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SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH

Social Surveys Unit

RACIAL AND CLASS DISCRIMINATION IN ASSESSMENTS OF "JUST DESERT" IN POST-APARTHEID CAPE TOWN

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CSSR Working Paper No. 199

September 2007

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Abstract

In multi-racial or otherwise multi-cultural societies, people may discriminate in the allocation of scarce resources against members of particular racial or cultural groups. This paper examines how people in post-apartheid Cape Town – a city characterized by both inequality and cultural diversity – assess the 'desert' of others in terms of access to social assistance from the state and employment opportunities. The paper uses attitudinal data from two sets of vignettes included in a 2005 survey of a representative sample of adults. The paper extends the findings of previous studies that a wide range of South Africans distinguish between deserving and undeserving poor on the basis, primarily, of their willingness or ability to work and their responsibility for dependents. The paper also confirms the preliminary findings of previous research that there is little racial discrimination in respondents' assessment of how deserving the subjects were in a narrow range of vignettes, but that race and class are significant in that richer and especially rich, white respondents are more generous in their assessment of what deserving people should receive. There is stronger evidence that racial considerations are relevant with respect to popular assessments of the justice of employment decisions, although it is difficult to distinguish (using available data) between racial prejudice (on the part of the respondents) and a principled opposition to affirmative action (i.e. opposition to perceived unfair racial discrimination on the part of employers or the state).

Race, class and distributive justice

Contemporary South Africa – like the USA – stands at the intersection of two traditions that are likely to shape attitudes towards the poor. Firstly, it is firmly rooted in the British poor law tradition, which distinguishes sharply between deserving and undeserving poor.[1] Secondly, it faces the legacy of centuries of state-sanctioned (or even state-driven) racism. Apartheid entailed a system of institutionalised racial segregation and discrimination that exceeded even that of

[1] On the foundations of the South African welfare state, see Seekings (2006a, 2006b); on current state justifications of the shape of the welfare state, see Seekings (2007a).

the American South in the era of Jim Crow. In both direct and (especially) indirect ways, public policy both exacerbated inequality and allocated places in the hierarchy on the basis of race (Seekings and Nattrass, 2005).

It would not be surprising if attitudes towards distributive justice in post-apartheid South Africa were shaped or even determined by these traditions. South Africans might be expected to distinguish between deserving and undeserving poor on the bases of race and willingness or capacity to work. In the USA, attitudes towards the poor are bound up with race: 'Welfare' for the poor is unpopular (among white Americans) because it is seen as benefiting undeserving lazy black Americans; many white Americans think that their black compatriots should make more of an effort and not 'depend' on the state (Sniderman and Piazza, 1993; Gilens, 1999). Such attitudes are surely even more likely to be found in South Africa than in the USA, where there is a long tradition of white people denouncing 'idle' or 'work-shy' African people (see Seekings and Nattrass, 2005: ch. 5), and where today African people might be expected to view tax-financed social assistance as appropriate (partial) compensation for past racial inequity and continuing racial disadvantage.

Some survey data suggest that there are some sharp racial differences in attitudes towards government policy in post-apartheid South Africa. African and white people differ starkly in their views on the redistribution of land and 'affirmative action' (i.e. racial discrimination in favour of people in the same racial categories as people who were discriminated against under apartheid) (Roberts, 2006). In previous research, I began to investigate this in innovative but preliminary ways. Using data from a small survey (n=588) conducted in Cape Town in 2003, I showed that attitudes towards distributive justice were mutable, i.e. they were contingent on the precise specification of the problem (with some poor people apparently seen as more deserving than others) and the costs of any intervention (would taxes have to be increased?). Many respondents could be persuaded to change their minds when provided with additional information. For example, the perceived desert of an unemployed person described in a vignette fell sharply when it was suggested that the unemployed person might be a heavy drinker (Seekings, 2005a). I also showed that there was little evidence of any racial dimension to assessments of desert in one specific (albeit abstract) context. When respondents were presented with a 'vignette' in which (*inter alia*) the race of an unemployed person was specified, neither the race of the respondent nor the race of the described subject was significant in respondents' assessments of the desert of the subject. In fact, white respondents proved to be much more generous than African or coloured respondents in terms of the absolute sums that they suggested should be paid (by the government) as social assistance to the unemployed subject

in the vignette. The explanation of this is in part but not entirely because richer respondents are more generous (in absolute terms, not relative to their incomes). White respondents appear more generous even controlling for their income, which I attribute to a sense of guilt about enduring racial inequalities and the hope that redistribution will reduce the chances of racial retribution (Seekings, 2005b).

'Attitudinal' data from a survey may not correspond to actual behaviour. Pager and Quillian (2005) remind us of a classic American 1930s study of racial discrimination, in which hotel and restaurant proprietors reported in a survey much *higher* levels of prejudice against Chinese customers than they exhibited in actual practice. Pager and Quillian suggest that this reflects the proprietors' desire to avoid difficult or even confrontational inter-personal situations. In the contemporary USA, where racial prejudice is generally frowned upon, it is more likely that surveys tend to underestimate discrimination because racial prejudice is socially undesirable, or because people are not aware of their own prejudice, or because it is more observable in real settings or inter-personal interactions than in abstract. One response to these problems is to try to observe actual behaviour in controlled settings, either through audit studies (e.g. Pager and Quillian, 2005), through studies in laboratory settings (such as psychologists' Implicit Association Test), or through experimental research into behaviour in 'real' but nonetheless contrived conditions (Quillian, 2006).[2] An alternative response is to endeavour to improve survey methodology, most notably through the use of vignettes in which the racial dimension is disguised. This paper uses more detailed data from vignettes, from a second survey conducted in Cape Town, in 2005.

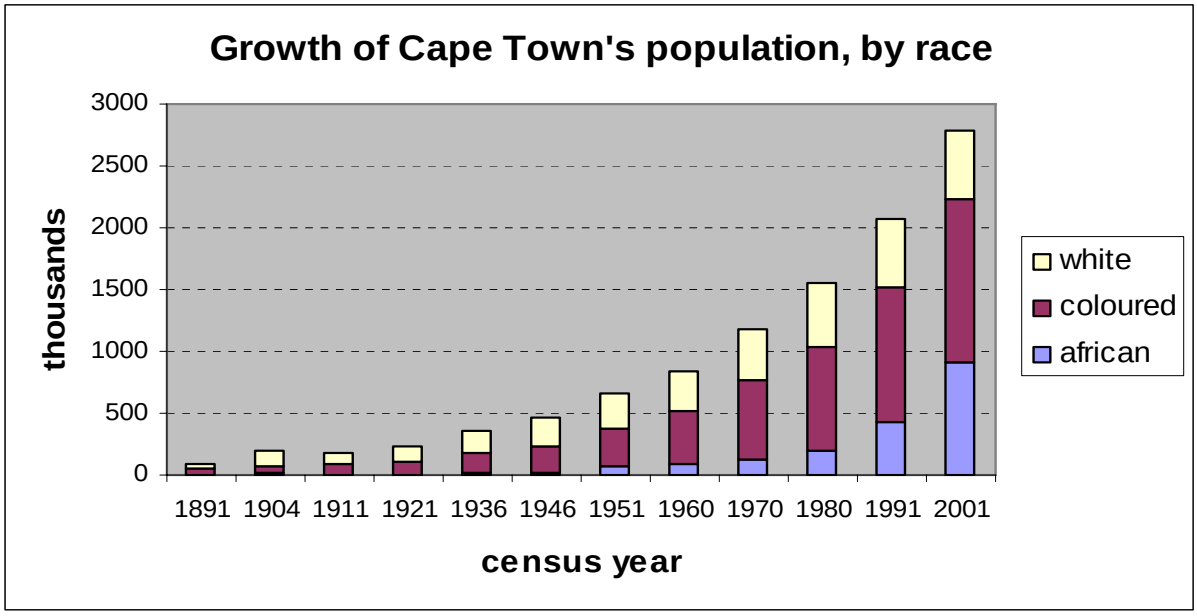
Cape Town

Cape Town is a multi-cultural and highly unequal city with a population of almost 3 million people. Like all South African cities, Cape Town bears the obvious scars of apartheid: persisting racial residential segregation, very high unemployment and a highly unequal distribution of income and wealth. It also shows some of the positive changes that have occurred since the transition to democracy, notably the rapid improvement of municipal infrastructure and public services in poorer areas.

But the population of Cape Town is unlike those of other South African cities. At the time of European settlement and expansion between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries, there were no 'African' (i.e. Bantu language-speakers) in the Western Cape. The indigenous Khoi and San groups were incorporated into the

[2] For examples in South Africa, see Burns (2004, 2005).

'racial' category of 'coloured', along with slaves from the Dutch East Indies and elsewhere and the offspring of 'mixed-race' relationships. In Cape Town itself, there were still more white than coloured people as late as 1946 (see Figure 1), although the coloured population rose rapidly thereafter. The apartheid state sought to prevent immigration into Cape Town by African people from the Eastern Cape. But the erosion then collapse of 'influx control' resulted in a very rapid growth of the African population from the 1970s. By 2001, only 19 percent of Cape Town's population was white, compared to 48 percent coloured and 32 percent African.



Post-apartheid Cape Town is a city characterised by both multi-cultural diversity and deep socio-economic inequality. Diversity and inequality are linked in that some racial divisions are also cultural divisions, there is a close relationship between race and class, and there remains a high level of segregation by both race and class. Cape Town's population is divided between white and coloured people speaking either Afrikaans (41 percent of the total population) or English (28 percent), and Xhosa-speaking African people (29 percent). Most people are Christian, divided between many denominations with no single church claiming more than 10 percent of the population as adherents. A minority (about one-sixth) of the coloured population is Muslim. Besides language, a second strong cultural divide between coloured and African residents is length of residence in the city. Survey data from 2002 suggests that as many as 84 percent of coloured adults were born in Cape Town, with another 11 percent born elsewhere in the Western

Cape.[3] Among African adults, however, only 22 percent were born in Cape Town and another 2 percent elsewhere in the province. As many as 71 percent of African adults in Cape Town were born in the Eastern Cape, almost all in rural areas. Only two in five white Capetonians were born in Cape Town, but almost all white Capetonians were born in an urban area. In many cultural respects, the city's white and coloured populations are broadly similar to each other, and distinct from the city's African population.

In Cape Town, as in South Africa as a whole, the end of apartheid did not mean an end to inequality. The Gini coefficient for the distribution of household income in Cape Town in 2002 was about 0.58, which is slightly lower than for the country as a whole but is nonetheless very high. The top decile of households in Cape Town, by household income, receive about 45 percent of all income in the city, or about fifty times as much as the poorest decile of Cape Town households. By standard international measures, about 10 percent of households in the city live in severe poverty; two-thirds of these are African and one-third coloured. Another 15 percent live in mild poverty; just over one half of these are African and just under one half are coloured. Inequality reflects, especially, the combination of high (and rising) unemployment with high (and rising) real earnings for a wide range of middle and working-class people who have jobs.

Table 1: Household income by race, Cape Town, 2002

Household income (Rands per month)	African (%)	Coloured (%)	White (%)	Total (%)
0-1999	20	12	1	33
2000-5999	10	23	4	37
6000+	2	12	17	31
Total	32	47	22	100

Source: Cape Area Panel Study household survey, 2002.
At the time, R2000 was approximately US$300.

Table 1 shows the relationship between 'race' (or population group) and household income in Cape Town in 2002. African households are concentrated in the poorest third of the city's population and white households in the richest third, with coloured households spread across the income distribution. The mean household income for African households in 2002 was about R2000 (US$300) per month; the mean household income among coloured households was more than

[3] These data are also from the 2002 household survey component of the Cape Area Panel Study. See Lam *et al*., 2005).

double this, and the mean household income among white households about five times this.[4]

These economic inequalities are a major reason why patterns of residential segregation have not broken down to any great extent since the transition to democracy. Cape Town was segregated racially with brutal and devastating force under apartheid (Western, 1991; Bickford-Smith *et al*., 1999). Like other South African towns and cities, it began to desegregate in the 1990s, but 'the vast majority of the urban population continues to live in highly segregated suburbs' (Christopher, 2005). Segregation is as thorough in residential areas built since the end of apartheid as in those that were populated earlier under segregationist legislation. There is some desegregation in middle-class residential areas, and more in schools in those areas (in part because many African and coloured children from other neighbourhoods choose to commute to the better schools in formerly white neighbourhoods). There is also considerable racial interaction within many workplaces, especially among white employees; this interaction is no longer entirely hierarchical. Overall, however, race has proved highly resilient in social and cultural terms (see Seekings, 2007b).

The 2005 Cape Area Study was designed to shed new light on aspects of inequality and diversity in Cape Town. The survey sought to gather data on how Capetonians see themselves and others, in terms of both diversity and inequality, and how this affects or is affected by their social interactions with each other and their political engagement with the local state.

Data[5]

The realised sample for the 2005 Cape Area Study comprised a representative sample of 1200 adults spread across metropolitan Cape Town. We used a two-stage cluster sample design. First, a sample of seventy 'enumerator areas' (EAs) was selected. Secondly, a sample of about 1820 households was selected in these EAs, using a combination of aerial photographs and on-site visits. We anticipated different response rates in different kinds of area, and therefore over-sampled in some kinds of area relative to others (rather than allow substitutions in the field). Within each household that was contacted successfully, an adult was randomly selected.

[4] *Ibid*.
[5] See further Seekings *et al*., 2005.

Inevitably, the actual sample was flawed. Poor, shack settlements posed minor problems for our sampling, and rich 'gated' neighbourhoods posed a major problem. We were unable to work in one selected EA because of an outbreak of violence locally, and one other – comprising a converted hostel for migrant workers – posed insuperable practical difficulties. In seven of our seventy selected EAs we collected no or a negligible number of interviews. In 'African' and 'coloured' residential areas, our response rates were excellent. But in 'white' areas our response rates were so low overall that we were compelled to supplement our sample with a convenience sample. We suspect that it is impossible to conduct a survey among a truly representative sample of white South Africans or of the population of 'white' areas. Overall, our response rate was between 60 and 64 percent, excluding the supplementary interviews in 'white' areas. Overall, our realised sample comprised too many members of the kind of people more readily found at home by interviewers – i.e. women and older people – but did not neglect working people and was not substantially out-of-line in terms of race. Weights are used to adjust for gender, age and race.

Fieldwork was conducted between April and June 2005. Xhosa-speaking, African respondents were interviewed by Xhosa-speaking, African fieldworkers, whilst English- and Afrikaans-speaking respondents, mostly white and coloured, were interviewed by English- and Afrikaans-speaking fieldworkers, mostly coloured.

The CAS 2005 questionnaire included a series of 'vignette'-based questions. Respondents were presented with a vignette describing a situation, followed by a question or series of questions related to the situation. What distinguishes the technique is that the description of the situation can be varied between questionnaires, allowing analysis of the effects of variation on responses. The use of vignettes to probe racial attitudes in Cape Town was inspired by Sniderman and Piazza's (1993) study of the nuances of American attitudes. Sniderman and Piazza used vignettes in part because they wanted to test the hypothesis that 'modern' forms of racism disguise racism behind other, more innocuous, attitudes. Conservatives might discriminate against black people not because they are explicitly racist, but because (they say) black people do not adhere to the mainstream American values that conservatives hold sacrosanct. Sniderman and Piazza used a 'laid-off worker' experiment in which respondents were presented with a scenario in which a person (or subject) is retrenched, and are then invited to suggest how much (if any) financial assistance that person should receive from the government whilst looking for work. The scenario varies insofar as the subject (or retrenched person) is given different characteristics: white or black, male or female, younger or older, single or married, with or without children, and dependable or not dependable. Experimental vignettes have been used in South

Africa by Gibson and Gouws in their studies of tolerance (Gibson and Gouws, 2003) and reconciliation (Gibson, 2004). Our 2003 survey included a variant of Sniderman and Piazza's 'laid-off worker' experiment to probe the effects of race on distributive justice (see Seekings, 2005a, 2005b).

The core vignette in our 2005 survey expanded on the vignette we used in 2003. We did not limit the vignette to a scenario in which the subject was said to have lost his or her job, but included also a wider range of circumstances in which a subject might be considered deserving of financial assistance. Respondents were first told that:

> 'The government provides grants to some people in need, for example old-age pensions to elderly people. I am going to describe a situation, and then ask you what the government should do to help the person involved.'

The government's non-contributory old-age pension system is long-established and well known. In 2005, it cost more than 1 percent of GDP and reached more than 2 million pensioners, i.e. excluding only rich elderly people.

A specific subject was then described. For example:

> 'Eddie is sick. He is a coloured man, aged 55, and is not married and has no children.'

The respondent is then asked:

> 'Should the Government provide a monthly grant or financial assistance to Eddie?'

This is what we call henceforth the 'assessment of desert'. If the respondent said 'yes', he or she is then asked:

> 'How much financial assistance should the Government give Eddie per month?'

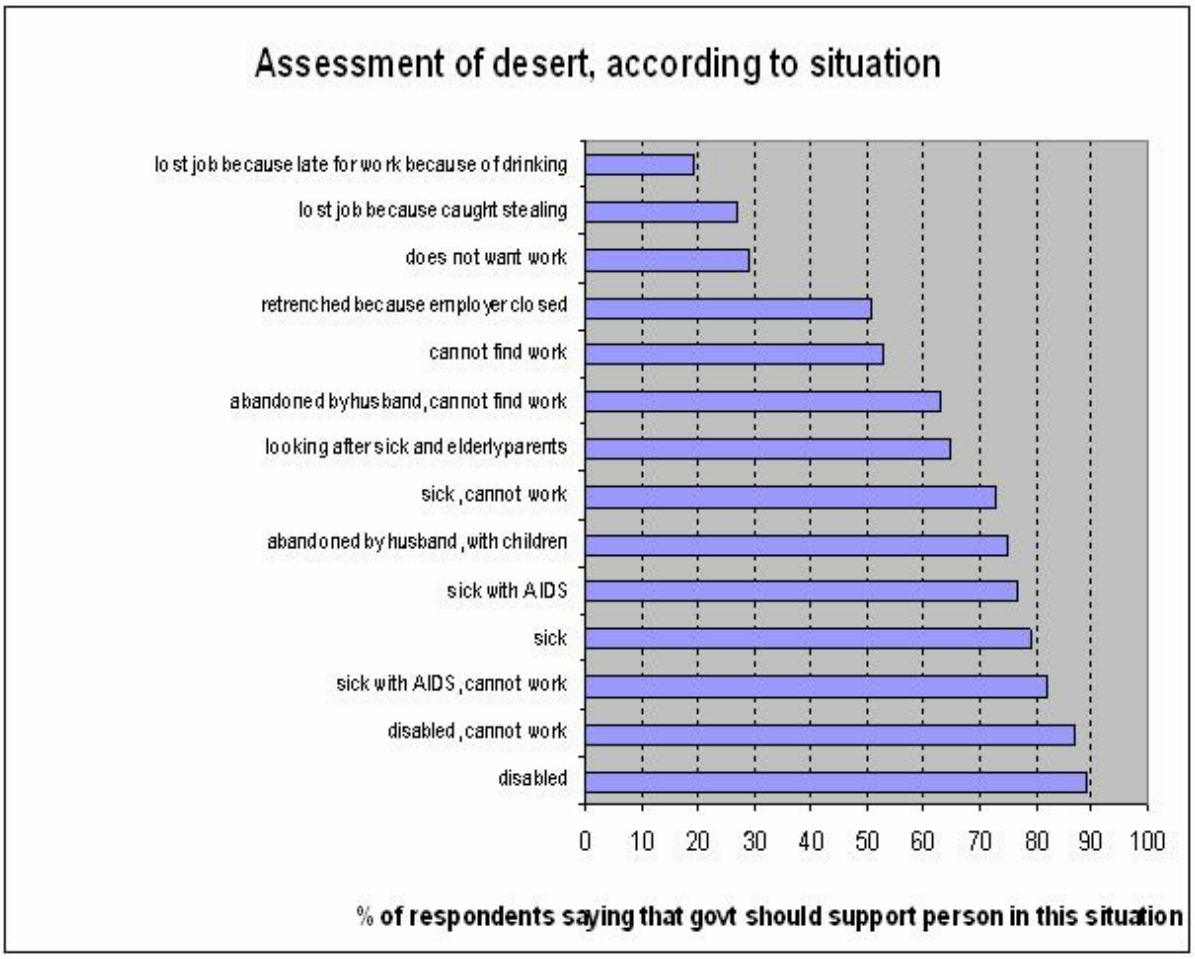
This is what we call henceforth the 'assessment of award'. The inclusion of the second question allows us to put a value on the assessment and to interrogate the consistency with which the respondent responds to the vignette.

The subjects varied between interviews. Firstly, the *general circumstances* of the subject varied. Some subjects were described as retrenched workers, others as people who were sick; some were disabled and others abandoned by husbands;

and so on. Other characteristics of the subject were also varied: *race*, *gender*, *age* and *family status* (single, with or without dependents, or married). In some cases, the subjects were said to be in some way *responsible* for their situation (for example, a worker might have been retrenched because he or she was always late for work). Names were changed as appropriate. A total of about 200 variations were described. We endeavoured to use each in a wide range of neighbourhoods. Each respondent was presented with two substantially different vignettes, so that we have data on a total of about 2400 assessments of desert. After the second vignette, respondents were presented with further information to see if they could be persuaded to change their minds.

Deserving and undeserving poor

People in post-apartheid Cape Town clearly distinguish between the deserving and undeserving poor. In 2003 we found quite high levels of support for financial assistance to the unemployed. The 2005 data shows even higher levels of popular approval of government financial assistance to the sick and disabled, especially. Between 80 and 90 percent of respondents assessed that subjects who were "sick with AIDS and unable to work", or "disabled and unable to work", or just "disabled", should receive financial assistance from the government. More than 70 percent of respondents said the same for subjects who were "sick and unable to work", "sick with AIDS" or just "sick". By comparison, only just over one half of our respondents supported financial assistance to subjects who "cannot find work" or who had been "retrenched because their employer closed". In assessing desert, incapacity due to health or disability seems be far more important than unemployment per se. The mean desert of subjects according to their circumstances is shown in Figure 2.



It is striking that the assessment of desert for subjects described as sick with AIDS is the same as when there is no mention of AIDS. AIDS might be understood as a health condition for which people are themselves responsible (as smokers may be deemed responsible in part for smoking-related illness). But there is no indication of AIDS-related stigma that detracts from the desert of AIDS-sick subjects.

Subjects with dependants attracted support. About 75 percent supported assistance to women who had been abandoned by their husbands and had children to look after, and about two-thirds supported assistance to women who were looking after sick and elderly parents. Almost as many supported assistance to women who could not find work, having been abandoned by their husbands.

Our respondents were least supportive of the subjects whose behaviour was questionable. Less than 20 percent supported financial assistance to subjects who had "lost their jobs because they were late for work because they had been drinking", and only slightly more supported assistance to subjects who "lost their

job because they were caught stealing" or who "do not want work". Some of this residual support is likely to reflect either fieldworker error or respondent disinterest in the question, so this '20 percent' support should probably be regarded as a baseline against which more deserving cases can be compared.

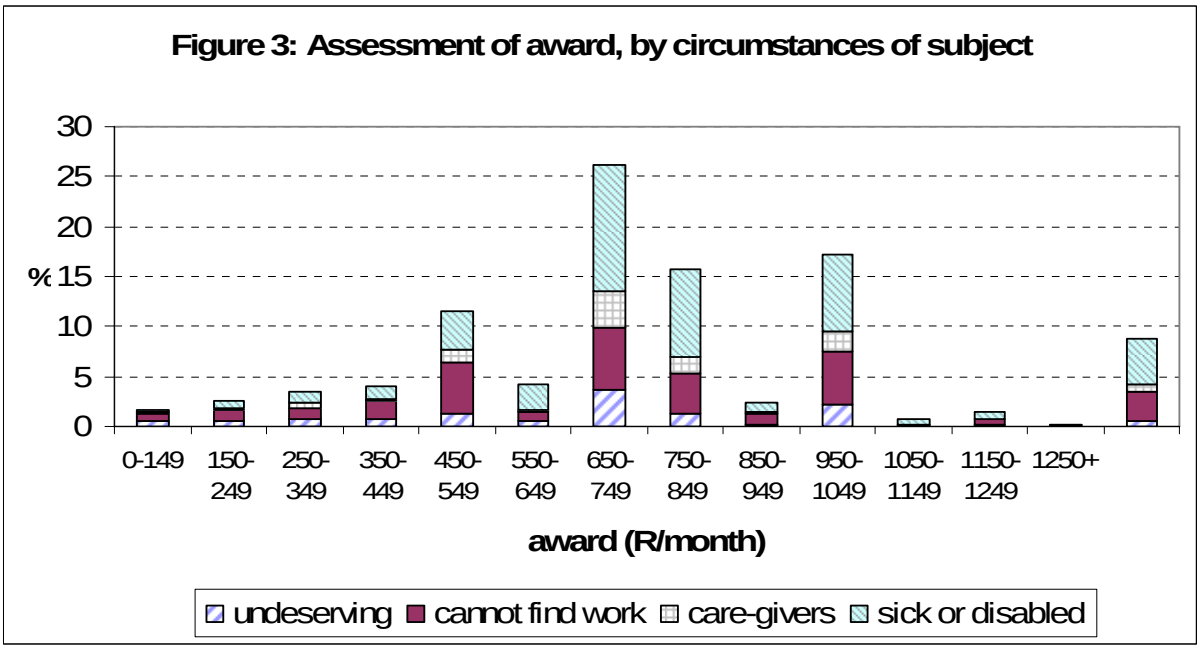
Table 2: Assessments of desert and award, by circumstances of subject

Circumstances of subject	Assessment of desert: % saying yes	Assessment of award: Mean award (Rands/month)	
		Only if initial assessment of desert was "yes"	including values of 0 if initial assessment of desert was "no"
The least deserving: 'Retrenched because late for work because drinking'; 'lost job because caught stealing'; or 'does not want work'.	28 (24-31) n=577	717 (656-779) n=157	206 (174-238) n=568
Cannot find work (including also 'retrenched because employer closed' and 'abandoned by husband, cannot find work')	55 (52-59) n=777	830 (771-888) n=386	447 (403-490) n=734
Care-givers: 'Looking after sick and elderly parents' or 'abandoned by husband, looking after children'	69 (63-75) n=229	776 (716-836) n=149	523 (459-586) n=216
Sick or disabled (including due to AIDS)	81 (78-84) n=810	948 (882-1016) n=578	765 (705-825) N=744

Note: Figures in parentheses show range within 95% confidence intervals. Data are weighted.

The various circumstances can be bundled into four broad categories of desert, as shown in Table 2. The second column reports the assessment of desert, i.e. whether or not the respondent considered the described subject as deserving of financial assistance from the government. There are clear and statistically significant differences between the assessment of desert of the 'least deserving' subjects (i.e. subjects in some way responsible for their predicament), those who 'cannot find work', 'care-givers', and the 'sick or disabled'. The mean assessment of the desert of subjects in these categories rises from 28 percent for the 'least deserving' to 54 percent (cannot find work), 69 percent (care-givers) and 81 percent (sick or disabled). The 95 percent confidence intervals for these different categories do not overlap.

The third and fourth columns of Table 2 show the assessment of award, i.e. what respondents suggested was the appropriate amount of financial assistance that should be paid to the described subject in the vignette. The third column reports only the actual assessed awards, i.e. when the subject was considered deserving.



Whilst smaller mean awards were made to the least deserving subjects and larger awards to the most deserving, the overall variation in the suggested awards is muted in comparison to the initial assessment of desert. The distribution of awards made is shown in Figure 3. If a respondent assessed a subject to be deserving, he or she then assessed the award at a level a little higher than the then value of the government's non-contributory old-age pension (which had just been increased from R740 to R770 per month at the time of the survey; this is approximately US$100-110 per month, but worth more than this in terms of real purchasing power), with only limited regard for the circumstances of the deserving subject. The South African old-age pension is unusually generous in comparison with tax-financed social assistance in other countries in the global South. It is set at about the minimum wage for domestic workers, and well below the minimum wages covering workers in formal employment in industrial or other service sectors. The typical award suggested by the respondents in our survey is generous by some criteria, but entails an income replacement rate of perhaps one-third to one-half for most unskilled or semi-skilled workers.

The final column includes values of zero (i.e. awards of R0 per month) if the respondent did not support any financial assistance to the subject, i.e. did not

consider the subject deserving. This column thus combines the effects of discrimination in the initial assessment of desert and of the subsequent conditional assessment of award. The table shows that the mean award to sick or disabled subjects was substantially higher than to subjects who could not find work or were care-givers, and they were substantially higher than to the least deserving subjects.

Respondents assessed women as more deserving than men, and older subjects as more deserving than younger ones. Married people and especially single parents were assessed as more deserving than single, childless subjects (see Table 3). As with the circumstances considered above, the gender, age or family status of the subject makes only a little difference in the awards assessed for deserving subjects. If the discrimination in assessment of desert and in assessment of award are combined, as in the final column, then women, older subjects and subjects with families are all again seen to be more deserving.

Table 3: Assessments of desert and award, by circumstances of subject

Circumstances of subject		Assessment of desert: % saying yes	Assessment of award: Mean award (Rands/month)	
			Only if initial assessment of desert was "yes"	including values of 0 if initial assessment of desert was "no"
Gender	Male	54 (51-58) n=918	876 (819-932) n=461	466 (424-507) n=867
	female	60 (58-63) n=1475	834 (793-876) n=829	496 (463-528) n=1395
Age	25	55 (52-58) n=945	873 (815-931) n=484	472 (439-515) n=895
	55	69 (66-72) n=841	808 (769-847) n=523	543 (506-581) n=779
Family status	Single, no children	52 (49-55) n=1020	787 (743-871) n=490	398 (365-432) n=968
	Married with children	62 (59-65) n=924	906 (842-969) n=529	553 (504-601) n=867
	Single parent: single, with children	66 (61-72) n=288	822 (792-951) n=179	569 (498-641) n=274

Note: Figures in parentheses show range within 95% confidence intervals. This table uses unweighted data.

Multivariate probit regressions show strong conditional correlations between the situation and the assessment of desert, weaker conditional correlations between age or family status and the assessment of desert, but almost none between gender and the assessment of desert (see Table 4). Subjects who could not find work were 27 percentage points more likely to be considered deserving than subjects in the least deserving category. Care-givers were 35 percentage points more likely to be considered deserving, and the sick or disabled 50 percentage points more likely. Controlling for the gender, age or family status of the subject makes almost no difference to these coefficients. Older subjects are 12 percentage points more likely to be considered deserving than younger subjects, whilst subjects with families and single-parents were 13 and 22 percentage points respectively more likely to be considered deserving than an unmarried, childless subject.

Table 4: Multivariate regression models on assessment of desert

	Model A	Model B	Model C
Cannot find work	.27 (.02)***	.26 (.02)***	.27 (.02)***
Care-givers	.35 (.02)***	.34 (.02)***	.38 (.02)***
Sick or disabled	.50 (.02)***	.50 (.02)***	.48 (.02)***
Female		.05 (.02)**	.03 (.02)
Older			.12 (.02)***
Married with children			.13 (.02)***
Single parent			.22 (.03)***
Pseudo r2	.14	.13	.16
N	2393	2393	2393

Notes: Coefficients are for marginal effects (dF/dx). Standard errors are in parentheses. Significance shown at 1% level (***), 5% level (**) or 10% level (*). All independent variables are dummy variables. This table uses unweighted data. Coefficients refer to assessments relative to the least deserving subjects, i.e. undeserving, young, white men without children.

Capetonians' construction of desert falls firmly within the poor law tradition of supporting those who are unable to work but not those (of working age and in good health) who are unwilling to do so. But the pattern of support entails the extension of welfare to cover a wider range of caregivers and even unemployed. The South African social assistance system currently provides for the elderly (women from the age of sixty, men from the age of sixty-five) and the certified disabled or chronically sick, as well as modest grants to poor families with children. There is also contributory health insurance, retirement provision and very limited unemployment insurance for most workers in formal employment (Seekings, 2007a). Support for the category of care-givers in Table 2 above entails an extension beyond present modest levels of support (and also to adults looking

after elderly parents as well as those looking after children). Support for the category of sick and disabled entails the endorsement of the present system. Given the limits to unemployment insurance, support for the category of subjects who 'cannot find work' would entail an entirely new programme of social assistance.[6]

The effects of race

Race can be brought into the analysis through specifying both the race of the respondent and the race of the subject. Table 5 sets out the assessments of first desert and then award by the various racial combinations. These trivariate data suggest that white respondents assess desert most negatively, and African respondents most positively. African and coloured respondents may assess the desert of same-race subjects more positively than that of other-race subjects. Coloured and white respondents clearly, and African respondents possibly, assess the desert of white respondents least positively. In terms of the assessment of awards, white respondents are clearly, by far and away, the most generous, especially to African and perhaps to coloured subjects. The confidence intervals are too wide to be certain of the other comparisons, but it is possible that coloured respondents are more generous than African respondents, and it is possible that both African and coloured respondents are more generous to same-race subjects.

Table 5: Assessment of desert (%) and mean award (R) (with 95% confidence intervals)

		Race of subject or 'beneficiary'		
		African	Coloured	White
Race of respondent	African	71% (65-77) n=236 R758 (695-820) n=161	65% (59-71) n=269 R720 (684-756) n=173	63% (57-68) n=300 R729 (691-767) n=185
	Coloured	62% (56-67) n=307 R841 (740-942) n=171	65% (60-70) n=322 R873 (790-957) n=194	48% (42-53) n=326 R800 (717-882) n=141
	White	50% (43-57) n=178 R1345 (1041-1649) n=78	53% (45-61) n=143 R1136 (908-1364) n=64	42% (34-49) n=183 R1019 (875-1163) n=62

Note: Race of respondent uses data on reported racial classification under apartheid. This table uses unweighted data.

[6] There is some evidence that the disability grant serves as a disguised form of social assistance for some unemployed people (see Nattrass, 2006). A modest 'basic income grant' or universal social assistance has been proposed (see Standing and Samson, 2003).

The findings are broadly similar to those from the prior and preliminary 2003 survey (Seekings, 2005b). There are minor differences. The 2003 data hinted that diverse respondents were more generous in their assessment of awards to white subjects. Here the opposite seems to be the case. There is some evidence of racial discrimination among African and coloured respondents. The 2005 data indicate more emphatically that white respondents are not only more generous in their assessment of awards, but also discriminate against white subjects and in favour of African and coloured subjects in their assessment of awards.

These findings can be interrogated more fully in a multivariate framework. The second column in Table 6 shows the results of regressing the assessment of desert against the characteristics of the beneficiary (or subject) and the race of the respondent. The coefficients are marginal effects, relative to a young white unmarried and childless man in the least deserving category of subjects, and to a white respondent. Thus, overall, there is weak discrimination in favour of coloured subjects and women, and stronger discrimination in favour of older subjects and those who have families or are single parents. African respondents are the most positive in their assessments, coloured respondents in the middle, and white respondents the least positive. The strongest coefficients remain on the circumstances of the subject, with strong discrimination in favour of care-givers and (especially) the sick.

The final three columns of Table 6 report the results of separate regressions for African, coloured and white respondents. African and white respondents appear not to discriminate at all on the basis of the race of the subject, contrary to what was suggested in Table 5 (and presumably because the multivariate analysis controls for other, more important factors). But coloured respondents do seem to discriminate in favour of coloured subjects. African respondents assess the desert of subjects who cannot find work less positively (relative to the least deserving) than do coloured and white respondents. This might reflect the higher rates of unemployment in African neighbourhoods, and perhaps also higher levels of ambivalence about how hard *all* unemployed adults try to find work.

Table 6: Multivariate probit regression models on assessment of desert				
	All	African respondents	Coloured respondents	White respondents
Beneficiary/subject:				
African	.04 (.03)	.06 (.04)	.05 (.04)	.01 (.05)
Coloured	.06 (.03)**	-.03 (.04)	.13 (.04)***	.06 (.06)
Cannot find work	.29 (.03)***	.14 (.04)***	.33 (.04)***	.49 (.06)***
Care-giver	.36 (.02)***	.27 (.03)***	.35 (.04)***	.57 (.03)***
Sick or disabled	.49 (.02)***	.43 (.03)***	.53 (.03)***	.55 (.06)***
Female	.05 (.03)**	.09 (.04)**	.08 (.04)*	-.10 (.06)*
Older	.12 (.02)***	.15 (.03)***	.15 (.04)***	.01 (.06)
Married with children	.13 (.02)***	.21 (.03)***	.05 (.04)	.15 (.05)***
Single parent	.20 (.03)***	.18 (.04)***	.14 (.06)**	.35 (.07)***
Respondent				
African	.20 (.03)***			
Coloured	.11 (.03)***			
Pseudo r2	.18	.21	.20	.16
N	2264	805	955	504

Notes: Coefficients are for marginal effects (dF/dx). Standard errors are in parentheses. Significance shown at 1% level (***), 5% level (**) or 10% level (*). All independent variables are dummy variables. This table uses unweighted data.

The analysis of the assessment of award requires the use of a procedure to account for selection bias. Table 7 reports the results of analysis using a Heckman two-step regression procedure. The Heckman procedure takes into account the selection bias arising (in this context) from the fact that there is missing data on the dependent variable (the award) for the non-random set of cases where the subject was not considered deserving in the first place (see Winship and Mare, 1992; Breen, 1996). The first, selection step, reported in the bottom half of the table, regresses the assessment of desert on the key characteristics identified in Table 6 above. The second step, reported in the top half of the table, regresses the assessment of award conditional on the prior positive assessment of desert. The second step uses the logged value of the award, to approximate a more normal distribution. The final row shows that the use of a Heckman two-step procedure is warranted (albeit less emphatically with respect to coloured respondents), with a very low probability that the two equations (i.e. in each of the two steps) are *not* independent of each other. Table 7 reports first the results for the total sample,

then separate results for the sub-samples of African, coloured and white respondents.

Overall, as we can see in the second column, coloured and especially African respondents are more positive in their assessments of desert, but less generous in their assessments of awards. Overall, Capetonians discriminate in favour of African and coloured beneficiaries in their assessment of desert (a result that is not altogether consistent with Table 6). But there is no significant discrimination in their assessment of awards. Turning to the regressions for the racial sub-samples (in the final three columns), we can see that there is very little evidence of racial discrimination. Only coloured respondents appear to discriminate – in their case, in favour of coloured beneficiaries.[7] There is no evidence of racial discrimination in the assessment of award. Table 7 suggests that discrimination is overwhelmingly on the circumstances of the beneficiary – i.e. whether they are in a more deserving situation and have dependents – and entails weak race effects.

[7] There is a hint that African respondents may discriminate weakly in favour of African beneficiaries. The coefficient of .15 is significant at the 15% level, although the 95% confidence interval does extend from <0 to >0.

Table 7: Heckman 2-step regression models on assessments of desert and award

	All	African respondents	Coloured respondents	White respondents
Assessment of award (logged):				
Respondent is African	**-.41*** (-.57 – -.27)**			
Respondent is coloured	**-.31*** (-.44 – -.18)**			
Beneficiary is African	Negligible and insignificant (with ci from <0 to >0)		(see cell below)	Negligible and insignificant (with ci from <0 to >0)
Beneficiary is coloured		Negligible and insignificant (with ci from <0 to >0)		
Beneficiary is white			Negligible and insignificant (with ci from <0 to >0)	
Respondent's neighbourhood income (per R 10,000)	(See cell above)	.01**		(see cell above)
Constant	7.1***	6.7***	Irrelevant	Irrelevant
N uncensored observations	1228	519	449	204
Selecting on assessment of desert:				
Respondent is African	**.61*** (.45-.76)**			
Respondent is coloured	**.29*** (.15-.43)**			
Beneficiary is African	**.16** ((.03-.29)**	.15 (-.05 – +.36)		
Beneficiary is coloured	**.16** (.03-.29)**		**.24*** (.07-.43)**	
Beneficiary is older	**.14** (.03-.25)**	**.21** (.04-.37)**	**.22** (.04-.4)**	-.1 (-.33 – +.14)
Beneficiary has family	**.31*** (.19-.43)**	**.44*** (.26-.62)**	.08 (-.1 – +.27)	**.62*** (.37-.86)**
Beneficiary is single parent	**.47*** (.29-.65)**	**.37*** (.12-.62)**	.27* (-.01 – +.55)	**.76*** (.39-1.13)**
Beneficiary cannot find work	**.64*** (.49-.78)**	.15 (-.07 – +.31)	**.82*** (.6-1.05)**	**1.06*** (.7-1.42)**
Beneficiary is care-giver	**.96*** (.75-1.17)**	**.77*** (.49-1.06)**	**.9*** (.58-1.21)**	**1.4*** (.85-1.95)**
Beneficiary is sick or disabled	**1.15*** (1.0-1.31)**	**.77*** (.54-1.01)**	**1.26*** (1.02-1.49)**	**1.44*** (1.09-1.79)**
Constant	-1.21***	-.31***	-.91***	-1.5***
N (censored plus uncensored observations)	2264	806	954	504
Probability of 2 equations *not* being independent of each other	0.000***	0.0000***	0.06*	0.000***

Notes: 95% confidence intervals are in parentheses. Significance shown at 1% level (***), 5% level (**) or 10% level (*). All independent variables except respondent's neighbourhood income are dummy variables. Note that the regression on assessment of desert is *not* a probit. Data are weighted.

The (un)deserving (non-)poor

Perceptions of what is a socially desirable response might well colour respondents' assessments of both desert and award, especially among white respondents faced with African subjects. It is possible that white respondents, for example, tailored their responses when faced with African subjects to avoid the impression of discrimination. Other questions in the questionnaire can shed some, albeit indirect, light on this.

The survey also presented respondents with a mini-vignette involving the justice of possible discrimination in employment. Affirmative action in employment is one of the major mechanisms by which the post-apartheid state has sought to accelerate improved opportunities for black, and especially African, people. The Employment Equity Act requires employers to report on the racial composition of their personnel, and to have plans for transforming these so that they reflect more closely the racial demographics of the country. The basic vignette was as follows:

> Two young men apply for the same job at a bank. They both graduated from the University of Cape Town with the [qualifications and marks]. One of the men is [race] and the other is [race]. At the interview the men are told that the job is an affirmative action position. The [race] man gets the job. Do you approve of this outcome?

Variation is introduced into this vignette by specifying whether they have the same or different qualifications, changing their racial categorisation, and changing the outcome (i.e. who gets the job). Only six different variations were used in the survey, and three of these are difficult to interpret because they specified that the candidates had different qualifications without specifying which was more qualified. Also, some important possible manipulations were unfortunately not omitted. We did not ask about the fairness of outcomes when the white applicant got the job, or when a coloured applicant got the job in preference to an African candidate. Including these would have expanded the scope of analysis.

Table 8: Manipulations of affirmative action vignette					
Version	Who gets the job	Who does **not** get the job	African respondents	Coloured respondents	White respondents
1	African	white	45% (37-53) n=120	36% (28-43) n=128	25% (14-36) n=46
2	coloured	white	56% (48-64) n=124	41% (33-48) n=148	29% (18-40) n=48
3	African	coloured	49% (41-57) n=130	15% (10-21) n=146	24% (14-33) n=60
Note: % are percentage saying that the outcome was fair; the response 'maybe/it depends' counts as 0.5. Data are weighted					

Table 8 reports the results of the three variations in which the candidates were said to have the same qualifications and marks from university. In each case, African respondents are much more favourable to the outcome – in which the African candidate is successful – than are coloured or white respondents. In this affirmative action vignette, coloured and white respondents are happy to express deep ambivalence or even hostility. This is in keeping with the findings of other surveys which show that white and other non-African people are ambivalent or opposed to affirmative action policies. Ambivalence to or hostility to apparent affirmative action need not indicate racial prejudice, or collective self-interest (given that affirmative action imposes much more direct costs on non-poor, non-African Capetonians than social assistance payments to the poor). It could equally be the product of a principled opposition to racial discrimination in any form (as Sniderman and Piazza (1993) suggested with respect to the USA). Whatever its cause, the fact that there appears to be an element of racial discrimination in assessments of the desert of affirmative action when there is no such observable element with respect to assessments of the desert of a candidate for social assistance, lends some credibility to the latter.[8]

[8] There is another variable in the dataset that might help to interrogate the robustness of assessments of desert. Immediately following the core desert vignette, a persuasion experiment was included. Additional information was provided to see if respondents would change their minds about the desert of the subject. If there are correlations between the race of the respondent, the race of the subject and the respondent changing his or her mind, then this might indicate an otherwise disguised form of racial prejudice. The persuasion experiment data have not been captured fully nor analysed satisfactorily.

Much of the criticism levelled at attitudinal data focuses on the difference between what people say they would do and what they actually do in practice, i.e. between self-reported attitudes and actual behaviour. Pager and Quillian (2005), for example, show that there is no correlation between a self-reported willingness to employ black workers or workers with criminal records and the observed practices of the same employers in terms of calling job applicants in for interviews. The core vignettes in the 2005 Cape Area Study did not ask respondents to say what they would do, however. Rather, they were focused on the perceived desert of the description in the vignette. Insofar as any behaviour is implied, it is on the part of the government – which pays social assistance, or legislates affirmative action – not on the part of the individual respondent. The absence of racial discrimination in attitudes towards the desert of the poor – but, for non-African people, not the non-poor – does not mean that respondents practice non-racism in every dimension of everyday life. It suggests, instead, that there are limits to the racialisation of thought – and, perhaps, practice also.

Class and popular perceptions of desert

To what extent is race simply a proxy for class? Given the relationship between race and class, it is not easy to disentangle the effects of each. By comparing regression models with and without race or class variables, however, we can begin to identify discrete effects. Unfortunately, the 2005 survey data on occupational class are not sufficiently clean to use, and data on household incomes are incomplete and of uncertain quality. The easiest proxy for class is a measure of mean household income in the neighbourhood, taken from the 2001 census.

Neighbourhood income certainly correlates with the assessment of awards, with respondents in richer neighbourhoods making more generous awards. The generosity of white respondents relative to their African and coloured counterparts is in part due to income. Figure 6 shows that the actual award made rises slightly with neighbourhood income. Figure 7 shows the actual award made as a fraction of the mean household income in the neighbourhood. Respondents in rich neighbourhoods might propose larger awards, but these are smaller in proportion to neighbourhood income than their counterparts in poorer neighbourhoods. Both Figures 6 and 7 use a logged measure of neighbourhood income.[9]

[9] Some outliers are omitted from the awards.

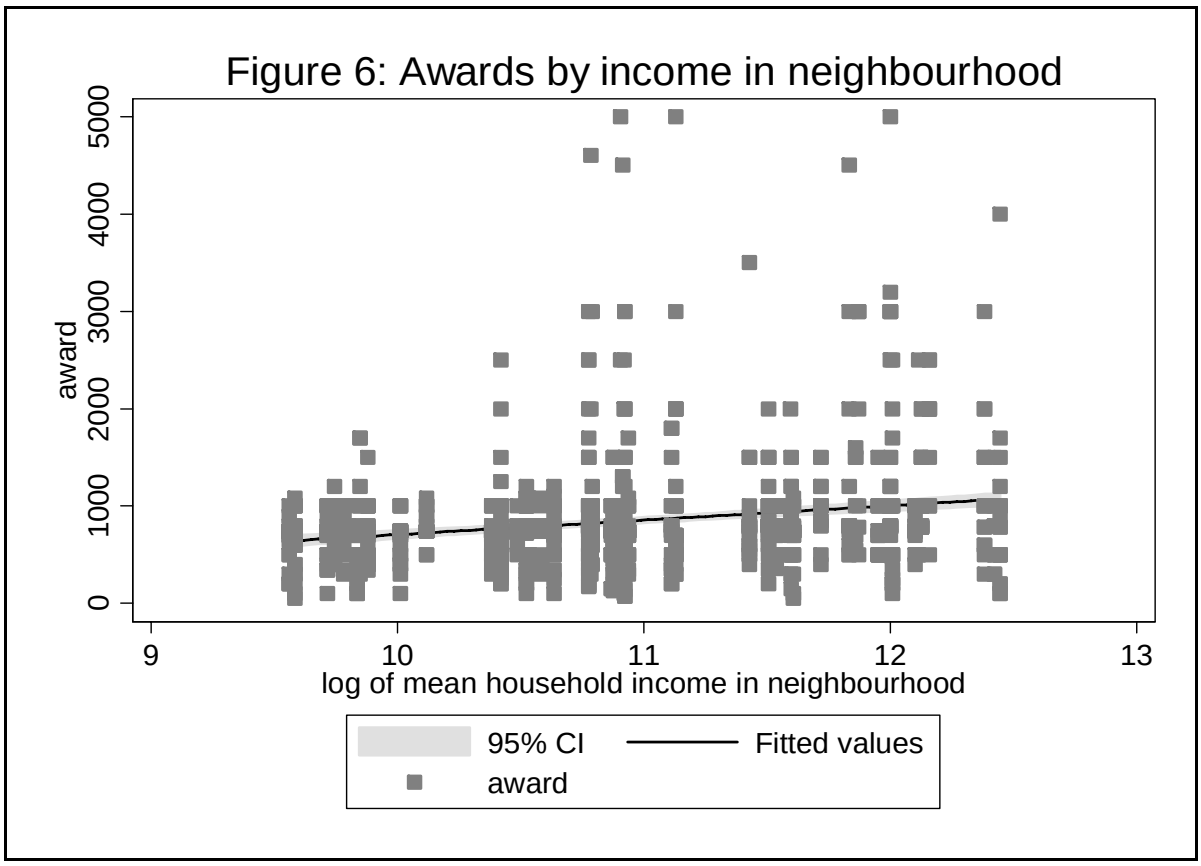


Figure 6: Awards by income in neighbourhood
award
0
1000
2000
3000
4000
5000
9
10
11
12
13
log of mean household income in neighbourhood
95% CI
Fitted values
award

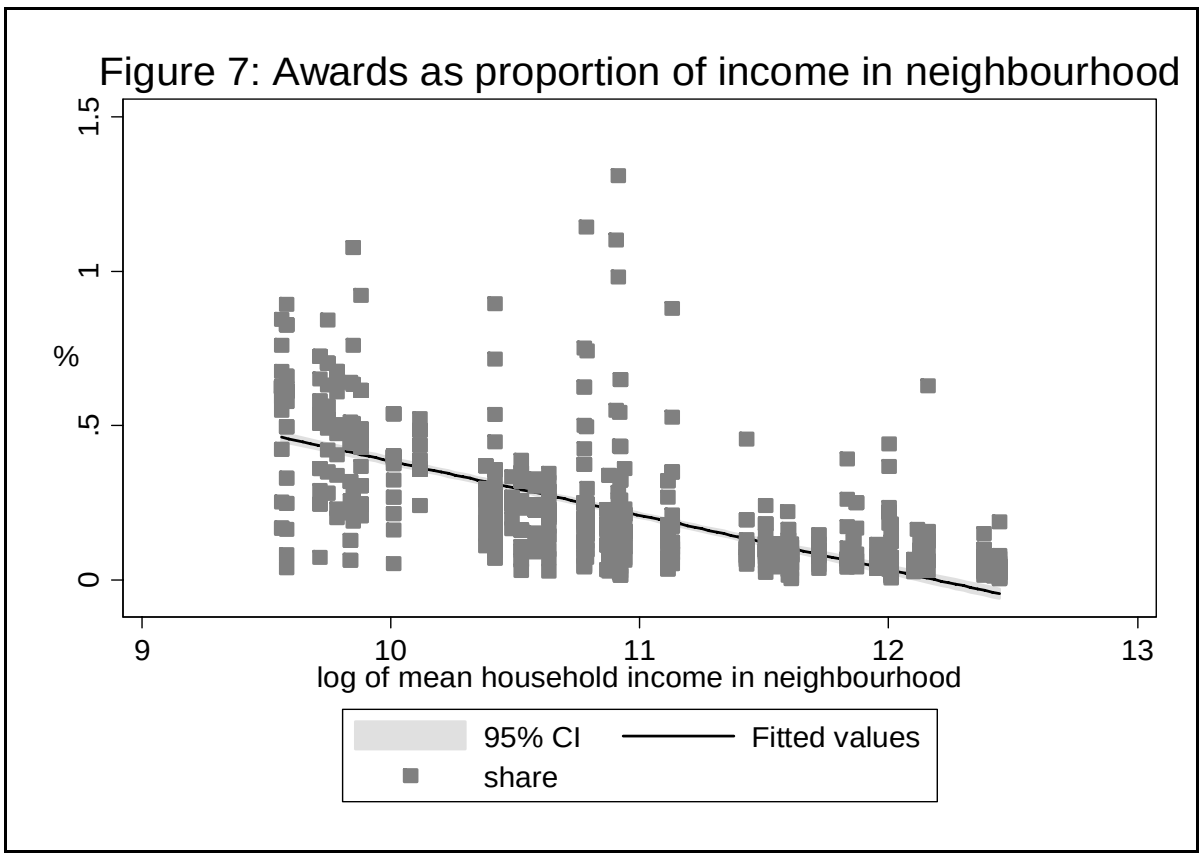


Figure 7: Awards as proportion of income in neighbourhood
%
0
.5
1
1.5
9
10
11
12
13
log of mean household income in neighbourhood
95% CI
Fitted values
share

The median award, measured as a share of neighbourhood income, is 0.18, i.e. the value of the recommended award is one-sixth of the mean household income in the neighbourhood. Table 9 shows the value of awards made in each neighbourhood income quintile, as a share of the mean household income in the neighbourhood. Unsurprisingly, respondents in poor neighbourhoods recommend awards that are larger as a share of local incomes than respondents in rich neighbourhoods, even though the latter recommend awards that are much larger in absolute terms.

Table 8: Awards as share of neighbourhood income, by neighbourhood income quintile

Neighbourhood income quintile	Mean award (Rand per month)	Mean share	95% confidence interval	n
1	713	.43	.41-.45	375
2	811	.22	.21-.23	263
3	811	.18	.16-.2	259
4	914	.11	.07-.12	208
5	1097	.08	.07-.09	191
total	842	.23	.22-.24	1296

Note: Data are weighted.

Table 9: Multivariate regression models on assessment of award

	Model A	Model B	Model C
Respondent:			
African		-394*** (45)	-314*** (70)
Coloured		-306*** (44)	-259*** (54)
Mean h'hold income in the n'hood (logged)	145*** (19)		47 (31)
Beneficiary/subject:			
Cannot find work	79 (50)	81 (52)	78 (51)
Care-giver	95 (63)	118* (65)	110* (65)
Sick or disabled	153*** (48)	170*** (49)	163*** (49)
Married with children	106*** (34)	113*** (35)	108*** (35)
Single parent	55 (45)	56 (45)	54 (46)
Constant	-890	973	417
R2	.06	.08	.08
N	1286	1226	1225

Notes: Standard errors are in parentheses. Significance shown at 1% level (***), 5% level (**) or 10% level (*). All independent variables except for mean household income in neighbourhood are dummy variables. This table uses weighted data.

Table 9 reports the results of three multivariate regressions on the award. The first includes the variable for logged mean household income in the neighbourhood but not the race of the respondent, the second excludes the income variable but includes the race variables, and the third includes both income and race variables. All three models control for the most important circumstances of the subject. This is not a Heckman, and takes no account of the selection bias arising from the prior assessment of desert. The important finding is that neighbourhood income appears to be statistically significant when race is not controlled for (model A), but it ceases to be statistically significant when race is controlled for (model C).[10] The race variables retain significance even when neighbourhood income is controlled for (although the coefficients do decrease). It appears to be race, rather than class, which drives differential assessments of award.

The prior assessment of desert is also shaped by class, or at least by neighbourhood income. Including the measure of neighbourhood income in the probit regression reported in Table 6 (or in the first step of the Heckman procedure reported in Table 7) has the effect of eliminating the significance of the race of the respondent. This is shown in Table 10. Income has a clear and negative effect on assessments of desert, even when race is controlled for, in contrast to its ambiguous (because conditional on race) and positive effects on assessments of award.

[10] Neighbourhood income is significant at the 15% level but not at the 10% level in Model C.

Table 10: Multivariate probit regression models on assessment of desert			
	Model A	Model B	Model C
Respondent:			
African		.2*** (.02)	.05 (.05)
Coloured		.1*** (.03)	.01 (.03)
Mean h'hold income in the n'hood (logged)	-.1*** (.01)		-.09*** (.02)
Beneficiary/subject:			
Cannot find work	.29*** (.02)	.29*** (.03)	.3*** (.03)
Care-giver	.36*** (.02)	.35*** (.02)	.35*** (.02)
Sick or disabled	.48*** (.02)	.48*** (.02)	.49*** (.02)
Married with children	.13*** (.02)	.12*** (.02)	.13*** (.02)
Single parent	.22*** (.03)	.21*** (.03)	.2*** (.03)
Female	.05** (.02)	.06** (.03)	.06** (.03)
Older	.1*** (.02)	.13*** (.02)	.12*** (.02)
Pseudo r2	.18	.18	.18
N	2391	2264	2262

Notes: Standard errors are in parentheses. Significance shown at 1% level (***), 5% level (**) or 10% level (*). All independent variables except for mean household income in neighbourhood are dummy variables. This table uses weighted data.

Inter-racial contact, beliefs and popular perceptions of desert

The 2005 survey included many other questions on a range of behaviours, attitudes and beliefs that might be expected to shape assessments of the desert of the poor. These include:

- Inter-racial contact: Does contact with others make respondents less likely to discriminate?
- Perceived insecurity and trust in others: Are insecure or untrusting people more or less likely to assess desert positively and to assess awards generously?
- Perceptions of the extent and causes of poverty: If respondents believe that the poor face good opportunities to provide for themselves, or attribute poverty to laziness, are they less likely to assess desert positively?
- Perceived availability of resources: Are respondents inclined to parsimony if they view the government's resources as constrained?

- Abstract beliefs about welfare policy: Are respondents who proclaim support for specific welfare reforms (such as the introduction of a basic income grant) more positive or generous to the poor in vignettes?

A preliminary analysis of these suggests some broad findings. First, for some variables, the direction of correlation is intuitive. Beliefs such as (1) 'poor people are poor because they are lazy' and (2) 'poor people face good opportunities to provide for themselves' correlated negatively with assessments of desert. The perception that (3) poverty is a worsening problem correlates positively with assessments of desert. Bivariate probit regressions of assessment of desert against the first two of these show significance at 5% level, but a regression against the third of these does not. Even where the relationships are significant, they account for a negligible fraction of the total variance in the dependent variable ($r2<1$). There are no significant relationships between measures of inter-racial contact, trust or perceived insecurity and assessments of desert.

Reassuringly, there is a highly significant correlation between whether respondents agree that the government should provide everyone with a basic income grant and their assessments of desert. The effect of support for a basic income grant was especially important when respondents were faced with situations entailing sick or disabled subjects (with a bivariate regression giving an r2 of .04, much higher than for the other situations).

Conclusion

Overall, the limited range of relationships that are significant statistically and the small size of the coefficients suggests that measured beliefs and perceptions are of far less import in assessments of desert than the major factors identified in previous sections, i.e. especially the situation of the subject. There appears to be a widespread perception, cutting across all racial groups and classes, that there are deserving and undeserving poor, and that this desert is due to the ability and willingness to work independent of race. The general findings from the vignette data are summarised in Table 11.

South African society remains highly racialised, for at least three reasons. First, disadvantage remains correlated with race: the poor, who lack social and human capital, employment and land, are overwhelmingly African, whilst almost all white people are rich (notwithstanding the growth of a huge African elite and middle class). Secondly, South Africans are culturally diverse, and culture correlates with

'race'. Thirdly, there no doubt remain vestiges of racial prejudice and discrimination by white people towards or against African people. It is unclear how far 'affirmative action', i.e. racial discrimination in favour of black (or at least African) people has actually transformed the landscape (although it is clear that it prompts polarised political attitudes).

Insofar as there is continuing racial discrimination, it does not appear to be expressed in popular perceptions of the desert of the poor. Attitudes towards the poor are dominated by other considerations besides race.

Table 11: Summary of results

Independent variables		**Assessment of desert**	**Assessment of award**
Characteristics of the subject	Race	Unclear: there is possibly weak discrimination in favour of African people among African and white respondents, and in favour of coloured people among coloured people	No
	Other social or demographic	Parents and single parents are more deserving	Bigger awards made to parents and single parents
	Situation (e.g. 'sick or disabled')	Very strong effects	Strong effects
Characteristics of the respondent	Race and class	Robust effects of both race and class (white people are less positive; people in rich neighbourhoods are less positive).	Robust effects of race (white people are more generous); class effects disappear when race controlled for.
	Other social or demographic	Negligible	Negligible
	Racial interaction	None	(Not analysed)
	Beliefs and perceptions	Weak effects of some beliefs about the poor, and of support for specific pro-poor welfare reforms	(Not analysed)

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