'Becoming citizens': young people making sense of citizenship on a South African community radio station youth show

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Abstract

This research set out to investigate the role that community radio can potentially play as a space in which young people engage with their own role as citizens and, in so doing, participate in discussions that seek to address social problems in a community divided by class, income, gender and race. The study examines how a local community radio station – *Radio Grahamstown* – developed a youth programme *Y4Y* in which the producers of the show and its audience came together to *negotiate* the meaning of citizenship. The study examines whether this interactive programme was able to function as something like a public sphere where in young people were able to develop a greater sense of agency, at least in the realm of citizenship.

Using evidence gathered through focus group discussions with a group of young school-going learners, interviews conducted with the producers of the show *Y4Y,* and drawing on Dahlgren's elaboration of a functional public sphere, the research concludes that the show provided a useful platform for Grahamstown high school students to develop their own notions of citizenship and to, at least partially and tentatively, build some 'bridges' across the vectors of socio-economic division in the town. However, the research also concludes that the *Y4Y* producers often failed to use a mode of address contemporary to the youth and often did not use production techniques congruent with young people's cultural tastes. This limited the programme's appeal and its potential as an enabler of discussion about notions of citizenship and as a platform for social bridging. In addition, because of the producers' control over the choice of topics put up for discussion, open interaction was more limited than could have been expected. In addition, the study also concludes that various limitations to the learners' freedom of expression (including their fear that teachers might be listening in to the shows) inhibited the programme's role as a deliberative public sphere where issues could be aired, common ground found, and solutions discussed.

List of Acronyms used in this study

ANC — African National Congress

DET — Department of Education and Training

DSG — Diocesan School for Girls

DSTV — Digital Satellite Television

ECA — Electronic Communications Act

ETV — Entertainment Television

IBA — Independent Broadcasting Authority

ICASA — Independent Communications Authority of South Africa

IEA — International Education Association

MNET — Electronic Media Network

NP — National Party

SABC — South African Broadcasting Corporation

SADTU — South African Democratic Teacher's Union

VG — Victoria Girls

Y4Y — Youth for Youth (radio show)

CONTENTS

Chapter 1: Background and Context

Introduction

This study seeks to investigate the role that community radio can potentially play as a space in which young people engage with their own role as citizens and, in so doing, participate in discussions that seek to address social issues in a community divided by class, income, gender, age and race. It seeks to examine how *Radio Grahamstown's* youth programme *Y4Y* – aired in 2010 and 2011, operated as a site in which the producers of the show and its audience *negotiated* the meaning of citizenship. The study seeks to examine whether the programme afforded young people, and in particular, young African learners in Grahamstown, a greater sense of agency in real terms, at least in the realm of citizenship and whether some of that agency derived from, or was involved with, the opportunity to meet and interact with other young people from across class and race lines.

This initial chapter provides some context and background to this study, and outlines the rationale for this study's focus on young people and community radio. The chapter then discusses the importance of the media in enabling citizen participation in formulating solutions to social challenges, in terms of some theories of the various normative roles of media. This normative discussion is briefly assessed against an overview of the real-world role of media in South Africa and, within this, popular media's overall role in facilitating citizen participation, with an emphasis on young people. This is followed by a more focussed discussion on the potential of community radio in this regard. Thereafter the chapter provides some background and context of the community within which this study is located. The chapter ends with an outline of the other chapters of this thesis.

Social Background and Context

South Africa's history of conquest and colonialism continues to impact on currently lived reality, even after 17 years of democracy. Three hundred and fifty years of subjugation created deep structural cleavages in society. As is well known, the first sustained interaction between Africans and Europeans in South Africa dates from 1652 with the arrival of Dutch traders at what was to become Cape Town, established to facilitate trade between Europe and the East (Ross 2000:21-53). From that time, European power expanded inland to exploit South Africa's rich natural and mineral resources (Development Report 2005:3). To maintain control over these resources, a system of control, based on ethnic division and racist

ideology, underpinned by violence, was put in place culminating in the Nationalist Party (NP)'s policy of apartheid, which was formally introduced in 1948. Apartheid divided people by racial and ethnic categories, regimented black South Africans in ethnic 'homelands', tied them up in bureaucratic and legal constraints, destroyed communities, and centralised political control in a harshly authoritarian system (Welsh 1994:40; see also Ross 2000:114-162). The apartheid system only came to an end as official policy in 1994 with the advent of democracy in South Africa (Ross 2000:163-197; Jacobs 2003:46).

Post-apartheid South Africa is bedevilled by many social problems, many of which have their roots in the colonial and apartheid era (Magubane 1994:1; see also Olorunnisola et al. 2011:1-11). These problems include among others, a still pernicious "...inter-racial and inter-ethnic tensions... (and a) lack of respect and hostility toward people who have different racial, cultural, linguistic, religious and political identities..." (Zegeye and Harris 2003:3). Today, race is still a strong vector of inequality in this country and income inequality is more marked in South Africa than in most other countries (Bhorat and van der Westhuizen 2011). This inhibits the ability of people from different racial and ethnic backgrounds to empathise with one another across social and economic divides (Bentley 2005:6). This, many suggest, arises from the reality that the end of apartheid has not translated into significantly improved material conditions for the majority of South Africans (Development Report 2005:3). As noted in the National Planning Commission's Diagnostic Report, "for those South Africans who are excluded from the formal economy, live in informal settlements, depend on social services which are either absent or of very poor quality; the political transition is yet to translate into a better life" (Diagnostic Report Overview 2011:7). According to the report, unemployment patterns are also heavily skewed in favour of men over women, and white over black (Human Conditions Diagnostic Report 2011:4). Thus, in the new South Africa, there are some people who experience a fuller sense of citizenship, while others, are marginalised or excluded from such an identity, despite the legal equalities enshrined in the constitution (see Duncan 2001b:3).

People create their own meanings from the socio-economic disparities in South Africa, and some of these meanings are mediated through the media, and not least community media. A key challenge for those seeking, for whatever reason, to ameliorate social division is to find ways of creating dialogue across social divides through which issues can be raised, some kind of common ground can be negotiated, and some common action contemplated. Through playing this kind of role, the media overall might be able to help reduce social

divisions and create a space for better understanding of others in ways that foster what Curran has described as "empathetic insights" between different sections of society (1997:126; see also Duncan 2001b:3).

The role of media and radio in particular, as a way of tackling these kinds of ongoing society-wide issues and legacies of apartheid is of central interest to this research. The research assumes that there is still enough political and social space (and goodwill) for current social problems to at least be raised, discussed through active citizen participation, and some solutions sought, and that the media can and does play a critical role in facilitating this participation (see Harcup 2011; Habermas 2006; Dahlgren 2002; Christians et al. 2009). More localised, community media, this chapter suggests, is more likely to achieve this active engagement, compared to national media.

A key working assumption of this study is that youth programmes that address issues of concern to the youth (and which use techniques that accommodate youth media use patterns) stand a better chance of engaging these youth and facilitating the creation of a sense of citizenship and civic mindedness. This assumption is tested by examining the meanings that the youth make of the *Y4Y* programme in the context of the intentions of its producers. This research is thus an examination of the way the audience's meaning-making of *Y4Y* happens and is negotiated between the youthful audiences/participants themselves, and between the youthful audiences and the programme producers.

Young people negotiating poverty and inequality

While women, the youth, ethnic and linguistic minorities are often ignored in community affairs (see Howley 2010:1-12; Howley 2007:342), it has also been suggested that this leads to unviable solutions. Alumuku, for example asserts "no community can change and develop equitably and satisfactorily without the active and informed participation of its women, youth, and minority groups" (2006:39). But in the many conceptualisations of citizenship and the participation of citizens in socio-economic and political processes, young people in particular are often not considered as active and independent opinion makers (Banda 2009:16). Worse, they are often constructed, in the media, as dangerous, criminal, decadent and therefore a menace to society (Diouf 2003:4-10). Young people are also generally excluded from dominant forms of 'political talk' and as a result often become alienated from the notion of political involvement (Buckingham 1998:2; Mindich 2005). A survey by the International Education Association (IEA) conducted in Australia showed, for

instance, that young university students are "largely disinterested in government" (Bennett 2008:8). It is further noted that such disinterest not only applies to politics in the narrow sense of the process of collective decision-making about governmental and state affairs but more generally to a "…way of talking together about the process of our common life" (Curran 1997:126 quoting Raymond Williams). While the South African ruling party's (ANC) Youth League, for example, might create an impression that the youth are a powerful component of the South African political ecosystem, this is not entirely the case in practice. High rates of poverty and high unemployment arguably undermine the material basis for greater levels of youth participation in formal politics. According to the Human Conditions Diagnostic Report, about 50 percent of school leavers aged between 15 and 24 experience unemployment (2011:4). The report paints a grim picture about the implications of this scenario saying:

> South Africa risks having 60 percent of an entire generation of young people live life not having ever held a formal job. This time bomb is the single greatest risk to social stability in South Africa. (Human Conditions Diagnostic Report 2011:4)

While this material deprivation might spur a great deal of dissatisfaction, young people – particularly those under the age of 21, and those at school – are largely absent from national debate. A preliminary look at the research data for this study shows that before the *Y4Y* show began, and to a certain extent, even regardless of any media, the youth in Grahamstown generally felt that they were closed out of community issues and communal deliberation. This is partly because there is often a disconnect between platform creators and providers and youth cultures and mores. As Everatt argues:

> The need for youth development is clear – unemployment is high and growing, HIV infection is extremely high, educational opportunities have been missed by many, and rape and violence is widespread. But those programmes have to be based on a sound understanding of youth cultures as they are – not as we want them to be or as we think they ought to be. (Everatt 2000: 25)

It is precisely in the context of these circumstances that this study is concerned with young people's engagement as citizens in formulating solutions to social problems affecting them and the rest of the country in general. Well-intentioned youth can contribute to raising and addressing issues related to failing public systems (Kim and Sherman 2006:3), such as the

current national education crisis, which is particularly acute in the Eastern Cape (Hendricks 2008)[7].

The status of the youth as citizens can be understood in two broad ways, described by Vinken (2007) as 'minimal' and 'maximal' definitions. The minimal definition of youth as citizens perceives them as "incomplete and immature versions of adults and impose an adult centred view of appropriate involvement in which young people have had no determining role" (Vinken 2007:49). By contrast, Vinken suggests a more maximal definition that perceives "younger generations as already valuable and valued citizens" (2007:49).

Young people enter the public realm by participating and taking responsibility in public life. This in turn is important because the term citizen "...refers to those members of society who actively participate in actions that reshape their own identities, the identities of others, and their social environment, through which they produce power" (Rodriguez 2001:19), and if youth are able to do this, they are able to start claiming a more maximalist sense of citizenship. The media can be a vitally important vehicle through which these public discourses can be facilitated.

The Media and Citizen Participation

The media in any society performs a number of roles for its citizens, and these include "delivering information in terms of programming that contributes to individuals forming their own informed public opinions" (Fourie 2004), and giving people or citizens access to "information, advice, and analysis that will enable them to know what their personal rights are and allow them to pursue them effectively" (Murdock 1992:21). In addition, media provide platforms for people to "engage the community and society in which they are embedded" (Christians et al. 2009:124). To play this kind of role as a platform for engagement, the pursuit of rights, and access to useful information, Murdock argues that citizens:

> ...must have access to the broadest possible range of information, interpretation and debate in those areas that involve public political choices, and they

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[7] Major problems with the education system in the Eastern Cape include highly politicised unions, severe under-staffing of teachers, lack of transport for about 100,000 pupils, the stopping of the School Nutrition Programme and poor infrastructure (SADTU 2011; Mail & Guardian 2011). The severity of this education crisis should be understood in the context of the Eastern Cape being one of the poorest provinces in South Africa and having among the highest percentage of impoverished people in South Africa (Tempest 2006:175).

must be able to use communication facilities in order to register criticism and propose alternative courses of action...they must be able to recognise themselves and their aspirations in the range of representations on offer within the central communications sectors and be able to contribute to developing and extending these representations. (1992:21)

These media roles are important because, as Murdock and Golding argue, citizens in a democracy are entitled to "rights to explanation of patterns, processes and forces shaping the present and of its links with the past helping transfer information and experience into knowledge and developing personal and social strategies and rights to participation..." (1989; Murdock 1996). In the post-apartheid South African context, the role envisaged for the mass media by policy makers is even more instrumentally constructed. With particular regard to broadcasting, some have proposed this platform should "...act as the medium of national unification and democratic citizenship" (Barnett 1999:640; see also the South Africa Broadcasting Policy Green Paper 1997). In the South African context for instance, the Electronic Communications Act (2005) and the Icasa Amendment Act (2006), which regulate and control all broadcasting and telecommunications activities in the country, seek to contribute to "democracy, nation-building, the provision of education and strengthening the moral fibre of society; encourage ownership and control of broadcasting by people from historically disadvantaged communities..." (South Africa Yearbook 2009/2010).

Democratic citizenship involves conceiving of oneself "as a participant in a collective undertaking" (Harcup 2011:17). Although citizenship may be awarded by "birth or residence in a particular nation state, active citizenship requires the use of human agency..." (Harcup 2011:17). The centrality of the media to enabling this agency and active citizenship has been extensively argued for by many scholars (Christians et al. 2009:20; Dahlgren 2002; see also Habermas 1989; McChesney 1999:2). However, commercial media, public media and community media interact with citizens in different ways. The inherent characteristics of these kinds of media shape their abilities to meet or not meet the demands of democratic practice.

A more detailed discussion of the relationship between communication and citizenship in a democracy will be outlined in Chapter Two's discussion of notions of citizenship and the public sphere.

The Media in South Africa

The actual practice of the media in democratic societies generally falls short of the broad normative ideals outlined above. A number of factors influence media operations and their ability and commitment to playing a citizenship-facilitating role. These include, among others, ownership and control, resource allocation, media concentration, commodification and standardisation of media products (see Mosco 2009). The theoretical traditions of political economy seek to "examine the media and the nature of media activity to identify the extent of corporate reach, the 'commodification' of media products and the changing nature of state and government intervention" (Williams 2003:72). The notion of commodification is important, as it goes to the heart of what media in South Africa is and is not able to do, in terms of being democracy-enhancing platforms. In this conception, private media business are preoccupied with or driven by profit motives which in turn drives them towards valuing content and audiences primarily in terms of their potential to generate profits (see Mosco 2009). This becomes the overriding concern. Commodification, in this view, is a process of "turning use values into exchange values, transforming products whose value is determined by their ability to meet individual and social needs into products whose value is set by their market price" (Mosco 2009: 128). This has various consequences. Some have argued that the commodification of media content leads to its standardisation where although there are many "communication goods" in circulation, in Williams's conception, many of them are "versions of the same product in a variety of packages" (2003:81).

The major consequence of commodification is the media's departure from performing roles that enhance citizen participation. In this process, audiences become consumers and not citizens (see Carey 1993), and content that 'interests the public' becomes dominant over that which is 'in the public interest' (see Curran 1986). The media also tends to underfund public or community service programming preferring instead entertainment programmes which are attractive to audiences thereby boosting advertising revenue (Entman 2005:260-262). From this, it is argued by scholars within the Political Economy tradition that media systems "organised on commercial lines cannot guarantee the cultural resources for effective citizenship..." (Murdock 1992:38) and this case can be strongly made for South Africa.

The tendencies outlined above are not limited to private or commercial media, but unfortunately to public media as well. Due to competition for audiences and dwindling financial support, public broadcasters have also resorted to following the commercial models

which value sensational stories, are driven towards entertainment programming and use tried and tested formulae of production which attract audiences, and, in turn, advertising revenue (see McChesney 2004:145-174). Some critics have argued that this leads to fewer public interest programmes as they are deemed to be costly to make. In this regard, Croteau and Hoynes point out that the commercial imperative in media operations "...not only weakens journalism, but blurs the boundaries between news and entertainment, creating lots of 'infotainment', but little useful news for active citizens" (2007:50).

Commenting on the same issue Franklin also notes that because of the commercial rationale "...entertainment has superseded the provision of information; human interest has supplanted the public interest; measured judgment has succumbed to sensationalism; the trivial has triumphed over the weighty; the intimate relationships of celebrities from soap operas, the world of sport or the royal family are judged more 'newsworthy' than the reporting of significant issues and events of international consequence" (2008:13), thus marginalising citizen centred content.

In addition to these limitations, the diversity of opinions and information in the media is also limited by concentration of media ownership. Critics of concentration argue that it enables companies to "...better control the production, distribution, and exchange of communication, and also limits competition and therefore the diversity of information and entertainment available in society" (Mosco 2009:158-159). The South African media is highly concentrated in the hands of a few private companies. The print media is dominated by three media behemoths, AVUSA, Naspers and Independent Newspapers, a foreign owned conglomerate owning the majority of English language publications in South Africa. However, Independent newspapers also own publications in isiZulu and some targeted at the Indian population as well as community and tabloid newspapers (see Independent News and Media PLC 2012; Media Club South Africa 2012). [8] Community print media is dominated by Caxton's free-sheet operation, with over 120 titles printed by Caxton across the country. Television broadcasting is mainly dominated by the public broadcaster, the SABC, and to a lesser extent the private broadcaster eTV. Another much smaller but no less significant service, is the pay per view platform provided by Multichoice (Media Club South Africa 2012). The SABC also dominates radio broadcasting, followed by a number of commercial

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[8] This is a significant factor because large foreign owned media which invest widely may stifle the growth of local media both at national or localised levels (see Herman and Chomsky 1988).

radio stations and several community radio stations which cater for specific audiences (Media Club South Africa 2012). This dominance of large national players means there is arguably less space for content that addresses issues at a localised so-called 'grassroots' level.

Despite this concentration, there has also been a resurgent sense of optimism about newer avenues of possible popular participation with the advent of what has sometimes been called 'popular media' such as tabloid journalism. Somewhat ironically, these have been developed and produced largely by South Africa's largest media company, Naspers, but despite this, scholars have argued that this kind of popular media could play a positive role in encouraging political debate, providing information for development, or critique the very definitions of 'democracy' and 'development' (see Wasserman 2011; Fiske 1989a; Dahlgren 2002).

However, while some scholars argue that tabloids in South Africa, which are largely a post-apartheid phenomenon, respond with more alacrity to issues that are of concern to ordinary people (see Wasserman 2010; 2011), it can still also be argued that literacy, usually in English, remains a barrier to some people in terms of access to information and participation through the media (see Duncan 2001b:1). It has also been argued that newspapers are more likely to be regularly read by better-educated groups (Wade and Schramm 1969:198), which marginalises illiterate and semi-literate members of society.

Broadcast media by contrast, transcend the literacy barrier thus making them an ideal platform for including the largest possible number of citizens by sensitising the public's awareness of development needs and projects, mobilising participation and playing a significant role in nation building (Fourie 2004:2; Duncan 2001b:1). In addition to its ability to transcend literacy barriers, broadcasting consumption by one person does not preclude its consumption by another because "it does not matter how many thousands there may be listening; there is always enough for others, when they wish to join in" (Reith 1924:217). While this may not be true with pay per view satellite television side of broadcasting, it is to a larger extent true with public and community broadcasting as they are mandated to serve the public interest (see Raboy 1996).

Community Radio: Practice and Potential

During the transitional period that saw the country become a democratic state, the Independent Broadcasting Authority (IBA) was setup to regulate broadcasting in the "public interest as provided for in the South African Constitution" (South African Broadcasting Policy 1997). It was also the institutionalisation of the IBA that saw the end of the "near-monopoly state of the broadcasting system and opened the radio and television markets to competition" (South African Broadcasting Policy 1997). Prior to the country becoming a democratic state, the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC), was the most dominant broadcasting media institution, and was then, before 1994, "a bastion of the apartheid state and a mouth piece for the ruling NP" (Barnett 1999:274). It was run by the state and imbued with British colonial ideology as well as, later, playing an explicit role in promoting apartheid ideologies (Fourie 2004), speaking of ideas of "separation and division" (Barnett 1999:276), and therefore neglecting its role of providing information to all citizens regardless of their race and ethnic backgrounds.

The post-apartheid broadcast reform process saw the emergence of a three-tier broadcasting system in South Africa which included at its core: public broadcasting, private broadcasting and community broadcasting (South African Broadcasting Policy 1997). After 1994, when South Africa became a democratic state, the SABC, under the ruling African National Congress (ANC) was made a public service broadcaster (Steenveld 2006:263). During a lengthy public examination, the South African parliament "endorsed the view that the SABC retain three Television channels, 11 radio stations in various languages, four commercial stations and one utility channel" (South African Broadcasting Policy 1997). It was also in the post-apartheid period and the coming into power of the African National Congress (ANC), that there was a transformation of the media industry which saw the "privatization of radio stations once owned and run by the SABC, and the addition of a new commercial station, eTV" (Steenveld 2006:263).

Private broadcasting in South Africa, just like public broadcasting was endorsed by Parliament with the decision that it needed to "bear some public service obligations, depending on their nature and the market in which they operate" (South African Broadcasting Policy 1997).

The transformation also saw the licensing of community radio stations throughout the country (Teer-Tomaselli and Tomaselli 2001:128 quoted in Steenveld 2006:263). Community broadcasting was also endorsed by parliament that proposed the development of community broadcasting by granting four-year licenses to community radio stations (South African Broadcasting Policy 1997). This was after an earlier amendment to the IBA Act which had previously only granted temporary licenses to community broadcasters (South African Broadcasting Policy 1997).

Following the changes at the SABC under the ANC government, as well as the restructuring of the broadcasting sector, the role that broadcasting institutions were now meant to play was that of ensuring "participatory democracy and decision-making that presupposes widespread access to the basic means of communication" (African National Congress 1994:133-135 quoted in Barnett 1999:275).

Community media can open some space for greater participation, and be something of an antidote to social and political structures that largely exclude young people, particularly those under voting age. It can facilitate young people's ability to claim an identity for themselves as citizens by providing a platform for them to participate actively in discussing social matters that concern them, while upholding the principles and norms of democracy (Molefe 2008:3).

The emergence of community media in South Africa was, indeed, largely due to the desire by those oppressed under apartheid to have their voices heard (Alumuku 2006:206). In post-apartheid South Africa, community radio remains relevant especially to those people who need "basic information and education and the means to interact and enrich their communities" (Alumuku 2006:210). The current South African Broadcasting Policy envisions community radio as a key tool for "meeting the needs of South Africans at a grassroots and local level" (2008), hence its importance to marginalised groups such as the youth.

There is significant evidence that in South Africa, community media and community radio in particular, has opened up a communicative space to people who generally have limited access to the media (Alumuku 2006:39). In this context, while there are a number of studies that foreground community radio stations' ability to enable young people use radio as "a powerful dialogic apparatus for communicating messages and building solidarity among members of the community at the local level" (UNESCO 2006:23), questions remain about what methods and approaches might be most effective in doing this. In the context of the

rapid growth of mobile phones and digital content, in particular, what kind of programming and what kind of presentation and participation styles might best empower young people to build bridges across social divides? How does this relate to encouraging a nascent sense of common 'citizenship'?

One of the ways of addressing these questions would be through various kinds of audience studies that examine how the youth receive and interact with media texts or programmes that address them as a social group. In other words audience studies can provide insight as to whether such programmes actually engage the youthful audiences, and with the issues raised on those programmes. This perspective is rooted in the idea that people are not simply captive subjects "positioned by media texts to accept the ideologically dominant message; they have the freedom and interpretative skills to resist and subvert the media" (Williams 2003:205-206). Audiences do not use the media in the same ways that the producers of those programmes intend them to be used (see Hall 1980). This point is elaborated by Barker and Brooks who point out that real media reception is characterised by a more complex picture of real media uses (1998:103). It is within this context that this study seeks to engage with the students and assess their real uses of the programme *Y4Y*. The idea is to examine the young people's real media use patterns so as to find out whether the programme is enhancing their social agency as citizens.

Social Setting of Study

Some background to the social setting of this study is useful to understanding the context in which the *Y4Y* programme was created. Grahamstown[9] is a city located in the Eastern Cape province of South Africa. The Eastern Cape Province is the third largest of the country's nine provinces in terms of population (Edwards 2011:123). The population growth in the province has been more or less static between 2001 (6.5 million) and 2009 (6.65 million), representing a growth of only 0.2% compared with the annual national growth rate of 1.2% (Edwards 2011:123). The explanation for the province's slow population growth is the fact that people are leaving the Eastern Cape due to under-development (Edwards 2011:123-124).

Large portions of the Eastern Cape are comprised of two former apartheid 'homelands', Ciskei and Transkei, whose development was severely neglected under the previous government (see Peires 1992; Moller 2003:54). The majority population of the Eastern Cape, one of South Africa's poorest provinces, are African and rural. Unemployment is high (Moller 2003:54).

Grahamstown is often described as a microcosm of the broader character of South Africa's apartheid legacy especially with regard to its education system (see Hendricks 2011; Brandt et al. 2005). As Lemon (2004: 278) observes starkly about the town, "the apartheid legacy could hardly be plainer". The more affluent side of Grahamstown, which was formerly inhabited by white people only, is spacious, and a host to major well resourced private and former model C schools which include among others St. Andrew's College (hereafter SAC),

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[9] Known by several names, its original name was Graham's Town, after Lieutenant-Colonel John Graham, the first British commanding officer of the Cape regiment who founded it in 1812 (Hendry and Grewar 2000:2). Other British settlers are said to have come and settled in Grahamstown in the 1820s, having fought the indigenous Xhosa people in the frontier wars around the same period (Zimasa 2005:15). Some other names associated with Grahamstown include; Rhini or Rini, a Xhosa name given to the town without a clear idea of its origin, although it is said to have likely originated from a Xhosa chief that lived in the area before the arrival of the British (Hendry and Grewar 2000:2). It also goes by the nickname the "City of Saints" because of the vast number of churches in the town (Hendry and Grewar 2000:2). The town is also popular with many South Africans and others outside of South Africa for its hosting of the National Arts Festival, the biggest cultural event of its kind in Africa, held every July of each year since it began in 1973 (Hendry and Grewar 2000:4). Such events are critical to the economy of Grahamstown, boosting its economy and development (Moller 2003:55). These festivals and others such as the National Schools' Festival are important for local young people as local schools are encouraged, according to Moller, "to participate in festivals which open up a window on the world and stimulate personal development" (2003:55).

Kingswood College, Diocesan School for Girls (hereafter DSG), Victoria Girls' High (hereafter VG) and Graeme College. Lodged between the affluent West and the impoverished African townships in the East is a 'coloured' area that also hosts Mary Waters a former coloured school which is now open to children of any background (see Lemon 2004). The grouping of schools along racial lines should be understood in the context of South Africa's recent history. Identity formations in South Africa like in any other country revolve around race. However in the South African context, the dimension of race is even more significant because of the country's history of segregation and discrimination along racial lines (Bentley and Habib 2008:8).

Linked to concerns of race in the context of South Africa, are the divisions along economic inequalities and social class which have continued to present "...an enduring marker of identity, difference, and, often, deep division", a factor which is also manifest in the schooling system as well (Bentley and Habib 2008:8). Grahamstown's African township is described as "...obviously poor, although with islands of relative affluence and some signs of improving infrastructure, including electricity, more tarred roads and telephones than previously" (Lemon 2004: 278). As Moller points out, the largest concentration of youth is in Grahamstown East, which is home to the mainly African population (2003:57). The town's population is above 100 000 and keeps growing because of Africans escaping rural poverty or workers forced to leave commercial farms by white farmers who anticipate "laws giving Africans greater rights to stay on the white farms..." (Lemon 2004:278-279). This population growth in the absence of economic growth is argued to have led to "...an estimated unemployment rate of 60-70 per cent" and as a result many families are said to survive on old age pensions (Lemon 2004:279). Therefore, Grahamstown, like many small towns in the Eastern Cape, finds itself faced with the absence of economic growth, growing unemployment and widespread poverty (Moller 2003:55; Lemon 2004:279).

The public school education sector in the province is in a desperate situation, due to a myriad of factors, and not least limited school resources, poor provision of piped water, sanitation, electricity and sufficient textbooks (Edwards 2011:124), poor management, corruption, and militant unionised teachers.

However, as bad as the province's public schools are, the state of the education system in the Eastern Cape is reflective of public education across South Africa. The 2011 "Diagnostic Report" released by the country's National Planning Commission notes that

physical asserts and infrastructure in schools remains unequal and heavily in favour of previously 'white' schools (Diagnostic Report Overview 2011:14). According to the report, about 5000 schools in South Africa are still without electricity, 500 without on-site toilets and many more without desks and chalkboards (Diagnostic Report Overview 2011:14). Furthermore, it notes that efforts to raise the quality of education for poor children have failed almost completely, across South Africa (Diagnostic Report Overview 2011:14). These problems are shared by Grahamstown, the setting of this research, and, at least anecdotally, the situation on the ground in Grahamstown schools seems to be worse than even the grim picture outlined by the government's own National Planning Commission.

Schools in the African townships are predominantly African, draw their pupils from local townships and informal settlements, and their fee levels reflect on the impoverished situation of their catchment area (Lemon 2004:284). On the other hand, the fees at private schools described as "...islands of privilege in a poor community...exclude all but the most affluent" (Lemon 2004:279). Their student population consists of a mixture of international students, South African students from outside the Eastern Cape and those native to the Eastern Cape. However, in spite of this cosmopolitan character to their student population, racial composition is still predominantly white. Academic results at these private schools are generally excellent (Lemon 2004). Of note however, is that former white state schools have desegregated further than the private schools and the fee levels are affordable to black middle class parents. For instance in 2004, Lemon points out, the enrolment of African students at Graeme College and Victoria Girls' High School (VG), constituted 45 and 95 per cent respectively (2004).

It is therefore mainly at former white and coloured schools (and essentially in the state sector) that significant enrolment across races has occurred (Lemon 2004:288). This one way desegregation process in schools was also reflected in residential areas, where blacks were now moving into formerly coloured and white areas and few if any whites moving to the townships (Lemon 2004:288). The intake patterns of African schools on the other hand remain unchanged. None of the former white and coloured schools currently teaches Xhosa as a matriculation subject (Lemon 2004:289). Even though the subject was introduced at the private schools, very few students were interested as they thought it to be "unimportant". The most promising thing about the entrance of African students into former white and coloured schools is that good friendships across race groups were formed where for example at Graeme College, township boys "visited white homes, and in some cases stayed over for

weekends" although the same could not be said of movement in the other direction (Lemon 2004:288).

With appropriate and effective means at the community's disposal, these friendships can be expanded to a broader level. At that level, the nature of the dialogue can also begin to address the very problems that still keep these youth apart from each other physically and symbolically. The youth, particularly high school students in the town are the focus of this research. The 15-19 year age group constitutes about 13 per cent of the total population of the Eastern Cape (see Statistics South Africa 2008:12), hence their importance to this research.

This brief outline of social conditions in Grahamstown highlights social problems that were borne of the apartheid era and which today keep people divided across class, racial, and ethnic lines, among others. The background also suggests the potential that is inherent in promoting interaction among young people from different racial or class groups as a way of overcoming the social and physical legacies of apartheid. The idea behind *Y4Y* is to nurture the kind of dialogue that might enable this.

Chapter Outlines

Chapter two

Chapter two expands on the conceptual issues introduced in chapter one above, particularly in terms of public sphere theory to make the case for the centrality of the media to the proper functioning of both social capital formation and democracy. The study then goes on to further problematise the media as an institution in view of the constraining factors intervening in the media's performance of roles that are consistent with democratic practice. To explain the 'gap' between the ideal expectations about the media and its actual practice, the chapter draws further on normative theories of the media and political economy to argue that, under the right circumstances, community radio can be an important component of the modern public sphere.

However, it is not enough to suggest that community radio is a better platform merely because it is not governed by the same operational conditions as commercial or public media. What happens 'on the ground' and how do we understand what 'uses' audiences make of these media platforms and what meanings they derive from the programmes targeted at them? The study briefly outlines the 'cultural studies' approach to media that seeks to understand

how and why audiences create their own meaning, and how and why this might differ from the intentionality of the producers.

Chapter three

This chapter briefly outlines the methods employed to gather and analyse the data gathered for this study. The Chapter discusses why a qualitative approach was chosen, and why the subsequent data gathering methods, such as simple observation of the production and broadcast of *Y4Y*, interviews with producers and focus groups with the students were used. The chapter also discusses the two level sampling procedure applied. The first level was used to select which schools to consider for focus groups and the second was used to select the student participants from the respective schools. It also seeks to show that the process was done in a systematic way to enhance the reliability and validity of its findings. Lastly, the chapter discusses the analytic procedures followed in the study.

Chapter four

Chapter four explores the research findings – the data generated by the focus groups -- and analyses them. The study shows how different schools with different characteristics, interacted with the *Y4Y* programme, and explores how some of the young and mostly African participants made meaning of the programme. It further explores how socio-economic and ethnic difference, appear to have sharply shaped the way various youth interacted with the programme. The chapter contrasts the stated intentions of the producers of the programme and views of young learners to explore to what extent *Y4Y* created a platform on which the youth could explore issues of their own identity and in particular, develop notions of citizenship as part of a broader creation of their identity.

Chapter five

This chapter draws out the more general implications the findings might have in terms of community radio's usefulness in engaging in particular African youth as citizens. It looks in particular at production techniques and the way they work to either attract or repel the youth to those programmes targeted at them. The chapter concludes by suggesting areas for further research.

Chapter 2: Socio–Economic Context and Theoretical Framework

Introduction

This chapter expands on some of the key conceptual issues introduced in chapter one. Many of the key terms used in this study, such as 'youth', 'democracy', 'citizenship' and 'community' require theoretical establishment, and problematisation, as they are not useful analytical categories when used just in their usual everyday senses. In addition, this chapter explores the tension and gap between idealist and normative expectations of the media, and the actual practice of media on the ground, drawing on normative theories of the media and insights from political economy. A political economy approach brings into sharp focus the constraints and contradictions of the media and some of the peculiarities of the media in South Africa. This background discussion seeks to both give credence to community radio as a platform to nurture youth citizenship while exposing the real day-to-day obstacles to doing this successfully.

Citizenship in the 'new' South Africa

Democracy has been variously understood as a government in which people exercise power directly or through representatives (VeneKlasen and Miller 2007:29), and as a system which enables citizens to communicate amongst themselves and impact on the decisions of governance. It ideally requires citizens to monitor the governing activity of those delegated (Christians et al. 2009:67), requiring both opportunities for participation and deliberation as well as, ideally, some form of 'schooling' of citizens in citizenship so that the populace has the "varied skills and values that are essential to sustaining effective participation" (Gillwald 1993:69).

Most nationalist movements in Africa, including those against apartheid in South Africa, have sought, post liberation, to reverse the bifurcated states that institutionalised separate development along racial lines (Mamdani 1996:8). However, in most post independent African states, including post-apartheid South Africa, this reversal has been partial at best. The most marginalised groups in society remain poor (and sometimes poorer) and privileged groups have retained their positions of privilege. Furthermore, as Mamdani

argues, much of this privilege is still experienced through and implicated in racial, gender and ethnic categories:

> Racial privilege not only receded into civil society, but defended itself in the language of civil rights, of individual rights and institutional autonomy...creating...a lullaby for perpetuating racial privilege. (Mamdani 1996:20-21)

In South Africa, the new democratic constitution attempted to address this directly. The constitution's core ideas revolve around nation-building, non-racialism and reconciliation (Moodley and Adam 2000:51), as well as the simultaneous pursuit of democratisation and socio-economic change. The new government likewise is overtly committed to radically improve the lives of all South Africans and in particular the poor, and to uniting a previously divided society to overcome the legacy of a history of division, exclusion and neglect (South Africa Yearbook 2010/2011:31).

Put another way, the post 1994 dispensation sought to create avenues for the assertion of agency of those citizens who were actively excluded during the apartheid era. A key thematic of the post-apartheid South African political system can be located within the republican view of a democracy where citizens are expected to be actively involved in their own governance and work out issues in a rationale, non-violent way. This kind of 'active agency' is predicated on taking "seriously each citizen's commitment to a civic culture that transcends individual preferences and private interests" (Christians et al. 2009:94) where "citizens are prepared to be moved by reasons that may conflict with their antecedent preferences and interests" (Cohen 1997b:413). In republican states such as South Africa, civic matters should be characterised by "open and robust public debate on the overall aims of society" (Christians et al. 2009:97; see also Zegeye and Harris 2003). As is explored further below, the licensing of more than 115 community radio stations can be viewed as one of South Africa's significant attempts at including the voices of previously excluded groups so as to encourage this robust public debate.

There are two major ways in which debates about citizenship revolve, neatly expressed by Kymlicka and Norman as "citizenship-as-legal-status, that is, as full membership in a particular community; and citizenship-as-desirable-activity; where the extent and quality of one's citizenship is a function of one's participation in that community" (1994:353). Active citizenship is important in any democratic political system because it enables citizens not only to claim their rights but also to act out their responsibilities (see

Lister 2003:42). Furthermore, it enables them not only to question government policies on all aspects of their socio-economic environment but also to contribute to the formulation of such policies. Active citizenship can arguably be a key vanguard against exclusion and marginalisation.

Many believe South Africa has, thus far, fallen short of these notions of active citizenship and has largely failed to create the institutions and cultures that enhance and encourage individual and collective agency. This is because, a variety of scholars argue, the settlement negotiated in 1990 to 1994 ultimately represented a compromise between sections of the white political elite and sections of the emerging African elite to preserve the economic power of the latter, while 'de-racialising' the system of capitalist accumulation (Marais 2001; Sparks 2009). South Africa's black middle class, big business, and the pre-existing white elite are the major beneficiaries of the negotiated transition, while the poor and largely black population remain in a state of poverty and exclusion. South Africa remains among the most unequal societies in the world in terms of income (Louw 2004:174), and Marais suggests that the current socio-economic and political order in South Africa "answers in the first instance, to the prerogatives of incumbent and aspirant elites..." (Marais 2001:4; Marais 2011:79).

This critique of South Africa's transition, and explanation for ongoing poverty and high levels of inequality is complex, and not the main subject of this study. The key question is, if this critique is largely correct, what are the implications of this for notions of citizenship and how people understand their own agency, ability to act in the world, and citizenship? What kind of citizenship is it that young South Africans can expect to be inducted into?

A first part of this answer is that the majority of South Africans and of young South Africans in particular, can only make sense of their citizenship in a context of both absolute and relative poverty. Declines in absolute poverty since 1995 has been significant, but declines in relative poverty have been fairly small (see Bhorat and van der Westhuizen 2011a). Despite many positive economic outcomes in post-apartheid South Africa, social exclusion and alienation persist in poor, economically marginalised communities and, in many areas, may be getting worse, especially in terms of income inequality. The effect of such marginalisation weighs heavily on young people (Human Conditions Diagnostic Report 2011:1). For example those under the age of 35 constitute more than two-thirds of the population, with about a third under the age of 15, a proportion that has remained relatively constant since 1994 (Human Conditions Diagnostic Report 2011:5). Two thirds of all

unemployed people are below the age of 35 (Human Conditions Diagnostic Report 2011:4). There is of course a close link between income poverty and deprivations in health care, education and social infrastructure which in return are also linked to lack of access to housing and land (Human Conditions Diagnostic Report 2011:2). Many studies, including those commissioned by government, suggest social conditions of the youth are a "time bomb" which poses "the single greatest risk to social stability in South Africa" (Human Conditions Diagnostic Report 2011:4). The condition of the youth in South Africa is also seen as deeply threatening to the post 1994 nation building project. As the recent Nation Building Diagnostic Report suggests:

> The inability of the economy to create jobs for young people directly threatens the delicate balance between the constitutional imperative for re-distribution, the need to escape the shadow of the past, and the need to build inclusivity for all – both black and white. (Nation Building Diagnostic Report 2011:11)

What does citizenship mean in the context of this triage of high unemployment, high levels of absolute poverty (coupled with poor education and poor social mobility prospects) and world-leading levels of inequality?

Youth and Youthfulness in South Africa

Being a 'teenager' or 'young' or part of the 'youth' is an identity. These identities are socially constructed (Hall 1992:287). Durham argues that, "people of a wide range of ages are treated as youth, and people of a wide range of ages claim the space of youth, at specific times and in specific places" (2000:113).

In South Africa, the National Youth Development Agency Act (2008) formally identifies people aged between the ages of 14 and 35 as youth. Part of the social construction of identities is the context of that construction, i.e. how societies think about and 'narrate' what youth are beyond technical definitions. In a great many societies, those under the age of 18 are ignored, marginalised and treated as secondary citizens (Durham 2000:114; Alumuku 2006:210). They are often 'talked off' pejoratively, termed rascals, hooligans, juveniles and wantons, and a 'menace' to the society (Savage 2007:34; Griffiths 1996:35). They are often not included in many citizen and community activities. This partly explains young people's absence from discursive spaces in the more formal areas of the public sphere in many societies (Diouf 2003:5).

Against this constructing context, Kirshner et al. (2003), suggest that such absences do not necessarily stop the youth from taking part in at least some of the traditional citizenship activities, such as forming party loyalties at relatively young ages. They argue that there is need to be mindful of the "multiple ways that youth come to identify with the common good and become engaged members of their communities" (Kirshner et al. 2003:1; Flanagan and Faison 2001:1). In other words, although political space is mostly closed to the youth partly as they can only vote in most societies in the world at age 18 or older, and partly due to the shallow nature of democratic practice in South Africa, this is precisely why other aspects of their identity formation arguably come more to the fore. These other elements of 'coming into being' are as elemental to the development of a political consciousness, and political notions of youth. This point is developed by Schroder who argues that:

> If instead we think of everyday behaviour as inherently political, it follows that every conversation we engage in is part of the process through which society's political life is constituted. Our everyday conversations are political not just when we are talking politics before an election, but also when we are talking to family members, friends, colleagues, about everyday social issues and choices we have to make, from the local to the global... (2000:252)

This insight provides context for the kind of themes embraced by the radio show *Y4Y* (see appendix 4). The show, although it had overt aspirations at being somewhat 'political' in the initial concepts of the producers, they found that it had to increasingly seek to rather enable 'everyday conversations' and then, through that, draw out more explicitly political themes, or, at least, seek common ground for discussions about citizenship. The 'retreat' from what can be seen as more political themes, which saw the *Y4Y* producers aiming to create something of a common public sphere for the youth of Grahamstown, is related to an environment where black youth in particular are extremely marginalised, whereas white youth are privileged and are arguably taken more 'seriously' in their own communities. But because South African youth have to inhabit the same space, such as Grahamstown and South Africa, there is a case for trying to forge, through media and other channels, opportunities for discussion and some kind of common understanding, en route to some kind of notions of citizenship that have to include all. To understand how this is to work, it is useful to draw on the public sphere theory and then look more closely at the role of the media in post-apartheid South Africa.

The Public Sphere

The concept of the public sphere was developed by German sociologist Jurgen Habermas, in his original study *The Transformation of the Public Sphere* in 1962 (Devereux 2007:106). Habermas defined the public sphere as that social space which is constituted to form public opinion, making a distinction between three types of sphere in society: the private sphere (consisting of the family and economy), the sphere of public authority (consisting of the state and the judiciary), and lastly the bourgeois public sphere (Devereux 2007:106).

The bourgeois public sphere, in its classical form, for Habermas, originates in the private realm; it is constituted by private citizens who deliberate on issues of public concern (Roberts and Crossley 2004:2). The principles of equality and accessibility are its indispensable ingredients (see Dahlgren 2002:10). In contrast to institutions that are controlled from without or determined by power relations, the public sphere promises democratic control and participation (Holub 1991:3-4).

Habermas's conception of the public sphere has been critiqued for not providing conceptual space for the development of alternative public spheres, and, more trenchantly, for idealising the bourgeois public sphere which was not as free of commercial motives as he suggested, and for rarefying the rationalism of discussion within this sphere (Garnham 1996:359-360).

Others have pointed to the class basis and patriarchal character of this formulation of the public sphere (Dahlgren 1991 in Gillwald 1993:67; Roberts and Crossley 2004:4; Fraser 1990).

In spite of the criticisms directed at Habermas's original conception of the public sphere, the concept can still be valuably used as an analytic device to think through the contemporary democratic systems in terms of how they enable the formation of group identities and facilitate collective decision making processes (Dahlgren 1991:2 cited in Gillwald 1993:67). The concept provides a useful starting perspective from which to think about the problem of democracy in the modern world (Garnham 2007:203), with particular reference to the role of the media. For example, how do the media actually enable people to talk to each other across social divides, to be represented in their diversity, and to be

informed about the world around them? As the basis for this study's analytical framework, this study draws on Dahlgren's critique and elaboration of Habermas, in terms of what the public sphere should be and should do.

Dahlgren refers to three dimensions of the public sphere that shape its democratic functionality: the structural, the representational and the interactional (2005:148-150). In addition to these is the fourth dimension which is the media's informational function. The informational dimension is concerned with the public sphere's capacity to mediate between events and sources on the one hand and individual members of the public on the other (Christians et al. 2009:139-140). In other words, the informational dimension focuses on how the media collects relevant and significant information and interprets and transmits this to its audiences. On the other hand, the interactional dimension is concerned with the media's ability to facilitate interaction among citizens in their diversity and the communicative processes of making sense, interpreting, and using media output (Dahlgren 2005:149-150). Lastly, the representational dimension draws attention to such issues as whose views and which groups are being represented in the media, who is setting the agenda and for whom is it being set, which modes of address are being used and for whom do they work (Dahlgren 2005:149).

Dahlgren's elaboration of these dimensions forms an important part of the analytical perspective of this study. For citizens to be able to have meaningful interactive dialogue, they need information about issues and events around them, as well as about other community members who may have similar or different goals. Even in their difference, community members also have shared and common goals and may through interaction discover and constitute commonalities, establish empathy for one another and work together in addressing social problems (Dahlgren 2006:274). A functional public sphere helps communities to coalesce into publics which converse, act out their civic identities and make use of their civic competencies (Dahlgren 2006:275). Collective identities are important in the sense that they help in constituting consensus on how to approach and address social problems (Cohen and Arato 1992:372). They are, in this way, core to developing social solidarity, which in turn is a cornerstone of notions of active citizenship in a democracy.

Indeed, it is important to explore the idea of social solidarity through the concept of social capital further, as this goes to the core of the Dahlgrenian idea of 'coalescence into publics'. Putnam, a leading theorist of ideas of social capital, defines social capital as those

"features of social life – networks, norms, and trust – that enable participants to act together more effectively to pursue shared objectives" (1996:3). Putnam partly draws on Bourdieu who sees social capital as a resource in both economic and cultural struggles (Siisiainen 2000:2). His idea of social capital derives the point of view of actors engaged in social struggle in pursuit of their interests (Siisiainen 2000:10). The social position of individuals or groups is seen as shaped by social resources such as economic, cultural and social capital (Bourdieu 1986). Social capital is thus a resource that is connected with group membership and social networks (Bourdieu 1986:249), although Bourdieu emphasises that "it is a quality produced by the totality of the relationships between actors, rather than merely a common 'quality' of the group (Siisiainen 2000). Siisiainen aptly elaborates the essence of Bourdieu's view of social capital thus:

> Membership in groups, and involvement in the social networks developing within these and in the social relations arising from the membership can be utilised in efforts to improve the social position of the actors...Differences in the control of social capital may explain why the same amount of economic and cultural capital can yield different degrees of profit, and different powers of influence to different actors. (2000:11-12)

Since high levels of social capital have been associated with, for example, lower crime rates, higher levels of economic prosperity, better levels of health and happiness, and more successful educational outcomes, its relevance for empirical consideration in Grahamstown via *Y4Y*, cannot be overstated (see Schuller et al. 2000:11; see also Putnam 2000).

What is also important about the notion of social capital to this research is its usefulness in conceptualising how citizenship issues can be thought and actualised at the level of civil society. Civic associations of various kinds do not only help community members acquire participatory skills and resources as well as to learn democratic norms and values, but they also "facilitate the articulation and representation of citizen interests to a democratic state" (Park and Shin 2003:4). Social capital is therefore relevant to thinking about 'active' citizenship because the propensity of civic cooperation is rooted in social attitudes, such as having faith in people, which is cultivated in turn through taking part in voluntary associations which infuse their members with habits of cooperation and norms of reciprocity conducive to civic engagement (Almond and Verba 1963). Elements of social capital such as trust, reciprocity and social networks are relevant to the construction of a healthy civil society because as Park and Shin argue:

> what really matters for civic virtues involves trust in strangers, or the people whom one does not know personally. This type of trust, which is often called generalized

trust, is built on expectation of unknown people's goodwill or benevolence. Unlike other types of trust, it requires interactions among people of heterogeneous rather than homogenous backgrounds. (2003:8)

This is in line with the character of active citizenship, a preferred notion in the study. Active citizenship stems from the general understanding that citizenship should be applied beyond the individual's direct relationship to the state to include "the great range of voluntary bodies and independent associations, and above all, to individual citizens of all ages" (Morgan 2003:28). This research prefers understandings that foreground active citizenship because it has been argued to help in building youth identities which in turn foster social cohesion and trust in society (Commission on Youth 2003:90). From the many ways in which social capital is seen to work (see Park and Shin 2003), the most relevant one in a divided society like Grahamstown is the idea of 'bridging' social capital (Schuller et al. 2000:10). Bridging social capital's pre-occupation with the establishment of connections between heterogeneous groups is juxtaposed with bonding social capital which refers to links between like minded people or the reinforcement of homogeneity (Schuller et al. 2000:10). It has been argued that while bridging social capital is fragile, it is the most likely to foster social inclusion over the long term (Schuller et al. 2000:10).

This notion of social capital's blending of social networks infused with some levels of trust, with democratic practice and citizen participation, makes it a relevant framework from which to assess *Y4Y*, a show which sets out to get youths from divided backgrounds to talk to each other. From this framework, what sort of role(s) should the media assume for them to maximise both bridging and bonding social capital, and enhance opportunities for citizen participation?

Part of an answer to this is simply for the media to provide citizens with information, and 'empowering people with knowledge'. Another part of the media's role can be providing the space for dialogue and communication. For example it is noted that, "talk among citizens is fundamental to-and an expression of-their participation" (Dahlgren 2002:6). Citizens make decisions about their everyday needs and expectations based on among other things, the information provided by the press (Fenton 2011:7). Since media are central to a healthy democracy, a "concern for democracy, therefore necessitates a concern about media" (Jacobs 2003:42). This concern is even more important if we are to heed the criticisms often made about the mainstream media, for instance, that journalism as a profession operates mainly in favour of the elite groups, privileging mostly their views and perspectives on issues (Curran 2005:126). But

how can information-providing and space-for-deliberation creating roles be understood? It is useful to explore some normative frameworks from which to think the role that the South African media can play to enhance democratic practice and build active citizenship.

Normative Framework: Understanding the Facilitative Role of the media

Since media operations are motivated by many factors which range from the commercial to public service, it helps to think of the ideal role of the media in a democracy from an initially normative position. What normative roles can the media play for them to become something of a functional public sphere? An identification of an appropriate normative framework helps in assessing the extent to which *Radio Grahamstown's* youth programme *Y4Y* compares to those normative expectations and democratic practices outlined above. Some have summed up journalistic responsibility as commitment to telling the truth, loyalty to citizens, monitoring of power, the provision of a forum for public criticism and compromise, as well as making the significant, interesting and relevant (Kovach and Rosenstiel 2001). This study finds the media's responsibility to provide information and a platform for public discussion, otherwise described by Christians et al. (2009) as the facilitative role, more useful as analytical departure points.

Therefore, this section hones in on the *facilitative* role of the media in a democracy within the normative theoretical framework outlined by Christians et al. (2009) and McQuail (2006). (Christians et al. (2009) also elaborate on the 'monitorial', the 'radical' and the 'collaborative' roles of the media but these are not as germane to this study and are not pursued here). The facilitative role works ideally best within a tradition of civic republicanism, a form of democracy that understands community as constituted by interaction (Christians et al. 2009:158). The media's role within this democratic model is understood as that of cultivating shared interests and common goals, strengthening participation in civil society, enriching and improving civil society's associations and activities (Christians et al. 2009:158). This is because for democracy to be meaningful, it needs both knowledge and participation, informed and active consent, or it starts to become democracy in 'form' only.

The facilitative role has been imagined fully by various theorists. It enables "journalism that aids democratic activity in the wider public sphere of civil society, supports community formation and citizen participation, provides lines of communication between citizens and government" (McQuail 2006:56). In performing this role, the media give support and strengthen civil society participation outside the state and the market (Christians et al.

2009:158), and it also meets the "…needs of individual citizens as well as the wider society without being particularly driven by profit" (McQuail 2006:56). In so doing, the media can also "promote dialogue among their readers and viewers through communication that engages them and in which they actively participate" (Christians et al. 2009:158). In performing this role, the media thus helps expand the shared "moral framework for community and society, rather than just looking after individual rights and interests" (Christians et al. 2009:126). The line of communication is left open (McQuail 2006:56) for the citizens to take part and share ideas on issues that concern them and need to be addressed by the government.

Considering the points made about community radio in the previous chapter and below in this chapter, it can be noted that community radio should be relatively well placed to play the facilitative role, which would subsequently 'activate' or provide a platform for, democratic citizen participation (see Christians et al. 2009:158). It is in this context that Olorunnisola and Lugalambi argue that "the phenomenon of community broadcasting should progressively resolve some of the public access concerns" raised below (2011:33). South Africa has licensed about 115 community radio stations, 80 of which are supported in various ways by the Department of Communications (South Africa Yearbook 2010/2011:106). How then does this possible normative facilitative role work in practice?

Media and the creation of participatory social platforms in post-apartheid South Africa

Whilst most scholars acknowledge that the media in post-apartheid South Africa is a powerful and active force in the public sphere, Zegeye and Harris argue that it is still not clear that the country's media "are providing the general citizenry with the information or the forum they need to influence in an effective manner the political leadership, public policies and actions of the government" (2003:21). It has also been noted that in spite of transformations such as the constitutional protection of media independence, the government's tolerance of freedom of speech and criticism, access to state held information and the breaking of the state's monopoly over broadcasting, these developments "have not led to the expected greater representation of the citizenry or the expected positive effects on democratic participation" (Zegeye and Harris 2003:21; see also Jacobs 2003). What accounts for this?

The socio-economic condition and state of the media in South Africa has been controversially but usefully characterised by what Sparks refers to as 'elite continuity' which, as referred to earlier in this chapter, describes how old and new elites in post-apartheid South Africa continue to enjoy privileged control of and access to the media and other resources (and to wealth in general) (see Sparks 2009). Some scholars observe that, post-apartheid, "deliberative processes are increasingly restricted to policy professionals and already empowered (mainly large 'white') non-governmental, business, and professional groups as well as think tanks" (Zegeye and Harris 2003:17; Jacobs 2003). By privileging the viewpoints of the elite (still mostly white and mostly male) the South African mainstream media is argued to have limited the range of social identities offered by such media (Wasserman 2011:118). Marginalised groups in contemporary South Africa therefore largely remain at the periphery of participatory democratic practices and institutions, a situation that calls the media's role in 'democratising' post-apartheid South Africa into question (Jacobs 2003:60).

The conventional mass media in South Africa can safely be argued to largely serve the needs of the urban middle class (Kivikuru 2006:120; see also Sparks 2009). The ownership patterns of the South African media have also been argued to be concentrated in a few hands (Olorunnisola and Lugalambi 2011:28), which inhibits the reconstitution of the country's broadcast sector as a medium of inclusive communication (Barnett 1999). Barnett notes that in spite of the envisaged role of the media as a tool for "national unification and democratic citizenship", structural limitations such as unequal access to material resources, different cultural tastes, interests and competencies which distinguish social groups continue to inhibit the reconstitution of broadcasting as an instrument of democratic communication (Barnett 1999:649). These developments are important to consider because, as some argue, citizens often fail to participate not because they are not interested or politically incompetent, but because the power or platform to do so is only in the hands of a few (VeneKlasen and Miller 2007:30). Some social groups defined by race and ethnicities among others are often given as examples of social groups that are usually excluded from political engagement (VeneKlasen and Miller 2007:34).

Generally speaking therefore, the mainstream media in South Africa are not participatory platforms, but view their audiences as largely passive (Zegeye and Harris 2003:17). This is not to say that the media cannot play a better role in facilitating deliberation but that for this to happen, they have to allow for far more participation. But, in spite of the fact that one of the cornerstones of republican democracies is citizen participation and

"...involvement in the political process" (Held 1996:55; see also Dahlgren 2006), the youth in South Africa are not provided the space to be involved in deliberative processes, especially through the mainstream media (see Alumuku 2006).

The importance of a democratic system that nurtures open and participatory dialogue in a society with a legacy of economic inequality, racial and ethnic divisions cannot be over-emphasised. Given the legacy of socio-economic divisions in South Africa, the question that remains is how these can be addressed. The options are few. These tensions may possibly be resolved through some kind of violent revolution or solutions may be sought through open and genuine public deliberation and through current institutions of democracy. The importance of open public deliberation lies precisely in its potential to solve social conflict before it escalates to the level of violence (Christians et al. 2009:160). Solutions to social problems through deliberative processes demand a participatory democratic system, active citizenship, and inclusive as well as participation-facilitating media. Can community radio, even with all its limitations provide such platforms?

Reconsidering Community Radio in South Africa

Radio Grahamstown, like much of the community media section, suffers from a lack of financial and organisational stability, a lack of professionalism, and limited reach, among others (Bailey et al. 2008:32). These factors impact the content character of community media. Despite these often desperate constraints (*Radio Grahamstown* often has to 'pass the hat around' to pay for electricity pre-paid vouchers to stay on air), community media especially community radio is still the most promising platform for enabling citizen participation, more so in the African context, because small radio stations are inexpensive and far less complicated to establish (Fraser and Estrada 2001:1; see also Olorunnisola and Lugalambi 2011; Kivikuru 2006) compared even to print publications.

However, it is also important to note, in terms of content, many of these stations focus primarily on entertainment and in particular, on playing music. *Radio Grahamstown* only marginally addresses the informational and participatory needs of the community. Out of the roughly 29 programmes that it broadcasts in a week, 6 are informational, 8 are religious and 15 are of an entertainment nature.[10] However, even on the entertainment shows, there is often

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[10] The assessment emerged from the programme schedule available online http://www.ghtnow.co.za/radioshows/index/2 and my consultation with the staff at Radio Grahamstown.

'chatter' about the day's events in town, information sharing about happenings and goings-on, and some call in with complaints, comment etc.

Community radio are generally 'non-profit' organisations, serving communities in which they are located, or to which they broadcast, while promoting the participation of this community in the radio (Plansak and Volcic 2010:79). Its potential has also been argued for by some scholars who have pointed out that it has a unique possibility, due to its geographic closeness to local government bodies, "to check, to criticise and to analyse the activities of local governments and to encourage citizens to participate" (Kivikuru 2006:13). The South African Electronic Communications Act makes it a legal requirement that community radio stations be not-for-profit entities partly because as has been argued, commercialisation of the media has occasioned the exclusion or marginalisation of other social groups (Nyamnjoh 2005:2). Community radio is important because it ideally allows "individuals to tell their stories and have the conversations necessary for their own self-directed development as citizens" (Johnson and Menichelli 2007:34). It is also argued to serve a particular community (Tomaselli 2001), provides fora for public discussion (Gordon 2009:11), and also provides a "voice and opportunity for expression to those sidelined from the established media agencies and platforms" (Burnett and Grace 2009:81; Kivikuru 2006:7).

As suggested above, the actual practice of community radio has been argued by some to fall short of the ideals fore-grounded in much of the literature (see Howley 2005; Plansak and Volcic 2010) in this area. For instance it has been noted that in South Africa the participation level of citizens is largely uneven, content is dominated by "cheap and easily available material, not necessarily the most relevant content", and that community radio stations also tend to lose their volunteer staff complement who end up leaving for paid jobs (Kivikuru 2006:11). Furthermore, as previously asserted, community radio stations in South Africa are often plagued by debilitating financial problems which drive them to accept externally produced programmes which may not always address local issues (see Kivikuru 2006).

However, these limitations do not completely dismiss the potential of community radio in constituting a functional public sphere (see Bosch 2005). Van Vuuren for example posits that community radio provides a space where "dialogue between different sections of a community, build on a common local background and encourage the articulation of local, cultural and political agendas" (Van Vuuren 2006:379). The role of community radio is also

seen as that of acting as a "channel for minority groups to agitate and influence the larger (national) public sphere", although these groups also often choose to keep the 'lid' on internal dissent within their community and try to present a more or less 'unified voice' to the broader society (Van Vuuren 2006:388).

One perspective identifies access to technology and participation in media production, the pursuit of democratic social relations of media production and decision making regarding its use, a focus on issues and perspectives neglected by the mainstream media, a commitment to an ethic of social solidarity and resistance to oppression, and a non-profit orientation as constituting the common principles of community radio (Fontes 2010:383; Bailey et al. 2008:6-33). Bailey et al. argue that alternative media such as community radio's function of serving the community involves "validating and strengthening the community, treating the audience as situated in a community, enabling and facilitating access and participation by members of that community" engendering discussion of topics relevant to that community and "opening a channel of communication for misrepresented, stigmatised or repressed social groups" (2008:31).

However, most of the literature on community radio tends to emphasise what community radio can do *without* actually cross-checking these claims with audience use patterns of these media as they happen in actual practice. There is a normative set of expectations for community radio that, it seems, is often some distance from what unfolds in reality. Given that *Y4Y* is created with donor funding and that there was no discernable overt organic 'demand' for it, this study is interested in finding out what youthful audiences make of it. Is this any kind of a solution; does it help in any way, and if so, why and how it does or doesn't? Despite the gross racialised inequality, youth are also interested in and indeed have to, spend a portion of their time working out 'who they are'. This process of identity formation has some elements and aspects of understanding their 'place' in society, i.e. their citizenship, but arguably the process of socialising youth into notions of responsibility and civic involvement, or caring about society, of having a sense of how things can be different and better, is very unevenly pursued. How, if at all, does *Y4Y* play any sort of role in changing this in its short two year run? The best way to answer these questions is through some form of audience-centric research. What follows is a brief discussion of the theoretical roots of audience-centric research tradition which this study seeks to be a part.

Cultural Studies and Audience Reception

A research paradigm that has come to be known as the 'cultural studies approach' played a powerful role in directing communication research towards audiences and the meanings audiences make. This was a significant development at the time – prior to the 1960s because most media communication research fell either within the mainstream behaviourist school or the critical studies paradigm, both of which were, cultural studies theorists held, too media-centric in approach. Behaviourism was pre-occupied with the potential effects of the media on audiences especially in as far as developmental and health oriented communication was concerned (Hall 1982:56). The behaviourist approach was informed by mass society theories which "...assumed a very powerful, largely unmediated set of effects attributable to the media" (Hall 1982:57). Research which fell in the critical paradigm also accorded the media too much power, arguing that, the media are ideological institutions transmitting the ideologies of the dominant classes (see Bennett 1982). Within these two research paradigms the audience was largely viewed as passive, and pliable to powerful media messages (Williams 2003:165-209).

However, the field of cultural studies re-oriented this focus by bringing attention to the audiences' reception of media texts as a vitally important site of meaning making (Hall 1980). Earlier research into audiences in America had already established that the media had much limited effects on audiences in many particular instances, and probably in general too (Lazarsfeld et al. 1948; Williams 2003:174-176). These studies did not completely do away with the linear model of thinking about the relationship between the media and their audiences, a dimension that was later addressed by the field of Cultural Studies. In his proclamation that "culture is ordinary", Williams (1958), whose early publications were foundational to cultural studies, refocused the attention of communication research towards the everyday life of ordinary people. He brought attention to the socio-cultural context from within which ordinary people made/make sense of the world around them. In defining culture as "a whole way of life" of a people, he points out that:

> The making of a society is the finding of common meanings and directions, and its growth is an active debate and amendment under the pressures of experiences, contact, and discovery, writing themselves into the land. The growing society is there, yet it is also made and remade in every individual mind. The making of mind is, first, the slow learning of shapes, purposes and meanings, so that work, observation and communication are possible. (Williams 1989a:93)

Here Williams is pointing to the dynamic nature of culture, the way it gets shaped into being and reshaped through "active debate and experience under the pressure of experiences, contact, and discovery..." (1989a:93). This argument is useful because it points to the different ways in which people make meanings out of the cultural resources around them across cultures and even across spatial and temporal planes. The cultural studies field thus brought attention to the fluid nature of culture and subsequently the agency of active audiences in shaping meaning out of cultural resources around them.

Pivotal to this, is Stuart Hall's encoding/decoding model that was a major stimuli for the development of active audience theory (Philo 2008:535). The encoding/decoding model suggests that communication processes occur in a set of relations which he says can be usefully thought of "...in terms of a structure produced and sustained through the articulation of linked but distinctive moments - production, circulation, distribution/consumption, reproduction (Hall 1993:91). These stages, he argues, are "sustained through the articulation of connected practices, each of which, however, retains its distinctiveness and has its own specific modality, its own forms and conditions of existence" (Hall 1993:91). The model's value lies in its argument that "...while each of the moments, in articulation, is necessary to the circuit as a whole, no one moment can fully guarantee the next moment with which it is articulated" (Hall 1993:91). This insight is important to this research because it makes a case for the need to be concerned with audiences' own understandings of the products created by media producers, independently but not exclusive of the dynamics at the point of production.

Audience research is thus concerned with the dynamics at play when audiences interact with media texts. It has been argued by other scholars that, generally speaking, audience research is concerned with two major issues: audiences' experiences of media content from their specific context, and the audiences' "...relation to the media – signifying structures (e.g. the 'preferred reading'), the relationship between readings and ideological positions, and the way reception may affect socio – cultural and political practice" (Schroder 2000:234). The concern in this research therefore, is to assess whether after participating on, and/or listening to *Y4Y*, the youth in any way 'act out' their developing notions of citizenship. This particular research is about teasing out what meaning(s) the youth make of citizenship in as far as their experience of the programme *Y4Y*, broadcast by *Radio Grahamstown* is concerned. This is important because the meanings of citizenship they make shape their socio-cultural and political practices. The research is also concerned with assessing how *Y4Y*

operates as a site in which the producers of the show and its audience can negotiate the meaning of citizenship. This assessment takes into consideration that:

> The decision about whether to compare specific audience comprehensions against the encoder's intentional meaning or against the comprehensions of other audience members must be purely a pragmatic one. (Schroder 2000:246)

In the context of this research, the producers of *Y4Y* clearly state the hope that the show can invite the youth to participate, however peripherally, in addressing social problems. It also aspires to create a platform that can contribute to social cohesion. To gauge the success of the show, it becomes necessary to talk to the audiences themselves, to not only establish whether the programme holds the same value to them but also to assess whether the programme is doing anything like what the producers hope and perceive it to be doing.

Conclusion

This chapter has argued that South Africa's attempt to build a deep and inclusive democracy out of a racial capitalist system has, thus far, largely failed because of the compromises made between the new and old elite to create a more non-racial elite that has no real interest in empowering people, and certainly has not empowered them economically beyond a still fairly small middle class. It has also been argued that this compromised transition has led to the marginalisation of the youth, especially black youth.

The chapter also argues that the media can play a role in addressing the democratic deficit in South Africa partly by building social capital. However, it was noted that due to commercial and policy constraints (and funding), the media 'system' overall in South Africa has largely failed to create a plethora of participatory platforms for its citizens. *Y4Y*, an interactive youth radio show on *Radio Grahamstown* whose production was funded by a Knight Foundation "News Challenge Grant" administered by the Journalism Department at Rhodes University, was produced against this background. Through audience research, this study seeks to establish the meanings that high school students in Grahamstown make of the programme, particularly with regard to their identity formation as young people, and particularly as they create individual and collective identities infused with notions of being part of broader nationally defined collectives including citizenship of the nation-state of South Africa. An outline of the methodological approaches used to establish meanings made of the programme by a selection of young people in Grahamstown is outlined briefly in the next chapter before data yielded through these methods is examined and explored.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology and Methods

Introduction

This chapter discusses the research methodology, the process of data gathering, and elaborates on the sampling methods used in this study. The research uses a qualitative approach which is predicated on a series of theoretical insights that suggest such an approach is able to generate a deeper understanding of how social contexts shape meaning and yet how the meaning makers' own agency is central to their worldviews. This dynamic interaction between structure and agency, context and consciousness, is difficult to access through quantitative methods, although these can form a usual corroboration function (Babbie & Mouton 2001:272).

Qualitative Research

Qualitative research is informed by the interpretivist tradition as opposed to quantitative research that is informed more by a scientific and positivist approach (Bryman 1988; Deacon et al. 2007). The positivist paradigm rests on the premise that the generation of scientific knowledge must be based on observation that is free of the interests, values, purposes and personal idiosyncrasies (Howe 1988:13). Conversely, the interpretivist tradition is premised on the view that a consideration of human intentions and beliefs cannot be eliminated in social science research because, as interpretivists argue, observation cannot be 'pure' in the sense of totally excluding "...interests, values, purposes and psychological schemata" of both the researcher and the researched (Howe 1988:13). Instead, interpretivist researchers aim for empathic understandings as opposed to a more positivist orientation towards explanation, prediction and control (Howe 1988:13).

Qualitative research is defined by Babbie and Mouton as research which attempts:

> ...to study human action from the perspective of the social actors themselves (also referred to by anthropologists as the "emic" perspective). The primary goal of studies using this approach is defined as describing and understanding (verstehen) rather than explaining human behaviour. (2001:270)

Qualitative research is also informed by the phenomenological tradition which, "emphasizes that all human beings are engaged in making sense of their life worlds" and that they "interpret, create and give meaning to, define, and rationalize their actions" (Babbie & Mouton 2001:28). These scholars go on to add that within the phenomenological tradition,

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"people are conceived, not primarily as biological organisms, but firstly and foremost as conscious, self-directing, symbolic human beings" (Babbie and Mouton 2001:28). Also in contrast to the positivist tradition, the interpretivist tradition appreciates that "people are continuously constructing, developing, and changing the everyday (common-sense) interpretations of their world(s)" and that this "should be taken into account in any conception of social science research" (Babbie & Mouton 2001:28).

Qualitative research produces results that are context specific and tells more about phenomena which are not available elsewhere (Silverman 2006:44). This challenge of localised or contextualised findings can be overcome by using samples, however small, that match the general socio-economic tendencies as may be reflected in quantitative data, such as census reports (Silverman 2006:51). As has been suggested in Chapter 2, the socio-economic context of Grahamstown is something of a 'microcosm' of many of the broader contexts and issues found in South Africa, and, as such, it is possible to infer some useful insights about the South African youth from what is the case in Grahamstown (see Silverman 2006:50-51), which this study attempts in Chapter 4. The sample that was drawn for this study is an attempt to capture the character of the social divisions and economic inequalities that in turn characterise, this study argues, the broader South African socio-economic condition.

Some of the main data gathering methods in qualitative research are participant observation, un-structured interviewing and focus groups (Bryman 1988:45-50). Qualitative research just like quantitative research uses empirical evidence to deduce conclusions about phenomena. It can also be said that it is guided by scientific values because of its concern with issues of quality such as validity and reliability (Merriam 2002:23-24; Seale 1999:465) which are also important within quantitative research (Bryman 1988:28-30). In addition to concerns with quality, qualitative studies also have to follow systematic processes about which Schroder et al. posit, "researchers are generally expected to articulate clearly the steps taken to account for various interpretations of the evidence they gather" (2003:180). It is from this exposition of steps that reliability can be established as it enables other researchers to follow the same steps if there is need for cross-checking.

This research could have been focused on the texts (the actual broadcast programmes), on the moment of production or a combination of both. However, it is deliberately focused on audience responses to both the 'texts' and to their participation in the making of these programmes. This is because the research set out to explore the meanings

that high school students in Grahamstown make of the programme *Y4Y* particularly in terms of their evolving citizenship. These considerations in turn speak to a broader but equally important concern, which is the media's role in society, a dimension that can be assessed by analysing the media's mediation between issues and events, on the one hand, and the audiences on the other, as well as the limitations and implications of the media in specific contexts (Kitzinger 2004:167). In the case of *Radio Grahamstown's Y4Y,* the overriding concern is broadly informed by a desire to examine how the media might shape the audiences' "… understandings and citizenship and how people use media texts and objects in negotiating interpersonal power relations or developing identities, pleasures, and fantasies" (Kitzinger 2004:169). The following section gives an outline of the research methods used in addressing this research's core problematic.

Some background to the Research Design
Sampling

Since a researcher cannot study the whole population under study, the first stage of any research is to constitute a sample based on various considerations, related to the research question (Gilbert 2008:167). This study used purposive sampling to constitute its sample of both schools and students. Purposive sampling, as opposed to random sampling, is a methodological choice where members of a sample are chosen with a purpose in mind, which can either be to ensure that key constituencies of relevance to a subject matter are covered or that some diversity is included so as to "…ensure that all relevant age groups are included and to ensure that any differences in perspective between age groups can be explored" (Ritchie et al. 2003:79). Purposive sampling in qualitative studies usually depends on the researcher's judgement and purpose in carrying out the study (Babbie & Mouton 2001:166). Its application is influenced by the researcher's knowledge of the population, as well as the elements and nature of the aims of the research (Babbie & Mouton 2001:166). Purposive sampling can also be used in instances where sample elements "are selected after field investigations of some group, in order to ensure that certain types of individuals or persons displaying certain attributes are included in the study" (Berg 1998:229). In this research, the researcher was concerned with covering the diversity of the Grahamstown high school students. The schools that were chosen for inclusion in the sample were meant to cover as far as possible the demographic diversity of these students along class, ethnic, racial and gender categories. For this reason, the researcher purposively created a sample consisting of learners

from three private schools, two DET schools and one former model C school (which is also at the same time a girls-only high school).[11]

In constituting members of the focus group discussions, a two-stage sampling procedure was followed. The first stage was concerned with establishing which schools to include or not in the sample, after which a decision had to be made on which students to include or not from those respective schools in the second stage. Below is a discussion of how purposive sampling was used to come up with the schools and the number of students and members for focus group discussions.

As outlined in Chapter 1, *Y4Y* is a youth radio show created by and for Grahamstown's high school learners. The programme has been on air since March 2010 on Thursdays between 5pm and 6pm. With 13 high schools in Grahamstown, the show potentially reaches out to pupils from different social classes and backgrounds from private, former model C, and DET schools (see Chapter 1). In constituting a sample of both schools and students for inclusion in the focus group interviews, consideration of such differences was taken to tease out the effect social background had on how students made meaning of the programme (Schroder et al. 2003:122).

The show *Y4Y* was conceived to deliberately attempt to overcome social, class, ethnic and race barriers. The sample was thus also selected to allow for an assessment of the extent to which the show had actually managed to do that by selecting private, former model C and DET schools respectively for inclusion in the study sample. This was done to eliminate or at least minimise bias as much as possible by balancing out the number of students and schools based on their socio-economic backgrounds. The learners were selected to take part in focus group discussions based on their listenership of and/or participation on the show. This consideration left out many other youth/students that might have held different opinions. The fact that there are many learners who do not even know the programme and who do not also listen to the programme somewhat affects the generalisability of the findings to Grahamstown high school students as their complete diversity is hardly covered. However, the sample gives an estimation of what the youth may understand of/from the programme as their concerns (as shown by the data gathered through focus group discussions) are generally the same.

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[11] Private schools St. Andrew's and DSG are Anglican schools, whereas Kingswood College is Methodist. VG, Nombulelo and Mrwetyana are funded by government although VG is better resourced because of the financial contribution of the students' parents. St. Andrew's College is a boys' only high school. DSG and VG are girls' only high schools while Kingswood College, Nombulelo and Mrwetyana are co-educational.

Data Collection Methods[12]

Focus group discussions

Bloor et al. (2001) argue that "focus groups provide an ostensibly attractive medium for public participation in the research process: they are sociable events; they are time-limited; and they require no technical skills of the group members" (2001:13).

This study uses focus groups because of the ability of such forums to spark debate around the issue under discussion that allows opinions to be cross-checked and critiqued by other participants in the group discussion (Lunt and Livingstone 1993:88). Focus groups also allow "people to discuss issues abstracted from their social identities" (Lunt and Livingstone 1993:88). This is important to this research because the programme *Y4Y*, which is the object of this research and a subject of the focus groups, is an abstraction of the students' social world in the sense that the topics discussed on the programme are extracted from their real life circumstances or at least have a bearing on their everyday life. Furthermore, focus groups are argued to also allow the discussants "to take on argumentative roles" (Lunt and Livingstone 1993:88) because as they further argue, "researchers using focus group methods are often more interested in socially expressed, and contested opinions and discourses than in eliciting individual attitudes" (1993:93).

In relation to the above insight, Patton also posits that a focus group interview is a "highly efficient qualitative data-collection technique (which provides) some quality controls on data collection in that participants tend to provide checks and balances on each other that weed out false or extreme views..." (1990:335). A focus group is also useful to this study because participants and in this case high school students, discussed and negotiated the meaning of *Y4Y* in ways that reflected processes of meaning making in actual interpersonal or group encounters (Schroder et al. 2003:152).

Focus groups, it is argued, also place participants in a more comfortable position as far as speaking out is concerned, compared to individual interviews (See Silverman 2004), making them useful when it comes to researching sensitive topics where the participants support each other in self disclosure, something that would not be possible in an interview (Lunt and Livingstone 1993:85). Of course, the converse can also be true: some individuals

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[12] While the researcher deliberately chose to focus on the students' experiences of the programme *Y4Y*, an insight into the content of the programme is provided in Appendix 4.

may much prefer individual interviews. Taking into consideration the diversity of *Y4Ys*
young audience, the importance of focus groups is in its ability to allow many different ways
of doing and perceiving things to be "thrown on the table for comment, agreement,
disagreement, negotiation" (Schroder et al. 2003:153). It is through this kind of discussion
that the nuanced media uses of Grahamstown's high school students can be captured.

Deacon et al. (2007:57) argue for a careful constitution of focus groups to enable the
constitution of a group representative of the population under study to tease out differentials
unique to different social categories within that group. Sampling for a focus group discussion
in this study was purposively conducted because not all the youth in Grahamstown listen to
or participate on the youth show *Y4Y*. Also not all of the youth were willing to participate in
the discussion or knew about the show. To offset this deficiency, snowball sampling together
with purposive sampling were used. Snowball sampling is when one person can refer to
someone else that they feel can be able to assist or even have knowledge in the researcher's
study (Faugier and Sargeant 1997:792). Snowball sampling is useful in cases where the
researcher may not immediately get the relevant people to partake in the interviews and focus
group discussions. In this regard, Flick notes that interviewees could be established through
friends who help locate friends to take part "thus persons from one's own broader
environment" (2002:58).

The researcher had a problem in getting participants for the focus group discussions
because it was clear from early in the research that there were many learners that neither
participated on the show, or were only dimly aware of its existence. To address this
deficiency, the researcher identified key informants who through chain referrals brought in
more potential participants who either participated on the programme or listened to it. This
kind of strategy however also comes with its own challenges. For instance as Hildenbrand
notes, while:

> ... it is often assumed that access to the field would be facilitated by studying persons
> well known to the researcher and accordingly finding cases from one's own circle of
> acquaintances, exactly the opposite is true: the stranger the field, the more easily may
> researchers appear as strangers, whom the people in the study have something to tell
> which is new for the researcher. (1995:258)

In this research, snowball sampling did not introduce a lot of potentially problematic effects
but in fact largely worked to the advantage of the study. The students were neither the
researcher's acquaintances nor friends and they didn't know the researcher in person, which

established distance between the young learners and the researcher. What this approach did however was skewer participants racially: the overall sample, across the various focus groups, eventually consisting mostly of African and coloured students, albeit from a wide variety of class, gender and socio-economic backgrounds. Only one white student (Meaghan from DSG) participated in the discussions. No Indian students participated in the focus groups. The findings in this study therefore reflect mainly the opinions and views of African and coloured students albeit from substantially different class and social backgrounds.

The location or setting of the focus group interviews was selected on the basis of its convenience to participants and suitability for a free discursive space. A successful focus group is also dependent on the skills of the moderator. In conducting the focus group discussions, the researcher kept in mind the need for flexibility, objectivity, empathy, persuasiveness, and a good listenership (Flick 2002:113; see also Fontana and Frey 2000). In the process the researcher also kept in mind Lunt and Livingstone's argument that the moderator's role in a focus group discussion also includes monitoring of a complex social interaction, encouraging, contributing as well as managing disruptions, diversions and other problematic group dynamics (Lunt and Livingstone 1993:82). Of equal concern to the researcher was also to keep the discussion focussed around the subjects of concern and also "to thwart single participation by individuals or partial groups" (Flick 2002:113; see also Merton et al. 1956). In each group some students were very articulate in expressing their views and assessments. Although the researcher tried to get all students to participate evenly, the most active members often ended up giving their opinions first to which others would either add on and agree or disagree with.

Individual Interviews

Interviews, as outlined above, are also important to this research. These were directed mostly at the creators and producers of the programme. The producers of the programme *Y4Y* have their own ideas about what the programme should do and these may or may not coincide with the meanings or media use patterns that the youth or high school students of Grahamstown may hold of the same programme. For this reason, it is important to get a detailed account of what the producers thought the programme could achieve in terms of making students aware of issues related to becoming citizens. There are two major advantages in using individual interviews to gather data from the *Y4Y* producers. Firstly, as Schroder et al. argue, individual informants get to say more and have a greater opportunity to

"develop an argument or a narrative in an hour than any group member does" in a focus group (2003:153). In the same vein, the individual interviews allow the researcher to ask much more detailed questions "tailored to the specific circumstances divulged by the informant" (Schroder et al. 2003:153). Secondly, the individual interview allows unique individual perspectives to come out in detailed forms. Furthermore, interviews are valuable to social research because they enable one to:

> ...understand the world from the subject's point of view, to unfold the meaning of peoples' experiences, to uncover their lived world prior to scientific explanations. The qualitative research interview is a construction site of knowledge. (Kvale 1996:1-2)

This research used semi-structured interviews to enable the producers to explain themselves in detail. Even though semi-structured interviews use an interview guide, the general hope is that questions will be answered freely by the interviewee (Flick 2002:91). However, semi-structured interviews have their own challenges and among these are when an interviewer, in trying to get more detail or explanation "faces the question of if and when to inquire in greater detail and to support the interviewee in roving far afield, or when rather to return to the interview guide when the interviewee is digressing" (Flick 2002:92). Such decisions are however based on the situation at hand. In this case, caution was taken to avoid unnecessarily interrupting the interviewees as this may block important expositions. The major advantage of a semi-structured interview is that "consistent use of an interview guide increases the comparability of the data and that their structuration is increased as a result of the questions in the guide" which helps when it comes to structuring the analysis (Flick 2002:93). The third but less prominent complementary data gathering method used is that of simple observation.

Simple Observation

Observation was only conducted as a preliminary exercise for the researcher to orient herself with the station's operations and production environment rather than a systematic data gathering method. Of the two common forms of observation in qualitative research, simple observation and participant observation, this research used simple observation because the researcher remained an outside observer (Babbie and Mouton 2001:293). In this type of observation, the researcher "has no relationship with the processes or people being observed, who remain unaware of the researcher's activities" (Deacon et al. 2007:250). This is because the researcher only wanted to become familiarised with the environment and the production processes of the programme and not necessarily to get immersed in the pupils' own world, largely because time (and the scope of this mini-dissertation) did not allow for such an

engagement. Simple observation was only undertaken to give the researcher insights to help in understanding data from interviews and focus groups, and also to understand the production context from which such data was arising by documenting "members accounting to each other in natural settings" [13](Dingwall 1997:60).

Quality, validity and reliability

Qualitative research methodologists have put in a lot of effort in trying to ensure quality in their studies because of criticisms that the field (qualitative research) does not use large samples to facilitate generalisation, and that it is weak in validity (Seale 1999:465; Hammersley 2008:3). Quality in research refers to the procedures that ensure or at least try to establish grounds for the "trustworthiness of a research report…" and concerns with quality are argued to lie at the heart of such concepts as validity and reliability which are concerned with truth value (assumes a single tangible reality), applicability (concerned with generalisation), consistency (reliability), and neutrality (concerned with separation of values from inquiry) (Lincoln and Guba 1985:294). However, it has been argued that having a stable criteria of quality measurement as in quantitative research may interfere with such qualitative advantages such as "creativity, exploration, conceptual flexibility, and a freedom of spirit" (Seale 1999:467). Since the quality criteria referred to here is not consistent with interpretive research, theorists such as Lincoln and Guba (1985) argue for quality criteria that are customised for qualitative research and these include 'credibility' which is established through member checks, 'transferability' which is a restrained idea of generalisation, and 'dependability' which is established through peer auditing procedures. These approaches to quality in social research are informed by the interpretivist understanding that there is no single reality but multiple realities (see Seale 1999:469). The terms validity and reliability are retained in some literature on quality in social research and they are also used in this research because of their familiarity.

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[13] The advantages of observational methods are that they might dispel any undue conspiracy theories in describing the production processes (Schlesinger 1980), give an opportunity to produce an independent assessment of data collected through other methods, give first hand information, and allow researchers to modify their assumptions as they go along (Deacon et al. 2007:257). The disadvantages include; the tiring note taking process and the uncertainty around what is important and what is unimportant (Babbie and Mouton 2001:295). These shortcomings are not of significant impact on this study as observation was conducted at a relatively small scale in order only to familiarise with the production processes of the programme.

In a similar vein, validity in the social sciences or in qualitative research in particular is meant to ensure that a researcher is answering the questions that he/she is asking in an accurate manner. Easily put, validity is concerned with answering the question; "Is one measuring what one thinks one is measuring?" (Nachmias & Nachmias 1982:138). Bloor also explains that:

> ...validity determines whether the researcher truly measures that which was intended. In qualitative research, validity is said to occur through social life and social settings unlike in the case of replicability, which as a natural science, can occur through subsequent replication in order to make it valid. (1997:37)

Nachmias & Nachmias (1982) point out that the "problem with validity arises because measurement in the social science is, with very few exceptions, indirect" (1982:138). In other words these authors are arguing that validity in the social sciences is never achieved with complete certainty that the researchers are measuring the exact property they intend to measure (Nachmias & Nachmias 1982:138).

One of the ways in which this research has ensured validity is through triangulation of methods. The researcher used three sources of data in this research; interviews, focus groups and to a limited extent, simple observation. Triangulation refers to the use of multiple data gathering methods and investigators in the same study to overcome the deficiencies that flow from one investigator or method (Denzin 1989:236). According to Merriam, triangulation of methods increases the possibility of more valid results because, information collected through interviews can be checked against that collected through focus group discussions and simple observation before one can make inferences from the data (2002:25, Mason 1996:25).

With direct bearing on this study, the researcher also conducted member checks with the discussants through which they verified that the transcripts reflected what they expressed in the discussions (see Merriam 2002:26). This was more important in the Nombulelo and Mrwetyana discussions because they were conducted in isiXhosa and translated into English by a Xhosa speaking friend.

Conventionally, reliability refers to "...the extent to which results are consistent overtime and an accurate representation of the total population under study is referred to as reliability and if the results of a study can be reproduced under a similar methodology, then the research instrument is considered to be reliable" (Joppe 2000:1). Seale, who interchangeably uses the term reliability with dependability, posits that, reliability can be

conventionally conceived and fulfilled by peer auditing procedures (1999:468). A positive assessment of the procedures followed during the research would therefore attest to the dependability of the inquiry (Babbie and Mouton 2001:278; see also Lincoln and Guba 1985). Lincoln and Guba (1985) argue that "an adequate trail should be left to enable the auditor to determine if the conclusions, interpretations and recommendations can be traced to their sources and if they are supported by the inquiry" (quoted in Babbie and Mouton 2001:278). Confirmability, which is the "the degree to which the findings are the product of the focus of the inquiry and not of the biases of the researcher" is also argued to be a component of the audit trail whose realisation assures reliability/dependability (Babbie and Mouton 2001:278). The auditor thus "examines documentation of critical incidents (documents and interview notes) and a running account of the process of the inquiry…" for purposes of examining "the product – the data, findings, interpretations, and recommendations…" so as to establish confirmability (Babbie and Mouton 2001:278).

The purpose of the above discussion has been to declare the procedures followed by the researcher from sampling, to data collection and as will be discussed below, the analytical procedures followed. The intention is to show that the interpretations coming out of this research were a product of a systematic process whose procedures were methodically chosen for use so that the outcome as argued by Lincoln and Guba (1985) can be traced to their sources and are shown to be supported by the inquiry.

Analytical Procedure

The nature of the phenomenon under study, which is youth citizenship vis a vis *Y4Y*, can only be studied from the transcripts because as Hammersley points out, "social phenomena are brought into being as particular types of phenomenon (situations, actions, events, institutions, etc.) through discursive practices" (2008:12). Thus, as Hammersley further points out, "the focus becomes, not the phenomena themselves, but rather the process by which they are discursively produced" (2008:13). In other words, the researcher could not analyse the actual everyday practices of Grahamstown's high school students to understand their media use patterns of *Y4Y*, as that would require ethnographic positioning, but rather sought to understand the meaning made by the learners as they were expressed by the students through focus group discussion transcripts in the context of the concepts of citizenship, democracy and the public sphere (see Chapter 2).

Qualitative data analysis entails segmenting and reassembling the data in order to answer the research questions (Boeije 2010:75). The process of analysis in qualitative research involves the:

> ...breaking up, separating, or disassembling of research material into pieces, parts, elements, or units. With facts broken down into manageable pieces, the researcher sorts and sifts them, searching for types, classes, sequences, processes, patterns or wholes. The aim of this process is to assemble or reconstruct the data in a meaningful or comprehensible fashion. (Jorgensen 1989:107)

Data segmentation is a preliminary process of unfolding, unravelling, breaking up, separating, disassembling or fragmenting data so as to establish patterns and relationships between the distinguished parts, and finding explanations for what is observed from a theoretical perspective through reassembling (Boeije 2010:76-77). In this study the data was segmented into categories, informed by Dahlgren's dimensions of a functional public sphere (see Chapter 2).

The process of analysis also swings between disassembling and reassembly as the researcher tries to locate topics emerging from the data. Different relevant themes can be found all throughout the data, often in different places because interviewees do not usually "give straightforward answers to the interviewer's questions" (Boeije 2010:77). Therefore, as Boeije argues:

> Reassembly requires continuous consideration of the data, of the evolving relationships between the categories, and of the credibility of those relationships. The end result, possibly a coherent model or integrated explanation, serves as an in-depth view of the social phenomenon that is studied. (2010:79)

The basis for the analysis in this study was conducted using open coding which involves careful reading and division of data into fragments which are then grouped into categories, dealing with the same subject (Boeije 2010:96). As Boeije points out "open coding encourages a thematic approach since it forces the analyst to break up the text into pieces, to compare them and to assign them to groups that address the same theme" (2010:96). A theme captures and unifies the nature or basis of the experience into a meaningful whole (DeSantis and Ugarriza 2000:362). Therefore the analytic approach used in this study sought to derive the meanings high school students in Grahamstown made of *Y4Y* in terms of their citizenship. The researcher used Dahlgren's dimensions of a functional public sphere and Christians et al.'s understanding of the media's informational role as categories within which to map the

meanings that the students made of the *Y4Y* show. These meanings were also analysed using the notion of social capital (see Putnam 1996).

Conclusion

This chapter located qualitative research as the methodological paradigm for the study. By outlining the data gathering and sampling methods used for the study, procedures followed by the researcher to ensure quality, and the analytical procedures followed, the chapter makes claim for a degree of rigour and systematicity of the process followed by the researcher to come up with the analysis and conclusions outlined in chapters 4 and 5.

Chapter 4: Findings and Analysis

Introduction

The data analysed in this chapter was gathered through focus group discussions with African and coloured students (with one white student) from six high schools in Grahamstown: St. Andrew's College/Diocesan School for Girls[14], Kingswood College, Victoria Girls' High School, Nombulelo and Mrwetyana High Schools (see appendix 3 for focus group member list and further information about each school). The focus groups were conducted for approximately 1 hour 15 minutes each and were guided by an interview schedule (see appendix 1). Another set of data originated from the interviews with the two producers of the show *Y4Y*: Khaya Thonjeni and Jayne Morgan (see appendix 2 for interview guide). A third set of data was drawn from observational notes made by the researcher from simple observation during the production of *Y4Y*. A fourth set of data comes from transcripts of selected episodes of the *Y4Y* programme which are drawn upon on occasion.

As outlined in Chapter Two, this chapter draws on Dahlgren's elaboration of public sphere theory (Dahlgren 2005), normative understanding of the media's facilitative role (Christians et al. 2009), and notions of citizenship to analyse the data. Public sphere theory enables an assessment of *Y4Y* as an informational, interactional, and a representative platform through which young people can explore and develop notions of citizenship. An understanding of the media's facilitative role allows for a normative framework within which to assess *Y4Y's* ability to foster a sense of place. The analysis is built around six thematics:

First, the study seeks to assess the producers' intentions from a public sphere perspective as this provides the normative framework for assessing the experiential meanings made of the programme by the students. Second, is an assessment of whether *Y4Y* helped introduce the notion of citizenship to the students, both as a legal status and as an active facility. This is done by assessing, from the data generated in the interview sessions, whether or not *Y4Y* increased participant knowledge about politics and political issues in Grahamstown and, more generally, about notions of citizenship in its broadest conception. The group interviews also attempted to assess whether *Y4Y* provided a meaningful discursive interactive forum for the town's high school students. The third point of discussion is an

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[14] The two schools share resources such as classrooms and both belong to the Anglican Church. The focus group discussion with learners from Mrwetyana High School was something of a 'pilot' discussion with some procedural limitations and, as such, only generalised reference is made to this particular group's sentiments.

assessment of the programme's ability or inability to perform the above roles in the context of the producers' intentions to build bridges between students divided by their socio-economic backgrounds. The next point of discussion, also related to the fourth area of discussion, provides an assessment of the programme's success (or lack thereof) in building networks and connections as the basis of some form of social capital (argued to be important not only to active citizenship but also to personal development in Chapter 2), of Grahamstown's high school students especially the poor black students. The fifth point of discussion is an assessment of the intersection between the condition of free expression in schools and the students' free participation on the programme *Y4Y*. The last point of discussion provides a critique of *Y4Y's* mode of expression in the context of the youth's cultural tastes.

Understanding the Producers' Intentions: A Public Sphere Perspective

The intentions of the producers need to be understood in the context of Grahamstown's social structure. As has already been shown in Chapter 1, Grahamstown's society is characterised by vast economic inequalities and social divisions and a host of social problems ranging from crime, high levels of poverty, a much criticised education system and high unemployment (see Lemon 2004). It is within this context that the producers of the programme conceived of a way of getting young people from across different social divisions and axes of economic inequality to talk to each other, to understand each other's experiences and from this to forge a common ground from which they can talk about or address social problems in their community either as individuals, as a collective and/or multiple collectives. Commenting on the intentions behind the programme, Khaya Thonjeni, co-creator and co-producer (and facilitator) of the show (hereafter referred to as Khaya) notes about Grahamstown:

> ...here is a society that is caught up in history but has a potential to change for the better now and into the future, [...] let's look into the citizens of the future and start constructing dialogues and ideas amongst people who don't have that old skanky smell from the past, people who will be in a way, starting on a clean slate, and moving forward...

Jayne Morgan, also a co-creator and co-producer of the show (here-after referred to as Jayne) elaborates on the motivation behind the establishment of *Y4Y*:

> ... in a square kilometre, which I am not even sure how large it is, you have some of the most well-resourced, most expensive private schools in the country and some of the least well-resourced, most dysfunctional government schools. So, fundamentally,

the idea behind it was not to try and make everybody best mates, but mainly in the first instance, to expose children of all those schools to children of the other schools […] and to try and start to change attitudes, because I think the earlier you start, the better.

One of the significant intentions of the producers was to encourage high school students to get interested in their communities, which they hoped would in a way, build a sense of belonging, a sense of being part of the locale and from that shared sense of belonging, a consequent sense of solidarity (Garnham 2007:209-210). Through these discussions, the producers also hoped that the students would also start to think about their rights and responsibilities as young citizens who are also in the process of growing into adulthood where such responsibilities assume a bigger scale. Episode 6 is a good example (see appendix 4). On the programme, students discussed the notion of leadership. By sharing ideas on good leadership and debating the notion of leadership, the students were being inducted into thinking about their own future responsibilities. In the programme they assessed leadership issues using the case of the Grahamstown council workers' strike by criticising the decisions made by workers' leadership and Council officials in respect of the strike. Part of the discussion went as follows:

> Khaya: ... you must also remember that it is not only that they were there to throw the trash. There was someone who asked: "What are you doing? Why are you throwing bottles in the street?" You know what they do to that person? They beat the daylight blues out of that person. He was bleeding and […] he had to take an ambulance immediately to the hospital. So, was there any other alternative, could they have done it differently? Where were the leaders? Is it the right direction they were leading the people to? Let's hear people talking about this, it affects us very much. We don't like the filth in our town, do we?
>
> Studio participants: No!
>
> Khaya: Let's get talking. Thembu, do you have any view? May be you can help us break through this one. Before Thembu let's hear someone from Nombulelo.
>
> Nombulelo participant: I think the thing they did was very bad because you are not going to get help if they are throwing something in the streets.
>
> Khaya: Yes! If you were leading them, what could you have suggested?
>
> Nombulelo participant: I would talk to them. As a leader I would go to…
>
> Khaya: Feel free, even in isiXhosa, feel free to express yourself, feel comfortable to use both languages simultaneously. Where would you go?
>
> Nombulelo participant: I would go to the head office and talk to the manager or something and tell them about the problem that we have.
>
> Khaya: That is very good.

> Nombulelo participant: And get back to my team and tell them... [Switches to isXhosa]

> Khaya: Basically you feel that there could have been more negotiations on this issue before they embarked on the strike. Lazola, do you have any contrary views or very interesting views about it?

From this cross pollination of ideas, they learn a lot from each other and from experts brought onto the programme. The producers also hoped to achieve this by putting up for discussion such topics as Human Rights, Freedom, Youth, Women, Mandela's birthday and other topics with which the students could identify such as dating, family, culture and music.

The intention of the programme in as far as representing the opinions of youth is captured by Khaya, who describes *Y4Y* as "the parliament of young people". Khaya, the on-air personality, had the responsibility of guiding the pre-agreed topics for discussion in ways that would surface citizen and civic issues. Commenting on the content of the programme, Khaya notes that:

> As a South African there are quite a lot of themes that are determined by the government for example in March, Human Rights becomes a prominent topic, in April, Freedom; June, Youth; and September, Women's month. There are themes like that, that are recurrent and then there are topical issues, so you just cannot leave those. I think at some time it was just about to be Mandela's birthday so we just wanted to celebrate the legacy of the man and see how the young people view the old man, you know?

The content of the programme was not restricted to overtly 'macro-political' issues. It also included issues relevant to the locality of Grahamstown and other arguably more mundane topics of shared interest among the youth as Khaya notes:

> And then there would be issues that are pertinent to young people; dating is amongst the tops, you know? What else do they want to talk about these guys? Family, you know? Culture! What do your clothes say about you? Music, you know? And there would be topics that are really pertinent to Grahamstown...And then I look for guests that would be relevant within the proximity of Grahamstown.

But, at the same time, the producers were realistic that these kinds of topics (especially the overtly political ones) were not necessarily topics that young people in Grahamstown would organically choose for themselves. Jayne recalls:

> We structured the programme initially on the basis that it doesn't matter where you come from, if you are sixteen you still struggle with the same issues. You still struggle with issues of identity, about dealing with the opposite sex, with relationships, dealing with your parents, insecurities, achievements, thinking about

what life is going to hold for you. We wanted to focus on the things that children that age have in common.

Building from these kinds of more personal issues, part of the *Y4Y* producers' intention was to bring the students to think about themselves, their sense of place, issues of culture, and a more participatory kind of citizenship. Commenting on this intention Khaya notes that:

> We didn't really feel that a citizen is doing his best if he is just passively walking around, you know? It is more like a complete system where you support and demand, and you have a continuous vigilance because you know it is for the good of the collective, whatever you are doing. And then we've got more of that citizenry now, and then you start having a better country.

This view of citizenship echoes Kymlicka and Norman's understanding of citizenship which is that its extent and quality is "a function of one's participation in that community" (1994:353). Such an understanding centralises participation as an element of one's citizenship. In other words, a passive member of a community may not be seen from this perspective as a citizen whose 'full potential' is realised (see Lister 2003:42). However, this raises questions about how the youth come to learn the active mode of citizenship. In this light, according to Khaya, the idea behind *Y4Y* was to have a medium of radio that addresses problems and also "… goes beyond issues of access, creating a space and a chance for young people to express their views and opinions" which he argues becomes important because of a history "where children were treated as non-entities".

The objectives that Khaya envisions of the programme correspond with the facilitative role which promotes media that aid "democratic activity in the wider public sphere of civil society, supports community formation and citizen participation…" (McQuail 2006:56).

Khaya also points out that the programme aimed to be useful in creating some kind of common understanding among youth and future adults of Grahamstown, a view which is consistent with civic democracy's preoccupation with the need for citizens to engage each other for the purpose of discovering or establishing genuinely common interests (Christians et al. 2009:101). The two producers also hoped that conversations or dialogue across racial, class, ethnic and gender divisions would not only work to bridge such divisions but also to get the youth interested in both the circumstances of their peers and their communities with the aim of sharing ideas on how to address social problems. Jayne uses a hypothetical example of a girl from a privileged background to illustrate how she hoped the programme

would intervene in the manner described above. She hoped that the programme can expose this girl:

> ...to girls her age who live in a very different environment, and if all she does is come to understand that the things that those girls think about, are quite similar to the things that she thinks about, and at least start some kind of thought process in her own head, that actually the divide *[between them]* is not as great as she thinks it is, then that's the role that they have to play. That maybe the next time when she would make a decision about someone she sees on the street, maybe she will make a different decision.

Did the programme achieve any of these broadly conceived objectives or intentions?

Y4Y, Youth, and Citizenship

This section offers an assessment of the degree to which *Y4Y* enables particularly young school learners (largely represented by African and coloured pupils in the sample) to develop their identity as citizens and to start making some sense of what citizenship means. The study has been conducted in the context, as explored in chapters 1 and 2, that the youth are generally disengaged from civic activities (see Durham 2000:114) in South Africa, although it is difficult to gauge whether this is to a greater or lesser extent compared to the rest of the world. The role that *Y4Y* can potentially play in enabling the youth to share and express their positions individually, or as groups on civic issues, is here assessed with the understanding that their citizenship is beyond "...legal categories and formal attributes", but in fact, a form of social agency (Dahlgren 2007:8). This view of citizenship thrusts upon social institutions such as the family, schools, and the media, a responsibility to induct young people into active citizenship. As Dahlgren argues, "...such learning must be seen as emerging from the practices of enacting citizenship, in the 'natural' settings where people participate in political matters..." (2007:9).

The additional dimension of citizenship, a sense of belonging, or sense of civic identity, is also embedded in this. This dimension assumes relevance in discussions about participation and active citizenship. For a citizen to be concerned about participation, contribution and social agency, they have to belong to some kind of collective with which they can identify themselves because "as civic agents people can imagine themselves acting in political contexts where they sense that their engagement, together with that of others, would be meaningful" (Dahlgren 2007:9).

The focus group transcripts show that while the majority of the students in the sample share similar ideas about what citizenship is and what it entails, there are also other different understandings. For example, it is clear that students from Kingswood College, St. Andrew's College/DSG, and Nombulelo generally understand citizenship as an *active* facility. For Thapelo, a student at Kingswood College, citizenship entails accountability and responsibility, which, as he says:

> … is more than just an identity, it is responsibility and accountability; it is those small things that we do to make a difference. You know, if you go into the townships and teach people how to do things with their hands, weave baskets, do bead work and then come into town and create an area for them to work, then that could actually alleviate a lot of the problems that they face.

Ntsiki from St. Andrew's College concurs that citizenship is:

> "… a right and responsibility that you have towards a place that you live".

Athi, a Student from a township school, Nombulelo, understands citizenship to be the:

> "…need to be sympathetic to those who need sympathy".

And Xola from Mrwetyana high school points out that citizenship is:

> … A right to everything! You have your own rights, you also have responsibilities, so […] if you don't feel satisfied, you have got a right to speak up, be clear and loud.

Theo, a student at Kingswood College associates citizenship with service to the community. For him community involvement is:

> … an obligation that we must take upon ourselves. *It mustn't be placed upon us*. We must take it, we must feel it in our hearts that: "okay fine, I want to get down and do something because my body is itching me to do it", and then you get down and do the best you can. It might not be as big as the next person, you know? You might not donate thousands of rands, you know? But, you would do something which will benefit someone in the remotest of ways. And once you feel that thing inside which shines so happy, then you know you have gotten down involved and someone's life has been bettered.

This view is in sympathy with Ntsiki's assertion that:

> "If the youth is not active, then it is basically dead".

The sense of responsibility and empathy is also expressed through Lithalethu's (Victoria Girl's High School) identification with and desire to address the social conditions under which people in the townships are living. She notes that:

> I'm not happy, primarily because in the locations there are certain parts, which don't have toilets as well as roads.

However, not all students see citizenship as something that invites them to act but as simply "belonging to a certain place you are said to belong", according to Motolani from Victoria Girls' High School. She characterises the state of the youth in Grahamstown thus:

> ... right now like in Grahamstown, the youth are just a waste of space. They have no point [...] the truth is, they are ungrateful and they spend the weekends drinking, like they have no point of being here except for like wasting space, they don't do anything in Grahamstown [...] There are very few of us that want to change, we only think of ourselves or our lives in the world. Like right now we are sitting here, we're not really thinking about the world or saving it or protecting it or something. I am sure like somewhere in the world there are like people who care but we don't! So, we're just here!

This may be explained by her view of citizenship and a sense of belonging about which she comments:

> The only reason why we are South African, or Africans, is because we are told that we are going to be Africans or South Africans. So everything that we are or ever would be is being told to us, that's how it is. We don't actually belong anywhere but we are told that we belong here and so this is our place.

Her assessment of the state of the youth in Grahamstown and view of citizenship shape her views about whether the youth have a role to play as active citizens in turning around community problems. She asserts that:

> ...the problem is that we are so far gone. I don't think we can change anything in the next 100, 200 years because, like our mindsets and the way we are okay with the system, if you have money then it is good, and if you don't have money then it's bad. Or if your hair is a certain way then it's bad. Like, we are okay being the way we are until we can sort of move past all the racism and enjoy living poor. Like, nothing is going to change, so I think for now we don't have any solution, I don't want to be too optimistic like; "oh no, we are going to change the world", but we are not going to.

Motolani's sentiments point to two important observations. On the one hand, her comments are consistent with the arguments in literature that point to youth disengagement (see Diouf 2003) at least among some youth. On the other, it is precisely sentiments like hers that necessitate interventions in the public sphere which build youth knowledge about citizenship issues thereby developing their citizenship, sense of belonging and responsibility to do something about the social condition of their communities.

The general picture that emerges suggests that students from private schools are more aware of their responsibilities towards their communities and are willing to act those out. Students from the township schools are aware of at least their potential agency as citizens. They seemed mostly eager to play an active role in their communities. Students in private schools

are aware of their privileged status and expressed the view, fairly often, they could do more to mitigate the circumstances of their under-privileged counterparts in other schools.

African learners in township schools are eager to play an active role because they are directly affected by the problems in their communities, but it is clear that the learners are not always able to articulate how this might be the case. For example, Olwethu from VG had strong ideas about how she thought the social problems in the townships could be addressed.

> I think job opportunities would be great because the reason why there is so much crime, so much lack of proper sanitation, education and so forth is because people don't have the money, they don't have the income and that money. So, if we can get more people working and developing campaigns in the location for women who are uneducated, buildings, infrastructure in Grahamstown, road work construction...

Such sentiments were fairly common. They show that these young African, coloured and white students at least see themselves as active citizens who can contribute meaningfully to socio-economic activities in their communities seriously. They yearn for an opportunity and platform, to not only voice their opinions but also to play a significant role in their communities.

Y4Y, Information and Youth Citizenship

Information is important to citizens for various reasons. For the public to be aware of their status as citizens and the rights and responsibilities that come with that status, and just to get a sense of the issues, and areas of importance in their society, they need regular and reliable sources and supplies of information (Murdock 1992:21). They also need information about issues and events so that they can make informed choices and decisions, and know when, where, and how to intervene or act in addressing social issues (Curran 2005:129). The aim here is to assess whether students feel that *Y4Y* in any way increased the amount and quality of information and knowledge that they have about life in Grahamstown, South Africa and on citizen type issues. Students from St. Andrew's College/DSG, Nombulelo and Kingswood College for example, expressed their appreciation of the programme's value in this regard. For instance, Meaghan from DSG points out that the programme:

> Exposed me to more projects and community issues so it helped me, it gave me direction as to where I could actually; you know...aid and help people. I volunteered at the 'Amasango' school for a while, which is a school that helps under-privileged students, some of them are orphans or have addictions, and it was very eye-opening to me because it was just such a different kind of society.

Athi, a student from a relatively impoverished township school appreciated the hope that the programme helped bring in him through information provision. He notes that *Y4Y*:

> ... has showed me another side of Grahamstown that I did not know existed, I used to think Grahamstown was not capable of getting things done, it had too much crime and nothing else to focus on [...] as a *Y4Y* member I have to be up to date, I have to know everything that is happening in South Africa because I could be asked about anything on the show, I don't want to embarrass myself on air and freeze.

While Athi's comment comes across in broad stroke, its relevance lies in his declared quest for information which as he suggests in the first sentence, can open to him areas of possible opportunities. In Alexander's case, the programme did not only demystify his wrong impressions about the general social expanse of Grahamstown, but exposed to him firsthand accounts of the actual social circumstances his peers from under-privileged backgrounds found themselves.

> ... what we must understand about *Y4Y* is that, *Y4Y* is not strictly based on just our schools, it was based on the community and we did have people there. And I mean, I heard so much more, I mean, I would say something on the radio station and think I was so right because that's the kind of idea I had but then someone that actually lived there would be like: "hold on, that's not the way it is, this is the way it actually is". I mean, now I have learnt the way it actually is, I've become more open and less ignorant towards the community.

Meaghan, Motolani and Ntsiki also appreciated the informational value of the programme because, as they say, it opened up to them, made them aware of the actual circumstances their less privileged peers find themselves. Commenting on how the show opened up a world unfamiliar to her, and linking this to the broader South African socio-economic condition, Meaghan observes:

> Grahamstown is a small microcosm of South Africa, and how you have these privileged people, these less privileged people and then people in sort of absolute dire poverty, it just broadens your mind and you become educated as to what the issues are and how all these other people around you actually live.

While noting the informational value of the programme, Ntsiki, also points to the value of this information in his opinion formation. This is important because it is from such opinions that he may also formulate solutions to social problems or ideas to share with others. He notes:

> It just opened my eyes basically to just a lot of the problems and a lot of, you know [...] potential and just everything that is basically going on in the country, you know? And how it is actually going on and where the problems are and what they are caused by and stuff like that, yeah! So, I've got another opinion. I got an opinion from people

who experience these problems firsthand and stuff, which is different to what teachers say or describe [...] from like our experience definitely.

A case in point is offered by Alexander who recalls:

> ...the biggest problem we had very recently was that stationery, books, everything to children was not brought. There were classes and there were no teachers in schools. I mean, I went to these schools and I saw this. I saw teachers getting on with 50, 60 students in a class and I mean, it is impossible especially, I mean, the schools... some empty because some people can no longer teach kids. Kids are not coming to school at all.

Some note the informational importance of the programme with restraint. Motolani for example does not see the programme as going beyond simply making people aware, about which she notes:

> It can bring awareness, that's what it can bring. Because I don't think it can do anything more than kind of reach out that far, but it can bring awareness.

In spite of Motolani's critique, the value of such awareness is expressed by Olwethu who notes that:

> I think if more people are more aware of a situation, they are more willing to help if they can, and you are able to help other people if you are aware that there is a situation or problem that is occurring maybe in some part of town.

An example of this is when Thapelo and his colleagues went to an impoverished primary school to read for the children.

> Thapelo: Every Tuesday and Thursday we used to go there and read for them, and I mean, that had such a huge impact on those little kids by the end of the year or the end of the term. You could see there was a huge difference in terms of their understanding of things, you know? Some of us couldn't speak Xhosa but it is amazing how like education and just trying to help other people understand through your vision can help them.
>
> Refiloe [cuts in]: And you also get from them as well...
>
> Thapelo: I remember there is a quote that says: "You haven't lived in life unless you have given to someone that can never repay you". And I think that's a very important saying in terms of [...] Like, we need to give to those who are less fortunate than us, it is important. It's something that is morally and ethically correct, you know? Especially because we are in this position where we are more privileged than a lot of people in this country. So I believe that a lot of institutions in this town can help a lot, not just the schools but even companies such as Standard Bank. Standard Bank could do something for the people in the location.

Sindi also notes that information can lead to attitude change.

> It has changed me in such a way that I am not selfish anymore. I am also considerate of other people. I know that I don't exist alone, I know that there are other people with different cultures which I have to respect and I also learnt a lot from those cultures. I have to respect other cultures even if I do not understand them and not just dismiss them as foreigners.

Sindi's point also speaks to issues of tolerance of people who are different. This view points to the programme's usefulness not only in developing individuals but also in connecting them to each other, a dimension which is valued in republican democracies because as Dahlgren argues, "interaction helps individuals to develop socially, to shape their identities, to foster values suitable for democracy and to learn to deal with conflict in productive ways" (2006:272).

Others also value the programme's provision of information on policy issues such as the debates on the proposed re-location of the High Court to Bhisho. Theo for example, points out about *Y4Y*:

> Well, they have the means to explain to us what's going on and with that we can understand from the information they give to making our decisions, you know? They can't just tell us that we must vote if we want the High Court to stay or go, or why it's meant to go. They should tell us it should go for this reason or that reason and then we can make our decisions. Because if not, we are making decisions based on okay: "eeny meeny miny mo", what should we tick, that kind of thing.

Private schools in Grahamstown are not only privileged but are also socially isolated from the environment in which they are placed. For them, the information about the township areas and schools, made them aware of social needs that they otherwise would not have known about. This is important to them because it helped them to identify needy areas and formulate appropriate forms of intervention as pointed out by Meaghan, Thapelo and Alexander. Students from township schools appreciate that the programme made them aware of the potential that resides in Grahamstown. This is because before the production of *Y4Y*, their mental picture of the town was limited to the problems that they face on a daily basis which in a nutshell include; crime, rape, poverty, unemployment, to mention but a few. Their exposure to other students from privileged backgrounds may have also triggered in them a desire to be successful and be like their privileged peers. In a way, the programme showed them areas of potential growth for them as individuals and for the community in general.

As Dahlgren argues, and as was shown in the discussion above, the youth "value having influence, and tend to demand participation and desire community if they become engaged in social issues" which party politics tends not to fulfil (2007:5-6). For example, it is through interaction that the youth establish areas of common interest from which they can then act collectively in addressing social problems. Curran also argues that an interactional platform in the media provides "a forum of debate in which people can identify problems, propose solutions and reach a consensus" (2005:129). *Y4Y's* potential to provide an interactional platform for youths in Grahamstown is very relevant given that the producers set out primarily to engineer such interaction which is not taking place in view of the social divisions keeping the students apart from each other. The meanings that the students make of the programme's potential as an interactional platform are quite varied. Some, like Thapelo appreciate the programme for opening up to them, contact with other people with whom they have little in common and would never have met. Thapelo appreciates that the programme taught him tolerance:

> … and understanding of other people. A sort of understanding that I probably wouldn't have had if you know, I hadn't been involved with the show. The interaction with other people from different places was interesting… it's like word of mouth information that would actually change your attitude.

For Refiloe, *Y4Y*:

> … encourages us to have that bond with the different schools that we meet ….

Theo appreciates the way interaction with other students helps him in reflecting on his own impressions about the environment around him and the programme's usefulness to him forming considered positions on social issues.

> … you also get to hear the other side and then you kind of reach equilibrium, in a sense, and then it just gives a better understanding to yourself and like where you stand on certain points. We are always, you know, debating around the way everything is run, and it's perfect. Note as some of us are not South African, you know, we've been here for five years. They help you relate to the situation even more. And I actually know that things aren't super different than back home with here.

In other words what Theo is arguing is that *Y4Y* helps them locate common social problems even beyond the boundaries of South Africa. This dynamic means that they can still share ideas on how to address those problems tapping from each other's experiences. The cross-

culture conversations are also appreciated by Sindiswa, a student from Nombulelo, one of the poorest schools in Grahamstown:

> ... we get a chance to meet and make friends and learn about different cultures through our friendships. Let's say I know less about rape or traditional issues and we're given one of the two as a topic and Athi is Zulu and because we come from different schools here in Grahamstown, we get a chance to meet and make friends and learn about different cultures through our friendships.

Alexander's comment below confirms the premise upon which the producers of the show initiated the project in the first place: to get students who would otherwise not have met in their lives, to talk to each other. As Alexander asserts, such interaction does not only bring awareness, but also gives the students and the youth a platform to voice their opinions and concerns.

> ... we got to see and interact and to hear each other's voices and we got to speak and we got to actually hear ourselves speak and hear what other people had to say. I mean, when you listen, you became more aware, you could now understand. Our schools very sadly to admit, are very separated. I mean, we really don't interact with each other, at all, and that is why we hold all these functions but I mean, for *Y4Y*, that's another initiative, to try and create a unity within the schools within the community as a whole. I mean, that's what it was for.

The interactional dimension of the media is important to citizens because, as Zegeye and Harris argue, sharing information enables and equips them to make informed decisions (2003:21). In this vein, Sindi from Nombulelo, a school deep in the poorest township area of Grahamstown, also noted that *Y4Y* was important to them as a discursive forum through which they freely expressed themselves and participated in discussions that enhanced community relations, mutual cultural understandings and promoted community solidarity (Howley 2005:2). For Sindi, *Y4Y* gives young people:

> ... a chance to express themselves, different young people meet and debate about how they feel about specific topics and, it encourages people not to be shy and to speak freely with confidence because everybody's view counts ... It has changed me in such a way that I am no longer selfish, I am also considerate of other people. I know that I don't exist alone, I know that there are other people with different cultures which I have to respect and I also learnt a lot from those cultures. I have to respect other cultures even if I do not understand them and not just dismiss them as foreigners.

The interactional function of *Y4Y* is important to the development of the youth's citizenship because it nurtures at least the prospect of collective action. The interactional aspect is symbiotically linked to the informational aspect in the sense that citizens interact by sharing information through discussions either face to face or through telecommunication.

By enabling interaction between high school students in Grahamstown, *Y4Y* assumed qualities that are consistent with the facilitative role as elaborated by Christians et al. (2009). As Christians et al. argue, the media's performance of the facilitative role promotes "interactive dialogue in which citizens engage one another on both practical matters and social vision" (2009:159). While the evidence above points not only to the desirability and appreciation of an interactional platform by students, it does not suggest the programme succeeded in providing genuine interaction wherein students could deal with issues candidly.

Y4Y, Representation and Youth Citizenship

As is self-evident and as has been pointed out above, Grahamstown is a deeply divided society. Through deliberate social engineering, the producers of the programme attempted to get people from different social categories represented on the programme. A fair representation of the different groups provides a good platform for the constitution of genuine and meaningful interactional activity. Furthermore, representation in this case goes beyond just representing different social groups within which the youth fall, to include youth as a social category that needs representation in the public sphere. Most of the students in the discussions value the fact that they could express themselves not only as members of the social category youth but also as individuals.

> Refiloe: ... *Y4Y* taught me to value my own opinion... you are literally just speaking at your own mind, you know? You didn't have to say stuff that people agreed with. It taught me to value my own opinions as well as other people's.

Alexander and Meaghan agreed:

> Alexander: ... the intention was to give a voice to the youth. And not just the privileged youth, not just the kids that went to private school, it was more about interacting us with each other as with the community.

> Meaghan: ...*Y4Y* made me actually realise that I did have an opinion on all these issues and it also made me think about them more and it just gave me access to what some of issues there are in our community. And I think that is a very valuable thing that I got out of it, the fact that I realised that I did have all of these opinions on issues.

The strength of Meaghan's point can be understood in the context that the youth are often ignored, marginalised and treated as secondary citizens (Durham 2000:114; see also Diouf 2003:5). Motolani also points out that the students do value a communicative space through which their views can be represented.

...by sort of like giving us a platform to talk about our views is a start. It gives a chance for you to say; "this is what I think and this is what I want in my world", it does that.

Students from Mrwetyana, a township school, also referred to *Y4Ys* potential as a platform for free expression. For them, the show got at least some young people to say their views and teaches them about their social environment. This view of the programme is consistent with the interactional and informational dimensions of the public sphere (see Dahlgren 2005). Students from Victoria Girls' High School, a relatively privileged government school, appreciated the intentions of the programme as good but also feel that the direction that it has taken over time has alienated them as a social group. Motolani expresses her opinions on this development thus:

> They are dragging it. Like now it's just Africa! I mean, I know Africa but the people that are wearing, you know, skinny jeans and like Dolce and Gabana, are they going to care about Africa, or want to know about Africa? Like, I don't really think they understand the youth. I think now they are a little older. I will be there and I will talk but I am not really interested! They will probably turn it off if they listen to it, they will be like this is boring! It's like; "human rights and like Mandela" and it's like: "What does that have to do with me"?

Her sentiments point to a disconnect between the programme's content and mode of address vis-a-vis the youth. Motolani's observation points to the producers' failure to engage with Schroder's argument that everyday behaviour is inherently political and that everyday conversations are part of the processes through which society's political life is constituted (2000:252). In other words, the political may develop from allowing the youth to discuss everyday mundane issues as Dahlgren argues: "if 'politics' is increasingly not the bounded terrain defined by politicians, then it can potentially emerge anywhere on the socio-cultural landscape" (2007:6-7).

From this, it can be argued that without formally teaching the students about their citizenship, the combined effect of the informational, interactional and representative character of *Y4Y* can potentially play some role in inducting Grahamstown's high school students into active citizenship at the level of deliberation and community involvement. From the above evidence, it is apparent that the programme made sense to the students in three major ways. They valued the programme for its informational role, for facilitating interaction and for representing their voices as part of the community. These meanings were shaped by how these students see themselves as citizens, as members of the community, and as influential social agents. In other words, if they understand their membership of a community

as an active one, the programme becomes more valuable to them in terms of the ways in which it facilitates them to act out that membership.

Building Bridges through *Y4Y*

As has already been argued, a sense of belonging or civic identity is central to active citizenship. As Dahlgren and Olsson argue, citizenship built on civic agency "has to do with a sense of belonging to – and perceived possibilities for participating in – societal development" (2007:200). Thus, from this perspective, interpretations of citizenship that emphasise atomised individuals rather than collectives are not conducive for constructing civic engagement. In this regard Christians et al. argue:

> For individual rights to matter beyond oneself, they cannot be separated from shared meanings and mutual belief in their importance. The common good is the axis around which communities have identity and purpose. (2009:168)

This is not to say that it is not important to empower the youth as individuals but that the empowered individuals are more useful to their communities when they have a strong sense of belonging and an obligation and responsibility to their communities (Dahlgren 2007:5-6). In South Africa, like any other country, people congregate within certain communities defined along various interests that can be of a religious, cultural, professional, and geographical nature, among other things (see Milioni 2008:271). They can also be along ethnic, racial and gender lines. However, social divisions in South Africa take an exaggerated form because they were emphasised on, during the apartheid era. In its contemporary set up, South Africa is characterised by two major social divisions: economic and racial (Bentley 2005:6). Economic inequalities which divide people between rich and poor, are also mainly shaped along racial lines wherein the white community is well-off in comparison to their black and coloured counterparts with the Indian population falling somewhere in the middle plane (see Moodley and Adam 2000). This situation, as has already been discussed in chapter one, is also manifest in the schooling system (see Moodley and Adam 2000; Lemon 2004).

Given this context, and by assuming the public sphere's dimensions of interaction, information and representation, one of the objectives of *Y4Y* therefore, is to build bridges among students across economic, racial and ethnic lines. Students included in the sample from across the divides appreciated the fact that they could meet, share ideas and information about each other's circumstances. No media platform before *Y4Y* facilitated such kind of interaction. Furthermore, no institutional frameworks and social dynamics exist in the town to

facilitate a building of bridges across these social divides among the youth. Through the strategy of social engineering, the producers of *Y4Y* intended for the programme to bridge the youth from across different lines of social division. The students themselves acknowledge the divisions and what *Y4Y* is trying to do:

> Refiloe: I think with the different schools, the fact that there is such a sort of distinction between a lot of them, you know? You sort of get Kingwood/DSG, and then you sort of get Graeme and VG and then get like Mary Waters/Nombulelo, it sort of develops into something that's not just about: "oh we are from different schools", it becomes a class thing of looking down on one another and not really having that relation. I think that's it!

However, sentiments expressed by the girls from VG here suggest that in spite of the producers' efforts to get the students from different backgrounds to mix and talk, that task is easier said than done:

> Motolani: Yeah! I think also, because they are trying to get all the different schools to mix, and we don't...
>
> Olwethu [cuts in]: Yeah!
>
> Motolani: And VG will come in and we'll have our own corner, and other schools will come in and they will all like have their own groups, and we sit there and pretend that we all...
>
> Olwethu [cuts in]: Happy, happy!
>
> Motolani: Happy, happy and bonding and whatever but, when we leave we'll be like, it's still the same.

This failure to go beyond the divisions is significant to the extent that it also affects other civic dimensions valued by young citizens. For instance it has been blamed by other students for getting in the way of their community involvement -- as Thapelo notes:

> If we were to put a lot of people on the spot and ask are you doing your job to help the community, they would say: "You don't know anything about the job I am doing because you come from a background which is much more privileged."

The success of this endeavour was limited partly by the fact that such interaction was mainly limited to the students that participated on the show. This situation can partly be explained by a disconnect between the programme and some of the youth as argued below. The production techniques employed in the making of the programme, the modes of address used, the sometimes poor technical quality of the transmission, and the absence of the programme's promotion to its relevant audience contributed to the exclusion of a significant number of high school students who would have otherwise been included among the active listenership.

In spite of these limitations, the fact that some of those students who participated on the programme and interacted across social divisions, liked the experience, points to the potential of the programme in building bridges among the youth.

The challenges to attempts to genuinely build bridges between the students may also be arising from the possibility that there is so much difference, along class and racial lines, as well as educational difference, that the very premise of putting kids from these different schools together might be flawed. One of the show's producers Jayne Morgan, acknowledges the difficulty inherent in the process when she observed that while they wanted "...to focus on the things that children that age have in common. And to, as much as we could, get them debating with each other about it" which as she says, "I think we were successful to some extent", she also admits that:

> It was a slow burn and I think it takes time. It took time, when the kids came to the studio, for them to start speaking to each other, they would often speak through the presenter and they were very vocally expressing their opinions and at least everyone was hearing these opinions. But eventually, after about six months, they would start debating with each other and I suspect that they were surprised about how much common ground they had.

Jayne's observation implies that building bridges takes a long time, which also implies that there is need for shows like this, to be on for a long time and to be popular. These sentiments were corroborated by the researcher during one of her visits to the studio. What was apparent on the day was the reluctance by students from St. Andrews to actively participate in the debates until later in the programme. One of the issues raised by the students from township schools which point to a huge gap between the students in terms of social background is crime. Sentiments from students whose background is generally affluent do not exhibit the same levels of despair as those from townships. A case in point is Athi's (Student from Nombulelo) sentiments on crime:

> What is most so disheartening to me about the crime in my community is that all those people that are killing one another are those people we grew up with. Like now I can't trust anyone. I can't even trust someone I used to share a bath with, someone that I used to share the spoon with as in like from the neighbourhood. Those are the people that I find, find it most easy to kill one another, I don't know why that is so disheartening to me, it's very bad.

Again noting the web of connections in the social circumstances that students in the townships find themselves, Sindi locates joblessness that by extension also brings in

education issues as drivers of crime. These issues go to the heart of what citizens faced with challenges have to deal with everyday. The only difference is that these are young citizens whose agency is generally limited in the South African society among others. The least that these sentiments do is point to the potential agency that the youth have in dealing with social problems, a responsibility that starts by simply identifying the problems themselves. An example is Sindi's observation that:

> For me I think the reason for a high rate of crime and rape is because people are bored, they have nothing to do so they think that by committing these things they are doing the right thing to kill boredom.

However, Athi a student at Nombulelo traces the source of solutions to social problems not only to the government but citizens as well. His observations are consistent with literature that argues for an active citizenry with commitment to the civic demands of their communities:

> But guys that is not a good reason, it cannot be an excuse because government is trying by all means to reach out to the people but the people do not want to participate, for example there are projects like the sanitation project but you will find for example in my area Hlalani, the people who work for that construction company are coloured people, Xhosa people don't want to do the work because they think they are better they can't be seen carrying forks.

Apparently frustrated by the restrictions the youth face in developing their role as citizens Athi remains optimistic that the youth can play a role in their communities. He argues that the youth should:

> ...stand up and be heard, convince people to listen to you in every way, find a platform or organise, you see, in your community not everybody will agree with you, try and grab the few who listen to you and influence them as much as you can, be like Steve Biko and give them a platform to speak about how they feel and talk to the municipality or the Mayor and get permission to go and address your community, nobody will tell you to sit down, you don't know what you are talking about if you say I was sent by the Mayor, I will be able to exercise my freedom of speech.

These preceding quotations point to two primary concerns pre-occupying students in the townships, their despair and hope. The issues that preoccupy them draw attention to the huge gap that exists between their social space and that of those from affluent backgrounds who are more concerned with locating opportunities to play a role in ameliorating the situation in poor communities.

But some students from relatively privileged backgrounds as is the case with VG, exhibit a very passive role for the youth to finding solutions to challenges facing the Grahamstown community. These gaps make the challenge of building bridges more difficult. However, the case of *Y4Y* demonstrates that there is no tension between developing assertive individual young citizens and developing a strong sense of community belonging among these young citizens. In other words, empowered individual citizens, as demonstrated through focus group discussions with students from St. Andrew's College/DSG, Kingswood, VG and Nombulelo, are more committed to their responsibilities as members of a community. These students were critical of the fact that the programme was not itself immersed in community issues beyond talking about them. Some of the students noted in this regard:

> Refiloe: I don't think it has given us activities to be involved in. It's usually we just go there and we communicate and we go out.

> Olwethu: I think it would be great if *Y4Y* would have, like, we would go...like say, not be restricted in the radio thing, have outdoor activities, outreach programmes. Because all we do is just talk. It would be great if we were not restricted only on the radio show, as the only place. If we were given opportunities to outreach in different ways, have programmes installed, go to the locations, I don't know! Be involved in the community besides talking about it. Wouldn't it help if we have actually experienced something, and talk about it? I think it's better because we actually want to listen to the person. But if you just talk about; "you should do this, you shouldn't do that", who is going to listen to you? So I think, yeah! We should go out more.

What is apparent also is that students whose outlook on citizenship is within the active paradigm, and see the youth as an important social group who can participate in identifying problems and solutions to those problems, appreciated *Y4Y* as a platform through which problems could be identified and solutions formulated through interaction with other students. They also valued the informational and representational dimensions of the programme.

In a nutshell, to these students, *Y4Y* is a space where they can meet with other students of different backgrounds and talk about problems facing their surroundings and formulate solutions to those problems. They also see the programme as a bridge that provides linkages between students otherwise confined in social spaces that do not allow such kind of linkages. By contrast, those students who identified with citizenship as a legal status are not only negative about *Y4Y's* potential as a genuine public sphere but also about the potential of the youth as productive members of the community.

Missed Opportunities: Social Capital

Social capital, defined by Putnam as "…features of social life – networks, norms, and trust – that enable participants to act together more effectively to pursue shared objectives" (Putnam 1996:56), is not only relevant to the pursuit of shared objectives but also enables individuals "to gain market and non-market benefits from social interaction with others" (Morgan 2008:36). Social capital is a useful component of active citizenship because elements such as trust provide individuals with an incentive to participate since they will expect that this brings benefits, and in turn, participation fosters a sense of trust which is argued to build an authentic community of citizens (Morgan 2008:39). The question that arises in view of social capital is whether *Y4Y* is building an authentic community of citizens. Is it enabling individual students to gain both market and non-market benefits from their interaction with others?

The evidence does suggest a bit of both although the extent and strength of established bonds is a matter for debate. If sentiments given by the girls from VG are anything to go by, no authentic community is in the making. Commenting on their feelings about Grahamstown in general, black students from VG had this to say:

> Motolani: I don't like this town. I think it's so white, like, it's disgusting […] I despise this place.

> Olwethu: I think based only on the racial part…not that apartheid does exist, but we are still very racist people.

These sentiments do not reflect a movement towards genuine bridging dialogue between the students. They reflect failure in terms of both bridging the gap between different races and also in terms of building trust across the social divisions at play especially race, as trust is central to building social capital. However, not all students involved in the focus groups shared the same feelings. Commenting on the idea of being mixed with students from other schools especially the affluent white dominated private schools, Athi from Nombulelo notes:

> It's a good and excellent thing because they are fluent in English and most of them are not of Xhosa origin and when I meet them they are interested in my Xhosa and I am interested in their languages, for instance I can speak Sesotho fluently even though I was never taught the language. I learnt it by being in the same environment with Sotho speakers who also encourage me to watch TV dramas like Muvhango.

The opportunity to connect, bond and learn from one another was also appreciated by Theo from Kingswood who notes that:

> ...you can see these people sometimes have the same views as you and then like after that, you guys just have a bonding session outside, you know, you laugh about what happened inside and you know, you tease people kind of thing and you exchange Mxit numbers and you know, see them in town and you're like: "hey, whatsap"! That kind of thing!

These views may not suggest, in absolute terms, that *Y4Y* built learners' social capital but they do show the potential that the programme has in doing that. Athi and Theo's comments also show that to the extent that the students shared knowledge and ideas, they also appreciated each other's unique qualities and developed a desire to share those qualities. It can be argued that this can subsequently lead to shared identities, duties and responsibilities. This is also demonstrated, for example, by an experience shared by a white student from Kingswood College in Episode 12 (see appendix 4), whose topic of discussion was Africa Day. Narrating his experience, he noted that:

> Participant: Well, I had a bit of a personal experience as of last weekend. I went on the President's Award silver hike and I was the only white person there. But it was the most amazing experience of my life, like there was no differentiation of skin colour, we were all one, we just saw through each other's skin colour, we became brothers and sisters, we were one, we had a common goal. We were truly African and we worked together and became good friends. I mean, I keep in contact with them, I have never known them before and now I have good friends.

> Busi: But how does it feel, that kind of atmosphere, how does it feel being in it?

> Participant: They were all from the same school so at first I was quite hesitant about if they would accept me or keep me in a corner. But they embraced me with open arms and they welcomed me in and they made me feel like one of them and proud to be a South African and we can work together and that a new generation is coming up. We are going to get past those days of apartheid and we are going to be one unity of South Africa.

The value in Athi and Theo's comments as well as the experience extracted from episode 12, lie in their identification of possibilities rather than what has been achieved. Equally valuable are the insights from the VG girls in showing the foreshortenings of the programme in not only building a sense of common belonging among the youth but also their social capital.

However, it may also be argued that while the media may provide a good platform for developing youth citizenship, for getting them to talk to each other, it may not at the same

time be a good platform to develop social capital. Other activities, such as sport, community projects, cultural activities and so on, might be more facilitative of social capital creation.

Free Expression

The condition of free expression is very important to any public sphere if genuine interaction and a candid delivery of information are to be realised. For instance, Dahlgren's elaboration of a democracy emphasises the importance of free expression, as well as free and equal participation in discussing issues that affect citizens (see Dahlgren 2002; Dahlgren 2007). Garnham's insight on this is also instructive:

> Without such freedoms it would be impossible for citizens to possess the knowledge of the views of others necessary to reach agreements between themselves [...] to possess knowledge of the external environment necessary to arrive at appropriate judgement of both personal and societal interests. (1996:364)

The students expressed three lines of restriction to their free expression. Not all of these restrictions are common across the socio-economic composition of the school system in Grahamstown. Firstly, is the structural restriction that schools themselves place on students in the name of protecting their (school's) image. Secondly, is the traditional view of youth as a poor source of constructive ideas and lastly, it is, especially in the case of township schools, the youth themselves who restrict free expression by their peers, or, on occasion, their teachers. Athi, a student from Nombulelo for example, pointed to the possibility of being attacked by criminal elements who themselves belong to the social category, youth, if they were to speak candidly about social issues such as crime and rape.

Students from VG discussed the restrictions imposed by their school in the following conversation.

Motolani Yho! We're not allowed to talk.

Lithaletu: We're not allowed to say things we want to say. Like, offensive. Not exactly offensive but like...

Sisipho [cuts in]: ...our opinions...

Lithaletu: Yeah! Some of the things you really want to put out there, we're not allowed because...

Motolani [cuts in]: Miss Hayes listens!

Lithalethu: Yeah! Miss Hayes listens...so, we're not exactly...

Lorenthia [cuts in]: Publicity and behaviour...

Motolani [cuts in]: And she makes sure she listens every week. And if you do anything, you will hear on Friday in class or whatever. So, you feel very sort of…And also by the way, the topics, because they are not broad enough for all of us to sort of go out and talk about our lives and our experiences. It's more like human rights this…

Olwethu: Yeah! It's almost like the schools image at the same time…

Motolani: …it's the image of the school because they see us as V.G girls as a whole and not individuals. And even if you are an individual from this school, and VG is very very…Ohh this is a very bad thing to say… we are very image conscious because Grahamstown is a very small town and we understand that like publicity is very important for us. And so, we can't really go out and you know, like in town and we are not in uniform, or like swear, or say things that aren't on caution…You can't be taboo because you'll be in trouble, and you know that. Yeah! We're very disciplined, that's why! It's the school.

Olwethu: We're *forced!*

And in respect of the encroachment of tradition on free expression the students note:

Motolani: I think the problem is that, like, especially in our society, Africans and the way that kids should be heard, seen and not heard and all that…they are not going to change their minds and that's the way they were brought up. So, like I said, like 100, 200 years, maybe then we can try and fix it, but for now, it's the way our parents were and the way they are going to be. Possibly, me too when I am older I will be like; "what can you kids do"? So, I don't think it's going to change for the next few years. I don't want to sound pessimistic, as in like the whole age thing.

Thapelo: Culture is something that is very hard to try to, not work against, but to try and work with. There is a culture, just, I think, maybe in general in South Africa, you know? To a certain extent that children have a place. And I mean, it's across probably Africa but here it's the […] it is not as heavily enforced as other places but it is there. In terms of, you know? Right now we are discussing issues that our community faces but it would be difficult to have, to set up an appointment with the Mayor of this town, to say to him […] it is very easy to dismiss us as students and as young people because, you know, of the circumstances that we're in.

These views show that these African youth at least are yearning to be taken seriously and to be heard in the public sphere. But as Dahlgren and Garnham argue, lack of freedom of speech can significantly deny the youth a voice or suppress it. However, the youth also interpret the restrictive traditional cultural restrictions as working to their advantage as this gives them more clout in those instances that they actually get an opportunity to say something, as Thapelo notes:

This is quite a contradiction but you know, with the whole cultural thing and how it actually sort of restricts us, to a certain extent it helps, specifically if the youth do speak out because they are expected not to. So it's more of shock value if the youths were to voice their opinions.

Refiloe[cuts in]: Say if we were properly given that platform of: "okay, speak", you know? May be we wouldn't come up with the things that we are talking about. But because we are not given that platform, we have a lot to think about.

Other schools such as St. Andrew's/DSG, Kingswood, Nombulelo and Mrwetyana did not express problems in terms of their school authorities prescribing limits on what they can say on the show. In fact, St. Andrews and Kingswood have an entrenched culture of civic engagement through their debate and interact clubs. The same is true about debates, with Nombulelo. As Refiloe and Thapelo, from Kingswood College note:

Refiloe: ...as a school the most important thing is outreach and sort of helping out the community and stuff like that. There is always drives going on, that's why interact is really a huge part of the school [...] outside interact as well, there is a lot of things that they are doing with the community.

Thapelo: ...these outreach programmes and a lot of them do extend to more than just what the schools do. Like for example our Chairperson of council at the school, she did a lot of charity work. I introduced her at a dinner and she raised millions every year to help rural communities, and especially to empower women in terms of giving them beads to create things that they grew up being taught how to do such as bead work so that they could earn themselves a living. And I mean it is those small things that do make a difference.

The case of VG demonstrates how restrictions on free expression can easily render platforms such as *Y4Y* nominal public spheres in that people end up with-holding their genuine opinions on issues thereby curtailing the programme's potential to facilitate candid dialogue. The producers of the programme may also be restricting discussion in the sense that they do not only prescribe topics for discussion, they also deliberately prevent the students from tackling sensitive topics such as racism, economic inequalities and differentials in terms of school resources, which are at the heart of the social divisions in the Grahamstown community. This approach falls short of both Dahlgren's (2005) conceptualisation of the interactional dimension to the public sphere and the media's facilitative role (Christians et al. 2009). Therefore, the structural limitations imposed by schools as in the case of VG, negative adult attitudes towards the youth, the producers' limitations on the subjects to be covered on the show and the threat posed by criminal elements among the youth can be argued to weaken genuine interaction which in this specific case, makes *Y4Y* fall short of the normative expectations of the media in a democracy.

A generational disconnect between Learners and the Programme *Y4Y*

It has been argued that one aspect that is important to the realisation of a functioning public sphere is the use of modes of address that correspond to the specific audience groups (Dahlgren 2005:149). The significance of this aspect lies in the potential of modes of address in promoting or impeding participation in the public sphere because as others argue, young people are also media audiences or users with their own specific media literacy, expectations and interests (Livingstone 2007:167). These concerns speak to factors that shape a participatory framework. Such factors are expressed in sum through the questions: "what is being communicated, how is it being communicated and who is communicating to whom?" (Livingstone 2007:169).

The focus group discussions demonstrated that the youth, at least those involved in the group discussions, do not listen to the programme *Y4Y* consistently. It also emerged from the discussions that most of the students preferred to listen to other radio stations instead of *Radio Grahamstown* with *5Fm* as the most favoured radio station. Other favoured radio stations include in no particular order *RMR*, *Metro Fm*, *True Fm*, *Algoa Fm*, *SA Fm* and *Y Fm* among others.

Alexander, a student from St. Andrew's College, noted that while the intention behind *Y4Y* as a programme is good:

> ... as for trying to get my friends to listen, I mean, the point was that they used to listen. But I mean, for us it is very off-putting, I mean, I know that the big problem of the show is the host. And the host, the actual D.J of the show [...] it's kind of off-putting for someone that is very fluent in English and you have someone that struggles. I mean, I am not going to blame; I'd rather that person sticks to the natural language and speaks that. And when you want English speakers you bring in English speakers. I mean, for us it is hard to listen to someone that is struggling especially when you are listening to the radio, you get to listen to people talk.

Theo from Kingswood College noted technical problems as a major impediment to their ability to access the show. Motolani from Victoria Girls' High also noted that their disinterest emanates from the content about which she notes:

> It's gotten sort of like older; it's not for us anymore. [...] It's more politicized, and it's...like...it's deep in a way that we can't understand. And this is wanting us to sort of go out and thinking about everybody else, and we're not ready for that.

Her comments confirm much of the literature on youth civic engagement which suggests that the youth feel that formal political discourses are not relevant to them personally, and that

they have difficulty identifying with older political actors whom they feel do not understand their life situations (Dahlgren 2007:5; see also Buckingham 2000). The negative sentiments against the presenter were not a common feature with all students involved in the group discussions. Students from Kingswood, Victoria Girls' High, Nombulelo and Mrwetyana generally felt that the presenter was good and knew what he was doing. However, Sindi from Nombulelo addresses issues of community ownership or in this case youth ownership of the programme when she notes that the presenter: "…is good, but I think he should give us a chance."

Her colleague Athi, criticised the production techniques employed by *Radio Grahamstown* saying that:

> … I am passionate about *RMR* because compared to *Radio Grahamstown* they are much more professional while *Radio Grahamstown* DJs make a lot of mistakes on air and this bores me.

Also commenting on what *Y4Y* could do to attract a youthful audience, Alexander noted that they could start by:

> …making it more fun, make it more towards a *5Fm* push, like just to have a more free environment where instead of just being asked constantly, going there and have jams and sessions, it's more like Rhodes Music Radio. I mean, that's the kind of vibe, and if *Y4Y* could reach out to that kind of standard, I believe it will reach great heights.

Another criticism of *Y4Y* came from Kingswood College's Thapelo whose ideas were supported by his colleagues Theo and Refiloe. Thapelo noted that:

> I think the standard of radio in Grahamstown is very low. So, that therefore, it means that there is not much going on in terms of actually tackling things that are important, it's more, they are still focussed on trying to build themselves as a product rather than actually working on the content that they are pushing out there. Like, I mean, you compare radio stations from other places, not necessarily bigger than Grahamstown but you would find that they actually do deal with issues that are important to the community. Here it just, it seems like a child and they are trying to nurture the child and they are trying to make it grow, and they are focussing so much on that that they can't actually focus on things that do matter.

Most of the students noted that they liked *5Fm* because:

> Alexander: They like interact with me, like I can understand, it is a very informal kind of radio station, it kind of feels like people are just walking in, they're just chilling in the room. Like, they get told and they just speak, like, they get news feeds and sports […]

Thapelo points out that:

> I think one of the few reasons why I actually listen to radio is for music. And in terms of something that's more national, more young, more fresh, *5Fm*!

And Lithalethu says that she likes *5Fm* because:

> ...of like the current affairs. Because there is like a wide variety of music, like they cater for everyone and the station is fun. Because they do deal with current affairs and fun stuff as well, it just caters for everyone, and yeah!

This evidence demonstrates that *Radio Grahamstown* and by association, the programme *Y4Y*, appears to not generally appeal to the audience for which the programme is intended. This feeling is not particular to any group of the youth in this six sample interviews, but was common to all, in spite of their location or class background. The implications of this disconnection between the programme and its intended audience of course undermines the purpose for which the programme is intended and has been lauded. Furthermore, the failure of adult oriented production techniques to engage the youth points to Dahlgren and other scholars' criticism of rationalist approaches to deliberative democracy as they discount entertainment oriented programmes as a platform for participation and youth engagement in the public sphere (2006).

The case of black and high school students in Grahamstown demonstrates that entertainment oriented production techniques stand a better chance of engaging the youth in social dialogue (as exemplified by their preference for *5Fm*). Preference for entertainment programming by the youth does not mean that they are not interested in information and participation in public discussions. Most students pointed out that one of the reasons they prefer *5Fm* over *Radio Grahamstown* is that *5Fm* provides information on current affairs and discusses issues in 'laid back' and informal ways. This suggests the youth do not dislike information as a media product, but they just prefer to receive it in what they perceive as a more entertaining mode of delivery.

Conclusion

The findings outlined above show that the programme partially met the yearnings of the youth to find a platform to express their opinions and to share ideas. Information about their surrounding environment brought them awareness about problems and issues that need attention so that they can tailor their efforts to such needs. The programme's informational role enabled an identification of potential areas for and ways of cooperating with other students across social divides. The significance of the programme's potential as a public sphere for the youth can be viewed from a background of their marginalisation from the

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public sphere. The programme's informational, interactional and representative qualities have a potential of contributing, albeit to a limited extent, to the development of the students' identity as citizens and to building bridges across the divisions in which they find themselves placed. However, the limitations noted in respect of freedom of speech, transiency, a failure to genuinely bridge the social gaps can potentially inhibit the programme's potential to create a genuine public sphere for the students or the youth in general.

Chapter 5 : Conclusion and Recommendations

This study set out to establish whether the media, by working as a functional public sphere, can be used to develop youth citizenship. Furthermore, it sought to establish whether the media can also play an instrumental role in enabling citizens, particularly young citizens, to develop their citizenship and also to develop their identities not only as citizens at a macro-level but also as active members of communities within which they are placed. One of the obstacles identified in chapter 2 as an impedance to the development of their group identities are the socio-economic divisions borne of the historical experience of apartheid (see Zegeye and Harris 2003:3). To address these concerns the research explored the meanings that high school students in Grahamstown made of an interactive youth radio show, *Y4Y*, produced and broadcast by a community radio station, *Radio Grahamstown*. The decision to focus on community radio and *Y4Y* in particular was informed by two major reasons. Firstly, as was argued in chapters 1 and 2, community radio is relatively free of the constraints imposed on mainstream media by commercial interests and government influence (Burnett and Grace 2009:81). Secondly, the programme *Y4Y* is deliberately directed at the youth and was designed in particular not only to help build bridges across the youth (in Grahamstown) from different socio-economic backgrounds, but also to develop their citizenship now and going into the future. To establish the meanings the youth made of their experiences with *Y4Y* and whether or not the programme successfully met the objectives set out by the producers, audience research was conducted.

A few conclusions can be made from the findings outlined in chapter 4. Using Dahlgren's elaboration of a functional public sphere, it can be concluded that to a significant extent, *Y4Y* provides the students who either participate on, or listen to the show, with information and knowledge about life in Grahamstown, South Africa and on civic issues, as well as an interactional platform where they can debate issues affecting them and their communities (see Dahlgren 2005) with some degree of freedom. Not only did *Y4Y* give the youth as a generic social group a platform to express their views, but through the social engineering techniques used by the producers, the show also attempts to represent the views of students coming from a diverse horizon of identities and axes of socio-economic privilege (see Dahlgren 2005). Therefore to the extent that *Y4Y* provides useful information to the youth about the world around them, it gives them the tools (information) they need in acting out their citizenship in varied ways.

However, as explored in Chapter 4, there are also significant limitations to the show's potential to assuming the status of a functional public sphere within Dahlgren's framework of a functional public sphere. Contrary to the tenets associated with community radio, control over the show and its content rests in adults. Thus the students' active role as citizens is curtailed by their lack of control over the processes of agenda setting (Livingstone 2007:167-169). The issues that are of immediate concern to them, as was shown through sentiments expressed by the VG girls' get missed in the process. Furthermore, restrictions that come to bear on their free expression as those imposed by schools, as is the case with VG, topic selection by producers and the threat of being assaulted by other youth, also limit the show's potential to be a platform for free and unfettered debate (Garnham 1996:364). In terms of facilitating a building of bridges between students from different backgrounds, it can also be concluded that while the media can get some dialogue going, a building of bridges cannot be achieved through the media alone.

However, the media retains a central role to this process in performing its facilitative role (see Christians et al. 2009). Another major limitation to *Y4Y* assuming the status of a functional public sphere is the disconnect between the programme's mode of address and that which is contemporary to Grahamstown's high school students (see Dahlgren 2005:149). Most of the students expressed some unhappiness with the quality of the programme and that it was too formal for them. The programme's potential would have been maximised if the programme makers had produced and delivered the programme using a youth-orientated language and production techniques more in tune with the youth, possibly, for example, making use of younger learners as presenters and not just participants. That most of the students in the sample preferred other radio stations to Radio Grahamstown alone is indicative of the disjuncture between youth cultural preferences and production practices at the station under study. Left unaddressed, this disjuncture can render Radio Grahamstown an impotent rather than functional public sphere for the youth.

Recommendations

This thesis is somewhat weakened by a lack of extensive content analysis of the programme Y4Y and therefore it is recommended that a thorough content analysis of the programme would also help in assessing, at a micro-level, the content subjects covered by the show *vis a vis* issues of youth citizenship, democracy and youth civic engagement.

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Appendix 1: Focus group discussion questions

Social issues arising

1. Which languages do you speak the most?

2. How old are you?

3. What is your best subject at school and why?

4. What sorts of things do you do when you are not at school?

5. What activities are you involved in at school?

6. What are the most important issues in your community?

7. What kind of problems are your communities facing?

8. How do you think these problems in your community came about?

9. What sort of solutions do you suggest to address these problems?

10. Do you feel you should be doing more to address problems facing your community? If yes, what?

11. What barriers do you think prevent you from contributing more in addressing those problems facing your community?

12. And how do you think these problems should be addressed?

13. What is your understanding of the role of the youth in a community/society?

14. Do you listen to radio?

15. Which radio stations do you listen to the most and why?

16. Are you optimistic about the future of Grahamstown and why?

17. Are you satisfied with the performance of your community leaders, if not, where do you think the problem is and how do you think it should be addressed?

Conceptual Issues

1. What is your understanding of civics?

2. What is your understanding of citizenship?

3. What is your understanding of democracy?

Y4Y/ Community radio

1. What is your understanding of community radio, what do you think community radio does?

2. And what role do you think radio/community radio can play in involving you in making decisions about matters that affect you in your community?

3. What role do you think radio/community radio can play in the development of your community?

4. Do you listen to *Y4Y*?

5. And what do you think of the programme?

6. How has the programme changed the way you see yourself as an individual and as a youth?

7. What do you think of the presenter of the programme?

8. Are you allowed to freely participate on the show and air your own opinions on the programme or do you feel restricted?

9. What do you think should be changed or addressed on the *Y4Y* programme?

10. Has the programme in any way encouraged you to get involved with activities in your community? If so, what sort of activities are these and how has the programme helped you get involved with these activities?

11. And how has the programme helped you, if at all, in understanding the way Grahamstown and South Africa generally are being governed?

12. How has the programme affected the way you use other media (newspapers, T.V, radio, the internet, cellphones, e.t.c)

Appendix 2: Interview guide for *Y4Y* Producers

Community

1. What is your understanding of a community?

2. Why is it important to be concerned with social issues at a community level?

3. How do you think dealing with community issues feeds into national issues?

4. In your opinion, who belongs to a community, who constitutes a community?

5. What sort of communities do you think exist in Grahamstown?

6. Do you think these communities pursue different social goals or they see themselves as sharing the same goals as the Grahamstown community?

7. How do you think their differences can be reconciled with their common goals?

Social Issues Arising

1. How would you describe the social set up in Grahamstown?

2. In your opinion do you think the Grahamstown community is a united social entity? If not, what do you think stands in the way of their unity?

3. Do you think people of Grahamstown should be a united whole and why?

4. What social problems do you think the youth in Grahamstown are facing?

5. How do you think these problems came about and remain in place?

6. How do you think these problems can be solved?

7. How did these problems influence your decision to produce *Y4Y*?

8. What role do you think the youth can or should play in addressing these problems?

9. Do you think the youth should be accorded the same rights, duties and responsibilities as adults?

10. What do you hope to achieve through the *Y4Y* programme?

11. In your opinion what role do you think a citizen should play in his or her community/society?

Conceptual Issues

1. What do you understand by the term 'youth'?

2. What is your understanding of 'citizenship'?

3. What is your understanding of 'democracy'?

4. Do you think these three are related, if so, how?

5. Would you say the youth are citizens, if so, why?

6. What is your understanding of civics?

Y4Y

1. Who came up with the idea about *Y4Y*?

2. How long does the programme run for and why this length?

3. What is the content of the programme?

4. Why did you decide on targeting the youth?

5. Who decides the content of the programme, why them?

6. How is that content decided?

7. Why do you think that a radio programme is the best way to address social issues?

8. What issues are generally covered on the programme and why?

9. What role do you think this programme will play in the community?

10. Who decides which schools or students participate on the programme?

11. How do they arrive at such decisions?

12. Why this selection method?

13. In your opinion, do you think the programme is meeting your objectives, if so why?

14. What languages dominate on the show?

15. Do you think these languages effectively enable interaction between the youth and why?

16. If these languages are not effective, what have you done to break this language barrier?

17. Where else besides community radio should the youth learn about civics and claim their role as citizens?

18. In your opinion do you think the youth understand what this programme is trying to do the same way that the producers of the programme understand this? If yes, why do you say so? If not, why do you think that is the case?

19. How do you think the gap between the producers understanding of the intentions of the programme and that of the youth can be narrowed?

20. Following your experiences in producing this programme this far, what challenges do you think stand in the way of community radio being a platform for the youth to exercise their citizenship?

21. How do you think these challenges can be remedied?

Appendix 3 : Focus Group Member List and Further Information about each School

About St. Andrews College

Founded in 1855, St Andrew's College in Grahamstown is an independent Anglican boarding school which caters for 450 pupils from across the globe. From Grade 8 to Matric, pupils experience individual attention with a focus on fostering individual talent says the school's website.

The school's website also notes that it is passionate about ensuring that each boy is schooled for life, develops character and strives to reach his full potential. The school motto is *Nec Aspera Terrent* (Difficulties do not dismay us) - an ideal which the school says refers to the fearless acceptance of challenge which it aims to instill in its pupils as preparation for future life.

St Andrew's College enjoys a unique co-ordinate relationship with its neighbouring sister school, the Diocesan School for Girls (DSG). Classes are shared by boys and girls from Grade 10-12, while retaining the distinctive features of life in a boys' school and a girls' school. The website also notes that the resources and strengths of each school, and sound relationships, are optimised through co-operation and interaction.

About Diocesan School for Girls

Founded in 1874 by Bishop Nathaniel Merriman, DSG is one of the oldest girls' schools in the country. Situated in spacious grounds in Grahamstown, its campus adjoins its brother school, St Andrew's College. The DSG also has close links with St Andrew's Preparatory School where the girls attend classes with the boys in the Pre- Primary School and the Junior Primary section. The school's website notes that individuality and independent thought are encouraged, and the school offers an exceptionally wide choice of subjects. Education in the acquisition of life skills is also emphasised. Qualities such as respect, responsibility, self-discipline and tolerance are encouraged.

Focus group participants from SAC/DSG

1. Ntsiki Mlamleli- Grade 11

2. Alexander Minney- Grade 12

3. Meagan Vetch [Diocesan School for Girls]- Grade 12

About Kingswood College

Kingswood, founded in 1894, is an Independent, boarding and day school that caters for girls and boys from pre-school to bridging year. It has children from all over South Africa, as well as a number from various other countries. 68% of pupils, however, come from the Eastern Cape, giving the school its rich, local heritage.

Set in beautiful grounds, Kingswood offers its pupils a well-rounded education, with facilities available in both the academic and sporting spheres. While all the traditional subjects and sports are offered, there are many other less well-known activities such as model engineering, rock climbing and Toastmasters to keep the pupils busy.

The College is a Methodist School but welcomes children of many different denominations and faiths. The Grade 12 pupils write the Independent Examination Board (IEB) matriculation examinations and the school has consistently gained excellent results. Information Technology is taught in the well-equipped IT Centre, and pupils have access to e-mail and internet facilities. Kingswood also has a renowned Music School, which has won international and national competitions in the past.

The majority of pupils in the Senior School are boarders, with about 160 pupils coming from countries outside of South Africa.

The College is a member of ISASA (Independent Schools Association of Southern Africa) and can accommodate a maximum of 416 pupils in the Senior School while the Junior School's capacity is about 300

Focus group participants from Kingswood College

1. Thapelo Thele- Grade 12

2. Theo Alonso- Grade 12

3. Refiloe Sebokho- Grade 12

About Victoria Girls High School

Victoria Girls' High School is a girls-only senior school of about 400 pupils, situated in Grahamstown, South Africa. The school caters for learners from grades 8 to 12 and offers an academically orientated selection of subjects. It is a very well-resourced school especially when compared to township schools listed below.

Focus group participants from Victoria Girls High School

1. Motolani Adesina- Grade 12

2. Lorenthia Swartland- Grade 12

3. Litaletu Zidepa- Grade 12

4. Olwethu Mvelo- Grade 11

5. Sisipho Nyamela-Grade 11

Focus group participants from Mrwetyana High School[15]

1. Asavela Dadabela- Grade 10

2. Anelisa Manyati- Grade 10

3. Lazola Mloangiso- Grade 11

4. Ndugane Onke- Grade 10

5. Mapapu Sinathemba- Grade 12

6. Joni Xola- Grade 10

7. Flathela Mpho- [No grade given]

8. Mvubu Siposethu- Grade 10

Focus group participants from Nombulelo High School

1. Athenkosi Ofisi- Grade 12

2. Sindi Dingana- Grade 12

3. Sindiswa Mrara- Grade 12

4. Nokuthula Yona- Grade 12

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[15] "About us" information for the four schools- SAC/DSG, Kingswood College and Victoria Girls High School was taken from each of the schools' website. The two remaining schools however, Nombulelo Secondary School and Mrwetyana do not have school websites. The schools are generally severely under-resourced and are dependent on government funding.

Appendix 4 : Content Extracts

Episode 6: Young People's Views on Leadership

Participating Schools: Graeme College, Nombulelo High and VG

Host: Khaya

Khaya: That is very profound, that is very profound. What makes a good leader? Nombulelo let's hear your voices. We have got someone from Nombulelo...

Participant [Name not given] from Nombulelo: To me being a leader is not about the rules you put down, the things you tell people to do, it is about the change you make in people's lives. Let's say a teacher, teachers change children's lives by teaching them the rights and wrongs of the world. So, it is not about the things you've done, it is about what you are going to do.

Khaya: Okay, that is very different and very profound. Sindi, what do you think about leaders, what are the characteristics, one characteristic you expect from a good leader if you think someone can be a good leader, what do you expect from that person?

Sindi from Nombulelo: I think a good leader must be honest.

Khaya: Honesty! That's very nice.

Sindi: And he must be supportive towards other people, you know!

Khaya: Must be in contact with the people because you cannot be in leadership and you are not in touch with your people. Pretty interesting stuff coming in from Mxit, Mix us up. Thembu you are my no. 1 Mxit mistress, you know that?

Thembu: Andy says that a leader has to have self respect, education, dedication, positivity, attitude and be able to work under pressure calmly and collected.

Khaya: Alright, it is just about close to half past and I am feeling lucky and I want to give Andy the second airtime, don't we agree people?

Studio members: Yes! Definitely!

Khaya: Andy, hear you go my dear, thank you for following us on Mxit and thank you for your very profound contribution. That is what happens when you mix with us at *Y4Y*. We still continue to bring you the best out of the best. Okay, let's talk about something very relevant and very close to us. Did you see high street and how beautiful it looks recently, in terms of cleanliness, have you seen it?

Some studio members: No!

Participant: Yeah! I have seen it today. It is not what I expected of the city, it is so dirty.

Khaya: Why?

Participant: Because the workers of the municipality are striking.

Khaya: Yes! Let's give it to Siya.

Siya: Okay, what I noticed today was an old man picking up papers and people were watching him pick up papers. And to me it's like a leader is doing things before other people do them. And like we were all watching this person and I could have helped too but then I was too scared. So being a leader is about taking responsibility and going out there and doing it for yourself.

Khaya: Okay, pretty interesting stuff. Let's explore further the discussion on leadership in the same context of the dirt and the filth within our town and especially our beloved high street. Let's say if you were the leader of the municipal workers, what could you have done differently to make sure that their complaints and whatever is troubling them is sent across to the managers without even messing up the street. What could you have done differently? Because they are complaining for something, it is very important and very dear to them but they decided to do it in a strike and also put the trash all over the place. Anyone who has got any ideas because this is not the only way that we could have solved this problem, let's hear something from people in the hizzle, Thembu, you have got something from Mxit?

Thembu: Someone says that they could have dealt with it by keeping it undercover and with respect.

Khaya: With respect, yeah! Okay, that is interesting and you must also remember that it is not only that they were there to throw the trash. There was someone who asked: "What are you doing? Why are you throwing bottles in the street?" You know what they did to that person? They beat the daylight blues out of that person. He was bleeding and [...] he had to take an ambulance immediately to the hospital. So, was there any other alternative, could they have done it differently? Where were the leaders? Is it the right direction they were leading the people to? Let's hear people talking about this, it affects us very much. We don't like the filth in our town, do we?

Studio participants: No!

Khaya: Let's get talking. Thembu do you have any view? May be you can help us break through this one. Before Thembu let's hear someone from Nombulelo.

Nombulelo participant: I think the thing they did was very bad because you are not going to get help if you are throwing something in the streets.

Khaya: Yes! If you were leading them, what could you have suggested?

Nombulelo participant: I would talk to them. As a leader I would go to...

Khaya: Feel free, even in isiXhosa, feel free to express yourself, feel comfortable to use both languages simultaneously. Where would you go?

Nombulelo participant: I would go to the head office and talk to the manager or something and tell them about the problem that we have.

Khaya: That is very good.

Nombulelo participant: And get back to my team and tell them… [Switches to isXhosa]

Khaya: Basically you feel that there could have been more negotiations on this issue before they embarked on the strike. Lazola, do you have any contrary views or very interesting views about it?

Lazola: I think that the leaders, as in the CEO of the people who are striking now should have at least gone to the head office and negotiated something that would not lead to a strike.

Khaya: That is very right. Somebody is giving us a down low on Mxit. Anything interesting on Mxit? Let's get the discussion happening people, let's get it going.

Studio participant reads Mxit message: Someone is saying it is a waste of time, they are throwing the rubbish but when it is over they have to clean it up.

Khaya: That is very interesting, that is very true. Let's get other discussions happening…

Khaya: …But you must also understand that these people are aggrieved, they want the money, they want it differently. And you know the bosses are always very cunning and very dodgy when it comes to the issue of money, you know? Also, if we could take the situation and be the boss, okay, Athi, if you were the boss, could you have made any different decision? Making sure that these people do not go into a strike, putting yourself in that position and see, what could you have done? May be if you were a leader, may be you were very unfair to those guys, they have tried everything in their strength or where there any other avenues that could have been explored?

Athi: If I was the leader, I was going to go to the Mayor telling him that he must try to give them the raise because he has seen the whole town being polluted, and those people are in need, they are seriously in need, with financial problems, some are not paying their accounts. Yeah, it is needs, the mayor must pay them, and it's a must. I would have given them money if I was the Mayor or the leader.

Khaya:_Okay, it seems like we have got a general agreement that the leaders haven't done all that was to be done or explored all the avenues in terms of coming up with the best decision. Sindi, give us your view my dear.

Sindi: Okay, I was going to say, as Athi had said, it is true because cost of living is too high and we have our financial problems like debt at stores, and food, we have to eat, you know?

Khaya: Food is expensive?

Sindi: Yeah! So, at the end we have to have that money to settle our bills, our children need uniforms …yeah!

Khaya: Okay, that is pretty interesting stuff... And now we are going to take it a little bit easy, let's check out the school buzz again because the schools have just reopened and to welcome Nombulelo who join us as a new school addition to our *Y4Y* family. Welcome again Nombulelo peeps. You made a good decision by coming here. Let's hear the news and how it went at Nombulelo, recorded live in a classroom...

School buzz

Reader: Here is the latest news at Nombulelo High School.

The historians grade 11's at Nombulelo High School are complaining about the good teachers that are leaving the school for another school and they are struggling to get along with the new teachers. They don't understand the new teachers. And now for something that happened during the holiday.

All the nearest schools to Nombulelo during the holiday were all gathered here at school as well with their teachers and a representative from the Department of Education and they were aiming to improve on the high rate of failures in the school and they were warmly working hand in hand with the SGP. Many of the students confirmed that it has helped them a lot because the June holiday will be long and they won't have enough time to learn what they have learnt.

Students at School are facing a shortage of textbooks in the classrooms. More than five students have to share one textbook. This makes it difficult for individuals to study. If any of the students in the group come to borrow the book, you have to hand it over even though you haven't finished using it yet.

Reader Two: And now here is news about our school choir

Nombulelo school choir will be going to sing at the Recreation Hall on the 17th of April which will be a Saturday. This is a big choir with almost sixty voices singing together. All of you who have time on Saturday please come and support them.

Reader Three: And in more school news

Nombulelo learners did not receive their term reports because it was reported that they were not yet finished. Teachers postponed the report hand over dates and organized a meeting with parents. That meeting will be held at Nombulelo Hall on Sunday 18th April but the time has not been confirmed yet. Learners are looking forward to this meeting as they have been patiently waiting for these term reports.

Reader Four:

On the 16th April there will be a district debate that will be held at Nombulelo High School at around 2. All the schools from Cacadu will come to debate at Nombulelo. The topic that they will be debating about is [speaks in Xhosa], meaning young people have too much rights and less responsibility. Nombulelo debating team will be representing us there and I wish them all the best and good luck!

Reader Five:

And finally sport. Nombulelo sport team visited [...] school on 6th March and played two teams. The first team was Pandulazi and the other was JS Skenjana from Thuwa. The results came out as follows; In netball, Nombulelo won all of their teams; Rugby, Nombulelo 5, Pandulazi 8. Rugby second team; Nombulelo 17, JS Skenjana 0. Soccer; Nombulelo 2, Pandulazi 4. Furthermore, on 4th March there was a cricket match in Port Alfred. The results came out as follows; Port Alfred made one of five runs in nine wickets and Nombulelo was all out in 97 runs.

Back to Studio

Khaya: Oh yeah! They are here, shy and sheepish, sharing themselves for the first time on radio. It is all nice, we are giving a space and chance to young people to use radio to express themselves, find their confidence and contribute to democratic discussions and vibrant developments within our community. My main man Athi is going to hit me hard with some comments from our Mxit friends. Hit me hard brah!

Athi: Yeah! Here we have got Dings, he says a leader is the one who has ability to get one developing full potential and honest brave young person. Again leadership is the authority ability that young people should take.

Khaya: Okay, it seems pretty much young people know what leadership is all about. We take a break now, we take a song. You have got to love this song. This song is very dear to us because it was recorded in the International Library of African Music at Rhodes University. This is Sue Moyo who is originally from Zimbabwe, in a beautiful debut album with a song titled; "It doesn't matter now." Here it out, enjoy it. I love it!

Song

Khaya: …. And now, back to the discussion. Sindi, my dear, you said something very interesting. You talk about the need for the money; you say those people need the money, so…

Sindi: Yes! I mean, we all need money. Cost of living is too high, and we have bills to settle, I mean, everything depends on money and to survive in this world you have to have money.

Khaya: Yes! But, does that justify the behavior we are seeing at High Street? There was somebody beaten, there were bottles and trash thrown all over the place. In need of money and behaviour, where is the sense of leadership and where is the leadership appealing in this situation? Talk to me!

Sindi: I am not saying that what they are doing is right but may be they have tried all means as well but then there is no solution. So, they thought may be the only solution is to strike.

Khaya: They have pulled all the stops and the strike seems to be the only solution. Okay, let's hear Lazola again.

Lazola: I think it is a leadership fault because everybody knows every problem has a solution, so, at least the leader should have found a solution to the problem and may be no body would have been hurt.

Khaya: Okay, I kind of like the way the discussion is coming. Somebody says no, all the avenues have been explored, but somebody thinks that not all the avenues have been explored. Let's take it a little bit further, any new view on the floor?

Studio participant: Well, I think the mistake that they made was littering. I mean, there is lots of ways you can express your views through talking, letters. You do not have to litter the whole place because everyone is suffering and the people. We are not the sort of people that like littering. We don't like the litter.

Khaya: Kind of like Siya. We agreed that we need democracy which allows people to try and make things happen through negotiations. We didn't get negotiation. Have we now lost confidence in talking as a solution to solving our problems? Athi give us another low down. Who is talking to us on Mxit?

Athi: Yeah! We have got Sweet Angel saying; "to be a leader you should show the commitment, standing up to what you believe is right for the people, have a desire for responsibility and respect others so you can be seen as a leader."

Khaya: Okay, nice one from Sweet Angel, she always supports us. Thank you Sweet Angel for supporting us all the time, keep those comments on Mxit coming, those fingers running, the airtime, voucher can be yours. We are just about to finish the show, keep them coming. Again Athi, hit me hard.

Athi: Yeah! We have also got Blings again "young people should be in leadership internationally and express their views about the world and get out there for a change in their own world.

Khaya: Thank you […] let's get the school buzz rolling. We have got our last bulletin of news from the boys from Graeme and here they come.

School buzz

Episode 12: African Day

Participating Schools – Kingswood and TEM Mrwetyana

Hosts – Sizwe, Bongi and Busi

Bongi: I asked Baby Boo who is an African and is she an African, and she was like; "Africans, I'd say with the change in time, I would say being black does not determine being an African but the pride in the continent makes one an African." And she goes on and says;

"A celebration of our continent's uniqueness and embracing the roots of this continent makes one an African." And I thought that was so powerful. And she goes on and says; "So more, along the lines of Ubuntu', togetherness and not embracing individualism or sovereignty or division, but togetherness." And she makes suggestions, like what we can do. I would say she is very passionate about this. She goes on making suggestions on things that we can do on Africa day and she says that she is not really a fan of celebrating these kind of days but then with civilization of our days, "…I would say it would be great to embrace the clothing, the language, the food and others that make us African just on a day-Africa day!" Thanks sis Baby Boo, thanks so much!

Sizwe: That was a great comment. Please make sure that you pump in those comments because there are prizes to be won, R 30 airtime vouchers and another prize of' Checkers' vouchers coming up. Busi, yes!

Busi: The prize for the checkers voucher is R100 my dear. You go all around the aisles in 'Checkers' checking for something you really like. […] Alright, let's go back to our discussion; we've just had new guys coming in from Kingswood, Hello Guys!

Participant from Kingswood: Hello! I'm Rasho from Kingswood.

Second Participant from Kingswood: Hello! I am Ed Butler from Kingswood.

Busi: Alright, good to have you in studio. Let's go back to our discussion. You've heard from the comments we've had here. The lady says you can be physically located in Africa, doesn't matter where in Africa, in the continent but not be African. Like, is it possible? How would you reply to something like that? Or, you are in America but yet you are so African.

Participant: I think it is all about how you go about embracing the culture and being part of Africa. Like, Africa has got certain cultures and ways in which we do things and the spirit in how we do them. I think it is all about…more of who you are than where you are.

Busi: Okay! The other thing that got my attention is that the cross-cultures we have in Africa. Like, how do we embrace each other, because if I say I am an African then I show or know more about South African culture, I mean, African cultures and languages and so on, like, how far… does being an African involve that in any sense?

Participant: Well, I had a bit of a personal experience as of last weekend. I went on the President's Award silver hike and I was the only white person there. But it was the most amazing experience of my life, like there was no differentiation of skin colour, we were all one, we just saw through each other's skin colour, we became brothers and sisters, we were one, we had a common goal. We were truly African and we worked together and became good friends. I mean, I keep in contact with them, I have never known them before and now I have good friends.

Busi: But how does it feel, that kind of atmosphere, how does it feel being in it?

Participant: They were all from the same school so at first I was quite hesitant about if they would accept me or keep me in a corner. But they embraced me with open arms and they welcomed me in and they made me feel like one of them and proud to be a South African and we can work together and that a new generation is coming up. We are going to get past those days of apartheid and we are going to be one unity of South Africa.

Busi: Okay! Ross, you are from Zambia I hear. Tell me about Zambia and how you in Zambia embrace being African

Ross: Well, I feel it is not about your skin colour, it is what you feel inside and what you do to become a part of a community is what really matters. And if you sit there thinking you are white in a black community then it is not going to work like that, you are not going to get anywhere. And I think that is what is going to happen in the near future, it's what's in the inside and not on the outside.

Busi: That's great! Hearing young people express themselves like that. What do you think?

Participant: I'm from Botswana and we accept everyone and anyone that wants to be part of the culture, we love everyone and we try to teach you the language and the culture and if you are there, try to go to the clubs even if you are the only white person there, you will be the best dancer, I can tell you now, it's awesome.

Busi: Alright!

Sizwe: Later on you are going to be teaching us how to say goodbye in Tswana. How good is your Tswana?

Participant: It is mediocre.

Busi: Can you say hello? Like now, say hello!

Participant: Yeah, sure! Dumela.

Sizwe: By the way, we have David in the studio, he is also from Botswana and he is a journalist, and he is also in Grahamstown. We are going to be interviewing him later, stay tuned for that. But for now let's go back to our music. Angelique Kidjo our Queen from Benin.

Song

…Busi: Let's go back to our discussion guys. We have talked about this westernization of Africa and of everything that is around us. Taking from the words I mentioned because all of you were like; "what"? I couldn't pronounce Holinhlanhla and […], so tell us Ross, what do you think?

Ross: Well, I think it should stay the same because people through their cultures, it has been like a historic thing and people can't change the way other people think and feel and what

they believe in, so your culture is like what you believe and you can't mix the cultures to make one and Brandon also has something similar that he says he is going to add on to.

Brandon: Okay, just to add on. I think it is very important to embrace who we are and retain our cultures. But I think it can also get to a point that we should allow for others and so like, for example, if an English speaking person cannot pronounce difficult names, there should be that option that they can't call them by something they can't pronounce like, […]. Like I know a big debate which is like changing names of some things, making it like one culture, one thing, they shouldn't because that like destroys who we are, our past, our culture, our religion, it destroys who we are. We have to be our individual and connect with our past and our culture and our heritage.

Busi: Alright! John, you are a civilisation boy. Like, you say you are Afrikaans but you are John, tell me about that.

John: Yes! Well, my parents for some unthinkable reason have named me John. I have yet to ask them as I have accepted my name as it is. But, I have grandfathers by 'Jan' and grandmothers of 'Jakumina' and all those very Afrikaans names and I come out as John. But that's now the extent of westernisation, it's just horrible what's happening.

Busi: Can you please give me your name, your nickname at home. Your 'Yang' …

John: What my residents, my uncles and such tease me? Well, teasingly they call me Jan Andris.

Sizwe: Wait, wait, guys, talking about identity! I just want to know, it is very interesting…what about the people who are influenced by two cultures at the same time, or more than one culture? And whose culture is it?

Participant: Well, I think it is their right to choose if they have, for example, if you have like Irish blood and some other kind of blood, you should be able to choose like which way…

Sizwe [cuts in]: No, I am talking about which way, the influences, the outside influences. Like, let's say you are Irish and you are Italian, but then again you live in a society where it is influenced by African culture and European culture or whatever, at the same time. So, which one do you pick? Is it okay to mix cultures and adhere to both cultures at the same time.

Participant: Yeah! Completely! I think you should be able to pick and choose and you don't have to pick one culture, you can embrace or have as many cultures as you choose.

Sizwe: Another interesting question is; "In South Africa, do we have a single culture"? They say this is South African culture. If someone said that to you, what would come to your mind?

Participant: Well, I think that we all have separate cultures. Like for example, more determined on the race and so on, but then we all have the common South African culture, like there are certain things that we do, for example, when go to sport like a cricket match or

something, we all are South African, there is no black or white or coloured or Asian or whatever. We are South African, and we support as South Africans.

Busi: Alright! And I felt that, the past weekend, when the 'Blue Bulls' flocked into Soweto, you know, In the Orlando stadium, it was great to see. It means that we are growing as a nation. Having said that though, we know that Africa or South Africa is part of a bigger global nation, you know? And if I'm going to stick to my culture, like if I would start speaking isiXhosa now, eish! It would be out for all of you guys. But you know, we should also have that in mind that we are South Africans and we are Africans and we still need to tap into other nations, globally be accepted. Justine, do you have something to say about this?

Justine: Oh yeah! I just want to say that I feel especially proud of being African because I'm actually coloured but my dad has got Sotho blood because his dad's Sotho and my dad's mother is like coloured and my mum's dad has Indian blood in him as well. So, I've got a whole mixture in me but cannot speak a single word of Xhosa or Sotho...

Busi: I was just about to ask that...

Sizwe: Time is exactly six minutes to six. We have a school buzz by Kingswood College.

School Buzz

Hi guys, this is Jeffrey from Kingswood College. I would just like to say thank you to all of the people around Grahamstown that attended the 'Beaufort Day' that was intended to raise money for the 'Loboni' community. This was for the underprivileged children and they managed to get a large sum of money out of it and it will allow them to have a lot of good things come out of this day. Just to let everyone out there know that Saturday the 29th of May, Kingswood will be holding the Winter dance from grade 8 to 10. I know a lot of you guys have been invited by Kingswood boys and maybe girls, so we would like to see you there on Saturday night at around 7.

Show continues on...