

**Democratizing an online discussion forum
at a Higher Education Institution: from rationalistic exclusion to
the recognition of multiple presences**

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Evaluation at the Potchefstroom campus of the North-West University

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Dedication

I dedicate the study to my parents, Louis and Nellie Postma.

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I would like to express my gratitude to:

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Abstract

Institutional transformation initiated the creation of an online forum by academic staff at the North-West University. This forum functioned as an official space on the intranet of the institution as a result of the need of academics to communicate their opinions and concerns. Participants in the forum judged the university and other co-discussants according to their ideals of a democratic, multiracial and self-reflective institution of higher learning. Debates which interested the broad academic community focused on the practice of religion, the student culture, hostel traditions and the language of instruction. The threads which dealt with these subjects were usually characterised by intense emotion and conflict as divergent racial and cultural identities constituted a pervasive presence in the discussions.

The study explored the reasons, strategies and consequences of internal exclusion which participants exercised within the forum discourse and the external incidences of exclusion practised within the larger discursive contexts (institutional, socio-political) of the forum. The inclusive focus of the communicative model of democratic discourse on emotion as an expansion of reason determined the exploration of patterns of exclusion.

The online discussion has been in existence for more than twelve years. The forum is not in the public domain and only administrative and academic staff within the institution has access to it. The asynchronous participations are authored and archived since 2004. Six discussants who acted as protagonists in the thread on racism were the main participants in the interviews. Five more participants were interviewed as their presence in, perceptions of and relationship with the forum and its participants were significant to the researcher and other discussants.

Qualitative research methodology informed the critical phenomenological approach of the study. The researcher conducted interviews and analyses between August 2010 and July 2011. The methodology of grounded theory directed the coding of interview transcripts and the text of the forum thread. The research diary and reflective notes enabled the researcher to find synergy between the practical field experience and theory.

The study found that strong ideological positions led to frustration with the idealised role participants contributed to the forum as a vehicle for change. These frustrations were incorporated in their rationalistic and moralistic strategies of interaction with participants holding equally strong but opposing positions. Eventually those who were motivated to participate because of their dissonance with discourse, within and outside the context of the forum, either excluded themselves or became excluded as their voices were not appreciated. They could also not persuade others or effect structural change. Participants with mediating presences brought an amiable nuance to the forum and influenced protagonists to assume less declarative styles of interaction and reflect on their own unemancipatory positions.

Based on the inclusionary and exclusionary elements found in the analyses, the study concludes with recommendations for the design and moderation of an inclusive and equalising space. This redefined space could subvert the dominating discourse of protagonists and foster a democratic discourse within the context of the forum and the university.

Keywords

Democracy; discourse; embodiment; emotion; hegemony; higher education studies; online forum; racism; rationalism; reason.

Opsomming

Institusionele transformasie het aanleiding daartoe gegee dat akademiese personeel 'n aanlyn forum by die Noordwes Universiteit gestig het. Die forum het as 'n amptelike ruimte op die intranet van die instelling gefunksioneer as die resultaat van die wens van akademici om hulle kommer uit te spreek en opinies te kommunikeer. Deelnemers aan die forum het die universiteit en mekaar beoordeel volgens hulle idees van wat 'n demokratiese, veelrassige en self-reflekerende instelling van hoër onderwys moet wees. Debatte wat die breëre akademiese gemeenskap geïnteresseer het, het op onderwerpe gefokus soos die beoefening van godsdien, die studentekultuur, koshuistradisies en die onderrigtaal. Besprekings oor hierdie kwessies is gewoonlik deur intense emosie en konflik gekenmerk aangesien diverse rasse- en kulturele identiteite beduidend in die besprekings teenwoordig was.

Die studie het ten doel om die oorsaak, strategieë en gevolge van uitsluiting te verken wat in die forumdiskoers plaasvind, en ook om eksterne gevalle van uitsluiting binne die groter diskursiewe konteks (institusioneel, sosiaal-polities) te ondersoek. Die inklusiewe fokus van die kommunikatiewe model van demokratiese diskoers op emosie as 'n uitbreiding van rede het die verkenning van patrone van uitsluiting bepaal.

Die aanlyn-besprekingsforum bestaan reeds meer as twaalf jaar. Die forum is nie publiek nie en slegs toeganklik vir administratiewe en akademiese personeel van die instelling. Die asinkroniese deelnames is onder die outeur se naam en word sedert 2004 geëgiver.

Ses deelnemers wat as protagoniste in die bespreking oor rassisme opgetree het, het ook aan die onderhoude deelgeneem. Vyf ander deelnemers is ook ingesluit in die onderhoude aangesien hulle teenwoordigheid, persepsies van en verhouding tot die forum en sy deelnemers van belang was vir die navorser en ander deelnemers.

Die navorser het kwalitatiewe navorsingsmetodologie en 'n krities-fenomenologiese benadering gevolg. Onderhoudvoering en analisering het tussen Augustus 2010 en Julie 2011 plaasgevind. Die analiseringproses van gegronde teorie-metodologie het die kodering van ondershoudstranskripsies en die forumteks gestruktureer. Die navorsingsdagboek en reflektiewe notas het die navorser in staat gestel om sinergie te vind tussen veldervaring en teorie.

Die studie het bevind dat sterk ideologiese posisies tot frustrasie met die geïdealiseerde rol wat deelnemers aan die forum toegeken het as 'n medium tot verandering gelei het. Hierdie frustrasies is verwoord in hulle rasionalistiese en moralistiese strategieë van interaksie met opponerende deelnemers. Diegene wat deur hulle dissonansie met die diskoers binne en buite die forum gemotiveer is om deel te neem, is of deur hulself of deur ander uitgesluit aangesien hulle stemme nie waardeer is nie. Hulle kon ook nie ander oortuig of strukturele verandering teweeg bring nie. Deelnemers met mediërende teenwoordighede het 'n vriendelike nuanse aan die forum verleen en protagoniste beïnvloed om minder deklaratiewe style van interaksie te beoefen en te reflekteer oor hulle eie onemansipatoriese posisies.

Gebaseer op die eksklusiewe en inklusiewe elemente wat in die analises gevind is, sluit die studie af met aanbevelings vir die ontwerp en moderering van 'n inklusiewe en gelyke ruimte. Hierdie ruimte sou die dominerende diskoers van protagoniste omkeer en 'n demokratiese diskoers versterk binne die kontekste van die forum en instelling.

Sleutelwoorde

Demokrasie; diskoers; beliggaming; emosie; hegemonie; hoër onderwysstudies; aanlynforum;
rassisme; rasionalisme; rede.



SOLEMN DECLARATION

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CERTIFICATE ISSUED ON 15 SEPTEMBER 2012

I hereby declare that I have linguistically edited the dissertation
submitted by ms Louise Postma for the PhD degree.

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Institution: from rationalistic exclusion to the recognition of
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The Ethics Committee would like to remain at your service as scientist and researcher, and wishes you well with your project. Please do not hesitate to contact the Ethics Committee for any further enquiries or requests for assistance.

The formal Ethics approval certificate will be sent to you as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Me. Marietjie Halgryn', written over a horizontal line.

Me. Marietjie Halgryn
NWU Ethics Secretariate

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Addendum O:	Conference paper documents

The addenda are available as .PDF format file on the CD-ROM at the back of the thesis. Activate the listing of addenda by clicking the .exe programme on the CD-ROM.

List of Acronyms

APA	American Psychology Association
BBS	Bulletin Board System
CDA	Critical Discourse Analysis
CMC	Computer Mediated Communication
CP	Conference Paper
HEI	Higher Education Institution
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IS	Information Systems
ISS	Ideal Speech Situation
NWU	North-West University
PU for CHE	Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education
UKZN	University of Kwazulu Natal

Democratizing an Online Discussion Forum at a Higher Education Institution: from Rationalistic Exclusion to the Recognition of Multiple Presences

1. Problem and Motivation for Research

The online discussion forum on the Potchefstroom Campus of the North West University (NWU) has sparked my interest since I was employed in 2002. The debates were interesting and the regular participants became well-known names. It was as if I were reading a story, but here real characters participated in and reacted to real events. The issues which were introduced in the virtual space of the forum became topics of interest among faculties and were discussed in real space. Seen against the popularisation of online social networks, or the Internet as “personal mass media,” as termed by Negroponte (1995, p. 28), the consciousness increased that every person’s voice matters and the perception was formed that the forum provides space for every voice. The freedom of speech coupled with the instant publicity of ideas on the forum made it an exciting but also a challenging medium of expression.

With the discussion of issues in the virtual space of the forum, online communities of interest, (as cited by Cohen, 1985, p. 56), were informally created within the larger formal learning context of the institution. Such communities are formed around issues such as language, culture, and religion. In theory, loosely structured communities of participants and readers offer opportunities to learn about diverse realities, sentiments, opinions, convictions, principles and experiences. In the case of the forum of NWU, the views of opposing participants became prominent and it could be this characteristic which intimidated and alienated current participants and restrained prospective readers from active participation. One can call the community which was formed one of no common interest. As a frequent reader of debates on the forum, I also witnessed the disappearance of certain views and the reasons for these silencing interventions started to interest me. Interactions internal and external to the forum therefore seemed to be detrimental to the forum’s potential in fostering the valuing of diversity in the content and style of participation, in developing a democratic discourse and in establishing a functional critical learning community.

In this thesis, I document my understanding of this informal learning community and its participants from the stance of critical phenomenology. I focused especially on the power relations that were raised within the community and its institutional context leading to the inclusion or exclusion of participants. The formal research question was stated as: *Which patterns of inclusion and exclusion can be identified in an online discussion forum of an institution for higher education?*

2. Contextualising the Study

2.1 Online Forums and Online Communities

The Merriam Webster online dictionary (Encyclopaedia Britannica Company, 2012) offers a few definitions of the term forum, as it relates to different historic periods. *Forum* used to refer to a public meeting place and the activity of discussion or the open exchange of ideas defined the function of the place. Later the idea of the forum expanded, while retaining its public and democratic function, it developed into a medium of the press for the purpose of open discussion, and even later it became an online medium for the discussion of ideas.

Websites such as Wikipedia (2012) and Webopedia (2012) associate an online forum with the terms bulletin board, discussion board or discussion group. The terms refer to the space and the agents within the space, such as seen in the terms *board* or *group*. By using the term *discussion group* as a synonym for *forum* the agents are referred to, and by using the term *discussion board* the space is referred to. The common denominator is that the type of discussion should serve as a unifying factor. Forums consequently define the motive or interest of the discussants. The group of discussants is generally referred to as a community, and within these definitions are understood as an online discussion community. The discussions can also be referred to as *messages* and then the forum be described as a *message board*. In this study, the term *discussion group* is preferred, as not only *messages* are delivered, but the messages represent a larger *discussion*.

Online forums which function within learning institutions are created by the *administrators* of the *subject*, and the *participants* usually contribute to a *discourse* on the *forum* about certain issues which are part of the larger *discussion*. The *participants* and the *administrator* form a *community*. Online learning communities are known as *communities of inquiry* (Swan *et al.*, 2008) or *communities of practice* (Wenger, 2006) where certain forms of interaction are expected from the participants and certain requirements concerning learning necessitate the forming of a supportive community. *Communities of discourse* (Tytler, Symington, Darby, Malcolm, & Kirkwood, 2011), refers to professionals engaging in online discourse to address e.g. curricular matters.

The online community which this study refers to does not fit any of the above descriptions. It offers some chance for learning, which is informal in the form of debates between participants. As most participants have the objective to raise issues of importance, the community which is formed can consist of those who participate in the specific thread and those who read the thread and do not participate actively. The factor which binds the participants in some form of community is their common interest in an issue, which does not mean that they agree on it. The community which is formed is therefore a community of interest, but not of shared meanings.

2.2 Forums at HEI

The existence of forums for general discussions amongst employees at HEI's does not seem to be a regular occurrence. In conversations I had with members of faculties local and abroad, it seems as if these either do not exist or if they did exist, they had a short lifespan. The termination of one such forum at the University of Vienna (as referred to by Hrachovec, 2012) was followed by an email listserv where everyone who wanted to take part in a discussion in this new space, could request to be added. The forum was assigned to a specific topic and it experienced a natural end when the topic was exhausted. The new space which was created by the administrator of the original forum served as a third type of space, which has characteristics of both private and public virtual spaces. Other forums, such as the forum titled "CHANGE@UKZN" at the University of Kwazulu Natal had a more dramatic existence. Dissidents' participation on the forum was used in court cases and partially led to their dismissal (Breckenridge, 2012). Morrell (2012) refers to the objective of this forum "to provide a forum to discuss UKZN issues, particularly as they related to the national question of 'Transformation' but as applied specifically to UKZN as institution." As the opportunity for lively debate was repressed in other sections of the university, "CHANGE was the only place where one could actually have serious discussion without being silenced, marginalised or threatened. In time the climate of repression impacted on people willing even to say things on CHANGE and my impression now is that CHANGE is no longer the vibrant place of opinion and debate that it was in 2007-2009. But this reflects the overall culture at UKZN which is of very low staff morale, fearful obedience and continuing exodus of the best staff" (Morrell, 2012).

This study provides a new research niche concerning university forums, as no documentation as yet exists about these forums. Studies focus on forums within political (Karlsson, 2011; Thakur, 2012a), business (Campbell, Fletcher, & Greenhill, 2009), professional and informal recreational contexts, such as communities formed in social networks (Arde' vol, Nu' n' ez, & Vayreda, 2006). Other communities which can partially be compared to the forum under scrutiny are open-content communities such as those formed who debate contributions to online encyclopaedias such as Wikipedia (De Laat, 2012).

2.3 Institutional Merger

After the publication of the Education White Paper 3: A Programme for the Transformation of Higher Education (Department of Education, 1997) universities merged into larger institutions of higher education. The merger that gave rise to North West University on 1 January 2004 "was part of a broader government initiative to restructure the higher education system in South Africa." Some of the strategic goals were "to overcome the apartheid-induced divide between historically white and

historical black institutions and to promote a more equitable staff and student body” (Department of Education, 1997, p. 6)

The North West University currently has three campuses which were formed during the merger in 2004. The former Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education (PU for CHE) merged with the former University of the North-West. The Vaal Triangle campus, a satellite of the PU for CHE merged with the Vista and Sebokeng campuses. The Potchefstroom campus is the largest, followed by Mafikeng while the Vaal Triangle has the smallest campus. The Ministerial Report on the North West University holds that “the three campuses differ not only in terms of their history, but also in other important dimensions including the numbers of enrolled students, the diversity of academic programmes, language policies and/or institutional practices, etc.”(Department of Education, 1997, p. 6).

2.4 Merger as an Issue on the Forum

Before the merger in 2004, the forum had already served as a popular space where discussions were motivated by participants’ experience and perceptions of institutional and socio-political changes. The forum kept management aware of the issues among administrative and academic staff and they regarded the forum as a barometer of the sentiments of *the people*. The former history of the forum itself is difficult to ascertain. Most forum participants were employed at the Potchefstroom Campus. One regular participant in the forum stated in an interview (Addendum A) that his grievance concerning managerial actions was posted to the advertisement section of the university’s virtual space. This and other employee driven initiatives eventually led to the later creation of a separate section, called “Have your say,” a space created for the specific purpose to raise issues within the institution which caused concern.

Some vocal participants on the forum also included academic staff who graduated at other universities, both in South Africa and abroad. Many of these academics expressed support for the socio-political transformations and found themselves uncomfortable in a tertiary environment where the ideals of a new social order in a Post-Apartheid South Africa were perceived not to realise on a campus where the culture seemed isolated and resistant to change. They turned to the online forum to voice their concerns about a campus culture they found difficult to assimilate with the ideals of a diverse and open society. Pertinent issues in the Report of the Ministerial Task Team (Department of Education, 2009) concerning institutional transformation are in many ways similar to the points of concern the participants on the forum raise, such as:

- (i) language policy

...the Task Team contends that the Afrikaans speaking community cannot claim a monopoly of language rights at the expense of the common interests of other South

Africans, by claiming that they are entitled to an “own” language university (Department of Education, 2009, p. 56).

(ii) residential life and racism

Residence life strongly follows on the ‘old’ Potch/PUKE [sic] culture based on Afrikaans traditions. In turn, these traditions tend to alienate black students. Critically, white students in residences, by their own account, explicitly expect the black students to merely “adapt,” to the point of almost declaring Potchefstroom a “white” campus” (Department of Education, 2009, p. 56).

Outdated and alienating residence initiation rituals and repeated charges of racism need to be addressed to prevent future problems on the campus. As was noted in the section dealing with the meeting held with students at the Potchefstroom campus, white students displayed a patronizing attitude towards black students, and some even explicitly suggesting that black students had no choice but to adapt to the Afrikaner culture prevalent on the campus. In short, there was no sense amongst these students that the campus was a shared space between different cultures (Department of Education, 2009, p. 43).

(iii) diversity

It is not clear why the ratio of black students in residences still stands only at about 12% to this day, and whether management considers this a matter of strategic concern in terms of infusing diversity in this space. The Task Team has found the residence policy framework at Potchefstroom too timid to be an instrument of effective transformation and equity (Department of Education, 2009, p. 57).

It did naturally follow that those forum participants who supported the socio-political changes were strongly opposed by participants who resisted the decisions concerning the language policy, campus culture and opinions regarding racism, apartheid and diversity. The public nature of the forum also enlarged the potential audience of participants and a virtual community of dialectic participations was formed. One can say that the forum community consisted of participants who had nothing in common and was often referred to as a “shout forum” (participant’s statement).

2.5 Design of the Forum

The forum was designed in such a way that participants contribute to discussions under their own names. A thread can be started by anyone and the first discussant also titles the thread. Participants reply to the thread and their contributions follow chronologically, with the date and time added automatically to their posts. The forum design includes options to insert emoticons, to attach text or pictures and to quote previous participants’ contributions in the composition of own text.

Options to participate under one or multiple pseudonyms or to remove own contributions are not part of the design. A search facility is also not available. The texts of older contributions still remain accessible, but earlier contributions under an older design are not archived. Access is restricted only to on-campus employees of the NWU and it is password protected.

3. Literature Review

3.1 Dialectic Views on the Emancipatory Value of Online Space

The ideal of free speech could have served as the motivation for the creation of an online forum of a university, as it would be the case for the creation of the growing and popular online social networks, such as Facebook™, Twitter™, and the use of digital multimedia such as YouTube™ (Kazeniak, 2009).

Critical research on Information Systems (IS), has investigated the question of emancipatory potential. The central objective of critical research is the intention to focus on the oppositions, conflicts and contradictions in contemporary society, and to be emancipatory in that it should help to eliminate the causes of alienation and domination (Young, 1996, 2001, 2003)

Some researchers agree about the attainment of ideals in the design of Communication Mediated Communication (CMC) technologies. Scholars like McGuire, Kiesler and Siegel (1987) focus on the principles of an open, free and democratic society in the design and support of virtual environments, which offer the potential for freedom of speech, the equalisation of participants (O'Sullivan & Flanagin, 2003), the expression of honest opinions (Fernback, 1997; Sproull & Kiesler, 1991), and the absence of restrictions in face to communications (Moor, 2007). Sproull and Kiesler (as cited in Howcroft & Trauth, 2005) maintain that CMC technologies are “surprisingly consistent with Western images of democracy.”

Others question CMC's democratising and emancipatory potential and conclude that online communication tends to reinforce rather than reduce status-related differences (Čečez-Kecmanović, 2001; Čečez-Kecmanović & Busutill, 2000; Čečez-Kecmanović, Moodie, Busutill, & Plesman, 1999; Čečez-Kecmanović, Treleaven, & Moodie, 2000; Čečez-Kecmanović & Webb, 2000).

3.2 Dialectic Views on Democratic Discourse

Critical research in communicative action through Information Systems has mainly been influenced by the theory of Habermas on deliberative democracy and his ideal of rational discourse. Ngwenyama and Lee (2000, p. 1), Čečez-Kecmanović and Busutill (1997), Čečez-Kecmanović and Webb (2000, p. 89), Čečez-Kecmanović *et al.* (2000) adhere to the theory of Habermas on communicative action in their evaluation of the emancipatory nature of interaction with IS in institutions through critical discourse analysis. In a more recent work, Ross and Chiasson (2011) support Habermas' (1987, 1990a) deliberative model of discourse in Information Systems Research. Fundamental works which inform postmodernist voices who oppose the metanarrative of Habermas, are the critical theorists, e.g. Foucault (1972), Lyotard (1979), Adorno (as cited in Benhabib, 1990), Derrida (1990), Bernstein

(1995) and Castoriadis (as cited in Bernstein, 1995). These researchers' stances on power and authority are of relevance to the emancipatory potential of Information Systems.

Other voices opposing the deliberative democracy of Habermas indicate specific problems. Brooke (2000) argues that the Habermas approach is limiting because of its exclusive rational focus. Adam (2002) problematizes Habermas' ideal speech situation in relation to feminist writing on male and female communication, in maintaining that the speech situation for women is far from ideal. Harrist and Gelfand (2005) indicate impediments to a genuine consensus which is reached through the ideal speech of Habermas, such as the lack of a personal element. Thorseth (2008) indicates that life stories might overcome the one-sided focus on rationality and the absence of emotion in discourse in the deliberative model. Thakur (2012b, p. 28) illustrates that theorists who adhere to the philosophical strand of deliberative thought "focus on deliberation as an exclusive path for reaching legitimate decisions, emphasize the need for an independent civil society, and narrow the scope of what can be considered relevant discourse to reasoned arguments." Thorseth (2011, p. 162) embraces the idea of plurality in discourse to overcome the exclusive focus of the ideal speech situation. She focuses the pluralistic view endorsed by the inclusiveness in the theory of Dewey:

Till the Great Society is converted into a Great Community, the public will remain in eclipse. Communication alone can create a great community. Our Babel is not one of tongues, but of signs and symbols without which shared experience is impossible...The essential need...is the improvement of the methods and conditions of debate, discussion and persuasion. That is the problem of the public (Thorseth, 2011, p. 162).

3.2.1 Exclusive Emphasis on Rationality

Young (2005) proposes that the rationalistic elements in Habermas' deliberative model of communication can be exclusive and alienating. A deliberative form of discourse is prescriptive in form and objective and excludes those who do not adhere to the rules of rationality, and are eventually excluded from the Habermas-ideal of consensus.

Habermas' (1987, 1990a) view of emancipation through dialogue is qualified by a process of respectful deliberation, where different conflicting parties propose solutions to their collective problems, offer reasons for these solutions, criticize each other's proposals and reasons and eventually come to a shared agreement after the abovementioned process.

Young (1996, 2000) demonstrates that engaging in respectful argument might fit in an ideal, orderly world, where those who know the rules are able to further their objectives through them, by presenting proposals and giving reasons for them, which are considered and critically evaluated by others who give their own reasons. She shows that deliberative theorists inappropriately assume that processes of discussion that aim to reach understanding, must either begin with shared understandings or take the common good as their goal. Further, she demonstrates that the preference of argumentation as a form

of discussion carries cultural biases and can lead to exclusions in practice. As general consensus is set as the ideal of the discussion and shared values and meanings are set as the prerequisite for participation, exclusion can be the consequence (Young, 2003).

3.2.2 Impartiality to Particular Experiences

Habermas (1987, 1990a) proposes that moral dialogue requires people to adopt a standpoint of impartiality toward all particular experiences and to assent to only those principles and judgements that are consistent with impartial standpoints. On the other hand, Young (1996, 2001) demonstrates the difficulty to meet this requirement and she proposes that moral and political norms are best tested by actual dialogue in which multiple needs, interests, and perspectives are represented. She shares Habermas' notion of the development of moral respect and egalitarian reciprocity, but she also wishes for people to reach understanding of their specific differences and not necessarily to reach agreement. In this respect she differs from Habermas' sense of unity and consensus and attends more to the specific differences among people.

3.3 Relevance of the Discourse Models for Online Learning Communities

The choice to participate and the different styles to present themselves, reflect on participants' ideology and concerns. Some choose to share experiences, while others bring debates to the forum. These would presumably occur with equal tolerance and should foster understanding and the freedom of expression, seen in connection with the idea that CMCs have an equalising effect (McGuire, *et al.*, 1987) and can develop democracy and freedom of speech.

It does, however, happen that discussants can exclude participants e.g. by their insistence on the deliberative form of discourse which has certain normative rules. Young (1996) demonstrates that the dominance of e.g. logic, rationality, consistency in argument and evidence can become hegemonic and exclusionary. The insistence on the rational rules of discourse, or instrumental reasoning (Kowch & Schwier, 1997) brings inequality to the forum and the community in the sense that some participants' style of discourse is devalued and others' is valued. Those who adhere to and support the rules of academic discourse, or as termed by Habermas (1990a) the rules of ideal speech, seem to speak from a position of authority. The participants, who speak from personal experience, offer individualised accounts which are different from the academic debate and are consequently not valued, as the style and content of their contributions do not subscribe to strict objective rationalistic rules. Their individualised accounts are seen as inferior and doubtful and do not reflect consensus or universal truth.

As personalised accounts are seen as an important part of a person's epistemology, a certain type of knowledge might be regarded as inferior and might not be acknowledged by the academic community. The normative academic community in the online forum excludes participants, which can lead to their

alienation from the online community because of the possible hostility they experience and the fact that their voices are not heard or appreciated. Čečez-Kecmanović (2001) refers to this type of exclusion as an action driven by purposeful rationality, independent of the concerns from participants' life world. Social (and also emotional) presence or embodiment is one of the important elements in building a sense of community (Aragon, 2003; Swan, *et al.*, 2008) and a misunderstanding of contributions (consciously or subconsciously) can lead to the fact that the forum misses its educational value and the opportunity for professional development.

Taking Young's (1996) model of communicative democracy as the point of departure, CMCs and specific online forums within Higher Education could offer the opportunity for colleagues to come to an understanding of one another's specific situations. Mutual understanding through an inclusion of all the ways of communication provides an opportunity for emancipation. Sergiovanni (1996) characterizes an online community of learning as a community which strives in a constructivist sense to reach deeper understanding, where adults construct their own understanding of the world in which they live. One can conclude that the community and participation within the community, as described by Young (1996) and Sergiovanni (1996) would be regarded as inclusive and the learning community based on the ideal speech tenets of Habermas (1990a) as exclusive. Kowch (1996) refers to this type of community as a loosely structured organization, which is highly interactive, with tightly knit relations based on personal persuasion and interdependence, in contrast to the closed community of empowered individuals.

3.4 Development of Moral Discourse

3.4.1 Community, Friendship and Morality

A community can be formed by one defining element, e.g. in this case, the online community is formed by people with the same concern. The community has been constructed because of a moral motivation. In his *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle (as cited by Jacquette, 2001) links the highest type of friendship (understand: community) with justice and morality and states that one needs friends (understand: participants in the community) to develop morally (Kowch & Schwier, 1997).

The inclusiveness of Young's community has a moral implication for its members as the basis of respect and understanding is formed by including and not excluding all types of participants and participations. The potential to establish and foster a community of learning and development is therefore enhanced by not excluding and regulating, but rather by aiming to understand and consequently respect the different situations of various participants. Learning, development and finally emancipation are then possible on different levels, e.g. intrapersonally (self-reflection, re-adjustment of unemancipatory ideologies), and interpersonally (adjustment of interaction towards

others) (Sokolowski, 2001). Young's learning community is therefore also holistic, providing for the equal existence of multiple presences, e.g. social, emotional and cognitive (Kegan, 1982).

3.4.2 Importance of Emotion in Learning

According to Foucault (1984), emotion is an indication of a person's judgments and beliefs. These values can best be expressed in a community which is acceptive of opposing beliefs and judgements. A community with characteristics outlined by Vygotsky (Nussbaum, 1998) provides a safe space for meaning making and understanding. A constructivist learning community with its focus on collaboration (Nussbaum, 1998), is preferred, rather than a rationalist learning community with its focus on competition. Emotion contributes to the understanding of participants' situatedness and particularities. In addition to its learning potential, emotion also makes learning more human and can be said not to be detrimental but conducive to learning (Newman & Holzman, 1993).

The issue of the exertion of power through reason or rationality (universality, objectivity) over emotionality (situatedness, subjectivity) links up with the reason over value or emotion debate, which had originated with the rise of modern science. Emotionality is seen as inferior and a person who shows emotion, is therefore referred to as irrational (Jaggar, 1996). The reason over emotion debate is also rooted in the academic opposition of Lyotard, Foucault and Derrida against the rationalism of the Enlightenment (Benhabib, 1990).

Values as such were seen as connected with emotional responses and reason had to be uncontaminated or abstracted from value, if it were to provide trustworthy insight into reality. The validity of logic was thought independent of human attitudes and preferences and reason was taken to be objective and universal (Sartre, as cited in Barrett, 1994).

3.4.3 Extension of Reason

As emotions or values (understand: ideology) act as the motivation to participate in an online community, contributions can not only be regarded as rational and objective. Rational arguments are also presented with emotional conviction and personal narratives on the other hand, which are seen to be emotional and subjective, present cohesive arguments and evidence. The two concepts are therefore not exclusive, but work together towards understanding: emotions are just as much part of cognition as rational argumentation; the one does not exclude the other. The study explores the rationality-emotionality polarization as one of the issues of power-inequality in and distortion of the discourse. Theoretically the polarization can be seen in the Habermas-Young opposition, including further opposites such as exclusivity vs. inclusivity, objectivity vs. subjectivity, universality vs. particularity, impartiality vs. situatedness.

3.5 Emancipatory and Hegemonic Potential of an Online Discussion Forum

Giddens (1996) indicates that the capacity for both domination and emancipation is integrated in the everyday practices of organizational life. The discourse can challenge the ideology and power of the institution or comply with it. The participant in the discussion forum is a social agent and indicating an opinion is already an emancipatory action. The discussion forum as a learning community can therefore also function in an enabling capacity and can allow members to reach goals, to question and to develop their value systems.

Wodak (as cited in Jaggar, 1996) indicates that institutions have their own value systems, which are crystallized in the form of particular ideologies with explicit demands and expectations and implicit rules underlying everyday behaviour. This ideology of the institution is reflected in the discourse of an online community. The discourse itself could also be used in an oppressive way, where lack of respect for other participants is evident and where contributions are seen as invalid arguments. The discourse can consequently be unemancipatory to all participants.

4. Research Objective and Questions

4.1 Research Objective

Online communities, such as the one created by the online discussion forum, do present the opportunity for democratic action. While these communities are characterised by an unequal distribution of power and resources, a critical analysis is needed.

Theorists are dominantly influenced by the deliberative model of democracy of Habermas (1987, 1990a, 1990b, 1993) in their reflection on technologically mediated communication. As this critique favours a kind of rationality which does not make it possible to identify and analyse persistent power relations, it is necessary to broaden the scope of critique in order to allow different voices, which do not meet the strict rules of rationality within the Habermasian paradigm. Such an expansion of communication is present in Young's (1996) communicative model of democracy, which aims to be more inclusive. Knowledge new to the field of emancipation through online dialogue is explored, as the implication of the communicative model of democracy and the emotional attributes of both models in discourse have not yet been applied to online academic environments.

The main objective of the research is therefore to develop a critical strategy on the basis of Young's communicative democracy to assist in the identification and analysis of patterns of inclusion and exclusion in an online discussion forum. Figure 1 summarises the different articulation of aspects of discourse by the two paradigms of discursive democracy. They differ concerning the aim, objective and form of discourse. Young's paradigm informs the online and offline analyses of text, which will eventually contribute to the building of theory, or a new critical strategy of interpretation.

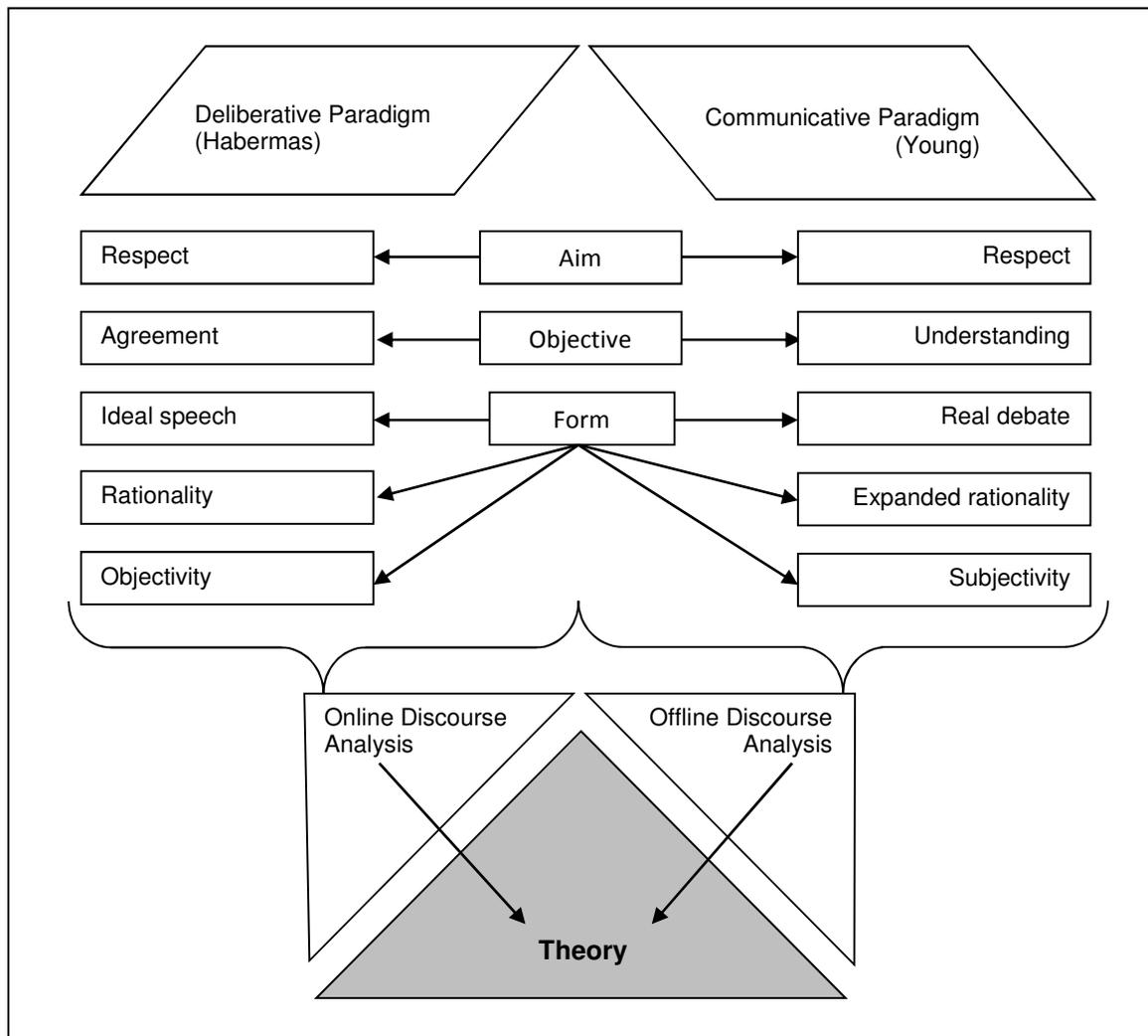


Figure 1: Building of Theory through the Exploration of Dialectic Paradigms of Democracy in Discourse

4.2 Research Question

Grounded research methodology (Strauss & Corbin, 2008) initiates the development of research questions while the researcher interacts with the research data. Research questions originate simultaneously with the field research and eventually lead to the building of theory. The research question resides in the interpretive and radical humanist paradigms, as the researcher assumes that the perceptions and experiences of participants are related to instances of inclusion and exclusion. The main research question which guides the research is:

Which patterns of inclusion and exclusion can be identified in an online discussion forum of an institution for higher education?

The following sub-questions developed out of the main question:

1. How do rationalistic strategies create power inequalities and exclusion within the online discourse?

2. How do the elements of internal and external exclusion interact within the process of participation in the online discourse?
3. How can moderating interventions alleviate the exclusive elements in the process of participation?
4. How do power (in)equalities cause and effect the internal and external moderation of discourse on the online forum?
5. How does the embodiment of participants inhibit or foster the growth of moral discourse?

5. Research Design and Methodology

5.1 Research Design

5.1.1 Ontological and Epistemological Stance

The ontological assumption is that participants in the forum view and create their own reality through their representations on the forum. The forum is a mediator of experience and serves as a representation of their interpretation of experience. It is therefore “a product of cognition” (Burrell & Morgan, 1979, p. 1). The epistemological assumption is that the knowledge presented by participants is of a unique and personal nature and that it is constituted in their specific interaction with their life world, therefore their knowledge is situated.

5.1.2 Sociological Paradigms

Two research traditions inform the study, namely interpretive sociology, where the researcher focuses on the subjective positions of the participants in the online forum; and also radical humanism in the use of critical theory.

The interpretive paradigm is informed by a concern to understand the world as it is, to understand the fundamental nature of the social world at the level of subjective experience. It seeks explanation within the realm of individual consciousness and subjectivity, within the frame of reference of the participant as opposed to the observer of action (Burrell & Morgan, 1979, p. 28). The social world is seen as an emergent social process, social reality is a network of assumptions, intersubjectivity and shared meanings (Burrell & Morgan, 1979, p. 31).

Critical post structuralist theory, which stresses subjectivity, emotionality and feeling (Denzin, 1999) informs the researcher about the particular position of the participants. This combination with critical theory allows the researcher to identify, with the participants, the agents of dominance. The element of compliance to structure in the interpretive paradigm is therefore not adhered to. The assumption “that the world of human affairs is cohesive, ordered and integrated...conflict, domination,

contradiction...play no part in their framework” (Burrell & Morgan, 1979, p. 31) is not valid in the study.

Within the paradigmatic diagram (Figure 2) offered by Burrell and Morgan (1979, p. 22), the research therefore lies within both the interpretive quadrant, which defines the subjective nature of the research and also within the radical humanist quadrant, in so far as the study is informed by critical social theory in the discovery of power inequalities and the looking for alternatives rather than accepting *status quo*. Horkheimer (1976, pp. 219, 224) describes the goal of critical theory as “the emancipation of human beings from the circumstances that enslave them.” The sociology of radical change is “essentially concerned with man’s emancipation from the structures which limit and stunt his potential for development” (Burrell & Morgan, 1979, p. 17).

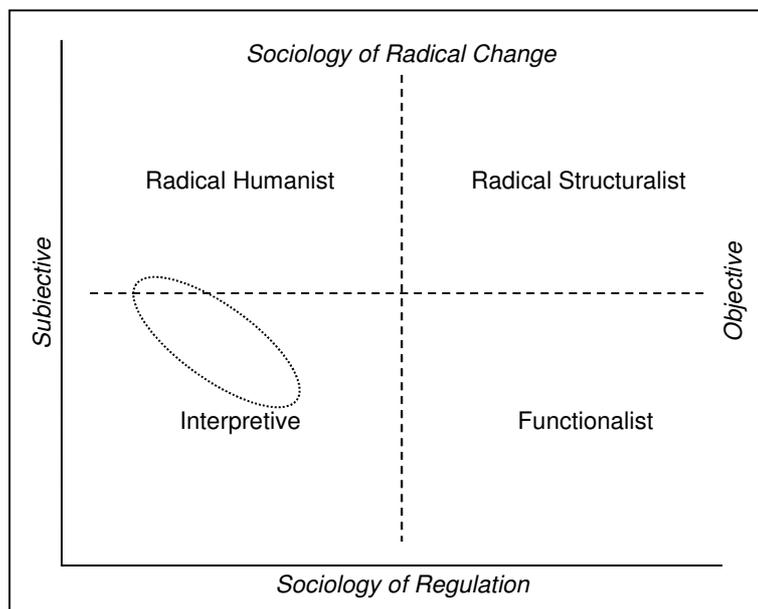


Figure 2: Four Paradigms for the Analysis of Social Theory (Burrell & Morgan, 1979, p. 22)

The nature of the research is exploratory and explanatory, the aim is to explore the positions or identities of the participants, the surface patterns and the deeper, latent meaning of the discussions. Exploring the question why discussants assume positions of power over others leads to the discovery or explanation of causes for hegemonic interactions.

5.1.3 Research Methodology

The methodology followed is based on the ontological and epistemological assumptions of the researcher and it provides a way to understand how “the individual creates, modifies and interprets the world in which he or she finds himself” (Burrell & Morgan, 1979, p. 3). Qualitative research methodology serves as the choice of method, which is furthered by a grounded theory approach. The location of grounded theory in the interpretive framework has the implication that participants and

researchers co-construct meaning. A more current view of grounded theory specifies that the researcher approaches the research with a certain philosophical orientation and research position and not as a blank slate (Hughes & Jones, 2003; Klein & Myers, 1999; Urquhart, 2001).

5.1.4 Critical Discourse Analysis

Critical discourse analysis is described by Wodak (1996, p. 11) as “an instrument whose purpose is precisely to expose veiled power structures.” The researcher will explore the understandings, “experiences and thoughts of the research participants, the way that social processes, institutions, discourses or relationships work, and the significance of the meanings that they generate” (Wodak, 1996, p. 16). Wodak views discourse (the use of language in speech and writing) as a form of social practice:

Discourse is socially constituted as well as socially conditioned—it constitutes situations, objects of knowledge and the social identities of and relationships between people and groups of people. It is constitutive both in the sense that it helps sustain and reproduce the *status quo*, and in the sense that it contributes to transforming it. Since discourse is so socially consequential, it gives rise to important issues of power. Discursive practices...can help produce and reproduce unequal power relations...through the way they represent things and position people(Wodak, as cited in Mason, 2002, p. 1).

Fairclough (1996, p. 15) describes language as “a irreducible part of social life, a social space of linguistically mediated interaction, representative of a certain morality, paradigm and life situation.” Critical discourse analysis focuses on how language as a cultural tool mediates relationships of power and privilege in social interactions, institutions and bodies of knowledge. Language is seen as “simultaneously constitutive of social identities, social relations and systems of knowledge and beliefs” (Fairclough, 2003, p. 2).

The term discourse is used to refer to the whole process of social interaction, of which text is a part (Rogers, 2008). The process of social interaction can also be termed “context.” The focus in more critical directions of discourse analysis is not on the autonomy of text structures, but on the way these structures are related with society (Fairclough, as cited in Titscher, Meyer, Wodak, & Vetter, 2000). According to the definition of Barry *et al.* (as cited in Van Dijk, 2007), the methodology is directed by a combination of an endotextual and an exotextual approach, which favours text and context. The analysis was performed on a micro level, the level of the text (discussion in the forum), and on a macro level, the level of the interaction of the individual within the institution and society which informs the discourse. On a textual level, the expression of an evaluation was regarded as indicative of an ideology or value which motivates the specific attitude assumed towards the narratives or ideas of co-participants or the person of the co-participant. On a contextual level, the reason for assuming a certain ideological position is explored. Wodak (2006, p. 21) describes context as different circles, of which text is the smallest circle and refers to the discourse unit itself, which then expands to the speaker and audience, which refers in this research to the participants in the forum with their various

personality features, biographies and social roles, the next circle as the situation, the objective setting of time and space and the last circle as the institution in which it is situated, with its function in history and society (Figure 3).

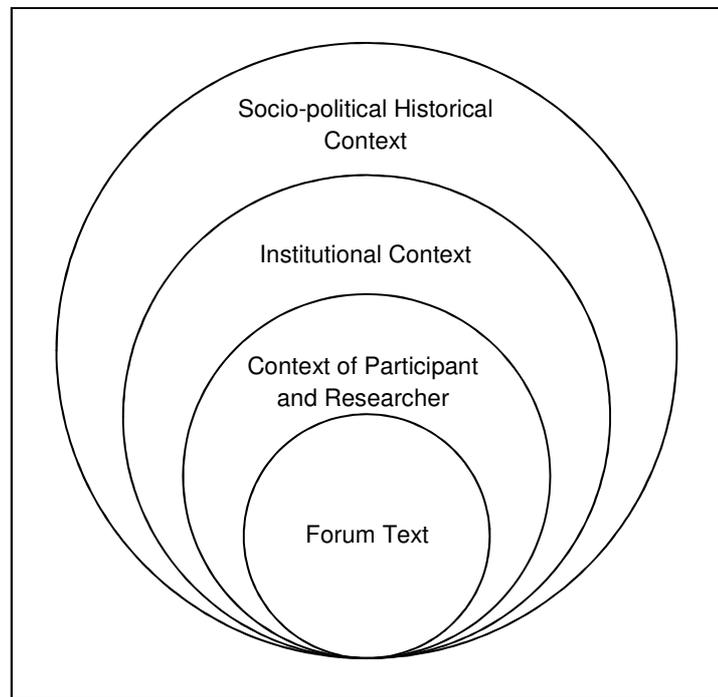


Figure 3: Explanation of the Hermeneutic Circle Diagram (adapted from Wodak (2006, p. 21))

Burrell and Morgan (1979, p. 237) refers to these various forms of context as the hermeneutic circle, or circle of understanding “in order to understand social or cultural phenomena, the observer must enter into a dialogue with the subject of the study.” Understanding then consists of putting oneself within the subjective experience of the creator of the text. It is about understanding the frame of reference of both the researcher and the researched, a co-construction of meaning by the researcher and the subject of research.

Discourse in institutions is viewed as an expression of power, either in discourse or over discourse (Wodak, 1996). Wodak (1996, p. 18) describes critical discourse analysis as the “access to a site of social reproduction in which ideologies and affects are on display as they play through social and institutional processes.” Discourse and institution are seen as mutually constitutive, an interdependent normative framework of the speaker and the setting is created: “the institution is literally talked into being” (Warner, 2005, pp. 294-295).

Interactive and non-interactive research designs were followed: within the interactive design, interpersonal interviews with chosen participants in the forum were held, with a focus on the phenomenological nature of participants’ individual experiences. Members of management who fulfilled

the role of supervision or moderation were also interviewed. Within the non-interactive design, the contributions within the discussion forum were analysed.

5.2 Selection of the Forum Text and Participants

The online discussion forum of the North West University served as the location of the research. The contributions on a certain thread, named “Racism, the other side,” (Addendum B) were chosen as it had a high number of viewers, indicating that the issue was considered important. Patton (as cited in McMillan & Schumacher, 2001) explains purposeful sampling as choosing information-rich cases in-depth, which this thread proves to have. Participants regard the specific thread as the culmination of emotions over a long time, serving as a catharsis.

The forum seemingly has a low form of moderation, although rules of participation are stated under the heading of “Rules and regulations with the use of the discussion board” (Addendum C). A diversity of topics is discussed, with varied numbers of participants. The contributors participate under their own names, without the statement of a person’s academic position. It is usually the case that certain controversial topics are viewed by many but few actively participate in them. Ten participants were interacting with me in the interviews, eight individual interviews were conducted and two participants were interviewed in one session (Addendum A).

5.3 Role of the Researcher

Initially my role of researcher related to that of an observing participant, as a reader of threads on the discussion forum. When the research started, I assumed a critical phenomenological position, attempting to uncover the essence of the account (Warner, 2005), and also finding and determining the effect of *power talk*. The uncovering of *power relations* became evident by investigating the structure of the thread as a macro approach and analysing the participants’ style as a micro approach. Within the appreciation of style, deductions were made concerning the assumption of power in the choice of vocabulary and the stances participants assume while addressing and interacting with one another.

After the textual analysis of the thread, I developed a more interactive approach and conducted interviews with the same participants whose texts I had analysed. I contacted the participants either telephonically or by e-mail and explained the purpose of my research and provided the reason why they were chosen for an interview. Everyone I approached for participation in the interviews agreed to be part of the research and signed a letter of consent (Addendum D). Before the interviews, the thread had been sent to participants to again familiarise themselves with the topic of discussion, and also to serve as a prompt for reflection before the interview.

Participants were aware of and agreed to the recording of their interviews with a digital sound recorder. I aimed to make the research act an experience which was positive both for me and the

participant, which contributed later to a truthful and respectful rendition of the ideas and identity of the participant. As the research is focused on ideological stances, I actively did not position myself for or against participants' opinions and actions (Berg, 2001). This was quite a difficult task, as the views of some participants were directly the opposite of my own. As I had already made textual analyses (Addendum E), I was aware of their positions and the way in which they conveyed their opinions. Observational notes were later accompanied by more abstract reflective notes (Addendum F). For example, the assumption of a distant stance in the interview led me to believe that it supported the participant's clinical rational style within the forum text. The reflective notes consisted of cross-referencing with theory and the noting of incongruences within the opinions and experiences of the participant. New theoretical questions which arose were noted for later reflection and issues which were raised by participants were reformulated into questions for new interviews with the relevant participants. During the axial and selective stages of coding (Addendum G), the reflective notes intensified with the progressive stages of abstraction.

I analysed the transcription of each interview before the next one in order to capture the gist of the nuances relating to the interaction between researcher and participant. I transcribed the interviews myself. This familiarised me with the style of participation and the personality of each participant. It enriched my initial perceptions which were formed during the interview by listening to the way participants voiced their views, as more was conveyed than merely the content of actual utterances. Thereafter the transcripts of the recordings were made available to the participants. If they agreed with the accuracy of the transcription, it was used in its entirety, or sections were omitted as indicated. The participants all agreed to the truthfulness of the transcriptions and in one case a participant indicated that a section should be removed as it could be harmful for collegial relationships. Precautions were therefore taken not to hurt the participants in the study (Miles and Huberman, as cited by Webster & Mertova, 2007).

I directed the interview with a few questions (Addendum H), sometimes quoting parts of the thread as an introduction to questions or to determine the participants' feelings about certain interactions during the period of the thread's existence. Sometimes the participants quoted parts of the thread to explain their stances or to convey a certain perception they had of another participant. This created an ethical dilemma, as I did not want participants to discuss each other. These remarks did however serve to be important data as they were relevant to the exploration of the research question. The interviews succeeded to be a free conversation and the interviewees made their opinions clear about institutional and interpersonal issues and their experiences of the exertion of power by themselves and others.

5.4 Data Gathering

The primary source of information was the participations on the forum. In depth individual interviews were conducted until data saturation was reached, i.e. no more new themes emerged from the

interviewees. I used the interview guide (Patton, 2002), with a few questions guiding the interview (Addendum H). I also directed the interview and simultaneously tried to develop a free conversation with open-ended questions, with the objective in mind, to establish the interviewee’s affective and ideological positions concerning certain issues. Silverman (as cited in Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2000) indicates that open-ended questions enable unanticipated issues to be raised.

5.5 Data Analysis

A critical discourse analysis of the contributions on the discussion forum and the interviews on pertinent issues reveals the ideological or normative positions of the participants. Berg (1996) refers to this type of content analysis as an extension of manifest content to more latent content. The analysis is therefore extended to an interpretive reading of the symbolism underlying the physical data. The latent content can be described as the deep structural meaning conveyed by the message.

I employed different methods of analysis, for example open coding and categorisation (Miles & Huberman, 1984) (Addendum G), and axial coding (Strauss & Corbin, 2008). Open coding consists of assigning a descriptive code to a small unit of text. Saldaña (2009, p. 3) describes a code as “a word or short phrase that symbolically assigns a summative, salient, essence-capturing, and/or evocative attribute for a portion of language-based...data.” These codes are in the following stage of analysis grouped into categories, which form the elements of the grounded theory paradigm. Figure 4 illustrates the coding and categorisation process I followed.

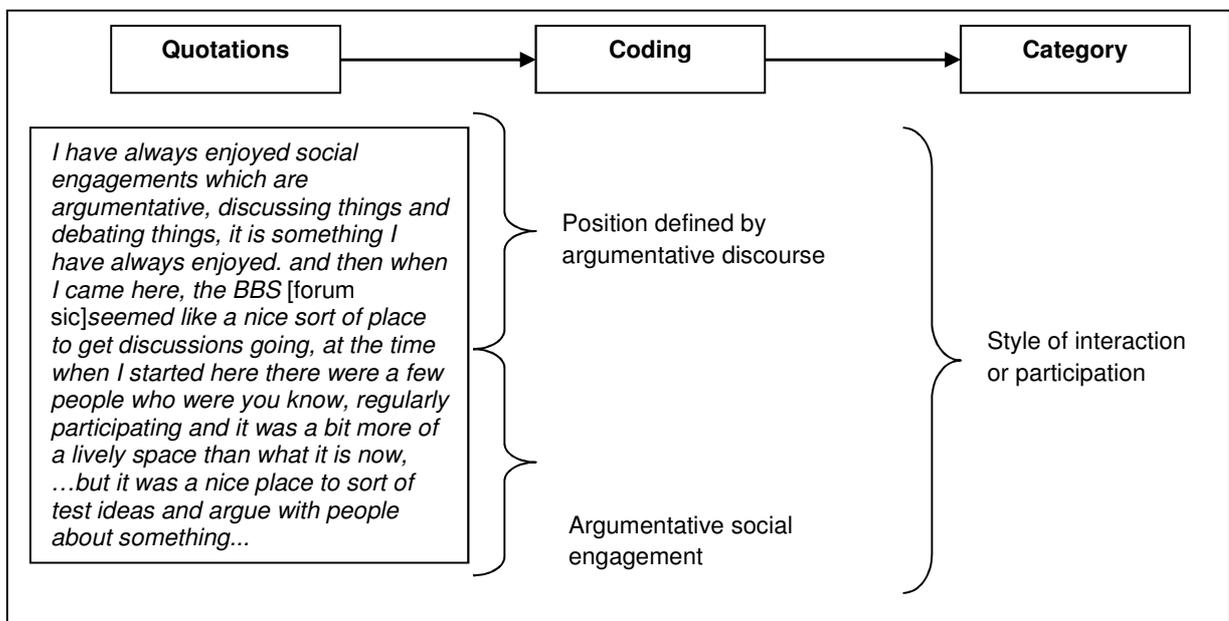


Figure 4: Example of Textual Coding and Categorisation

The following categories were found after the open, descriptive coding of the forum text and interview transcripts (Table 1). The categories are offered in the order which the interviews were held. The categories which have the same meaning, or refer to the same notions, are colour-coded. The colour

coding, which can be described as a form of axial coding, (Strauss & Corbin, 2008) eventually constitute the five general categories, which formed the conditions of the generic paradigm of forum participation.

Table 1: Colour Coding of Related Categories

Participant	Yellow: Motivational aspects	Brown: Style and content of interaction	Red: Consequence of participation	Blue: Construction of online and offline identity	Green: The potential of the forum and external influence
John	Motivation (yellow)	Style of interaction (brown)	Termination	Identity (blue)	Development through forum
Stephen	Style and content of interaction (brown)	Perceptions, identities (blue)	Opportunity offered by forum and the influence participation leads to		Institutional intervention
Francois	Motivation (yellow)	Style of interaction (brown)	Termination		Interaction (brown)
Charl and Petro	Opportunity		Interaction (brown)		Termination
Beth	Context (yellow)	Persuasion (yellow)	Motivation (yellow)	Argumentation (brown)	Morality (brown)
Susan	Objective (yellow)	Role of forum	Influence or importance effect of forum		Opinion (brown)
Peter	Problems in university (yellow)	Potential forum	Expectations of participants (blue)		Perception participations (blue)
Cathy	Opportunity offered and benefits of forum's existence	Role and influence of management	Assumptions and expectations of participation (blue)		Attitude to and interaction with participants (brown)

The process of participation revealed the structure presented in Figure 5. The central phenomenon, which is “the opportunity offered by forum” gave direction to the study. The participants assigned a certain role to the forum and this role expressed their ideals. The idealisation or opportunistic idea served as a central theme throughout the other elements of their participation, such as their motivation, strategy and consequence of participation.

5.5.1 Causal Conditions

The causal conditions of the axial paradigm are translated in the analysis to the motivation of participants. These were noted as the personal convictions, beliefs and perceptions, in short the ideologies of participants which were informed by their personal contexts, such as their history of experience. The motivation of a participant was probed into during interviews, while the textual analysis gave insight into the strategies of interaction.

5.5.2 Intervening Conditions

The axial paradigm labels the context of the participants as intervening conditions, which can be translated in the study as the immediate context of the participant, his/her experience of institutional culture, the identity or persona s/he constructs on the forum and the experience of managerial interventions in the forum.

5.5.3 Strategies of Interaction

The strategies of interaction can be used similarly in the analysis, by investigating how participants choose to interact with others. Strategies are quite diverse and range from poking and joking to mediating and minimalising. The strategies of management in interacting with participants range from praising them offline to censoring their contributions online.

5.5.4 Intervening Conditions

The intervening conditions of the axial paradigm are translated as the specific context of the forum, which is characterised by different dimensions. The intensity of emotion in the support or opposition, acknowledgement or dismissal, understanding or intolerance (i.e. the inclusion or exclusion) of ideas and persons is either low or high, dependent on the causal conditions of participation.

5.5.5 Consequential Conditions

The consequence of all the elements in the paradigm can be translated as either alienation from the forum or the formation of community in the forum. The alienation leads to termination of participation and is accompanied by feelings of anger, mistrust, frustration and disrespect. Those participants, who experience an accepting community in the forum, would ideally experience trust, respect, acceptance and understanding, which would again inform and influence all the other elements in the paradigm (Figure 5).

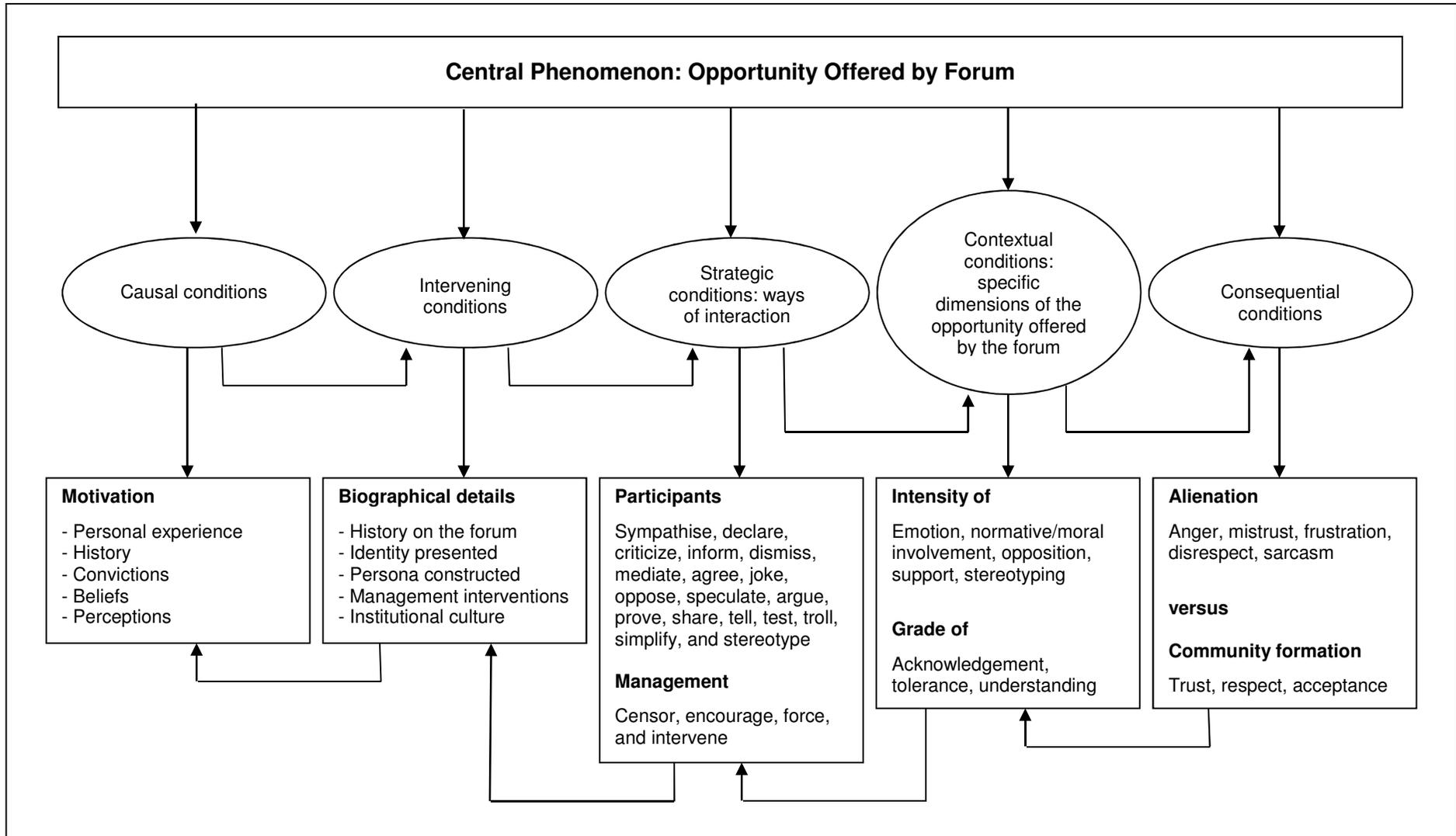


Figure 5: Interpretation of paradigm of axial coding (Strauss & Corbin, 2008)

5.6 Ethical Aspects of the Research

Preliminary permission (Addendum I) to use the contributions on the forum was granted by the North West University's Department of Marketing and Communication in August 2008. The Ethics Committee of the North West University also approved the proposal in May 2009 (Addendum J).

Codes of ethics, such as the Declaration of Helsinki and the Articles of the Nuremberg Trial, as cited by Christians (2008) served as a guideline prior to the fieldwork (interviews with participants and the analysis of the documents). Christians (2008, p. 192) summarises the codes of ethics by indicating that respect for human freedom generally includes two necessary conditions: (i) Subjects should agree voluntarily to participate; (ii) The agreement must be based on full and open information.

As the discussion forum is the property of the North West University, the contributions of participants belong to the institution. In this sense, the participations are institutionally regarded as private. The institution had already laid boundaries to the access of the forum by building in a technical exclusion of those outside the institution. Therefore only faculty and staff of the institution, and only if they access the forum from their office computers via the intranet can view the participations.

Participants' identities were protected in the sense that pseudonyms were used, chosen to reveal the gender of the participant. The age and ethnicity of the participants were revealed, as well as a description of the campus where the participant lectures. Making the above known is seen as a contribution to the contextual nature of the research.

6. Validity and Reliability

Merriam (1998) focuses on the ethics of research by stating that the validity and reliability of research is ensured by the ethical manner in which research is done. The research process is characterised by a faithful following of procedures, an examining of constituent parts for appropriateness and rigour and the formulations of conclusions based on data. For data to match reality as an indication of internal validity (Merriam, 1998) means that the study has to render the participants' representations of reality truthfully. Reality, or the *true state of affairs* is understood within the researcher's epistemological stance as the representation of reality through symbols, the view of the forum as a cognitive constitution. In this study, the research procedures were faithfully followed, the interviews were transcribed verbatim and the analyses were done after every transcription. Reflective entries were made concerning the meaning of the interviews in the building of theory and incongruences in participations were noted. The integrity of the research notes was attained through a process of reflection, which included both a continuous comparison with literature and previous inscriptions in my research diary (Addendum F).

6.1 From Triangulation to Crystallization

Theorists doubt the strategy of triangulation to ensure that the true state of affairs is rendered by the researcher. Silverman, (as cited by Webster & Mertova, 2007, p. 91) perceives the use of triangulation as a means for qualitative researchers to convince themselves and their audience that “by having cumulative views of data drawn from different contexts, we may...be able to triangulate the “true” state of affairs by examining where the different data intersect. In this way, some qualitative researchers believe that triangulation may improve the reliability of a single method.”

In an effort to overcome the limitations of the method of triangulation, the metaphor of crystallization rather serves to demonstrate the multiplicity involved in looking at the same data in diverse ways. Guba and Lincoln (2008, p. 276) explain the enabling effect of this metaphor in the choice of multiple forms of data to research a single phenomenon:

The metaphoric “solid object” (crystal/text), which can be turned many ways, which reflects and refract light (light/multiple layers of meaning), through which we can see both “wave” (light wave/human currents) and “particle” (light as “chunks” of energy/elements of truth, feeling, connection, processes of the research that “flow” together) is an attractive metaphor for validity. The properties of the crystal-as-metaphor help writers and readers alike see the interviewing of processes in the research: discovery, seeing, telling, storying, re-presentation.

Ellingson (2008, p. 11) describes crystallization as depending on “including, interweaving, blending, or otherwise drawing upon more than one genre of expressing data.” The various forms of crystallization which characterize this study are described in the following sections.

6.1.1 Crystallization through Various Data Sources

An immersion into the participant’s personal experience is created by using various sources, such as the interview, observation notes, diary entries and text analysis, which serve as the different components of the metaphorical crystal. Crystallization offers a holistic and multi-layered process of the researcher’s interpretation of participants’ experiences.

The combination of analyses of online and offline contexts provides a different articulation of participants’ identities online and offline. The exploration of online and offline contexts offers the opportunity for the creation of rich data, or as specified by (Geertz, 1973), a “thick description.” This is stated with the cognition that online and offline life worlds intersect and are mutually constitutive. Reflective entries (Addendum F) in the researcher’s diary also served as a form of data, albeit already on a next level of analysis than the forum text and interview transcripts.

6.1.2 Crystallization through Various Methods

The use of two different methods of document analysis, namely open coding (Miles & Huberman, 1984) and the processes of axial and selective coding in grounded theory (Strauss & Corbin, 2008) also provide methodological crystallisation in offering different ways of understanding participants’

engagement with the world. A process of reflection about the different processes involved in open, axial and selective coding contributed to the methodological rigour of the research.

6.1.3 Crystallization through Different Opposing Paradigms of Democratic Discourse

By reflecting on the inclusive and exclusive strategies in applying the opposing paradigms of democracy through discourse, a form of theoretical crystallization is achieved. The option of regarding a pure rationalistic strategy as exclusive or inclusive enables the researcher to move further than only a descriptive analysis. The researcher also values elements within participants' paradigms as inclusive or inclusive and does not only describe them.

6.1.4 Crystallization through the Combination of different Research Traditions

The paragraph above refers to the descriptive research method, which is articulated in interpretive methodology and open coding. The study also assumes a critical stance, which implies moving further than open coding to axial and selective coding (Strauss & Corbin, 2008) to enable the researcher to identify patterns of inclusion and exclusion in the paradigms of participants (Table 2).

Table 2: Forms of Crystallization

Strategy	Application
Different forms of data	Textual data on the forum Interview transcriptions Reflective notes
Different data gathering strategies	Selection of forum texts Selection of interviewees
Different data analysis strategies	Open, axial and selective coding
Theories	Deliberative and communicative models of democracy through discourse
Research traditions	Interpretive and radical humanist research paradigms

7. Presentation of the Research

The research is presented in the form of four autonomous articles, and a publication in conference proceedings. The conference proceedings paper relates to the integration of articles two and three, and does not make a total new contribution, but provides a different perspective on the analysis. The four articles were submitted to international journals, accredited by the Social Sciences Citation Index and the International Bibliography of Social Sciences. The four articles and the conference proceedings publication are co-authored by three supervisors due to their longitudinal involvement with the study. The four articles and a publication in conference proceedings each addresses an overarching focus relating to the main research question: *Which patterns of inclusion and exclusion can be identified in an online discussion forum of an institution for higher education?* The specific focus and sub-questions of each article are listed in Table 3. The versions of all the articles in the thesis reflect their status at the time of submission to the journals and for examination (Table 4).

The first and last section of this thesis adheres to the same writing, formatting and referencing style. The four articles and conference proceedings are formatted according to the specifications of the respective journals and proceedings. Therefore their referencing styles also differ from the American Psychological Association (APA) 6th referencing style. The page numbers of the non-published material follow consecutively, with the exception of the conference proceedings publication that has editorially allocated page numbers.

Article 1: Dealing with Racism within Discourse on an Online Forum of a Higher Education Institution

This article relates to a rationalistic approach to discourse that effects power differences and instils hostility among participants. Young's paradigm on democratic discourse informs the researcher in the identification of excluding forms of communication, such as the authoritative sharing of information and the condescending attitude of participants. The eventual consensus, which the Habermas paradigm holds as ideal, does in contrast inhibit and close the opportunity for moral discourse. The analysis of strategies assumed by participants shows how a less declarative approach mitigates the discourse and opens the opportunity for reflection and growth.

Article 2: Reflections on the use of Grounded Theory to Uncover Counter Narratives in an Online Discussion Forum at an Institution of Higher Education

The open, axial and selective coding stages of grounded theory create the means to uncover the elements within the process of participation. The interrelationship between categories demonstrates the intricate cause and effect in the interplay of the different stages of participation, such as motivation, interaction and consequence. The analysis of these interrelationships and interdependencies contributes to a deep understanding of the dynamics in elements leading to, interacting with and effecting the cyclic process of the exclusion of participants.

Conference paper: Narratives Countering the Democratising Ideal of Discourse in an Online Forum of a Higher Education Institution

This paper combines the insights gained from grounded theory in illuminating elements within the narratives of participants of unemancipatory interventions of the moderator and the disempowering interactions of participants. The articulation of these exclusive elements both in the discourse and in the external exertion of power over the discourse enables the proposal of an equalising participation of the moderator rather than applying an exclusive and hegemonic moderating strategy. The proposal is also informed by Young's inclusive rhetorical strategies, which aim to install understanding and mutual respect as also endorsed by the tenets of Habermas' ideal speech situation (ISS).

Article 3: **(Un)desired Interventions in an Online Discussion Forum of a Higher Education Institution in South Africa**

The paper focuses on the institutional context of the forum by describing the cause and effect of moderating interventions. The idealistic notion concerning style and content of academic participation as held and exercised in acts of moderation is described. Censoring interventions lead to a termination of participations which challenge managerial acts. These interventions minimalise critical discourse and cast doubt on the freedom to criticize hegemonic practices.

Article 4: **Valuing the Impact of Embodiment on Moral Discourse in an Online Forum of a Higher Education Institution**

This paper describes the construction of participants' identities and provides the reflections and observations of the researcher in valuing the contribution of disembodied, rational identities and embodied, emotional identities to moral discourse. The researcher is also informed by participants' self-presentation through their textual embodiment and participants' perceptions as expressed during interviews. Instances of incongruence between online and offline identities provide reason for further analysis and the eventual support of the theory that multiple presences and identities contribute more to moral discourse than the singularity of one-dimensional (e.g. only rational) presences. Design elements to enhance participants' embodiment are proposed which might alleviate the singularity of textual presentation.

The sub-research questions as they are addressed in the different articles are indicated in Table 3. Table 4 indicates the titles of the articles, the journals they were submitted to and their status at the time of the thesis' submission. Together, as a body of contribution, the five research pieces address the main research question.

Table 3: Listing of the Research Sub-Questions and the Articles that Address the Questions

Sub-Question Number	Question Addressed in Article
1. How do rationalistic strategies create power inequalities and exclusion within the online discourse?	Article 1 Dealing with racism within discourse on an online forum of a higher education institution
2. How do the elements of internal and external exclusion interact within the process of participation in the online discourse	Article 2 Reflections on the use of grounded theory to uncover counter narratives in an online discussion forum at an institution of higher education
3. How can moderating interventions alleviate the exclusive elements in the process of participation?	Conference paper Narratives countering the democratising ideal of discourse in an online forum of a higher education institution
4. How do power (in)equalities cause and effect the internal and external moderation of discourse on the online forum?	Article 3 (Un)desired interventions in an online discussion forum of a higher education institution in South Africa

Sub-Question Number	Question Addressed in Article
5. How does the (dis)embodiment of participants inhibit or foster the growth of moral discourse?	Article 4 Valuing the impact of embodiment on moral discourse in an online forum of a higher education institution

Table 4: Status of the Articles Submitted to Accredited Journals

Title	Submitted to	Status at time of thesis submission	Addendum
Dealing with racism within discourse on an online forum of a higher education institution	<i>Discourse and Communication</i>	Submitted	Addendum K
Reflections on the use of grounded theory to uncover counter narratives in an online discussion forum at an institution of higher education	<i>International Journal of Qualitative Methods</i>	Review requested	Addendum L
Narratives countering the democratising ideal of discourse in an online forum of a higher education institution	<i>CATAC '12 Conference Proceedings</i>	Published	Addendum O
(Un)desired interventions in an online discussion forum of a higher education institution in South Africa	<i>Communication Research</i>	Submitted	Addendum M
Valuing the impact of embodiment on moral discourse in an online forum of a higher education institution	<i>Rhetorical Society Quarterly</i>	Submitted	Addendum N

Each journal prescribes a certain format with a limit to the number of words according to the required formatting style of the journal. All of these were retained in the articles. The articles were submitted in the order in which they are listed, as well as the format required from the journal. The format of the five papers therefore differs from the first and last sections of the thesis.

I structured the last section (Synopsis, Conclusions and Recommendations) according to Mouton's (2001, p. 24) guidelines for the final chapter in a thesis. The synopsis, reflections and contributions of the study conclude the thesis. Here I summarised the conclusions of each article and also addressed the prime research question by discussing elements of exclusion as found in the general participant paradigm.

8. Summary

Figure 6 explains the constitutive parts of the research process. The research commenced with the different stages of coding (Strauss & Corbin, 2008) of the forum text and interview transcripts, which were accompanied by reflective notes which enabled me to apply and interpret the two paradigms of democratic discourse. I assumed a phenomenological position to describe and interpret the stances and ideological positions of the participants, and a critical position in determining whether these stances are conducive to the development of moral discourse. The choice of inclusive discourse, as held by Young's (1996, 2000, 2001, 2003) paradigm of communicative democracy, was coupled with the inclusive learning community as endorsed by Vygotsky (as referred to by Newman & Holzman,

1993; Nussbaum, 1998). Two fields are combined in the study and serve as theoretical points of departure, namely the field of political deliberation and equality and the field of social constructivist learning. The identification of inclusive and exclusive elements within the interview transcripts and forum text follows after the selective coding stage of the methodology of grounded theory (Strauss & Corbin, 2008). These elements of exclusion and inclusion are then addressed in the four different articles and the conference paper.

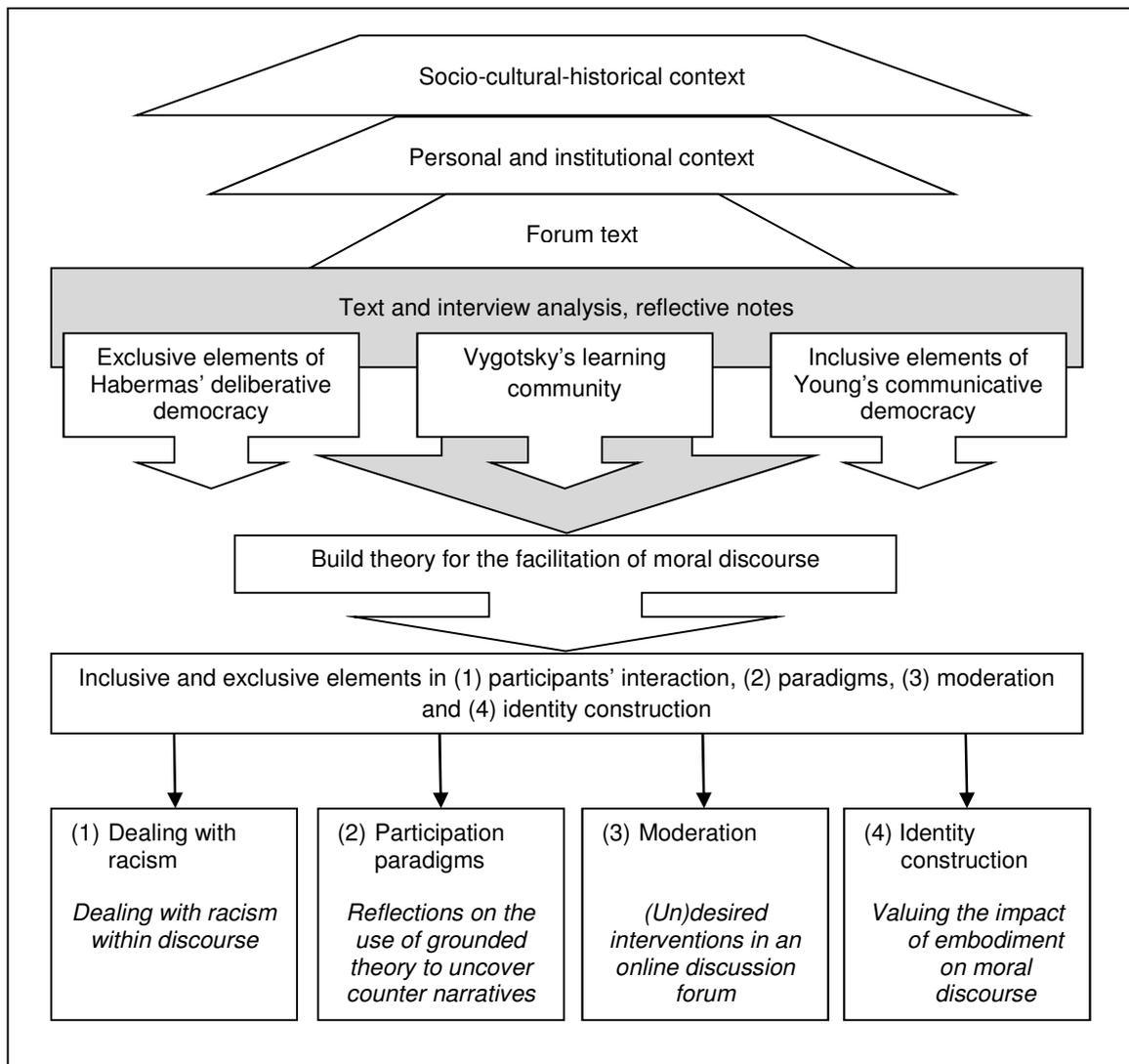


Figure 6: Diagram of the Different Components in the Research Process

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Dealing with racism within discourse on an online forum of a higher education institution

Abstract

This case study of an online forum of a Higher Education Institution examines the discursive inequality among participants. The analysis of a text on racism is informed by Habermas' and Young's paradigms on emancipatory discourse. The findings show that the rationalistic approach favours argumentation as the legitimate style of participation, thereby judging other styles as lacking and unconvincing. This approach is marked by an authoritative sharing of information and a normativist attitude to opposing participants. In contrary to the ideal speech and rational consensus of a Habermasian approach to democratic discourse, this discourse harbours an unideal hostility and a growing disagreement among the participants. Diversity as a resource, as promoted by the paradigm of Young, is absent and not appreciated, thereby polarizing participants.

Keywords

Discourse analysis; diversity; transformation; online forum; emotion; rationality; racism; ideal speech.

Introduction

In the last twenty years Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in South Africa have been influenced by the political transformation to a democratic society. In this paper, we explore how critical views about the change in HEIs influenced discourse on an online forum at a specific university. The discourse harboured dialectic views about the transformation of the HEI to embrace a diverse, self-critical and democratic culture of learning and teaching. Academics hoped to effect transparency by using the immediacy and theoretically equalizing opportunity of the online forum. The opportunity was created for the expression of honest feelings and interaction with colleagues in a space which was differentially perceived to have varying degrees of informality, equality and strategic importance.

A few authors contributed to the twelve year old forum, while many more read their posts. Certain authors became well-known presences on the forum which was formed by the tenor and

content of participations. The forum was partially characterized by being host to strong opposing voices and being named a soap box. The robust discussions on the forum decreased by 2010, partly as prominent authors reportedly left the university. The decline of the forum might also be explained by the fact that the dialogue had been stifled by the participants who dominated the discourse on the forum. Indeed, most readers decided to stay uninvolved and only observed the verbal combat and name calling, too afraid to go public with their own views. This choice not only excluded them from a potentially constructive discourse, but also deprived the forum of more voices, which might have reflected the sentiments of a diversity of readers. In this paper we argue that the major participants caused the inequality in their practice of a rhetoric which excluded others and eventually led to hostility, antagonism and alienation.

Moreover, the forum was characterized by strong emotionality, as evidenced by participants' insistence on presenting their views, their interaction with others, and their choices of topics for discussion. This motivated the researchers to look for another theory to inform the analysis besides the Habermas' deliberative model of democratic discourse, which had been dominant in the critical reflection on Computer Mediated Communication (Čečez-Kecmanović and Busuttill, 2000; Čečez-Kecmanović et al., 1999; Čečez-Kecmanović et al., 2000; Čečez-Kecmanović and Webb, 2000; Harrist and Gelfand, 2005; Ngwenyama and Lee, 1997; Thorseth, 2008; McGee and Brisco, 2003; Lyytinen and Klein, 1985). It seems that these experts' critique favours a kind of rationality which tends to exclude some voices and views. Communication is evaluated against a norm of rationality which favours a particular kind of discourse and which does not make it possible to identify and analyse persistent power relations. As the research focuses on a discussion which is marked by a high emotional presence of most participants, a deliberative approach which has the danger of excluding emotions, is judged as lacking for the analysis of the discourse. Brooke (2002) also concludes that the deliberative approach is limiting in discourse analysis and that the frameworks of enquiry should be broadened.

Within the analysis of discourse produced in ICT's, some acknowledgement is given to Young's model of communicative democracy, indicating that her concepts of rhetoric and life stories (Thorseth, 2008; Harrist and Gelfand, 2005) might overcome the one-sided focus on rationality and the absence of emotion in discourse analysis in the deliberative model. From the above it seems that a paradigmatic shift to embrace the full impact of Young's theory of

communicative democracy has not completely been realized. In an attempt to expand previous work on the topic of the emancipatory nature of discourse, the researchers illustrate how the analysis of a case study, based on the Youngian form of critique, makes elements of disempowerment evident which could be overlooked in the Habermasian form of critique. This case study explores online power hierarchies on a forum of a HEI, and specifically power inequality as it becomes defined in the way participants interact. Status differences were created by means of communication within the forum, for example, by the way participants choose to interact with each other, by the ways in which they addressed the topic, and by the content they provided while discussing the topic. It becomes apparent that the practice of these choices is related to the type of motivation participants have for contributing to the forum, as well as for terminating their involvement.

The idealistic spirit in which the HEI online forum was created and which originally motivated participation, declined after ten years and was replaced by disappointment about equality amongst participants. The sceptic view is echoed by theorists who indicate that the virtual environment only replicates existing offline power hierarchies (Čečez-Kecmanović et al., 2000). The idealistic view is also maintained by some experts who conclude that a virtual environment supports and is designed by the principles of an open, free and democratic society (McGuire et al., 1987), that it is an equal space where honest opinions can be expressed freely (Fernback, 1997; Sproull and Kiesler, 1991) and that because the space is online participants are more likely speak their minds, as they cannot experience the readers' reactions face to face (Moor, 2007). Reduced social cues can result in greater equality in participation and a reduction of status related differences (O'Sullivan and Flanagin, 2003).

The reduction of social cues however encourages forum participants to develop perceptions of each other based solely on their discourse. A person with better discursive style and display of knowledge can thus be more convincing. The reduction of social cues therefore does not necessarily lead to equality in participation, but rather can lead to a marked inequality. Status differences are created in the text itself.

Habermas (1990) concludes that power inequality undermines the emancipatory ideal of moral discourse. He proposes an ideal speech situation which should work towards the equalizing potential of moral discourse. Ideal speech sets as ideal an a priori general consensus

by discussants in which values and norms are shared. Young (2003) proposes a more inclusive form of communication to effect the diminishment of power relations which does not prescribe the sharing of the same values, but rather suggests listening more to participants' presentation of their life situations and acknowledging them. In contrast to the shared values and meaning of Habermas, she concludes that these prerequisites for participation can lead to exclusion. She demonstrates the shortcomings of the ideal of deliberative democracy and proposes revisions through her expanded conception of democratic communication (Young, 2001). The Habermas-Young opposition informed the researchers in the analysis of the data as procured by the texts and interviews. Further theoretical consideration is offered in the discussion of the findings and the conclusion. Specific methodological decisions are discussed in the coming section.

Method

The study reported in this paper uses qualitative content analysis to explore the thread which forms the focus of the case study and interviews with seven of the ten participants contributing to it. The researchers chose this specific thread as it had a much higher viewer count than other discussions indicating the interest readers could have in the way the discussants interacted on this topic. The forum was chosen as it served as a space where employees of the HEI could voice and share their fears, ideals and criticism in a time of institutional change.

The analysis follows a mode of critical discourse analysis in combining a micro and meso approach (Fairclough, 2003; Fairclough, 2005). At the micro-level, the text's syntax and rhetorical devices are considered and on the meso-level the text's production and consumption are considered, focusing on how power relations are enacted (Barry et al., 2006). Figure 1 is a message cluster, giving an overview and initial structural analysis of the course of the thread.

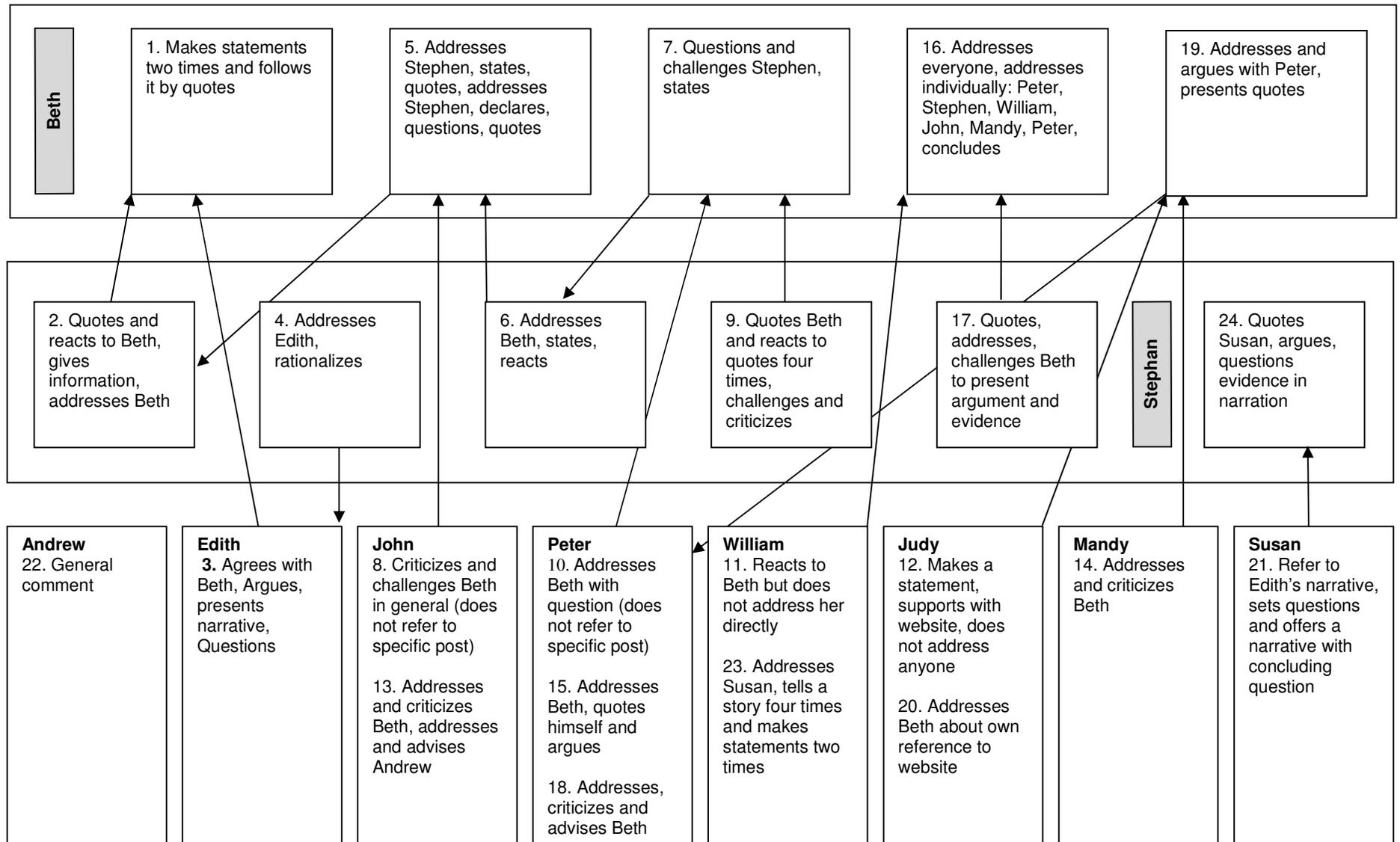


Figure 1: Clustering of thread messages

The research started with a textual analysis of the thread and was followed by interviews with seven participants in the discussion. The discussion was sent to the participants prior to the interview to act as a reference and point of departure. Some of the respondents made hard copies of the discussion and had it with them during the interview. Certain parts of the respondents' participations were quoted and acted as introduction to questions selected for the interviews. The content reflected the participants' reaction to the protagonists of the specific thread. A different set of questions was formulated for every respondent and focused on their specific issues, but some questions were generic, such as the motivation to take part in the forum, support and resistance to their participations on and offline, their views on what influence the forum possibly had and their views on other participants. If certain consequences of their participation were important enough, respondents were asked to relate those incidents. As the interviews progressed, the number of questions decreased as some of them was answered without having to be put directly to the respondents.

Respondents were assured of the ethical handling of data and were in every case given the opportunity to review it. When they indicated certain parts were too sensitive or potentially damaging for collegial relationships, those parts were omitted. Participants' identity is protected by the use of pseudonyms, which only reflect their gender.

As the discourse revealed a pervasive emotional element and reflected the values of participants, an extra demand was made on the analyst not to infer judgment on participants who held what she considered un-emancipatory or insensitive views. This also motivated the choice of descriptive analysis (Miles and Huberman, 1984), which forces the researchers to refrain from judgment and let the data speak for itself. Saldana (2009) describes this type of analysis as a strategy focused on finding the data's basic topics, to see what the data is about and identifying basic categories for further analysis.

The application of axial coding in the second stage of analysis (Strauss and Corbin, 1990) made the relationship between categories clear and also indicated the cyclic nature of the central phenomenon, which is: "using the opportunity offered by the forum." Axial coding was also applied to the initial descriptive analysis of the discussion, offering a skeletal indication of the cyclic nature of the discourse, which identified "miscommunication" as the central phenomenon. The second application of this form of analysis provided more details and broadened the central

phenomenon to its current description. The analysis of the text and interviews was accompanied by the making of observational and reflective entries in a journal, and has been integrated within the categories of the paradigm.

The case study

The online discussion forum which is the focus of this research has been part of the university since 2001 and was initiated by a dissident posting a letter of complaint on the advertisement board of the intranet. This letter created an avenue for partially similar participations which either voiced complaints or opinions. Later on, these types of posts moved to another space on the intranet titled “Have your say.” The specific thread which became the focus of analysis had a lifetime of twelve days on the forum and was viewed by one of the respondents as a turning point as it eventually led to the assumed censoring of one of the participants. The thread consists of 24 messages, made by ten participants.

The thread (Figure 1) was dominated by two participants, Beth and Stephen, who were both academics and who had had a dialectic relationship on the forum over the years. The thread was started by Beth, named by herself ‘Racism, the other side’ in an attempt to challenge the accepted normativity of liberalism which she perceives to direct the discourse on the forum.

Beth participates five times, making declarative posts which she supports with quotations (Figure 1, messages 1, 5 and 19). She reacts to Stephen in three responses (Figure 1, messages 5, 7, 16) where she addresses, questions and challenges his views. In her fourth post, she addresses everyone who has addressed her during the thread (Figure 1, message 16). She is strongly opposed by most of the participants. Three of the five male participants, John (Figure 1, messages 8, 13), William (Figure 1, messages 11, 24) and Stephen (Figure 1: messages 2, 6, 9, and 17) oppose her in no unspecific terms, while one female participant, Edith (Figure 1: message 3), supports her sentiment partially, Mandy (Figure 1, message 14) criticizes her, and Judy’s (Figure 1, messages 12 and 20) interaction is cautious. Susan (Figure 1, message 21) refers to Edith’s (Figure 1, message 3) narrative, not criticizing Beth, but addresses the issue of racism. Beth is more sympathetically addressed by one male participant, Peter (Figure 1, messages 10, 15, and 18). Stephen disagrees with Beth’s political position and view of an African university (Figure 1, messages 2, 6, 9, and 17). John (Figure 1, messages 8 and 13) confronts Beth by

criticizing her personally and challenging her in both of his posts. William expresses his shock at Beth's position (Figure 1, message 11), not addressing her directly, while his second post is in response to Susan (Figure 1, message 24), in which he strongly expresses his emotion. Peter first directs a question to Beth (Figure 1, message 10), and then follows it later with an argument (Figure 1, message 15), criticism and advice (Figure 1, message 18). Andrew (Figure 1, message 22) makes a general comment about xenophobia, which is not directed to anyone in particular but does connect to the content of Beth's first post.

In their respective posts Beth and Stephen offer opposing views about development and the role of the university in Africa. The one view can be typified as sceptic, unsympathetic, populist, negative, uninformed and un-emancipatory (Beth's), while the other view can be typified as idealistic, academic, positive, informed and emancipatory (Stephen's). The question asked in the research is how emancipatory Beth's opponents (especially Stephen) are in their interactions with her.

Findings and discussion

The central phenomenon

The central phenomenon explored in this research is how participants used the opportunity offered to them by the forum. The way they used the opportunity can be described as their strategic interactions: their ways of interacting with others, the tone they assumed and the way they portrayed themselves through discourse. Some aspects of this analysis can be found in the transcripts of the discussion, but some of the information could only be procured through interviews and observational notes made during the interviews. The data offered by interviews, therefore, illuminated aspects of the categories found in the axial coding, such as the causal, strategic, intervening and consequential conditions of participation. The categories have a procedural, cyclic and interrelated nature. The interrelationships are addressed in the discussion of the causal conditions, which describes the motivational aspect of participation and the strategic category, which describes the ways participants choose to use the opportunity offered by the forum.

The motivation to take part in the forum

The discussion thread should be seen in the context of the participants' history of conflict on the forum. This conflict was spurred by differing world views in general and, in this specific discussion, opposing interpretations of development in Africa and the West. These can be seen as the causal conditions of the way participants viewed the opportunity offered to them by the forum. The motivation to interact was influenced partially by strong convictions and partially in reaction to views expressed on the forum which were opposed to the own.

In contrast to the ISS of Habermas (1990) who asserts that discussants act from a shared understanding and aim towards consensus, participants in this thread seem motivated to argue opposing positions. In this sense, Beth is motivated to provide a non-idealistic view of Africa, something she does in reaction to what she perceives as the dominant *idealistic* view. She aims to present "the other side of racism" (Beth's titling of the thread), the part she perceives people (her co-participants, the opponents to her world view) do not want to acknowledge. This coincides with her cataclysmic view of Africa and how the decline of the continent appears to be mirrored in the HEI. She idealizes the former status quo of the HEI as part of a former political reality and she reacts against those who criticize remnants of the older political dispensation within the university and country.

Stephen, who identifies himself as a liberal, acts as first respondent to Beth and then as the person who concludes the discussion. His motivation to take part in the forum initially was to influence opinion towards leftist political positions and to motivate the questioning of political views and the status quo of the HEI. He initially had an idealistic view of the forum, seeing it as a vehicle for the change he wanted to effect, but later on this idealism weakened:

Researcher: Do you think you have made some shifts in people's opinions, by way of your participation?

Stephen: No, I don't think so,

Researcher: Like when you offer an analysis, you have offered many analyses, of what racism is...have people come back to you and say well, you have enlightened me on this?

Stephen: No, I never had an encounter with somebody who suggested that I have sort of changed their way of thinking or...but I would like to think that I had some positive influence, but what I would say, I would, I think it would even be optimistic to say that I was part of shifting consciousness a little bit towards the left, discussions a little bit towards the left, introducing things to think about, in online discussions.

As the opponents failed to convince each other, which perhaps can be attributed to the their interaction style, the motivation to interact weakened and eventually led to less robust

participations and later a termination of interaction within discussions. Discussions on opposing world views became saturated and no new and fresh voices entered the discourse. The reason for the deterioration of interaction is normally ascribed to a lack of time, such as Beth also indicates:

Beth: No, at this stage I do really not have time anymore, and, do you know what, at this stage there are not any active discussion lines which are new and fresh, it is the same old anti-apartheid, liberal,....moan about this, moan about that...moan, moan, moan, it is all which we hear from their side, uhm, I have had my say, I have said it clearly, uhm, for those who have heard it or for those who haven't heard it, but really, it is like gramophone needle which got stuck.

It seems from the analysis that the frustration Beth and Stephen as opposing participants can be found in their views of each other as unchanging. They blame each other *inter alia* of setting the agenda for debates and being uncompromising. These perceptions also set the stage for the way they interact, which again influence their perceptions of each other, resulting in a destructive interaction.

Strategies of interaction

The interaction strategies became a category in the axial analysis, through the clustering of two categories found in the initial descriptive coding, namely forms of self-presentation and ways of interaction. The varieties of interaction strategies observed are described below.

Declarative narrative strategy. Beth opens the discussion (Figure 1, message 1) with a declarative post, describing her identity as a white person who inherited and represents the achievements, discoveries and progress of the West and who now has to live with the backwardness and low standards of Africa which the new political dispensation intensifies. The contrasting perception which defines the West as exploitative, bad and racist is taken as a personal insult. She challenges 'everyone' to define racism and she resolves to fight an uncritical attitude in the acceptance of low standards.

She identifies the source of her dismay by quoting from posters of students belonging to the Azanian Student Convention and the Pan Africanist Student Movement of Azania. She interprets these posters as indicative of academic terrorism and black-white racism. The students call for a demonstration after an incident in a class where a white lecturer seemingly made racist remarks. The posters indicate that the students want to remove this lecturer, who becomes the symbol of academic racism, from their 'black campus,' doing it in the spirit of Black Consciousness.

Beth describes her own reaction to the posters and in general gives a version of her view of the attitude of the students, shedding light on the difficulty she has with teaching them when they hold such racist attitudes and such deficient literacy skills, as she believes is evident in the wording of their posters. Beth reasons that the reaction of the students is due to ‘a hatefulness against everything which is white and which is brought to the surface with minimal provocation.’ She describes the reaction of the students as *poisonous*, *immoderate*, and *injudicious* and she describes it as ‘a pretty example of the psyche of young black people on our campus.’ Beth quotes the posters and then provides commentary within the text by adding question and exclamation marks and interrupters such as ‘language!’, ‘wow!’, ‘Now then!’, to indicate her reaction to the spelling mistakes and the content of the document. Beth finds it upsetting to transfer knowledge to students who apparently do not want their fellow black students to be lectured by her, ‘a white western lecturer.’

In further responses to Stephen and Peter, Beth quotes (Figure 1, message 5) a complete letter to the Nigerian Daily Trust Newspaper which calls African competence into question, titled ‘I agree with Dr Watson,’ where the author refers to the geneticist Dr James Watson, a former 1962 Nobel Prize Laureate who claimed that Africans have a lower IQ (Nugent, 2007). She presents (Figure 1, message 5) an article on the book *IQ and the wealth of nations* by Prof Phillippe Ruston about the presumed lower IQ of Africans, and a letter (Figure 1, message 19) to a South African newspaper about the oversensitivity concerning racism, written by Richard van der Ross, a former principal of the University of the Western Cape, titled ‘Racism? No, bad manners.’

These posters and articles offered by Beth form part of a narrative she wants to share. Not only are the majority of the narratives she offers provocative in content but Beth’s style of presentation is equally provocative and emotionally challenging. She reveals her emotional position in reaction to the posters and attitudes of the students in declarative terms: she uses loaded and connotative nouns, punctuation (question marks, exclamation marks) to indicate sarcasm/amusement/indignation, repetition, superlatives and the compilation of adjectives. Her strong contrasts and direct questions support the content of her narrative and she further develops the message through juxtapositions, repetition and generalizations. She addresses the reader directly through questions and employs sarcasm in the expression of her indignance:

What are they (the students) doing here? Where is the African university? Western knowledge is seemingly unnecessary, is wonderful Africa not an example of progress with his African style education and his Black Consciousness and dictatorial, corrupt, backwards, war-loving lawlessness and genocides an example of values????”

How utterly ridiculous is the command to expect me to make all the sacrifices in order for them to go on with their idiotic ideas of what constitutes values, what defines education and what defines Africa.

The repetition of ‘I’ (three times) focuses the attention her emotional state. She seems despondent in the repetition of the phrase, ‘I am so tired.’ Later she demonstrates resoluteness in the phrases: ‘I will expose it’ [low standards], ‘I will fight, even if I am accused of racism.’ The passages focus the reader on Beth’s position and her emotional state, which can be described as angry, despondent, indignant, irritated and frustrated:

I am so tired of always hearing how racist is everything which has white in it (schools, universities, working places, civil service, army, society). How many times is being boasted in the public domain with what Western civilization has achieved, about the innovation, scientific discoveries and progress? No, everything Western is bad, only exploits and is racist. I am tired of living apologetically because I am white and my ancestors arrived here 300 years ago and brought civilization. As I have said before, it is time that everyone asks themselves what racism really is. To accept backwardness, low standards and the accusation that everything white is bad and everything black is justified and good just because the majority of the community accepts it, is unacceptable to me and I will expose it and fight it even if I am accused of racism.

Figure 2 offers an analysis of the contrasts and repetitions of passages 3-4.

I	Them, those people (Contrast)
Everything black is justified	Everything white is bad (Repetition, contrast and exaggeration)
Africa: dictatorial, corrupt, backward, war-loving, lawless and genocidal	West: innovative, scientific and progressive (Accumulation and contrast)

Figure 2: The use of contrasts, repetition, exaggeration and accumulation

One would expect that the responses to Beth’s position would match the emotional tone of her introductory and consequent posts. The reactions of the other participants are quite understandable, having a similar emotional element, and the consequent debate between the two protagonists does not influence any participant to read Beth’s contributions in any sympathetic way. The reaction of Stephen, which follows Beth post, is more rationally stated, although the strong emotional component of his immediate reaction later turns into a hostility which is characterized by a moral overtone. Stephen’s reaction is discussed in the last paragraph of this section.

Less declarative narrative strategy. Edith and Susan offer narratives from their own experience with questions not directed to anyone particularly. These narratives are formally similar to Beth's first post: a situation is described (Beth offers posters and quotations to present her narrative environment) in which the narrators were personally involved and which had a pervasive effect on them. In their sharing of their stories, Edith and Susan are more circumspect than Beth in identifying the incidents as indicative of racist attitudes, leaving the judgment to the reader. In an interview with Susan, she stated that her motive was purely the sharing of ideas that might prompt readers to react; while Edith makes a stronger appeal by directing questions to the reader:

Susan: As soon as one shares experiences and just start to question, how do you experience this? What do you think about this? Then people start talking not only to say this is ABCD and E, but only to say, this is what I experienced, what do you think? (Interview)

Edith: Now I want to know—are these not also forms of racism? Aren't they cases of not showing respect? (Forum, Figure 1: message 3)

Edith's post also challenges the reader, as questions are asked, but they do so in more respectful, less threatening and aggressive way than Beth's. The reaction received by Susan is respectful, as expressed by William (Figure 1, message 23), who sympathizes with her experience and expresses the fact that he knows her well and would not like her to be subjected to discriminatory attitudes.

Judy offers a website about the intelligence of nations which contradicts the article quoted by Beth, without addressing her directly (Figure 1, message 12), and she offers a personal narrative of experiences of white people being racist, cautiously addressing Beth about her dismissive attitude to the information she offered (Figure 1, message 20).

In general, the female participants who offer their narratives are more mitigating than Beth, whose narratives are declarative and even offensive. As Edith and Susan refer to their reactions in the incidents, the reader feels more sympathy, more identification with their narratives.

Young (2000) demonstrates that discourse between opposing parties is lubricated by storytelling and acknowledgement, leading the reader to identify with and appreciate a person's specific situation. This effect can clearly be seen in the thread—the acknowledgement of people's situations contributes to feelings of sympathy and brings a different nuance to the discourse.

Argumentative, declarative and informative strategy. In contrast to the mitigating character of Edith's and Susan's posts and similar to Beth, Stephen follows a declarative style. Stephen indicates that he prefers discussions which are argumentative:

Stephen: I have always enjoyed social engagements which are argumentative, discussing things and debating things, ...it is something I have always enjoyed. And then when I came here, the BBS (forum) seemed like a nice sort of place to get discussions going (Interview).

Stephen strongly disagrees with the perspectives of Beth (Figure 1, message 2, 6, and 9). His first response to Beth's introductory post (Figure 1, message 2) has a declaratory argumentative tone. He views Beth's quotations about the development and intelligence of Africans and her disdainful reaction to the students' posters as racist:

Stephen: Okay, my reading of it was that she has now stuck up these quotations and is using the obvious lack of discursive skills or the obvious language problem (of the students) uhm, as a way of discounting it, sort of, but the discounting of these feelings is well, that these people, the subjects of ... that these people are stupid, they can't formulate their own ideas, how can you take their ideas seriously, and that sort of thing, which I saw at the time as being a fairly racist response to an accusation of racism (Interview).

It is evident in this passage, that Stephen's reaction to Beth is similar as her reaction to the students. She discounts the feelings of the students and he discounts Beth's. He does not acknowledge the source of her discomfort or fear, as installed by the posters of the students (in which they are calling for a demonstration). Instead of acknowledging her emotional discomfort, he states his disagreement with her on universal issues, such as views on development and what constitutes civilization. In this respect he assumes a rationalistic stance, a standpoint of impartiality towards a particular experience, similar to Habermas's (1990) requirement for a moral dialogue.

The general denial of Beth's particular experience follows in the thread and it encourages her respondents' lack of sympathy which intensifies over the course of the discussion. This is aggravated by the fact that a discourse in virtual reality is estranged from the historic context of a person's narrative, serving as an absolute representation of a person frozen in digital space. Beth is eventually depersonalized in two ways, not only by the estrangement of the personal in virtual space, but also by the rationalistic stance with which Stephen dominates the discourse. Furthering his rationalistic style, Stephen isolates Beth's posts by way of quoting certain parts of her participation (Figure 1, messages 2 and 9), and then builds his argument by responding to these isolated quotations.

Later in the discussion, Stephen states his opposing normative position to Beth by stereotyping her. Stephen portrays a definite distance between his life view and consequent way of acting and Beth's. He assigns emotional attitudes to her, describing her, in contrast to himself, as someone who is dictatorial, ungrateful and uncaring. Beth becomes synonymous with that which everyone in the discussion opposes strongly as immoral. He soon accuses her of racism:

And people like you, that have been ungrateful and uncaring about who has been paying the price for you are understandably unhappy that it is now being paid on your doorstep so that you can no longer avoid seeing it.'

Unlike you, I do not propose to dictate what the solution to the approach to the necessary transformation of higher education in a post-colonial world should be, or rather how it should be done.

Every discussant who takes sides against Beth consequently assumes a higher morality. The shared values of their normative position bind them in the deliberalist paradigm. Any opposition to the norm or shared morality is regarded as a weak argument with insufficient evidence and reflects participant's dubious and racist character.

Stephen focuses on her lack of informedness, her doubtful sources of information, and her deficient argumentation. The larger part of his participation is marked by the presentation of information which illuminates certain aspects of Beth's lack of knowledge, thereby educating her and the readers. His language bears evidence of an emotional attitude defined by the security and authority that Stephen's informative style affords. This also makes clear his bias. He describes her as under-informed, minimizes her evidence and judges her incapable and not in a position to make authoritative statements:

And of course, as usual, you are perpetrating the fiction of the "west" achieving its ascendancy in isolation and creating the impression that while the "west" rocketed through enlightenment and industrialization the rest of the world was unable to follow as a result of some species of inherent backwardness (this is a clear implication of your trotting out the wonders of western achievement) ...It is clear that you are informed in your estimation by little to nothing more than your "Hoerskool" [High School sic] history lessons...You should not make such apparently authoritative statements from such a woefully under-informed position.

In contrast to Beth's position, which Stephen assesses as under-informed, he proves that he is well informed by providing an informative explanation of 38 lines. As Stephen views his participation to be informative and to be supported by evidence, he also expects this from Beth and Edith:

It is not possible to say, on the basis of the information contained in your description, whether or not these incidents were in any way racially motivated. You certainly have described situations in which people acted extraordinarily rudely, but their rudeness cannot with certainty be ascribed to their racial attitudes.

In doing so, he not only portrays his understanding of the character and intention of the forum as academic, but also enforces it. He evaluates Beth's *argument* as weak and lacking authority. Her argumentation is seen as a listing of endless examples and therefore unacceptable in a debate that he prescribes should be ruled by the 'proper guidelines of discourse.'

Explain in less than 500 words how BEE [Black Economic Empowerment sic] and/or Equity Employment is racist. Listing endless examples is not good enough, use them, make an argument, build something convincing by clearly explaining how it is that the evidence that you are presenting supports the assertion that you are trying to make. That is called reasoning, and it is the most important part of academic writing.

Stephen concedes in the interview that he exercised hermeneutic bullying in the above post. His condescending attitude is also visible in the following statement:

... unfortunately for you, more questionable information does not make an argument based upon questionable information any less questionable.

It is ironic that Stephen demands a style of argumentation which is distinctly Western, and thereby he unknowingly supports his rival, Beth in her identification with Western knowledge and achievements. His 'hermeneutic bullying' therefore undermines his own agenda.

To conclude the discussion, Stephen's last post (Figure 1, message 24) does not address anyone; it is a conversation stopper, the last argument and conclusion to the discussion has been offered. The neutral informative pieces Stephen offers do not encourage synthesis and might be given more consideration within the deliberative paradigm. It seems as though only two views are present in the thread, as no one else contests Stephen. It might be that the inequality in the forum discourages the potential of opposing or different views.

Conclusion

In this section the ideas of the Young (2000; 1996) and Habermas (1990) on discursive democracy are explained under the headings, which describe the type of morality attained in the forum, the preference in rationalistic discourse for arguments, the negation of situatedness and particularity, the exclusion of the online community, the role which the common good plays in a rationalistic discourse and the question of emancipation as raised by the specific case study.

Instrumental morality vs critical morality

A certain instrumental morality is present in the thread under investigation and it builds to the consensus that Beth is racist. This is far from the attainment of the common good that

Habermas (1990) espouses, indeed it is the un-emancipatory result of the discourse. Without the acknowledgement of Beth's specific situation and her depersonalization in the discourse, critical morality is not attained and the discourse reflects an instrumental morality.

The discussion is marked by the absence of other, potentially diverse voices, a moralistic overtone and disrespect which leads to hostility and intolerance which is eventually taken offline.

Arguments vs story-telling

Young (2000) proposes certain communicative skills, which mitigate exclusion and already appear in everyday interaction. She makes those norms explicitly known, which implicitly guide everyday interaction such as greeting or public acknowledgement and narratives or story-telling. Young (2000) does this in order for opposing parties to reach understanding and acknowledgement. Instead of replacing Habermas's theorizing that emphasized the role of argument, Young's (2000) purpose with these modes of communication is to add to the concept of the ISS and to eventually mitigate discourse

Young (1996) demonstrates that the dominance of logic, rationality, and consistency in argument and evidence, as espoused by Habermas (1990) can become hegemonic and exclusionary. The insistence on rationalistic rules of discourse, or instrumental reasoning (Kowch and Schwier, 1997) , brings inequity to the forum and to the community in the sense that some participants' style of discourse is devalued and others' is valued. Those who adhere to and support the rules of academic discourse, or as termed by Habermas (1990) the rules of ideal speech, seem to speak from a position of authority.

Impartiality vs acknowledgement of situation

It seems as if Beth's experiences of her direct environment is discounted. As nobody asks her to explain her situation, the reaction is based on universal moralistic grounds. The effect of the rationalistic devices used by Stephen are in contrast to the communicative action described by Young (1996) who states that moral and political norms are best tested by actual dialogue in which multiple needs, interests, and perspectives are represented.

Habermas (1990) argues that moral dialogue requires people to remain impartial and to assent only to those principles and judgments consistent with this impartiality. This appears to be

quite a challenging requirement, as one cannot be impartial to an experience, nor to the interpretation of an experience. Beth's accounts are seen as inferior and doubtful and do not reflect consensus or universal truth. The normative academic community in the online forum might exclude dissentient participants, which can lead to their alienation from the online community because of the hostility they experience and the fact that their voices are not heard or appreciated.

Open versus closed online community

Although an online community can ideally have emancipatory or democratizing potential for its participants (Fernback, 1997), it seems to be the case that a rationalistic form of discourse can minimize participation and even exclude participants from the community formed in the online forum, which lessens the opportunity for critical understanding, for the negotiation of meaning, for development, and finally for emancipation. Social (and also emotional) presence or its embodiment is one of the important elements in building a sense of community in online discourse (Swan et al., 2008; Aragon, 2003). Correspondingly, a misunderstanding of participants' contributions (consciously or subconsciously) can lead to its opposite. Misconstructions of colleagues' identities can lead to polarization and hostility, which are harmful on both personal and professional levels.

Using Young's (1996) model of communicative democracy, CMCs and specific online forums within Higher Education should offer the opportunity for colleagues to come to an understanding of each other's specific situations. Sergiovanni (1996) characterizes an online community of learning as a community which strives in a constructivist sense to reach deeper understanding, where adults construct their own understanding of the world in which they live. One can conclude that the community and participation within the community, as described by Young (1996) and (Sergiovanni, 1996), would be regarded as inclusive. Kowch and Schwier (1997) refer to this type of community as a loosely structured organization which is highly interactive, with tightly knit relations based on personal persuasion and interdependence in contrast to the closed community of empowered individuals.

This closed community represents the deliberative, rationalistic community of Habermas (1990), governed by the rules of ideal speech, exclusive in the sense that it does not provide

participants the opportunity to understand each other's differences and particularities, and it excludes narratives of those experiences regarded as deviant to accepted and shared norms and values.

Reaching the common good versus exploring uncomfortable realities

Habermas' (1990) model of deliberative democracy would set as a goal for a discussion in an online forum that participants should try to reach a consensus, relying on shared values and assumptions, by presenting logical arguments and evidence. Following an agenda in which the goal is to reach consensus and shared values are the point of departure constrains the community to an inequality in power.

Beth's narratives are not directed to reveal the common good. Although they are an attempt to clarify, these narratives are convoluted and include experiences that make people uncomfortable and less willing to listen, which is reflected in this observation of Beth:

Thanks for all the comments but you are missing the whole point of this argument. It started with the other side...The side which does not want to be heard."

In contrast with informative pieces, which seem to provide answers and security, Beth's questioning furthers the dialogue, as it opens space for insecurity, creates some imbalance, puts issues on the table, and forces clarification:

And why did you say nothing ...? Where is your appeal to reasonability? What is your opinion about academic terrorism? Is this all you can say? Why do you not answer the questions?

The rationalist approach expects narratives to support a logical argument and would lead to some consensus, something which might set everyone at ease. In this discussion, the consensus is that Beth is racist. This is a moral condemnation, introduced by Stephen, that the other participants eventually come to share. Beth's narratives can also have an element of destructiveness in them which may lead participants to form negative opinions of her and engender their hostility and her alienation. Beth's way of arguing is criticized, in the sense that it is too strong/sharp, not respectful and even venomous. Beth's responses strike people as hostile, so people tend to shut out her views:

Mandy: I was shocked about the content of your piece of research in your post and then specifically about the venom with which you support it.

Peter: I must, alas, agree with Mandy, that your way of writing gives people a wrong impression of you, a milder tone might perhaps help.

Questioning the model of communicative democracy

It is true that the account Beth offers of her experience is generally interpreted as racist. If one concedes that she offers narratives which should bring understanding and reciprocal respect, but still reflects unemancipatory attitudes towards others, should narratives then be still regarded as a sufficient means to emancipate the participants in a discourse?

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Reflections on the use of grounded theory to uncover counter narratives in an online discussion forum at an institution of higher education

Abstract

This paper reports an example of grounded theory methodology used in a case study to describe power inequalities among participants in an online forum at a higher education institution in South Africa. A critical poststructuralist theory informs the study as it investigates how hegemony influences the strategic interaction of participants. An interpretive analysis through the coding procedures uncovered elements of a cyclic process of intensified exclusion, inequality and oppression. This took place within a virtual space which is theoretically idealized as an equalizer and promoter of freedom of speech. The process involved in the eliciting of voices and in the analyzing and interpreting of subjective accounts is described to give an account of the disillusioned experiences of a potential liberating form of technology. Instead of alleviating conflict, the potential of the online forum is subverted and intensifies the alienation of and animosity between participants.

Keywords: online forum, hegemony, grounded theory, critical theory, higher education, democracy, discourse analysis.

Introduction

Information systems designers and theorists construct an idealistic view of effecting equality and democracy through information technology (McGuire, Kiesler, & Siegel, 1987, p. 717; Moor, 2007; O'Sullivan & Flanagan, 2003). However, higher education institutions (HEIs) do not escape reproducing discourse domination by making use of internet technology. Čečez-Kecmanović *et al.* (1999) report how a university brought about organizational change by a seemingly democratic process of consulting faculty through the use of the internet and email, but the eventual decisions were made with concerns expressed ignored. Consulting through email and the internet, therefore, only appeared to be democratic and created a superficial air of managerial care.

Instead of information technology contributing and being instrumental in the democratization of the university, through such avenues as encouraging and promoting free speech, the potential inherent in these technologies can create a lack of transparency, inequality and domination, which is not only characteristic of undemocratic management styles, but is also experienced in oppressing interaction amongst employees. The narrative countering the presumed idealism inherent in online discussions is consequently researched in the case study which is subsequently described.

Academic members at an HEI in South Africa established an online forum to voice their opinions about issues they considered to be important to their lives in general, such as the impact and expectations of socio-political change on a former mono-cultural institution and their interaction with students and management. This forum theoretically offered the opportunity for any participant, whether academic or administrative, to share opinions online. It also served as an alternative space where issues could be raised for which channels for expression did not exist

elsewhere. The opportunity to practise free speech and interact with colleagues in an equal space ideally provided unlimited potential for free expression.

This paper describes the grounded theory methodology (Strauss & Corbin, 2008) involved in analyzing the discourse of participants in this online forum, named “Have your say.” Theory is built from an analysis of the subjective accounts and perceptions of participants about their interaction on the forum, and the offline consequences of their online participation. The location of grounded theory in the interpretive framework in this study means that the building of theory is an interpretive process in which the meanings of the participants and the researchers are co-constructed. The position of the researchers is as much influenced by their philosophical orientation as the participants’ world views are influenced by their perceptions and interaction (Hughes & Jones, 2003; Klein & Myers, 1999; Urquhart, 2001). The philosophy inherent in the interpretation and the theoretical framework of critical theory is the foundation of the study and also influences the findings and hypotheses formulated at the end of the analysis. The criteria set by critical poststructuralist theory, which informs this study, stress subjectivity, emotionality and feeling (Denzin, 1999), elements which are acknowledged, advocated and regarded as prerequisites by Young (2000) in the attainment of democracy through discourse, as they describe how and where participants are situated and lead to an understanding of their positions. The objective of the methodology, therefore, is to understand the subjective positions of the participants as they interact and assume stances of oppression in their presentation of issues, arguments and experiences through the forum text and through their reflections on their participation in interviews with the researcher.

The paper focuses on the process of analysis: it (i) describes the choices made in the selection of participants and the considerations which determined the interviews; (ii) presents a discussion of descriptive and axial coding with examples; (iii) gives an explanation of the choices made concerning the context of the study; (iv) concludes with a discussion of the application of selective coding and hypothesis formulation.

The collection of data

The research produced a large amount of relevant data, which were found in both online and offline context. In this section the considerations of the researchers are discussed in their choice of participants, interview styles and questions, forum text and offline contextual data. Online and offline data are incorporated in the study, as these offer a holistic picture of the participants and serves as an “expanded ethnography” (Beneito-Montagut, 2011, p. 717).

Choice of the thread and the interviewees

The research started with a textual analysis of a thread on the online forum, which a female lecturer introduced and named “Racism, the other side.” This discussion was chosen as it had a considerable number of participations (24) expressing different viewpoints and employing different styles of presentation, such as argumentation, presentation of evidence, telling of personal experiences, informative pieces and quotations from newspapers. The participants also comprised people who had regularly participated in previous forum discussions, who opposed one another in declarative ways and consequently formed prominent identities within the forum.

Based on the reasons provided, the participants in this thread were also chosen as the participants for interviews. The forum text can be viewed as a micro-context, while the interviews are part of a larger context and enable the researchers to understand the power which is exerted within and around the discourse (Fairclough, 2003; Wodak, 1996). At the micro and meso levels, the syntax of the text, rhetorical devices and reception are considered, focusing on how power relations are enacted (Barry, Carroll, & Hansen, 2006). The online data are procured by an inquiry in the text (the thread), while the offline data (interviews, observations) provide the real life context of participants. The interviews offered the opportunity for participants to relate, in their own terms, how their context influenced the production of their texts. The online and offline data eventually offer “multiple meanings and experiences” (Orgad, 2009, p. 34) that emerge in and around the discussion forum.

If reference in the interviews were made to persons having any relationship to the interviewee and/or who participated in the forum in another thread, they were also interviewed. This caused the inclusion of two additional interviews; one with a manager who acted as moderator, and another with two colleagues of an interviewee. The number of participants was ten; eight individual interviews, where two participants participated in the same interview.

In five of the interviews, the discussion on racism was sent to the participants and this served as the point of departure for the interview. Receiving the text beforehand, participants had time to reflect on the circumstances under which their participation was produced and in this way they could prepare themselves for the interview. Certain parts of the participants’ discourse were used as an introduction to certain questions, thereby offering them time for reflection, which helped to elicit their subjective views on their own participation, lending a meta-cognitive and meta-emotional approach to the study. In the interview with the manager, a different approach was followed and a set of questions was sent on request before the scheduled interview.

Formulation of questions

An interview guide served as initial document to lend structure and purpose (Packer, 2011) to the engagement, but the interaction between interviewer and participant soon became relaxed and questions followed in a more spontaneous way. As the content referred to in the thread and the participant’s reactions on the forum were both of an intense emotional quality, the interviewer ensured that the participants did not feel exposed or pressured to defend their interaction, but felt comfortable to reflect on their participation in the forum. The objective was to create a feeling of rapport (Charmaz, 2006) and support in a conversation which resembled a social encounter between the interviewer and interviewee (Packer, 2011). The interviewer took extra care not to cause the participants to become defensive of their views, as was the case in the forum. They were instead free to express their feelings and persuasions, with the interviewer taking on the role of a sympathetic listener, encouraging the participant to explain their positions and convictions. In this sense, the face-to-face environment was quite different from the online environment, providing an opportunity for the participant to react more spontaneously than when they constructed their messages on the forum, which ultimately proved to have a competitive and moralistic context. The situations in which the participants expressed their opinions differed in spontaneity and instead of having a reader for their “performance text” (Denzin, 1999; Van Doorn, 2011), they had a face-to-face interviewer, who encouraged the spontaneity of the interaction.

The researchers noted how the participants expressed themselves and conveyed their feelings concerning their views and interaction with other significant participants on and off the forum. In addition, emotions were noted, such as hesitant reactions, nervousness about the topic and fired-up outspokenness. These were considered to be important data, and also helped to place the interviewee as well as the forum in context, providing the possibility of what is known in ethnographic research as a “thick description” (Geertz, 1973). This directly conveyed the dimensional conditions found in a grounded theory paradigm (Strauss & Corbin, 2008) which describe the characteristics of the forum-context.

A different set of questions was formulated for every single participant, which focused on their specific issues; however some questions were generic, such as the motivation to take part in the forum, support and resistance to their participations on and offline, the reason why they ended their participation, their views on the potential influence of the forum and their views on other participations. If certain consequences of their participations were important enough, participants were asked to relate those incidents. In this respect, the study partly uses narratives as a method of inquiry (Webster & Mertova, 2007).

For the purposes of this paper, four participants’ data-analyses are discussed, while the findings also bring all the other participants’ data into consideration. The participants are referred to by pseudonyms, John, Susan, Stephen and Francois. The first three participants offered their views in the interview on the specific discussion, “Racism, the other side,” while Francois did not participate in the specific thread but his role in the forum is considered to be relevant in exploration of the research question.

The men are employed as academics in different departments and they graduated at universities other than the one at which they are employed. They are between thirty and forty years old and represent a minority group on the campus: Stephen comes from an English background, John regards himself as politically black, and Francois is a French-speaking Belgian. Susan is an administrative assistant, 45 years old, and graduated at a tertiary institute for distance education. She comes from a family where both Afrikaans (an indigenous South African language) and English were spoken and she is fluent in both languages.

Except for the observational data which were procured during the interview, these are the only biographical data collected from all participants in the study. They are considered relevant in that they explain given contexts not constructed within the forum, but which do in important ways explain online and offline interaction. The limited inclusion of offline data is justified by the scope of the research question (Hine, 2009) which seeks to determine how and why participants exclude each other. Offline data therefore explain the perceptions participants have of one another and online data are used to explain the strategies they employ in their participations. Data such as age, gender and culture have a significant impact on understanding the motivation of participants, their ways of interacting and the perceptions they form of others. The data procured in the offline context through interviews are regarded as sufficient to answer the research question.

The analysis

The analysis outlines the three stages of grounded coding, namely the descriptive, axial, and selective stages of analysis.

Descriptive coding

During the descriptive analysis of the interview verbatim-transcripts, the text was analyzed with codes which served as semantic units, which were later clustered into categories, as described by Miles and Huberman (1984). Descriptive analysis forms a useful initial approach to the data as it offers the basic categories (Saldaña, 2009) on which the further analysis of the text is based. Urquhart (2001) describes these types of codes as the providers of context because they provide a comprehensive description of the phenomena under study.

Table 1 provides an example of the descriptive codes which were used to analyze paragraphs in Stephen's interview transcript. These paragraphs indicate the reason and objective behind his participation in the forum. The second stage of descriptive analysis is to sort the descriptive codes into categories. It is clear from the analysis presented in the table that Stephen's preference was for argumentation and his view that the forum offered him the opportunity to test his arguments. These are regarded as motivational aspects of his participation.

Table 1: An example of descriptive codes used in the analysis of a participant

Text	Descriptive code	Category
<i>Stephen: I have always enjoyed social engagements which are argumentative, discussing things and debating things...it is something I have always enjoyed...and then when I came here, the forum seemed like a nice sort of place to get discussions going.</i>	Motivation: social engagements which are argumentative (M-SEA)	Motivation
<i>...but it was a nice place to sort of test ideas and argue with people about something</i>	Opportunity: test ideas which are argumentative (O-TIA)	Motivation

Axial coding

This stage of the analysis, namely the clustering of categories of descriptive coding, is marked by a more abstract organization and interpretation of data (Hughes & Jones, 2003; Urquhart, 2001). The cluster involves grouping categories with semantic similarities together. The categories found after an analysis of all the interviews with the participants were clustered into five groups, shown in Table 2. Each participant's interview resulted in three to five categories, some of which resembled each other.

Table 2: Clustering of categories of descriptive codes

1	2	3	4	5
<i>Motivation</i>	<i>Perceptions</i>	<i>Style of interaction</i>	<i>Opportunity offered by the forum</i>	<i>Consequence</i>

Selective coding

The structure in Figure 1, developed from the axial coding structure (Strauss & Corbin, 2008), shows how the categories interrelate on a more abstract level than the axial coding. The strategy of interaction forms the central phenomenon in this analysis, as it describes what all the categories relate to. It is evident from Figure 1 that a person's motivation and the consequences of his or her interaction equally influence the interaction strategies they employ. The interaction strategies are articulated around the identity formed online, the choice of a certain style in which to interact, the perceptions formed of other participants and the role of offline institutional interventions. The motivation for forum participation was defined by a person's expectations of the forum, personal convictions and personal history. The consequence of participation could either be to eventually end any interaction online or to pursue participation and stay involved in the discourse.

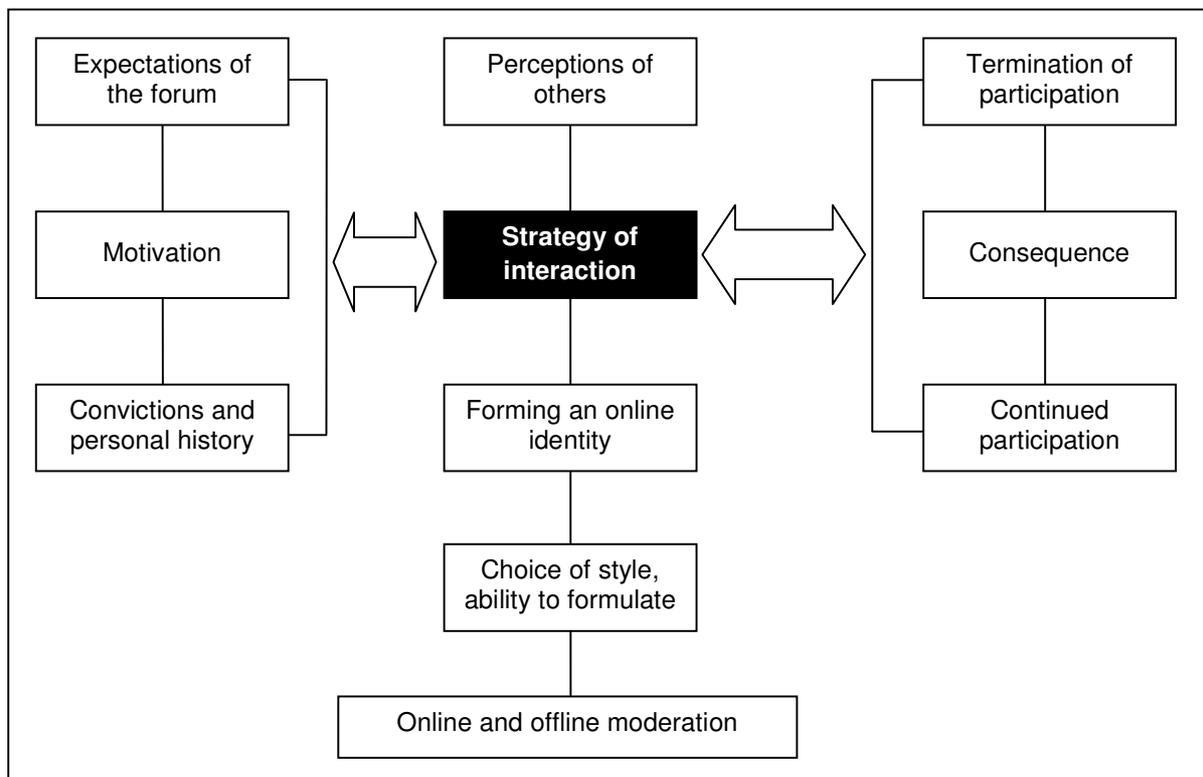


Figure 1: Interrelationship of axial categories through selective coding

In the following section, the paths shown in Figure 1 are applied to the discussion of four participants' online and offline interaction. Participants' titles in the paragraph headings serve as an indication of the identity they constructed for themselves in the forum.

John: The challenger

Strategy of interaction: choice of style → online moderation

John adopts a strong confrontational and declarative style in his forum participation which mirrors the strategy of using oppositional language (you-us, white-black) which the person he addresses previously employed and which mirrors the same strong criticism used by the same person (Beth) in her introductory post, titled “Racism, the other side”:

With your bitter racist remarks and quasi academic references, Beth, you are opening a can of worms about your and other white colleagues’ similar ideas about us, your black colleagues. Your research and convictions do now prove that black people are of a lower cognitive ability than white and Asian people. Your stream of logic (very dubious I have to add) lead me to the conclusion that black colleagues therefore 1. have to be very thankful that we are tolerated on your white, Western piece of pride of a university, 2. are not of the same intellectual ability as white and Asian colleagues 3. must not complain about the racism and other unwanted spin-offs of the western framework of thinking.

The criticism of Beth’s “stream of logic” is indicative of John’s own online criticism of Beth’s participation. This conforms to the forum’s context of high internal criticism and the imposition of own norms, something which Stephen introduces in the thread ‘Racism - the other side’ in response to Beth’s post. A certain standard is expected from academic participants, which Beth fails to meet. As Stephen prefers argumentation, he especially expects his opponents to conform to his style of participation, and those who support his line of argument, such as John, also conform to the same form of criticism he practises.

Strategy of interaction: Online identity → perceptions of others → termination of participation

In the interview, John also stresses his political identity as being black and defines the dominant culture of the campus as politically white. John is quite honest in the identity he creates in the forum. He sees himself as someone who makes life problematic and raises issues. He also appreciates strong reactions to his views instead of polite silence which he attributes to members of the culture which is dominant on the campus:

John: I just went in with who I am, and I think the impression which people could now get of the identity which they could contribute to me, uhm, might be one of an angry person who do not understand the whole...uhm...context of the pace, and not the traditions and culture and not the necessary respect for what is going on here, as a troublemaker, I think that identity could have been formed in the minds of some.

Researcher: And would you be able to live with that?

John: No, I am not a troublemaker, I do not see myself like that, I see myself as someone who goes about with life in a critical way, and who troubles things which people find too comfortable, because real life is not such a untroubling, deadening existence.

John equates the white culture to hegemony and regards his white colleagues, in this sense, as representatives of the hegemony he wishes to oppose. When his white colleagues do not meet his

expectations by supporting his views on hegemony on the forum, John risks a negative identity attributed to him; as a troublemaker.

The analysis of the quotation which follows, offers a glimpse of the interrelatedness of the categories as shown in Figure 1. John's offline identity corresponds to his online identity: he perceives himself as a black man in confrontation online and offline with the hegemonic character of the university. He experiences himself as excluded in two ways, by his race, and by his opposition to hegemonic practices on and off the forum. He opposes these practices as an individual and runs the risk of being identified with trouble and creating conflict on the forum. He opposes hegemonic practices without the supportive participation of his white colleagues on the forum. His expectations of his colleagues' offline are therefore not met online and he consequently ends his participation:

Mmm, before I stopped participating, I started chatting with white colleagues of mine, I regard myself as politically black...uhm, you know we are all fucked up by apartheid, in colour and in terms of where we went to school, were born, to use those type of things as point of reference when we look at the world, and I saw that my colleagues, who share verbally with me the stuff that I am writing, but they do not participate themselves...and I told them, how will I, who carries the mark of an outsider, although I am an insider here by virtue of my employment here, how will I as outsider ever touch people in their deepest being with the stuff I am writing, because I can be brassed off as a bitter, young black little man...not part of the dominating Afrikaans culture, culture is a dirty word, let's say hegemony...so I started writing less, because I saw that personally the hegemony, which they say they do not support, the oppressive and exclusionary types of practices and declarations, that they do not write, and well, let me stop writing, let the Afrikaners [white descendants of mainly Dutch and other European settlers sic] fight among themselves...and the lone Englishman, Stephen, let him, he has time to write, I did anyway not have that much time to write.

The hesitance of John's colleagues to support him online might be ascribed to the style of interaction he employs in his participation. He also does not seem to be critical of the way in which he expresses himself.

Motivation → strategy of interaction

This category groups the data which relate to John's convictions, which inform his participation in and expectations of the potential of the forum, e.g. as a rectifier of wrongs, as a mouthpiece for social justice. John describes his grounding in and experience of social justice and his sensitivity to political oppression as his motivation for protesting against instances of the condoning and practice of hegemony on and off the forum:

What incited me specifically, was when I saw some people, who write on the [forum sic] in a way which is not respectful to others who are not of the same religious background, of their educational level, of their social stature, mmm, yes things like that incited me and, as I came from a strict...not totally strict, good grounding in social justice, and worked and lived before I came here, could not remain quiet, it was like a red rag in front of a bull.

It is a logical deduction that John's history of participation and his personal convictions lead to the choice of a declarative strategy. The "red rag in front of a bull" aptly describes his choice of interaction with Beth, whom he addresses in the thread.

Susan: The sharer

Motivation → choice of style → consequence

Susan's style is cautious and corresponds to her motive for participation: she wants to share an experience to test whether her view of an incident which could be interpreted either as racist or rude, is acceptable. Her motivation for this specific interaction is to have clarity about her experience of the incident:

Researcher: Your motive was, you just wanted to throw your story in the pool?

Susan: Throw it in the pool and see what people say, do they experience it too? I wanted an answer, I wanted to see if there are other people who have the same experience and if they...uhm, would have reacted the same as I did, and if they would have seen it differently, and what would have been their reaction, was my reaction normal or not?

Susan attributes a therapeutic role to the forum, as the reaction to her telling of the incident also supports her own interpretation. She absolutely resists expressing judgments about racism on the forum as she experiences the topic as very sensitive.

Expectations of the forum

As her demeanour is marked by cautiousness, Susan does not expect much of the forum other than it being a dumping place and outlet for daily frustrations. In her opinion, great expectations of influence on a management level will only undermine the success of the forum:

Susan: There are certain things [on the forum] which should be taken seriously [by management sic], but uhm...does top management of the university really have time to look around on the [forum sic]? No, they don't. That is why there are others forums for people to...to...uh...have their say, to raise serious issues and to say, this is what bothers me, this is what I want you to pay attention to, there are other ways to make people aware of things which...uh, upset you, make you miserable, and then you can get constructive feedback from management...

Having the status of an employee in an administrative position, she acknowledges the limited power given to people in her position for alerting management to issues of importance or danger on the forum:

Susan: My opinion is, is that, when there is something really important which becomes serious, which one say, almost becomes scary, uhm, then it is the administrative staff which brings those things under the attention of managers, so, yes,...top management does not have the time to read [the forum sic], but I think administrative staff tell them, go and have a look, go and read quickly,...but it is not the forum's place to force decisions, yes, it is not the forum to cause decisions to be made, it will never be a success if that is what people expect [of the forum sic].

Even in her assigning a therapeutic role to the forum, one can intuit the frustration Susan experiences with the lack of influence the forum has on management:

Susan: It is literary so, stand in a soundproof room and shout...

Researcher: Do you see the forum like that, as a soundproof room?

Susan: Yes

Researcher: Where you can only shout?

Susan: Yes, a stuffed pillow and hit it, have a pillow fight, get rid of that which...how shall I say, make you angry in a sense, uhm...make you bitter later on, things which you cannot...Get it out, get it over with...

In spite of her disappointment about management's overlooking of issues presented on the forum, Susan has not terminated her participation.

Stephen: The "lone Englishman"

Motivation → strategy of interaction → consequence

Stephen sees the forum as a space where arguments can be practiced and tested. His style is generally informative and impersonal, except in his confrontational interaction with Beth in which he employs a declarative style and uses rationalistic devices to minimize her arguments. He sets the stage in his reaction to her comments on the thread by criticizing the quality of her arguments and evidence. His informative sociological insights are appreciated and praised by male participants (such as John and Francois). Susan does not have the same appreciation and refers to Stephen's participation as difficult to grasp: "I do not always understand what Stephen says." One can conclude Stephen creates a community for the informed, and those who do not follow his arguments (like Susan) or do not construct arguments in the way he condones and prefers (like Beth), are excluded.

In hindsight Stephen does view his participation as dissenting, and describes it in the initial stage of his interaction on the forum as "trolling," in which he identifies certain aspects of the university's culture which he finds unacceptable and strange. In retrospect, his opinion is that the motive for using this technique was to raise participants' consciousness and lead people to question the *status quo*. He views his trolling in the forum as contra-productive, leading to the intolerance of readers. He concludes that his trolling stereotyped his online identity as being disruptive and dissenting which makes him unpopular, something which he now would rather avoid:

Stephen: I think in some ways it was sort of slightly more a sophisticated form of trolling, really, it was at first then I pop up and say this prayer stuff is terrible, all this religion is crap, we should get rid of it and people immediately I think see that as an extremist position and you know, that coloured the rest of my commentary, and if I can do things over again, I possibly wouldn't be as hard about, hard core about as when I started...

Online identity → perceptions of others

Contributing to the negative effect of his trolling, Stephen feels that other participants view him as unmoving, someone who does not engage personally with issues and who does not have room for opinions different from his own. In contrast, he sees himself as a reasonable person, willing to listen to other people.

Stephen sees his main opponent (Beth) as someone who does not engage with opposing arguments because she does not interact, learn or change her attitude. The conciliatory tone which she employs at one stage is seen by him as only lip service, as she does not gain insight or undergo any fundamental change. He views her postings as voicing a populist view without any original thought of her own, which is on the one hand useful for conducting a debate, but it also demonstrates her courage and in a way her naivety. She presents old evolutionary ideas in her explanation of the development of races and her contributions are therefore seen as academically naïve. Her presentation of cases, which can be interpreted as racist, are criticized as unconvincing because of the lack of information she offers.

Stephen criticizes another female participant because she, like Beth, unconsciously accepts a grand racist narrative. Stephen regards race as an easy explanation for her feeling of victimization because he believes that encounters with black people and the ensuing feelings of victimization are informed by racial stereotyping.

Stephen realizes that his attitude towards Beth is patronizing and he playfully refers to his treatment of her as “hermeneutic bullying.” He is aware of the power play between John, himself and Beth. He acknowledges the power which normative positions on human rights and academic discourse allow participants such as himself: however, he does not seem to care that Beth is insulted in various ways as a result of their moralistic positions. During the interview he does acknowledge defensively and a bit vaguely that he did try to interact with Beth in a positive way.

Expectations of the forum

Stephen’s wish was to move the consciousness of forum participants to the left. This wish concurred with his initial idealism that an online forum could bring about change. His opinion is that serious discussions on the forum could attract management’s attention and could result in structural changes. His view at the time of the interview was that popular discussions, where everyone can make a contribution, are not seen by management as serious, and that it seems as if the influence of serious discussions on a structural level is undermined by the “democratic” characteristics of the forum. Stephen believed that any discussion therefore, however serious, was disregarded, rendering the forum itself powerless.

Stephen receives support via email for his views, while his colleagues, although they initially disagreed with him, praise his courage and convictions. The rector also regularly encourages his participation which he does appreciate. Although the overt reaction to his positions is positive, Stephen perceives his supporters to be in the minority.

Online and offline moderation

Stephen feels that censorship of forum contributions by management weakens the notion of free speech. The intervention of the institution shuts down conversations on emotionally uncomfortable issues and narrows the topics to be discussed on the forum. He also views other discussions on the forum (such as religion, hostel culture) to have racial undertones and thinks discussions on these topics might be threatened and participants in the threads prosecuted institutionally. He therefore prefers discussion not to be censored, and preferably be on uncomfortable issues. He is, however, neither conscious of the negative effect of his online arguments nor of his prescriptiveness.

Francois: The “provocateur”

Francois’s initial aim was to provoke debate on the forum. Religion is his first entry point of interest relative to which he starts questioning some conventions:

I started tackling the subject, and tackling the little details that bugged me, like prayer at the beginning of classes, and this, also this very negative view of humankind, which is inherent to Protestantism to a large extent, in Catholicism to a lesser extent.

His first arguments were directed against theologians and radical Christians:

I remember the first topic I ever tackled, and that was back in 2000 I think or 2001, was this bunch of radical Christians, uh, petitioning against the advertisement of ice creams, the seven deadly sins, the Ola ice cream, the Ola people came with this commercial slogan, eating this ice cream would be like embracing the seven deadly sins, and so a bunch of people at the faculty of theology uhm, petitioned and ultimately you know, got their way, and this to me, you know, was a provocation to common sense and what we stand for as a university, because we are a university, we’re not a church, and at the time you know, the difference was unclear, because we were still the Christian university, and so the lines were fairly blurring...

Francois holds the opinion that the radical views of the participants in the forum (such as the support for creationism and a negative view of humankind) undermine the potential universal tone of the forum. In his opinion these factors make the forum unfit for reasonable debate. He wishes for moderate voices which he thinks can make the forum more representative of the majority.

Choice of style → perception of others → online identity

Eventually Francois takes the position of *provocateur*, as he does not believe that common ground for reasoning and debate can be found. He further regards the university as a fertile field for provocation. His motive in adopting the role of *provocateur* is to mock and ridicule people, not realizing that this style provokes attacks and bad reactions. In retrospect, he does not see the provocations as the best way of interacting, and acknowledges that this type of discourse becomes emotionally challenging. He states that his ultimate aim was to antagonize and to be obnoxious, and regards the identity constructed around these two characteristics as inevitable. He feels his forum ego was built as a result of the context he had to deal with, finding no alternative

to engaging in debates which seem archaic and “insane,” thereby exposing himself as the *provocateur*.

Francois finds himself in a culture which is in conflict with his own, which he views as marked by critical discourse. He considers his outsider status to be fortunate and does not feel bound by the morality of respect which he sees exercised locally. In this sense, he uses profanity and finds reactions to it entertaining:

...and then for the sake of, I also wrote a piece in French where I said, quote, that Jesus was a flea infested prophet, as people lived two thousand years ago in squatter conditions, earlier, there was just one purpose in doing it, it was to piss people off, and I wrote it in French, and I didn't think that someone would decipher it, but somebody did, so that person, I think it was a lecturer at, his name is Paulo Gulielmi, actually he is...he speaks French, so he translated this and he began a message which is still there, saying this interesting fact, saying you know that Jesus bla-bla-bla, this is the kind of incident that happened, but I take full responsibility for it, and I still find it highly funny, and the other people saw me as a pure, you know, provocateur, which I was deliberately being, and there was no other purpose than provoke reaction, and nastily enough I thought it was very funny...

Offline and online moderation → consequence

Francois uses the forum to declare his dissociation with the university's hostel culture, which he believes violates students' rights and inhibits their emancipation and learning. He uses the forum space to charge a residential manager with passively allowing a negative culture to develop, irresponsibility and undermining the development of a culture of learning. Francois was forced to make an official apology to the residential manager on the forum and had to revise his initial apology when management regarded it as a stubborn restatement of his adversarial position and not an admission of guilt. Only his second apology remained on the forum, his other “uncomfortable” posts were deleted. As his offline relationship with the rector was of a friendly nature, Francois was amicably forced into an apology which management accepted:

Yeah, the rector back then, who is Cathy, who is a close friend as well, uhm and she tried to mend the pieces, and she asked me, maybe I was the more flexible person in the whole equation I guess, but I think she also,...I think she, I wouldn't say she emotionally blackmailed me, but, you know, there wasn't any other solution for me...

Francois is convinced that his participation after this intervention from the university's management was fruitless. The power to control that management has, he believes, hinders conversation and deprives participants of the opportunity for argumentation. Consequently, Francois's participation diminished. This incident had a traumatic impact on both him and his family:

You know back then it was taking a toll on my family as well, as it was the subject of conversations for a while and obviously because of the emotional affect that you derive from such a situation, so, after this episode, I saw that, well, what can you do anyway, you can use the forum as much as you want, but it is obviously controlled in many ways, and, and you can't convince the people of your point.

In retrospect, Francois believes that his reaction to the hostel incident and the consequent action management took, was not strong enough. The position he initially took on issues did not change through his participation, and the act of participation strengthened his convictions and the direction he took over the time.

Personal history → online identity

Francois feels that his foreign status creates a distance between himself and the culture in which he works; he does not feel fearful about what he says on the forum. He does not care about others' estimation of himself. He does not feel compelled by the morality of respect which he feels is exercised locally:

I rushed to my computer and logged into the forum and obviously wrote the first that you probably read, and so I wasn't of afraid of anyone because I was a foreigner I don't really care about what people think about me, because anyway I am branded as a foreigner...

Findings

The following hypotheses or propositions are formed as a result of the different stages of analyses.

The forum as agent of change

If participants experience alienation from and dissatisfaction with the dominant culture on campus (based on their convictions, personal history, race, colour, language), then they use the forum to express their discomfort with institutional practices.

If the expectations of the forum are focused on the forum as an instrument of social justice and agent of change, the forum acquires a moralistic and rationalistic character, the level of conflict becomes higher and participants find the forum does not meet their idealistic expectations. Such participants' style become pervasively declarative and even aggressive and is frequently experienced by readers as a verbal assault. Potential forum participants are deterred from participating, as its interaction seems disrespectful and the public exposure, potentially harmful.

If the forum is viewed as an agent of change, the perception is that its populist and democratic character is undermining its influence on management. The fact that everyone can participate, leads to a lack of serious discussions and the lack of seriousness leads to management generally ignoring all the discourse in the forum. Even those messages that are serious and voice legitimate criticisms are not acknowledged. The populist and democratic character of the forum can therefore be viewed as negative. This is similar to the view of ideal speech of Habermas (1990): if arguments and evidence are not the basis of discourse, the discourse is seen as inferior and lacking.

Normalistic and rationalistic character

If the forum acquires a normalistic character, participants expect the style and content of participations to meet certain formal ideal standards. Preference is given to rationalistic arguments and relating personal experiences becomes less convincing. It also follows that the

idealistic expectations of content and style leads to an intolerance of certain voices and ways of expression, and undermines the democratic potential of the forum.

If participants find that the discourse on the forum represents views they regard as disrespectful, hegemonic, non-universal and subjectivist, then they resort to rhetoric which marginalizes the discourse of others (through “trolling”, humour, by using rationalistic devices portraying their messages as deficient in different aspects, such as faulty argumentation, inferior evidence). Some participants aim to oppose and ridicule those people who practice “absurd discourse” which does not allow constructive participation. These participants eventually find the forum frustrating and terminate their interaction on it.

Moderation

If participants feel especially discriminated against by the opinions and views expressed on the forum, then stronger preference is given to external moderation, and management is expected to intervene. When management approves the views which echo their own, they offer support and encouragement to those expressing them and encourage them to pursue their writing on the forum. Management interferes, however, with participants whom they regard as insensitive by forcing them to acknowledge their mistakes publicly, as in forcing them to make an apology to those they presumably offended on the forum. Management also shows a preference for arguments which meet a certain academic standard, thereby limiting topics of discussion and inhibiting freedom of speech.

The forum as place to share

If participants are using the forum to share an experience, their identity is not criticized and they continue their participation. The forum does not frustrate their expectations, as they do not expect it to change anything. Participants who share an experience are more sympathetically responded to by other female participants, while male participants tend to question the legitimacy of the meaning attached to the experience.

The forum as a place of growth

If a participant realizes that s/he has been intolerant of opposing views, minimal credit is given to their opponents’ participation. If a participant rethinks his/her interaction with opponents at all, the only positive reflection on the opponents’ participation is that they provide an opportunity to be contradicted.

If participants view their opponents as unmoving, it can be ascribed to the fact that they read forum participations without taking the context of their opponents into account. A misjudgement of online identity then follows.

Conclusion

This analysis shows that grounded theory as methodology does offer the means to explore a narrative which counters the main narrative, or the ideal view that online environments are definite promoters of free speech, equality and democracy. Participants who dominate the forum do, in contrast to their idealistic views and great expectations of the potential of the forum to equalize and be the rectifier of wrongs, prove themselves to be the new oppressors as they

construct new opponents in various ways, of which moralistic condemnation forms the prevalent strategy. By labelling their online opponents as politically and socially deviant and academically inferior, a new inequality is formed.

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NARRATIVES COUNTERING THE DEMOCRATISING IDEAL OF DISCOURSE IN AN ONLINE FORUM OF A HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION

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Abstract. This paper describes power inequalities among participants in an online forum at a higher education institution in South Africa. Critical poststructuralist theory informs the study as it investigates how hegemony influences the strategic interaction of participants. An interpretive analysis uncovered elements of a cyclic process of intensified exclusion, inequality and oppression. This took place within a virtual space which is theoretically idealized as an equalizer and promoter of freedom of speech. The process involved in the eliciting of voices is described and the interpretation of subjective accounts tells of the disillusioned experiences of a potential liberating form of technology. Instead of alleviating conflict, the potential of the online forum is subverted and intensifies the alienation of and animosity between participants. Proposals for moderation are made to change the forum to a democratic, inclusive space.

1. Introduction

Some information systems designers and theorists construct an idealistic view of effecting equality and democracy through information technology. They propose that a virtual environment supports and is designed by the principles of an open, free and democratic society (Mcguire, Kiesler, & Siegel, 1987), that it is an equal space where honest opinions can be expressed freely (Fernback, 1997; Sproull & Kiesler, 1991) and that because the space is online participants are more likely to speak their minds, as they cannot experience the readers' reactions face to face (Moor, 2007). According to (O'Sullivan & Flanagan, 2003) reduced social cues can result in greater equality in participation and a reduction of status related differences.

Other experts in the field of information technology maintain that the potential inherent in online spaces can be used in less than ideal ways. Cecez-Kecmanovic *et al.* (1999) report how a university brought about organizational change by a seemingly democratic process of consulting faculty through the use of the internet and email, but the eventual decisions were made while expressed concerns were ignored. Consulting through email and the internet, therefore, only appeared democratic and gave a superficial air of managerial care.

Higher education institutions (HEIs) do not escape reproducing discourse domination by making use of internet technology. Information technology is expected to contribute to and be instrumental in the democratization of the university, through such avenues as encouraging and promoting free speech. However, the potential inherent in these technologies can create a lack of transparency, inequality and domination, all of which are not only characteristic of undemocratic management styles, but are also experienced in oppressing interactions amongst employees. The narrative countering the presumed idealism inherent in online discussions is consequently researched in the case study which is here described.

Academic members at an HEI in South Africa established an online forum to voice their opinions about issues such as the impact and expectations of socio-political change on a former mono-cultural university. One of the changes included the merging of two previous independent universities into one institution. Within the larger institution, the three campuses with their distinct and diverse student demographics, provide a fair representation of the different cultures of the country. One campus in an industrialized area became predominantly black and represented students from a diversity of ethnic groups (Zulu, Sotho, Tswana), one campus in the former apartheid homeland of Bophutatswana remained predominantly black and consisted of a large group of Tswana-speaking students, and one remained predominantly white and consisted of a majority of students whose home language is Afrikaans (a language which has developed in South Africa since 1600, mainly from Dutch origin).

Although the forum had been created on the former "white campus", employees from the larger institution have access to it. Perspectives from opposite sides of the political spectrum appeared in the online discussions. Employees with nostalgic views about the dispensation before the governmental change to democracy (1994) represent a conservative, and often a cataclysmic view of the socio-political transformation of the university and the country. These views are declaratively stated and consequently opposed by liberal participants with pro-transformation views on the forum, while the

more moderate voices do not have a pervasive presence on the forum. Apart from the fact that the forum eventually featured mainly opposing views, it ideally offered the opportunity for any employee, whether academic or administrative, to share opinions online. It also served as an alternative space where issues could be raised which had no channels for expression elsewhere. The opportunity to practice free speech and interact with colleagues in an equal space ideally provided unlimited potential for free expression.

This paper describes the divergent motivations, perceptions and interactions of participants in this online forum, named "Have your say." Theory concerning the hindrances and opportunities to change this forum to a democratic space, is built from an analysis of the subjective accounts and perceptions of participants about their interactions on the forum and the offline consequences of their online participation. The objective is to understand the subjective positions of the participants as they interact, as they assume and experience interventions and stances of oppression in their presentation of issues, arguments and experiences through the forum text, and also through their reflections on their participation in interviews with the researcher.

The philosophy inherent in the interpretation and theoretical framework of critical theory is the foundation of the study and also influences the findings and hypotheses formulated at the end of the analysis. The criteria set by critical poststructuralist theory, which informs this study, stress subjectivity, emotionality and feeling (Denzin, 1999) elements which are acknowledged, advocated and regarded as prerequisites by Young (2000) in the attainment of democracy through discourse, as they describe the situatedness of participants and lead to an understanding of their positions.

The paper is divided into three sections: a discussion of the choices in the selection of participants and the considerations which determined the interviews, a presentation of the findings and proposals for the formation of a democratic online forum.

2. The Collection of Data

In this section the considerations of the researchers are discussed in their choices of participants, interview style and questions, forum text and offline contextual data. Online and offline data are incorporated in the study, as these offer a holistic picture of the participants and serve as an "expanded ethnography" (Beneito-Montagut, 2011, p. 717).

2.1. CHOICE OF THE THREAD AND THE INTERVIEWEES

The research started with a textual analysis of a thread on the online forum, which a female lecturer introduced and named "Racism, the other side." This discussion was chosen as it had a considerable number of participations (24) expressing diverse viewpoints and employing different styles of presentation, such as argumentation, relating personal experiences, informative pieces and quotations from newspapers. The participants also comprised people who regularly participated in previous forum discussions, opposing each other in declarative ways, and who had consequently formed prominent identities within the forum.

The forum text can be viewed as a micro-context, while the interviews are part of a larger context and enable the researchers to understand the power which is exerted within and around the discourse (Fairclough, 2003; Wodak, 1996). The online data are procured by an inquiry into the text (the thread), while the offline data (interviews, observations) provide the real life context of participants. The interviews offered the opportunity for participants to recount, in their own terms, how their context influenced the production of their texts. The online and offline data eventually offer “multiple meanings and experiences” (Orgad, 2009, p. 34) that emerge in and around the discussion forum.

2.2. FORMULATION OF QUESTIONS

As the content referred to in the thread and the participants’ reactions on the forum were both of intense emotional quality, the interviewer ensured that the participants did not feel exposed or pressurised to defend their interactions, but rather felt comfortable to reflect on their participation in the forum. The objective was to create a feeling of rapport (Charmaz, 2006) and support in a conversation which resembled a social encounter between the interviewer and interviewee (Packer, 2011). In this sense, the face-to-face environment was quite different from the online environment, being an opportunity for the participant to react more spontaneously than when they constructed their messages on the forum, which ultimately proved to have a competitive and moralistic context. The situations in which the participants expressed their opinions differed in spontaneity and instead of having a reader for their “performance text” (Denzin, 1999; Van Doorn, 2011), they had a face-to-face interviewer which encouraged the spontaneity of the interaction.

If certain consequences to their participations were important enough, participants were asked to relate those incidents. In this respect, the study focuses on narratives as a method of inquiry (Webster & Mertova, 2007).

The participants are referred to by pseudonyms, John, Susan, Stephen and Francois. The first three participants offered their views in the interview on the specific discussion, “Racism, the other side,” while Francois did not participate in the specific thread but his role in the forum is considered to be relevant in exploration of the research question.

3. The Analysis

The structure in Figure 1 shows the strategy of interaction as the central phenomenon in this analysis, as it describes what all the categories relate to. Figure 1 indicates the motivation of a person and the consequence of interaction equally influence the interaction strategies they employ. The interaction strategies are articulated around the identity formed online, the choice of a certain style in which to interact, the perceptions formed of other participants and the role of offline institutional interventions. The motivation for forum participation was defined by a person’s expectations of the forum, personal convictions and personal history. The consequence of participation could be

either to eventually end any interaction online or to pursue participation and to stay involved in the discourse.

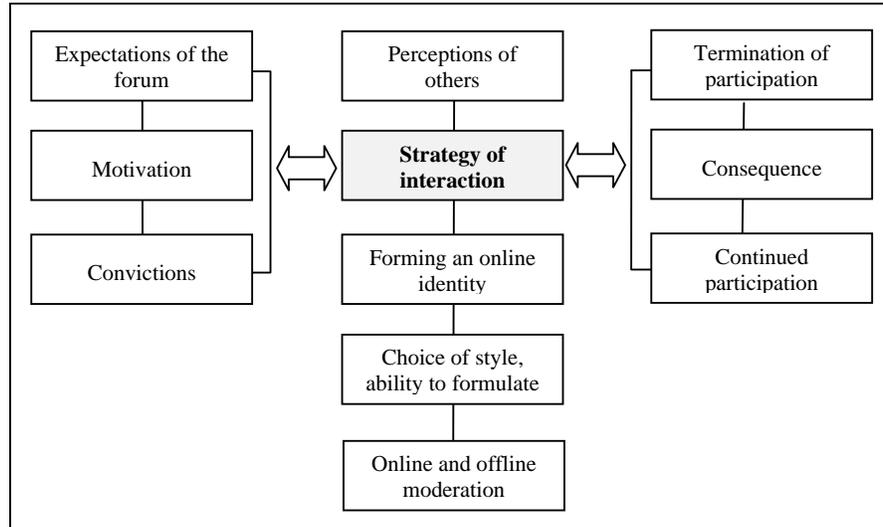


Figure 1. Interrelationship of the categories

In the following section, the paths shown in Figure 1 are applied to the discussion of four participants' online and offline interactions. Participants' titles in the paragraph headings serve as an indication of the identity they constructed for themselves in the forum.

3.1. JOHN: THE CHALLENGER

3.1.1. Strategy of Interaction: Choice of Style→Online Moderation

John adopts a strong confrontational and declarative style in his forum participation (as seen in Table 1, which mirrors the strategy of using oppositional language (you-us, white-black) of the person he addresses and which mirrors the same strong criticism used by the person in her introductory post, titled "Racism, the other side":

With your bitter racist remarks and quasi academic references, Beth, you are opening a can of worms about your and other white colleagues' similar ideas about us, your black colleagues. Your research and convictions do now prove that black people are of a lower cognitive ability than white and Asian people. Your stream of logic (very dubious I have to add) lead me to the conclusion that black colleagues therefore 1. have to be very thankful that we are tolerated on your white, Western piece of pride of a university, 2. are not of the same intellectual ability as white and Asian colleagues 3. must not complain about the racism and other unwanted spin-offs of the western framework of thinking.

The criticism of Beth's "stream of logic" is indicative of John's own online criticism of Beth's participation. This conforms to the forum's context of high internal

criticism and the imposition of own norms, something which Stephen introduces in the thread “Racism the other side” in response to Beth’s post. A certain standard is expected from academic participants, which Beth fails to meet. As Stephen prefers argumentation, he especially expects his opponents to conform to his style of participation, and those who support his line of argument, such as John, also conform to the same form of criticism he practises.

3.1.2. Strategy of Interaction: Online identity→Perceptions of Others→Termination of Participation

John also stresses his political identity as being black and defines the dominant culture of the campus as politically white. John is quite honest in the identity he creates in the forum. He sees himself as a challenger, someone who problematises life and raises issues. He also appreciates strong reactions to his views instead of polite silence which he attributes to members of the dominating culture on the campus:

- John: I just went in with who I am, and I think the impression which people could now get of the identity which they could contribute to me, uhm might be one of an angry person who do not understand the whole...uhm...context of the pace, and not the traditions and culture and not the necessary respect for what is going on here, as a troublemaker, I think that identity could have been formed in the minds of some.
- Researcher: And would you be able to live with that?
- John: No, I am not a troublemaker, I do not see myself like that, I see myself as someone who goes about with life in a critical way, and who troubles things which people find too comfortable, because real life is not such a untroubling, deadening existence.

John equates the white culture to hegemony and regards his white colleagues, in this sense, as representatives of the hegemony he wishes to oppose. When his white colleagues did not meet his expectations by supporting his views on hegemony on the forum, John risked a negative identity attributed to him, as a troublemaker.

The analysis of the quotation which follows, offers a glimpse of the interrelatedness of the categories as shown in Figure 1. John’s offline identity corresponds to his online identity: he perceives himself as a black man in confrontation online and offline with the hegemonic character of the university. He experiences himself to be excluded in two ways, by way of his race, and by way of his opposition to hegemonic practices on and off the forum. He opposes these practices alone and runs the risk of being identified with causing trouble and creating conflict on the forum. He opposes hegemonic practices without the supportive participation of his white colleagues on the forum. His expectations of his colleagues offline are therefore not met online and he consequently ends his participation:

I saw that my colleagues, who share verbally with me the stuff that I am writing, but they do not participate themselves...and I told them, how will I, who carry the mark of an outsider, although I am an insider here by virtue of my employment here, how will I as outsider ever touch people in their deepest being with the stuff I am writing, because I can be brassed off as a bitter, young black little man...not part of the dominating Afrikaans culture, culture is a dirty word, let’s say hegemony...so I started writing less,

because I saw that personally the hegemony, which they say they do not support, the oppressive and exclusionary types of practices and declarations, that they do not write, and well, let me stop writing, let the Afrikaners [white descendants of mainly Dutch and other European settlers sic] fight among themselves...and the lone Englishman, Stephen, let him, he has time to write, I did anyway not have that much time to write.

The hesitance of John's colleagues to support him online might be ascribed to the style of interaction he employs in his participation. He does also not seem to be critical of the style he employs.

3.1.3. *Motivation*→*Strategy of Interaction*

This category groups the data which relate to John's convictions, which inform his participation in and expectations of the potential of the forum, e.g. as a rectifier of wrongs, as a mouthpiece for social justice. John describes his grounding in and experience of social justice and his sensitivity to political oppression as his motivation for protesting instances of the condoning and practice of hegemony on and off the forum:

What incited me specifically, was when I saw some people, who write on the [forum sic] in a way which is not respectful to others who are not of the same religious background, of their educational level, of their social stature, mmmm yes things like that incited me and, as I came from a strict...not totally strict, good grounding in social justice, and worked and lived before I came here, could not remain quiet, it was like a red rag in front of a bull.

It is a logical deduction that John's history of participation and his personal convictions lead to the choice of a declarative strategy. The "red rag in front of a bull" aptly describes his choice of interaction with Beth, whom he addresses in the thread.

3.2. SUSAN: THE SHARER

3.2.1. *Motivation*→*Choice of Style*→*Consequence*

Susan's style is cautious and corresponds to her motive for participation: she wants to share an experience to test whether her view of an incident which could be interpreted either as racist or rude, is acceptable. Her motivation for this specific interaction is to have clarity about her experience of the incident:

Researcher: Your motive was, you just wanted to throw your story in the pool?

Susan: Throw it in the pool and see what people say, do they experience it too? I wanted an answer, I wanted to see if there are other people who have the same experience and if they...uhm would have reacted the same as I did, and if they would have seen it differently, and what would have been their reaction, was my reaction normal or not?

Susan attributes a therapeutic role to the forum, as the reaction to her telling of the incident also supports her own interpretation. She absolutely resists expressing judgments about racism on the forum as she experiences the topic as very sensitive.

3.2.2. *Expectations of the Forum*

As her demeanour is being marked by cautiousness, Susan does not expect much of the forum other than being a dumping place and outlet for daily frustrations. In her opinion, great expectations of influence on a management level will only undermine the success of the forum:

There are certain things [on the forum] which should be taken seriously [by management sic], but uhm does top management of the university really have time to look around on the [forum sic]? No, they don't.

Having the status of an administrative position, she acknowledges the limited power given to people in her position for alerting management to issues of importance or danger on the forum:

My opinion is, is that, when there is something really important which becomes serious, which one say, almost becomes scary, uhm then it is the administrative staff which brings those things under the attention of managers, so, yes...top management does not have the time to read [the forum sic], but I think administrative staff tell them, go and have a look, go and read quickly...but it is not the forum's place to force decisions, yes, it is not the forum to cause decisions to be made, it will never be a success if that is what people expect [of the forum sic].

Even in her assigning a therapeutic role to the forum, one can intuit the frustration Susan has about the lack of influence the forum has on management:

Susan: It is literary so, stand in a soundproof room and shout...
 Researcher: Do you see the forum like that, as a soundproof room?
 Susan: Yes
 Researcher: Where you can only shout?
 Susan: Yes, a stuffed pillow and hit it, have a pillow fight, get rid of that which...how shall I say, make you angry in a sense, uhm...make you bitter later on, things which you can not...Get it out, get it over with...

In spite of the disappointment she experiences because of management's disregard of issues presented on the forum, Susan has not terminated her participation.

3.3. STEPHEN: THE "LIBERAL"

3.3.1. *Motivation→Strategy of Interaction→Consequence*

Stephen sees the forum as a space where arguments can be practiced and tested. His style is generally informative and impersonal, except in his confrontational interaction with Beth where he employs a declarative style and uses rationalistic devices to minimize her arguments. He sets the stage in his reaction to her comments on the thread by criticizing the quality of her arguments and evidence. His informative sociological insights are appreciated and praised by male participants (such as John and Francois). Susan does not share the appreciation and refers to Stephen's participation as difficult to grasp. One can conclude that a community is created for the informed by Stephen and those who do not follow his arguments (like Susan) or do not construct arguments in the way he condones and prefers (like Beth), are excluded.

Stephen does, in retrospect, view his participation as dissenting and describes it in the initial stage of his interaction on the forum as “trolling,” in which he identifies certain aspects of the university’s culture which he finds unacceptable and strange. His opinion is that the motive for using this technique was to raise participants’ consciousness, leading people to question the *status quo*. He views his trolling in the forum as contra-productive, leading to the intolerance of readers. He concludes that his trolling stereotyped his online identity as being disruptive and dissenting which makes him unpopular, something which he now would rather avoid:

I think in some ways it was sort of slightly more a sophisticated form of trolling, really, it was at first then I pop up and say this prayer stuff is terrible, all this religion is crap, we should get rid of it and people immediately I think see that as an extremist position and you know, that coloured the rest of my commentary, and if I can do things over again, I possibly wouldn’t be as hard about, hard core about as when I started...

3.3.2. *Online Identity→Perceptions of Others*

Contributing to the negative effect of his trolling, Stephen feels that other participants view him as unmoving, someone who does not engage personally with issues and who does not have room for opinions different from his own. In contrast, he sees himself as a reasonable person, willing to listen to other people.

Stephen sees his main opponent (Beth) as someone who does not engage with opposing arguments because she does not interact, learn or change her attitude. He views her postings as voicing a populist view without any original thought of her own, which is on the one hand useful for conducting a debate, but on the other hand demonstrates her courage - and in a way her naïvety. She presents old evolutionary ideas in her explanation of the development of races and her contributions are therefore seen as academically naïve. Her presentation of cases, which can be interpreted as racist, are criticized as unconvincing because of the lack of information she offers.

Stephen criticizes another female participant as she, like Beth, unconsciously accepts a grand racist narrative. Stephen regards race as an easy explanation for her feeling of victimization because he believes that encounters with black people and the ensuing feelings of victimization are informed by racial stereotyping.

Stephen realizes that his attitude towards Beth is patronizing and he playfully refers to his treatment of her as “hermeneutic bullying.” He is aware of the power play between John, himself and Beth. He acknowledges the advantage that powerful normative positions on human rights and academic discourse allow participants such as himself, although Stephen does not seem to care that Beth is insulted in various ways as a result of their moralistic positions.

3.3.3. *Expectations of the Forum*

Stephen’s wish was to move the consciousness of forum participants to the left. This wish concurred with his initial idealism that an online forum could bring about change. His opinion is that serious discussions on the forum could attract management’s attention and could result in structural changes. His view at the time of the interview was that popular discussions, where everyone can make a contribution, are not seen by management as serious, and that it seems as if the influence of serious discussions on a structural level is undermined by the “democratic” characteristics of the forum. Stephen

believes that any discussion therefore, however serious, is disregarded rendering the forum itself powerless.

3.3.4. *Online and Offline Moderation*

Stephen feels that censorship of forum contributions by management weakens the notion of free speech. The intervention of the institution shuts conversations on emotionally uncomfortable issues down and narrows the topics to be discussed on the forum. He also considers other discussions on the forum (such as religion, hostel culture) to have racial undertones and thinks discussions on these topics might be threatened and participants in these threads prosecuted institutionally. He therefore prefers discussion not to be censored, and preferably on uncomfortable issues. He is, however, not conscious of the negative effect of his online arguments nor of his prescriptiveness.

3.4. FRANCOIS: THE “PROVOCATEUR”

3.4.1. *Motivation*

Francois’s initial aim was to provoke debate on the forum. Religion is his first entry point of interest relative to which he starts questioning some conventions. His first arguments were directed against theologians and radical Christians:

I remember the first topic I ever tackled, and that was back in 2000 I think or 2001, was this bunch of radical Christians, uh, petitioning against the advertisement of ice creams, the seven deadly sins, the Ola ice cream, the Ola people came with this commercial slogan, eating this ice cream would be like embracing the seven deadly sins, and so a bunch of people at the faculty of theology uhm, petitioned and ultimately you know, got their way, and this to me, you know, was a provocation to common sense and what we stand for as a university, because we are a university, we’re not a church, and at the time you know, the difference was unclear, because we were still the Christian university, and so the lines were fairly blurring.

Francois holds the opinion that the radical views of the participants in the forum (such as the support for creationism and a negative view of humankind) undermine the potential universal tone of the forum. These factors make the forum unfit for reasonable debate, in his opinion. He wishes for moderate voices which he thinks can make the forum more representative of the majority.

3.4.2. *Choice of style→Perception of others→Online Identity*

Eventually Francois takes the position of *provocateur*, as he does not believe that common ground for reasoning and debate can be found. He further regards the university as a fertile field for provocation. His motive in adopting the role of *provocateur* is to mock and ridicule people, not foreseeing that this style provokes attacks and bad reactions. In retrospect, he does not see the provocations as the best way of interacting, and acknowledges that this type of discourse becomes emotionally challenging. He states that his ultimate aim was to antagonize and to be obnoxious, and finds the identity constructed around these two characteristics inevitable. He feels his forum ego was built as a result of the context he had to deal with, finding no alternative

to engaging in debates which seem archaic and “insane,” and thereby exposing himself as the *provocateur*.

Francois finds himself in a culture which is in conflict to his own, which he views as marked by critical discourse. He sees his outsider status as fortunate and does not feel bound by the morality of respect which he considers to be exercised locally. In this sense, he uses profanity and finds reactions to it entertaining.

3.4.3. *Offline and Online Moderation→Consequence*

Francois uses the forum to declare his disassociation with the culture of the university’s residents, which he believes violates students’ rights and inhibits their emancipation and learning. He uses the forum space to charge the residential manager with passively allowing a negative culture to develop, irresponsibility and undermining the development of a culture of learning. Francois was forced to make an official apology to the residential manager on the forum and had to revise his initial apology when management regarded it as a stubborn restatement of his adversarial position and not an admission of guilt. Only his second apology remained on the forum, his other “uncomfortable” posts were deleted. As his offline relationship with the rector was of a friendly nature, Francois was amicably forced into an apology which management accepted:

Yeah, the rector back then, who is Cathy, who is a close friend as well, uhm and she tried to mend the pieces, and she asked me, maybe I was the more flexible person in the whole equation I guess, but I think she also...I think she, I wouldn’t say she emotionally blackmailed me, but, you know, there wasn’t any other solution for me...

After this intervention from the university’s management, Francois is convinced that his participation from there on has been fruitless. The power of control management has, he believes, hinders conversation and deprives participants of the opportunity for argumentation. Consequently, Francois’s participation diminished. This incident had a traumatic impact on both him and his family:

You know back then it was taking a toll on my family as well, as it was the subject of conversations for a while and obviously because of the emotional affect that you derive from such a situation, so, after this episode, I saw that, well, what can you do anyway, you can use the forum as much as you want, but it is obviously controlled in many ways, and, and you can’t convince the people of your point.

In retrospect, Francois believes that his reaction to the hostel incident and the consequent action management took, was not strong enough. The position he initially took on issues did not change through his participation, and the act of participation strengthened his convictions and the directions he took over the time.

3.4.4. *Personal History→Online Identity*

Francois feels that his foreign status creates a distance between himself and the culture in which he works; he does not feel fearful about what he says on the forum. He does not care about others’ estimation of himself. He does not feel compelled by the morality of respect which he feels is exercised locally:

I rushed to my computer and logged into the forum and obviously wrote the first that you probably read, and so I wasn't of afraid of anyone because I was a foreigner I don't really care about what people think about me, because anyway I am branded as a foreigner.

4. Findings

The following proposals are formed, based on the analysis of the text and the interviews. Although only four participants' data were analysed, the proposals are based on the analysis of all the data:

4.1. THE FORUM AS AGENT OF CHANGE

When participants experience alienation from and dissatisfaction with the dominant culture on campus (based on their convictions, personal history, race, colour, language), they use the forum to express their discomfort with institutional practices.

If the expectations of the forum are focused on the forum as an instrument of social justice and agent of change, the forum acquires a moralistic and rationalistic character, the level of conflict becomes higher and participants find the forum does not meet their idealistic expectations. Such participants' style become pervasively declarative and even aggressive and is frequently experienced by readers as a verbal assault. Potential forum participants are deterred from participating, as its interactions seem disrespectful and the public exposure seems potentially harmful.

If the forum is viewed as an agent of change, then the perception is that its populist and democratic character is undermining its influence on management. The fact that everyone can participate, leads to a lack of serious discussions and the lack of seriousness leads to management generally ignoring all discourse in the forum. Even those messages that are serious and voice legitimate criticism are not acknowledged. The populist and democratic character of the forum is therefore viewed as negative. This sentiment supports the exclusive characteristic of the forum.

4.2. NORMALISTIC AND RATIONALISTIC CHARACTER

If the forum acquires a normalistic character, then participants expect the style and content of participations to meet certain formal ideal standards. Preference is given to rationalistic arguments, and relating personal experiences becomes less convincing. It also follows that the idealistic expectations of content and style lead to an intolerance of certain voices and ways of expression, and undermine the democratic potential of the forum.

If participants find that the discourse on the forum represents views they regard as disrespectful, hegemonic, non-universal and subjectivist, then they resort to rhetoric which marginalizes others' discourse. Some participants aim to oppose and ridicule those people who practice "absurd discourse" which does not allow constructive participation. These participants eventually find the forum frustrating and terminate their interactions on it.

4.3. EXTERNAL MODERATION

If participants feel especially discriminated against by the opinions and views expressed on the forum, stronger preference is given to external moderation, and management is expected to intervene. When management approves the views which echo their own, they offer support and encouragement to those expressing them and encourage them to pursue their writing on the forum. Management interferes, however, with participants whom they regard as insensitive by forcing them to acknowledge their mistakes publicly on the forum.

4.4. THE FORUM AS PLACE TO SHARE

If participants are using the forum to share an experience, their identity is not criticized and they continue their participation. The forum does not frustrate their expectations, as they do not expect it to change anything. Participants who share an experience are more sympathetically responded to by other female participants, while male participants tend to question the legitimacy of the meaning attached to the experience.

4.5. THE FORUM AS A PLACE OF GROWTH AND REFLECTION

If a participant realizes that s/he has been intolerant of opposing views, then minimal credit is given to the participation of their opponents. If a participant rethinks his/her interactions with opponents at all, the only positive reflection on the opponents' participation is that they provide an opportunity to be contradicted.

If participants view their opponents as unmoving, it can be ascribed to the fact that forum participations are read without taking the context of their opponents into account. A misjudgement of online identity then follows.

5. Conclusion

In contrast to their idealistic view and great expectations of the potential of the forum to equalize and be the rectifier of wrongs, participants who dominate the forum prove themselves to be the new oppressors, as they construct new opponents in various ways, of which moralistic condemnation forms the prevalent strategy. By labelling their online opponents as politically and socially deviant and academically inferior a new inequality is formed.

It is through sensible moderation that the forum can reach its potential as a place of growth and an agent of change. It could also invite the participation of more moderate voices, lending a balance to the forum. Certain opportunities in building an emancipatory space are discussed in the following paragraphs:

5.1. VISIBLE, IMPARTIAL AND PARTICIPATORY INTERNAL MODERATION

As the current moderator is invisible, partial and intrusive, a moral incoherence (Sokolowski, 2001) is created. The moderator should be visible, should stand as a moral judge outside the debate between participants and should assume the role of a co-

participant and not be someone whose presence is only made known by negative interventions.

5.2. NORMALISTIC AND RATIONALISTIC CHARACTER

The normalistic and rationalistic character of the discourse leads participants to assume moralistic roles and eventually to become hostile, disrespectful and alienating. Sensible moderation could rectify this by acknowledging the person behind the statement. The moderator can set an example by stating the need to know more about the person and the motive for taking a certain view of issues. In addressing participants, the moderator can also employ, as a strategy of interaction, the rhetorical devices Young (2000) proposes, such as to greet and to compliment the participants, something which is absent in an online forum. The issue often takes priority and the participant is ignored by those who build the thread. The practice of greeting and complimenting acknowledges the person behind the statement and lends a humane and a positive emotional element to the discussion. By doing this, the linguistic act does not serve to be the only representation of who the person is. Readers construct online identities and these constructs might be a misrepresentation of the real identity. Participants who are not eloquent and do not express themselves in their first language have a disadvantage and might represent themselves inadequately. Instead of creating moral incoherence by assuming the moralist position of the majority of participants, the moderator must aim to bring opposing parties to a better understanding. This intervention might also serve to build reciprocal respect among participants which is one of the tenets of the ideal speech situation of Habermas (1990).

5.3. THE FORUM AS PLACE TO SHARE AND ENGAGE

The moderator can encourage the sharing of personal experiences to clarify certain positions. Linguistic acts can obscure meaning and the telling of life stories might bring more understanding to specific situations (Young, 2000). The focus on debating might also be broadened to include sharing. If the practice of certain styles, such as trolling and ridiculing, serves the purpose not to engage in social interaction, then a moderator can facilitate moving participants beyond those styles. The moderator can acknowledge the linguistic act and move on by asking what motivates the specific choice of style.

In this specific case study, sensible interaction between participants is absent. This can be seen in the choice of declarative style in the majority of cases. The choice of ridicule, trolling and flaming also does not lead to meaningful and engaging discourse, although some of these might provide comic relief for likeminded readers. Acknowledging the humour is certainly a way to start, but the motive of the participant has to be clarified for proper understanding. Linguistic acts in the forum mostly cloud less eloquent participants' true meanings and lead to the misconstruction of online identities.

5.4. THE FORUM AS A PLACE OF GROWTH

Participants can, within an inclusive, non-competitive, friendly and accepting online community, reach more. Aristotle held the view that morality cannot exist or be

developed without a community of friends: “With friends men are more able both to think and act” (Sokolowski, 2001).

One needs friendship to grow and to realize one’s potential. The forum can offer the opportunity for people to reach something they are not able to reach themselves (such as the truth), as a friendship enables a person to attain something more (Jacquette, 2001; Sokolowski, 2001).

An acceptance of styles and divergent perceptions of situations leads to more understanding and respect. A community which supports rather than divides could also encourage more voices, and not be characterized by the declarative styles of polarized voices only.

5.5. THE FORUM AS AGENT OF CHANGE AND REFLECTION

If a moderator assumes an equal, visible co-participative rather than an unequal, invisible intervening position, emancipation is possible within the forum. The participants can become motivated to become engaged and reflect on their own positions as the moderator as co-participant sets an example of amiable engagement and reflective interaction.

The role of the invisible, detached and punitive moderator is replaced by a visible, involved co-participant who co-defines and is ultimately co-responsible for the creation of a friendly, inclusive space of mutual trust.

The ideal would be that sensible moderation of the forum would change oppressive practices within the forum and also have a democratizing effect on the institution. As participation is motivated and articulated by the thought of what the space potentially can effect, such as to be a restorer of justice and to address oppressive practices, a critical consciousness is needed not to turn these ideals into oppressive practices.

Eventually a careful moderator acknowledges that the space offered by the forum belongs to and is defined by the employees. The moderator and participants are however part of a larger context of potential undemocratic demands, such as that the forum should uphold and create the ideal image of an institution. Functioning within an institution which is defined as being educational, one should hope that space is allowed for deviant, dissentient and possibly unemancipatory views. By allowing the expression of these views in an inclusive forum, they can constructively be challenged and changed.

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(UN)DESIRED INTERVENTIONS IN AN ONLINE DISCUSSION FORUM AT A HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION IN SOUTH AFRICA

ABSTRACT

Interventions from management in an online forum at a higher education institution in South Africa in order to moderate discussions result in antagonism and the smothering of dissident discourse. Critical poststructuralist theory, the model of communicative democratic discourse as held by Iris Marion Young, and the tenets of ideal speech as held by Jürgen Habermas, inform the study while it investigates how the internal and external moderation of the forum limit and terminate essential discourse which could be instrumental in the critical construction of meaning and the exercise of freedom of speech. The methodology of grounded theory and the approach of critical discourse analysis direct the exploration of interview transcripts and forum text. In the analysis of characteristics displayed in discursive moderating strategies, the researchers are enabled to propose a form of emancipatory moderation within the discourse which could result in better understanding of opposing parties. The hegemonous and distant character as seen in the discourse concerning current moderation is sub-versed to allow participatory and equal moderation for the establishment of an enabling, accepting and diverse online environment.

Keywords: embodiment; moderation; online forum; higher education institution; freedom of speech; censoring; democratic discourse; emancipation

INTRODUCTION

Universities are ideally world seminar rooms which offer opportunities to openly form, share and debate ideas to ultimately find the truth. In this context freedom of speech plays a central role and forms a basic prerequisite and right for the development of academics. Williams (as referred to by Dandridge & Mendus, 2012) however insists that freedom of speech for academics and the ideal of an open university are challenged within the “highly regulated context of universities.”

An online discussion forum of a formerly mono-cultural higher education institution in South Africa was established with the objective in mind that employees could raise issues and share ideas in such a virtual seminar room. With the transformation of the university to a

multi-racial institution, anxiety levels among employees rose. Those in favour of the transformation used the forum to voice their opinions about remaining hegemonous and unemancipatory practices, while those with cataclysmic views about political and institutional transformation opposed the so-called liberals and expressed nostalgia about the time before transformation.

Although these opinions are divergent, the ideal would be that they can be expressed in an environment which is secure and equalizing (Herring, Job-Sluder, Scheckler, & Barab, 2002, p. 371). In such an ideal university context, participants of different academic positions, cultural identities and divergent perspectives can freely raise issues of concern. This can be done without the status-related differences (O'Sullivan & Flanagin, 2003) which characterise and inhibit offline interactions. The presumed equalization of participants plays a motivating role, with the assumption that this alternative space offers the opportunity for free expression which might not be found elsewhere. In contrast to this ideal perspective of participants, or their “enabling logic,” some participants and members of management condone a “control logic” (De Laat, 2012, p. (1)) in the moderation of the forum and expect external intervention by way of censoring or controlling those with extremist and dangerous positions.

This paper describes how the rationalistic and moralistic context of internal and external moderation of the online discussion forum excludes participants. It aims to illustrate which participations are perceived as extremist and socially dangerous and how these participants’ voices are silenced. By these forceful acts, the proponents of the ideal speech situation (ISS) which Habermas (1990) characterizes as the absence of oppression and dominance are undermined. The central thesis of the paper is that moderating interventions are not aimed to reach a consensus and the common good of the ISS, but are driven by normalistic and moralistic concerns limiting online and offline uncomfortable positions in order to protect managerial and strategic concerns and to ignore and avoid conflict. These interventions do not facilitate the discourse towards expressing correct views in a moderate and refined way, but lead to more *flaming* and *trolling* (Herring, et al., 2002; Turnage, 2007) on the forum, a growing intolerance between discussants, non-constructive and disruptive comments, and the termination of participation. The opportunity for academics to learn the truth is sabotaged, as the discomfort which management experiences in interacting with perceived irrational and unreasonable participations leads to the silencing of voices. Instead of facing and experiencing uncomfortable views, the discourse on challenging issues is censored, which ultimately terminates real and potential voices.

The online and offline community of like-minded participants lends intellectual capital and authority to academic participations which assume rationalistic, detached and clinical positions, while more involved, emotional and seemingly ill-judged participations are perceived as intellectually inferior. This “Bourdieuian intellectual capital” (Wodak, 1996, pp. 25, 26) is dominant in the forum, contributing to the agreement that participations representing opposing world views have less learned styles and are consequently disregarded or acted on by way of some form of external moderation. External moderation eventually adds to the imbalance of power in the forum, which has already been caused by the internal dominance of rationalistic participations.

The verb “moderate” has a Latin root, which explains “modus” as “a medium quantity or quality” and the verb “moderare” as the action “to avoid extremes” (Hoad, 1996). Understood in the context of the paper, the act of moderation would mean to *avoid extreme voices*. A moderation of extreme voices on an online forum would be interpreted in the paradigm of deliberative democracy (Habermas, 1990) to bring opposing parties to a form of consensus. The paradigm of communicative democracy of Young (2000) however, would as an act of moderation allow opposing and extremist voices to occupy their place by way of different strategies. Young (2000) refers to these strategies as an emotive rhetorical process to bring opposing parties to the understanding of differences and specific situations and not necessarily to a rational agreement. Echoing Young’s (2000) insistence on emotive strategies in discourse, the postmodernist position on knowledge holds that “truth and knowledge are not only to be found through rational thought or method” (Webster & Mertova, 2007, p. 29), but also through emotional experience, which embodies both discomfort and conflict. Critical poststructuralist theory, which informs this study, stresses subjectivity, emotionality and feeling (Denzin, 1999, p. 113), elements which are acknowledged, advocated and regarded as prerequisite elements by Young (2000) in the understanding of others, the legitimization of their voices and eventually the democratization of everyone through discourse. This means that moderation should not become a means to silence extreme voices but rather to create the means for these to be heard.

Instead of enabling participants to speak their minds, the act of speaking out is used by moderating interventions as a means to control, limit and eventually disable freedom of speech. The forum enhances the visibility of those who participate and ultimately functions in a “Foucaultian panopticon” (Foucault, as cited by Rouse, 2003), which implies that a means is offered to management by the forum to see everything and to eventually control what they see. Moderation becomes what Foucault describes as “control or neutralization of dangerous

social elements” (as cited by Rouse, 2003, p. 100). Eventually a person whose participation causes discomfort with its readers and moderators is literally overpowered. In this respect Foucault’s explanation of power as the “right of seizure: of things, time, bodies, and ultimately life itself” is relevant (as cited by Rouse, 2003, p. 100), as these moderating interventions resulted in trauma, time to be spent in dealing with the processing of trauma and the termination of life on the forum. Even if the participation is in a virtual space and reality is represented through discourse, participants also create reality through discourse. This presented or created reality is just as real as face to face discourse, as it influences real life and can potentially lead to trauma. The virtual does matter and becomes “embodied matter” (Van Doorn, 2011). The fact that participation happens in a virtual space, does not diminish the reality of its influence. Participants in virtual space are materialized, or embodied through their presentations of themselves: “In this sense, the performative practices in digital spaces...resemble everyday physical experiences in their simultaneous incorporation of virtual and concrete elements to make sense of daily life...the digitally virtual is embedded in the ongoing life of the concrete and forms an important extension of the notions of reality and the context of action” (Shields, as cited by Van Doorn, 2011, p. 534). One can therefore conclude that the moderation of online participations is not experienced lightly and superficially as it serves as a significantly negative intervention in the participants’ lives.

The paper focuses on the moderation of the online forum: (i) by using grounded theory methodology and critical discourse analysis (Wodak, 1996), the researchers analyze the text of and interviews with participants who directly or indirectly experienced, feared, condoned or enforced the processes of moderation, and (ii) by formulating hypotheses and proposals in the building of theory of an alternative form of moderation.

MODERATING INTERVENTIONS

Grounded theory methodology (Strauss & Corbin, 2008) directs the empirical part of the study, allowing the researchers to formulate theory concerning moderation as the final stage of analysis. The following diagram illustrates the relationship between the different categories which was established through the procedure of selective coding. It is evident in this presentation of data, that the moderating interventions influence all the aspects of participation. In the discussion which follows, the paths indicated between categories will be referred to. The participants who are referred to in the next section, either condoned and practised forms of moderation or were subjected to it. Moralistic and rationalistic elements in

their moderating discursive interactions with participants, effect the exclusion of dissidents or those who oppose the normalistic view.

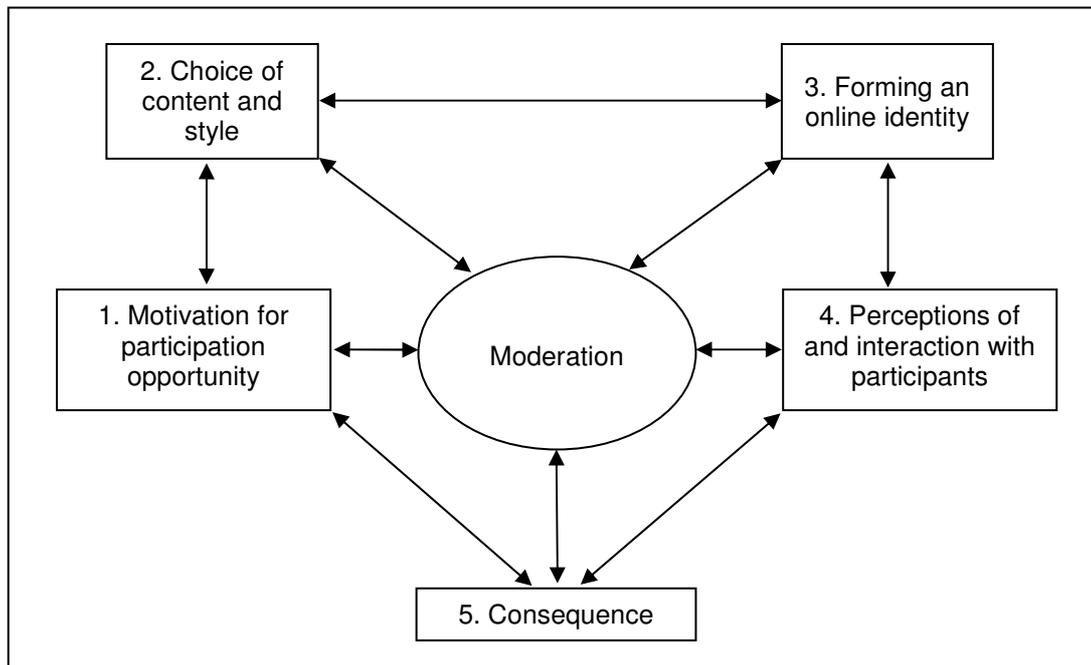


FIGURE 1: Categories to which moderation links

The voice of the people

In her time as member of the institution’s management, Cathy acted as the unannounced moderator of the forum. During the interview with the researcher, she states her perception of the forum as a useful therapeutic space (Figure 1:1) where employees could during the uncertain time of transformation to a racially integrated institution, voice their honest opinions. She also regards the forum as a place where people could make unguarded statements if they were afraid to do it elsewhere:

Cathy: And, people are very hesitant to say things directly to you, uh, I think you know...can be a career limiting statement, or they think it is not quite appropriate to load you with unimportant stuff, of they are afraid that they might offend you, all those type of things which out of a, uh, look, the relationship between a senior manager and someone lower down in the organization is a skew relationship of power and of course people are, uh, there are many filters which people build in to make sure that they protect themselves also, and [the forum sic] has always been, uhm, to me one of the very best ways to find out what the people really think.

As Cathy regrets the collegial distance which was created by the style of management in the new context of a larger university, being a former outspoken academic herself, she perceives the forum to be the “voice of the people.” The forum provides opportunity (Figure 1:1) to criticize management, which offers a useful insight in what is happening on ground level and which serves as a bridge for her to cross the divide between management and employees:

Cathy: Look, I think it is very important when you are in a, in a management position, that you have to know what people think and say, because, uh, one moves a bit, especially when you are on the level of campus management, that you do not have much to do with people much lower down on the food chain, to call it like that ... And the forum has always been to me, uhm, one of the best methods to get to know what people are really thinking, because I think that people who write on the, uhm, forum, that they, uhm, don't think that senior management will read it, so they are more free or they, uhm, think that you will read it and it provides them with the opportunity to deliver a bit of a blow or whatever, but it has always been to me in the largest extent an opportunity to hear, what the, what the people are thinking.

As Cathy shows a regular and keen interest in forum activities, she is alerted by her secretary or family members of actions on the forum which they regard would be of importance to her when she herself cannot tend to it. She acknowledges that, in stressful times, the forum served as relief (Figure 1:1), as difficult situations were often defused with witty remarks on the forum. In this regard she perceives the forum as a place which provides much needed fun and entertainment, serving as a therapeutic space for her personally.

The significance for management

Although she has a benevolent feeling towards forum activities, Cathy acknowledges the dismissiveness of certain members of management about the forum:

Look, there were some members of management who distanced themselves totally from [the forum sic], who felt, oh no, you know, I am not tiring myself.

She does add that the forum creates awareness with management about strong feelings (Figure 1:1), although she can't perceive that the forum effected any structural changes:

Cathy: You know, I cannot...see that it had in such a measure an impact, and then I cannot say that we said in meetings listen here, what was on the [forum sic] again, and how can we consider it, but, some of the issues were, uh, were discussed, I cannot say in which way it did contribute to structural change...I would say that it did have the impact that people became aware of a strong feeling among people about certain issues.

Censorship and boundaries

Cathy regards the right of freedom of speech as essential for academics and although she admits that rumours of censorship do exist, she strongly denies any censoring by herself or even a vindictive attitude of management towards forum participants:

Researcher: Did you get the feeling that people say, yes, but the [forum sic] is censored and now we cannot say what we want?

Cathy: You know, one or two people said that, especially Andrew, suggested, strongly suggested that it is censored, but it is not true at all, I myself did sometimes not get the chance to get on the [forum sic]... but uh, I always had the feeling that there were people on the campus who think that management gets up early in the morning and figures out especially how they will make life intolerable for that guy's life.

Having previous knowledge of incidences where participations did disappear shortly after publication, the researchers took the opportunity to explore the reasons for censorship. Although the forum provides the means for the voice of the people to be heard, Cathy

indicates that there are constraints which inhibit the act of speaking out (Figure 1:2). Participants should be aware that the public nature of the forum creates the circumstances for voices both to be heard, and to be reacted on. Cathy phrases the reaction however as “repudiation”, indicating that dangerous or risky participants should expect just that. In a way she does subvert her own opinion of the freedom the forum offers by resorting to the panoptic view of the forum as a means to see what “the people” are thinking, offering the opportunity to control or “repudiate” those participants. She assumes that participants should know the limits of their participations and the “prudent” boundaries which regulate both the content and the way of their acts of speaking out:

Cathy: look, I see here is the Big Brother syndrome, uh...if you are very afraid...that what you say might be used against you, then it would now of course be the prudent path not to say it...or in a different way...when you publish on the [forum sic]...with your name, then it feels to me a bit like throw it down the gauntlet, uh...you want reaction and you will get reaction, if you come afterwards and say yes, but wow, the guys clamped down on me...it was never my approach to clamp down or to harm someone about things he...on the [forum sic], I did in any case not see everything, uh, things which became apparent, uhm, I never saw myself in the role of Big Brother or Big Sister, not at all.

Decorum and academic finesse

In addition to the reaction which participants should anticipate, Cathy prescribes the concept of decorum for academics (Figure 1:2). This means that they should be self-regulatory and make informed statements on the forum with academic finesse. In this regard she redefines the nature of the forum from being a therapeutic, fun space to a formal environment where decorum is expected. The decorum of a formal environment requires the use of a proper language, it requires the consciousness of civil norms and the proper address of co-participants and it might possibly temper free speech:

Cathy: Look, it is a very difficult thing, uh, one would want academics to exercise an amount of decorum, this is to me quite, uh, a concept which we learned quite a bit about in drama, but it is a concept which I ...very widely, uh, your decorum means that you have a proper judgment, about what you can say in public and about what you cannot say, uh, I know many of us might perhaps be deeply persuaded about something which you just do not blurt out and broadcast, it can be offensive.

Cathy leaves the door open for radical ideas to be conveyed on the forum, as long as they are conveyed by the choice of the *correct register*. She indicates that academics should be able to formulate their statements properly and be aware of the significance or possible reception of their statements, something she doubts happens. Stephen is one of the participants whom Cathy distinguishes as a “solid” academic (Figure 1:4) whose participation is especially motivated by his foreign status. She agrees with most of his views, perceiving

him as her *alter ego* who can recognize which issues are pertinent. His style of presentation (Figure 1:2) is praised, exhibiting the finesse she expects from an academic:

Cathy: I must say that uh, especially Stephen, uhm, I was partially responsible for uhm, his appointment at the university...I thought it is very important to bring in another voice...and he did not disappoint me, uhm, I liked, I often supported his views, and I thought, uh, that he verbalized what I would have verbalized if I, uh, could speak totally independently...but I thought Stephen's voice was necessary...he, uh, writes well, he writes witty, he recognises things, now, of course it is, when one is a bit of the lefty on the campus, I had for many years the reputation of being the lefty, uh, of course it is a bit exaggerated, of course one does not agree with everything he says..but I always thought Stephen's views were probably the most nuanced, and he uh focused on the right things...I think he is an asset to the university...I do think...uh, his voice was very necessary, within the context of his appointment but also in the broader campus.

Balancing loyalties

Over time, Cathy dealt with former colleagues (Figure 1:4) who criticized and insulted her co-managers. This caused strained relationships and a difficult act of balancing previous and present loyalties. She did tactfully persuade one former colleague into a public apology on the forum:

Cathy: Because we are on a good terms with each other, and therefore I found it very difficult to tell him, uh, you know what, uh, I really think that it's...the ball is in your court, he is not cross with me, we still are very good friends.

As Cathy judged Francois' criticism of her co-manager as insulting, it disappeared from the forum within a few minutes of its publication. His first forced attempt of apology which he presented as a statement of his persuasion also vanished. Cathy did not appreciate Francois' use of the forum to address the specific issue and felt that, on the basis of their friendship, he could have approached her personally. A critical reflection on the favouring of a co-manager above a former colleague and the benefit of a former friendship in addressing and alleviating a difficult situation was present in the conversation with Francois, but absent in the interview with Cathy. The superior position of management being better informed than staff was played as a card, viz. that Francois' misjudgement was because of a lack of information:

Cathy: That is also why I thought with Francois, oh no, Francois, I thought you are a bit better than this, don't act on uh incomplete information.

During the interview with Francois, he did not refer to himself being ill-informed, and in the interview with Cathy, the fact that censorship did take place was also not alluded to. If a lack of information caused the uproar, no steps were taken to inform the readers of the forum of the correct facts to put the events in perspective.

Cathy finds Andrew, a previous colleague's criticism (Figure 1:4) to be unfair, needing editing and also uninformed and repetitive. She claims that participants need to edit their posts, to be sure of their information and to present it with finesse and decorum (Figure 1:2). Some utterances did not meet these requirements, such as Beth's, but her perceived racist declarative participation did go uncensored and her opinions were perceived as instrumental for the existence of an actual, lively debate:

Cathy: On the other side, concerning Beth, it was to me...I did not necessarily agree with opinions, but I just thought that it is good, there must be space for lively debate.

Beth's participation is especially seen as a transgression of decorum and lacking of academic finesse (Figure 1:2), thereby risking the name of university:

Cathy: It can bring the university's name in discredit, and so, and uh, I would in an ideal world that a lecturer know which decorum he must practise, where is his, where is the finesse, the academic finesse to know, oh no man, you don't make, you don't make a statement like this, but, when someone then uhm does it...then one has to handle it carefully, I am very careful for uh censorship.

It does seem however, that voices are judged as uncomfortable when they move too closely to managerial concerns and preference is given to the safe middle ground of tempered views:

Cathy: One concept which had been driven especially by uh Andrew, and he also had his accolades who joined him...the one concept which had been driven very much was managerialism...Andrew always has a good case, but he always takes it to the extreme...but one always again has to move a bit to the middle.

In describing an ideal world of informed academics who participate with decorum (Figure 1:2), Cathy perceives Stephen as someone who comes close to these proponents of ideal speech: "but I always thought Stephen's views were probably the most nuanced, and he...focused on the right things." Cathy concedes that his views might be exaggerated, but still they are preferred to those who have extreme positions: "of course it is a bit exaggerated, of course one does not agree with everything he says."

In addition to the ideas Cathy endorses about academic finesse, self-regulation and decorum, echoes of the proponents of the ideal speech bearing on the universal common good underlying and directing democratic discourse is apparent in Cathy's conclusive reflection:

Cathy: And therefore ideas are to me...and lately there plays something in my head, which I had as a sort of a mantra, I used it in my first speech...and I used it again in my farewell speech when I said...people and things are temporal, but ideas and values are eternal.

It would be unfair to ignore the stress conflicting loyalties exerted on a former academic in management, and especially for a woman who had to deal with a management corps which comprised mostly mono-cultural men. In this sense, the power which resides in

the larger contexts of the institution and the perception of the university's socio-cultural position cannot be denied. Cathy can be seen as someone who is subjected to, and also actively exercises, the dominant discourse. The dominant discourse is imbedded in those structures within which the university is perceived to be located. Wodak (1996) refers to the powers above discourse which explain why the dominant discourse is mirrored in external interventions in the forum.

It is therefore interesting to note the irony in the touchiness of management about criticism on the forum if they distinctively prefer to dismiss its existence or importance.

THOSE WHO OPPOSE CENSORSHIP/MODERATION

Acts of internal moderation

As a person who is alien to the context of the university, Stephen is in conflict with the old dispensation and its sympathizers and this conflict serves to motivate his participation (Figure 1:1). He functions unknowingly and in an unofficial sense as an internal moderator, as he sets the style and tone (Figure 1:2) for others to follow and he criticizes those who seem not to comply with the form or content of his participation:

Stephen: Beth, unfortunately for you, more questionable information does not make an argument based upon questionable information any less questionable.

He especially expects his opponents, such as Beth, to be as rational as he is, to present arguments with the type of evidence he approves of, thereby assuming a patronizing attitude (Figure 1:4):

Stephen focuses on her lack of informedness, her doubtful sources of information, and her deficient argumentation. The larger part of his participation is marked by the presentation of information which illuminates certain aspects of Beth's lack of knowledge, thereby educating her and the readers. His language bears some evidence of an emotional attitude defined by the security and authority that Stephen's informative style affords. This also makes clear his bias. He describes her as under-informed, minimizes her evidence and judges her incapable and not in a position to make authoritative statements (Postma, Blignaut, Sutinen, & Swan, 2012a).

Stephen resorts to what he himself confesses as "hermeneutic bullying" in the following address:

Stephen: Explain in less than 500 words how BEE [Black Economic Empowerment] and/or Equity Employment is racist. Listing endless examples is not good enough, use them, make an argument, build something convincing by clearly explaining how it is that the evidence that you are presenting supports the assertion that you are trying to make. That is called reasoning, and it is the most important part of academic writing (Postma, et al., 2012a, p. 16).

Ideas about censorship

Stephen disagrees with the censoring interventions (Figure 1:4) on the forum, having a different concept of what censorship is than which is held locally:

Stephen: I have a different notion of free speech that is commonly upheld in South Africa, in South Africa there's certain things that you definitely can't say, we have the category of hate speech, and...I don't know if I really agree with the category of hate speech, as we uhm...as we have it, it's problematic in all sorts of ways, because you can't really insult a category of people, because a category of people doesn't really exist.

He does not condone the disciplinary action which was taken against Beth for her perceived racist opinions:

Stephen: Well you know, we don't think there should be a disciplinary act against [Beth sic] because we think that she brings to the discussion a sort of popular position and that the discussion is more important than that, uhm, but then by this time I think the person...it was John who made the complaint, and he was very angry and very adamant that that sort of thing should not be tolerated and we differed a bit on that.

Stephen prefers opposing participants to rather solve an issue internally than expect an external agent to address the problem. He however resorts to a form of *dominance* in the way he addresses those who oppose his views. He acknowledges his bullying of his main opponent and the power play of ideologies present in the forum, creating the perception that the forum is a playfield. He refers to his participation as trolling, which, contrary to the negative impact he alludes to, was never censored:

Stephen: I think in some ways it was sort of slightly more a sophisticated form of trolling, really, it was at first then I pop up and say this prayer stuff is terrible, all this religion is crap, we should get rid of it and people immediately I think see that as an extremist position and you know, that coloured the rest of my commentary, and if I can do things over again, I possibly wouldn't be as hard about, hard core about as when I started.

It is evident from the above quotation that Stephen became aware of his extremist style. In rethinking his participation, he eventually assumed a self-regulatory position to his style of interaction and became less extreme.

THOSE WHO CONDONE PRACTICES OF MODERATION

John expects action to be taken against racist remarks, being intensely aware of the hegemony inherent in these types of participations (Figure 1:1). He perceives the finding of racism against a participant as a small victory but expresses doubt about any disciplinary action taken:

John: Well, if I have to look at one small victory, that the office of...what is the office's name, something like...let's call it something like the human rights commission of the university, that office made a finding in my favour, that one of the participants was racist and that there were judgments, hate speech, so there was a piece of justice which triumphed, the finding alone, but

the recommendation that justice was seen to happen, about that I know nothing, I do not know if the person literally was held liable, that I do not know.

John's victory can be seen in the context of his expectation for the institution to transform. An external moderation or a finding in his favour is seen as tangible evidence of a serious commitment to change. He also applies a form of internal moderation in referring to Beth's arguments as a shaky "stream of logic" which she supports with "quasi-academic references". In this sense his exclusion of her is based both on moralistic and rationalistic grounds:

John: With your acutely racist opinions and your quasi academic references, Beth, you are now opening a can of worms about your and other colleagues' similar opinions about us, your black colleagues. Your "research" and your own persuasions do now prove that black people are of a lower intellectual capability than whites and Asians. Your stream of logic (very shaky, I must add) lead me now to the conclusion that black colleagues therefore: 1. Must be very thankful that we are tolerated in your white western piece of pride of a university, 2. are not of equal intellectual ability to the white and Asian colleagues, 3. Must not complain that much about the supposed racism and other unwanted spin-offs of the western thought paradigm

In contrast with his exclusive moralistic discursive relationship with Beth, John portrays an inclusive view of forum as a place which could effect catharsis:

Andrew withdrew from the discussion on racism, as it declines to a level of a shouting competition. Catharsis is good colleague. It prevents consuming illnesses like cancer and diabetes (according to some medical practitioners), but overall it gives psychological relieve and prohibits the building up of methane and other gases which clouds the mind. So, the soapbox of Discussion Forum has space for another shouter.

His moralistic condition for catharsis however, is that racist participations should be excluded, as seen in his wish for disciplinary action against those who practise hate speech such as Beth. Beth does however make the same attribution of hatefulness to him:

Beth: John, your outspokenness about all imaginable racist incidents bothers on the manical. Your assumptions about what racism is, is precisely the reason why I condescend to communicate with you. **Your hatefulness against everything** which the [institution sic] was and against those who work and study here, take notice, white people, is clear in all your arguments.

THOSE WHO WERE SUBJECTED TO MODERATION

Beth and Francois were participants who experienced the censoring of their posts by management (Figure 1:4). Each experienced the censoring differently. It caused Beth to become more resolute and persistent in her participation, while Francois eventually understood the censoring as a signal that any discourse which is worthwhile is made impossible. He therefore withdrew from a constructive participation in discourses on the forum.

Beth's motivation (Figure 1:1) to participate lies in her persuasion that she represents the silent voice of the majority of middle aged white men in her opposition to the dominant voices of the liberalists on the forum. On the basis of her perceived racist opinions, she was forced into an acknowledgement of racism, which she refused to do. The episode did not cause her to rethink her position but only made her more resolute. She even quoted a letter of management on the forum to prove that opinions on the forum are indeed censored and acted against by management, thereby casting doubt on the freedom of speech participants presume they have:

Researcher: Concerning management who took action against you, what is your feeling about it? I see that you quote management, what do you feel about it?

Beth: I said that time, see the worry in my eyes, and today exactly the same.

Researcher: So you were not even afraid?

Beth: No, I did write again as you know.

Researcher: So, you were not silenced, you...

Beth: Mmmmm...

Researcher: Would you say you rather were encouraged?

Beth: Yes, yes yes, if someone tell me not to do something, then I will do it, I really did, I have no, uh, anything which I say from conviction, and on which I stand, I stand and fall there, I do not care what the consequences are.

She especially despises the moralist position of her censors, referring to their higher moral ground, while her own morality is frowned upon. She acts from her persuasion which she regards as the absolute truth. The internal moderation which her co-participants exercised in one thread could have been more successful to bring Beth to reflection than the external acts of management which only caused antagonism.

Francois, a former colleague and friend of Cathy, concedes that their friendship facilitated Cathy's intervention between himself and a co-manager he criticized on the forum. He does however indicate the amiable forcefulness of the situation:

Francois: Yeah, the rector back then, who is Cathy, who is a close friend as well, uhm and she tried to mend the pieces, and she asked me, maybe I was the more flexible person in the whole equation I guess, but I think she also...I think she, I wouldn't say she emotionally blackmailed me, but, you know, there wasn't any other solution for me (Postma, Bignaut, Sutinen, & Swan, 2012b).

He reflects on the trauma the event caused and the uselessness of participation:

Francois: Yea, completely, and I didn't want to, you know back then it was taking a toll on my family as well, as it was the subject of conversations for a while and obviously because of the emotional affect that you derive from such a situation, so, after this episode, I saw that, well,

what can you do anyway, you can use the [forum sic] as much as you want, but it is obviously controlled in many ways, and, and you can't convince the people of your point.

The Foucaultian panopticon (Rouse, 2003) is significant here in the opportunity which the forum offers for management to exert control. This control makes the free debating of ideas and even the raising of “uncomfortable” issues impossible. From here on Francois becomes less engaged and reverts more to trolling and ridiculing, as he perceives fruitful debate as impossible.

THOSE WHO FEAR CENSORSHIP AND THOSE WHO SPEAK OUT

In contrast to employees who are born and bred within the system, those who are alien to the context, like Francois and Stephen, do not respect the local morality, but rather by way of trolling and ridiculing they show their disrespect to the “insane” upholding of the status quo. Their foreign status and their disregard for negative reactions from co-participants make them fearless and courageous to speak their minds. Francois indicates his sympathy for the hesitance of locals to speak out and finds himself like Stephen in the fortunate position of coming from a culture where critical discourse is alive:

Researcher: But did people respond to you positively, say well, we agree, but we won't write on the [forum sic].

Francois: I have had a bit of that, we are not talking about some messages, maybe five or six, messages over the years, saying well, you know, we sort of agree with you, but we don't have the guts to write on the [forum sic]. Yeah, and then I can understand, you know, if I were them, I would have exactly the same grievances, and the same hesitations, as I said, I am in the very fortunate position, I think Stephen will share this, because he is English speaking, he comes from Cape Town, so in many ways he is an outsider as well, and as an outsider I carry with me the reputation of my country, you know, in France we tend to discuss everything, ...in Europe, there is a culture of critique, rather than embracing any kind of self-propelled truth.

Peter, who comes from Europe, has no fear in speaking out and alludes to the fact that locals do not speak out, as they fear losing their jobs. He also indicates the minimal existence of true critical discourse, especially among students, and finds its absence strange, especially in an academic environment where everything should be questioned:

Peter: There isn't much discussion amongst students also, here, the university, must according to me be an institute where lot of discussion take place, we must actually doubt everything in research, and it does not happen, and eventually, when you look at the [forum sic], how many people are really participating, it's only ten or twelve, it's a few, but what I do know is that many people read it, so around the forum, it is ...many people [say sic] yes, we agree with you, but there might be a fear to take part, I do not have it, I love discussions a lot. But I think the fear of people not to...because I also have pal, a colleague of mine, he has explicit opinions, but he will never, never write on the [forum sic] never, he is afraid.

PROPOSALS

Several contradictions are evident in the forum between what people propose and what their actions are, or a tension is marked between what Habermas refers to as linguistic acts and social interaction (as cited by Čečez-Kecmanović, 2001). What people propose to be ideal in their speech acts is not echoed in their social interactions. Cathy proposes that the forum should serve as a space for employees to view their concerns, but as soon as these concerns become uncomfortable for management, those voices are silenced.

If participants experience discomfort, frustration and/or indignance, they are expected to express it with decorum and finesse, a type of ideal speech which Young (2003) alludes to as quite an unrealistic expectation. The type of interventions from management to solve conflict is typified as an intervention to sidestep conflict by forcing the weaker party “amicably” further into a subordinate position to acknowledge guilt where no transgression took place. The perceived lack of information in opponents’ actions serves as a rationalistic form of domination to discard their participation. This is also evident in the oppressing interactions among participants themselves. In this regard, Stephen’s view of hegemony is contradictory; he opposes censorship in favour of freedom of speech, but simultaneously dominates the forum and alienates other participants with rationalistic devices, such as minimalising and stereotyping his opponents.

There are also contradictions in John’s views and actions. He upholds the ideal that the forum should promote discourse, but the reality of speaking out proves too close to home. He proposes to tolerate racist remarks for the sake of debate, but nevertheless wants management to intervene and discipline those who make it. His motivation to participate is to withstand those who are disrespectful and have unemancipatory views about those who are not of the colour, race, religion, etc. they are, but in the same line of thought he also wants them to be silenced.

John views himself as a representative of the injured party in discriminatory racist declarations and presumes that restitutive action has been taken by management, but the moral coherence is distorted concerning the actualization of justice when he is misled into assuming that his charge of racism had been acted upon.

The perception and practice of morality is strong in the forum and it seems from the above description that the theory and practice of morality are in conflict. One can assume that a critical form of moderation could solve this tension. In the following paragraphs, some proposals are made to move to a more emancipatory form of moderation. The following

diagram illustrates the elements within participation which is subject to emancipatory change should the moderator employ a visible and equalising strategy. The actualisation of a critical morality is perceived to be dependent on this reconceptualisation of moderator participation.

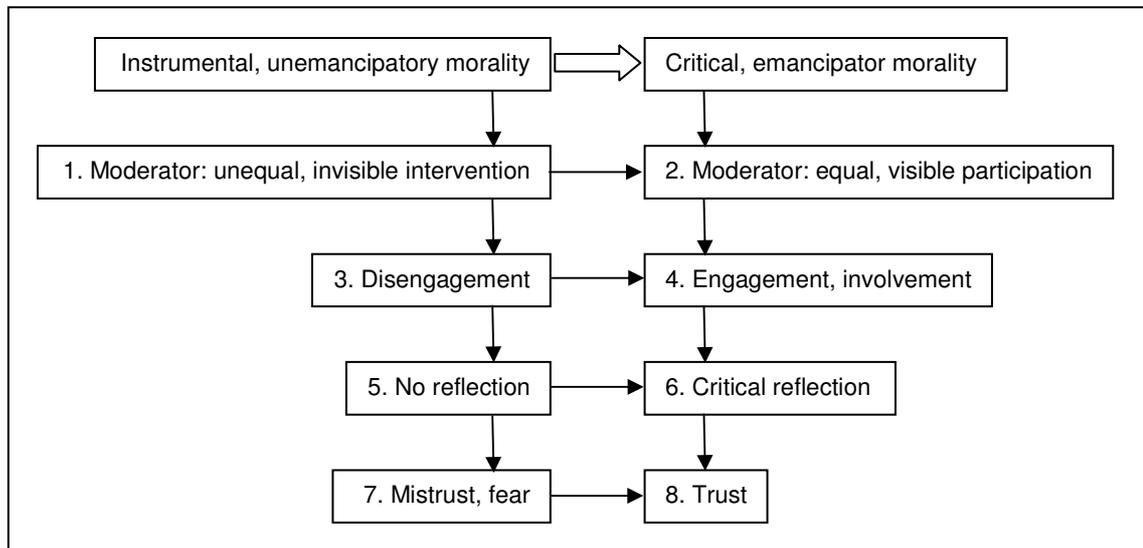


FIGURE 2: The influence of the moderator on participant emancipation

From rationalistic exclusion towards emotional inclusion

If the forum pivots around morality as the pervasive issue, then a moderator should focus on establishing a forum which is characterised as being a friendly, inclusive and acceptive space. Aristotle held the view that morality cannot exist or be developed without a community of friends: “With friends men are more able both to think and act” (as referred to by Jacquette, 2001; Sokolowski, 2001). One needs friendship to grow and to realize one’s potential. The forum can offer the opportunity for people to reach something they are not able to reach themselves (such as the truth), as a friendship enables a person to attain something more (Sokolowski, 2001).

If a rationalistic stance in the forum leads to the assumption of moralistic attitudes by participants, the moderator can facilitate the alienation and disrespect which result from the use of rationalistic devices (stereotyping, minimalising) by acknowledging the emotions experienced by those who make deviant and unemancipatory claims. The moderator can by encouraging narratives of life experiences which inform a certain persuasion create an understanding among participants which moves understanding beyond the pure rational to include affective, embodied ways of knowing. Instead of assuming the moralist position of the majority of participants, the moderator aims to bring opposing parties to a better understanding, but not necessarily an agreement. This intervention might also serve to build “reciprocal respect”, which Habermas (1990) refers to, among participants.

In addressing participants, the moderator can also employ the rhetorical devices Young (2000) proposes, such as to greet and compliment the participants, something which is absent in an online forum. Many times the issue takes priority and the participant is ignored by those who build the thread. The practice of greeting and complimenting acknowledges the person behind the statement and lends a humane and emotional element to the discussion. By doing this, the linguistic act does not serve to be the only representation of who the person is. Readers construct online identities and these constructs might be a misrepresentation of the real identity. Participants who are not eloquent and do not express themselves in their first language have a disadvantage and might represent themselves inadequately.

From declarative linguistic acts to social interaction

If the practice of certain styles, such as trolling and ridiculing, serves the purpose not to engage in social interaction, then a moderator can facilitate by moving participants beyond those styles. The moderator can acknowledge the linguistic act and move further by asking what motivates the specific choice of style.

In this specific case study, sensible interaction between participants is absent. This can be seen in the choice of declarative style in the majority of cases. The choice of ridicule, trolling and flaming also does not lead to meaningful and engaging discourse, although some of it might provide comic relief for likeminded readers. Acknowledging the humour is certainly a way to start, but the motive of the participant has to be clarified for proper understanding. Linguistic acts in the forum mostly cloud participants' true meanings.

From invisible to visible moderation

If a moderator is visible and present (Figure 2:2), the mistrust and fear (Figure 2:7) of participants to speak out might disappear. It seems as if the doubt concerning the consequences of participation installs more fear and rumours about censorship and flame the antagonism against management. If the motive of moderation is clarification, the transparency of the moderative act could bring more trust.

From censorship to allowing all voices

Eventually, moderation is not about the silencing or censoring of voices but it should aim to bring opposing parties to better understanding. It does not mean that extreme voices should be made more moderate. Real debate will not take place if everyone has moderate views and if all share the same premises (Young, 1996, 2001). Debate is however fruitless if premises are not understood. Although premises can and should be questioned, it seems as if

the termination of participation can be ascribed to the fact that premises keep on being claimed and participants do not adjust their views, simply because they are not within a space which encourages it. Instead of finding themselves within a friendly accepting space, the space remains competitive and toxic and the participants remain isolated and alienated from meaningful engagement.

From unequal intervention to equal participation

A moral incoherence is created when the moderator intervenes invisibly and gives preference to or silences participants. A mathematical formulation illustrates the incoherence, based on similar examples offered by Sokolowski (2001). A moral equation should prefer the moderator to stand outside a debate between participants: moderator (participant 1/participant 2) but the real situation in this case study is that an invisible moderator sides with one participant against another, thereby creating a moral incoherence (invisible moderator*participant 1/participant 2).

From instrumental to emancipatory morality

If a moderator assumes an equal, visible co-participative (Figure 2:1) rather than an unequal, invisible intervening (Figure 2:2) position, several emancipatory elements can be realised within the forum. The participants can become motivated to become engaged and reflect on their own positions as the moderator sets, as co-participant, an example of amiable engagement (Figure 2:4) and reflective interaction (Figure 2:6). The role of the invisible (Figure 2:1), detached (Figure 2:3) and punitive moderator is replaced by a visible (Figure 2:2), involved co-participant (Figure 2:4) who co-defines and is ultimately co-responsible for the creation of a friendly, inclusive space of mutual trust, learning and development.

CONCLUSION

It seems as if the perception of the forum as an outlet of emotion leads management to be afraid of the emotion of employees. It might explain the measures which were undertaken to censor and silence deviant voices and to condone those voices which supported the direction of transformation. Ideas about an ideal world, an ideal institution, the ideal academic and the ideal way of expression can result in enforcing views which support this idealism and the notion of what is ideal can lead to an oppressive form of management.

Perceiving the forum as the voice of the people brings with it the necessity to listen to what the people are saying in the way they prefer to do it. Formulating rules and restrictions for the style and content of participations eventually disables the potential this form of

communication has in the establishment of an institution which values freedom of speech, the basic tenet of democracy.

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Valuing the Impact of Embodiment on Moral Discourse in an Online Forum of a Higher Education Institution

Abstract

Constructing the identity of participants on an online forum, which is characterized by its high level of conflict and unequal power relations, is an emotionally challenging task for post structuralist researchers. By analyzing the textual presentation and performance of online identity and by reflecting on the interaction with participants during personal interviews, a multilayered and more often a confusing experience follows. Researchers have to explore their own embodiment in their actions of valuing and judging, leading them to a revision of their own positions. This paper describes the analytical process in exploring the complexities of online and offline identity construction in an institutional forum of a higher education institution. Qualitative research methodology as informed by grounded theory directs the process of analysis. Design elements for the online forum are proposed to facilitate a more embodied identity construction of participants which could enhance understanding and appreciation of others and contribute to a moral discourse.

Keywords: identity, persona, online discourse, moral discourse, embodiment, rationality, online design

Introduction

This paper describes the process of participants' involvement in the construction of their identity and the attribution of a certain identity or *persona* to them by others. The researchers also explore the influence embodied and disembodied offline and online identities have on their analysis of the identity or *persona* construction of participants. A secondary objective is to build on the finding of conditions which inhibit or promote the construction of identity within a moral discourse by proposing design elements for the forum. In order to explore the research focus, (i) description of the categories of analysis as they relate to the construction of identity of different participants is offered, and (ii) proposals are made concerning the design of the online space to facilitate the emotional engagement of the participants and to overcome the problem of the lack of visibility and accessibility of a participant's history of online participation.

In this paper the online identity of a participant is referred to as *persona*, with the understanding that the *persona* is the attribution of characteristics to the participant by others.

Exploring identity for moral discourse

Discourse analysis of online identity have brought about themes like identity formation, multiple identities, role playing, self-disclosure, social relationships, gender and embodiment in virtual space (Matsuda; Campbell, Fletcher and Greenhill; Ess; Taylor; Turkle *Life on the Screen*; Turkle *Alone Together: Why We Expect More from Technology and Less from Each Other*; Turkle "Connected, but Alone?"; DePalma and Atkinson; Van Doorn; Merchant; Grabill and Pigg; Markham; Herring et al.; McGee and Brisco). This paper contributes to the discourse on *identity formation* within the specific context of an online academic forum. The work of McGee and Brisco (2) does partially inform this paper, as they refer to the interactional production of identity within an online listserv where the offline power hierarchies are re-enacted. Being "a crucial strategic site" (Drew and Sorjonen 95), participants would be aware of the strategic importance of their opinions and interactions in the online space.

If the online environment mirrors the hierarchy of the academic environment, the formation or construction of participants' identities might be tainted. This fact brings about a moral incongruence as unwanted characteristics might be attributed to online participants. Those participants who are on the unfavourable side of the power equation might especially be subjected to misunderstanding and the misconstructions of their identities, as they can for instance not verbalise themselves as eloquently as their academic superiors.

Online discourse requires certain elements in order to facilitate the moral development and emancipation of its participants. Young (*Inclusion and Democracy* 65) indicates in her model of communicative democracy the quintessence of emotion in building moral discourse. The presence of "non-rational argumentative moves within online discussions" is referred to by Grabill and Pig (101) in their descriptions of concepts such as embodiment and performance identity. They indicate that performance identity has rhetorical agency in the online discourse, as the participant dramatizes life experiences, introduces the self to others and eventually become well-known because of emotional involvement. The embodied, emotional participation leads to the understanding of specific situations and life circumstances. Within a discourse which aims to build understanding between participants, this type of rhetoric agency is instrumental in the building of moral discourse. As soon as the

diversity and particular circumstances of participants are understood, the objective of moral discourse is reached (Young *Inclusion and Democracy* 69).

When participants engage emotionally, a moral discourse becomes possible and the discourse also enhances. Eventually participants are enabled and encouraged to build their own moral character as they develop the ability to listen to each other. The process of equalization and understanding is directed by participations telling of specific situations, revealing multiple and un-ideal realities and identities in their embodied interaction with the concrete world around them, portraying conflict and emotional struggle. Their sharing of experiences shifts the forum “from the abstract and conceptual to the immediate and concrete” (Grabill and Pigg 114).

Young (*Inclusion and Democracy* 65) posits that discourse is never void of emotion: “No discourse lacks emotional tone: dispassionate discourse carry an emotional tone of calm and distance.” Foucault (352) holds that our emotion is an expression of our morality. If an online discourse is characterized by polarization and the intense emotional involvement of its participants, one can assume that the ideologies and moral values of the participants are in conflict. An online discourse which includes the rhetorical devices whereby ideologies, moral values and the inner states of the participants are revealed is described in the following section.

The field of research

The online discourse which offers the potential for researchers to investigate issues concerning identity and morality within the rhetoric of participants is conducted on an online forum of a higher education institution in South Africa. The forum as such is accessible only to employees of the university, which includes academic and administrative personnel. Entry to the forum is via the official intranet and is username and password protected. The university regards the forum as a private space and maintains that the “opinions of online participants should be protected” (participant’s response). The discussion forum came about a few months after the creation of the general bulletin board and was intended to serve as a mouthpiece for employees to voice issues of concern.

Issues which were raised included the transformation of a former mono-cultural (exclusively white) university to a non-racial inclusive institution which reflects the constitutional values of a post-Apartheid South Africa. A thread on racism which the

researchers chose to analyse, reflects the sentiments and dialectic ideologies within a broader discourse of a society dealing with the challenges of political transformation.

The thread is marked by the high emotional involvement of its participants as the participants regard it of importance. It directs and colors their rhetoric and consequently informs the identity constructions of the researchers.

The construction of identity

The forum acts as a textual mediator in the presentation of own identity, the construction and reproduction of the participants' world and with that the construction of others' identities. By viewing their representations of the world and by viewing the interactions with others in these representations, identities of other participants are constructed. An important factor underlying the context of the forum, is the hegemony which is exercised by participants within the discourse, which influences their own "identity performance" (as termed by Grabill and Pigg 101) and the construction of their identities by others.

In the context of poststructuralist theory, the researchers acknowledge their subjective positions in the construction of participants' identities and affirm the role of emotion within and moral dilemmas resulting from an embodied process of meaning making. It is especially those unconscious inclinations to side with or judge participants which the researchers have to acknowledge and explore as part of their subjective valuing of the participants.

The researchers applied three forms of analysis on the text of the thread and textual transcriptions of the interviews. Open coding (as illustrated by Miles and Huberman 242) served as the initial form of data analysis, followed by axial and selective coding (Strauss and Corbin 96-142). The axial and selective coding stages eventually illustrate the cyclic and interactional process of identity construction. The researchers construct participants' identities by way of four main categories which were formed in the analysis of data. These categories are the *expectations* which participants have of the online space, such as a place to address and rectify wrongs; their *motivation* to take part in the discourse, which includes specific ideologies and moral values; their *interaction* which is defined by the style (distant, emotional) participants choose and the *perceptions* which participants hold of themselves and others.

Figure 1 offers an interpretation of the categories as they relate to the construction of online and offline identities and shows the dependence of identity construction on the elements within the structure. This diagram is the product of selective coding (Strauss and Corbin 116-42) and it provides a more abstract analysis of the data.

As soon as a participant's motivation changes, the structure as such undergoes change. As the idealization of the role of the forum ends in disappointment, the articulation of identity alters. It also has an influence on the strategy of interaction, the perceptions of self and others and eventually returns to a different articulation or reformulation of motive.

The strategy of interaction of participants is informed by the style they choose to communicate their sentiments and persuasions and by the way they interact with other participants. These differential interactions between motivational factors and the strategies of participation form certain different presences. As one becomes acquainted with a participant through the text they create, a certain identity or *persona* is formed in the mind of the reader. If a participants change their strategies of interaction, one can for instance note it in less or more *flaming* or *trolling* and either taking a safe distance from issues or becoming more involved and more adamant about the own viewpoint.

Participants have an affective relationship to the forum in the sense that they idealize the opportunities which the online space offers. This influences their motivation to become involved in the discourse, the way they interact (how they address others, the issues they speak about), the online *persona* or perceptions they construct of others and eventually how they construct their own online identity and the characteristics attributed to them by others, the *persona* with which they may or may not agree. This initial idealization of the role of the forum is embedded in and articulated by the specific context of each participant. A participant can for instance be acutely aware of the hegemony involved in unemancipatory views and actions concerning racism and he might fear the identity of a "angry black man" (participant's response) attributed to him, a perception which indeed has been feared by one participant and defined his interaction strategy, his perceptions of and reactions to others and ultimately caused the end of his forum involvement.

The context of the forum also changes, depending on the type of participants involved. Identity construction is therefore dependent on the context of the participant and the context of the forum, as articulated by the types of participations at that specific moment. The context of the forum is also indirectly influenced by participants' history of involvement on the

forum, which might be known or unfamiliar to others. Newcomers to the forum might find it difficult to determine the reason for certain positions and also understand why participants engage with each other in a certain way, such as applauding or condemning each other. In short, the construction of online identity is dependent on the history of and the specific way the paradigms of participants in the forum are constructed by the readers and the participants themselves. In the following section the threads of and interviews with Beth and Stephen, the two protagonists and other marginal figures in the thread; John and Peter are referred to.

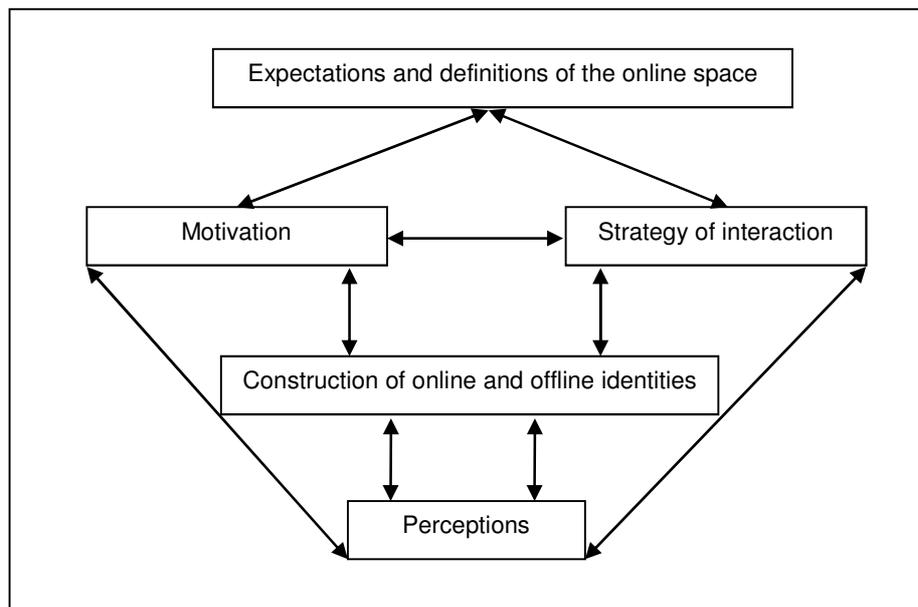


Figure 1: Categories relating to the construction of offline and online identities

Stephen, the liberal

Expectations and definitions of the online space ↔ Motivation ↔ Identity construction

Stephen displays a social essentialist view (as described by Timmermans and Berg 101-03) of the forum's role by thinking that the forum offers the possibility to influence opinions on the campus to the left. He finds himself at odds with the culture of the university which he perceives as conservative and also with online participants, such as Beth, who still harbors nostalgic and unemancipatory views about the Apartheid¹ past and the institutional culture before transformation. Although he is supported by most participants on the thread and by his colleagues offline, Stephen feels that the identity he created in the first year of his tenure was

¹ "racial segregation; *specifically* : a former policy of segregation and political and economic discrimination against non-European groups in the Republic of South Africa" m-w.com., "Apartheid," *Merriam Webster online dictionary* (2012), vol. 2012.

too “hard core” (participant’s response) and that the trolling he exercised might have antagonized people and created the impression that he is not a person who is open for other ideas than his own, with which he does not agree. Incongruence exists between his historical online identity and his present offline identity:

Stephen:

I think in some ways it was sort of slightly more a sophisticated form of trolling, really, it was at first then I pop up and say this prayer stuff is terrible, all this religion is crap, we should get rid of it and people immediately I think see that as an extremist position and you know, that colored the rest of my commentary, and if I can do things over again, I possibly wouldn’t be as hard about, hard core about as when I started. You know I sort of like to think of myself as reasonable person, who puts this sort of argued position down and so on, but it is of course very easy for a sort of dogma to lurk behind the trappings of a formal argument in a way, I think that while I am quite reasonable, I think a lot of people would see me as quite dogmatic or unmoving my position, I am willing to listen to people, that sort of thing, I think I am somewhere in between, my own conception of my liberal argumentative discourse and other people see it as having no room for real difference or actual engagement, I don’t know.

Like Stephen, John also experiences incongruence between the way he perceives himself and the *persona* attributed to him. He insists on addressing instances of social injustice and thereby he performs a critical, emancipating identity in his critical interaction with the world. He does regret the *persona* of troublemaker to be attributed to him:

Researcher:

Do you think you created an identity for yourself on the (forum [sic]), look, when you are writing you are very convinced, which identity did the people create, who is John?

John:

I am glad you change the question there, from did I create an identity for myself to did others create it for me, I just went in with who I am, and I think the impression which people might now get or the identity attributed to me, uhm, is perhaps one of an angry person who does not understand the whole...uhm...context of the place, nor traditions nor the culture and who does not have the necessary respect for what is going on here, as a troublemaker, I think that identity could perhaps have originated in the minds of some.

Researcher:

And would you be able to live with that?

John:

No, I am not a troublemaker, and don’t see myself like that, I see myself as someone who goes about life critically, and who troubles things which people find too comfortable, because life is not such an untroubled, deadening existence.

The method of trolling which Stephen uses in his criticism of the university’s culture and traditions brings to mind that he views the forum in a more modern sense as a playfield. As his idealist notion about the potential change he could effect through the forum watered down, he also started to rethink and reappraise the effect of his online presence. Although this awareness was not reflected in his online participation, he did reveal a critical insight during the interview in aspects of his participation which portrayed his unemancipatory attitude towards others. This statement is however challenged further in the analysis of his

non-reflective attitude to himself setting an agenda of a philosophical approach in addressing issues.

Perceptions ↔ Strategy of interaction ↔ Identity construction

The first perception which the researchers formed of Stephen through his textual participation was that of a clever, eloquent and knowledgeable academic. Like the other participants, the researchers found these characteristics both impressive and intimidating. Belonging to the dominant Afrikaans (a language developed from *inter alia* 1600-Dutch) culture on the campus, the researchers also felt that Stephen, who is English speaking and who graduated at an English university, might view them as the opposition and this sentiment also influenced their disposition during the interview. It was against these sentiments that the critical viewing of his ideas was a challenging task and the construction of his offline identity an activity which was not neutral and void of certain dispositions. Similar dispositions were expected from Stephen in his probable viewing of us as traditional, supporting the *status quo* of the institution and a plethora of unemancipatory other dispositions.

But, the interview offered more than his textual character. Incongruence came up in the construction of his identity, which rests in his motivation to become involved in debate and his inability to interact constructively with his opposing participant on the forum. He also seemed not to be able to interact directly with the researchers during the interview.

His participation in the forum consists of elaborate informative monologues presented in a distant style, consisting of long reflective pieces. His last self-reflective informative contribution to the thread serves as a conversation stopper. Where one would expect some form of interpersonal closure with his main opponent, he prefers a distant hypothetical argumentation. As this forms his last contribution to the thread, it also doesn't invite further engagement:

Stephen:

As bad elements go, it perpetuates the racial qualification of personhood, and also provokes racially based responses that if anything are likely to perpetuate the problem of racism. As good elements go, it swims against the stream of prevailing racial meanings and therefore may do something to break down those meanings. In the same way that BEE taught white men that they are a category like all others, and not some kind of supercategorical exemplar of the norm, so these kinds of statements perhaps herald a turn, a moment in which categories are being remade and the old meanings shaken loose—the bad comes in the form that the new meanings such encounters are forgering [sic] may well not be any better.

During the interview, the researchers noted the following reflections in the research diary:

Researchers:

Stephen is not very direct, it seems that his engagements with others is more on a distant intellectual level than interpersonal. The fact that he sees his interaction as a game—trolling—might be the reason why he antagonizes people and does not really immerse himself in reality.

The way Stephen talks can be interpreted as a mono-directed account of his wishes and preferences to be engaged in argumentative discourse. This is quite ironic as the interview was not engaging and he dominated it with long explanations of his views about the forum, freedom of speech and anthropological insights. His wish to become involved in debate in online space is countered by his inability to direct himself to the interviewer.

Researchers:

I did not feel if a conversation took place. I felt excluded as he spoke very softly, more involved in his own thoughts than having a conversation. This mirrors his participation in the specific thread, long paragraphs of reflection, portraying the knowledge of his specific subject which is social anthropology. I had difficulty in hearing and following him and this made me uncomfortable. His ideas were very much the same as mine and we agreed on a number of things.

Stephen's participation creates a community of supporters who envy and applaud his eloquent style and his display of sociological knowledge. He is known by his supporters as a clever person, with sociological knowledge of "higher theories" (participant's response), setting the stage of wisdom for the readers of the forum in being an informative, knowledgeable participant. Peter and John comment on his eloquence and knowledge, which they judge as far better and more expanded than their own. Peter comments on his own incompetence to express himself adequately in English, which is his second language, and John indicates that Stephen's field of expertise serves to inform him about a subject he does not have knowledge of:

Peter:

Yes, but it is also pretty, I do especially like, in science, publication, which becomes now very important, the nice writing up of stuff, look, I hated English when I was in school, my English is a bit shaky, but if you write an English as he does, it is pretty, from a literary viewpoint it is a highlight, reading his things, often very pretty.

John:

Yes, and especially Stephen, made the point there, and it is surely based on one or other high theory, of which they are better familiar with in social anthropology.

In an interview even Beth, his main opponent describes him as knowledgeable and eloquent. Peter however, remarks that he is as un-giving and as set in his ideas as his main opponent, Beth, who aims only to declare her position and polarize the discourse rather than aiming to understand:

Peter:

Stephen also has the inclination to do it, that is what I want to say, that, there are two camps, I try and it is really what, I find South Africa, this town, so pretty, there has to be some way of getting together, how, that I know is very difficult, but Beth is not that, Stephen also, they would rather polarize than bringing people together.

Even in their appraisals during the interviews, Beth and Stephen refer to each other as young and old thereby informing this polarization on a personal level. Stephen's attribution of old age to Beth might be explained by the fact that she supports conservative and "old evolutionist ideas" (Stephen's response) and have a fossilized knowledge, while her describing Stephen as young might explain Beth's idea of him as a naïve liberal, whose young age informs his ideology and consequently his intolerance of her who can substantiate her positions with more real life experiences.

Stephen generally assumes a rational, distant and disembodied identity, but signs of emotionality are visible in his condescending, intolerant and impatient opposition of Beth. The "rationalistic veneer" which Herring et al. (371) refer to might be an appropriate description of his attempt to hide his disapproval of people who still uphold the ideology of apartheid:

Stephen:
Lionel is racism dressed as reason and concealed behind some quotes.

When he addresses his main opponent Beth, he does it in a declarative, condescending style. He creates the impression that his knowledge is superior to her ill-informed mundane experiences:

Stephen:
It is clear that you are informed in your estimation of what colonialism did for the rest of the world by little to nothing more than your own 'Hoerskool' [sic] history lessons. You should not make such apparently authoritative statements from such a woefully under-informed position.

The incongruences in the construction of Stephen's identity are the elements of personal engagement and disengagement, the rational and the emotional which seem not to complement each other, but rather are contradictions within the person himself. He expressed the wish to become engaged in debate as part of his motivation to engage in the forum,.....

Stephen:
I have always enjoyed social engagements which are argumentative, discussing things and debating things, it is something I have always enjoyed. and then when I came here, the BBS [forum sic] seemed like a nice sort of place to get discussions going.

...but he prefers to assume a rational distance in his conclusive remarks. Instead of interacting with his opponent and thereby reaching some interpersonal closure, he chooses a hypothetical piece as a form of argumentative closure. The emotional and sensible understanding of the other, would imply investing emotion not in opposing but in reconciling with the other. But he takes the easier way out by assuming a rational distance.

Beth, the fundamentalist

Identity construction ↔ Motivation ↔ Strategy of Interaction ↔ Perception

Beth feels that her identity, as well as the interests of middle class white Afrikaans speaking males, are denied in the forum. Her type of identity can be seen as an “attachment identity, i.e. our sense of self as constituted by what we care about, as our attachments shape our affective life and, to some extent, our normative view of the world” (Rodogno, as cited by Ess (4)).

The values they cherish, or the attachments they had, are minimized by the liberals who dominate the forum, which she perceives as an “absolute minority” (participant’s response). Her motivation is to oppose the liberals on the forum, whom she regards as having the most say without any realistic ground. She assumes a declarative style in the text, which creates the impression that she is racist, angry, aggressive, conceited and ungiving:

Beth:

As I have said previously, the time has come that everyone should establish the meaning of racism. To accept backwardness, low standards and the accusation that everything white is bad and everything black is just and good just because the majority of the community accepts it, is unacceptable to me and I will demonstrate it and I will fight it even if I am accused of racism.

The researchers had their doubts about the person whom they would meet during the interview. They expected a person such as the one constructed online: fearless, confrontative, unmitigating and aggressive. The strategy of interaction the researchers took was influenced the textual *persona* and they unconsciously approached her very carefully. They tended not to upset her and not to cross her ideas. The strategy of the researchers in their interview can in this respect be compared to the stance participants have in their interaction with Beth and a light was lit in understanding their subjective positions concerning her. In retrospect this experience helped the researchers also to come to an understanding of and identification with the emotions of participants on the forum in their reactions to Beth. The following entry in the research diary explains the researchers’ cautiousness:

Researcher:

In reading Beth’s thread, I was immediately abhorred by her choice of content and the style in which she conveyed her opinions. It took courage to meet her in an interview which turned out to be quite a surprise. As I experienced a person who should not be crossed in text, I decided not to oppose her as my strategy with the face to face meeting. I did not oppose a word she said. I rather was interested in why she took certain positions. I had second thoughts about my interview before the appointment and was a bit scared, as all her convictions she was outspoken about on the forum are totally the opposite of mine. Her ideas were hair raising to me. I tried to be as friendly as I can, trying to make her understand that she is not on trial.

In contrast with the courageous textual *persona*, the main impression Beth creates during the interview is that she feels panic and threat in seeing the same cataclysm at the university as in her previous work place:

Beth:

As I came from the technicon, I saw exactly how a technicon, which was a wonderful place to work at, absolutely changed character, and students causing millions of rands of destruction about a rector they don't like, and then he goes away and then they again cause millions of rands' destruction to get him back again, so, I got a culture shock there, so many of the things I wrote was because of that.

Further she feels indignant that the morality of herself and her peers is not acknowledged and even seen as misplaced. She regrets the deprivation of religious ceremonies, such as christian openings and prayers which were cherished in the older dispensation of the university before transformation:

Beth:

And they always want to dictate from this moral higher ground, uhm, and actually want to ignore things which are important for other people who do not belong to their frame of reference, that is just swept under the carpet, and, you know, then they have opinions about religious openings, prayer, things which were precious and dear, a test, and a lecturer standing in front and opens with prayer, that was dear to us, and it is taken away, then you rather keep quiet, you don't go on and step on it.

She also shows a warm, engaging personality who is not distant to the interviewer. The following diary entry was made:

Researcher:

As I expected with Stephen's influence to meet someone old and conservative, Beth was quite funky. I expected her to look quite different. From her text I also expected someone with old fashioned clothing, resembling the "Boerevolk" [Afrikaner nation sic] she represents. The way she interacted with me was quite friendly, but I got the impression that her ideas are very pronounced, such as on the forum. She interacted, made eye contact, spoke dramatically, such as in her text. The persona and the person were compatible. Or congruent. She did not apologize for any of her views, she stands and falls by it.

Beth's supporters are much less verbal and have no visibility on the forum such as the community of supporters Stephen has. Stephen describes her as naive and courageous and these characteristics offer him the opportunity to display his knowledge by correcting her world view and broadening her incomplete factual knowledge, which he calls "old fashioned evolutionist ideas" (Stephen's response). According to him she represents a populist view of a majority of silent voices, those who support a "grand racist narrative" (Stephen's response). It does come to mind that both Stephen and Beth set the agenda for the discussion, something they accuse each other of. He enforces his philosophical discourse on others, which they can either applaud or feel inferior about. It does not seem as if Stephen reflects on the exclusiveness of his choice of discourse or of himself setting the agenda. His accusation of Beth that she also sets the agenda by forcing him into agreeing with her opinion on "academic terrorism," (Stephen's response) shows this non-reflective attitude. Beth experiences

resistance to and annoyance with her participations. Participants label her as a racist and also revert to attacks concerning her personal life:

Mandy:

I have just the following question and remark. Do you have children? If yes, I hope with honest sympathy for their part that you do not transfer the nonsense about more stupid black people to them. If you do that, you make their lives (in a country where they live, work and learn side by side with black people) more difficult than what is necessary. I was shocked by the content of the “research” in your post and specifically the venom with which you support it.

She was also at a previous occasion forced by management to an acknowledgement of racism. According to her, management doubts her moral integrity, while she in turn doubts theirs. The resistance she experiences makes her more resilient in her opinions, and instead of reflecting critically, she offensively protects and consequently does not adjust her ideas.

Incongruences in the construction of Beth’s identity complicated the truthful rendering of who she really is. While she is generally marginalized and minimalized in the context of the forum, she feels that she represents a silent morally correct majority. As a courageous heroine, she fights for those she regards as the newly oppressed. While her embodied discourse in the forum text leads to most participants judging her and experiencing abhorrence or alienation from her, the embodied presence of the offline person attracts. While participants choose not to see the person beyond the textual embodiment, they tend to deal with her by abstract stereotyping and judging her as racist, a continuance of the distant reasoning Stephen initiated in his interaction with her.

Peter, the mediator

Identity construction ↔ Motivation ↔ Interaction ↔ Perception

The following reflection was made after the interview with Peter in the researchers’ diary:

Researchers:

It is intriguing that his awareness of the town being so restful and beautiful serves as the background of his attempts to make people more conciliatory and peaceful.

Peter shows a more nuanced identity in his efforts to mediate the forum’s opposing parties. He is not declarative in his participation, but more mitigating. He tries not to win an argument, but to show Beth that the undiplomatic way she presents her case textually, might easily lead others to assume that she is racist:

Peter:

Therefore I think people think that you are a big racist, which might really not be the case, as I said, I believe in your integrity. However, I have to agree with Mandy, that your style of writing might create the wrong impressions. A milder tone might help. Just of piece of diplomatic advice.

As an emigrant, he left Europe for South Africa, which he expected to offer a less stressful work environment. He now experiences conflict and racism in the macro context of a polarized society, which is also mirrored in the micro context of the forum-text.

Peter seems more giving and understanding in his address of Beth, though his choice to interact with her and not with Stephen makes his motive dubious. She obviously does not have the eloquence to further her views, and her conceited naivety make her an easy object of criticism. As he experiences deficits in his own way of expression, he has insight that her style might seem uncompromising. Playing the role of the mediator, he is able to see the similarities in the two opposing protagonists, both are un giving and unwilling to listen. However, Peter has difficulty in constructing Beth's identity logically. He thinks she contradicts herself and he struggles to identify the real objective of her participation:

Peter:

Yes, it is a very weird...and she is proud of her white skin...remark. Why would she now say that, (it is [sic] unnecessary, and then she says, yes, but her best student is black, I don't understand it, that is the way the discussion goes. That is what I say, what is her purpose, that is in my opinion not the purpose, but perhaps I don't see it, but I want to say it again, I like her, she says what she thinks, while 99 % do not.

Although Peter does not act as a protagonist, his sympathetic participation and his effort to understand Beth and respect her (*I believe in your integrity*), does open the possibility for reflection and lead her to acknowledge that her style of participation might discredit her integrity. The fact that he uses the word "believe" creates a softer, nuanced relationship between himself and a seemingly hard core protagonist.

The congruence of offline and online identities

A congruence or continuance largely exists between the offline and online identities of Stephen, Beth and Peter. Their styles of interaction on the forum match their styles of interaction during the interview. Stephen is as distant and rational offline as he is online. Beth is as dramatic and direct online as she is offline. Peter shows as much concern about the polarization of races and people offline as in his mediating attempts online. This finding questions the previous theoretical assumption that the absence of context of an online forum might lead to the misinterpretation of identity. In this respect the research partially concurs with Internet Studies over the last decade "which has increasingly highlighted how our online

identities are largely continuous with our offline identities” (Ess (4)). The important point of difference with the above theory however is that the construction of identities by others might show a discontinuance between offline and online identity. The incongruences relate to the effect the *persona* or online identity has on others.

The embodied identity of Beth does at the same time attract and alienate. She effects sympathy and abhorrence. Participants react differently to the presentation of the *persona* and construct different identities of her. The different identities they construct of her might be part of or might contradict who she is, as no person is viewed the same by everyone. The differences in representations might reveal the multiplicity of her offline identity. Some participants might detect the fear and moral panic in her text and because of similar experiences might have sympathy. Some may have only focused on her unemancipatory attitudes towards others and might only portray strong disapproval. Some may have only contributed racist ideology to her and see her as a “hard persona” (John’s response) whom they love to hate. In this sense the perceptions participants have of each other are different, they can be seen as incongruent or simply diverse interpretations and experiences of the *persona*.

Incongruence is found in the motivation of Stephen to interact in the forum and his distant style of participation. His rational style is intermittently interrupted by emotional stances, such as his assumption of a superior attitude in his address of Beth. Congruence and incongruence in identity construction lay both in the text and the relation of the text with the context of the participants. When Stephen reflects in the interview on his online *persona* he would hypothetically have assumed a different style of interaction and not be “as hard core” (Stephen’s response) as when he started his career on the forum. Incongruence between his historical *persona* and present offline identity exists. John who set out to challenge the *status quo* and criticize those who are disrespectful towards others, currently fears the label of troublemaker and terminates his involvement in further discourse on racial matters.

The act to construct identity is ultimately both a rational and an emotional process. Peter acts rationally in his unsuccessful effort to find logic in Beth’s text by asking: “*What is her purpose?*” His understanding of Beth is eventually morally much more valuable when he portrays an emotional appreciation and trust in her good intentions. This characteristic of resorting not only to a logical understanding also makes him a good mediator in the forum.

Ultimately the understanding of a person does not imply valuing the ideal or the ideology, but rather valuing the person. Understanding the person, which Young ("Communication and the Other: Beyond Deliberative Democracy" 165; *Inclusion and Democracy*; "Comments on Seyla Benhabib, Situating the Self"; "Activist Challenges to Deliberative Democracy") proposes as the objective of moral discourse implies assuming a position where the other is viewed as a concrete other, not the general other. Habermas (as referred to by Young "Comments on Seyla Benhabib, Situating the Self" 165; "Discourse Ethics: Notes on a Program of Philosophical Justification"; *Moral Consciousness and Communicative Action*), in proposing his tenets of ideal speech, views the other as general, those who support the ideology of racism or liberalism, and the objective of understanding the general other means the understanding of their ideas, which either serve to inhibit or achieve the common good, the absolute idea of what is good. In this respect especially Stephen resorts to this rational strategy of not trying to understand the person, but rather to identify the person with the ideology, such as viewing her participating in a grand racist narrative, or Beth, who only views Stephen as part of the liberals, whom she views as those undermining the ideals she stands for and eventually support the cataclysm she fears.

Conclusion

In this section, conclusive remarks about the difficulty to construct identity in a conflict-driven forum are made.

Emotionality in identity construction

The pervasive presence of emotion in the interactions of the participants, leads the researchers to claim that the construction of identity is an emotional and value-laden activity present both in themselves and in the participants on the forum. The exploration of the identity of participants also contributed to the moral growth of the researchers, as an exploration of own assumptions and a critical revision of judgments were necessitated.

The polarised environment challenges identity construction

The discourse among the academic participants is marked by a high level of conflict. Unequality can be viewed in the interaction amongst participants and the power the management of the university exerts over the forum. The way participants present themselves and the way they are perceived within this polarized environment lead to misconstructions of identity.

Reaction to embodied participations

In the thread under scrutiny, some participants do reach a form of understanding and do display sympathy for the person who tells about specific experiences and situations which are different from their own. Others are however deterred by the direct and dramatic display of negative emotions in the performance of embodied participations. In response they resort in their interactions to rationalistic argumentation, coupled with moralistic and normalistic positions. By judging the emotional participation as morally inferior, they distance themselves from further involvement by claiming themselves as morally superior. They eventually terminate the possibility of reaching some form of understanding within an equal space. Their assumption of a distant, rationalistic style is ironically pre-determined by their strong emotional reaction.

Rationality as dominant strategy

Those participants, who have dialectic histories in the forum, engage in polarizing and alienating forms of discourse. They do not aim to understand nor do they explore the specific diverse situations and perspectives of others. They assume positions of power through various techniques, such as the repetition of their viewpoints. The singular focus on rationality serves as the more dominant strategy, whereby an exclusive insistence on logic minimalises and disempowers other forms of reason than their normative own.

Issues of design

Except for the high amount of conflict which characterized this distressed online environment, the negative effects of instant publicity and exposure also serve as deterrents to actual and potential participants. The design of the forum does also not encourage participants to interact freely as the institutional administration designed the forum in such a way, that participants' texts are authored and the option of anonymity or the experimenting with multiple identities does not exist. These factors inhibit creativity and also spontaneous interactions. The threat and reality of institutional censorship further undermines any exercise of free speech and silences possible dissentient voices.

Absence of personal context

The most prominent characteristic of this online environment is the fact that a participant's most current message is seen as the only means of representation of the person.

A participant is therefore frozen in online space, which lends a permanent character to something which only has temporal, fleeting value. This absence of personal context in the online forum leads to a challenging process of construction of identities, especially if they are incongruent to the way participants perceive themselves. Participants shy away from the negative labeling attached to them based on the online, textual identity which their readers envisage and create.

Recommendations

Suggestions are made for a practice based design of technology (as proposed by Timmermans and Berg 103), which could alleviate the problems of misrepresentation and misconstruction of identity.

Sub-versing a moralistic way of identity construction

During their experience of a participant's textual embodiment, readers form a certain representation in their minds of the person's identity. This representation process is characterized by the valuing and judgment of the person, especially in a discourse where moral issues are discussed. The idealistic view of the forum as the rectifier of wrongs also has a moralistic influence on the way identities are constructed and an exclusion of opponents to the own ideology easily follows. This is also strengthened by a participant such as Stephen, whose eloquence and dominant abstract, rational style easily conveys the exclusion and stereotyped reduction of Beth's identity.

Participants idealize the opportunities which the online space offers as if it is neither constrained by the context of their real life environment nor by the context of the forum itself. The forum is however embedded in an institution which is characterized, such as other universities, by its "highly regulated context"(as cited by Dandridge and Mendus).

Anonymity

Albeit contested by the moderator, the anonymity of participants is proposed precisely because the denied practice of silent censorship by management creates a moral incongruence. It is interesting in the interview with a member of management that previous acts of censorship are not acknowledged as a form of moderation or editing:

Researcher:
I want to know, uhm, would anonymity have helped? Or would it open the forum too much for irresponsible remarks?

Cathy:

You see, if you want to allow anonymity, then I would almost feel there has to be an editor, because plainly, anonymous things can be very slanderous, and then you cannot, uh, I think the fact that you have to add your name brought a bit of self-regulation along, because, look, you can become very slanderous

Researcher:

Yes

Cathy:

...and uh, if you cannot be rebuked, then you really have an unfair advantage, if you want to throw stones, let the people at least see by whom, and so on.

Anonymity would bring a playfulness and informality to the forum and the possibility for participants to experiment with multiple identities and multiple viewpoints.

Emoticons

The value of emoticons has been widely documented as a nonverbal alternative to textual communication (Dresner and Herring; Tossell et al.; Wolf; Vincent and Fortunati; Taesler and Janneck) and as a facilitator for the expression of emotion in online environments.

In the current thread, although minimally presented, some other identities do surface but do not meet the challenges of the dominant discourse. As multiple perspectives and nuanced *personae* are needed to facilitate moral discourse, some design elements can be helpful. As the thread is dominated by informative and rationalistic accounts on the part of Stephen, the use of emoticons can enable participants to insert them in the text he provides. The insertion of emoticons serves as a subtext to the text without interrupting the text and brings an immediate response to the author. This might lead Stephen to develop a more interactive style, to become aware of the effect of his ideas and start engaging with others. Beth, who is unaware of the undiplomatic statements she made, could also benefit from the application of emoticons in her text by others, and exercise greater care in the expression of emotion.

The necessity to participate in the agenda of dominant eloquent speakers and the confinement to text as the only viable way to respond, are thereby lifted and the a-textual significance of symbols carries the meaning and intention of non-dominant participants. In this way the emotional presence of anyone can be visible and enhanced without the necessity to participate by making a textual contribution. The dominance of rational presence is in this way subverted and a more nuanced discourse is enabled.

Enhancing morality and identity growth in an inclusive community

The formal environment and the limiting context of an institutional forum play a significantly limiting role in identity presentation. In the thread, most participants prefer to side with the disembodied identity as presented by Stephen in his distant form of informative and argumentative participation. Support of the embodied, courageous, dangerous and emotional Beth is tentative and very careful. The community formed within these limiting circumstances can be identified as controlling, judgmental, unsympathetic and exclusive, characteristics which can also be used to construct the identities of Stephen's supporters.

The congruence between identity and *persona* is high in the formal environment where participations are authored. This limits the choice of experimentation and the creativity of participants. It also limits the growth of a discursive identity of protagonists and marginal participants. These limitations serve as an added motivation for anonymity and the use of one or multiple identities. Within the design of the forum, the option has to be given for participants to be known as the author and/or to be known by a pseudonym and/or to be known as anonymous.

Along with the fact that their online and offline identities are similar, the opposing protagonists also share the same characteristics, such as being similarly unmoving and polarizing. It is exactly this similarity in characteristics which disables the discourse and makes it one dimensional. More dissimilar identities and multiple viewpoints are needed to enable a discourse through which moral growth is possible.

The assumption of multiple identities and their contribution to moral discourse have in the beginning stages of studies in multi user domains been documented by Turkle (*Life on the Screen*). She holds that serious discussions on moral issues are conducted in online networks which allow participants to have more than one identity. The possibility to assume a variety of identities allows participants to play around, experiment with multiple perspectives and reveal different facets of themselves.

Visualize the history of identity presentation

One of the problems in constructing the identity of an online participant is the fact that the history of someone's participation is not accessible. The effect is that the participant is only known by her most current thread.

By designing a search facility within the forum where a participant's name is used as a search term this problem might be overcome and the context of a person's participation becomes known and better understood. The embodiment of the participant might also lead to an easier construction of her online identity.

Proposing a technology based on practice

The danger remains that these design proposals might fall in the category of technological determinism (Timmermans and Berg 99) in the belief that only through technological design social problems can be addressed and rectified. The design proposals can also be seen as social essentialist, in the sense that technology is only influenced by social ideals, such as the wish for people to understand each other, which is the basic tenet of Young's (*Inclusion and Democracy*) model of communicative democracy. These design proposals are however formulated to address the problems which arise in the practice of constructing online identities truthfully and respectfully. In this way the hegemony within the micro context of the forum can be alleviated and the possibility of power within the discourse sub-versed.

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Synopsis, Conclusions and Recommendations

1. Introduction

My interest in online discussions was sparked when I started to read the threads in the online forum of the university. My theoretical interest was formed by Young's (1996; 2000; 2001; 2003) paradigm of communicative democracy, which she developed as an answer to the rational exclusion she perceived in Habermas' (1987; 1990a) theory of deliberative democracy. I formulated a research question which would allow me to explore possible forms of exclusion in the online forum. I therefore started looking for internal exclusion in the forum and I found a thread which could match my inquiry. With knowledge of posts which disappeared after their publication, I entertained the idea that external exclusion might also be possible.

I present each of the four articles and the conference paper in the order of completion and in relation to the development of the research question. The unifying thread which binds all the articles is the exploration of the question how inclusion and exclusion are manifested in an online discussion forum of an institution for higher education.

The first article, *Dealing with racism within discourse on an online forum of a higher education institution* indicates how participants interact with one another and exclude others within the forum. This article is based on textual analyses of one thread and the transcripts of two interviews. The main points of difference between Habermas (1987; 1990a) and Young (1996; 2000; 2001; 2003) serve as the theoretical framework against which the participations in the thread are seen as exclusive or inclusive. The articles which followed and the conference paper also included the analysis of online and offline data. The second article, *Reflections on the use of grounded theory to uncover counter narratives in an online discussion forum at an institution of higher education* describes the methodology followed in the procurement and analysis of data. This article presents a paradigm which was formed during the final stage of analysis, namely selective coding, as described by Strauss and Corbin (2008). This form of theory building by means of a paradigm provided the fundamental structure on which the other two articles were built. The focus of the diagram just shifted each time to assemble and include those specific strategic interactions (such as style of presentation, moderation, perceptions and identity construction) which are relevant to the specific focus of the article. The following article took moderation as its focus, *(Un)desired interventions in an online discussion forum of a higher education institution in South Africa*. The last article addressed the issue of embodiment in identity construction, *Valuing the impact of embodiment on moral discourse in an online forum of a higher education institution*. The conference paper was based on the findings of the article on methodology (Article 2) along with the findings of the article on moderation (Article 3), *Narratives countering the democratising ideal of discourse in an online forum of a higher education institution*.

2. Summary and Discussion of the Main Findings of the Sub-questions

As the research developed, the problems indicated in the first articles were addressed in the articles which followed. Sub-questions one, two and four explore the elements of exclusion within the participants' paradigms while sub-questions three and five combine the explanations with proposals which might facilitate inclusion. Sub-question three is addressed in the conference paper, which is a combination of sub-questions two and four. Sub question five explores the theory of embodiment in combination with its value for the development of moral discourse. In this section, the findings of each article are offered.

2.1 Dealing with Racism within Discourse on an Online Forum of a Higher Education Institution

Sub-question 1: How do rationalistic strategies create power inequalities and exclusion within the online discourse?

This article indicates how a rationalistic approach to discourse effects power differences and instils hostility among participants. Young's (1996; 2000; 2001; 2003) paradigm on democratic discourse informs the researcher in the identification of exclusive forms of communication, such as the authoritative sharing of information and the condescending attitude of participants. The eventual consensus which the Habermas (1984; 1990a) paradigm holds as ideal, becomes un-ideally the consensual exclusion (the consensus reached by the majority) of one participant (Beth). The consensus eventually inhibits and closes the opportunity for moral discourse for all the participants involved in the discussion.

The analysis shows strategies participants assumed and their way of interaction and self-presentation. How other mitigating approaches, such as sharing and story-telling, mediate differences and effect the assumption of softer *personas*, thereby opening up the opportunity for reflection and growth. A declarative approach leads to the repetition of the own point of view, creates a non-giving, conceited *persona* without real interaction with opposing participants or reflection on unemancipatory attitudes. The declarative style of Beth is accompanied by her presentation of narratives with which she interacts in her larger socio-cultural context, like newspaper articles and posters. Stephen finds these documents or narratives not suitable, but rather regards it as inferior evidence for what he presumes to be her *argument*. By setting the agenda concerning the rational argument-evidence style of reasoning, he acts rationalistically and discredits her participation. He assumes a position of impartiality to the real reasons of her distress and portrays her as the general other, the typical racist who adheres to old evolutionist ideas.

The dynamics of the thread is revealed in a macro structure analysis of the participants which indicates the main focus of their participations. It becomes clear in the analysis that the impact of the singular

rationalistic style is so pervasive that the consequential participations tend to enforce the elements in this rationalistic style, such as stereotyping, the assumption of moralistic attitudes which eventually lead to hostility. These types of interactions eventually impoverish and terminate the discourse. The consensus which is reached by the majority of the participants does not serve the common good of Habermas' (1984; 1990a) ideal speech.

2.1.1 Further Research Opportunities

The main concern of this article is the unemancipatory interaction amongst participants. If the narrative is the preferred way to reach understanding, the question still remains if it should be regarded as an appropriate strategy also for the expression of unemancipatory ideas. The questions to explore therefore are: why, how, and when the narrative form of discourse could be unemancipatory?

2.2 Reflections on the Use of Grounded theory to Uncover Counter Narratives in an Online Discussion Forum at an Institution of Higher Education

Sub-question 2: How do the elements of internal and external exclusion interact within the process of participation in the online discourse?

This article shows how the open (Miles & Huberman, 1984), axial and selective coding stages (Strauss & Corbin, 2008) of the method of grounded theory creates the means to uncover the different conditions within the process of participation. The interrelationship between the conditions demonstrates the intricate cause and effect in the interplay of the different stages of participation, such as motivation, interaction and consequence. Although these conditions are broadly the same across the different paradigms of participants, each condition is articulated differently within each specific participant's paradigm. The analysis of these interrelationships and interdependencies contributes to a deep understanding of the dynamics of conditions leading to, interacting with, and effecting the cyclic process of intensifying exclusion of participants.

The causal conditions of a participant's paradigm include a participant's motivation to take part in the forum, which again is based on the specific convictions and ideology the participant holds. Although participants hold different convictions and their personal histories are diverse, their choice of participatory strategy is generally similar. The stronger their sense of exclusion concerning institutional practices and dominant discussions, the more their participations are characterised by declarations and strong wording in their opposition of participants. It is therefore not strange that the emotional nuances of their participations are the same, such as in the case of Beth and John. While addressing each other in the same way, the motives for their strategic interactions are quite diverse. It is interesting to note that the feelings Beth and John experience become internalised in their strategies of interaction. For example, when John feels belittled and stereotyped, that is exactly the action he employs in the way he addresses Beth (Table 5).

Table 5: Diverse Motivations and Similar Strategies of Interaction

Beth	Shared stances, emotions and strategies	John
Motivation and ideology A religious fundamentalist, conservative perspective Experiences disrespect from liberals to own value system	Stances declarative, confrontative, condescending	Motivation and ideology A human rights perspective Experience disrespect towards non-dominant cultures
	Emotions threatened, indignant, angry	
	Strategy stereotype, belittle	

Like John and Beth, none of the opposing participants reach any understanding. The cyclic process of exclusion shows that interaction only serves to estrange participants, and that motivations and objectives only become stronger and result in reciprocal denouncing. The termination of participation as consequence is defined by the fact that no understanding or even mutual respect has been reached. On the contrary, those who felt excluded and started interacting because of this feeling of exclusion ultimately used the forum in such a way that they became excluded from the forum itself and felt even more excluded in their interaction with the real environment. Beth, who wanted to oppose dominant voices, excluded herself in such a way that she became a more marginalised voice on the forum than she had envisaged. The objective of participation eventually undermined the outcome of participation—exclusion as motive became exclusion as consequence, the effort to oppose dominant voices resulted in becoming a more marginalised voice.

2.2.1 Further Research Opportunities

As this paper contracts a wide spectrum of participant paradigms in illustrating the conditions of selective coding, the questions which are derived are broad. The following five questions serve as a representation of issues which could be explored:

1. What are the reasons for and consequences of the idealisation of the role of the forum?
2. What is the role of management in the emancipation of participants on the forum?
3. How do participants experience the role management plays in the administration of the forum?
4. Which influence does the forum have on personal and structural change?
5. Which styles of participation can be regarded as constructive for moral discourse?

2.3 Narratives Countering the Democratising Ideal of Discourse in an Online Forum of a Higher Education Institution

Sub-question 3: How can moderating interventions alleviate the exclusive elements in the process of participation?

This paper combines the insights gained from grounded theory in exploring conditions within the narratives of participants of unemancipatory interventions of the moderator and the disempowering interactions of participants.

The conditions of moderating interventions can be tied to the context within which the forum operates, which has an effect on both the way participants exercise control or moderation over one another and the way participants are controlled or moderated from outside.

The internal moderating interventions are of a less intrusive quality than those exercised from outside. The external moderating interventions and the ideas of the moderator are intensely exclusive because of the following reasons:

1. The moderator operates invisibly or “discreetly”, thereby creating suspicion and fear
2. The moderator terminates participation by acts of censoring
3. The moderator assumes rationalistic stances, such as attributing uninformedness to participants
4. The moderator expects *decorum* in participation, thereby setting an expectation for the form and content of participation

The internal moderation effects inequality among participants, as the rationalistic stances minimise and stereotype opposing participants, thereby giving evidence of the fact that diversity is not appreciated. The articulation of these exclusive conditions both in the discourse and in the external exertion of power over the discourse enables the proposal of an equalising participation of the moderator rather than applying an exclusive and hegemonic moderating strategy. The proposal is also informed by Young’s (2000) inclusive rhetorical strategies, which aim to install understanding and mutual respect as also endorsed by the tenets of Habermas’ ideal speech situation.

Table 6 indicates the characteristics of desired interventions, or desired acts of moderation and the potential effect it would have on the forum. These characteristics are part of an inclusive community, or a community of friends, as held by Aristotle (as referred to by Jacquette, 2001; Sokolowski, 2001) which would bring its participants to act morally:

Table 6: Desired Acts of Moderation and its Effect on the Forum

Desired moderation	Effect on the characteristics of the forum
visible, impartial, spontaneous, accepting, equal, participatory, involved, encouraging	non-competitive, accepting, appreciative, diverse, inclusive, friendly, trusting, understanding

2.3.1 Further Research Opportunities

As the place and status (the intervening and contextual context) of the moderator have been partially investigated, one can determine in more detail how these contexts influence the internal and external moderating participations. A further question to explore is how the moderation which is exercised institutionally can be emancipatory when taking the socio-historical conditions into account.

2.4 (Un)desired Interventions in an Online Discussion Forum of a Higher Education Institution in South Africa

Sub-question 4: How do power (in)equalities cause and effect the internal and external moderation of discourse on the online forum?

The paper focuses on the institutional context of the forum by describing the cause and effect of moderating interventions. The idealistic notion concerning the role of the forum leads to certain internal moderating interactions amongst participants themselves. If the role of the forum is perceived to aid in transformation, the strategic interactions of those opposing transformation are criticised. The internal moderation, however, does not limit itself to the criticism of style and content of opposing participants, but leads to a moralistic condemnation of those who resist change.

Contrasting views are held concerning external moderation. It seems as if external moderation is regarded an act of institutional transformation when voices which are disrespectful to other races are controlled or silenced. When signs of support for transformation are detected, the external moderation is both expected and applauded. This can be seen in the comment of John concerning an expectation he had of external moderation:

John: Well, if I have to look at one small victory, that the office of...what is the office's name, something like...let's call it something like the human rights commission of the university, that office made a finding in my favour, that one of the participants (Beth sic) was racist and that there were judgments, hate speech, so there was a piece of justice which triumphed, the finding alone, but the recommendation that justice was seen to happen, about that I know nothing, I do not know if the person literally was held liable, that I do not know (Postma, Blignaut, Sutinen, & Swan, 2012).

On the other hand censoring or disciplinary action is not regarded as an option within an institution where the exercise of freedom of speech is necessary for the building of new ideas. Stephen indicates that the issue of racism always underlies discussions and the act of censoring or disciplining racist remarks will eventually terminate discourse on serious issues, such as religion and language:

Stephen: Even the other discussions, the discussions related to religion, discussions related to the residences, discussions related to traditions here, the language issue, all included at one point or another a racial component, that somehow the topic of race was unavoidable, and dealing with lots of the big issues...and talking a lot about what people felt as the big issues here, and when this thread sort of reached its emotional peak, and people began to decide to take action outside of the discussion, I think it sent a very clear message, to Beth, that these sort of

comments won't be tolerated, and that would, 'cause right at the beginning, when I first started participating on the BBS [the forum sic], I think it was the first year when I was here, in 2005, there was actually somebody who had raised a disciplinary issue against Beth..and I think Paul was part of it, but Paul and I both wrote something to say, well you know, we don't think there should be a disciplinary act against her because we think that she brings to the discussion a sort of popular position and that the discussion is more important than that, uhm, but then by this time I think the person, it was John who made the complaint, and he was very angry and very adamant that that sort of thing should not be tolerated and we differed a bit on that.

External acts of moderation also share the rationalistic stances of internal moderation in holding a certain standard concerning the style and content of participation. Contextual factors concerning the place of the forum within the larger institution influence the moderator and participants differently. It seems as if a sense of loyalty to managerial colleagues clashes with the liberal ideologies of participants, leading to the silencing of participants who criticise acts of management.

The effect of censoring or controlling interventions which management exercised effected consequences which were different and alike. Beth was much more convinced of the morality in her participation, felt challenged by the managerial intervention and continued in a more confrontative and declarative style. Francois shared this strengthening of persuasion like Beth and became much more convinced that he was in principle correct:

Francois: And I was quite happy and I would never regret saying, and if it were to be done again I would do exactly the same again, perhaps even worse and more cruel, because I don't think I pushed it far enough.

The consequence however was different from Beth in the fact that Francois did change his strategy by becoming less intensely engaged, and eventually ended his participation.

2.4.1 Further Research Opportunities

As not all possible contextual and intervening conditions to participants' paradigms were explored, one can still determine why acts of external moderation either silence or encourage participants. Another question which still remains unanswered is if and how freedom of speech can be exercised in a medium such as an institutional forum.

2.5 Valuing the Impact of Embodiment on Moral Discourse in an Online Forum of a Higher Education Institution

Sub-question 5: How does the embodiment of participants inhibit or foster the growth of moral discourse?

This paper describes the construction of participants' identities and provides the reflections and observations of the researcher in valuing the contribution of disembodied, rational identities and embodied, emotional identities to moral discourse. The researcher is also informed by participants'

self-presentation through their textual embodiment and by participants' perceptions as they express these during interviews.

The online and offline identities are congruent, which can be explained by the fact that participations are authored and the misconception of identity is perceived as an unwanted consequence of participation. Some participants indicate that others might view them as conceited troublemakers, a construction of their identity they find difficult to associate themselves with. Instances of incongruence between online and offline identities do, however, present themselves. Contradictions between the objective of participation and the actual interaction are noted in participants such as John and Stephen. Stephen does for instance indicate the wish to become involved in argumentative discourse, but his interaction with opponents such as Beth proves to be distant. John wishes for a lively debate, but he wants disrespectful voices to be silenced.

The conclusion reached in this paper is that the incongruences shown in identity construction indicate that a person is not only known by a singular presence. The theory is therefore maintained that multiple presences and identities contribute more towards moral discourse than the singularity of one-dimensional (e.g. only rational) presences. It seems as if emotion is pervasively present in all participations, even if participants would like to play a purely rational and informative role.

Design elements to enhance participants' embodiment are proposed which might alleviate the singularity of textual presentation. The choice of more than one pseudonym instead of authored participations might contribute to multiplicity, plurality, flexibility and creativity in the discourse. The option to insert emoticons in other participants' text might facilitate more emotional involvement in the forum and might also create awareness in singular rational participants of the tediousness of their distant and clinical style. A search facility might provide the possibility to follow the history of someone's participation and identity presentation. All these devices could enhance embodied participations and create appreciation for diversity.

2.5.1 Further Research Opportunities

The question which deserves further exploration is how effective the technical design of an institutional forum to enhance embodiment and emotional presence will eventually be.

3. Addressing the Main Research Question

The sub-questions above serve to address the main research question. Each of the sub questions was derived from the themes which became apparent in the data analysis. The literature which further supported the deliberative and communicative paradigms of democratic discourse added perspective to the main research question:

Which patterns of inclusion and exclusion can be identified in an online discussion forum of an institution for higher education?

The patterns of inclusion and exclusion which the main research question refers to, could be found in the specific paradigms of each person who contributed to the forum. The binding element in the five sub-questions was the issue of morality in discourse. The exclusion of participants impacted negatively on the development of moral discourse in the forum. It also impacted negatively on the experience of participants in the sense that their morality was denied or seen as misplaced. A dominant rationalistic strategy of interaction could lead others to normalistic and moralistic attitudes and ways of interaction which effected the extreme alienation of other participants. They did not remain participants but were treated as opponents.

The declarative strategy of interaction was found in the protagonists' interactions and echoed in the participations of minor contributors to the thread. The declarative strategy did not contribute to a productive discourse but polarised participants. It served as a power tool in the repetition of own convictions, the dismissal of opposing opinions and eventually the minimalisation of opponents.

In all the research themes, the issue of exclusion and inclusion was relevant. The forms of exclusion and inclusion were also visible in the conditions which constituted the paradigm of each participant.

3.1 Exclusive Causal and Intervening Conditions

The motivation of participants was morally inspired and the forum was generally idealised as a rectifier of wrongs. Participants would use the forum for one of the following purposes:

- i) To indicate institutional hegemonic practices
- ii) To influence the sentiments to the left
- iii) To oppose and to indicate the intolerance of the liberals
- iv) To mediate opposing parties
- v) To share own experiences with other participants

These objectives were informed by ideologies or theoretical paradigms participants adhered to, which were the principles associated with social justice, human rights and liberalism versus conservative-fundamentalist thought.

The specific ideology, the cultural and socio-political history of a participant relates to the causal and intervening conditions of the paradigm of participation. John was motivated by his grounding in social justice and categorised himself as politically black; Beth regarded herself as a fundamentalist and she cherished the perceived positive values which characterised the institution before its merger; Stephen was motivated as a liberal to indicate oppressive traditions and customs within the institution

which were a remnant of the older political regime. Peter and Francois were used to a culture where people were not inhibited to speak their minds freely.

John, Stephen, Francois and their opponent, Beth reacted very strongly to the *status quo* of the university as they experienced themselves as alien to the campus culture. Apart from feeling excluded from the dominant culture, they also found it incongruent to their moral convictions. Ironically, their feelings of exclusion were based on opposing ideologies.

The motivation of participants directed the strategy of interaction they chose. Their degree of idealisation of the forum also had a direct effect on the consequence of their online interactions. The two more mediating participants (Peter and Susan) interacted either directly or indirectly with their opposing participant (Beth). Their motivations to participate in the forum can be regarded as more inclusive and their contributions developed some ideas alternative to those which the protagonists hold. Peter wanted to promote discourse on the forum and he wished for opposing parties to meet and solve their differences. Susan’s motive was to throw her story into the forum and to ask others to judge it, as she would not venture into the declarative strategy of judging her own experience and also indicating racist attitudes in others.

3.2 Exclusive Strategic Conditions

As the main participants (Beth, Stephen, John and Francois) felt excluded from either the institutional culture or insulted by the dominant voices of the forum, they resorted to a declarative strategy of interaction to phenomena or people they opposed. The strategies they employed are described by the verbs in Table 7 (a) and (b).

Table 7: Exclusive and Inclusive Strategies of Interaction

a. Exclusive Strategy	b. Exclusive or Inclusive	c. Inclusive Strategy
Patronise	Troll	Sympathise
Declare	Joke	Share
Criticise	Flame	Tell
Dismiss	Provoke	Advise
Minimalise		Question
Stereotype		Compliment
		Trust

Placing trolling, flaming and joking in Table 7 (b) means that there was some conflict in judging these strategies as exclusive or inclusive: The “trolling” which was referred to by Stephen in an interview was done in an indirect way—he did not address someone specifically, but “trolled” aspects of the institutional culture which he found absurd and irrelevant. He refers to his trolling in the interview by remembering himself saying: “this religion is all crap.”

Along with Francois he also reverted to joking about, amongst others, the religious convictions held by theologians. Joking also served as a form of narrative and did not fall under the argument-evidence form of *ideal speech*. The art of provoking was also a strategy which Francois later on assumed, as he felt excluded by the topics of discussion on the forum which he judged were not of universal value and not worth being considered. He also did not feel obliged to respect or abide by the morality which was exercised locally but rather to ridicule it.

Although flaming and trolling are perceived negatively by Herring *et al.* (2002), their effect in the forum could be either exclusive or inclusive. In this respect a reappraisal of flaming is necessary, which is also indicated as a concern within online studies by Turnage (2007). The question to be answered is if flaming and trolling contributed to moral discourse. One has to question whether a strategy is inclusive if it is efficient, *e.g.* if it invites more participation. A declarative strategy, such as the one used by Beth, invited more declarative strategies. In this respect the strategy can be judged as efficient as it promotes discourse. The problem with the strategy is that it doesn't promote understanding, and therefore it can be regarded as exclusive. It also seems likely that a declarative strategy, which is combined with a distant, non-interactive, informative and rational style, smothers discourse.

The mediating participations were not declarative and brought a different nuance to the thread. The motive of these participants was not to oppose the protagonists, but they rather brought a narrative/story to the discussion (Susan and Beth) and addressed one of the protagonists (Beth) in a much friendlier way than the others did. The mediator (Peter) complimented Beth by ensuring her of his trust in her well-meaning intentions and he questioned the negative consensus the other participants held. The strategies the mediators used are described by the verbs in Table 7 (c).

The declarative strategy enforces the insistence on point of view, bringing polarisation to the discourse, while the mediating strategy did lead to self-reflection but did not ease the existing hostility. It is also not sure if understanding, which Young (1996) proposes as the aim of discourse was reached. It is however true that the mediating strategies had the potential to initiate and enhance a process of mutual respect and understanding.

3.3 Exclusive Consequential Conditions

The exclusion participants experienced was related to their respective motivations and interactive styles. If a participant acted from an ideological stance they were inclined to assign an idealistic role to the forum and acted opportunistically. It followed that their declarative participations served as a strong testimony to their convictions. The consequence of their interactions on the forum was one or more of the following:

- i) fear, mistrust, hostility, indignance
- ii) disappointment and frustration
- iii) saturation and termination of participation.

John and Stephen feared the attribution of negative characteristics, such as being seen as troublemakers and being uncompromising. As Stephen assigned an idealistic role to the forum, such as to influence sentiments or participants to the left, a feeling of disillusion and disappointment followed. Beth felt that she stated her convictions and that her participation became saturated. She also felt indignant that the morality she exercised wasn't appreciated and that she was perceived to be immoral. In both the cases of Stephen and Beth the power they tried to exert over each other eventually became feeble and ineffective. Only Stephen reflected that he would have taken another approach than he did and he would not be as "hard core as when (he) started." Beth didn't seem to revisit her strategy or opinions:

Beth: I had my say, I said it clearly, uhm, for those who listened, they did hear, for those who did not listen, they did not hear.

3.4 Exclusive Contextual Conditions

The intervening conditions of the axial paradigm are translated as the specific context of the forum, which is characterised by different dimensions. Inclusion and exclusion could intensely be exercised and experienced in the support or opposition of ideas, the acknowledgement and dismissal of participants and the understanding or intolerance of participants.

These forms of inclusion and exclusion were practised from within and from outside the forum by means of internal moderation and external moderation. While the internal moderation could still be regarded as a power play between participants with expected consequences, the external moderation did create a moral incongruence and overrode any expectations concerning participants' potential influence and their ideals of free speech. Not only did it terminate the building of moral discourse, but it also seized or disembodied (Van Doorn, 2011) the online life of a participant. The opportunity to criticise elements outside the domain of the forum text, those spheres in which the forum text was embedded, such as the institutional sphere and its location within a larger socio-cultural context was therefore limited. The only sphere of criticism, which also proved to be a limited sphere, was within the forum text.

The possibility of conducting a moral discourse with managerial participants offline was stifled in the censoring interventions by management. The fact that participation from management in the forum discourse was absent, made the forum a playfield for *the people* with no real effect on matters which concerned them. Even if the discourse could foster morality and the moral development of its

participants, this was still far from achieving structural changes and the need for accountability from actors in the larger spheres in which the forum is embedded.

The limited influence of the forum had already been indicated by Cathy, who played the part of moderator when she described it as a *therapeutic space*. She also valued the forum in its offering the means for management to see what the people were feeling, what the *vox populi* was, but unfortunately this potential of the forum led it to be used as a Foucaultian panopticon (Rouse, 2003), a way to see, to identify and to control dissidence.

3.5 Inclusion and Exclusion in all the Conditions of Participation

Table 8 indicates that participants could both exercise exclusion and be subjected to it. John, Peter, Stephen, Francois and Beth experienced exclusion either in the forum or in the institution and they acted on it by assuming a strategy which either included (Peter, Susan ↔ Beth) or excluded (John, Stephen ↔ Beth) each other. Cathy regarded the forum as an inclusive, therapeutic space, but she excluded voices (Cathy → Francois) which fell outside her frame of expectation, like those which criticised management. She proposes *decorum* as the criterion for interaction and expects academics to be informed. By taking these rationalistic stances, she creates an inequality in theory and through her censoring interventions her exclusionary stances actualise in exclusionary practices.

The perceptions Beth, Stephen and John had of each other lead to their mutual intolerance and excluding interaction strategies, while Peter and Susan did not display their support or opposition to the protagonists overtly and did act in a more accepting way. As they did not idealise the role of the forum as a rectifier of wrongs, they were not as disappointed or felt excluded and continued with their participation after the others had terminated theirs. However, this does not mean that they were not aware of the limitations the forum had to effect structural change.

Stephen and John anticipated that the identities formed by other participants of them might be negative, viewing them as conceited troublemakers. They feared that these negative attributions might inhibit the positive influence they could have. Beth states that she was not deterred by managerial interventions against her, in contrast it made her more resolute and her declarative style and aggression only intensified. These factors cause the intensifying negative construction of her identity by other participants and readers like myself. My discomfort disappeared in the face to face meeting with Beth as I found her emotional and dramatic *persona* entertaining and appealing.

Table 8: Exclusion and inclusion in each participant’s paradigm

	Motivation				Interaction								Consequence	
	Personal convictions		View of role of forum		Style		Perceptions		Identity construction		Moderation		End interaction	Still involved
	Ex	In	Ex	In	Ex	In	Ex	In	Ex	In	Ex	In	Ex	In
John	x		x		x		x		x			x	x	
Stephen	x		x		x		x		x					
Beth	x		x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
Peter		x	x	x		x		x		x	x			x
Francois	x		x		x		x		x		x		x	
Susan		x		x		x	x		x					x
Cathy		x	x	x	x		x		x	x	x		NA	NA

In inclusion
 Ex exclusion
 NA not applicable

3.6 References to Categories within the Generic and Specific Participant Paradigms

The four articles and the conference paper do not individually refer to all of the participants. The generic paradigm is present in each article, but a specific participant’s paradigm is contracted into an article if it is relevant to the article’s theme. Table 9 provides an indication whose participation is relevant within each article and to which category in the generic paradigm the participation relates:

- (i) The *stylistic aspects* of the texts of Beth, Stephen, Susan and Peter are more prominent in article one, than in the other articles.
- (ii) Article two focuses on the *generic paradigm* and involves all the categories as they relate to the paradigms of Stephen, John, Susan and Francois.
- (iii) Article three which deals with *moderation*, refers to the interactions of Cathy with Francois. Prominent in Cathy’s paradigm are her views about the role of the forum and her ideas about style of participation. Views about moderation are expressed by John, Stephen and Beth.
- (iv) The conference paper and presentation refer to the *style of participation* of especially Beth and John as it is informed by their *personal convictions*. Based on the analysis of these participants, proposals for *moderation* are made. References are made to the *motivation* and *style of interaction* of Stephen, Francois and Susan. Francois’ and Beth’s experience of *moderation* are also discussed.
- (v) Article four focuses on *identity construction* and especially involves the category, *perceptions of other participants*. Beth, Stephen, John and Peter are again referred to in this discussion.

Table 9: Participants and categories which are referred to in each article (1, 2, 4, and 5) and the conference paper (CP)

	Motivation		Interaction				Consequence	
	Personal convictions	View of role of forum	Style	Perceptions of other participants	Identity construction	Moderation	End interaction	Still involved
John	2, CP	2	1, 2	5	5, CP		2	
Stephen	2, CP	2, CP	1, CP	5	5	4	2	
Beth			1, 2, CP	5	5, CP	4, CP		
Peter			1	5	5			5
Francois	2, CP	2	2, CP			4, CP	2	
Susan	2	2, CP	2					5
Cathy		4	4			4		

4. Recommendations

4.1 Altering the Role of the Moderator in Facilitating an Inclusive and Moral Discourse

Figure 7 serves as a summative diagram to indicate how the findings of the theoretical study and field study inform the researcher's conceptualisation of the role of the moderator. The preference of Young's theory (1996; 2000) on communicative democracy implies that respect and understanding is achieved through real debate, an expanded form of rationality and the choice of subjectivity in participation on the forum. By using the methodology of grounded theory, the central phenomenon is identified as the perceived opportunity which the forum offers, which defines the way participants orientate their interaction. The opportunistic characteristic of the forum also reflects participants' motivation and ultimately influences the consequence of their interaction on the forum. The perceptions of the context of the forum, the institutional context and the broader socio-historical context also serve as an indication how the role of the moderator should change to facilitate an inclusive and moral discourse.

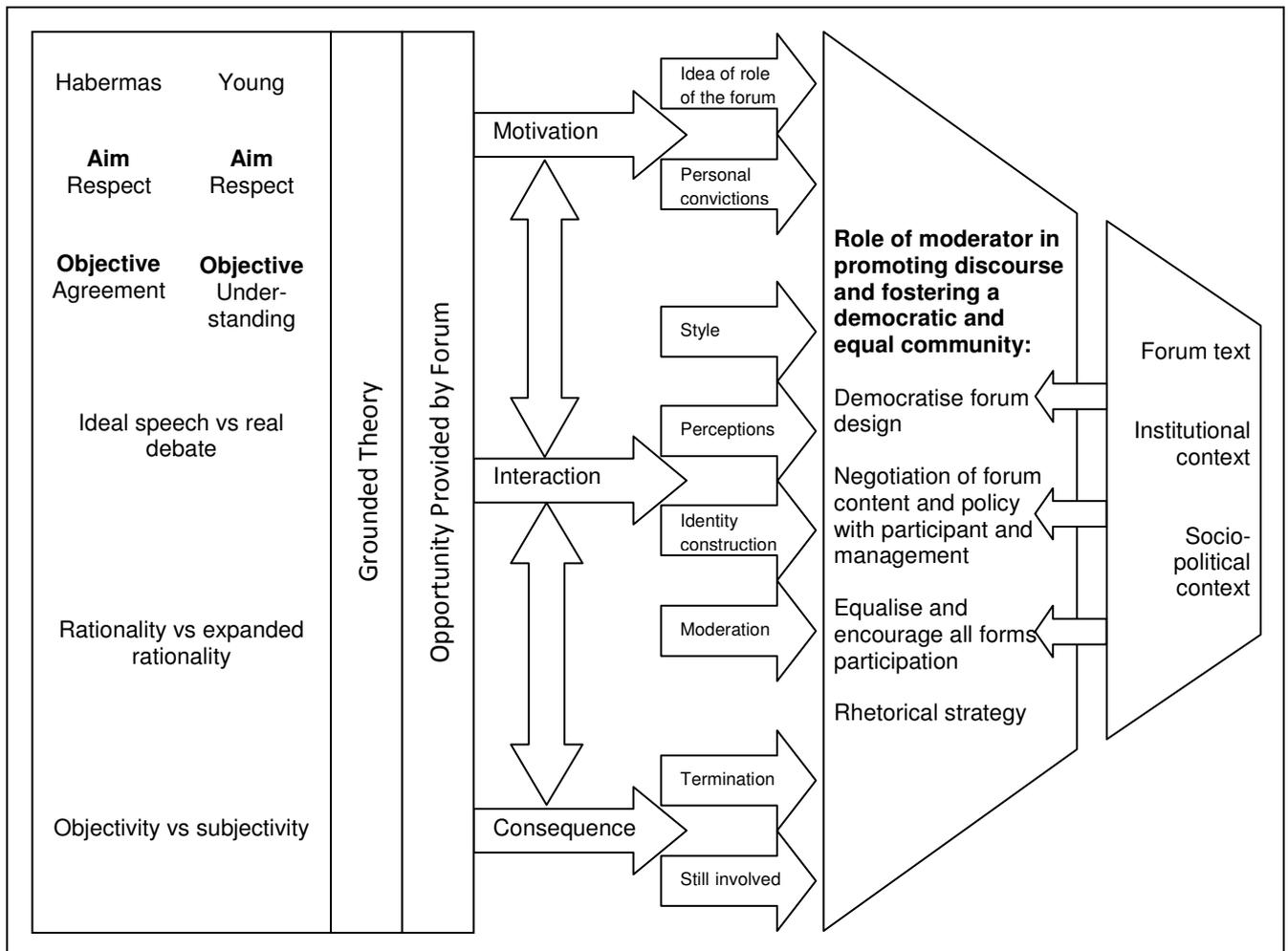


Figure 7: Theoretical and Empirical Motivation for the Moderator's Role in Promoting Discourse and Fostering a Democratic Community on the Online Forum

4.1.1 Extend Rationality by Narratives

It became clear that embodied participations develop moral discourse and disembodied, distant and rationalistic participations inhibit free interaction. The more embodied participants are not impersonal and cold, they show more emotion and share personal experiences. They also tend to dramatise and perform their part, which makes the reading of their text a lived experience. Grabill and Pigg (2012) refer to performance as a rhetorical strategy which furthers discussion by lending an embodied presentation and experience of the identity of the participant. As demonstrated in the research, the emotional reactions to embodied participations can be intense and often negative perceptions are formed of the identity of the *performer*. In overcoming these judgements, the moderator can encourage these alternative forms of participation by inviting other narratives, which might support or describe different experiences from those which were initially presented. In this way, the moderator acknowledges other forms of reasoning and invites diverse voices. The singular perspective of rationality is broadened to an inclusion of multiple rationalities and also presences.

4.1.2 Enlarge Thought and Overcome Stereotyping

By encouraging narratives the moderator would enable participants to develop an “enlarged thought” (Young, 2000, p. 76) about others that transforms the self from being self-interested to taking account of the perspectives of others. This would imply that the particular experience of others in particular social situations would be appreciated instead of the “empty generalities, false assumptions or incomplete and biased pictures of the needs, aspirations and histories of others” (Young, 2000, p. 74). The stereotypes which participants form of each other, or the narrow focus on aspects of their lives, such as seen in their labelling as *coloured*, and *racist* could then be overcome. Stephen, who wished to influence sentiments in the institution to the left, might in this altered forum not define his interaction as an attempt to influence, but rather to enlarge his own motive towards an understanding and appreciation of divergence. The altered forum therefore also relieves participants of a limited perception of their role in the forum.

4.1.3 Become a Visible and Equal Participant

As the effects of invisible moderation were described as suspicion and fear, the effect of visible moderation could reverse negative emotions to feelings of trust. The moderator can reveal the role s/he assumes and can define this role by applying the strategic interactions of a sympathetic listener and interactive, involved and embodied participant. As an equal embodied participant, the moderator can share life stories which tell of experiences which are similar or dissimilar to those of others. Making the self-known, the moderator can encourage similar acts of sharing and eventually create a community of trust.

The moderator should also take note of the everyday customs of personal interaction which install feelings of respect and trust. Young (2000) emphasises the importance of greeting and the rituals which accompany it, such as complimenting and the statement of trust in the other’s good intentions. These rituals have the effect that the other is recognised as an equal within the discourse. These rituals can be moved to the online environment and instead of “diving” into a thread; a personal greeting lends a humane element to the moderator and can influence others to follow the same approach. Young (2000) indicates the importance of acknowledgement and recognition of the other as the starting point of interaction and debate rather than its end.

4.1.4 Negotiate Forum Policy

The notion of the forum as the property of those who read and participate in it serves as a principle for the design of a policy by the participants themselves. When the community owns the forum, they would also share responsibility for the formulation of its policy. The negotiation of forum policy has

to recognise the fluidity which characterises an online environment and the creativity and playfulness which accompanies modern online activities, as indicated by Steinmetz (2012).

4.1.5 Altering the Design of the Forum

Newcomers to the forum might feel excluded as they are unaware of the histories of participation and interaction. They do not know the main characters, their issues and strategies and which sympathies dominate the discourse. These factors might inhibit their active participation and cause them to assume the permanent position of a lurker. A sensible reading and active participation in the forum can be enhanced by some design elements. A facility which includes subject searches and searches directed by participants' names can facilitate an understanding of the forum's character. A graphic display of a thread can overcome the limits of textual linearity, such as proposed by the concept of woven stories (Nuutinen, 2009). This concept is integrated within a computer programme to assist the reader in developing a holistic picture of participations as it defines the relationship between the arguments or narratives of participants. It indicates if a statement is supported or opposed and demonstrates by way of a spider web how the discourse develops.

4.1.6 Introduce Timely Issues

The moderator has to be aware of important institutional and socio-cultural issues which relate to the life world of participants. The introduction of these concerns in the forum serves to make the space relevant and current. The relevance of discussions would also attract and encourage participants to introduce new issues. However, the moderator has to make sure that the judgement of importance and relevance should not become an exclusionary act. It has been remarked by Francois that the topics of interest on the forum are absurd and display idiosyncratic and not universal views. As the space should be regarded as inclusive, these views are as relevant as views of a more universal nature.

4.1.7 Altering the Role of Management

The forum can easily be perceived as a place where participants criticise management and institutional culture. As these voices are present and are indicative of perceptions which might be held by a number of people, management can especially use this space to inform and bridge the divide between themselves and employees.

4.1.8 Create a Collective of Social Wisdom

When the moderator shows appreciation for narratives which tell of specific experiences and a diversity of perspectives are encouraged and entertained on the forum, a collective of social wisdom (as termed by Young, 2000) is created. The forum is then respected and viewed not as a *shout forum*, but as a space which accepts divergent world views. The forum can then ideally bridge the divide

between people. The ultimate objective of moderating strategies would be to establish a community of respect, trust and acceptance:

(These strategies) not only remed(y) exclusionary tendencies in deliberative practices, but more positively describes some specific ways that communicatively democratic processes can produce respect and trust, make possible understanding across structural and cultural difference, and motivate acceptance and action (Young, 2000, p. 57).

5. Contribution of the Study

5.1 Applying Young's Model of Communicative Democracy

Thorseth (2008; 2011) and Thakur (2012) refer to Young's paradigm of communicative democracy in the domains of political discourse within online electoral community forums. Young's theory has not been applied to the study of university forums specifically. The deliberative theory of democratic discourse of Habermas (1984; 1987; 1990a; 1990b; 1993) has informed an ethnographic study on management's hegemonic use of email within a university (Čečez-Kecmanović, Moodie, Busutill, & Plesman, 1999). As these analyses are characterised by a pervasive rational focus, certain forms of inequality and exclusion might be overlooked which are specifically carried by emotional elements. The overemphasis of rationality and the absence of emotion within research in IS (Information Systems) have been indicated by various researchers, such as Avgerou and McGrath (2005).

By applying Young's (1996; 2000; 2001; 2003) theory of communicative action, the study contributes to the current discourse on the role of emotion in IS. It describes the integrated nature of emotional elements within forms of inclusion and exclusion, as they define the participants' style of interaction, which Young (2000) describes as the rhetoric of discussants. The research focused on rhetoric by using it as a medium to explore emotive elements, such as the ideology, personal convictions and idealisation of online space of discussants and how these emotive elements influenced the rhetoric, or style of participants' interactions and the perceptions they held. Rhetoric is also used as the object of the research, how the perceptions of external factors—such as institutional politics and acts of moderation influence the rhetoric.

5.2 Exploring Morality within the Discourse

The research contributes to an understanding of the complexity of morality within a polarised discourse. It also shows that each participant departs from the conviction that they are acting morally correct. The unifying factor in each person's moral paradigm is their resistance to those who do not respect them, or their intention to rectify practices which they perceive as disrespectful within an institutional culture which should promote human rights. Participants do therefore easily perceive sentiments of disrespect towards which they react with emotional intensity, creating a growing emotionally distressed environment. The online environment is characterised by a growing indignation, which is viewed in the declarative styles of interaction. The unifying factor of all

participants seem to be their defence and protection of their dignity, which explains their indignant responses and also the attacks on and undermining of the dignity of others, by way of amongst others, the strategies of stereotyping, condescendence and minimalising. It also explains the declarative strategies in self-presentation and the criticism of others.

5.3 Linking Emotion and Morality

Foucault (1984, p. 352) indicates that our emotions are always an indication of our morality, by stating “you can say, in general, that in our society the main field of morality, the part of ourselves which is most relevant for morality, is our feelings.” In demonstrating how dispassionate, rational discourse and passionate emotional discourse eventually lead participants to assume moralistic positions to others, a contribution to the understanding of the exclusionary effect of moral stances within discourse is made. A seemingly dispassionate rational tone in contrast to an intense emotional tone persuades most participants in the thread of the rational participant’s moral value. Consequently the intensity of the emotional passionate tone deters the same participants and convinces them of the immorality of the participant.

The rational voice is however not without emotion. Young (2000, p. 65) indicates that discourse never lacks emotional tone. When the participant is dispassionate, the text carries “an emotional tone of calm and distance.” The *calm and distance* of the authoritative informational tone of Stephen conveys the feelings of security and has the effect that he is seen as morally superior, and the aggressive and emotional voice of Beth overwhelms the reader and causes insecurity, leading to the perception of her as morally inferior. Appealing to the reader’s sense of moral rectitude with a seemingly rational and informed participation, Beth is consequently excluded from the consensus of what should be regarded as morally acceptable.

With this analysis, an understanding of the exclusiveness and potential negative effect of so-called singular rational participation is demonstrated. The analysis also shows that an embodied participation has a more complicated influence as it can effect opposition and support, as shown in the reactions to the embodied identity of Beth.

The study supports the theory that emotional embodied participations facilitate moral discourse. Article one questions the emancipatory value of emotional non-tempered views and attitudes and its positive effect on moral discourse, given the view that embodied participations contribute to real debate. Article four does come to the conclusion and offers an answer to the question of article one that emotion does extend the possibilities of moral discourse as displayed in the performative element of identity presentation. As identity performance portrays a more realistic look at the person, the building of moral discourse within a real debate with real people is facilitated.

5.4 Indicating the Effect of the Idealisation of Online Space

As shown in the previous section (§ 5.1), moral convictions motivate the participations in the forum. A focus on ideology coupled with an idealisation of online space as the rectifier of wrongs and the instrument to convey ideology can easily lead to a new form of oppression. The idealisation of the online space as an instrument to practise own convictions eventually lead to hegemonic interactions with those who hold opposing views. The analysis of the thread and the interviews with participants indicate that strong convictions and “great expectations” of the influence of the forum ultimately create conflict and disappointment. These are however bound to the specific context in which the forum is embedded. The forum in this respect only mirrors hegemonic practices outside and would not necessarily rectify it.

5.5 Exploring the Integrated Nature of Online Presences

The study contributes to an understanding of the pervasive presence of emotion in all participants. A participant like Stephen can show an appreciation for hypothesising and show a softer, more mitigating and humane *persona*, but can in the same thread show intolerance. He can also use rationalistic devices to discredit his opponent. Informative participations can be coupled with condescending remarks, which is a combination of rational and emotional presences. Beth who is branded as irrational also brings reasoning to the debate, and in not following the rules of consistency and not quoting orthodox theory, she expands the idea of reasoning. In this sense the title of the thesis can be interpreted as an investigation of both rational and emotive strategies in the forum participations.

5.6 Defining a Mediating Presence

As the thread under scrutiny is observed as a “distressed space” and was perceived to be the culmination of emotions over a period of time, it is clear that a convincing, reasonable voice was absent. The research eventually moved to the formulation of a role for a mediator or moderator which intends to relieve and nullify the identified patterns of oppression. The study contributes to practice by making proposals of sensible moderation to promote diversity and manage opposing views. The moderator’s interaction includes foremost an analysis of the core of differences, as it is more valuable than denying it. The focus therefore moves away from agreement in handling diversity, such as proposed by Habermas’ ideal speech (1984; 1987; 1990a).

5.7 Integrating the Concept of Friendship

The study contributes to the understanding of the relationship between morality and friendship and its significance for the building of an inclusive online community. In this sense the ideas of Aristotle, as explored by Sokolowski (2001) and Jacquette (2001) about friendship and morality are still relevant:

the principle that a community of friends is essential to act morally, defines the character of an online community which strives to build moral aspects such as respect and trust. Building an inclusive community also enhances friendship and the moral development of its participants.

5.8 Congruence in Online and Offline Identity Construction

In exploring offline and online identities, the finding in article four is that these identities are congruent. The study finds that the absence of social cues does not necessarily lead to a misconstruction of identity. This point of view is supported in article one but article four initiated a revision of the concept and demonstrates that identities can be correctly constructed which are only presented online. The conclusion is based on the process of data crystallisation, as the identities which were constructed of participants online matched the identities which were constructed during the interviews.

5.9 Integration of Online and Offline Data

A contribution to the methodology in online research is the analysis of both online and offline data. This combination of data contributed to the formation of a contextual paradigm of participants. The analysis of the online text was therefore complemented by the analysis of interviews and reflective notes. The analysis of offline data informed those elements within participants' paradigms which are described as the intervening and contextual conditions within grounded theory (Strauss & Corbin, 2008). The specific context of the participant, such as biographical details and ideology gave a clearer picture of the identity of participants and provided understanding for their reactions to the larger context in which the forum is embedded, such as the context of the institution and its embeddedness in the larger socio-historical context.

5.10 Respectful Critical Reading

Analysing a thread with intense emotional content is taxing for the researcher. The exploration of power inequalities in and out of the forum means that the hegemonic practices of the institution are identified. The contribution of the research is to portray a sympathetic look at all those who both experience and exercise power over others by looking deeper than the surface in detecting the motives and structures underlying their actions. The researcher also tried to overcome her own dispositions in interviews with the participants in rendering a just and respectful picture of them. This respectful, non-confrontative interaction eventually made a contribution to interpretive, critical research.

5.11 Ideas for the Design of an Inclusive Forum

The design of an inclusive forum builds on the positive effect of embodied presence within online participation on the actualisation of moral discourse. A contribution to the idea of designing "technology in practice," as held by Timmermans and Berg (2003) is made, as the proposed design

focuses on enlarging the emotional element of discourse. These elements can relieve the intense polarisation and distressed character of the forum. The constraint of textual linearity is also overcome in the proposal of a graphic display of participants' interaction (as designed by Nuutinen, 2009) and provide a holistic view of the development of a thread. The characteristics of playfulness and creativity of modern online environment (as referred to by Steinmetz, 2012) can in this way also be actualised. The assumption of multiple presences and anonymity is advocated, as it can reveal more aspects of a person. The proposal of emoticons in the text also serves to enhance emotional presence. If participants can insert emoticons in the texts of others, a non-textual, graphical indication of emotional reaction is enabled, which might inform the overly rational participant of his/her one-sidedness and the overly emotional participant of the extremity of his/her opinions. In this way these graphical signs and symbols could serve as a counter narrative which indicates to participants how their ideas and opinions might seem to others (Young, 2000). Using emoticons also supports the integration of more forms of communication.

5.12 Detecting a Cyclic Process of Exclusion

The contribution of the study does not lie in the descriptions of emotions, but in indicating how emotions define the paradigms of forum participation. Emotion is integral in the motivation, strategy of interaction and eventually determines the consequence of participation. As emotion is an indication of our moral values (as indicated by Foucault, 1984) the central focus of this study is how morality binds all the elements within the paradigms of discussants' participation. It is however true that the stronger participants' convictions were, the more excluded they became by way of their interactions in the forum itself and in their interactions within the larger context of the institution. A cyclic process of exclusion is therefore directly tied to the moral convictions of participants and their intensifying disillusionment in the potential of the forum to act as the moral rectifier or wrongs.

6. Limitations

6.1 Judging Identity

The negative judging of identity is a danger in this form of critical interpretive research. The researcher did assume a subjective position in exploring the identity of the participants, leading to times where either the one or the other protagonists were viewed more or less sympathetically. I assume that this confusing process is a characteristic of critical discourse analysis. I did find that the embodied styles of participation do indicate self-centred and intolerant positions. These embodied styles caused me to feel uncomfortable even if these positions did contribute to moral discourse. Ultimately, these feelings of discomfort did support the theory of Young (2000) in contrast with the theory of Habermas (1990a; 1990b), that the ideal discourse with ideal elements and an ideal world does not exist and that moral discourse is only possible with real people, revealing real

unemancipatory positions and causing discomfort. It is however not proven that the informative type of participation, apart from being accompanied by condescending remarks, did not inform readers broadly and contribute to their moral development.

6.2 Communicative Democracy as Point of Departure

The study did not explore Habermas' theory (1984; 1987; 1990a; 1990b; 1993) on deliberative democracy and only departed from those instances where Young indicates her differences with his theory. The actual objective is not to discredit the rational paradigm of Habermas, but to add to the view of what constitutes as reason.

6.3 Generalising the Findings

By referring to one thread of forum text and interviewing eight participants might seem too little to draw conclusions which can be generalised. I do however believe that the recommendations of the role of moderator can be applied to polarised institutional and political forums.

7. Reflection on my Research journey

Many attempts to find a viable research topic preceded this study. The following notes in my reflective diary describe the process:

February 2008: I started with the creation of a Facebook group in February 2008 for eleven off-campus students enrolled for the Post Graduate Certificate in Education with the purpose to discuss critical issues which they experience at the schools at which they are employed as pre-service teachers. I posted videos on their Facebook™ group site, which were on topics such as homophobia in high schools. I also invited them to post videos which they find of interest to the website. I was quite disappointed when no one reacted to the videos. Instead, one or two students did describe some problems they experienced with learners, e.g. how to deal with learners with troublesome backgrounds. The students further posed assignment-related questions which they addressed to the group or to me. They responded to these questions and the students seemed satisfied with the exchange of ideas. After that semester, I decided not to pursue my studies on the enhancement of critical thinking or the creation of an online community to support students through a medium such as Facebook. It seemed to me quite time intensive and I did not want to investigate something which I would have to create first. Part of the challenges was also that the students in rural sites did not have Internet access. Another challenge was that the participation of the students would not be part of their mark in the module I was teaching (Educational Media), so it was not taken seriously. I also think that they did not really understand the notion of system criticism and if they did, they might not have thought that it would be appropriate to discuss it.

September 2008: During a study visit to the University of Joensuu, Finland in September-November 2008, I intended to work with dr Jussi Nuutinen who created a computer programme as part of his PhD in Computer Science. This programme is called *Woven Stories*, and with it one can map a discourse with links and nodes of the different themes participants introduce in the discussion. I thought that the mapping of a discussion could have value for research, as the visualization of the discussion subsumes the linearity of a textual discussion and can shed some light on the progress and different nuances in the discussion. Unfortunately the programme did not perform satisfactorily as it was still in construction. I still intend to make use of the programme, even if it is only in the display of data after analysis.

October 2008: I created an intranet community with the purpose to stimulate discourse on any topic which the post graduate students and lecturers in Computer Science might find worth discussing. As the students and lecturers come from different countries and are of different nationalities, I thought they would have something to say, e.g. about their adaptation in Finland, or just share some useful information. As a school shooting in the West of Finland triggered a nationwide shock and feelings of despair, I thought to take this as an inroad for further discussion. The only response came from a PhD-student from Namibia who expressed appreciation for the fact that the law had changed and restricted the possession of firearms to those above 21 years of age. The students also commented on questions I asked about their lack of interaction on the community. They did not want to participate in a community which is merely there; it should have a purpose, such as dealing with problems they have in their post graduate studies in Computer Science or the sharing of useful study-based information. A community for the discussion of everyday topics seems to be irrelevant and they do not have the need for it.

I asked the administrators of the online group ITFORUM if I could do research on the emotional presence of participants. They did not really respond positively and anticipated ethical problems and could not see the relevance of doing research on a group whose sole purpose is the discussion of information technology.

Eventually I decided on the data for my research:

Before my departure to Finland, I chose discussions on the intranet of my home university about racism. After the above attempts at creating online communities, both at my home university and in Finland, I decided to focus only on these discussions. This discussion was in May 2008 and the fact that the topic was treated quite intensively and had many viewers, served as the motivation for the choice of text which comprised more than a thousand lines.

But the choice proved to be more challenging than I thought it would be and I developed conflicting feelings about it: It was quite difficult to distance myself from the opinions expressed in the

discussion and the turbulent feelings I had about the state of affairs in my home country, especially in the calm and restful atmosphere I experienced in a country which I presumed to be quite homogenous concerning its race composition. My reading of the text was therefore quite confusing concerning my own personal opinion and position regarding the issue of racism. At first I sided with participants who clearly opposed racism and any indication of it. These discussants were well-spoken and their arguments were correct and clear. They also attacked views which they regarded as racist quite vehemently and in no uncertain terms. I came to like these outspoken people with their clear and well-chosen discourse. On the other hand, the participation which seemed to me and the other participants to bear evidence of racism, was contradictory and over-emotional.

I started wondering if Habermas' discourse ethics was the only way to look at the forum thread:

October 2008: Following the discourse ethics of Habermas, nothing more seemed to be explored in the discussion forum. The verdict was spoken—those who argue against racism are ethical and those who have racist arguments are unethical. There had to be something more. What if the person with the so-called racist attitudes was not such a racist? Peter expressed doubt about her perceived racism and advised her to choose her words more carefully. It started to become clear to me that she experiences turmoil in her professional life and she wants to give expression to the conflict she experiences, by presenting opposing views.

At this stage I favoured the theory of Young for democratic discourse, as it was set against, as she describes, the rationalistic approach of Habermas. While reading Young, I started to understand that the rational approach of participants is limiting and does in fact disempower participants who choose to convey their positions and convictions about racism not through rational means. So, I started to read the discussion with more sympathy for those I initially sided against.

During the time which followed, I struggled to find a balance between the two forms of discourse ethics which Habermas and Young supported. The binding element in their paradigms was the issue of reciprocal respect as the point of departure and aim for discourse. I kept the notion of respect in mind when I eventually conducted the interviews and analysed the transcripts. To explore the forum text before the interviews seemed to be an uncomplicated task as I had not met the participants face to face. The difficulty started in giving a respectful rendition of the intent of participants after I had met them face to face. This made me aware of the complexity of the practice of respect. It was clear in the forum text alone that the morality of Beth was suspect and I took it as a part of my conceptualization of research ethics to establish who she was and what motivated her interactions in the forum. I had to put my own convictions aside and overcome my bias in order to interpret her views justly. This involved a process of confusing introspection as I had to understand a world view which contradicted my own. In these endeavours, I realized that I was busy actualizing the basic tenet of Young's model of communicative democracy: I was attempting, through the research, to understand. I came to realize

that a researcher has to understand in order to respect and has to respect in order to understand. The two demands enforce each other. In my efforts to understand Beth, I was faced with another problem. It was as if I were schizophrenically denying the moral correctness of her opponents. In my attempts to understand Beth, I was busy sanctifying her at the cost of understanding someone like Stephen, her main opponent.

The process of critical discourse analysis also created conflict in rendering a respectful interpretation of Cathy and John. Incongruence was discovered in the analysis of John's interview and it led to a revision of his forum text. I found his action against Beth perplexing as he wished for others to be respectful and honest. When Beth did in fact spoke honestly on the forum, he found it disrespectful and charged her with racism and hate speech. His further views about the *decency* of the Afrikaner were also contradictory: he finds that it inhibits true interaction but he still expects it to be upheld. I eventually came to the conclusion and understanding that these incongruences and contradictions which I found in John's interactions and views were be part of his own struggle to cope with racism.

The analysis of Cathy's interview transcripts also created its amount of agonizing conflict, as contradictions and incongruences abounded. I felt like a traitor as I had a friendly relationship with Cathy and had known her for quite some time. I eventually understood that incongruences and contradictions are typically part of the narrative which Young describes. Rational criteria are not met if one tries to dissect each sentence and paragraph for its logic coherence and consistency. I had to pay more attention to the information which was conveyed in a more embodied way. This led to an appreciation of the subtext, which was more important than the text itself. I came to understand the conflict Cathy experienced in her managerial position, the difficult act of balancing previous and current loyalties, the difficult position of acting in a complex environment of an institution which itself had to find a balance between the nostalgia of the old and the challenges of the new. I also came to understand that the rationalistic positions of domination Cathy assumed were probably so embedded and customised in managerial actions, that they unconsciously became embodied in her demeanour and were therefore much more an emotional than a rational choice. The analysis of Cathy's text provided an insight in the contradictions of the narrative and especially an appreciation for embodiment. Embodiment is pervasive in all discursive acts. This also led me to a better understanding of Stephen. I came to realize that his distant and clinical stance could be seen as a disembodied way of dealing with emotion which was too strong to acknowledge or to demonstrate.

The journey of research can eventually be described as a process of conflict which accompanies the cognitive Piagetian disequilibrium the researcher experienced. The process of understanding implied the assimilation of the theory in my subjective knowledge structures, which was only made possible by the emotional disintegration I experienced. Finding contradiction and incoherence was both a rational and an emotional process, which led me to the real understanding that reason is not at first

rational and then enhanced by the emotional, the two are intertwined, not independent and exhibit a mutual cyclic enhancement.

The subjective nature of the phenomenological approach to the study made qualitative methodology and specifically the methodology of grounded theory a logical choice. I undertook the field study from two different points of departure: the tenets of democratic discourse and the creation of theory through the data analysis. Eventually these two sets of data—the available theory and the creation of theory were mutually informing. I took the research process as a personal interaction with the data, which influenced my choice to analyse the data by hand. I did not use Atlas.ti™ as a method of analysis, although I would consider using this form of analysis in next studies. The building of theory, as structured by the methodology of grounded theory, and the impact of Young's model of communicative democracy, informed me in the exploration and detection of patterns of exclusion and the identification of multiple presences within each individual as they interacted and reflected on their interaction in the online forum.

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Addendum A

1 **Onderhoud John**

2 **20 Augustus 2010**

3

4 Louise: Ek wil hê jy moet my net kortliks vertel van jou deelname aan die BBS, jy het op
5 `n stadium vir my gesê jy gaan vir my vertel wat gebeur het en waarom jy opgehou het.

6

7 John: Ja, ek was aanvanklik nie bewus van die BBS nie, toe ek nou in Augustus 2007 hier
8 begin, ek het gedink dis `n aanduiding van die oriëntering of non-oriëntering wat ek
9 gehad het, non-induksie wat ek gehad het as `n nuwe personeellid, alhoewel `n kollega in
10 die vakgroep toegewys was aan my om die ropes te leer oor wat die universiteit is, ek het
11 te hore gekom van die BBS by `n kollega van my wat op `n stadium hier was wat nou
12 werk by `n ander universiteit,.. en ek het gelees en van die gesprekke interessant gevind,
13 soos mens maar maak in `n nuwe omgewing, ek het geluister en geleer en toe later begin
14 deelneem, toe die gesprekke nou beginne heat up,

15

16 Louise: Oukei, en jou deelname, wat is die geskiedenis van jou deelname?

17

18 John: Wat my spesifiek geprikkel het, was toe ek sien dat sommige mense, wat skryf op
19 die BBS op `n manier wat nie respekvol vir mense is wat nie van hulle geloofsagtergrond
20 is, van hulle opvoedkundige peil is nie, van hulle sosiale stand is nie, mm, ja, sulke goed
21 het my geprikkel en, omdat ek vanuit `n streng, nie heeltemaal streng nie, goeie
22 grounding in social justice kom, en ook gewerk en geleef voor ek hierna gekom het, kon
23 ek nie stilbly nie, dit was soos `n vlag, `n rooi lap voor `n bul.

24

25 Louise: Ja, so mense wat disrespekvol is teenoor ander, dit het jou geprikkel..

26

27 John: .. uitsprake wat lynreg gebots het met die social justice beginsels waarvolgens ek
28 probeer om my lewe rig, daardie beginsels van om uit te praat teen oppression, teen
29 exclusion, om respek te hê vir ander wat nie soos jy glo nie, maar die son mag ook op
30 hulle skyn, jy weet, daai soorte goed ..

31

32 Louise: Ja,

33

34 John: as iemand dit begin aanvat, hetsy in gedrag een tot een of soos die BBS, in skrywes
35 wat nou deur `n hele gehoor gelees gaan word, dan kan ek nie stilbly nie..

36

37 Louise: oukei, jy het op `n stadium genoem dat jy opgehou deelneem het ..

38

39 John: Ja

40

41 Louise: kan jy my net meer daarvan vertel?

42

43 John: mmm, ek het voor ek opgehou deelneem het, het ek begin praat met wit kollegas
44 van my, ek beskou myself as polities swart, uhm, jy weet ons is maar almal opgefok deur
45 apartheid, in kleur en

46

47 Louise: ja..

48

49 John: in terme van waar ons skoolgegaan het, gebore is, om daai eie soorte goete te
50 gebruik as basis waardeur ons die wêreld bekyk, en ek het opgemerk dat van my kollegas
51 wat mondelings met my deel dat hulle ondersteun van die goed wat ek skrywe, maar
52 hulle neem nie self deel nie, ek het aan hulle die challenge gestel, kêrels, skrywe julle,
53 dan gaan ek ook vir `n slag skrywe, uhm, die challenge is nie regtig opgeneem nie, een
54 manlike kollega het ook geskryf in wat ek beskou het as so `n papperige stukkie, maar
55 twee vroulike kollegas wat sterk uitgekom het, het nie geskryf nie, en ek het hulle gesê,
56 maar hoe gaan ek wat die merk dra van `n outsider, alhoewel ek nou hier `n insider is by
57 virtue of my employment here, hoe gaan ek as `n outsider nou ooit mense raak in hulle
58 diepste wese met die goed wat ek skrywe, want ek kan afgebrass word as `n bitter jong
59 swart mannetjie wat hier is

60

61 Louise: mmm

62

63 John: nie deel van die oorwegende Afrikaanse wit kultuur, kultuur is `n vuil woord, kom
64 ons sê hegemonie,

65

66 Louise: mmm

67

68 John: so ek het al minder begin skryf omdat ek nie gesien het persoonlik van die
69 hegemonie wat hulle dan nou sê hulle ondersteun nie, die oppressive en exclusionary
70 soorte praktyke en uitsprake, dat hulle nie skryf en well, dat ek nou maar ophou skryf, dat
71 die Afrikaners nou maar onder mekaar baklei en die lone Englishman, Stephen, laat hy
72 nou maar, hy het tyd om te skryf, ek het nie anyway meer so baie tyd gehad om te skryf
73 nie, die praktiese ding was nie die hoofoorweging nie, dit was `n conscious besluit van
74 my om op te hou skryf omdat persone wat ek assosieer met die hegemonie, die wit
75 Afrikaner hegemonie, omdat hulle nie hulle voices laat hoor het,..

76

77 Louise: ja, nou dat jy nie meer jou voice laat hoor nie, hoe voel jy daaroor?

78

79 John: Ek weet nie of my voice gemis word nie, ek het so lanklaas nog die BBS gelees, ek
80 weet nie meer wat is die strekking van gesprekke daar maar ek het ander outlets gevind,
81 uhm, vir die ongemak wat ek gevoel het, so, ek weet nie of ..my stem gemis word op die
82 BBS nie, waarskynlik nie, uhm, maar die outlets van research, die outlets van research
83 communities, soos die research projek wat ons het, die SALN groep, uhm ja, dit gee my
84 `n ander kreatiewe outlet, maar dit steek dan nou seker my voice bietjie weg

85

86 Louise: watter reaksie het jy, behalwe van jou kollegas wat jou ondersteun, het jy reaksie
87 gekry van ander mense wat jou wou aanvat of was dit maar net gematigde reaksie?

88

89 John: Wel, in skrywe was daar robuuste reaksie soms,..

90

91 Louise: op die BBS?

92

93 John: Yes, in persoon, was die, .. mense is mos baie beleef, Jonathan Jansen noem die
94 beleefdheid van die Afrikaner,..so in persoon het niemand my nog robuust aangevat oor
95 wat ek geskrywe het nie, maar in skrywe was ek nogal redelik sterk aangevat en het ek dit
96 gelike, want dit het gewys ten minste is die ander mense nie dood nie,

97

98 Louise: ja

99

100 John: hulle is nie breindood nie, hulle mag konserwatief wees, en in een geval waar
101 iemand bevind is as rassisties, was dit nogtans goed om te kon idees uitruil, en aangevat
102 te kon word ..

103

104 Louise: Dink jy jy het vir jousef `n identiteit geskep op die BBS, kyk as jy gaan skryf is
105 jy baie oortuig, watter identiteit het die mense geskep, wie is John?

106

107 John: ek is bly jy change die question daar, vanaf ek vir my `n identiteit geskep na ander
108 vir my geskep, ek het net ingegaan met wie ek is, en ek dink die indruk wat mense dalk
109 nou kon kry of die identiteit wat hulle kon toedig aan my, uhm, is dalk een van angry
110 mens wat nie die hele ..uhm ..konteks van die plek verstaan nie, en nie die tradisies en die
111 kultuur en nie die nodige respek het vir wat hier aangaan nie, as `n troublemaker, ek dink
112 daardie identiteit kon dalk ontstaan het in die minds van sommige ..

113

114 Louise: en sou jy daarmee kon saamleef?

115

116 John: Nee, ek is nie `n troublemaker nie, ek sien my nie self so nie, ek sien myself as
117 iemand wat krities omgaan met die lewe, en wat dinge wat sommige mense te gemaklik
118 vind, trouble, omdat real life is nie so `n untroubled, deadening existence nie.

119

120 Louise: ja, dis reg

121

122 John: so ek trouble goeters, in my gesprekke met mense, in my akademiese endeavours
123 en so aan.

124

125 Louise: Wat het jy nou agtergekom van die institusionele kultuur deur die forum?

126

127 John: Well, deur die forum het ek gesien die gematigde stemme skryf nie, daar is groot
128 absence van die gematigde stemme, uhm, die meer vocal stemme was of uhm, meer
129 progressief, transformasie-gesind, of aan die ander kant was hulle konserwatief, so die
130 BBS het my nie `n goeie idee gegee nie van die institusionele kultuur nie, omdat hy so op
131 die eindpunte van die kontinuum gesit het, die institusionele kultuur lê mos darem seker
132 meer na die middelpunt van die kontinuum toe.

133

134 Louise: ja, so jy sê jy wil sosiale geregtigheid laat plaasvind, dink jy jy het daarin geslaag
135 om dit oor te dra?

136

137 John: Well, as ek moet kyk na een klein oorwinninkie, dat die kantoor van.... wat is die
138 kantoor se naam, iets soos ..kom ons noem dit nou maar iets soos die human rights
139 commission van die universiteit, daai kantoor, het `n bevinding gemaak in my guns, dat
140 een van die deelnemers rassisties was en dat daar uitsprake, haatspraak was, so, daar was
141 `n srukkie geregtigheid wat geseëvier het, die bevinding alleen, maar, die aanbevelings
142 van dat justice gesien word om te gebeur, daarvan weet ek niks, ek weet nie of die
143 persoon letterlik aangespreek is nie, of daar enige sanksie geloods is teen die persoon nie,
144 dit weet ek nie, maar die feit dat die forum bestaan, nog steeds bestaan, gee my die idee
145 well, miskien moet, sien die kantoor, iewers moet die mense kan stoom afblaas.

146

147 Louise: Ja

148

149 John: alhoewel dit nou impotent begin raak het, dis waarom ek ook opgehou skryf het, as
150 `n impotente forum begin ervaar het..

151

152 Louise: Dink jy mense wat ekstreme standpunte inneem, dink jy daar is `n kans vir hulle
153 om iets te leer, uit die forum, dat hulle miskien begrip begin ontwikkel, sê maar vir jou
154 nou?

155

156 John: Ek dink so, as mense, uhm, denkend lees, dan kan daar van beide kante af begrip
157 begin te ontwikkel vir die standpunt wat nie soos joune is..

158

159 Louise: ja

160

161 John: uhm

162

163 Louise: sou daar simpatie ontwikkel?

164

165 John: Simpatie is `n sloppy woord, is `n emosioneel gelaaide woord in `n negatiewe sin,
166 maar ek dink begrip, begrip kan begin ontwikkel, uhm alhoewel, alhoewel, ek weet nie
167 mense wat verhard in sekere standpunte of hulle enigsins geskuif kan word nie, maar, ek
168 dink even die persoon van wie ek nou praat wat skuldig bevind is aan rassisme, of haar
169 skrywe is skuldig bevind, uhm, in die latere skrywes was daar amper `n soort tempering,
170 is asof die persoon self `n bleeper in die kop laat afgaan het,

171

172 Louise: ja, of daar nie noodwendig `n paradigma skuif nie, net bietjie nadenkend..

173

174 John: Kyk, op die punt van begrip ne, uhm, ek sit nie aan die ekstreme linkerkant nie,

175

176 Louise: Nee,

177

178 John: maar daar was `n skrywetjie van die een wat jy vir my geforward het, wat ek nou
179 remind, wat sommige mense genoem het van voorvalle wat hulle beleef het

180

181 Louise: dis reg

182

183 Willie: wat hulle beleef het as rassisties, uhm, ek dink dit sensitiseer tog `n mens, hoe jy
184 met ander omgaan, dat jy nie summier labels soos rassisme moet koppel aan sekere
185 gedragsuitinge nie, wat byvoorbeeld net kru is of onbeskof is, .. ja

186

187 Louise: dat mens net te maklik iets as rassisties beskou, maar dan is dit nie die root van
188 mense se optrede nie

189

190 John: Yes, en veral, Stephen het die punt goed gemaak daar, dis ook seker gebaseer op
191 een of ander hoge teorie, waarin hulle van die sosiologie of social anthropology, beter
192 ingelees het, dat mense versigtig moet wees om rassisme in te lees vanaf swart na wit toe,
193 wanneer dit byvoorbeeld net rudeness is, as jong mannetjies voor jou kom indruk by `n
194 lift, want wit mannetjies kan dit ook doen, kom indruk voor jou by die escalator, ja, so ek
195 hoop, ek dink, ek dink van daai soorte, waar mense deel die voorvalle van wat gebeur het
196 plus die feit dat iemand kom `n analise gee daarvan, sulke goed is `n nuttige deel van die
197 BBS,

198

199 Louise: ek dink ook mense kan ook emosionele reaksies beskryf, sy het geïntimideerd
200 gevoel, sy het `n victim gevoel, dink jy dis belangrik dat mense sulke persoonlike goed
201 deel?

202

203 John: wel, dit hang af, hoe dapper mense is, hoe oop hulle is, uhm, want jou naam sit
204 daarso

205

206 Louise: ja

207

208 John: uh, so dit hang van die individu af, sommige voel meer vulnerable en sal nie ooit
209 sulke goed deel nie..

210

211 Louise: dink jy die analises wat gebied word is waardevol?

212

213 John: Ja, ek dink so, veral die feit dat `n social anthropologist soos Stephen kon deelneem

214

215 Louise: ja

216

217 John: Ja, ek dink dis waardevol
218
219 Louise: Jy het op `n stadium gesê, die debattering is nie gesond nie, dit het die lyne
220 gekruis wat gesonde debattering, wat is jou gevoel oor debattering?
221
222 John: Well, ek dink debatvoering moet gebeur in `n klimaat van respek, dit moenie
223 aftakelend wees vir die persoon van die ander nie, en dit moenie so kru soos wat dit
224 gegaan het toe die persoon op daai stadium gesê het van, die Afrika kontinent is op die
225 bottom van ...
226
227 Louise: oorlogsugtig, wetteloos, al daai byvoeglike naamwoorde
228
229 John: Yes yes, so, ek dink daar het die persoon die lyn gekruis, soos die studente hier sê,
230 she lost it
231
232 Louise: Ja, goed, soos jy netnou gesê het, jy is gemoeid met sosiale geregtigheid en jy sal
233 dit altyd aanspreek, of dit nou hier is, en of dit op `n forum is, maar jy kanaliseer dit nou
234 in `n akademiese rigting, en dis vir jou `n beter outlet,
235
236 John: in my klein verskil wat ek probeer maak in my research en teaching
237
238 Louise: ja ja, sou jy sê die vryheid van spraak wat daar nou sou wees op so `n forum,
239 dink jy dit bestaan?
240
241 John: Well ja, ek dink in die paar jaar wat die forum bestaan het ek nie een voorval
242 gesien van `n comment wat ge-edit is of waar sekere woorde uitgeknipt is, ek dink mense
243 is ordentlik genoeg om ten minste nie ander te noem die k-woord of so nie
244
245 Louise: ja, dis reg
246

247 John: veral op `n plek waar ons so `n samevoeging van geleerde mense het, ja, so vryheid
248 van spraak, ja ek dink dit leef op die BBS, tensy jy kan weet van ander voorvalle, waar
249 daar editing was
250

251 Louise: ek weet van iemand wat iemand anders aangevat het en gesê het hy is absoluut
252 lafhartig en toe moes hy dit verwyder, en toe het die mense wat die BBS hanteer, dit
253 afgehaal, en hy moes toe verskoning vra ook, uhm, goed,
254

255 John: Interessant dat die kampusrektor, die nuwe kampusrektor, op `n stadium hier vir
256 ons skool gesê het hy vind nie die BBS `n goeie plek om die dipstick in te sit om te
257 bepaak hoe lyk die universiteit nie
258

259 Louise: ja, dis tog `n ontkenning
260

261 John: ja, ek het dit ook gevind as .. ek het dit ook vir hom gesê in e-pos,
262

263 Louise: o?
264

265 John: dat hy op `n manier die persoon wat die vraag gevra het, gesilence het,
266

267 Louise: ja..
268

269 John: miskien onbewus van sy power as manlike rektor met die grote stoel wat hy daar
270 het en met sy grote lyf ook, dat hy die persoon kon silence, hy het dit tereg gegee, hy het
271 my gelyk gegee, hy het gesê ja dit kon so wees, en ek het hom gesê die BBS is dalk nie
272 die ideale manier om die pols van die universiteit te voel nie, maar dit is `n manier
273

274 Louise: ja
275

276 John: dit gee, as dit nog is dat mense van die twee hoeke van die kryt baklei, gee dit hom
277 nogtans `n aanduiding van die eindpunte

278

279 Louise: ja, dis die polarisering, `n ander ding is, en dit het ek gesien, sekere onderwerpe
280 het 4000 mense wat kyk, 4000 views, die een ou kan 5 keer gaan kyk, maar dis ten
281 minste `n duisend mense wat daai pos lees

282

283 John: ja

284

285 Louise: en dis `n baie, in daardie geval `n baie kragtiger kommunikasiemedium as enige
286 pamflet wat die universiteit uitstuur

287

288 John: soos wat ons in die navorsing partykeer gemeet word, die koers waarteen jou goed
289 gebruik word, deur citation rate

290

291 Louise: ja, dis reg

292

293 John: en as die rektor nou wil weet in watter onderwerpe stel die mense belang, dan kan
294 hy die hits list gebruik om te sien

295

296 Louise: ja, dis net nou so, dis baie min mense wat deelneem

297

298 John: en die lesers, ..

299

300 Louise: die lesers is nie baie nie, miskien so 100 per bydra, ..maar sodra daar nou goed
301 uitkom soos dinge wat mense se harte raak, soos kultuur, afrikaans, rassisme, dan kyk
302 almal, die godsdienkskewessie

303

304 John: nou dat jy die groen vlag op die gewone e-pos, mense wil praat oor die goed

305

306 Louise: ja maar hulle het dit glad nie na die BBS geneem nie

307

308 John: is dit, ek het dit nie eers opgevolg om te kyk nie ..

309

310 Louise: ek wil nou nie met myself hier `n onderhoud voer nie, maar die feit dat die BBS
311 so moeilik toeganklik is, jy kan nie net `n ikoon op jou laptop sit, jy moet soveel keer
312

313 John: klik en dan moet jy nog iets inskrywe ook, jou password en

314

315 Louise: ja, dit weerhou mens, en ook die feit dat hulle die advertensies skei van die
316 gewone gesprekke, maak of ons nou in hierdie dualistiese samelewing is, jou opinie en
317 jou lewe is nie geïntegreerd nie, hierdie dinge gebeur hier in `n boksie en daardie daar..

318

319 John: ja, ek stem met jou honderd persent saam, so as jy nou vir jou wil uit edit, ek stem
320 saam met wat jy nou daar sê, die doelbewuste skeiding van die rêrige lewe waar ons ook
321 dienste en produkte koop, en die gesprekvoering, dis kunsmatig, dis nie hoe real life werk
322 nie

323

324 Louise: dit werk nie so nie. Goed, is daar dinge wat in die kultuur van hierdie institusie
325 vir jou nou meer eksplisiet is, dinge wat nie genoem was nie, maar wat nou duideliker is?
326 Na aanleiding van die BBS?

327

328 John: Well, na aanleiding van die BBS? Ja daar is. Sterk verdediging van koshuistradisies,
329 alhoewel daar meer skrywes was teen die gang van die koshuistradisies, kom ons sê teen
330 die anti human rights tipe ding wat leef in die tradisies, die feit dat daar verdedigers was,
331 nè, het vir my die indruk laat verstaan, moet nie te veel aan hierdie onderwerp vat nie,
332 want dit is heilig vir sommige mense, ja, so dit is een van die idees wat ek vir myself
333 gevorm het oor die institusionele kultuur, spesifiek deur die BBS, daai idee van
334 koshuistradisies is heilig en daarvan kan mens maar op `n intellektuele reis gaan, en die
335 koshuistradisies uitmekaar uit trek en sien hoe sterk sit patriargie en ander vorms van
336 oppressie daarin, en as mens saamstem met die koshuistradisies, uhm, dan is hulle mos
337 instemmig met die goed wat daaronder lê, die konfrontasie met human rights, ek sien dit
338 in die klas, as human rights opgehaal word dan is dit `n oogrollery, asof dit `n dirty word
339 is.

340

341 Louise: so, die mooi woorde wat daar nou gepraat word, is maar net `n bokant, maar aan
342 die onderkant – ons is nou pro menseregte en ons sal dit altyd implementeer, maar die
343 gesprekke hier sê eintlik vir jou daar is `n versteekte gevoel

344

345 John: net die feit dat die praktyke nie verander het nie, kom ons praat nou maar weer van
346 die koshuistradisies, die nuwe rektor maak geluide in sy inaugural speech, en op ander
347 terreine, dat hy nie happy is met hoe die koshuistradisies nog voortleef nie, uhm, maar
348 wat, ons sal volgende jaar sien, dis die test, of ons weer die O&B gaan kry met die troepe
349 wat marsjeer ..

350

351 Louise: ons gaan waarskynlik dieselfde kry, ek dink nie dit gaan anders wees nie..goed,
352 jy sê jy is nie ekstreem nie, jy is bloot pro social justice, dink jy jy is so verstaan, jy is nie
353 die ekstreme..jy is nie soos die polarisasie op die BBS, absoluut aan hierdie kant
354 nie ..dink jy die gevaar bestaan dat mense jou sien as hierdie ou wat altyd dit en dit skryf?

355

356 John: die gevaar is daar, ja.

357

358 Louise: jy't gese dis nie vir jou gaaf nie

359

360 John: janee, want dit is `n verskraling van die groter mens,

361

362 Louise: ja

363

364 John: so dis nie nice nie, maar ek dink dit leef in sommige mense, mense wat ek nie ken
365 nie, wat nie regtig mee omgang het nie, op enige van my sosiale of akademiese gebiede
366 nie, uhm, het uitsprake oor my gemaak wat waarskynlik gebaseer was op die persona wat
367 hulle geskep het van my ..

368

369 Louise: hierdie persona-ding is vir my nogal `n probleem, soos bv. die persoon wat van
370 rassisme aangekla is, sy't vir haarself die persona geskep of mense het dit ingelees, sy
371 kon dalk gesê het dit is nie wie sy is nie, ...
372

373 John: yes
374

375 Louise: en die feit dat jy net met die geskrewe woord kan praat, en sy is nie, wel sy het as
376 rassisties oorgekom, die persona is 'n gevaarlike ding
377

378 John: inderdaad, en die feit dat, daar is sagter personas en dan is daar harder personas wat
379 deurkom, hierdie persoon het nog steeds `n harde kern gewys, even in die milder skrywes
380 agterna
381

382 Louise: regtig?
383

384 John: kon jy agterkom die mens het nie noodwendig geskuif nie, net groot geskrik toe sy
385 dalk `n brief of `n oproep kry, maar die kern is nog steeds daar van meerderwaardigheid,
386 supremacy.
387

388 Louise: ek wil by jou hoor of jy, die forum is nou `n virtuele forum, is daar ander outlets
389 wat jy gebruik, digitaal?
390
391

392 John: Ja, nadat ek van die BBS afgetree het, het ek so `n gespreksgroep per e-pos begin
393 met `n paar kollegas, uhm, ons was aanvanklik `n klompie swart kollegas wat
394 saamgeskryf het en ek het so `n paar kollegas wat ek gedink het progressief is, ingetrek
395 en geCC, sekere skrywetjies met mekaar gedeel, veral voor, tydens en na die
396 verkiesingstydperk verlede jaar, maar dit was per e-pos. Dit was `n lekker produktiewe
397 stukkie skryfwerk.
398

399 Louise: Ja

400

401 John: Cosatu se ouens hier, Nehawu het deelgeneem, soos ek sê dit was binne die
402 progressiewe groep wat ek ... progressief is

403

404 Louise: oukei

405

406 John: maar dit was `n lekker lewendige skrywe, ek dink baie meer lewendig as wat dit op
407 die BBS sou wees, want dit guarantee `n mate van dit is net ons

408

409 Louise: ja

410

411 John: jy is nie blootgestel aan `n groter gehoor, waar jou direkteur jou dalk kan verkeerd
412 lees en more `n verkeerdmerkies kan maak teen jou naam en jy een of ander toekenning
413 kan kry in die fakulteit

414

415 Louise: of as jy meer geld wil hê. Het jy iets nuuts agtergekom van die mense om jou,
416 behalwe nou van die afrikaners wat nie wil uitpraat nie, wat sê hulle ondersteun jou maar
417 hulle doen dit nie op die forum nie, enige iets ander wat jy agtergekom het?

418

419 John: enige iets anders wat ek agtergekom het?

420

421 Louise: wat vir jou `n leerproses was, aangenaam of onaangenaam?

422

423 John: mmm, wat het ek geleer uit die forum, is dit jou vraag?

424

425 Louise: ja, iets soos personal gain?

426

427 John: uhm,

428

429 Louise: personal loss?

430

431 John: ha ha, daar was nie regtig `n sense of loss nie, wat ek gegain het is inligting, oor
432 onderwerpe waarvan ek waarskynlik minder sou weet, of wat ek op `n ander manier sou
433 te hore gekom het,
434

435 Louise: die tipiese debatte waarin jy betrokke was?
436

437 John: uhm, soos ek sê inligting, feitelikheid, want ek glo nie iemand sal kwaadwillig
438 ietsie vertel van `n koshuis wat...., ek het name van bronne gekry daarso wat ek op my eie
439 agterna kon opsoek, so daar was akademiese gain, daar was persoonlike groei in die goed
440 wat ek geleer het daarso,
441

442 Louise: interpersoonlike gain?
443

444 John: ja, interpersoonlik het ek bevriend geraak met van die skimme, wat net name was,
445 het ek bevriend geraak en ek weet nou hoe lyk sekere van die karakters en ons gesêls as
446 ons mekaar kry aan die anderkant van die brug
447

448 Louise: goed, ek dink ek het min of meer gevra wat ek wou vra, so, wat sou jy sê moet
449 gebeur voordat mense rerig geëmansipeer raak deur hierdie forum? Dink jy dis moontlik?
450

451 John: Jong, ek dink
452

453 Louise: perhaps in another society?
454

455 John: binne hierdie society, dink ek as die prosesse minder identifiseerbaar en minder
456 kompleks is om binne die BBS gespreksvoering in te kom, as daar `n mate van
457 anonimiteit kan wees, as mens dalk `n online persona self kan skep, en in stand hou
458

459 Louise: ja, soos angry bull?
460

461 John: Yes, dan sal dit waarskynlik die ding weer aan die gang kry

462

463 Louise: ja, dink jy die gevaar van blootstelling is daar?

464

465 John: ja, inderdaad, ja.

466

467 Louise: dit maak mense minder eerlik

468

469 John: inderdaad, veral in hierdie beleefde omgewing van ons, dat die beleefdheid dalk `n

470 resentment kan wegsteek,

471

472 Louise: en dan stemme stilmaak, selfs die rassistiese stem

473

474 John: Yes, bloot uit die beleefdheid waarmee omgegaan word, ons praat mos nou nie oor

475 sulke goed nie, die lyftaal wys dit mos dan

476

477 Louise: nee

478

479 John: uhm, maar as daar `n bietjie anonimiteit kan kom,

480

481 Louise: mmm

482

483 John: well, dan sal dit `n beter dipstick kan gee, want ek glo dan sal die mense wat

484 geinhibeerd is deur die groot naam wat daar staan, dit is personeellid so en so wat dit se,

485 dan kan jy gaan opkyk wie is personeellid so en so, waar werk die persoon?

486

487 Louise: dan kan jy ook se, ja, dit is nou tipies van iemand van Wiskunde ..

488

489 John: teenoor as dit `n anonieme persoon is met `n geskepte .. wat noem julle dit, `n

490 avatar, `n geskepte online persoon, dan kan jy dit lees teen, hierdie is nou die aspris ene

491 wat vandag praat, die ene is die gemaak naïef, daai ene is bloot naïef, en so kan jy uit die

492 naam van die persoon en die soorte karaktersketsietjie wat jy gee, so, daar is potensiaal
493 nog in die BBS, dit word ondermyn deur die mense..

1 **Onderhoud Peter**

2 **15 Oktober 2010**

3 **10:30**

4

5 Louise: Ek het gewonder toe ek nou kyk na jou deelname, dat jy partykeer Afrikaans praat,
6 partykeer Engels.

7 Peter : Mm, ek is eintlik Nederlands.

8 Louise: Is jy vars in Suid-Afrika?

9 Peter : Ek is al elf jaar hier, elf en `n half amper. In 1999 gekom as post-doc. En twee jaar later
10 word ek aangestel as associate professor, en onlangs is ek, ek het 3 September my inaugural
11 speech gehou vir full professor

12 Louise: so, jy is nou `n ..

13 Peter : promoted

14 Louise: het jy altyd nog in Potchefstroom gebly?

15 Peter : ja, ja, ek sou eintlik vir twee jaar kom, maar toe like ek dit hierso baie, en toe bly ek maar

16 Louise: o

17 Peter : en ek vind dit baie lekker hier in Potchefstroom

18 Louise: ja, die weer is goed

19 Peter : die weer is goed, en dit is ook `n baie lekker plekkie, en ag Holland is maar stresserig, dit
20 is bietjie meer relaxed hier, ek hou daarvan

21 Louise: het jy familie ook hier?

22 Peter : nee

23 Louise: so dis net jy

24 Peter : ek het `n vriendin hier, maar my ouers bly in Holland, my twee susters bly ook in Holland
25 nog

26 Louise: so, jy het `n Suid-Afrikaanse vriendin

27 Peter : ja, sy bly in Potch, sy het by Absa gewerk, maar sy is nou by, sy werk nou in
28 Johannesburg, geld is bietjie sleg, ons sien mekaar nie so baie nie

29 Louise: oukei, die eerste vraag is, hoekom neem jy deel, in die algemeen?

30 Peter : kyk, uh, ek hou baie van diskussie

31 Louise: mm

32 Peter : en en as ek eerlik moet syn, dis ook, there isn't much discussion amongst students also,
33 hier, die universiteit, moet na my idee instituut wees waar baie diskussie is, eintlik moet ons in
34 navorsing alles betwyfel, we have to doubt everything, en, dit gebeur nogal eintlik baie min, en
35 dis uiteindelik, as jy na die BBS kyk, hoeveel mense neem nou rêrig deel, dis nou maar tien, of
36 twaalf, dis baie min, maar wat ek wel weet, is dat baie mense dit lees, so buite die forum om,
37 word dit baie mense van, ja, ek stem met jou saam, maar daar's waarskynlik `n angs om deel te
38 neem, ek het dat niet, ek spreek reg uit, en ek hou baie van die diskussies, ek kyk amper elke dag
39 of daar ..forum is, ek het self ook nou weer `n paar dinge om oor te skryf, maar tyd is nou nie
40 heeltemaal aan my kant, maar ek hou binnekort weer bietjie iets te tik, maar ek weet dat Francois
41 ook weg is, nou weg gaan,

42 Louise: is hy op pad?

43 Peter : Ja, hy is oppad ja, dis wat ek gehoor het, ek weet nie of hy nog is, maar hy gaan weg, en
44 Stephen ken ek ook redelik goed, het jy saam met hom al gepraat,

45 Louise: ek het ja

46 Peter : ons sien mekaar dikwels, drink dikwels `n biertjie saam, ja, Ettienne, maar hy is al lank
47 weg, maar hy het ek ook baie van gehou, ook `n pel van my, ons drink ook saam `n biertjie so,
48 maar dit is gewoon, die hoofdoel is gewoon, ja, ek dink, dat is wat ek sê van Potchefstroom

49 altyd, van dese universiteit, ons het `n baie mooi... van universiteit, ons het `n baie rustige
50 omgewing, ons het geen, geen industrie, daar is baie sportfasiliteite, dit is eintlik `n baie goeie
51 omgewing, vergelykbaar met `n paar heel goeie universiteite in Amerika, van die kleiner
52 universiteite, wat helaas nie so goed is nie, is die scholarship van die studente, en eintlik ook van
53 meestal doen wat jy voor gesê word en dan kom alles reg, luister na die dosent en alles kom
54 goed, jy moet net doen in plaas van dink, en dan, dat is, dat is baie jammer, daar was ook een
55 ondersoek, ek het dit in my cahier, iets van the climate van dese universiteit en daar kom dit oor
56 the scholarly debate is nie aanwesig nie, daar is ..ons is net baie nice vir mekaar, maar daar is
57 gewoon geen debat, als is soos dit is, luister na jou baas en doen dit, en dat is..dis hoekom ek
58 dink dat die BBS kan `n baie goeie medium wees om dit te verbeter, maar

59 Louise: uiteindelik was dit nie

60 Peter : nou al, ek dink op sig is dit, ek weet nie of ander universiteit dit het, ek weet nie of daar
61 so `n forum is op al die universiteite, die ding is, dit is wel `n demokraties-agtige medium, dit
62 wat ek sê, ek hou baie daarvan en ek hou baie van die debat, maar, ja, daar is te min mense wat
63 deelneem, en as jy `n stuk skryf, ek skryf ook wel stukke, dan is jy lank daarmee besig, want jy
64 wil dit tog goed formuleer, en jy wil dit kort hou, dit is amper `n soort van `n wetenskaplike
65 artikeltjie, jy moet wel, as jy `n stuk skryf dan skaaf ek wel ure daaraan om dit goed, om te sê
66 wat jy wil sê, met ook agtergrond, jy kan nie sommer sommer iets sê sonder dat jy weet of dit nie
67 êrens gepubliseer is nie, so kyk wel bietjie rond,..

68 Louise: so dit is vir jou `n scholarly forum, dit is vir jou `n plek waar jy kan semi-wetenskaplike
69 goed sê

70 Peter ; ja, byvoorbeeld ook de manier hoe ons klas gee en so, dit sal tog, ek het êrens wel op die
71 BBS gesê, dit sal tog, sommige mense...die BBS, hulle like dit nie, moet tog ook iets wees waar
72 ons ons klasgee, struktuur van hoe ons lecture is, so, ek het nou met baie, met redelik van kritiek,
73 sê maar...wetenskappe oorgedra, dit is wat ek sê, ons is veels te veel besig met klein toetsies, die
74 vierdejaar studente toetsies, kla ek ook, praat ek ook baie oor, en ek dink dat is wel `n goeie
75 forum om sulke dinge te...

76 Louise: dink jy dit word gelees deur die regte mense?

77 Peter : nouw ek weet dit niet, maar ek het wel gehoor dat Cathy in die tyd dit wel gelees het, ek
78 en Johannes is in die skool.... van gemaak Dat het ek wel gehoor, maar ek dink as ek rektor
79 was gewees sou ek dit wel doen, ek wil kyk wat daar aangaan

80 Louise: ja, dit is `n goeie dipstick om die sentiment van mense te meet

81 Peter : ja, ja,

82 Louise: ek weet die huidige rektor heg nie veel waarde daaraan nie, hy het gesê nee wat, want ek
83 het gekla by `n vergadering dat jy moet soveel kere jou password insit om uiteindelik by die BBS
84 uit te kom, toe sê hy dis net `n paar mense en dis ekstreme opinies, en dis nie rêrig..

85 Peter : by my is dit my home, ek het myne so ingestel, dat as ek dus my home druk, dan

86 Louise: o, is hy by jou? So jy het hom anders gaan maak?

87 Peter : ja, ek hom my home gemaak en dan gaan ek daartoe ek weet hoe om `n ding te verander
88 om dit op die internet in te tik

89 Louise: maar is jy nie `n goeie tegnoloog nie, dat jy dit kan regkry nie,..

90 Peter : ek dink as jy `n ander browser as ..as jy nie explorer gebruik, kan jy dat dit jou password
91 onthou, maar ek is glad nie goed met rekenaars nie, maar ek het al gesien, die jongens daar, as jy
92 `n ander browser as explorer gebruik, kan jy jou ding onthou

93 Louise: ek weet google chrome is daarin opgelaai, maar ek is te stupid om dit..

94 Peter : die student is nou nie hier, anders sal ek vir hulle gevra het, ek werk nog met 2003, dus ek
95 kry baie stukke wat ek nie kan oopmaak, almal werk in 2007, ek is baie oud op die gebied van
96 rekenaars

97 Louise: oukei, as jy nou dink aan Beth se deelname, maar vroeër, jy maak `n verwysing, jy quote
98 jouself, uh, 2007, maak jy `n quote van wat jy gesê het, I wrote on Wednesday April 27, dit is `n
99 jaar gelede, dat sy geneig is om heelyd `n sekere fout te begaan, om te veralgemeen, wat is jou
100 geskiedenis met jou deelname, of jou gesprekke met Beth?

101 Peter : Kyk, heel toevallig ken ek Beth al van my tyd dat ek my dosentekursus gedoen het

102 Louise: o

103 Peter : daar is ook `n filosofie wat ek ook gedoen het, daar is `n filosofie, daar is twee dele, jy
104 leer die kampus en daar is ook `n deel wat hulle doen, filosofie van science, dis wat hulle dit
105 genoem het, toen was, het ek Beth ontmoet, sy was ook deel, sy was ook beginner dosent, en toe
106 al, kyk sy het my opinie sal ek nie sê ekstreme idees, maar toe het ek haar leer ken, toen het ons
107 uitmekaar, toen, ek weet nie wanneer ek eerste het geskryf, maar toe het ek my in die debat ook
108 vermeng, ja, kyk en, ek hou van Beth in `n way, ek hou nie altyd van haar opinies, maar ek het al
109 baie... sy sê dit, ek weet wat sy sê hierso, dit word rondom die braaivuur baie vertel, en dan nog
110 ekstreem, dus ek weet dat is wat sy sê, maar my opinie is dat dit gaan nie om swart of wit, maar
111 dit gaan meer om wat ek ook wil sê, dit gaan om..nie per definisie is alles wat swart is slegter, en
112 dat wil sy die heelyd daar ingooi, jy weet swart is maar skeiding en ek sien dat niet, so miskien
113 ek wil dat nie sien nie, maar dat is, ek kom uit Nederland, en byvoorbeeld by ons, ek het tennis
114 gespeel en daar was ook `n swart iemand in, maar dit was gewoon normaal, kyk Suid-Afrika is
115 histories dan so, verskil tussen swart en wit, en ek het ook ek het ook veel meer in terme van
116 swart en wit gedink sinds ek hier is, wanneer ek terug in Nederland is, ook weer.....ek het dit
117 rêrig nie gesien nie en dit, daar is die idee wat ek ook uitgaan van die mens, en dit is ook wat ek
118 sê met die statistiek van haar, kan gemiddeld kan almal nie laer IQ...dit beteken nie altyd dat een
119 iemand altyd `n laer IQ het as `n ander, jy kan dit nie, en dat is my groot punt met haar, sy, sy, sy
120 praat ook swart en wit, jy kan dit nie doen nie, jy kan ook nie over Nederlanders, jy kan maar
121 praat dat de gemiddeld IK laer is, ek het dit met my swart student ook bespreek, sal hulle nie `n
122 probleem het nie, maar die persoon, dat almal ... is, die gevolgtrekking durf jy nie doen, nie
123 maak nie

124 Louise: oukei, so jy het nou al `n paadjie met haar geloof en jy het nou vroeër, wanneer was dit,
125 2000 en hoeveel was dit gewees

126 Peter : ek dink dit was 2002, het ek die kursus gedoen

127 Louise: oukei dit was lank terug, maar toe het jy haar leer ken

128 Peter : wel, kyk, ek was, ek het nie eers van die BBS geweet nie, tot iemand vir my gesê het, toe
129 ek dit sien, ek sal ..wat my eerste deelname is, en toen later het Beth, ..dit is de vrou wat toen by
130 ons op de kursus was,

131 Louise: dink jy die universiteit kon meer doen om die BBS bekend te stel aan nuwe personeel?

132 Peter : ja, dat..

133 Louise: mens vind so toevallig uit daarvan

134 Peter : ja, dit was by my ook so, ja, ek het dit nie geweet nie, eers op die, waar hulle altyd die
135 karre verkoop,

136 Louise: die advertensies

137 Peter : die advertensies, ja, ja, daar het ek toe opgekom en dit was via daar, `n ou vriendin van
138 my, dit is nou nie meer, sy het met Andrew gewerk, en hy het ook baie geskryf, toen wil ek dat
139 `n bietjie lees, toe wys sy vir my hoe ek dat moet doen, ..dit was nog so `n klein knoppie in die
140 hoek, maar ek is `n redelik, daar is `n paar mense wat ek sal sê, soos Ettienne, hy was amper
141 verslaaf daaraan en sy diskussie, ek vind dat ook baie mooi, daar is weinig leef op die moment,
142 daar moet ook kritiese groei wees, van 10 tot 20 mense

143 Louise: dink jy daar is `n rede waarom dit so afgeplat het

144 Peter : mm, ja, ek dink tog dat, en dat is nogmaals wat ek sê, kritiek en diskussie is, kritiek is
145 eintlik altyd sleg, terwyl ek dink kritiek kan heel goed wees, jy kan daarvan leer, mense is bang
146 voor kritiek, mense is bang voor, as ek dit skryf, dan word ek gefire, of ek kry nie promotion nie,
147 daar is mense bang daarvoor, dink ek, dit wat ek sê, die mense wat baie skryf, ja, goed, dit word
148 bietjie dieselfde diskussie die heeltyd, dit gaan herhaal..

149 Louise: dit raak vervelig

150 Peter : ja, maar ek dink daar is genoeg goeters om oor te gesels, maar ek dink die angs van
151 mense, ek het ook `n pel van my, kollega van my, het ook uitgesproke meanings, maar hy gaan
152 nooit, nooit op die BBS skryf nie, nooit nie, hy's bang, dit verbaas my bietjie dat die rektor nie
153 hierso, dis jammer

154 Louise: hy, wel, `n kollega van my het vir hom geskryf en gesê hy het my nou eintlik gesilence
155 toe ek nou die probleem opper, want hy het gesê hy wil graag weet wat die personeel, toe sê ek
156 `n plek waar hy dit kon sien is die BBS, maar dit is eintlik nou so moeilik om in te gaan, toe sê

157 hy hy heg nie veel waarde aan so `n forum nie, toe het `n kollega van my vir hom gesê jy het
158 haar nou eintlik gesilence, dit sou `n goeie dipstick wees, mens dit nie net afmaak nie, ek weet
159 nie wat hy nou dink nie, ek dink vroeër was dit dalk beter met Cathy, toe sy tot dit nog gelees
160 het, ..

161 Peter : sy het nooit self iets geantwoord nie

162 Louise: ja, dink jy die reaksie wat mense op Beth het, hulle sê sy is rênig rassisties, en, uhm,
163 dink jy dis verdiend?

164 Peter : ek sê altyd, jy kan sê wat jy wil, maar ek vind, ek het dit ook êrens gesê, wat ek by haar
165 af.., wat wil jy nou? Dat ons gelyk bemagtig is of nie? My gevoel is sy wil dit nie. Ek het nie
166 soveel probleme met wat sy sê daarso, in terme van my mag jy dit doen, ek het glad nie
167 probleme nie, ek stem nie saam nie, maar ek heb daar nie soveel probleme mee nie, ek dink ek
168 het haar nooit as `n rassis uitgemaak op die forum nie, maar wat is, wat is die doel van haar? Is
169 die doel, wat wil sy bereik? Niks, wat sy wil bereik, is juis `n groter gaping, en dat wil ek altyd in
170 die forum bring, hoe kan ons bymekaar kom, en hoe kan ons `n beter Puk of beter samelewing,
171 ons moet verder gaan met mekaar.

172 Louise: so, jy wil

173 Peter : sy polariseer

174 Louise: sy polariseer gemoedere

175 Peter : hoekom sal sy dit nou sê, onnodig, en dan sê sy haar beste student is `n swarte, so gaan
176 die diskussie, want ek het baie diskussies oor rassisme gelees, en rassisme is in my opinie te
177 doen met discriminations, iemand wat swart is, doen jy dit, sê maar generalization, Duitser drink
178 altyd bier, Hollander rook altyd dagga, almal generalizations, en dit dan projekteer op watookal,
179 dan gaan jy nie braaie ...gaan jy die vleis langer vind ...

180 Onderbreking (Peter gee geld vir Hollandse ingenieursstudente om bier en vleis vir die braaivleis
181 te koop wat hulle van 12 uur die middag af hou)

182 Dit is wat ek sê, wat is de doel van, dit is in my opinie nie de doel, maar miskien sien ek dit nie,
183 ek like haar, sy sê wat sy dink, terwyl 99 % dit nie doen nie

184 Louise: en jy ondervind dat mense eintlik haar ondersteun, ... nie amptelik,
185 Peter : dat weet ek niet, uhm, ek het min mense gehoor wat haar ondersteun, nee, kyk, daar is `n
186 paar mense wat dit wil lees, hierso, maar ek dink daar is byvoorbeeld baie opposisie teen
187 Stephen, die mense sê hulle sal hom doodmaak

188 Louise: hier by jou?

189 Peter : mense wat ek ken van die workshop, redelik, blanke boeragtige...oor wat Stephen skryf,
190 hulle word baie kwaad,

191 Louise: en hierdie workshop, die werkswinkel, hulle is basies..ek weet van iemand wat daar
192 werk,

193 Peter : ja kyk, ons het aparte, daai Boersma werk daar, sentrale werkshop, werkswinkel, dit is die
194 kant om, en Erlank is daar, die baas, en Theron werk daar, Boersma, maar ons het ons eie
195 workshop, ..

196 Louise: maar die algemene gevoel is, Stephen is..

197 Peter : By `n klomp mense, is, kyk selfs by Stephen, kyk ek stem selfs met hom nie heeltemaal
198 saam nie, baie met hom nie saam nie, maar hoe hy skryf is baie goed

199 Louise: ja, hy skryf uitstekend,

200 Peter : maar dat is ook mooi, ek hou veral, in die wetenskap, publikasie, wat nou baie belangrik
201 word, is mooi opskryf van goeters, kyk, ek het die Engels gehaat toe ek op my skool was, my
202 Engels is maar bietjie shaky, maar as jy `n Engels soos hy skryf, is mooi, uit `n literêre oogpunt
203 is dit `n hoogtepunt die lees van sy dinge, gereeld baie mooi

204 Louise: ja, dit is, en ek dink Beth se formulerings is so half kru, jy weet, as jy die twee vergelyk,
205 jy kan hulle eintlik nie vergelyk nie

206 Peter : kyk, plus Stephen is `n baie smart ou, en hy sal sy bronne, Beth is selektief in haar
207 bronkeuse, dis gewoon, wat sy sê is gewoon, na my idee is nie goed, wetenskaplik onderleg, die
208 mate van wetenskaplikheid van die..twyfelagtig, dit hoef ook nie, want dis sê jou sê, jy kan sê
209 wat jy wil, dit maak nie saak nie

210 Louise: ja, dit is nie `n wetenskaplike forum nie

211 Peter : nee, maar haar argumentasie is, baie argumentasie is, vind `n voorbeeld en dan
212 veralgemeniseer, sy wil ook nie ingaan op ander man se argumente, gaan nie r`rig in op die
213 argumente nie...so, herhaling van standpunte, is so bietjie soos die Charl of so, hy het ook so `n
214 bietjie van, hy bly maar herhaal, hy gaan nooit r`rig in op wat jy sê nie, dit maak dit bietjie
215 moeilik, hy het die neiging om dit te doen, dis wat ek sê dat, daar's twee kampe, ek probeer en
216 dit is r`rig wat ek in Suid-Afrika, Potchefstroom so mooi, daar moet `n soort van bymekaar kom,
217 ek weet dis baie moeilik, maar en dat is, polariseer eerder dan, mense saambring

218 Louise: so, jou doel met jou deelname is om `n goeie middeweg te vind

219 Peter : ja, ek weet dit is verskriklik moeilik, stimuleer van akademies debat, dit gaan soseer om
220 leer argumenteer, is deel van wetenskap, dit is nogal sleg ontwikkel, by studente ook, ..vir
221 navorsing, as jy niet dinge doen, studente weet nie wat om te doen, want wat moet dit wees

222 Louise: ja, hulle wil nie die onsekerheid hê nie, onsekerheid beteken, uhm, wel in ons konteks is
223 onsekerheid redelik sleg

224 Peter : ..is redelik mooi, en Confucius, Potchefstroom se uitsette op die gebied van
225 navorsing..ons wil nie daar wees nie, ons wil klas gee, dis lekker, dis `n boek, `n sommetjie, ons
226 weet hoe hy moet, dat is die klimaat van, ek het dit nou al gesê, die klimaat van kritiese denke,
227 Stephen analiseer elke sin, rafel dit uitmekaar en antwoord, soms is daar nog die opmerking van,
228 ja, maar dit is te akademies, maar dat is juis, dat is wetenskap, dat is diskussie, kyk na die
229 kleinste ding, publiseer, jy skryf artikels, dan gaan die mense dit ook doen

230 Louise: ja, wat mens miskien moet kyk by Beth is nie noodwendig wat sy sê nie, maar hoe sy dit
231 sê, en dat daar moontlik `n redelike angs by haar is, jy weet,

232 Peter : ja, kyk, ek het êrens gesê,jy bedoel dit miskien goed, dit is wat ek sê, ek twyfel nie
233 daarin nie, maarsy is so ondiplomatiek, jy bereik nie wat jy miskien wil bereik,

234 Louise: ja, dalk is sy nie baie duidelik in wat sy wil bereik nie, want sy sê “julle het dit almal
235 mis, ek wil net die ander kant wys, die kant wat nie gehoor wil word nie”, jy weet dit wat mense
236 verswyg, dit waaroor mense nie wil praat nie, dit sal ek nou hier uitblaker

237 Peter : kyk weet jy wat met rassisme, diskriminasie, ek gebruik die voorbeeld ook altyd, as ek
238 nou sê die vuil smerige Duitsers sal niemand sê vir my daar is `n probleem of nie, stupid
239 Amerikaners, want hulle is die minority-groep, as ek sê die stupid swartes, dan diskrimineer ek,
240 dit gaan ook om die magsrelasie, maar as jy die sterker groep aanval, soos Amerikaners of
241 Duitsers, het jy nie probleem, maar as jy `n swarte groep gaan aanval, swakker groep, dan is dit
242 `n probleem, en dat is.. kyk by mans en vrouens kan ons ook maar, ..die vrouens kan nie park of
243 so doen, jy weet dis nie so heel erg nie, maar as jy sê swartes kan nie kar ry nie, dan is daar altyd
244 die ding van rassisme, daar is wel die konflik tussen swart en wit, word eintlik op rassisme, aan
245 albei kant, dat is `n probleem, en ons kan nie gewoon diskussie hê met mekaar, want daar word
246 altyd gedink dit is so

247 Louise: wel, ons land is baie gepolariseer, mens moet baie versigtig wees in wat jy sê, want ek
248 stem met haar saam in sekere opsigte, wit op swart rassisme word baie gedokumenteer, maar
249 sodra die rassisme omkeer, dan word dit nie as rassisme gesien nie,

250 Peter : maar kyk die ding is, daar is `n ander ding ook, en dis ekonomiese, want rassisme is wel
251 `n negatiewe impact, hy kry die job nie oor hy swart is of wit is, maar daar is in alle lande, jy wil
252 sêmaar in jou nywerheid of universiteit, wil jy soort van gemiddelde demografiese deelname, ons
253 weet Suid-Afrika het 80 persent swart, 10 persent.. danw il jy eintlik dat in elke gebied van jou
254 land na vore kom, byvoorbeeld in Nederland is daar baie min vroulike hoof van die polisie, nou
255 as daar `n aanstelling gedoen word, ...so affirmative action, wat gesien word as diskriminasie, is
256 verstaanbaar en is noodsaaklik vir Suid-Afrika, die diskussie is jy moet die beste kies, maar daar
257 is `n ..balans en die balans moet op een of ander manier weer regkom, ek bedoel as ons kyk na
258 Suid-Afrika, as jy na Holland kyk vyftig jaar terug was die deelname van vrouens..baie laag, ons
259 wil ook vrouens in bepaalde posisies van die regering, die kabinet, op hoë poste, en miskien dit
260 gaan bietjie vinnig en ek verstaan dit ook wel, ja, daar is soveel probleme in hierdie land maar
261 ook soveel opportunities, maar jy moet daarnatoe, jy kan nie anders nie.

262 Louise: Wat dink jy daarvan dat die vrouens nie regtig deelneem op die BBS nie?

263 Peter : Maar is dat so? Ek bedoel, kyk daar is Susan, sy kom wel

264 Louise: so jy dink daar is

265 Peter : daar is tog wel, bietjie, ja, ek dink dis nou nie te, ek dink vanuit die, ek dink jy kan my
266 maar die liberaal en Stephen by die liberale, maar ek dink daar is tog wel andere, ek kan dit nie
267 so opnoem nie, ek weet nie of jy dat statisties getoets het, ek dink dit is tog wel interessant, maar
268 ek twyfel daaraan

269 Louise: ja, kyk, Beth is die most outspoken en sy skryf die meeste, en Edith het `n soort van `n
270 persoonlike ding vertel, en Susan ook, so die vrouens se deelname is anders,

271 Peter : in hierdie forum ja, maar byvoorbeeld as jy over, en dit is ook `n ander vrou, maar as jy
272 oor ander in hierdie forum dink, miskien ja, net `n voorbeeld, dat wys vir my nou eintlik wel,
273 kyk, daar is natuurlik maniere wat jy denk en wat jy moet, jy is diplomatiek, jy kan dit wel dink
274 maar jy sê dit niet, dit is eintlik maar al, jou hele lewe, nie net met rassisme nie, met andere dinge
275 ook, so bietjie diplomatiek, jy wil eintlik sê wat jy wil sê maar jy kies jou woorde so om jou
276 doel te bereik, dat mense so

277 Louise: nie affronteer nie

278 Peter : ..en wat ek lees uit die voorbeelde, dit is eintlik presies wat ek bedoel, uhm, daar is `n
279 swart man wat in die pad was, maar wat nou as dit `n witman was, dit is moeilik

280 Louise: ja, wat haar man gestamp het, Edith se man

281 Peter : ja, maar dit is nie noodwendig rassisties nie, dit is ..konflik, dit is my probleem, ek het dit
282 gesê, elk probleem tussen wit en swart word gesien as rassisme, en ja.... kyk, ek het my
283 menings daaroor, mense word maar opgevoed met swart en wit, ek dink, wat ek dink, is, dat
284 vanuit psigologies kan dit en swart by veel mense niet, dit is gewoon psigologies, ons het `n
285 sekretaresse hierso, as daar `n wit student inkom.. is dit hoe gaan dit, en sy is heel vrolik, maar as
286 daar `n swart student inkom is dit asof sy hom nooit gesien het, die toon is wel anders, dit is iets
287 ingebore, dit, ja, so dinge is moeilik om so maar in een jaar weer reg te kry, maar dit is
288 psigologies, as daar Hollanders is, gaan ek en vat ek hulle altyd na Ikageng, maar jy word dat
289 gesê, ..jy word doodgeskiet, ..om die hoek van Ikageng staan daar `n man met `n pistool en alle
290 blankes wat daarbinne kom word geskiet..

291 Louise: ek was in Rome gewees nou onlangs, toe is daar Hollandse toeriste, toe vra hulle vir ons
292 kan `n Hollander in Suid-Afrika bly, is dit veilig vir `n Hollander, toe wou ek vir hom sê, weet
293 jy, Hollanders se kele word hier afgesny, Duitsers s'n hier bo, ..

294 Peter : kyk, met die World Cup, was eers baie mense, baie pelle sal kom, ..drie het gekom, door
295 die Engelse nuussyfer van hoe onveilig dit is

296 Louise: ek dink, uhm, ek het nogal ervaar met die Nederlander daar oorsee, is baie versigtig oor
297 Suid-Afrika, hy het eintlik in baie kru terme verwys na swart mense, hy het gesê die negroes, jy
298 weet hy kon nie rêrig dit formuleer nie, so ek het gevoel dit is iets..

299 Peter : Negers, daar is gewoon, ek het nou weer gesien, Zimbabwe in die nuus, in Zimbabwe is
300 daar nou weer probleme, dit is gewoon nie, en dit was toe in die tyd met Terre'blanche en so,
301 met die World Cup, toe jy in Rome was, dit was rondom die tyd, `n paar jaar terug, kyk alle
302 Nederlanders en alle buitelanders in Potchefstroom is bietjie bang in die begin, ek ook, ek kan
303 jou vertel, ek het in Joostestraat gebly in die begin, die kampus hier gebly, ek was nie so ver nie,
304 ..toe gaan ek `n keer na...toe gaan ek so....toe kom daar `n swarte op my af, toe dink ek nou word
305 ek gerob, ek weet dit, ek bedoel, dit is gewoon wat jy .. en later sien jy ag, ek dink ek was nooit
306 in so `n veilige stad as Potchefstroom, ja en veiliger as wat ek in Holland gebly het, ..

307 Louise: oukei, ek wil bietjie terugkom na die forum, uhm, Beth sê op `n stadium sy het nie `n
308 stats les nodig nie, `n statistiekles nodig nie

309 Peter : kyk, daar's..ek weet sy het statistiek gedoen, dit was miskien bietjie sleg vir my, ek weet
310 sy is `n statistiek dosent en kyk, haar statistics is gewoon niet goed, en dat was..

311 Louise: sy verwys hier na iets, kyk, ek is glad nie vertrouwd met statistiek nie, ..

312 Peter : kyk, wat sy sê wat sy bloot voorkom ..wat ek probeer sê, as ek nou na statistiese
313 verdelings kyk as mens na lengte kyk, is dit so iets als dit, en dit is met IQ dieselfde, as jy na
314 byvoorbeeld lande, dan is dit miskien, of jy nou swart of wit is, miskien dit swart en dit wit, dit
315 maak gewoon nie saak nie, maar daar is nog altyd wel `n deel, verstaan jy, dit is die
316 algemenering hier, en dis, nogmaals, dis totally not constructive, wat ek wel sê, wil jy wel,
317wil jy wel naar `n land waar swart en wit ewe slim is, wil jy dat wel, of is die supernawiese
318 gedagte, is dat eindelijk die ang...., dat ons dan eindelijk miskien ewe slim is, dit miskien die

319 agterliggende gedagte, van die mense was vroeger net in die kombuis, die tuin, en nou gaan ek
320 hulle klas gee, op die universiteit, ek weet dit nie, maar dat is die gevoel dat ek soms, is dat niet
321 de idee, is dat niet de probleem, dit wil sein, wil jy.dat swartes ewe slim is of nie

322 Louise: ek dink nie dit is die probleem nie, ek dink wat sy dalk sien is die probleem vir die
323 toekoms, dat..die gemeenskap word...dit wat sy dalk bereik deur die forum deur polariserend te
324 wees is dalk dit waarvoor sy bang is, soos jy nou sê sy polariseer goed, dit is nie konstruktief nie,
325 maar dalk is dit die hele probleem, dat sy dit wat sy om haar sien en om haar ervaar is vir haar so
326 angswekkend..

327 Peter : maar ook onbekendheid, ek was al, ek bedoel ek was al, ek dink dat, ons bly baie naby
328 Ikageng, maar..hoeveel mense was al in Ikageng gewees, daar binne by iemand in `n huis en het
329 daar gesels, dat maak soveel goed, die mense, ek was wel daar, en dan kom jy daar waar die
330 haarkapper is, dit is wel mooi daar, die haarkapper se huis, jy stap daar na binne,dis baie nice,

331 Louise: ek dink ja, dis waar

332 Peter : ons ken mekaar nie,

333 Louise: ja, daar is `n ignorance, `n groot ignorance

334 Peter : ja, ons is hier veilig bymekaar, lekker, kyk na die kroeg

335 Louise: ja, met daardie rugby, die Blue Bulls, toe hulle in Soweto gespeel het, ..

336 Peter : die World Cup, dit was nou vir my baie mooi, ..die hele World Cup was vir my baie
337 mooi

338 Louise: dit was `n baie besondere ervaring

339 Peter : ja, ek was nou ook in O'Hagans, ek drink nou baie `n biertjie daar, dit was met Bafana
340 Bafana, nie noodwendig met die rugby, en daar was wit en swart bymekaar en ons het geskreu,
341 dit was vir my geweldig, en ek moet sê ek praat ook wel van blanke, al wil ek niet, die blankes
342 het ook baie belang gestel,....oukei, sommige mense niet, daar was ook mense wat gehoop het
343 Bafana....ek sê jou daar is `n hele klomp, een rassitiese oompie wat ek nou ken, ..

344 Louise: hulle sê sokker is `n swart sport en rugby is vir die witmense

345 Peter : soms is dit ook bietjie simplisties, die denkwyse, swart en wit...daar is ook min
346 verskillende standpunte oor goeters, die blootstelling van blanke studente hier is min, almal het
347 `n religieuse agtergrond,..daar is min diversiteit

348 Louise: dit is baie homogeen

349 Peter : ja

350 Louise: oukei, ek dink ek het min of meer met jou gepraat wat ek wou praat, uhm, jy het op `n
351 stadium gesê, eintlik gaan my navorsing nie oor rassisme nie, dit gaan oor hoe mense interact, so
352 ek wil nie nou gaan en sê hierdie een is `n rassis en daardie een is nie `n rassis nie, dit gaan, dit is
353 nie die doel van my navorsing nie, maar, ek weet jy sê vir haar, miskien is jy glad nie `n rassis
354 nie, maar mense kan jou so sien, uhm, waarom sê jy so?

355 Peter : nou, kyk, sy's, first of all, ... jy kan vir my sê wat jy wil, ek het `n baie hoë maak nie
356 saak nie, `n belediging, persoonlik is net nie nice nie, ek kan dit hanteer, maar, omdat ek dit nie
357 kan, kyk, ek...om iemand `n rassis te noem is nogal iets, ook, dis wat ek sê, in die wetenskap ook
358 as jy iets sê, dit is so, dan moet jy goeie bewyse hê dat is so, ek het nie bewyse nie, miskien is ek
359 negentig persent seker dat sy is, plus die feit dat, kyk, as jy nou na jonger mense kyk, jonge
360 kinders van 12 jaar, 15 jaar, hulle praat van kaffers, en dat sien ek as rassisme, hulle gebruik die
361 woord, maar dat is hulle geleer, as jou pa en ma dit die heelyd sê, ek kan dat niet kwalik neem,
362 ek dink dis sleg, nie net.vir ouers in hierdie tyd, baie belangrik om..goeie signalen te geven, kyk,
363 sy is baie gevoelig as jy haar kinders..Stephen het wel `n keer daar ..

364 Louise: sy sê los my kinders uit die BBS

365 Peter : en Stephen het ook `n keer verskoning gemaak vir haar want hy het ook iets gesê, ek
366 weet niet, ek weet niet presies hoe hy dink, maar ek weet ook nie wat sy wil nie, is dit `n
367 uitlaatklep, ek weet nie of jy die woord uitlaatklep ken, maar ek moet dit uit my stelsel kry, dit is
368 baie goed om `n bietjie aggressie te uit, daar, maar skryf dit ook, ek dink dat dit de doel van
369 mense is, e kook, as ek van die snaakse administrasie-vorms kry, dan tik ek dit in, dan is dit ook
370 bietjie van my af, en ek het ook al `n keer gesê, dat is, kyk, Andre en Beth is baie meer dieselfde
371 as wat jy dink, ek het `n keer probeer om Beth na Potch te .laat kom en nou met Stephen `n

372 biertjie te gaan drink en sy was.. en ek is seker hulle sal mekaar like, maar die punt is wat sy sê,
373 vind ek eintlik nog meer belangrik, ..dis mooi, mense moet dit meer doen

374 Louise: so jy wou hê hulle moet bymekaar kom in Potchefstroom..

375 Peter : sy sê, nee dis reg, ons kan dit organize, ek is seker dit sal `n lekker gesprek wees, ook die
376 fighting, maar dit gaan `n lekker gesprek word, ..

377 Louise: die tipiese liberal, en die tipiese, wel, die Afrikaner, die..

378 Peter : maar kyk sy het natuurlik nie dit, van die stilsweye, wat die Afrikaanse tog stilbly, nie sê
379 nie, sy doen dit wel

380 Louise: ja nee, sy bly nie stil nie, wel, sy verteenwoordig hopelik nie die meerderheid nie, ek
381 dink sy verwoord baie sentimente

382 Peter : ek dink baie mense sal saamstem, maar dis nie te sê, haar gesprek orals gaan altyd so,
383 altyd, ek het dit al honderd keer gehad, ja maar die ou, dit is nou `n goeie ou, en die ou..die
384 blankes is eintlik kak, maar dit is nie so, dit is `n gemiddelde, jy het gemiddeldes, jy het `n mens
385 en almal het sy eie kwaliteite, swakhede, ...en die kans moet ons mekaar gee,

386 Louise: goed, oukei

387 Peter : hoop ek het jou bietjie ...

388 Louise: janee ons het nou baie gepraat, ek wil nou nie in jou braaivleistyd ingaan nie, maar goed,
389 baie dankie

390

391

392

1 **Interview**

2 **Stephen**

3 **Friday, 15 October 2010, 11:00**

4

5 Louise: I first want to know, what motivates you in general to take part in the BBS?

6

7 Stephen: It is a difficult question, and I have always enjoyed social engagements
8 which are argumentative, discussing things and debating things, .it is something I
9 have always enjoyed. and then when I came here, the BBS seemed like a nice sort of
10 place to get discussions going, at the time when I started here there were a few people
11 who were you know, regularly participating and it was a bit more of a lively space
12 than what it is now, 'cause they have subsequently gone off and Beth was also...you
13 know, disappeared, so it isn't was it used to be, but it was a nice place to sort of test
14 ideas and argue with people about something ..

15

16 Louise: Could you guess why it filtered out, why it is not really relevant anymore?

17

18 Stephen: I think in part that the discussion that you have identified, is actually a sort
19 of a turning point, I think there's two turning points, one, there used to be a guy
20 named Etienne, who was working here, he used to participate in the BBS quite a lot,
21 and then he left the university and he stopped participating.. which was one of the
22 major participants, and then leaving, weakened it a bit .. and then, with ... if I
23 remember correctly, this discussion actually resulted in formal complaints being laid
24 and so on, which was antithetical to the whole idea, I didn't support the idea of laying
25 some sort of formal complaint, a charge of racism against a person, but obviously,
26 being white, I did not experience the same sort of emotional anger or whatever about
27 the things that she was saying, and I think that that set very starkly the limits of
28 wherever the conversation might go.. many of the links on the bulletin board service
29 had had the same broad theme and it sort of popped up again and again and again and
30 again over the years, .. and once that act happened, I think it was a sort of act of
31 censorship, you know, you can't actually have these sorts of discussions, ...

32

33 Louise: .. so the major themes were things like religion, traditions, hostel stuff,
34 language issues, you think that closed down because of this?

35

36 Stephen: I think that, at least in my experience, in my memory, which is not
37 necessarily flawless, but in my memory of things, even the other discussions, the
38 discussions related to religion, discussions related to the residences, discussions
39 related to traditions here, the language issue, all included at one point or another a
40 racial component, that somehow the topic of race was unavoidable, and dealing with
41 lots of the big issues...and talking a lot about what people felt as the big issues here,
42 and when this thread sort of reached its emotional peak, and people began to decide to
43 take action outside of the discussion, I think it sent a very clear message, to Beth, that
44 these sort of comments won't be tolerated, and that would, 'cause right at the
45 beginning, when I first started participating on the BBS, I think it was the first year
46 when I was here, in 2005, there was actually somebody who had raised a disciplinary
47 issue against Beth ..

48

49 Louise: oh, ok

50

51 Stephen: and I think Ettienne was part of it, but Ettienne and I both wrote something
52 to say, well you know, we don't think there should be a disciplinary act against her
53 because we think that she brings to the discussion a sort of popular position and that
54 the discussion is more important than that, uhm, but then by this time I think the
55 person, . it was Willy who made the complaint, and he was very angry and very
56 adamant that that sort of thing should not be tolerated and we differed a bit on that..

57

58 Louise: Have you experienced instances where you felt you had to stop interacting,
59 but you have actually indicated in your answer, as there were institutional
60 interventions, it actually demotivated people to pursue discussions,

61

62 Stephen: yeah, the one sort of basic requirement for a discussion is that there are the
63 people to discuss things with, and the BBS had a character over , at the time I was
64 participating regularly, antagonistic type of discussion, it wasn't typically a bunch of
65 people talking about things they agreed about, there was that side of if, there was

66 Pitkos, people sort of encouraging one another and saying how much they like this or
67 that, but the participation that I was involved in was much more a confrontational
68 discussion and once the other side of the coin was you know negatively sanctioned by
69 the institution, well, the scope for antagonistic discussions on those points became
70 very much limited.

71

72 Louise: When you came here, you questioned stuff like religious openings and so, and
73 I remember, there were like 4 000 views on that specific post, which I really find
74 interesting, and people wanted to see what you are saying now, I think since then you
75 created an identity, uhm, what do you think is your identity on the forum, were you
76 really labeled at some stage?

77

78 Stephen: not really, I mean Beth had this stereotypical description viewing the world
79 through pink brille, this sort of thing, I once received a book anonymously in the mail
80 about how to get to know God, which I think was very ... I felt quite flattered, uhm,
81 but obviously someone thought I was in need of some sort of religious direction and
82 sent me this book, and I once heard from a student assistant and one of the librarians
83 questioned her about who I was and sort of interested in atheism and what is an atheist
84 like, but that is about it, on the whole I think, people, you know I sort of like to think
85 of myself as reasonable person, who puts this sort of argued position down and so on,
86 but it is of course very easy for a sort of dogma to lurk behind the trappings of a
87 formal argument in a way, I think that while I am quite reasonable, I think a lot of
88 people would see me as quite dogmatic or unmoving my position, I am willing to
89 listen to people, that sort of thing, I think I am somewhere in between, my own
90 conception of my liberal argumentative discourse and other people see it as having no
91 room for real difference or actual engagement, I don't know ..

92

93 Louise: You say there were these reports of people wanting to know who you really
94 are, have you experienced hostility from anybody?

95

96 Stephen: No, not really, ..

97

98 Louise: when you felt, okay, now I am an outsider, and they're pushing me to be more
99 of an outsider than I want to be?

100

101 Stephen: My experience hasn't been of one of being marginalized, as a result of that,
102 I had, I don't think, I still got them, in several points of some of the discussions, I
103 have received mails from people saying that I agree with what you are saying, I think
104 this, but I don't participate in the BBS myself, I got more overt reaction from people
105 of a positive kind, .. I think those people were in all likelihood in the minority, I think
106 the majority of people looking at what I was saying would probably disagree with me
107 or don't like it, but that is just my imagination of the local setup, but I never received
108 anybody privately sending me a message saying anything negative.

109

110 Louise: You know there is this difference between f2f and virtual, would people
111 support you f2f overtly?

112

113 Stephen: Yes, well obviously one tends to have more f2f engagements with
114 likeminded people, people that you get along with on a social level, so I didn't have
115 any real f2f encounters with anybody that was....uhm, hostile.

116

117 Louise: Didn't anyone come to you and say, listen I have read the stuff on the BBS
118 and okey, I support you or I don't support you, have you had reactions of non-
119 support?

120

121 Stephen: Not really, not that tendency, I have had discussions with people who .. like
122 for example there is a guy in philosophy now.. an Italian guy, who I spoke about
123 many of the things on the BBS, I had discussions with him outside, he disagreed with
124 my position, but our relationship generally has been one of discussing these sorts of
125 things from differing standpoints, I wouldn't say it was a negative response on his
126 part, it was positive and he was happy to participate in the discussion, and even to talk
127 about those sort of topics, but we didn't share the same perspective, but it wasn't an
128 opposite perspective like Beth's, it was perhaps an alternative perspective to mine, in
129 opposition to me, if you understand what I'm saying...

130

131 Louise: Do you think you have made some shifts in people's opinions, by way of your
132 participation?

133

134 Stephen: No, I don't think so,

135

136 Louise: Like when you offer an analysis, you have offered many analyses, of what
137 racism is .. have people come back to you and say well, you have enlightened me on
138 this,..?

139

140 Stephen: No, I never had an encounter with somebody who suggested that I have sort
141 of changed their way of thinking or .. but I would like to think that I had some
142 positive influence, but what I would say, I would, I think it would even be optimistic
143 to say that I was part of shifting consciousness a little bit towards the left, discussions
144 a little bit towards the left, introducing things to think about, online discussions,
145 particularly the way in which I began my online career on the BBS, I think in some
146 ways it was sort of slightly more a sophisticated form of trolling, really, it was at first
147 then I pop up and say this prayer stuff is terrible, all this religion is crap, we should
148 get rid of it and people immediately I think see that as an extremist position and you
149 know, that coloured the rest of my commentary, and if I can do things over again, I
150 possibly wouldn't be as hard about, hard core about as when I started ..

151

152 Louise: Trolling, I don't know the word, what is that?

153

154 Stephen: Trolling is a term for people who sign up to chat rooms and bulletin boards
155 things just to piss people off..

156

157 Louise: Okay, to stirr,

158

159 Stephen: ja

160

161 Louise: and that was not your intention?

162

163 Stephen: It was not my intention, uhm, but I think it was part of the effect, people saw
164 this ...and you can see some of the quotes, or some of the responses early on, which
165 were like, I am just paraphrasing was shut up, we have had this koshuis problem
166 before, this was now the tenth time it is coming up, you know, I those are typical
167 responses that a troll would get, it would be like, you know we have dealt with these
168 things a hundred times, just be quiet,

169

170 Louise: How do you spell this troll thing?

171

172 Stephen: Troll, it is T R O L L, like the mythical character.

173

174 Louise: Okay, do you know about any labels being put to you, I mean, pink glasses is
175 one, but any others?

176

177 Stephen: Uh, we were, you know one of the colleagues, we're friends, we're friends
178 in a collegial sense, we get along very well, we drink tea together every day, and
179 we're good colleagues, he began describing me and the group of associates that I use to
180 hang around with socially as "die kommuniste" and I think that came from the BBS
181 discussion, but it was obviously intended as a sort of sarcastically affectionate label,
182 not a horrible one, and then someone once called me and Schalk Engelbrecht, who
183 also wrote a few times, on the BBS, particularly after there was a discussion about uh,
184 whether the university does or should make condoms available for students more
185 widely and more openly and we were described as "die ridders van die kondoom",
186 but, ja, apart from that, nothing, nothing that I have seen..

187

188 Louise: Nothing insulting really

189

190 Stephen: No.

191

192 Louise: What is the value of your contributions for you personally? Personally,
193 interpersonally?

194

195 Stephen: Ja, I think that, despite, when I started here I think it was... obvious to me
196 that .. lots of the people that I was working with, at the time disagreed with the sorts
197 of things that I was saying, and the sorts of positions that I was taking, but were quite
198 positive about a person having the courage and convictions to stand up and say things
199 which are a bit dissenting or a bit unpopular, perhaps, I would say, on the one hand it
200 was just fun, and I enjoy doing this, so it is fun for me to participate in all sorts of
201 discussions, and I wouldn't say that at this point I have any idealistic notions about
202 what might be achieved through online discussions, but back then, I would say, there
203 was a degree towards I naively believed that a robust discussion on the public bulletin
204 board service in the university would produce some material, structural results, I
205 thought misguidedly perhaps this is a good place to take issues to,

206

207 Louise: It did have potential ...theoretically it has potential ..

208

209 Stephen: Yeah, but the problem is it is a sort of democratic thing, anyone can write on
210 the BBS, and institutions generally, like universities, are not democratic, interests and
211 people holding power are not going out of their own initiative pick up something
212 which is even very heated and popularly discussed on a public bulletin board service
213 and do anything about it, anything that you want done is going to have to go through
214 the various channels and circuits of power that exists, uhm, so I think there was a bit
215 of that, I thought that well, by starting a big stink about prayer at official functions
216 could, could you know, get people to think about what it is and maybe they'll start
217 changing it, to talk about the structural politics, about evening students that are black
218 might get them to rethink their, their ... I think that, without being a hundred percent
219 convinced of it, I think that that BBS discussion on part time evening students did in
220 fact later on contribute towards, at least our faculty, I don't know how widespread it
221 is, beyond our faculty, but a few years ago they got rid of the idea of part time
222 evening students all together and it was then phased out, so it is the last year that there
223 will be students and I think it had to do with the sorts of things that I was saying, that
224 I was saying on the BBS and how that stood in ...you know, stood threateningly on
225 the landscape when the HEQC audit arrived on the campus, and suddenly they had to
226 be, you know, cognizant of the fact that race does lurk in unsuspecting ways, I didn't

227 want the committee to sort of see this and think well actually there is a .. so I think
228 that there were ... uhm, but I can't contribute that to the discussion,

229

230 Louise: not directly

231

232 Stephen: I just think the content of the content managed to coincide with the structural
233 conflict between how the university had been doing business and the state coming to
234 have a look at it, because it was in that year that they sort of got rid of a whole bunch
235 of the off campus courses and did away or started doing away with the evening
236 classes,

237

238 Louise: all right, so that discussion had an effect, whether it contributed directly or
239 indirectly, you feel some perspectives moved ..

240

241 Stephen: it foreshadowed what in the end did happen, whether it produced any
242 consequence, whether it contributed all to that happening, is, is not clear, but it
243 certainly, uhm, predicted that, that this would be a problem and that the university
244 would have to deal with it, and then the university dealt with it three years later,

245

246 Louise: have you ever experienced an institutional warning?

247

248 Stephen: No, I didn't, I know Annette Combrink the old rector very well and we
249 encountered each other many times during the course that, during the time when she
250 was the rector, when I was working here, and she always, mentioned the BBS but
251 always sort of saying why haven't you written something lately, uuh, you know, and
252 that was very encouraging, that sort of participation

253

254 Louise: ok

255

256 Stephen: so I never experienced anybody saying, you know, look, you need to cool it,

257

258 Louise: I know this intervention from the institutional office, it was from the human
259 rights office with Beth, and that she got a warning, but apparently it wasn't

260 communicated to anybody, like Willy did not get any communication that this
261 happened and this happened, he is unsure of the consequences of his charge.

262

263 Stephen: Yeah, I never, I don't know where I heard, that, I think I heard from, from
264 him, that he submitted something, and then I can't remember if I ever heard that there
265 had been anything or if Beth .. said somewhere that had she received a warning, uhh,
266 but I was definitely under the impression that action was taken, and that she was
267 negatively sanctioned by the...

268

269 Louise: What do you think, do you think it impacted on the whole notion of free
270 speech negatively?

271

272 Stephen: No, I have a different notion of free speech that is commonly upheld in
273 South Africa, in South Africa there's certain things that you definitely can't say, we
274 have the category of hate speech, and... I don't know if I really agree with the
275 category of, of hate speech, as we uhm ...as we have it, it's problematic in all sorts of
276 ways, because you can't really insult a category of people, because a category of
277 people doesn't really exist, it only exists when people within that category take
278 personal offence, so it's a personal act, now I imagine it should be covered under
279 normal law, if you know what I mean, so if Willy took offence at things that Beth was
280 saying, which were racist, I think it more productive to consider it something between
281 the two of them or between Beth and a bunch of people that she has offended, than to
282 say this sort of speech is against the rules because it talks about ...

283

284 Louise: she generalizes more,

285

286 Stephen: yeah, I think, I think in America the way the free speech law works is that
287 you can say pretty much anything that you want, but as soon as you attempt to act on
288 it or other people attempt to act on something you have said, it becomes an issue, so
289 for example in America it is legal to say this is a white zone school, but it is not legal
290 to try and attempt to prevent black people from attending it, you know what I mean,
291 as soon as the word becomes action, it becomes a problem, but you can say pretty
292 much anything that you want, so you can have radical right wing radio stations and

293 radical left wing radio stations, and we I think loose a bit as South Africans because
294 people don't talk about the uncomfortable issues, because they are stuck away in the
295 corners of hate speech, ..

296

297 Louise: mmmm, Yes, that is something I gathered from this discussion, was that Beth
298 actually puts an unpopular view on the table, and it is sort of you know really on a hot
299 plate, what do you do with the things she is saying which are uncomfortable, which
300 might not be true, but many people would agree with her, what do you do with this
301 hot potato in your hands? That is what happened here.

302

303 Stephen: The way that I thought about Beth and still think about her, is that none of
304 the ideas were , none of . .she is not that different from..., none of the things that she
305 is saying here are really her own, you know, it is not these are original thoughts that
306 Beth is having, this is ..uh, invariable and inequitable distillation of the sorts of
307 messages that abound up in the normal reports, in the Beeld for example, every time
308 when you open a page it is a crime story, and invariably the sort of racial thing and
309 stories about corruption, the whole grand narrative of die swart gevaar,

310

311 Louise: yeah, that's true

312

313 Stephen: has been sort of reproduced in the media and it is even reproduced in what
314 we consider to be the liberal English press, you know, it is a fairly pervasive South
315 African discourse, uhm, and Beth just happens to be .. uhm, seemingly from what I
316 could piece together of her, part of a fairly radical set of right wing South Africans but
317 I don't think she would call herself that, but then she also, you can find posts from
318 Beth Smith on www.boervryheid.co.za, so she, she is participating in what is a fairly
319 far right wing discussion about what South Africa is and where South Africa is going
320 and so on but I think on the BBS she functioned as a sort of metonymic every
321 man, she was representing a very broad, broadly held set of views, not necessarily all
322 as extreme as as Beth, and lots of people, friends of mine and family of mine who
323 would agree with her, the reason why Africa hasn't progressed is because Africans are
324 less competent, maybe some would say that it is not a matter of objective stupidity,
325 like Beth says, but it is a matter of education stupidity, they're not educated enough,

326 not intelligent enough to do things, so it is a widely held view, Beth happens to have
327 the... ..I don't know what, the courage, the stupidity, or the lack of knowledge....

328

329 Louise: the naivity

330

331 Stephen: to put it on the bulletin board where people can comment on it and I think
332 that is why I think Beth was useful,

333

334 Louise: yes, a sort of catalisator, okey, I just want to go through this discussion
335 quickly, let's start with line 107, she started quoted these posters which were on the
336 campus, uhm, what is your feeling about the posters she quoted?

337

338 Stephen: Where is it?

339

340 Louise: The PASMA poster starts at line 33, there is this things that the student react
341 on a white lecturer, apparently he made them feel inferior, and then she had these
342 small quotes by saying the arguments are so ill-informed, and she really criticizes it
343 by way of these questions marks and ..line 46,

344

345 Stephen: Yeah

346

347 Louise: And, uh, line 41, the language use, and line 53 she quotes the AZACO poster,

348

349 Stephen: yeah

350

351 Louise: and then line 69, something about white supremacy, and then "he must leave
352 our black campus, apparently the white lecturer said stuff, when you just think about
353 her reaction to these posters, do you understand the logic behind it? That she is
354 outraged?

355

356 Stephen: Yeah, I mean, I can see that she is uhmfrom the rest
357 of her commentary she hints at, she does not ever really say why, she believes it is a
358 misunderstanding, the students have gotten it wrong, and that this person didn't

359 actually do what he is accused of, but she never says what exactly did happen, why
360 she believes it did not happen ...

361

362 Louise: apparently the case was still under investigation so she was not allowed to say
363 anything

364

365 Stephen: Okay, my reading of it was that she has now stuck up these quotations and is
366 using the obvious lack of discursive skills or the obvious language problem uhm, as a
367 way of discounting it, sort of, but the discounting of these feelings is well, that these
368 people, the subjects of .. that these people are stupid, they can't formulate their own
369 ideas, how can you take their ideas seriously, and that sort of thing, which I saw at the
370 time as being a fairly racist response to an accusation of racism.

371

372 Louise: I see, to show the stupidity of the posters, condescending language, mistakes

373

374 Stephen: I mean, they really are stupid,

375

376 Louise: condescending language, mistakes,

377

378 Stephen: 'cause some guy blames Holland for.. I think there is somewhere where they
379 talk about white supremacists in Holland or (laughs) something like that, uhm, but but
380 I think that embodied in these posts is a uhhhh, a basic uhhm black consciousness
381 position, that is the idea that our education ought to be criticized as, as part of who we
382 are, sort of thing

383

384 Louise: okey, and she does not understand that ...

385

386 Stephen: No Beth, it is very clear from this post and other posts, is an adherent of the
387 ...uhm, sort of old sets of evolutionist ideas, the notion that it is inevitable that
388 societies that are primitive, uhm, you know, or considered to be primitive, like
389 Bushmen, are gonna eventually progress to move from a stone age sort of politics and
390 technological level to an iron age politics and technological level, through this
391 inevitable trajectory of progress, up to a space age, information age modern society,

392 uhm, and this a popularly held western idea, that progress is an inevitable story, that it
393 would happen anywhere, and I think part of literature dealing with other people,
394 research in other parts of the world, initially was trying to understand why they didn't
395 do so well on this inevitable journey, uhm and ...we've, as a result of that way of
396 thinking come to think of ... some other groups of people as contemporary versions of
397 our own historical pasts, if you know what I'm saying, so for someone like Beth, I
398 don't think it is a stretch for me to say that she would consider some groups of
399 African people to be the equivalence of European people from the tribal years, from
400 the ...

401

402 Louise: alright, from before Christ

403

404 Stephen: Ja, and that they therefore not progressed on the same axis, this is an
405 inevitable molk...., and she then sees any deviation from this, any evidence of this as
406 confirmation of her story of the inferiority

407

408 Louise: of races, okay

409

410 Stephen: Ja

411

412 Louise: I want to go on, uhm, to Marlene Wiggill comment where she told the story
413 about when they went to the shopping mall, and she experiences things which she
414 interprets as racist, and then you said well, you can't really say that these happenings
415 were racist, and you something like, if it is an individual experience it is not
416 necessarily racism, uhm, is that some theory you hold, is that a common sensical thing
417 to say?

418

419 Stephen: There is literature dealing with what racism is, and there is a guy called, I
420 can't remember his name, Goldstein, or Goldberg, who makes this argument, that in
421 order for something to really be racist, it has to be grounded in a cultural component,
422 a set of ideas and meanings which hold that one group is superior to another group,
423 but also within a set of power relations in the material world, through which one
424 group is trying to limit the access of another group, to the dividends of being a

425 member of society, so we could say that racial segregation as what was practiced in
426 America is racist, because you have qualifying .. where people should go, what people
427 can do, what they can become in their lives, and apartheid was obviously racist for the
428 same reason, uhm, but it is not really possible for one single person to hold an
429 ideology,.... I happen to hate..... Eskimo's, you know, nosocial, structural
430 framework within which this could possibly be exercised, yeah, I can't really be a
431 racist against Eskimo's, but I think personally it is a problem of terminology, because
432 what else are we gonna call it, I think it is a problem, it is prejudicial, but one of the
433 sort of activist slogans against racism in the mid 20th century was racism equals
434 prejudice plus power, so the prejudice side is not really enough to call it technically in
435 my opinion racism, ..

436

437 Louise: I think what you can read behind this is the feeling she had of victimization,
438 because she refers to her little daughter and she refers to her husband who is disabled,
439 and I think if you could read behind what she actually says, what she felt, that would
440 be more, you know, I know this is not a sympathy column or let us put our hearts out
441 column, a let me console you discussion, but it could be helpful if you realize, if you
442 read through it again, what she actually said, or what she wanted to convey, because
443 words alone.. I think you can see it in the way she formulates her feelings, is that she
444 feels victimized, ..but..uhm

445

446 Stephen: Yeah, but the irony of that sense of victimization, if she feels victimized and
447 she feels victimized on the ground of these encounters that she had in the shopping
448 mall, the one between the woman who bumped into her husband, and didn't apologise
449 and another with the shouting at her in the public bathrooms, then, .. and I imagine
450 that this was probably how I was thinking at the time but I am not sure, uhm, I have
451 met Marlene several times, and I like her a good deal, I think we get on relatively
452 well, uhm, we're not a strained or relationship with one another, but I think that that
453 sense of victimization requires that the people in the story, whether they are in the
454 bathroom or bumping into her husband, become coalesced into a victimizing category
455 of people, we are not talking about random two different encounters, she is not even
456 explaining this as if it sort of is two different things, one continuous set of encounters,
457 and my, I didn't say here, underlies the whole thing, it is based on a culturally

458 induced, culturally acquired imagination, in order to feel victimized as what Marlene
459 does, she has to have internalized the meaningfulness and supreme importance of
460 racial categories, that when she meets someone in the bathroom, the first thing she
461 jumps on is well, the person is treating me because of the racial difference, the person
462 is not apologizing to my husband because of the racial difference, uhm, and as I
463 understand it, things in stereotypes work in strange ways, we don't usually interpret
464 outliers very consciously, if I'm living my life under the impression that all black
465 people are lazy, for example, then I can walk past the houses of ten black people who
466 are working the garden, not registering that fact, and when I go to work the next day
467 and I see my colleague is doing what he should not be doing, it immediately confirms
468 the stereotype, it is always a psychological phenomenon, we don't ... presumably,
469 there were other people who politely got out of the way for her and her husband, but
470 she doesn't notice it, it is not her fault, it is just how we're wired to experience life
471

472 Louise: mmm

473

474 Stephen: uhm, so what I was trying to do here is say well, the experience was not one
475 of racism, it was one of rudeness, and you're right to be outraged at people who are
476 rude, but you are.. to couch the rudeness in a racial narrative, and that is the danger of
477 race as a meaning, is that, Marlene's experience of the day is clearly one which must
478 have been emotionally exhaustive, I can imagine dealing with a handicapped person
479 in a busy shopping mall and a little toddler in a shopping mall, I will be ... beyond,
480 and then you have these encounters with the other humanity in the shopping mall
481 which makes the experience even worse, what race offers people and the reason why
482 it survives so well, racism, is that it enables us to explain very quickly and very easily
483 very complicated things, so, she has had a series of encounters and they can be
484 conveniently closed off, by saying that it was reverse racism, ..

485

486 Louise: yeah, it is our mythical nature which ..

487

488 Stephen: I think so,

489

490 Louise: okay

491

492 Stephen: But I did try, I did not say all your experiences is complete crap, ..

493

494 Louise: because her experience is her reality...yeah, I think you were quite nice about
495 it.

496

497 Stephen: There were other threads where the same issue came up, this idea of reverse
498 racism, and I have sort of argued on the BBS before that I don't think it is actually
499 possible for black people to be racist towards white people, which was quite
500 controversial, I think I was quite hard core then, it predated this

501

502 Louise: I'll have to look if they still have it on, in the archives, all right, there were
503 questions on 322 to 324, on..where Beth says, why don't you say anything about the
504 black students, where is your call for reason, why don't you condemn hate speech
505 against white lecturers?

506

507 Stephen: My version looks a bit different from your version...

508

509 Louise: 322

510

511 Stephen: Here is my 322,

512

513 Louise: Oh, let me see, that's weird

514

515 Stephen: Maybe I've got the wrong

516

517 Louise: Let me see what is going on here..well she says, why don't you answer me,
518 she feels she has a reasonable issue and now you don't address it

519

520 Stephen: Ja, it is on 343 on the sheet (reading to himself), do you want me to talk
521 about those questions?

522

523 Louise: Ja, do you feel you had to answer those questions?

524

525 Stephen: I think there's, on the one hand there is sort of a practical problem, you were
526 faced with something that Beth said, there's so much that need to be said in response
527 to that,

528

529 Louise: Ja, true

530

531 Stephen:that, I would sort of start writing a response, and you get to a point where
532 you get tired of writing this response and you must now finish, so I would focus on
533 the message I want to put back to her as a response to some of her points, it wasn't an
534 attempt that was comprehensively engaging with all of Beth's, you know, points, also
535 there is a, I can't remember what the philosophical term is, but.....there is a name for
536 these sorts of questions, like, wat is jou mening oor die academic terrorism? Now that
537 is a question which requires that I already answer another question, you know, so it
538 requires that you already say well, yes I do agree that this is an act of academic
539 terrorism and answering that sort of a question places you within the agenda of the
540 person that is asking the question, uhm, so I don't agree that it is an act of academic
541 terrorism, ...

542

543 Louise: so she implies that you agree this is academic terrorism, so what is your
544 opinion?

545

546 Stephen: Ja, what would I think about this....., it is immediately expecting me to say
547 yes, I agree with the action of these students as illegitimate, and then give my opinion
548 on the action of these students, which I have already given by agreeing with her it is
549 illegitimate,and I thought it was legitimate, and I think that uhm....student politics
550 at least on the Puk from what I have seen where it barely exists, tends to be a bit
551 politically naïve, or a bit politically populist, and anything taking a radical tone at
552 least in the context of die Puk has been thoroughly unproductive, and no meaningful
553 dialogue, have ever resulted from Sasco's politics on this campus, and this doesn't
554 seem to me to be too,too different from it, but I don't think that what the students
555 were doing was illegitimate, I think that if the students felt that they were being

556 treated in that way and these political organizations you know amounted complaints
557 and demonstrated that, well, it is a legitimate, it is a legitimate action,

558

559 Louise: ja

560

561 Stephen: and we can then question it in other ways, but I don't think it was hate
562 speech against white lecturers, because that would require us to have, for me to have,
563 some sort of categorical feeling that as a white lecturer I am being hated by these
564 students, which I have no point in Beth's description ...I didn't feel at any point like
565 this was black students in some sort of racial tirade against me, that might just be
566 because their posters was so pathetic, that the generalizations they're making seems so
567 stupid that you can't take it seriously,

568

569 Louise: ..this is no typical, how can I teach these stupid students if they are so racist,
570 where she comes from it is easy to understand why she is outraged,

571

572 Stephen: ja but it links to, Hein Neomagus argues to the same threads, he said it so
573 many times, she talks in these aggregates all the time,

574

575 Louise: at some stage he says I know you're not a racist, ..and then she says well I
576 don't have this ability to express myself..she says she is misunderstood..she says she
577 doesn't have the gift to express herself,

578

579 Stephen: ja, even you read, I don't know if it is here, but uhm..but there is one where
580 she responds to a whole range of people,

581

582 Louise: ja, where she addresses everyone

583

584 Stephen: and it begins sort of with a apologetic, conciliatory tone, a sort of thank you
585 all for-thing, and so on, and that is also where she says I don't have the gift of
586 expression myself so clearly, and then she says, uh..

587

588 Louise: I have it too, it is my line 738

589

590 Stephen: dankie vir al die kommentaar, and if you read that paragraph by her, you...
591 that is sort of why I said earlier, I think these ideas are not really her own ideas, she
592 speaks from a set of cultural resources that force her always to say the same thing, but
593 I'm not sure if it is there, or later, on mine it is line 901, she is responding to Hein, she
594 said ek dink Charles het dieselfde trant aangevoer,

595

596 Stephen: and that is where I said you talk in these categories, ek verstaan en sal
597 daarop let, and then in capital letters, MAAR, (laughs) daar is wel gevalle waar ek
598 gaan weier om, you know there are incidences where I am not going to be politically
599 correct, and then she starts talking about well, when people burn campuses down and
600 then in '99, and then she gets back onto the crime, and it is always blacks, and
601 elsewhere on the forum she had said that these crimes are part of a sort of racial
602 genocide, basically, crime in SA is a political genocide, trying to get rid.. and I think
603 those sorts of ideas she gets from www.boerevryheid.com, because that is similar to
604 what they are typically on about, farm murders, it is a genocidal thing, uhm, so I think
605 Beth's attempt to look as if she is listening to what people are saying, are ways of sort
606 of just paying lip service, she doesn't really engage with what people have said, she
607 says, here it is in capital letters, MAAR, BUT, is not really speaking about anything
608 important,

609

610 Louise: one of the things you say, is try to reason, use evidence, this is part of
611 academic writing, have a consistent argument

612

613 Stephen: that was just my own piece of hermeneutic violence against Beth,

614

615 Louise: build an argument

616

617 Stephen: I think I sort of patronizingly set to her sort of undergraduate assignment,
618 where I say well, to her write in 500 words

619

620 Louise: How BEE is racist

621

622 Stephen: Ja, because she sort of would string endless evidence and stuff, ja, and I
623 mean that was just a bit of hermeneutic violence against Beth, so well, my mode of
624 speaking is superior to your mode of speaking, and you know, therefore what you are
625 saying can be discounted by these rules, so ja, it's not,I think that you can see in
626 the course of the whole thread, how uhm, the conversation sort of degenerates, and
627 that's evidence of its degeneration, that it has reached a point where all the
628 participants now, have uhm, said quite a lot on the topic, no one has moved their
629 position in the slightest, and the conversation is now really becoming about the field
630 of discussion, what is legitimate and whose capital is more important than other
631 people's capital, you know, Willy, he deploys a particular sort of approach to the
632 discussion by complaining about it, which ultimately does trump Beth's position, by
633 raising it, uhm, and I'm doing in a different way exactly the same way what Willy is
634 doing, here is a story about what is legitimate and what is illegitimate, and you are
635 just participating on the illegitimate side,

636

637 Louise: I see

638

639 Stephen: And I am calling the rules of .. you know, obviously tremendously watered
640 down version of academic argument, to paint a picture of you know valid legitimate
641 statements, and he is using a discourse of human rights to paint a picture of valid
642 legitimate statement, and these are both responses toa disbelief that Beth can
643 continue, despite the things being put back to her, over and over again, to continue to
644 not be moved, uhm, because ja, I was really convinced that this is reasonable stuff, but
645 obviously in a space like this you can't really move anyone,

646

647 Louise: Willy says she only got a fright when she was accused as being racist, when
648 the human rights office wrote a letter, he says well, sy't geskrik maar sy't nie regtig
649 verander nie,

650

651 Stephen: Ja, what do you expect? I mean, the mythological character we were talking
652 about earlier just feeds into Beth's belief perhaps, you know that ...uhm white people
653 are being dominated and persecuted on the basis of a new order, which has captured
654 the structure, the power in society, and this is just an example of her, she is being

655 censored, she is being silenced just because she is saying things that these black
656 people don't like, but when they say things that white people don't like, these posters,
657 nothings happens, so in some ways Willy's act was just a legitimation of Beth's
658 starting position,

659

660 Louise: I see, okay, I think we've exhausted some of the problems which arose, but
661 thank you, I think we had a good interview.

662

663 Stephen: Ja, it was interesting to talk about the stuff again,

664

665 Louise: Ja.

666

667

1 **Onderhoud Charl en Petro**

2 **17 Oktober 2010**

3 **12:00**

4

5 Louise: Julle weet nou ek doen navorsing oor die BBS, die afgelope twintig jaar.

6 Petro: Ons weet nie wat en hoe en waaroor nie

7 Louise: Weet jy ek moet nog rêrig self uitvind hoekom ek dit doen en wat ek doen, wel onder
8 andere doen ek dit oor die power relations wat binne die forum geskied het, dis redelik afgeplat
9 nou, daar gebeur nie veel meer nie, die forum het redelik doodgeloop, maar daar..ek kyk na redes
10 waarom dit gebeur het en waarom mense ophou deelneem het, dit is nou uiteindelik die, nie
11 presies dit nie, onder andere gaan ek redes soek waarom dit nie meer `n plek is waar mense wil
12 diskoers voer nie, nou ek het so twee vrae wat nou so half inleidend is en dan wil ek wil ek hê
13 ons moet so `n bietjie gesels, die een vraag is hoekom het jy deelgeneem, byvoorbeeld, Charl, ...

14 Charl: Ek het deelgeneem omdat dit, well, een van die groot issues is in die Suid-Afrikaanse
15 samelewing meen ek, wat ons eers nou vir die eerste keer binne hierdie bedeling as daar nou
16 (sug) gelyk is in terme van die grondwet, vir die eerste keer die geleentheid het om die goed te sê
17 soos wat dit is, soos wat jy dit belewe, sodat, jy weet, voor die tyd was dit baie moeilik gewees
18 want toe was die power relations, was heeltemaal vreemd abnormaal opgestel gewees, so dis `n
19 forum wat mens kan gebruik, om well, normaliserend uit te werk oor hoe werk verhoudings, hoe
20 kan mense uit verskillende kulturele agtergronde en perspektiewe en insigte as dit gelyk is
21 bymekaar kom, so dit is breedweg hoekom ek deelgeneem het en hoekom ek nog healtyd
22 deelneem aan hierdie soort gesprekke, ...

23 Louise: so die forum is vir jou `n equalizer, `n equal space, waar mense ..

24 Charl: Ek dink so, ek het so gedink, ja.

25 Louise: Ja. Petro, jy het nie deelgeneem ooit nie?

26 Petro: Nee, ..

27 Louise: Wat is jou ervaring van die gesprekke daar?

28 Petro: Ek kan vir jou lekker vertel, dit hang seker af wat die tema was hoekom jy besluit het om
29 deel te neem, nè, want dit is hoekom mens besluit of jy gaan deelneem of nie, of die tema jou
30 interesseer of iets daaroor, om deel te neem of nie, ek het dit vir `n lang ruk baie getrou gevolg,
31 uit ek wil sê nuuskierigheid, maar eintlik geïnteresseerd in hoe werk mense se koppe, nie soseer
32 oor die threads of die temas waaroor dit gegaan het nie, maar omdat ek geïnteresseerd is oor hoe
33 dink mense, hoe redeneer mense, hoe neem mense deel en sulke goed, en dit was eintlik vir my
34 ontstellend om te sien dat mense nié na mekaar luister op hierdie threads nie, op hierdie
35 skriftelike gespreksvoering nie, elke ou het sy eie tema, sy eie agenda, sy eie idee in sy kop, en
36 hulle luister nie na wat die ander ouens sê op die BBS nie, hulle vat een klein stukkie en dan
37 interpreteer hulle dit nog verkeerd ook en dan reageer hulle daarop vanuit hulle eie persepsies en
38 interpretasies, so, die idee van `n objektiewe, demokratiese gespreksvoering, daarvan het na my
39 mening nooit gerealiseer nie, want mense was te vasgevang in hulle eie skeefgetrekte persepsies,
40 en `n wil om sy eie sê te sê, ongeag wat die ander ou gesê het, en ook ongeag of hulle op tone
41 trap en mense seermaak, so, dit was vir my eintlik onthutsend om te sien dat mense so
42 disrespekvol met mekaar kommunikeer op die BBS, ek kry nou nie meer so baie tyd om te lees
43 nie en dit is vir my jammer, ...

44 Louise: Hulle het dit op `n stadium `n skreeforum genoem

45 Petro: Is dit? Sjoë, ek kan dit verstaan, ja.

46 Louise: Uhm, nou een van julle kollegas, en ek moet nog sy toestemming vra, so dit mag wees
47 dat ek glad nie van hierdie data gaan gebruik nie, maar ter wille daarvan in die interim, gaan ek
48 dit tog doen. John, ek het nou klaar met John gepraat,

49 Petro: John

50 Louise: John, en hy het vir my gesê waarom hy deelneem, is as hy sien daar is momente waar
51 social justice, waar die beginsels van social justice verkrag word,

52 Petro: Mmm, reg

53 Louise: dit was vir hom soos `n rooi lap voor `n bul,

54 Petro: mm, ja

55 Louise: en dan het hy ingespring en absoluut deelgeneem

56 Petro: mmmm,

57 Louise: en in die onderhoud, in die transkripsie wat julle nou hier het, nè, staan hier nou,

58 Petro: O ja, daai lang een

59 Louise: nee maar dis `n korter enetjie, daai ene, sê John, hy het nou baie van hierdie goed met
60 julle bespreek, in die vakgroep of met julle persoonlik, ek weet nou nie,

61 Petro: ja

62 Louise: hy kom nou nie uit daarmee nie,

63 Petro: Ja, oor dit

64 Louise: en hy sê, hy het nou, die rede waarom hy deelgeneem was nou hierdie onreg, as hy dit
65 sien, soos koshuise, hegemonie, en dit het hy ook, hy het ook aanklank by julle gevind in
66 persoonlike gesprekke, oor die, oor uhm

67 Petro: geregtigheid

68 Louise: patriargale stelsels, en die uhm, die Afrikaner hegemonie, noem hy dit spesifiek, toe sê
69 hy, maar hy het julle aangemoedig, en julle is nou nie on the spot nie, julle moet net mooi vir my
70 verduidelik,

71 Petro: mmm

72 Louise: want ek moet nou clarity kry, hy sê hierso, hier sê hy “ek het opgemerk, reël 52, dat
73 van my kollegas wat mondelings met my deel dat hulle ondersteun van die goed wat ek skrywe,
74 hulle neem nie self deel nie, ek het vir hulle die challenge begin stel, kêrels, ek het presies
75 geskryf soos hy praat, skrywe julle dan gaan ek ook `n slag skrywe, die challenge is nie regtig
76 opgeneem nie, ..”

77 Petro: Mmm

78 Louise: “een manlike kollega het begin skryf, maar twee vroulike kollegas wat sterk uitgekome
79 het, het nie geskryf nie”

80 Petro: mmm

81 Louise: “ek het hulle gesê hoe gaan ek, wat die merk dra van `n outsider, alhoewel ek nou hier `n
82 insider is by virtue of my employment here, hoe gaan ek as `n outsider nou ooit mense raak in
83 hulle diepste wese met die goed wat ek skrywe, dat ek kan afgebrass word as `n bitter jong
84 mannetjie, swart mannetjie wat hier is,” en hy sê dan hierso, uhm, want hy, hy is nie deel van die
85 oorwegende Afrikaanse wit kultuur nie

86 Petro: mmm

87 Louise: hy sê, “kom ons sê hegemonie,” en toe het hy al minder begin skryf, “want ek nie
88 persoonlik van die hegemonie, wat hulle dan nou sê hulle ondersteun nie, oppressive en
89 exclusionary soorte praktyke en uitsprake dat hulle nie skryf nie, toe sê ek well, dat ek nou
90 ophou skryf, dat die Afrikaners nou maar onder mekaar baklei, en die lone Englishman Stephen,
91 laat hy dan nou maar, hy het nou tyd om te skryf, ek het nie meer baie tyd nie,”

92 Petro: mmm

93 Louise: hy sê, die mense wat hy assosieer met die wit hegemonie, hulle skryf nie

94 Petro: mmm

95 Louise: ek wil julle gevoel hieroor hoor, want uhm, want indirek sê hy ons verteenwoordig die
96 Afrikaanse wit hegemonie, en ons skryf dan nou nie, terwyl ons hom nou eintlik support,
97 mondelings,

98 Petro: ja, mmm

99 Louise: sit ons nie onself on the line nie

100 Petro: dis, dis `n ander diskoers daai wat mens eintlik met hom kan opneem, dink ek, want hy
101 interpreteer nou weer, dink ek, ons stilswe met `n verkeerde rede, wat ek nie weet wat dit is nie,

102 Louise: ek sal ...

103 Petro: my rede is, dit gaan nie help om te skryf nie omdat soos ek nou gesê het, ek ervaar die
104 BBS, die ouens hoor nie jou standpunt nie, hulle pick een stukkie uit wat jy sê en kom jou dan
105 persoonlik by daarvoor, en daarvoor is ek nie lus nie, want ek het gesien die mense kan nie
106 objektief demokraties oor `n saak redeneer nie,

107 Louise: ja

108 Petro: so dis hoekom ek nie verder deelgeneem het aan die skrywe nie, so ek voel steeds
109 dieselfde oor wat ek gesê het, my opinies het nie verander nie, maar dit is nie vir my die moeite
110 werd om..

111 Louise: jy gaan dit nou nie publiek maak nie

112 Petro: publiek maak in die sin van praat onder mekaar as die subject ter sprake kom, ja, maar ek
113 gaan nou nie op `n openbare forum uit my eie uit `n saak aan die orde stel nie, omdat ek weet dit
114 gaan nie demokraties opgeneem word nie, maar my opinie is steeds dieselfde,

115 Louise: Ja

116 Petro: so ek dink hy het waarskynlik verkeerd geïnterpreteer, ja dis jammer dat hy dan nou
117 ophou skryf het

118 Louise: hy het ook gesê hy het nie meer tyd nie,

119 Petro: dis waarom ek ook ophou lees het, amper

120 Louise: wat hom pla is hy sê die blankes die Afrikaners, uhm, gaan hulle nie, hy, hy voel
121 blootgestel

122 Petro: mmm

123 Louise: as hy praat, en hy sê nou is hy hierdie jong swart outjie en hy praat en hy praat, maar
124 eintlik die ouens wat hy assosieer met die hegemonie, hulle praat nie, is eintlik wat hy sê, en
125 hoekom sal hy dan nou aanhou praat en homself blootstel? Wat dink jy daarvan, Charl?

126 Charl: Wat, wat vra ons?

127 Louise: Wat is jou opinie van die feit dat hy voel uhm, ons praat nie, ons wil nie sê wat ons dink
128 nie,

129 Petro: dis hoekom ek sê dis sy persepsie, dis `n opinie, dis `n gesprek wat mens met hom moet
130 voer

131 Louise: ja,

132 Petro: uhm, ek het nou gesê hoekom ek nie skryf nie, mens kan met hom daaroor in gesprek
133 gaan, maar ek dink hy het waarskynlik `n skewe persepsie..

134 Louise: ja, well, ons moet uhm, ek wil hê ons moet reageer, ons moet onsgevoel uitspreek
135 oor sy ..

136 Petro: oor sy twyfel

137 Charl: oor sy stelling

138 Louise: oor sy stelling, ja

139 Charl: kyk, uuh, soos dit vir ons almal waar is, ons wil uit `n bepaalde konteks uit konstrueer, en
140 ons vat ervaringe uit die verlede speel `n rol in wat jy sê en hoe jy dit sê, my indruk is, en ek wil
141 myself net vinnig onderbreek, uhm, die feit dat ons oor `n kollega hier praat is uit die aard van
142 die saak

143 Louise: is `n etiese

144 Charl: is ook `n etiese kwessie, so jy sal mooi moet uitfigure hoe jy dit gaan oorkom

145 Louise: oukei, maar kom ons los hom

146 Charl: Jy verstaan wat ek bedoel,

147 Louise: janee, ek ...

148 Charl: uh, jy sal hierdie etiese kwessie baie mooi moet bedink, uitklaar, want die gesprek hier
149 behoort te fokus op wat jy wil agterkom, en jy het aan die begin gesê hoe werk die power
150 relations,

151 Louise: ja, dis reg

152 Petro: op die openbare forum

153 Louise: mmm

154 Petro: dis hoekom ek sê mens moet hom vra

155 Charl: verstaan jy wat ek gesê het..

156 Louise: kyk, ek gaan nou, ek het `n paar, soos met julle nou, gaan ek probleme identifiseer wat
157 ek, en dan gaan ek terugkom na julle, en ek sal ook, die hele onderhoud sodra dit getranskribeer
158 is, terugstuur en as julle sê hierdie dele wil ons nie daar hê nie, haal ek uit en dan is dit nie meer
159 deel van die navorsing nie,

160 Charl: ja

161 Louise: so ek sal die etiese pad loop, julle hoef nie daaroor te worry nie, en ek het ook `n
162 probleem daarmee, maar ek dink nie ons bespreek hom nie,

163 Charl: ja

164 Louise: ons bespreek die hele ding van die hegemonie wat ervaar word..en uhm, waarom hy
165 deelneem, waarom jy deelneem, en dit klink nie vir my daar is `n overlap nie

166 Charl: ja, maar wat ek nou wil sê is, ek deel tot `n baie groot mate die standpunt, of sy siening of
167 sy stelling dat hier `n Afrikaner hegemonie is, dit is so, ek weet dit,..

168 Petro: mmm, dis wat ek ook nounou bedoel het

169 Charl: ek weet dit, dit is so,wat in die meeste gevalle met die mense gebeur het, wat van
170 hierdie konteks praat, is dat mense geïnstitutionaliseerd geraak het, met ander woorde hulle is so
171 deel van die kultuur van hierdie universiteit dat hulle in `n onvermoë gekom het om krities te
172 reflekteer oor hulle eie akademiese aktiwiteit, dit wat hulle skryf, dit wat hulle praat van verhoë
173 af, dit wat hulle in onderrig gee aan die universiteit, en en en, so wat dit aanbetref is die
174 universiteit nie gesond nie, as jy nou in daardie terme wil sê, so ons het in `n onvermoë geraak

175 vanweë ons geïnstitusioneerdheid van tipiese Afrikaner waardes en beginsels en
176 godsdienstige oortuigings, so daarmee stem ek saam

177 Louise: mm

178 Petro: ja

179 Charl: ek stem saam daarmee

180 Louise: ja, dis wat ek wil hoor

181 Charl: ja, ek stem saam,

182 Petro: ja

183 Charl: ek stem saam, en die feit dat ek nie, ek dink ek het een of twee keer gereageer, ek kan nie
184 eens meer mooi onthou nie, het ek my sê soort van gesê...

185 Petro: mm, klaar gesê

186 Charl: mmm, klaar gesê en gedink well, ek gaan nou nie verder karring

187 Petro: mm

188 Charl: op hierdie snaar nie, en toe het ek net besluit ek gaan uit daai gesprek uitklim, mens het
189 nie tyd om heeltyd die gesprek te volg en te lees wat sê mense en dan sinvol daarvoor te reageer,
190 en toe het ek, so sommige van ons het dit meer nodig as ander, ek dink, by my is dit gewoon `n
191 meer praktiese oorweging gewees,

192 Petro: ja

193 Charl: dis nie hoekom ek nie saamstem nie

194 Petro: ja, dis wat ek ook net nou gesê het

195 Louise: John het gesê hy het opgehou skryf want hy het nie meer tyd nie, en hy het gevoel dis `n
196 impotente forum,

197 Petro: dis waar

198 Louise: en hy het toe nou maar sy energie in artikels

199 Petro: mmm

200 Louise: en in navorsingsgroepe in gekanaliseer

201 Petro: jy't gepraat in die begin van power relations, ek weet nie hoe dit hierin inspraak nie, want
202 dit is waarskynlik dinge wat agter die skerm gebeur, as daar van buite af ingrype kom om die
203 gesprekke op die BBS te beheer

204 Louise: ja, dit is die een soort, en dan is daar ander interne power, as ek beter kan praat as jy,

205 Petro: ja

206 Louise: dan het ek meer mag

207 Petro: ja, dis wat ek bedoel, mens het mekaar persoonlik ook begin bykom en verneder en
208 afkraak en ek dink dis `n rede hoekom mense onttrek het van die skrywe, dit is ook power
209 relations, as mense mekaar persoonlik begin aanval, ..

210 Charl: Het jy bietjie gaan kyk na die kodes wat bestaan oor die gebruik van die BBS? Het jy dit
211 bietjie gaan verken? Ek het dit nog nooit gaan lees nie.

212 Louise: Dit is maar net daai reëltjies, dit is maar baie algemeen, ...

213 Charl: Is dit van so `n aard dat dit gesprekke bevorder, oop gesprekke, skerp gesprekke?

214 Louise: ek dink, mmmm, daar waar daar nou disrespek was teenoor ander kollegas, het dit nogal
215 baie goeters gesparg en baie meer oop gesprekke tot gevolg gehad, so ek dink as almal heeltyd
216 ordentlik is, gaan jy ...dit is nie hoe die werklike lewe is nie, mense is nie die heeltyd ordentlik
217 nie,

218 Charl: ja, dis waar

219 Louise: en daar is nou konflik ook, wat is nou ordentlik en wat is disrespekvol, wat is
220 aanvaarbaar, so dit is `n issue op sy eie

221 Charl: Jy sien, ek dink wat ook gebeur, is, soos wat ons in `n meer demokratiese bedeling
222 inbeweeg, leer ons wat is meer aanvaarbaar en minder aanvaarbaar, so dis `n proses wat aan die
223 gang is hier, maar die onreg wat plaasgevind het in die verlede, op alle vlakke, geslagtelike vlak,
224 die rasvlak, die haves en die havenot vlak, was so enorm gewees, so verdraai gewees, dat daai
225 aggressie en woede en konflik wat potensieel daarin vasgelê is, moet uitkom, so, jy weet, as ek
226 sê bliksem, dan uuuh, beteken dit nie dat ek disrespekvol is teenoor jou in hierdie konteks nie,
227 so, uh, ek het `n vermoede dat as ons daardie elemente van dialoog en oop gesprek sonder om
228 skrikkerig te wees en bang te wees wat gaan wie dink kon behou het, sou die forum dalk beter
229 aangegaan het.

230 Petro: So jy bedoel dit was eintlik `n veilige forum waar mense kon...

231 Charl: ja, ja ja ek dink so. Ek dink so, ek sou wou hoop dat dit meer so gaan wees in die
232 toekoms, en ek weet dis baie idealisties

233 Louise: oukei, ek dink ek het gehoor wat ek wou hoor, dis nou nie `n uurlange onderhoud nie, ek
234 wou basies net weet waarom het jy deelgeneem, waarom het jy opgehou, hoe interpreteer jy
235 hierdie persoon se siening, so dit is dit

236 Petro: ja

237 Louise: goed, ek gaan die dingetjie afsit

238

1 **Onderhoud Susan**

2 **13 November 2010**

3

4 Louise: Vertel my wat het gebeur.

5 Susan : Ek het die dag by Markhams ingestap, ek het uhm, `n hemp of iets vir my man gaan soek
6 vir `n funksie of `n ding

7 Louise: ja

8 Susan : en...(sug) die.....persoon was, die rak, jy weet , waar hulle die goed hang, by die deur
9 soos jy ingaan,

10 Louise: ja

11 Susan : ek kan nie onthou was dit in of uit, maar dit was by daai rak... en die volgende oomblik,
12 die persoon het daar gestaan en, en die volgende oomblik (lag) trek hulle daar los, nè, ,,

13 Louise: hulle of sy?

14 Susan : die een persoon, maar die een wat saam was het niks gesê nie, maar die persoon het my
15 uitgekryt vir al wat `n rassis is en ek moenie dink ek kan hulle uitmekaar uit dingese nie en ek
16 dink,

17 Louise: what now?

18 Susan : ek het niks gedoen nie, ek het net gesê askies

19 Louise: ja, jy wil net verbykom

20 Susan : ja, sy het vir my so uitgekryt vir die ergste mens wat asem haal, you can't believe it

21 Louise: ja

22 Susan : en ek het net so vir haar gekyk en ek draai om en ek kyk in die winkel in (lag) en daar is
23 so `n groot vrou, met die mooiste smile, vriendelik, sy werk daarso, sy't so gekyk en haar kop

24 ook so geskud en sy het vir die persoon gesê hulle moet net, just go, hulle gedrag is nie wat dit
25 moet wees nie

26 Louise: ja

27 Susan : en dis hoekom, toe dog ek maar,is dit oor ek wit is of is dit nou maar net slegte
28 maniere, jy weet daai

29 Louise: ek wil eintlik weet hoe mense praat op die forum, en uhm, toe het ek nou jou, ek weet
30 Marlene Wiggill het `n stukkie geskryf wat sy ook beleef het dat mense rude is

31 Susan : ja, mense is ongeskik

32 Louise: toe sê sy is dit nou, is dit, en toe het Stephen Goodrich gesê `n bespreking van is dit nou
33 rude of is dit rassisme, mens moet versigtig wees om te sê is dit rassisme, is dit nie net rudeness
34 nie, en toe het jy dieselfde ding gevra, hierso,

35 Susan : was it racism or was it bad manners

36 Louise: ja, en dan sê jy, oukei, hier is jou storie, oukei, nou waarin ek geïnteresseerd is, uhm, is
37 hoekom het jy besluit jy wil deelneem aan hierdie gesprek?

38 Susan : weet jy, uhm, ..

39 Louise: wat het jou gemotiveer?

40 Susan : ek mense....ja, two sides to the racism card, ek dink rassisme kom van weerskante af,
41 maar uhm, baie keer is mense te vinnig om te sê it's racism, jy weet

42 Louise: ja

43 Susan : uhm, ek dink almal is sensitief en almal is bietjie krappierig en mense wil nie meer...die
44 word racism hoor as die antwoord vir alles nie

45 Louise: ja dis reg

46 Susan : ek bedoel, let's face it, as jy in `n winkel instap en iemand is ongeskik met jou, dit is
47 ongeskik,

48 Louise: ja, dis nie rassisme nie

49 Susan : ja, die feit dat sy vir my....vanuit `n rassistiese benadering benader het,

50 Louise: ja, is nie te sê sy is, jy't dit nie as rassisme..

51 Susan : uhm, ja, ek het nie geweet hoe om te dit op te vat nie, soos ek sê, my man het by die deur
52 gestaan en hy het net gekyk en ek het gelag, want wat moes ek maak

53 Louise: oukei, wat ek wil hoor by jou is, hoe voel jy oor die ..uh..respons wat Stephen toe
54 geskryf het, hy het byvoorbeeld iets gesê soos, uhm, hy maak, ag hy maak hy sê mens kry iets
55 soos kulturele rassisme, individuele rassisme, hy beredeneer die ding so, hoe voel jy oor sy, het
56 jy dit gelees?

57 Susan : uhmmm, (sug) weet jy, uhm, ..

58 Louise: ek weet dis nou bietjie lank terug

59 Susan : dis baie lank terug, maar kom ek sê, laat ek net gou kyk hier,uhm

60 Louise: Het jy gehou van sy analise wat hy toe bied?

61 Susan : Ek dink dis meer interessant om te sien wat ander mense se sieninge is. Ek bedoel, ek
62 kan nie my siening op iemand afdwing, maar dis interessant om te sien hoe mense dink en hoe
63 hulle redeneer.

64 Louise: so hoe het jy die redenasie gevind, kon dit jou...help?

65 Susan : Nee, ek het uh, partykeer stir ek net, gooi `n ding in en kyk wat gebeur en mense se
66 antwoorde, dit was een van die goed, dit het net gebeur, en ek wou weet wat ervaar ander mense
67 ..

68 Louise: o, oukei

69 Susan : maar.....hy sê ja dis racist, maar...ek bedoel, so iets sal nie uit my mond uitkom nie...,
70 ek sou dit nie in die reverse gedoen het nie..

71 Louise: jy gaan nie dit coin as rassisme nie

72 Susan : dit gaan net weereens, was die persoon net bloot ongeskik, was die persoon r rig
73 rassisties teenoor my

74 Louise: ja

75 Susan : uhm, kon dit miskien iets gewees het wat in die heat of the moment ges  is, ek bedoel, ek
76 weet nie wat, hoe daardie persoon se lewe is nie, ek weet nie wat het vroe r die dag met die
77 persoon gebeur het nie, dis hoekom ek gestaan en lag het

78 Louise: sy het jou so onverhoeds gevang

79 Susan : sy het my totaal onverhoeds gevang, ek bedoel, ek kon geskree het, ek kon totaal  n
80 scene gemaak het, ek kon niks gedoen het nie, dis presies wat ek gedoen het, ek het niks gedoen
81 nie, want wat sou dit my in die sak gebring het?

82 Louise: oukei

83 Susan : wat sou dit my in die sak gebring het? Ek voel net, ek dink ... my siening van rassisme
84 is...ek dink daar is  n rassis in ons almal, en dit is nie om lelik te wees teenoor iemand nie, ek
85 dink dis net hoe jou persoonlike gevoel is, in die sin van....ek verstaan nie altyd Stephen se goed
86 nie, om eerlik te wees, ...

87 Louise: Jou motief was, jy wou net hierdie storie in die poel gooi

88 Susan : In die poel gooi en sien wat s  mense, ervaar hulle dit ook? Ek bedoel nou, as jy by  n ry
89 staan by  n till, is dit nou  n kulturele ding, ek ken nie ander mense se kultuur nie, ek ken my
90 kultuur, uhm, party mense sal baie styf teen jou staan en ander gee vir jou jou personal space,
91 ja...partykeer raak ek bietjie iesegrimmig, veral as ek met geld werk, en iemand staan so reg teen
92 my, want ek voel onveilig, ek voel bedreig, maar is dit  n kulturele ding, ja of nee, ek weet nie

93 Louise: so jy wou, ...

94 Susan : ek wou sien wat is ander mense se siening, hoe hulle reageer op hierdie, sou hulle dit ook
95 gesien het as bad manners, swak opvoeding, miskien het hierdie persoon  n slegte dag gehad, of
96 was dit r rig gemik op  n rassistiese uitlokking?

97 Louise: So jy wou nie  n punt maak nie, jy wou  n antwoord kry

98 Susan : Ek wou `n antwoord kry, ek wou sien of daar ander mense is wat dieselle ervaring het en
99 of hulle...uhm, of hulle dieselfde sou reageer het as ek, en of hulle dit andersins sou sien en hoe
100 hulle reaksie sou gewees het, was my reaksie normaal of nie?

101 Louise: ja, die enigste respons wat jy gekry het, ek weet Tsepiso het ook `n ding geskryf, Tsepiso
102 Molamo, het later iets geskryf

103 Susan : ja

104 Louise: ja hierso, "I'm sorry it happened to you, because I know you"

105 Susan : Tsepiso is die een wat by ITB gewerk het

106 Louise: is hy nog daar?

107 Susan : ek weet nie, hy het op `n stadium by ITB gewerk en Tsepiso het baie op my rekenaar
108 gewerk, ek en hy kom goed oor die weg,uhm, ja toe ...

109 Louise: ek dink hy was die enigste een, oukei, net voor Stephen het hy iets gesê, ek kan nou nie
110 onthou, reël 168, ja, lyk my net na hom het Stephen die hele conversation geëindig, so daar was
111 eintlik net `n respons van hom af, het jy enige ander response gekry?

112 Susan : Nee, uhm.....net van die kollegas en die vriende by die huis en mm,
113 familie en goed, was dit ook `n mixed bag of reaction, ja, jy weet, mens weet nie wat voorheen
114 gebeur het nie, ja, dis rassisme, of ek sou dit gedoen het of ek sou dat gedoen het, en dan dink ek,
115 wat sou ek daaruit gekry het? Sou dit nie die situasie vererger het nie?

116 Louise: Sê my, jy het nou seker die hele thread gelees, ...

117 Susan : van die begin af, ja

118 Louise: oukei, Beth het gesê..en ek dink Judy het iets geskryf,..

119 Susan : Judy skryf nogal baie..

120 Louise: en uhm, toe was daar nou mans soos Stephen, Peter en Andrew het so `n ietsie gesê,
121as jy nou so dink aan wat Beth gesê het en Edith het ook `n rassistiese ding beskryf, wat
122 sy as rassisties ervaar het, het jy so half aangesluit by Edith? Of wou jy net jou ervaring...

123 Susan : Weet jy, ek sal nie vir jou kan sê, dit was te lank terug

124 Louise: Marlene het gesê hulle was in die nuwe mall en toe was daar mense wat voor hulle
125 ingedruk het, en iemand het haar man gestamp en toe was hulle in die badkamers en vrouens het
126 gesê hulle moet in die ry staan, sy mag nie met haar dogtertjie indruk nie, jy weet, en sy het al
127 hierdie voorvalle beleef as rassisties, en toe het jy basies net jou ervaring bygesit, ..

128 Susan : ek dink dis miskien hoekom ek gevra het, is dit rassisme of is dit swak maniere?

129 Louise: en Stephen het toe mos geantwoord

130 Susan : jy weet dit is (sug) dis...die hele lewe is gejaag, alles wat ons doen is jaag, jaag, jaag,
131 jaag, jaag en dis me, myself en I am first, en ja, ek is baie so, as iemand aan my stamp gaan ek
132 terugstamp, ek gaan, as ek in `n ry staan wil ek nie hê iemand moet voor my insny nie, maak nie
133 saak wie dit is nie, pienk, groen, swart, whatever, dit maak nie saak nie, dit kom af op manners,
134 dit gaan oor jou maniere, en jou opvoeding, mense doen nie sulke goed nie, uhm....ek
135 dink...hierdie was net om, uh, hierdie ervaring te deel en om te kyk, want dit gaan vir my rêrig
136 daaroor om, uh, mense is te vinnig om mekaar te vergil en te verskree, en kwaad te raak en nie
137 die son te sien skyn oor iemand anders nie, en, mmm, ek wil sien of ek reg gereageer het op `n
138 situasie ..en as ek verkeerd was wil ek hê iemand moet vir my sê, luister, jy is verkeerd, en sou
139 die situasie so of so benader het, sodat ek kan leer, om in `n volgende situasie meer met
140 helderder denke na so `n situasie te kyk of met `n helderder oog na so `n situasie te kyk, en
141 daarvolgens te reageer.

142 Louise: dink jy die antwoord wat jy gekry het van Stephen en van Tsepiso, voel jy tevrede met
143 die antwoorde wat jy gekry het?

144 Susan : Ja, in `n sekere sin, maar...ek kry die gevoel hierdie topic is een waaroor mense nie rêrig
145 wil praat nie, dat daar rassisme in reverse nou plaasvind, dit is

146 Louise: dit lyk vir my of dit redelik ontken word

147 Susan : ja, dit word ontken, maar uhm....iemand het nou die een dag vir my `n email
148 gestuur...uhm, skrywer van Amerika wat geskryf het oor...in Amerika they have..hoe het hulle
149 gesê, they've got...uhm, Latin something, `n Latynse fees, en hulle het black tribe day, en hulle

150 het daai en daai en daai, vir elke kulturele...maar sodra hulle sê dis `n wit ding dan word dit
151 uitgekreet as rassisme, en uhm...ek, ek sien dit, en ek weet nie hoe om dit te verwerk, hoe om te
152 antwoord daarop nie, in Suid-Afrika is dit presies dieselfde, ...ons swart nasie, in al die
153 verskillende tale, elkeen het sy eie kulturele agtergrond, goed wat hulle uhm, celebrate,
154 maar.....as die blankes nou iets gaan doen wat suiwer blank is, dan gaan daar mos nou geskree
155 word, ja maar hulle word ge-exclude, sekere groepe word ge-exclude, en ander en sekere mense
156 en dit is net elite en so aan, so ja, daar is dit, daar is dit, ek bedoel, ...

157 Louise: so jy wou basies maar net

158 Susan : ek wou net weet

159 Louise: jou ervaring in die poel..

160 Susan : in die poel ingooi en kyk wat is ander mense se ervaring, het ek reg gereageer deur net
161 daar te staan en lag, en die vet weet, hier staan hierdie vrou en sy vergil my vir als wat sleg is, en
162 letterlik, jy kon `n speld hoor val in daai winkel en ek het net omgedraai en gekyk en almal het
163 hierdie vrou gekyk of sy mal is, en ek staan en lag daarvoor, weejy ek het gestaan en kliphard lag
164 en ek dink dit het vir haar kwater gemaak, want

165 Louise: jy het haar gedisempower, eintlik

166 Susan : ja, want sy't nou, ek weet nie of dit haar doel was om `n whatever, een of ander reaksie
167 uit te lok, I just laughed,

168 Louise: ja

169 Susan : I mean, die vrou het my totaal onkant gevang,

170 Louise: ja

171 Susan : my man het daar gestaan, my man het net kop geskud, mmmm, en ek het net gevoel, just
172 .. it off, ..

173 Louise: as mens die saak nou op `n kontinuum moet sit, Beth,, en dan het Marlene
174 ook haar storie vertel, uhm, sou jy sê as jy jouself op `n continuum moet sit, waar sal jy jouself

175 plaas in hierdie gesprek oor rassisme, sal jy heeltemaal saamstem met Beth of oordeel jy nie, gee
176 jy maar net jou ervaring?

177 Susan : ek oordeel nie, want dis nie my plek nie,

178 Louise: jy deel jou ervaring

179 Susan : ek deel my ervaring om te kyk, elkeen se argument het meriete, elke een se argument het
180 meriete, want dit is hoe hulle dit ervaar, ek bedoel, ek het ook die pad geloop van, ek het nie `n
181 job gekry omdat ek wit is, waar daar reguit vir my gesê is moenie eers aansoek doen vir hierdie
182 pos nie, want jy is wit en ons wil `n swarte hê, en op die ou einde van die dag het `n hulle `n
183 blanke Afrikaner man aangestel, en weet jy wat, dit was nie vir my bedoel nie, want ek is
184 gelukkig waar ek is, so... ekke, dis nie my plek, ek weet nie wat in `n ander man se lewe
185 aangaan nie, ek weet nie wat in `n ander man se lewe aangaan nie, so hoekom moet ek my opinie
186 afdwing op iemand anderste, en sê dit moet so wees of dit moet so wees, ...

187 Louise: Sê vir my as jy basies na die forum kyk, het jy hom gereeld gelees...

188 Susan : Die BBS assulks?

189 Louise: Hy het nou bietjie uitgedun

190 Susan : Die interessanter skrywers is nie meer daar nie, dit was vir my lekker om te lees en te
191 sien hoe argumenteer .. kyk party dae is daar nie heilige koeie op daai BBS nie, almal is faie
192 game.....ek dink die BBS se gespreksforum is daar vir mense om..van hulle, ek sou dit graag
193 wou sien dat mense dit gebruik as `n plek waar...gooi af, lat hierdie asblik nie vol raak en hy
194 later oorloop in `n moeilike ding in nie, dit moet `n plek wees waar, ...gooi af, as iets jou
195 kriewel, krap, die ou wat voor jou sssswwt, vanmôre en amper `n ongeluk veroorsaak, gaan
196 bespreek dit op die BBS, oor die swak bestuurder, wat baie mense al gedoen het..

197 Louise: Dis reg

198 Susan : Uhm....jou kinders het jou die hel in gemaak want hulle ..uh, geld groei op jou rug, pak
199 uit, gebruik dit as `n forum, as jy nie gelukkig is oor iets by die werk en jy voel jy staan voor
200 dooiemansdeur,sit dit op dier BBS, deel ervaring en vra wat ervaar julle, gooi dit oop dat

201 mense hulle ervarings kan deel, dat mens partykeer kan sien ek sit nie alleen nie, ek is nie die
202 enigste een in hierdie bootjie nie

203 Louise: Het jy ooit support gekry?

204 Susan : uhm

205 Louise: ek meen mense doen dit dan..

206 Susan : ja, ...ek het al gesien al lees al lees ek die goed en ek het niks om by te voeg nie, kan ek
207 sien hoe ja, die twee stry teen mekaar die heelyd en nie een is bereid om bietjie toegeeflik te
208 wees teenoor die ander nie, en dan kan jy letterlik sien hoe, blood and guts, ek bedoel, dis die
209 prentjie wat jy kry, maar ten minste kry die mense dit uit hulle sisteme uit en dis `n gesonde
210 ding, ons moenie opkrop nie, uhm...ander kere het ek gesien waar mense mekaar ondersteun,
211 waar iemand iets sê en die antwoord wat daarop is, is ja, ek stem saam met jou, dit en dit is
212 verkeerd, dit is wat ek ervaar het, sodra mens jou ervarings deel en begin net, vrae net uitsit hoe
213 ervaar julle dit, wat dink julle hiervan, wat dink julle daarvan, dan begin mense praat, nie om net
214 te sê dis ABCD en E, maar om te sê, dis wat ek ervaar het, wat dink julle?

215 Louise: Dink jy die mense wat so vreeslik van mekaar verskil is geïnteresseerd om te weet wat
216 ander dink?

217 Susan : Hulle sou dit nie daar gesit het as hulle nie geïnteresseerd was om te weet wat ander
218 mense dink nie.

219 Louise: Dink jy so?

220 Susan : Ja! `n Bietjie fireworks elke nou en dan is goed, dis goed, want dit wys mense het nog
221 passie, passie vir die lewe in dit wat hulle lewens raak, is jammer dat die skrywers en die
222 filosowe nie meer op die BBS is nie

223 Louise: Party van hulle het gesê dit raak vir hulle..

224 Susan : te filosofies..

225 Louise: ja, of die forum het nie meer krag nie

226 Susan : ja

227 Louise: die forum het nie invloed nie

228 Susan : uhm,.....partykeer wil jy `n ding sê sonder om `n antwoord van bo af te kry, uhm.....ek
229 wil deel, ek wil praat, ek wil dit uit my sisteem uit kry, wanneer dit kom by `n ding waar ek `n
230 besliste antwoord wil kry, `n besliste optrede wil hê, dan moet ek mos tog `n ander roete volg, ...

231 Louise: so die BBS is basies vir jou `n plek waar jy kan afpak, waar jy kan idees kry van ander,
232 maar as jy wil hê daar moet regtig opgetree word

233 Susan : dan is daar ander `n ander forum daarvoor, ek bedoel, dan het `n mens jou kanale

234 Louise: ja, dan gaan jy nou nie op `n gespreksforum iets sê nie

235 Susan : nee

236 Louise: want daar is die gevoel dat mense voel dat as hulle daar iets gesê het, dan moet daar nou
237 iets gebeur

238 Susan : maar dit is maar die ding, dit is elke persoon se siening,...uhm,... ek wil `n verhoging hê,
239 gaan ek nou baklei op die BBS vir `n verhoging, nee, ek gaan begin by my direkteure, van daar
240 af sal ek die stappe volg soos wat die kanale loop soos wat mens dit moet doen..uhm, ek's die hel
241 in vir wie ook al, spoeg dit daar uit, sê wie..partykeer kan mense mens so omkrap, kan hulle nie
242 die son sien skyn nie? Jy weet, daai tipe van ding

243 Louise: dis meer `n social awareness

244 Susan : social awareness, en ook om, om terugvoer te kry in die sin van wat dink ander mense?

245 Louise: om jouself te posisioneer

246 Susan : om te redeneer

247 Louise: weet jy, dis al wat ek wil weet van jou

248 Susan : dis reg

249 Louise: soos jy kan sien, ek gaan dit nou afsit

250 Susan : dis reg,
251 (onderhoud gestaak)
252 (onderhoud hervat)
253 Susan : daar is sekere goed wat ernstig opgeneem moet word, maar uhm... het die topbestuur
254 van die universiteit r rig die tyd om te gaan karring op die BBS se gespreksforum? Nee, hulle het
255 nie. Dis waarom daar ander forums moet wees vir mense om hulle...om hulle....uh...s  te s , om
256 om om hulle kwelvrae te lug en te s , dit is wat my pla, dit is waaraan ek aandag wil h  julle
257 moet gee, dit is wat ek wil h  julle moet aandag gee, daar is ander maniere om mense attent te
258 maak op dinge wat jou..uh, omkrap, ongelukkig maak en dan konstruktiewe terugvoer te kry van
259 topbestuur af, ..
260 Louise: maar partykeer, n , dink ek, voel ek mense dink hulle het nie `n spreekbuis nie, na
261 topbestuur toe, hulle voel die kanale is nie, is nie flexible genoeg of luister nie na hulle nie, en
262 dan gaan hulle, gebruik hulle hierdie openbare plek om te kyk gaan daar nie iets gebeur nie
263 Susan : uhm
264 Louise: ek dink van die goeters is dalk gemerk deur topbestuur, daar is soveel mense wat na
265 hierdie ding kyk, wat hier redeneer, dit is maar..
266 Susan : my opinie is, is dat, wanneer daar r rig iets belangriks is wat te ernstig begin raak, wat
267 r rig kan mens amper s  scary raak, uhm, dis die admin personeel wat daai goed onder die
268 direkteure en bestuurders se aandag bring, so, ja, miskien is dit `n manier, jy gooi af, jy pak af,
269 uh, topbestuur het nie tyd om BBS te lees nie, maar ek dink administratiewe personeel s  vir
270 hulle, gaan loer, gaan kyk gou, ...maar dit is nie die forum om besluite af te dwing nie, ja, dit is
271 nie die forum om veranderinge te laat maak werk nie, dit is nie, dit sal nooit `n sukses wees as dit
272 is wat mense daarvan dink nie,..
273 Louise: dit is eerder `n barometer van die gevoel wat mense het, hulle kan dit in ag neem
274 Susan : maar dit is omtrent al, ek bedoel, ek is op kampus al vyftien jaar, en in vyftien jaar het
275 hulle al probeer om `n kleuterskool hier te kry vir mammies met babatjies en goed en dis nog
276 steeds nie..en dit was nog altyd op die BBS gewees, ..

277 Louise: dis vir jou `n aanduiding dat hulle nie rêrig ag neem nie

278 Susan : Puk het die skool toegemaak, Puk het die skool toegemaak, ..

279 Louise: was daar `n skooltjie?

280 Susan : hier was `n skool op kampus, hulle maak hom verlede jaar toe

281 Louise: o, die christenskool

282 Susan : ja, hulle maak hom toe

283 Louise: maar dit is nie, daar's, maar daar is personeel se kinders daar, maar

284 Susan : ja, ons bodetjie wat hier werk, een dametjie wat hier werk, sy is ons kantoorassistent,

285 bode ...(onderhoud gestaak)

286 (onderhoud hervat)

287 Louise: (lag)

288 Susan : dit is letterlik so, staan in `n klankdigte kamer en skree, ..

289 Louise: sien jy die forum so, dit is `n klankdigte kamer?

290 Susan : ja,

291 Louise: waar jy maar net kan skree

292 Susan : ja, opgestopte kussing en slaan nou maar, have a pillow fight, dit raak ontslae van dit wat

293 jou enersins sou....uhm,hoe sal ek sê, kwaad maak, lateraan bitter maak, goed wat jy nie

294 aan..get it out, get it over with, ..

295 Louise: dis `n terapetiese plek, soos `n sielkundige se kantoor

296 Susan : ja

297 Louise: maar dis nie rêrig `n plek waar jy ernstig opgeneem word nie

298 Susan : uhm, vir bestuur om te sien, soos jy sê, as `n barometer, maar that's about it, dis nie die
299 plek om veranderinge te wil afdwing nie

300 Louise: ja, oukei

301 Susan : dit is nie

302 Louise: oukei, tjap, ek dink ons onderhoudjie is nou verby, ek gaan maar afsit

1 **Onderhoud Beth**

2 **26 November 2010**

3 **12:00**

4

5 Louise: As jy iets oor teorie wil sê is jy welkom, maar kom ons begin.

6

7 Beth: Ja

8

9 Louise: Jou basiese motivering, waarom jy besluit het jy gaan deelneem, wat is dit?

10

11 Beth: Eerstens omdat ek gevoel het die liberale het altyd die meeste sê, en, en ek weet nie,
12 een van my vorige skrywe was uhm, aan Stephen, juis oor die godsdienzaspek `n klompie
13 jare terug, ek het dit genoem hulle moral high ground, en hulle wil altyd van hierdie
14 morele hoë grond dikteer, uhm, en eintlik afmaak dat wat vir ander mense buite hulle
15 raamwerk belangrik is, uhm, wat ons voel is eties, korrek, word eenvoudig onder die mat
16 gegee, toe ek, my deelname aanvanklik was nie oor ek lus was om stem te hoor nie, die
17 deelname was oor ek moeg was dat hulle die BBS oorheers en hulle is `n totale
18 minderheid, en uhm, idees afdwing wat `n baie moeilik in die oorgangsfase, baie mense
19 in die oorgangsfase van Potchefstroomse Universiteit vir CHO moeilik verwerk na `n
20 sekulêre NWU, uhm, universiteit, en, jy weet, dan het hulle ook nog uitsprake oor
21 godsdiensoeninge, gebed, wat kosbaar en dierbaar was, `n student wat kom skryf het, `n
22 toets, en `n dosent staan voor en hy open met gebed, was `n kosbaarheid vir ons, en dit is
23 van ons weggevat, dan bly jy eerder stil, jy gaan trap nie nog verder daarop nie..

24

25 Louise: ek sien

26

27 Beth: dit is waarom ek geskryf het

28

29 Louise: Jy het regtig vanuit `n eerlike gevoel, jy wil `n ander stem laat hoor, het jy begin
30 skryf

31

32 Beth: Ja.

33

34 Louise: Jy praat van morele hoë grond, hoe sal jy jouself posisioneer, sou jy sê hulle het
35 die morele hoë grond, maar ek gaan sê ons etiek is net so relevant, ons moraliteit?

36

37 Beth: Jy het twee pole hierso, jy het `n pool wat sekulêr is, met ander woorde met al die
38 teorieë, met al die filosofieë wat ons kry, wat vanuit `n wêreldbeskouing, wat die...(sug)..
39 die gelowige, uh, ek wil nie die woord christelik gebruik nie, ek beskou myself nie as `n
40 christen nie, uhm.....wat buite die godsdienstige aspek opereer, met ander woorde hy het
41 sy....die humanistiese siening van sake....is vir my heeltemaal teenstrydig met die
42 opdragte en insette en skryfgedeeltes wat in die Woord is, ek beskou my as `n gelowige,
43 en ek aanbid die God van die Bybel, nie die God van die Kerk of die christelike geloof
44 nie, uhm, ek aanbid die God van Israel, so vir my het humanisme en die christelike
45 godsdiensoos wat dit nou bedryf word, perfekte pasmaatjies geword, wat my aanbetref
46 is dit baie teenstrydig teenoor die Bybel, ..

47

48 Louise: Ok, neem jy nog deel aan die BBS, is daar vir jou nog `n rede?

49

50 Beth: nee, op hierdie stadium het ek eintlik rêerig nie meer tyd nie, en, weet jy wat, daar
51 is nie op hierdie stadium aktiewe gesprekslyne wat nuut en fris en vars is nie, dit is
52 dieselle ou anti-apartheid, liberale, kerm oor dit, kerm oor dat, kerm oor die studente,
53 kerm oor Afrikaans, kerm oor die godsdiensoos, kerm oor die filosofie, kerm kerm kerm, dit
54 is al wat ons van hulle kant af hoor, en uhm, ek het my sê gesê, ek het dit duidelik gesê,
55 uhm, vir die wat gehoor het het gehoor, vir die wat nie gehoor het nie, het nie gehoor nie,
56 maar rêrig, dis soos grammafoonplate wat vashaak, en die probleem is, as jy hom
57 konfronteer, veral iemand soos Stephen, wat welbesproke is en wat in `n gebied is waar
58 taal en tegniese skryfstyl en bewoording en redenasies uhm vreemd vir my is, ek is `n
59 statistikus, ek werk met syfers en dit is dit, jy weet, ek is nie `n filosoof nie, so om
60 werklik my te begewe op sy filosofiese terrein is om jou baie bloot te stel, en dit het jy al
61 gesien, ek het my geweldig blootgestel, ek het hom al gesê “you’ve got the gift of the
62 gab”, so om oor en oor dieselfde goed te sê, en, ek dink, hierdie was geskrywe, wanneer,

63 in 2008, dis twee jaar terug en..met al hulle mooi praatjies, ek het verder teruggegaan, ek
64 het eintlik in 2005 en 2004, 2003 begin skryf, en om die waarheid te sê, daar is nie `n
65 ding wat ek geskryf het wat enigsins verbeter het volgens Stephen, wat al in 2003 die son
66 en die maan en die hemel voorsien het vir hierdie land, intendeel, het alles net erger
67 geword, so, wat meer het ek te sê, ek het dit gesê, daar het niks verbeter nie, intendeel,
68 dit het erger geword, ons universiteit het erger geword, Engels is besig om helemal oor te
69 neem, christelike geloof, uhm, jy weet, of die gelowigheid, of ten minste `n ordanigheid
70 of erkenning aan `n hoër gesag bestaan omtrent nie meer nie, uhm, so wat is daar meer te
71 sê?

72

73 Louise: In verband met die bestuur wat jou aangevat het in 2005, wat is jou gevoel
74 daaroor, 21 Februarie 2005? Ek sien hier quote jy nou die bestuur, wat voel jy nou
75 daaroor?

76

77 Beth: Ek het daai tyd gesê, see the worry in my eyes, en vandag presies dieselfde, ek het
78 my afgegee daaraan

79

80 Louise: So jy het nie eens geskrik nie?

81

82 Beth: Nee, ek het daarna mos weer geskryf.

83

84 Louise: Jy het baie moed om hulle te quote.

85

86 Beth: Mm, ek het natuurlik `n brief, `n e-pos van Cathy gekry, want sy was baie geskok
87 gewees toe sy gehoor het wat het met my gebeur.

88

89 Louise: Wat het sy gesê?

90

91 Beth: Sy het net gesê dit sal nie op haar kampus, sy sal nie die saak glad nie so hanteer
92 het nie, in elk geval dit het nie op hulle webwerf gebeur nie, dit het op Potchefstroom se

93 BBS gebeur, hulle het geen reg gehad om my aan te spreek nie, en ek dink dis, ag kyk ek
94 het dit nie dadelik bekend gestel nie, onthou, dit was ses maande na die insident,
95
96 Louise: Is dit?
97
98 Beth: Ja, dit was baie lank terug, ek het dit, kyk wat gebeur het, daar het `n man, ek kan
99 nie onthou wat is sy naam nie, iemand het geskryf, ja mens kan nie dit skryf op die BBS
100 is nie want dit en dit, toe skryf iemand, ek kan ook nie meer onthou nie, jy moet dit maar
101 gaan opsoek, gesê ja, ek het gehoor daar is iemand aangekla van rassisme, en toe't ek
102 gereageer en toe het ek gesê dit was ek,
103
104 Louise: o goed
105
106 Beth: en toe het die brief, uhm, vir hulle getik, ...
107
108 Louise: Daar is `n persoon daar by ons, uh, John, ..
109
110 Beth: Hy is `n kleurling..
111
112 Louise: Ja, ...
113
114 Beth: Ja, ek en John het al `n paar kere koppe gestamp.
115
116 Louise: en hy het gesê na aanleiding van `n klag wat hy gelê het, is daar toe opgetree.
117 Weet jy iets daarvan? Hy het `n klag gelê dat jy rassistiese goed sê en ...toe sê hy hy het
118 toe nou verneem daar is teen jou opgetree, maar weet jy iets daarvan?
119
120 Beth: (lag) ek weet niks daarvan
121
122 Louise: Want hy is later van tyd aangestel, 2006
123

124 Beth: Het hy `n klag teen my gelê?
125
126 Louise: Ja wel, hy sê hy het `n klag ingedien en hy reken daar is toe opgetree
127
128 Beth: Nee man, ek het toe laaaaank daarna weer geskryf, nee man, hy praat absoluut twak,
129 die klag wat ingelê is, is prof Herman Potgieter, hy het die klag gelê
130
131 Louise: Want ek sien hy word hier aangehaal
132
133 Beth: Ja.
134
135 Louise: En is hy van hierdie kampus?
136
137 Beth: Ja, hy is sosiologie.
138
139 Louise: Ja oukei.
140
141 Beth: So, met ander woorde hy het `n klag gelê en dit het na daardie klag gekom.
142
143 Louise: Waar is dit toe hanteer, hier?
144
145 Beth: Ja.
146
147 Louise: Nie op die Potchefstroom kampus nie?
148
149 Beth: Nee
150
151 Louise: Het die bestuur van hierdie kampus jou...
152
153 Beth: Ja, dit was die bestuur van hierdie kampus, die dekaan en die direkteur, want ek is
154 ingeroep, die brief gegee en toe gesê ek moet `n verskoning op die BBS plaas, toe bel ek

155 my swaer wat `n advokaat is, toe sê hy daar is geen manier dat jy, jy het geen rassistiese
156 aanmerkings gemaak nie, jy het geen swartmens verkleineer nie, jy het slegs feite genoem
157 en die gesprek wat dit nou voorafgegaan het, wat Herman Potgieter nou ter harte geneem
158 het, en toe sê hy net, doen dit nie, en ek het net, dit was eintlik in retrospek gedoen, want
159 hy wou gehad het ek moes verdere stappe vat, toe sê ek weet jy wat, ek het sommer,
160 Derrick was baie cool daaromtrent, hy het gese, hier is die brief, teken dit,

161

162 Louise: wie is Derrick?

163

164 Beth: Dit was my direkteur.

165

166 Louise: O, jou direkteur

167

168 Beth: Ja hy was my ...so ons het dit net vinnig afgehandel, toe sê hy net hy wou hê ek
169 moet `n verskoning maak, dit staan ook daar, toe sê ek net ek gaan nie, ek sal dit nie doen
170 nie, ek aanvaar geen.. ek teken hier om te sê jy het my geroep..

171

172 Louise: Het die Menseregtekommissie enigsins met jou interact?

173

174 Beth: Neeeee

175

176 Louise: Glad nie.

177

178 Beth: Glad nie, en weet jy, hulle is baie welkom om te kom ..

179

180 Louise: Maar daar word vermoed, dit word nou jare na die tyd gesê, dat die
181 Menseregtekommissie, of institusioneel is daar teen jou opgetree, maar ek dink dit is
182 seker wishful thinking..

183

184 Beth: Teen my opgetree?

185

186 Louise: Ja.
187
188 Beth: Neeeeee.
189
190 Louise: Oukei, glad nie.
191
192 Beth: Neeeeee, soos ek sê, dit het, daai brief het eintlik, eintlik het ek hom gepubliseer
193 omdat iemand gesê het iemand is aangekla van rassisme, en hulle is bang om hulle
194 opinies te lug op die BBS, toe sê ek wel dit is so, en dit is wat gedoen, ... maar ek.. Cathy
195 het dadelik gereageer, so, as John `n klag gelê het teen my, is hy daar gebriek, want dit
196 het nooit na my toe..., hoekom het hy, hy het nooit daarna verwys nie,....
197
198 Louise: Weet jy, hy het vir my gesê hy weet nie of daar opgetree is nie, maar hy reken
199 nou hy het iets bereik, maar dit nou daar gelaat, dit is nou water onder die brug deur..
200
201 Beth: wel, nuus vir my, want as dit in 2005 is, hierdie is in 2008 geskryf en ek het lustig
202 voortgegaan, so, niemand het vir my gese stop nie, ek het net voortgegaan..
203
204 Louise: so, jy het vryheid van spraak absoluut gaan beoefen,
205
206 Beth: ja
207
208 Louise: so, jou gevoel teenoor die bestuur hier,
209
210 Beth: was bestuur, onthou dit was
211
212 Louise: Ja, 2005 se bestuur, of 2004 se bestuur eerder
213
214 Beth: wanneer het ek daardie brief geskryf?
215
216 Louise: 21 Februarie 2005

217

218 Beth: was die vorige jaar, ja ja, dit was in daardie jaar, dit was, daar het `n lang tyd

219 verbygegaan, ek kan vir jou die datums kry as ek vreeslik, vreeslik soek,

220

221 Louise: 2004 se goed is nie meer beskikbaar nie

222

223 Beth: van my e-posse

224

225 Louise: o, ag dit sal baie gaaf wees as jy dit vir my kan aanstuur

226

227 Beth: ek wil net `n nota maak

228

229 Louise: het jy dit gebêre?

230

231 Beth: ek het van dit gebêre, jy weet dit is ook al lank terug, ek wil net gou hierso, uhm,

232

233 Louise: so jy sê jy is nie stilgemaak nie, jy het ..

234

235 Beth: mmmmm

236

237 Louise: sou jy sê jy is eerder aangemoedig?

238

239 Beth: ja, ja, ja, as iemand vir my sê moenie `n ding doen nie dan doen ek dit, ek het

240 regtigwaar, ek het geen, uh, enige iets wat ek uit oortuiging sê, en waarop ek staan, ek

241 staan of val daarby, ek gee nie om wat die gevolge daarvan is nie,

242

243 Louise: ek sien jy het op `n stadium gesê jy sal die goed beveg, al word jy van rassisme

244 beskuldig, en toe word jy, actually, in hierdie selfde ding van rassisme beskuldig?

245

246 Beth: ja, ja, ja, ek het nog nooit, ek dink net die pad wat die geweldige, polities korrekte

247 optredes is bitter meer skadelik as om feite in die gesig te staar en daarvolgens op te tree,

248 rassisme is `n woord wat, wat so, so maklik rondgegooi word, en en inteendeel, is die
249 kruste vorm van rassisme wat jy kan kry, ek moet werklikwaar vir jou sê, ek het dit nog
250 in my hele lewe nog nooit ervaar nie, uhm, ek het half ervaar goed wat geklassifiseer
251 word as rassisme, maar dit beteken nie rassisme nie, want, daar is nie werklik `n definisie
252 van rassisme nie, rassisme sê om `n persoon met meerwaardigheid te behandel, omdat jy
253 dink hy is ondergeskik en nie jou gelyke nie, uhm, wat beteken dit, as ek `n werker het,
254 wit, pienk of swart, is hy ondergeskik aan my, en ek sal hom daarvolgens hanteer,
255 beteken dit dat ek hom nie met respek kan hanteer nie? Nonsens. Beteken dit dat ek nie
256 goed vir hom kan wees nie? Nonsens. Dit beteken net hy moet sy plek ken, nou as
257 rassisme is, as die kruste vorm van rassisme is om vir iemand te sê wat jou ondergelyke is,
258 jou ondergeskikte is, om te sê jy is ondergeskik omdat ek wit is, dit is rassisme

259

260 Louise: ja, dis reg

261

262 Beth: om te sê `n swartmens het nie die basiese kennis van whatever nie, beteken mos nie
263 ek is `n rassis nie? Dit beteken mos daar is `n gaping wat gevul moet word. So, my
264 gevoel, en dit is een van die dryfvere van van uhm, gesprekke, dat as jy nie feite, en my
265 lewe bestaan uit feite, as jy nie feite in ag neem nie deur polities korrek te wees, kry jy
266 die volgende, jy kry onbevoegde mense in plekke waar hulle nie moet wees nie, jy kry
267 verlaagde standaarde, jy kry akkommodering van goed wat nie geakkommodeer moet
268 word nie en jy kry, en dit is vir my `n kritiese punt, jy kry dat potensiaal vermoor word.

269

270 Louise: ja, nie ontwikkel raak nie, nie erken word nie

271

272 Beth: die punt is net ons sit met `n krisis op die universiteit, ons het studente wat hier
273 inkom wat nie hier hoort nie, as ek dit sê, is ek `n rassis, omdat hulle, meeste van hulle
274 swart is, is ek `n rassis, nee, I am stating the fact, uhm, jy weet mos wat Stephen vir my
275 gese het, I am a scientific racist, het jy dit gelees?

276

277 Louise: ek het net gelees dat jy vir hom sê hy moet die Afrika-universiteit in die hemel
278 gaan stig

279

280 Beth: (lag) ja, dit is nou waarom ek baie opgewonde raak

281

282 Louise: ek wil by jou hoor, né, uhm, jy het vir my op `n stadium oor die telefoon gesê

283 daar is baie mense wat jou ondersteun, wat vir jou e-pos gestuur het, veral wit mans,

284

285 Beth: ja, daar het, uh, daar het twee wit mans vir my geskryf maar ek het via ander mense

286 gehoor

287

288 Louise: indirek, maar vertel vir my daarvan

289

290 Beth: uh, basies is daar net gesê, wat net vir my gesê het, ons is baie bly dat iemand goed

291 uitlig wat net onder die mat gevee word, wat nie aangespreek word nie, uhm, want ons

292 kan dit nie doen nie, ons is wit, middeljarige mans, en ons kan nie die kans vat om van

293 rassisme aangekla te word, ons kan dit nie doen nie, terwyl my uitgangspunt was, my

294 beginsels word nooit, nooit gekoöpteer nie, as ek `n ding sê is ek van volle oortuiging dat

295 my feite korrek is, uhm, dat ek nie sydig is in terme van die feite nie, ek mag sydig wees

296 in terme van my gevoel of my wêreldbeskouing, maar van die feite *per se*, as ek statisties

297 kan bewys dat dit en dit die geval is, dat ek dit kan bewys, dan gaan ek dit sê, en as daar

298 vir my gesê word daar is nie meer plek vir jou nie, dan sê ek fine, ek het nog nooit dat

299 enige iets my in my hele weerhou om te sê wat ek wil sê nie, en om die waarheid te praat

300 nie, vir my, vir my is.. en nou weet ek kom ons weer by die filosofiese, wat is waarheid,

301 en....die feit van die saak is, daar is waarheid, en daar is waarheid, die waarhede, jy kies

302 watter waarheid jy wil aanhang, ek het die een gekies en ek sal staan of val daarby..

303

304 Louise: As jy nou skryf oor wat jy as die waarheid beskou, antisipeer jy oor hoe die

305 mense op jou gaan reageer?

306

307 Beth: Ja, kyk, ek weet net, ek het baie keer geëindig wat ek sommer vir Stephen sê

308 moenie terugskryf nie, of, antwoord my, of iets van die aard, want ek weet Francois,

309 Stephen, John, wat is die ander perd, ook `n kleurling, uh, hulle het my konstant aangeval,

310 Ettienne op `n stadium ook, uhm, en ek moet werklikwaar sê, veral met hierdie laaste
311 stuk, .. en doen ek so alles in een, kom ek gee vir jou `n voorbeeld, ek het ook myself
312 ingehou tot `n mate, ter wille van die gesprek en die ordentlikheid, maar wat vir my
313 skreiend skreiend skreiend is, is dat iemand soos Tsepiso Ntombeni, Tsepiso....., whatever,
314 op `n webwerf kan skryf soos `n idioot, en hy is verbonde aan `n instelling soos die
315 Potchefstroom Universiteit, en weet jy, dit is vir my skreiend, dit is vir my skreiend, dat
316 iemand dit kan, dat niemand iets daaromtrent sê nie, want die oomblik wat jy jou mond
317 oopmaak, is jy `n rassis, dit is waarom ek daar een plek geskryf het Ag Tsepiso, want ek
318 meen dit sê vir my alles, so ek meen, hoe kan `n mens `n persoon aanstel, ek weet nie
319 watter afdeling is hy nie, ek wou nog uitvind, is hy `n dosent, want die hemel bewaar ons
320 as hy `n dosent is, en daarvoor, ek sal nie skroom om dit te sê nie, jy weet, uhm, maar in
321 daardie gesprek het ek gevoel dit sou `n addisionele, uhm,

322

323 Louise: vet op die vuur gewees het..

324

325 Beth: ja, so, uh, daar is nie `n ding in die lewe wat my meer irriteer as onbevoegdheid nie,
326 uhm, en ek het `n oordosis daarvan in hierdie, ons het almal `n oordosis daarvan in
327 hierdie land, maar dit is ook fine, want onbevoegdheid kan geleer word, onbevoegdheid
328 met arrogansie, dit is `n fatale...

329

330 Louise: weet jy wat, ek onthou dat Stephen gesê het een van die groot probleme van die
331 BBS is dit is demokraties, almal kan deelneem, en kyk ek meen, die rede waarom ek dit
332 sê, ek dink nie Tsepiso is `n akademikus nie, ek dink hy is, en almal het toegang tot die
333 BBS, almal kan sê wat hulle wil, waarskynlik is hy, is hy `n administratiewe persoon, ..

334

335 Beth: dis fine, dis hoekom ek nog noot iets gesê het nie, ek het nie geweet waar dit
336 vandaan kom nie...

337

338 Louise: en toe sê Stephen, die feit dat almal kan deelneem maak die feit dat dit nie ernstig
339 opgeneem word nie, lei daartoe dat dit nie ernstig opgeneem word nie, hy sê selfs as iets

340 ernstig bespreek word, kan bestuur nie omgee nie, want almal kan iets sê. Wat dink jy
341 daarvan?

342

343 Beth: Ek dink as die BBS, as die bestuur, as die bestuur meer aandag gegee het aan BBS,
344 met ander woorde te kyk na wat is die mense se gevoel, dan praat ek nie net oor politieke
345 goed nie, ek praat oor die gevoel van hoe die universiteit `n besigheid geword het,..

346

347 Louise: dis reg

348

349 Beth: oor die gevoel van ons akademici suig aan die agterspeen, die gevoel van `n klomp
350 reëls en regulasies wat ons werkswaarde verdrievoudig het, uhm, omdat daar sekere goed
351 van bo-af besluit word en net deurgevoer word, ek dink die gaping tussen die onderste
352 vlakke van die universiteit en die bestuur het geweldig gegroei en daar het êrens iets
353 verlore gegaan, en ek het dit ook êrens in my e-pos op die BBS gesê, dat daar vergeet is
354 dat ons die rugsteun is van, nie akademiese steundienste of personeel of konstitusionele
355 kantoor nie, ons, dis ons, wat daagliks sit met probleme van studente om slaagsyfers te
356 kry, en die kennis oor te dra, ons is die belangrikste persone, en dit word toevallig net
357 misken

358

359 Louise: onder in die food chain

360

361 Beth: ja, die bestuur kyk nie na BBS nie, hulle heg nie waarde daaraan nie, maar as hulle
362 waarde daaraan geheg het, is die vraag wat doen hulle dan daarmee, ...

363

364 Louise: Ja, ek wil by jou hoor, Stephen sê op `n stadium, jy voer nie rêrig akademiese
365 argument nie.

366

367 Beth: Mmm

368

369 Louise: want hy sê jy string `n spul quotes en jy sê nie rêrig iets nie

370

371 Beth: Mmm, uuuu, die probleem is, dit is weer `n persepsie van hom, dieselfde aan sy
372 kant, hy sal graag aanhaal uit `n deel wat hy interessant vind, het hy na die teendeel gaan
373 kyk? Een van die goed wat ons gepraat het, ek kan nie meer mooi onthou wanneer nie,
374 maar dit is oor `n artikel wat geskryf is deur Pennekatzen en nog ietsie, goeie artikel, daar
375 is in Amerika ook geskryf oor hom, oor IQ and the wealth of nations, ek het aangehaal,
376 ek het `n klomp ander ook wat ek nou nie aangehaal het nie, as jy nou objektief is, dan
377 kyk jy na weerskante van die saak, en ongelukkig en dis nou waar ek miskien, waar
378 Stephen heeltemaal tereg is, is die feit dat van die artikels wat wel aangehaal kan word, of
379 op die voorgrond gebring word, word deur die, uh, wat is `n peergroup, in die akademie,
380 weggestoot, gesê dis rubbish, want `n spesifieke teorie word aangehang, ek het toevallige
381 die filosofie artikel wat ons vir die kursus vir nuwe dosente moes doen, het oor kwasi
382 statistiese eksperimentering gegaan, en een van die goed wat juis `n probleem is binne die
383 sosiale omgewing, en nie in `n kliniese laboratorium met perfekte omstandighede, is dat
384 die ontwerp van die eksperiment hang baie af van die eksperimenteerder, en hoe hy sy
385 data versamel, maar wat baie sterk `n rol speel en dit het ek probeer uitlig binne my uhm,
386 artikel was dat die wêreldbeskouing van die eksperimenteerder, uh, het `n definitiewe rol, so
387 op hierdie stadium is the flavour of the month, die afgelope dekade, rassisme, so alles wat
388 gedoen word, word gemeet aan rassisme, en dit sal werklike statistiese data onder die mat
389 in vee ter wille van die politiese korrektheid van die resultate. So ja, tot `n mate is Stephen
390 reg, want dit wat ek kan gebruik het, of kon gebruik het, gaan in elk geval nie aanvaar
391 word as geldig nie, want dit het al reeds deur die akademici aan die ander kant afgeskryf
392 as whatever dit is

393

394 Louise: Ja, as ongeldig, of polities dan na die verkeerde kant toe, dink jy, ek gaan nou vir
395 Stephen aanhaal, die feit dat jy hierdie.....dit is belangriker om gesprek te voer as om
396 mense stil te maak

397

398 Beth: ek dink dis honderd persent reg, dit is hoekom, ek meen, die probleem is net, kom
399 ons noem dit maar weer, die morele hoë grond, daar kan jy sê wat jy wil, want dit is
400 oukei, kom jy van `n ander kant af, wat nie in die groot geheel oukei is nie, en jy sê iets,
401 is dit baie makliker om hierdie persoon aan te vat, en ek moet sê ek waardeer dit van

402 Stephen, want daar is niks wat hy op hierdie stadium kan sê wat buite perke is nie, want
403 dit wat hy sê is binne die aanvaarbare swembad-gedeelte, dit wat ek sê is binne die nie-
404 aanvaarbare swembad-gedeelte.

405

406 Louise: Hy beskou sy opinies wat hy uitspreek as baie onpopulêr, hy weet dit.

407

408 Beth: Hy is onpopulêr binne `n spesifieke milieue, as hy dieselfde opinies op UCT gaan
409 uitspreek, gaan hy geen, hy gaan net yes yes yes yes kry

410

411 Louise: dit gaan nie eers `n wave maak nie

412

413 Beth: dit gaan nie eers `n wave maak nie. Dit is binne `n redelik konserwatiewe uhm
414 omgewing, wat `n geskiedenis het, en sy idees en sy opinies is baie radikaal,

415

416 Louise: vir die omgewing

417

418 Beth: vir die omgewing, en en dit is, dit is, ek verstaan hy is jonk, uhm, jongerig, so, ek
419 dink hy het ook, hy is amper soos `n bul in `n glaswinkel gewees toe hy begin het, hy het
420 baie, hy het baie goed gesê baie hard op `n baie sagte teer plek in ons geskiedenis, die feit
421 dat daar `n afname is in die aantal mense wat BBS lees, uh, dui vir my daar op dat daar `n
422 sekere saturasiepunt bereik is, versadigingspunt is, in terme van wat Stephen sê en wat ek
423 sê, jy weet dit is hoekom ek, ek lees baie keer goed en dan dink ek, weet jy wat, ek gaan
424 nie eers dit antwoord nie

425

426 Louise: dink jy julle, hierdie twee ekstreme op die kontinuum het mense gehelp om
427 bietjie oor die transformasie te kom?

428

429 Beth: Ek dink so, want baie van die goed wat gesê is, is in die ope gesê, terwyl baie van
430 die e-posse wat ek gekry het, soos van wat mense gesê het, hulle kon nie wag om in die
431 kantoor in te kom om te sien wat ek en Stephen nou weer vandag aanvang nie, uhm, ek,
432 maar ek dink dit het tot `n mate `n uitlatingsklep gesit, en ek dink daar was `n soort van

433 `n domheid, na aanleiding van my aanklag van rassisme, was juis omdat ek van die
434 teknikon af gekom het, ek het presies gesien hoe `n teknikon, wat `n wonderlike plek
435 was om by te werk, absoluut van kultuur verander het, en studente wat miljoene rande se
436 skade aangerig het oor `n rektor waarvan hulle nie hou nie, en dan word hy weg en dan
437 rig hulle weer miljoene rande se skade aan om hom terug te kry, so `n kultuurskok het ek
438 reeds ondervind daar, so baie van my goed het ek geskryf van agter dit, en dit is hoekom
439 Herman Potgieter die eerste keer uhm smalend gesê het ja jy wil seker hê dat alle wit
440 studente vlug na die wit enklawes van die noorde, gaan soek dit op, dis somewhere in
441 die... en dit is waar die ding tussen my en Herman gekom het en ek het hom baie kwalik
442 geneem, omdat hy, daar is `n engelse woord wat ek nou glad nie aan kan dink uhm, hy is
443 so pious, en Stephen nie, Stephen sê `n ding soos wat hy sê,

444

445 Louise: Stephen is nie pious nie (lag)

446

447 Beth: Nee, dis hoekom toe Stephen my kinders aangevat het in daai een stuk, hy het dit
448 onttrek, het ek hom onmiddelik aangekla, ek het hom gebel en gesê ek sit onmiddelik `n
449 eis teen jou in en ek gaan onmiddelik `n klag van laster lê,

450

451 Louise: wat het hy van jou kinders gesê?

452

453 Beth: You probably raised them as trigger happy white racists,you probably
454 raised your sons as trigger happy white racists,

455

456 Louise: en toe?

457

458 Beth: hy het dit toe onttrek, hy het `n verskoning opgesit en hy het die stuk toe
459 uitgehaal, ...maar ek het hom onmiddelik gebel, en ons het lank gepraat, ek het gesê
460 Stephen, weet jy, don't overstep the bounds, ons het baie lekker gepraat, ek het gesê jy is
461 jonk en jy het jou opinies en ek het my opinies en ek het Stephen nog nooit persoonlik
462 aangeval nie, maar ek weet dis uit sy jeug uit wat hy my persoonlik aangetas het en daar
463 het mense geskryf dit help nie om persoonlik te raak nie, ek sou goed sê soos jy kyk uit `n

464 pienk brille, maar ek hom nooit as persoon, maar toe hy my kinders inbring, was dit vir
465 my onaanvaarbaar,
466
467 Louise: janee, op `n stadium verwys jy na die mense by sosiologie as `n addernes
468
469 Beth: ja, nee, `n addernes en ook as termiete, hulle grawe onder uit en dan val alles in, dis
470 presies hoe ek voel daaroor en ek voel nie net oor antropologie nie, ek voel tot `n mate,
471 baie baie akademiese instellings, teologie is vir my `n volgende een, teologie is `n
472 wetenskapsport en dit gaan oor kyk hoe vinnig ons die Bybel kan verkeerd bewys, hoe
473 hoe sterk ons kan sê dat hy meer nie van toepassing op vandag se tyd nie, ensovoorts
474 ensovoorts, en ek is heeltemaal te rigied, vir my is die Woord onwrikbaar, 2000 jaar
475 gelede soos dit vandag is, uhm ek glo honderd persent daarin, ek glo letterlik wat daarin
476 staan, so, uhm, al die mense wat altyd sê o ek kan nie die Bybel letterlik opneem nie,
477 Jahwe o ek noem hom Jahwe oor die eenvoudige rede dat ek sit nie saam met mense en
478 bid vir God nie, want wie is hy, is hy nou Allah, of is hy nou Buddha, of is hy die ...sy
479 naam is Jahwe, en hy is die god van Israel, die god van die Bybel, so ek noem ... Jahwe
480 het ons `n goeie dosis van verstand gegee, ons hoef rêrig nie sewe jaar te swot om te
481 probeer uitvind wat hy eintlik sê nie, en as hy nou praat van jy moet nie jou hare vleg nie
482 of watookal, dan weet jy ja oukei dit is seker darem in daardie tyd spesifieke betekenis, in
483 vandag ae tyd sou dit wees moenie met visnet kouse en rooi hakskoene aan `n lamppaal
484 hang nie, whatever, of jy't verstand genoeg om te weet daar is sekere goed nie, maar die
485 basiese goed van die 486 wette of 456 of 496 wette wat daar is, het almal een of ander
486 toepassing wat gegee is vir `n spesifieke tyd en ons het genoeg verstand om te weet
487
488 Louise: ja, binne daai konteks, ..
489
490 Beth: Presies.
491
492 Louise: uhm, ek wil nie rêrig ingaan op mense se ideologie nie, dis nie vir my belangrik
493 nie, wat vir my belangrik is, is hoe hulle dit verwoord, uhm, maar anyway, dink jy jy het,
494 julle op die punte van die kontinuum, mense gemotiveer om hulle harte uit te praat?

495

496 Beth: wat Stephen gesê het wat hulle wou sê, wat ek gesê het, wat hulle graag sou wou sê,
497 yes yes yes, ons stem saam, of sy is nou helemaal, helemaal van die bus af, weerskante
498 toe, ...

499

500 Louise: Dink jy jy het gegroei deur jou deelname?

501

502 Beth: Absoluut, uh, deur iemand aan te vat wat in `n veld is wat heeltemaal vreemd is vir
503 my, in terme van hoe om te argumenteer of hoe om jou oor te bring of wat ook al, was vir
504 my, it's daunting, was erg gewees, omdat ek, ek is `n, my lewe lank voor `n rekenaar en
505 somme, somme nogmaals somme, ek, uhm, ons ons manier van beredeneer binne `n
506 wiskundige omgewing is heelwat anders as om te beredeneer binne `n filosofiese
507 omgewing, en ek het rêrig nie die tools gehad daarvoor nie, en eh, maar dit het nogal vir
508 my ook tot `n mate gedwing om miskien `n bietjie meer te konsentreer op op hoe ek
509 myself oorbring of hoe wil ek dit nou in daardie ander wêreld eh probeer sê, en ek dink
510 baie van die goed is ook verkeerd opgeneem, van hoe ek dit gestel het...

511

512 Louise: wat jy nie behoorlik kon verwoord nie

513

514 Beth: mmm, tot `n mate, jy weet, vir my die idees, eh eh eh , vir Stephen is die, is taal
515 ook `n tool om goeters te sê, vir my is `n taal `n taal, ek moet dit wat in my kop het, net in
516 daai taal inkry, Stephen kan die taal gebruik, om, en of `n filosoof, of enige persoon
517 wat meer in die sosiale omgewings is of in die filosofiese, uhm, hulle kan, hulle hulle toor
518 met taal, dit is soos advokate, en prokureurs..

519

520 Louise: het jy minderwaardig gevoel?

521

522 Beth: nee glad nie

523

524 Louise: maar ek bedoel met jou taalvaardighede

525

526 Beth: ja, eh, onthou die ander is, hy het hom nie verwerdig om in Afrikaans te skryf nie,
527 en ek is, ek het in Afrikaans geskryf en in Engels geskryf en ek meen my Engels kan glad
528 nie met sy Engels vergelyk word nie

529

530 Louise: en sy Afrikaans kan nie met jou Afrikaans vergelyk word nie (lag)

531

532 Beth: whatever, maar die punt is ek het weerskante probeer om vir die mense wat die wil
533 leer en ter wille van hom, maar ek meen, hy het net, hy het net, werklikwaar net een
534 afrikaanse woord in sy hele tyd geskryf nie,

535

536 Louise: mmmmm

537

538 Beth: en dit was ook in 2004 vir my `n irritasie dat `n persoon kan inkom, van UCT by `n
539 Afrikaanse universiteit en, uhm, nie die moeite doen om enigsins in Afrikaans te praat nie,
540 en dan het hy ook nog sy bek vol gehad oor Afrikaans. So, en ek is, onverbiddelik dat
541 Potchefstroom kampus moet Afrikaans bly, ek het nou nie `n saak met iemand wat Engels
542 daar is nie, want uhm, ek skaar my aan Jakes Gerwel se, eh kant, daar moet twee
543 Afrikaanse universiteite, Suider Afrikaanse universiteite wees, so ek het eintlik min
544 simpatie met mense wat Engels daar is

545

546 Louise: wat ek kon sien in Stephen se goed is dat hy baie patronising is,

547

548 Beth: ja wat

549

550 Louise: dat hy dinge sê soos jou hoerskoollesse is al wat jou inlig

551

552 Beth: mmm, mmmm, ag ek het my rêrig nie daaraan gesteur nie

553

554 Louise: dit sal my nogal baie geïrriteer het

555

556 Beth: weet jy wat, eintlik, ek het my nooit rêrig vervies vir Stephen enigsins nie, behalwe
557 die keer toe toe ek hom nou, . ek het toe sommer besluit ek vat hom rêrig aan, ek was
558 bereid gewees, ek sou hom banke toe gevat het, maar, ek....ek, dit was ook nodig gewees
559 datdat ek in eenvoudige taal, en dat almal dit kon lees, probeer antwoord of teenstaan
560 wat hy konstant in ons kele indruk, want onthou, eh, vir Stephen gaan alles oor issues, ek
561 het, dink, is omtrent een van die enigste.....uhm, strands wat ek begin het, as ek reg kan
562 onthou, ek het nie veel gesit waar ek `n onderwerp begin het nie, ek het baie keer net
563 gereageer

564

565 Louise: hierdie het jy begin

566

567 Beth: hierdie het ek begin, en dit was ook na aanleiding van iets, wat ek.. ek sou dit in elk
568 geval nie sommer net begin het nie...

569

570 Louise: ek weet dit is daardie storie van hierdie Azapo en mmm...

571

572 Beth: toe ons hierdie vreeslike optogte hier gehad het

573

574 Louise: wat hierdie posters totaal illiterate is

575

576 Beth: en die goed wat hulle sê, goed wat hulle sê, jy weet, uhm..

577

578 Louise: dit was jou

579

580 Beth: dit was Jaco Sieberhagen wat betrokke was, wat hulle hom so aange..., wat hulle

581 hom geteiken het en sy lewe hel gemaak het, ...

582

583 Louise: wat het hy

584

585 Beth: hy het iets gesê in die klas, ek kan nie eers onthou wat dit was nie, maar dit was

586 werklikwaar,... dit was niks, maar...

587

588 Louise: hy was toe opgeneem as `n rassis

589

590 Beth: mmm, en hulle het net geteiken, onthou hulle sweep mekaar op, dit het ek gesien op
591 die Teknikon, ek het dit met my eie ervaar, gesien, en dis skrikwekkend om te sien hoe
592 maklik hulle kan opgesweep raak, so dit veroorsaak ook dat, uhm, dat dosente ook
593 byvoorbeeld hier, uhm, sal baie versigtiger optree, ek het nog nooit `n saak gehad nie, ek
594 moet reguit sê ek sê vir studente presies wat ek van hulle dink, hoe dit is, hulle doen goed
595 by my, hulle het respek vir my, ek het nou die dag toevallig, staan ek in die Spar, en daar
596 kom `n swart student, .. good evening mrs Beth, en ek kyk so, ek sê, who are you, hy sê
597 ma-am you won't remember me, ek sê no but you're old, hy sê yes, you taught me pascal
598 thirteen or fourteen years ago, ek kyk hom so ek sê what your name, hy sê Moses, ek sê I
599 can't remember you, hy sê no you won't, ek sê but how can you remember me, hy sê
600 because you always shouted at us, but we learnt a lot from you...en uhm, ek het nog nooit,
601 eh, `n student, as hy in my klas kom, is dit nie swart of wit nie, dis `n kwessie van, kan jy
602 die werk doen of kan jy nie, ek gee nie om wat die situasie is nie, ons word baie erg ge...,
603 ons standarde is besig om, eh, aangepas te word byvoorbeeld deur die ..programmes,
604 derde geleenthede,

605

606 Louise: derde geleenthede, o, ons het dit ook

607

608 Beth: ja, ..

609

610 Louise: dit is vir blanke studente

611

612 Beth: nee, o, moenie praat van hulle nie, hier het ek, my swakste student in die eerstejaars
613 is op hierdie stadium `n blanke student, dit gaan vir my, behalwe nou vir die skool, dit
614 gaan vir my dat die regte toegang, die oomblik wat `n student dink hy het die reg om
615 universiteit toe te gaan, en daar word nie in ag geneem wat die meriete daarvan is nie, is
616 dit `n fout,

617

618 Louise: ja, mm

619

620 Beth: en ongelukkig, dis maar die humanisme, almal is gelyk, eks jammer, niemand is
621 gelyk nie, ek het nie dieselfde potensiaal as `n Einstein of `n John Murray of `n ...ek het
622 dit nie, en as jy nie, as jy, as jy te dom is om te beseef wat die einde van jou potensiaal is,
623 dit is `n disaster, so, wanneer mense begin dink almal is gelyk, dit is wanneer die pawpaw
624 die fan dan behoorlik strike, ...

625

626 Louise: Oukei, hoor hier, ek dink ons het genoeg gepraat, ek dink ek het genoeg by jou
627 gehoor, ek dink ek het ook iets geleer uit die gesprek, mens weet nie altyd wat gaan aan
628 op ander plekke nie, jy sê, jy weet mens lees jou goed ook in isolasie

629

630 Beth: mmmm

631

632 Louise: jy het die stuk geskryf en mens beseef nie waar jy vandaan kom nie, en dit is maar
633 met almal so

634

635 Beth: kyk, ek het in 1990 begin by die technikon, ek het in Afrikaanse gegee, dit was,
636 daar was nie baie swart studente nie, dit was baie Portugees gewees, ons het mmm, ons
637 was verskriklik akkommoderend in terme van Engels en Afrikaans, en '94 was die eerste
638 opstand gewees, en, dit was chaoties, toe was dit 50/50 gewees, studente was 50 wit en
639 50 swart, en hulle het mekaar getakel en hulle het die plek verwoes, dit was afgryflik, toe
640 is die volgende jaar, toe is daar omtrent nie meer blanke studente nie, toe het dit geval tot
641 omtrent 20 persent, en van die 5 duisend is dit nou op na 20 duisend by die technikon,
642 waarvan 99 persent swart is, maar '97 was eintlik vir my die keerpunt in my lewe, want
643 ons was sewe weke by die huis, hulle het miljoene rande se skade aangerig, en daarna het
644 die studente net ingekom, en ons het `n swart dekaan gehad, mnr Matula, en die
645 slaagsyfer vir programmering op daardie stadium was iets soos 5 persent, en ons is
646 ingeroep, ons klomp dosente, waarvan baie jare kom, en hy het gaan sit en hy het gesê
647 we've got problems with programming, but I don't want to hear about the problems, I
648 want solutions, en hy het by een kant begin en die een het gesê in plaas van 8 ure klas sal

649 ek tien ure gee en hierdie een het dit gesê en daardie een het dat gesê en ek het met `n
650 verveeldheid daar gesit, met `n verveeldheid, en toe hy by my het hy gesê, mrs Beth,
651 what do you want, en ek het gesê get me 30 good students and I'll give you 30 that pass,
652 en toe sê hy, well then, mrs Beth, I'll then have to say goodbye to you, because then you
653 won't have work, toe sê ek then I'll go first, en ek het uitgestap en ek het Derrick gebel
654 en gesê het jy werk vir my en hy het gesê kom werk hierso, en ek ondervind dat ons
655 universiteit is besig om presies dieselfde ding te..., jy weet iemand het gesê, die
656 universiteit, vir elke universiteitsgegradueerde, moet daar 5 technikon gegradueerdes
657 wees, en vir elkeen van hulle moet daar 5 tegniese kollege gegradueerdes wees, en vir
658 elkeen van hulle 5 ambagsmanne, en deesdae wil almal baas wees, en die Bybel is
659 duidelik daarop, nou was jy die kop en dan is jy die stert, die wat die stert was, is nou die
660 kop, en dit is presies die hiërargie van die hele samelewing het omgedraai, die werkers
661 rule, die studente rule, en die mense wat eintlik die wysheid en die grysheid het, word
662 eenkant toe geskuif, en dit gaan nie verander nie, die deling gaan nie verander nie, en dit
663 is een van die goed waarom ek aanhou, in wese kom dit van die humanistiese kant, en ek
664 is nie `n humanis nie,

665

666 Louise: wat sal jy jousef, hoe coin jy jousef? As jy nie `n humanis is nie

667

668 Beth: ek is `noeg, ek gaan nou vir jou `n vreeslike vloekwoord gee, ek is `n
669 fundamentalis, `n Bybelse fundamentalis, en daar is, almal se hare staan orent as jy dit sê,
670 en uhm, maar ek is absoluut fundamentalisties, en dit het my nog nooit in my lewe en in
671 my verhoudings of met my studente of met die mense wat vir my werk ooit uhm, skade
672 aangedoen nie, dit is die ou wat aan die ander kant staan wat die hardste skree, Bybel
673 fundamentalis, wanneer jy `n stelling maak wat baie waterdig kan wees, maar net omdat
674 jy dit van `n fundamentalistiese oogpunt sien, word dit dadelik afgeskiet, so ek wil ook sê
675 dat ek is, ek is `n Bybelse fundamentalis

676

677 Louise: en jou stem op die forum, dit word daardeur gedra?

678

679 Beth: Ek dink so, ek het genoeg gesê

680

681 Louise: so as mense sê jy is `n bybelse fundamentalis

682

683 Beth: ek dink ek is ook beskuldig daarvan.

684

685 Louise: so dis vir jou `n kompliment as mense dit agterkom.

686

687 Beth: mmm, mmm, ek het nog nooit, dis altyd vir my verstommend as die media skryf of
688 as mense hulle uitlaat oor fundamentalisme, uhm, dis soos die woord nasionalisme of
689 patriotisme, of jy weet, die, dit was altyd die goeie kwaliteite, dit het die skuim van die
690 aarde geword, en uhm die Bybel is baie duidelik daarop, daar is paaie....., die Bybel is
691 baie duidelik op die smal pad en die breë pad en die nuwe paaie, is baie duidelik daaroor,
692 mens verander nie net om te verander nie, en ek weet die filosofie van die wêreld changes,
693 the only thing that is constant is change, daar is sekere tye wat jy net moet sê nee, ek gaan
694 nie verander nie, en ek het op `n punt in my lewe gekom waar ek net gesê het nee, ek
695 gaan nie meer verander nie.

696

697 Louise: toe jy daar by die technikon was, jy is seker in jou 50's,

698

699 Beth: 52, 5 kleinkinders

700

701 Louise: by die technikon was jy in jou 40's ne?

702

703 Beth: kyk ek is nou, ja, ek was seker in my 40's gewees, ek het begin toe ek dertig daar
704 was, ek was 30 jaar oud,

705

706 Louise: hierdie biografiese details is nodig vir my om `n prentjie van jou in te kleur, en
707 het jy in hierdie omgewing grootgeword of waar kom jy vandaan?

708

709 Beth: Ek kom eintlik van Pretoria af, maar ons het toe in Johannesburg gebly en ons is
710 nou so 21 jaar in die Vaaldriehoek. Eh, weet jy wat, ag ek dink, jy weet daar is baie

711 mense wat baie graag wil sê, wat wil, wat goed wil sê, maar, ek moet ook sê daar is `n
712 ander faktor wat bygekom het, ons het baie besig geraak, jy weet, toe ek in 2003 hier
713 begin het, was ons, ons was min, ons het min klas gehad en ons het nie hierdie, hierdie
714 (sug) kritieke uitkomst, OBE-twak, en EPE's en al die nonsens wat daarmee saamgaan,
715 gehad nie, ons was akademië, ons het klas gegee en ons het die ding hanteer soos ons
716 gedink het om dit te hanteer, en ons het navorsing gedoen, en ewe skielik het ons 5 toetse
717 `n semester plus `n eksamen, plus lêers wat moet op datum, so die administratiewe las het
718 swaar geword, so om tyd te spandeer, dan moet jy navorsing ook doen, so om tyd te
719 spandeer aan die BBS en ek moet werklikwaar sê, partykeer futiele gesprekke, en dit het
720 regtigwaar vir my later gevoel, hier is jy soos `n haan op `n mishoop wat kwekkwekkwek
721 en Stephen was daar en daar was nooit werklikwaar insette, en ek weet nie of jy
722 agtergekom het nie, die ondersteuning van die Johns en die Frans en die Erics en die
723 Oliviers en die Stephens, dit het altyd gekom vir Stephen, by my was daar bittermin
724 stemme, intendeel, is ek net konstant aangeval, so, ondersteuning op die BBS, is daar
725 van, is daar niks van ter sprake nie.

726

727

728

1 **Interview Francois**

2 **2 December 2010**

3 **09:00**

4

5 Louise: I first want to know, what motivates you to take part in the forum, are you still
6 taking part, what is your reason, why?

7

8 Francois: Well, I'm not taking part in it anymore, and this is a choice, and I'll come to
9 this in a second, originally I think the BBS was quite simply a platform for uhm, both
10 fruitful debate, but I don't think it ever reached that and provocation, and I was interested
11 in both, and I think what mainly started me in the end was that I was just interested in
12 provocation, because I could see that no debate wasn't going anywhere, and it was
13 partially my fault as well, because, as much as I considered the people radical in their
14 views, in terms of the subjects that we tackled on the BBS, uhm, I was, I think in the end,
15 I was not really interested in the debate, I was really interested in provoking bad reactions
16 from the people, and I got what I wanted, really, it was fun, uh, it was fun, but it also was
17 emotionally challenging, because, just as you attack people quite frankly and frantically,
18 you have to expect people to attack you back, and so all kinds of bad and I think negative
19 feelings come into the equation, I think that well, some of the first subjects that I tackled,
20 not only me but some of my colleagues, like Stephen and Erick Chambers, at the
21 time,...I think you will talk to them as well, you should, anyway, ..

22

23 Louise: I haven't talked to Erick,

24

25 Francois: He has left the university

26

27 Louise: Is he still around?

28

29 Francois: I got his number if you want....and so, to me, yes, instead of becoming a
30 universal tool for everyone, it became, and I am talking about the hayday of the BBS, yes,
31 this was 2005 I think, 2004, 2005, when the new BBS system came online, because

32 before that it was via Groupwise, it wasn't very practical, but I remember the first topic I
33 ever tackled, and that was back in 2000 I think or 2001, was this bunch of radical
34 Christians, uh, petitioning against the advertisement of ice creams, the seven deadly sins,
35 the Ola ice cream, the Ola people came with this commercial slogan, eating this ice cream
36 would be like embracing the seven deadly sins, and so a bunch of people at the faculty of
37 theology uhm, petitioned and ultimately you know, got their way, and this to me, you
38 know, was a provocation to common sense and what we stand for as a university, because
39 we are a university, we're not a church, and at the time you know, the difference was
40 unclear, because we were still the Christian university, and so the lines were fairly
41 blurring, and so, well I started you know, populating that forum, uh, with all kinds of
42 arguments, uh, some of them silly, some of them mocking and ridiculing people, because
43 that is the tools I like to use in general, for better or for worse, for worse in most cases,
44 uhm, and then so, you know, my name sort of got known in that time, and then

45

46 Louise: the antichrist or something

47

48 Francois: yeah, probably, some people definitely thought I was a Satanist,.... And it got
49 pretty far in terms of uh, because I like to uh, the Christian perspective, because I am an
50 atheist, verging on antitheism, and the idea of a God you know, just baffles me, but
51 anyway, that is besides the point, but I started tackling the subject, and tackling the little
52 details that bugged me, like prayer at the beginning of classes, and this, also this very
53 negative view of humankind, which is inherent to Protestantism to a large extent, in
54 Catholicism to a lesser extent

55

56 Louise: the very negative view on human rights, also

57

58 Francois: yeah, there were a variety of things, that, you know, it was a very fertile field
59 for provocation

60

61 Louise: Yes

62

63 Francois: an insane debate, and of course the cherry on the cake was the Brandwag
64 episode

65

66 Louise: Ja, I read that

67

68 Francois: some messages from that were deleted actually

69

70 Louise: ja, I want to talk about that, I know that you had a very strong address to Barend
71 and in some way you had to apologise, tell me more about that..what happened

72

73 Francois: well, it started on a Monday, there was one of my students in the second year,
74 who was really the archetypal student, coming out of his shell and becoming an
75 individual, I know that it sounds like a cliché and idealistic, but this was really someone
76 transforming himself, starting in his first year as this radical conservative person in
77 philosophy and literature classes, where this was typically a class where we talk about
78 these things, using some French text as an excuse for dealing with this topic and he sort
79 of start opening up and he was still living in the Brandwag residence, and it didn't help
80 that he was coming out of the closet, as well, not that much at the time, but I could see
81 that that was where he was going, and living in a very masculine environment like
82 Brandwag, you can imagine all the problems, and so uhm, I don't know how it happened,
83 he started to telling me about what was going on at Brandwag the night before, that they
84 had been made to run around, uh, and shave their armpits and all kinds of things that I
85 really can't possibly associate with a learning environment, and with a serious intellectual
86 environment, and so, obviously I was the wrong person, to be confided in with this kind
87 of episode, so, after the class was over, I rushed to my computer and logged into the BBS
88 and obviously wrote the first that you probably read, and so I wasn't of afraid of anyone
89 because I was a foreigner I don't really care about what people think about me, because
90 anyway I am branded as a foreigner anyway, uhm, so I started writing and naming names
91 and it's actually raising the point that if there was a housefather at Brandwag last night,
92 what the hell was he doing, and obviously those people, Barend, I actually never received
93 any news from him, he never wrote me, he never phoned me, I tried to phone him, I tried

94 to write to him, I even tried to go to his office, but, there was never anybody, and so this
95 whole thing cascaded down to a conclusion where I had to publicly apologise, well, this
96 is essentially the reason why I started writing on the BBS, because I was made to
97 apologise for denouncing a practice which is nonsensical and blatantly ridiculous, and so,
98 Brandwag never apologized, you know, so

99

100 Louise: you had to

101

102 Francois: yeah, the rector back then, who is Cathy, who is a close friend as well, uhm and
103 she tried to mend the pieces, and she asked me, maybe I was the more flexible person in
104 the whole equation I guess, but I think she also,... I don't know how well she knows
105 Barend, but I owe Cathy a lot, she was the one who hired me in the first place when she
106 was the head of the school of languages, so I think she, either willingly or not, it doesn't
107 really matter, I think she, I wouldn't say she emotionally blackmailed me, but, you know,
108 there wasn't any other solution for me,

109

110 Louise: in a good spirit she asked you to

111

112 Francois: Ja, completely, and I didn't want to, you know back then it was taking a toll on
113 my family as well, as it was the subject of conversations for a while and obviously
114 because of the emotional affect that you derive from such a situation, so, after this
115 episode, I saw that, well, what can you do anyway, you can use the BBS as much as you
116 want, but it is obviously controlled in many ways, and, and you can't convince the people
117 of your point. It's also useful to say that I am not the best person to argue, Stephen might
118 be better, because he masters the English language much better than I do, and he is in
119 sociology, so he can see more clearly through the structures and layers of human
120 interaction

121

122 Louise: I also think he is a bit more emotionally detached,

123

124 Francois: Ja, exactly, uhm, and so for a while, we were very good friends, with Stephen
125 and Margaret, so, uh, for a while it was fine to be just, uh, he was a more rational person
126 and I was provoking once in a while to make it a lively place, and shortly after or before,
127 there was this big debate about creationism and evolution, because I heard that some
128 people wanted to make a certain doctor Keimans come to the university, it was a bit of a
129 quack doctor in philosophy from an unnamed college in America who believed that
130 dinosaurs walked with Jesus, something like that, it is grotesque, and so there was this
131 topic as well, and obviously, as you have been probably able to read on the BBS, the
132 most insane reactions came out about that, uh, but the funny thing about the BBS and you
133 can hear it.in... it is also to a large extent about ego, right, it is about exposing yourself
134 and being able to appear as somebody obnoxious in my case, which I enjoy doing, for the
135 sake of doing it, because it is fun, and I am not, I am not tied to any particular moral,
136 when it comes to respecting people, or, if I feel there needs something to be said I'll say it
137 and possibly not in the nicest way possible, uhm, that is also the funny thing about the
138 BBS, it is also about saying I, and, you know what e-mail does, you can see the people
139 writing, but you don't know how they are exactly, you don't know if they are screaming
140 and so on and forth, and then there were various issues as well about racism, you know
141 the whole range of issues that you will definitely see as

142

143 Louise: yes, the Brandwag culture, different traditions there, religion, racism, those are
144 basically the issues

145

146 Francois: yeah,

147

148 Louise: Stephen says that racism actually underlies all the important issues, surfacing on
149 the BBS

150

151 Francois: mm, well, I will tend to agree, it is uh, but that is not inherent to South Africa
152 itself, I think it is also a universal phenomenon, uh, but looking at the history of this
153 campus, looking at the history of this country, it's not far fetched to say that race or class

154 underlies a lot of issues, underly a lot of issues on the campus, uh, I was more interested
155 in religion, but eventually religion falls in class and race as well in many of the ways, ..
156

157 Louise: So you found fertile ground to poke

158

159 Francois: To piss people off, actually, it was the point, and I mean I can readily admit it
160 without any shame, I think the aim really was to provoke reactions and to start a debate,
161 but, uh, it wasn't fruitful for many reasons, but my reasons was obviously, I was not
162 looking for a debate towards the end, I was looking just to piss people off,

163

164 Louise: Do you think you have changed minds? Raised some consciousness?

165

166 Francois: Among the staff?

167

168 Louise: Yes.

169

170 Francois: I don't think so, no, look when people are adults they're the same, you know, I
171 have evolved since those days in many ways, but I think I have evolved more in the
172 direction I was heading to anyway, I didn't have any relevation, I think it is a Christian
173 born again concept, I didn't take a shower and then was reborn as a..whatever..

174

175 Louise: But did people respond to you positively, say well, we agree, but we won't write
176 on the BBS

177

178 Francois: I have had a bit of that, we are not talking about some messages, maybe five or
179 six, messages over the years, saying well, you know, we sort of agree with you, but we
180 don't have the guts to write on the BBS, ..

181

182 Louise: They feel, perhaps they are too much of insiders

183

184 Francois: Yeah, and then I can understand, you know, if I were them, I would have
185 exactly the same grievances, and the same hesitations, as I said, I am in the very fortunate
186 position, I think Stephen will share this, because he is English speaking, he comes from
187 Cape Town, so in many ways he is an outsider as well, and as an outsider I carry with me
188 the reputation of my country, you know, in France we tend to discuss everything, ...in
189 Europe, there is a culture of critique, rather than embracing any kind of self propelled
190 truth, ...

191

192 Louise: I spoke to Peter and he sort of says the same thing, he says there is no debate
193 around and also academic debate doesn't exist.

194

195 Francois: Yeah, well, there is, the latest I saw, I don't really write anything, there is a new
196 section on the BBS called academic, and I find it very ironic for a university, and the
197 section has at least been in existence for a few weeks, but nothing has been
198 written...nobody is interested in academic debate, you know, academic debate takes
199 place in offices like this, around coffee with your colleagues, somehow if you're lucky,
200 but I don't think it can ever take place in a platform like the BBS... uhm, but funny
201 enough, I just remember that some people, I think it was, what is her name, she is very
202 racist, ..

203

204 Louise: Beth,

205

206 Francois: She is Stephen's favourite,

207

208 Louise: Yeah, I went to her, I spoke to her

209

210 Francois: Ok, that must have been lively, yeah, what was I about to say? Yeah, she called
211 us, Peter, Stephen and myself, uh, she called us the pack of wolves or something, which I
212 thought was very funny, I was part of such a mob of people, uhm,

213

214 Louise: She refers to the sociology department as a nest of termites, because you never
215 see what they're doing, but they are really undermining

216

217 Francois: I think Stephen is very right in highlighting that sort of things, and she thinks
218 along the lines of education a very conservative family in my mind, uhm, look, it is not
219 always easy to accept the fact what our society, the society in which we live, looks like,
220 uh, but if you go outside of Potchefstroom you'll see lots of people, you know, knowing
221 more about, and then seeing through the lines, reading through the lines of human
222 interaction in South Africa, that everything, Stephen has mentioned the thing, which he
223 will say in a more eloquent manner, is that everything again is underlined again by race
224 and class, and ...and everywhere I can look you know, it's the truth, we've got emotions
225 and we've got culture, but these terms are misused as well, uhm, so when Beth says she is
226 proud to be an Afrikaner, she says it in a way that brings with it a lot of very negative
227 luggage, I know a lot of Afrikaans people outside of Potchefstroom, for them being an
228 Afrikaner, an Afrikaans person is about a certain culture, it is also a culture of marginality,
229 it is also a culture of adventure, of initiative and know-how, and knowledge of the land
230 and so on, everything you can associate with good things, unfortunately Beth is more
231 from the Eugene Terreblanche school, you know, and it is not very nice, and it doesn't do
232 credit to Afrikaans culture, ..

233

234 Louise: It's true, it is just strange, the reactions is only from you, only from four or five
235 people, and we, who are more in the middle of the continuum, we don't react to her, ..

236

237 Francois: ja, which is a shame, I wouldn't say it's an acceptance of what she says, a lot of
238 people in general... it's a shame, it gives an opportunity for people to express
239 themselves, ..

240

241 Louise: Well, they see it as...you can say something publicly, you are out there and you
242 can get criticized, ..

243

244 Francois: You got to accept that

245

246 Louise: You say that there was some emotional impact with the Brandwag thing, others
247 things that you find emotionally challenging, emotionally exhausting? ..

248

249 Francois: No that was the big thing, at one point I did write in French a message, because
250 I was really tired of the ridiculous matching all the time, the litany of prayer and silly
251 sentences that didn't mean anything, and there was a whole thread that started, the
252 language that we use on the BBS, and so somebody said, well I can write in Tswana, I
253 can't remember, somebody started writing in Tswana to which Peter responded
254 blablablalabla, very, you know, obnoxious, which I found extremely funny, and then for
255 the sake of, I also wrote a piece in French where I said, quote, that Jesus was a flea
256 infested prophet, as people lived two thousand years ago in squatter conditions, earlier,
257 there was just one purpose in doing it, it was to piss people off, and I wrote it in French,
258 and I didn't think that someone would decipher it, but somebody did, so that person, I
259 think it was a lecturer at, his name is Roberto Gugliemi, actually he is..

260

261 Louise: Oh, he is from philosophy, that Italian guy,....

262

263 Francois: Yeah, philosophy, but he speaks French, so he translated this and he began a
264 message which is still there, saying this interesting fact, saying you know that Jesus
265 blablalabla, this is the kind of incident that happened, but I take full responsibility for it,
266 and I still find it highly funny, and the other people saw me as a pure, you know,
267 provocateur, which I was deliberately being, and there was no other purpose than provoke
268 reaction, and nastily enough I thought it was very funny, ..

269

270 Louise: Uhm, ok, actually we have spoken a lot and I am very grateful to you, I had a few
271 questions and I think they were covered, ..

272

273 Francois: yes, I think the rest is self explanatory and they are still on the BBS

274

275 Louise: That's true

276

277 Francois: But there were some messages which were deleted, so you may talk about
278 censorship as well, ..

279

280 Louise: ja

281

282 Francois: Including my first apology which was deleted, uh, I think Stephen saved a pdf-
283 file of those conversations but I can't remember where they are, uhm, whether there was
284 anything in it that was saved,..

285

286 Louise: yeah, those first discussion in 2004, the things about religion, you can't find it on
287 the BBS, because it was on the old BBS, so those weren't saved, ..

288

289 Francois: Ja

290

291 Louise: But the people who deleted your stuff, was it you or was it the ITB-people or ..

292

293 Francois: it wasn't the ITB-people, the thing is Cathy asked me to write an apology, I
294 wrote a semi-apologetic letter, I said and it is as far as I can remember, I addressed
295 Barend personally, directly, you and I obviously have different perspectives of the
296 university, you think it is a giant jamboree and you think it is a military camp,

297

298 Louise: Jamboree?

299

300 Francois: Like a country party, so essentially I said you think that being at the university
301 is just trolling the campus.in your pajamas and shaving your armpits and that is all fun
302 and games, I think it is a place of academic betterment and we will never agree, so I
303 apologise if I offended your perspective,obviously that was deleted almost
304 immediately, and I think that is why it has never been said anyway, and Cathy phoned me
305 personally five minutes after, uhm, and she said no, you have to write something more
306 apologetic and this remained

307

308 Louise: and she was obviously under some pressure

309

310 Francois: yeah, yeah

311

312 Louise: and she was then the rector, or was she wasn't the dean of ..

313

314 Francois: no, she was the rector, she was the rector; and and yeah, I think her and

315 Barend know each other quite well, and thereafter I tried to reach Barend by phone, you

316 know, I was afraid that if I went to his office, then he would get physical, and he would

317 probably get physical, ..and I was quite happy and I would never regret saying, and if it

318 were to be done again I would do exactly the same again, perhaps even worse and more

319 cruel, because I don't think I pushed it far enough, but I tried to phone him and he had

320 asked his secretary to block the calls from me, and

321

322 Louise: there was something on the BBS, like, don't you have other things to do...you

323 know, you must have lots of time on your hands..

324

325 Francois: Yeah, obviously I had the time to deal with this issue, I was working here and I

326 didn't want to be associated with that, and I wanted to ridicule Barend, and I managed to

327 get his secretary once and she said quote: Will you please fuck off our department,

328

329 Louise: Was that telephonically?

330

331 Francois: Yeah, and she said I was making a storm in a teacup, well, and I said say that to

332 the people who had to shave their armpits and found it very funny and they are so

333 brainwashed, they think these are the best days of their lives, you know, instead of

334 attending classes and possibly reading books that can change them and make them not to

335 see other perspectives and other horizons in the world that we inhabit .. so this is pretty

336 much how it happened, and after 2005 I just decided to, you know

337

338 Louise: You still wrote stuff after that?

339

340 Francois: Yeah, but it was only occasionally in isolated cases, I don't think it drew any
341 reaction, I think Stephen writes much more than I do

342

343 Louise: Yes, he continued, there was this big discussion in 2008 on racism, and that is
344 why I decided to take the BBS as my object of research, I started with that thread as my
345 point of departure

346

347 Francois: mm, ok, yeah, that is quite interesting, I am not sure if anything is going on
348 now, I haven't been on it for quite some time. Uhm, but I am leaving now, so I don't
349 want to get involved in that.

350

1 **Onderhoud Cathy**

2 **9 Maart 2011**

3 **09:30**

4

5 Louise: Ek wil eers dankie sê dat jy ingewillig het om met my te praat oor die BBS, of oor die
6 gespreksforum spesifiek, uhm, die eerste vraag is, ek onthou jy het een keer by ons in `n
7 vergadering kom sê, ja, jy lees die BBS, geïnteresseerd daarin, uhm, hoekom?

8 Cathy : Kyk, ek dink dis baie belangrik as mens in `n, in `n bestuursposisie is, dat jy moet weet
9 wat mense dink en sê, want uh, mens beweeg nogal `n bietjie, veral as jy op die vlak van
10 kampusrektor is, dan't jy min te doen met die mense wat heelwat laer af is op die voedselketting,
11 om dit nou maar so te noem,

12 Louise: ja

13 Cathy : en mens, mense is baie huiwerig om vir jou dinge reguit te sê, uh, ek dink altyd jy weet
14 `n career limiting statement wees,

15 Louise: ja

16 Cathy : of hulle dink dis nie toepaslik dat hulle jou met onbenullighede opsaal nie, of hulle is
17 bang dat hulle aanstoot gaan gee, al daai soort van goeters wat natuurlik nou maar uit uh, kyk die
18 verhouding tussen senior bestuurder en iemand laer af in die organisasie is maar `n skewe
19 magsverhouding,

20 Louise: ja

21 Cathy : en uit die aard van die saak is mense uh, daar is baie filters wat mense inbou om seker te
22 maak dat hulle hulself verskans ook, en die BBS was vir my nog altyd uhm een van die heel
23 beste maniere om agter te kom wat mense regtig dink, want ek vermoed dat van die ouens wat op
24 die uhm, BBS skryf, dat hulle uhm, nie dink dat senior bestuur dit gaan lees nie, so hulle is
25 enigsins meer onbevange en hulle, uhm, of hulle dink jy gaan dit lees en dit gee vir hulle `n

26 geleentheid om maar bietjie `n skuins klap in te kry of wat ook al, maar dit was vir my in die
27 grootste mate `n geleentheid om te hoor wat die, wat die volk dink

28 Louise: die vox populi

29 Cathy : wat die vox populi, wat baie belangrik is,

30 Louise: ja

31 Cathy : en uhm, ek dink wat baie mense dalk uh, kontak mee verloor, en mens moenie dit doen
32 nie, want jy moet deurgaans, uh,jy moet toeganklik wees, jy hoef nou nie, `n oopdeurbeleid
33 vir my beteken nie dat uh, jy kan sommer enige tyd daar kan inloop nie, net dit beteken dat ek
34 beskikbaar is vir gesprek, dat ek sal luister na wat mense graag wil sê, ..

35 Louise: Nou, ek het met Stephen gepraat, hy was my eerste onderhoud, en kyk hy
36 verteenwoordig `n redelike linkse uhm,stem, toe het ek met Beth gepraat, wat redelik aan die
37 ander kant is van die politieke

38 Cathy : spektrum, ja, ..

39 Louise: en albei van hulle was baie positief oor die rol wat jy gespeel het, dit het my laat dink jy
40 is rêrig onpartydig, ..

41 Cathy : Kyk, ek sal myself nou nie noodwendig heeltemaal onpartydig noem nie, ek het my eie
42 redelike sterk oortuiging, maar, uhm,ek dink dis tog belangrik dat mens vir almal `n
43 geleentheid en `n stem moet gee en ek moet sê dat uh veral Stephen, uhm, ek was deels
44 verantwoordelik nog vir uhm, sy aanstelling by die universiteit en ek het juis in `n veld soos syne
45 wat nou sosiale antropologie is,

46 Louise: ja

47 Cathy : het ek gedink dis baie belangrik dat mens `n ander stem moet inbring, want uhm, hy het
48 interessant genoeg die antropologie-skool verteenwoordig, waar die Puk oor baie jare die
49 volkekunde-skool verteenwoordig het,

50 Louise: o ja,

51 Cathy : so, en, dit was vir my goed om `n antropoloog eerder as `n volkekundige

52 Louise: ja

53 Cathy : aan te stel met al die semantiek wat daarmee gepaard gaan, en hy het my nie teleurgestel
54 nie, uhm, ek het gehou, ek het baie dikwels sy standpunte gesteun, en ek het gedink, uh, dat hy
55 verwoord wat ek sou wou verwoord as ek uh, heeltemaal onafhanklik kon praat, dat `n mens,
56 mens moet net versigtig wees as jy in `n bestuursposisie is dat jy nie te openlik kant kies nie

57 Louise: ja

58 Cathy : en veral nie uhm, `n kontroversiële kant kies nie, want dit uh, dit kan die verkeerde
59 beeld uitgee as mens besig is om iets te bereik.. maar ek het gedink Stephen se stem is nodig,

60 Louise: ja

61 Cathy : hy uh, hy skryf baie goed, hy skryf spitsvondig, hy sien dinge raak, nou, uit die aard van
62 die saak, as `n ou bietjie die lefty op die kampus is, ek het baie jare die reputasie gehad van die
63 lefty wees, uh, uit die aard van die saak is dit soms oordrewe, uit die aard van die saak stem
64 mens nie saam met al die nuanses van wat hy sê nie, ek het net gedink dis nodig dat die ouens dit
65 hoor,aan die ander kant, wat Beth betref, was dit vir my net...ek het nie noodwendig
66 saamgestem met standpunte nie, maar ek het net gedink dis goed, daar moet plek wees vir
67 lewendige debat, en uh, wat was die Hough outjie, het ook..

68 Louise: Anthony

69 Cathy : Anthony, het ook lekker te kere gegaan, en uit die aard van die saak, Andrew, het sekere
70 standpunte gehad maar ek het altyd gedink Stephen se standpunte was waarskynlik die,
71 akademies gesproke die mees uh, genuanseerde, en hy uh het die regte goed op uh gefokus

72 Louise: hy was ook solied gewees,

73 Cathy : baie solied ja, nee ek dink hy is vir die universiteit ook `n aanwins, ek dink hy dreig kort-
74 kort, nee hy wil nie hier wees nie, hy wil loop, en al so, maar hy het nog nie geloop nie, hy is nou
75 al lank hier, en uh, ek dink tog uh sy stem was baie nodig, binne die konteks van waar hy
76 aangestel is, maar ook in die breër kampus.

77 Louise: Ja, nou ek het met Beth gepraat en toe't ek, voor ek met haar gepraat het, het ek
78 agtergekom daar was nou teen haar opgetree ,..... op daardie kampus, dat sy `n brief moes
79 onderteken dat sy rassistiese uitsprake gemaak het, daardie bestuur het haar skynbaar gedwing,
80 sy het gesê sy gaan dit nie teken nie, sy gaan net teken dat sy kennis geneem het van die brief,

81 Cathy : mmmm

82 Louise: en toe noem sy dat jy gesê het, wel, jy sal nie so iets, op hierdie kampus sal so iets nie
83 gebeur het nie,wil jy iets daarvoor sê? Uhm.

84 Cathy : kyk, dis altyd `n baie moeilike ding, uh, mens sou wou hê dat akademici moet 'n
85 bepaalde dekorum aan die dag kan lê, dis vir my nogal uh, `n konsep wat ons in drama nogal
86 geleer het maar dis `n konsep wat ek baie wyd, uh, jou dekorum beteken dat jy `n ordentlike
87 judgement het, oor wat jy in die openbaar kan sê en wat jy nie kan sê nie, uh, ek weet baie van
88 ons huldig dalk in ons binneste standpunte wat mens gewoon nie gaan uitblaker en aan die groot
89 klok gaan hang nie, want dit kan kwetsend wees,

90 Louise: ja

91 Cathy : dit kan die universiteit se naam in diskrediet bring, en so, en uh, ek sou graag in `n
92 ideale wêreld wil hê dat `n, dat `n dosent moet weet waste dekorum hy aan die dag moet lê, waar
93 lê sy, waar's die finesse, die akademiese finesse om te weet, ag nee man, jy maak nie, jy maak
94 nie so `n uitspraak nie, maar, as iemand dit dan uhm doen,dan sal `n mens dit baie
95 versigtig moet benader, ek is baie versigtig vir uh, sensuur,

96 Louise: mm

97 Cathy : want sensuur gaan indruis in teen wat mens beskou as uh, akademiese vryheid, ek meen,
98 en dis heel `n ander debat wat mens natuurlik bietjie in berekening moet bring, maar uhm,, ek sal
99 nie sensuur wil toepas nie, ek sou vreeslik graag wil hê dat `n akademikus moet selfregulerend
100 wees,

101 Louise: ja

102 Cathy : hy moet weet waar is die streep wat hy moet trek, en ek het nou al allerhande
103 moeilikheidjies oor tyd, veral met student gehad, wat ek uhm, ek meen daai Facebook episode,

104 en die hele ding van GK267 wat bepaalde uh uitlatings gemaak het,ek sou dalk, as `n dosent
105 wat my betref die steek heeltemaal oorgesteek het, sou ek persoonlike gesprek mee gevoer het,
106 maar ek sou nie sommer uh tot dissiplinêre optrede oorgaan nie, ek sou eerder die
107 opvoedkundige, ek het inderdaad, oor tyd, met ouens gepraat en gesê hoor hier, kom ons gesels
108 bietjie, ek sou eerder..

109 Louise: negotiate?

110 Cathy : ja, en sê, jy weet wat, so `n ding kan kwetsend wees, so `n ding kan verhoudinge
111 beduiwel, voel jy so sterk daaroor dat jy dit regtig wil sê, dikwels sal `n persoon sê, weet jy, ek
112 het nie mooi gedink nie, ons sal verstom wees oor uh, hoeveel academics nie mooi verstaan nie,
113 nie mooi kan formuleer nie, nie mooi verstaan wat dit is wat hulle eintlik sê nie,

114 Louise: ja

115 Cathy : mens sal amper hoop dat `n academic per definisie uh dit nie sal doen, maar nee, ek sou
116 dalk vir iemand gesê het, hoor hier, wil jy nie maar oorweeg om vir daardie persoon of vir
117 iemand om verskoning te vra nie,

118 Louise: ja

119 Cathy : want dit is tog die christelike paadjie om te loop, maar nie uh, hierdie tipe van
120 strafoptrede nie, dis bietjie..

121 Louise: dis nou nie die volgende vraag nie, maar net terloops, ek het ook met Francois gesels, en
122 hy het gesê maar hy was so half vriendelik gevra om verskoning te vra vir Barend, en toe is die
123 verskoning nie goed genoeg nie en toe moet hy hom nou weer formuleer, uhm, was daar, ek weet
124 nie of jy nou iets rêrig mag sê nie, maar was daar baie druk, was dit maar net bloot disrespekvol?
125 Of was daar....?

126 Cathy : weet jy, as ek nou die episode reg onthou en dit was lank terug, ek het nie nou probeer
127 om nou weer terug te gaan en al daai goed hy het in `n redelike mate opgetree sonder die
128 korrekte inligting..

129 Louise: o goed

130 Cathy : dis waar ek gevoel het waar `n verskoning dalk gepas kan wees, want uh, hy het hom
131 aangevat uh, en hy het nie al die inligting gehad nie, en in daai konteks was dit daarom, nie
132 disrespekvol nie, dit was insulting,

133 Louise: o goed

134 Cathy : maar sy, maar sy, toe ek nou vir hom mooi verduidelik wat eintlik die agtergrond is, en
135 sy verskoning was maar bietjie flouerig, ..

136 Louise: ja, dit was meer `n statement van sy oortuigings

137 Cathy : dit was `n statement, ja ja ja, maar as ek die episode nou reg onthou was dit gewoon dat
138 hy waarskynlik dit nie sou gedoen het as hy bietjie meer inligting gehad het nie en ek het gevoel
139 hy kon, hy kon my gebel het,

140 Louise: mmm

141 Cathy : want ons is op `n baie goeie voet met mekaar, en daarom was dit vir my moeilik om vir
142 hom te sê, uh, you know what, uh, I really think that it's, the ball is in your court, hy is nie vir
143 my kwaad nie, ons is nog altyd baie goeie vriende

144 Louise: met al my gesprekke het ek agter gekom, almal het `n baie, voel baie toegeneë oor die
145 rol wat jy gespeel het

146 Cathy : dis lekker om dit te hoor

147 Louise: uhm, sou jy reken daar's mense wat, of het jy die gevoel gekry dat mense sê ja maar
148 hierdie BBS word gesensureer en nou sê ons nie meer wat ons wil nie

149 Cathy : weet jy, een of twee mense het gesê, veral Andrew, het gesuggereer, sterk gesuggereer
150 dat dit gesensureer word en so, maar dis natuurlik glad nie waar nie, ek het partykeer nie kans
151 gekry om self op die BBS te klim nie, uh, vroeër toe hy baie meer toeganklik was, elektronies,

152 Louise: ja

153 Cathy : het ek elke oggend gou net vir 5 minute gekontroleer en gekyk wat is daar wat
154 interessant is, of my kinders het vir my die goed uitgedruk en huis toe gebring of my sekretaresse

155 het vir my gesê hoor hier het jy gesien daar is nou weer `n ding, en dan, dan het ek dit gelees, uh,
156 maar uh, ek het altyd die gevoel gehad dat daar mense is op die kampus wat dink dat lede van
157 die bestuur in die oggend vroeg opstaan en spesiaal gaan uitfigure hoe hulle daai ou se lewe
158 daardie dag ondraaglik gaan maak,

159 Louise: ja

160 Cathy : wat natuurlik nou nie naastenby waar is nie, mens het nie tyd daarvoor nie, en uhm, ek
161 kan eerlik sê, ek het in `n paar gevalle op die kampus het ek op `n ou se case geklim, nie `n
162 vendetta gevoer nie, want uh, dit is onregverdig, maar op `n ou se case geklim en daar is ook
163 mense wat as gevolg van myen my uh, aandrang op sekere goed hulle werk verloor het, of
164 wat die universiteit verlaat het, dit is so, maar dan was daar baie goeie gronde en dit was binne
165 die korrekte prosedures gedoen, maar ek het nie op `n ou se case geklim op uh, oor uh iets wat hy
166 op die BBS geskryf het nie, ek het net nie tyd gehad om dit te doen nie, en kyk, van die goed het
167 my soms mateloos geïrriteer, omdat dit op swak inligting gebaseer is,

168 Louise: ja

169 Cathy : ek gee nie om as iemand my aanvat oor `n standpunt of oor `n handelinguh en hy
170 doen dit op goeie gronde nie, maar as iemand my aanvat net oor hy `n saak het met bestuur,

171 Louise: uh

172 Cathy : of oor hy net oor hyop sy ou treintjie klim, dan irriteer dit my, maar dan sal ek hom
173 privaat aanvat en vir hom sê ag nee man, kan ek vir jou bietjie inligting gee, dis ook waarom ek
174 met Francois gedag het, ag nee Francois, ek het gedag jy is bietjie beter as dit, moenie handel op
175 uh onvolledige inligting nie, ..

176 Louise: ja, hy is nogal baie... liggeraak,

177 Cathy : hy is `n Fransman,

178 Louise: of seergemaak deur die insident

179 Cathy : ja, nee hy is `n Fransman, hy het gevoel hy mag dit maar doen, maar kyk, in daai
180 spesifieke geval, en hierdie is vertroulik, nè,

181 Louise: ja

182 Cathy : in daai spesifieke geval was dit ook so dat uh, `n senior kollega van my, uh, ek was
183 tussen die twee, ek moes optree en ek het baie versigtig gedink voor ek opgetree het, uh, dit is so
184 dat ek as senior bestuurder darem ook wel `n verantwoordelikheid het teenoor my mede-
185 bestuurder,

186 Louise: ja, dis reg, ek sal die onderhoud transkribeer en vir jou stuur en dan kan jy sê wat moet
187 uit en wat is in orde, want ek dink ek beweeg so half op die grens van wat is eties aanvaarbaar

188 Cathy : ja, ja

189 Louise: maar mens moet sekere inligting kry

190 Cathy : natuurlik, ek is nie skaam vir inligting nie

191 Louise: uhm

192 Cathy : kyk, ek sien hier is die Big Brother sindroom, uh,....as jy baie bang is....dat wat jy sê
193 teen jou gebruik gaan word, dan is die prudent path mos nou om dan nou nie te sê nie,

194 Louise: ja, dis reg

195 Cathy : of om dit nou op die ander manier...as jy op die BBS publiseer, ...met jou naam by, dan
196 voel dit vir my so klein bietjie soos, throw it down the gauntlet, uh, jy wil reaksie hê en jy
197 gaan reaksie kry, as jy dan agterna kom en sê ja maar joe, die ouens het my dan nou so vasgevat,
198 ... dit was nooit my benadering om iemand vas te vat of te benadeel oor goed wat hy op die
199 BBS, ek het buitendien ook nie alles gesien nie, uh, deur die goed wat hulle self voorgedoen het,
200 uhm, ek het myself beslis nie gesien as die rol van Big Brother of Big Sister nie, glad nie,

201 Louise: Big Mother

202 Cathy : Ja, en ek sou nie wou hê uhm, dat dit negatief deur enige iemand ervaar moet word nie,

203 Louise: Ek wil by jou hoor, uhm, sou anonimiteit gehelp het? Sal dit die forum te veel oopgooi
204 vir onverantwoordelike uitlatings?

205 Cathy : Jy sien as jy anonimiteit wil sit, dan sal ek amper voel daar moet `n redakteur wees,
206 want gewoon anonieme goed kan baie lasterlik wees, en dan kan jy nie, uh, ek dink die feit dat jy
207 jou naam moes bysit het het wel `n bietjie van `n selfregulering ingesit, want kyk jy kan uiters
208 lasterlik raak,

209 Louise: ja

210 Cathy : en uh, as jy dan nie kan aangevat word nie, dan het jy darem regtig `n onregverdigde
211 voordeel, as jy nou wil klippe gooi, laat die ouens dan ten minste sien wie die klippe gooi, en, so
212 on, maar, dat jy nie gepenaliseer word oor jy die klippe gooi nie, want want uh, jy kan
213 gerepudieer word op die BBS, ek het myself eintlik nou grootliks weerhou daarvan om te
214 reageer, want ek dink nie dis regverdig, net soos terwyl ek rektor was ek nie aan `n politieke
215 party behoort het nie, want ek dink nie dis toepaslik nie, en ek, jy staan nie `n politieke party
216 voor nie, nie terwyl jy in daai pos is nie, want dit kan ook die persepsie skep dat jy partygenote
217 gaan bevoordeel byvoorbeeld en mens kan nie, uhm, dis al moeilik genoeg om so `n ding op die
218 persoonlike vlak te bestuur, jy soek nie ander moeilikheid nie,

219 Louise: ja, uhm, was daar bydraes op die BBS wat uiteindelik wat die bestuur in ag geneem
220 het of besluit het ons gaan eerder die ding so dryf, goeters wat strukturele veranderings tot
221 gevolg gehad het?

222 Cathy : Weet jy ek kan niesien dat dit op so `n groot mate so `n impak gehad het nie, en dan
223 kan ek nie sê dat ons uh dit by bestuursvergaderings gesê het hoor hier wat was nou op die BBS
224 en hoe kan ons nou uh, oorweging skenk daaraan nie, maar, van die, van die issues het het wel
225 uh, ter sprake gekom, ek sal nie kan sê tot watter mate die uh die BBS uh, bygedra het tot
226 strukturele verandering nie, dat ons wel bewus was van, kyk daar was sekere lede van die bestuur
227 wat hulself heeltemaal gedistansieer het van die BBS, wat gevoel het, ag nee wat, jy weet, ek
228 maak my nie moeg nie, ek kry in elk geval nie tyd om dit te lees nie, ander het dit wel gelees,
229 party het ontsteld geraak daaroor soos Barend, wat nogal soms neig om ontsteld te raak oor sulke
230 goed, hy het eintlik maar `n baie klein hartjie, mense dink dit nie, uh normaalweg nie, uh, ek sou
231 sê dat dit wel geïmpakteer het daarin dat mense wel bewus was daarvan dat daar `n sterk gevoel
232 onder mense loop oor `n sekere saak, en, een ding wat ek eintlik voel wat jammer was, spesifiek
233 oor Andrew se bydraes, ek het eintlik gedink my persoonlike verhouding met hom het

234 agteruit gegaan, waarom ek jammer was, uh, want uh, ek dink hy het my ten onregte gesien as
235 die argitek van sommige van dinge wat nie met hom uh reg geloop het nie, ek sou eintlik graag
236 wou gehad het dat hy sekere, dat hy van die lang stukke wat hy op die BBS geskryf het, dat hy
237 dit eintlik moes intrek ... met bietjie self....-editingen dit as uh, uhm, think pieces uh
238 uhm moes aanbied, want Andrew het gewoonlik `n goeie saak beet, maar hy dryf hom bietjie
239 na `n, na `n ekstreem toe,

240 Louise: ja

241 Cathy : en dan, dan verloor hy sy gehoor, ek het gedink met met uh kwaai editing kon sekere
242 van daai stukke van hom regtig uh in `n publikasie uh uitgeloop het, wat dit nie gedoen het nie,
243 uh, behalwe nou op uhm, die vervlietende..BBS. baie van die..

244 Louise: Hy sou dit waarskynlik nog kon doen, retrospektief

245 Cathy : ja, ja, uhm, ek dink retrospektiewe essays sou waarskynlik interessant wees want, kyk,
246 uh, kom ons sê so, een konsep wat vreeslik gedryf is uh deur veral Andrew, maar hy het ook
247 accolades gehad wat saam met hom ge..., die een konsep wat vreeslik gedryf is was
248 managerialism, en hy het verskeie voorrade daarvoor uh gepraat,ek het baie sterk uitgegaan
249 van die standpunt, dit is in sekere van my toesprake uh het ek dit onderstreep, en dit is dat mens
250 moet onderskeid maak tussen managerialism en good management, dit is so dat die universiteit
251 in die huidige tydsgewrig, en ek praat van die laaste 40 jaar, het universiteite baie meer uh
252 oorgegaan daartoe om soos besighede bedryf te word, die universiteit het te groot geword, `n te
253 groot en te komplekse organisasie, met te veel geld wat daarby betrokke is, om bloot net uh, op
254 die kollegiale vlak bestuur te bly, ons het nog, en ek en Andrew is tydgenote, ons het nog
255 universiteit toe gekom toe hier 2000 studente op die Puk was, toe uh die dekaan se rol was om
256 voorsitter van die fakulteitsraad te wees, uh, en so nou en dan na klagtes te luister, dat daar `n
257 kollegiale gesprek aan die gang was, dat die senaat `n plek was waar mens oor akademiese sake
258 gedebatteer het, elke laaste doktorsgraad-uitslag is op die senaat is die samevattende verslag
259 voorgelees,

260 Louise: jis

261 Cathy : jy weet dit was uh glad nie, dit was glad nie uh die rubber stamping wat vandag, jy weet,
262 wat onafwendbaar is vandag, so, maar met die baie groter, met die baie komplekser omgewing,
263 waar uh, waarin `n mens inbeweeg het, is die punt wat ek gemaak het, maar ek dink nie Andrew
264 het ooit regtig geluister as ek die punt maak nie, is dat deur goeie bestuur, goeie en effektiewe
265 bestuur, skep jy die enabling environment waarbinne `n academic kan werk, waarbinne hy
266 optimaal kan funksioneer,

267 Louise: ja

268 Cathy : want `n academic kan nie werk, kan nie sy navorsing na behore doen as hy nie uh
269 ...geld het nie, die geld moet gevind word, die geld moet geallokeer word, die geld moet reg
270 bestuur word, jy kan nie aanhou om vir iemand geld te gee vir oorsese reise as hy nie wel
271 terugploeg in publikasies en so aan nie, so my uitgangspunt was nie managerialism nie, maar
272 good management, Andrew het dit gesien as managerialism, want alles gaan oor die managers,
273 dit was ook `n wanpersepsie op `n sekere punt van hoeveel mag `n bepaalde bestuurder regtig
274 gehad het

275 Louise: mmm

276 Cathy : en waste duistere motiewe `n bepaalde bestuurder dalk gehad het, so daar het ons
277 mekaar nie gevind nie, maar, dis iets waarna ek geluister het, want ek het geweet dit leef in
278 mense se gemoedere,

279 Louise: ja

280 Cathy : dis die dat ek dit aangespreek het in toesprake, ..

281 Louise: die, die bydraes van Andrew, sou jy sê dit dit het mense bewus gemaak van issues in die
282 transformasie?

283 Cathy : ja, kyk, uh, miskien nie in transformasie as sodanig nie, as jy transformasie sien hier as
284 die verandering van die universiteit se wese,

285 Louise: mm

286 Cathy : wat is nog des universiteit se, dan het dit beslis, hy het `n sekere stem verteenwoordig,
287 dalk `n stem wat bietjie uh, bietjie ver uit op die spektrum was, maar vreeslik nodig, ek meen, uh
288 as ek sê Stephen het uh, sekere penne ingeslaan, op `n sekere plek, dan het Andrew ook sekere
289 penne ingeslaan,

290 Louise: ja

291 Cathy : maar dan moet `n mens altyd weer bietjie na die middelpunt toe beweeg, maar ja, uh, ek
292 sou sê dat die....die leitmotiv wat hy sterk gehad het oor die universiteitswese is die kwessie van
293 managerialism, en in daardie konteks het uh, is daar baie mense wat so dink, hoor, ek meen, as
294 jy na “managerialism in academic context” gaan google, gaan jy op baie artikels afkom, waar
295 mense dit betreur..

296 Louise: kyk, my, my studie gaan nie noodwendig, my studie gaan oor hoe praat mense, en uhm,
297 wat is, wat is die voorwaardes vir demokratiese gesprek,

298 Cathy : mmm

299 Louise: daar is twee, ek kyk `n feministiese hoek daarna en dan kyk ek uit `n krities teoretiese
300 hoek, oukei, dit is bietjie dieselle,

301 Cathy : mm

302 Louise: maar die een is Habermas en die ander een is Young, is `n vrou, en sy het natuurlik baie
303 ander idees oor wat is, wat is die voorwaardes vir demokratiese gesprek, maar dit daar gelaat, ek
304 het ook nie rêrig, ek het Andrew se goed gelees maar ek het dit nie rêrig geanaliseer nie, dit is vir
305 my te omvangryk..

306 Cathy : dit is, dit is baie omvangryk en dis die wat ek gesê het, ernstige editing,

307 Louise: ja

308 Cathy : `n swaar hand op die editing sou, maar die die lyn wat deurloop, kyk ek wou ook met
309 sekere van sy goed begin lees en dan weet ek uhm, dan kan ek al mooi voorspel uh waar dit
310 oppad is, maar kyk as, ek dink wat ons na verwys het al oor die voorwaardes vir `n demokratiese

311 gesprek, dit is `n openheid, daar moet vryheid van spraak wees, maar vryheid van spraak moet
312 wat my betref getemper wees deur `n selfregulering, en dis wat ek saamvat in die term decorum,

313 Louise: `n tipe van emosionele intelligensie

314 Cathy : ja, ja, en en `n bewus wees van algemeen beskaafde norme, van hoe jy mekaar, hoe jy
315 mekaar aanspreek,

316 Louise: ja

317 Cathy : kyk ek het uh,..... in een gesprek waar ek en die betrokke dekaan by `n betrokke skool
318 `n besoek afgelê het en waar uh een van die senior kollegas homself heeltemaal verloor het en op
319 `n besondere onkollegiale manier en uh, gebruik van kru taal, my aangeval het oor iets wat hulle
320 gesien het oor iets wat julle, die bestuur, nou weer verkeerd doen, en ek het hom tot orde
321 geroep en vir hom gesê ek vind sy diskoers ontoepaslik en ek dring aan op `n verskoning, ...wat
322 hy wel aangebied het,

323 Louise: mmm

324 Cathy : grudgingly, maar wel, uh, want dit is so, uhm, ek voel sterk oor die ding van decorum,

325 Louise: ja

326 Cathy : die taalgebruik wat ek dalk huldig in `n informele omgewing, is nie die taalgebruik wat
327 ek sal huldig in `n formele omgewing nie, en mens weet, jy weet watter register is toepaslik, en
328 rondom dit alles bly vir my die konsep decorum

329 Louise: so die gespreksforum, uhm, moet voldoen, die mense wat deelneem moet op `n manier
330 en dan `n onderbewuste hê, hier is `n sekere standaard van uitdrukking, oukei, ek kan grappe
331 maak, maar..

332 Cathy : jy kan grappe maak

333 Louise: daar was op `n stadium `n vuil grappie gewees op die BBS gewees wat mense die ou toe
334 aangevat het, ..

335 Cathy : maar sien, dis mense se persepsie van hy het decorum oortree, en kyk, jy kan sekere
336 grappe vertel maar jy kan hulle nie neerskryf nie, daar is ander grappe wat uh vreeslik snaaks is
337 wat regtig bietjie risky is, maar wat jy maar kan vertel, want dis `n slim woordspeling, dit is dit,
338 sekere woorde skryf jy nie, en `n`n bewus wees daarvan is baie belangrik, dis vir my regtig,
339 uhm, as jy deelneem aan `n oop gesprek, jy kan radikale idees ...neersit, sonder dat jou
340 taalgebruik

341 Louise: ja

342 Cathy : die decorum oorskrei, jy kan regtig radikaal wees, en daarom is idees vir my ek het nou
343 die afgelope tyd, speel daar nogal iets in my kop deur, wat ek as `n soort van `n mantra gehad
344 het, ek het dit gebruik in my heel eerste toespraak, toe ek rektor geword het, en ek het weer toe
345 ek in my afsluiting weer gebruik wat ek gesê het mense en dinge vergaan, maar idees en
346 waardes bly staan,

347 Louise: ja

348 Cathy : en dit lyk vir my, onder waardes sluit ek dan ook hierdie decorum ding in, daar is `n
349 manier van doen, ..

350 Louise: daar was een van die deelnemers wat vir my gesê het, hy is nou nie, hy gebruik.. toe sê
351 hy die ordentlikheid van die Afrikaner weerhou hulle daarvan om rêrig te sê wat hulle dink,
352hy het gesê Jonathan Jansen praat van die ordentlikheid van die Afrikaner, half as `n skans,
353 dat jy nie kan, jy nie deur dit sien nie, want hulle het hierdie ordentlikheid..

354 Cathy : kyk, dis `n baie komplekse ding, uh, ek stem met hom saam, die ordentlikheid van die
355 Afrikaner, uh, ek het, as student het, my twee hoofvakke was Afrikaans en Engels, ek het deur
356 die feit dat ek in Engels verder gegaan het, en ook goed soos sosiologie en filosofie en goed meer
357 gelees het, het ek`n groter openheid leer ervaar, `n openheid van `n idee uitspreek ... is nie
358 `n persoonlike aanval nie, daar is baie Afrikaanse mense wat dink dat as jy `n ou aanvat, op die
359 idee-vlak, dat jy hom persoonlik aanvat, en ek dink dis deel van hierdie ordentlikheid, jy is so
360 versigtig dat iemand anders jou aanvat oor die idee, dat jy ook nie `n idee ..., Afrikaners is maar
361 ek wil nie, ek wil absoluut nie te veel veralgemeen nie,

362 Louise: ja

363 Cathy : maar die ordentlikheid van die Afrikaner is daar, dat mens bang is om aanstoot te gee,
364 maar ek dink dit is ook reflektief, dat jy ook bang is om aanstoot aan gegee te word,

365 Louise: ja

366 Cathy : dat jou, uh, ... jou benadering tot jou diskoers is uh, daar is klaar `n skans ingebou, so jy
367 sal nie `n ou aanvat nie,want jy is bang jy gee aanstoot, want hy gaan jou dalk weer terug
368 aanvat,

369 Louise: dis reg

370 Cathy : so ja, ja, ek is geneig om dit te glo, daarom uh, as jy kyk wie is die ouens wat op die uh
371 BBS ge..., is dikwels ouens uh, wat uit `n ander agtergrond kom, ek meen, uit die aard van die
372 saak, Francois kom uit die Franse agtergrond, uh, dingies, Stephen, hoewel hy van Middelburg af
373 kom, weet ek, uh, en in `n Afrikaanse omgewing grootgeword het, het hy by UCT geswot en uh
374 het hy in die Engelse milieue geleer dink

375 Louise: ja

376 Cathy : en daarom is hy meer geneë om homself sommer uit te druk.

377 Louise: dis waar, uhm, die, die uhm...daar was belangrike skrywers op die BBS wat verdwyn
378 het, baie van hulle het gesê, soos Francois het gesê dis `n insane debate, insane debate, hy onttrek
379 hom, of hy is maar net die provocateur, hy gaan nie, hy gaan maar so hier en daar `n pyl inskiet,

380 Cathy : ja

381 Louise: maar dit, dit lyk vir my of dit baie afgeplat het

382 Cathy : weet jy ek moet ook sê dat ek sedert verlede jaar wat ek nou heeltemaal in `n ander
383 werkmilieue was en die grootste deel van verlede jaar was ek te, insanely besig met die Spaanse
384 projek, en so aan, het ek, ek het ook uh opgehou om dit te vreeslik te lees want ek kry letterlik
385 nie nou kans nie en omdat ek nou nie meer aan die kampus so gekoppel is nie,

386 Louise: ja

387 Cathy : uh, is dit vir my minder, in die aande by die huis sal my kinders bietjie vir my vertel uh
388 van die goed wat aan die gang is, maar ja, dit lyk of dit afgeplat het.

389 Louise: hulle sê ja, `n forum het maar sy leeftyd,

390 Cathy : ja

391 Louise: dit is maar normaal, ..

392 Cathy : ek sou so dink, kyk daar was natuurlik al die tyd met die merger en met die verandering
393 van die universiteit met al die dinge wat omgegooi is,was daar baie dinge op mense se harte,

394 Louise: ja

395 Cathy : dit sal vir my jammer wees as `n forum soos daai doodloop, want afgesien van enige iets
396 anders was dit partykeer baie prêet, dit was gewoon sommer net prêet en ouens het snaakse goed
397 kwytgeraak en hier en daar het iemand ingekom en `n ding ontlont net deur `n paar snaakse
398 opmerkings te maak, so, dit sal vir my jammer wees, maar soos jy sê, `n forum het ook sy uh, sy
399 lewe, sy lewensloop, en uh, dan sal `n mens weer iets anders moet aan die gang moet kry,..

400 Louise: ja,om die gevoel van die volk te meet

401 Cathy : ja, want ek sou uh, kyk, ek het byvoorbeeld gekyk, kom ons vat een voorbeeld, in vorige
402 week, vorige week se Wapad, was daar `n onderhoud, of `n artikel wat Victor Eberson
403 geskryf het oor prof Hendrik se eerste jaar in die uh rektorstoel en toe was daar nou ook sommer
404 so `n vox populi opnametjie gewees van uh, wat studente moet uh, gevra is oor hom, en as ek hy
405 was sou ek nou bietjie afgehaal gevoel het oor party van die opmerkings, hulle weet nie eers oor
406 lyk hy nie, so een of twee snaakse opmerkings oor sy gewigverlies, en dan `n opmerking uh wat
407 my sou geïrriteer het, om te sê, ja wat, hulle kry nie eintlik vat nie, is te gewoond aan my, jy
408 weet, aan prof Cathy, ek weet nie of jy dit gesien het nie, nou, dit sou uh, dit sou jammer wees,
409 ek besef net skielik een ding, en dit is dat die opkoms van Facebook het die BBS dalk geklap,

410 Louise: ja, dis waar

411 Cathy : ek dink ouens het, ek besef dit nou, want daar was nou ook Facebook debatte oor die
412 hele Veritas-storie en die O&B storie en al so aan, en ek kan nie sê dat, ek weet nie of daaroor
413 enige iets op die BBS regtig gesê is nie

414 Louise: was dit nou onlangs?

415 Cathy : ja kyk, dit het nou verlede week bekend geraak daar is mos nou `n hele ondersoek deur
416 `n senior advokaat na O&B-vergrype..

417 Louise: ja, dit het ek gelees

418 Cathy : ja, en uh, daar is redelike verwoede debat op Facebook daaroor, maar ek sal wil gaan
419 kontroleer of daar op die BBS enige iets verskyn het, want ek ek dink Facebook het dalk die
420 BBS verwater

421 Louise: ja kyk, want op Facebook kan mens maar mos enige iets sê

422 Cathy : jy kan, tot jy, daar is selfregulering natuurlik `n verskriklike belangrike ding, want daar
423 kan jy jou goed, want kyk daai foto wat daai keer in daai famous Facebook episode in 2008, het
424 die foto vreeslik vinnig van die Facebook af verdwyn, ..

425 Louise: jy kan ook anoniem, jy kan `n ander identiteit skeep,

426 Cathy : ja, ja, so jy, maar ek dink dit het dalk, jy weet dis, ek dink dis minder pret om `n
427 anonieme ding te lees as om `n ding te lees wat gekoppel is aan iemand se naam, daar is tog iets
428 van `n ...as jy sien hierdie persoon sê dit, ..

429 Louise: ek het nou dit bietjie gemis, ek sal op Facebook bietjie `n search gaan doen oor die
430 onlangse gebeure, ..

431 Cathy : ja, uh, ek het nou skielik, ek het nou terwyl ons nou so praat, ek't daai konneksie nou
432 skielik gemaak, terwyl jy nou sê die afplating, toe besef ek maar, en kyk daar is nou `n hele paar
433 ander forums waarvan mens kan praat, daar is ...plaxo, daar's facebook, daar is al hierdie uh, ek
434 dink die social media het waarskynlik beteken dat die BBS nou dalk bietjie koue pap geword het

435 Louise: ja, die ouens het gevoel, wel, sê nou maar hulle het die idee van..jong jy gaan jou job
436 verloor as jy iets sê wat jy nie moet sê nie, gaan praat eerder jou hart uit op `n ander..

437 Cathy : kyk daar was natuurlik die interessante ding, ek is nou baie hazy op die details daarvan,
438 maar ek dink so twee jaar gelede was daar `n personeellid van Oxford, oor wie daar, ek verbeel
439 my dit was `nbaie uh uhm uitlokkende foto of iets wat verskyn het, en daar was `n hele
440 debat oor mag die owerhede by Oxford haar aanvat, oor iets wat sy op haar private Facebook, ek
441 probeer nou onthou, daar, daar was iets, ek kan nie eers die details onthou nie, ek weet net daar
442 was `n vreeslike debat, want die owerhede het haar aangevat en sy het die foto ook onttrek, ..

443 Louise: ek weet daar is `n vrou wat in die VSA gesê het die universiteit is doelbewus nie
444 republikeins nie, maar demokraties, in al hulle lectures en so sal dosent eerder Obama ondersteun
445 as die republikeine, en sy het gesê dis nie reg nie, akademie behoort nie so te wees nie, ..

446 Cathy : ek dink die akademie behoort juis so te wees

447 Louise: sy het gesê hoekom moet hulle polities kant kies

448 Cathy : ek sou nie sê die universiteit moet polities kant kies nie, ek sou meer sê dat die
449 universiteit behoort die etos van ... die liberale bevraagtekening, behoort eerder kenmerkend van
450 die universiteit te wees

451 Louise: sy het toe, die universiteit het toe uiteindelik besluit hulle gaan haar nie

452 Cathy : sanction nie, ja

453 Louise: nee, want sy het die reg om dit te sê

454 Cathy : ja, absoluut, absoluut, kom ek sê ek sou verras wees as daar meer republikeins gesinde
455 mense by die universiteit is as demokraties gesinde mense, want die etos wat mens assosieer met
456 die demokrate is eerder die ondersoekende, meer liberale etos, uh

457 Louise: dit is net nie hier so nie

458 Cathy : ja dit is `n ander een, ons het nou die middag `n baie interessante gesprek gehad, `n
459 klompie van ons, ek was daar, Dirk van Wyk, Tim Labuschagne, uhm, Johannes Smit, Ester van
460 Wyk, Rob Miedema... van Nederland, `n gesprek met die man met die naam van Moodie, hy
461 het die boek geskryf The rise of the Afrikanerdom, en hy is nou in `n proses, hy is `n ex Suid-
462 Afrikaner, wat nou in Amerika woon, maar hy't, hy wil die boek aanvul, opvolg, of whatever, en

463 hy't toe nou, Thomas Erlank was ook daar, hy't toe nou gevoel hy wil nou bietjie gesprek voer
464 oor hoe die Afrikaner voel oor dinge en al so aan, en tipies iemand wat die Afrikaner geken het
465 maar ook nou nie heeltemaal nie, hy het dit eintlik gehad oor die Doppers, Doppers, Afrikaners
466 en so, en ons het, in hierdie gesprek het daar interessante perspektiewe na vore gekom, .. en die
467 rol wat die Doppekerk gespeel het, die rol van die Afrikaner, en wat sterk daar uitgekome het by
468 die Puk, is iets wat mense nie noodwendig altyd in gedagte hou nie, oor jy nou sê dat dit dalk by
469 ons nou nie so is nie dat die demokratiese ideaal nie leef by die universiteit nie, die stem van
470 Potchefstroom, was in die ou dae was dit die steun vir die regering, en toe met Wimpie de Klerk,
471 die Koinonia-ouens, het die stem van Potchefstroom anders geword, was dit die stem van verlig
472 en verkramp, en daai kwaliteit moet tog by die universiteit bly, die universiteit hoef nou nie
473 rasend in opposisie tot die regering te wees nie, maar die universiteit moet altyd sy outonomie
474 behou, om die regering ernstig tot verantwoording te roep,..

475 Louise: ja, dis wat hulle gedoen het, maar dit het altyd vir my gevoel of daardie stemme nie
476 waardeer word, intern nie, ..

477 Cathy : natuurlik nie, maar ek dink dit het baie geskuif, daai emphasis het baie geskuif, maar die,
478 die uh issues het nou ook so baie geskuif, uh, dis nie meer die middelpunt van bespreking nie.

479 Louise: Nee, ok, ek dink ons is klaar, ek gaan hier afsit.

Onderhoud Andrew

10:00

4 April 2011

Louise: Ek weet dat jy `n groot presence het op die BBS

Andrew: gehad

Louise: so dit is nou verby?

Andrew: ek skryf nog soms daar selde, uh, want uh, dis betekenisloos, ...die BBS het begin toe my frustrasiedrempel uh, heeltemaal geknak het, en dit was toe filosofie gekul is met poste, toe wis ek al toe nou al vir `n tyd van vreeslike onregte wat met ander mense gebeur in bevordering en so, en wat ek toe gedoen het, ek het `n ope brief aan die Raad geskryf, en ek het hom om drie uur in die oggend tussen die advertensies, op daai stadium het daar nog nie `n BBS bestaan nie,

Louise: die Sê-jou-sê deel nie

Andrew: Nee,

Louise: tussen die advertensies?

Andrew: tussen die advertensies, daar was `n oop advertensiekolom

Louise: o

Andrew: om drie uur in die more het ek in my kantoor gesit sonder dat enige iemand geweet het, my vrou ook want sy sou my gestop het, het ek `n ope brief aan die Raad geskrywe waar ek met die titel Geregtigheid is beter as offerande, en dit deurgestuurd na alle Raadslede wie se e-posse ek in die hande kon kry, en dit tussen die advertensies geplaas op die BBS, en verder dit vir al die bestuurslui gestuur, al die senior bestuurslui....

Addendum B

1 **Beth**

2 Posted: Fri May 09, 2008 12:37 pm

3 Post subject: Rassisme: Die anderkant

4

5 Ek is net so moeg om altyd te hoor hoe rassisties alles is wat wit in het(skole,
6 universiteite, werksplekke, staatsdiens, weermag, samelewing). Hoeveel keer word in
7 die publieke domein gespog met wat die Westerse beskawing vermag het, van die
8 innovasie, die wetenskaplike ontdekkings en vooruitgang? Nee, alles wat Westers is,
9 is sleg, buit net uit en is rassisties. Ek is moeg om verskonend te lewe omdat ek wit is
10 en dat my voorvaders 300 jaar terug hier gearriveer het en beskawing hierna toe
11 gebring het.

12

13 Soos ek al voorheen gesê het, dit het tyd geword dat almal self ondersoek moet doen
14 oor wat rassisme nou eintlik is. Om verlief te neem met agterlikheid, lae standaarde en
15 die beskuldiging dat alles wat wit is sleg en alles wat swart is is geregverdig en goed
16 net omdat die gros van die gemeenskap dit aanvaar is vir my onaanvaarbaar en ek sal
17 dit uitwys en beveg al word ek van rassisme beskuldig.

18

19 Hier is nou 'n mooi voorbeeld van die psige van jong swartmense op ons kampus. Dit
20 wat volg is dele van plakkate wat hier op kampus versprei word.

21

22 PASMA: "... a lecturer made some foolish racial remarks when he insulted black
23 students of this campus."

24

25 Van die bietjie wat ek weet is dit glad nie die geval nie maar die saak duur voort. Wat

26 ontstel is dit wat volg, en is dieselfde giftige reaksie wat verkry is na die Kowsies
27 insident. Van 'n matige, oordeelkundige reaksie is daar geen sprake van want die
28 hatigheid teen alles wat wit is borrel net te vinnig na die oppervlakte met die geringste
29 geleentheid.

30

31 Hier is die bewys: (met taal en spel foute en al)

32

33 PASMA:

34

35 This university is ours because it is Africa and Africa is our land, we do not appreciate
36 fools that still uphold and embrace the values of apartheid or white supremacy maybe
37 in Holland.

38

39 We are made to believe that they are stupid because they are black and they are not
40 products of Hoerskool. The same person we are arguing about came in a ship in 1652
41 very late 18:00.(taal????)(Sal later verduidelik waar dit vandaan kom, maar wil net sê
42 dat as ek reg is bewys dit net my punt dat die logika van sekere groepe veel te wense
43 oorlaat)

44

45 He will never make us feel offended by our past and our blackness because black is
46 beautifull he can utter such nonsense black will still be beautifull.(taal???????)

47

48 Therefore on 13 May 2008 at 11:00 we are marching agaist this stupid man.

49 Figthing students battles against academic terrorism. (WOW!!)

50

51 AZASCO:

52

53 AZASCO believes that the type(???) of education given to black students aims at
54 teaching us to hate ourselves, to look down upon our communities and to despise our
55 parents. (soos bo na die saak afgehandel is, sal verduidelik maar dit is uifers belaglik
56 en hier kom die kultuurverskille met volle mag na vore.)

57

58 It aims at making us see ourselves as an elite class (Wat soek hulle hier?????)

59

60 This Western style education is racist in moral fibre and capitalist in content. (Nou toe
61 nou!)

62

63 AZACO believes in an action orientated ideology of Black Consiousness, which
64 teaches us to assert ourselves as black people.

65 This means not trying to imitate white people but taking pride in being black, and
66 therby valuing our blackness is not a matter of pigmentation but an attitude one has
67 about oneself.(taal????)

68

69 White supremacy and values have been set as the standard agaist which we measure
70 ourselves.

71

72 He must leave our black campus.

73

74 Die ANCYL se dieselfde.

75

76 Vir my as wit dosent is dit onstellend dat ek my kennis aan sulke mense moet oordra.
77 Hulle wil klaarblyklik nie dat hulle swart mede-studente van my as wit westerse
78 wiskundige statistiek dosent die kennis kry nie. Wat soek hulle dan hier? Waar is die
79 Afrika universiteit? Westerse kennis is klaarblyklik onnodig want is wonderlike
80 Afrika nie 'n toonbeeld van vooruitgang met sy African-style education en sy Black
81 Consiousness en diktatoriale, korrupte, agterlike, oorlogsugtige, wetteloosheid en
82 volkuitwissings 'n voorbeeld van values nie???? Hoe uiters lagwekkend is die oproep
83 om te verwag dat ek al die opofferings moet maak sodat daar met hulle idiotiese idees
84 voort gegaan kan word van wat waardes is, wat opvoeding is en wat Afrika is.

85

86

87 Voordat die 'mindset' van die Afrikaan nie verander en realisties is oor wat die weste
88 se kennis vir afrika beteken nie en voordat die swartman in SA nie besef dat hulle nie
89 van die witman ontslae kan raak sonder om hulle self in die voet te skiet nie maar
90 aanhou om sulke idiotiese onrealisties gemors te propageer, sal rassisme gedy.

91

92 Ons sal nou sien of die "march" gaan plaasvind en dit gedissiplineerd gaan wees en of
93 dit soos gewoonlik in choas en anargie gaan plaasvind.

94

95 Die plakkate (behalwe ANCYL sin) is by my as iemand dit wil hê.

96

97

98 **Stephen**

99 Posted: Fri May 09, 2008 2:32 pm

100 Post subject: Re: Rassisme: Die anderkant

rkwlcb wrote:

Ek is moeg om verskonend te lewe omdat ek wit is en dat my voorvaders
300 jaar terug hier gearriveer het en beskawing hierna toe gebring het.

101

102 To believe that colonists and settlers brought 'civilization' with them is as ill informed
103 as the idea that Holland is a hotbed of white supremacist thinking. It is furthermore a
104 brilliant example of the kind of ongoing racial devaluing that makes black
105 consciousness so necessary.

106

107 And of course, as usual, you are perpetrating the fiction of the 'west' achieving its
108 ascendancy in isolation and creating the impression that while the 'west' rocketed
109 through enlightenment and industrialization the rest of the world was unable to follow
110 as a result of some species of inherent backwardness (this is a clear implication of
111 your trotting out the wonders of western achievement).

112

113 Until as late as the nineteenth century, according to Stephen Gunder Frank, the 'west'
114 was a periphery of the Chinese and to a lesser extent the Indian centres of economic
115 power - this on the basis of the fact that revenue flowed into these centres out of
116 western Europe.

117

118 The same is the case with the scientific centre. During Europe's dark ages, science
119 was thriving in the middle east and northern Africa. It is only after the rise to
120 prominence of the modern (and expansionist) nation state in Europe that the picture,
121 with regard to Europe's economic position in the world-system changed. Why?

122 Because powerful European states were able to begin to force the terms of trade such
123 that they became economic centres toward which revenue flowed. Colonialism was
124 one manifestation of how that was done, but the end of colonialism did not see an end
125 to the prevailing terms of trade, so that the underdevelopment of the third world was
126 an active corollary of the development of Europe within a single capitalist world-
127 system. Rather than a failure by comparison, it was a part of the foundation that made
128 such 'progress' possible. While the details of the world-system are under debate, and
129 will of course remain so, there can be no argument against the insights into how the
130 'west' came to dominate the rest, and how that dominance is maintained. This is not
131 the whole picture, but it is a part of it without which the picture makes no sense.

132

133 Looking at Archaeological evidence of so-called Iron-age settlement in South Africa
134 (where settlements supported tens of thousands of people), and at the tremendous
135 wealth possessed by the Khoi as described by Portuguese sailors, or at the thriving
136 trade routes running up and down the African coasts and into the interior, at ports
137 such as Kilwa, and even Mogadishu, we can easily support the argument that
138 colonialism brought with it the destruction of the existing cultural and economic
139 networks (forcibly restructured towards European expansion) that had seen those that
140 became colonial subjects thriving in precolonial times.

141

142 It is clear that you are informed in your estimation of what colonialism did for the rest
143 of the world by little to nothing more than your own 'Hoerskool' history lessons. You
144 should not make such apparently authoritative statements from such a woefully under-
145 informed position.

146

147 You should, more importantly, not offer such opinions in defense of how special
148 white people are, and how (instrumentally) important we are to South Africa. The
149 citizens of this country are only as (instrumentally) important as what they are willing
150 to contribute more than a never-ending poorly-informed diatribe about how much of a
151 favour they have done for everyone else because they brought 'civilization'. What a
152 load of crap.

153

154 This is a University in Africa, and it is time it became more of an African University.
155 How that should be done is of course something that will require much debate and
156 discussion, but that it should be done, is, I think, beyond question. What you see as a
157 threat, some of us see as an opportunity.

158 _____

159 Sapere aude!

160

161

162 **Edith**

163 Posted: Fri May 09, 2008 5:48 pm

164 Post subject: Rassisme: die anderkant

165

166 Ek wil in 'n mate met Beth saamstem: rassisme kom nie net van een kant af nie. Ek
167 besef baie goed dat wit op swart rassisme op die kampus, en oral in SA, bestaan, maar
168 daar word nie juis 'n bohaai gemaak van swart op wit rassisme nie. Hoekom nie? Is dit
169 dalk omdat blankes nie "Rassisme! Rassisme!" oor elke moontlike insident skree nie?

170

171 Voorbeelde uit een Saterdagoggend (by die nuwe mall): 'n swart vrou stamp my

172 gestremde man dat hy steier en sy vra nie eens om verskoning nie - hy het net 'n vuil
173 kyk gekry. Toe ek doodbenoud by die badkamers aankom met 'n tweejarige wat NOU
174 wil piepie, is daar 'n klomp swart vroue in die badkamer (nie in 'n ry nie). Toe ek met
175 die waentjie verby stap na die toilette, word daar op my geskree "There's the line!!"
176 Gelukkig kon ek my dogtertjie in die toilet vir gestremdes help. Ek sou beslis meer
177 begrip gehad het vir 'n kind wat nog nie lekker kan knyp nie. Derdens wag ons om
178 met die roltrap af te gaan na die parkeergarage. 'n Groep jong mans druk voor ons in,
179 en ons kan (mag) niks sê nie.

180

181 Nou wil ek weet - is dit nie ook vorme van rassisme nie? Dis mos ook gevalle van
182 geen respek betoon teenoor ander nie.

183

184

185 **Stephen**

186 Posted: Mon May 12, 2008 9:09 am Post subject:

187

188 It is not possible to say, on the basis of the information contained in your description,
189 whether or not these incidents were in any way racially motivated. Your certainly
190 have described situations in which people acted extraordinarily rudely, but their
191 rudeness cannot with certainty be ascribed to their racial attitudes.

192

193 When a person from one racial category is rude to a person of another, this is just
194 plain rudeness. Unless that rudeness is the result of their belief in the other group's
195 inferiority and their own sense of entitledness derived from their belief about how the
196 benefits of social belonging ought to be distributed unevenly along racial lines.

197

198 More controversially I am sure, I would even suggest that for something to be racist it
199 is necessary that others recognize it as such. In other words, the set of ideas about
200 inferiority and entitlement being exercised in a given situation have to have a material
201 history as a myth about the appropriate relationship between a particular racial
202 category and the dividends achievable as a member of society. People have to have
203 either internalized it, or recognize that it was internalized and produced effects.

204

205 So, as a hypothetical example. If a man or woman is black, and is angry to the point of
206 vengefulness with whites as a whole, and therefore treats them rudely and tries to
207 undermine them around every turn, he or she would not necessarily be acting as a
208 racist. this certainly is a kind of racial thinking that is terrible, a kind of racial
209 discrimination. However, it is individual, it is neither shared as a set of social
210 practices or prevailing beliefs. it is discrimination against race on the basis of a
211 personal emotional state, rather than on a set of prevailing ideas about racial
212 inferiority and an associated lack of deserving to participate fully in society. it is too
213 far removed from the power-knowledge of what race groups mean for it to be called
214 racism.

215

216 Sapere aude!

217

218 **Beth**

219 Posted: Tue May 13, 2008 12:28 pm Post subject:

220

221 Ag asseblief! Jy kan dit soveel as wat jy wil sê totdat jy dit self glo maar dit verander
222 nie die feite nie. Natuurlik was daar beskawings ver bo die van die weste soos die
223 Maja's wat uitstekende astronomiese kennis gehad het of die Arabiere wat bydraes tot
224 vandag se algebra gemaak het of die Egiptenare met hulle wonderlike bou style en die
225 Chinese met die pragtige kunswerke, sy en die abakus. Het ek die weste as die begin
226 en die einde voorgestel?

227

228 Wat ek en baie ander nou besef is dat die arrogansie van die mense van Afrika alle
229 redelikheid oorskry. Hierdie arrogansie dat black is beautiful en dat hulle op hulle eie
230 kan maak en breek soos hulle wil versterk net die persepsie van hulle agterlikheid.
231 Soos die feit dat Zim se mense ten spyte van die honger en ellende nog steeds vir
232 Mugabe stem. Dat dit lewensgevaarlik is om oor die lugruim van Afrika te vlieg of net
233 in een van hulle vliegtuie.

234

235 En om die ewigduurende blaam op kolonisasie te plaas is net so pateties. Want vir hoe
236 lank nog kan dit gebruik word as teenvoeter vir die totale onbevoegdheid om in die
237 21ste eeu voor uit te gaan.

238

239 Hier is 'n oorsig ('n deel) van 'IQ and the wealth of nations' deur Prof Phillippe
240 Ruston. Jy kan al die kritiek ook gaan lees.

241

242 Lynn and Vanhanen provide a detailed examination how well IQ theory stacks up
243 against its competitors. For example, two significant exceptions to the view that a
244 tropical climate is detrimental to wealth are Singapore and Hong Kong, which lie in
245 the tropical zone but are rich. Conversely, Lesotho and Swaziland are temperate, lying

246 slightly south of the Tropic of Capricorn, but poor. These differences, however, can
247 be explained in terms of intelligence theory. The people of Singapore and Hong Kong
248 belong to the ethnic group with the highest average IQs; the people of Lesotho and
249 Swaziland belong to the ethnic group with the lowest.

250

251 Modernization theories, according to which all economies would evolve from
252 subsistence agriculture through to various stages of urbanization and industrialization,
253 have worked for Western Europe and the Pacific Rim but have failed for the four
254 remaining groups of nations (South Asia, the Pacific Islands, Latin America, and sub-
255 Saharan Africa). IQ and the Wealth of Nations proposes that modernization theories
256 describe Western Europe and the Pacific Rim because these countries have
257 appreciably the same or somewhat higher IQs than in the United States. But they did
258 not work for the other four groups of countries because average IQs are below the
259 technological threshold.

260

261 But why did the peoples of East Asia, with their high IQs, lag behind the European
262 peoples until the second half of the 20th Century? Well, China's science and
263 technology were generally more advanced than Europe's for around two thousand
264 years, from about 500 B.C. up to around 1500 A.D. But in the 15th century, Chinese
265 inventiveness came to an end and from that time on virtually all the important
266 advances were made by Europeans, first in Europe and later in the U.S. The
267 explanation may be that Europeans developed the market economy, while China
268 stagnated through authoritarian bureaucracy and central planning.

269

270 The failure of Japan to develop economically until the late 19th century is largely

271 attributed to a regulated economy and isolation from the rest of the world. By 1867-68
272 a revolution occurred and the new rulers embarked on a program to modernize Japan
273 by adopting Western education and technology, and by freeing up the economy by
274 transforming state monopolies into private corporations. Much of the Japanese
275 economic success in the 20th century was built by adopting inventions made in the
276 West, improving them, and selling them more competitively in world markets. Japan
277 thereby built up its motorcycle, automobile, shipbuilding, and electronics industries.
278 Although it is sometimes asserted that the Japanese have not made any significant
279 scientific and technological innovations of their own, this underestimates their
280 technological achievements: the fiber-tipped pen (1960), "bullet" trains traveling at
281 210 km per hour, much faster than any Western trains (1964), laser radar (1966),
282 quartz watches (1967), VHS video home systems (1976), flat screen televisions using
283 liquid crystal display (1979), video discs (1980), CD-ROM (read only memory) disks
284 (1985), digital audio tape (1987), and digital networks for sending signals along
285 coaxial cables and optical fibers (1988).

286

287 African countries are at the opposite pole from China and Japan in national IQ. This
288 may explain why they are such a major anomaly for modernization theory. The low
289 rate of economic growth of African countries following their independence from
290 colonial rule in the 1960s is one of the major problems in developmental economics.
291 During the years 1976-98, the average rate of economic growth per capita GNP of the
292 41 countries of sub-Saharan Africa for which data are available is much lower than in
293 the rest of the world. Many of the African countries actually suffered negative per
294 capita growth rate. Economists have quantified all possible factors, such as climate,
295 ethnic diversity, geography, mismanagement, unemployment and the like, and

296 compared the situation to elsewhere in the world, especially Asia. They concluded
297 that these factors do not provide a complete explanation and that there is some
298 "missing element." Some have suggested the low level of "social capital," i.e., the
299 widespread corruption and lack of trust in commercial relationships, poor roads and
300 railways, unreliable telephones and electricity supplies, and the prevalence of tropical
301 diseases such as malaria.

302

303 Ek weet dat jy tienduisend goed te sê gaan hê. Vir my is dit maklik; geen studie is
304 nodig om te sien dat Afrika pateties vaar op elke sosiale, ekonomiese en politieke
305 gebied. Om te praat van die stone age is irrelevant as in ag geneem word dat min of
306 meer 200 jaar gelede is die wiel eers hier gesien. En wat van skoorstene in hulle
307 hutte?

308

309 En natuurlik is ons spesiaal want ons kan. Ons kan uitvind, innoveer, ontwikkel,
310 oplos, vooruit beplan, skep, onderhou, doen en vooruitgaan. En ons het vooruitgang
311 gebring of jy dit wil weet of nie. Gee my een voorbeeld van jou aanname dat Afrika
312 kan kompeteer met die westerse beskawing. Een voorbeeld van volhoubare
313 ontwikkeling en innovasie in isolasie van die westerse tegnologie en kennis. Een.

314

315 Verduidelik ook vir ons wat sien jy as 'n Afrika universiteit sonder ENIGE western-
316 style education. Dit is die arrogansie van Afrika. Met die westerse tegnologie wil
317 hulle ploeg maar geen krediet gee nie. Vir jou African university droom, ALLE
318 STERKTE!

319

320 En hoekom het jy niks te sê oor wat kwytgeraak is nie van die swart studente nie?

321 Waar is jou oproep om redelikheid of jou verdoeming van die haatspraak teen wit
322 dosente? Wat is jou mening oor die academic terrorism?

323

324

325 Hier nog 'n insiggewende stuk.

326

327 Nigerian Daily Trust newspaper.

328 .

329 Posted to the web 25 October 2007

330

331 I agree with Dr Watson by Idang Alibi

332 A few days ago, the Nobel Laureate, Dr James Watson, made a remark that
333 is now generating worldwide uproar, especially among the blacks.

334 He said what to me looks like a self evident truth. He told The Sunday

335 Times of London in an interview that in his humble opinion, black people
336 are less intelligent than the White people.

337

338 Since then, some of us cannot hear anything else but the outrage of
339 black people who feel demeaned by what Watson has said. So many people
340 have called the man names. To be expected, some have said he is a
341 racist. Some even wonder how a "foolish" man like Watson could have won
342 the Nobel Prize. Even white people who, deep in their heart, agree with
343 Watson want to be politically, correct so they condemn the man.
344 Why are we blacks becoming so reactive, so sensitive to any remarks, no
345 matter how well meaning, about our failure as a race?

346 I do not know what constitutes intelligence. I leave that to our
347 so called scholars. But I do know that in terms of organising society
348 for the benefit of the people living in it, we blacks have not shown any
349 intelligence in that direction at all. I am so ashamed of this and
350 sometimes feel that I ought to have belonged to another race.
351 Nigeria my dear country is a prime example of the inferiority of the
352 black race when compared to other races. Let somebody please tell me
353 whether it is a manifestation of intelligence if a people cannot
354 organise a free, fair and credible election to choose who will lead
355 them. Is it intelligence that we cannot provide simple pipe borne water
356 for the people? Our public school system has virtually collapsed. Is
357 that a sign of intelligence? Our roads are impassable. In spite of the
358 numerous sources that nature has made available to us to tap for energy
359 to run our industries and homes, we have no steady supply of
360 electricity. Yet electricity is the bedrock of industrialisation. When
361 you agree with the school of Watson, some say you are incorrect because
362 all these failures are a result of poor leadership. Why must it be us
363 blacks who must always suffer poor leadership? Is that not a
364 manifestation of unintelligence?
365 In the name of international trade, bilateral co operation,
366 globalisation and other subterfuges, the norm in the world today is for
367 smart people to appropriate the wealth of other people for themselves
368 and their countries. But more among the blacks than any other race, the
369 practice is to steal from their own country and salt away to other
370 people's country. Is it intelligence that our leaders steal billions of

371 naira and hide in other people's country?

372 Anywhere in the world today where you have a concentration of black
373 people among other races, the poorest, the least educated, the least
374 achieving, and the most violent group among those races will be the
375 blacks. When indices of underdevelopment are given, black people and
376 countries are sure to occupy the bottom of the ladder. If we are
377 intelligent, why do we not carry first when statistics of development
378 are given?

379 Look at the African continent. South Africa is the most developed
380 country because of the presence of whites there. This may be an
381 uncomfortable truth for many of us but it exists nevertheless. If the
382 whites had been driven away after independence, we would have seen a
383 steady decline of that country.

384

385 In terms of natural endowment, Africa ought to be the richest of the
386 continents but see the mess we have made of the potential for greatness
387 which God in his infinite wisdom has bestowed upon us. We have proved
388 totally incapable of harnessing the abundant natural resources to become
389 great. Today, there is a renewed scramble for the wealth of Africa.

390 China, our new "friend", does not bother about the genocide against
391 fellow blacks in the Sudan by the Arabs who control the affairs of that
392 country. They say they do not want to interfere in the internal affairs
393 of any country. All they want is the oil in Sudan to run their
394 industries. Yet, we blacks have not seen the Chinese action as an
395 affront to our sensitivities. Every race takes us for granted because we

396 are so weak and so foolish, if you permit me to say it.

397

398 I am really pained by our gross underachievement as a race. Instead of
399 regarding bitter truths expressed by the likes of Watson as a wake up
400 call for us to engage in sober reflection, we take to the expression of
401 woolly sentiment. For me, this type of reaction is a further evidence of
402 our unintelligence. A man of intelligence recognises genuine criticism
403 against him and takes steps to improve himself in order to prove his
404 critics wrong. But for us blacks, our reaction is to abuse the man who
405 expresses worries about our backwardness.

406 Other races are deeply worried about us because we are a problem to the
407 world. We suffer from the five Ds: disorderliness, debts, diseases,
408 deaths and disasters. Our disorderliness affects others or else they
409 won't be too bothered about us. Many are afraid because our diseases
410 could infect them. Polio has been eradicated all over the world yet it
411 is still found in Nigeria here. When they give us money to help us
412 eradicate it, our thieving officials will embezzle the money; the virus
413 will spread and endanger the health of not only our people but other
414 people as well.

415

416 Out of a shared sense of humanity, some cannot bear to see how we die in
417 thousands almost every day from clearly preventable diseases and causes.
418 For years now, our people die extremely painful but perfectly
419 preventable deaths from buildings which collapse because they were
420 poorly constructed. How can you tell me we are as intelligent as others

421 when we set traps for ourselves in the name of houses and others do not
422 do so? Some people are extremely frustrated about us. If they have a way
423 of avoiding us, they will be too glad to do so because we are a problem.

424

425 As I write this, I do so with great pains in my heart because I know
426 that God has given intelligence in equal measure to all his children
427 irrespective of the colour of their skin. The problem with us black
428 people is that we have refused to use our intelligence to organise
429 ourselves socially and politically.

430 It should worry us that we do not invent things. We do not go to the
431 moon. Our societies are not well organised. We have the shortest
432 lifespan of all the races. Something must be wrong with us. Why are we
433 not like others? Our scholars will be quick to say that these are not
434 the only ways of measuring intelligence. They will quote other scholars
435 to adumbrate their point, but the fact remains that we are not showing
436 intelligence. Others are showing it more than we're doing. If they are
437 not more intelligent than we are, let someone tell me how to put it. God
438 himself must be frustrated with his black children. They must be an
439 embarrassment to him. He has given us everything he has given to other
440 of his children; why are his black children not manifesting their own
441 gift?

442 A few years ago, the whites used to contemptuously call the Japanese
443 "little Japs". Today, the Japanese and other Asians have pulled
444 themselves up by the bootstrap and have arrived. No one speaks of the
445 Japanese or Asians with contempt anymore. When people like Watson speak

446 about us in unedifying terms, we should take it as a challenge to prove
447 them wrong by sitting down to plan how we can become world beaters.
448 If our political leaders are the reason for our backwardness, we should
449 resolve to get the kind of leaders who will be instrument for our rapid
450 progress. I may not know how intelligence is measured but my limited
451 knowledge of intelligence is that it can also be measured by the kind of
452 leaders a people decide to have. If, for instance, our professors
453 preside over the massive rigging of elections, it means that we do not
454 have very intelligent professors. Such rigged elections will no doubt
455 produce unintelligent leaders. Such unintelligent leaders will do stupid
456 things which will prove that we are not as intelligent as other races.
457 Do I sound confusing or intelligent?
458 I am ready for some of our 'patriotic' intellectuals who will write and
459 abuse me for the 'outrage' I have expressed here but I stick to my guns:
460 we lack intelligence and as stated in the Bible, anyone who lacks
461 intelligence should cry unto God who is the custodian of wisdom to
462 bestow some upon him. We should go on our knees today and ask God why we
463 do not appear as intelligent as our other brothers. I am confident God
464 will reveal to us what we must do, and urgently too, to change our
465 terribly unflattering circumstances.

466 _____

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477

478 **Stephen**

479 Posted: Tue May 13, 2008 1:05 pm

480

481 Beth, unfortunately for you, more questionable information does not make an
482 argument based upon questionable information any less questionable.

483

484 It is widely argued that a range of factors influence IQ, and that many among those
485 relate to poverty, class position and so on so that you IQ argument could easily be
486 found to be dependent upon, rather than a predictor of development.

487

488 As for Watson, he has no particular foundation for his opinion. It also indicates just
489 how pervasive the set of assumptions and myths you live by has become when a man
490 as intelligent as Watson can say something so blatantly racist and grossly inaccurate,
491 and presumably believe it.

492 _____

493 Sapere aude!

494

495

496 **Beth**

497 Posted: Tue May 13, 2008 1:33 pm Post subject:

498

499 Is dit al wat jy kan sê. Hoekom beantwoord jy nie die vrae nie? Hoekom vertel jy nie
500 van die pie in the sky African university based on the action ideology of black
501 consciousness nie? Vertel vir ons van die wonderlike Afrika uitvindsels wat vir die
502 mensdom iets beteken. Wys vir ons die wiskundige en wetenskaplike uitvindsels van
503 Afrika? Jy kan nie en al kan jy sal dit statisties onbeduidend wees in ag geneem die
504 850 miljoen mense op Afrika se bodem. Al wat julle wil doen is om vir ons te vertel
505 hoe sleg westerse waardes en stelsels is, hoe rassisties ons is as ons aandring op
506 standarde, kultuur en taal en hoe sonder ons afrika 'n Utopia sou en sal wees. Kyk
507 boontoe my vriend en dan gaan stig jy jou universiteit daar en los ons met verstand
508 hier om aan te dring op westerse werketiek, standarde en logika.

509

510 **John**

511 Posted: Tue May 13, 2008 2:10 pm Post subject:

512

513 Beth, jy het in jou afgelope drie skrywes die lyn gekruis van wat gesonde debattering
514 behels. Net soos wat David Bullard se redakteur bevind het.

515

516

517

518

519

520 **Stephen**

521 Posted: Tue May 13, 2008 2:22 pm Post subject:

522

523 rkwlcw wrote:

524 Ek weet dat jy tienduisend goed te sê gaan hê. Vir my is dit maklik; geen studie is

525 nodig om te sien dat Afrika pateties vaar op elke sosiale, ekonomiese en politieke

526 gebied. Om te praat van die stone age is irrelevant as in ag geneem word dat min of

527 meer 200 jaar gelede is die wiel eers hier gesien. En wat van skoorstene in hulle

528 hutte?

529

530 First, no-one was talking about the stone age, and bringing the wheel is only a favour

531 if you are not going to use it to colonize their land and force them into dependency on

532 migrant labour in your economy..

533

534 rkwlcw wrote:

535

536 En natuurlik is ons spesiaal want ons kan. Ons kan uitvind, innoveer, ontwikkel,

537 oplos, vooruit beplan, skep, onderhou, doen en vooruitgaan. En ons het vooruitgang

538 gebring of jy dit wil weet of nie. Gee my een voorbeeld van jou aanname dat Afrika

539 kan kompeteer met die westerse beskawing. Een voorbeeld van volhoubare

540 ontwikkeling en innovasie in isolasie van die westerse tegnologie en kennis. Een.

541

542 If 'progress' is a measure of achievement, and the achievement is what we are sitting

543 with today, then I could certainly have done without such 'progress'. More, if

544 'progress' is based on inventions largely aimed at improving peoples entertainment

545 (Japan's achievements listed above in Beth's post), and for which they must pay in a

546 world in which most people are too poor, then this is qualified progress if it is
547 progress at all. And moreover, it is the type of progress that is dependent on the
548 extraction of surplus labour, which I have argued is what lies behind the grossly
549 unequal distribution of wealth. So, qualified progress dependent upon class inequality
550 is what lies behind the underdevelopment of the third world. Now read this carefully,
551 so that you don't gloss it, I said it before.

552

553 The dependency argument does not exhaustively account for the current inequality
554 between states with regard to wealth, but it is a crucial component of any attempt to
555 do so that has as its motive a will to meaningfully change that distribution. This is an
556 important point. Reducing the structural inequalities of the world-system is crucial to
557 solving the problem of global poverty and inequality. What are you proposing Beth?

558

559 Your commitment to the modernization Utopia - long since abandoned by any
560 sensible states and development agencies, is ignorant if quaint. As is your strange
561 commitment to the idea that there is not a price to be paid for the kind of progress we
562 are talking about. An environmental price to be sure, and a human price too. The
563 dependency argument, as is the case with world-systems thinking is that the powerful
564 were able to ensure that the human price was paid somewhere else, by someone else.
565 No longer. And people like you, that have been ungrateful and uncaring about who
566 has been paying the price for you are understandably unhappy that it is now being
567 paid on your doorstep so that you can no longer avoid seeing it. Rather than wanting
568 to do something about it, you insert it into your ready-made racial narrative of inferior
569 intelligence and what not, so that you can continue to comfortably avoid drawing the

570 connection between how it is that having is the shiny side of a coin, the dull side of
571 which is having not.

572 *rkwlcb wrote:*

573 *Verduidelik ook vir ons wat sien jy as 'n Afrika universiteit sonder ENIGE western-*
574 *style education. Dit is die arrogansie van Afrika. Met die westerse tegnologie wil*
575 *hulle ploeg maar geen krediet gee nie. Vir jou African university droom, ALLE*
576 *STERKTE!*

577 As I said in the post you never really responded to, that is a challenge that needs to be
578 met. Unlike you, I do not propose to dictate what the solution to the approach to the
579 necessary transformation of higher education in a post-colonial world should be, or
580 rather how it should be done.

581

582 I have two suggestions. First, such a university should embody the history and future
583 of the struggle against the historical and contemporary forces that are productive of
584 global inequality. But that is not saying a lot.

585

586 Second, such a university must be founded upon the understanding of the relationship
587 between power-knowledge and the identities of post colonial subjects, so as to avoid
588 the case that people in the post colonies come to participate in their own
589 marginalization and oppression.

590

591 this is just off the top of my head, and I will not suggest it as any more than some
592 points for discussion in a necessary discussion.

593 *rkwlcb wrote:*

594 *En hoekom het jy niks te sê oor wat kwytgeraak is nie van die swart studente nie?*

595 *Waar is jou oproep om redelikheid of jou verdoeming van die haatspraak teen wit*

596 *dosente? Wat is jou mening oor die academic terrorism?*

597

598 I say if I was one of them and classrooms were full of the same kind of undermining

599 ideas on your campus as what your entries on the BBS are, I would have been on the

600 front line. Think about it. you have basically suggested, with that rubbish about IQ

601 that blacks are stupider than whites (Obvious rubbish) and that the condition of Africa

602 can be ascribed to this mental inferiority. That Beth is racism dressed as reason and

603 concealed behind some quotes. If I was presented with this on an ongoing basis in a

604 class i was attending in order to improve my situation, I would be at the front of the

605 march, and I would be very angry.

606 _____

607 Sapere aude!

608

609

610

611

612 **Peter**

613 Posted: Tue May 13, 2008 2:35 pm Post subject:

614 Beth, do you agree with me that racism is a form of shortage of civilisation?

615

616 **Tsepiso**

617 Posted: Tue May 13, 2008 3:23 pm Post subject: racism

618 ol 😊 it is funny someone so educated can think like that, I thought if you are educated
619 you are the one who should lead by good examples then I will say Mandela is more
620 educated more innovative, implemative, conquaring all those big words, He is black
621 and he thinks better than some whites that think they are superior because they are
622 white what a bunch of crap coming from an academic it is such a crap it maks me sick
623

624 **Judy**

625 Posted: Wed May 14, 2008 8:28 am Post subject:

626

627 This is a French article (for those who can read it), where they explain that it has been
628 proven that all humans are genetacally 99.9% similar.

629

630 They even say that a white person can be genetacally more similar to a black person
631 than to another white person.

632

633 That might scare some of you! 😊

634

635 Anyway, they talk about the fact that there is no such thing as a black person being
636 less intelligent than a white person.

637

638 There are seven biological groups but we are the species with the most homogeneity,
639 that is why there are no reasons to be racist.

640

641 <http://www.lepoint.fr/actualites-sciences-sante/une-seule-race-mais-sept-groupes->

642 [biologiques/1055/0/225997](http://www.lepoint.fr/actualites-sciences-sante/une-seule-race-mais-sept-groupes-biologiques/1055/0/225997)

643

644 **John**

645 Posted: Wed May 14, 2008 8:46 am Post subject:

646

647 Met jou bittere rassistiese uitsprake en kwasi-akademiese bronverwysings, Beth, maak

648 jy nou 'n blik wurms oop oor jou en ander enersdenkende wit kollegas se sienings

649 rakende ons, julle swart kollegas. Jou "navorsing" en jou eie oortuigings bewys mos

650 nou dat swart mense van laer verstandsvermoë is as wit en Asiatiese mense. Jou

651 stroom van logika (baie wankelrig, bygesê) lei my dan nou tot die gevolgtrekking dat

652 swart kollegas dus: 1. baie dankbaar moet weet dat ons verdra word op jou wit,

653 Westerse pronkstuk van 'n universiteit, 2. nie van gelyke intellektuele vermoë is as wit

654 en Asiatiese kollegas nie, 3. nie so baie moet kla oor gewaande rassisme en ander

655 ongewenste spin-offs van die Westerse denkraamwerk nie. Die swart studente is op

656 die minste 'n irritasie vir jou en op die ergste 'n geweldige steen des aanstoots.

657 Hopelik vind jy 'n werkplek en stukkie Suid-Afrika waar jy na jou bedanking van

658 hierdie universiteit jou fantasie van wit meerderwaardigheid in vrede kan uitleef. O'

659 ja, voor swart dosente en swart studente jou wit, Westerse ikoon van tersiêre

660 uitnemendheid kom kontamineer het, was jy en jou soort mos gelukkig en knus in die

661 wete van julle uitnemendheid alhier. Gaan soek egter algemene kommentaar by ander

662 instellings wat ook voorheen wit en Westers was oor die voormalige PU vir CHO se

663 Vaaldriehoek kampus en Potch kampus. Jy sal ineenkrimp oor die idee wat mense

664 gehad het en nog steeds het van 'n laer as middelmatige, kerktipe instelling oorheers

665 deur benouende Gereformeerde dogma. So much for your idea of academic

666 excellence! Verduidelik asseblief ook in voorlegging aan die komitees rakende

667 transformasie hoe gegrief jy is deur die teenwoordigheid van swart mense op jou

668 universiteit en ons aandrang op gehalte kollegialiteit en uitnemende onderrig-leer
669 (Hesa s'n gelei deur prof Barney Pityana en die ministeriële een gelei deur prof Crain
670 Soudien, ongelukkig altwee swart akademici wie se credentials jou en ander
671 middelmatige wit en Asiatiese dosente s'n laat vaal lyk).

672

673 Ponti het hom onttrek van die gesprekke oor rassisme, want dit daal volgens hom na
674 die vlak van 'n skreeu-kompetisie. Katarsis is gesond, kollega. Dit verhoed verterende
675 siektes soos kanker en diabetes (sê sommige geneeskundige praktisyns), maar
676 bowenal gee dit sielkundige verligting en verhoed 'n opbou van metaan- en ander
677 gasse wat jou brein kan benewel. So, die seepkis van Gespreksforum het plek vir nog
678 'n skreeuer.

679

680

681

682

683 **Mandy**

684 Posted: Wed May 14, 2008 8:46 am Post subject: rassisme

685

686 Mev Beth,

687

688 Ek het nie 'n akademiese stuiwer om in die armbeurs te gooi nie, net die volgende
689 vraag en opmerking.

690

691 Het jy kinders? Indien wel, hoop ek met 'n eerlike meegevoel vir hulle part dat jy nie
692 die onsin wat jy oor 'dommer' swartmense kwytingeraak het aan hulle oordra nie. As jy

693 doen, maak jy hulle lewens (in 'n land waar hulle sy aan sy met swartmense leef, werk
694 en leer) moeiliker as wat nodig is.

695

696 Ek was geskok oor die inhoud van die stuk 'navorsing' in jou post en dan spesifiek die
697 venyn waarmee jy dit ondersteun.

698

699 **Judy**

700 Posted: Wed May 14, 2008 9:27 am Post subject:

701 ous ! I would like to correct my spelling mistakes : genetically not genetacaly! 😊

702

703

704

705

706

707 **Peter**

708 Posted: Wed May 14, 2008 10:28 am Post subject:

709 I wrote, on Wed Apr 18, 2007 1:55 pm:

710

711 “Beth, the flaw in nearly all your posts is that you want to project the activity of a
712 single person (or a small group) to a large group of persons”

713

714 and asked her in the same post:

715

716 “Beth, although I think it will be very difficult for you, please try (at least try) to treat
717 everybody as an individual, not as a member of a herd.”

718

719 I also once made a post on the average IQ of European citizens, where Germany
720 leaded the list (with a normalised score of 107), Norwegian scored average (100) and
721 people from Serbia were on the bottom of the list (with a score of 89).

722

723 According to Bosman-logic I can now conclude that a German person has a higher IQ
724 than a Norwegian one, but this is of course not true. These statistics are on the
725 AVERAGE German, Norwegian, Serbian etc. and can not be projected on a single
726 person. There are even a lot of Serbian people that have a (much) higher IQ than some
727 Germans.

728 Statistics often appear in the form of Gaussian-curves, and everybody, who is a little
729 bit aware of statistics, knows that you can not directly relate averages with a single
730 experiment.

731

732 So next to the genetic argument of Judy, your statistical arguments just not hold, Beth

733

734 **Beth**

735 Posted: Wed May 14, 2008 12:53 pm Post subject:

736 Dankie vir al die kommentaar maar julle mis die hele punt van hierdie argument. Dit
737 het begin by die anderkant van rassisme. Die kant wat nie wil gehoor word nie.

738

739 Peter, ek stem saam met jou. Rassisme lei tot die wegkalwing van beskawing. Dit is
740 die probleem met SA is dat die regerings geïnspireerde rassisme die oorsaak is dat ons
741 beskawing in SA so verval. Hoekom? Want rassisme van swart na wit sal sonder
742 enige nadenke wit kennis laat verdwyn en vervang word met politieke en ras

743 aanstellings ten koste van die mense in hierdie land. Jy weet van die honderde
744 voorbeelde wat ek al genoem het Die verval wat plaasvind is meestal in die instellings
745 waar regstellende aksie sonder oordenking te vinnig en te gou plaasgevind het. John
746 het betoog vir 'redress'. Niemand sry dat restitusie moes plaasvind nie maar hoekom
747 ten koste van? Elke keer as 'n onbevoegde persoon aangespreek word word daar
748 rassitiese ondertone daaraan geheg. Die feit is dit: Daar is bevoegde witmense wat 'n
749 honderdmaal meer 'n beter 'job' kan doen as 'n munisipale bestuurder wat nie eers
750 matriek het nie. (52% van munisipale bestuurders het net matriek) Wie lei eintlik
751 daaronder? Die 'wit buurtes' of die 'townships'? Hoekom moet 'n Karoo dorp soos
752 Loxton wat merendeels 'n bruin gemeenskap is wat net Afrikaans praat sestien swart
753 polisisie lede kry wat nie 'n woord Afrikaans kan praat nie? Wie word benadeel? Die
754 witboer in die omgewing of die arm bruinman? Rassisme veroorsaak dat ons
755 stelselmatig agteruit beweeg in plaas daarvan dat ons saamwerk vir 'n beter toekoms.
756
757 Stephen, nooit het ek my mening gegee oor wat voortuitgang huidig beteken vir die
758 wêreld nie. Dit is 'n debat op sy eie. Wat ek voor veg is dat ons nie in nog 'n piesang
759 republiek verval met die soort uitsprake wat deur die studente geuiter word nie. Ek is
760 glad nie 'n voorstander van ongebreidelde voortuitgang soos wat nou met die
761 steenkool sage aan die gang is nie. Of die bome wat in die amasone afgekap word nie
762 of in die kongo. Ek dink net voortuitgang beteken skoon water, krag en gesondheids
763 sorg. Afrika is berug dat sy leierskorps die geld van die mense steel en hulle sodoende
764 in armoede hou. Moet ek nou sleg voel daaroor?
765
766 In my klas word nie politieke twak gepraat nie. My studente (meeste swart) kry van
767 my die beste onderrig om hulle op hulle pad vir die toekoms te kry. Met bemoediging

768 en ondersteuning. Die eerste swart studente wat tot die M program by die skool vir
769 BWI op julle kampus toegelaat is is deur my hande (tweede en derde jaar). Gaan
770 praat met hulle.

771 Wat hierdie insident op VDK betref, dit was bloot kwaadwilligheid om wat gesê is te
772 interpreteer as rassisties. Dit gebeur in 90% van die sogenaamde rassisties uitroep dat
773 daar slegs kwaadwilligheid betrokke is. Dit verwoes lewens en beroepe. Wil julle
774 voorbeelde hê? So, Stephen om dit na my te projekteer as 'n rede tot hierdie
775 kwaadwillige optrede is kinderagtig.

776

777 Ag, Tsepiso.

778

779 Judy, dankie maar ek bly 'n skeptikus met sulke artikels.

780

781 John, jou uitgesprokenheid oor alle denkbare rassistiese voorvalle grens aan manies.
782 Jou aannames oor wat rassisme is is juis die rede dat ek my enigsins verwerdig om
783 met jou te kommunikeer. Jou haatdraendheid teen wat die PU vir CHO was en vir die
784 wat hier werk en swot, let wel witmense, is duidelik in al jou betoë. Hoekom ek my so
785 blootstel is juis om uit te wys dat 'n eensydige geskree oor rassisme alles wat
786 jy(hopelik) en ek wil hê teëwerk. Wat is dit? Dit is 'n land, plek, instelling waar
787 mense van alle rasse bymekaar is vir 'n doel, hetsy om 'n dorp te bestuur, opvoeding
788 te gee , misdaad te bekamp en mense te versorg . Hierdie mense moet by mekaar
789 hoort deur daar te wees op meriete, met die regte kwalifikasies en met die een doel en
790 dit is om die land 'n beter plek te maak sonder eie gewin. Sonder dit en soos dit nou
791 gaan met oor en weer beskuldigings is ons gedoem.

792

793 In terme van die IK debat. Interpreteer dit soos jy wil. Ek het nooit beweer dat alle
794 swartmense dom is nie. My beste student toe ek nog vir die derdejaars
795 rekenaarswetenskap gegee was Eric Ntumba. Briljant. Hy is nou Parys Frankryk waar
796 hy weer 'n graad swot. Maar die ongenaakbare manier waarop feite wat teen die
797 humanistiese, kommunistiese gelykheid teologie verdoem word is baie meer
798 afbrekend as opbouend. Dit grens aan arrogansie en dit veroorsaak dat mense wat NIE
799 die potensiaal het nie maar dit vertel word 'n baie moeilike lewe het omdat hulle nie
800 in hierdie kompeterende wêreld oorleef nie. Dit is die rede dat die universiteite so 'n
801 hoë druipsyfer en deurvloei syfer het.

802

803 Mandy, wat ek vir John gesê het, geld vir jou ook. My kinders en klein kinders(5 van
804 hulle) is my saak en hou hulle uit die BBS.

805

806 Peter, ek nie gedink dat 'n stats les nodig is nie. Maar jy is reg. Dit is ook waar daar 'n
807 belangrike statistiese tegniek frekwensie tabelle is. Gebruik dit om van my
808 voorbeelde te meet en kyk dan waar jy uitkom.

809

810 Ek het duidelik nie daarin geslaag om uit te wys dat redelikheid en balans nodig is vir
811 enige debat oor rassisme nie. Spesifiek in hierdie land waar ons rassistiese wetgewing
812 het. Waar daar nog rassisme op voetsoolvlak voorkom. Al wat ek wil het is dat ELKE
813 rassistiese insident met meriete gevalueer word en dat NIE elke insident as rassisties
814 ervaar word nie.

815

816 **Stephen**

817 Posted: Wed May 14, 2008 1:17 pm Post subject:

818 **rkwlcb wrote:**

819 Al wat ek wil het is dat ELKE rassistiese insident met meriete gevalueer word en dat
820 NIE elke insident as rassisties ervaar word nie.

821

822 Would this include your own racist pronouncement here and elsewhere? I would
823 suggest that evaluating racist incidents is counterproductive. Racism is racism and
824 should not be tolerated.

825

826 As for what you think of as black on white racism. You are going to have to do much
827 better than what you have to convince me that this is actually racism. So, the
828 challenge: Explain in less than 500 words how BEE and/or Equity Employment is
829 racist. (listing endless examples is not good enough, use them, make an argument,
830 build something convincing by clearly explaining how it is that the evidence that you
831 are presenting supports the assertion that you are trying to make. That is called
832 reasoning, and it is the most important part of academic writing)

833 _____

834 Sapere aude!

835

836 **Peter**

837 Posted: Wed May 14, 2008 3:03 pm Post subject:

838

839 Beth, dankie vir jou kommentaar; ek glo jou goeie bedoelings, en jou kommentaar is
840 ook baie meer werd as die stilswygende meerderheid.

841

842 Maar dit bly so, dat jy kontinuu praat in terme van swart, wit en bruin, asof dit

843 afgebakende groepe is. As jy kommentaar het op die regering kan jy tog van die ANC
844 praat, of as jy oor die polisie kla, die SAPS aanspreek. Nie alles nie by definisie
845 koppel aan velkleur.

846

847 Dis, dink ek, dat mense dink dat jy 'n groot rassis is, wat miskien rêrig nie so is nie,
848 soos gese ek glo in jou integriteit.

849

850 Ek moet tog ook helaas met Mandy saamstem, dat ook jou manier van skrywe die
851 verkeerde indrukke by mense gee. 'n milder toon kan miskien help

852

853 Net 'n diplomatiek advies

854

855 **Beth**

856 Posted: Fri May 16, 2008 9:53 am Post subject:

857 Peter, ek dink Charl het dieselfde trant aan gevoer. Ek verstaan en sal daarop let.

858 MAAR, daar is wel gevalle waar ek gaan weier om polities korrek te wees. Soos, as

859 daar berig word dat studente die kampus afbrand en 99% van hulle is swart dan sal ek

860 so daarna verwys, want dit is 'n klap in die gesig van wit studente wat sulke optredes

861 as barbaars ervaar. Waar ek egter praat van my druipe syfer of laat inhandiging van

862 opdragte of plagiaat dan is dit 'n studente kwessie.

863

864 In die media word vir elke moord wat op plaasboere gepleeg berig dat mans of rowers

865 dit gedoen het, maar as 'n witman met dieselfde misdadige oortuigings 'n huis aanval

866 en moord pleeg en dit is swart slagoffers dan word dit aan die groot kolk gehang. As

867 daar gepraat word van die hoogste verkrachtings syfer in die wêreld sou ek as wit man

868 baie omgekrap wees want wat is die persentasie van witmans wat jonk en oud verkrag
869 ? Dan WIL ek onderskeid sien tussen wit en swart want dit is 'n saak van trots en
870 word jy dan deel van statistieke wat onwaar is. Ons moet nog baie, baie ver gaan om
871 nooit van ras te praat nie en die grootste sondebok is juis die ANC regering wat met 'n
872 gesplete tong praat.

873

874 En dankie, Peter. Ek het nie die 'gift of the gab' en mag die rede wees vir die manier
875 waarop ek skryf . Ek voel egter baie sterk dat as rassisme in ons land, nou, aangeraak
876 word, moet dit gelykmatig gedoen word. Rassisme in die kru vorm van aftakeling van
877 menswaardigheid, die ontneming van regte weens jou velkleur en die miskenning van
878 jou kultuur en taal en godsdiens is onaanvaarbaar. Dit is hoekom ek uitgesproke is
879 teen eentaligheid(engels), christelike imperialisme, en die veramerikasering van ons
880 jeug(swart en wit). Dit is hoekom ek teen regstellende aksie is in die manier waarop
881 dit toegepas word en nie die vir die moet of moet nie debat nie. Dit is hoekom ek my
882 afkeur uitgespreek het oor die Kovies insident.

883

884 Hier is 'n stukkie wat geskryf is in die beeld deur 'n man so na aan my hart. John,
885 moet net nie omval nie.

886 Beeld-forum: Rassisme? Nee, swak maniere

887 May 14 2008 07:15:59:030PM - (SA)

888 Richard van der Ross

889 Wat word deesdae die meeste bespreek – die nalatenskap van apartheid, die
890 demokrasie, ras en rassisme, of Eskom?

891 Bo-aan my eie lys is ras en rassisme. Hoekom? Sommer.

892 Sommer omdat ek verlede Vrydag uitgery het na die Paarl om te luister na 'n lesing

893 oor en 'n bespreking van rassisme.

894 In die kollig was die skrywer Ryland Fisher en sy nuwe boek, Race. (Fisher het wel
895 meestal Engels gepraat – in die Afrikaanse Taalmuseum nogal – maar die gehoor was
896 oorwegend Afrikaanssprekend.)

897 En nou sit ek en peins oor Vrydagaand se dinge. Dis 'n interessante boek, wat betref
898 Fisher se hantering van sy onderwerp. Hy het onderhoude gevoer met 17 of wat Suid-
899 Afrikaners uit verskillende agtergronde – van 'n skooldogter tot 'n kabinetsminister;
900 van Rhoda Kadalie tot Melanie Verwoerd; van 'n vorige universiteitsrektor tot 'n
901 werklose bruin man in die Kaap.

902 Fisher stel vrae, teken die antwoorde aan, en stel sy eie menings. En dan word die
903 saak vir bespreking oopgestel in die Paarl.

904 Dis jammer, uit my oogpunt gesien, dat daar so min “anderskleuriges” was, maar die
905 vergadering is glo gereël ter ere van wyle eerw. Abe Maart, van die Paarl, en dit
906 verklaar seker waarom dit nie wyer geadverteer is nie.

907 Maar om terug te kom na ras en rassisme: Die ou Grieke het mekaar gegroet met die
908 woorde “Wie is jy, en uit watter stad (land) kom jy?” Met hierdie twee stukkies
909 inligting kry jy die vreemdeling in fokus, as't ware. Jy weet, in 'n mate, watter soort
910 mens hy is, jy weet iets van sy kultuur. Jy weet hoe jy hom ten beste kan hanteer. Jy is
911 nie vir of teen hom nie; dis iets wat later kom, namate jy meer van hom weet.

912 Is dít nie hoe ons ons eie benadering tot vreemdelinge aanpas nie? En daar is niks mee
913 fout nie. Ons het wel vooroordele of stereotipes wat nie altyd pas nie, want die
914 vreemdeling voor jou is wel vir jou vreemd. Maar jou vooroordele help om jou
915 evaluering van hom of haar aan die gang te sit.

916 Niemand (behalwe Fisher self, en later meer daaroor) erken dat hy of sy 'n rassis is
917 nie. Want rassisme is 'n lelike woord. Die ander ou is altyd die rassis, nie ekself nie.

918 Fisher skryf egter op bladsy een: “I believe that I am a racist because my entire life I
919 have been groomed to become one.”

920 Gewis ’n goeie manier om die boek aan die gang te kry. Prikkelend. Uitdagend. Maar
921 nie waar nie.

922 Want as dit waar was, sou hy nie hierdie boek geskryf het nie. Hy sou ’n boek geskryf
923 het waarin die deelnemers aan die debat nie die vinger van blaam sou gewys het na
924 die mense of landswette of situasies wat hul menswaardigheid gekrenk het nie. Liewer
925 ’n boek waarin die deelnemers apartheid of rassediskriminasie sou verdedig as nodig,
926 positief of selfs as Godgegewe. Maar daar bestaan mos nie meer sulke mense in Suid-
927 Afrika nie, of hoe?

928 Die een ding wat ek in die bespreking gemis het, was ’n definisie van rassisme. Kyk,
929 die boek se naam is Race. Maar om van ras te praat is wetenskaplik. Dus is ons gevra
930 oor rassisme. Dis iets anders. Dit gaan oor gedrag, oor verhoudinge. Oor die inneem
931 van standpunte ten opsigte van ander mense op grond van hul ras. Ek noem iemand ’n
932 rassis as hy meen hy is meerderwaardig op grond van sy eie velkleur.

933 Baie van die beskuldigings van mense as rassiste gaan eintlik oor hul swak maniere.
934 Sê maar iemand druk voor ’n ander by ’n winkel se betaalpunt in. Doen hy dit omdat
935 hy wit en die ander mens bruin is, dan is hy ’n rassis. Maar as hy dit doen net omdat
936 hy haastig is, dan is hy gewoon ongemanierd.

937 En mense is soms te fyngvoelig. Hulle sien rassisme waar dit nie is nie. Twee mense
938 klets in ’n winkel, salig onbewus dat hulle die gang versper. Hier kom ek aan en kan
939 nie verbykom nie. Ek kan ekskuus vra, dan sê hulle ekskuus en laat my verbykom.

940 Maar ek kon ook anders optree. Ek sien hulle is wit, laat my gevoelens opvlam omdat
941 ek bruin is, en dan kla ek dat hulle rassisties was.

942 Ons lewe in ’n wêreld vol van wantroue, woede, aggressie en sonde. Om te lewe asof

943 daar eendag hemel op aarde gaan wees, waar almal van liefde teenoor almal oorborrel,
944 is wensdenkery. Ons sal maar moet saamleef met 'n mate van onaangenaamheid oor
945 baie dinge – soos rassisme.

946) Prof. Richard van der Ross is 'n voormalige rektor van die Universiteit van Wes-
947 Kaapland.

948

949 **Judy**

950 Posted: Mon May 19, 2008 11:57 am Post subject:

951

952 Dear Beth,

953

954 That is a pity that you do not take this article seriously, since it is a very serious
955 magazine. 😞

956

957 “Le point” is for the French speaking people what “the time magazine” is for the
958 English speaking ones.

959

960 **Susan**

961 Posted: Mon May 19, 2008 1:58 pm Post subject:

962

963 Edith made the comment about her bad experience at the shopping mall and it was
964 answered with the question: Is this racism or is this just bad manners?

965

966 Well could somebody please tell me then if this is racism or just bad manners:

967

968 I was in the Markams store at the Pick 'n Pay Centre, a short while back. On
969 attempting to leave the store, a very large woman (black) stopped in front of me and
970 refused to move. In fact, she ignored me. I politely said "Excuse me" and attempted to
971 pass her (I'm not one of the thinnest people either) as there was no other way out of
972 the store at that time. The next moment, there was a torrid of verbal abuse in which I
973 was called a "White Bitch" and that I must remember that I am no longer in power
974 and cannot throw my weight around.

975

976 My husband together with the staff of the store stood there, waiting for a reply. To
977 everybody's amazement, I just stood there laughing at her. What did she expect? Did
978 she want a confrontation, I don't know.

979

980 Because I laughed out loud, she saw I was not going to be baited into a squabble. The
981 one saleswoman, also black, came to her and told her in no polite language where she
982 could get off.

983

984 So once again, was this racism or just rudeness?

985

986 There is two sides to the racism card and it is being played by both sides.

987

988 Just a brief comment on my experience of rude (racial) shoppers....

989

990 **Andrew**

991 Posted: Mon May 19, 2008 2:24 pm Post subject: EK IS BLY

992

993 dat die soort ding al hoe minder voorkom.

994

995 Ek staan dikwels in van die lang toue by die kitsbanke. En waar 'n mens vroeër

996 maklik uit die ry geboender is, of mense maklik voor jou ingedruk het en niemand

997 gewaag het om iet te sê nie, is die situasie ddeesdae gemoedelik, en sta ons saam en

998 grappies maak oor ESKOM en so aan.

999

1000 Maar sommige banke, soos FNB, gebruik goedopgeleide sekerheidspersoneel by die

1001 kitsbanke, wat beurte bepaal, mense help wat sukkel met die masjiene, en onmiddelik

1002 laat weet as 'n masjine nie reg werk nie. Jy is dus nie meer uitgelewer aan die boelies

1003 nie, jy hoef nie heelyd rond te loer wie jou gaan besteel nie, en dit haal die spanning

1004 van almal af. Sodra mense begin gespanne en onrustig voel, is hulle gouer

1005 iesegrimmig - nie 'n verskoning nie, maar 'n feit wat kan help.

1006

1007 Maar ons probleem is baie GROOT - het ons al planne as die xenofobiese rassisme

1008 na ons NWU-kampusse begin oorspoel?

1009

1010 Oppie Mafikengkampus is daar omtrent die helfte XENOSTUDENTE. Daar is ook

1011 baie meer van hulle op die VDK - vermoed ek - as hier in Potch. Op Mafikeng was

1012 daar al probleme wanneer die Xenostudente te goed vaar in SR verkiesings, of nie

1013 saam wil staak nie.

1014

1015 As ons, medeburgers van die land - nie hier met mekaar kan regkom nie, wat gaan ons

1016 doen as party ouens dink die kongolese en die sjinese en die korjane hoort nie hier

1017 nie?

1018

1019 Nee, ek gaan haal nie die moeilikheid anderkant die berg nie - hy loop self oor die
1020 berg.

1021

1022 **Judy**

1023 Posted: Mon May 19, 2008 3:19 pm Post subject:

1024

1025 Susan, it was racism without a doubt.

1026

1027 However, and I am not trying to justify the way the lady talked to you, because she
1028 had no excuse in being rude and call you that way; I have seen more racism from the
1029 white people towards the black people than the opposite.

1030

1031 Since we are sharing experiences:

1032

1033 How many times did I see at the post office, white people making sure that they have,
1034 at least, 5m between them and the black person in front of them.

1035 How many times did I hear from people who are white : I hope you are not speaking
1036 these funny languages "they" speak.

1037

1038 Even my dentist was making huge racist comments while checking my teeth, and it
1039 was impossible for me to respond to these comments. (he is not my dentist anymore!)

1040 😊

1041

1042 How many times did I hear people telling me that they hate these "b...dy K".

1043

1044 Most of the time, because I am white, people assume that I share their ideas on black
1045 people. They tend to speak freely about their feelings, and in front of my children, not
1046 even thinking one second that, maybe, just maybe, I am not a racist and I do not like
1047 the way they talk about black people.

1048

1049 I come from a pretty multiracial family, but they can't know it, can they?

1050

1051 Racism is definitely on both sides, and that we cannot deny it, however can we really
1052 ignore the fact that black people had to endure that for centuries, on a daily basis and
1053 that maybe once in a while as a white person we have to go through it?

1054

1055 It is not right, and nobody should pay the mistakes that the people have made in the
1056 past, however, sometimes you do have to remember that it has been only freedom for
1057 most of the population in SA only for 14 years, and yes it will take time to adjust on
1058 both sides.

1059

1060 Interesting enough, as a white French person, I have experienced more religious
1061 discrimination than racism, and it was not coming from black people. 😊

1062

1063 **TSEPISO**

1064 Posted: Tue May 20, 2008 10:10 am Post subject: Racism

1065

1066 I am sorry it happened to you Susan, because I know you I have worked with you, the
1067 funny is it happen on the people who are not racist or who are there to make a

1068 difference, well I don't know but most of the white citizen of potch are racist no doubt
1069 about that even in the cinemas you will see lots of them (whites shift to another seats
1070 far away from blacks lol) and for I will just tell my self ok that's their problem and I
1071 can even have a better concentration when I am not close to someone ∅grinning the
1072 pop corn next to me lol

1073

1074 Well I am not an expert on this but most of the older Vision of racist still fear whites
1075 they feel as if they are inferior to them some of them even still call some whites baas,
1076 and yes of course some will misuse the power that they speak to whites like they want
1077 because the law no longer favors only whites but both parties and especially in malls
1078 and restaurant you will struggle to get a service if you are black some of the waiters if
1079 they are white they will make as if you are not even standing there and giving whites
1080 first service so to say and like me cus I can't keep my mouth shut someone head will
1081 roll for sure, ooh like hell they will roll.

1082

1083 New versions of or new citizens like young people have no problem most of them till
1084 problem comes to them on racial issues some of them they feel their parents went
1085 through hell when apartheid was still in power especially Vervoerd, botha and the
1086 likes where if you where a black person well you where treated like an animal
1087 something that cannot think that is use for hard labour, and yes still now and there you
1088 hear remarks from whites how they hate us(blacks) why only god knows,

1089

1090 But as an individual I will really like to know where all this came from, why whites
1091 treated black sooo bad more like travel back in time and witness the root and
1092 beginning of racism who started, its the bible? A person who thought because he/she

1093 is white is better than the other? I mean the blood is red on both parties, basically we
1094 are the same just black are more poorer than white because of apartheid and Bantu
1095 education but what I like about apartheid is they thought by making black to know
1096 their languages by force they ∅where killing but infact they where giving us
1097 advantage lol

1098

1099 Mostly woman(white) are the one who like racism and very influential to they are
1100 men when it come to different colours between men I know it I have seen it
1101 experienced it

1102 But at the end of the day racism is there and is there to stay maybe till the second
1103 coming of Jesus I wonder if he will be black or white but I think he would'nt like
1104 himself if he comes back and he is white.

1105

1106

1107

1108

1109 **Stephen**

1110 Posted: Tue May 20, 2008 11:16 am Post subject:

1111

1112

1113 I was in the Markams store at the Pick 'n Pay Centre, a short while back. On
1114 attempting to leave the store, a very large woman (black) stopped in front of me and
1115 refused to move. In fact, she ignored me. I politely said "Excuse me" and attempted to
1116 pass her (I'm not one of the thinnest people either) as there was no other way out of
1117 the store at that time. The next moment, there was a torrid of verbal abuse in which I

1118 was called a "White Bitch" and that I must remember that I am no longer in power
1119 and cannot throw my weight around.

1120

1121 This is very interesting in terms of racism. It certainly is a racial slur, and in the
1122 vernacular sense that people conventionally use the word, it is racist. And that of
1123 course is enough that it be roundly condemned.

1124

1125 However, once we go back to the definition I posted on a different thread, the picture
1126 is much more complicated. It certainly is not political racism, as there is no political
1127 structures in place attempting to enforce the meanings this person is attaching to the
1128 "white" of "white bitch". In the 'Neo South Africa', political racism is a thing of the
1129 past.

1130

1131 The problem is SA now is cultural racism. By this I do not mean discrimination on the
1132 basis of culture, I mean the internalization as prevailing cultural resource of the race
1133 categories and the meanings that have been historically assigned to them. Although
1134 they are not formal any longer, they exist as ready-made habits of thought, frameworks
1135 that people draw on to make sense of the world around them, to construct the limits of
1136 events and interpret those events. For example to make sense of corruption, to make
1137 sense of infrastructure failures, to explain poverty or crime. Race and the meanings
1138 attached to it over the past few centuries has become for many a resource through
1139 which they can explain complex problems easily, and with which they can press their
1140 claims or feel outraged when their claims are not met.

1141

1142 But I do not think that the story Susan recounts can be thought of as cultural racism

1143 either, simply because there is no comparable construction, distribution and
1144 prevalence going the other direction. There is not a widely held tacit belief that whites
1145 are inferior, that they should be denied political or economic rights. This womans
1146 position, I imagine, is one that would be widely condemned and very poorly
1147 supported. Unfortunatly, the same is not true (certainly not in Potch) for encounters
1148 going in the other direction. I would even go so far as to suggest that many black
1149 citizens of South Africa, still see themselves as inferior as they have internalised the
1150 same set of meanings regarding race as what the white racists have.

1151

1152 So I guess, if it is neither political racism, nor cultural racism, then it has to be
1153 individual racism, but an individual cannot be the possessor of ideology, and racism is
1154 ideology. So we have a problem here I think once we try and put this in the broader
1155 picture. I would suggest it is a racial slur that goes against the current of prevailing
1156 racist ideology, that contradicts the established (hopefully increasingly less so)
1157 meanings attached to the racial categories we have inherited.

1158

1159 So, controversially I am sure, I would suggest that a statement like "white bitch" has
1160 good and bad elements. But first I want to say that I would never endorse anybody
1161 insulting anybody else, and think that the interaction Leonie describes is to be
1162 condemned strongly.

1163

1164 As bad elements go, it perpetuates the racial qualification of personhood, and also
1165 provokes racially based responses that if anything are likely to perpetuate the problem
1166 of racism. As good elements go, it swims against the stream of prevailing racial
1167 meanings and therefore may do something to break down those meanings. In the same

1168 way that BEE taught white men that they are a category like all others, and not some
1169 kind of supercategorical exemplar of the norm, so these kinds of statements perhaps
1170 herald a turn, a moment in which categories are being remade and the old meanings
1171 shaken loose - the bad comes in the form that the new meanings such encounters are
1172 fortering may well not be any better.

1173 _____

1174 Sapere aude!

1175

1176

1177

Addendum C



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Author	Message
Karien Brits BBS VIP Joined: 14 Oct 2004 Posts: 174	<p>↳ Posted: Fri Jul 22, 2005 9:07 am Post subject: Riglyne vir die gebruik van Sê jou Sê quote</p> <p>- Dit is 'n oop gespreksforum vir alle personeellede. - Bespreek die saak, moenie die persoon aanval nie. - Indien u beswaar het teen iets wat op die forum gesê word, neem dan aan die debat deel dat almal daarby kan baat vind, of - indien u nie daarvoor kans sien nie, neem dit met die persoon self op of rig die klagte aan bkkjhb@puk.ac.za</p> <p>Geniet die vryheid op Sê jou Sê verantwoordelik en baie dankie vir die waardevolle bydraes sover.</p> <p>Karien Brits X2563</p>
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Faculty of Education

Consent form

I, hereby give my consent to participate in the interview held on(date) between myself and the researcher in (place)

I further give permission that the interview data and/or my contributions to the forum can be used for analysis.

I have been informed that my privacy and identity are protected in the research and that I have the right to terminate my participation in the research at any time.

.....

(participant)

.....

Louise Postma (researcher)

Addendum E (a)

Self presentation		
DOI – declare own identity	9-11, 76, 77, 78	Ek is moeg om verskonend te lewe omdat ek wit is en dat my voorvaders 300 jaar terug hier gearriveer het Vir my as wit dosent is dit onstellend dat ek my kennis aan sulke mense moet oordra. Hulle wil klaarblyklik nie dat hulle swart mede-studente van my as wit westerse wiskundige statistiek dosent die kennis kry nie.
DOP – declare own persuasion	5, 9	Ek is net so moeg om altyd te hoor hoe rassisties alles is wat wit in het Ek is moeg om verskonend te lewe omdat ek wit is
FOE – focus on own experience	5, 76	Vir my as wit dosent is dit onstellend dat ek my kennis aan sulke mense moet oordra.
EWE – emphatic way of expression SEW – strong emotional wording	5, 6, 8, 9	Ek is net so moeg om altyd Nee, alles wat Westers is, is sleg, buit net uit en is rassisties.
RQ – rhetorical questioning DAR – Q – direct address of reader - questioning	6-8	Hoeveel keer word in die publieke domein gespog met wat die Westerse beskawing vermag het, van die innovasie, die wetenskaplike ontdekkings en vooruitgang?
Self-other presentation		
PNSE – provide negative self judgement	16, 17	ek sal dit uitwys en beveg al word ek van rassisme beskuldig.
OSO – Oppose self against others	16, 17, 76, 77, 78	net omdat die gros van die gemeenskap dit aanvaar is vir my onaanvaarbaar Hulle wil klaarblyklik nie dat hulle swart mede-studente van my as wit westerse wiskundige statistiek dosent die kennis kry nie.
Issue presentation		
P-SPR – Posters –	41, 46, 49, 53,	.

share personal reaction	55, 56, 58, 61, 67	
P-OEV- Posters – offer evidence of viewpoint	33-74	
P-CLU- Posters – offer criticism against language use	41	The same person we are arguing about came in a ship in 1652 very late 18:00.(taal????) He will never make us feel offended by our past and our blackness because black is beautiful he can utter such nonsense black will still be beautiful.(taal?????) This means not trying to imitate white people but taking pride in being black, and thereby valuing our blackness is not a matter of pigmentation but an attitude one has about oneself.(taal????)
P-ISV- Posters – indication of surprise with view	49	This Western style education is racist in moral fibre and capitalist in content. (Nou toe nou!)
P-IQW – Posters – indication of questioning of wording	53	AZASCO believes that the type(????) of education given to black students aims at teaching us to hate ourselves, to look down upon our communities and to despise our parents. (soos bo na die saak afgehandel is, sal verduidelik maar dit is uiters belaglik en hier kom die kultuurverskille met volle mag na vore.)
P-QLV – Posters – question logic of view	58, 60	It aims at making us see ourselves as an elite class (Wat soek hulle hier?????)
Way of issue presentation		
SEP-CNN – strong expression of persuasion – choice of negative nouns	14, 15	Om verlief te neem met agterlikheid, lae standaarde en die beskuldiging dat alles wat wit is sleg
SEP-AA – strong expression of	81	diktatoriale, korrupte, agterlike, oorlogsugtige, wetteloosheid en volkuitwissings

persuasion – acculmination of adjectives SEP-DA – strong expression of persuasion – descriptive adjectives		
SEP-DN – strong expression of persuasion – descriptive nouns	8, 14	innovasie, die wetenskaplike ontdekkings en vooruitgang Om verlief te neem met agterlikheid, lae standarde
CLU- EG - contrasts in language use – exaggerated generalization CLU – CA – contrasts in language use – contrasting adjectives	8, 9,15	alles wat wit is sleg en alles wat swart is is geregverdig
ENO – expected negative outcome	92, 93	Ons sal nou sien of die "march" gaan plaasvind en dit gedissiplineerd gaan wees en of dit soos gewoonlik in choas en anargie gaan plaasvind.

Beth: 1 - 95

Self presentation				
APP	Assume a prescriptive position	107, 144	And of course, as usual, you are perpetrating the fiction of the 'west' achieving its ascendancy in isolation	You should not make such apparently authoritative statements from such a woefully under-informed position.
Self other presentation				
DPI	Diminuation of participant's ideas	103	To believe that colonists and settlers brought 'civilization' with them is as ill informed as the idea that Holland is a hotbed of white supremacist thinking.	
RPP - N	Reference to previous participations - negative	107	And of course, as usual, you are perpetrating the fiction of the 'west' achieving its ascendancy in isolation	
PDE	Participant's declarations are exemplary	104, 105, 110, 111	It is furthermore a brilliant example of the kind of ongoing racial devaluing that makes black consciousness so necessary.	the rest of the world was unable to follow as a result of some species of inherent backwardness (this is a clear implication of your trotting out the wonders of western achievement).
PRU	Participant regarded as uninformed	102, 142, 145	To believe that colonists and settlers brought 'civilization' with them is as ill informed as the idea that Holland is a hotbed of white supremacist thinking.	

SID	Sources of information dubious	143		
Self presentation				
PIP	Presentation of informative piece	113-140		
QPP	Quotation of a previous participation	100-101		
Way of issue presentation				
SRT - QM	Sarcastic reference to terminology – quotation marks	102		
SEP – DA - N	Strong expression of persuasion – descriptive adjectives - negative	143, 144, 145		

Stephen: 98-157

Self- presentation		
DAR-RQ	Direct address of reader – rhetorical questioning	168, 169, 181
SPE- N	Share personal experience - narrative	171-179
Self other presentation		
SPO	Share participant’s opinion	166
EOA	Experience of aggression	175
DIS	Disempowered in situation	179
N-OSO	Narrative – opposition of self against others	173, 174, 178, 179
Issue presentation		
NIV	Narrative illustrates victimisation	171-179
Way of issue presentation		
N-IF	Narrative – intensive form	173
N-SDA	Narrative – strong descriptive adjective	172
N-SDV	Narrative-strong descriptive verb	172
N-DQ	Narrative-direct quotation	175

Edith: 162-182

Self presentation		
Self-other presentation		
DCN	Doubt conclusion of narrative	188-191
Issue presentation		
A-FOP	Argumentation – focus of presentation	
ECE	Expect clarity of evidence	191
Way of issue presentation		
PHE	Provide a hypothetical example	205-209
DVIE	Deny validity of individual experience	209-214
GEGV	Generalised experience has greater validity	209-214

Stephen: 188-214

Self-other presentation		
IPI	<i>Irritation with participant's interaction</i>	221
IID	<i>Indication that ideas are diminished</i>	225, 226
DAP	<i>Direct address of participant</i>	221, 222, 305, 313-314, 317, 319, 322-324
CAQ	<i>Challenge to answer questions</i>	322-324
Issue presentation		
PCN	<i>Presentation of a controversial narrative</i>	239-301, 331-467
OWA	<i>Opposition we-Africa</i>	311-320
Way of issue presentation		
ELU	<i>Exaggerated language use</i>	305
ELU-R	<i>Emphatic language use by repetition</i>	313-315
ELU-CL	<i>Emphatic language use by capital letters</i>	317, 320

Beth: 221-478

Self-presentation		
AAP	<i>Assume authoritative position</i>	483, 486
COC	<i>Contradict own conviction</i>	491-492
Self-other presentation		
NEO	<i>Narrative equalises opinion</i>	483-484
DAP	<i>Direct address of participant</i>	483
DIA	<i>Doubts information and argumentation</i>	483-484
AMC	<i>Assumptions and myths determine convictions</i>	491
Issue presentation		
Argument and evidence		
DVN	<i>Doubts validity of narrative</i>	486-488, 490
DIDE	<i>Doubtful information doubtful evidence</i>	483-484

Stephen: 483-493

Self-other presentation		
DAP	<i>Direct address of participant</i>	501
PAD	<i>Prescriptive in address of participant</i>	508, 509
IRL	<i>Indication of response as lacking</i>	501
IQU	<i>Indication questions unanswered</i>	501
YUO	<i>You us opposition</i>	506-510
FPDP	<i>Focus of participant is degrading and prescriptive</i>	506-508
IPIU	<i>Indication participant ideology unrealistic</i>	508-509
IUR	<i>Indication of us as realistic</i>	509-510
Issue presentation		
Argument and evidence		
DNI	<i>Demand for narrative of ideology</i>	503,504
DEI	<i>Demand for evidence of ideology</i>	504,505
IEI	<i>Incapable of evidence of ideology</i>	505
PENM	<i>Possible evidence is not meaningful</i>	505,506
DBI	<i>Demand proof of ideology</i>	501-503

Beth: 501-510

Issue presentation		
Argument and evidence		
DJU	<i>Debating judged as unhealthy</i>	515-516
AIV-REE	<i>Argument invalid – reference to external evidence</i>	516

John: 515-516

Self other presentation		
QIMP	<i>Quotation illustrates mistakes of participant</i>	526-534
PFW	<i>Participant has the focus wrong</i>	532
SYT	<i>Suppression you-them</i>	532-534
PAP	<i>Prescriptive address of participant</i>	552, 553, 570, 571
DAP	<i>Direct address of participant</i>	559, 560
PII	<i>Participant's ideology speaks of ignorance</i>	562-563
PIS	<i>Participant's ideas are strange</i>	563-564
RPU	<i>Regard participant as ungrateful</i>	568
RPS	<i>Regard participant as selfish</i>	568-569
PUR	<i>Participant unhappy with reality</i>	569
NSC	<i>Narrative speaks of comfort zone</i>	571-572
NSE	<i>Narrative speaks of escape</i>	570-571
PCU	<i>Previous contribution is answered</i>	580
DSP	<i>Dictating style of participant</i>	582
DOP	<i>Direct opposition participant</i>	581

SIS	<i>Stresses informality of own suggestions</i>	594
SPD	<i>Suggestions only points for discussion</i>	594-595
PAQ	<i>Presents answers to questions</i>	601-608
Issue presentation		
Argument and evidence		
RDS	<i>Reformulation of development as suppressive</i>	532-534
DAI	<i>Dependency argument insufficient</i>	555-556
ROSI	<i>Regards own statement as important</i>	557-558

Stephen: 522-608

Addendum E (b)

	<u>Self presentation</u>	<u>Interaction</u>	
Beth:	reveals identity and emotion, feels despondent, threatened and angry portrays self confidence about viewpoint	Beth:	General appeal to everyone Fight acceptance of low standards Anticipates resistance of black students against herself as white lecturer Perceive opinions of black students as harmful to her Opposes I - them
Stephen:	portrays selfconfidence, informed and knowledgeable about issues introduced by Beth, opposes Beth's ideas strongly	Stephen:	Stereotypes – Beth typical devalues races Prescriptive towards Beth Refers wrongly to Beth's participations Beth is uninformed, gives fiction
Edith:	feelings of victimization	Edith:	Supports Beth Feels victimized Opposes I - them
Stephen:	Hypothetical, rational, self confident	Stephen:	expresses doubt about convincing value of Edith's narrative
	<u>Issue</u>	<u>Way of issue presentation</u>	
Beth:	Presents full posters and quotes Criticises style and content of posters	Beth:	Contrasts, repetitions Sarcasm, Rhetorical questions
Stephen:	Gives facts about rise to economic power of the West at cost of Africa	Stephen:	exaggeration, reduction of Beth's arguments, sarcasm factual and informative tone in presentation
Edith:	Narrative about unpleasant encounters which can be interpreted as racist	Edith:	direct quote, the use of strong verbs and adjectives, and adjectives in the intensive form direct question to reader
Stephen:	racist attitudes can only be defined as racist when not an individual, but rather a group has to recognize it as such.	Stephen:	argument, hypothesis

Addendum E (c)

Beth	Argument				
1-78	Opposes West and Africa, equalises West with innovation and scientific discoveries, while Africa is equalised with backwardness and low standards. discrimination against western civilisation and whites with no apparent reason, or little justification and resolves to fight injustices (racism, indication white is bad vs black is good). Opposes the majority in their acceptance of low standards.				
	Pronouns Nouns Verbs	Adjectives/adverb of degree	Rhetoric style	Punctuation	Description
1-78	I am just so tired (5) I will expose it (17) I will fight (18) I am accused of racism (18)	So tired of (5,9) How racist (5)	<u>Repetition:</u> How many times? (6) <u>Direct address</u> No,....(8) <u>Contrast:</u> White (10, 15) vs black (16)		Message brought by use of oppos placing of self in the middle of the emphasised by the repetition of I repetition of own resolve/action (I repetition of negative state of min Selection of strong nouns: hateful Selection of strong verbs: Burling up Indication of despondence, then aggressiveness, challenging repetition – everything ... everyth
	Everything black is justified (16)		Africa = Backwardness (8) Low standards (15) vs		
	Boast (7)		Western civilization =		

			Innovation (8) Scientific discoveries (7,8) Progress (8)		
	Everything white is bad (15) Hatefulness (29) Burling up (29)		Western civilization = bad, racist, exploit (9)		
			Poisonous reaction (27) vs Moderate, judicious reaction (28)		
			<u>Plasing the self in the middle</u> I am just so tired (5) I will expose it (17) I will fight (18) I am accused of racism (18)		
	Possible categories		Emotional impact on reader		
	1. Indication of state of mind 1.1 Direct address 1.2 Repetition 1.3 Contrast	1.1 How many times? (6) So tired of (5,9) How racist (5) Everything (5,9)	1. Indication of state of mind Rhetoric style of direct address, (no,) repetition has emotional impact and conveys emotion of speaker. Reference to self makes the speaker's state of mind directly available.		

	2. Argument 2.1 Quote 1.1 Repetition 1.2 Contrast 1.3 Question	1.2 Africa = Backwardness (8) Low standards (15) vs Western civilization = Innovation (8) Scientific discoveries (7,8) Progress (8) Western civilization = bad, racist, exploit (9) White (10, 15) vs black (16)			
	3. Resolution to action 3.1 Repetition 3.2 Contrast	I will expose it (17) I will fight (18) I am accused of racism (18)			
Beth	Argument				
23-76	Content of the quote: The university belongs to black people as the country belongs to them. Lecturers who uphold the values of apartheid make black students feel inferior they did not have access to education as the whites had. A white lecturer has no reason to make black people feel inferior about their skin colour or the fact that they are black. That is why a protest march will be undertaken. Azasco believes that education offered to black students makes them despise themselves, their communities and their parents. The western style of education is capitalist and racist. The ideology of Black Consciousness is supported by Azapo, which gives black students a sense of pride and self-worth.				

	black people, changes their attitude. Black students should not measure themselves against white supremacy's values.				
	Pronouns Nouns Verbs	Adjectives/adverb of degree	Rhetoric style	Punctuation	
	Insulted black students (23) We do not appreciate fools (36) Academic terrorism (51) White supremacy (73)	foolish racial remarks (23) stupid man (50)	Black is beautiful (47) Teaching us to hate ourselves...look down on our communities .. despise our parents (55-57)		Black vs white, west Black campus Beautiful white supremacy Academic terrorism Pride despise Hate Racist Capitalist Valuing blackness
	Pronouns Nouns Verbs	Adjectives/adverb of degree	Rhetoric style	Punctuation	Description
80-101				Within quotations, repetition of ??????, parenthesis – indication of spelling mistakes, astonishment (wow)	Indicates questioning of and astonishment quotations by placing remarks with repetition, question marks and exclamations marks, parentheses next to the statements in quotations
Stephen	Argument		Quotes and addresses other participants		
104-168	Contests the idea of civilization brought by settlers,		Quotes previous author: 9-11		

	the excellence of the west and states that these misconceptions and consequent racial devaluing makes black consciousness necessary		Of course, as usual, <u>you</u> are (113) It is clear that <u>you</u> are informed ... by little to nothing (151) Than <u>your</u> own “Hoerskool” history lessons (153) <u>You</u> should not make (153) <u>You</u> should not offer (156)			
	Nouns, verbs	Adjectives	Rhetoric style,	Punctuation	Signature	<u>Description</u>
	Hotbed (109) Racial devaluing (110) Trotting out the wonders (117)	ill informed (108) Apparently authoritative statements (153) Woefully under-informed position (154)	Of course, as usual (113) It is clear that you (151) You are informed ... by little to nothing (151, 152) You should ... not (156) What a load of crap (161) What you see as a threat (166) Threat vs opportunity (166)	“Civilization” (108, 161) “west” (113) “west” (114) “hoerskool” (152) (instrumentally (157, 158)	Sapere aude – be bold to be wise (168)	
	Possible categories		Emotional impact on reader			
	Quotes previous author and contradiction – addresses directly (113) Provides evidence for argument (119-149) Describes uninformed position of previous		Direct address of opponent makes impact strong, Definite, selfassured address, it is clear, of course, as usual Use of quotation marks and parentheses relativises / puts opponents convictions and knowledge in doubtful light Personal signature under the post underlines the fact that the writer			

	author What should rather consider Conclusion, direct address of previous author		refers to the self as informed as wise, in contrast to the opponent Prescriptive		
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DIARY OF RESEARCH AND REFLECTIVE NOTES

February 2008

I started with the creation of a Facebook group in February 2008 for the 11 off campus students enrolled for the Post Graduate Certificate in Education with the purpose to discuss critical issues which they experience at the schools at which they are employed as pre-service teachers. I posted videos on their Facebook group site, which were on topics such as homophobia in high schools. I also invited them to post videos to the website which they find of interest. I was quite disappointed when no one reacted to the videos. Instead, one or two students did describe some problems they experienced with learners, e.g. how to handle learners with troublesome backgrounds. The students further had assignment-related questions which they addressed to the group or to me. They responded to these questions and the students were seemingly satisfied with the exchange of ideas. After that semester, I decided not to pursue my studies on the enhancement of critical thinking or the creation of an online community to support students through a medium such as Facebook. It seemed to me quite time intensive and I did not want to investigate something which I have to create first. Part of the problem was also that the students in rural places did not have internet access. Another problem was that the participation of the students did not form part of their mark in the module I was teaching (educational media), so it was not taken seriously. I do also think that they did not really understand the notion of system criticism and if they did, might not have thought that it would be appropriate to discuss it.

February-August 2008

During a study visit to the University of Joensuu, Finland in September-November 2008, I intended to work with Jussi Nuutinen who created a computer program as part of his PhD in Computer Science. This program was called "Woven Stories" by which one can map a discourse with links and nodes of the different themes participants introduce in the discussion. I thought that the mapping of a discussion could have value for research, as the visualization of the discussion subsumes the linearity of a textual discussion and can shed some light on the progress and different nuances in the discussion. Unfortunately the program could not perform correctly as it was still in construction. I do still intend to make use of the program, even if it is only in the display of data after analysis.

September 2008

I created an intranet community with the purpose to stimulate discourse on any topic which the post graduate students in Computer Science and the person (staff and faculty) find worthwhile discussing. As the students and lecturers come from different countries and are of different nationalities, I thought they would have something to say e.g. about their adaptation in Finland or just share some useful information. As a school shooting in the West of Finland triggered a nationwide shock and feelings of despair, I thought to take this as an inroad for further discussion. The only response came from a PhD-student of Namibia who expressed appreciation for the fact that the law changed and restricts the possession of firearms to those above 21 years of age.

The students also commented to questions I asked about their lack of interaction on the community that they do not want to participate in a community which is just there, it should have a purpose, such as dealing with problems they have in their post graduate studies in Computer Science, the sharing of useful study-based information etc. A community for the discussion of everyday topics just seems to be irrelevant and they do not have the need for it.

I asked the administrators of the online group ITFORUM if I could do research on the emotional presence of participants. They did not really respond positively and anticipated ethical problems and could not see the relevance of doing research on a group whose sole purpose is the discussion of information technology.

Before my departure to Finland I chose discussions on the intranet of my home university about racism. After the above attempts at creating online communities, both at my home university and in Finland, I decided to focus only on these discussions. This discussion was in May 2008 and the fact that the topic was treated quite intensively and had many viewers, served as the motivation for the choice of text which comprised of more than a thousand lines.

It was quite difficult to distance myself from the opinions expressed in the discussion and the turbulent feelings I had about the state of affairs in my home country, especially in the calm and restful atmosphere I experienced in a country which I presumed to be quite homogenous concerning its race composition. My reading of the text was therefore quite confusing concerning my own personal opinion and position regarding the issue of racism.

At first I sided with participants who clearly opposed racism and any indication of it. These discussants were well-spoken and their arguments were correct and clear. They also attacked views which they regarded as racist quite vehemently and in no unsure terms. I came to like these outspoken people with their clear and well-chosen discourse. On the other hand, the participation which seemed to me and the other participants to bear evidence of racism, were contradictory and over-emotional.

October 2008

Following the discourse ethics of Habermas, nothing more seemed to be understood in the discussion forum. The verdict is spoken – those who argue against racism are ethical and those who have racist arguments are unethical. There had to be something more. What if the person with the so-called racist attitudes was not such a racist? Evidence in the forum could be found that this person's colleagues do not experience her as being racist and advised her to choose her words more carefully. It started to become clear to me that she experiences turmoil in her professional life and she wants to give expression to the conflict she experiences, by presenting opposing views.

At this stage I favoured the theory of Young for democratic discourse, as it was set against, as she describes, the rationalistic approach of Habermas. With my reading of Young I started to understand that the rational approach of participants is limiting and does in fact disempower participants who choose to convey their positions and convictions about racism not through rational means. So I started to read the discussion with more sympathy for those I initially sided against.

November 2008

One lecturer did actually later respond to my proposal of investigating a community of students and showed some discussion on his online subject community in programming. The discussions were mostly based on the work the students had to do, although some elements of students' personalities could be detected. One student had e.g. another idea about the assignment and seemed quite stubborn in having it his way, to which the lecturer actually responded that his instructions had to be followed.

Onverwerkte idees:

Gemeenskapsvorming in virtuele leeromgewings

Die probleem met virtuele leergemeenskappe is dat mense nie 'n sosiale teenwoordigheid daar voel nie, en dat die medium uiteindelik vervremend is, soos reeds deur verskeie navorsers aangedui. Die moontlikhede van sosial netwerke en die sagteware voorsien soos deur Facebook, kan 'n aanduiding wees hoe 'n moderator te werk kan gaan om vir die leerder ook 'n sosiale omgewing te skep, aangesien leer hoofsaaklik 'n sosiale proses is (Vygotsky). Die idee van Gemeinschaft teenoor die van Gesellschaft, wat as primer rasioneel teenoor sosiaal, emosioneel gemeenskaplik gestel word, sluit ook aan by die feministiese teorie oor kommunikatiewe diskoers, wat wegbeweeg van Habermas se ideale spraak posisie, wat die bereiking van rasionale konsensus tot doel het en eintlik in daardie sin utiliter is en 'n arm of reduktiese beskouing van leer tot gevolg het.

'n Virtuele gemeenskap met die eienskappe van Gemeinschaft van Tonnies, wat meer neig na kommunikatiewe diskoers, en nie noodwendig rasioe diskoers uitsluit nie, maar meer inklusief is en nie noodwendig konsensus as die norm stel nie, is meer uitnodigend.

Vele eise word aan moderatore van aanlyn gemeenskappe en veral die van gespreksforums gestel, soos die guide on the side, maar vereis tog 'n teenwoordigheid op verskillende vlakke, soos kognitief, emosioneel en sosiaal. 'n Studie wat die moderatorsteenwoordigheid aantoon, soos van Blignaut en Trollip, toon ook die affektiewe teenwoordigheid in die sin van aanmoediging.

Sekere tipes gespreksforum in verskillende kontekste lei ook tot verskeie soort teenwoordighede van die deelnemers. Dit kom voor asof gespreksgroepe in gepolariseerde omgewings onderwerpe met gepoliseerde gesprekke insluit en 'n groter emosionele teenwoordigheid van die deelnemers toon, daarteenoor kan akademiese gespreksgroepe selfs ook die emosioe nie negeer nie, maar dan word die wegbeweeg van rasioe gesprek, dikwels as 'n wegbeweging van die doel van die groep beskou (vgl van Wyk en Cronje se bespreking van Itforum se afwyking van groepsdoel met 9/11), terwyl mens hierdie oomblikke van gemeenskapsvorming as 'n ideale leergeleentheid kan beskou, aangesien mense normatief optree, waardes toon en op 'n ander manier van mekaar leer as in die kognitiewe gesprekke. Dikwels bly die demonstrasie van 'n deelnemer se identiteit op emosionele vlak die lesers langer bly as die persoon se argumente.

Die skepping van teenwoordigheid en die gedagte van spel, representasie van die self

Dit word aangedui deur navorsers (Carolina) dat spel kultuur voorafgaan en dat die motiveringselement daarvan veral leer kan aanhelp. So word spel ingebring in die ontwikkeling van sagteware om kinders te fokus om te leer binne 'n museum, vir kinders met spesiale behoeftes (Virnes), deur die interaksie met die program, wat 'n speletjie is, word sekere waardes aangeleer. Die spelelement binne die mens se ontwikkeling/evolusie word gebruik om gedrag te wysig, wat eers emosie en daarna kognitiewe elemente insluit.

By die emosie kant van die mens word aangesluit deur die verpakking van tegnologie in sagtesspeelgoed, soos om 'n webkamera in 'n seekat in te sit, en die pote heg dan aan die skerm vas.

In gesprekforums dien emosie as die subteks, en word die rasioe diskoers dikwels versag met 'n emoticon, of humor of die persoon verskaf 'n handtekening onderaan elke bydra wat 'n aanhaling, soos van Einstein, Aristoteles of Homer Simpson gee. Hierdie subteks dien dikwels die rol vir die leser om die spreker/skrywer se identiteit te leer ken, wel nie duidelik uitgespel nie, maar deur middel van sagter wenke, die subteks. Die spel met taal vervul ook 'n sagter rol, dis nie 'n duidelike kognitiewe stelling nie, maar eerder iets wat deur spel aan die leser oorgedra word.

'n Besprekingsforum is in gepoliseerde gemeenskappe dikwels die virtuele oorlogsveld. Mens kan dit "the eye of the storm" noem. Emosie betrokkenheid is die reël en kognitiewe teenwoordigheid is dan dikwels die uitsondering op die reël. In 'n geval waar 'n bydraer dan 'n gedeelte aanhaal van 'n kenner, kan die gesprek of tot tot 'n einde kom, want die "wyse mens" het dan gepraat. Ander kere kom dit voor asof die aanhaling mense nog heftiger laat reageer en veral dan kom dit voor asof persoonlike narratiewe die teendeel van die "wetenskaplike aanhaling" wil teenstaan en kan die leser tot die gevolgtrekking kom dat die persoonlike narratief en die aanhaling van die wetenskaplike op dieselfde vlak is.

Mens kan die afleiding maak dat 'n besprekingsgroep ook 'n spelruimte is, en dat verskeie gereelde deelnemers aan die groep elk 'n spesifieke rol het om te speel of 'n sekere teenwoordigheid inneem, wat voorkom om redelik konstant te bly. Of die teenwoordigheid wat die persoon inneem in ooreenstemming met die persoon se professionele identiteit of persoonlike identiteit is, kan wel iets wees waarvoor mens wonder. Ons het almal 'n rol te speel binne verskillende omgewings, en die besprekingsgroep of virtuele sfeer is 'n omgewing waar mense 'n identiteit inneem. Hierdie identiteit is nie iets vas nie, en kan met interaksie oor 'n tyd verander en ontwikkel. Die feit dat 'n deelnemer se bydrae gesien kan word, het ook 'n invloed en dikwels is die blootstelling veel groter as die hoeveelheid studente wat so 'n persoon in jare voor klas gee. In hierdie sin is dit 'n openbare ruimte en die deelnemers se interpretasie van sy rol in hierdie ruimte is een van die elemente wat sy virtuele identiteit vorm. Wat wil mens he moet ander mense van jou weet, is jy iemand wat passievol wil redeneer oor sosiale sake, is jy 'n aktivis vir diere-regte, is jy uitsluitlik die kognitiewe akademikus, het jy 'n bleeding heart vir minderheidsgroepe, is jy 'n filosoof, en wat in die realistiese sfeer, buite die virtuele omgewing, is jou

kwalifikasies om hierdie rolle in te neem? Of is almal binne die besprekingsgroep gelyk? Wat kennis, ervaring ens. betref?

Die idee van forum dui 'n openbare ruimte aan. In die Romeinse tyd was die forum die markplein, maar ook 'n plek waar redenaars en filosowe opgetree het, nuwe politieke kandidate hulle agenda aan die kiesers verduidelik het, waar mense hulle kandidate gewerf het. In die Griekse stadstaat, wat die eerste vorm van demokrasie was, het politici toesprake gehou en het filosowe opgetree.

Dis bv. op die forum in Rome waar Cicero se kop en hande aan die publiek vertoon is as voorbeeld van iemand wat teen die staat se gesag aan die opposisie filosofiese gronde gegee het. Die forum Romanum was in baie opsigte die vertoonstuk van die stadslewe, die plek van optrede, die plek van besluitneming, maar ook die plek waar aan die publiek die reëls gegee is op 'n baie tasbare en vreeswekkende manier.

Stadstaat en gedagte van demokrasie.

Identiteit kompleks, elke assosiasie het bepaalde identiteit.

January-June 2009

I wrote the research proposal.

July-August 2009

I wrote an article with the purpose to apply the theories of both theorists and I sided with the position of Young. I quoted lines from the discussion to prove some of my arguments.

September-October 2009

In this time I prepared the ethical document for the research.

January 2010

The article did not make it through the editors and the recommendation was made that I should integrate the text of the discourse much more to give evidence to the theoretical arguments and to make the arguments more convincing.

February-April 2010

I started with a detailed analysis of the text, first following open coding and categorization of codes as described by Miles and Huberman and later on axial coding as described by Strauss and Corbin.

The codes formed four different categories, which were self-presentation, which brings together all the ways which describe participants' revelation of aspects of their identities; interaction, which describes the ways participants interact with each other

and their presentation of reactions to aspects of their environment; the issue they present, which reveals the content of their narratives or arguments; and lastly, the way they present the issue, which refers to style elements in the discourse, such as the choice of verbs, nouns, questions, contrasts, exaggerations, etc.

The axial coding brought a structure to the data and it can be described as such: That the central phenomenon is miscommunication and the result is polarization, that this process seems to be circular and that it is enforced by elements such as the participants' history in the forum and the identity they have constructed of each other.

May-July 2010

With the reading of Charmaz, it came to light that an axial coding could enforce a structure upon the data and wouldn't allow for a more creative way of interpreting it, What I can apply is the schema Charmaz has in describing participants' forms of telling as describing data as objective and subjective, which can be applied in the initial coding of the participations on the forum.

August - March 2010

August 2010

My first interview was with a psychologist concerning the one person in the discussion forum whose contributions first attracted my attention as she was so outspoken and not really careful about her statements. The interview brought one thing to the front, and that is that she finds it difficult to cope with change and is not really flexible, this inflexibility is seen in the way she expresses herself. Her way of coping does not help herself and brings her nowhere.

August – October 2010

Interview John, 20 August 2010

My second interview with John by the end of August was a trial and error episode, I had about 20 questions and I now (14 October) have my doubts whether I got the essence out of him. After the coding of his interview I set the questions for my second interview which are only six. I also formulated the questions around the categories I got from the first interview. This interview happens on 15 October, which is tomorrow.

From this interview I have a few questions, if John regards the BBS-space as `n ordentlike plek, why is he upset if people in this apparent ordentlike space, are not ordentlik, in his words, disrespectful against others? He criticizes die ordentlikheid / properness of the Afrikaner, but does not want disrespectful / improper things to be said on the BBS?

Why does he regard all white Afrikaners as part of the hegemony?

Question to John: do you see yourself more in opposition to your colleagues after their passivity to take part – in the sense you are brown, they white, you oppressed, they privileged etc.?

October 2010

Interview with Stephen , 15 October 2010:

The impression I got from Stephen is that he is a bit of an outsider, looks a bit like a teenager with his red cap and really worn clothes (Thai Tshirt he got from a friend, wearing it because by the end of the week it is the only real clean clothes left) . I also got the impression that he is not very direct, and from the interview I gather that his engagements with others is more on a distant intellectual level than interpersonal. The fact that he sees his interaction as a game – trolling- might be the reason why he antagonizes people and does not really immerse himself in reality.

I did not feel if a conversation took place. I felt excluded as he spoke very softly, more involved in his own thoughts than having a conversation. This mirrors his participation in the specific thread, long paragraphs of reflection, portraying the knowledge of his specific subject which is social anthropology. I had difficulty in hearing and following him and this made me uncomfortable. His ideas were very much the same as mine and we agreed on a number of things.

Interview with Peter (29 October 2010)

Coming from Holland, here since 2002, finds Potch a lekker plek, disappointed with the absence of real academic discourse in the university. It is intriguing that his awareness of the town being so restful and beautiful serves as the background of his attempts to make people more conciliatory and peaceful.

Interview with Charl and Petro (2 November 2010)

The fact that I questioned them about support for a colleague through the forum made Charl especially defensive and caused discomfort. I also had to delete some parts of the interview especially because he did not want to put strain on collegial relationships. I got the idea during the interview that Charl was uncomfortable and defensive and he tried to force me into a position of discomfort, with questions like, what do you want to know, remember the focus of your study is...

Interview with Beth (26 November)

In reading Beth's thread, I was immediately abhorred by her choice of content and the style in which she conveyed her opinions. It took courage to meet her in an interview which turned out to be quite a surprise. As I experienced a person who should not be crossed in text, I decided not to oppose her as my strategy with the face to face meeting. I did not oppose a word she said. I rather was interested in why she took certain positions. I had second thoughts about my interview before the appointment and was a bit scared, as all her convictions she was outspoken about on

the forum are totally the opposite of mine. Her ideas were hair raising to me. I tried to be as friendly as I can, trying to make her understand that she is not on trial.

As I expected with Stephen's influence to meet someone old and conservative, Beth was quite funky. I expected her to look quite different. From her text I also expected someone with old fashioned clothing, resembling the "Boerevolk" [Afrikaner nation sic] she represents. The way she interacted with me was quite friendly, but I got the impression that her ideas are very pronounced, such as on the forum. She interacted, made eye contact, spoke dramatically, such as in her text. The persona and the person were compatible. Or congruent. She did not apologise for any of her views, she stands and falls by it.

Beth's opinion is that Stephen changed, she describes him as young, in contrast to him who refers to her as old.

Her style of expression weird, not really eloquent, she uses Afrikaans expressions wrongly.

She finds it irritating that people are so comfortable in their higher moral ground and also their higher academic ground, the piety of them irritates her.

Nothing about the interpersonal fight between Stephen and Beth had been mentioned by Stephen, why not? Is it possibly too close to his skin and an embarrassment?

I think Stephen's motives for judging Beth is far more emotional than he would want to acknowledge, his impressions might have been coloured by the online conversations – judging her as old might be derived from her archaic views on race, development etc.

My conflict about the Afrikaans character of the university – feels to me as if the university does not want to internationalise.

Beth says but that she experiences conflict, in the sense of both irritation and a feeling of endearment in close following situations – for instance in traffic, when a taxi almost causes an accident or if a smiling black man makes her go first at the fourway stop.

My worry with the interviews at this stage is that I have not kept the theory in mind.

It seems to me as if Beth's relationships with her colleagues are caring, good, she was quite nice with me. She offers something to eat and goes through trouble to make nice coffee with croissants and salami.

Her one colleague wants to know whether Beth shocked me with her views.

Peter refers to Stephen as someone who keeps to himself, not socializing.

In the analysis I have to ascertain how people express themselves face to face in the interview I had. With which comfort do they express themselves, are they inconcise,

do they repeat words, phrases, stammer, what is their point of departure and how do they support that, how does their ideology influence their choice of words and how does their ideology influence their stance towards others and the issue.

I think with Susan it is clear that she wanted to share an experience, not necessarily sharing an opinion, but wanting to have answers.

Stephen states that Beth's participation is in a way courageous, and stupid and serves as a point of departure for his participation, he judges her participation therefore as useful.

It is interesting that Beth and her colleagues do not pronounce Francois's name like the French would do, thereby showing either ignorance or willful ignorance. I find it quite irritating and funny.

It does come to mind that Stephen sets the agenda in place of Beth by laying a philosophical table for the discussion. He accuses her of setting the agenda by asking: "what do you say about academic terrorism?"

Question to Beth: if the university does not want to be Christian anymore, on what do the theologians base their persuasions, or higher moral ground?

Interview with Francois

As the rational debate becomes fruitless, Francois turns to a discourse which is more emotional and which leads to emotional responses – stimulus – response.

Offline and online incidents are traumatic to Francois. The effect of his type of participation, which has a high emotional input, is emotionally challenging. The question is why his provocation is not successful.

Like Beth, who is intrepid in her persuasion, Francois's foreign status makes him unafraid. Both do not seem to care what others think of them.

Interview with Susan

Resists judgement about other participations. I think it can be theoretically explained as the absence of embodiment – she does not know what happens in another person's life. It seems as if theoretical judgements do not have to take embodiment into account, that is why it is easier to make it. Embodiment or the lack of embodiment causes people like Susan to resist judgement.

Susan does not think the forum a proper place to influence decisions from above.

It seems to me as if people are more frustrated with the BBS if they want structural change to happen through it. It also becomes clear that people who are less opinionated, experience less frustration with the forum's influence.

Susan seems quite complacent with the fact that the forum should only serve as a therapeutic space and management should only be made aware by administrative staff

of noteworthy things on the forum, “when things become scary”. She thinks structural change has to happen through other means and not the forum.

Thoughts about theory

Sort out the issue of identity and presence

The types of presences as seen in the analysis:

Sharing presence – like Susan, sets questions, shares experiences, wants an answer, refrain from judgement

Sharing presence and shares opinion in the form of a question - Edith

Opinionated presence - Stephen

Antagonising presence – Francois, Beth, Stephen

The bodily experience not only in the presence which wants to share experiences, the antagonizing presence has been preceded by emotional, embodying discomfort and pain.

Interview Peter

Motivation to take part is the importance of critical discourse and the absence he experiences of that locally.

It seems in general – also with Francois, that the forum frustrates if expectations of critical debate is not met. Also has to do with foreigner status.

Interview Cathy

The interview with Cathy was pleasing as she is a pleasant person. I did get the impression that she was defensive about management style which she had to practise, especially that it caused an estrangement between herself and former colleagues who were friends. The arguments she set forth were not preceded by questions – it seems as if Cathy wanted to defend it, giving it a sort of predetermined flavor and did not seem spontaneous.

She mentions decorum as an important element in academic discourse, something which is expected from academics and which should determine their use of language and the views they express.

Decorum can be applied in two senses, in the framework of Habermas it could refer to ideal speech, or in Young, to communicate with keeping in mind the position of the other person in the discourse, the way of greeting, addressing, etc.

Embodiment can also be seen in the conflict Cathy experiences, she stands between two colleagues, she has to mediate to preserve good relationships, it does seem as if she manages to do that, although it seems as if Francois thinks that he himself was the person who was right in the case and the one who was more approachable.

Embodiment can also be seen in the fact that participation is not anonymous, your identity is known, you have the courage to make ideas public and risk confrontation and judgement. Would selfregulation be regarded as positive within Habermas or Young-frameworks?

The dangers of embodiment cause people to withhold opinions.

Francois acts from his cultural identity – also a form of embodiment with serious consequences, for his choice of style of participation.

Embodiment makes myself more sympathetic towards people's personal positions, although in the case of Stephen he does not reveal it. His foreign status is revealed indirectly through my knowledge of his studies at an English university.

Hiding by the practice of decorum or behavedness possibly a form of disembodiment or precisely the protection of self, therefore especially embodiment?

Question to put to Cathy: whose idea was the finding of the chat forum? Does she fulfill the role of moderator?

Stephen has more a teaching presence, less social, more cognitive. Has supporters under the male participants who judge him as smart, female participants do not seem to be that involved or informed in the reading of his ideas.

The problem with the lack of decorum in Beth's participation might lead to a lack of decorum or simply outrage from other participants.

Analysis of interview with Peter April 2011

It seems as if the outsiders at the university experience themselves as a community – a type of comradeship presence is created by that.

Note for methodology chapter: I use what people say of each other in interviews. Eg, Interview with Beth – John thinks that she had been repudiated by management, Cathy – Positive feeling at all interviews with her presence.

Peter and Stephen expect Beth to have some objective in her participation and they are unclear of what she wants, like Stephen: "What do you propose Beth?", Peter: "Wat wil jy?" It seems as if her lack of clarity is disturbing or irritating to them.

The questions of decorum in the interview with Cathy: the lack of decorum in Beth's participation could lead to a reaction of similar lack of decorum from other participants.

The need to have critical scientific conversation is carried over to the expectations and frustrations with the forum

The participants are perhaps, in response to their environment – in Peter’s case the experience of a restful town and the consequent disturbing polarization on the forum, a solution within the forum – the consequence of that is the forming of an informal community

Peter experiences during his interview participant who keep repeating their arguments and do not make an effort of reading others’ arguments or learn from it.

Interviews with John, Stephen, Beth, Susan, Peter, Petro and Charl

Concerning Peter:

It seems as if the outsiders experience each other as a community, which is formed through the forum. A type of “comradeship presence” is created through that.

Methodology:

Use what the participants say of each other in the consequent interviews.

Rationalistic attitudes:

Peter and Stephen want to know from Beth what she wants – “what do you propose” – Stephen, what is the purpose of her participation?

Decorum:

Decorum can be expected from the reaction of others on Beth – if she doesn’t show or exercise decorum, the reaction to her is the same.

Peter:

The need for a critical scientific conversation is carried to the forum – frustration follows. Participants are perhaps looking – due to their conflict with the environment – because of their outsider status – a solution within and through the forum – the effect of that is the foundation of a non-virtual community.

In the interview with Peter he expresses frustration with participants who repeat and do not try to read what other participants are saying and learn from it.

April 2011

Methodology – interview with Cathy

She portrays discomfort with certain parts of the interview – perhaps the feeling of collegiality inhibits her to disclose certain things.

I start an interview by referring to the forum text I analysed. I compile questions specifically for the person, get information and build the consequent questions on the issues I encountered and as it is relevant to the next person in the interview. I also bring the debate along as a point of discussion and as a way to start the interview.

Beth

The fact that Beth displays the polarisation in the country brings understanding to her not being cautious about race matters.
The tyranny she experienced outside is perhaps reflected within the forum.

Interview:

I went in a discourse about the role of the forum, how do people experience the contributions of others, what motivates them, etc. Not all information is relevant, especially when they go on about racism.

Peter's motivation not to call Beth a racist might be part of his academic decorum. He adores Stephen's style of expression and compares it with his own. Like Francois he thinks it is much better than his own as both are not fluent in English.

The interview with colleagues was interesting. Especially Charl wanted to know what I am doing and what the purpose of the research is – he tries to lead me back in the interview to the purpose of my research – I think he tries to sidestep the discomfort which the interview creates, he does not want to confront the problem I put before them.

My focus in the interviews is not to know who is racist, I want to determine specifically by way of the discourse on racism what people judge as the role of the forum, why they participate, are they conscious of power relations and how they choose to participate.

Methodology:

The first part of the coding is descriptive, then in the more analytical phase the relationships between categories are indicated. The interview questions are directed to a specific person, I use the text as point of departure and then venture further and ask wider. I get information from previous interviews about a certain issue and then ask the participants about that, e.g. Beth – John – Charl; Cathy – Stephen – Francois
Everyone was asked about the textual analysis and their attitude to Beth's outspokenness. The general questions center on their motivation to take part, experiences of others, support or resistance, their experience of censoring – especially Beth and Francois.

Then their further history is explored, which benefit did the forum have, why did they terminate their participation?

Interviews were conducted with:

John, Stephen, Peter, Beth, Francois, Charl and Petro, Susan, Cathy and Stephen.

The respondents are chosen in the order which the names appear. They were chosen as they were relevant for the research, eg if they had a pertinent voice or role on the forum, in most cases they had a strong reaction for or against someone else.

Interviews started in August 2010 and were conducted until April 2011. A descriptive analysis was followed to exclude the influence of theory and own subjectivity. The

interpretive analysis lent more space for own interpretation, as directed by theory and the paradigm of Young.

Interview: Stephen, Beth

Stephen's interview made his rational distance clear between himself and the issue he addresses. The interview with Beth showed a much more emotional relationship with the issues involved.

Methodology:

The descriptive analysis according to Saldana is the method for most studies and it is used for the both the textual analysis and the interviews. Figure 1 indicates how the issue (the thread) is taken as the point of departure and which elements are contracted in the discourse.

Webster and Mertova (2007:26) indicates that the linguistic mediation of a story determines its meaning and effect.

With each category found in the analysis the issue of embodiment and disembodiment is relevant.

The forum under investigation dates from 2002-2008, focusing especially on a discourse in May 2008, which is taken as the point of departure in most of the interviews.

The theoretical underpinning through postmodernism is that the notion is rejected which states that truth and knowledge are found through rational thought or method (WM: 2007:29)

The interviews follow a narrative in the sense that people have to tell their story – how and why they became involved, the process, factors, influences, whether they ended participation or still pursuing involvement.

Specific insights concerning participants:

The aggressive reaction to Beth is caused by her blatant opinions, the forum's growth potential is undermined by aggression. (This notion is further explored)

Management keeps people in the dark about their actions – John thinks action has been taken because of his complaint but no action was taken – a moral incongruence therefore. He was misled.

Politically correct participations have power, such as the person who fights for human rights, the correct academic formulation has power, the accusation that Beth does not abide by these places her in an submissive position.

Cathy appreciates the **humour and the clever remarks** to defuse the tension rather than aggressive statements.

The opinions about Beth’s participation can partially be taken as the Habermas-Young exposition of criticism against ideal speech. Beth’s goal is not necessarily the common good, but she rather polarises (according to Peter). She encourages debate by being polarising. The problem enters with the amoral attack on her person, which undermines the moral effect or potential of the forum.

Beth does not share the understanding of Stephen, possibly neither do the other, but by his erudite presentations of sociology he impresses the other and support it and consequently oppose Beth. The academic insight they did not have before add to their reason to disregard her arguments and evidence. Stephen acknowledges in the interview that the arguments of the black students are stupid but he does not express his agreement with Beth on the forum.

The common good can be found in Peter’s mediation.

A question to be asked is whether Stephen’s community is closed, are those individuals empowered?

Categories form part of a process (seen in figure 2)

John’s termination can be ascribed to his strong sense of identity and the reactions to his identity.

Table 1

disembodiment	neutral	embodiment
Impersonal, rational Stephen	Peter	Emotional John, Beth

Multiple identities do not mean that one person assumes one identity – different identities/presences can be assumed throughout the discourse, but I do not think conflicting identities can be present in one person.

Concerning morality:

Beth – moral indignation

Francois: no regard for morality or respect for local morality, he shows the lack of morality (concerning the aim of a university in making students critical), his style of participation causes emotional impact – he acts as a provocator

Figure 3: morality as the central phenomenon

Motivation also has its own history and is different at certain times of the participation.

Francois reflects more during the interview on his style of participation and his identity. Figure 4 describes morality and identity further.

Taking identity as the central phenomenon, the formation of identity in opposition to hegemony, the exposure of and reaction to this identity

Stephen: rationalist, shows off knowledge

Figure 5 fills in more aspects of participation.

Figure 6 offers more thinking about the central phenomenon and other elements.

Reflection: participants:

Beth resists the community offered by the liberalists, she forms her own offline community of support.

Francois and Stephen rethink their style of participation but not their positions.

Charl and Petro are quite defensive, they seem tired of local debates

Stephen does not mention the conflict he had over the telephone with Beth, it is mentioned by her, that explains his opinion that conflict rather has to be solved internally than by management intervention

Exclusion and inclusion are present in every participant. Stephen – disembodiment, Francois also disembodied as provocator and jester as he does not want to engage anymore and pokes from the outside

Is the forum the opportunity for extremists to meet and for people to represent contrasting viewpoints?

Susan: she asks for judgement from others as she does not want to judge the experience she had, she throws the story into the pool

Van Doorn vocabulary: Susan and Mandy share an affective memory
They construct a personal identity through their textual communication

Ties that bind a community – those in awe of Stephen form a community

Multiple presences

Participants have an affective relationship with each other and with the forum itself.
They have e.g. frustrations and expectations
Their relationships with each other are affective, cognitive and social

Rationalistic exclusion

A continuous narrative is not offered. Beth's participation is frozen. The rationalistic approach isolates her participation, dissect it and does not see it in context.

Moderation

The moderator is not involved to see the worth of participation, if the problem is a lack of information, such as indicated by Cathy, why does she not offer the wanted

information? A moderator can also prompt participants in asking them why they have this or that opinion. A recommendation is to have a broader view of the thread, e.g. a search facility to place the participation in a larger context.

Look at Thorseth's (2008:225) ideas about the plurality of different styles. Is ideal speech possible in a polarised context?

What am I doing? I explore the dynamics in the discussion by drawing on interviews and the textual analysis of the two protagonists in the discussion. I illustrate how Young's theory of communicative democracy and Habermas' paradigm serve as interpretive tools.

Figure 7 describes the intensity of emotion within Beth's and Stephen's presences on the thread. Beth remains emotionally intense, while Stephen again resorts to some rational equilibrium or even distance

Multiple presences

Thorseth refers to the narrative of Young as a way to cross the rationalistic divide of Habermas. Also Harrist and Gelfand. Other aspects of Young's paradigm are also of importance. Eg the disembodiment - embodiment discourse which Van Doorn introduces.

Critical theory usually uses the theory of Habermas and only partial use of Young. Young's communicative democracy is mainly a political concept, and the discourse on the forum also.

One could reach a 'common good' by acknowledging diversity and other forms of presentation than arguing.

Stephen's being knowledgeable is also a display of power, providing information etc. He also downplays other pieces of evidence. Foucault's power and knowledge in discourse is relevant.

There is an embodiment in the power relations. It is seen in the emotional blackmail style of management with Francois and also Beth.

Van Doorn focuses on the virtual as representation of reality. Deleuze, as cited by Van Doorn: "the virtual image a "pure reflection ...a temporal realm that is innate to everyday reality."

The issue of performance of the embodied identity as indicated by Grabill and Pigg. Participants have affective relationships with each other and with the digital technology – they have expectations of and frustrations with the forum. The bigger their expectations are, the more frustrated they become. If they expect the forum to solve problems – like Peter expects the rector to answer questions on the forum.

Multiple presences - Reflection on interviews

Stephen sees Beth as useful. She is more honest and does not take on the distance Stephen does.

Although her motivation differs, she uses the same style elements.

Identities are not givens, but are interactionally produced in a context which is a crucial strategic site (Drew and Sorjonen, as cited by McGee and Briscoe:2)

Within ICT's... it is communication between people that constructs and alters both social and psychological realities

The forum originated within the online advertisement section when one person decided to complain about the transparency in interviewing candidates and also to question an investigation into the research capacity of the institution. Later the forum shifted to a section on its own. The initiative for this originated in the needs of academics to voice their concerns about institutional culture.

Taking Young as the point of departure – how can the discourse be lubricated by storytelling, greeting – within an online forum?

The absence of social cues do lead to distance, hostility, alienation

Findings concerning official and unofficial knowledge

Knowledge is real when it is official, published, accepted in academic community

Knowledge is doubtful when it is unofficial, populist

The type of knowledge preferred in the discourse is argument/evidence criticism, the consequent inferiority of narratives, the superiority of textbook knowledge and informative participation, the distant handling of narratives and no interaction with it, the dismissiveness of the own experience

Multiple presences

Most participants side with the powerful, those who form the knowledge community vs the others

Female participants are either more sympathetic or not sympathetic at all

Findings

Universality vs particular situatedness

The style of the uninformed is dismissed within the academic context (Foucault – power/knowledge)

A distance is assumed and no acknowledgement is given

The normative position vs the morally doubtful position

No narratives are offered within the preferred form of discourse to prove the contrary, only Judy does that

The opposing positions may be a real reflection of the polarised society

The forum assumes a strategic importance for its participants. The unimportant claims are not regarded as true, the unofficial versions are untrue, those statements are regarded as serious which are credible.

Within the different presences some do dominate
The differences are marked in the motivation, intervening conditions, dimensions of the forum, strategies, perceptions of others, identities.

May – June 2011

Write article one

Article one

Integrate the necessity of acknowledgement as a way to overcome the absence of social cues
Acknowledgement of the particularity, situatedness vs universality, distance

Foucault

Rouse (:98,99) refers to docile bodied.
The surveillance of the forum not apparent and taken as a free and open, but it is visible in the disciplinary actions, silencing and demand of apologies
The forum becomes a control mechanism, an avenue or medium to exercise control
The moderation happens offline
Francois assumes his identity as a result of certain interactions and moderation

Young

Young's influence is to acknowledge a person's specific situation which can lead to a more contextual approach. One can deduct that people do not only know each other through the medium of the text alone
They have built a history on the forum
The might be known to each other offline too – they do form friendship communities

July 2011

Methodology

Through the clustering of messages a macrotextual approach is followed
A larger historical presentation of style and content is needed
The linearity of the forum makes it different to ascertain these

The setting of the study

Is unique, no other evidence is found of research on discussion forums within a HE context.

Grounded theory is applied in coherence with CDA but not in online environments

Eventually everyone assumes that Beth's paradigm is politically incorrect and dangerous. She gets partial agreement and support from women, but the majority challenges the correctness of her facts and arguments.

It is not about the argument and evidence, but about the establishment of structures of power, the participants challenge truth to establish power
The establish hierarchy by indicating that the information is deficient

Forester refers to the inner states of the self, which listeners may trust or challenge. Beth's inner states are condemned and challenged, not trusted and not sympathised, no acknowledgement is given, leads to no information provided which could lead to more comprehension of her specific situation

Beth calls for attention by using certain devices, such as dramatisation and declarative use of language

The participants do not only disagree, they form a community of opposition. The participation of Susan puts them on a different track, when a declarative element is not pervasive, more subtle, asking for opinions, showing an experience

Beth's use of I is pervasive while Stephen refers to himself as a thinker, more distant

Table 2 explains the differences and similarities between Beth and Stephen's participations:

Beth: focuses on own experience	Similarity	Stephen: focuses on objective knowledge
	Style Disrespect Non-acknowledgement Beliefs not shared Norms not shared Distrust - hostility	

Stephen aims to excommunicate Beth by discrediting her norms, identity, beliefs and world views

The norms, identities, beliefs and world views of others are recognised and included

It is eventually about how participants construct and deconstruct beliefs, status and identity

The problem which should be asked is if Beth and her views the problem – and besides her views, what is the way the discourse could be more inclusive?

Exclusion can serve as the cause and effect:

external factors lead to John's initial exclusion – motivates his participation

intervening conditions

internal factors lead to Stephen's continuance – his appointment is favoured, he is

praised by management, not affected by those who don't agree

dimensions of the forum

not affected by external community

praised by internal community

It is interesting that online relationships in this case study do not cause the end of a participant's involvement, it is rather caused by external factors, like moderation. The only internal factor is saturation.

The objective with the questioning was not to probe whether they are included or excluded, but rather to tell their experience through the duration of their involvement and the reason for their termination, if they did terminate their participation.

Beth might not be excluded in the sense that she terminated her participation, she is excluded internally from sensible participation as she is not acknowledged.

Stephen is excluded by not interacting with Beth by way of acknowledging her specific situation. He stays detached from other participants (Susan, Edith). He focuses on the issue rather than the person and in doing so alienates himself and the others. This is demonstrated in figure 8.

For every person the cycle in the paradigm is unique. Everyone starts from a basic set of convictions, strong enough to motivate them to engage in a conversation just to make their viewpoint clear and for interest's sake to see if they any reaction, which can be either opposition or agreement.

The motivation can be discouraged as a result of the consequence of interaction, it dries up over a period of time and is reflected in instance 2, 3 and 4 of the paradigm. The identity which is presented can be described as despondent, strategies to interact dismissive and sarcastic, the dimensions of the forum itself become all the more negative.

August 2011

Structure and process of the data

The virtual character of the environment adds another dimension to the different categories and defines the paradigms differently. Time and place is relevant to the participant at the time when the contribution is made, but that specific time and place is not relevant to the relevant and it disappears in online communication.

Reference to figure 9 – the higher a participant's expectation is of the role of the forum, the higher the frustration level

The more a participant shares, the more trust is conveyed in the person self

I should decide whether the digital space's investigation should be informed extensively by the real space? Should external intervening conditions be extensively

investigated – everything relies on interpretation and the reproduction of reality. The methodology eventually focuses on the experiences as mediated in digital space.

The level of selfdisclosure in Beth's case are higher.

Grounded theory is commonly referred to in critical IS studies. Not a total application of grounded theory. While indicating the methodology followed, some questions/problems arose while applying the paradigm such as the allowance of external conditions.

Specific question to John: Have you ever revealed your background as brown man on the BBS and has anyone addressed you and referred to you as a brown man, you talk about the ordentlikheid of the Afrikaner but you don't like straight forward racism? How do you reconcile the two? Beth refers to John in the interview as a "coloured".

The forum can be seen as a IRC, as the communication is synchronous and there is no time delay. The boundaries between intellectual and informal are blended.

Herring (1999:155) – "Female participants engage in much less quoting than male participants...consistent with the tendency for females to make less use of direct disagreement than males in asynchronous CMC

Axial coding: a more complex pattern of understanding

Open coding: a flat linear conceptualisation

My concern is the analytical approach to a form of textuality and integration of findings of inter4views. Examine how this forum has created a site for the production of ideas, perceptions on race – through the telling of critical incidents and reactions on that and how power is exercised. Analytical approach to a discourse on racism. The exchanges form a comment-response cycle. The first participant introduces the topic and it remains like that for the rest of the thread. The thread is dominated by two people and introduced by a woman, which she states she never does but did as a result of being forced by circumstances, type of a revolt against the status quo. The question to be explored is how power is exercised. The frame of the discourse is enlarged by references to previous discourses, the context of the text itself which recreates the context outside the forum. These can be linked to the intervening and contextual conditions of the paradigm.

Cybertalk is frozen and meaning is constructed in the context of responses from one participant to the other, but also in the larger context of previous engagements with the same or other participants.

The focus is on the forum and not the context, but the forum as recreation of the context.

How do the interviews explain the findings of the textual analysis of the forum? – intervening conditions such as race, class, gender, biography inform the textual happenings.

Denzin (1999:111) refers to the fact that the text is “performed”. It is checked, evaluated, not spontaneous, refers to “enlarged”.

“These understandings are based on glimpses and slices of the culture in action, happening in a particular time and place. The practice can not be generalised to other practices – it instantiates a cultural practice, performance and a set of shifting, conflicting, cultural meanings (Fiske, 1994, as cited by Denzin:112)

The intervening conditions are therefore constructed, viewed by participant, recreated in forum.

September 2011

The intention of the study is to understand why the text is constructed as it is, by looking at the motivation, interaction and consequence. How the text includes and excludes, although it is an instant action, it is embedded in a process of motivation, style, consequence – it is an action embedded in a larger context.

Axial coding enables the researcher to explain the emotional loadedness of the forum thread.

Denzin (113) states that critical poststructural positions develops criteria which stresses emotion, subjectivity and feeling. Therefore the subjectivity of the participant is explained.

Voices which carry emotional elements are legitimate, within the forum these voices seem not to be appreciated.

The confrontation in the forum of people with divergent cultures and backgrounds is not representative of the broader campus but it is still valid.

January - February 2012

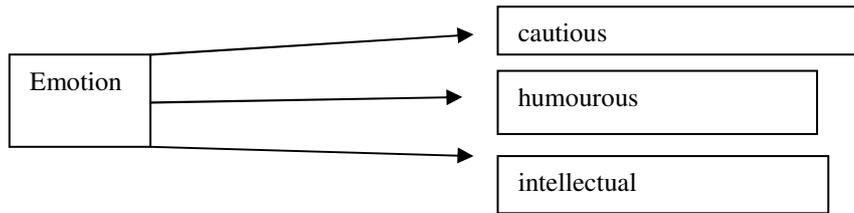
Multiple presences:

A participant creates a persona which may or may not be compatible with the offline persona.

The research aims to provide an interpretive framework of the discourse between participants. A way of internal moderation is non-acknowledgement of cases where the opponent’s view is agreed with (such as Stephen who does not acknowledge some agreement with Beth on the forum about the stupidity of the students’ posters)

Emotion serves in all the presences of the participants, it forms the basic presence, it is just embodied in different forms of presentation as seen in figure 10.

Figure 10: emotion as basis-presence



Question about the potential to educate emotion – how should it happen, which environment is suitable? – where it is acknowledged?

E-moderation

Cathy wants to know the vox populi – why is an instrument not brought in such as the liking or disliking of a comment?

Friendship – morality – Aristoteles – forum digresses into hostility – absence of friendship.

The presence of the rector or someone from management is expected but they remain absent.

Moderation

Assumes the character of persecution and repudiation. It is not about making someone more moderate – it goes into the direction of censorship, the stronger the convictions are, the more liable for “persecution”.

Multiple presences

Beth represents a populist view, acts with courage as she represents a silent majority: **The fact that participants think they represent more than themselves, makes their participations “enlarged”, one can the declarative approach better in this sense.**

March – April 2012

Moderation

The internal community of the forum should not be externally moderated, management is not involved in the process, they enforce a disequilibrium. The forms moderation take are: censorship, enforces apologies, internal forcing down a style, criticise other styles, expectations of decorum

Critical emancipator moderations should be equal. **Help participants to move beyond declarations.**

The good intentions of participants should be trusted. No censoring therefore.

Stephen understands situatedness of John in his making a case against Beth.

Moderation tells more about what is going on outside the forum than inside.

Expecting decorum and academic finesse makes the forum exclusive, what about the participation of people like cleaners, would academic finesse also be expected from them?

The current moderation constrains the community and angers or make people despondent. **Visible moderation is expected vs the private dealing with dissidents.**

John refers to the absence of moderate voices.

The acts of moderation are as forceful as the posts which are declarative.

Multiple presences

The performance of identities should also be seen in concurrence with the foreigner status of participants – their identities are constructed by others

Moderation and friendship

One can say that the intervention in Francois' case is a false friendship. The interventions is not salutary but leads him to view his opinions more legitimate. The view of Aristotle that we need friends to be moral is very relevant.

Alienation vs friendship

The hostility undermines the potential growth of morality among participants. "Where friendship prevails, there is no need for official justice" (pg 379)

(pg 380) Friends help friends to be virtuous, by enabling them to be happy in their efforts to achieve moral excellence"

The morality of the intervention is therefore morally suspect. It can be referred to as a friendship of utility, pleasure.

John and Beth refers to each other in a declinatory way – the emotion is that of hostility

The moderator should rather indicate the emotion which are not expressed that to smooth over the current ones.

Young (2003:43) Challenges to deliberative democracy

"The activist is often also propelled by anger and frustration at what he judges to be the intransigence of people in power....the activist believes it is important to express outrage at continued injustice in order to motivate others to act." (John, the troublemaker, challenger, activist for human rights)

In the same line of activism performs Francois and Stephen – trolling, ridiculing, taking a safe distance but performs a special way of activism

Francois, John, Stephen mirror the activist of Young. Francois refers to his interaction concerning religion as “nastily enough” and assumes a cynical position – the impossibility to engage with those who hold religious views enforces the cynical position he takes.

He might be seen as what Young describes as the “irrational nihilist” (2003:44)

What is a more moderate view? Especially in circumstances which are oppressive and cause outrage?

One can regard Francois’ action against the fundamentalist religion as unreasonable and disrespectful. If supporters of religion behave in oppressive ways it is surely not an unreasonable criticism.

The emotional appeal of humour is not distant, the use of irony and ridiculing can be regarded as a disruptive tactic of the activist (Young, 2003:44), or it can be seen as distant and non-engaging = precisely because the engagement and serious debate proved to be unfruitful.

He therefore can not be seen as an extremist, although he is labelled as such by management. By calling him extremist the irrationality and unreasonableness of management is accentuated.

Labelling is part of a power play and is part of the construction of identities. Being part of the power plays in on the micro and macrolevels of the text. Labellings are such as extremist, coloured, old, young, racist, not informed.

More positive labels are from Beth to Stephen: he doesn’t assume the moral higher ground of people she had to deal with, is not pious, which she appreciates, she is not really a racist, the researcher also labels the participants, such as sharer, challenger, activist, fundamentalist, liberal, mediator.

May – August 2012

Decorum is mostly a part of deliberation, an instrument of power, why should participants exercise decorum – it is the voice of the people, should they exercise decorum? Young (2003:46) refers to respectful argument.

Beth basically feels powerless, she shows a moral panic

The construction of identities eventually a product of power plays and prejudice

In a way everyone can be regarded as an activist for some cause on the forum, they would be activists on and off the forum. Are they extremists or are they constructed as extremists?

The presence of the moderator is ambiguous. She does side with Stephen, being her alter ego – she does sympathise with Stephen in saying that he always has a good case/

What should the recognition of multiple presences contain?

In some cases (such as John) he goes into the discussion being himself, but he fears the reaction to the persona, therefore he leaves the forum, he feels exposed as his colleagues do not openly support his views online

In some cases the identity is seen as “too hard core” – Stephen anticipates that

In some cases like Francois he would have been worse and more insistent.

The situated presences are more real, visible; the universal presences are more invisible, the person as such, the issue is presented rather than the person

Peter has a more reconciliatory presence, he acts from the assumption that people must live in peace in the “beautiful” town and he wished opposing parties to meet.

What should be learned from the forum? What do I perceive as the role of the forum?
Is there a critical change and should there be?

Vlieghe:3

Are the selves non-transparent, is there an existential move rather than taking a firm position?

Butler, J. 2005. Giving an account of oneself. New York: Fordham University Press – Butler sees the rationality of Habermas as “rational narcissism” (pg 5, Vlieghe)

Butler writes about intransparency

Vlieghe (4) – blind pursue of our own particular interest

Quotes part of Habermas (pg 4)

Butler 2004:26: The public sense of resistance against the existing social order is not founded in a rationalist or individualist morality, but refers to the experience of human vulnerability.

As material embodied creatures we are exposed to the touching, the gaze and the violence of others (Butler 2004:26)

We have a collective responsibility for the physical lives of one another.

Within the forum few people are actively participating, but it is popular reading material – eg 4000 at one stage in a thread concerning religious openings – these conventions are still present in the new secular transformed institution, so the conversation is still conducted, albeit not in the virtual site.

Identities of the participant quit honest – “Go in with who I am”, the representer of the populist view profoundly believes that the forum is too liberal

The construction of identities is mostly accurate, but chance for misconstruction because of the limited space to show yourself.

Misconstruction of identity might be damaging to members of the online community.

The community is formed by way of participation, but not because of shared ideas, they are united in the sense that they have similar and divergent ideas about the role of the forum.

Beth sees herself as a moral person, but she is overpowered, or met just as powerful by others in their perception of her as immoral.

The study confirms the view of Campbell et al 463 that conflict is an integral element of the social interrelations found in an online community.. “Recognises the existence and persistence of dissonance.

In the forum there are allies of Stephen and enemies of Beth and further those inbetween. The continuous cycle of hostility that eventually brings the forum participation to an end but also spurred the dialogue.

The participants mostly stay in their roles as assigned by the researcher in the thread and also in the interviews. With Beth however comes the understanding of embodied reality, with Stephen the understanding of distance in dealing with emotional issues.

Various impressions were formed during the interviews and the analysis of the text. Impressions are important in the researcher’s construction of identities behind the presence on the forum.

The presence is regarded as a superficial indication of the larger identity, concealed by words

August 2012

Questioning someone’s morality is an acute form of disembodiment of the person. Emotional blackmail is also form of disembodiment. Disembodiment can therefore act as an agent and also be the object of action.

Figure 9: dimensions of expectation-frustration and sharing-trust

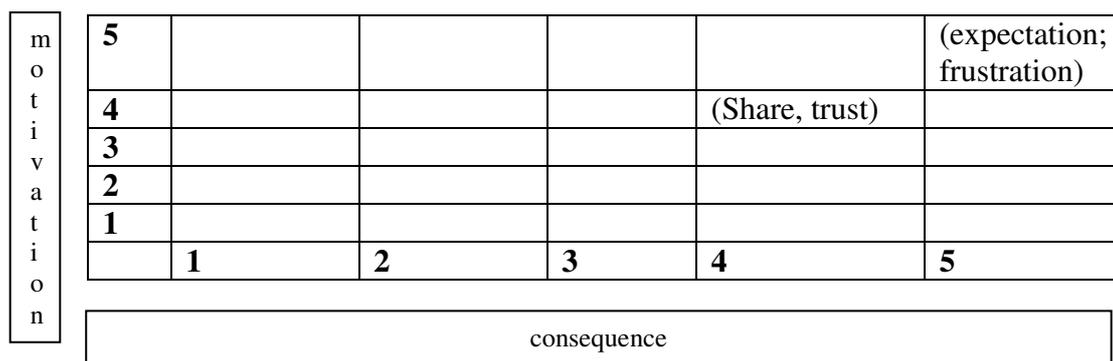


Figure 8

Using the opportunity offered by the forum

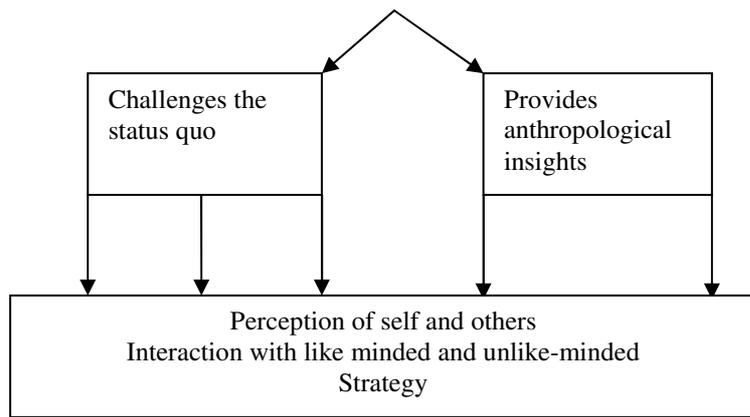


Figure 7

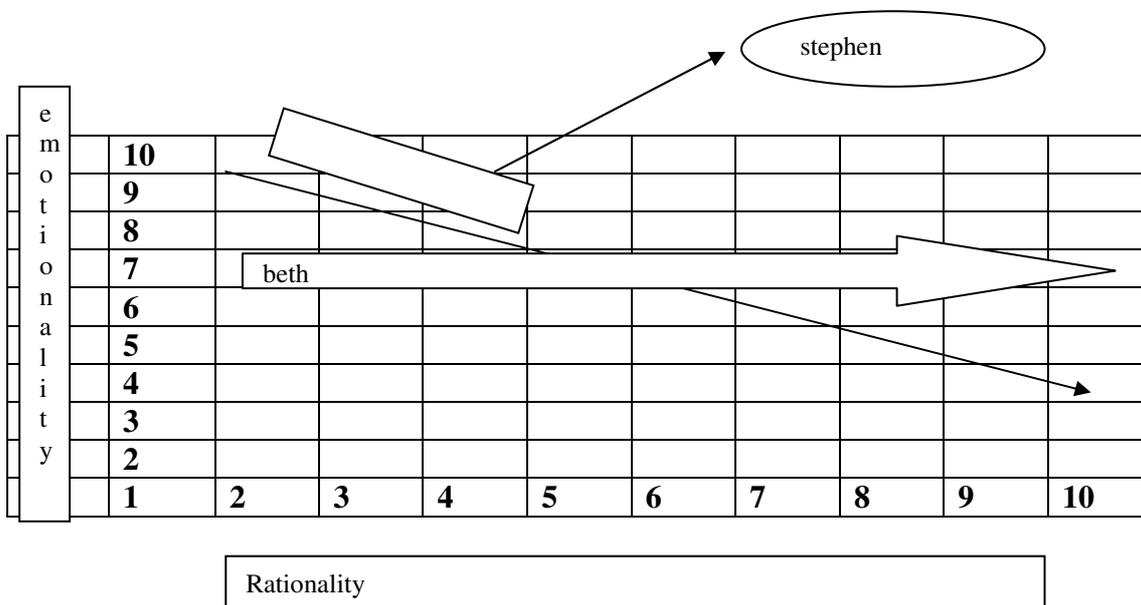


Figure 6

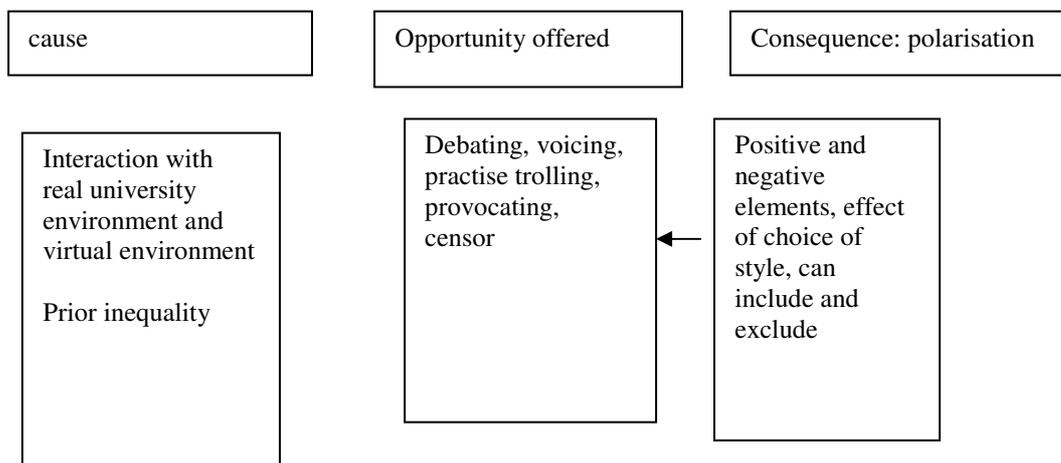


Figure 5

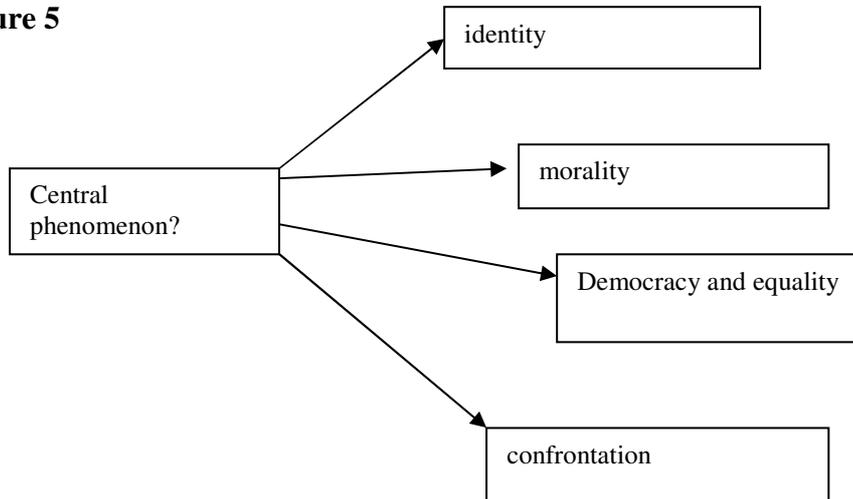


Figure 4

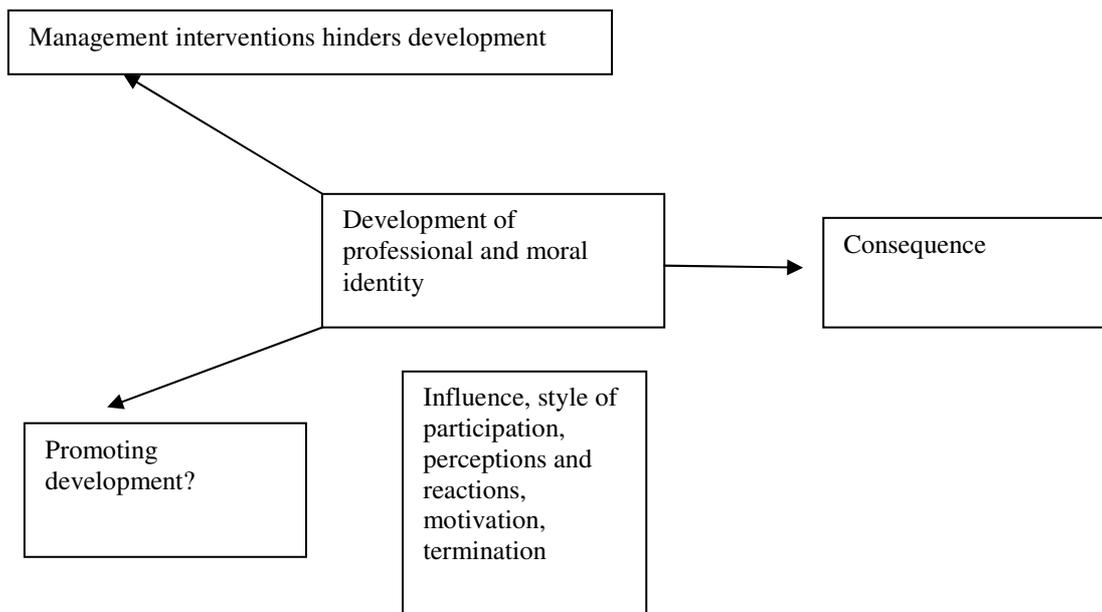


Figure 3

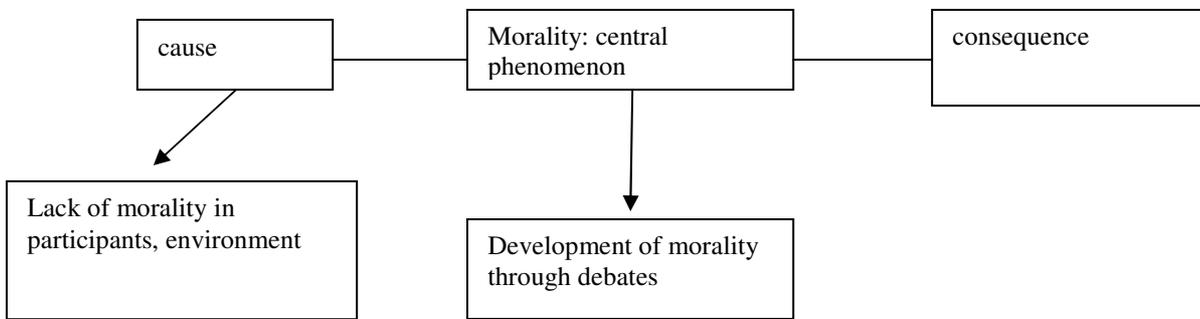


Figure 2

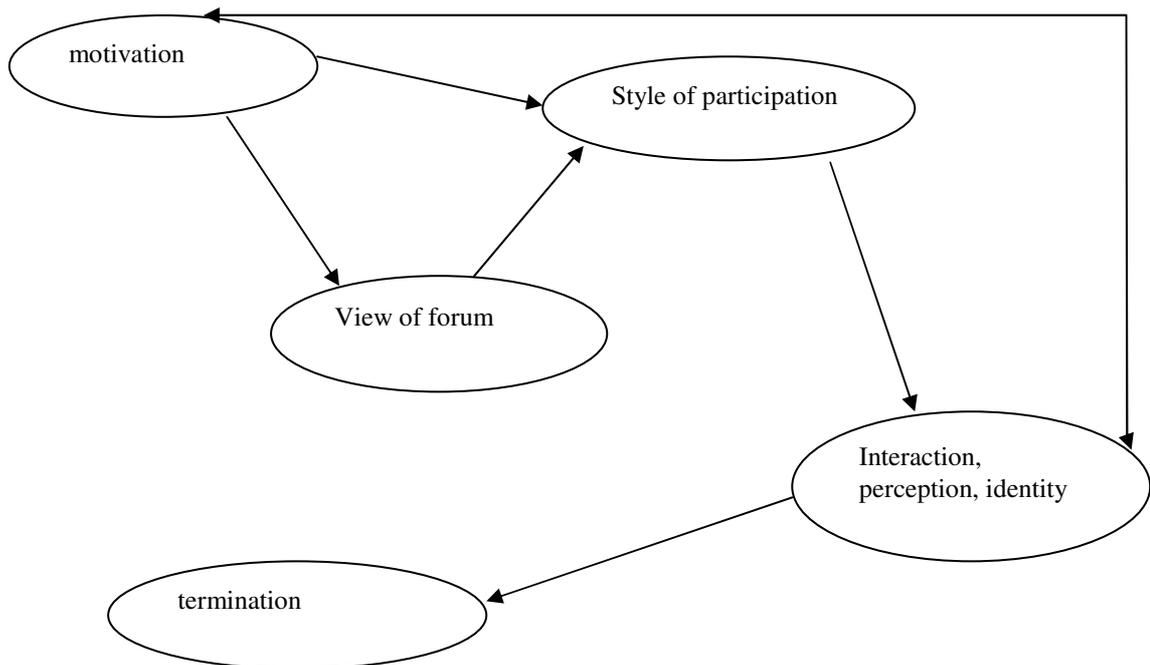
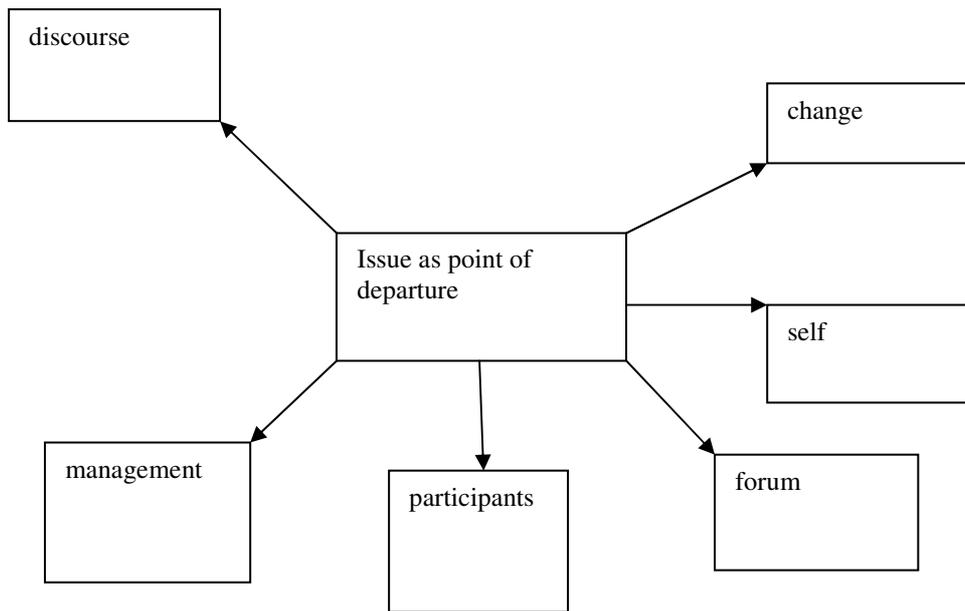


Figure 1



Addendum G

Onderhoud Beth Analise

M – RCRP – motivation – resistance to criticism of religious practices
M- RLV – motivation – resistance to liberal voices
LVH – liberal voices hostile
PHC – position humanism and Christianity
HCS – humanism and Christianity synonymous
ALSPP – arguments of liberals saturation point
I RL – irritation with repetition of liberals
MOVC – made own viewpoint clear
LAL – language ability lacking
OIPT – opponent intimidating with philosophical terrain
CRPP – current reality proves position
U- TOS – university take-over of secularization
U – TOE – university take-over of English
NDM – not deterred by management
MER – management expresses regret
MCMD – management criticises management decision
ICMI – isolated case of management interaction
LASMC – legal advice after management coercion
MIA – management interaction antagonizing
NFIM – no further interaction of management
MII – management intervention ignored
POI – persuaded of own innocence/righteousness
SFR – statements are facts not racism
UCP – undeterred continuance of participation
PMA – persuasion motivates action
NACA – not afraid of consequences of action
PCD – political correctness damaging
PCIF – political correctness ignores facts
PCMP – political correctness murders potential
AR- JIS – racism judgement of incapable students
SUMC – situation at university mirrors that of country
AR – SF – accusation of racism – statement of facts
ASR – accused as scientific racist
RUV – represents unheard voices
RWMM – represents white middle aged men
FRP – fearless representation of principles
PFS – proves facts with statistics
USB – uncritical that statistics are biased
ATS – adheres truth strongly
CASO – continuous attack by same opponents
SCD – self composure during discourse
OIBP – outraged by illiteracy of black participant
PPL – presumes participant a lecturer

MTWF – management not in touch with workforce
M-FOA – management – forum opportunity awareness
RSAO – reflects same accusation to opponent
IAIU – invalid academical information used
SDUPC – statistical data undermined by political correctness
OACM – opinions against current morality
PCIP – previous context influences participation
CCCT – cultural changes caused trauma
RNP – recognizes naivety in participation
HMGO – high morality ground of opponents
APNHM – appreciates participation of not higher morality
ESF – experiences slander against family
APA – abstain from personal attacks
RMP – recognizes miscommunication in participation
EMC – ease in mathematical context
UPC – unease in philosophical context
IULD – incapable of using language within discourse
UDP – unequal distribution of power
AUE - accommodating in use of English
UUE – unaccommodating in use of English
ULIP – unaccommodating towards language incapability of person
AAO – accommodating towards attacks of opponent
PESR – previous experiences of student riots
TPE – trauma with previous experience
SIR – seeming irrationality of students
DSR – destructions of student during riots
HCEM – humanism causes equality misconceptions
ASTPE – anticipates same trauma from previous experience
BFER – biblical fundamentalism explains reality
BFPC – biblical fundamentalism prohibits change
CAO – consistent attacks by opponents

Motivation

RCRP – resistance to criticism of religious practices

RLV – resistance to liberal voices

Persuasion

NGHC – negative view humanism and christianity

HCS – humanism and Christianity synonymous

HCEM –humanism causes equality misconceptions

POR – persuaded of own righteousness

FRP – fearless representation of principles

ATS – adheres truth strongly

FRP – fearless representation of principles

BFER – biblical fundamentalism explains reality

BFPC – biblical fundamentalism prohibits change

Morality

PCD – political correctness damaging

PCMP – political correctness murders potential

DHMG0 – despises high morality ground of opponents

APNHM – appreciates participation of not high morality

OOACM – own opinions against current morality

Context

Previous

PCIP – previous context influences participation

CCCT – cultural changes caused trauma

SIS – seeming irrationality of students

DSR – destructions of students during riots

ASTPE – anticipates same trauma from previous experience

PESR – previous experiences of student riots

TPE – trauma with previous experience

Present

ELTSU – experiences loss in transition to secular university

EDU – experiences degradation of university

SUMC – situation at university mirrors that of country

CRPP – current reality proves position

LIL – liberals insensitive towards loss

RWMM – represents white middle aged men

Interaction

Opponents

IRL – irritation with repetition of liberals
ALSP – arguments of liberals a saturation point
CASO – continuous attacks by same opponents
OIP(PPL) – outraged by illiteracy of participant (presumes participant a lecturer)
TAOO – turns accusation of objectivity to opponent
AAO – accommodating towards attacks by opponent
OUUE – opponent unaccommodating in use of English

Own

OASP – own arguments a saturation point
MOVC – made own viewpoint clear
UPC – unease in philosophical context
IULO – incapable of using language like opponent
AUE – accommodating in use of English
SCC – self composure in conversation
ESF – experiences slander of family
APA – abstain from personal attacks
RNP – recognizes naivety in participation
EMC – ease in mathematical context
LAL – language ability lacking
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Management

NDM – not deterred by management
MER – management expresses regret
MCMA – management criticizes management's action
ICMI – isolated case of management interaction
MIA – management interaction antagonising
LAMC – legal advice after management coercion
NFIM – no further interaction of management
MII – management intervention ignored
MTWF – management not in touch with workforce
FCCAM – forum could create awareness for management
UCP – undeterred continuance of participation

Argumentation

AR-SF – accusation of racism – statement of facts

AR-SR – accusation of racism – scientific racist

AR – JIS – accusation of racism – judgement of incapable students

PFS – proves facts with statistics

IAIU – invalid academical information used

PCIF - political correctness ignores facts

SDUPC – statistical data undermined by political correctness

ASR – accused as a scientific racist

Descriptive analysis

Context

Previous - how influenced by it, student riots, destruction, left technikon
Current

Previous

PCIP – previous context influences participation
CCCT – cultural changes caused trauma
SIS – seeming irrationality of students
DSR – destructions of students during riots
ASTPE – anticipates same trauma from previous experience
PESR – previous experiences of student riots
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Present

ELTSU – experiences loss in transition to secular university
EDU – experiences degradation of university
SUMC – situation at university mirrors that of country
CRPP – current reality proves position
LIL – liberals insensitive towards loss
RWMM – represents white middle aged men

Persuasions

Cataclysmic view of country and university
Fundamentalism prohibits change
Too much change experienced, fundamentalism a safe refuge

Persuasion

NGHC – negative view humanism and christianity
HCS – humanism and Christianity synonymous
HCEM –humanism causes equality misconceptions
POR – persuaded of own righteousness
FRP – fearless representation of principles
ATS – adheres truth strongly
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Argumentation

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PCIF - political correctness ignores facts
SDUPC – statistical data undermined by political correctness
ASR – accused as a scientific racist

Morality

PCD – political correctness damaging
PCMP – political correctness murders potential
DHMGO – despises high morality ground of opponents
APNHM – appreciates participation of not high morality
OOACM – own opinions against current morality

Interaction in forum

Motivation

RCRP – resistance to criticism of religious practices
RLV – resistance to liberal voices

Liberals challenge everything she stands for: Religion, politics, language, academical standards

States own convictions which leads to attacks and slander of family and person

Accommodating in use of English

Opponents

IRL – irritation with repetition of liberals
ALSP – arguments of liberals a saturation point
CASO – continuous attacks by same opponents
OIP(PPL) – outraged by illiteracy of participant (presumes participant a lecturer)
TAOO – turns accusation of objectivity to opponent
AAO – accommodating towards attacks by opponent
OUUE – opponent unaccommodating in use of English

Own

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ESF – experiences slander of family
APA – abstain from personal attacks
RNP – recognizes naivety in participation
EMC – ease in mathematical context
LAL – language ability lacking
OIPT – opponent intimidating on philosophical terrain

Management intervention

Not deterred, legal advice sought

Management

NDM – not deterred by management
MER – management expresses regret
MCMA – management criticizes management's action
ICMI – isolated case of management interaction
MIA – management interaction antagonising
LAMC – legal advice after management coercion
NFIM – no further interaction of management
MII – management intervention ignored
MTWF – management not in touch with workforce
FCCAM – forum could create awareness for management
UCP – undeterred continuance of participation

Analise Cathy

Kodes en kategorieë

Motivation to read participations

OF - SEHO – opportunity to express honest opinion

CCM - chance to criticize management

RIFA – regular interest in forum activities

SSAF – secretary shows actions on forum

Management's interest in forum

OF – MHOO – opportunity forum - management hears honest opinion

Attitude to and interaction with participants

Stephen

FPP – favours prominent participant

WVCO – world view corresponds to own

PAA – participant's appointment advocated

PAS – participant academically solid

PGU – participant good for university

VNDC – voice needed in different contexts

Beth

FPC – friendly persuasion to censoring

IP - FPA - insulting participation – friendly persuasion to apologise

Francois

FCICM – former colleague insults co-manager

DCFEI – disapproves choice of forum for expression of insult

CF – PCP – choice of forum – personal contact preferred

AILI – address insulting because of lack of information

DCFC – difficult to handle conflict with former colleague

Expectations and rules of participation

Decorum

EA – expected from academics

WASC – wishes for academics to be self censoring

MSR – means self-regulation

MCPS – means censoring of public speech

IAF – implies academic finesse

WJP – withholding of judgement in public

ADI – absence implies damage to institution

PD – EFE – practice of decorum – expected in a formal environment

FEDS – formality of environment determines speech

DDLU – decorum determines language use

RICPL – radical ideas conveyed by proper language

Codes and categories

Opportunity – offered and not attained

ESD – equalizing space for differences

EFNA – equalization through forum not achieved

FNOD - forum not objective and democratic

Interaction

SSH – silence supports hegemony

AUI – academics uncritical because of institutionalization

FAUO - fear of attack undermines openness

PFF - participation in the forum fruitless

ODD - opinionated debating is disrespectful

ODU - opinionated debating is disrespectful

Termination

OPS - own participation saturated

TPPC - terminate participation because of practical considerations

RATP - risk of attack leads to termination of participation

IDRT - interest decreased in repetitive topics

Onderhoud Francois kodering

PMP – provocation motive for participation
DFRV – debate fruitless because of radical views
PBR – provoke bad reactions
APA – attack provokes attack
PDEC – provocative discourse becomes emotionally challenging
RSF – reasoning seems fruitless
IBP – identity built as provocator
TRC – tackles religious conventions
TNH – tackles negative view of humankind
VDI – views debate as insane
FNUT – forum not universal tone
CCK – considers colleague as knowledgeable
FPAT – first participation against theologians
PMRP – participation mocks and ridicules people
UPBE – use of provocation a bad effect
UFPF – university a fertile field for provocation
CHC – censorship with hostel criticism
SEUH – student emancipation undermined by hostel
HCNLE – hostel culture negative for learning and emancipation
FSU – foreign status makes unfearful
EAU – estimation of other unimportant
NRHF – no reaction from hostel father
MP – MCA – motivation participation – management coercion in apology
FPA – friendly persuasion into apology
AOS – apology the only solution
PFTE – personal and family trauma experienced
MCHC – management control - hinders conversation/argumentation
MC - IPF – management control - impact of participation fruitless
LPHA – language problem hinders argumentation
OADCA – opportunity for argumentation discouraged because of control
SKAU – sociological knowledge of Stephen useful
APR – Stephen’s participation rational
OPFL – own participation makes forum lively
AIC – attacks ideas about creationism
FEE – forum about ego and exposure
PHO – presents himself as obnoxious
NCOMR – not compelled by morality of respect
TMC - EPU – text as medium of communication - emotions of participants unknown
DEEP – difficult to establish emotions of participants
IRI – interested in religious issues
IAPD – initial aim to provoke debate
PNS – provocation not successful
AUA – aim ultimately to antagonize
IDS – initial direction the same

IPSP – initial position strengthened by participation
SCP – supporter not courage to participate
SHLP – share hesitation of locals to participate
OSF – outsider status fortunate
DRF – discussion reputation of the French
CCE – culture of critique in Europe
ACOTL - absence of critique of own truths locally
NCAL - negative concept of culture by Beth
PCCO – positive concept of culture through others
NGNCC– not general negative concept of culture
RF – MVN – recommendation forum – more voices needed
EPAP – exercises profanity to antagonize people
FARF – finds antagonistic reaction funny
RFPA – reverts to French to provoke antagonism
MI - DFA – management interaction - deletes first apology
MI – DBA - management interaction – demands better apology
R – RNSE – reflection – reaction not strong enough
DCU – dissociate with culture of university
IC – CPD – incident of conflict – causes participation to diminish
IDUI – imminent departure makes uninvolved in issues

Motivation – criticism religious issues - effect criticism – thoughts about forum, ideas about himself and own participation

IAPD – initial aim to provoke debate
IRI – interested in religious issues
FPAT – first participation against theologians
TRC – tackles religious conventions
TNH – tackles negative view humankind
AIC – attacks ideas about creationism
DFRV – debate fruitless because of radical views
RSF – reasoning seems fruitless
VDI – views debate as insane
FNUT – forum not universal tone
RF – MVN – recommendation forum – more voices needed

Turns to provocation as debate is fruitless and ideas of himself (cause or consequence)

PMP – provocation motive for participation
PMRP – participation mocks and ridicules people
UFFP – university a fertile field for provocation
PBR – provokes bad reactions
APA – attack provokes attack
UPBE – use of provocation a bad effect
PNS – provocation not successful
IBP – identity built as provocator
PDEC – provocative discourse becomes emotionally challenging
AUA – aim ultimately to antagonize
FEE – forum about ego and exposure
PHO – presents himself as obnoxious
OSF – outsider status fortunate
DRF – discussion reputation of the French
CCE – culture of critique in Europe
ACOTL – absence of critique of own truths locally
EPAP – exercises profanity to antagonize people
FARF – finds antagonistic reactions funny
RFPA – reverts to French to provoke antagonism

Hostel incident and management coercion - effect – himself and participation

MP – DDHC– motive participation – declares disassociation with hostel culture
SEUH – student emancipation undermined by hostel
HCNLE – hostel culture negative for learning and emancipation
AHFAF – attacks hostel father on accountability on forum
PAHNC – passive approval of hostel’s negative culture
HFRFI – hostel father refuses forum interaction
SVAT – secretary verbal assault telephonically

CHC – censorship with hostel criticism
MI - FPA – management intervention - friendly persuasion into apology
AOS – apology only solution
SMFP – seen as more flexible party
FASP – first apology statement of principles

MI – FAR – management intervention – first apology rejected
MI – FAD – management intervention – first apology deleted
MI – MCTE - management intervention – more conciliatory tone expected
SAA – second apology accepted
SANS – second apology not sincere

MC - HC – management control – hinders conversation
MC – IPF – management control – impact of participation fruitless
MC - OADC – management control - opportunity for argumentation discouraged
MC – CPD – management control – causes participation to diminish

PFTE – personal and family trauma experienced

Position on interaction (own and others - ease, discomfort)

RI-RNSE – reflection about interaction – reaction not strong enough
IDUI – imminent departure makes uninvolved in issues
IPSP – initial position strengthened by participation
IDS – initial direction the same
FSU – foreign status makes unfearful
EOU – estimation of others unimportant
NCOMR – not compelled by morality of respect
TMC-EPU – text as medium of communication – emotions participant unknown
LPHA – language problem hinders argumentation
DEEP – difficult to establish emotions of participants
OPFL – own participation makes forum lively
APR – Stephen’s participation rational
SKAU – sociological knowledge of Stephen useful
CCK – consider colleague as knowledgeable
SHLPH – share hesitance of locals to participate hypothetically

Teksanalise van onderhoud met Willy Nel

IFNO – introduction to forum non official
SIMI – social injustice motivates interaction
PDO – participants disrespectful to others
DCA – disrespect causes anger
DSCOP – disrespectful statements confront own principles
MI – SAOE – motivation interaction – statements against oppression and exclusion
MI – SDO – motivation interaction – statements of disrespect against others
MI – ADB – motivation interaction – any discriminatory behaviour
PBDP – political background determines perception
UPMC – unsatisfactory participation by male colleagues
NPFC – no participation by female colleagues
PBCOS – political background causes outsider status
PBIA – political background influences acceptance
PBDPP – political background diminishes possible persuasion
ESPWC – expects stronger participation from white colleagues
PSOPH – perceives himself in opposition to prevalent hegemony
PACH – prevalent Afrikaans culture is hegemonic
PDCI – participation decreases with colleagues' inactiveness
RHS – representatives of hegemony silent
CDSP – conscious decision to stop participation
PDCF – present disinterest in conversations on the forum
POFE – productive outlet found elsewhere
LSRI – likes strong reactions to ideas
EIP – exchange of ideas positive
CIPP – confrontation of ideas perceived as positive
ICO – identity constructed by others
HIP – honest in identity of participation
PI – TDT – perceived identity: troublemaker with disrespect for tradition
PI – TDC – perceived identity: troublemaker with disrespect for culture
OI – PRL – own identity – problematises real life
PRL – NUD – perception real life: not untroubled and deadening
PCA – problematises comfort and acceptance
GNP – general nature of problematisation
ICR – institutional culture not reflected forum
VFRP – voices in forum represent polarization
VRTC – voices represent transformation or conservatism
SOP – HRO – support of own position – human rights office
SOP – FSH – support of own position – findings of statements as hateful
FEE – HRO – forum place to express emotion – human rights office
URJF – unsure of realization of justice through forum
DSHP – doubt sanctions against hateful participant
MEI – IF – motivation for the end of the interaction – impotence of forum
UOA – CR – understanding the opinion of others – critical reading
FIHO – flexibility impossible when hardened in opinion
RTO – reflection brought tempering of opinion
SAUA – social anthropologist makes a useful analysis
AEFU – analysis of experiences makes forum useful
AESPR – analysis of experiences sensitizes participants about racism

SPC – signed participation demands courage
VSPE – vulnerable people will not share personal experiences
DCD – debating conducted with disrespect of others
PPR – participation perceived as rude
FS – NEC – freedom of speech – no editing of comments
FS – NEC - CLP – freedom of speech – nonaddicting of comments - civility of
learned people
FRR – ROPV - forum reflects reality – recognizes oppressive and patriarchal views
UPCO – unwanted persona/identity created by others
DHSP – differentiate between hard and soft personas
HCP – SS – hard core persona still evident in supremacy and superiority
IICRP – institutional intervention did not change racist paradigm
PVV –public visibility makes vulnerable
ICI – information on the culture of the institution
IAS – information on academic sources
FDF – friendships developed through forum
AFD – anonymity might facilitate discussions
CEHR – civility of environment hides resentment
CEDD – civility of environment determines discussions
ADA – anonymity will overcome the dangers of authority
PEUPF – public element undermines potential of forum

Motivation for participation

SIMI - social injustice motivates interaction
SAOE – statements against oppression and exclusion
SDO – statements of disrespect against others
ADB – any discriminatory behaviour
PDO – participants disrespectful to others
DCA – disrespect causes anger
DSCOP – disrespectful statements confront own principles
PBS– political background sensitized
CI-PL –character of interaction – problematizes life
PCA – problematizes comfort and acceptance
PLU – perception of life not as untroubled
GIP – general inclination to problematise

Motivation for termination of participation

PDCI – participation decreases with colleagues' inactiveness
RHS – representatives of hegemony silent
CDSP – conscious decision to stop participation
POFE – productive outlet found elsewhere
FRI – forum regarded as impotent
ESPWC – expects stronger participation from white colleagues
LSRI PBCOS – political background causes outsider status
PBIA – political background influences acceptance
PBDPP – political background diminishes possible persuasion
UPMC – unsatisfactory participation of male colleagues
NPFC – no participation by female colleagues

Identity

ICO – identity constructed by others
HIP – honesty in participation
PI-TDTC – perceived identity – troublemaker with disrespect for tradition and culture
DSEO – diminishes self in eyes of others (swart mannetjie wat hier is)
OI-PRL – own identity – problematizes real life
UPCO – unwanted persona created by others
DHSP – differentiate between hard and soft personas
HPE-SS – hard persona evident in supremacy and superiority

Development through forum

UOO-CR – understanding of opinion of others through critical reflection
IICRP – institutional intervention did not change racist paradigm
FIHO – flexibility impossible when hardened in opinion
RTO – reflection brought tempering of opinion
URJF – unsure of realization of justice through forum
DSHP – doubt sanctions against hateful participant
SAUA – social anthropologist makes useful analysis

AEFU – analysis of experiences makes forum useful
AWPESVR – analysis of white participants' experiences sensitizes views on racism
FS-NEC – freedom of speech – nonediting of comments – civilness of learned people
FRR-ROPV – forum reflects reality – recognizes oppressive and patriarchal views
PEUPF – public element undermines potential of forum
ADA – anonymity will overcome dangers of authority
CEHR – civility of environment hides resentment
CEDD – civility of environment determines discussions
VRTC – voices represent transformation or conservatism
IV-FEE – institutional view – forum place to express emotion
SOP-HRO – support of own position by HRO
SOP-FSH – support of own position – findings of statements as hateful

Peter

Codes and categories

MDS – minimal discussion students

QRSM – questioning research among student minimal

MDS – minimal discussion staff

MPFS – minimal participation forum staff

PRM – participations read by many

FWP – fear withhold participation

NFP – no fear for participation

FMF – friends met through forum

ASS – absence of scholarship in students

OAS – obedient attitude in students

ACQ – absence of critical questioning

PF – ISD – potential of forum – improve scholarly debate

PDM – potential as democratic medium

MPD – more participation to be democratic

ECP – effort in composition of participation

PESA – participation an element of scientific article

RNP - research necessary for participation

CWLF – criticize way of lecturing on forum

PB – ISM – participation Beth – ideas shared by many

SUF – staff unaware of forum

IEF – informal exposure to forum

PPF – pertinent participants on forum

PAF – participants addicted to forum

CCWT – criticism can cause work termination

CCNP – criticism causes no promotion

WSOF – withhold strong opinion on forum

EPR – expects participation of rector

PB – EOP – participation Beth – expects objective with participation

PB – PEP – participation Beth – polarization effect of participation

PB – OAF – participation Beth – outspokenness appreciated on forum

PB - SLM – participation Beth - support minimal

PAG – SM – participation Stephen - support minimal

PAG – RWS - participation Stephen - resistance workshop staff

PAG – AWS - participation Stephen - appreciates writing style

PF – PAW – potential forum – practice of academic writing

PLB – ASS – participation Beth – arguments scientifically suspect

PLB – USD – participation Beth – use of statistics doubtful

PLB – URS – participation Beth – usual repetition of statements

PLB – NEOA - participation Beth – no exploration of other arguments

PS – NEOA - participation Stephen – no exploration of other arguments

PS – PEP - participation Stephen – polarization effect of participation

PP – OMP – participation Peter – objective the mediation of participations

PP – OSAD – participation Peter – objective the stimulation of academic debate

PP – OLA – participation Peter – opportunity to learn to argue

CCTA – climate critical thinking is absent

PAG – CAAD – participation Stephen – criticism & analysis academic nature

FOAA – forum opportunity academic analysis

PB – UCP – participation Beth – undiplomacy characteristic of participation

PB – LDUO - participation Beth – lack of diplomacy undermines objective

EDP – expects diplomacy from participants

IFFU – initial fear as foreigner unfounded

WSBR – white secretary born with racism

FRLU – fear and racism of locals unfounded

MRF – mediating role as foreigner

TDFT – try to demystify fear of townships

PB – USU – participation Beth – use of statistics unscientific

UTCR – unfamiliarity with township causes racism

WSHB – white student homogenous background

LD – LDV – lack of diversity – lack of different viewpoints

RJR – refrain from judgement of racism

FSOA – forum space for outlet of aggression

EF – TRBG – ex forum – tries to reconcile Beth and Stephen

PLB – USA – participation Beth – unsimilar to silence of Afrikaner

Problems in university

MDS – minimal discussion students

QRSM – questioning research among students minimal

ASS – absence of scholarship in students

OAS – obedient attitude students

ACQ – absence critical questioning

CCTA – climate critical thinking absent

Potential forum

ISD – improve scholarly debate

PDM – democratic medium

PAW – practice academic writing

OAA – opportunity academic analysis

OLA – opportunity to learn to argue

Potential undermined

MPD – more participation to be democratic

CCWT – criticism can cause work termination

CCNP – criticism causes no promotion

WSOF – withhold strong opinion on forum

FWP – fear withhold participation

Objective of participation

Own

O-MP – mediation of participations

O-SAD – stimulation of academic debate

Expectations of participants

Own

ECP – effort in composition

ESA – element of scientific article

RN – research necessary

Others

Beth

EDP – expects diplomacy from participants

EOP – expects objective with participation

LDUO – lack of diplomacy undermines objective

Perception participations

Positive

Stephen

CAAD – criticism and analysis academic nature

AWS – appreciates writing style

Beth

OAF – outspokenness appreciated on forum

USA – unsimilar to silence of Afrikaner

Negative

Stephen

PEP – polarization effect of participation

NEOA – no exploration other arguments

Beth

PEP – polarization effect of participation

NEOA – no exploration other arguments

UCP – undiplomacy characteristic of participation

URS – usual repetition of statements

ASS – arguments scientifically suspect

USD – use of statistics doubtful

Problems in university	Potential forum	Objective of participation	Expectations of participants	Perception participations
<p>MDS – minimal discussion students</p> <p>QRSM – questioning research among students minimal</p> <p>ASS – absence of scholarship in students</p> <p>OAS – obedient attitude students</p> <p>ACQ – absence critical questioning</p> <p>CCTA – climate critical thinking absent</p>	<p>ISD – improve scholarly debate</p> <p>PDM – democratic medium</p> <p>PAW – practice academic writing</p> <p>OAA – opportunity academic analysis</p> <p>OLA – opportunity to learn to argue</p> <p><u>Potential undermined</u></p> <p>MPD – more participation to be democratic</p> <p>CCWT – criticism can cause work termination</p> <p>CCNP – criticism causes no promotion</p> <p>WSOF – withhold strong opinion on forum</p> <p>FWP – fear withhold participation</p>	<p><u>Own</u></p> <p>O-MP – mediation of participations</p> <p>O-SAD – stimulation of academic debate</p>	<p><u>Own</u></p> <p>ECP – effort in composition</p> <p>ESA – element of scientific article</p> <p>RN – research necessary</p> <p><u>Others</u></p> <p><u>Beth</u></p> <p>EDP – expects diplomacy from participants</p> <p>EOP – expects objective with participation</p> <p>LDUO – lack of diplomacy undermines objective</p>	<p><i>Positive</i></p> <p><u>Stephen</u></p> <p>CAAD – criticism and analysis academic nature</p> <p>AWS – appreciates writing style</p> <p><u>Beth</u></p> <p>OAF – outspokenness appreciated on forum</p> <p>USA – unsimilar to silence of Afrikaner</p> <p><i>Negative</i></p> <p><u>Stephen</u></p> <p>PEP – polarization effect of participation</p> <p>NEOA – no exploration other arguments</p> <p><u>Beth</u></p> <p>PEP – polarization effect of participation</p> <p>NEOA – no exploration other arguments</p> <p>UCP – undiplomacy characteristic of participation</p> <p>URS – usual repetition of</p>

				statements ASS – arguments scientifically suspect USD – use of statistics doubtful
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Categories of analysis

Stephen

Institutional intervention

IFC – intervention because of formal complaint
FWI – forum weakened by intervention
CD – censors discussions
PDC – prefers discussion to censorship
LCD – limits confrontational discussions
ILT – intervention limits topics
R-HSL – reason – hate speech law
E - LPFS – effect - law prevents free speech
DDUI – discussion denied on uncomfortable issues
ECC – emotional content censored
PP – participant prosecuted
RRIP – racist remarks an interpersonal issue
DPHS – different perception of hate speech

Style of interaction / participation

PAD – position defined by argumentative discourse
CDP – confrontational discussions preferred
ASE – argumentative social engagements
CMT – career marked by trolling
DPG – dissenting participation seen as game

Effect

PD – participation is disruptive
PCI – participation colours identity
UPI – undermines positive influence
UNE – unintended negative effect
PMI – participation met with intolerance
PDU – participation seen as dissenting and unpopular

Perception and interactions

Of others to himself

RSS – views reactions to self as stereotypical

OPU – others perceive him as unmoving

NRD – no room for difference

NPE – no personal engagement

Of himself to others

LCR – limited consciousness of reactions

ALM – associates with likeminded people

Of self to self

SHR – see himself as reasonable

WLP – willing to listen to people

Of opposing participants

1.

OEI – old evolutionist ideas

NEP – no engagement with participants

CTS – conciliatory tone superficial

PPV – presents popular view

UCS – useful because of courage and stupidity

LIC – lack of information criticized

2.

IGRN – influenced by grand racist narrative

FVRI – feeling of victimization racially informed

LERS – life experienced through racial stereotypes

REE – race easy explanation

Power and influence

In forum

WICL – wishes to influence consciousness to left

WIDL – wishes to influence discussion to the left

TIA – test ideas which are argumentative

PA – opportunity to practice arguments

IIC – initial idealistic about change

NIC – not idealistic about change

SDSC – serious discussions should bring structural change

PDIC – popular discussions does not bring institutional change

ODUP – online discussions are unofficial and powerless

TRC – trolling could raise consciousness

OPSA – opposing participant sets agenda

OPAA – opposing participant assumes agreement

RPA – recognizes patronizing attitude

RPP – recognizes power play

UDAA – use discourse of academic argument

UDHR – use discourse of human rights

ASCD – attributes structural change to discussion

CESC – contribution effects structural change - racial segregation

Out of forum

SEM – support via e-mail

IDC – initial disagreement by colleagues

CCP – courage and convictions praised by colleagues

RCPP – rector encourages participation personally

ORP – overt reaction is positive

SM – supporters as minority

OM – opponents the majority

Susan

Onderhoud analyse

Sharing experience

MSE – motivation to share an experience

MKEO – motivation to know experiences of others

QRR – question whether racism or rudeness

MCE – motivation to have clarity on experience

EQ-SE – exchange of questions asks for sharing of experience

CIE – confirms interpretation of experience

SE – FTR – sharing of experience – forum a therapeutic role

SEAS – sharing of experience asks for support

MKEO – motivation to know experiences of others

EQSA – exchange of questions a softer approach

CIE – confirms interpretation of experience

Role of forum

FDP – forum a dumping place

FRSE – forum role share experience

FODF – forum outlet for daily frustrations

SCDR – structural change demands different route

FRT – fights relieve tension

Influence / importance effect of forum

IF – FRI - influence forum – frequent requests ignored

ADAM – administrative staff should alert management

FRT – fights relieve tension

Resisting or giving opinion

RJOE – resist from judging own experience

RFO – resist forceful opinion

OPCD – opinionated participations are conflict driven

RAI – rational analysis incomprehensible

RRST – racism in reverse a sensitive topic

RJOE – resist from judging own experience

OPE – opinionated participations are entertaining

Addendum H

Onderhoudsvraag: Andrew

Wat het jou gemotiveer om deel te neem aan die gespreksforum?

Onderhoudsvrae: Beth

1. Wat het jou in die algemeen gemotiveer om aan die BBS deel te neem? En op te hou deelneem?
2. Wie is jy as jy aan die forum deelneem?
3. Daar was positiewe en negatiewe reaksies op jou deelname. Kan jy meer daarvan vertel?
4. Het dit jou stilgemaak of eerder aangemoedig? (die klag van rassisme, die brief van bestuur wat jy aanhaal)
5. Ek sien jy is baie oortuig, bv. in die stuk oor rassisme, antisipeer jy mense se reaksies of skryf jy bloot net hoe jy dink sonder om teenstand te verwag?
6. Wat is jou gevoel daaroor dat jy nie “akademiese argument” voer nie?
7. Namens wie praat jy en waarom?
8. Waarom dink jy het die forum al hoe minder gewild geraak?
9. Is jy van buite die forum ondersteun en geopponeer?
10. As jy weer die gesprek moet voer, sal jy dit dieselfde doen?
11. Het jy iets geleer uit die deelname, het jy iets “gegain”?

Onderhoudsvrae: Cathy

1. Jy het op `n stadium in jou tydperk as rektor by `n vergadering by Opvoedingswetenskappe genoem dat jy graag die BBS lees. Wat is jou belangstelling in die BBS?
2. Twee mense met wie ek onderhoude gevoer het, Stephen en Beth het elk gunstige kommentaar gelewer op die rol wat jy gespeel het in die BBS in die tyd toe hulle aktief deelgeneem het.

Wat is die rol wat jy gespeel het?
3. Was daar gevalle waar die rol wat jy gespeel het wel negatief ervaar is, dat mense nou dink die forum word deur Big Brother dopgehou?
4. Wat is jou siening van die belang van die forum – party mense noem dit `n skreeforum, - is/was dit meer as dit?
5. Het jy in jou tyd as rektor ernstige konflik na aanleiding van gesprekke op die forum moes uitsorteer? Hoe het jy dit ervaar?
6. Was daar gesprekke op die forum wat die bestuur van die universiteit in ag geneem het by die neem van besluite of wat die maak van veranderings tot gevolg gehad het?
7. Hoe kan die universiteit baat by `n gespreksforum soos die BBS?

Onderhoudsvrae: Charl en Petro

1. Waarom het Charles aan die BBS deelgeneem?
2. Waarom het Petro nie deelgeneem nie?
3. Waarom het Charles opgehou?
4. Ek het `n onderhoud gehad met John, hy sê dat die “social justice” beginsels hom motiveer om deel te neem. Maar hy sê julle ondersteun hom in beginsel maar neem nie deel en ondersteun hom so op die forum nie. Waarom nie?

Interview questions Francois

1. What motivated you to take part in the forum?
2. Which negative and positive consequences did you experience after participation?
3. Did your involvement in the forum change you?

Onderhoudsvrae: John

1. Vertel van jou geskiedenis van deelname aan die BBS.
2. Waar laat die gebeure jou nou?
3. In watter mate het die BBS jou toegelaat om vryheid van spraak te beoefen?
4. Voel jy jou stem is gehoor?
5. Wat was vir jou die dominante stemme?
6. Voer jy die tipe gesprekke ook met mense in f2f situasies?
7. Is jou interaksie en die gebeure vergelykbaar met aanlyninteraksie?
8. Hoe voel jy oor jou nie-deelname?
9. Wat sal jy reken is die rede vir die einde van die forum?
10. Hoe voel jy oor die waarde van jou deelname en die waarde daaraan toegeken?
11. Jy meld op `n stadium dat die debattering nie vir jou gesond is van een van die deelnemers nie, wat het jy daarmee bedoel?
12. Hoe dink jy word jou deelname verstaan? Hoe dink jy word jy ge"label" na aanleiding daarvan?
13. Wat voel jy oor die waarde van jou bydrae en die waarde daaraan toegeken?
14. Watter soort bydraes is vir jou van meer/minder belang by gesprekke/debate?
15. Hoe dink jy kan die forum mense emansipeer?
16. Kan dit in huidige omstandighede gebeur?
17. Het jy tot meer insig oor die instelling se kultuur gekom?
18. Is daar implisiete kodes wat nou meer eksplisiet is?
19. Wat was die doel van jou deelname, wat wou jy kommunikeer en het jy daarin geslaag?
20. Het jy enige simpatie/begrip ontwikkel wat ander betref?

Onderhoudsvrae: Peter

1. Waarom neem jy deel in die algemeen?
2. Wat is jou geskiedenis in gesprekke oor die algemeen en met Beth spesifiek? (April 2007)
3. Wat dink jy van die reaksie op Beth se bydra in hierdie spesifieke gesprek? Die persoonlike aanvalle?
4. Hoe sal jy jou houding teenoor haar beskryf?
5. Waarom reken jy sy is dalk nie regtig `n rassis nie?
6. Waarom reken jy sy praat namens die swygende meerderheid? Hoe kan sy die meerderheid dalk beter verteenwoordig?
7. Beide van julle gebruik statistieke om `n punt oor te bring - Beth reken sy het nie `n stats les nodig nie, wat is jou opinie daarvan?

Interview questions: Stephen

1. What motivates you to take part or start discussions on the BBS?
2. Have you experienced instances where you felt you have to stop interacting in the forum and do not pursue an issue anymore and can you tell me more?
3. Can you tell me about any personal conflict or feelings of hostility in interactions on the forum?
4. Can you tell me about instances where you experienced that you came across and made a difference?
5. Have you been labeled and what is your feeling about that?
6. What would you regard is the value of your contributions, your interaction e.g. in the discussion on racism?

Onderhoudsvrae: Susan

1. Dink jy jou bydra hier is sinvol beantwoord deur Stephen?
2. Wat dink jy van hoe Edith se beskrywing van haar ervaring hanteer is?
3. Waarom het jy in hierdie spesifieke geval deelgeneem?

Addendum I

From: Theo Cloete
To: Louise Postma
CC: Mariëtte Lowes
Date: 8/19/2008 12:51 PM
Subject: Re: Navorsing oor BBS

Beste Louise

Jy het al vroeër met die Institusionele Kantoor (Marelize Santana) en ITC ook al oor hierdie navorsing gepraat. Omdat hier die forum 'n informele forum is, behoort hy eintlik aan die personeel en is daar nie regtig 'n finale "baas" wat die goedkeuring kan gee nie.

In my hoedanigheid as Direkteur Bemaking & Kommunikasie van die Kampus, gee ek toestemming dat julle die navorsing kan doen, maar wel met die volgende versoek:

1. Dat die hele kwessie met die etiekkomitee uitgeklaar word omrede dit personeel se persoonlike sienings of menings is en hierdie forum beskerm word deur wagwoorde. Dit is eintlik nie 'n openbare forum nie. Hulle sal ook moet besluit of die individue wat in hierdie studie aangehaal gaan word in kennis gestel moet word dat hulle aangehaal gaan word.
2. 'n Vinnige navraag by die regs kantoor of die individue se vryheid van spraak aangetas gaan word, kan dalk ook goed wees.

Vriendelike groete

Theo

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http://www.puk.ac.za/system/galleries/pics/puk/nwu_hd_logo.gif

>>> Louise Postma 19 August 2008 >>>
Mnr Cloete

Baie dankie vir die terugvoer. Aangesien ek in 'n simposium vroeg in September in Joensuu reeds bydrae op die BBS gaan gebruik in my aanbieding, hoop ek my navraag en antwoord betreffende die etiese oorwegings word spoedig hanteer.

Groete
Louise Postma

>>> Theo Cloete 2008/08/18 14:15 >>>
Me Postma,

Ek hoop om vroeg hierdie week u navraag ten volle te kan afhandel. Ons gee terugvoer sodra moontlik.

Groete,

Theo Cloete

>>> Louise Postma 2008/08/05 23:12 >>>

Geagte mnr Cloete

Ek het gister verneem dat ek 'n beurs ontvang het om vir drie maande vanaf 1 September tot 1 Desember aan die Universiteit van Joensuu, Finland as uitruilstudent te studeer as deel van my PhD studie. My studieleier aan NWU is prof. Seugnet Blignaut en die mede-leier is prof. Erkki Sutinen van die Universiteit van Joensuu.

Ek beoog om vir hierdie studie ondersoek in te stel na virtuele leergemeenskappe binne die hoër opvoedingsektor. Ek is van voorneme om die NWU se BBS as virtuele leergemeenskap as eenheid van analise te gebruik. Hierdie besprekingsforum binne die hoër opvoedingsektor is 'n goeie voorbeeld van 'n informele, sosiale leergeleentheid vir beide diegene wat aktief daaraan deelneem, asook diegene wat dit bloot net lees. Tydens my besoek aan Joensuu, gaan ek saam met navorsers van die Universiteit van Joensuu ondersoek instel na die gebruik van 'n webgebaseerde program, naamlik Woven Stories, om die bydrae van deelnemers op 'n semantiese vlak te analiseer. Die studie het verder ten doel om deelnemers se virtuele professionele identiteit binne 'n transformerende omgewing te bestudeer.

Aangesien die besprekingsforum die eiendom van die Noordwes Universiteit is, versoek ek hiermee om die besprekings op die BBS as my navorsingsdata te gebruik. In 'n opvolgende stap sal ek deur die Etiese Komitee toestemming verkry vir al die navorsingsaksies. U toestemming is een van die dokumente wat ek nodig het vir die normale etiese aansoek.

Ek versoek dat u my sal help om die nodige toestemmings in die verband te verkry.

Groete
Louise Postma

Dear mr Cloete

I learned yesterday that I received a bursary to study for three months from 1 September to 1 December at the University of Joensuu, Finland as an exchange student as part of my PhD study. My study leader at NWU is prof. Seugnet Blignaut and the co-leader is prof. Erkki Sutinen from the University of Joensuu.

I plan to investigate virtual learning communities within the higher education sector for this study. I want to use the NWUs BBS as virtual learning community as the unit of analysis. This discussion forum within the higher education sector is a good example of an informal, social learning opportunity for both those who actively participate and those who are only reading the contributions. During my visit to Joensuu, I will investigate with researchers of the University of Joensuu the use of a web based program, namely Woven Stories, to analyse the contributions of the participants on a semantic level. The study has the further objective to investigate participants' virtual professional identity within a transforming environment.

Seeing that the discussion forum belongs to the North-West University, I hereby request to use the discussions on the BBS as my research data. A next step will be to procure admission from the Ethics Committee for all the research actions. Your approval is one of the documents I need for the normal ethical application.

I hereby request your assistance to acquire the necessary admission in this regard.

Greetings
Louise Postma

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Faculty of Education Sciences
North-West University
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ETHICS APPROVAL OF PROJECT

Ethics Committee

Tel +27 18 299 4850
Fax +27 18 293 5329
Email Ethics@nwu.ac.za
2012/07/16

This is to certify that the next project was approved by the NWU Ethics Committee:

<p>Project title : Democratizing an online discussion forum at a Higher Education Institution: from rationalistic exclusion to the recognition of multiple presences</p> <p>Student : L Postma</p> <p>Project leader: Prof S Blignaute</p> <p>Ethics number: NWU-00006-10-A2</p> <p><small><u>Status:</u> S = Submission; R = Re-Submission; P = Provisional Authorisation; A = Authorisation</small></p> <p>Expiry date2015/05/19</p>
--

The Ethics Committee would like to remain at your service as scientist and researcher, and wishes you well with your project. Please do not hesitate to contact the Ethics Committee for any further enquiries or requests for assistance.

The formal Ethics approval certificate will be sent to you as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Me. Marietjie Halgryn', written over a horizontal line.

Me. Marietjie Halgryn
NWU Ethics Secretariate

Addendum K

From: <@discourses.org>
To: <seugnet.blignaut@nwu.ac.za>
Date: 2012/09/07 02:43 PM
Subject: Re: Paper for DISCOURSE & COMMUNICATION

From: "Teun A. van Dijk" <journals@discourses.org>
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Please also use this personal address for any other query you may have about your submission or the journals.

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Best wishes

Teun A. van Dijk
Pompeu Fabra University
Dept. of Translation and Language Sciences
138, Roc Boronat
08018 Barcelona, Spain
E-mail: vandijk@discourses.org
Web: www.discourses.org

----- Original Message -----

Blignaut:

Thank you for submitting the manuscript, "Reflections on =
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discussion forum
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From: <commre@syr.edu>
To: <louise.postma@nwu.ac.za>, <seugnet.blignaut@nwu.ac.za>
Date: 9/17/2012 3:59 PM
Subject: Communication Research CR-12-245

17-Sep-2012

Dear Miss Postma:

Your manuscript entitled "(Un)desired interventions in an online discussion forum at a higher education institution in South Africa" has been successfully submitted online and is presently being given full consideration for publication in the Communication Research.

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Co-Editor
Communication Research Editorial Office
commre@syr.edu

Addendum N

From: <jdyer@pugetsound.edu>
To: <Louise.Postma@nwu.ac.za>, <seugnet.blignaut@nwu.ac.za>
Date: 9/14/2012 12:40 PM
Subject: Rhetoric Society Quarterly - Manuscript ID RRSQ-2012-0100

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Sincerely,

Rhetoric Society Quarterly



eighth international conference on
**cultural attitudes
towards technology
and communication 2012**

edited by
michele strano
herbert hrachovec
fay sudweeks
charles ess

catac'12

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Eighth International Conference on

Cultural Attitudes Towards Technology and Communication

18-20 June 2012, Aarhus, Denmark

Web: www.cataconference.org

Email: catac@it.murdoch.edu.au

Ms Louise Postma

North West University
PO Box 20390
Noordbrug 2531
Republic of South Africa

9 August 2012

Dear Ms Louise Postma

Thank you for presenting your paper at the *Eighth International Conference on Cultural Attitudes Towards Technology and Communication (CATaC12)*, held at Aarhus University, Aarhus, Denmark, 18-20 June 2012.

Your paper will appear in the conference proceedings and should be cited as:

Postma, L., Blignaut, A. S., Swan, K. and Sutinen, E. A. (2012). Narratives countering the democratising ideal of discourse in an online forum of a higher education institution. In Strano, M., Hrachovec, H., Sudweeks, F. and Ess, C. (eds). *Proceedings Cultural Attitudes Towards Technology and Communication* (pp.228-243). Murdoch, Australia: Murdoch University.

You have permission to include your publication in your thesis providing the conference is acknowledged accordingly.

Yours sincerely



MURDOCH
UNIVERSITY
PERTH, WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Associate Professor Emerita Fay Sudweeks

Co-Chair, CATaC

School of Information Technology

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Tel: +61-8-9360-2364, Fax: +61-8-9360-2941

Cultural Attitudes towards Technology and Communication 2012

*Proceedings of the Eighth International Conference on
Cultural Attitudes towards Technology and Communication
Aarhus, Denmark, 18-20 June 2012*

edited by

Michele Strano

Bridgewater College, USA

Herbert Hrachovec

University of Vienna, Austria

Fay Sudweeks

Murdoch University, Australia

Charles Ess

University of Oslo, Norway

*Eighth International Conference on
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PREFACE

The papers in this volume represent the *Eighth International Conference on Cultural Attitudes Towards Technology and Communication* (CATaC'12), held June 18-20, 2012 in Aarhus, Denmark.

CATaC'12 both built upon the precedents and foundations of previous CATaC conferences while also seeking to move into new areas and directions of scholarship and research, as captured in the conference title “Beyond the digital/cultural divide: In/visibility and new media.” This meant that, on the one hand, a number of questions, themes, and *topoi* continued to be represented while also being explored and developed in new ways. To begin with, our two keynote speakers – Rasha Abdulla (Egypt) and Randi Markussen (Denmark) – took up the theme of the democratization potentials (and pitfalls) of computer-mediated communication, a theme that emerged as a critical one in some of the earliest discussions and investigations of the then-young Internet. At the same time, Rasha’s keynote address provided us with an eyewitness account of the importance of social media such as Twitter and Facebook in the Egyptian revolution of 2011; Randi Markussen focused on e-voting technologies and their *anti*-democratic potentials as seen from especially Scandinavian perspectives. These two addresses thereby further instantiated our commitment to fostering a genuinely *global* exploration of culture, technology, and communication.

Similarly, other themes familiar from previous CATaC conferences received fresh views and new developments; for example, in the areas of website design, e-learning, ICTs and social action, and cross-cultural approaches to such issues as copyright. In addition to our characteristic attention to diverse cultural domains – from Saudi Arabia and Iran to Malaysia and Japan, to Indigenous peoples in a number of countries – so a number of conference presentations likewise continued our tradition of attending to diverse cohorts, ranging from young people to the elderly, online communities *per se*, and so forth. By the same token, our thematic and critical attention to concepts of ‘culture’ (and the limitations of these) was helpfully extended by a number of contributions.

At the same time – and as we had hoped – our conference thematic attracted a number of new emphases, ones that often reflected on-going developments of ICTs beyond the now common focus on social media. These included, for example, a discussion of diverse cultural conceptions of privacy vis-à-vis the (growing) use of robots. More broadly, no less than 5 out of the 12 sections of conference presentations collected here address visibility and invisibility in a variety of contexts and venues.

In these ways, then, CATaC'12 both sustains and expands upon our hallmark goals, characteristics and approaches as a conference and community of scholars and researchers. Once again, we have met to explore together some of the best and most current work at the intersections of ‘culture’, technology, and communication. Once again, we have enjoyed a distinctive conviviality and informality that are, let us be frank, a refreshing change from many academic conferences. Once again, we have been inspired to both appreciate the growing body of research, scholarship, and reflection

that constitutes much of the foundational work in these domains, and to look forward to new directions of exploration – directions we plan to showcase at CATaC'14.

As this spread of topics, approaches, emphases and findings suggests, the work of the Program Committee for CATaC'12 was exceptionally demanding. Hence our first thanks go to Program Chair Michele Strano and the Program Committee made up by Herbert Hrachovec, Leah Macfadyen, Fay Sudweeks and Maja van der Velden. We are further grateful to the conference presenters and participants who made the journey to Aarhus, “the city of smiles” (*Smilensby*), and whose engagements across the three days of the conference thus constituted a remarkably fruitful and enjoyable time of discovering new insights, undertaking new dialogues, and inspiring new collaboration possibilities. Likewise, we thank our sponsoring universities, beginning with our host, Aarhus University, which provided an excellent conference venue along with critical support and facilities. In particular, the Department of Media Studies (Institute of Aesthetics and Communication) sponsored the opening reception that provided a relaxing conclusion to our first day of presentations while fostering further informal conversations and networking. Melody Sanders and the Drury University Office of Marketing and Communication were crucial to our registration processes. We are equally grateful to Murdoch University, the University of Vienna, and Bridgewater College for their supporting the critical participation of Fay Sudweeks, Herbert Hrachovec, and Michele Strano, respectively.

Charles Ess
Aarhus University, Denmark

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