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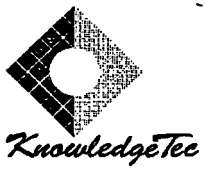

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'CHICKENS IN A BOX'

A progressive participatory study of Lwandle hostel residents' perceptions of personal safety

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'CHICKENS IN A BOX'

A progressive participatory study of Lwandle hostel residents' perceptions of personal safety

Julia Sloth-Nielsen, Desirée Hansson and Colleen Richardson

Pretoria
Human Sciences Research Council
1992

This is a publication of the main committee for the **Co-operative Research Programme on Affordable Personal Safety.**

The main committee does not necessarily agree with the views expressed and the conclusions drawn in this publication.

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PREFACE

Chickens in a Box is a good example of a study in the 'critical criminological' (sometimes called neo-Marxist) tradition. This tradition opposes much 'traditional' theory, *inter alia* on the grounds that the latter "is largely an apologia for existing institutions and practices in capitalist societies". (*The Fontana Dictionary of Modern Thought*, 2nd ed. 1986 reprint, q.v. 'critical sociology'). Critical criminology sees its task partly as one of 'unmasking', 'demystifying' or 'demythologising'. It is often heavily value-laden and shows a concern for social change. "By constantly subverting society's self-regarding ideologies, and repeatedly confronting it with the unpleasant truth about itself, it hopes to stimulate a critical awareness that might lead to the desire for change" (*The Fontana Dictionary of Modern Thought*, 1986).

'Truth' should not be understood in an absolute sense; the present study is about perceptions. For example, in some instances the researchers in this study have not researched the 'substantive truth' about alleged incidents, but have focused on some people's subjective perceptions about the incident. Since most people do in any case not act on 'absolute' truth but on perceptions, the 'truth about perceptions' as it is reflected in this study is also important, *inter alia* for policy-makers and social reformers.

Jan H. van Rooyen
Professor of Law, Unisa
Executive Committee Member
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Affordable Personal Safety

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The Institute of Criminology at the University of Cape Town wishes to thank the Human Sciences Research Council for its financial assistance in conducting this research. It should be noted that the views expressed in this report are those of the authors.

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EKSERP

Die hoofoogmerk van hierdie navorsing was om ondersoek in te stel na persepsies van persoonlike veiligheid onder swart trekarbeiders wat in die Lwandle-hostel naby Somerset-Wes in die Wes-Kaap woon. Die ondersoek is benut om die geldigheid van sommige grondliggende veronderstellings van hoofstroom-viktimologie te beoordeel. 'n Progressiewe deelnemende benadering is gevolg. Hierdie benadering het ingehou dat deelnemers aan die navorsing aangemoedig is om demokraties beheer oor die navorsingsproses uit te oefen. Dit het verseker dat die navorsing vir diegene wat bestudeer is tersaaklik gebly het en dat die magsverhouding tussen die "bestudeerders" en die "bestudeerdes" gelykgemaak is deur onder meer 'n skikking oor die aanwending van vaardighede, oor die verdeling van hulpbronne en oor die bevindings. Die data is op drie maniere ingesamel: deelnemende waarneming, die byhou van 'n dagboek en 'n opname van 'n verteenwoordigende steekproef van die opinies van 252 inwoners. Hieronder word die kernbevindings van die studie gegee:

- "Misdaad" kan nie by voorbaat as die kernfaktor in die bedreiging van persoonlike veiligheid beskou word nie. Opvattings oor viktimisering en oor bedreigings vir persoonlike veiligheid behoort nie slegs "misdaad" en "misdadige" viktimisering te behels nie. Dit behoort alle faktore in te sluit wat mense as bedreigend en/of viktimiserend ervaar.

- 'n Ontleding op mikro- en makrovlak word benodig om 'n minder verwronge en 'n geldiger begrip van alle samelewingsverskynsels, insluitend persoonlike veiligheid en viktimisering, moontlik te maak.

- Magsverhoudinge ten opsigte van ras, geslag, ouderdom en materiële sekuriteit is hoofkragte wat mense se begrip vorm rakende persoonlike veiligheid, hul ervaring van viktimisering, die soorte bedreigings waaraan hul blootgestel is en hul opsies om hul veiligheid te verbeter en viktimisering te hanteer.

- Die uitwerking van magsverhoudinge ten opsigte van ras, geslag, ouderdom en materiële sekuriteit is nie bloot kumulatief nie, maar hou ook komplekse interaksies in.

- Verbeteringe ten opsigte van Lwandle-inwoners se materiële gesteldheid - hul finansiële hulpbronne en hul leeftoestande - is prioriteite indien daar beoog word om hul persepsies van persoonlike veiligheid te verbeter.

- Hulpbronne en hulpmaatreëls moet gerig wees op die ontwikkeling en verbetering van bestaande gemeenskapsgeïnisieerde maatreëls eerder as op die afdwing van konvensionele, staats- of regsmaatreëls.

- Die verbetering in die persoonlike veiligheid van en die afname in die viktimisering van vroue en jong mans in Lwandle vereis grondliggende veranderinge in die heersende androkratiese en gerontokratiese magsverhoudinge.

ABSTRACT

The central objective of this research was to explore perceptions of personal safety among residents of an African migrant labourers' hostel - the Lwandle hostel near Somerset West in the Western Cape. This investigation was used to evaluate the validity of some of the fundamental premises of mainstream victimology. A progressive participatory approach was adopted to the research. This approach involves encouraging the democratic control of the research process by the research participants, ensuring that research is relevant to those who are being studied and working to level power relations between the "researchers" and the "researched", for example through the negotiated utilization of skills, sharing of resources and agreement on findings. A triangulated data collection method was employed, comprising participant observation, diary keeping and a survey of a representative sample of the opinions of 252 residents. The following are some of the core findings which emerged from this study:

- "Crime" cannot be assumed *a priori* to be the central factor threatening personal safety. Conceptions of victimization and threats to personal safety should be expanded beyond "crime" and "criminal" victimization to include all factors which people experience as threatening and/or victimizing.

- A macro to microlevel of analysis is required to produce a less distorted and more valid understanding of all social phenomena, including personal safety and victimization.

- Power relations of race, gender, age and material security are central forces shaping people's sense of personal safety, their experiences of victimization, the types of threats to which they are exposed and the options available to them for enhancing their security and for dealing with victimization.

- The impact of power relations of race, gender, age and material security are not simply cumulative, but involve complex interactions.

- Improvements to the Lwandle residents' material conditions - their financial resources and their living conditions - are the priority if their perceptions of personal safety are to be strengthened.

- Resources and efforts should be directed at developing and improving existing community-initiated regulatory mechanisms, rather than imposing conventional, state forms of law enforcement.

- Improving the personal safety of and decreasing the victimization experienced by women and by younger males in Lwandle, will require fundamental changes in current androcratic and gerontocratic power relations.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1 OVERALL AIM

The overall objective of the research discussed in this report was to explore the perceptions of personal safety of African* people who were living in a migrant labourer's hostel, during the period of rapid social change which followed the 1986 reform of Influx Control legislation in South Africa.

This study was conducted as part of a broader research endeavour, namely the Human Sciences Research Council's co-operative research programme on Affordable Personal Safety, the stated aim of which is "to investigate all aspects of the crime problem in South Africa"; and in particular, the causes, extent and nature of 'crime'** and the impact of 'crime' on all aspects of social life in this country (Glanz, 1990:6). The rationale for this subprogramme rests on an implicit assumption about the relationship between perceptions of personal safety and 'crime', namely, that 'crime' in the legal sense of lawbreaking, is the most significant factor influencing people's sense of personal safety. This assumption has two important corollaries: firstly, that there is a consensual understanding of the meanings of 'crime' and personal safety across different sectors of South African society, and secondly, that the purpose of research should be to identify the causes of 'crime' so that it can be reduced or eradicated, in order to improve people's feelings of personal safety.

These premises were not assumed *a priori* for the purposes of the research under discussion in this report. Instead, the study was consciously designed to enable the assessment of the validity of such assumptions. Accordingly, the following alternate basic assumptions were adopted: people's subjective sense of personal safety may be

---

* The authors wish to emphasize that, although terms signifying race have been used in this report, they in no way condone the use of racist terminology. Such terms have been used because the South African Nationalist Government's apartheid policy has produced real differences in the life experiences of people of different races in this country, and the authors believe that the impact of these constructed differences cannot be ignored in a critical analysis of this society. Until the abolition of the Population Registration Act during 1991, the state classified all South Africans according to their race: white, coloured (people of mixed racial heritage), Indian (Asian) and black. However, for the purposes of this report, the more popular terms for race have been used, namely, the term African for those who have been officially classified as black and the term black for all people who have been officially excluded from the classification of white. However, in some cases the terms coloured and Indian have been used to identify particular sectors of the black population.

** Throughout this report terms which have been placed in single quotation marks are those which the authors regard as having disputed meanings. Double quotation marks have been reserved to indicate direct quotations.

threatened by any range of factors some, or all, of which may not constitute 'crime' in the legal sense, such as inadequate living conditions, economic exploitation and forced removals. These factors do not have a fixed, inevitable and universal negative or positive influence on people's perceptions of personal safety. People's positions within a social structure, that is power relations, in particular relations of race, class, gender and age, are crucial variables which shape the factors influencing perceptions of personal safety. An important corollary to the latter assumption is that perceptions of personal safety and the factors which shape such feelings, are neither timeless nor universal, but are historically specific and context dependent. Hence, such social phenomena should be understood within the macrocontext of the historically specific social, material, economic and political environment in which they occur, as well as in the microcontext in which people conduct their everyday lives. The concepts of 'crime' and personal safety are social constructs whose meanings are neither absolute nor fixed. Their meanings are likely to vary, especially for people in different social positions. Lastly, a dialectical relationship exists between people and their environment. Hence, people and their sense of personal safety are not simply determined by certain factors. People act on their world. This includes acting on those phenomena that threaten and/or enhance their personal safety, thus contributing to a perpetual dialectical cycle of action and reaction.

2 A BRIEF RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

In 1987 one of the authors conducted a pilot study in Lwandle which highlighted some of the shortcomings of the dominant academic conceptions of personal safety (Sloth-Nielsen, 1987). A subsequent survey of the literature in this field revealed that the bulk of research into perceptions of personal safety has reflected the views and concerns of white, Western, economically privileged people, and to a large extent males, who live in 'first world' conditions. This has served to mute all but the voices of the dominant and has produced a narrow, distorted conception of personal safety and the factors which shape it. The study discussed in this report was undertaken in an attempt to broaden our understanding of and redress the imbalance in this field of research, by introducing the voices of economically and politically oppressed African people who live in 'third world' conditions.

The fact that relatively little progressive criminological research has been conducted within oppressed communities in South Africa, was an added impetus prompting this study. Lwandle itself was chosen as a particularly important context for research, given that it is a distinct community which is undergoing the marked social, political and economic changes associated with a sudden and rapid influx of people at a time of social transformation in South Africa. These conditions, it was felt, would have a marked impact upon people's perceptions of personal safety and would highlight the historically specific and context-dependent nature of such perceptions. Research at this historical moment was thus deemed to be of particular relevance.

3 AN OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH CONTEXT

This research was conducted with the African community that resided at the Lwandle hostel complex* between 1987 and 1990. As is illustrated in Figures I and II, the hostel is situated in a peri-urban area outside the white residential area of the Strand, in the Western part of the Cape Province of South Africa, in a region known as the Hottentots-Holland Basin.

Lwandle was built in accordance with the Nationalist government's apartheid policy of separate development. Simply put, this involved the state's revoking African people's South African citizenship and along with this, their rights to land, to residence, to vote, and to demand social benefits such as welfare, education and housing. As an alternative African people were given citizenship in small areas of South Africa allotted to them as 'homelands'. While people classified as coloured and Indian were allowed to remain in South Africa, they were limited to living in racially segregated areas which the state demarcated under the Group Areas Act.

Until 1986 a panoply of laws regulated the influx of African people from the 'homelands' to urban areas in South Africa. The central intention behind such legislation was to ensure that as few African people as possible could gain a permanent foothold in what was deemed to be white-owned territory. However, the variable labour needs of capital had to be met and a system of migrant labour was developed in which African males were allowed to work in South Africa on annual employment contracts. The consequent absence of African women and children was used to add credence to the image of African men as temporary sojourners in white urban areas.

Although, technically speaking, African people could be granted the right to permanent residence in South Africa if they had been born in the country, or had lived here for a lengthy period without interruption, the chances of acquiring such rights were in fact extraordinarily low. Up until the early eighties, African people who left South Africa for any reason, even migrant workers who were forced to renew employment contracts by leaving the country or those who returned to the 'homelands' on leave, forfeited their right to permanent residence. In effect, only African people who could prove to the state that they had stable employment and accommodation, who were legally permitted to enter and remain in South African cities for longer than 72 hours.

Lwandle is a hostel complex which was built to accommodate African male migrant workers who were required to meet the labour needs of the surrounding industrial complex. Because it is situated in the Western Cape, Lwandle was subject to a further influx control measure, namely, the Coloured Labour Preference Policy, which stipulated that employees could employ African workers only when no coloured workers were available. It is hardly surprising therefore that Lwandle was the sole legal residential area for

---

* The term Lwandle hostel has been used to refer to state-owned bungalows, whereas the terms Lwandle complex or Lwandle hostel complex have been used to refer to both state and privately owned bungalows.

FIGURE 1: DIAGRAM INDICATING THE SITUATION OF LWANDLE WITHIN THE WESTERN CAPE (taken from Urban Design Services (1987:3)).

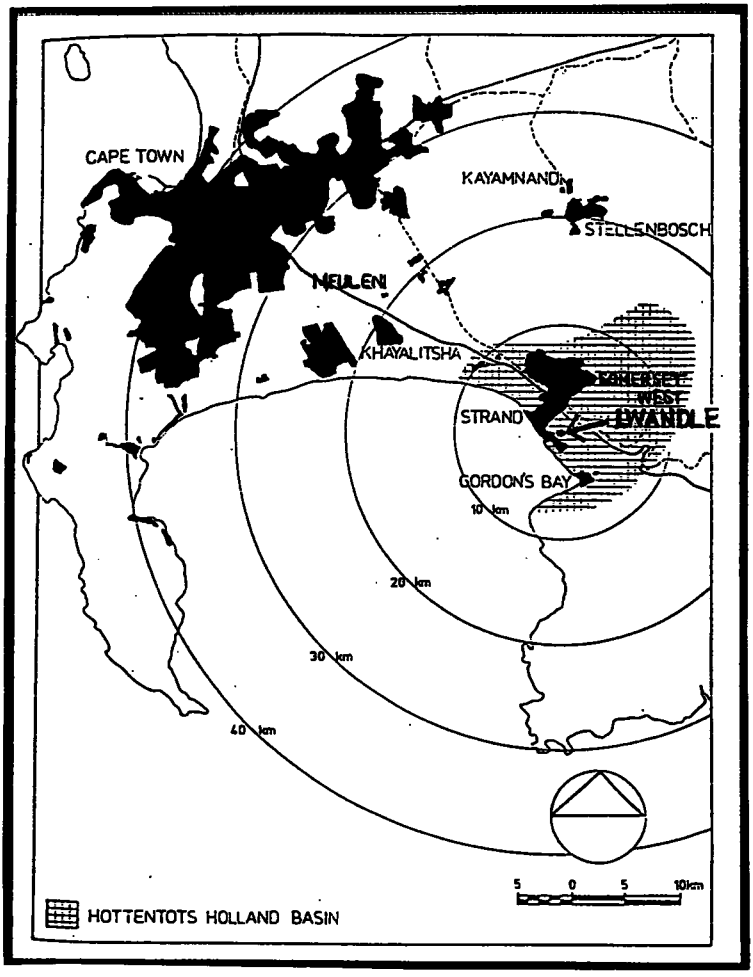
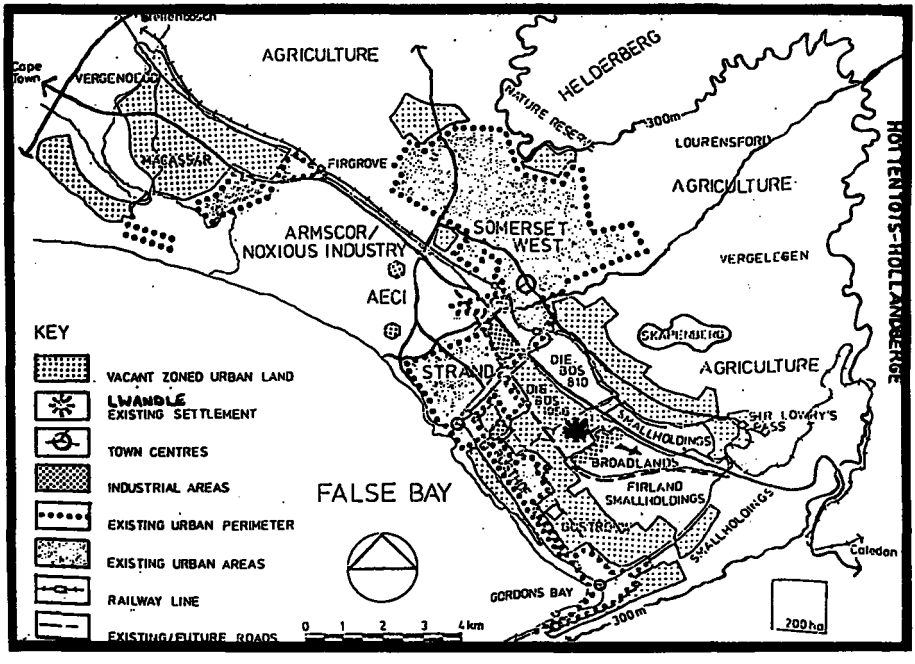


FIGURE 2: DIAGRAM INDICATING THE SITUATION OF LWANDLE IN RELATION TO THE STRAND (taken from Urban Design Services (1987:14)).



African people in the Hottentots-Holland Basin, until the mid-eighties when the Coloured Labour Preference Policy, Influx Control and Group Areas legislation were reformed.

Prior to reform, the men who resided in Lwandle were not able to acquire rights to permanent residence because as migrant workers they were compelled to return to their 'homelands' annually in order to renew their employment contracts. Moreover, since hostel accommodation was limited to males only, the family members, wives, children and dependants of migrant workers were both legally and structurally excluded from the complex. This was yet another aspect of the state's attempts to prevent the development of settled African communities in South African urban areas.

Nevertheless, women and children have always lived in Lwandle and their numbers have increased dramatically since 1986 when their presence was made lawful. Despite this sudden rise in population and although plans were formulated by the state to upgrade existing accommodation in Lwandle and to build extra low-cost housing in the area, by 1991 the state had provided only a few basic infrastructural services. The state-owned hostel, which was originally built to house some 2 000 males, now accommodates about 7 500 people. This means that the cubicles measuring nine square metres each, which were designed to accommodate only two adult males, now have to house up to ten people, including men, women and children.

The state-owned hostel accommodation comprises single-storey, dormitory-style bungalows entered by a passageway that divides each bungalow into a left and a right-hand section. Each section is divided into six cubicles that are nine square metres in size, and each is furnished with two single beds and a built-in cupboard. The cubicles are separated from one another by single walls and do not have doors.

In addition to the state-owned hostel, there are a few dormitories, similar in design to the hostel, but owned by private employees. In general these are of poorer quality than the state hostel, as they are constructed of corrugated iron which has notoriously poor thermal qualities and are frequently more densely populated. Consequently, the living conditions in the Lwandle complex continue to deteriorate. The environment is unhygienic and grossly overcrowded. Public facilities are either non-existent or hopelessly inadequate.

The administrative authorities of Lwandle allow only adult males to hold rent cards, which legally entitle the holder to a bed. This compels women to rely for accommodation on the men who hold cards. Most adult male residents of Lwandle cohabit with female partners and young children. Given the lack of educational facilities in the area, especially secondary schools, the majority of the children who live in Lwandle are under the age of 12 years. Older children are usually sent to the 'homelands' to complete their education.

Many Lwandle residents, especially women, are unemployed and a general aura of poverty plagues the community. Most of those who have paid jobs perform so-called unskilled work in the construction and small manufacturing industries in the vicinity, or work intermittently as casual labourers. Many of these jobs are poorly paid, frequently of short duration and do not offer the benefits, such as unemployment insurance and workmen's compensation benefits, accorded those in more permanent, 'skilled' positions.

FIGURE 3: DIAGRAM INDICATING THE LAYOUT OF THE LWANDLE HOSTEL COMPLEX (taken from Urban Design Services (1987:24)).

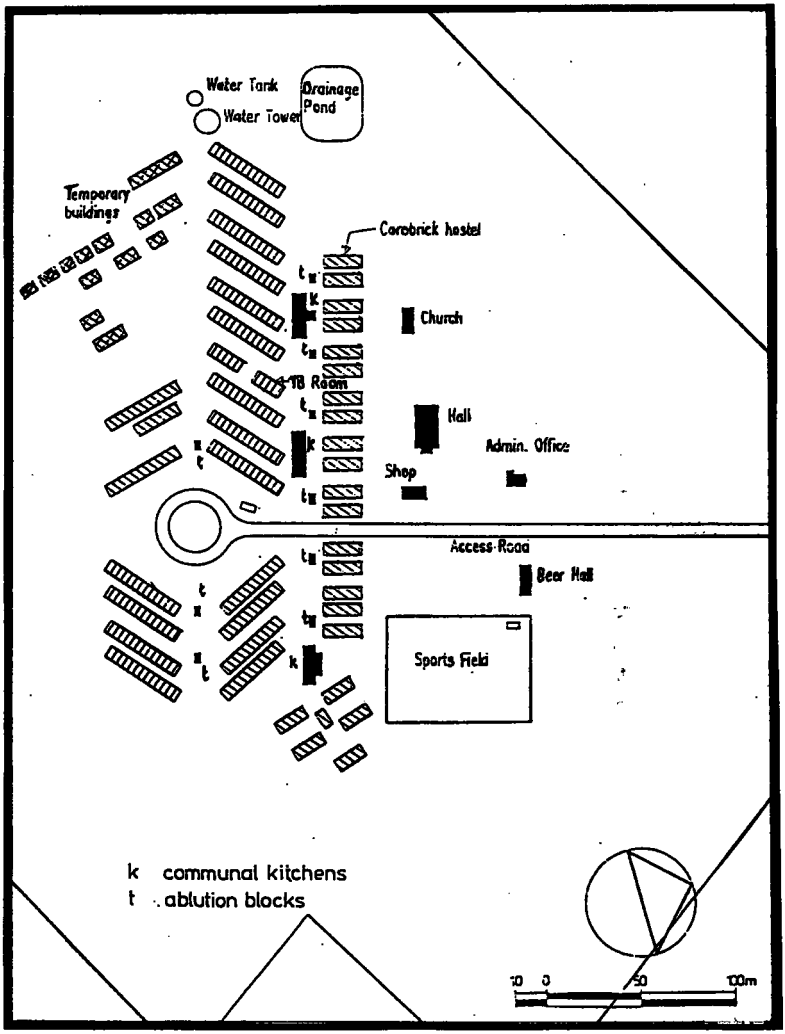
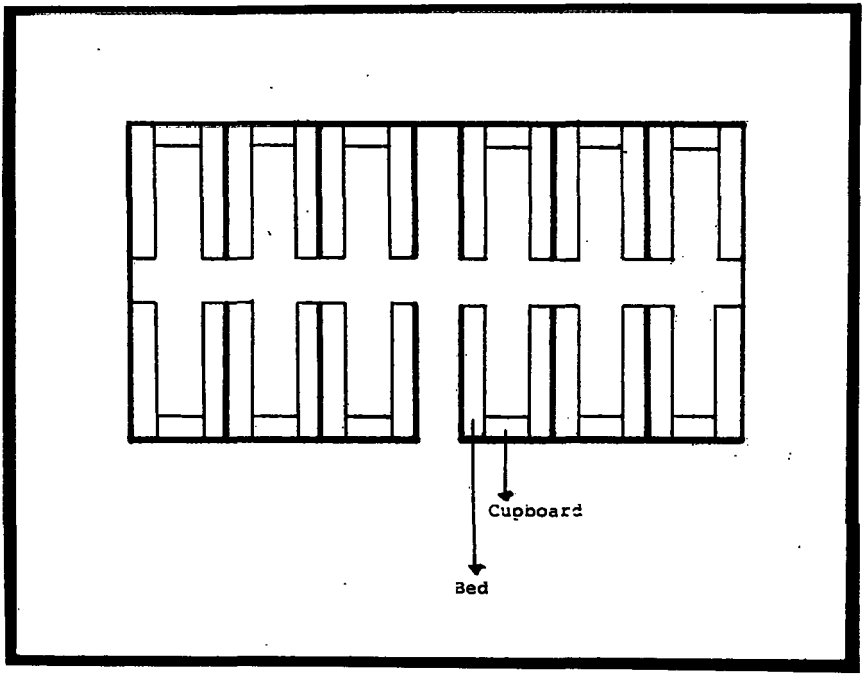
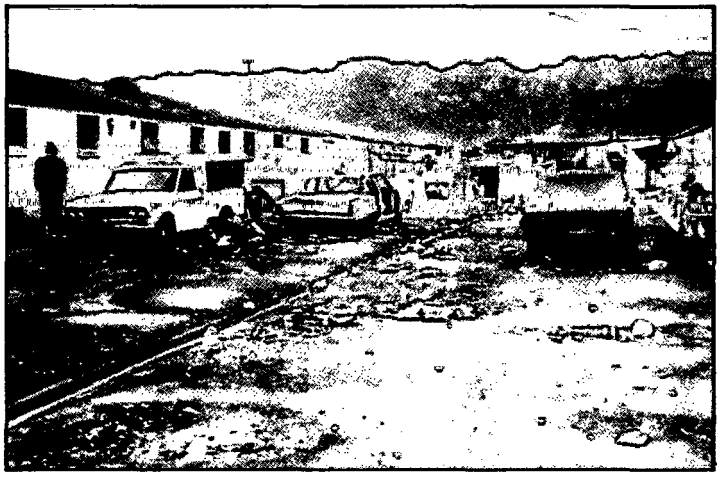


FIGURE 4: DIAGRAM INDICATING THE LAYOUT OF EACH BUNGALOW



SELECTED VIEWS OF THE LWANDLE COMPLEX



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SELECTED VIEWS OF THE LWANDLE COMPLEX

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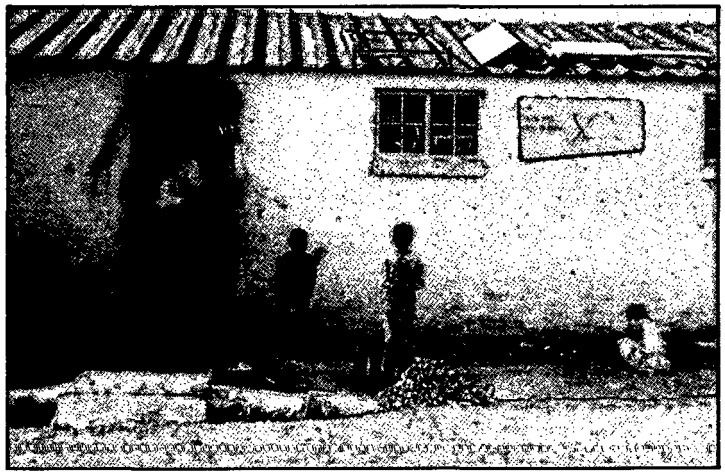
SELECTED VIEWS OF THE LWANDLE COMPLEX



CHAPTER II

A CRITICAL REVIEW OF SELECTED VICTIMOLOGICAL RESEARCH

1 A CRITIQUE OF TRENDS IN INTERNATIONAL VICTIMOLOGICAL RESEARCH

Internationally the majority of studies on personal safety have been conducted in the field of victimology which is usually a subdiscipline of criminology. Within the parameters of mainstream victimology, 'crime', as legally defined, has been viewed as the main threat to personal safety and most research to date has focused on three themes, namely victim responsibility, the impact of 'crime' and fear of 'crime'.

Studies of victim responsibility date back to North American work from the forties to the sixties (e.g. Von Hentig, 1948; Wolfgang, 1958; Schafer, 1968). The focal concerns of this type of work have been to conceptualize systematically the ways that victims of 'crime' contribute to the 'criminal' incidents in which they are targets, for example the role played by the victims of 'criminal' homicide in their own demise (Wolfgang, 1958); and to develop classification systems for categorizing victims (e.g. Von Hentig, 1948; Wolfgang & Ferracutti, 1969; Schafer, 1968).

North America in the early seventies saw an increase in research on the impact of 'crime', which was fueled by feminist work on the female survivors of male violence, (e.g. Burgess & Holmstrom, 1974; Kelly, 1988) and by the publication of the first national self-report survey of victims of 'crime' in 1972. A similar national survey was conducted in the United Kingdom in 1983 (Hough & Mayhew, 1983). This research technique, subsequently termed the victimological survey, involved interviewees' admitting to 'crimes' they had committed and reporting 'crimes' they had experienced as victims. The victimological survey was hailed as a major methodological breakthrough in the study of 'crime', for it was said to provide a more accurate picture of lawbreakers and victims and of the nature and prevalence of 'crime'. At last criminologists felt they had overcome the constraints of official statistics which grossly underestimated 'crime' by excluding unreported 'crimes'. Even a well-known critical criminologist commented that "victimization research represents a major advance in the techniques available to both criminology and the policy sciences" (Young, 1988:165). Victimological surveys have since become the standard data collection method for victimological research worldwide and have been conducted in most Western countries.

The third and latest victimological concern has been fear of 'crime', which was first brought to light by North American and British feminists who maintained that fear of male violence was one of the central social control mechanisms in women's oppression (e.g. Gordon & Riger, 1988; Stanko, 1988). Incorporating this issue within victimology has required broadening the focus from considering only the immediate victims of 'crime', to

including all people's responses to 'crime'. The rationale here has been that people are indirectly affected by the mere 'crime' in their communities (e.g. Research & Forecasts Inc. & Friedberg, 1983), as well as by the images of 'crime' that are portrayed in the mass media (Clark & Jefferson, 1976). Therefore people need not experience 'criminal victimization' directly in order to fear 'crime'. Fear of 'crime' can be disproportionate to the actual threat posed by 'crime' and hence, can become as significant a social problem as 'crime' itself (Lea & Young, 1984; Maxfield, 1984).

Research in the spheres of victim responsibility, the impact of 'crime' and fear of 'crime' has served to promote the growth of victimology as a vibrant new field of study. This work has led to the development and refinement of useful research techniques and has broadened the criminological view beyond lawbreakers and the nature of 'criminal acts', to encompass both the direct and the indirect victims of 'crime'. Victimological surveys have provided less distorted 'crime' statistics and have revealed a rich array of novel and useful data on the magnitude, nature and impact of 'crime'.

Nevertheless, mainstream victimological research is flawed by a number of fundamental theoretical shortcomings, which derive from its uncritical acceptance of existing law as the ultimate criterion for defining victimization, or in other words, the assumption that victims are to be limited to those who experience lawbreaking, either directly or indirectly (Ziebarhagen, 1977). Such a legalistic conception is narrow and uncritical. It excludes all conduct which is experienced as victimization, but which is not proscribed by existing law, including conduct which has simply not been outlawed by the state, such as rape in marriage, as well as oppressive actions which have been legalized by the state and structural violence (Hansson, 1991). State abuse of power is of particular relevance in the South African context, for here the state has legalized actions which "involve dictatorship, the arbitrary exercise of power, oppressive and repressive conduct, as well as different forms of violence used to elicit compliance or to overcome resistance" (Omar, 1990).

Not only does a legalistic conception of 'crime' and victimization involve an acceptance of law, but it places law beyond the realm of study, and certainly beyond criticism. In this way existing law is reified to a level where it is treated as inevitable and immutable. Such conceptions rest on the invalid premises that "certain actions are universally and absolutely deviant because they break fundamental expectations about human behaviour" (Aggleton, 1987:3), and that such universally accepted, 'natural' morality is embodied in law.

Since the late fifties, evidence has mounted showing that moral norms vary historically as well as across cultures, societies and even situations; that law itself is culturally and historically specific, and hence does not reflect a universal, fixed morality. Despite the fall of such premises from sociological grace and the widespread acceptance of the view that norms, including those embodied in law, are context dependent social constructs, a significant number of academics have held to legal conceptions of 'crime' and victimization. Their rationale is that although the morality reflected in law is not universally accepted or fixed, there is social consensus about such morality within any particular society at any particular time. This premise is also flawed. In contemporary South Africa for example, there is no social consensus on which a homogeneous morality could be based. On the

contrary, there is social and cultural heterogeneity. The vastly different, and frequently conflicting, values and interests of the groups comprising this society are currently being highlighted in attempts to develop a new constitution. Instead of a society in which all people are equal parties to a social contract, we have a social formation which has been constructed on inequality and imposed by a powerful minority on a majority who have been denied power. In such a society there cannot be real consensus - instead, conflict is more likely owing to contradictory interests and values. The majority of people in South Africa are still denied a say in the making of the laws which govern them. Therefore the existing South African law cannot be accepted uncritically as a sound moral baseline for defining either 'crime' or victimization. Hence, the question which must now be addressed is: to whom are existing laws acceptable and why?

An overreliance on self-report surveys within victimology has led to the systematic exclusion of many forms of victimization. The largest proportion of policing activity is directed at so-called 'victimless crimes', such as the possession of illicit substances and prostitution, in which the police rather than victims are the complainants (Steytler, 1989). In fact, these are not 'victimless crimes' simply because charges are not laid by those who experience the direct impact of such conduct, for in effect the policing of such conduct creates victims. This significant form of victimization is, however, excluded by victimological surveys. Self-report surveys also tend to exclude 'crimes' which victims do not define as 'criminal', as is commonly the case with sexual harassment, battery and the sexual abuse of children (Estrich, 1986; Sparks, Genn & Dodd, 1977). Furthermore, victimological surveys disregard the victims of 'crimes of the powerful', such as insider trading by holders of corporate shares, computer fraud and the failure of big businesses to provide safe working environments. These are forms of victimization as they result in injury and losses, yet such conduct tends to go unnoticed in surveys of individual victims.

The use of legal definitions of 'crime' as the basis of victimological survey questions, even when couched in lay language, limits responses to the predetermined legal definition of what constitutes victimization. It has been argued in response to such shortcomings, that victimology should be concerned with all phenomena which people feel constitute victimization (Hindelang, 1976; Zieberhagen, 1977), and hence, that victims' *status qua victim* ought to be self-defined.

Despite such proposals to extend the conception of victimization beyond narrow legal definitions and to incorporate broader material and sociopolitical factors, the majority of victimological surveys continue to impose legal conceptions of victimization and to individualize and decontextualize victimization. The focus is placed on individuals' experiences of particular incidents of 'criminal' victimization without due consideration of the historical, material and sociopolitical context of such experiences. Yet, in trying to explain the impact of 'crime' "in terms of risk rates abstracted from the general material predicament of the victim we come to a totally false assessment of impact" (Young, 1988:173). Such an approach fails to consider that social position produces a differential vulnerability to victimization and to the compounding of victimization. The impact of 'crime' differs for people in different social positions. For example, the middle-class professional

may experience burglary as a somewhat positive experience, because s/he is able to make a "creative insurance claim" which will provide her/him with new belongings. By contrast, an indigent elderly woman is likely to suffer greater loss as a result of burglary. The support services provided by police, the local council and victim support schemes, which serve to mediate the impact of 'crime', also vary considerably for persons in different social positions (Young, 1988). Furthermore, victimization is frequently compounded, in the sense that people who are subject to one type of 'crime' also tend to be subject to others, and people who experience one kind of social problem usually also have to deal with a range of other social problems (Young, 1988).

The traditional decontextualized approach to victimization has dismissed women's fear of being victimized as irrational, on the grounds that women are actually less likely than men to experience 'criminal' victimization. Such a claim ignores the fact that women's fears and the elaborate precautions they subsequently undertake to avoid dangerous situations, emanate from their subjugated position in androcratic societies. A wealth of feminist research has shown that when victimized, women experience greater victimization than men, because of their subjugated position (Young, 1988). Yet, this structural difference between victims is not considered in traditional victimological research which is concerned only with the 'objective' risk of 'criminal' victimization. Consequently, even though generalizations are drawn from victimological surveys of individual victims, the basic assumption that 'crime' is an activity perpetrated by a 'bad' individual against a 'good' individual, results in narrow, individualistic interpretations.

To conclude: a comprehensive and less distorted understanding of victimization and of perceptions of personal safety requires a historical materialist approach which acknowledges the impact of power relations and which explains victimization in its macro, meso and microcontexts, and data collection methods which enable people to express their own conceptions of victimization and personal safety.

2 A CRITIQUE OF TRENDS IN SOUTH AFRICAN VICTIMOLOGICAL RESEARCH

Victimology is a young field in South Africa. Our first victimology conference was held as recently as 1990. Hence, little victimological research has been conducted in this country and until the establishment of the field of victimology within the discipline of criminology, most victimological studies were conducted by feminists. The work of mainstream victimologists suffers the same shortcomings as traditional, international victimological research. It too is uncritical, class-biased, ethnocentric and androcentric.

One of the most recent and relatively large scale studies of reactions to 'crime' in South Africa* (Glanz, 1989a & b) is a typical example of the dominant approach. In this work the South African public's reaction to crime is described in terms of the measures people take to protect themselves and their property against 'crime'. Such measures include

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* This study was also conducted for the co-operative research programme on Affordable Personal Safety.

burglar-proofing, alarm systems, security lighting systems, guard dogs and firearms. This study proceeds from the assumption that there is a consensual understanding of the concept of 'crime', which is reflected in questions like: "Do you have any of the following which were specifically obtained to protect you and your home against crime?" (Glanz, 1989a:5). But this is a false assumption, since 'crime' means very different things to economically and politically privileged white people living in suburban residential areas than to economically impoverished, politically disempowered African people residing in squatter camps. It is hardly surprising that the latter group often perceives state violations of their human rights, and not burglary, as the most significant of all 'crimes'.

Hence, studies should not assume *a priori* that certain factors affect people's sense of security. Different people's perceptions of threats to personal safety should be investigated in order to assess whether or not legally defined 'criminal' behaviour is a significant factor, and if so, the relative importance of such 'criminal' conduct in relation to other threats. To an African person living in a squatter camp the threat of disease resulting from unsanitary living conditions and exposure to the elements, as well as the threat of forced removal by the state, may well be greater than the threat of burglary or even assault.

The aforementioned question also clearly reflects class bias for it would be ambiguous were it put to a resident of an African migrant labourers' hostel. The question refers to the respondent's 'home'. In a hostel setting a number of residents share a single bed located in a doorless, concrete cubicle, which is part of a bungalow. Respondents living in such conditions may find it impossible to distinguish the portion of this living space to which such a question refers: is one's home the bed which one shares with as many as eight people, is it the concrete cubicle, is it the entire bungalow, or is it one's mud hut in one of the 'homelands'?

The protective devices included in the survey by Glanz (1989a & b) apply only to economically privileged people who live in separate residential units, such as flats or houses, in urban areas. Such devices would be completely inappropriate for a hostel bungalow. Even if, for example, hostel residents could afford a burglar alarm, such a device would be totally unsuitable for a bungalow occupied by hundreds of unrelated people! Similarly, burglar-proofing would serve little purpose in the case of a tin and cardboard shack or a mud hut. This survey was clearly concerned with the personal safety and protection of economically privileged householders who in South Africa are mainly white, and as such, also reflects the widespread fear among white South Africans of the *swart gevaar**. Consequently this research falls prey to one of the central criticisms of positivist research in general, namely that, while purporting to be objective and value-neutral, it in fact reflects the view of only the socially, politically and economically powerful people in a society. Such research can provide only a distorted and narrow

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* Translated as the black danger, the threat which white people feel African people pose.

understanding of victimization, and one which negates the experiences of the majority of South Africans.

Despite its obvious ethnocentric bias, Glanz's (1989a & b) survey did involve respondents from all population groups. Although subject to the same limitations as the latter mentioned work, the recent South African victimological study* by Lötter, Ndabandaba and Esterhuysen (1990), focused on African respondents only. In this sense it is more comparable to the study discussed in this report, and hence the differences in approach between these two projects have been highlighted below.

The first major difference is the way that each approach conceptualizes of victimization. Lötter, Ndabandaba and Esterhuysen limit victimization to 'criminal' victimization and define 'crime' as any "act that violates criminal law and is punishable by the State" (1990:5). This definition is crucial to the research findings, for respondents were asked to which of a specified list of 'crimes' they had fallen victim, namely 'crimes' of robbery, aggravated assault, common assault, theft, rape and attempted rape (Lötter, Ndabandaba & Esterhuysen, 1990:120). This approach is problematic for a number of reasons. The list of 'offences' specified by Lötter, Ndabandaba and Esterhuysen (1990) does not include all the legally defined 'crimes' against persons or property, and their selection is explained on the grounds that these are the types of 'offences' included in North American victimological surveys. This is indefensible, for it cannot simply be assumed that African people, living in completely different conditions from North Americans, will necessarily agree on the forms of conduct which they feel are the most important types of 'criminal' victimization. Furthermore, the South African system of classifying 'crimes' is very different from that used in the United States of America. Hence, the forms of conduct selected by Lötter, Ndabandaba and Esterhuysen (1990) cannot be viewed as equivalent to those included in North American surveys. Given higher educational levels and greater exposure to comprehensive media reports about 'crime', it may be that the North American public has a relatively consensual understanding of what constitutes 'crime' and more specifically, of different types of 'crime'. This is certainly not the case in South Africa. The cultural diversity in this country and the fact that black people have had little or no voice in the formulation of criminal law, makes it inappropriate for researchers to impose predetermined notions of what conduct people in differing social positions will perceive as constituting 'criminal' victimization.

Despite these obvious problems, Lötter, Ndabandaba and Esterhuysen (1990) did not explain the legal definitions of each type of 'crime' that they included in their survey question to respondents. Instead they assumed, incorrectly, that the respondents would share the same understanding of what conduct constituted each type of 'offence'. This is a little absurd considering that even in law, there is contention over what conduct constitutes an apparently unambiguous offence like robbery (e.g. S v Mogala, 1978; S v

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* This study was also conducted for the co operative research programme on Affordable Personal Safety.

Sithole, 1981; S v Yolelo, 1981), and such ambiguity is even greater in distinctions between such offences as common and aggravated assault.

The intensive pilot investigation conducted as part of the study under discussion in this report showed that using the term 'crime' in interviews tended to encourage interviewees to talk about what they believed researchers would define as 'crime', rather than their own perceptions. Hence, to avoid the shortcomings just discussed, both the term 'crime' and legal terms for specific 'offences' were purposely excluded from the interview questions used in this research, and specific steps were taken to avoid the imposition of preconceptions of victimization and to encourage the respondents to express their own conceptions.*

A second substantive difference between the research of Lötter, Ndabandaba and Esterhuysen (1990) and the Lwandle study discussed in this report, is the role accorded sociopolitical and economic factors in the research designs and in the analysis of the findings. Although Lötter, Ndabandaba and Esterhuysen conclude their study by recommending: "It seems doubtful whether South Africa's many social problems such as crime, for example, can really be tackled with confidence unless certain preconditions are met. These include the phasing out of apartheid, the realization of a new and more equitable socio-political dispensation, national reconciliation and an end to violence and a revitalized and strong economy able to create wealth and jobs for a growing population" (1990:547); their research provides no basis whatsoever for these assertions. At no point in their report are these ideas argued in any way, nor are they tested as research hypotheses, either directly or indirectly. To use a colloquial expression, they crop up quite out of the blue. Therefore these concluding recommendations should be regarded merely as an attempt to increase the political credibility of the research findings.

To illustrate this criticism further: while it is commendable that Lötter, Ndabandaba and Esterhuysen (1990) acknowledge the extent to which apartheid is inextricably connected with lawbreaking, their study fails to explain the impact of apartheid. So for example, the authors maintain that the South African Police (SAP) has the role of apprehending and detaining lawbreakers. This view of the SAP's being concerned with the apparently politically neutral task of dealing with lawbreaking, is evidence of a decontextualized analysis. It completely ignores the highly political role which the SAP has played, and continues to play, in the enforcement, not of politically neutral laws, but of apartheid (Brogden, 1989; Fine, 1989; Prior, 1989; Schärf, 1989; Steytler, 1989; Van der Spuy, 1989).

Nor is it simply in the area of policing that Lötter, Ndabandaba and Esterhuysen (1990) fail to contextualize their findings, for their explanation of street gangsterism is similarly flawed. They state that one type of street gang, the *com-tsotsis*, originally comprised "those youngsters who broke away from the comrades** because they had violated

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* These steps are detailed in the section on research praxis.

** Anti-apartheid activists.

comrades' regulations and standing orders"; but they then proceed to discuss the history of the comrades, and not of the *com-tsotsis*. The effect is that the distinction between these two very different groups is totally blurred. More specifically, the implication is that the development, *modus operandi* and objectives of these two groups are the same, and this is simply inaccurate.

Furthermore, Lötter, Ndabandaba and Esterhuysen's (1990) account of political conflict and of the politicization of African people in townships is extraordinarily limited, and simultaneously reveals the authors' political positions. The following extract illustrates this clearly:

> The comrades are alleged to have started in the early 1980's in Chesterville as a result of a strike against increased bus fares. When the police tried to maintain law and order, the comrades attacked them and unrest was the outcome. The unrest spread to the schools, classes were boycotted and property was destroyed ... All those blacks who did not participate in the violence were labelled pimps or government informers. The comrades molested the out group, burnt their houses, looted their cars and victimized them in a number of ways, such as petrol bombs and kangaroo courts ... The boys used in the violence were aged between 7 and 15 years and were trained into thinking that they were fighting for freedom. The catchword was developed "freedom now and education later". The violence was directed at progressive residents who owned property, businesses and good cars (Lötter, Ndabandaba & Esterhuysen, 1990:350).

Although contrary versions of the events described in this extract abound, Steytler's (1989) is probably the most reliable of these versions, since it is based on eyewitness accounts and sworn affidavits which were collected for court cases. In stark contrast to Lötter, Ndabandaba and Esterhuysen (1990), Steytler (1989) shows the brutal, random and illegal actions committed by the SAP in attempts to restore rule by fear in the African townships around Durban. However, without citing any authority for their propositions, Lötter, Ndabandaba and Esterhuysen (1990) maintain that the police were simply attempting to maintain law and order in these areas. For Lötter, Ndabandaba and Esterhuysen (1990) the sequence of events is reduced to: strikes to which the police responded in order to maintain law and order, which were followed by attacks on the police by the comrades, which finally spiralled into 'unrest'! The fact that these strikes were explicitly political in nature is omitted. These were strikes against increases in bus fares by economically impoverished African residents who, because of apartheid, were forced to live in townships situated far from their places of work and had few, if any, essential services or recreational facilities. Lötter, Ndabandaba and Esterhuysen (1990) also describe youth violence during this period in a similar manner, namely, that African youths engaged in violent acts to which the SAP responded. Clearly African youths are being cast as the cause of 'unrest', although Lötter, Ndabandaba and Esterhuysen (1990) do suggest that youths were manipulated by political organizations. The ongoing battle for control and allegiance in the Natal region has been the subject of daily newspaper reports and of sustained political analysis for the last three years. Yet notably, Inkatha, its development in these very townships, the reign of the warlords and their central role in

victimization, receives nary a mention in the work of Lötter, Ndabandaba and Esterhuysen (1990).

Lötter, Ndabandaba and Esterhuysen's (1990) exclusion of the role played by Inkatha and their distortion of the role played by the comrades is but one example of an approach which has dominated South African criminology throughout the eighties (e.g. Van der Westhuizen, 1982), an approach which is uncomfortably akin to the official version of reality propagated during this era.

3 A BRIEF COMMENT ON SOUTH AFRICAN RESEARCH ON HOSTEL RESIDENTS

A small number of anthropological studies have been conducted on group dynamics in African migrant labourers' hostels in South Africa (Wilson & Mafeje, 1963; Ramphele, 1986; Ramphele & Boonzaaier, 1988). While this work is not direct relevant to the study of perceptions of personal safety discussed in this report, such findings did provide valuable background information about the general atmosphere of hostel life and the types of issues which were likely to impact on hostel dwellers' perceptions of victimization and of personal safety.

4 CONCLUDING REMARKS ON MAINSTREAM VICTIMOLOGICAL RESEARCH

The claim that the only valid knowledge is that developed using value neutral scientific methodology has been discredited. However, this positivist approach continues to dominate mainstream victimology overseas as well as in South Africa. Moreover, this alleged objectivity is used to disguise politically partisan ideas. With the exception of the victimological studies that have been conducted mainly from feminist and left realist perspectives (e.g. Jones, Maclean & Young, 1986), the major thrust in mainstream victimology internationally has supported greater law enforcement. Calls for increased state intervention and harsher, more punitive treatment for lawbreakers have earned mainstream victimology, as well as the broader victims' movement, a comfortable place on the political right (Maguire & Pointing, 1988). Furthermore, the claim of scientific 'objectivity' has allowed positivists to neglect the ways in which researchers' social, economic and political positions shape research findings. Hence, views of 'crime' and victimization that are actually androcentric, ethnocentric and class-biased, have been presented as universally applicable. The mainstream approach has also focused on individual experiences of legally-defined 'criminal' victimization, and has led to a neglect of the variety of forms of victimization and the crucial social, political, economic and historical underpinnings of 'crime' and victimization. The consequent impoverished understanding of victimization is narrow, reductionist and distorted.

CHAPTER III

THE THEORETICAL APPROACH

1 CRIMINOLOGICAL APPROACH

In view of the problems associated with the positivist approach, the work discussed in this report was informed by alternate premises. Although such premises do not yet constitute a comprehensive or systematic criminological theory, these ideas are part of the currently developing South African approach to criminology, known as progressive realism. Progressive realism is a response to the shortcomings of the dominant approach to criminology in South Africa (Hansson, 1991), which is currently termed fundamental criminology (Cloete & Stevens, 1990). As the term implies, progressive realism shares many of basic assumptions of British left realist criminology (e.g. Lea, 1987; Mathews, 1987; Young, 1987).

The late seventies saw the beginnings of progressive realist thinking at the University of Cape Town's Institute of Criminology in work which challenged mainstream criminologists' consensual view of society and support of the apartheid state (Davis & Slabbert, 1985; Hansson & Van Zyl Smit, 1990). From the outset, this emerging alternate criminology was guided by the criteria set forth by Taylor, Walton and Young (1973) for a fully social theory of 'crime and crime control'. To date work in this field has been characterized by: a focus on state abuses of power; on deconstructing lawbreaking and responses to lawbreaking at the macro, meso and microlevels of analysis; on exposing the gaps between the law in books and the law in action; and finally, on developing a praxis that involves a commitment to empowering the oppressed, both victims and lawbreakers, and to active participation by progressive criminologists in the struggle against all forms of oppression in this country.

What follows is a brief overview, based on Young's (1981) conceptual framework, of some of the basic assumptions of South African progressive realism in its present state of development. A conflictual rather than a consensual model of social order is assumed. Contemporary South African society is viewed as comprising dynamic groupings with conflicting interests and values which derive from the power relations of class, race, gender and age.* The field of study is extended to include all forms of social regulation, including law making and law enforcement, and incorporates victimization and reactions to norm violation and social censure. Accounts of social phenomena are explained historically, dialectically, materially, ideologically and at macro, meso and microlevels.

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* This notion of power relations has been adopted from socialist feminism, in particular the work of Bozzoli (1983) and Walker (1990).

Law and legal systems are not viewed as mere instruments of ruling class oppression, but as important sites of struggles for power and authority. A legal conception of 'crime' and victimization is rejected. The norms reflected in law at any specific time and in any particular social context, are not assumed to be universal, natural or consensually acceptable moral standards, but are viewed as the historically specific outcomes of dialectical power struggles among various social groupings and alliances, which have differential power and authority. It is this differential power that has allowed the views of those in positions of authority to subjugate other people's views of the world, a form of cultural hegemony that has produced distorted accounts of social reality namely class-biased, ethnocentric, androcentric and gerontocentric views. For this reason it is considered important to elicit the views of those who are oppressed.

There are various kinds of conduct in contemporary social orders, namely conduct which is criminalized and viewed as unacceptable by some or all social groups (e.g. homicide); conduct which is not criminalized yet is viewed by some social groups as unacceptable (e.g. marital rape); conduct which is criminalized, yet is not viewed by some social groups as unacceptable (e.g. the use of marijuana); and conduct which is neither criminalized nor viewed as unacceptable by certain groups (Mathews, 1987). There is therefore a dialectical and dynamic relation between heterogeneous social morality and legal norms. Similarly, human conduct is viewed as dialectically determined - both determined and determining - that is, as human agency operating within historically determined constraints.

Like critical criminologies in general, progressive realism is based on the premise that fundamental changes in the distribution of power, whether economic, political and social, are prerequisites for change in social conduct, including lawbreaking. Although the ultimate goal of progressive realists is to develop a more egalitarian social order, they share with left realists the position that strategic short-term and small-scale changes in existing social orders are necessary to effect more fundamental social change in the longer term. To this end, politically progressive criminologists engage actively in the realm of 'crime control' in order to prevent conservatives from dominating this important sphere (Young, 1987). A central aim is to develop models for the regulation of social relations which will be compatible with, and which will reinforce, a more egalitarian social order.

The resolution of 'the crime problem' is not deferred until after a fundamental change in the social order has occurred, for this strategy has proven problematic even in countries such as the Soviet Union and Cuba that have undergone major social change (Young, 1975). Victimization impacts disproportionately on oppressed groups. In particular, it further exacerbates their already impoverished material conditions, restricts their mobility and reduces their participation in democratic structures (Mathews, 1987). Progressive criminologists therefore intervene to assist already oppressed groups in dealing with the impact of destructive conduct, including so-called predatory 'crime'.

The assumptions of progressive realism are derived from the epistemological premises of representative realism, namely that reality has a determinate role, even though our immediate sensory experience limits us to perceptions of appearances and not of essences

(Mathews, 1987). Therefore appearances are not taken as fact but are deconstructed to reveal temporally and contextually specific internal dynamics and relations (Lea, 1987). Even though we humans may never be able to understand or perceive social reality in its essence, our partial perceptions are real in the sense that we experience them as real and act upon them as if they were real. Since there is a dialectical relation between reality and human conduct, our actions have an impact on reality which in turn reacts on our consciousness and on our subsequent conduct. Social phenomena have an ontological reality, in that the impact of such phenomena is experienced as real even though such experiences are socially constructed and such constructions are historically and culturally variable (Mathews, 1987). Oppressed groups experience certain forms of lawbreaking as well as other types of conduct which are not illegal, as destructive and/or victimizing. The consequences of such conduct, as well as attitudes and responses toward it, are not merely forms of false consciousness or products of bourgeois hegemonic control and so should be dealt with directly.

CHAPTER IV

THE RESEARCH PROCESS

1 AN OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH APPROACH

Praxis refers to the dialectical relation between theory and practice, or in other words, theory informs and is reciprocally informed by research practice. Over the past five years a research praxis known as progressive participatory research has been developing within the sphere of alternative criminology in South Africa.

> There is power in knowledge. Just as social science research has been used to enhance the power of the privileged, it has the potential to empower the oppressed. Thus, in striving toward national liberation in South Africa, it is important that social science be treated as a sphere in need of democratization (Hansson, Carollisen & Prinsloo, 1989:64).

Not only have the views of the subjugated been disregarded, or more commonly overshadowed, by those in positions of dominance, but oppressed people in South Africa have also come to perceive research as being

> ... both exploitative and irrelevant. Their experience of researchers in general, seems to have been that of privileged academics intruding on economically deprived communities, invading the privacy of residents to collect information that is neither useful nor meaningful to those being studied. More often than not researchers benefit, not those whose participation makes the findings possible (Hansson, Carollisen & Prinsloo, 1989:61-62).

The progressive participatory approach to research is a response to these important issues, an approach guided by three central principles: non-exploitation and active sharing; democratic control or accountability; and relevancy. It is because researchers have come to occupy positions of power in relation to research 'subjects', especially those from oppressed groups, that this approach requires research to be designed and conducted in a manner that levels the power relations between researchers and those being researched. Furthermore, those who provide information as part of research, are not treated as 'subjects' to be studied by 'objective' researchers. Instead, the views of those traditionally viewed as the 'subjects' of research are considered to be just as legitimate as the interpretations made by social scientists. In practice, where appropriate, members of communities which are being researched are encouraged to participate actively and at all stages of the research process, which means that they are trained in research skills, that they are involved in deciding what research should be done, how it should be conducted and to what uses the findings should be put.

From this perspective, research is not conducted only to gather information, but also to share skills, resources and information actively with participants. Hence, researchers seek to assist the communities being studied to address problems. This aspect of the

approach is known as action research and is probably best exemplified in the work of feminists who established refuges for battered women and services for rape survivors, which were both resources for communities and sources of valuable data for victimological research.

2 PUTTING PRINCIPLES INTO PRACTICE

2.1 Establishing democratic controls

For the purposes of the study discussed in this report, the democratic control of the project was implemented in a number of ways. Throughout the research process, a dialogue was maintained between those conducting the research and the members of the community. The research team functioned as a democratic body and regular meetings were held at which all information was shared. Before the project was started a meeting was held with those acknowledged as community leaders in order to discuss the goals and methods of the proposed project. Then a second meeting was held, to which the entire Lwandle community was invited, and the project was discussed further. A letter, written in Xhosa, was circulated throughout the hostel complex describing the proposed project and clarifying the problematic issues that had been raised in debate at the second meeting. In particular, the matter of confidentiality had to be addressed, for the Lwandle residents were concerned about suffering negative consequences should the research data fall into the hands of the state.

2.2 Assistance to individuals

From the outset of the project the residents began approaching the members of the research team, especially those who resided in Lwandle, for assistance in matters concerning victimization. Many of the initial complaints pertained to police action which residents felt had been unfair and/or unlawful. The following incident is a typical example: A woman approached the team for assistance in a criminal case in which she had been accused of slashing the tyres of a police vehicle during a police raid. She explained that she had not slashed the tyres, but had merely been a member of the angry crowd that had surrounded a police vehicle. A member of the team took her statement, and organized an attorney to defend her in this matter through the local Advice Office. The research team also functioned as a link between this woman and her lawyer, and assisted her in getting defence witnesses to appear in court. Her ultimate acquittal was celebrated by a large sector of the community as a significant moral victory, since experience had taught the people in Lwandle that if one was detained, it was advisable to plead guilty or to pay an admission of guilt fine, because the police could not be successfully challenged in court.

The full significance of the community's joyous response to this acquittal, in what may appear to be a petty issue, is better understood when additional aspects of this case are considered. When the attorney received a copy of the charge sheet from the prosecution in order to prepare for the trial, she noted that, contrary to the instructions she had

received from her client, a plea of guilty had in fact been noted and that the matter had been set down for sentence and not for trial. This issue was probed in depth by the lawyer and the following facts emerged. On her first appearance in court, the accused had in fact pleaded not guilty to the charge. The investigating officer and principle witness for the prosecution, had then immediately had her placed in a cell and had removed her very young infant. While she had listened to the infant crying, he had informed her that her baby would be returned to her only if she changed her plea to that of guilty. Not surprisingly, it had not taken long before she had agreed to do so. The charge sheet on which the plea of not guilty had been noted earlier that day, had then allegedly been destroyed and replaced with one indicating a plea of guilty.

On this basis, the attorney appeared on behalf of the accused at a subsequent hearing and related this sequence of events in order to explain the application for a change in the noted plea, so that a trial on the merits of the case could be held. As a result, the presiding officer recused herself and the entire matter had to be recounted *de novo* before another judicial officer. In all, it required unusual persistence on the part of this accused to prove her ultimate innocence!

A number of defences on a variety of criminal charges followed this case, each of which involved a Lwandle resident as the accused and a member of the police force as the chief or sole witness for the prosecution. Most of these criminal charges related to public order offences such as, breaches of the peace in which residents had sworn at the police or had refused to give their names and addresses to the police. In fact, a situation developed in which a group of policemen and a group of residents became such familiar adversaries in the court-room, that a certain police officer claimed this was a deliberate strategy to discredit the police force!

Another notable incident in which the team's assistance was sought concerned a complaint about a police strip-search. A female resident claimed that a policewoman had required her to strip naked and to submit to a body-search. Although this complainant had been partially shielded from the view of others in the bungalow by a curtain during this strip-search, she maintained that the curtain had not in fact afforded her sufficient privacy. Moreover, at the time she had been in the final stages of pregnancy and she said that being searched while in this physical state had embarrassed her. She added that she had not been told why she had been searched and so had been denied the opportunity to avoid such action. This complainant, together with the research team, therefore decided to institute a civil claim against the police for injuria, that is, harm caused by the invasion of her dignity.

In sum then, when members of the research team came across incidents of victimization, these were not merely recorded as examples of victimization. Instead the team members and the victims discussed available sources of assistance and ways of dealing with such matters in order to assist the victims in reaching informed decisions. When the victims chose the avenue of legal proceedings, the research team liaised with the lawyers or the advice office personnel concerned, by providing regular feedback to complainants on the progress of their cases. The fact that two people who received

assistance in the early stages of the project became so interested that they joined the research team and have since become involved in community organizations, is testimony to the positive impact of action research.

2.3 Assisting the broader community

The Lwandle community has had to develop its own resources and mechanisms for addressing problems of victimization and personal safety, because it has been denied access to conventional resources such as lawyers, social workers, educators and democratically elected political officials. From the outset the research team recognized that they had access to skills and resources which could be useful to Lwandle residents, but which had been denied this oppressed community. Since it was acknowledged that, all too often, the assistance offered by privileged outsiders at best provide only short term respite for the oppressed and at worst, fosters dependency, one of the aims of this project was not only to share the skills and resources that the residents found most useful, but to do so in ways that could have long-term gains for this community. Throughout the project the team concentrated on working with existing community structures and on encouraging forms of collective action and organization, rather than merely imposing methods and resources. The growth of the trade union movement during the eighties has shown that the route to empowerment for the oppressed lies in self help through organization and collective action.

This is the principle of empowerment and in this project it was translated into practice in a number of ways. The Lwandle residents themselves comprised half of the research team. They were selected because they were already respected as leaders in Lwandle, and it was felt that by participating in this research they would acquire useful skills which they, as leaders, would be able to employ in the longer term to the enduring benefit of the community as a whole. Indeed there is some evidence that this goal was achieved, at least to some extent, because one of the participants is now employed in the local Advice Office, an organization which assists victims with a wide range of problems such as unfair dismissals, victimization in the work place and consumer protection matters. In this capacity he has ensured a strong link between the Lwandle community and the Advice Office and has used his skills to assist fellow residents. In addition, this researcher is also receiving training at a university as a community educator and has been elected to political office in Lwandle.

Other research participants reported that they had gained a deeper understanding and practical knowledge of how to deal with the problems of victimization and personal safety in Lwandle, which had in turn improved the assistance they are able to offer in their voluntary capacity to fellow residents. Participants noted that being informed about the law relating to search and seizure, about the way that the legal system operates and about democratic methods of dispute resolution and mediation, were the most useful aspects of their involvement in the project. In short then, the methods employed in this research

served, albeit in a low-key and sometimes intangible way, to facilitate the development of long-term resources.

Efforts were also made to empower the broader community more directly. In the early stages of the project, it became apparent that many of the matters for which residents sought assistance from the research team, related to police raids. In fact, many of the actions of police officers during search and seizure operations appeared to be unlawful. It was clear from these reports that the residents viewed police raids as unwarranted invasions of privacy. As the project progressed, reports of individual incidents of victimization began to abate and the research team was able to attend to the issue of police raids in general.

Since the research team was aware of the extent of illegal liquor distribution and other unlawful activities in Lwandle, its members were initially somewhat sceptical of claims that the police were damaging and/or removing the property of completely innocent residents. Furthermore, at first the research team felt ill-equipped to assist residents in instituting the legal action required to obtain an interdict and so prevent the recurrence of violations of people's rights. The team therefore decided not to intervene immediately, but to assimilate more detailed information on the frequency, location, timing and other important aspects of police raids, in order to prepare for the use of civil law if this became necessary. Those of the researchers who lived in Lwandle began recording details of police raids that they had observed and of incidents reported to them. The team also worked with lawyers and Advice Office personnel to develop an effective strategy for using legal intervention.

In addition, the team organized workshops* to educate itself and the community as a whole, about the legal limits of police powers in relation to search and seizure. Not only was the law demystified, but residents were also shown independent and more effective ways of dealing with illegal searches. These included instruction on how to take a basic statement in cases of alleged police abuse of power and how to initiate recovery proceedings in cases of property confiscation. Residents were also equipped to deal with instances in which they felt they had been victimized by lawful police action, the most common instances being arrests and/or fines for dealing in liquor without a licence. In this regard, alternate strategies, such as joining the Western Cape Taverners Association in order to gain some respite from police harassment, were considered.

It was only after almost a year's work that the team and the community decided to use civil law to challenge the police with regard to property which had been removed and/or damaged during a series of police raids in November 1989. The incident was fully investigated by the research team and formal statements were collected from complainants and witnesses. Complainants were then briefed on all aspects of available legal remedies in order to inform their decision about whether or not to proceed. It is noteworthy that

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* The progressive grouping known as the Legal Education Action Project (LEAP), which is part of the Institute of Criminology at the University of Cape Town, ran a number of these workshops through the local Advice Office, and later, similar issues were discussed in less formal meetings of residents.

many were surprised to learn that they did not have to sit back and bemoan the loss or damage to their property, but could use the law to recover their goods.

With the informed consent of all parties concerned, the lawyers sent a letter to the commander of the local police station, stating that unless all the goods that had been confiscated by the police were returned forthwith, an interdict would be sought. Since the goods had been seized under the familiar legal pretext that they were suspected stolen property, it was expected that the police would demand receipts as evidence of proof of ownership. Since many residents did not have such papers, it was necessary to establish the basis of each complainant's claim to ownership of the property concerned and this involved much work for the research team and volunteers who collected this evidence. Rather surprisingly, this evidence was not sought by the police. Apparently the fact that the letter had emanated from an attorney and threatened legal action, was the key to the resolution of this matter. The complainants were merely required personally to identify and fetch their belongings from the police station during office hours. Only one item was not returned, namely a bicycle which was not reflected in the records of the police storeroom.

An interdict was thus averted and what in the eyes of the individuals concerned appeared to be a legal remedy, proved effective. The less direct benefit of this process was that the Advice Office workers and the residents who had assisted the team gained practical experience in processing complaints about unlawful police action. Ironically, however, this tactic was so successful that no further incidents of illegal search and seizure occurred during the period of the research, which meant that there were no further opportunities for the residents who had been involved to utilize their newly developed skills. This outcome is also a little unfortunate in the sense that a trial would have established clearly the grounds which the courts deem legitimate for police search and seizure and may also have yielded useful information about the ambit of police practices in the hostel as a whole.

It is, of course, not known whether this successful challenge to the exercise of search and seizure powers by the police, did produce the subsequent dramatic reduction in such police activities in Lwandle. It should be noted, however, that the majority of complaints about police raids in Lwandle, including those of the applicants in the 1989 case, seemed to have a solid legal basis. The law that allows the police to seize property they suspect is stolen, requires proof that a suspect is found in possession of the property concerned, and that the police have an objectively reasonable suspicion that the goods concerned are in fact stolen (s23 of Act 51 of 1977). Police raids in Lwandle frequently did not meet these legal criteria, as it was common practice for the police to seize property from residents who were away at work, and it is difficult to see how the police could have had reasonable grounds for believing that certain goods such as old clothes, gas bottles and rusty bicycles had been stolen; and when they generally did not even question those in possession of such goods about ownership (Snyman, 1989).

The "S"* housing case is another good example of the way that the research team sought to assist a large sector of the Lwandle community, rather than individuals. The sequence of events which finally culminated in Industrial Court action, commenced when the "S" Construction Company gave notice to labourers and their families to vacate the premises which the company had rented for workers in Paarl, a town approximately 45 minutes' drive from Lwandle. By all reports, this accommodation comprised reasonably comfortable family units' many workers had resided there for some years, and their children attended schools in the Paarl area. Although the company claimed that they had given these workers due notice to vacate the Paarl premises, these people maintained that they had suddenly been informed that they and their families were to be moved to Lwandle the following day. Indeed, some 20 families and all their belongings had been transported to Lwandle, and accommodated in what has come to be known as the "S" Shed. This structure had been built by the Company some years previously to house employees and at the time the Paarl families were moved, it was already fully occupied by approximately 30 families. In order to make space for the newcomers from Paarl, the Watchmen, male residents of Lwandle employed by the Cape Provincial Administration to assist in the control of the affairs of the hostel, had been ordered to break down the cardboard partitions which residents of the "S" Shed had constructed to create a measure of privacy. During this process, residents of the shed alleged that the Watchmen had thrown out and damaged many of their belongings.

Given these circumstances, legal action against the "S" Construction Company was possible on behalf of both groups of employees - the Paarl group and those already resident in the "S" Shed, whose living conditions were materially altered by the forced influx of the former group. A preliminary action was brought in the Industrial Court, on the basis that the company's treatment of its workers, whom it had housed as part of the conditions of employment, constituted an unfair labour practice. For, besides the fact that both groups of employees had been given unreasonably short notice and no choice in the matter of sharing accommodation, appalling physical conditions had resulted from squashing almost 50 families and their belongings into an area of two hundred square metres. Disharmony and strife in the "S" Shed community had increased so much owing to overcrowding that a murder had taken place some three months after the move. The fire hazard and risk of asphyxiation had increased because of the increased use of gas cookers in this overcrowded and windowless environment. Split sleeping-shifts had to be introduced, because there were too few beds to accommodate each of the residents, and children who had previously attended school in Paarl had been left idle. Even before the oral evidence was led at the hearing of the preliminary application in the Industrial Court, these abhorrent circumstances occasioned the presiding officer to state in his judgement, that the applicants appeared to have been housed in conditions amounting to slavery!

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* A pseudonym has been used for the company involved in this action since the case was *sub judice* at the time this report was written.

A number of notable points emerged from this case. It is an example of the novel use of the mechanism of an Industrial Court application to compel an employer who had undertaken to provide housing for employees, to provide a reasonable standard of accommodation. In this case, the employer's obligation was based on the fact that accommodation was an essential element of the contract, since this employer had offered housing when recruiting migrant labourers from the 'homelands'. In court, the concept of 'reasonable' accommodation is likely to call into play issues such as safety, sanitation, the level of overcrowding, thermal sufficiency and privacy. Consequently, in deciding questions on the basis of fairness and equity, the Industrial Court might be entitled to lay down minimum standards in this regard. Hence, should the outcome of this case be decided in favour of the applicants, it would have potentially far-reaching effects for all employees nation wide who are housed by their employers, and in particular for those who are housed in company-owned hostels, including the majority of mine labourers. More specifically, such a judgement would certainly call into question the adequacy of living conditions in the privately-owned bungalows in Lwandle, which are even worse than those in the state-owned structures.*

Another feature of this case which deserves mention in the context of the study as a whole, concerns the manner of preparing the oral evidence for this trial. When it became clear that legal action was being seriously considered in this case, a support group was constituted comprising elected representatives from the "S" Shed, members of the research team, delegates from the local Advice Office and the lawyers who had been working on this matter. This group provided ongoing communication between the "S" workers and their legal representatives, planned the course of the trial and publicized the plight of the workers.

The use of expert witnesses in contentious political trials of the eighties has proven a useful strategy (e.g. Foster, 1990; Hansson & Fine, 1990). Hence in this case, experts were approached to give testimony on the likely effects of the squalid and overcrowded living conditions on the residents of the "S" Shed, and to substantiate the point that the changed circumstances of these employees' accommodation could have materially affected their ability to perform their contractual obligations to their employer. The research team investigated circumstances in the "S" Shed and this detailed information formed the basis of the expert witness's report on the impact of overcrowding. A second expert, an industrial health specialist, was approached by the research team to provide information on international and local regulations regarding minimum health and environmental standards for residential accommodation. His conclusions were clear - the living conditions in the "S" Shed violated a range of minimum standards. For example, there was insufficient airspace for each person, the risk of fire was too high and the available sanitation facilities were totally inadequate. It should be noted that since the "S" Company did not provide

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* Further comment is attendant on the outcome of this case, which had not yet been decided by the time this report was written.

additional washing or toilet facilities for the new residents, they were obliged to use the already overloaded and inadequate facilities of Lwandle, including the notorious bucket system toilets.

It is perhaps important to note, finally, that the issues raised by the unreasonable actions of the employer in this case confirm many of the concerns voiced about the ambit of mainstream victimological research. To be more precise, the residents involved in the "S" case perceived themselves as victims when they approached the research team for assistance, and they described graphically the extent and impact of the victimization they had suffered in their supporting affidavits. The reasons they gave for feeling that they had been victimized ranged from environmental factors to the increase in interpersonal friction associated with overcrowding and squalid living conditions. Yet such experiences would have been excluded from consideration had the mainstream conception of 'criminal' victimization been adopted. While the actions of the employer in this instance do not fit any conventional definition or category of criminal law, it may be argued that unilaterally reducing a worker's employment conditions to a situation which is tantamount to slavery, constitutes victimization not only in the context of international human rights law but also in the minds of the lay public. This is further support for a widening of the conception of victimization.

2.4 Mediation as an intervention

The research team was not only called upon to assist individuals and groups in matters of victimization, they were also asked to mediate potentially divisive disputes resulting from incidents of victimization within the community. In these instances, the various conflicting interest groups concerned were brought together to try to settle their differences. To illustrate: a group of former members of a youth organization who had been denied permission to use the community hall by the Hostel Men's Committee, requested the research team's assistance to gain access. Since this committee, which comprised older men, was the 'informal' body governing Lwandle it had the authority to determine who was allowed access to the hall and on what terms. The research team responded by organizing a series of meetings between this group of youths and the Men's Committee, with members of the research team facilitating the negotiations between the two parties.

Such conflicts between younger and older men are commonplace in African communities and seem to be the product of a wide generation gap arising from the disintegration of traditional family structures in African society over the last few decades. It is therefore gratifying to note that approximately 14 months after the research team had mediated the dispute between the Men's Committee and the youth group, the committee decided to allow a number of delegated members of the youth contingent to become members of the committee, thus giving younger residents formal representation in running the affairs of Lwandle.

2.5 Ensuring the relevance of the research

The research team took several steps to ensure that the research would be relevant for the Lwandle community: the residents were involved in the planning and conducting of the project, skills and access to resources were shared, people were assisted in dealing with incidents of victimization and the research findings were discussed with the residents.

3 THE RESEARCH PROCEDURE

3.1 An overview of the research procedure

The chief objective of the Lwandle project was to explore residents' perceptions of personal safety with due regard to the impact of all factors they deemed relevant, whether these were aspects of *inter alia* the physical environment, material conditions, internal social organization, or victimization resulting from any form of conduct, including 'criminal' activity. A triangulated method was used comprising three main research techniques, namely semistructured interviewing, diary keeping and participant observation.

The research was conducted in three phases which at times ran simultaneously: the first phase was a pilot study, whose main aims were to assess the suitability of the proposed research design, to gather information to inform the construction of the interview schedule and to refine this schedule through testing. This involved extensive consultation and interviews with a wide range of Lwandle residents. In the second phase of the project the members of the research team who resided in Lwandle were trained in participant observation techniques and the keeping of research diaries in which they were required to record their perceptions of noteworthy incidents and everyday events, as well as reports of victimization and of the follow-up action taken. During the third and final phase of data collection, a semistructured interview schedule was used to survey the residents' perceptions of personal safety in Lwandle.

3.2 The pilot study

Sloth-Nielsen's (1987) study was examined to highlight the central issues that required amplification or further investigation. This data was used to construct a draft interview schedule, which was then tested by interviewing volunteers from the community. The findings and experiences gained from this first round of interviewing, as well as from the information collected via participant observation and that recorded in the research diaries, was fed back to and assessed by the research team, in order to improve the interview schedule. In all, this process was repeated four times before the interview schedule was deemed ready for use.

The pilot survey confirmed that factors which people felt threatened their personal safety were not limited to 'criminal' activity as defined by the law, but included a wide range of material conditions. The analysis of pilot interviews shows clearly that using the term 'crime' when interviewing residents resulted in a particular bias - for most Lwandle

residents the term 'crime' referred to technical violations of the law or 'victimless' offences, such as traffic offences and trading or selling liquor without a licence, and not to violations of personal or property rights. Interview questions were therefore formulated to exclude explicit references to 'crime'. This finding also supported the theoretical premise mentioned earlier, namely that researchers should not impose notions of personal safety and victimization, but should enable respondents to express their own conceptions.

The pilot survey also generated a wealth of information about the experiences and perceptions of marginalized groups within the Lwandle community. For example, the researchers came to understand the enforcement of discipline or the exercise of social control within the hostel structure. Younger men who did not occupy positions of power in these structures told of the gerontocratic nature of power and authority in this African community. Since these structures have an important bearing on people's feelings of personal safety, such revelations prompted the in-depth exploration of the system of bungalow headmen and committees and the operation of bungalow rules, which regulate many aspects of the lives of Lwandle residents.

The pilot study showed that feelings of personal security were affected by the range and quality of resources available to the residents for dealing with victimization. Lwandle has been systematically deprived of the conventional means of dealing with victimization that are taken for granted in more privileged communities. For example, there is no police station, neither are there any medical facilities in Lwandle and with the exception of a handful of residents, most people have only indirect access to one telephone which is housed in rooms occupied by the Watchmen. Hence, at one point during the study the residents became very worried that the Watchmen, on whom they were forced to rely when they needed to call ambulances or the police, were not making calls promptly.

Although the pilot phase of the project was crucial to developing an effective interview schedule, it also served as an important period for the training of researchers and for trouble-shooting. For example, one of the difficulties which the English-speaking members of the research team had to overcome was learning to understand the full meaning of translations of various idiomatic phrases and metaphors which were used extensively by the respondents who were mainly Xhosa speaking.

3.3 Participant observation and research diaries

The members of the research team who resided in Lwandle were trained to record their day-to-day observations in diaries. They were asked to record events related to personal safety and victimization in their community, as well as their interpretations of the development of certain important themes, such as police raids and the structure and functioning of 'informal' regulatory mechanisms. This information was used not only to inform the subsequent survey, but also as an additional source of data. Since many of the researchers were newly trained and hence somewhat inexperienced in conducting research of this nature, the systematic recording of their observations was a valuable training experience. This process sensitized them to events in their everyday life which might

otherwise have seemed unremarkable. They gained experience in expressing their thoughts in writing, were able to practise interviewing and became more familiar, in a practical sense, with the aims of the project. The diaries also served as a barometer of the increasing competence of these researchers and of their developing skill as community advisers.

The contents of the diaries were discussed and analyzed on a weekly basis by the research team, and the diarists were asked to clarify, elaborate and further investigate specific matters. The diarists worked independently of one another and resided in physically distant sections of the hostel complex. Although they did report on the same incidents at times, usually their reports differed since they resided in different parts of the complex, moved in different social circles and took part in different activities. Furthermore, the personalities and interests of the diarists differed dramatically, and because their diaries were personal reflections on life in Lwandle, their choice of topics and their interpretation of this material reflected their individual viewpoints. This may be seen, somewhat paradoxically, as the central strength and weakness of the diary method of collecting data. On the one hand, the choice of material and its presentation is subject to individual diarists' preferences and biases. On the other hand, if as was the case in this study, such diaries are not viewed as 'objective' data sources, but are treated as 'insiders' views of life, they yield rich and in-depth accounts about what life is like for people in particular social positions and contexts. In this case, the diarists were specially selected because they lived in the hostel complex and were active participants in community life, and it was assumed that the data they collected would reflect the views of young males. Since the diaries were reliably maintained over a period of 18 months, the research team was able to identify idiosyncratic themes as well as shared views.

The diaries provide rich and systematic accounts of raids by the police, of violent incidents in the hostel complex, of cases of victimization reported to researchers and of responses made to such incidents. The diarists took detailed notes at all workshops and meetings, and wrote lengthy accounts of the workings of the internal disciplinary structures within the bungalows, the extent and range of the 'informal' trading sector and of the hostel rules regulating such activities. The wide latitude allowed for expression of ideas and comments about all facets of daily life, and the fact that each diarist was encouraged to develop specific themes associated with their particular interests, meant that the diaries yielded invaluable additional data, which would not have emerged from survey interviewing. The increasing fluency, detail and eloquence of the diarists' accounts over time, is evidence of the empowering effect that this technique had on individuals.

Participant observation was critical to achieving the theoretical and practical aims of this project. At the practical level, the research was designed to explore and explain the resident's perceptions of personal safety. Although two members of the research team had previously worked in Lwandle and thus had some understanding of the relevant issues, they were white females who were not part of this community, and as 'outsiders' in this male-dominated context, it was felt that they would not be privy to certain valuable information. From the outset, the team agreed that a comprehensive and accurate understanding of this community could only be achieved by trusted residents who were

able to maintain daily links with other members of the community. Consequently, it was crucial that the research team include male residents as participant observers. This enabled the informed and consistent monitoring of all facets of daily life over a lengthy period of time, as well as the development of trust in the project.

The information collected through participant observation enriched and validated the interpretation of the data gained from other sources, including the survey interviews. Where feasible, the ways that participant observation contributed to the findings have been acknowledged explicitly in this report. For the most part, however, the impact of this process was such that it became an integral part of the thinking of the research team, and the exact effects of this could not be accurately documented. Hence, the influence of participant observation should be seen as permeating the total fabric of this study, rather than being limited to those instances where it was noted explicitly.

3.4 The survey interviews*

3.4.1 Introductory comment

A semistructured interview technique was selected as the third means of collecting data for this research. The advantages of this technique are well-known: it is a procedure that yields information from a range of respondents and enables conclusions to be drawn not only about the dominant view of a large group of people, but also about the differences in the views of the subgroups in this larger group. The use of standardized questions and interview methods also reduces the influence of personal bias. However, the fact that a semistructured, rather than a fully structured interview, was used in this research may be viewed as having increased the chances of interviewer bias. In this regard, however, it should be emphasized that such notions of bias and 'objectivity' emanate from a positivist epistemology which was rejected for the purposes of this research. Instead, it was assumed that no investigation of social phenomena could be 'objective', that is, totally uninfluenced by bias of any sort. Systematic trends in people's views of social reality are seen as resulting from their position and dialectical relations within a social structure. In this sense, researchers are no different from those whom they study. Their views of what they investigate are shaped by their social position, their biographies and through their relations with research participants. Despite the use of standardized interviews, interviewing remains an interpersonal interaction and as such, it involves a reciprocal relation between interviewer and interviewee. In addition, the very choice of questions, the way that such questions are asked, recorded and interpreted, are subjective processes. Hence, this research was designed to highlight the ways that the research findings were shaped both by the researchers and by those whom they studied. From this perspective,

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* The last interviews were completed in April 1990.

the aim was a reflexive interpretation of the roles played by all parties to the research, rather than the elimination or control of potential bias (Harding, 1987).

Since one of the central aims of this research was to facilitate the expression of the opinions of a group of people whose views had been systematically neglected, steps were taken to accomplish this aim. The researchers were trained throughout the project in the skills of interviewing. They were made aware of the ways that their behaviour and ideas could impede the interviewees' self expression. The pitfall repeatedly emphasized was that of the interviewers' imposing, consciously or unconsciously, their own preconceived notions upon the interviewees. Although this difficulty cannot be overcome fully, the many ways it might occur were discussed at length, and researchers were warned to take care in phrasing additional questions, to be aware of their intonation and inflection when asking questions, and above all, to refrain from prompting respondents to give certain answers. The importance of interviewing in a non-judgemental manner and of recording the interviewees' responses as accurately as possible, were highlighted. Ways of coping with a range of possible difficulties were discussed in detail, including how to deal with difficult or recalcitrant interviewees, how to cope with the possibility of enmity or conflict in the interview situation, and how to ensure sufficient privacy when conducting interviews in order to promote confidence on the part of respondents and to preserve confidentiality. The team practised interviewing one another, staged mock interviews for the group, and were given constructive feedback. Much time was also spent in the research team's examining the ways that the position of the young, male resident interviewers and their relations with different groups in Lwandle shaped the information they collected.

Traditional techniques were employed, designed to increase co operation and to enable informed consent on the part of interviewees. Potential interviewees were presented with a letter typed on an official letterhead. The letter confirmed that the interviewers were being employed as researchers by the University of Cape Town, explained the purpose of the interview and undertook to treat the information as confidential. The team decided that interviewers should abide by the traditional African custom of using deferential forms of address to older persons, especially males; and that if female interviewees were uncomfortable about being interviewed by a young male, a female interviewer would be called in.*

The process of interviewing was carefully and systematically monitored. The university-based members of the research team checked each completed interview to ensure that every recorded response was legible and intelligible. Regular meetings were scheduled to deal with problems experienced by the interviewers. The intensive preparatory work done during the pilot study paid dividends in this regard, as relatively few problems were encountered during this phase of the research. Nevertheless, a number of problems did emerge. At one stage, when about half of the very large number of interviews had been

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* This decision arose out of a number of situations in which women insisted that their husbands be present during interviewing.

conducted and at a time when the research team was centrally involved in the critical stages of a number of law suits, interviewers expressed their loss of motivation to continue interviewing. Since this occurred close to the Christmas vacation period during which many Lwandle residents were expected to be away on annual vacation in the 'homelands', and when many of those who remained were expected to be too inebriated to be interviewed, the team decided to cease interviewing over this period.

Another problem that emerged during the interviewing process, was that a number of respondents became bored and distracted near the end of the rather lengthy interview, which took at least an hour to complete. In particular, women complained that they needed to continue with their many chores, men who had worked night shift tended to become sleepy, and interviewers found that maintaining a measure of privacy for this length of time was often well-nigh impossible. In most bungalows there is a constant traffic of consumers buying whatever is on sale in that particular venue; children are ever-present in and around the bungalows; and many interviews had to be conducted amidst the hum of a day-time or night-time shebeen*!

Finally, although the interview schedule was tested during the pilot phase, some problems were experienced with the content of the interview. Differences in culture and the fact that the majority of interviewees were illiterate or semiliterate - the legacy of decades of 'Bantu' education - meant that the interviewees had difficulty responding to questions that required fairly abstract conceptualizations. When this occurred the interviewers were advised simply to encourage the interviewees to think of concrete examples.

3.4.2 The interview questions

The interview questions were formally divided into five sections according to basic themes. A copy of the interview schedule is attached as an appendix to this report.

The questions comprising the first section (Section A) of the interview pertain to the basic demographic data needed to identify the characteristics of the sample, to evaluate whether the sample polled was indeed representative and to enable the interpretation of themes emanating from the residents' occupying different social positions in this community. In view of the theoretical perspective adopted for this study, it was crucial to find out, for example, how many people were legally entitled to sleep in a bed and how many were dependent on the goodwill of a rent-card holder for the right to remain in this complex.

Such basic demographic data was of particular importance in the case of the Lwandle community, because little such information was available at the time this study was conducted and available data was thought to be unreliable. It has been argued convincingly that one of the few population estimates - based on a survey conducted by

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* Illegal bars and/or liquor sellers.

the Urban Foundation for the purposes of lobbying for family housing* - was grossly understated to avoid alarming the white residents of surrounding areas (Sloth-Nielsen, 1987). The findings of another survey which was conducted by army troops was treated with similar caution, since casspirs and army uniforms during a state of emergency are hardly conducive to the collection of reliable data! (Sloth-Nielsen, 1987). Moreover, the population of Lwandle has been in flux since the reform of influx control measures, which means that survey findings are rapidly outdated.

The second group of questions (Section B) was designed to provide the most complex information concerning residents' views on personal safety in Lwandle. The first two questions in this section aimed at assessing the relative importance of personal safety. Hence the respondents were asked to specify which of two concerns was more important to them, firstly their personal safety or their financial security and secondly, their personal safety or the security of their home. These questions were included to test the assumption common in mainstream victimology that 'crime' and fear of 'crime' are the most important, if not the sole factors influencing feelings of personal safety. Findings from such questions are also important because they inform the kind of recommendations that will be made about improving personal safety. Respondents were then asked to rate how safe or unsafe they felt living in Lwandle as compared to other African hostels and townships in the Western Cape. It was recognized, however, that the data gained from the latter two questions was not likely to be reliable, since it is well documented that respondents are generally reluctant to reveal their own involvement in lawbreaking (e.g. Young, 1988). Thereafter, two general questions were posed: "Is there anything that makes you feel safe living in Lwandle?" and "Is there anything that makes you feel unsafe living at Lwandle?" In addition, the respondents were asked to explain their reasons for each response. Since these were in no way leading questions, they allowed the respondents to express their own conceptions, that is, to interpret feelings of safety or threat in whatever ways they chose. The term 'anything' could have been interpreted as including factors from the physical to the metaphysical - from locks and guns to religious beliefs and bonds of kinship.

It was hypothesized that different people probably find different factors enhancing or threatening to their personal safety in different situations. For example, it has been found consistently that women experience going out in the dark as more threatening than men do (e.g. Stanko, 1990), and the pilot study had indicated that this was the case in Lwandle. For this reason a third question - "How do you feel when it is dark?" - was included.

The questions comprising the third section (Section C) related to personal experiences of lawbreaking, both as victims and as lawbreakers, of violence, threats of violence and violations of property, to wit damage or theft of belongings. The respondents were asked not merely to confirm whether or not they had experienced violations of person and/or property, but also to provide details about their individual experiences, that is, what had

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* This survey was conducted at a time when the forced removal of the entire hostel community was still on the cards.

happened and what measures they had taken in dealing with such victimization. It was hoped that such questions would contribute to an understanding of what it meant to be victimized in this community.

This inclusion of questions pertaining to specific forms of victimization, and what is more, to forms which are clearly related to 'criminal' offences, may seem to contradict certain central aims of this study, namely, to avoid imposing conceptions of victimization, especially those relating to 'criminal' victimization. This was not the case, however, for these questions were included only after the respondents had been allowed to express their own perceptions of personal safety and victimization and contained no overt references to 'crime'. Furthermore, these questions were phrased so as to avoid legal jargon of any sort and even though terms like violence, threats, damage and stealing are recognizable notions in criminal law, they are relatively devoid of legal niceties and artificial constructions. This meant that no explanation of their meaning or of the distinctions between them was required during interviewing. The benefits of including these more specific questions were *inter alia*: that they tapped information about the extent of these types of victimization and, more specifically, the level of violence in Lwandle, which was deemed important for comparison with other contexts; and that they yielded information about the extent to which the protection of property was of concern to these materially deprived people who had no apparent means of adequately protecting their belongings. During the pilot phase of this project the impression had been gained that the system of bungalow rules effectively controlled theft in Lwandle, and it was felt important that this hypothesis be investigated further.

Less directive questions were interspersed in this section, namely questions about how people in Lwandle protect themselves and their belongings. These questions were included to obtain information to test the applicability of mainstream findings from privileged samples to economically oppressed groups.

In the fourth section of the interview (Section D), the focus was broadened to the nature of the resources available to Lwandle residents for dealing with victimization, and their views on the quality of these resources. A list of potential 'resource bodies' was drawn up from data collected during the pilot study, from participant observation and from the research diaries. Interviewees were asked whether they had approached each of these bodies for assistance with any sort of problem related to personal safety and how they had felt about the assistance which they had received. The following bodies were listed: Heads of Bungalows, the Hostel Men's Committee, Homeboys, the South African Police, Watchmen, the town superintendent, trade unions and lawyers. This list of potential relief agencies is not exhaustive - conspicuously absent are ministers of religion, social welfare agencies, medical personnel and so on. However, there is a unity of theme in the selection of these particular bodies or groupings: the one group includes non-governmental community-based structures, namely, the Heads of Bungalows, the Hostel Men's Committee, Homeboys and trade unions. By contrast, the second group includes more 'formal' and governmental bodies, such as the town superintendent, Watchmen, the police and lawyers.

As was discussed earlier, the reason for including this group of questions was to explore the different ways in which people who are denied the resources available to the economically and politically privileged, attempt to deal with matters of personal safety. People's views on the adequacy of each of these sources of assistance were sought to inform any recommendations arising from these research findings, for there is little point in investing time and money to provide resources that recipients feel are inappropriate and/or of little use.

The final section of the interview (Section E) consisted of questions aimed at eliciting more specific and detailed information about the residents' attitudes to the South African Police - "Does the presence of the SAP in Lwandle make you feel safe or unsafe?" The rationale for the inclusion of this particular direct question, was twofold: firstly, the intention was to test the hypothesis, which had emerged from the pilot study and participant observation, that police activity in Lwandle had led residents to view the police, at best as a source of assistance only as a last resort and at worst, as a threat to their sense of security. Since this initial finding ran contrary to the claims being made by the state that the police enjoyed legitimacy in African townships, it was felt that more evidence was required. Once again, findings from such questions have an important bearing on the kinds of interventions that develop from studies of this nature. Mainstream criminologists tend to respond to a finding that there is a high incidence of victimization with suggestions for more, better and/or increased policing. This type of response has to be re-evaluated in contexts in which there is a pervasive mistrust of the police force.

Finally, since one of the basic premises of this study was that conduct which is proscribed by law cannot be assumed to be universally regarded with opprobrium, it was felt important to explore the residents' notions of what constitutes 'crime' and socially acceptable behaviour, since such perceptions also shape what people construe as victimization. Hence, a number of questions were included about the residents' perceptions of law enforcement and 'criminal' sanctions, namely: "Do the police arrest people in Lwandle?" "If yes, for what do they arrest people?" "Do you think people should be arrested for this and why?"

3.5 The sampling procedure

A random sample of Lwandle residents was selected for interviewing in order to obtain a representative sample of opinions. At the time this research was in progress no reliable population census of the total population had been conducted. Official estimates of the Lwandle population included only those who held rentcards, that is, approximately 2 100 people. This was a gross underestimate of the actual population, since it excluded all females, all children and all males who were not rent-card holders. In the absence of reliable statistics, the research team was compelled to use an estimate in order to calculate the size of a representative sample. Since unofficial estimates made by the Urban Foundation and various political and welfare organizations, including the Black Sash, were inconsistent, the research team used data from participant observation to modify these

figures to what is arguably a more accurate estimate of the population, that is, approximately 7 500 people as at September 1989.

It had been decided from the outset that only adults would be interviewed. This was done to avoid the difficulties of interviewing young children and because the children who are resident in Lwandle are not representative of the children of Lwandle residents in general. The majority of children over the age of six years are sent to the 'homelands'. In Lwandle, the age of 16 years is generally accepted as signifying entrance into adulthood, because this is usually the age at which people enter the work force. This was why the research team decided to include persons of 16 years and older in the sample. Furthermore, only persons who were permanently resident in Lwandle were interviewed and selected. Respondents who were so intoxicated that a coherent interview was not feasible, were excluded.

It was estimated that approximately 5 000 of the estimated 7 500 people resident in Lwandle were over the age of 16 years. Since it is conventional practice in social science research to consider a five per cent random sample representative (Keppel & Saufley, 1980), such a sample of residents, numbering 252 respondents, was selected for interviewing.

In order to ensure randomness, a plan of the physical layout of the hostel complex* was drawn up and the number of residents in each bungalow determined. Approximately four residents were interviewed in each of the 64 bungalow-type structures and each interviewer was assigned a group of bungalows in which to conduct interviews. Bungalow beds were each assigned a different number and each interviewer was provided with a list of random numbers which they were trained to use in selecting respondents. They were instructed to work down their list of random numbers systematically, and to interview any available person of 16 years or older who regularly occupied a bed whose code was on the list of random numbers. Interviewers were to return later if no one was present at a selected bed, or if a potential respondent was not available for interviewing at a particular time. When no interview could be conducted, interviewers were required to proceed to the next bed on their list of random numbers.

The sampling procedure was monitored systematically. So for example, an equal number of interviews were conducted during the day and at night to ensure that no disproportion would arise between the numbers of employed and unemployed residents included in the sample. Regular checks were carried out to ascertain that representative proportions of men and women of various age groups and of rent-card holders and non-holders were being interviewed. In order to balance the final sample, interviewers were briefed from time to time, to select particular categories of persons when there was more than one occupant per bed available for interviewing.

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* Including those living in privately owned or non-state accommodation.

CHAPTER V

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE QUANTITATIVE FINDINGS*

1 INTRODUCTORY COMMENT

Except where otherwise indicated in this section, percentages have been calculated as proportions of the number of respondents replying to the question concerned. All figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number for ease of reading. The figures used to calculate percentages have been included in square brackets after each percentage. Since it was hypothesized that the power relations shaped by material well-being, race, sex and age would influence perceptions of personal safety, these factors were treated as independent variables for the purposes of analysis. However, in Lwandle employment status and rent-card status are integrally linked, since being unemployed makes one a financial risk which in turn decreases one's chances of acquiring a rent card and hence, stable access to accommodation. Given the interdependent nature of these two variables and the central importance of accommodation within grossly overcrowded Lwandle, for the purposes of analysis rent-card status rather than employment status was selected as the indicator of material well-being.

2 DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SAMPLE

2.1 Sex

Sixty-one per cent (153) of the interviewees were male and 39 % (96) were female. A higher proportion (+22 %)** of the interviewees were therefore males (61:39 %).

2.2 Age

The interviewees were adults who ranged in age from 16 to 72 years, with an average age of 34 years and a standard deviation (sd) of 11 years (refer Table 1).

The majority (97 %) of the interviewees fell into the economically productive age group of 16 to 60 years inclusive. In addition, the majority (76 %) of the interviewees were under

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* It is important to note that since no statistical tests of significance were conducted, only differences of five per cent or more have been treated as significant and are therefore included in this section for analysis.

** In the sections which follow a + or a - sign preceding the figures indicates the direction of the difference between the groups under comparison.

the age of 40 years, with the largest proportion (46 %) under 31 years. Only 3 % of the interviewees were over 60 years old.

The females ranged in age from 17 to 50 years, with an average age of 31 years (sd = 8), and the males ranged in age from 16 to 72 years, with an average age of 36 years (sd = 12) (refer Table 2). The female interviewees were therefore on average younger than the males (31:36 years). All the female interviewees were under 51 years old, whereas 15 % of the males were over 51 years. The highest proportion of both females and males fell into the age groups of 21 to 30 years (43:38 %) and 31 to 40 years (32:30 %), with a slightly higher proportion of females in those two age groups. A higher proportion (+7 %) of females than males (10:3 %), were under 21 years old.

TABLE 1: AGE DISTRIBUTION OF THE SAMPLE

Age categories	%	N	Combined categories	
			%	N
Under 21 years	6	14	Under 31 years:	
21 - 30 years	40	100	46	114
31 - 40 years	30	76	30	76
41 - 50 years	14	36		
51 - 60 years	7	17	Over 40 years:	
61 - 70 years	2	5	24	58
Over 70 years	1	1		
Column totals	100	249	100	248

TABLE 2: SEX AND AGE DISTRIBUTION OF THE SAMPLE

Age categories	Males		Females	
	%	N	%	N
Under 21 years	3	5	10	9
21 - 30 years	38	58	43	42
31 - 40 years	30	45	32	31
41 - 50 years	14	22	15	14
51 - 60 years	11	17	-	-
61 - 70 years	3	5	-	-
Over 70 years	1	1	-	-
Column totals	100	153	100	96

2.3 Marital status

Fifty-four per cent (135) of the interviewees were married and the remaining 46 % (115) were not married at the time they were interviewed (refer Table 3). This indicates that there was a higher proportion (+8 %) of married than unmarried interviewees. Only 1 % (1) of the interviewees had been married and divorced.

Of the married respondents, the majority (76 % (103)) had been married under African customary law, 22 % (30) under South African civil law and 1 % (1) under both forms of law.

TABLE 3: SEX AND MARITAL STATUS

Marital status	Males		Females		Row totals	
	%	N	%	N	%	N
Married	33	84	19	46	52	130
Unmarried	28	69	20	50	48	119
Column totals	61	153	39	96	100	249

2.4 Active parental status

Thirty-five per cent (87) of the interviewees had children under six years of age who lived with them in Lwandle: 48 % (41) had one such child; 29 % (25) had two children, 14 % (12) had three children, 5 % (4) had four children, 2 % (2) had five children and 2 % (2) had six children. Sixty-two per cent (54) of the interviewees who were active parents were females.

A higher proportion (+30 %) of interviewees did not, therefore, have children under the age of six years living with them in Lwandle. A higher proportion (+24 %) of those who did have such young children in their immediate care were females.

2.5 Rent-card status

At the time they were interviewed fifty-two per cent (128) of the interviewees held rent cards, while the remaining 48 % (117) did not (refer Table 4). This means that the sample comprised more or less equal numbers of card holders and non-holders. All of those who held rent cards were male* and only 15 % of the males did not hold rent cards. Male

* This is because it is the policy of the local authority in Lwandle not to register females as rent-card holders.

rent-card holders were more or less evenly distributed across the age groups (35:33:32 %), but the majority (73 %) of males who did not hold rent cards were under 31 years old.

Furthermore, 40 % (44 females) of those who did not hold rent cards were married to card holders, 30 % (33 females) were common-law spouses, 28 % (17 males and 13 females) were blood relatives or were related by law to the card holders, and the remaining 2 % (2 males) were Homeboys to card holders. The vast majority (81 %) of the females were therefore either married to, or involved in common-law relationships with males who held rent cards, whereas the majority (77 %) of the males who did not hold rent cards were related to males who did hold cards.

2.6 Sex, age and rent-card status

The following groups were significantly underrepresented* in the overall sample: males between 31 and 40 years who did not hold rent cards (-10 % male non-holders over 40 years (-10 %), and female non-holders over 40 years (-5 %).

The following groups were significantly overrepresented in the overall sample: females under 31 years who did not hold cards (+9 %), male rent-card holders under 31 years (+7 %); male rent-card holders between 31 and 40 years (+6 %), and male rent-card holders over 40 years (+6 %).

TABLE 4: SEX, AGE AND RENT-CARD STATUS OF THE SAMPLE*

Sex and RC status	Under 31 years		31 - 40 years inclusive		Over 40 years		Row totals	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
F - NRC	20	50	13	31	6	14	39	95
M - NRC	7	16	1	3	1	3	9	22
Row total - NRC	27	66	14	34	7	17	48	117
M - RC	18	45	17	42	17	41	52	128
Column totals	45	111	31	76	24	58	100	245

* For the purposes of all tables in this section the following abbreviations have been used: RC = rent-card holder, NRC = non-rent-card holder, F= female and M= male.

* Assuming that all groups should have been equally presented, i.e. each constituting 11 % of the sample.

2.7 Employment status

At the time of interviewing 68 % (166) of the respondents were gainfully employed and the remaining 32 % (77) were unemployed, in other words the majority of the interviewees were gainfully employed, and the minority were unemployed. Among those who were gainfully employed, the highest proportion (58 % (129)) worked for employers, 14 % (33) were self-employed and 1 % (4) were both self-employed and worked for employers (refer Tables 5 to 8).

TABLE 5: SEX, AGE, RENT-CARD STATUS AND UNEMPLOYMENT

Sex and RC status	Under 31 years		31 - 40 years inclusive		Over 40 years		Row totals	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
F - NRC	34	26	14	11	10	8	58	45
M - NRC	13	10	-	-	3	2	16	12
Row total - NRC	47	36	14	11	13	10	74	57
M - RC	5	4	4	3	17	13	26	20
Column totals	52	40	18	14	30	23	100	77

TABLE 6: SEX, AGE, RENT-CARD STATUS AND EMPLOYMENT

Sex and RC status	Under 31 years		31 - 40 years inclusive		Over 40 years		Row totals	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
F - NRC	14	24	12	20	4	6	30	50
M - NRC	3	5	2	3	1	1	6	9
Row total - NRC	17	29	14	23	5	7	36	59
M - RC	25	41	23	39	16	27	64	107
Column totals	42	70	37	62	21	34	100	166

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TABLE 7: SEX, AGE, RENT-CARD STATUS AND EMPLOYMENT BY EMPLOYERS

Sex and RC status	Under 31 years		31 - 40 years inclusive		Over 40 years		Row totals	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
F - NRC	14	18	7	9	1	2	22	29
M - NRC	3	4	2	3	1	1	6	8
Row total - NRC	17	22	9	12	2	3	28	37
M - RC	27	35	28	36	17	21	72	92
Column totals	44	57	37	48	19	24	100	129

TABLE 8: SEX, AGE, RENT-CARD STATUS AND SELF-EMPLOYMENT

Sex and RC status	Under 31 years		31 - 40 years inclusive		Over 40 years		Row totals	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
F - NRC	18	6	34	11	12	4	64	21
M - NRC	3	1	-	-	-	-	3	1
Row total - NRC	21	7	34	11	12	4	67	22
M - RC	18	6	3	1	12	4	33	11
Column totals	39	13	37	12	24	8	100	33

2.8 Employment status, age, sex and rent-card status

Females (+34 %), and those who did not hold rent cards (+31 %), were both significantly overrepresented (+34 %) among the self-employed*. Females were also significantly overrepresented** by 19 % among the unemployed.

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* Note that no females were both self-employed and worked for employers.

** Since the groups which were compared for the purposes of analysis differed greatly in size, the proportional representation of each group for each specific factor, such as gainful employment, has been compared with the proportional representation of that group in the overall sample. So for example, the finding that females were underrepresented by 9 % among the interviewees who were gainfully employed was made on the basis that although females comprised 39 % of the overall sample of interviewees, they constituted only 30 % of those who were gainfully employed.

Respondents aged less than 31 years were the most significantly overrepresented age group (+7 %) among the unemployed, followed by those over 40 years (+6 %). By contrast, those between 31 and 40 years were significantly underrepresented by 13 %.

Those who did not hold rent cards were significantly overrepresented by 26 % among the unemployed. Males, for example, who did not hold rent cards were significantly overrepresented (+23 %) among the unemployed. In addition, females under 31 years who did not hold rent cards were significantly overrepresented (+14 %) among the unemployed.

The following groups were significantly overrepresented among the self-employed: females between 31 and 40 years who did not hold rent cards (+22 %), and females over 40 years who did not hold rent cards (+8 %).

3 THE RELATIVE IMPORTANCE OF PERSONAL SAFETY

3.1 Personal safety and financial security

Fifty-two per cent (100) of the respondents felt that their personal safety was more important to them than their financial security, while 27 % (65) felt that their financial security was of greater importance to them than their personal safety, and the remaining 31 % (73) felt that financial security and personal safety were equally important. This means that the highest proportion (52 %) of the interviewees felt that their personal safety was more important to them than financial security.

Seventy-three per cent (73) of those who felt that their personal safety was more important than financial security, were employed; while 27 % (27) were unemployed. Among the gainfully employed who expressed this opinion, 86 % (63) worked for employers, 12 % (9) were self-employed and 2 % (1) were both self-employed and worked for employers. The employed were therefore significantly overrepresented by 5 % among those who felt that personal safety was more important than financial security, and it was those who worked for employers who were the most overrepresented group (+18 %).

Fifty-eight per cent (38) of those who felt that financial security was more important than personal safety, were employed; while 42 % (27) were unemployed. Among the gainfully employed who expressed this opinion, 66 % (25) worked for employers, 32 % (12) were self-employed and 2 % (1) were both self-employed and worked for employers. The unemployed were significantly overrepresented by 10 % among those who felt that financial security was more important than personal safety.

Seventy per cent (51) of those who felt that financial security and personal safety were equally important, were employed; while 30 % (22) were unemployed. Among the gainfully employed who expressed this opinion, 73 % (37) worked for employers, 24 % (12) were self-employed and 3 % (2) were both self-employed and worked for employers. Consequently those who worked for employers were significantly overrepresented by 5 % among those who felt that financial security and personal safety were equally important.

3.2 Personal safety and safety of the home

Thirty-seven per cent (87) of the respondents, which was the highest proportion, felt that their personal safety was more important to them than the safety of their homes, while 33 % (78) felt that the safety of their homes was more important to them than their personal safety. The remaining 30 % (75) felt that their personal safety and the safety of their homes was equally important.

Seventy per cent (87) of those who felt that their personal safety was more important than the safety of their homes, were employed; while 30 % (26) were unemployed. Among the employed who expressed this opinion, 61 % (53) worked for employers and 39 % (34) were self-employed. The self-employed were therefore significantly overrepresented by 10 % among those who felt that their personal safety was more important than the safety of their homes.

Seventy-one per cent (55) of those who felt that the safety of their homes was more important than their personal safety, were employed; while 29 % (23) were unemployed. Among the employed who expressed this opinion, 69 % (38) worked for employers, 25 % (14) were self-employed and 6 % (3) were both self-employed and worked for employers. Those who were both self-employed and worked for employers were significantly overrepresented by 5 % among those who felt that the safety of their homes was more important than their personal safety.

Seventy-seven per cent (50) of those who felt that their personal safety and the safety of their homes were equally important, were employed; while the remaining 33 % (25) were unemployed. Among the employed who expressed this opinion, 78 % (39) worked for employers, 20 % (10) were self-employed and 2 % (1) were both self-employed and working for employers. This means that those working for employers were significantly overrepresented by 10 % among those who felt that neither the safety of their houses nor their personal safety was more important.

4 SENSE OF PERSONAL SAFETY

4.1 Sense of personal safety in general

4.1.1 Overall sense of personal safety across situations

Forty-three per cent (97) of the respondents felt that Lwandle was less safe than other African townships and hostels in the Western Cape, while 35 % (80) felt that Lwandle was safer than other African residential areas, and the remaining 22 % (51) felt that Lwandle was neither safer nor less safe than other areas. The majority (57 %) of the interviewees, therefore, felt that Lwandle was safer or at least as safe a place to live as any other African township or hostel in the Western Cape, whereas 43 % felt that Lwandle was less safe.

Fifty-six per cent (137) of the respondents said that something about Lwandle made them feel safe, while 41 % (101) said that nothing about Lwandle made them feel safe, and the remaining 3 % (7) were undecided (refer Table 9).

Seventy-five per cent (185) of the respondents said that something about Lwandle made them feel unsafe, while the remaining 25 % (58) said that there was nothing about Lwandle which made them feel unsafe (refer Table 10). This indicates that although the majority (56 %) of the interviewees said that something about Lwandle made them feel personally safe, a larger majority (75 %) said that something about Lwandle made them feel unsafe.

TABLE 9: SEX, AGE, RENT-CARD STATUS AND RESPONDENTS WHO FELT THAT SOMETHING ABOUT LWANDLE MADE THEM FEEL SAFE

Sex and RC status	Under 31 years		31 - 40 years inclusive		Over 40 years		Row totals	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
F - NRC	19	26	12	16	6	8	36	50
M - NRC	10	14	1	1	2	3	13	18
Row total - NRC	29	40	13	17	8	11	49	68
M - RC	20	27	15	21	15	21	51	69
Column totals	49	67	28	38	23	32	100	137

TABLE 10: SEX, AGE, RENT-CARD STATUS AND RESPONDENTS WHO FELT THAT SOMETHING ABOUT LWANDLE MADE THEM FEEL UNSAFE

Sex and RC status	Under 31 years		31 - 40 years inclusive		Over 40 years		Row totals	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
F - NRC	21	38	14	26	7	13	42	77
M - NRC	4	8	1	2	1	1	6	11
Row total - NRC	25	46	15	28	8	14	48	88
M - RC	18	34	18	33	16	30	52	97
Column totals	43	80	33	61	24	44	100	185

4.1.2 Sex and overall sense of personal safety across situations

Neither males nor females were significantly overrepresented or underrepresented among the interviewees who said that something about Lwandle made them feel safe or unsafe.

4.1.3 Age and overall sense of personal safety across situations

No age group was significantly overrepresented or underrepresented among the interviewees who said that something about Lwandle made them feel safe or unsafe.

4.1.4 Rent-card status and overall sense of personal safety across situations

Neither the rent-card holders nor those without rent cards were significantly overrepresented or underrepresented among the interviewees who said that something about Lwandle made them feel safe or unsafe. However among the males, those without rent cards were significantly overrepresented (+ 6 %) among all respondents who said that something about Lwandle made them feel safe, whereas the card holders were significantly underrepresented (+ 5 %) among all respondents who said that something about Lwandle made them feel unsafe.

4.1.5 Sex, age, rent-card status and overall sense of personal safety across situations

No group was significantly over or underrepresented among interviewees who said that something about Lwandle made them feel safe.

Only males over 40 years who held rent cards were significantly underrepresented (-11 %) among interviewees who said that something about living in Lwandle made them feel personally unsafe.

4.2 Sense of personal safety in the dark

4.2.1 Overall sense of personal safety in the dark

Sixty-seven per cent (167) of respondents said that they felt unsafe in the dark, of which 19 % (47) said they felt very unsafe and 48 % (120) said they felt unsafe. Thirty-one per cent (79) of respondents said that they felt safe in the dark, of which 6 % (15) said they felt very safe and 25 % (64) said they felt safe. The remaining 2 % (5) of respondents said that they felt neither safe nor unsafe in the dark (refer Tables 11 and 12). The majority of interviewees, therefore, said that they felt unsafe in the dark.

TABLE 11: SEX, AGE, RENT-CARD STATUS AND RESPONDENTS WHO FELT UNSAFE* IN THE DARK

Sex and RC status	Under 31 years		31 - 40 years inclusive		Over 40 years		Row totals	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
F - NRC	24	39	18	29	7	12	49	80
M - NRC	3	5	1	2	1	1	5	8
Row total - NRC	27	44	19	31	8	13	54	88
M - RC	15	24	15	25	16	26	46	75
Column totals	42	68	34	56	24	39	100	163

* This table includes those who felt unsafe and those who felt very unsafe.

TABLE 12: SEX, AGE, RENT-CARD STATUS AND RESPONDENTS WHO FELT SAFE* IN THE DARK

Sex and RC status	Under 31 years		31 - 40 years inclusive		Over 40 years		Row totals	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
F - NRC	15	11	3	2	3	2	21	15
M - NRC	13	10	1	1	3	2	17	13
Row total - NRC	28	21	4	3	6	4	38	28
M - RC	25	19	21	16	16	13	62	48
Column totals	53	40	25	19	22	17	100	76

* This table includes those who felt safe and those who felt very safe.

4.2.2 Sex and overall sense of personal safety in the dark

Females were significantly overrepresented by 10 % among the interviewees who said that they felt unsafe in the dark.

4.2.3 Age and overall sense of personal safety in the dark

No age group was significantly overrepresented or underrepresented among the interviewees who said that they felt unsafe in the dark.

4.2.4 Rent-card status and overall sense of personal safety in the dark

These interviewees who held rent cards were significantly underrepresented by 6 % among interviewees who said that they felt unsafe in the dark. It was those who held rent cards who were significantly overrepresented (+5 %) among the males who said that they felt unsafe in the dark.

4.2.5 Sex, age, rent-card status and overall sense of personal safety in the dark

Females between 31 and 40 years who did not hold rent cards were significantly overrepresented (+5 %) among the interviewees who said that they felt unsafe in the dark.

5 FACTORS ENHANCING PERSONAL SAFETY

5.1 Factors enhancing personal safety across situations

Thirty-seven per cent (57) of the factors which made the respondents feel safe, or enhanced their sense of personal safety, were contextual factors, that is, aspects of the immediate living environment of Lwandle. A further 21 % (33) of the factors related to the presence of trusted persons, 14 % (22) related to respondents' never having experienced harm directly, 14 % (21) related to their having protective strategies, and the remaining 14 % (21) related to the economic security of being gainfully employed (refer Table 13).

5.1.1 Range of factors enhancing personal safety across situations

Contextual factors, that is, aspects of the immediate living environment, were the most common (37 %) type of factor felt to enhance people's personal safety. The presence of trusted persons (kinfolk) was the next most common factor (21 %), followed by the absence of personal experience of violations of personal safety (14 %), having protective strategies (14 %) and the economic security of being gainfully employed (14 %).

The five most commonly mentioned single factors felt to enhance people's personal safety were: the relatively low level of violence in Lwandle (16 %), followed by the small size and cohesiveness of the Lwandle community (14 %), the economic security of being gainfully employed (14 %), never having directly experienced violations of personal safety (14 %), the presence of an intimate male partner (10 %), and using the protective strategy of remaining in one's bungalow as much as possible (10 %).

The most commonly mentioned contextual factor (16 %) was the relatively low level of violence in Lwandle in the form of street gangs, robbers, fighting and intimidation. This was followed by: the slow pace and cohesiveness of a small community (14 %), the fact

that Lwandle was perceived as safer than other African residential areas (4 %), that Lwandle had a set of rules which served to regulate conduct (1 %), and that there was a police presence in Lwandle (1 %).

TABLE 13: FACTORS ENHANCING PERSONAL SAFETY ACROSS SITUATIONS

Factors	%	N	Rank	
Contextual factors:	37	57		1
Low level of violence*	16	26	1	
Small, cohesive community	14	22	2	
Relative safety of Lwandle	4	6	6	
Presence of community rules	1	2	9	
Presence of police	1	1	8	
Presence of trusted persons:	21	33		2
Intimate male partners**	10	16	4	
Family members***	8	13	5	
Homeboys$^{\phi}$	3	4	7	
No direct experience of harm	14	22	2	3
Protective strategies:	14	21		4
Staying in bungalow	10	15	4	
Avoiding conflicts	2	3	8	
Abstaining from alcohol	2	3	8	
Being gainfully employed	14	21	3	4

* Including the absence of street gangs (8 % (13)), the low level of fighting and violence (5 % (8)), the absence of intimidation (2 % (3)) and the low numbers of robbers (1 % (2)).

** Husband or lover.

*** Males comprised 6 % (8).

ϕ Males originating from the same area of the 'homelands'.

The most commonly mentioned type of trusted person (kinfolk) felt to enhance personal safety was the intimate male partner (10 %), followed by a family member (8 %) and a Homeboy (3 %). It is noteworthy that all of those regarded as trusted persons were kin and that 85 % were male kin.

The most commonly mentioned protective strategy was staying in one's bungalow or avoiding public places (10 %), followed by refraining from getting involved in trouble (2 %) and abstaining from alcohol (2 %).

TABLE 14: SEX, AGE, RENT-CARD STATUS AND CONTEXTUAL FACTORS ENHANCING PERSONAL SAFETY

Sex and RC status	Under 31 years		31 - 40 years inclusive		Over 40 years		Row totals	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
F - NRC	12	9	10	8	4	3	26	20
M - NRC	4	3	1	1	1	1	6	5
Row total - NRC	16	12	11	9	5	4	32	25
M - RC	27	21	22	17	19	15	68	53
Column totals	43	33	33	26	24	19	100	78

5.1.2 Sex and factors enhancing personal safety across situations

Females were significantly underrepresented (-13 %) among the interviewees who said that contextual factors made them feel safer, but they were significantly overrepresented (+25 %) among the interviewees who said that having kinfolk present made them feel safer and among the interviewees who said that having protective strategies made them feel safer (+19 %).

5.1.3 Age and factors enhancing personal safety across situations

No age group was significantly overrepresented or underrepresented among the interviewees who said that contextual factors made them feel safer. Those under 31 years old were significantly overrepresented by 13 % among the interviewees who said that the presence of kinfolk made them feel safer, whereas those between 31 and 40 years were significantly underrepresented by 5 %, and those over 40 years by 8 %. Those under 31 years old were significantly overrepresented by 7 % among the interviewees who said that having protective strategies made them feel safer, whereas those between 31 and 40 years were significantly underrepresented by 5 %.

5.1.4 Rent-card status and factors enhancing personal safety across situations

Respondents who held rent cards were significantly overrepresented by 16 % among those who said that contextual factors made them feel safer. Those who did not hold rent cards were significantly overrepresented by 6 % among the males who said that contextual factors made them feel safer. Rent-card holders were significantly underrepresented by 40 % among the interviewees who said that the presence of kinfolk made them feel safer. Those who did not hold rent cards were significantly overrepresented by 49 % among the males who said that the presence of kinfolk made them feel safer. Those who held rent

cards were significantly overrepresented by 7 % among the interviewees who said that having protective strategies made them feel safer. Those who did not hold rent cards were significantly overrepresented by 12 % among the males who said that having protective strategies made them feel safer.

TABLE 15: SEX, AGE, RENT-CARD STATUS AND THE PRESENCE OF TRUSTED PERSONS AS FACTORS ENHANCING PERSONAL SAFETY

Sex and RC status	Under 31 years		31 - 40 years inclusive		Over 40 years		Row totals	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
F - NRC	32	10	13	7	10	3	65	20
M - NRC	20	6	-	-	3	1	23	7
Row total - NRC	52	16	23	7	13	4	88	27
M - RC	6	2	3	1	3	1	12	4
Column totals	58	18	26	8	16	5	100	31

TABLE 16: SEX, AGE, RENT-CARD STATUS AND PROTECTIVE STRATEGIES AS FACTORS ENHANCING PERSONAL SAFETY

Sex and RC status	Under 31 years		31 - 40 years inclusive		Over 40 years		Row totals	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
F - NRC	10	2	5	1	5	1	21	4
M - NRC	21	4	-	-	-	-	21	4
Row total - NRC	31	6	5	1	5	1	42	8
M - RC	21	4	21	4	16	3	58	11
Column totals	52	10	26	5	21	4	100	19

5.1.5 Sex, age, rent-card status and factors enhancing personal safety across situations

The following groups were significantly overrepresented among the interviewees who said that contextual factors made them feel safer: males under 31 years who held rent cards (+9 %) and males between 31 and 40 years who held rent cards (+5 %). Females under

31 years who did not hold rent cards were significantly underrepresented (-8 %) among the interviewees who said that contextual factors made them feel safer.

The following groups were significantly overrepresented among the interviewees who said that the presence of kinfolk made them feel safer: females under 31 years who did not hold rent cards (+12 %), females between 31 and 40 years who did not hold rent cards (+10 %), and males under 31 years who did not hold rent cards (+13 %). The following groups were significantly underrepresented among the interviewees who said that the presence of kinfolk made them feel safer: males under 31 years who held rent cards (-12 %), males between 31 and 40 years who held rent cards (-14 %), and males over 40 years who held rent cards (-14 %).

Males under 31 years who did not hold rent cards were significantly overrepresented (+14 %) among the interviewees who said that having protective strategies made them feel safer. The following groups were underrepresented among the interviewees who said that having protective strategies made them feel safer: females under 31 years who were not card holders (-10 %) and females between 31 and 40 years who were not card holders (-8 %).

5.2 Strategies for enhancing safety across situations

5.2.1 Strategies for enhancing personal safety across situations

Ninety-five per cent (220) of the respondents said that they took measures to protect themselves, while only 5 % (11) maintained that they took no such measures. Seventy per cent (173) of the respondents who said they took measures to protect themselves explained that they used their bungalows as havens (this being the most common type of protective strategy), while 10 % (26) said that they modified their use of alcohol, 10 % (25) said that they avoided certain public places known to be unsafe, 7 % (19) said that they avoided conflict, and the remaining 3 % (8) said that they relied on trusted persons for their safety (refer Table 17). The overwhelming majority (95 %) of the interviewees, therefore, said that they took measures to protect their personal safety, and it is noteworthy that this included the majority (84 %) of those who felt that there were things which made them feel safe in Lwandle.

In sum, the five most common single protective strategies were: staying in a bungalow as much as possible (67 %), abstaining from alcohol (9 %), avoiding public events except for church and sports gatherings (8 %), refraining from interfering in the concerns of others (7 %) and avoiding discotheques (2 %).

It is also noteworthy that 86 % (50) of the respondents who said that nothing made them feel unsafe and 84 % (115) of those who said that there were things which made them feel safe in Lwandle, nevertheless took measures to protect themselves.

5.2.2 Strategies for enhancing the safety of belongings across situations

Eighty-seven per cent (219) of the respondents said that they took measures to protect their belongings, while 13 % (33) said that they did not take precautionary measures. Of those who said that they did not employ protective measures, 11 % (28) explained that this was because they did not feel this was necessary and 2 % (5) said that it was because they felt there was no way of effectively protecting their belongings. This indicates that the majority (87 %) of the interviewees took measures to protect their belongings.

The most common (76 %) measure taken to protect belongings was to lock property away, which was followed by having someone watch over belongings (10 %), storing belongings away from Lwandle (8 %), and keeping belongings close to one's bed (6 %).

TABLE 17: STRATEGIES FOR ENHANCING PERSONAL SAFETY ACROSS SITUATIONS

Factors	%	N	Rank	
Use of bungalow as haven:	70	173		1
Whenever feasible	67	168	1	
When intoxicated	10	4	6	
When there is conflict	1	1	9	
Alcohol-related strategies:	10	26		2
Abstention	9	23	2	
Refrain from excessive use	1	3	7	
Avoid unsafe public places:	10	25		3
All except church and sports	8	19	3	
Discotheques	2	6	5	
Avoid conflict	7	19		4
Reliance on trusted persons:	3	8		5
Trusted persons in general	1	3	7	
Males	1	3	7	
Homeboys	1	2	8	

5.3 Factors enhancing personal safety in the dark

Forty-nine per cent (20) of the factors that respondents noted as enhancing their sense of personal safety in the dark related to the presence of trusted persons, while 28 % (11) related to having personal attributes which decreased vulnerability, 12 % (5) related to having protective strategies, and 11 % (5) related to contextual factors (refer Table 18).

5.3.1 Range of factors enhancing personal safety in the dark

The presence of someone trusted was the most common (49 %) factor felt to enhance people's personal safety in the dark. Having certain attributes which decreased vulnerability was the next most common factor (28 %), followed by having protective strategies (12 %), and contextual factors, that is, aspects of the immediate living environment (11 %).

The five most commonly mentioned single factors felt to enhance people's personal safety in the dark were: the presence of male kinfolk (39 %), followed by being male (20 %), the presence of someone trusted (10 %), being skilled at self-defence (10 %), and never having actually experienced harm (8 %).

The most commonly mentioned group of trusted persons who were felt to enhance personal safety in the dark, were male kinfolk (39 %) and the remainder were simply trusted persons (10 %). The most commonly mentioned attribute which made people feel safer in the dark, was being male (20 %), followed by never having experienced harm (8 %). The most commonly mentioned protective strategy which made people feel safer in the dark, was being skilled in self-defence (10 %), followed by refraining from getting involved in trouble (2 %). The most commonly mentioned contextual factor (5 %) was living in a peaceful bungalow, which was followed by living in a bungalow which was located close to the communal toilets (2 %), having the view that Lwandle was safer than other African residential areas (2 %) and good lighting in public spaces (2 %).

TABLE 18: FACTORS ENHANCING PERSONAL SAFETY IN THE DARK

Factors	%	N	Rank	
Presence of trusted persons:	49	20		1
Males	39	16	1	
Someone trusted	10	4	3	
Individual attributes:	28	11		2
Being male	20	8	2	
No direct experience of harm	8	3	4	
Protective strategies:	12	5		3
Self-defence skills	10	4	3	
Avoiding conflict	2	1	6	
Contextual factors:	11	5		4
Living in a peaceful bungalow	5	2	5	
Living near the toilets	2	1	6	
The relative safety of Lwandle	2	1	6	
Adequate lighting	2	1	6	

6 THREATS TO PERSONAL SAFETY

6.1 Threats to personal safety across situations

Ninety-eight per cent (270) of the factors that the respondents felt threatened their personal safety were contextual factors, while the remaining 2 % (7) of the factors related to the economic insecurity of being unable to find gainful employment. More specifically, the threatening contextual factors mentioned were of two main types, that is, threats resulting from the inadequacy of living conditions (64 % (176)), and threats posed by people in the immediate environment (34 % (94)) (refer Table 19).

TABLE 19: THREATS TO PERSONAL SAFETY ACROSS SITUATIONS

Factors	%	N	Rank	
Contextual factors:	98	270		1
Inadequate living conditions:	64	176		
Overcrowding	22	62	1	
Unsanitary conditions	17	48	3	
Lack of privacy	17	48	3	
Dangers related to toilets*	5	12	4	
Use of flammables**	1	3	8	
Inadequate lighting	1	3	8	
Threats posed by people:	34	94		
Violence in general	21	56	2	
Violence by the intoxicated	5	13	4	
Rape	4	11	5	
Police raids	3	8	6	
Robbery	2	6	7	
Economic insecurity	2	7		2

* Including the distance at which the toilets are situated from the bungalows and the poor lighting.

** Due to the fact that Lwandle does not have electricity for individual use.

6.1.1 Range of threats to personal safety across situations

The five most commonly mentioned single factors felt to threaten people's personal safety were: overcrowding (22 %), the threat of violence in general (20 %), unsanitary living conditions (17 %), the lack of privacy (17 %) and the threat of violence posed by intoxicated persons (5 %).

The contextual factors felt to threaten people's personal safety were of two main types: inadequacy of living conditions (64 %) and threats posed by people in the immediate environment (34 %). The most commonly (22 %) mentioned contextual factor felt to

threaten personal safety was overcrowding, followed by unsanitary living conditions (17 %), a lack of privacy (17 %), the danger of using the toilet facilities which are poorly lit and positioned far from the bungalows (5 %), inadequate lighting due to the limited provision of electricity (1 %), and the fire hazard caused by the use of flammables for cooking, lighting and heating (1 %).

The most commonly mentioned threat from people in Lwandle was the threat of violence (29 %), that is, violence in general (25 %), rape (4 %) and robbery (2 %). The

TABLE 20: SEX, AGE, RENT-CARD STATUS AND INADEQUATE LIVING CONDITIONS AS THREATS TO PERSONAL SAFETY*

Sex and RC status	Under 31 years		31 - 40 years inclusive		Over 40 years		Row totals	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
F - NRC	22	28	15	20	6	8	43	56
M - NRC	5	7	1	1	-	-	6	8
Row total - NRC	27	35	16	21	6	8	49	64
M - RC	21	27	17	22	13	17	51	66
Column totals	48	62	33	43	19	25	100	130

* These tables reflect the number of respondents, not the number of factors reported.

TABLE 21: SEX, AGE, RENT-CARD STATUS AND PEOPLE AS THREATS TO PERSONAL SAFETY*

Sex and RC status	Under 31 years		31 - 40 years inclusive		Over 40 years		Row totals	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
F - NRC	23	18	13	10	4	3	40	31
M - NRC	5	4	1	1	-	-	6	5
Row total - NRC	28	22	14	11	4	3	44	36
M - RC	24	19	13	10	17	14	54	43
Column totals	52	41	27	21	21	17	100	79

* These tables reflect the number of respondents, not the number of factors reported.

most commonly (20 %) mentioned sources of such violence were people in general, followed by intoxicated people (5 %), males (4 %), the police (3 %) and robbers (2 %).

6.1.2 Sex and threats to personal safety across situations

Males and females were not significantly underrepresented or overrepresented among the interviewees who said that their inadequate living conditions threatened their personal safety, or among those who said that certain people in their living environment threatened their personal safety.

6.1.3 Age and threats to personal safety across situations

Those over 40 years were significantly underrepresented (-5 %) among the interviewees who said that inadequate living conditions threatened their personal safety; whereas those under 31 years of age were significantly overrepresented by 7 % among the interviewees who said that certain people in their living environment threatened their personal safety.

6.1.4 Rent-card status and threats to personal safety across situations

Those who held rent cards and those who did not were neither significantly under-represented nor overrepresented among the interviewees who said that inadequate living conditions threatened their personal safety, or among those who said that certain people in their living environment threatened their personal safety.

6.1.5 Sex, age, rent-card status and threats to personal safety across situations

No group was significantly overrepresented or underrepresented among the interviewees who said that inadequate living conditions threatened their personal safety. The following groups were significantly overrepresented among the interviewees who said that people in their immediate living environment threatened their personal safety: males under 31 years who held rent cards (+6 %), and males between 31 and 40 years who held rent cards (+5 %).

6.2 Threats to personal safety in the dark

Eighty-nine per cent (153) of the factors said to threaten personal safety in the dark were contextual factors, while 11 % were attributes felt to increase the vulnerability of an individual (e.g. being asleep, being female, being physically handicapped). More specifically, the two most common types of contextual factors were, threats of violence posed by people in the immediate environment (59 % (101)) and dangers related to using the toilets in the dark (24 % (42)) (refer Tables 22 and 23).

6.2.1 Range of threats to personal safety in the dark

The five most commonly mentioned single factors felt to threaten people's personal safety in the dark were: the threat of violence (59 %), the dangerous nature of the toilet facilities (24 %), being asleep (6 %), having been previously harmed (5 %) and the inadequate lighting in Lwandle (4 %).

The contextual factors felt to threaten people's personal safety in the dark were of two main types: the threat of violence posed by people in the immediate environment (59 %) and threats associated with the inadequate living conditions (30 %).

TABLE 22: THREATS TO PERSONAL SAFETY IN THE DARK*

Factors	%	N	Rank	
Contextual factors:	89	153		1
Threats of violence in general	59	101	1	
Dangers related to toilets	24	42	2	
Inadequate lighting	4	7	5	
Overcrowding	2	3	8	
Individual attributes increasing vulnerability:	11	19		2
Being asleep	6	10	3	
Being previously harmed	5	9	4	
Being physically handicapped	3	5	6	
Being female	2	4	7	

* This table reflects the number of factors reported not the number of respondents.

TABLE 23: SEX, AGE, RENT-CARD STATUS AND USING TOILETS IN THE DARK AS A THREAT TO PERSONAL SAFETY

Sex and RC status	Under 31 years		31 - 40 years inclusive		Over 40 years		Row totals	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
F - NRC	24	10	24	10	19	8	67	28
M - NRC	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Row total - NRC	24	10	24	10	19	8	67	28
M - RC	10	4	4	2	19	8	33	14
Column totals	34	14	28	12	38	16	100	42

The two most commonly mentioned contextual factors felt to threaten personal safety in the dark were the threat of violence (59 %) and the dangers associated with the toilet facilities (24 %) (i.e. being located far from the bungalows, the presence of dangerous people around the toilets, the lack of toilet doors, the fact that males and females had to share the toilets, inadequate lighting and unsanitary conditions).

6.2.2 Sex and threats to personal safety in the dark

Females were significantly overrepresented (28 %) among the interviewees who said that using the toilets in the dark threatened their personal safety.

6.2.3 Age and threats to personal safety in the dark

Those over 40 years were significantly overrepresented (14 %) among the interviewees who said that using the toilets in the dark threatened their personal safety, whereas those under 31 years of age were significantly underrepresented (11 %).

6.2.4 Rent-card status and threats to personal safety in the dark

Those who held rent cards were significantly overrepresented (19 %) among the interviewees who felt that having to use the toilets in the dark threatened their personal safety. Those who held rent cards were significantly overrepresented (15 %) among the males who felt that having to use the toilets in the dark threatened their personal safety.

6.2.5 Sex, age, rent-card status and threats to personal safety in the dark

The following groups were significantly overrepresented among the interviewees who felt that having to use the toilets in the dark threatened their personal safety: females between 31 and 40 years who did not hold rent cards (+11 %) and females over 40 years who did not hold rent cards (+15 %). The following groups were significantly underrepresented among the interviewees who felt that having to use the toilets in the dark threatened their personal safety: males under 31 years who were not card holders (-7 %), males under 31 years who did hold rent cards (-8 %), and males between 31 and 40 years who did hold rent cards (-13 %).

7 DIRECT EXPERIENCE OF HARM AND THREATS TO PERSONAL SAFETY

7.1 Direct experience of lawbreaking

Ninety-one per cent (228) of the respondents maintained that they had not been involved in lawbreaking, either as lawbreaker or victim, during the two-year period prior to being interviewed. The remaining 9 % (22) said that they had been directly involved in lawbreaking, 41 % (9) as victims and 59 % (13) as lawbreakers (refer Tables 24 to 26).

7.1.1 Overall experience of being the victim of lawbreaking

Only a small minority (4 %) of the interviewees reported that they had been the victims of lawbreaking during the two years prior to being interviewed. The most common experience (19 %) reported by victims was that of having property stolen, followed by assault (18 %) and attempted murder (5 %).

TABLE 24: DIRECT INVOLVEMENT IN LAWBREAKING

Conduct	Victims		Lawbreakers	
	%	N	%	N
Violent conduct:				
Assault	18	4	23	5
Attempted homicide	-	-	5	1
Homicide	-	-	5	1
Public violence	-	-	9	2
Property-related conduct:				
Theft	18	4	-	-
Possession of stolen goods	-	-	5	1
Miscellaneous conduct:				
Selling liquor without a licence	-	-	9	2
Non-payment of debts				
Loitering	-	-	5	1
	-	-	5	1

7.1.1.1 Sex and experience of being the victim of lawbreaking

Females were significantly underrepresented (-17 %) among the interviewees who said that they had been the victims of lawbreaking.

7.1.1.2 Age and experience of being the victim of lawbreaking

Respondents over 40 years were significantly overrepresented (+9 %) among the interviewees who said that they had been the victims of lawbreaking.

7.1.1.3 Rent-card status and experience of being the victim of lawbreaking

Those who held rent cards were significantly overrepresented (+15 %) among the interviewees who said that they had been victims of lawbreaking.

7.1.1.4 Sex, age, rent-card status and experience of being the victim of lawbreaking

The following groups were significantly overrepresented among the interviewees who said that they had been victims of lawbreaking: females over 40 years who were not card holders (+5 %), males under 31 years who held rent cards (+16 %), and males over 40 years who held rent cards (+5 %). The following groups were significantly underrepresented among the interviewees who said that they had been victims of lawbreaking: females under 31 years who were not card holders (-20 %), and males between 31 and 40 years who did hold rent cards (-6 %).

TABLE 25: SEX, AGE, RENT-CARD STATUS AND DIRECT EXPERIENCE AS VICTIMS OF LAWBREAKING

Sex and RC status	Under 31 years		31 - 40 years inclusive		Over 40 years		Row totals	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
F - NRC	-	-	11	1	11	1	22	2
M - NRC	11	1	-	-	-	-	11	1
Row total - NRC	11	1	11	1	11	1	33	3
M - RC	34	3	11	1	22	2	67	6
Column totals	45	4	22	2	33	3	100	9

7.1.2 Overall experience of breaking the law

A very small minority (5 %) of the interviewees reported that they themselves had broken the law in the two-year period before being interviewed. The most common (23 %) type of lawbreaking reported was assault, followed by public violence (9 %), selling liquor without a licence (9 %), killing (5 %), possessing stolen goods (5 %), failing to pay a debt (5 %) and loitering (5 %).

7.1.2.1 Sex and experience of breaking the law

Males were significantly overrepresented by 23 % among the interviewees who said that they had broken the law.

7.1.2.2 Age and experience of breaking the law

Respondents between 31 and 40 years old were significantly overrepresented by 15 % among the interviewees who said that they had broken the law, whereas respondents under 31 years were significantly underrepresented by 15 %.

7.1.2.3 Rent-card status and experience of breaking the law

Those who held rent cards were significantly overrepresented by 24 % among the interviewees who said that they had broken the law. Those who held rent cards were significantly overrepresented by 6 % among the males who said that they had broken the law.

7.1.2.4 Sex, age, rent-card status and experience of breaking the law

The following groups were significantly overrepresented among the interviewees who said that they had broken the law: males over 40 years who were not card holders (+7 %), and males under 31 years who did hold rent cards (+34 %). The following groups were significantly underrepresented among the interviewees who said that they had broken the law: females under 31 years who were not card holders (-12 %), females between 31 and 40 years who were not card holders (-13 %), males under 31 years who were not card holders (-7 %), and males over 40 years who did hold rent cards (-9 %).

TABLE 26: SEX, AGE, RENT-CARD STATUS AND DIRECT EXPERIENCE AS LAWBREAKERS

Sex and RC status	Under 31 years		31 - 40 years inclusive		Over 40 years		Row totals	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
F - NRC	8	1	-	-	8	1	16	2
M - NRC	-	-	-	-	8	1	8	1
Row total - NRC	8	1	-	-	16	2	24	3
M - RC	52	7	16	2	8	1	76	10
Column totals	60	8	16	2	24	3	100	13

7.2 Direct experience of damage to or loss of belongings

Thirty per cent (76) of the respondents reported that while living in Lwandle their belongings had been damaged and/or stolen. Seventy-nine per cent (60) had their

belongings stolen, 12 % (9) had belongings stolen and damaged, and the remaining 9 % (7) had belongings damaged (refer Table 27).

Forty-seven per cent (35) of the property reported stolen was clothing, 17 % (13) money, 15 % (11) electrical equipment and 7 % (5) food. Of the property which was reported damaged, 36 % (4) was clothing, 27 % (3) was electrical equipment and 27 % (3) was food.

Ninety per cent (63) of those who reported that their property had been stolen felt that the items they had lost were valuable, whereas all of those who reported that their belongings had been damaged felt that the items which had been damaged were valuable.

7.2.1 Overall experience of damage to and/or loss of belongings

The majority (70 %) of the interviewees said that they had not had their personal property damaged or stolen while living in Lwandle. Of the 30 % who had experienced loss of or damage to their property, the majority (79 %) had suffered theft, while 12 % had suffered theft of and damage to property and 9 % had suffered damage to their property. The majority (90 %) of those who had suffered theft felt that the property concerned had been valuable, whereas all (100 %) of those who had suffered damage to their property felt that the property concerned had been valuable.

TABLE 27: SEX, AGE, RENT-CARD STATUS AND DIRECT EXPERIENCE OF THEFT OF AND/OR DAMAGE TO THEIR BELONGINGS

Sex and RC status	Under 31 years		31 - 40 years inclusive		Over 40 years		Row totals	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
F - NRC	23	27	11	8	7	5	41	30
M - NRC	1	1	1	1	-	-	2	2
Row total - NRC	24	18	12	9	7	5	43	32
M - RC	14	10	17	12	26	19	57	41
Column totals	38	28	29	21	33	24	100	73

7.2.1.1 Sex and experience of theft of and/or damage to belongings

Neither males nor females were significantly overrepresented among the interviewees who said that while living in Lwandle their property had been damaged or stolen.

7.2.1.2 Age and experience of theft of and/or damage to belongings

Those over 40 years old were significantly overrepresented by 9 % among the interviewees who said that while living in Lwandle their property had been stolen and/or damaged, whereas those under 31 years were significantly underrepresented by 7 %.

7.2.1.3 Rent-card status and experience of theft of and/or damage to belongings

Respondents who held rent cards were significantly overrepresented by 5 % among the interviewees who said that their property had been stolen and/or damaged while they had been living in Lwandle. Those who held rent cards were significantly overrepresented by 10 % among the males who said that while living in Lwandle their property had been stolen and/or damaged.

7.2.1.4 Sex, age, rent-card status and experience of theft of and/or damage to belongings

Males over 40 years who held rent cards were significantly overrepresented (+9 %) among the interviewees who said that while living in Lwandle their property had been stolen and/or damaged. Males under 31 years who did not held rent cards were significantly underrepresented (-6 %) among the interviewees who said that while living in Lwandle their property had been stolen and/or damaged.

7.3 Direct experience of threats of violence

Nine per cent (22) of the respondents reported having been threatened with violence while living in Lwandle, while the remaining 91 % (230) said that they had never been threatened with violence (refer Table 28).

TABLE 28: SEX, AGE, RENT-CARD STATUS AND DIRECT EXPERIENCE OF THREATS OF VIOLENCE

Sex and RC status	Under 31 years		31 - 40 years inclusive		Over 40 years		Row totals	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
F - NRC	9	2	23	5	-	-	32	7
M - NRC	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Row total - NRC	9	2	23	5	-	-	32	7
M - RC	14	3	27	6	27	6	68	15
Column totals	23	5	50	21	27	6	100	22

7.3.1 Overall experience of threats of violence

The majority (91 %) of the interviewees said that they had never been threatened with violence while living in Lwandle.

7.3.1.1 Sex and experience of threats of violence

Males were significantly overrepresented by 7 % among the interviewees who said that they had been threatened with violence while living in Lwandle.

7.3.1.2 Age and experience of threats of violence

Those between 31 and 40 years were significantly overrepresented by 19 % among the interviewees who said that they had been threatened with violence while living in Lwandle, whereas those under 31 years of age were significantly underrepresented by 22 %.

7.3.1.3 Rent-card status and threats of violence

Respondents who held rent cards were significantly overrepresented by 16 % among the interviewees who said that they had been threatened with violence while living in Lwandle. Those who held rent cards were significantly overrepresented by 15 % among the males who said that they had been threatened with violence while living in Lwandle.

7.3.1.4 Sex, age, rent-card status and threats of violence

The following groups were significantly overrepresented among the interviewees who said that they had been threatened with violence while living in Lwandle: females between 31 and 40 years who did not hold rent cards (+10 %), males between 31 and 40 years who did hold rent cards (+10 %), and males over 40 years who did hold rent cards (+10 %). The following groups were significantly underrepresented among the interviewees who said that they had been threatened with violence while living in Lwandle: females under 31 years who were not card holders (-11 %), females over 40 years who were not card holders (-6 %) and males under 31 years who were not card holders (-7 %).

7.4 Direct experience of physical harm

Fifteen per cent (37) of the respondents reported that they had actually experienced physical harm at the hands of another while living in Lwandle, while the remaining 85 % (214) said that they had not been assaulted. Of those who had been assaulted, 5 % (2) reported more than one assault (refer Table 29).

7.4.1 Overall experience of physical harm

The majority (85 %) of the interviewees said that they had not been assaulted while living in Lwandle and 5 % of the 15 % who had been assaulted, reported more than one assault.

7.4.1.1 Sex and experience of physical harm

Females were significantly overrepresented by 9 % among the interviewees who said that they had been assaulted while living in Lwandle.

TABLE 29: SEX, AGE, RENT-CARD STATUS AND DIRECT EXPERIENCE OF PHYSICAL HARM

Sex and RC status	Under 31 years		31 - 40 years inclusive		Over 40 years		Row totals	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
F - NRC	22	8	5	2	3	1	30	11
M - NRC	3	1	-	-	3	1	6	2
Row total - NRC	25	9	5	2	6	2	36	13
M - RC	26	10	14	5	24	9	64	24
Column totals	51	19	19	7	30	11	100	37

7.4.1.2 Age and experience of physical harm

Those under 31 years old were significantly overrepresented by 6 % among the interviewees who said that they had been assaulted while living in Lwandle, whereas those between 31 and 40 years were significantly underrepresented by 12 %, and those over 40 years by 6 %.

7.4.1.3 Rent-card status and experience of physical harm

Rent-card holders were significantly overrepresented by 12 % among the interviewees who said that they had been assaulted while living in Lwandle. Those who held rent cards were significantly overrepresented by 7 % among those males who said that they had been assaulted while living in Lwandle.

7.4.1.4 Sex, age, rent-card status and experience of physical harm

The following groups were significantly overrepresented among the interviewees who said that they had been assaulted while living in Lwandle: male card holders under 31 years

(+8 %), and male card holders over 40 years (+7 %). The following groups were significantly underrepresented among the interviewees who said that they had been assaulted while living in Lwandle: females between 31 and 40 years who were not card holders (-8 %), and males under 31 years who were not card holders (-5 %).

8 SOURCES OF ASSISTANCE WITH PERSONAL SAFETY

8.1 Range of sources of assistance utilized

Homeboys were the source of assistance most commonly used by those residents who sought assistance with their personal safety (21 %), followed by Watchmen (11 %), Heads of Bungalows (8 %), the police (7 %), lawyers (5 %), the town superintendent (4 %), trade unions (3 %), and lastly, the Men's Committee (1 %).

The source of assistance with which the highest proportion of users (50 %) were dissatisfied was: the town superintendent, followed by Heads of Bungalows (44 %) and lawyers (44 %), the police (35 %), Watchmen (29 %), and lastly Homeboys (9 %). No interviewees who had approached the Men's Committee or the trade unions said that they were dissatisfied with the assistance they had been given by these sources.

TABLE 30: SOURCES OF ASSISTANCE USED BY RESPONDENTS

Sources of assistance	Using		Satisfied		Dissatisfied	
	%	N	%	N	%	N
Homeboys	21	46	91	42	9	4
Watchmen	11	24	71	17	29	7
Heads of Bungalows	8	19	56	10	44	9
Police	7	17	65	11	35	5
Lawyers	5	11	100	2	-	-
Town superintendent	4	10	50	5	50	5
Trade unions*	3	2	100	2	-	-
Hostel Men's Committee	1	3	100	3	-	-

* This is a proportion of the number of respondents who were union members, i.e. 32 % (78) of the sample.

8.2 Sources of assistance used by those who had experienced threats to safety

8.2.1 Sources of assistance used by those who had experienced threats to their belongings

Only 38 % (23) of the respondents who reported that their belongings had been stolen and/or damaged said that they had taken action following these incidents. Therefore the

majority (62 %) of those who reported the theft of and/or damage to their property said that they had not taken any action in response to such losses. The most common (57 %) action taken was reporting the threat to some authority, most frequently (30 %) the Hostel Men's Committee, or the police (27 %). The remaining 43 % of the respondents had investigated matters themselves by questioning those in their own bungalow.

8.2.2 Sources of assistance used by those who had been threatened with violence

Only 27 % (6) of those who reported having been threatened with violence said that they had taken action regarding such threats. It is evident, therefore, that the majority (73 %) of those who reported having been threatened with violence said that they had not taken any action in response to such threats. The most common (100 %) action taken was reporting the threat to some authority, most frequently (18 %) the police, the Homeboys (5 %), a Watchman (5 %) or a male parent (5 %).

8.2.3 Sources of assistance used by those who had experienced physical harm

All of the respondents who reported having been assaulted said that they had taken action in response to such incidents. The most common (60 %) action taken in response to an assault was reporting the incident to some authority, most frequently (41 %) the police, the Heads of Bungalows (8 %), a Watchman (5 %), Homeboys (3 %) or a lawyer (3 %). Interestingly, 11 % (4) of the assault victims reported that they had either requested the Homeboys to assault, or had themselves assaulted, their assailants in retaliation.

8.3 The role of the police in Lwandle

Seventy-five per cent (189) of the respondents said that the police arrested people in Lwandle, while 25 % (63) maintained that the police did not make arrests in Lwandle. The large majority of the interviewees, therefore, said that the police arrested people in Lwandle. The most commonly mentioned reason (179 (46 %)) for such police arrests was drug or alcohol-related conduct, followed by violent conduct (134 (34 %)), property-related conduct (64 (16 %)), failure to present valid passes (2 %), trading without a licence (1 %) and failure to pay fines for admissions of guilt (1 %) (refer Table 31).

The five most common reasons the interviewees gave for police arrests in Lwandle were: selling liquor without a licence (25 %), fighting (22 %), selling marijuana (17 %), theft (12 %) and killing (11 %).

Significantly higher proportions of the interviewees felt that people who engaged in the following types of conduct should be arrested: fighting (+23 %)*, theft (13 %) and killing

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* Figures preceded by an addition sign in this paragraph indicate the difference between the proportion of those who felt that the conduct concerned warranted arrest and those who felt it did not. Figures not preceded by an addition sign indicate that no interviewee felt that the conduct concerned did not warrant arrest.

(12 %); whereas a significantly higher proportion of the interviewees (+8 %) felt that people who sold liquor without a licence should not be arrested.

The interviewees who favoured arrest for certain types of conduct gave general reasons for their views. The most common reason (69 %) was that lawbreakers should be punished, followed by the view that arrest protects people from lawbreaking (29 %) and deters others from lawbreaking (2 %).

TABLE 31: REASONS FOR POLICE ARRESTS IN LWANDLE

Conduct	%	N	Ranks	
Drug or alcohol-related conduct:	46	179		1
Selling liquor without a licence	25	97	1	
Selling marijuana	17	67	3	
Using marijuana	2	8	7	
Alcohol intoxication	2	7	8	
Violent conduct:	34	134		2
Assault	22	87	2	
Homicide	11	43	5	
Rape	1	4	11	
Property-related conduct:	16	64		3
Theft	12	47	4	
Possession of stolen goods	4	17	6	
Miscellaneous conduct:	4	12		4
Failure to present a pass*	2	6	9	
Trading without a licence	1	5	10	
Failure to pay admission of guilt fine	1	1	12	

* This offence existed prior to the reform of influx controls in 1986.

Seventy-eight per cent (242) of the responses indicated that the respondents felt the police ought to arrest persons for certain types of conduct (pro-arrest) and 28 % (92) indicated types of conduct which the respondents felt did not warrant arrest by the police (anti-arrest).

The interviewees who felt that certain types of conduct did not warrant arrest gave more specific reasons for their opinions. The most common reason (65 %) given why those engaged in selling liquor without a licence should not be arrested, was that this was one of the few income-generating activities available to residents of Lwandle and was a useful service for residents. The most common reason (100 %) given why people should not be arrested for possessing goods without proof of ownership was that people often

lost receipts and invoices. The most common reason (100 %) given why people should not be arrested for failing to pay a fine, was that Lwandle residents often did not have enough money to pay fines.

TABLE 32: PREFERRED ROLE OF THE POLICE IN LWANDLE

Conduct	Pro-arrest		Anti-arrest	
	%	N	%	N
Drug or alcohol-related conduct:	22	74	26	81
Selling liquor without a licence	9	29	17	56
Selling marijuana	11	36	7	22
Alcohol intoxication	1	5	1	1
Using marijuana	1	4	1	2
Violent conduct:	37	123	1	1
Assault	24	79	1	1
Homicide	12	40	-	-
Rape	1	4	-	-
Property-related conduct:	14	45	2	7
Theft	13	43	-	-*
Possession of stolen goods	1	2	2	7**
Miscellaneous conduct:	-	-	1	1
Failure to pay fines	-	-	1	1

* However, 1 % (2) of the respondents said that people should not be arrested for the theft of bicycles.

** Including 1 % (2) of the respondents who felt that people ought not to be arrested for possessing goods without proof of ownership.

Only 36 % (87) of the responses supporting arrest were justified further, as compared to 65 % (60) of the responses opposing arrest. Those which were pro-arrest for certain types of conduct tended to cite general reasons for arrest such as: the belief that lawbreakers deserved to be punished (69 % (60)), that arrest protected people in the community (29 % (25)), and that the threat arrest was a deterrent to lawbreaking (2 % (2)). Those who were anti-arrest for certain types of conduct provided more specific reasons for their views. To illustrate: among the most commonly cited reasons for condoning the selling of liquor without a licence and the selling of marijuana, were that these activities were services to the community and were some of the few ways that residents were able to earn a living in Lwandle. The possession of stolen goods was felt not to warrant arrest,

because the respondents said that it was usually not feasible for purchasers to distinguish stolen goods. Respondents felt that people should not be arrested for possessing goods without proof of ownership, because it was common for people to lose or mislay their receipts.

When respondents were asked directly about their feelings toward the police, 42 % (95) said that the presence of the police in Lwandle made them feel unsafe and the remaining 58 % (131) said that their presence made residents feel safe.

CHAPTER VI

DISCUSSION OF THE CENTRAL FINDINGS

It is necessary to understand the macroforces that have shaped social relations in Lwandle, in order to explain the residents' experiences of victimization and their perceptions of personal safety. Of central relevance in this regard are the power relations that have shaped the migrant labour hostel system, in particular the politics of apartheid which have regulated the lives of African people in South Africa over the last 40 years.

The migrant labour system itself was not invented by the Nationalist Government, nor can it be attributed solely to the ideology or practice of apartheid, for it was rooted in the mining industry of the 1880s. This system was, however, adapted by the practitioners of apartheid and legally structured by the enactment of increasingly harsh influx control legislation.

The physical structure of the Lwandle migrant labourers' hostel is directly derived from the system of legal apartheid which was formally introduced in this country after 1948. The hostel was constructed in 1954 to provide accommodation for migrant labourers who came to work in surrounding white peri-urban areas. As discussed earlier, influx control was designed to minimize the possibility of male labourers gaining access to permanent residential rights, for either themselves or their families. Wives and children were structurally and legally excluded from such single-sex hostels, thereby limiting the African population in towns and simultaneously justifying the image of African men as temporary sojourners in South African cities. Migrant labourers' hostels were also intensively policed to ensure further that 'illegals' did not take up residence (Sloth-Nielsen, 1987). This has had a profound impact upon the style of policing in hostels, which has in turn contributed to the development of 'informal' non-governmental forms of social control. The study discussed here shows clearly that these factors are crucial to understanding personal safety in the contemporary context of Lwandle. In sum, apartheid is one of the central forces that has shaped peoples' feelings about their personal safety, as well as limiting the options available to them for enhancing their security and dealing with threats to their personal safety.

The politics of apartheid were predicated on the economic subjugation of the African labour force in South Africa. The dominant mode of production in this country is capitalism. Therefore, it is crucial that the interrelationship of the state, the economy and the social structure be taken into account in understanding aspects of life in Lwandle. Even the physical structure of the hostel buildings in Lwandle reflects the policy of minimum expenditure which has characterized African urban housing.

Electricity has been supplied to bungalows for these overhead lighting only and residents use illegal and dangerous connections from these overhead sockets to gain access to electric current. This is supplemented by the use of gas, paraffin burners and candles, all of which are hazardous within the confines of the overcrowded and poorly ventilated bungalows. This is but one example of how the state has assisted capital by ensuring a cheap reproduction of labour in ways which have had a negative impact on the daily lives of the residents of Lwandle.

The continuing impoverishment of the vast majority of the inhabitants of Lwandle is also the result of state policy, in this instance a policy which sought to ensure that opportunities for the accumulation of wealth by African people were severely restricted. For decades the primary routes to economic betterment in African communities were curtailed or criminalized. Trading, the operation of minibus taxis, and the selling of liquor are examples of potentially lucrative enterprises which have been systematically restricted and/or outlawed by the state. Since the overwhelming majority of Lwandle residents barely eke out a living, the role of the state in limiting and preventing access to economic opportunities is clearly central to understanding these people's perceptions of personal safety.

A final point which justifies the consideration of macroforces in studies of personal safety relates to the availability and accessibility of resources for dealing with threats to personal safety. It is no secret that under apartheid, self-financing has been the central tenet of the administration of African urban areas (Swilling, 1988). This was yet another way of reducing the cost of African labour to a minimum (Bloch & Wilkinson, 1982). Until the collapse of African local authorities in the mid-eighties, the primary sources of revenue intended to fulfil this objective were the beer halls and liquor sales administered by local authorities and income from rent. The fact that Lwandle has no recreational facilities, except a beer hall, a soccer field and a hall, is clear evidence of minimum expenditure on the reproduction of African labour force.

White capitalist domination is not the only macroforce that has shaped, and continues to shape, social relations in Lwandle. South African society has an androcratic structure, that is, it is male dominated. The impact of apartheid is thus filtered through gender relations of male domination and female subjugation. The first obvious legacy of the androcratic and apartheid origins of hostel life is evident in the status of women in this community. For although the social structure of the population is now no longer that of a single-sex male hostel, the women's position in relation to that of the men is determined by the fact that women cannot hold rent cards in their own right. Only the men have access to rent cards which entitle holders to a portion of the available space in a bungalow, namely, to a bed. Since a woman is therefore obliged to find and keep a man in order to have a place to live in Lwandle, the relationships between men and women are structured by the women's formal dependence on the men. Preventing women from holding rent cards also effectively denies them political

power, because this excludes them from participation in the organization which governs the hostel complex, the Hostel Men's Committee (Sloth-Nielsen, 1987). In consequence, women's lives in general, and their perceptions of personal safety in particular, have been and continue to be structured by the macroforces that have shaped their social, economic and political position in relation to men within a male migrant labourers' hostel.

For the purposes of this study, personal safety as an apparently microlevel or individual concern, was viewed at macro, meso and microlevels. The macrolevel perspective enabled overt cognizance to be taken of the impact of historical antecedents and of broader, structural power relations in the formation of the social, physical and economic structure of this particular community and furthermore, of the impact of such forces on the individual's perceptions of personal safety.

Although the perspective adopted in this study proceeds from a macrolevel, the microlevel of the experiences of individuals, has not been neglected. The approach taken was informed by phenomenology. The data collection techniques used were therefore designed to enable research participants to express their own views on personal safety, rather than imposing preconceived constructions. One of the central aims of the study was to elicit the views of a community which has been subjugated. Such a combination of a macro and a microlevel approach is not original, but is a valuable development within the victimological field which originated in radical feminist accounts of women's individual experiences of domestic violence and sexual assault as explained within the broader context of androcratic power relations (Gelsthorpe, 1989).

At the time this report was written there were no accurate statistics on the size or the demographic characteristics of the Lwandle community. Nevertheless, extensive participant observation during this study indicated that the sample of respondents was representative of the background population.

The Lwandle community is a population in which males and younger adults in their economically productive and reproductive years predominate. The reader should note that due to the selection procedure all of the respondents were adults over the age of 15 years. More specifically, the respondents ranged from 16 to 72 years. Males outnumbered female interviewees by almost two to one. The large majority of respondents were young adults under 40 years old, with very few interviewees 60 years. Although most of the interviewees fell in the economically active and reproductive age group of 21 to 40 years, proportionately more of the female interviewees fell into this age group, whereas males were more evenly distributed across age groups. On the whole, the females were younger than the males and there were relatively few females over 40 years. In fact, no female over 51 years old participated in this study. Just over half of the respondents were married and the majority had been married according to African custom, rather than under South African civil law.

A significant proportion of respondents were unemployed. Of all the groups, females under 31 years who did not hold rent cards, were most likely to be unemployed. By contrast males of the same age group, who held rent cards were the group most likely to be employed. Among the employed, males between 31 and 40 years who held rent cards were most likely to work for employers and females between 31 and 40 years were most likely to be self-employed.

Only half of the respondents were rent-card holders. All card holders were males by definition, since the local authority in Lwandle does not allow females to hold rent cards. Furthermore, the relatively small proportion of males who did not hold rent cards comprised predominantly younger males under 31 years old. By far the large majority of women in Lwandle were the intimate partners of men, in particular of male card holders, whereas males who did not hold rent cards were kin to male card holders.

The Lwandle hostel is a structure created for the migrant labour system, since it was built to house single African male migrant labourers. It is hardly surprising that the characteristics of the Lwandle population clearly reflect the impact of this policy and its corollary, influx control. Although these policies were reformed almost five years ago, the fact that males still outnumber females and that young adults still outnumber the elderly in areas like Lwandle, shows that the consequences of the forced proletarianization of African males are changing only gradually. It seems that this community is still functioning as a point of entry into the peri-urban labour market for unmarried, young African males, for about two-thirds of these adults were male and almost half of these males were not married.

Older males, who were among the first to come to Lwandle as migrant workers, are now the most privileged group in this community. They are the people who settled when jobs and accommodation were not as scarce as they are now. This group now holds most of the more stable, better jobs, and most of the rent cards which entitle them to beds in this highly overcrowded environment. By comparison, females of all ages and younger males who came to Lwandle after the lifting of influx control, have had far fewer opportunities. Younger males have to compete for scarce employment and access to beds. Although males are on the whole more materially privileged than females in Lwandle, among males it is the young who are most likely to be unemployed and least likely to hold rent cards. The situation is even more harrowing for females - they face a highly competitive labour market which favours males, and moreover as they are denied access to rent cards, they are obliged to depend on males for accommodation. Although the local authority has acknowledged the presence of women in Lwandle since the abolition of influx control legislation, women are still arrested for trespassing, because they are formally prohibited from holding rent cards. When women are arrested for trespassing, they have to rely on the tacit permission of male rent-card holders as a defence. This further illustrates the forced dependency

of women on men in this community. Interviews showed that memories of being arrested for pass law offences were so indelibly printed on the minds of most female residents that they continued to fear being arrested for trespassing. The following comment made by one female resident reflects the fear haunting many women in Lwandle:

> They come at 4 o'clock in the morning. They say they are looking for women. They open the curtains [closing off cubicles] and look under the beds. They shake the cupboards to feel if there is anyone inside. They tell you to open the cupboards or they will do it themselves. If they find anyone, they take them away. If you run when they [the police] are trying to catch you, they hunt you with dogs. I am very afraid of going to jail.

Females in Lwandle are most likely to be unemployed and when working, to be self-employed, which means that they usually earn far less than men and do not enjoy the few benefits available to those working in the 'formal' sector.

Elderly people, and in particular females, seem to migrate to Lwandle less frequently than young males, and those who grow old in this community tend to return to their 'homelands' in their later years, the females at younger ages than the males. The material conditions of Lwandle offer little to the aged. There are no facilities for the elderly in this community, jobs are scarce, the aged are disadvantaged and outnumbered by younger persons competing for work. Without a job or social welfare there are no means of subsistence.

There are additional reasons for the fact that the females in this community were on the whole younger than the males, for apparently the presence of women in this community is attributable to their reproductive capacity. Participant observation and interviews revealed that most women came to Lwandle in order to have children with their migrant male partners and then return to their 'homelands' once their fertile years had passed. It was also more difficult for females to find gainful employment, as males were favoured in the 'formal' labour market. The outcome of these processes is reflected in the finding that the large majority of the women in Lwandle were in their child-bearing years and that no women over 51 years were encountered during this study, whereas 15 % of the respondents were males over 51 years.

It appears that the initial forecast that the lifting of influx control would lead to the rapid inflow of African people from the 'homelands', as well as from other rural areas, to urban and peri-urban areas in South Africa, was inaccurate. In Lwandle at least, the permanent urbanization of older persons, females and children is still a very gradual process. Women in their early fifties and men in their early sixties tend to leave Lwandle. There are also relatively few children of school-going age in Lwandle. The shortage of accommodation and the lack of resources for children, especially educational and recreational facilities mean that many children over the age of six years are still being sent to live and attend school in the 'homelands'. Families that

remain in Lwandle must deal with the many problems that result from having to live in quarters designed to accommodate single males. It seems then, that the inadequate housing and facilities in Lwandle are functioning as informal influx controls by deterring the permanent settlement of African families in this peri-urban area.

It is clear that the power relations in this community are shaped by sex, age and material status - the community is androcratic, gerontocratic and in a sense classist. Those who are gainfully employed, especially those working for employers in the 'formal' sector and those who hold rent cards, are materially the most privileged group in this community.

Females of all ages, are materially the most deprived group in Lwandle, since they are least likely to find gainful employment and cannot hold the rent cards that secure access to accommodation. However, among the females the youngest age group, those under 31 years, were the most materially deprived. Females between 31 and 40 years were relatively more privileged than females in other age groups, because they were more likely to be established in the 'informal' sector. Although the males were materially more privileged than females in general, younger males under 31 years were the least privileged group of males. This group of males was most likely to be unemployed and least likely to hold rent cards. Unlike younger males, older males enjoy greater material security, status and social authority. Participant observation indicated that the older males, especially those over 40 years, enjoyed the material security of being established in better jobs, with better working conditions, were more likely to hold rent cards and had greater access to positions of authority, such as membership of Bungalow Committees and of the Hostel Men's Committee.

Overall then, females are economically disadvantaged in relation to males and hence materially dependent on males, although to varying degrees according to their ages. By contrast, it is only younger males who do not hold rent cards who are likely to be dependent upon older, materially better established males, for economic support and accommodation. This age pattern suggests that younger adults, both males and females, are more insecure in a material sense, because they have been among the last people to settle in Lwandle and hence, have had relatively little time to establish themselves in the face of increasing competition for employment and accommodation.

It is noteworthy that people's level of economic security seemed to affect the relative importance they gave to personal safety. In other words, those who already had a measure of financial security, because they were gainfully employed in more stable and better jobs, regarded personal safety as of greater importance than financial security, that is, they felt that it was more important to be personally safe than to be economically secure. By contrast, those who had less economic security, because they were unemployed or only self-employed, were more likely to feel that financial security was more important than personal safety. In short, concern over personal safety may carry little weight when one is unable to earn money to feed oneself!

The question whether personal safety or the safety of the home was more important to the respondents, was included to assess the impact of a class-biased question. After all, not only do Lwandle residents share all their living space, including toilets, the shortage of accommodation compels as many as eight people to take turns sharing each bed. For such respondents the luxury of a home, let alone its safety, is not a reality. The findings do seem to reflect the inappropriateness arising from the class-bias of this question, for unlike any other question no significant pattern emerged in response to this question - equivalent proportions of respondents felt that their personal safety was more important than the safety of their homes, that the safety of their homes was more important than their personal safety, and that both forms of safety were equally as important. Furthermore, the employed and the unemployed did not seem to differ significantly in their views on this issue, whereas there were stark differences in the responses of these two groups to the above-mentioned question relating to economic security and personal safety.

Although a majority of respondents said that there were factors in Lwandle which enhanced their sense of personal safety, a larger majority felt that there were threats to personal safety in Lwandle. It may be concluded that living in Lwandle affords people relatively little sense of personal security. In other words, the residents of Lwandle live their everyday lives feeling unsafe. What is noteworthy, is that residents also felt that Lwandle was at least as safe a place to live as other African townships. It is probable that the low level of personal safety felt by Lwandle residents is, at least to some extent, shared by residents of other African townships.

Unlike materially and politically privileged white people, the oppressed African respondents in this study did not feel that 'crime' was the most serious threat to their personal safety. Instead, it was the inadequate living conditions in Lwandle and the material insecurity resulting from high levels of unemployment, which these respondents most commonly expressed as threatening their personal safety. In particular, respondents felt that the conditions of greatest concern were overcrowding with the consequent lack of privacy, and unsanitary conditions, such as the open sewers flowing between the bungalows owing to inadequate toilet and drainage facilities.

Throughout the study the respondents emphasized the lack of privacy as integral to their sense of feeling unsafe in the Lwandle environment. People's disquiet about the lack of privacy extended to the impact it had on so many areas of personal and family life, such as being unable to sleep, to raise children or to enjoy sexual intercourse in private, and having no safe place for one's belongings, or simply to be alone. Although rules have been developed chiefly to regulate residents' conduct within the bungalows, no matter how disciplined or considerate bungalow residents may be, the structure of bungalows and the level of overcrowding make it impossible to ensure any level of privacy, either for individuals or for families. The rather obvious conclusion is that the majority of Lwandle residents feel unsafe, because of poverty

and their appalling living conditions.

These findings illustrate the advantage of adopting an approach that allows the respondents to imbue the notion of personal safety with their own meaning and which does not impose preconceptions of threats to personal safety, in particular conceptions of 'criminal' victimization. Such findings would have been excluded by questions which referred only to 'criminal' victimization and so would have escaped the attention of researchers seeking to explore people's perceptions of personal safety. The approach taken in this study shows that for the Lwandle residents, their sense of personal safety is shaped by a wide range of material and social conditions, quite apart from 'crime'. This is not to suggest that 'crime' is of no concern to the Lwandle residents, for the second most common type of threat mentioned by the respondents was the threat of violence. The point is that, not only were material conditions perceived as threats to personal safety, but that these types of factors were perceived by more residents as a greater threat than was the threat of violence, which may in some sense be interpreted as the threat of certain types of 'crime'.

Life in Lwandle does expose residents to a real risk of personal injury, especially when darkness falls. Stabbings, fights, rapes and murders were reported to the researchers and evidence of similar events was found in the files of the local Advice Office. In fact one of the residents who assisted in the research,* had himself been accused of murder. The following series of abbreviated excerpts from one of the researcher's diaries for the month of February 1990, reflects this aspect of life in Lwandle:

4 February: "A man was badly beaten with sticks by the notorious X brothers. It is said that they attacked a group of men who had been sitting drinking in one of the bungalows, after a quarrel had started over manhood."

17 February: "I was not told the causes of the fight, but many people in bungalow Y seemed to have been beaten by an angry mob. Their friends were forced to hire a taxi to take the injured to hospital."

19 February: "At 7:30 a.m. I was called to take a man to hospital, who had been unconscious for 12 hours. He had been attacked and beaten by unknown assailants, while walking in the bush with his girlfriend."

24 February: "Two men started fighting, because one had taken the other's wife. They threw stones, chased each other and at one stage, one of them stabbed the

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* He was a volunteer who translated and assisted in gathering evidence in the "S" case.

woman concerned."

27 February: "Rumour has it that a man has been stabbed to death near bungalow Z. It is said that the man who is responsible originally brought the dead man's girlfriend to Lwandle, and is still in love with her. He was jealous when he saw his ex-girlfriend with her new boyfriend and so quarrelled with the new boyfriend and stabbed him."

February 1990 was no special month, and the entries for other months are very similar. The researchers' diaries tell a tale of group attacks in daylight, of robbery in the bushes that are traversed in order to reach the main thoroughfare to surrounding towns, and above all, of interpersonal violence often exacerbated by overcrowding and the abuse of alcohol.

Given this picture, it may seem logical to conclude that Lwandle residents frequently observe violence. It has in fact been claimed that children in Lwandle see stabbings and murder on a regular basis (Jones, 1990). However, a cautionary note should be added. In the close confines of this overcrowded community, a stabbing or a fight becomes public knowledge within hours - rumours of violent incidents spread like wildfire. Thus, although exposure to violence is inevitable in the overcrowded bungalows, the exaggeration common to information that is spread by word of mouth heightens the residents' awareness and fear of violence, and hence contributes to an image of Lwandle as a more violent place than it actually is. Each violent incident is discussed by many people, creating the impression that violence is constantly occurring. However, during the two years in which research was conducted on an almost daily basis in this community, the researchers did not actually observe a single incident of interpersonal violence. In fact it is not common for all residents to witness, or be involved in violence, and Lwandle is not in a state of continual mayhem.

From the standpoint of a white, economically privileged person living in a middle-class suburb, the level of violence in Lwandle may seem intolerably high. Yet, to the economically oppressed African people who have become accustomed to township life, Lwandle is not regarded as a particularly violent place. Nevertheless, the stark reality is that the physical conditions of this hostel are conducive to interpersonal conflict, or as one resident put it:

> As people are forced to live the way they live, in horse stalls, the only way they can enjoy themselves is by drinking, and we all know what follows after drinking - Yes, lots of fights. Fights happen on weekends because people's minds are free, they have nothing to keep them busy and it is easy to fight, just like chickens in a box.

The respondents' relatively greater concern over their inadequate living conditions than over violence, may explain the finding that the residents in general expressed a

low sense of personal safety, even though only a very small proportion reported actually having experienced violence, threats of violence, theft of or damage to their property, or indeed, lawbreaking of any kind. Although this finding could merely be the product of underreporting and/or of the respondents' successful use of protective strategies, it may well be due to the fact that it was not the threat of violence, or of 'crime' more broadly, which was of central concern to the residents, but the relatively more serious threat posed by their inadequate living conditions.

The findings also reveal that the views of the working class, or economically oppressed, residents of Lwandle regarding personal safety differ from the views of the middle class, or economically privileged, persons whose opinions have been reflected in mainstream victimological research findings. Whereas the police have consistently been cited as the major factor enhancing the personal safety of economically privileged, white people in South Africa, only one Lwandle resident expressed this opinion. Furthermore, the factors noted as promoting Lwandle residents' sense of security, such as employment and the fact that the community is small, cohesive and relatively non-violent; pertained exclusively to life in an African township. By contrast, residents of white middle-class suburban areas would probably have cited low levels of house breaking and car theft in their neighbourhoods, as major factors enhancing their feelings of personal safety.

It is important to note, however, that residents do not only experience life in Lwandle as threatening to their personal safety, but are at the same time aware of factors that enhance their sense of security. More importantly, the findings show that Lwandle residents are not merely the passive victims of a threatening residential environment, but make active efforts to enhance their personal security and the safety of their belongings.

Aspects of the residential environment, the presence of trusted persons and having protective strategies were the types of factors most commonly felt to enhance people's feelings of personal safety. The most common contextual factor mentioned was the relatively low level of violence in Lwandle.* The most commonly mentioned group of trusted persons were intimate male partners, and the most commonly mentioned protective strategy was that of remaining in bungalows as much as possible and avoiding certain dangerous public places and events.

The large majority of the interviewees also took measures to protect their belongings, although these differed from the burglar bars, alarm systems and guard

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* At first glance this finding appears to contradict the earlier finding that the threat of violence was the second most commonly noted threat to personal safety. However, a more detailed analysis, presented below, reveals that these findings are the opinions of different groups. In other words, certain groups consider Lwandle to be a relatively non-violent place of residence and others view it as being a somewhat violent abode.

dogs typically used by economically privileged persons. In fact the two most common measures taken to protect property were to lock belongings away, usually in tin trunks or bedside cupboards, and to have trusted persons watch over belongings.

It is interesting that the threats to and factors enhancing people's sense of personal safety, differed across situations. When respondents were asked about their sense of personal safety in general, they noted overcrowding as the major threat, but when asked about their sense of security in the dark, they noted the threat of violence posed by other people and the inadequacy of the communal toilet facilities as the two central threats. Furthermore, whereas economic insecurity was noted as the second most common type of threat to personal safety in general, attributes perceived as increasing the vulnerability of individuals, in particular being asleep and being female, were reported as the second most common type of threat to the respondents' sense of personal safety in the dark. Similarly, whereas the presence of trusted persons was the second most common type of factor said to enhance people's sense of personal safety in general, it was the most common type of factor noted as enhancing the respondents' sense of personal safety in the dark. Furthermore, whereas factors felt to decrease an individual's vulnerability, particularly being male, did not feature as factors enhancing respondents' sense of personal safety in general, this type of factor was the second most commonly reported factor felt to enhance the interviewees' sense of personal security in the dark. Although protective strategies were the third most commonly noted factor enhancing the respondents sense of personal safety in general as well as in the dark, the types of protective strategies differed. Although using bungalows as a haven was the strategy most commonly noted in general, being skilled in self-defence was the strategy most commonly said to enhance personal safety in the dark.

As discussed already, it was males over 40 years of age who held rent cards who constituted the most powerful group in Lwandle, in that they wielded the greatest authority and were materially the most secure. It is not surprising therefore, that they were also the group which expressed the greatest sense of personal security, in that they were least likely to perceive threats to their personal safety. Similarly this group was also the least likely to report fears of being assaulted in the dark and along with all the other card holders, were less likely to report relying on trusted persons for protection. It seems that the relative material well-being resulting from the material security of being employed and having stable access to accommodation by holding a rent card, decreased people's sense of being threatened and by implication, increased their sense of personal safety.

These findings are striking when it is noted that this group also reported being

more vulnerable than other groups to assault,* to threats of violence,** and to theft of and/or damage to their property. Of course, this may be merely the effect of a greater tendency among this group to report such incidents. Participant observation did indicate that masculinity, demonstrated in courage and physical strength, is an important way for males to achieve status in Lwandle. Thus, it could be that older men, who have achieved the highest status in Lwandle, tend to report less fear and greater independence despite actual threats to their personal safety, in attempts to protect their status. However, the finding that males under 40 years who held rent cards were in fact the group most likely to report that their personal safety was threatened by other residents, tends to suggest that the social pressure on men to prove their masculinity may not have produced the above-mentioned finding, or may have contributed only in part. It seems more probable that this group of older men is indeed the target of violence and of threats to property, because they are materially the most privileged group in a context of abject poverty, and furthermore, that it is their relative material security which enables them to feel safer independently of others, even when their personal safety is in fact threatened. There is further support for this hypothesis. Younger males under 40 years who held rent cards, are among the materially more secure. They were also more likely to report having being threatened with violence and/or assaulted, but being less materially privileged than older males, tended to report fewer experiences of damage to or theft of their belongings. Finally, the materially least secure group of males, namely those who did not hold rent cards, were also the least likely of all males to report being assaulted, threatened with violence or theft of and/or damage to their belongings.

The other two groups of relatively materially secure males, namely younger males under 31 years and those between 31 and 40 years who held rent cards, gave markedly similar responses with regard to personal safety. Despite the fact that like the older males, these groups reported being more vulnerable to violence, and in addition, feeling threatened by other people, they were the most likely of all groups to report that aspects of the living environment of Lwandle enhanced their sense of personal safety. It should not be surprising that holders of rent cards were more likely to view their material conditions as enhancing their personal safety. After all, males who had rent cards were the most secure residents in Lwandle, both legally and structurally, and this formal security clearly affected their perceptions of personal safety.

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* Along with males under 31 years who held rent cards.

** Along with males between 31 and 40 years who held rent cards.

However, the finding that the older male rent-card holders were less likely than younger rent-card holders to express the view that their living conditions enhanced their personal safety, despite their relative material privilege, seems to suggest that younger male rent-card holders not only enjoyed material security which encouraged them to see Lwandle as a relatively safe place, but being young and male, they also had confidence in their physical ability to defend themselves. The importance of such confidence should not be overestimated, however, for the residential environment of Lwandle appeared less safe to males in insecure material circumstances - the unemployed who did not hold rent cards. Instead, such young males were less likely to look to the residential environment to enhance their sense of personal safety and were instead more likely to depend on trusted persons and to develop protective strategies to make themselves feel more secure.

Similarly, it was the least materially secure group of females, namely, those under 31 years, who were the least likely to report that aspects of their living environment enhanced their sense of personal safety. However, unlike materially insecure males, they tended to rely solely on the presence of trusted males for protection, rather than on developing independent protective strategies, such as self-defence skills. Even the most materially secure of females, those aged from 31 to 40 years, relied on trusted males for their sense of personal security. What seems clear, is that because Lwandle residents live in conditions which are threatening to personal security, they have to rely on factors other than material conditions for a sense of safety, such as protective strategies and networks of kinship support.

The females' reliance on the presence of trusted males for their sense of personal safety is a clear reflection of the assimilation of the entrenched structural and cultural dependency of women in this community. Female dependency on males is deeply ingrained in the fabric of hostel life, and the structural power of males is replicated in the perceptions and conduct of females in Lwandle. Not only are females in Lwandle structurally dependent on males, they are also the targets of male violence in general, and sexual violence in particular. It is hardly surprising therefore, that females who are both materially insecure and faced with the very real threat of male violence, do not view their materially impoverished living conditions as conducive to a sense of personal security. Under such oppressive conditions, females have little choice but to rely solely on trusted males for protection. They are vulnerable to male sexual violence, and to violence at the hands of other females and do not have confidence in their physical ability to ward off violent attacks. In Lwandle relatively few younger females are married and, as they are not the property of specific men, they are viewed by males as 'fair game'. The forced dependency of all females on males in Lwandle, especially for accommodation, fuels competition for male partners especially among unmarried women.

> Unmarried women in the hostels find themselves in a particularly difficult position. Besides being denied the social respectability associated with marriage, their relationships with male card holders are by definition much more fragile, as they face constant competition from other unmarried women ... Relationships between women are marked by intense competition (Ramphele & Boonzaier, 1988:159).

The findings show clearly that, unlike males, the female respondents of all ages felt less safe than the males and were more likely to feel threatened in the dark, especially when having to use the communal toilets. The female residents of Lwandle repeatedly expressed concern about the danger of violence, particularly sexual violence, to which they were exposed when using the communal toilets at night. This threat, they explained, was posed by young males who tended to congregate around the toilets. Participant observation revealed that the women's fears were definitely well-grounded. By using the toilets at night, or in the dark of the early morning, females were at great risk of being attacked and raped by males. It should be noted that the toilets were intended for use by males only, and that even the physical structure of these facilities increases the risk run by females, for the toilet blocks are physically separate units, set some distance away from the bungalows, and are poorly lit and doorless! Furthermore, the toilets have become a male domain, which women enter on sufferance. The male residents feel that the bungalows are the only legitimate domain for women in Lwandle and the space outside the bungalows is considered a male domain. Therefore, when women are obliged to leave the relative safety of the bungalows, they are viewed by men as easy prey, especially at night. This is a clear example of the way in which women's feelings of insecurity in Lwandle are inextricably tied to the physical and associated social conditions in a hostel which was designed for men and which is still dominated by men.

One respondent had in fact been raped the week prior to being interviewed. She was a washerwoman and she told how she had left her bungalow at about 9:45 pm in order to deliver clean laundry. As she crossed the open space between the bungalows two young men, armed with knives, emerged from the kitchen block and had grabbed her. Both had subsequently raped her. She had not been able to obtain medical assistance as she did not have enough money, and she had not reported the rape to the police, because she had not recognized either of the rapists, and from previous experience she knew that the police demanded such 'concrete evidence' before they would investigate any matter. It was an entire week before she had been able to muster sufficient courage to venture out of her bungalow, and she said that she had decided never to leave her bungalow after dark again.

Given the relative powerlessness of females in Lwandle, it is rather surprising that the female respondents were the group least likely to report direct experiences of violence and/or threats of violence. This could be the product of underreporting by females of the types of violence to which they are most commonly exposed, including

sexual violence in general and more particularly, violence at the hands of intimate male partners (e.g. Stanko, 1990). It may also be that because women recognize their greater vulnerability to violence they, unlike males, tend to avoid violent encounters whenever possible and take extreme precautions to protect themselves against violence (Stanko, 1990). Such protective tactics may indeed reduce the incidence of violence actually experienced by women. Both of these explanations are feasible in the context of the findings. It was found to be typical for female residents to try and protect themselves by limiting their physical mobility especially at night - they usually remained in their bungalows as much as possible and avoided leaving the bungalows unless they were accompanied by a trusted male when it was dark. In this regard it should be emphasized that in Lwandle, a great many necessary daily activities require residents to leave the confines of the bungalows. Taps and toilets are located outside bungalows. Unless one cooks on paraffin stoves inside bungalows, one has to leave one's bungalow to cook, because the kitchen blocks are separate, shared facilities. In addition many income-generating activities have to be conducted outdoors. The vegetable seller, the chicken merchant and the cooked-meat trader conduct their business near the taxi rank, or on the periphery of the hostel, far from the bungalows.

For economically privileged people, remaining indoors for self-protection may limit social life, but better living conditions would generally enable such people to live a relatively comfortable existence within their houses. For the Lwandle residents, however, staying in a bungalow as a way of protecting oneself, severely impedes day-to-day living - washing, bathing, using the toilet, eating and earning a living! The economic position, therefore, clearly determines the impact of threats to personal safety and the options available to people for protecting themselves. Furthermore, in the Lwandle context, remaining indoors in order to protect oneself and to watch over one's belongings, tends to compound overcrowding and its consequent negative effects. The tiny cubicles designed solely for sleeping, are used for cooking, washing, and even for carrying out business activities such as child care, selling goods, running shebeens, making clothing and distributing milk. This illustrates the way that victimization is compounded. The respondents reported overcrowding and the lack of privacy in Lwandle as central threats to their sense of personal security, yet in order to avoid threats associated with activity outside the bungalows, female residents felt obliged to spend most of their time within the confines of their bungalows. Thus, avoiding certain threats may simultaneously increase vulnerability to other threats.

The findings show clearly that the Lwandle residents were more concerned about their personal security than about the security of their belongings. Although people do take steps to protect their property, this is not of central concern to them, and in fact the incidence of theft of and/or damage to property appeared to be relatively low. This may seem surprising given these people's levels of economic deprivation and the physical conditions which make it difficult for residents to protect their belongings,

since there is no private space in the hostel. Washing lines, kitchen facilities and sleeping areas are all shared by many different, and often unrelated people. Even the lockable cupboard in each cubicle has to be shared by at least the two rent-card holders. The cubicles cannot be locked, as there are no doors to these rooms and there are no alternate safe storage facilities for large, valuable items like television sets and bicycles. Participant observation showed that within the bungalows, theft of and damage to belongings seemed to be limited by general conformity to bungalow rules, and it was the theft of clothing from public washing lines outside bungalows that residents felt was the greatest problem. The other major threat to property and indeed to personal safety, one not related to lawbreaking but voiced by many residents, was the threat of fires resulting from accidents with paraffin stoves and candles, which are used because Lwandle does not have electricity for individual use.

For significant numbers of the respondents, the threat of violence was often linked to the use of alcohol. Many residents said that they tried to avoid situations where liquor was being used, as a way of protecting themselves from the interpersonal friction and consequent fights, which frequently resulted from drunkenness. Since drinking is the most common leisure time activity in Lwandle this is in fact much more difficult than it may appear. There is a township 'beer garden' which is situated at the entrance to the hostel and virtually every bungalow houses a shebeen, or illegal bar and liquor outlet, many of which operate from mid-morning until late at night. Shebeen owners are among the wealthiest residents of Lwandle and many have managed to diversify into other lucrative enterprises, such as taxi companies. Until the mid-eighties when the state privatized the sale of beer, the local authority sold beer at the 'beer garden' as a way of raising revenue for the maintenance of the hostel. In fact, this was the situation in all African townships. However, during the eighties political resistance increased over the issue of the state's control of beer selling, and it was largely to defuse this resistance that the state eventually passed control to the private sector. In Lwandle, this involved the state's leasing the local bottle store and 'beer garden' to a white businessman from a nearby town. However, interviews with employees and users of these establishments revealed that their primary business was the sale of liquor to shebeens, rather than to individuals. One source indicated that these outlets supplied liquor to more than 40 shebeens in Lwandle, generating a monthly turnover of between R120 000 and R160 000! This level of liquor sales translates into approximately R40,00 per adult resident per month, or virtually an average week's wages!

Of course shebeens can, and do, purchase liquor from sources outside Lwandle itself. However, there is some indication that the owner of the liquor outlet in Lwandle, assisted by the police, may be attempting to monopolize the shebeen market in this area. A number of shebeen owners have alleged that the police raid their shebeens when they purchase liquor from alternate sources. Furthermore, it did seem more

than coincidental that all of the shebeens that were raided on one particular occasion, had acquired their liquor from outside sources. It seems inconceivable that the local authorities and the police are unaware of the illegal distribution of liquor in Lwandle. Indeed, the residents spoke openly about the extent and nature of the operation of the bottle store, and were quite surprised that anyone should ask about what was common knowledge. It is also noteworthy that most police visits to and raids on shebeens take place on Fridays, probably because this is payday for many residents, so shebeens stock up with alcohol for the weekend and business booms. Furthermore, it was noted that certain police officers were well known to the residents, because most of the raids on shebeens had been conducted by the same group of officers. Many residents told the researchers that shebeen owners paid this group of police, in money and liquor, to avoid raids. Therefore Fridays could be the days when the police collected their payoffs.

Despite the privatization of beer selling, the state has apparently remained involved, even if indirectly, in the distribution of liquor in Lwandle. The residents are rarely arrested for drunkenness, whereas police raids on shebeens, in which owners are arrested and supplies confiscated, are common. It appears that such raids have little if anything to do with 'crime control', or more specifically, with the prevention of alcohol abuse and associated lawbreaking. The simplest method of reducing the use and abuse of alcohol in Lwandle would be to close down or control the sources of supply, in particular the nearest bottle store; or alternatively, if the aim was merely to reduce this form of lawbreaking, the legalization of shebeens would be the solution. Yet police raids on shebeens remain one of the most common police activities in this community.

Lwandle has a relatively sophisticated structure which supports the use and abuse of alcohol, and which also perpetuates the associated consequences. The slick system of liquor distribution contrasts starkly with the lack of infrastructure, the paucity of other recreational facilities, the inadequacy of health services and the absence of 'formal' shops* and other public amenities in Lwandle.

It is apparent that, despite the array of potential sources of assistance, the large majority of Lwandle residents relied on themselves for their own protection, rather than upon community-based or 'formal' and state structures. Even when the respondents had had their belongings damaged and/or stolen and had been threatened with violence, the large majority reported that they had not approached such groupings for assistance. In fact it was only in cases of assault that the respondents typically looked beyond themselves and their kin for assistance, and then non-governmental

* Lwandle has one tiny store which is poorly stocked with sweets, cigarettes, cooldrinks and a very limited range of canned foods.

groupings, especially the Homeboys and Heads of Bungalows, were frequently preferred to the state sources, such as the police and the town superintendent.

It is clear that Lwandle is an oppressed community which has been denied the resources for dealing with victimization and for enhancing personal safety - resources that are taken for granted in more privileged communities. Lwandle residents have not, however, responded to their racial and class oppression as passive victims, but have actively developed alternate ways of protecting themselves and their belongings. Given the somewhat aggressive way in which the police force has operated in this community and the absence of a democratically elected local authority, the residents have over the years developed a number of community-based structures for regulating social relations in Lwandle.

At the time this study was conducted, there were two sets of structures regulating life in Lwandle - 'formal' state groups including the SAP, the local authority headed by the town superintendent and the Watchmen who are employees of the CPA, and 'informal' non-governmental or community-based groups, namely the Hostel Men's Committee including Heads of Bungalows, and the Homeboys, which are various groups of clansmen each comprising those who originate from the same area of the 'homelands'.

The body that in effect controls the day-to-day life of residents is the Hostel Men's Committee, which comprises mainly older males who hold rent cards. The bungalows are governed by a Head or by members of Bungalow Committees. The Hostel Men's Committee and Bungalow Committees fulfil judicial functions commonly viewed as the province of state law-enforcement agencies like the police and the courts: they have the authority to lay down rules for the regulation of in-house affairs, constitute internal disciplinary structures and have *de facto* sentencing authority, which ranges from warnings to expulsions from bungalows. In some cases an expulsion order may even be extended to the person who is deemed responsible for an offender. The income from the fines imposed is generally spent to benefit all the occupants of a bungalow where an offence has occurred.

Sentences may also involve corporal punishment which is usually carried out by a parent or a 'responsible' male. For example, it is not uncommon for women whose arguing disturbs the tranquillity of other residents to be sentenced to a beating from their husbands or boyfriends. It is noteworthy that such punishment is effected outside the bungalows. This provides an interesting alternative to the dominant notion that domestic violence between spouses occurs in the private domain of the home and is treated differently from public violence, both by the public at large and within the criminal justice system, the latter form of violence being more frequently reported, prosecuted and criminalized. Instead here, it is 'public' violence which is tolerated and domestic violence which carries negative sanction.

Several kinds of rules were in common use in these internal disciplinary structures.

One of the most important regulations maintains that it is the responsibility of each bungalow resident to ensure that her/his visitors behave appropriately when visiting her/his bungalow. In effect then, visitors are required to have a 'sponsor' in any bungalow which they visit. This rule is intended to ensure a measure of peace and privacy in the overcrowded communal bungalows and is aimed at enhancing the security of residents' property against removal or damage by unauthorized passers-by.

Another regulation seeks to control the operation of any type of informal business conducted within the confines of a bungalow. In other words, Bungalow Headmen or Bungalow Committees have the authority to decide what businesses may be conducted in bungalows, as well as the conditions under which such activities may occur. The rationale for this rule is obvious, for the consequences of economic activities being conducted in bungalows affects the quality of each resident's environment given that bungalows are shared residences and are already over-crowded.

A third category of constraints is aimed at maintaining an acceptable level of comfort in the overcrowded living space of bungalows. These rules pertain to the level of noise allowed, the use of illegal electrical connections to the overhead light sockets for various appliances, and the time when lights should be extinguished at night so that people can sleep.

Bungalow Committees or Bungalow Headmen play an important role in mediating and resolving the disputes arising their bungalows. It is to these structures that complaints concerning damage to or theft of property are usually made, and furthermore they are also accorded the authority to deal with marital disputes that may escalate and affect the peace and order in a bungalow, as well as problems related to the behaviour of children. These 'informal' structures thus provide a mechanism for social control and a resource for people who feel they have been victimized in some way.

It should be noted that only older men have access to such positions of power and authority in Lwandle, a practice inherited from the androcratic and gerontocratic structure of power relations in traditional African cultures. Women are excluded not only from membership of Bungalow Committees, but also *de lege* from participating in these structures in their own right. For, whether they seek redress as victims or are called to account for some misdeed, they have to be represented in 'hearings' by the male card holder who is seen as being responsible for them, that is, usually a husband, brother, father or boyfriend. Similarly, children and uncircumcised men do not have *locus standi* and so also have to be represented.

Homeboys, groups of males who have come from the same area of a 'homeland', are a central source of support for Lwandle residents. They assist brethren both financially and emotionally by providing loans during lean times, contributing toward the cost of funerals, and functioning as friendship networks and sources of advice,

especially for rural newcomers to this alienating urban environment. Their role also extends to that of a 'private army' - taking revenge on behalf of clansmen who have suffered some harm. To illustrate: one retaliatory incident involved a conflict between two groups of Homeboys, the Mabomvana and the Mbata, in which one person was stabbed and considerable damage was done to the windows of a bungalow. As one researcher recorded: "This was not their first attack. People in Lwandle fear the Mabomvana tribesmen, for when there is fighting they come in battalions to help their clansmen." It is this retaliatory action which has led some to view these clansmen as street gangsters, although there is dispute over whether or not Homeboys constitute street gangs in the conventional sense. The general feeling of the residents in this study was that the Homeboys were not street gangs, even though their 'feuds' often did cause an escalation of conflict in Lwandle.*

It also seems clear from the respondents' levels of satisfaction with the assistance offered by various groupings, that residents were usually more satisfied with the help given them by non-governmental sources, especially the Hostel Men's Committee, Homeboys and trade unions, than with that provided by state sources, in particular the town superintendent and the police. Traditionally the availability and accessibility of the state's machinery, most importantly the police, have been assumed to be a central factor affecting all communities' perceptions of personal safety. Despite the fact that the police station closest to Lwandle is some ten kilometres away, police vehicles are seen daily in the hostel complex. However the Lwandle residents generally, do not regard the police as a central source of assistance in matters of personal safety and moreover, they are dissatisfied with the style of policing in their community. In fact almost half of the respondents claimed that the presence of the police actually threatened their sense of personal safety. To these people, the entry of police into the hostel complex engendered fear of arbitrary arrest, search and seizure of property. Participant observation revealed that it was common for the police to seize goods for which residents did not have proof of ownership and that although, arguably, this may be legal practice, many residents perceived this as unjust. This feeling was clearly expressed by a prominent member of the Hostel Men's Committee, who recalled:

> In June last year they [the police] took 12 tins that belonged to me. I went and collected them and asked why they should take tins of food? I was very, very angry inside. We [the Hostel Men's Committee] challenged the CPA [Cape Provincial Administration] to say that they wouldn't allow the SAP in [to the hostel].

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* The Homeboys are not politically aligned and in fact, at the time of this study, there were no political youth organizations in Lwandle. During the eighties, the youth in most African townships in the Western Cape were organized by the comrades. However, the powerful Hostel Men's Committee which comprised older men, prevented this happening in Lwandle.

That the police should be a source of fear, rather than a presence inspiring feelings of greater security, is an indication of the residents' dire lack of faith in those who are primarily responsible for the protection of the public. Hence, unlike the economically privileged white South Africans, the majority of Lwandle residents would not be likely to call for more intensive policing of their community. Nevertheless, a substantial proportion of the respondents did feel that the police could, and should, play some role in protecting Lwandle residents. This they felt could be achieved if the police limited their activities to arresting people who engaged in physical violence and who stole from others, and desisted from arresting residents for innocuous forms of conduct, especially trading and selling liquor without a licence. Despite the impoverished and overcrowded conditions of Lwandle, the residents have demonstrated considerable entrepreneurial skill. Even the government-sponsored Bureau for Information has lauded the prolific number of small spaza* shops in black townships and hostels like Lwandle. It seems destructive then, that police raids of unlicensed enterprises continue regularly. The following account of a typical police raid highlights the situation starkly:

> In January 1987, I opened a store in the hostel. I didn't have a licence to operate. I didn't think I needed one. We wanted a whole bungalow for the shop, but the [town] superintendent said we couldn't have one, because this [Lwandle] is a hostel not a township. So we converted our own cubicle, which we were sharing, into a shop. My shop stays open from 5 am to 11 pm. The bakery arrives at 4 am with fresh bread. I employ three guys to work in the shop. In the bungalow opposite this one, they sell fresh fruit and vegetables. [So] we agreed not to sell fresh fruit and vegetables and only to sell dry goods, [and] they agreed not to sell dry goods. In June 1988, the police surrounded Lwandle - checking for stolen goods. They took all my groceries and my TV [television set] - most of my stuff was damaged [by the police]. In fact, everything that they took [confiscated] from the bungalow, even from other people, was just put down in my name - they never asked who it belonged to - [and] I wasn't even there.

It is not clear what legal provisions such traders are allegedly violating. The policing of illegal trading, like that of shebeens, is erratic. The many small-scale hawkers, most of whom are women, are not commonly subjected to police raids, but are instead regulated by the Hostel Men's Committee. During the period when this research was in progress the Men's Committee ordered a number of these small enterprises to relocate, and fined those among the group who complained that relocating would lose them their markets. When some of these hawkers resisted the orders of the committee by applying to the town superintendent for trading licences,

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* So-called 'informal' traders.

a general meeting of the hostel dwellers was called, at which the Men's Committee attempted to further entrench its authority to organize trading licences. The committee announced that they, and not the white local authority, were in charge of Lwandle and that it would henceforth be policy for all those applying for trading licences to be accompanied to the town superintendent by a member of the committee.

By contrast it seems that it is the more lucrative and established trading enterprises which are most vulnerable to police intervention. The large majority of arrests in Lwandle are the result of police-initiated action - or in the parlance of international victimology, 'victimless crimes'. In the main residents are arrested for conduct related to alcohol and drugs, illegal trading, trespassing and the possession of goods without proof of ownership. This style of policing - police-initiated raids rather than responses to residents' complaints - has fuelled a general antipathy toward and fear of the police, which manifests clearly in the resident's reluctance to approach the police for assistance with matters of personal safety. Overall, the message received from the Lwandle residents was clear - the residents want policing priorities to change from the current focus on illegal trading toward the more effective policing of violent conduct. In fact, the employees of the Cape Provincial Administration, namely the Watchmen, not the SAP, seem to play the role of peace constables in the public areas not governed by Bungalow Committees and Heads. As one watchman stated: "We see to the peace in Lwandle. If there is fighting among the people then we are called in to sort this out."

CHAPTER VII

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This study set out to explore the perceptions of personal safety of the residents of an African migrant labourers' hostel. This process tested the validity of a number of the central premises of mainstream victimology. Some of the core findings of this research are highlighted below and although this research was not designed with the intention of formulating recommendations for improving personal safety, a few brief comments in this regard have been included:

- 'Crime' cannot be assumed *a priori* to be the central factor threatening personal safety.

- Conceptions of victimization and threats to personal safety should be expanded beyond 'crime' and 'criminal' victimization, to include all factors which people experience as threatening and/or victimizing.

- The meanings of social constructs such as 'crime' and personal safety are neither fixed nor universal, and vary especially for people in different social, economic and political circumstances.

- A macro to microlevel of analysis is required to produce a less distorted and more valid understanding of all social phenomena, including personal safety and victimization.

- As humans we are neither passive nor unilaterally determined. Just as material and ideological factors constrain our options, so are we active in changing these constraints.

- The power relations of race, class, gender and age are the central forces shaping human consciousness and conduct - more specifically: race, gender, age and material security influence people's sense of personal safety, their experiences of victimization, the types of threats to which they are exposed and the options available to them for enhancing their security and for dealing with victimization.

- Material conditions are central to people's sense of personal security.

- The subjugation of women to men - ideologically, socially, politically and economically and more specifically, their vulnerability to male sexual violence - is crucial to their diminished sense of personal security.

- The impact of the power relations of race, gender, age and material security are not simply cumulative, but involve complex interactions. For instance, advancing age is commonly associated with a diminished sense of personal safety (e.g. Stanko, 1990). However, this simple correlation was not valid for all the residents of Lwandle. It did seem to hold for the older males, whose relative material privilege amidst abject poverty and their decreased physical strength in relation to younger males, tended to increase their vulnerability to violations of person and property. By contrast, older females, although less materially privileged and less physically able, expressed a greater sense of personal safety than younger, more materially secure females, because they felt, and in fact seemed to be, less vulnerable to male sexual violence.

- This project has provided evidence of the feasibility and desirability of a progressive participatory approach to research, especially in the South African context. Not only did such an approach yield rich and more valid findings, it helped to empower an oppressed community in a number of concrete ways including for example the development of community leaders and of the residents' skills.

- Bettering Lwandle residents' material conditions - their financial resources and their living conditions - is the top priority if perceptions of personal safety are to be improved.

- Resources and efforts should be directed at developing and improving the existing community-initiated regulatory mechanisms, such as the Hostel Men's Committee, Bungalow Committees and Homeboys, rather than imposing conventional, state forms of law enforcement. In particular, police activity should be limited rather than increased and the focus should be shifted to the policing of violence, rather than technical violations of the law.

- Improving the personal safety and decreasing the victimization experienced by women and by younger males in Lwandle, will require fundamental changes in current androcratic and gerontocratic power relations. Although this may seem a somewhat daunting task, at least the path toward such a goal seems clear, that is, the promotion of organization and collective action among the women and young people in this community.

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