

A HISTORY OF THE PSYCHOLOGY DEPARTMENT

**A History of the Psychology Department at the University of Cape Town between 1974 and  
1994**

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### **Abstract**

The period between 1974 and 1994 was marked by a debate over the relevance of psychology in South Africa. While much has been written about the history of South African psychology at the general level of the discipline, what is less well known about this period is the specific functioning of psychology departments across the country. This study examines the history of the University of Cape Town's (UCT) Department of Psychology between 1974 and 1994, with a focus on how teaching and research developments in the department intersected with macro-level social and political processes in South Africa. Towards this end, it draws on archival material and, where necessary, interviews with former staff members employed in UCT's Department of Psychology during the period under analysis. It notes how the department was situated in a political climate characterised by both unprecedented government repression and powerful political resistance. In turn, the university context was typified by increased student activism and a strong emphasis on academic freedom. This socio-political context had a noticeable influence on departmental teaching and research trends, with clear connections between staff members' political activism and teaching and research directions. In particular, these teaching and research developments show that the department grappled with two different conceptualisations of relevance: firstly, that relevance was about emphasising fundamental, common issues, and secondly, that relevance involved understanding the local context and, specifically during the period in question, the political and social crisis in the country.

*Key words:* contextualism, Department of Psychology, relevance, The University of Cape Town, psychology

### **Introduction**

Debates on the relevance of psychology have occurred among psychologists around the world across time and in South African psychology since its very beginnings. This debate is premised on longstanding historical-theoretical and socio-political conundrums in the relationship between psychology and society. Given the immense social changes sweeping across South Africa at the time, the period between 1974 and 1994 saw a flourishing of the debate on relevance. However, whereas the extant literature is focused on descriptive accounts of the key organisational and thematic developments in South African psychology between 1974 and 1994, an identifiable gap is evident when it comes to university departments' role in South African psychology specifically.

Historical writing, especially critical histories of psychology, is more prevalent during times of political change (Long, 2016b). The period between 1974 and 1994 was one such time of political change in that it saw a flourishing of critical histories of South African psychology. This period was marked by a debate on the relevance of psychology in South Africa. Psychologists began to critique psychology for its apolitical stance on the oppression of black people (Long, 2016b), which explains why, for much of the apartheid period, psychology in South Africa developed a noticeably Eurocentric orientation. In time, questions began to be asked about South African psychology's ability to be socially relevant for all South Africans during this period. This crisis in confidence led to some key developments in psychological knowledge production and practices (Suffla, Stevens, & Seedat, 2001). Accordingly, despite its Eurocentric foundations, South African psychology has evolved over the years along with the broader socio-historical context in such a way as to become a microcosm of South African society (Suffla et al., 2001).

The final two decades of apartheid rule was a time of immense social and political change. From 1974 onwards, psychology began to gradually change in reaction to the political and economic context in South Africa. After 350 years of ensuring that black people were treated as a source of cheap labour, the South African economy in 1974 experienced a severe recession which left thousands of black people unemployed and poverty-stricken as the economy demanded skilled labour (Terreblanche, 2002). This forced the apartheid government to make political changes such as ending measures that were used to make it impossible for black workers to compete with white workers for the same jobs. These political changes were part of

the government's attempts to keep their system going despite intense internal and external pressure to end apartheid (Terreblanche, 2002). At the same time, television was introduced to South Africa and therefore white people were not able to shy away from the horror of the apartheid system. This coincided with the Soweto Uprisings in June 1976 which further emphasised the tyranny of the system (Foster, 2008). All these political and social changes coincided with the creation of a professional register for psychologists in 1974 (Cooper & Nicholas, 2012).

### **Organisational Developments**

There is extensive literature on the formation of different psychological organisations at the time. Indeed, Hayes (2000, p. 329) describes the period of the 1980s as “the time of the organisations” as this period saw the development of new psychological associations. The first of these associations was the Psychological Association of South Africa (PASA). PASA resulted from the merging of two psychology associations, the nominally integrated South African Psychological Association (SAPA) and the whites-only Psychological Institute of the Republic of South Africa (PIRSA), in 1982. The creation of PASA did not resolve the relevance debate and the stance of psychology regarding apartheid policies (Long, 2016a). Although PASA did not officially exclude black people, it was dominated by white Afrikaner men. This led to many believing that PASA was not acknowledging the racist past of the two organisations that came together to create it (Seedat & Mackenzie, 2008).

The question of relevance and the formation of PASA in the mid-1980s came about in a political context of heightened conflict. The apartheid system was taking a lot of strain, with the economy at a record low. White South Africans started to feel the effects of apartheid's brutality as well as the violent resistance to it. They tried to hold onto their power by forcing young white men to join the army, assassinating leaders of the resistance movements and implementing policies that would further divide the black communities embarking on boycotts (Long, 2016a).

Contemporaneous with this development was the birth of a more ‘liberal anti-apartheid’ organisation that took a stance against apartheid: the Organisation for Appropriate Social Services in South Africa (OASSSA). Unlike other organisations that shied away from politics, OASSSA, which was founded towards the end of 1983, identified the apartheid policy of racial capitalism as a significant factor in the high prevalence of mental illness in South Africa. It also spurred the development of the field of indigenous psychology that was more culturally relevant

(Long, 2016a). Despite their liberal outlook, OASSSA's members were mostly white (Seedat & Mackenzie, 2008). By contrast, the Psychology and Apartheid Committee (PAC), which was created in the late 1980s, was formed to create a space for black psychologists to come together and discuss the way forward (Suffla et al., 2001). PAC brought to the fore many political concerns in South African psychology such as the insidious racism that underlies much psychological research and practices (Foster, 2008).

### **Thematic Developments**

In thematic terms, critical psychology became a focal point for many psychologists during these years. By the late 1970s, some psychologists started to see the merit of critical psychology and that the discipline as a profession had blinded many to its complicity in an oppressive system (Foster, 2008). Increasing numbers of psychologists started to critique apartheid such as Chabani Manganyi (1973), Len Holdstock (1979) and Don Foster (1983). A new journal was created at the time that actively encouraged more critical thinking on psychological knowledge. This journal, *Psychology in Society* (PINS), was vital to the development of critical psychology in South Africa. It was created in 1983 as a way for like-minded psychologists to resist the way psychology had been conceptualised by mainstream psychologists in South Africa (Cooper & Nicholas, 2012).

The crisis of relevance in psychology also spurred an interest in community psychology in South Africa. Community psychology became a rallying point for many psychologists in the 1980s when they began to take seriously the importance of black<sup>1</sup> ideas and cultures for community psychology (Seedat & Lazarus, 2011). They began to focus their attention on helping black and oppressed communities. This was all in an effort to make South African psychology more relevant for the majority of South Africans (Seedat & Lazarus, 2011). This can especially be seen through the creation of the aforementioned organisation, OASSSA. It was created to call into question established psychological practices and search for better practices. It called for fair and equal psychological services for all South Africans (Hayes, 2000).

There is a caveat to this literature which may indicate that these developments may not be illustrating the subtler ethos that helped influence the work of psychologists at the time. Despite

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<sup>1</sup> This study uses the Black Consciousness Movement's definition of blackness. This defines black as anyone who has been denied rights and privileges by white supremacist regimes (Hook, 2014).

these changes in some psychologists' focus, racism remained a key part of many psychologists' understanding and practices. Seedat (1993), for example, describes two kinds of psychologists who disavowed themselves from these new progressive developments, namely, the "scientific neutralists" and the "cultural determinists" (Seedat, 1993, p. 84). The former were determined to keep psychology as a purely scientific endeavour even though its complicity in colonialism and apartheid was made clear. The latter recognised the cultural element of psychology but did not go as far as acknowledging the power dynamics evident in psychology (Seedat, 1993). Suffla and colleagues (2001) point out that many of these apparently progressive moves on the part of some psychologists could be understood as a way for them to resist the possibility of being guided by black psychologists in the future (Suffla et al., 2001).

As the above literature bears out, much has been written on the history of psychology in South Africa in the final two decades of apartheid rule. The literature shows that much is known about the thematic and organisational developments in South African psychology during these years of dramatic political change. What is not known about this period (1974-1994), however, is the role of university-based psychology departments in these developments. Most of the leading members of these different organisations were academics at universities and research institutes. The psychology departments in which they worked, that is, were imbued with a socio-intellectual ethos that informed these more visible organisational and thematic developments. Universities, at the time, were sites of heightened political activism and harsh suppression in the form of police violence (Saunders, 2000). The literature written about this context will be expounded on in this study's analysis. Given the recurring prominence of the relevance debate in South African psychology, it is important to understand the connection between psychology departments and broader society during these years. In particular, it may illuminate the workings of the concept of relevance – that is, the relationship of the discipline to a rapidly changing society – in an especially powerful manner. Indeed, the concept of relevance tends to flare up during periods of rapid social change (Long, 2014).

### **Aims and Objectives**

#### **Aim**

While it is beyond the scope of this project to examine psychology departments across the country, this study examines the history of the University of Cape Town's (UCT) Department of Psychology between 1974 and 1994, with a focus on how teaching and research



developments in the department, the core activities of disciplinary life, intersected with macro-level social and political processes in South Africa. Importantly, the study's objective is to move beyond pure description of the developments in the department. In keeping with its theoretical framework, it aims to situate the teaching and research developments in UCT's Department of Psychology at that time within their broader socio-political context.

### **Main Research Question**

How do the teaching and research developments in the Department of Psychology at the University of Cape Town between 1974 and 1994 relate to the developments in the broader discipline and the local socio-political context of the time?

### **Sub-Questions**

- What were the teaching and research developments in UCT's Department of Psychology during the period in question?
- What were the accompanying social and political contexts, both in South Africa and at UCT?
- How did teaching and research developments relate to these social and political contexts?

### **Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical framework of this study is known as *contextualism*, which is a hallmark of critical work in history of psychology (Jansz & van Drunen, 2004). Contextualism understands knowledge as being produced through particular social, institutional and societal processes that are changing and interacting constantly (Pettigrew, 1985). In other words, it views the interaction between different processes inside psychology and other processes external to psychology as resulting in the specific historical developments of the discipline (Jansz & van Drunen, 2004). This framework also emphasises that past developments should be examined on their own terms, that is, in their particular context. Present understandings should not be used to evaluate these developments, failing which it is likely that this would lead to skewed and incomplete understandings of the past (Jansz & van Drunen, 2004).

The contextualist framework rejects positivism, which posits that there is a fixed reality in which all people live. It takes the view that there are many different realities in which people live depending on their context. It is critical of unconditionally accepting the veracity of knowledge claims. It attempts to unpack these different realities in order to understand how these

realities are constructed and to show how these realities are linked to the possibility of certain actions and the impossibility of others (Terre Blanche, Durrheim, & Painter, 2014). With regard to the discipline of psychology, its subject matter changes over time, which means that its present should not be used to judge its past, which is why this study will aim to reserve judgement on past developments as far as possible (Jansz & van Drunen, 2004).

The concept of ‘relevance’ is an important theoretical tool for this study. Long (2014) has argued that the way the discipline of psychology is structured, ensures that the issue of relevance is inevitable. He cites the discipline’s failure to define its subject matter, its reliance on basic science to argue for its knowledge claims and its inability to consider social context as key reasons for this inevitability. Moreover, relevance debates develop typically in contexts of rapid social change where societies are deeply divided, as demonstrated by the emergence of a relevance debate in South African psychology during the last years of apartheid rule (Long, 2014).

## **Method**

### **Research Design**

#### **Contextualist historical research.**

In simple terms, historical research is about comprehensively capturing the events, meanings, ideas and people that made up the past and that helped to make the present (Berg, 2001). It is about scrutinising events of the past to gain a broader comprehension of ideas and thoughts that would not be accessible without this examination (Berg, 2001). Contextualist research is similarly descriptive in nature (Byrne & Ragin, 2009). It does not seek to make generalisations or universal results as it takes the view that all subjects of study are highly idiosyncratic and cannot be essentialised. While the focus of this approach is on the description of the past in its context, this does not mean that the social, cultural and institutional processes should not be analysed. Rather, the purpose of contextualist research is to use description to consider all processes that are relevant to the research question within their particular context (Byrne & Ragin, 2009).

Reflexivity is a key element in contextualist research. It regards the production of knowledge as specific to a particular context and, therefore, the history that is documented in this study needs to be understood within its own terms of reference (Byrne & Ragin, 2009). Thus, it is essential that due consideration is given to our own social positionings that can influence the

research processes in this study. The issue of reflexivity will be explored further later in the project.

### **Data Collection Tools and Procedures**

The data set for this study consisted mostly of archival material and, where necessary, interviews with former staff members employed in UCT's Department of Psychology during the period under analysis. Archives were the primary source of data as they explored available resources that were aligned to the research question (Morh & Ventresca, 2002). The archival data was accessed at UCT's Administrative Library, the Department of Psychology and the personal collections of past staff members. They were examined systematically to identify all documents that helped answer our research question, such as UCT calendars, minutes of departmental meetings, historical literature and journal articles. Findings were scanned electronically onto the researchers' laptops. Based on these documents, other UCT libraries were visited in order to gain further insight. Along with these searches, the researchers also conducted searches on Google Scholar for journal articles that might shed light on the social and political situation at the time in South Africa; these were also stored on the researchers' laptops and Google Drive.

In addition to textual archives, purposive sampling was employed to arrange face-to-face and video interviews to collect data from participants who were former employees of UCT's Department of Psychology during the period of analytic interest (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). Since these interviews were only used to clarify data from the archives, no interview schedules were used. For example, if there was missing information on material that was taught in a specific course, a former staff member who taught that course was approached—on our supervisor's recommendation—to provide the necessary input and, if possible, their personal archives. Information sheets (see Appendix B) were emailed to participants along with invitations to participate. Interviews took place in a convenient place for participants (such as their homes). At the beginning of interviews, participants were asked to sign consent forms (see Appendix A). Interviews were then audio-recorded for face-to-face interviews and video-recorded for video interviews. Interviews ended with the researchers providing brief summaries of the interviews along with debriefings.

### **Data Analysis**

Since this is a historical study, contextual analysis serves as the primary form of data analysis. This approach focuses on detailed descriptions and analysis that is contextually specific

(Byrne & Ragin, 2009). In line with the theoretical framework, contextual analysis examines data in its specific social, political and cultural setting. It posits that knowledge is different in different contexts and therefore context is essential in analysing data. Thus, this form of analysis does not take for granted the words in the texts and interviews. It tries to situate this data within the larger socio-political processes at the time (Terre Blanche et al., 2014). Although there are no specific steps involved in contextual analysis because it sees all research questions as individual (Madill, Jordan, & Shirley, 2000), there are nonetheless a few important aspects that are needed for this approach (Pettigrew, 1985). Firstly, this approach emphasises description of all the data with as much detail as possible. Secondly, there needs to be an identification of all continuities and differences that occur in the data. Thirdly, there needs to be an exploration of the reasons behind these continuities and differences by grounding the data within its context. Certain conclusions can then be drawn from this analysis in order to answer the research question. Lastly, there needs to be a discussion on alternative ideas and theories in order to remain reflexive (Pettigrew, 1985).

### **Ethical Considerations**

Ethical approval was sought and subsequently granted by UCT's Department of Psychology Research Ethics Committee. Along with ethical considerations for participants, there were also other ethical considerations pertaining to historiographic concerns.

#### **The dangers of presentism and whiggism.**

In order to remain faithful to a contextualist reading of the data, this study attempted to remain mindful of certain errors in historical research. Firstly, celebratory versions of history, especially histories of psychology, focus on the work of specific people in their respective disciplines who are seen as key to the making of the discipline. This approach ignores the complex internal and external factors that contribute significantly to the formation of disciplines (Richards, 2010). Secondly, Whiggish approaches to historical research operate on the assumption that history inevitably moves in a linear progression from the worst to the best. This does not recognise the complexity of the past, which seldom reveals itself in neatly packaged morality tales (Richards, 2010). Lastly, there is the error of presentism, which refers to the unavoidable writing of history from the perspective of the present (Richards, 2010). This is an issue of ethics because the way that the past is written about has implications for the present. Basic historiographic errors such as these can lead to significant mischaracterizations: without a

reflexive consideration of context, people and theories of the past may be wholly misunderstood (Jansz & van Drunen, 2004).

### **Confidentiality, informed consent and debriefing.**

This study ensured that the participants' names did not appear anywhere in the data or on the typed-up transcriptions. Informed consent was obtained by informing participants of the procedure, nature and aim of the interviews before data is collected (Willig, 2008). In this study, there was no harm associated with participating. In terms of consent, it was important that permission is sought to access the personal archives of the participants. Participants were asked to sign the informed consent form that stipulates the information that was verbally communicated, procedure and process of the interview; issues of privacy and confidentiality, researcher's contact details. The voluntary consent was also emphasized, where participants have the right to withdraw during the interview procedure if they do not wish to continue (Wilson & MacLean, 2011). In this study, debriefing happened straight after the interview and allowed the participants to withdraw their data or raise any concerns that they had about the study (Wilson & MacLean, 2011).

### **Reflexivity**

Contextualist research emphasises the importance of reflecting on how the researchers are located in the research process (Byrne & Ragin, 2009). The researchers have some control over the research process, which means that their individual biases will always have an effect on it. Researchers must acknowledge these potential biases that might affect the writing process. In relation to this project, since it was a collaborative study there were certain biases that needed to be considered — in particular, the potential for bias as a result of the two researchers' similarities. Specifically, some writers argue that 'insider' status can lead to celebratory or presentist accounts of the past (Jansz & Van Drunen, 2004). Since we are both South African citizens and Honours students in psychology at UCT, we have insider status on both counts. This could have made us view psychology and South Africa in a more positive light compared to someone who was not South African nor studying psychology. This was something that we kept in mind constantly as it could have influenced the way we chose to write about the past. This was initiated at the start of the research process—in supervision and in discussion between ourselves—in order to ensure that at every stage of the research process, we were aware of our

potential biases and actively worked to ensure that, as far as possible, we were striving to understand the past in its own context (Terre Blanche et al., 2014).

### **Analysis and Discussion**

#### **The Socio-political Context**

##### **South African political and social situation.**

In the final two decades of apartheid rule, the socio-political climate was characterised by a great deal of political upheaval. In 1978, P.W Botha became Prime Minister and introduced his Total Strategy doctrine. This doctrine aimed to consolidate waning white control through a systematic integration of all instruments of white control to challenge what the state referred to as a “total onslaught” (Murray, 1987, p.14). The “total onslaught” was described as a Soviet plot to gain control over South Africa’s valuable natural resources (Murray, 1987, p.14). One of the main aims of this doctrine was to ensure the continued presence of leaders supportive of apartheid in South Africa’s neighbouring countries, including Angola, Rhodesia and Mozambique. This doctrine led to unprecedented government oppression throughout this period (South African Democracy Education Trust, 2010).

At the same time, there was also unparalleled political resistance, which the government aimed to eliminate. A large part of this resistance came in the form of the Black Consciousness Movement which was an intellectual movement that empowered black people through the ideals of independence and self-love. Another aspect was a reviving of the labour movement which saw hundreds of strikes throughout South Africa. In 1973, about 100 000 workers in over 150 factories in Durban started to strike which reignited the trade unions that became key elements in the struggle against apartheid. The military operations of the armed wing of the African National Congress (ANC), Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK), were also stepped up. They attacked police stations, railway lines, public buildings and individuals. MK’s activities increased from 55 acts in 1981 to 300 acts in 1988 (South African Democracy Education Trust, 2010). Resistance to apartheid was being organized on numerous fronts which drastically undermined apartheid’s legitimacy and ability to function (South African Democracy Education Trust, 2006).

The Soweto Uprising is a key example of the synchronicity of resistance and mounting suppression (South African Democracy Education Trust, 2006). In 1974, the government took measures to regulate the rising popularity of the English language and the decline of Afrikaans as a medium of instruction in learning institutions (Ndlovu, 2017). Bantu Education officials passed

a decree which compelled high schools populated by black students to use Afrikaans and English as the only medium of instruction (Ndlovu, 2017). The decree was met with resistance. On 16 June 1976, students across Soweto peacefully marched against this decree. The police shot into this demonstration of unarmed children which led to the death of Hector Pieterse and Hastings Ndlovu. After this, angry students threw rocks while police continued to use live ammunition and teargas. Following this event, many students began to organise committees and strategies to resist apartheid (South African Democracy Education Trust, 2006). A new politicised generation was born out of the Soweto Uprising (Murray, 1987). This event showed both the heightened government violence at the time as well as the re-energising of resistance against apartheid (South African Democracy Education Trust, 2006).

The 1980s is considered one of the bloodiest decades in the history of apartheid. In 1984, the apartheid government declared a state of emergency that gave them wide-ranging powers. Over 20 000 people were arrested. No political meetings of any kind were allowed. The government lifted this state in March 1986 but then called for another state of emergency in late 1986. This state of emergency saw the arrest of 614 leaders with many tortured and eventually dying in detention. Strikes during this period were crushed brutally which led to even more strikes in the latter part of the 1980s and the early 1990s. These states of emergency made resistance difficult as they decimated leadership structures ranging from local groupings to national organisations (South African Democracy Education Trust, 2010).

Nonetheless, the 1980s still saw resistance to apartheid grow. The United Democratic Front (UDF) was formed in 1983 at a rally in Mitchell's Plain in Cape Town. Originally, it was formed to fight the creation of the tricameral parliament that was eventually introduced in 1984. It was a parliament with three layers, one to represent Indian people, one to represent coloured people and one for white people. The UDF fought this reform because of its total exclusion of African people from constitutional representation. From this, the UDF grew into a wide-reaching organisation that encompassed 600 grass-roots organisations, ranging from church groups to workers unions. It brought together very different people from very different circumstances to fight apartheid, playing a key role in the eventual downfall of apartheid (South African Democracy Education Trust, 2010).

Another significant aspect of the 1980s was the academic boycott. As early as the 1950s, anti-apartheid leaders and some academics were concerned about the reciprocal exchange

between South African academics and academics in other countries. They saw this as serving to uphold apartheid instead of working to dismantle it (Coovadia, 1999). This issue became increasingly debated between 1984 and 1989. Both the ANC and the UDF supported the idea of stopping this exchange with an academic boycott. This meant the total barring of South African academics and academic institutions from every form of academic exchange with people and institutions outside of South Africa (Hyslop, Vally & Hassim, 2006). These groupings were successful in gaining increasing support for it with an increasing number of international journals rejecting South African contributions. Yet, much resistance to this boycott came from liberal academics in South African universities (Nordkvelle, 1990).

With the coming to power of F.W De Klerk in 1989, there was a shift towards negotiations as the only way forward for a peaceful national transition. This period saw the release of Nelson Mandela in 1990 and the first meeting of the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA) in 1991, both of which ultimately led to the first democratic elections in South Africa's history in 1994. Significant political changes occurred during the final two decades of apartheid rule, beginning with Botha's Total Strategy doctrine and ending with the first democratic elections (South African Democracy Education Trust, 2013).

### **The University of Cape Town context.**

As important as it is to situate the department in the socio-political climate of the time, it is just as important to situate it in its local context, that is, the socio-political context of UCT. In 1976, the Student Representative Council (SRC) of UCT recognised that students were becoming increasingly politicised and petitioned to create political student groups on campus to allow students to voice their political views and debate them (Senate, 1976). Permission was granted on the following conditions: associations should be under the supervision and umbrella of the SRC and they should not take the same name as any established political parties nor accept money from external funders (Senate, 1976). While UCT's academic freedom policies contributed significantly to the struggle against apartheid, the rise of politically conscious students led to conflict between these policies and students who continually criticised UCT for being too apolitical.

### ***Academic freedom.***

Since its establishment, UCT had set itself apart as an institution that took academic freedom seriously, especially during the apartheid years. It earned the nickname 'Moscow on the



Hill' due to its reputation of liberal tradition and academic freedom policies (Davenport, 2004). In 1987, the Council of the university made a statement where it reinforced UCT's stance on academic freedom. They reaffirmed their belief in the T.B Davie principles on academic freedom which they had adopted in 1959. T.B Davie was the first South African-born UCT vice-chancellor who emphasised the importance of education free from the influence of politics. These principles focused on non-discriminatory teaching and admission policies. They did not consider any racial, religious or gender boundaries with regards to who should teach, what should be taught and how materials should be taught (Senate, 1987). These principles opposed the apartheid rationality strongly on ideological grounds.

During the period under examination, UCT challenged apartheid in certain ways but was also criticised for remaining apolitical. In 1983, the government put forward an amendment to the Universities Act, which meant that the Minister of Education could set a limit to the number of black students admitted to white universities. UCT—along with the University of Natal, the University of the Witwatersrand and Rhodes University—came together to protest the amendment as “political interference in an academic function” (Senate, 1983). This protest proved effective as the amendment was never concretised and was nullified in 1985 (UCT, 1985). This was a significant challenge to apartheid given the political situation in South Africa at the time. Contemporaneous with this development, in 1987 students opposed UCT's attempt to remain apolitical in their decision to observe certain holidays while ignoring others that were politically significant to some students (Senate, 1987). A demand was made to include the following four holidays on the UCT calendar: Sharpeville Day, Detainee's Day, Woman's Day and Freedom Day. The students' plea was unsuccessful. To further fortify the university's stance on remaining apolitical, policies on staff involvement in politics were modified, with, for example, staff members being obliged to resign from their duties if they were elected as members of parliament (MP) (Senate, 1987). On the one hand, adherence to the principle of academic freedom involved adopting a strong political position against apartheid, but it also allowed the university to stay out of the more contentious issues of the day, such as the academic boycott.

### *The academic boycott*

After the near-disruption of controversial traditional leader Buthelezi Mangosuthu's guest lecture in 1986, UCT felt the need to re-emphasize its policies on academic

freedom and the right of any faculty or university body to invite speakers of their choice—provided they were acting in the best interests of the university (Senate, 1985). In addition, the university argued against—as it interpreted the matter—the likely decrease in intellectual growth and international recognition should it comply with the academic boycott (Senate, 1985). It decided, rather, to preserve academic freedom and minimise violence on campus by informing guest lecturers of these policies as well having security personnel on campus. In essence, UCT opted against a more progressive political position in support of the academic boycott in order to preserve its academic freedom policies (Senate, 1986).

This rejection of the boycott led to conflict between university management and students when Conor O'Brien was invited as a guest lecturer in the Political Science department in 1987 (Senate, 1987). O'Brien was an Irish historian and politician who was opposed to the academic boycott in South Africa. During his visit, students forced their way into his lecture. The rest of this lecture series was cancelled as it was feared that more violence would occur if he continued. Student behaviour was deemed unacceptable and disrespectful to the university policies (Senate, 1987). While there was clear a divide between students and Senate on this issue, the university authorities were divided themselves on the issue of the academic boycott and its implications for their academic freedom policies (Senate, 1987). The stance against the academic boycott was based on the lack of evidence of its effectiveness and its negative impact on the standard of the university. Arguments for upholding the boycott revolved around its long-term effect on weakening the apartheid regime and contributing to peaceful protest. Moreover, the boycott was perceived as an immediate strategy for the long-term goal of attaining democracy. The solution was to change the structure of the academic freedom council to make it more inclusive and non-authoritarian with the addition of students and staff (Senate, 1987).

### ***Violence on campus and UCT's response.***

During the final years of apartheid rule, protest and violence had a continuous presence on UCT's campuses. Following the Soweto uprising in 1976, for example, UCT's SRC organised a day of solidarity and "focus on political prisoners' week" (Davenport, 2004). Approximately 2000 students boycotted lectures and gathered at Jameson Hall. A pig head with a sign was paraded as a symbol of sympathising with Soweto students and hair pieces burned to honour the detainees who were arrested for political reasons (Davenport, 2004). In 1979, protests escalated when students boycotted UCT's celebration of its 150 years as a South African

university. They disrupted the honorary graduation ceremony at the Jameson Hall with demonstrations such as posters, graffiti and painting the Rhodes statue on campus (Davenport, 2004). Five years later—in 1984, UCT—faced an accommodation crisis. Students demonstrated by erecting tents on the lawns near Jameson Hall (Saunders, 2000). After fifteen days, the issue was resolved—but not before eleven students were called in for disciplinary hearings. These students were supported by 400 students who marched to the university's administrative headquarters for the hearing (Saunders, 2000). The march resulted in violence, destruction of Bremner Building, and further charges for these damages (Saunders, 2000).

In 1985, students protested against the apartheid regime and, in particular, the declaration of a state of emergency. Undercover police were sent to spy on those who were in opposition to the apartheid policies (Saunders, 2000). This protest led to struggles between police and students, with the former firing tear gas on campus (Senate, 1985). The events of the 20<sup>th</sup> March 1987 were also characterised by violence. Students representing two student unions approached the Vice-Chancellor to cancel the fifth teaching period on the 20<sup>th</sup> of March to commemorate the Sharpeville massacre of 1960. This was refused. After a meeting in the lunch period, students began to disrupt Accounting and Business Science lectures. Again, the Senate condemned the behaviour of the students, with broad disapproval expressed for the disruptions on campus by both staff and the SRC (Senate, 1987).

### *New directions.*

Towards the end of the 1980s and into the early 1990s, UCT's apolitical stance shifted to some degree. From 1988, the atmosphere on campus changed as UCT was focused on transformation and making the university even more inclusive. They admitted the impact of South Africa's discriminatory past on its operations (Senate, 1988). Later, new policies were introduced to address the inequalities of the past. Senate introduced policies for dealing with such inequalities as sexual harassment, gender discrimination, prejudice and racism on campus. UCT was also extending its role to broader society, especially disadvantaged communities (Senate, 1992). In 1989, they called for an end to detention without trial through abolishing the offending legislation. They called on all South Africans to support this call, in order to create a more humane legal system in South Africa (Senate, 1989). Nonetheless, over the period under examination the university focused on academic freedom and preferred to take an apolitical

stance, balancing a disdain for apartheid with the reality of relying on government funding—a pragmatism that ran foul of the values of progressive students (Saunders, 2000).

## **The Department**

### **Teaching trends**

This socio-political context, both in South Africa at large and at UCT, had an impact on the work of the university's Department of Psychology. In the 1970s and 1980s, the department was divided between the academic department and its more practical counterpart, the Child Guidance Clinic. While the clinic had been the responsibility of the department, in 1975 UCT's Council and Senate approved greater independence for the clinic in terms of its administration, with its own independent director (Senate, 1975). The clinic engaged in clinical psychological work and taught the Clinical Psychology Master's program. While the academic department focused on teaching and research, the clinic focused on the more practical aspects of psychology and, to a lesser extent, on teaching and research (Interview A, 2019). From 1978 onwards, however, the clinic began to focus mainly on clinical teaching and supervision while decreasing its service provision emphasis. This was due to the recent professionalisation of psychology that saw the clinic tasked with the responsibility of the professional training of clinical psychologists (Senate, 1978).

Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, the clinic treated former political prisoners and torture survivors. The staff were very much influenced by this work in that it forced them to question the mental health model at the time and psychology's complicity in the apartheid system. As the clinic became more politically active, they began to look for other ways to treat patients and played a prominent role in the operations of the Western Cape branch of OASSSA (Interview A, 2019). As well as a focus on helping survivors of torture, there was also a demographic shift in terms of who the clinic treated. Previously, the clinic saw mainly white middle-class clients, but this shifted to a majority black working-class clientele over this period (Interview C, 2019). The new mindset created by this clinical work and their collaboration with OASSSA fed into the way that the Clinical Psychology Master's programme was taught as well as the treatment of those seen at the clinic (Interview A, 2019). As early as 1978, community psychology was emphasised as a key part of clinicians' training (Senate, 1978). A community clinical psychology model became the focus. Emphasis was placed on collaborating with clients and seeing them as the expert of their experiences (Interview A, 2019). Group therapy and family therapy became part

of the training. Given that the basic clinical curriculum could not change too drastically, the biggest change involved thinking about how to help families that faced multiple traumas, which led to trauma becoming an important part of the curriculum (Interview C, 2019).

In terms of the teaching trends in the main academic department, there was a shift towards a broader conception of the discipline in the undergraduate and honours curricula. Both of these curricula were academic and theoretical in nature rather than practical or technical. Whereas, in 1975, the teaching focus was almost exclusively on behaviorism, the appointment of new academics introduced different perspectives and expertise into the curriculum, including industrial psychology, sports psychology and Jungian psychology, with some members of staff helping to create the Southern African Association for Jungian Analysts. The development of an Advanced Undergraduate Curriculum aimed to create a more non-specialist approach to teaching undergraduates in psychology (Interview B, 2019). While this was only introduced in the formal curriculum in 1985, it was first proposed for discussion in 1974. This curriculum gave students more choices in their second- and third-year courses, with subjects ranging from biopsychology to community and environmental modules (UCT, 1985a).

At the same time, there was also a gradual move towards more critical, context-specific subjects. Between 1974 and 1979, the subjects at undergraduate level focused on traditional measurement-based subjects such as personality theory and assessment, measurement and evaluation of intelligence. Physiological psychology subjects were also offered, such as learning theory, cognitive psychology and human development. Along with these subjects, traditional forms of counselling and psychotherapy subjects were offered (UCT, 1974-1979). A similar trend occurred in the Honours subjects between 1974 and 1979 (UCT, 1974-1979). While these subjects, in one form or another, remained a key part of the curriculum at the undergraduate level, changes started to appear from 1980 onwards. In 1980, community and environment as a subject was introduced at second-year level (UCT, 1980). While social psychology was continuously offered as a subject in second year, in 1986 social psychology became compulsory (UCT, 1986a). This directly coincided with the lifting of the State of Emergency which had been declared the year before (Senate, 1985). The rationale for this decision was that psychology was seemingly becoming more and more scattered and it was felt that there needed to be core subjects that every psychology student should learn. Given that humans are inherently social beings, social psychology was seen to be one of those core subjects (Interview D, 2019),

although it was not compulsory for second-year industrial psychology students (UCT, 1986a). It should be noted that, from 1984 onwards, industrial psychology started to be separated from general psychology although it remained part of the department (UCT, 1984a). As for changes in the Honours curriculum, apart from the introduction of cross-cultural psychology in 1984 there were few critical psychology subjects offered (UCT, 1984a). However, in 1991 health psychology and gender studies were introduced as more critical subjects (UCT, 1991a), completing the general move towards more critical subjects at both the undergraduate and postgraduate levels.

Given the prominence of social psychology and its signalling the move towards more critical subjects, it is worth examining the material that was taught in this second-year subject. Social psychology had traditionally been dominated by American perspectives but, during the 1970s, European theorists began introducing new orientations with theories such as Social Identity Theory and Social Representation Theory. At the same time, social psychologists were starting to appreciate the importance of language, heralding the discursive turn within social psychology. Simultaneously, materialism—reaching back to Marxist theory—was also an important aspect of this more critical version of social psychology. It was these three aspects that became the core elements in the teaching of this subject (Interview D, 2019).

Readings in the form of course readers were the main material covered in the compulsory second-year social psychology course. In 1986 and 1987, the topic areas were very much focused on South Africa. For example, these included social psychological research in South Africa, the issues facing South African society and the psychological effects of oppression in South Africa. In particular, the focus was on the effect of apartheid on South Africans and how social psychology could be used to understand it better. Authors such as Steve Biko, Frantz Fanon and Chabani Manganyi were continuously prescribed with relatively few readings that focused on theories of social psychology (UCT, 1986b-1987b). In 1988, however, while there was still some focus on South Africa there was a subtle shift towards more theory-heavy readings such as Tajfel and Turner on Social Identity Theory and Moscovici on Minority Influence (UCT, 1988b). Then, in 1989 and 1990, there was a dramatic shift towards these kinds of readings. The topics became exclusively devoted to social psychology theories with very few readings that referenced the South African context (UCT, 1989b-1990b). The rationale for this shift was the lack of

theoretical grids in South Africa, necessitating a reliance on international theorists for understanding the South African context better (Interview D, 2019).

While social psychology was not compulsory at postgraduate level, it is still important to compare the teaching material at the undergraduate level with that at honours level. A similar trend occurred. In 1981, the focus was on theory (UCT, 1981b). This continued until 1984 when the focus shifted to the South African context and trying to understand it (UCT, 1984b). From 1990 onwards, however, the focus again shifted towards theories such as Social Identity Theory and discourse theory. Theories on attitudes and attributions, ideology, Social Identity Theory and social change were taught throughout this period (UCT, 1990c-1992b).

In both undergraduate and honours curricula, then, there were periods of distinct focus on the South African context as an area of study in order to make the discipline more relevant, particularly in light of the debate about relevance at the time. Indeed, this general point confirms observations in theoretical psychology—that discussions about the relationship between psychology and society tend to occur during periods of turbulent social change (Long, 2016a).

### **Research trends.**

As for research trends over the analytic period in question, there was a great diversity of interests in the department. Generally, the research interests can be divided into two categories, namely, those topics that aimed to grapple with the socio-political context of South Africa and those that aimed to understand ‘universal’ or traditional concepts in psychology. The former group of topics ranged from social psychological topics to discussions on the mental health needs of South Africans in this time of crisis. Some academics in the department were looking at the state of social services in South Africa, especially mental health services and psychology as a profession (Interview A, 2019). Racism as well as other social issues were also variously researched. The aim was to challenge the minimisation of the oppressive nature of apartheid rule in South Africa. Much of the research that was performed during this period was aimed at creating new teaching material that would be relevant in the Southern African context. This was particularly the case in the social psychology courses discussed above. The objective, that is, was to examine the social climate in the country, which ultimately shaped the research interests of the academics in question (Interview D, 2019).

In this body of research that concentrated on socio-political issues, there was a significant focus on various aspects of detention and torture. Some academics focused on the psychological,

legal and historical dimensions of detention and torture in South Africa (Foster & Davis, 1987). Others focused on the clinical treatment of torture or detention survivors (Interview A, 2019). For instance, some research attempted to understand the ethical dilemmas that South African psychologists were facing at the time (Steere & Dowdall, 1990). This research interest was very much linked to the work being done in the Child Guidance Clinic with detention and torture survivors (Interview A, 2019), but it was also linked to the political activism that academics individually engaged in to a greater or lesser extent.

At the same time, there were other academics who were less interested in researching the socio-political context than in focusing on general psychological questions. These topics ranged from Jungian psychology to industrial psychology. Jungian psychology was of particular interest to some academics. They were interested in how animal behaviour could be used to understand human behaviour, especially instinctual behaviour. Within Jungian psychology, there was an interest in the analysis of dreams and, more specifically, the nature of archetypal dreams and how to differentiate them from normal dreams (Interview B, 2019). Sports psychology was also of interest to some in the department. This work was around understanding the psychological issues and experiences faced by athletes (Interview B, 2019), such as the role of stress in athletes' experience of sport injuries (Schomer, 1982). In turn, other researchers focused on the more cognitive aspects of psychology (Interview B, 2019).

### **Relevance Conceptualisations**

The various teaching and research trends in UCT's Department of Psychology between 1974 and 1994 can be understood by viewing through the prism of relevance theory. While it is clear that both the major teaching areas and research areas were influenced by socio-political crisis in the country at the time, it is also clear that academics related to the notion of a relevant psychology in highly idiosyncratic ways, confirming theoretical work that has been done on the concept of relevance. Long (2016a), for example, notes how different South African psychologists have interpreted the term relevance in divergent ways, identifying four main versions. Firstly, there is *social* relevance, which regards psychology as needing to contribute to the psychological wellbeing of all people. Secondly, there is *cultural* relevance, which insists that psychology become Afrocentric so that it can address the cultural realities of the majority of South Africans. Thirdly, there is *market* relevance, which stresses the need for local psychology to benchmark itself against the international standards of the discipline. Finally, the notion of



*theoretical* relevance argues against research that is focused on context and stresses instead the importance of focusing on hypotheses that are generated from basic theory (Long, 2016a).

With reference to this study, two versions of relevance emerged. The data suggests that some academics believed that the broadening of the discipline was integral to making psychology in the department more relevant. They felt that the incorporation of various aspects of psychology made the discipline more relevant rather than the incorporation of subjects that were more South African, Afrocentric or more contextually-based. Overall, these academics believed that the focus of the discipline should be on fundamental, common issues, such as what it means to be human and how human beings perceive and respond to the world (Interview B, 2019). Moreover, this perspective on the academic project (within psychology) is echoed in the notion of theoretical relevance as it emphasises the importance of a universal, shared disciplinary project rather than a context-driven one (Long, 2016a). This perspective is also characteristic of what Seedat (1993, p. 84) called “scientific neutralists” who were determined to keep psychology as a purely scientific endeavour.

On the other hand, there were also academics that appreciated the need to understand the local context and, specifically, the political and social crisis in the country. They saw the creation of more critical and context-specific courses and research studies as a way to create a more relevant discipline. They stressed the importance of representing the experiences of the majority of South Africans by focusing on specific issues that affected their psychological well-being at the time, such as torture and detention (Interview C, 2019). This understanding of the discipline finds resonance in the concepts of both social and cultural relevance, with both emphasising the importance of contributing to improving the psychological well-being of people and, particularly, the majority of South Africans (Long, 2016a).

An interesting finding within this data is how the different viewpoints in the department seemed to mirror the different camps in the wider socio-political arena at the university. Two camps can be identified within UCT during the period under examination. Firstly, university management and many staff and students supported and worked to preserve UCT’s academic freedom policy. This policy called for education to be free from the influence of the politics of the day. It opposed apartheid ideologically but was also interpreted as the university avoiding taking a stance on more politically progressive issues, especially the academic boycott (Senate, 1987). This sentiment can be regarded as mirroring the concept of theoretical relevance in

psychology, with its focus on fundamental, common issues and keeping research and teaching apolitical (Interview B, 2019). Second, other students as well as some university authorities viewed this adherence to academic freedom as too rigid, criticising UCT for ignoring the oppressive realities in the country and calling on the university to support the academic boycott (Senate, 1987). This stance reflects the notion of social relevance in psychology, with its emphasis on the importance of local context and examining the social and political crisis in the country (Interview C, 2019). It would seem, therefore, that disagreements in the broader university community over the question of politics showed itself in departmental life too.

Evidently, the findings of this study draw attention to the fact that there is no single, universal definition of relevance, with the range of understandings of relevance very much grounded in the particular social, political and cultural orientations of time and place (Long, 2016a). The data also demonstrates that psychology remains one of those pre-paradigmatic disciplines that still cannot finalize its topics and methods (Kuhn, 1962). Over the period in question, it was clearly the case that academics differed on whether to view the discipline in fundamental or applied terms—and that is a problem that has dogged psychology for the entirety of its history, regardless of the country concerned (Long, 2016a).

### **Conclusion**

Between 1974 and 1994, UCT's Department of Psychology was situated within a particularly turbulent political climate that was characterised by both unprecedented government repression and powerful political resistance. The department was also situated within a very specific university context. The university space was one of heightened student activism on the one hand, and a strong managerial emphasis on remaining apolitical, on the other. The general socio-political context, however, had a manifest influence on teaching and research trends in the department. There was a clear connection between staff members' political activism and teaching and research trends at the time. In terms of teaching, there were two trends. Firstly, there was a broadening of the subjects offered. Secondly, there was a shift towards more critical, context-specific material with a particular emphasis on social psychology. Overall, the teaching seemed to be moving in the direction of content that focused on South Africa's socio-political climate in order to make the discipline more socially relevant. In terms of research trends, there was great diversity which could mainly be divided into two overarching categories. One involved research that focused on the South African context at the time and the other encompassed

research that focused on more universal psychological ideas. These developments demonstrate that the department grappled with two different conceptualisations of relevance. For some academics, relevance was about emphasising fundamental, shared issues, whereas for others, it involved understanding the local context and, specifically during the period in question, the political and social crisis in the country. The findings of this study draw attention to the fact that there is no single, universal definition of relevance (Long, 2016a) and that psychology remains one of those pre-paradigmatic disciplines (Kuhn, 1962). This contextual analysis of UCT's Department of Psychology during the final two decades of apartheid rule allows for a more nuanced understanding of the concept of relevance. Future research into other departments of psychology around the country can further enrich our understanding of this vital concept, which, indeed, continues to occupy the minds of psychologists via the current idiom of decolonization.

There are certain limitations to this study that need to be acknowledged—in particular, the commitment to historical thinking (Jansz & van Drunen, 2004). This study attempted to defer moral judgment and, as far as possible, to not be influenced by the present. It aimed to take into consideration all historical developments and not only those developments that led directly to the current state of South African psychology. Yet a limitation of this study was that it was difficult to expel completely present concerns in psychology from our analysis of its historical development (Jansz & van Drunen, 2004). For example, it was difficult to ensure that we did not make judgements with the benefit of hindsight. This was equally true of the interviews we conducted, with participants also struggling not to approach historical events from the position of the present. Nonetheless, we attempted to remedy this unavoidable shortcoming by adopting as far as possible a “thoughtful presentism,” which regards the past as framing the conditions of possibility for the present (Smith, 1988, p.151). Some readers could argue that this non-judgemental approach is, in itself, a limitation in that it is seen as not being able to be critical on issues of power. In this study's view, this approach avoids portraying psychology of the present as the inevitable which would give it power unjustly (Smith, 1988) as well as skewed representations of the past (Jansz & van Drunen, 2004). A second limitation that we encountered was that the archives were often incomplete. It was anticipated that interviews with past staff members would address this limitation as they would provide clarity on gaps or inconsistencies in the archival record. Indeed, this proved to be the case to some extent, but participants'

recollections could not account for all of the identified gaps. Inevitably, this study cannot (and should not) be viewed as a full account of the department during the years in question.

The age-old debate about the relevance of psychology is the overarching focus of this study. The time period under examination is a case study for understanding this debate. As the debate is centred around the relationship between society and psychology, this study aims to go beyond an examination of psychology's subject matter and explore the relevance debate through examining how psychology and society interact and constitute one another (Louw, 2002). This has implications for the current debate on relevance which is being articulated through the concept of decolonisation. Decolonisation is about critically interrogating the knowledge that is being produced through knowledge production processes that are of a colonial character (such as those in psychology) and ending the erasure of local knowledge production processes (Carolissen et al., 2017). In this way, calls for decolonisation are inextricably linked to questions of history and more specifically, how history works to the benefit of particular interests (Seedat & Suffla, 2017). This project attempts, therefore, to contribute to the move towards the decolonisation of psychology in that it interrogates the history of one particular site of knowledge production, the university department.

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## Appendix A

**UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN****DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY**

A history of the Department of Psychology at the University of Cape Town between 1974 and 1994.

**Informed Consent Form****1. Invitation and Purpose**

We are honours students in the Psychology department at the University of Cape Town. You are invited to take part in this study about the history of the psychology department at the University of Cape Town between 1974 and 1994. The information gained in the interview will be used to write a research report for the honours' programme. Along with information gained in the interviews, we hope that you will be willing to share any personal archives that you might have that relate to this time period in the department. We are approaching you to help us clarify information that we have already collected from university and departmental archives.

**2. Procedures**

Participating in this study is voluntary. You do not have to answer any questions you do not feel comfortable with answering. You are free to end the interview without any consequences. The interview length will depend on the amount of information that you would be able to provide but they should not take longer than two hours. The purpose of these interviews is only to help us clarify the information gained from the UCT archives.

**3. Privacy and Confidentiality**

All of the information that you share is confidential. You will remain completely anonymous throughout the research process. You have the right to request that any information you have shared be removed from the study. The interview will take place in a convenient place for the participants such as their homes. It will be done in a private room so that your confidentiality is maintained. With your permission, interviews will be recorded using an electronic voice recorder. Only the interviewers will have access to these recordings, and they will be kept in a safe place. After the interview, the voice recordings will be transcribed (typed out). Your name will not appear in these transcriptions. The information from your interview will be used to create a research report. Your identity will be kept confidential in this report and also in the case that this study should be published. We will use pseudonyms to anonymize your identity and will make sure that any information that we use, cannot be linked to you in any way.

#### **4. Risks**

This study poses no risks to you. There may be some discomfort from talking about the past.

#### **5. Contact details**

If you have questions, concerns, or complaints about the study please contact Natalie Davidson on 0726808915 or Lufuno Masindi on 0662126824 or Dr Wahbie Long at the Department of Psychology, University of Cape Town (UCT) or Rosalind Adams at the Department of Psychology, UCT on 0216503417 or Rosalind.Adams@uct.ac.za.

#### **6. Signatures**

Interviewer: The participant has been informed of the nature and purpose of the study and its procedures as well as the risks associated with participating. He or she has been given time to ask any questions and these questions have been answered to the best of the interviewer's ability.

\_\_\_\_\_ Interviewer's Signature

Participant: I have been informed about this study and understand its purpose and its procedures. I agree to take part in this research as an interviewee. I know that I am free to withdraw from this

interview at any time, and that doing so will not disadvantage me in any way. I also agree to provide access to relevant archival material for the purposes of this study.

\_\_\_\_\_ Participant's Signature

Participant: I have been informed that this interview will be recorded. I consent to an audio recording of the interview. I know that I am free to withdraw from this interview at any time and withdraw my recording from the study.

\_\_\_\_\_ Participant's Signature



## Appendix B

## UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN



## DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

A history of the Department of Psychology at the University of Cape Town between 1974 and 1994.

**Information Sheet****This study**

We are honours students in the Psychology department at the University of Cape Town. You, as a former staff member at the University of Cape Town, are invited to take part in this study about the history of the psychology department at the University of Cape Town between 1974 and 1994. This study will provide a resource that will contribute to the understanding of South African psychology.

The information gained in the interview process will be used to write a research report for the honours' programme. We are approaching you to help us clarify information that we have already collected from university and departmental archives. The length of the interview will depend on the amount of information that you would be able to provide but they should not take longer than two hours. Along with information gained in the interviews, we hope that you will be willing to share any personal archives that you might have that relate to this time period in the department.

**Contact details**

If you have questions, concerns, or complaints about the study please contact Natalie Davidson on 0726808915 or Lufuno Masindi on 0662126824 or Dr Wahbie Long at the Department of

Psychology, University of Cape Town (UCT) or Rosalind Adams at the Department of Psychology, UCT on 0216503417 or Rosalind.Adams@uct.ac.za.

Appendix C

Ethics Approval Letter

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN



Department of Psychology

University of Cape Town, Rondebosch 7701 South Africa  
Telephone: (021) 650 3417  
Fax No.: (021) 650 4104

11 June 2019

Natalie Davidson and Lufuno Masindi  
Department of Psychology  
University of Cape Town  
Rondebosch 7701

Dear Natalie and Lufuno

I am pleased to inform you that ethical clearance has been given by an Ethics Review Committee of the Faculty of Humanities for your study, The History of the Psychology Department at the University of Cape Town between 1974 and 1994. The reference number is PSY2019-027.

I wish you all the best for your study.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lauren Wild'.

Lauren Wild (PhD)  
Associate Professor  
Chair, Ethics Review Committee

University of Cape Town  
PSYCHOLOGY DEPARTMENT  
Upper Campus  
Rondebosch