specifically for the benefit of the national servicemen (including those in the air force and navy) and their loved ones at home. These programmes could be tuned into depending on the location of the camp. Tony Fernandes was 17 years old when conscripted into the army in 1975 to fulfil a two year enlistment. In addition, he completed a number of camps, some of which were carried out on the border, between 1978 and 1982. He had always been a lover of pop music, and listened avidly to many radio stations of the time, such as Springbok Radio, LM Radio, Swazi Radio, Capital Radio 604, the English Service of Radio

South Africa and Radio 5. Tony revealed that in the case of being on the border, “one could tune the larger B25 radios onto most frequencies in South Africa. While the reception was generally better at night or just after it had rained, the sound of ‘home’ always lifted the spirit of the troops, even if one could only listen for a short while before the radio's batteries went flat” (pers. comm., 22 March, 2009). He explained:

Tony: The playing of music and dedications were symbols of home. We were so far away. We felt that they were all remembering us. It felt like I was round the corner and wondered whether anybody cared and remembered us. But those messages and dedications were our connection to home. [...] The Beatles, Rolling Stones, Bee Gees. And Billy Forrest, Quinton Klopjager ‘Lazy Life’.

Q: What did that mean for you Tony?

Tony: It reminded me of relaxing with my girlfriend. That’s what I’d be doing. Durban was very meaningful for me. I felt closer [when I heard the music]. It reminded me of the beach life. I’d hear the music and I’d imagine what I’d be doing. It made me think of Swaziland: the Highland View Hotel and the Royal Swazi, the banned movies and porn movies (laughs), gambling, books, movies, the ‘Cuddle Puddle’ which was the hot spring bath next to the casino (laughs). The music [we heard on the radio whilst in the army] signified home, freedom. We’d be listening to music on the radio in the cars on the way [to Swaziland]. We played cassettes. (ibid).

It is interesting and relevant that Tony refers to ‘home’ as having a sound. ‘Home’ in this context refers not only to his house and the family who inhabit the building, but also to the familiarity, freedom, security and comfort that one associates with the space. In this space, Tony would have been free to choose the soundtrack to his life. Various aspects of Tony’s life had already been moulded in conjunction with specific music genres and songs. In his interview he specifically mentioned trips he and several friends had taken to Swaziland to relax, gamble, watch restricted movies and

generally have a great deal of fun, much of which would have been illegal in South Africa at the time. His desire to be part of such events does not set Tony apart from most young white men of the time. The sense of freedom that came with completing school would have filled most young men with the desire to break free from the humdrum routine of everyday life. The need to explore various avenues of a new-found adulthood was essential for many others like Tony. These experiences, alongside many others, would have been part of the perception Tony had of 'home'.

Music was constantly played via tapes or on the radio during these and other experiences, and therefore, when these songs were heard on the border and in the camps, they reminded Tony not just of being at the geographical place of his home where his family and friends were, but also of the associations it had with familiarity, freedom, security and comfort he had already made with 'home'. Therefore, at those times on the border and in the camps when Tony heard the music and the dedication messages, they would have helped him to recreate previously experienced physical, emotional and psychological states associated with the outside world and 'home'. Hearing these songs immediately connected Tony with what he calls 'home': music became a tool for virtual communication and a representation of where he wanted to be and go physically, emotionally and psychologically (DeNora 2000: 53).

Most ex-soldiers who were interviewed discussed the ravenous way in which they listened to these radio programmes. Many can still recall the specifics of the programmes' times and days of broadcast: Radio 5 broadcast music and dedication messages from Monday to Friday from 19h00 until 20h00, the English Service of the SABC broadcast a similar programme for national servicemen on Saturday afternoons

from 14h00 until 16h00, as did the Afrikaans Service on Saturday mornings from 05h00 until 06h00, and Springbok Radio on a Sunday from 14h00 until 17h00. The process which the soldiers underwent each time they listened to these radio music programmes became an essential mechanism for survival in the army: many of the men relied on these programmes for emotional, psychological and even physical recuperation. DeNora states that music can be used to shift mood and energy levels as a mechanism for what she calls “care of the self”. It can be used to “attain, enhance and maintain states of feeling and bodily energy (such as relaxation); [...] It is a resource for modulating and structuring the parameters of aesthetic agency – feeling, motivation, desire, comportment, action style, energy” (2000: 53). DeNora observes that due to previous associations with music experienced in the outside world alongside other discourses, people learn to anticipate what music genres or works could act as a mechanism for “care of the self”, which would explain why many soldiers listened to the programmes with such commitment.

Consider then, the agonising sense of loss a man would have felt had he missed a personal dedication made to him by his family, friends or girlfriend. Attie de Bruin, who was conscripted into the army from 1983 until 1984 for his compulsory national service, made the following comments during his personal communication:

Attie: In Angola the temperatures were nice. But in South West Africa, sho¹⁸, it could get up to 52 degrees Celsius. You’d see guys drooling and not focused. Even the flies would fly slowly, but you can’t swat it because it’s too hot (laughs).

Q: That hot?

¹⁸ Wow!

Attie: Ja (laughs)! So, in the afternoon you'd have a siesta from two to three. We sat and listened to the radio. It was so, so hot. If you left a tape on the bed it would melt. It'd take you three hours to put it, put the tape, back on another reel. Just for the music (laughs). [...] Anyway, the requests, you'd sit and listen to those programmes, and? Nothing! Nobody loves you, nobody misses you. Three weeks later you gave up and listened to your walkman. Then somebody would run up to you. "Attie! Attie! You had a dedication!" You'd ask, "who was it from"? They wouldn't know. You'd ask what the dedication said, they didn't know. You asked what the song was, didn't know. You missed it! Fuck, I was so angry! Nobody could remember [the details of my dedication and song]. I was so upset. (pers. comm., 13 May, 2009)

In the personal communication Attie came across as a man with a quiet and reserved temperament. For him, anger or rage would most likely be exceptional emotions; however, even in relaying the memory he seemed to show signs of agitation. Music's role as a mood modulator and regulator becomes apparent in the way Attie relayed the memory, and the effect music had on him, both in the personal communication and in the past. It is clear that although music can give expression to internal emotional states, evoke memory, and restore familiarity and security, it is also a discourse which can assist in identifying internal emotional states. The absence thereof can cause great emotional distress to those starved, albeit momentarily, of its effects. In an effort to express this disruption and stress, outbursts as described and acted out by Attie, can and do occur.

Clearly, if the soldiers were deprived of hearing a message and song dedicated to them, it could be a source of great upset and discomfort. A further way in which men

became unsettled was when they did not have immediate access to the preferred radio station when they turned the radio on in the mornings before breakfast, or in the evenings whilst preparing for inspection. As mentioned previously, as a mechanism for survival, the soldiers needed to create spaces in their day where they could escape from the difficulties of daily life. When they switched on the radio they were emotionally prepared to hear particular songs or genres. Essentially, the act of switching on the radio began the process of the creation of space. The songs and talking that followed continued this process. When the radio was switched on, they expected the music to carve a very specific space out for them. The extract below illustrates this point:

Sunday – now this is the day that we can lie in bed for an extra hour. Skip breakfast and head straight for Church at 8 AM. The radio broadcaster pipes out “This is Radio South Africa” in military style. Wonder who changed the station. The formality of the tune sounds like the Commanding Officer phoned the radio station and demanded that they play this tune to spite us. Never fear, we will demand that the station be changed as soon as we are all up and about... (Le Roux, S and Opsmedic 2004)

The space the soldiers tried to create naturally had to exclude the physically, psychologically and emotionally harsh reality they occupied whilst performing their daily duties. The music was the essential tool used for exclusion. In this case, the English Service of Radio South Africa was too “military” in style, and the “formality of the tune” had within seconds created an environment which was too similar to the one they inhabited for 12 hours each day. This immediately generated a negative response from the men listening to the radio.

In this example, these men use music in anticipation of the process they expect to go through when they hear it. They choose the station, and leave the radio tuned into it. They do this because from previous experiences, they know that the music broadcast via their particular station of choice would provide them with the opportunity to carve out a space for themselves. The station broadcasting Radio South Africa, from previous experience, had proved to be ill-equipped for the men to use as a tool for carving personal space, and therefore, they “demand that the station be changed as soon as we are all up and about”. The radio, and the music coming from it, was a necessity in creating a specific space for them which helped them escape the reality of the army. The geographic place that they physically occupied remained the same, but it was the music that helped soldiers create a very specific sense of space which was necessary for them to survive their experience of the war and the part they played in it.

In a personal communication with John Richards, Patricia Kerr – one of the long-time presenters of *Forces Favourites* – states that “the idea of the programme was to be the link between the family and the boy or girl in uniform” (The English Service of Radio South Africa, 2 July 1984). Kerr established a style and popularity with many soldiers, and believed that *Forces Favourites* should continue throughout South Africa’s war years because “the situation in the country is such that we can’t be complacent anymore. [...] I don’t think there’s a home in the country that’s not affected by the call up. Sons are called up from homes all over this country, and I don’t think we can afford to be complacent. We have to have a programme of this kind which is a link.” (ibid).

Kerr's observation of the functionality of such music programmes is interesting, but can be developed further. She states that the programmes themselves were the link between the soldiers and the outside world. In actual fact it was the songs alongside the dedication messages which provided the link, or the method of cultural transportation, between the soldiers and the outside world. The programmes were the medium through which the songs and dedications could function. The act of broadcasting facilitated the process, but it was the songs, broadcast alongside the messages, which brought about the connection.

In the personal communication with Richards, Kerr seems to give more emphasis to the messages which were sent to the stations from loved ones and intended for the soldiers away on duty, rather than the songs which were played in tandem with reading the messages. In addition, when the songs on the programmes were referred to by ex-soldiers during personal communications, it was the lyrics, rather than the music and the lyrics together, which were mentioned. Certainly, the verbal messages and the lyrics of the songs were important to the soldiers and did link those in the camps and on the borders with those at home, because the meaning of the words was obvious and the subject material relevant; however, it is equally important to recognise that people don't simply respond to lyrics, but to the combination of lyrics and music. Response to lyrics is easier to discuss, as their meanings are relatively fixed due to the denotative capacity of language. Music's connotative abilities provides a space in which meaning is malleable.

The music dedication programmes not only catered for a measure of verbal communication between loved ones and soldiers by means of messages, but provided the soldiers with a forum in which music could be used to evoke memories and restore familiarity: Tony's comment about the sound of 'home' always lifting the spirit of the troops illustrates this effectively. Whilst verbal messages conveyed specific sentiments from friends, girlfriends, siblings or parents, and thereby connected the soldiers with the outside world to a certain extent, it was particularly the music that would evoke memories in the soldiers. These memories would already have been associated with the music prior to conscription. Men had previously placed it within a semiotic network of music and extra-musical associations. Meaning in music is created through a process of exchange between musical and extra-musical discourses, not simply from within the musical 'work' itself. Contrary to Adorno's assertions (see Adorno 1991), the concept of the musical work 'itself' – as a self-supporting structure – being the only element contributing to the process of making meaning is all but obsolete. Whilst a musical style and its historical associations are initially relevant to the way meaning in music is made, the ways particular musical materials relate to extra-musical matters such as the personal occasions and circumstances of its use are key to the ways meaning is made and reworked, and modes of agency are shifted (DeNora 2005).

Again, it can be seen how music can be used as a catalyst to shift its listeners into modes of agency: it was used by soldiers as a vehicle to transport them from states of fatigue, stress, homesickness and boredom to more preferred states of familiarity,

comfort, contentment and normality. This was made possible by music's ability to evoke memories associated with songs. Therefore, when songs were heard on the radio by soldiers conscripted into the SADF during the border, they were not heard in isolation. Meanings – both musical and extra-musical – had already been attached to the music. Therefore, when heard in a space that felt completely foreign and arid, the songs would have provided a degree of familiarity to the soldiers, by evoking specific memories and feelings associated with the music. In doing so, music was able to change the ways in which soldiers engaged with the world they inhabited.

It is important to acknowledge that the government and radio stations frequently sent musicians and presenters from radio stations to entertain the troops on the border. This was another form of musical interaction which, although laced with propaganda, did provide a comfort to some soldiers. When asked about the live entertainment which was provided for the soldiers when they were on the border, Tony replied:

There was an entertainment corps. Des and Dawn Lindberg from South Africa, Billy Forrest, Sonja Herholdt, Min Shaw, Gert Potgieter. They sang songs for the troops; especially Sonja Herholdt and Min Shaw had special songs for the forces. They were always in Afrikaans though. We called them Dutchies and said "Don't push a Dutchie¹⁹ song on us" (laughs). Sonja Herholdt was very cute. She was short. Cute and big breasted (laughs). She used to come up two or three times a year, the others a little more. They also performed for the Rhodesian forces. They boosted our morale. We enjoyed it. We forgot about all the problems. When the music stopped we went back to life, but the music was like a security bubble. (pers. comm., 22 March, 2009)

¹⁹ "Dutchie" is an insulting word given to Afrikaans people by the English. It refers to their historical links to the Dutch.

By saying “Don’t push a Dutchie song on us”, Tony implies that he doesn’t listen to Afrikaans music, but the experience of listening to the singers – in particular Sonja Herholdt – was a meaningful one for Tony. The first reason for this is the lyrics. Even though they are in a different language to Tony’s home languages (he speaks English and Portuguese), he can understand the meaning. The song “Ek Verlang Na Jou”²⁰ (1976) [track 4] was written specifically for the soldiers away on national service and therefore the lyrics would have been particularly meaningful for many soldiers who heard Herholdt singing them. In the personal communication Tony mentioned that hearing her singing the song whilst he was on the border would bring him to tears. Hearing these words would have been deeply meaningful for Tony and many others, as they describe how they felt about having left lovers and wives, which many of them had to do.

Ek verlang na jou	I miss you
Na die winde wat sy arms om my vou	I miss the winds that wrap their arms around me
So verlang ek as die son, en die maan	I miss you when the sun, and the moon
En die wind, en die wolke oor my gaan	And the wind, and the clouds move over me
Verlang jy ook na my	Do you miss me too
Daar waar jy nou in die verre lande bly	There in the far-away lands you live
En verlang jy as die son, en die maan	And do you miss me when the sun, and the moon
End die wind, en die wolke oor jou gaan	And the wind, and the clouds move over you
Waai wind	Blow wind
Bring hom terug na my	Bring him back to me

The second reason why this experience was meaningful for Tony was that the characteristics of the music are consistent with that of a love song. Although this

²⁰ I Miss You.

particular song was not one which Tony had heard prior to his national service, the connotations and meanings associated with the genre of love song were meaningful to him because of prior associations and memories he had of other love songs. It would appear then, that genres can act as a cultural vehicle, transporting listeners from dispreferred states of fatigue and stress to more positive states of feeling, by evoking memories, restoring familiarity, continuity and security in much the same way as songs do. This explains then, why hearing South African singers live, as mentioned in Tony's comment, boosted morale and created an atmosphere of enjoyment where Tony could forget his problems. It was in this atmosphere – to which he refers as his “security bubble” – that he could forget all his problems. The song and experience removed him emotionally and psychologically from his present situation and placed him in a virtual environment, partially sketched by previous experiences in the outside world connected with love songs, where he felt safe and secure. Thus he was able to attain a positive emotional state because of the associations he had made with the genre, and the experiences he would have had in conjunction with it; it enhanced his state of feeling and boosted his morale; and for the time the song was sung, he felt he could forget about all his problems. Once the music stopped, the connection between Tony and his comfortable, secure, familiar virtual world was broken: the bubble had burst.

During the border war, music was used by groups of people and by individuals in varying ways. What follows below, is an account of how the interpersonal and the intrapersonal engagement with, and use of, music could sometimes collide. It will demonstrate the outcomes of people simultaneously attempting to create and control a

space both inter- and intrapersonally. Here, contested narratives of space arise from the different ways in which music is used.

Danie: You were allowed to bring radios. It was always a problem: these youngsters with their type of music, and what I liked. And they'd have these ghetto blasters, especially over weekends while you're trying to rest, do your washing and ironing, and they've got this rubbish: stuff that I didn't like (laughs). You know, sort of popular stuff. Cindy Lauper. You know, getting woken up [...] to Cindy Lauper saying 'oh girls just want to have fun'. Another popular song was 'I want to break free' by Queen. Which is not a bad song, but at [certain times], no! So you're competing against somebody's ghetto blaster. Tempers get a bit frayed. "Turn off that crap!", "No!", so I said "I'm a senior officer and you will obey me. Switch it down!" I had a walkman, and I had my own stuff, but that was personal. With earphones. Music is, I felt you don't want to invade somebody else's privacy, and I know a lot of people didn't like Hendrix so I played it for myself.

Q: I'm going to push a bit. Did you feel that by putting the earphones on you were shutting something out? Making a space for yourself that no one else could enter?

Danie: Definitely! Definitely up on the border, definitely you just want to shut off everything, and that's when I put on my own stuff, and just lie back and dream of my girlfriend (laughs). (pers. comm., 13 October, 2007)

The youngsters, as Danie calls them, are playing pop music on their ghetto blaster. What is more, they are playing it at a very high volume. Danie, on the other hand, is not a fan of pop music; rather he enjoys the music of Led Zeplin (1971) [tracks 5 and 6], Deep Purple (1972) [track 7], Steely Dan (1972) [track 8], and the like. The youngsters are aggressively claiming a soundscape which Danie also occupies. Their

‘weapons’ are their choice of music, and the volume at which they choose to play it. What the youngsters are trying to do is to claim and familiarise a space by designing it according to the space they inhabit in the outside world. The music creates an opportunity for them to enjoy themselves, relax, interact with one another and pretend they are in a social place, perhaps in a pub or club, where this music would have been played. They use music to soften the harsh conditions of being on the border, as well as to establish camaraderie and group identity, not only in and through the music (because of their common enjoyment of it), but when they are challenged by Danie to turn it off. They gang up against him in their protest, until eventually Danie has to exercise authority (he is a lieutenant, they are riflemen) to get them to switch it down. Here, music is a tool used interpersonally by the youngsters to create and control a space.

In the same moment however, Danie (because of his taste in music, and perhaps – due to his age – his more mature, less aggressive way of claiming space by using headphones) uses a completely different music genre, and a different method, to do exactly what the youngsters were doing. Music, however, is used intrapersonally here, to claim and control a space. Rather than blasting his Jimi Hendrix tape across a soundscape occupied by many people, Danie chooses to listen to the music through his earphones. This was a conscious decision to “just shut off everything [...] and just lie back and dream of my girlfriend”.

Danie uses the music to affirm his own, not group, identity. As with the youngsters, the music facilitates the creation of scenes and occasions that constitute social life in a world from which he is removed. On his own, the music allows Danie to dream of his girlfriend and the things they have done and will do together when he gets out the army. By doing so, Danie can temporarily remove himself from his current circumstance, and imagine one which is loving, safe and undemanding. He wants nothing to interrupt or spoil his imaginings and dreams, which are pure and unadulterated. The earphones act as a buffer, minimising any other sound from leaking in. The fact that the youngsters are aggressively challenging that process makes Danie feel out of control and angry. He asks them to switch it down, and when they refuse his response is to exercise authority and order them to switch it down, which he knows they must obey because he is a senior officer.

This example shows how people use music to create and control spaces in different ways. The youngsters are doing so on an interpersonal level. Together, and with the help of music, they create an environment which reminds them of the outside world, and they control it with volume and their choice of music. When they are challenged on it they feel they are losing control of the space they are trying to create, which generates displeasure and aggravation. Reluctantly they eventually lower the volume because military rules dictate that soldiers of lower rank must adhere to the instructions of those of higher rank. Similarly, Danie also attempts to create and control a space through the use of music, albeit differently. He is frustrated by the disturbance, the youngsters' choice of music and the volume. This provokes a

negative response from him. When they finally lower the volume, Danie can return to his dreams and regain control of his space.

This scenario shows that even though people occupy the same geographic place, they use music in differing and sometimes incompatible ways to claim and control space, and therefore conflicting authorisations of space can and do occur. Later on in the personal communication, however, Danie describes a different scenario: “We used to play Eric Clapton’s *Behind the Sun* album (1985) in the Officers’ Mess at night when we were having drinks. We also played some Jimi Hendrix. But we played it loud, loud, loud.” (pers. comm., 13 October, 2007)



Soldiers at the Bossiespruit camp at Kroonstad, sharing a beer

Whilst in the army, soldiers were allocated R50 at the beginning of each month (which was deducted from their salary) for purchasing supplies from the base pub and tuck-shop. Soldiers could obtain goods such as cigarettes, soft drinks, sweets, chocolates and chips, and were rationed to two beers per day. At the end of each day, which began at 05h15 and ended after dinner at 18h00, the men were sometimes given a limited amount of time before lights, out to rest and relax. Most soldiers were too exhausted from the day's training and so would prepare for the following day and go to sleep early. Sometimes, however, they gathered in the Officers' Mess to share a drink with other men in their platoon.

Essentially, the army provided the men with a small window of opportunity which they used to connect, albeit very briefly, with each other and the outside world. Similar to the youngsters in Danie's previous description, the group of men in the Officers' Mess used music to create and control a space which mirrored, as closely as possible, a scenario in a pub or club, or indeed any social gathering where there would have been drinking, relaxation and enjoyment. The music was integral in creating a pleasurable space, and essential to sustaining their control over it; the aggression with which it was claimed (i.e. by playing the music "loud, loud, loud") helped them to delineate the boundaries of their space.

Danie's involvement in, and enjoyment of, this scenario shows how his use of music could change from moment to moment in accordance with the specifics of his needs. Considering also, that he played Jimi Hendrix in private through his earphones for

particular reasons, and then on occasion as part of a group for other reasons, suggests that one particular song (for example) can be put to use by individuals in different ways in pursuit of the same end: to create and control space.

It has repeatedly been suggested that music was, for many soldiers, an important discourse with which they could create and control space, evoke memories, create a sense of security and familiarity and create a connection between people who are removed from one another. It is also important to acknowledge that soldiers lived in fluctuating circumstances of utter boredom and extreme pressure. Many soldiers spoke of how excruciatingly boring the army could be, and that the boredom which many men experienced, most especially on the border, was a very dangerous mental space in which to be. Attie de Bruin says:

The only time you wanted to leave was when your mind was idle: like guard duty, or if you were not doing anything. You'd listen to music. It wasn't really allowed [on guard duty] but you did it anyway. [...] The situation was so bad but no one knew about it. I shot my first guys on Christmas day 1983. The first time was terrible. There were 1200 terrorists dead, but only a reported 17 on the news. My dad used to tape the news for me and I'd listen when I got home. They reported only 17 dead. The next time I felt nothing. There were all these bloated bodies. And I stood there eating a chocolate (laughs). [...] One of the guys [in our platoon] had a Silver [radio], but you couldn't pick anything up. So we had a very long aerial tied to a tree. After that time flew. When the batteries went flat the time just was unbearable. [...] In 1983, '84 [the concept of] depression didn't exist, but you got so depressed if your mind was idle. (pers. comm., 13 May, 2009)



A cartoon of a soldier on guard duty drawn by Danie

Here Attie's comment throws into relief the ability of music to organize its listeners in real time (DeNora 2000: 8). The use of the radio music programmes changed the way Attie experienced the intervals of time where he was doing very little, if anything. The use of music here avoided (what he perceived as) the danger of his mind going idle. The music that he heard via the radio redefined the way he experienced time – from time that “dragged” to time that “flew”. It is important to emphasise once again, that music does not simply fill the interval of inactivity and boredom: music's ability to activate the body and shift its listeners into physical, mental and psychological modes of agency creates an experience where the engagement with the space is no

longer monotonous, possibly depressive, but by interactive and physically and mentally stimulating. The power of music can not be underestimated in such circumstances. Music was one of the few forms of cultural expression which was permitted in the army and is therefore responsible for diffusing many potentially harmful situations. As Attie states, an idle mind could allow for negative thoughts to pervade and depression to set in. At the very least, music was a force which – only just, and only sometimes – kept depression, anxiety and negativity at bay. It is important, however, to acknowledge that whilst music played an extraordinarily important role in the ways men organised their time and diffused negative situations, as with the prisoners in the Nazi ghettos and camps (Gilbert 2005), there were points in the experiences of these men – when they were exhausted, homesick and watching friend and foe die – where the effects of music could simply no longer flourish.

For many boys at school, the thought of being in the army one day was an adventure to which they greatly looked forward. Greig Coetzee, now a writer and actor, who did his basic training in 1990 at the time of Mandela's release from prison, said in a personal communication: "You used to imagine the guys sitting up at the border. You felt fear knowing that you had to do it one day, you know? But I also had this sense of pride, this heroic attitude about being in the army." (pers. comm., 14 April, 2008) Many interviewees like Greig expressed their gladness and excitement about going to the army for the first time: the idea of leaving home and school signified the rite of passage from boyhood to manhood. It meant independence from their parents and facing the world as men in charge of themselves. 'Imaginings' of being a soldier at war were to a great extent entrenched and encouraged by the government through

various expert systems, and international media played an integral role in the interviewees' romanticised perceptions of what it meant to be a soldier at war.

It would be easy, but incorrect, to generalise and say that once the men began basic training their romantic perception of being a soldier at war immediately shifted to one of abhorrence. Many of the interviewees stated that the two years they were in the army were both the worst and best two years of their lives. All but three of them believe that men should still have to complete two years of military service, as it teaches discipline and obedience: characteristics which they find lacking in many young men today. Nevertheless, many interviewees experienced internal conflict when their 'imaginings', and realities of being a soldier at war, collided.

It would be unwise to underestimate the potency of the deeply entrenched 'imaginings' of being a soldier. These constituted notions of bravery, heroism, strength, immortality, masculinity, dependability, obedience, being on the side of righteousness, and above all, being (what many cultures the world over have framed as) a man. Interviewees expressed confusion and shock at the gaping chasm between the realities and the 'imaginings' of being a soldier at war. Basic training and active duty brought them face to face with their own mortality, a sense of disconnection with the outside world, fear and unfamiliarity. Homesickness and exhaustion, among other things, began to drain the initial excitement many experienced at the outset of their military service. The tensions between the 'imaginings' and the unavoidable realities of being a soldier at war provoked a conflict within, which was waged between two equally strong competitors.

Music was one of many discourses used to pacify this conflict by evoking memories of the outside world which helped restore security, familiarity and continuity, and connect them once more with familiar, secure spaces associated with the outside world. It provided a place where the illusion of normality could be recovered, and where people could escape temporarily from the camp or active duty. Music, therefore, operated multi-dimensionally over space and time. It evoked memories that had been defined, amongst other things, by music, and transported the men to spaces which were familiar and safe. Thus, through the use of music, the sense of being severed from the outside world was momentarily diminished, because it helped create a perception of continuity between life as a soldier in camps or on the border, and life as a civilian. Music, used as a tool for reworking reality, narrowed the chasm between the 'imaginings' and realities of being a soldier, and created a space where the experiences of war could be assimilated and made easier to process.

The intention of this chapter was to demonstrate how music was used as a mechanism for survival by soldiers whilst they were in the SADF during the border war. Without portraying these experiences as being one dimensional, unified and consistent amongst all soldiers, the aim was to show that although experiences overlapped, none were exactly the same and, for this reason, no two articulations of experience matched entirely. In addition, it was vitally important to show that there were many motivations for the ways in which they negotiated their spaces and gave expression to their experiences, making music's role therefore, one which was textured, meaningful and nuanced.

Despite this, it became clear that the ways soldiers used music to negotiate space overlapped, and therefore the dynamic ways in which music can be appropriated by people was thrown into relief. Music was used for its ability to evoke memory; identify and express feelings; connect soldiers with the outside world; create a space which was safe, familiar and consistent with that which they experienced in the outside world; organise its users in real time; and shift modes of agency, such that the ways in which soldiers experienced their environments and acted upon them, could change. Therefore, although no two experiences are exactly the same, this project concludes that there are specific ways in which music can be used. These are dependent upon people's agencies, and the ways they shift.

It has become apparent that DeNora's theory – that people use music in their everyday lives to negotiate space – was applicable to the ways soldiers negotiated their experiences of the SADF and being at war, despite the fact that these experiences were not everyday. Although the circumstances were entirely different to those of their everyday lives, soldiers used music in similar ways to negotiate this extraordinary experience, as they used it in their everyday lives. Thus, the outcomes of this research project have implications for our understanding of the various ways in which music can be used by people to negotiate experiences, whether everyday or exceptional. This research builds upon the notion that people can use music to author the space they inhabit, and the experiences they have within it, such that agencies can be shifted.

As such it can be concluded that music can be used by groups of people, and individuals, to author and control spaces which are alien to them. The results are that

familiarity and security in their present space are, to a certain extent, restored; memories are evoked; virtual connections between people that are separated by time and space are set up such that continuity is experienced; time is experienced differently; and feelings can be identified and expressed. Considering the experiences men were having as soldiers, it is not surprising that music was, for many soldiers, an unqualified essential for their survival of the war.

Chapter 4

Conclusion

“It is not history which uses men as a means of achieving – as if it were an individual person – its own ends. History is nothing but the activity of men in pursuit of their ends.”

~ Karl Marx ~

“The past is malleable and flexible, changing as our recollection interprets and re-explains what has happened.”

~ Peter Burke ~

History is not a unified discourse, where the telling of which reflects a cohesive and organised chain of events. This is not to say, however, that all is chaos and that there are infinite, purely idiosyncratic histories about a single occurrence. Rather, specific episodes unfold about which generalisations can be made, and it is these that require discussion and consideration. Furthermore, historical information is largely based on narratives told, and interpretations made, by people. These narratives and interpretations take many forms, and are dependent upon the multilayered identities of those who relay them. The process of reconstructing what has passed is ongoing and subject to frequent shifts and changes depending on the circumstances (Gilbert 2005).

As people remember and relate experiences, the details of what they encountered undergo reinterpretation. This forms part of people's ongoing struggle with making sense of what happened to them. In addition, when telling their story, people reconstruct and interpret events according to their agendas: they could emphasise certain points, while consciously or subconsciously misrepresenting or even omitting others. In the context of 'retelling' the border war, the reconstruction of events could be shaped and informed by survivor's guilt; shame for acts committed that were necessary for survival at the time, but which would be judged negatively in a 'civilized' society; severe trauma which hampers recollection of crucial events; and even problems with remembering events which took place more than 20 years ago. Therefore, when using this information as part of the content of a dissertation such as this one, it must be approached with care and discretion.

This project delved into an episode in history which has largely been neglected by post-apartheid South African society. In fact, the border war is one of many acts of the apartheid government which is viewed with contempt by the current regime, as it was waged in the

interests of upholding apartheid and suppressing liberation movements. This understandable, but neglectful attitude towards the border war was demonstrated when a monument, erected in Pretoria by the current regime, naming those who died ‘in the struggle for the nation’s liberation’, left off the names of those who lost their lives in the border war. Naturally, taking this stance is a favourable perspective in the new South Africa: viewing the war, and all who sustained it, as immoral, complies with the view held by most South Africans that everything apartheid stood for was evil.

In response to the erection of this monument, outraged veterans of the conflict unofficially erected a monument close by, commemorating those who lost their lives during the conflict. These veterans believe that by fighting the Russians, Cubans and black liberation movements until the collapse of Communism, the SADF made the circumstances more favourable for a political transition in South Africa. The veterans argue their contribution to building the new South Africa has not been recognised by the current regime (Baines 2009). The two monuments, which stand only a few hundred meters apart, highlight the tension surrounding this unresolved issue: how the border war, and those who lost their lives fighting it, should be remembered when the principles upon which it was based offend the majority of South Africans.

It is vitally important that the voices of all South Africans are heard in the interests of reconciliation and nation-building. Although this task might seem impossible, a platform which addresses the social issues involved with political transition must be made available to South Africans. This is one of the reasons why projects such as this are vitally important. During the personal communications held with 20 ex-soldiers, I realised that there lies dormant in many, feelings of, amongst others, betrayal and fear. Betrayal, because they

sacrificed several years of their young lives in the interests of keeping South Africa 'safe' from the 'communists' and black liberation movements. At the end of the war, they were proffered no acceptable explanation as to why they were required to hand over power to the very people from whom they were protecting the country. Fear, because they could be held accountable by the new regime for gross human rights violations. As the personal communications unfolded, in addition to the feelings mentioned above, many ex-soldiers felt relieved by the opportunity simply to tell their story to a 'willing' listener.

My journey began with a frame of reference which almost entirely excluded the possibility that white soldiers may have been victims of apartheid, and more specifically, the border war. At the outset, I accepted that there was a possibility that my initial presumptions could be challenged by the outcomes of the interview process. As such, I reasoned that the only other outcome possible was that soldiers, in their resentment of conscription, united in their resistance thereof, and used music to give expression to their experiences of the border war. Nevertheless, I maintained the view that, although the soldiers may have experienced a certain degree of trauma, this was far outweighed by the benefits they enjoyed as South African citizens, courtesy of the apartheid regime.

Listening to the recorded first few personal communications clearly revealed my attitude, which could be summed up as patronising, although I did not realise it at the time of the personal communications. I swiftly became aware that the only way I could extract the maximum information from the interviewees was to embrace the notion that there are several versions of history, and that although there were countless benefits which whites enjoyed during apartheid, from a broader perspective there was no one who gained totally from apartheid. By accepting this point of view, as far as I was able, it became increasingly clear

that the outcomes were not wrong, but different to what I expected, and more importantly, necessary in understanding how music was useful to soldiers in their survival of the war, and to the government in their selling of it.

Music is an enormously malleable discourse. Delivered to soldiers via radio stations, it became a valuable agent for the government, because it acted as an aesthetic device which instilled trust that the government's policies were necessary and the border war was legitimate. Although the degree to which white soldiers were receptive to the government's use of music via the SABC and radio stations was dependent upon their situatedness and background, many ex-soldiers noted in their personal communications that they truly believed that the country was under threat from 'communists' and black liberation movements, and that they had a role to play in protecting the country from almost certain ruin. Music, and other aesthetic devices, were used to consistently enhance this perception. Radio was instrumental in bringing these devices to the soldiers, and in framing the contexts in which they were heard.

Thus, the government's campaign to sell the war proved successful to a certain extent. Music was essential to this campaign, because it could covertly and subtly steer the opinions of many listeners. The previous historical and social meanings and associations attributed to music helped inform the attitudes and frame the perceptions of many white soldiers. Nevertheless, there were many instances where soldiers recognised the propaganda in the music and dedication programmes, advertisements, and news broadcasts, and therefore did not buy into the government's campaign to sell the war.

In many cases, the very same music which was aimed at shaping white soldiers' perceptions of the border war, the 'communists' and black liberation movements, was put to use by soldiers as a means to negotiate and control the space they occupied. A great deal of what was heard on the radio had been accessed by many soldiers before they were conscripted into the army, and therefore carried meanings and significance associated with experiences had in the outside world. Therefore, music was able to evoke memories, restore familiarity, security and continuity, and create a link between soldiers and their loved ones in the outside world. Music was often used to fill the time and occupy their minds, such that modes of agency shifted and the ways soldiers engaged with their environment changed. Music was used to negotiate, and sometimes even escape, the harsh reality of being at war, due to its ability to function multi-dimensionally over time and space.

Many soldiers occupied a complex environment where their beliefs were often in conflict with their emotions. Many believed that the war was necessary and legitimate; however, the exhaustion of training and combat, as well as experience of being removed from familiar and safe environments, had an effect on their commitment to, and support of, the border war. It is for this reason that government had to put into place several measures which would counteract the personal turmoil many soldiers were experiencing. In addition, there were many soldiers whose beliefs were entirely contradictory to those of apartheid. In such cases, recorded and live music was useful to these men in that they were able to give expression to their frustration and anger at conscription and the futility of the war.

The body of this work does not exhaust the numerous ways in which music can be put to use by people during times of war. Indeed, it is specific to the South African border war, and the ways in which music was used to sell and survive it; however, it adds to an existing body of

knowledge which illuminates the ways in which people and expert systems can use music (and other aesthetic devices) during times of conflict to create spaces and negotiate experiences. Furthermore, this project aimed to draw attention to the fact that there are precious few platforms in the new South Africa where people are able to express their experiences of apartheid. Whilst the nature of this project is limited to giving only ex-solders a platform to retell their experiences of the army and how they survived it through the use of music, amongst other discourses, it is very important that this project is seen as part of a process where everyone who lived under apartheid rule would be able to express how they survived the regime. Embracing the numerous versions of history makes for a multilayered and complex understanding of the grey zone that constituted life, for all South Africans, under apartheid rule.

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Appendix 1

Questionnaire

Background

What is your name?
When were you born?
Where in South Africa do you come from?
Do you have siblings, and if so, how many?
What is the age difference between you?
What did your parents do for a living?
What was the financial situation like when you were still at school?
Did you move around a lot when you were at school, or did you live in the same town or city for most of your childhood?
What were your and your family's religious affiliations when you were still at school?
Were you active church goers, and if so, were you or your parents involved in any duties at church?
Were you aware of any political affiliations or beliefs that your parents might have had when you were at school, and if so, can you think of any examples that demonstrate these?
Did you have any particular political viewpoints at this time, and if so, how do you think your parents' affected your own?
What school(s) did you go to?
What was your experience of school as a child?
What kinds of extramural activities were you involved with at school?
Were you ever part of Scouts or *Voortrekkers*, or participate in any other cultural activities like music lessons outside of school time?
What did you and your siblings and/or friends do for entertainment purposes?
Have you travelled much since you left school, and if so, where did you travel to, and what was the purpose of your travel?
Did you go to university, and if so, which university did you go to?
What did you study?
What extracurricular activities did you take part in?
How long did you study for?
Did you remain at the same university?
What happened after you left university: did you begin working straight away in the field you studied?
What do you do for a living now?
Where do you live?
Are you married?
Do you have children, and if so, how old are they?

Knowledge about the war

Was the war on the northern border of Namibia, and South Africa's involvement in Rhodesia something which you were directly aware of whilst you were growing up?
Can you remember how and when you were made aware of its existence?
Can you remember the extent to which the media paid attention to the war and its proceedings?

Were you aware of there being any radio programs that hosted discussions which overtly expressed opinions about the war, if so can you remember which they were?

Was music ever played before, during, or after these programs?

What kinds of songs were played on these programs?

In hindsight (or even at the time), do you feel that these songs perhaps enhanced the message of the discussions, or that of the government in any way?

Can you remember Vorster, Botha, or Malan, in their capacity as prime minister during the period of war, making any speeches about South Africa's foreign policy regarding the war, or nationalism? If so, can you remember the broad outline, or details about the speech?

What were your parents' responses to the war and how did they demonstrate this?

How did your extended family demonstrate their response to the war, if at all?

Can you remember if any of your friends' parents ever spoke about the war, and if so, what was said about it?

Did the teachers at the school(s) that you attended ever discuss the war during class, and if so, what did they say about it?

Did you have any family members who fought in the war before you?

Conscription

What was their personal response to the war when they were first conscripted?

Did they correspond much with you or your family whilst they were in training or in combat?¹

Did they return before you left for training?

How did they react to your being conscripted?

What was their opinion of, and reaction to the war subsequent to having fought in it?

How do they find talking about their experiences of fighting in the war?

Can you remember when the war first began?

How old were you when this happened?

Can you remember what your parents felt about it?

Do you remember any conversations between your parents and/or the friends of your parents that surrounded the outbreak of the war?

Can you remember how the newspapers responded to this?

Were there any radio programs which you and/or your family listened to at this time which dealt with the topic of war?

Can you remember what the various public opinions were about this war?

What was your own opinion on the matter?

To what extent do you think your age or others' opinions influenced your opinion?

Did your outlook on the war change at all during the years leading up to your conscription?

If so, how did they change, and why do you think these changes occurred?

During the period of the war, were you aware of the government and ministry of defence being involved in campaigns to encourage young men to fight for their country, and to create a positive attitude toward conscription and the war effort?

How did they go about doing so?

Did they make public addresses, or any such thing, and if so, where were these held?

Did you ever attend these?

To what extent do you think the media were involved in this campaign? Did they promote an idealistic notion of men becoming heroes because they were bravely defending their country and family?

What was your reaction to this campaign?
How did you feel when you knew you were going to defend your country in Namibia?
What was your reaction when you were conscripted?
How did this process work? Did you receive forms in the post, or did you have to collect them from a particular venue?
What was the general consensus amongst your friends and peers about conscription?
How did your parents react to your conscription?

Music

Did you listen to the radio much when you were at school, and if so, what kinds of programs did you listen to?
What types of music did you listen² to?
How was this music made available to you?
Were you able to purchase LP's or cassettes?
Did your parents buy very much recorded music?
What kinds of music did they enjoy listening to?
Which bands, singers, or songs stand out in your memory as being particularly meaningful to you during your school years?
Which were your favourite, and why?
Where did you hear these songs?
When were they played: were there particular times or places that these songs were played because they were particularly meaningful to the occasion? For example, did your group of friends have a song, or a few songs that were played at particular times?

Training:

When did you go to the army – was it before or after you went to university?
Where did you do your training?
How long did this training last?
Can you mention some exercises or practices that were part of the training process?
How was a 'regular' day in training structured?
Can you remember the men that trained you: what were they like?
How were you and the other young men treated during your training?
Can you think of any examples to demonstrate this?
How did you react to this kind of treatment?
Were you given much free time, and when was this time generally given?
How many soldiers were there in the training camps at one time?
EITHER:
Did you find that there was a feeling of unity amongst the soldiers – a kind of "were in this together" attitude?
How was this demonstrated: what factors played a role in creating and maintaining this feeling of unity?
Do you think that music played a role in making the soldiers feel this way?
OR:
Was there much group division or social cliques and alliances which prevented the intermingling of soldiers amongst one another?

Are you able to describe some of these groups: on what grounds or basis were they defined and maintained?

Did music play a role in creating and maintaining the boundaries of these divisions?

Did you make friends easily?

Were some of your peers and friends that you knew previously in training with you?

Was this the first time you were away from your family?

How did you experience being away from home and your family?

Are you still in touch with some of the men with whom you were in training?

Entertainment and music radio:

What kinds of entertainment were provided for the soldiers-in-training?

Were you allowed to bring your own music into the training camps?

Were there restrictions on what kinds of music were allowed into the camps, and if so, what were these restrictions, and were you given reasons for them?

What kinds of music were brought into the camps by soldiers? Can you remember any songs or bands in particular that you listened to during training?

Was there a radio, tape recorder or record player available for you to play your own music on?

Where was this situated?

Were you allowed to have your own private radio, tape recorder or record player in your room, and if not, what was the reason for this?

Were there particular times of the day, or during your training when music was not allowed to be played?

Why do you think this was?

Were there particular times of the day, or during your training, when radio music programs were selected, or when music was played over tape recorders or record players, by people other than the soldiers-in-training?

Who were these people?

What kinds of music was played, or radio music programs selected, at these times?

Was there a dramatic difference between the music that either the soldiers-in-training would have chosen, or particular groups of soldiers-in-training would have chosen, and this music?

What were these differences?

Did this music represent anything to you?

Do you think that there were specific reasons for these particular types of music to be played, and if so, what were these reasons?

Can you remember any songs or bands that were featured during these times?

Did you notice whether or not, over time, the music chosen by these people changed during your training period, or were the music selections fairly repetitive?

How did you respond to this music that was not selected by the soldiers?

How did others respond to it?

Were there specific radio music programs that seemed to be geared towards the soldiers, and if so, what were the names of these music programs?

Which radio stations broadcast these music programs?

Can you remember any songs or bands that were played frequently on these programs?

Did these programs allow for listeners to make song requests?

To whom did these requests usually go out?

Were there many that were made to soldiers either on the border or in training?

What kinds of messages came with the requests?

Can you remember anything about the presenters?

What kinds of dialogue did they initiate during the programs: did these programs broadcast mainly music, or were there other features, such as debates or news bulletins?

Were there any references to the war on these programs, and if so, what was the content of these references?

What was your response to these radio programs?

Was there a similar response from others or were there differing responses?

Were you ever aware of spokespersons representing the government, ministry of defence or ministry of foreign affairs making public addresses via these programs?

If these said spokespersons were addressing the public via other radio stations or programs not commonly listened to by the soldiers during the training period, would this be played to the soldiers?

Is there anything else you would like to mention or speak about?

Appendix 2

Contents of Recordings

Compact Disc 1

1. The Longest Day (Instrumental version)
2. Military march used to introduce the news bulletins of the English Service of Radio South Africa
3. English Service of Radio South Africa news bulletin on the Apollo 11 mission, 21 July 1969 (Please note that tracks 3 and 4 are the same, but comprise of a number of clips from Springbok Radio and the English Service of Radio South Africa. Both the quotes to which tracks 3 and 4 refer appear on the same track.)
4. Springbok Radio news bulletin on the Apollo 11 mission, 21 July 1969
5. *Ride Safe* advertisement on Springbok Radio
6. The Flames – For Your Precious Love

Compact Disc 2

1. Queen – I Want To Break Free
2. Cindy Lauper – Girls Just Want to Have Fun
3. Bob Dylan – Knocking on Heaven's Door
4. Sonia Herholdt – Ek Verlang Na Jou
5. Led Zeppelin – Stairway to Heaven
6. Led Zeppelin – Black Dog
7. Deep Purple – Smoke on the Water
8. Steely Dan – Do It Again
9. Eric Clapton – Same Old Blues