to their equally swift demise in the daily lives of South Africans, including Fernwood students. Instead, the contours and textures of the borders are open for change and reconfiguration: the possibilities of what one does with the borders, how they are approached, what they mean, and what they enable and close down, expand. As I have demonstrated, this does not mean that all potential reworkings of the border are necessarily liberatory or positive. Nikki resists change at the same time that she is hopelessly immersed within it; Jackie's encounters with African students at Fernwood allow her "authentic" contact with the violent lives portrayed in rap music. In other instances, the opening of borders creates painful and uncomfortable spaces: Molefe's anguish is palpable, as he is repeatedly rejected by the white world and simultaneously distant from the black one. Amanda, in contrast, boldly embraces the new world she inhabits. Less concerned with other people's perspectives, Amanda is not trapped by the border. Instead, she simultaneously negotiates multiple racial positions, trailblazing possibilities for negotiating identity. In a different, perhaps more constrained manner, Charmaine also reimagines the borders of race, as her identification with a coloured identity is a shifting effect of the changing landscape of taste, not a solid, immovable object. While Charmaine sees borders as mobile, Shirley approaches them as flimsy constructs to be knocked down and exploded. As she deliberately adopts the taste codes of coloured students, she mocks the rigid world of whites at Fernwood and becomes a target for hostility. Finally, Zola recognizes the borders, but shies away from them. Like many African students at Fernwood, she knows the benefits of attending a formerly white high school, but sees little to be gained from interacting with white, coloured, or Indian classmates. The borders do not trouble her (at least at the level of personal interaction), but she has no need to deliberately enter them.

Fernwood students confront the border each day, as they try to carve out temporary points of affiliation in a setting in which the new is rejected, defied, and at rare moments, welcomed. Their varying responses to this reality demonstrate that the possible reimagination of race and identity are multiple: constrained by history and circumstance, but reinvigorated by the local and global changes that envelop Fernwood. For the students profiled here, the effort involved in thinking about and living in border spaces is enormous. As Anne Locke Davidson (1996) reflects, "We no longer live in nearly bounded, homogenous communities, nor do we operate in a purely national economy. For these reasons alone, the ability to challenge and negotiate social categories can be viewed as an ability worthy of encouragement" (p. 229). Although Davidson writes in the context of her study of high school students in the United States, her observation is also applicable to the youth of Fernwood. By choice or chance, Fernwood students are thrust into the borderlands; their negotiations of these spaces point us towards and open up multiple futures, including the futures of race.

Everyone's been so cornered off, everyone was put into a certain topic, you're black, you go there. You're coloured, you go over there. Everybody had a certain class, and now because everything's changed, everybody has just been mashed together, and you have to struggle and find your bearings, and find out where you are in this whole new little nation because before everybody knew their place. A lot of people weren't happy with it, but they knew their place.

-Jackie, white student at Fernwood High

Jackie's comments frame the structuring questions of this book: What happens when, in her words, everyone is "mashed together"? How do youth, who find themselves involuntarily at the forefront of desegregation, think about and live with difference? Jackie's remark that "you have to struggle and find your bearings" speaks to the need for adolescents, and all people, to find places and points of identification, even if they are, as Gils Deleuze and Félix Guattari (1987) argue, temporary points and locations of affiliation.

Fernwood in 1996 is turbulent terrain for this work. Only five years after the first desegregation of white government schools, and two years after the first multiracial elections, one could not describe Fernwood (or South Africa) as "post" apartheid in a sense that suggests that apartheid and its effects have vanished. It is, instead, a "going beyond" (S. Hall, 1996) that incorporates the traces of apartheid and redeployed them in a new conjuncture. Here, there are no necessary
outcomes or predetermined paths. Fernwood is one of the sites in which the new, however raw, crude, and unpolished, is formed.

And, in some sense, it is all new. The attitudes of some Fernwood administrators and teachers, formed through years of immersion in apartheid educational and societal systems, sit in a new context and thus resonate a bit differently from before. What was once accepted as common sense is now examined quizzically, interrogated, and perhaps discarded. As a school, Fernwood does not attempt solely to cling to the old, but to refashion and position itself as a particular kind of school (white), within a world that is increasingly black. Its whiteness, assumed and naturalized under apartheid, is no longer. It must struggle to create and solidify this whiteness through its practices and discourses, despite the cost to its predominantly black student population.

With Fernwood as context, this book has analyzed how Fernwood students think about and struggle over difference. Through doing so, I have interrogated fundamental theoretical questions about two central social constructs: race and identity.

THE CONTEXT AND CONTENT OF RACE

"Race" in educational research is often taken as a given, a set, preexisting variable that is then put into conversation with other naturalized states of being, such as gender and class. Despite occasional gestures towards an understanding that race really isn't biological, we still tend to study race as a constant presence, a "fact" of life that unfolds within a predictable, unchanging routine. While we undoubtedly admit to and study change in other aspects of life and work (e.g., education is constantly producing new ideas about teaching and learning), race in educational research is stuck in paradigms that prevent us from putting forward interpretations and analyses that address the staggering complexity of the world in which we find ourselves. As Nicholas Burbules (1997) argues, there exists a "danger that difference can become categorical, static; that we do not rethink particular dimensions of difference as contexts and circumstances change" (p. 109). Race is, without question, a social, not biological fact (Haney Lopez, 1996; Ignatiev, 1995; Omi & Winant, 1994), and part of the job of educational research is to unpack how race functions as a set of practices within schools.

Here, I try to shift the fundamental questions we ask about race to ones that explore its temporal and spatial variability. Instead of assuming what race is, and then proceeding to analyze its effects and manifestations, I engage how race is produced in a particular situation, how it is explained, circulated, and reproduced, and how as a construct it interfaces with various structures of power. In essence, I change the emphasis from drawing and redrawing lines between groups to getting underneath how those lines are produced in the first place and what they mean to people in their everyday lives. As Akhil Gupta and James Ferguson (1997b) argue in reference to the study of cultural difference, "We are interested less in establishing a dialogic relation between geographically distinct societies than in exploring the processes of production of difference in a world of culturally, socially, and economically interconnected and interdependent spaces" (p. 43). This process of production, in all its complexity, is the focus of my study of Fernwood.

In this book, I have argued that Fernwood students produce race as a discourse of taste. I take seriously and engage with Kris Günter and Peter McLaren's (1995) concern that "educators need to ask themselves how students' identities are organized macrospatially and geopolitically as well as within the micropolitics of the classroom" (p. 128). Identities are not assumed and prefigured, but are shifting constellations that cannot be understood through paradigms that reinsert them as solid. Furthermore, identities are organized on multiple intersecting planes, both encompassing and creating the scapes (Appadurai, 1996) that structure the contemporary world.

THE LANDSCAPE OF RACE AND TASTE

Racial identity's manifestation as taste functions to reinscribe race as a valid point of suture for students' identities, disrupting and displacing other potential constructions of race, such as nation, culture, or biology. Taste specifically and forcefully organizes itself within what Bourdieu has described as a habitus, a set of practices that assures that structures (such as race) will perpetuate, but never exactly reproduce themselves. Yet as students' engagement with difference at Fernwood moves through taste, race splits open in several ways.

First, the fantasy of race as a purely local construction is shattered, as its embeddedness in the global is made evident. Here, the micropolitics of Fernwood interact with the macrospatial world of global popular culture and inevitably connect to the scapes that reconfigure students' place in the world. By using this approach to the interpretation of the construction of race at Fernwood, I mean to interrupt ethnographic analysis that is narrowly local and sedimented within the bounds of the (ethnographer-invented) traditional village. James Clifford (1997), working against this paradigm, recasts the village as a crossroads, a place of movement, as he theorizes, a hotel lobby, an urban café, or a bus. He argues, "We often need to consider circuits, not a single place" (p. 37). The circuit, in the case of Fernwood, is broad, encompassing everything from the taxi students take to school to the latest Whitney Houston CD they carry in their book bag as they make the journey. Both the process of their travel to school and the particularity of their affection for Whitney can be analyzed within these scapes that redefine the meaning and impact of these now unbounded circuits.

Second, an analysis based on taste reveals how race functions in multiple, sometimes contradictory, ways. Here, we see how it is possible for not one, but
multiple forms of "race" to emerge and function simultaneously. Charting race's course leads to often divergent directions. In Chapter 5, I examined how students use taste to create and police racial borders, defining and enforcing racialized taste codes to separate African, coloured, Indian, and white. Taste codes become an insistent, pounding refrain, managing the minutiae of students' daily lives, and are the structure through which the sociopolitical relations of the school are governed. In this instance, race as a construct retains its power—it does not, of course, exactly replicate, but it uses the logic of the habitus to both reproduce and mutate. But then, in chapter 6, breaks occur in the students' racialized taste practices. Taste, as an affective construct, cannot hold. Alliances develop between groups of students, which, under the strict logics of racialized taste, should be impossible. Taste begins to work with other factors, such as class, to drive and shape, not simply reflect, the constituted racial positionings that students have carefully produced. Taste's dynamism becomes apparent as it is a major factor in cementing relations between coloured and African students in grade 12, and coloured and white students in grade 8. Taste here does not replicate; instead it cracks open, and race falters. How students navigate the racialized borders of Fernwood is the focus of chapter 7, as I deepen and broaden my discussion of race and taste through profiling seven individuals. Taste's role is uneven and, in some stories, muted; yet the strong variability of race emerges through my sketches of the seven students.

THE PLAY OF IDENTITY

Through emphasizing the role of taste in the production of identities, I attempt to destabilize and problematize not only the concept of race, but the very notion of identity itself. Race, of course, is part of this broader problematic that surrounds contemporary social theory and the practices of everyday life. The idea of identity, that everyone "has" one composed of certain components (race, gender, class, nation, ethnicity, etc.) that coalesce or conflict in a particular manner within each individual has its roots in the Enlightenment conception of self (S. Hall, 1992). In this paradigm, an "identity" is solid, unchanging, unfolds through a lifetime, and precedes social forces. Later, of course, this paradigm is rocked by the emergence of the "sociological subject" (S. Hall, 1992) whose identity is formed in constant conversation with the structures of the world. Race, then, is not a necessary category of identity, but one that is created within and becomes salient because of particular historical, economic, and political forms. Through demonstrating how race is formed by taste (and, at moments, how taste forms race), I reveal the instability both of race as a construct, and of identity itself. Identity is at play. Here, I do not use "play" to infer that this process of identity construction is joyful, or that it is a matter of choice, but that it is open to many articulations. In other words, how identity is constituted is not a preordained fact. That identity can be transformed into an affective practice, that of taste, illuminates its variability and complexity. Taste, as I have demonstrated, is not a simple matter

Applying the construct of taste to identity is not saying that one group wears these clothes and a second group wears another. Instead, it is understanding how taste is produced, how it circulates, how it structures relations, and where and how it falters. The paradigm of taste allows us to see, quite vividly, how identity produces itself. Taste's remarkable instability illuminates the pitfalls of the Enlightenment self—these identities are not stable and preformed, but moving temporary affiliations, ready to alight at any moment.

Taste also underscores the import of affect for identity production. As Grossberg (1989) suggests, popular culture "is intimately implicated in the production of common sense—the multilayered, fragmented collection of meanings, values, and ideas that we both inherit and construct and which largely define our taken-for-granted interpretation of the world." (p. 94). Here, affect becomes part of students' commonsense production of identity, as important and relevant to them as other potential constructions. Stuart Ewen (1988) quotes from a student essay on the topic of style, which mixes reflections on living in a bombed-out building in a Beirut war zone with comments on the popular make of clothing, cars, and contemporary fashion in Beirut. Fernwood students' essays and spoken comments often contain a similar, seemingly bizarre juxtaposition of observations on apartheid and violence and then, without pause, specifics about the racial coding of music and long lists of preferred clothing manufacturers. While I, standing outside their lives, may label apartheid and violence as "important" and clothing as "not so important," it quickly becomes clear that these youth do not share my worldview. I am compelled to recognize that while the remnants of apartheid and violence are forces that bear down on students' lives, popular culture is where students live: where and how they are invested and the raw material they draw on to think about themselves and their relations to others.

RACE, RACISMS, AND EDUCATION

The previous discussion points to the reality that race, and racial identities, are slick and elusive. Race does not proceed unchallenged through time and space, but constructs and reconstructs itself, resistant to attempts both to be pinned down and eliminated. Racial identities cannot be bounded and framed, for they exceed, engulf, and mock the borders in which we attempt to encase them. "Racism" does not exist in the singular, as a monolithic, all-encompassing system of domination. Instead, "racisms" (Hall, 1986) proliferate.

Accepting that race and racism are multiple, not singular, constructions raises troubling, probing questions about the design and focus of educational research that investigates these phenomena and other aspects of identity. If we are to understand and intervene in the ways in which race functions within a school setting, it seems imperative that we ask questions about what race is, and how it circulates, reproduces, and changes in that environment. Investigating these questions may lead us to new
ways of looking at and thinking about race, and may illuminate spaces of connection that otherwise remain invisible. Here, I follow David Lionel Smith (1998), who in his discussion of black culture argues that “our reliance on ‘common sense’ racial notions subverts our ability to produce accurate theoretical or even descriptive accounts of our social and cultural circumstances” (p. 181). In this book, I question “common sense” ideas of race, and instead probe critical issues around how and why race is constructed in a specific way at particular time.

For example, by using taste to analyze racialized identities at Fernwood, I am able to interpret the changing landscape of connections and alliances between different racial groups. These alliances (e.g., between African and coloured students in grade 12) may have remained buried or unexplained (and thus ignored) if I neglected to focus on the concerns of taste, popular culture, and a shifting notion of “race.” Using these paradigms gives me a new approach, a new way into the racial dynamics of Fernwood.

At the same time, recognizing the multiplicity of race opens up our understanding of the conflicts that dominate Fernwood and many other desegregated schools not just in South Africa, but around the world. Michelle Fine, Lois Weis, and Linda Powell (1997) are concerned with the divisive dynamics that are often found at these sites, and suggest that without an investment in developing community, democratic practices, and ongoing and substantial analysis of the play of “difference, power, and privilege,” “settings that are technically desegregated will corrode into sites of oppositional identities, racial tensions, and fractured group relations which simply mirror the larger society” (p. 249). While Fernwood students would likely benefit from the interventions and structural changes suggested by Fine, Weis, and Powell, the story of race and identity at the school suggests that it is important to do in-depth and penetrating analyses of desegregated sites to look for the divergent trajectories of race. The dynamics at Fernwood do not only mirror the larger society (though they do that in some respects), they are, in and of themselves, part of the ongoing conversation and negotiation of race in South Africa and worldwide. If we look at Fernwood in this way, as a productive, not only reflective site, then it becomes a compelling task to study the connections, and the moments and spaces of border crossings and hybridities that exist even without the conditions suggested by Fine, Weis, and Powell. By analyzing the “how” of race, even in instances when it remains a point of conflict and connection, we tease out its complexity. By doing so, we begin with the understandings, connections, and interpretations that students already bring to their engagement with race, and move forward from there. As Grossberg (1994) reflects, “...we must begin where people already are if we want to move them to somewhere else” (p. 99). In the case of Fernwood, students engage with race as a discourse of taste, and through their practices illuminate (often unintentionally) its instability. If “race” was solid, then there would be no crossover in taste preferences, there would be no need to police borders, there would be no alliances or connections. It is only because race is not solid that these dynamics exist.

Teaching Race

As the boundaries of racial identities move and shift, they are open to reconfiguration, though in a contextual, not free-floating, manner. As my research and others’ (K. Hall, 1995; Maira, 1999; Perry, forthcoming; Wulff, 1995; Yon, 2000) demonstrates, race and racisms are more complex phenomena than our pedagogical practices admit, and we need to move along the road of beginning to engage these complications.

Critically, our pedagogies need to acknowledge the limits of racial identification (McCarthy, 1998) and to focus not on how people are different, but on how such differences are created and sustained through the culture that surrounds us. As Farid Rakivi (1991) points out in his discussion of ethnicity, “The idea . . . that ethnic groups maintain their cultural identity is fundamentally ideological” (p. 191). By this, he suggests, with McCarthy, Burbules, and others, that difference (whether called racial, ethnic, or cultural) is neither natural nor innocent. For example, when a society such as the United States fosters and promotes racial/ethnic/cultural difference, it may have the (intended) effect of muting class-based identification.

Thus, instead of sending students on a journey to find out who they are, we need to deepen students’ understanding of the “how” and the “why” of difference. This approach would also allow space for engaging with how students themselves (like the students of Fernwood) make sense of “race” and how these meanings are both embedded in, and influence, the structures in which they operate. In other words, instead of insisting that we know in advance what it means to be an “x,” and transmitting that to students, we engage in a conversation about that meaning and its historical and spatial variability.

In the context of the United States, this might mean talking with both white and black students about how the Irish were (and are still in some contexts) positioned as black. Stanley Aronowitz (1994) similarly gives the example of a male youth from Puerto Rico who migrated to the United States in 1929 and “could live through the thirties without being crucially identified as a Puerto Rican—both by himself, by social and economic institutions, and by others” (p. 198). Instead, this young man was both positioned, and positioned himself, predominantly through his class and political identifications. His Puerto Rican “identity” was a small part of his “self” (p. 198), not the overarching racial and/or ethnic position that it is more likely to be today. In South Africa, it might mean examining the racial classifications of apartheid, and how they functioned not only to mark difference, but to actually create and sustain that difference. The pedagogical aim of these practices is to involve students in a project that looks at the ways in which difference is constructed, how its significance shifts, how it is operationalized in a society, and most critically why difference continues to matter. As Burbules (1997) argues, the examination of systems of difference is an integral component of the educational project, and can “illuminate something
crucial about the way in which we make our lives, in which they are made for us, within tacit categories of sameness or difference that could be re-made differently" (p. 112, emphasis is the author's).

Race, for Fernwood students, is a crucial part of the selves they both inherit and recreate. It is a category of difference that holds enormous power within the historical structures of South African society, and will certainly continue to be a critical point of voluntary and involuntary identification. Despite its tenacity, race is also remade here—sometimes in ways that reinscribe its hold, in other instances, in ways that loosen it. For all of us, the challenge is to dismantle the power of race and difference, so that we are able, in Toni Morrison's (1998) words, to be home.

**APPENDIX**

**NEGOTIATING PLACE:**

**REFLECTIONS ON METHOD, THEORY, AND BEING THERE**

In a city built on steep, torturous hills, a car makes all the difference. Getting into my car every morning at 7 or 7:30, I drive out of my neighborhood surrounding the University of Natal, and past dozens of African domestic workers trudging slowly from the bus stops up the hills of Glenwood to the homes of their white employers. The drive from my apartment to Fernwood takes me ten minutes: up the winding roads to the university and then past five of the most prestigious white schools in the area. As I approach the neighborhood surrounding Fernwood, I often spot Fernwood students, those who live close enough to walk to school, starting up the massive hill that then plunges into the valley where Fernwood was built. I usually stop to pick up these students, and often similarly transport students home after school or to various bus stops. I am not the only adult at school to do this; many teachers also arrive at school with carloads full of students.

My short and easy journey to school, past the palatial homes of the elite of Durban and then into more modest though almost exclusively white areas, contrasts sharply with the long, unpleasant daily trip for many Fernwood students. Leaving home at 5:30 or 6 A.M., the majority of African students at Fernwood travel via bus, train, and/or taxi from the townships of Umlazi, to the south, and KwaMashu, to the north—a trip that takes anywhere from one to two hours. The trains, buses, and taxis stop near an industrial and commercial area of Durban,